

**Double Trouble**

**Breakfast Show, Weekdays, 7.00am, 6 Music**

It's been over a year since 6 Music hit the airwaves yet in all that time *Breakfast Show* presenter Phill Jupitus and his producer and sidekick, Phil Wilding, have never been interviewed together. Now, sitting chummily together on a couch in Broadcasting House, they talk about their mums, their love affair with music and their digital radios.



Phil Wilding, producer of the *Breakfast Show* is clutching a box of cereal and DJ Phill Jupitus is clutching his box of records. They have just been through their e-mails, sent before and during this morning's show – and are looking a little worried. No, they haven't had a complaint – far from it. What's distressing them is a certain ER doctor in New York who e-mails

them every morning when he's on shift. They have convinced themselves that he waits to hear his requested song before attending to his dying patients ...

Despite their paranoia, Jupitus and Wilding love hearing from their listeners, though they are reluctant to predict just how many tune in each day. The official RAJAR figures are released for the first time in October this year but they don't seem overly worried. After all, laughs Jupitus, "Terry Wogan sits 60ft from us with millions of people listening to him – so we just keep doing what we do."

Indeed, Wogan is a bit of a broadcasting hero for both Jupitus and Wilding, along with John Peel, John Humphrys, Danny Baker, Jenny Murray and Tim Westwood.

Producer Wilding is warm in his praise: "I think in terms of radio these are people you want to be in a room with, because radio is intimate ... If you want to wake up and spend time with them in your bathroom or kitchen, then that's a good radio show."

So they know a good radio show when they hear one, and their own is no exception. They are particularly happy with how the *Breakfast Show* has developed over the last year or so. "It has just very organically and naturally achieved its shape," Jupitus says proudly. Wilding agrees: "We've shed a lot of stuff, actually ... and I think we've realised that the dynamic is us two, pretty much."

"That's it," Jupitus echoes. "The achievement is that we know how we work together."

The rapport between them is certainly palpable: they complete each other's

sentences, seem to know what the other is thinking and sound like old friends more than colleagues. Jupitus and Wilding, a former music journalist, first met through Mark Lamarr at GLR, BBC London’s predecessor. “When Phil worked at GLR, he was through the glass and he used to say funny things to me through the headphones and I would think, ‘I could have done with that on air, really,’” recalls Jupitus. “It’s just nice to have the dynamic where you can talk about anything you want and respond to guests and things in the paper. I like almost every part of the double act.”

Jupitus goes as far as to say that working with Wilding on the *Breakfast Show* is the best job he’s ever had – and he’s had a lot of jobs. In his past lives he’s worked at a job centre, as a press officer for the Housemartins and as a stand-up comedian, not to mention doing stints on TV in *Never Mind The Buzzcocks*. “Phil’s the first person I thought of when I was offered this gig; the only one I thought I could make it through the year with,” Jupitus admits. Apparently he met Wilding in Starbucks and tied up the deal – two hours later Gideon Coe called the producer to offer him the same thing. “It was close, it was that close,” Jupitus says, breathing a sigh of relief.

It’s easy to see why Jupitus’s mum refers to the pair as an “old married couple”, especially when Jupitus starts talking about how much they’re enjoying their life together. But Wilding points out that Jupitus’s mum, a divorcee, might know something that they don’t. “Yeah, I think she senses the big split coming any time,” Jupitus confirms with a chuckle.

Aside from having the same sense of humour, they also share another great passion: music. Jupitus remembers the first single he bought, though not necessarily fondly: “It was *The Streak* by Ray Stevens, so that doesn’t really indicate a passion as much as a dysfunction ...” Wilding jumps in with his own, which was *Puppy Love* by Donny Osmond.

After admitting that “Seventies pop spoke to me briefly”, Jupitus mentions listening to prog rock at boarding school – Genesis, Floyd, Yes – before punk slapped him in the face, for which he has been forever thankful. “I went on to proper records,” he continues, “and out of that ... I started regressing and got into Sixties soul ... In the Eighties I loved Two Tone, which sent me to reggae, which sent me to ska and then to R&B and to bluebeat.”



Wilding is no different; he embraces music of all different styles and genres. Among his favourites he cites Aaron Copeland, Yo-Yo Ma and Chopin. This wilful eclecticism influences the pair’s musical choices on the programme, which ranges from soul, blues, alternative country, country, hard rock, ska, reggae and much more. Jupitus is without doubt that 6 Music is about collecting together a bunch of people who love music and letting them do their own thing. They’re also certain that their listeners are willing to listen to a lot of

different styles and that the network attracts people with a broad musical palate who just enjoy good music. They certainly seem to come from far and wide, with people from Holland, Canada, Australia – and of course New York medics – all contacting the show.

This wide spectrum of listeners is, of course, only possible with digital radio, which can be heard through the internet and digital television, in addition to standard DAB digital radios. Jupitus and Wilding are united in thinking that this relatively new medium is the future of radio – and not just because they work for a digital radio station.

“Honestly, the sound is amazing,” Wilding raves. And apparently all of his friends and family think so as well – which is why he even bought one for his mum. And Jupitus did the same for his mum, though he claims that “she persists on listening to Terry [Wogan]”. Wilding’s mum, however, is “more loyal” and texts their show regularly.

This all seems to prove that the audience for digital radio is growing, which does not surprise Jupitus. “Loads of people I know who have bought these little digital radios are the ones who had been listening on computers or telly – and this is great.

“And when they get it, it just broadens their choice even more ... There’s literature, stories and plays, BBC 7 is amazing, the Asian Network I listen to, I Xtra – I love I Xtra, it’s like having a 24-hour high-quality pirate radio. And I’ve got digital radio in my car, I love it that much.”

Although Jupitus has admitted to being a technophobe, he thinks that those afraid of using a digital radio should be “buried up to their neck in mud”. He says (affectionately, one hopes), “Even my mother likes it. But you have to understand that to her it’s just a radio with the subtle difference of being ‘posh’.”

Jupitus’s enthusiasm seems to know no bounds: “I think they’re the best gadgets to come out in the last 10 years in this country. The digital radio and the iPod are fighting for supremacy in my life.”

Going back to their show, I challenge the pair to describe it in six words. “Err ... sleepy ... oh no, that’s our favourite dwarves,” laughs Jupitus, before Wilding comes up with “potent”, “angry” and “magical”. Jupitus adds “whimsical” and “frisky”.

I make that five words but who’s counting when they are so obviously enjoying themselves and doing such a good job of it too.

**Stand Up And Be Counted**

**Spanking New On 7, Monday 7 July, 11.00pm, BBC 7**

Name: Robin Ince  
 Age: 34  
 Place of birth: A village where they often film Midsomer Murders



You may not necessarily recognise his name, but Robin Ince is a prolific comedian, writer and culture pundit, pontificating on a variety of subjects. He’s written for Channel 4’s *V Graham Norton*, performed for Radio 4’s *The In Crowd* and *4 At The Store* and impersonated John Peel for *The 11 O’Clock Show*. He also made a brief cameo appearance in *The Office*, though you’d be forgiven for missing it. Even *The Saturday Show*’s Tiny and Mr Duk have enlisted Robin’s expert services.

After so many incarnations, Robin’s latest project is to simply be himself. As part of BBC 7’s first original comedy commission, *Spanking New On 7*, Robin took to the stage as a compere, with the arguably unenviable task of warming up the crowd before introducing new

stand-ups. The idea behind the show is to find hot comedians who’ve never had exposure on television and radio and to bring them to a new listening audience. Broadcast over seven weeks, *Spanking New On 7* will introduce 28 stand-ups in total, found by scouring the country’s pubs, clubs and everything in between.

After wrapping up the last show and before jetting off to the Big Apple, Robin kindly agreed to answer a few questions in which he discusses his modelling prospects, the Radiophonic Workshop and deflecting an angry mob at the Glastonbury Festival.

**How did you first discover you had a talent for comedy?**

“I have always liked larking about and when I found out I could make money for doing it, it added an air of shabby professionalism to my larking.”

**What was your big break?**

“My big break probably was coming second in the *So You Think You’re Funny* competition at the Edinburgh Festival because, from that point onwards, I made a living as a comedian. I think I’m still waiting for a bigger break: being talent-scouted by an agent from Models 1 whilst eating an ice cream at Heathrow Airport – I think, possible if I get my figure back.”

**Who are your favourite comedians and why?**

“Woody Allen – sheer genius, both as a writer and as a slapstick performer; Bill Murray – brilliantly deadpan. Others are: the Marx Brothers, Chris Morris, Victoria Wood, Alastair Sim, Buster Keaton, Laurel and Hardy, Rik Mayall, Joe Orton, Frankie Howerd, Margaret Rutherford, Fry and Laurie and on and on and on. I will give no reason because if you don’t

know there is no point in going on (though Rik Mayall standing in dog excrement in *More Bad News* made me fall off my cinema seat)."

### **What did you enjoy most about *Spanking New On 7*?**

"Making stuff up and fearing it wouldn't work. (I think I am being voiced by Barry Cryer in the edit.)"

### **How did you come up with so much original material for your warm-up act for each show?**

"The majority of my material comes from one-line ideas – such as the Radiophonic Workshop collaborating with the French resistance and making spooky noises to scare the Germans away from haystacks full of infantrymen – then I just try to create a routine on the spot. I am easily distracted by thoughts and things, so I mainly make sure I drink a lot of orange squash and wait for the tartrazine to kick in."

### **What is the biggest source of inspiration for your act?**

"I read lots of bits of things and watch lots of bits of things and they make me think of things."

### **Have you had a worst moment on stage and what was it?**

"My best worst moment was turning a difficult but quietly responsive Glastonbury audience into an angry mob by using the word gypsy (it was not in a derogatory way). Within five minutes the audience members were screaming at me with puce faces and trying to run up on the stage and punch me; I stood my ground and laughed in their silly faces."

### **Do you think *Spanking New On 7* has uncovered some hot new talent?**

"I think there have been some brilliant new acts on, from great one-liner merchants to surreal ramblers. In a time when stand-up

comedy seems to be becoming so homogenised, it is great to see that there are, in fact, many fine new comedy minds."

### **What would be your one piece of advice for new comedians trying to break into the business?**

"Don't just think about how much money you can make from comedy."

### **What's next for you?**

"I am writing a sitcom with Howard Read (a funny boy who broke my arm in Edinburgh once) and recording a pilot about John Peel with Ross Noble. And resting on some tatty laurels."