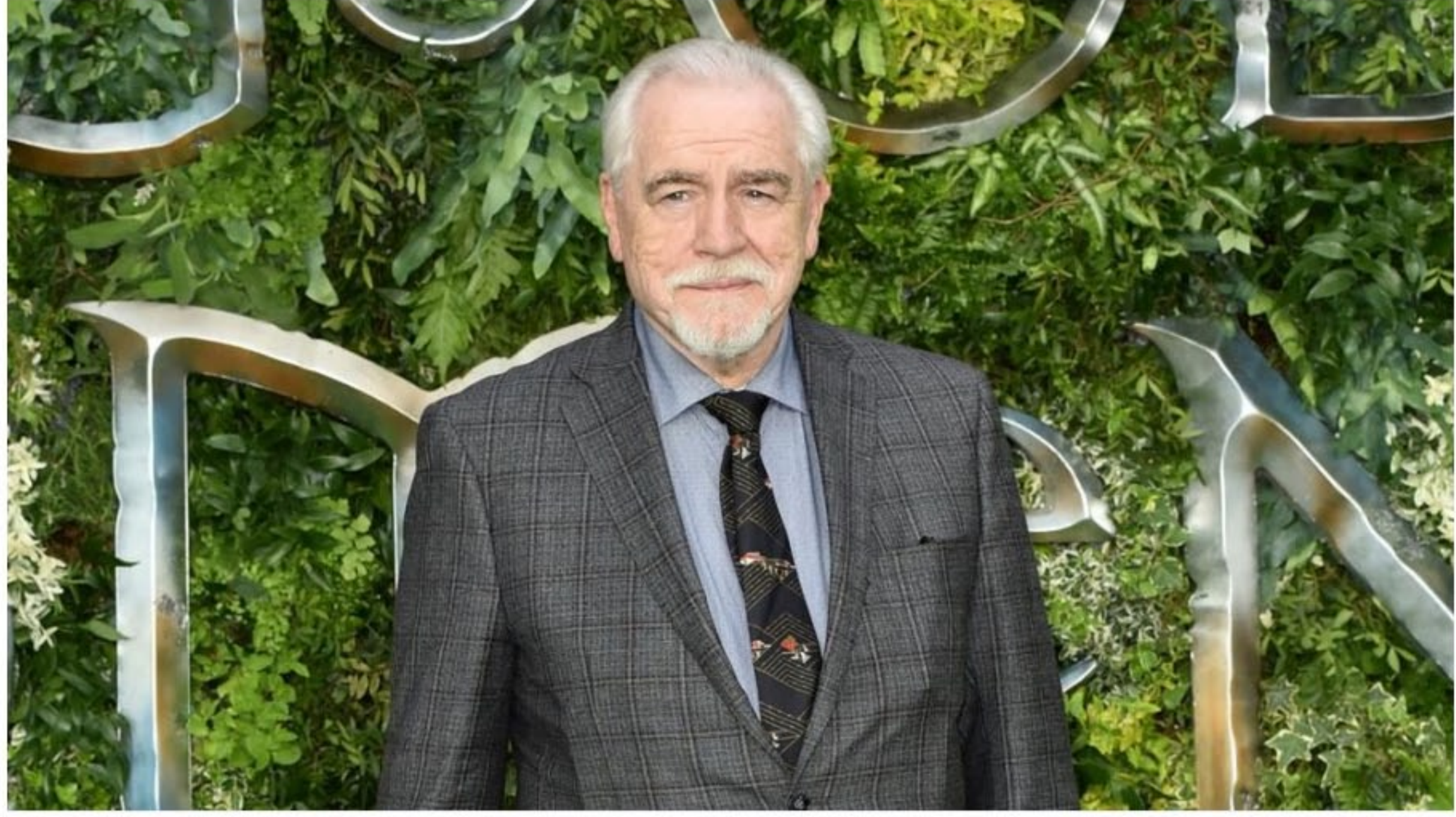


# Sixty Seconds with Brian Cox



by Paul Simper

Published August 14, 2019



■ The Succession star, 73, on, hateful families, Game Of Thrones and how Bourne changed the Bond films

## It's season two of Succession. How is your character Logan Roy and his twisted, super-rich family now?

His main priority is the rehabilitation of his son, Kendall. Logan is also beginning to groom his daughter, Shiv, to take over the company. So there's that dichotomy. And the emergence of another son, Roman, as being a much more considerable figure than the jokey wee lad he was. It's all about shifting family. It is also a modern morality tale about entitlement and the Kushners and the Ivankas of this world.

## Every member of the family is a terrible person and yet we can't stop watching them. Why?

The great thing about terrible people is that the devil has the best songs. And we get an insight into a world that does exist of privilege and entitlement, which people don't see very often. They see it on the news but they don't realise how dysfunctional these people are in terms of their distance from normal society. I think that's key in this show.

## Logan declares at one point, 'Money wins.' Do you agree?

I don't, no. I am the antithesis of it. Why they cast me as this horrible human being I have no idea! Logan is a self-made man. He's not like Trump and he's not like Murdoch. He's not inherited anything. He's done it all from his own volition, which I think is a much more interesting dynamic because then you can see what he's capable of. The key to Logan is that this is a very elaborate game. He's a gamer.



Entitled: Ivanka Trump

## Logan's fighting fit this season. Does this mean there could be plenty more Succession to come?

It's up to them. I think they're finding that Logan is a character that works. He was originally supposed to die in the first season. They'll probably kill me off at some point but I'm not sure they want to kill me off yet. There's too much at stake. You'll find when you get to the end of this season that there is a whole other thing that we have to negotiate if we do a season three.

## How do you keep in shape?

I walk regularly. I diet. I do this fasting — an 18-hour fast to keep myself reasonably trim. I'm healthy. I am a diabetic so I have to watch what I eat. But I'm naughty as well. I just try to take care of myself.

## Logan tried psychotherapy. How about you?

Many years ago. I found it helpful. Psychiatry is a bit like the confessional. It is a form of offloading and sometimes you need to offload. Sometimes you need to work out puzzles. 'Why am I doing this now?' I've had that a couple of times in my life. When I first got divorced I found it extraordinarily helpful. But I don't make a habit of it.

## Is Brooklyn still home?

Yeah. I do have a bolthole in up-country New York State, which I value greatly. I miss London because I was a student here. I've lived in London for most of my life. I went to America in the 1990s. My favourite place in London is Primrose Hill. It's got a bit gentrified but there's still an old guard there who have been renting for 40-odd years. I try and keep a place there, though I can't afford it. My children use it mainly.

## You've done the Bourne movies but never a Bond. Would you be more interested in playing M or a villain?

I suppose the more interesting role is to play the villain. Ralph Fiennes is doing M and I think Judi Dench was fantastic as M. That was a great innovation. I do think the Bond films have started taking themselves rather seriously. I'm partly responsible. The Bourne films upped their game for the Bonds. Dan Craig was suddenly doing all kinds of things that the old-style Bond would never do.



Short thrift: Daenerys in Go

## You're a big Game Of Thrones fan even though you turned down a role. What was your verdict on the finale?

I thought the series was good but the final episode was rushed. I felt very sorry for Daenerys. I thought she was given short shrift suddenly becoming psychotic at the end. She had been through so much that to suddenly tip her over the edge... although that can happen. I think a lot of fans would have been a little disappointed by that.

## You've said acting for you is learning the lines and not bumping into the furniture. What's it like working with method actors?

You just have to have enormous patience and realise each to their own. The main thing is, does it work? The element of acting that so many people forget is the element of pretend. My favourite actors are children. They just do it. I think the great strength of Kieran Culkin [Roman in Succession] is that he was a child actor. He has that ease with him. There are other problems that family had but in terms of his skill it's quite something.

■ Succession season 2 is available on Sky Atlantic and NOW TV