

# British actress Julia Farino talks Whiskas 'Kitten Kollege'

SPECIAL

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**Actress Julia Farino chatted with Digital Journal about her latest Whiskas commercial campaign, her leading role in the feature film of Oscar Wilde's 'Lady Windermere's Fan' and living life in Los Angeles.**

Born and raised in Surrey, England, 25 miles outside Central London, **Julia Farino** is a multi-talented and diverse actress/singer. As a child, Julia often visited London's West End to see the sights and the theatre shows. "I loved the historic buildings, museums, parks and vast department stores in London," explains Julia. "I would go with my Grandma every year in December to do our Christmas shopping and see the stunning Christmas lights." She was so enamored that, at 17, she chose to study drama and musical theatre at the **London Studio Centre** in Euston and she moved to her dream city.



Official PR photo

"After drama school, my first theatre job was in the West End in Boubil and Schönberg's, *Les Misérables*. It was an incredible experience," said Julia, "and I was fortunate to work with stars as diverse as Sir John Gielgud and Sir Elton John early on in my career too." Over the forthcoming years, Julia established herself in Great Britain as a well-respected actress, touring with productions all over the UK and Ireland. She has worked in a plethora of stage shows and in television and film with some notable actors from both England and America such as Jimmy Nail, James Wilby, Edward Woodward OBE, Brian Cox OBE, Janel Parrish, Bethany Joy Lenz and Fred Willard, to name but a few. As a vocalist, Julia covers many styles. She has reached No 2 in Tower Records in Japan on an album of football songs and has toured the UK and internationally with her own jazz quartet which led to her becoming the resident jazz singer at The Dorchester Hotel, London. Her debut jazz album, *Don't Talk To Me Of Love*, is a mixture of original songs and covers which received rave reviews.

As an internationally acclaimed actress and singer, it's hard to understand why Julia made the leap to Los Angeles. "Most people will tell you that they moved to LA for the sun but that's not me. I moved to LA as I've never been able to switch off the performer in me so my career always comes first. The work opportunities are more diverse in LA and I love an adventure so I've moved a long

way from my home and family to break into new territory and am finding that the Americans love my work as much as the British do!”

Julia’s ‘go-getter’ attitude is what helps her achieve success in all that she puts her mind to. “I love to work, whether on stage or in a TV show or film. If I’m not working, I’m not happy,” explains Julia. “I’ve done a bunch of advertisements too. In the past 25 years, if you haven’t got up to make a cup of tea during the commercial breaks on TV, you probably will have seen me popping up all over the place.” Julia has certainly racked up some credits in the commercial world. She has worked on a huge range of advertising campaigns: *Tesco, Sky TV, Silvikrin Hairspray, Hewlett Packard, Greenpeace, Pedigree Chum, Dell, Embraer Jets, Bank of New York Mellon, Land of Leather, Epson, Humira*, the list goes on. Most recently, Julia worked with singer-songwriter Robbie Williams on the European Volkswagen campaign 2014/2015. “It was hilarious to work with Robbie on the Volkswagen spot last year. He’s exactly the same in real life as when you see him perform; always joking around and having a laugh!” And Julia can currently be seen as the lead, female spokesperson in the highly anticipated digital commercial campaign for Whiskas cat food, “**Kitten Kollege**”, created by AMV BBDO and featuring content developed by the hugely popular comedy site, College Humor. “The spots have been very well received by the advertising industry. They seem to have taken off in leaps and bounds. People are enjoying the humor of the videos all set at “Kitten Kollege”, where prospective cat owners can be entertained while being educated in what to expect when introducing a new kitten into the family,” explains Julia. “I appear in several of the Whiskas videos including; *Best Breeds For Families, Kittens and Drinking* and *How To Choose The Right Kitten* and of course, there’s one about litter training too! The College Humor site has reached over 9.7 million subscribers so we are expecting a lot of eyes on these videos!”

Earlier this year, Julia portrayed the role of Chris (played by Helen Mirren in the movie) in Tim Firth’s brilliant comedy play, *Calendar Girls* about the strength and resilience of a group of women after the death of a loved one to cancer. “The audience laughed and cried and I was told by a few audience members that they wondered if one of the props would slip and a little too much would be revealed. That’s live theatre for you!” said Julia. “The movie was a great comedy but Tim Firth adapted the screenplay for the stage and amazingly managed to make the play even funnier.”

In film, Julia has become a sought after leading lady. She can be currently seen in the feature film version of Oscar Wilde’s, *Lady Windermere’s Fan*, where she plays the inimitable Mrs Erlynne. “Mrs Erlynne is such a complex but fun character to play. As an actress, there are certain roles that you immediately connect with and Mrs Erlynne was one of those characters for me so I am delighted that the film is being so well received during its international film festival run,” explains Julia. “*Lady Windermere’s Fan* is set for release early next year on Video on Demand and all digital platforms, which is rather exciting too.”

Julia's television credits include; the BBC's hit TV show *Crocodile Shoes* with Jimmy Nail, *In Suspicious Circumstances* with Edward Woodward OBE for Granada Television, *My Haunted House* for Lifetime TV and *Murder Book* for Investigation Discovery and she worked with Sylvester McCoy, who played the seventh Doctor in the hugely successful *Doctor Who* series, in a documentary about the BBC franchise. "What can I say? I like a variety of work and love having my fingers in many pies," said Julia. "I have relished every minute of my 25 years in the world of show business so far and I am very much looking forward to the next 25!"

To aspiring actors Julia concluded, "You don't necessarily need to focus on only one aspect of the entertainment industry. Try a little of everything and find your passion in whatever you do. I love to act, sing and dance – all of it! I just enjoy performing so am happy working in all arenas available to me as an actress and singer. If you have a passion, don't limit yourself; make sure you pursue it and try something new, you might just fall in love with that too!"

To learn more about actress Julia Farino visit her website – [www.juliafarino.com](http://www.juliafarino.com)