



Adam Liaw

Program: *Destination Flavour*
Role: Presenter
SBS ONE

In the space of under just three years, Adam has gone from being a lawyer to a reality TV star to the presenter of a successful food and travel series. Raised in Adelaide, Adam developed an appreciation for cooking, thanks to his paternal grandmother, Kwei-Eng Chew. He studied science and law at university, and ended up working for The Walt Disney Company in Japan.

“I was really very comfortable doing what I was doing and quite content,” he says.

But after entering – and winning – the second season of *MasterChef Australia*, his life changed direction. He released a cookbook, *Two Asian Kitchens*, in 2011 and, in 2012, began hosting *Destination Flavour* with Renee Lim and Lily Serna.

“A lot of people think the Holy Grail is a food and travel show – and it's fantastic to get to cook a lot of food and eat, but it's hard as well,” the 34-year-old explains.



Aldo Mignone

Program: *Danger 5*
Role: Pierre
SBS ONE

Growing up watching *The Pink Panther* with Peter Sellers and “cheesy spy films” came in very handy for Aldo while filming his breakthrough role in *Danger 5*. The actor, who studied drama at Flinders University in Adelaide and at NIDA, worked with Dario Russo and David Ashby on their internet sensation, *Italian Spiderman*, before taking a lead role in the pair’s next project, *Danger 5*, as suave spy Pierre.

“It’s ridiculous action-comedy mashed together,” Aldo says of the series. “It’s completely different. I’ve never seen anything like this done before in Australia.”

Aldo, 27, who has established his own theatre and film company, will be seen next year alongside Marta Dusseldorp and Noni Hazlehurst in upcoming Seven Network drama series *A Place To Call Home*.



Alex Williams

Program: *Underground: The Julian Assange Story*
Role: Julian Assange
Network Ten

Underground wasn't just Alex's first role out of his drama school – it was the first role he ever auditioned for! The 22-year-old admits he was excited to be cast as Julian in the telemovie.

“It's such a great opportunity to get to play a figure who's had that much influence and is such an icon; someone who's had such a meaty story and life,” he says.

Alex, who graduated in 2011 from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, found himself starring alongside internationally acclaimed actors Rachel Griffiths and Anthony LaPaglia.

“It's such a privilege to work with people who not only are great and have been working all over the place, but also to have them support you so much as a young actor on set and treat you as an equal,” he smiles.



David Campbell

Program: *Mornings*
Role: Presenter
Nine Network

He's stood up and sung for Australian TV audiences on *It Takes Two* and whirled around the floor on *Dancing With The Stars* – but, over the past year, David has been sitting down with Sonia Kruger as the host of *Mornings*.

David, the son of rock royalty Jimmy Barnes, clearly inherited his father's musical talent. In 1997, aged 24, he headed to New York to perform cabaret and won rave reviews. He's performed in musicals, including *Les Misérables* and *Shout!: The Legend Of The Wild One*, as well as released a string of albums that have charted in the top 10 and toured nationally – but when his friend Sonia rang him to ask if he would host *Mornings* with her, he agreed.

“We get along like a house on fire,” he says. “We're a great double act. We're very, very close.”



David Ashby

Program: *Danger 5*
Role: Jackson
SBS ONE

David Ashby was just 22 when he and his friend Dario Russo were offered a development deal by SBS.

“Like, ‘Here’s a little bag of money and here’s a blank piece of paper, come up with a concept for a TV show for us,’” he recalls. “And we were just like: ‘Whoa! Who gets offered this?!’”

David and Dario had impressed SBS with their parody *Italian Spiderman*, which was a massive hit on YouTube. David had starred as Italian Spiderman in the series, which had started out as a student film for Dario at Adelaide’s Flinders University. David and Dario pitched three concepts to SBS, one of which was *Danger 5*, a 1960s-style series about five WWII spies trying to kill Hitler. David, now 26, lost 25kg to play the role of Jackson.

“You just do anything for the part,” he shares.



Ed Oxenbould

Program: *Puberty Blues*
Role: David Vickers
Network Ten

The Oxenbould name is already a familiar one in Australian television, with Ed’s uncle Ben having played Ben in the long-running sitcom *Hey Dad...!*. But it’s Ed’s dad, Jamie, an actor who’s appeared in shows including *Home And Away* and *All Saints*, who Ed looks up to the most.

“I love watching him act on stage because he inspires me,” Ed says.

At the age of 11, Ed has already notched up roles in series such as *Tricky Business* and *Underbelly: Razor*, as well as numerous TV commercials. He also starred in *Julian*, which won the award for Best Short Film at the Berlin International Film Festival. Playing David Vickers in *Puberty Blues*, the rest of the cast have heaped praise on him, with Ashleigh Cummings, who plays his older sister, Debbie, describing him as “so talented and so beautiful”.



Graham Manou

Program: *Cricket Superstar*
Role: Mentor
FOX8 (Foxtel)

Graham found himself extremely busy in the summer of 2011/12. Not only was he filming his first television role as mentor and judge on *Cricket Superstar*, but was also coming out of retirement to play for the Melbourne Renegades in the KFC Big Bash competition. With his filming commitments, Graham didn't have time for much training.

"I was as nervous as hell before that first game," he admits – yet still managed to impress.

Graham, 33, played for the South Australian Redbacks for 13 years, and was also wicketkeeper for Australia during the 2009 Ashes tour. In 2010, he launched The Graham Manou Foundation to help children with heart conditions, having been born with a hole in his heart himself. Through his role on *Cricket Superstar*, he has been able to help up-and-coming cricketers to achieve their dreams. "These are some of the more talented kids I've worked with," he says.



Joe Hildebrand

Program: *Dumb, Drunk & Racist*
Role: Host
ABC2

When the makers of *Go Back To Where To You Came From* came up with a new concept for a TV series, to be entitled *Dumb, Drunk & Racist*, they approached Joe Hildebrand.

"They had the idea, and then all they needed was someone who was deeply offensive and idiotic to host," Joe explains. "Which is where I came in."

Melbourne-born Joe, 36, made his name as a newspaper columnist with Sydney's *The Daily Telegraph*, as well as through appearances on shows like *Q&A*. The inspiration for *Dumb, Drunk & Racist* came from a news article revealing that these were the very words used by Indian call-centre trainers to describe Australians. Joe says the idea was to bring four people over from India to Australia "to show them we weren't so bad after all". "Unfortunately we were proven wrong," he adds.

The series drew record ratings for ABC2.



Joel Madden

Program: *The Voice*
Role: Coach
Nine Network

It's hard to think of Joel as a "new talent" when he's sold more than 10 million albums worldwide with pop/punk band Good Charlotte and performed on shows like *Saturday Night Live* and *The Tonight Show With Jay Leno*. But the musician reveals that being a coach on *The Voice* is completely different from anything he's ever done before. "Obviously I've done TV before," he notes. "But, I've never been part of a show."

Joel and identical twin brother Benji were born in Maryland in 1979. They formed Good Charlotte in 1996, with Joel taking on the role of lead vocalist. Six years later they hit the big time with their first top 10 album. Joel says working on *The Voice* – with Benji involved as guest mentor – was one of the best experiences of his life, and that he loved being based in Australia.

"Life is easy living here," he grins.



Nic Westaway

Program: *Home And Away*
Role: Kyle Braxton
Seven Network

Playing basketball and volleyball and going surfing as a teenager – as well as being involved with a theatre group – Nic wasn't sure what he wanted to do when he finished high school. He deferred a sports science degree and then, at the end of his gap year, made the decision to pursue acting. He moved from his home town of Margaret River to Perth, where he was accepted into the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. Three years later, he made the move to Sydney and won the role of Kyle on *Home And Away*.

"Kyle is complex," he says. "He is tricky, as he can come across as just evil, and I think that there's a risk he can be misunderstood."

The 23-year-old actor notes that the cast is like one big happy family. "We have so much fun on set," he laughs.



Robert Irwin

Program: *Steve Irwin's Wildlife Warriors*
Role: Presenter
Network Ten

At the age of just one month, Robert made headlines worldwide when his dad, Steve Irwin, took him up close to a crocodile. Turning nine on December 1, Robert is now more than happy to head into the crocodile enclosure at his family's Australia Zoo in Queensland by himself.

"I'm not actually nervous, because since I've been living around crocodiles for so long that I'm really used to them and I love them," he explains.

Steve Irwin's Wildlife Warriors shows Robert getting up close to crocodiles – as well as less-threatening animals – as he, older sister Bindi and mum Terri carry on the work of Steve, who passed away in 2006. Robert has made TV appearances before, including on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, but this is the first series in which he, Bindi and Terri have all co-presented together.

"I can talk to a lot of people about the conservation message and why it's good to actually protect wildlife, so it's awesome," he says.



Sam Simmons

Program: *Problems*
Role: Sam
ABC1

Not too many people have made the transition from zookeeping to TV comedy, but Sam is one of them.

"I might as well go and be honest and say I really miss it," he admits. "I adore animals."

After getting his start in radio on Melbourne's 3RRR, Sam, now 35, began at Triple J in 2005, where he did one on-air stint that ran for 24 hours, during which he had a goat tattooed on his bottom. His stand-up comedy has won him a string of accolades, and in 2011 he was nominated for the Edinburgh Comedy Festival's top gong. He's also written for shows such as *The Ronnie Johns Half Hour*, appeared on shows like *The Unbelievable Truth* and, more recently, landed his own four-part sketch comedy series, *Problems*. Each episode tackles "a minor annoyance that spirals into a comedic adventure".



Seal

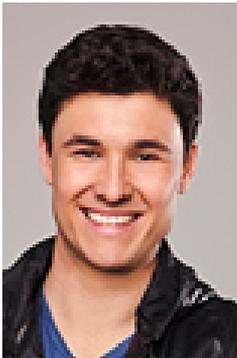
Program: *The Voice*
Role: Coach
Nine Network

As a four-time Grammy Award winner with album sales in excess of 20 million, it's no surprise to hear that Seal had been asked to be a judge on TV talent shows before. But he says he turned the offers down until the Australian version of *The Voice* came calling.

"It harks back to the original days in the music industry," the 49-year-old explains. "If you were inspired by what you heard, then you would go and see them."

Born in London in 1963 to a Brazilian mother and Nigerian father, Seal Henry Olusegun Olumide Adelo Samuel studied architecture, then began singing with bands in the '80s. The man whose single "Crazy" propelled him to international stardom in 1991 admits he's not sure he could have gone on a show like *The Voice* himself.

"I don't think I would have had the courage some of these guys have shown," he says. "What if no one turned around?"



Tom Hobbs

Program: *Winners & Losers*
Role: Flynn Johnson
Seven Network

It's not every teenager who gets to play a leading role in a Peter Jackson movie. Born in Auckland, Tom lived in Melbourne, Sydney and London before returning to New Zealand, where he finished high school and was cast in the short film *Crossing The Line*, made by the world-famous director.

After studying drama at the Victorian College of the Arts, Tom scored the role of Seppius in *Spartacus: Blood And Sand*. Small roles in *Neighbours* and *Howzat! Kerry Packer's War* followed, before he turned up in *Winners & Losers* playing Flynn, the brother of Cat Johnson (Peta Sergeant).

"I come in contesting the will of my sister," he explains. "So I come in fighting against Sophie (Melanie Vallejo) and Frances (Virginia Gay)."

Tom, 26, will also soon be seen in the upcoming movie *The Railway Man* with Colin Firth and Nicole Kidman.



Will McDonald

Program: *Home And Away*

Role: Jett James

Seven Network

Will always wanted to be an actor and from a young age would recite lines from movies. When he was 11, his mother suggested he start acting classes and, two years later, he scored a role on *Home And Away*.

"When I got the part, Mum and Dad called me downstairs and Dad told me the role was mine. I was speechless," he reveals. "I thought: 'This had to be a dream.' I was so excited that I couldn't stop jumping around!"

Will plays the rebellious Jett, who caused trouble from the moment he arrived in Summer Bay.

"The first day on set seemed so surreal," he remembers. "I was surrounded by a great team of actors."

Now 14, Will is in Year Eight and enjoys playing rugby and cricket on weekends.