

Summit of Three T(h)oms:

THOM ADCOX - HERNANDEZ

Talks about *Falcon Crest*

Interview by
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in association with
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I reached out to Thom Adcox - Hernandez (credited Thomas Adcox in season 9 of *Falcon Crest* where he played Brian, Sharpe's key MBA), and he agreed to do an interview with Thomas J. Pucher, and myself. We had a great conversation via *Zoom*, which was also the first video conversation between Thomas and me after more than 15 years of collaborating on www.falconcrest.org. We learned a lot from Thom and his *Falcon Crest* days, as well as what he has been up to since. Our conversation was two hours, and we had a lot of fun.

So here's the *Zoom* conversation of three T(h)oms...

Thom: I live in Palm Springs, which is where Jane [Wyman] is buried at *Forest Lawn*, and Frank Sinatra's buried there. That's about two miles from my house. So, Jane is here with us in spirit.



Thomas J. Pucher (up left),
Tom Tagliente (up right) and Thom Adcox,
who played Brian, Sharpe's MBA in
Falcon Crest's 9th season.

Thomas: I have two friends who worked on the show, Steve Black and Henry Stern. They did the year before you came on. They are a couple of writers who worked on the show and came back for season 8. And they live in Palm Springs, and I actually stayed with them for an extended weekend a couple of years ago.

Thom: Oh, you're kidding!

Thomas: Yeah, they were so kind to invite me, and it was fabulous. They showed me around and showed me all the sights in Palm Springs. I really had the time of my life.

Thom: Yeah, so beautiful here. It's a beautiful place. I love living here. And when I have jobs that I have to go into L.A., it's only an hour and forty minutes. And I can usually leave whenever I want so I won't hit traffic. I love to drive. So, I listen to my music.



Thom has three dogs, two Dachshunds named Cody and Toby and a Chihuahua named Petey. He showed us the latter, and when I said, "Hey Petey, yo quiero *Taco Bell*?" like in the commercial, Thom responded.

Thom: You know, I almost got that voice. It was between me and Carlos Alazraqui who got the voice. I was close to being the voice of the *Taco Bell* Chihuahua. But even more, I was just as close to being the voice of Bart Simpson for *The Simpsons*. That would've changed my whole life.

Tom: And that started the same year your season of *Falcon Crest* was on, so you would've been kind of crossed over.

Thom: Yeah, because I did an acting guest-starring rôle on *The Tracey Ullman Show* around that time. You know I would've been in all 22... I want to tell you a story about the... Do you want to ask me the questions in order? Or do you just want to talk?

Thomas: Oh no, no problem. Go on talking. It's okay.

Thom: My agent sent me to the casting directors for *Falcon Crest*. It was literally just like three lines. And it wasn't for Brian, for the character I read for. So, I go in and I didn't know what I was going to do with three lines. Anybody in the world could do them. And so, I had stopped and got a donut on my way to the audition. So, I brought my donut in there with me, and the scene was a guy who was in Gregory Harrison's office — one of the guys that was just answering phones. So, the line was just "Okay, sure. Okay. Yeah, okay. That's... okay. Yeah, okay, I'll get on it. Thanks." And that was it.

Thomas: Oh my god!

Thom: And I thought, "What am I going to do with these lines?" Because he was on the phone. So, I got a donut, and I got into the casting room, and I pulled my donut out, and I leaned back in the chair, and I put my legs up, and I had the phone like this [demonstrated holding it to his ear], I put the donut on the desk, and I kind of... the three lines, and went, "Mm hmm. Mm hmm." And I went, "Yeah." And I looked over at the casting director like I was talking to him, and [used his hands to look like the caller was rambling on] I go, "Yeah. Yeah. That's good. Yeah. Sure. Okay. Yeah." And then, I do all of the stupid shit — like holding the phone away from my voice [more funny gesturing]. Then I hang up. And they go, "Okay, thank you, Thom. Thanks for coming in." Like "Okay. Great." And I left. And I got down the hallway, and the casting director came running out after me and she goes, "Thom! Come back in! Come back in! The producers want to see you for this rôle of Brian." Just because of what I did. I don't even know why I did it. So, another time I did a guest-starring rôle on *Family Matters*. I don't know if you know any of these shows, Thomas.



Thom (as Brian) in the background answering a phone call in one of his first scenes in episode 206 <9.01>.

Thomas: Yes. It's another of those *Lorimar* shows, I think.

Thom: Yeah. Yes, it was a *Lorimar* show. And I don't know which one I got first... *Family Matters* or *Falcon*... I think I was already on *Falcon Crest* at the time. So, I used the

donut trick again.

Tom: Reginald VelJohnson [the lead of *Family Matters*]...

Thom: Yes, and oh, such a nice man. That whole set was great. I did the donut thing again. I left the donut outside in the office, and I went in to meet the producers. And I shook their hands and said, "Hi. Hi. Hi. And I'm going to step out here and I'm going to knock, and I'll start the scene that way." And they said, "Yeah! Yeah! Okay. Go ahead." So, I had a powdered donut and went outside the casting door, and I took a big bite and I've got white powder all over my face, and I pounded on the door like it was them knocking on the door, and I entered the door like I was pissed. And I go, "What!? Oh, hi, officer." Like that, and I had the donut in my hand like that [gestures again] and I go, "Oh he's right in here. I'll get him." And they cracked up. And I booked that job, too. So, the donut worked again.

Thom [looking at the questionnaire we sent earlier]: You've got some great questions, Tom. You probably know... well you both know more than I do about the show. And one of your questions was, "Did I watch it before?" And I didn't. I wasn't a fan of the show. I mean, I never watched it. I didn't watch *Dynasty* either. But I did watch *Dallas* because my partner at the time was on that show.

Thomas: Oh, really?

Tom: Who did he play?

Thom: Dave Culver. He played Senator Dave Culver.

Thomas: Oh, the Senator? Was that Tom Fucello?

Thom: Yeah! Oh my god! Yes, he was!



Thomas: He was actually on *Falcon Crest*, too, for one episode. He played a Councilman for Tuscany.

Thom: Oh my god! That blows my mind that you know his name! Yeah.

Tom Fucello (left) and David Beecroft in episode 197 <8.14> of *Falcon Crest*.

Tom: Thomas, didn't he pass away?

Thomas: Yes.

Thom: Yeah, he did. In 1992. He was my first partner. He was an incredible man. But yeah, he was on there. And he got to see me do the show, which was great. Lorenzo Lamas, first-of-all, is such a nice man. He was always so, so sweet. And Gregory Harrison is awesome. It was such a great show to work on. It was so nice. The worst part of it was I had to get up at 5 AM. My call time was always at 6 AM. The lesser actors got the earliest times. Except for Jane Wyman. Her time, I guess, was always very early. She used to get to the set early and do her own makeup. That's what the makeup artist on the show told me: "She does her own makeup. She gets here early, puts on her makeup." I was like, "Wow".

Thomas: That's what I heard. Some people told me that she loved coming to the set early because she liked to leave early. So, that was part of her rhythm.

Tom: Thom, you previously mentioned that Jane — when she wasn't working — wouldn't come to the set to do the "Angela" supervision because of her stature and her work background. I'm just happy you got to work with her in one scene, even though you didn't have any lines with her.

Thom: I didn't.

Tom: But you're standing right behind her.

Yes, he really did have a scene with her:
Gregory Harrison (Michael Sharpe), Thom Adcox (Brian) and the
incredible Jane Wyman as Angela Channing in episode 227 <9.22>.



Thom [smiling]: Yeah! She was very nice. She was very nice to everybody. [Snapping his fingers] And she knew what she was doing. She'd get in there and, bam, bam, bam, bam... "Okay everybody, goodbye."

Thomas: When she was there, was the atmosphere any different in contrast to the time that she wasn't?

Thom: Yes! Everything... I noticed immediately the day she was on. Everything was boom, boom. No goofing around.



[Laughter all the way around.]

Thom: Yeah, she pretty much was very strict on the set and had a really great work ethic. And I was kind of lucky because, I think... I don't know what episode it was but, I'm not a really good line memorizer. And on that show, the character I played, I had some big words that I wasn't that familiar with. I remember it's a scene where I sleep with Andrea Thompson's character, and I don't know if it's when he [Gregory Harrison] finds out or what, but he picks me up and throws me down to the ground. And I remember when I get back up, I had this line. I could not remember what the line was. I can't wait to look

at and see the scene. But he throws me down to the ground and whatever I had to say to him, when I stood up, I couldn't remember. And we had to start and do the scene again. And he would throw me down again. So finally, I wrote down on my hand the first word. So, I throw myself down, and then I would look at my hand, then I would start to get up and then I would have the line, and I would say it. And I remember thinking when I saw the episode, I could tell that I was doing that. I could tell that I was looking at my hand.

Tom: I can tell you what episode it was.

Thom: Yeah?

Tom: I don't remember the title, but Thomas, it sounds like the episode where Richard held Michael at the restaurant while *Overdyne* was being raised. And when he came back to the office... no one could reach him... and Brian tells him, "We couldn't reach you!", and he [Sharpe] threw him [Brian] to the ground. He said, "You mean I'm down 40 million Dollars!?"

Thom: Yes!!

Thomas: Yes, that's it! It's episode 4 from that year, I think.



Screen captures from episode 209 <9.04>: Michael Sharpe is grabbing at Brian's collar (left) and pushing him down (center). While Michael Sharpe is fuming with anger about the financial loss in the *Overdyne* deal, Brian is trying to get up on his feet again.

Tom: It was right after he kidnapped the kids.

Thom: And another one of your questions, Thomas, was if I was only on 16 episodes, or how many was I on?

Thomas: 15, I think.

Thom: Yeah. I was scripted to be in all of them, in all 22, but then I got a part in a movie that got shot in Jamaica for two months. They let me go and they rewrote stuff and threw a couple of the other guys in the office... a heavyset guy, they gave him some of my lines. But I couldn't turn down this film in Jamaica. Oh my god!

Thomas: It's a great opportunity, isn't it?

Thom: Yeah, it was so great. It was called *Popcorn* It's like a cult classic.

Thomas: Were there any other competitors with you there at the same time, who wanted to get a rôle on *Falcon Crest*?

Thom: Yeah, there were probably ten guys in the waiting room. They probably saw forty people, fifty people for that. Maybe more. It's amazing. Sometimes they see thousands of people.

Thomas: One other thing I want to know, Thom, did Brian ever have a last name? I know it was never in the script, but did you get something like a character biography or something?

Thom: No. No I never got a name. 'Cause I think the first episode I did they weren't planning on having my rôle being that big. But I think some of the producers and writers really liked me, so they just kept writing my part. So, I never knew how many episodes I was in. But they told me, "We're going to put you in all 22," after about episode 4. And I was so happy. It was so great. My family would always say, "Oh, you need to learn a trade, or you need to learn something," because I told them, "I'm going to be an actor." And they would say, "Yeah, okay. Well, you better learn how to weld or something." And I did commercials and stuff, but then when I got *Falcon Crest* that was a big deal. Because they could watch me and tell all the relatives, "Tonight... he's on tonight." So, my parents were so impressed by that. And it made them realize that I was going to be a successful actor.

Thomas: And did they give you any outline of the character? Or was it more that you could kind of develop and feel your way into it?

Thom: They just let me do whatever I wanted. Like when I got the first episode, and the next one, and then the next one. They never gave me "How you want me to be" because that show would also have different directors, too. And I remember I was kind of annoyed at one point, because I had already done ten episodes or something. And we had this one guest director, and he had directed some big cult-film. I forget his name. But it was my big episode where I confront Andrea Thompson in the bar. And he was going: "You should act this way." And I was saying, "No, my character wouldn't act that way." They just trusted me with the character. I don't think the character was supposed to be that big. They were writing it after they realized they really liked me, they thought, "We'll utilize him."

Thomas: I actually think that's what happened here. The overall experience with that kind of show is when the producing staff or the writers see that a character works with an audience, they have a tendency to write more lines for the character and, of course, give the actor a little more leeway.

Thom: Yes.

Thomas: Was it Tim Hunter?

Thom: Yes! It was!

Thomas: He only directed two episodes of *Falcon Crest*.

Thom: And I did go to the big final party. I sat right next to Cesar Romero. It was great.

Thomas: Where did they have that party?

Thom: I think it was in the *Hilton*, or one of the hotels at *Universal*. And they actually rented a room and had it catered. And it was really fun, really nice. But I remember I never worked with Cesar Romero. He wasn't in any of the episodes in the year I was on it.

Tom: No. His last episode was at the beginning of season 8.

Thomas: It's really great that they obviously invited some of the previous cast members as well.

Thom: Yeah. And Kristian Alfonso was another one that was very nice. She was always very sweet, although I never had any scenes with her. Carla Gugino, whose career just skyrocketed. She is a good actress, and she is gorgeous and just very, very nice. But we never stayed friends, cause when you don't have scenes with people...

Thomas: But since you mention her, do you know why they wrote her off like in the last third of the season? Because from what I know — I have the storyline bible for that year — the original plans were that they wanted to keep Carla Gugino for the whole season.



Carla Gugino at the beginning of her career as Sydney St. James in *Falcon Crest* (episode 211 <9.06>).

And in case they produced a tenth season, she would have gotten an even bigger rôle. They kind of wanted her to be the next Angela Channing. I thought it was an odd idea because it didn't fit into the original concept of the show, but anyway...

Thom: She wasn't under [a long-term] contract. Where it's from week to week — 'cause I think that's the contract she was under, too (that's what I was under) — she could just refuse to do the work. She just started doing films. I think that's what happened with her.

Tom: It's nice that the production allowed that, though. You would think that a production like *Falcon Crest* would say, "No! You're locked in for the whole year". It's nice that they let the talent grow. What I wanted to ask you, can you tell us a little bit about your relationship working on and off screen with Gregory Harrison since you were with him so much.

Did he bring you under his wing and treat you like a son? Or was it more like a friend relationship?

Thom: He really did treat me like his son. He was so kind, and he is such a generous actor. Gregory was so nice. We would hang out in between scenes. We would have lunch in the commissary together. He wanted me to come over and meet his wife Randy at the time. They didn't have kids at that point. He did a play in the *Pasadena Playhouse*. I went

to see him. He was a great guy, he really did take me under his wing and he was very very sweet. That scene where I kept getting thrown down, he would say to the directors, "Can you put him on the floor? Having me throw him down — the poor guy is gonna break his arm. Can we start from there 'cause he is already on the floor?"

Tom: Well, it's funny that he got *Falcon Crest*, because two years before he got a mini-series which was a spoof on *Falcon Crest* called *Fresno*. And every scene he was in he never put on a shirt. It was part of the joke.

Thom: That's hysterical! I remember *Fresno*. After working with him on *Falcon Crest*, he was doing a sitcom, it only lasted a season or two, at the most. And I read to be his son and I felt too old, of course. And when you do episodics, they don't like to cast people that are that much older, 'cause if the show goes and keeps running, all of a sudden this character's gonna start looking really old really fast, so they're like: "You might be a little too old to play the son," and I was, I was 20 years older than the guy they cast.

Tom: Now, when you got *Falcon Crest*, you said you went in to audition. How did you hear about it? Did one of your agents call you and say, "Hey, they have a rôle for you." Or did you say, "Hey, I want to try a soap," and jump on that?

Thom: I had an agent at the time. The casting people were looking for a character... this 18 – 25, you know, with a bit of a character... And then the agent will send you in to the casting office. And then the casting people will bring you back for the producer session, "callback" it is called. They will bring you back for a callback. But for that one, they brought me right into the producer session, right to a callback. It's great when you do that 'cause then you bypass all that...

Tom: Did you guys know ahead of time or was it last-minute when you guys found out the show wasn't going to continue to a tenth season? Where was it in the series where you guys were told?

Thom: They never told us. Like literally the last episode. But you can get a feeling for that when... Did it air on Friday nights or Thursday?

Tom: Friday night, and then they moved it to Thursdays for the last four episodes.

Thom: So, when that happens... Also, they would pre-empt us with like a special or something...

Tom: You were off for six weeks.

Thom: So, when that happens, you kind of know it's gonna be the demise. Because when they start screwing around with it like that... And I was so sad, 'cause I would have loved to continue to work on that show. Such a great experience.

Thomas: So, Thom, what was the atmosphere in that whole last year? Were the people a little bit dissatisfied with the show? Because the ratings were plummeting obviously.

Thom: We would never really talk about it that much. You could feel it around on the set. They told us during the last episode: "We are not coming back for another season and the wrap-party is in two weeks," or something. It was sad.

Tom: You could probably see it on people's faces.

Thom: Yeah, you could tell. And I think everybody that was working on it — Lorenzo was probably happy because he was on the show for that many years, and then he went on to do that motorcycle...

Tom: *Renegade*.

Thom: I did a little co-starring spot on that. And he was like, "Oh my god, I can't believe you are here!" It was so funny.



Lorenzo Lamas in *Renegade*.

Thomas: So, when you first started to work as Brian on *Falcon Crest*, you mentioned earlier that you had to say all those fancy terms, you were an MBA and of course you had to talk about economic things and stuff like that... Did you go through a specific preparation for it, or was the script basically enough for you to get this kind of stuff?

Thom: The script... Because I went in and did what I did, I think they kind of liked that character... They liked what I did. I guess they liked me enough as an actor. I would go through what they would write me, and I would do what I thought the character would do, so I never went through anything that was specific. I would just read the script and then try to memorize the lines, which was always hard for me. My whole life I've had such a hard time memorizing...

Tom: And yet you played the character so well! Knowing what you are telling me and Thomas now, I would have never guessed that you had trouble memorizing your lines because they would just seem to flow so well in the scenes. I don't know if that's multiple takes, but don't sell yourself short because you're very talented!

Thom: Thank you! I never got many takes. The peripheral players on shows don't usually get a lot of takes, they want it done in one or two whereas the stars are given take after take. On shows like that they keep it [at] a pretty quick pace.

Tom: Did they give you liberty like they did with Jane and David and Susan Sullivan to alter lines, or if you had a question, would you go to the writers and say: "I don't think Brian would say this, can you change this?", and then they would accommodate you?

Thom: No. First of all, I didn't ever have any lines that would make me question... I was their character. So, I was what they made up. I never felt like I needed to do that. And if I would, they probably would have said "Fuck off!"

[Everyone laughing.]

Thomas: I know that David Selby did it all the time. Not so much as going to the producers and asking for permission, but just doing it. I mean he went like, "Well, that line is not like Richard, so I'm gonna change it," and he sometimes added a Shakespeare

reference as a quotation or something like that. It changed the whole scene's direction. It was really interesting, and he always got away with it. He mentioned to me once that... — oh, well, you never worked with Carl Held because he left after season 8, but those two had an incredible chemistry on the screen. He played his butler if you will and his security chief...

Tom: His "100 % - everything - assistant"!

Thomas: His "everything - assistant", that's right! His right-hand man. And they really worked very well together. And when David in one scene made a Shakespeare reference that wasn't in the script, Carl, who has a theater background also, realized which play it was from, and he said: "Oh, that's act whatever and line such-and-such from *Hamlet*!" And they kept it! They kept it in the episode because they were like, "Oh my goodness, what are they doing here?!" But it was terrific.

Tom: That was the episode after they blew up Maggie's house.

Thomas: We briefly talked about the ex-*Falcon Cresters* if you will. Susan Sullivan was let go from the show at the beginning of that season.



Thom: I know! That big diamond ring got caught... And she was very nice, too.

Every fan remembers this scene: Maggie's ring — a present from Richard — got stuck in the drain gate of the pool. Even Thom Adcox remembers her unhappy demise on *Falcon Crest*.

Thomas: It was really a pity that she had to leave, and I know that Susan was not happy at all, and they always had to play to the press that it was a mutual decision, which it wasn't because they fired her — because, well, she actually was too expensive. It's kind of an open secret that they hired three other actors for her salary. It was actually Greg Harrison, Wendy Phillips and Andrea Thompson. They got three new characters for the price of one.

Thom: That's so funny because I remember, after I did 5 or 6 episodes, my manager says, "I think we need to ask for a raise. Let's ask for a \$ 1,000 raise."

Tom: "Don't do that, they'll kill you off!"

Thom: My managers asked, and they said: "No." And that was it. But then I heard on set that Lorenzo got like a \$ 5,000 - a - week bonus.

Thomas: Well, probably they felt that he and David were the only ones there from the old cast, so probably that was the reason. It's just a guess. Anyway, did you have a chance to see Susan while she was on the set for her last couple of scenes?

Thom: No, I didn't. I wish I would have 'cause I met her once, I think. One day when I was there, she was maybe like finishing or something. And so I got to meet her and say hi. And she was very sweet, I remember.

Thomas: She is a terrific lady! She is unbelievable.

Thom: Good actress, too!

Tom: She's excellent!

Thomas: Did you see our anniversary special, by any chance, for the 40th anniversary of *Falcon Crest*?

Thom: No! Where can I see it?

Tom: I'll send you the link to it.

Thomas: It's on falconcrest.org, it's right on the homepage there. It was a hell of a lot of fun when we shot that little segment with Susan... You will roll on the floor just laughing.

Tom: She's hilarious! They saved the best for last.

Thomas: It was so much fun. When we prepared those things, we asked the actors if they wanted to have something scripted that they should tell the fans or if they wanted to just speak freely and do their own thing. Some of them asked, "Yeah, send me a few lines and we'll talk about it". And when I talked to Susan about it, we felt that our mutual disgust



of the producers' decision to fire her should be addressed. And Susan has this really loving way to present this. I thought these lines would be perfect for her, and she loved it, and I think the way she said it was fabulous.

Susan Sullivan in the 40th anniversary special:
"Maggie dead?! The hell with that last season! Legends never die."

Thom: That's wonderful!

Tom: She's brief, but oh my god, she is the most memorable one. [Everyone laughing.] I loved it! Even her mannerisms, the way she moves her hands, it was almost like you're watching Maggie again. And even though she was Maggie, it was almost like she jumps back into the character, and she never left it. That's how quick she is.

Thomas: She's an incredibly good actress and her career really took off as well. I mean at age 70 or something she got that really big rôle on *Castle* as Castle's mother — perfect for her! She was in it for all eight years. She was not in every episode, but maybe in every second episode or a little bit more. And she said it was perfect for her. She had like one day a week to work and was paid obviously well, and she had what we called the "Jane Wyman clause" in her contract, which ensured she could take her costumes from the show. Did you know that Jane had that in her contract?

Thom: I didn't know that!

Thomas: She was free to take all her wardrobe from the show. That was an extra bonus.

Tom: I'll jump in on that real quick. Jane in a couple of the arthritis foundation things she did, she's actually wearing some of the gowns she wore on *Falcon Crest*. In season 7 she had this beautiful, and I mean stunning, blue — it was in the episode where Nicole leaves, and Maggie finds out that Angela now owns the title to the *Gioberti House* — this beautiful blue sparkling gown with these silver flowers all over it. And I tell you, of all the dresses she wore, for her age, she really rocked that dress!



Thomas: And there was another one, this white thing with the silverish and goldish elements on it, that was designed by Nolan Miller for season 6 — Nolan was a friend of Jane's, and she sometimes got her wardrobe from him — and she also wore that I think for an award party.

Tom: Yes, she did.

Thomas: And Susan obviously learned a lot from Jane. When I met Susan the last time she said, "Well, Jane had a lot of interesting things in her contract, you know, and I'm doing all this, I suggest it now..."

Jane Wyman with Julio Iglesias (left) and Robert Mitchum (right) at the 1990 *Valentino Award* presentation, wearing a dress from *Falcon Crest*.

Thom: I used to have to beg to get a different colored suit! I'm like, "Jesus! I'm wearing that suit again!?" They wouldn't let me keep them. Of course not. But I remember when they started getting me more suits I thought, "Oh, I'm gonna be doing more episodes."

Thomas: Was there anything that you could take from the set that they gave you?

Thom: No. They gave us — I forgot what they gave us, some cheesy little gift they gave all the people at that wrap-party — but if I would have known... I thought about taking something from the set because you could just walk out and spend time on the set for lunch breaks, just relaxing there on the set when nobody was around... I should have taken something. But I didn't.

Tom: Michael Sharpe's computer monitors out of the wall!

[Laughter]

Tom: One thing I wanted to ask you, Thom, because you and I have talked back and forth a few times, when you were doing the show... and there was the episode where it was you and Gregory mostly... and it was the episode where he's talking to you... It was near the end of the series after he was kind of tired of the fight. And he is talking to you like a son and telling you, "Go out and find a wife!"

Thom: I remember that! I had a date, and he said: "Cancel it!"



Tom: That was to me, probably the most vulnerable you saw that character. And you could see the respect that Michael had for Brian for all the things he put him through. That was a very touching scene. Did you guys talk about that and rehearse it before you did it? Or do you recall just jumping into it and acting it out? Because it looks like a father - son moment even though you weren't related.

Thom: Thank you so much, I love that scene! And he was so good in it, too. We did a rehearsal for the camera and for the director and then we just jumped right into it. And they did his close-up first, which was great because then I got to see how vulnerable he was going to get and give my reactions to him. That was a great scene, I totally forgot about that scene.



Episode 225 <9.20>.

Tom: And I love it because at the very end of it he says, "You understand what I'm saying", and you go, "Yeah, I guess I really do, Michael". And it was just like such a tender moment between the two of you. And it was so raw and so powerful because you see this guy as this really ruthless tycoon, but then he feels so broken that he's so sad for you, that he takes time to give you love advice. It was just such a beautiful moment!

Thom: Oh, thank you! I agree, it was totally out of character for him. It was great.

Thomas: Did you film all your scenes at *CBS Studio Center*, or did you have any location scenes as well?

Thom: I did have a location one time, and it was in Long Beach, and it was for Dave Sheinkopf's scene.

Tom: *Danny's Song*.

Thom: Yes! I think I was in that scene because I remember going to Long Beach for it.



One of Thom Adcox's few scenes on location:

Danny Sharpe (David Sheinkopf) tries to commit suicide on the rooftop of the *Sharpe Capital Ventures* building in Sausalito, CA (actually Long Beach).

Brian arrives with Michael Sharpe, Connie (Sharpe's secretary) and a security guard.

Tom: I have to ask you this: When Gregory Harrison would dress someone down and insult them without cracking a smile, when he would deliver those lines, and you were on the set with him — and I know you guys are professionals — but was there ever a time where it just got to the point where you just had to laugh, and you actually broke up during scenes?

Thom: Yeah, that did happen! Several times with him. And you know what he told me? He gave me a bit of advice. It was such good advice. He told me, "Thom, come here. If you're ever doing a take and you don't like the way it's going, you feel like it's not going well and you want it to be better", he said, "sneeze or cough in the middle of it, 'cause then they'll stop. 'Cause otherwise if you go 'Can I do this over?', they don't appreciate that because it's so much money. Cough or, if you can, do a fake sneeze. They will stop immediately, and you can do your take all over again." Yeah, but we busted up a few times!

Thomas: Did they present any of those outtakes to you?

Thom: No, I wish. But no, they never did. Thomas, I just remembered, I did have another scene on location when I had sex with Genele, Andrea Thompson. That was supposed to be at my apartment. It's where Robert Kennedy was killed.

Thomas: Oh, the *Ambassador Hotel* on Wilshire Boulevard?

Thom: Yes! They tore it down several years ago but that's where my apartment was, in that old hotel. It was abandoned. I went down to the basement where Kennedy was actually shot. I went down there and looked around. It was an old, creepy hotel! It was not being lived in, they would just use it to shoot films and stuff there. So, that was another location scene.

Thomas: And what was also shot there was when Genele, Andrea Thompson's character, steals a bearer bond which was hidden in a painting. And she goes to a shipping depot and collects one of the packages — that depot was also filmed on the *Ambassador* lot.

Tom: And the actor who played the guy who she talks to is in a couple of other scenes, he played different characters, 'cause he was the guy that Maggie held a gun to his ribs when they were looking for Vickie.

Thomas: And that's actually a funny connection... coming back to the director you mentioned before, Tim Hunter. He was friends with that guy. They knew each other from high school. Jeff Freilich once mentioned to me that Tim Hunter and this guy who played that shipping courier, Taylor Negron, they were friends in high school, so Tim had a tendency towards hiring him for various of his projects. That's how he got the job on *Falcon Crest* again. It's always interesting how interwoven all those connections are.

Thom: Yeah! That was my first sex scene. And it wasn't even really a sex scene. But I remember going, "Oh my god, I gotta do this and take off my shirt". I was so uncomfortable. I'm a character actor, so I never have love or sex scenes. And luckily, it was her just like going down on me. We finished having sex. 'Cause I remember them spraying fake sweat on me. And then we finished, and she was trying to get information about... I kind of forgot what the storyline was there.

Thomas: She wanted to get the password or keyword so she could pick up this shipment of...

Thom: ...the painting!

Thomas: ...the painting, yes!

Thom: That's what it was. So, I remember being so nervous and doing sit-ups outside and then they put this skin-colored G-string on... Awful! So awful! It was cold, I didn't like it.



Brian and Genele (Andrea Thompson) in episode 221 <9.16> performing a sex scene.

Thomas: And there were like probably 50 people around you, right?

Thom: Yeah, there were! And all the guys were like, "Oh yeah you must be getting..." And I'm like, "No, not really..."

Thomas: And I think those scenes were particularly difficult from a technical aspect because I know that CBS program practices at the time were very strict and rigid. You would have to be careful, as a camera operator, not to film below the waistline and make sure that a blanket covers the women's breasts and all that stuff. So, I think the technicalities are really difficult in those scenes, right?

Thom: Oh yes, so much! Luckily, they did one take on me and one side-take. I can't imagine being an actor and trying to do a real sex scene.

Thomas: So, when you worked with Andrea, how was that experience? How did you two get along?

Thom: We got along good. We exchanged numbers after the show. And I saw her for breakfast once. We weren't really great friends, but we were friends, she was very nice. And she was easy to work with, too. She knew that character, she played that character so well! She did a great job.

Tom: You had a couple of scenes with Wendy Phillips. Did you enjoy working in the scenes that Wendy was in? She seems like she's a very sweet lady.

Thom: Yeah, she's very nice. And she's another great actress.

Tom: What I wanted to ask also — the musical score changed over the final season from the original theme. Was there ever any talk, did you watch the show as it aired? I know that Jane would watch every Friday night. Did you guys watch it in its final entity and get to see it after its final print?

Thom: Yeah, that's when we would watch it, I never got to see dailies or any of that stuff. I was always surprised to see... Well, they kept pretty much everything in. But it would be disappointing if there was a scene that you liked, and they cut it out. But I don't think they ever cut my stuff, fortunately.

Tom: One of the things I loved about your character, Thom, was the way that even though you were Michael Sharpe's lackey, it seemed like you had a great affinity and respect for the man. Even though he was abusing you verbally and pushing you and sending you there, it just seemed like you guys had a great chemistry together and it just came through so beautifully in your scenes.

Thom: Oh, thank you, Tom! That's so nice to hear! Yeah, I loved working with him. He was so easy to work with 'cause he comes from the theater, so he likes to rehearse a lot. And he would want to be going, "Do you wanna run the scene?" He always wanted to be such a professional. And I was like [hesitantly], "Oh, okay..." Soo, we were supposed to be doing this other scene and then they tell me at the last minute, "Oh tomorrow we're doing this scene". And it was a scene where I have a huge amount of lines, and I'm yelling and screaming. And I'm angry at her and I was like, "Oh fuck! You're kidding!" And so, I was staying up all night and I didn't want to stay up all night 'cause then I look like crap. So, then I get up and we do the scene, and I was just terrified doing it the whole time. And when you looked at what I said and what the script... — I said what I was supposed to say but in a totally random different order.

Tom: Well, I can understand. I mean, it's very tough. They give you pages and pages of dialogue to memorize and you have to know your lines, but you also have to know the cues of where the other actors have to start and have to stop. It is a lot to take in. Also, you gotta know where to stop on the floor, and that's a challenge. I think it's great that Gregory kind of helped you along because you can't tell in any of the scenes you did that there was ever an issue. It always came off so fluently and so perfectly. And it was just so well done. And Thomas, you may remember this where... I forget the actress who played his secretary... She had blonde hair.

Thomas: Diane Behrens.

Thom: No! Oh my god, I can't believe you guys are mentioning her. She is one of my very best friends.

Thomas: Yes! Diane Behrens. Her character's name was Connie Johnson.



Diane Behrens as Connie Johnson, Sharpe's secretary in episode 209 <9.04> with Lorenzo Lamas (left) and Thom Adcox and others in the right screen capture.

Tom: Even when she was in it briefly, but every time she was in it and Sharpe was like insulting her and everything and she just took it like a champ. And it was almost like you walk through the front doors of I don't know what, but I just felt like, "Oh my god, how is he gonna beat him up this week?!" And obviously it's acting, you're just playing a part, you said he's a great guy, I bet you guys were friends off-set. It's just so amazing to see some people and the rôles they play. And then it's always nice to hear that they're not the

character they play. 'Cause I've met a couple of actors in my day — and I don't know Thomas, you may attest to that to, and Thom, you may, too — sometimes they're not what you expect, but in a bad way. And it sours the performance you get that you liked from something else and then if you go back and watch it again it can take away the entertainment of the value of it. It's a shame because these actors, they build up a legacy and it only takes one bad day with a fan to ruin it for everybody. And it's nice to know that *Falcon Crest* didn't have "those kind of people". It's just very rare that a TV series can go to the very end of the series, and everybody gets along, and everybody helps each other along and everybody wants everyone to succeed. I think *Falcon Crest* was very lucky to be blessed with such an abundance of that kind of comradery. Albeit there were one or two rare exceptions. But they were fixed quickly.



Gregory Harrison as Michael Sharpe, Brian's ruthless and moody boss at *Sharpe Capital Ventures* in episode 207 <9.02>.

Thomas: What are your current projects?

Thom: I have a show called *Young Justice*, it's animated. Most of the stuff I'm doing now is animated, and it's on *HBO Max*. I play Klarion, the witch boy on that, and it's a recurring character. He's an 8-year-old boy, and he is the Lord of Chaos. And his hair looks like this, like two little horns. And I'm on another show called *The Spectacular Spider-Man*, that's animation. And I'm working on an animated show of my own, it's gonna become *The Misadventures of Porkchop and Tate*. It's gonna be funny. But it's dark. It's about these two hamsters, 'cause I used to have hamsters. And Porkchop is gonna be a big fat one. This is how it started, it's a really sick mind. Tate was named after Sharon Tate, who was murdered by Charles Manson.

Tom: Oh no!

Thom: I know, it's awful! I named her that because one day my hamsters got out of the cage and I had a dog and I looked in the hallway and I saw them laying like this, dead, bites all over their backs — dead! So morbid, and I was like, "Oh no!", because I'm the best animal lover, I cry so hard if I step on an ant, I will be upset about it for a day. She was a white, beautiful hamster. And she was all bloody and I thought of Sharon Tate. It's horrible! So, my mom told me, "Bury it!", and I didn't wanna go out bury it, so I put it in a shoe box and put it under my bed. And in the middle of the night — I was probably about 7 years old — my dog jumped up on me and laid something on my pillow and it was cold, and I was like, "Oh my god, it's Tate!" My hand jumped off and I turned on the light and it was just a porkchop bone. So, it's *The Misadventures of Porkchop and Tate*, and they're gonna be in all kinds of trouble. So, that's what I'm working on, writing that, having a friend of mine do the animation. Let's see what kind of trouble we get them into, we probably end up on *Adult Swim* or something... [everyone laughing] There we don't have to explain where the name Tate came from. I'm doing mostly voice-over now. I'm thinking about going back into acting again, and I may do it because it seems now that I have more connections now than I ever had.

Tom: This has been so much fun that I'm wide awake.

Thomas: It was really terrific! It was a great experience.

Thom: It was so nice to meet you, Thomas, and so nice to talk to you and see your face, Tom, in person!

Tom: For me as well! This was great! It was so much fun!

Thomas: Yeah! Wonderful stories, wonderful chat, it was a great experience!

Thom: Thank you! Goodnight, you guys!

Thomas and I thanked Thom for the chat. We look forward to staying in touch with him.



Thomas J. Pucher,
Thom Adcox and
Tom Tagliente
say goodnight to each other.



Some more scenes with Thom Adcox as Brian in *Falcon Crest* from different episodes.
Left: episode 207 <9.02>; center and right: episode 221 <9.15>.



Episode 225 <9.20>, episode 226 <9.21> and episode 227 <9.22>.
The screen capture on the right was taken right after Jane Wyman left Sharpe's office in the scene.