



BURGER KING: Jolyon Symonds has been filming a Lynda La Plante TV production in H&F – his home borough
PICTURE BY LEIGH QUINNELL

Big cheese of film and TV

► He once had to buy a burger for a Hollywood star but now Jolyon is making top television productions
► Lynda La Plante drama filmed around the borough

CAROLINE BUTCHER

HE'S just called a wrap on a hectic London film shoot and is jetting off to Portugal for a weekend's filming – for Jolyon Symonds it's a far cry from the days of making cheeseburger runs for celebrities.

The Hammersmith television and film producer was putting the finishing touches to a new Lynda La Plante ITV production *Above Suspicion* when he talked to *h&f news*.

Having completed the final day's shooting in London, Jolyon was on his way to the production's wrap party and preparing to fly to a set near Lisbon the following day, where he would replicate the Costa del Sol for a further two days' filming. He said the 80-strong cast and crew would have much to celebrate.

"We're all proud of what we've achieved, but it's been very intense," he said. "You have four weeks to shoot what is effectively a film. It's a very tight schedule and we're trying to make something better than the norm."

Jolyon, 41, who has lived in Hammersmith and Brook Green for the

past 12 years, said he didn't need to look far from home for some of the locations in the new crime drama.

"We filmed all the interior police station scenes in the Munster Centre in Fulham and we used a couple of other locations along Munster Road, including a clothing store," he said.

"It was good for me, because I just live nearby. The cynical ones among the crew might say that I got to stay in bed a bit longer!"

Above Suspicion is an adaptation of Lynda La Plante's best-selling novel, the

choices," Jolyon said. "We'd seen Kelly onstage and she is a very distinctive and unusual actress – quite magnetic."

Jolyon first caught the film bug 17 years ago, turning down a place reading law at university to begin work as an art department assistant on the set of *A Kiss Before Dying*.

"We were filming at Pinewood Studios and I remember that my first job was to drive to Slough to buy Matt Dillon a cheeseburger," he said.

Next he worked as French director Louis Malle's assistant on the film *Damage* before embarking on his own short film projects. He then settled into his current role as a producer, working on German film *Harald* in 1997, *The Last Yellow* in 1999 and UK comedy *Kevin and Perry Go Large* in 2000. His television productions have included controversial docu-drama on Prince Charles and Camilla's story *Whatever Love Means*, five episodes of BBC drama *Hustle* and eight episodes this year of Lynda La Plante's ITV crime series *Trial and Retribution*.

Jolyon said he had dipped into his home borough several times while scouting for set locations and had filmed several scenes around Hammersmith for *Trial and Retribution*. "My aim is always to make London look cinematic," he said. "I want to film on Hammersmith Bridge one day – it's my favourite bridge in London."

• *Above Suspicion* is due to air on ITV in early November and the next three episodes of *Trial and Retribution* – *Siren*, *Shooter* and *Ghost Train* – will screen in January.



My first job on set was to drive to Slough to buy Matt Dillon a cheeseburger

first in a series of five books. Both Jolyon and director Chris Menaul worked with La Plante on the script development.

"There seems to be a limitless appetite for these sorts of stories, but we need to keep it fresh for the audience," he said.

The two-part drama introduces heroine Det Con Anna Travis, played by Kelly Reilly, a young and ambitious police officer who has just been assigned her first murder case. Ciaran Hinds also stars as her volatile boss, Det Ch Insp Langton.

"Both Kelly and Ciaran were our first

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