

Questions for ROY THINNES

January 27, 2011

Thomas J. Pucher asked Roy Thinnnes, who portrayed Nick Hogan on *Falcon Crest* in seasons 2 and 3, questions about his work on the set.

Roy Thinnnes' answers are in bold print.

[The parts in brackets were edited for publication purposes.]

Roy, I am happy that we met at *Nate 'n' Al's*, the popular deli in Beverly Hills, right before we had the *Falcon Crest* reunion at the *Paley Center* last October. It is great that you agreed on answering a few questions about your assignment.

My thirty year memory test regarding my one season on *Falcon Crest*!



Roy with Susan Sullivan in the green room at the *Paley Center* (10/12/2010).

How did you win the rôle of Nick Hogan on *Falcon Crest*? Was it specifically written for you, or did you have to go through an audition? If you auditioned, do you remember the names of any other actors you had compete with?

My then agent proposed no more than one season on the show knowing I had other plans and did not want a long-term assignment because of other plans, asked me to meet with the executive producer, after which we agreed.

Do you know who created your character?

As I recall three writers were present. The producer was amiable and known to be talented. He wanted to present the Jamie Rose character in challenging relationship. We agreed.

Did you know the show before you joined the cast?

I had seen a few episodes to familiarize myself with the ensemble and heard that some members of my family loved the show.

How did you like working on *Falcon Crest* in general and location filming in the Wine Country in particular?

As I recall the first call was to film in Napa Valley for six weeks. Napa is quite [a] beautiful region of vineyards, zoning laws require underground utilities and no outdoor advertising. No overhead wiring and no constant bombardment of trivial advertising gibberish — quite calm and beautiful. Time seems to slow down to calm. Many rolling hillsides of immaculate vineyards and occasional majestic chateaus.



This 2007 photo of Lincoln Avenue in Calistoga (Main Street in downtown Tuscany on the show) illustrates that there is still no overhead wiring in the Napa Valley up to this day.

Are there any particular moments you recall from the Wine Country?

I didn't film the first few days, and though there were very few encounters with company members at the motel, I did visit the set. There were a few hellos from crew members and a warm greeting from Susan Sullivan welcoming me, but she then had to report to the set for filming. Jamie Rose also chatted for a moment saying she had a friend visiting with her. In a short while I returned to the motel and found a nearby high school track where I ran a few miles. Often. In the lobby said hello to the producer who had just arrived and was going into a meeting. And from then on I ran in the morning and walked to a nearby breakfast spot and got to know a few retired lawyers and doctors who discussed winemaking and their vineyard businesses.



You mentioned to me earlier that not many other people talked to you on the set. What was the reason? Was it because the show had already been on the air for a year when you joined and people had already formed certain groups?

When on set between scenes I noticed huddled conversations, window shades lifted and dropped as I passed various trailers, and not much personal engagement. I began to recognize a very familiar behavior, having worked in large casts, something I call "soap opera paranoia". A new character played by a known artist could mean a dismissal for another. I felt like announcing the fact that I was here just for one season, no problem. Weird. But I was well paid to be there to deliver.

What was it like to work with your co-stars?

Anyway, working with Miss Rose was a delight. Good humored and always prepared and on time, Jamie made the days pleasant.



Jamie Rose and Roy Thinnes during a scene in episode 25.

What was your most memorable scene?

Favorite scene: Last day of filming [season 2]. Large party at Falcon Crest where there had been a recent murder.

The beginning of the party had been scripted but for the last two pages which were to be delivered by the end of the day. It should be known that in recent weeks the producers had been pressured by regular cast members' managers demanding pay raises for their clients. Now pages were delivered to three or four regulars containing confessions to the "murder". All hell broke loose. Before cell phones, and only two telephones on stage, the actors stood online to call their managers, one even weeping, saying they would not read these pages. At day end all did read them and surely the managers desisted in their demands. That is genius producing and writing. I presume the ploy worked as all continued into the next season. I don't know for sure as I was finished with my commitment and went soon to star in *Guys and Dolls* as Sky Masterson in a masterpiece production at the *Guthrie Theater*. (Es geht mir gut, danke! [Roy speaking German: I am fine, thanks!])

I should think that in future seasons there was not quite the demand from actors' managers.



Left:
Roy Thinnes and Jamie Rose during "their" wedding scene in episode 40.

Below:
Shortly before the season 2 cliffhanger: Carlo Agretti's murderer is revealed by Charles Fong. This is one of the final *Falcon Crest* scenes Roy Thinnes filmed. He only appeared in one more episode in season 3.



Thank you so much for sharing these interesting tidbits from the set!

**Hope this is helpful. All in good humor, please.
Be well and hope for peace. Pax.**