



'IT'S A SNAPSHOT OF BRITAIN'

Gogglebox narrator **Craig Cash** on the show's appeal

This year marks the tenth anniversary of *Gogglebox*. Why do you think the show has remained so popular?

Well, it's warm and funny and multicultural and has a great mix of ages. It's a great snapshot of Britain.

How did you get the gig in the first place? Your *Royle Family* co-creator, the late Caroline Aherne, was the original narrator...

She'd asked me if I could fill in for her as she wasn't well. When she took weeks off for treatment, I'd fill in as and when. Then, when she died, they asked me if I'd carry on doing it. In a way, it was like a gift from Caroline. It was bittersweet at first, because I'd go in and it felt like she was there. We recorded it in the same space and I know it sounds weird, but I could feel a sort of presence.

There's a lot of *The Royle Family* in *Gogglebox*. How does it feel to have some of the sitcom's DNA still present in a different show?

I can see why they wanted Caroline in the first place, and then me, because it's got that same vibe to it – it's about families watching the telly and commenting on people and slagging them off or being thrilled. It feels very much like they've picked up our ball and run in a completely new direction.

When do you record your voiceover?

I get a script on Thursday evening, then I get up early Friday and record it on the day of transmission. I don't know what happens after I've done my bit – it probably goes through legal.

Does your voice get recognised much?

I'll be in a queue and people will turn round when they hear my voice. Often they'll pass me their phones and ask me to say, "In Manchester..." and then whatever the person's name is.

It's the 25th anniversary of *The Royle Family* this year. Do you ever think about what the characters would be up to now?

Not really, but when [Amazon's] Alexa came along, I did think it would be brilliant for Jim [Royle] to be given it as a present – it wouldn't work for him, so he'd be rowing with it and cursing it.

Could you ever see yourself returning to the world of *The Royle Family*?

I wouldn't want to do a spin-off, no. Because Caroline's gone, she'd be like, "Oh bloody hell, I want to do it!" and I'd feel a bit mean. That show was a compilation of both our voices. I could do it, but it wouldn't be the same. It's best left where it is.

INTERVIEW BY **STEVE O'BRIEN**



SITCOM ROYALTY
Craig Cash with
Caroline Aherne in
The Royle Family

