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| 00:00:00 | Music | Transition | Gentle, trilling music with a steady drumbeat plays under the dialogue. |
| 00:00:01 | Promo | Promo | Speaker: <i>Bullseye with Jesse Thorn</i> is a production of MaximumFun.org and is distributed by NPR. |
| 00:00:13 | Music | Transition | <i>[Music fades out.]</i> "Huddle Formation" from the album <i>Thunder, Lightning, Strike</i> by The Go! Team. |
| 00:00:20 | Jesse Thorn | Host | It's <i>Bullseye</i> . I'm Jesse Thorn. The odds are that you, a <i>Bullseye</i> listener, know David Cross. Alongside Bob Odenkirk, he created and starred in the brilliant and influential sketch series <i>Mr. Show</i> on HBO. He's a longtime standup comic and of course, there's <i>Arrested Development</i> . |
| 00:00:36 | Sound Effect | Transition | Music swells and fades. |
| 00:00:37 | Clip | Clip | Tobias Fünke (<i>Arrested Development</i>): Hello everyone! And welcome to the theater! I am Dr. Tobias Fünke and I will be your new director! |
| 00:00:48 | Sound Effect | Transition | Music swells and fades. |
| 00:00:49 | Jesse | Host | So, there's that David Cross. The funny guy. But more recently, David has started branching out. He's starring in this new movie, called <i>The Dark Divide</i> . In it, he plays a fictionalized version of Robert Pyle, a real-life science writer and expert in moths and butterflies. In the film, Robert is at a crossroads in his life. He's just lost his wife to a long battle with cancer. He's rudderless. He doesn't really know what to do with himself. And he finds out that before she passed, his wife applied for a grant for him. He finds this out when he gets the grant approval letter. And apparently, the plan is for him to pack his car with butterfly-catching stuff, get together some hiking gear, and head to a giant forest in Washington State. There, Pyle embarks on a six-week-long trek through the woods, ostensibly to find and research new butterfly species. |
| | | | It's a beautiful, quiet film. It bounces back and forth between his time in the forest and the last days he spent with his wife. And Cross loses himself in the part. You can see the sadness and exhilaration and sometimes you feel it too. And since it's David Cross, it's still very funny. Like in this scene from early in the film. Here, Robert is on his way to the trailhead. He's stopped at a local convenience store to get a few last-minute supplies. And he strikes up a conversation with the clerk, played by Cameron Esposito. Let's listen. |
| 00:02:16 | Sound Effect | Transition | Music swells and fades. |
| 00:02:17 | Clip | Clip | Monty (<i>The Dark Divide</i>): Where are you hiking to? Robert: I'm going from Highway 12, over Mount Adams, to the Columbia Gorge. Monty: <i>[Beat.]</i> On foot?! Robert: Yeah. Monty: Jesus! How long's something like that take? |

Robert: Well, I'm anticipating up to a month.

Monty: Didn't the Petrus brothers do something like that, back in '88?

Speaker: *[Laughing.]* Yeah, they sure did. They got their asses kicked.

Robert: Well. It's—

Monty: Yeah, he's right. I mean, you should not do this right now. That trail's no joke.

Speaker: The bears have slept awful long. They're gonna be extra hungry.

Robert: *[Laughs awkwardly.]* I think I'll be—I'll be fine. Thank you, though. I've done several overnights in the field. So.

Speaker: *[Chuckles.]* Overnights.

Monty: Overnights.

Robert: *[Beat.]* Perhaps I should get another bag of peanuts for the... it's a long trip. *[Chuckles.]* Music swells and fades.

00:03:09 Sound Effect Transition

00:03:10 Jesse Host David Cross, welcome back to *Bullseye*. I'm so happy to have you back on the show.

00:03:13 David Cross Guest Thank you, Jesse. Happy to be here.

00:03:16 Jesse Host So, you've acted in almost every kind of thing, at this point in your career. But I still imagine it must have been a little scary to undertake a film where, you know, 70% of the time you're the only person onscreen.

00:03:34 David Guest I'm in my underwear.

[They chuckle.]

00:03:36 Jesse Host There is a lot of underpants! It is an underpants-heavy film. That's true. *[Laughs.]*

00:03:44 David Guest Yeah! I mean, it's—I didn't think about that so much when I was—when I was doing it. Or, you know, thinking about doing it and meeting with the director. It was... but once we started shooting, it became much more apparent how much would be—I'd be on my own. And the scene that you just played a clip from is—happens early on in the movie, but that was one of the last scenes we shot. And I was so excited. And after being in the woods for almost a month, like, the idea of actually having a conversation or riffing with a human being—and we did a lot of that. We had to cut that way down. But, um—and I know Cameron from standup. And, you know, it was like a guy in isolation who can't shut up. It's like that scene in *Breaking Bad* where Walter White pays the guy, like, a million bucks to play, you know, cards with him for an hour. Just so he can talk to somebody. That's how I felt.

And it did become apparent, as we were shooting—but it wasn't like I was in isolation, 'cause there was a crew and all that stuff. But yeah, it was interesting, that's for sure.

00:04:58 Jesse Host The movie largely takes place in nature, almost exclusively takes place in nature—in the place that it's about. What was it like to go out with what I imagine wasn't a huge crew and shoot—?

00:05:12 David Guest Oh no, it was a total skeleton crew. 'Cause a lot of where we shot, I mean, I'd say over half of the nature stuff was in the woods, off of a accessible road. So, we would have to drive to a point where you couldn't drive any further and then lug gear in, you know, anywhere from a quarter of a mile to a mile in—deep in there—you know, there's no electricity or internet or any of that stuff. So, yeah. It was skeleton crew for most of the time. Or at least in those—in that part of the movie, the in-the-woods part.

00:05:51 Jesse Host Was it a part of the country that you'd ever been to before?

00:05:54 David Guest Not really. There were—you know, three or four times, when I'd go up to do Bumbershoot, in Seattle, or I'd be doing something in Portland occasionally—I have a number of friends who live in Seattle and Portland and we'd kind of go on a day drive and into the woods and hike around for a couple hours. But nothing like that. And it's nothing I've ever... experienced. I've been in the woods plenty of times, but mostly in the East Coast—northeast and southeast. And it's quite different. The woods up there is—it's bigger, the trees are larger. It's lush. It's thicker. It's more dense. It's... you sense the mythology that has been created from those type of woods. It's—and you feel small, physically. You feel small in those woods. And I've never really experienced that.

I remember roughly 20-something years ago, maybe 25 years ago, I went on a hike through the redwoods, in northern California, and that's the closest I've ever been to that kind of thing. But that was—again, that was for a couple hours, you know, during a day on a drive across country. And not to the extent that we were doing it, there. And it's—it's really stunning and beautiful and just magical.

00:07:21 Jesse Host There's a really intense sequence in the film where you... hurt yourself and, you know, you sort of—sort of get overwhelmed and lose the thread, your character does. Um... was it easy to get to that place, on camera?

00:07:42 David Guest Um, are you talking about the scene in the lava tubes?

00:07:45 Jesse Host Yeah, that's what I was thinking of.

00:07:47 David Guest I was so—first of all, that—as crazy as that looks, it doesn't even do it justice for how intense that place is. And I had been told about this, too. Numerous times, by the director, the location guy, like, "This is the cool—when you see this, check this out. It's nuts!"

I wasn't expecting it to be as crazy as they said. They didn't do it justice. The experience of going through this A-frame house, which is—it's small. And it's in the middle of nowhere. You drive for, you know, close to an hour to get there. And it's very normal. There's a little kind of fifties-looking small kitchen type of place and there's a little—there's a comfortable chair with a TV in the corner and it's just a small, little A-frame in the middle of the woods, in the middle of nowhere. And then there's a door and—just a very normal-seeming door. And you open it, and it is like—the immediate oppression was like a lair of a Bond villain, where it's very unassuming from the outside and it's like, "Oh! Here's a rock." And

you move the rock and then it—you descend maybe 50 yards down, like, this industrial strength, diamond-plated—you know, those like steel stairwells that are—and you have to hook yourself up. And you have a security—you have a belt, and you wear the belt and the belt hooks to this thing, and you have these miner’s hats, you know, with the lights on.

And you go a looong way down. And it’s pitch black. When you open the door, say it’s—whatever it is. Say it’s 75 degrees. And you open the door, and you can already feel it’s about 45 degrees and wet. And then you go down into this thing a long, long, long, long way down and you’re in the bottom of the lava tube—which really exists and is from—who knows, 100 million years ago? I’m not sure. And there’s no light. There’s no ventilation. There’s less oxygen. There’s—it’s wet. All that stuff you see—the particles in the air—that’s all real. There was no effects of any of that stuff. And it’s cold. And it’s wet. And the floor is sharp lava. And jagged and everything. And so, to answer your question, by the time that we got to that point of shooting it, it was so—I was so exhausted and mentally weirded out that—it was a very, very difficult shoot. Physically, the most grueling thing I’ve ever done, you know, shoot-wise. And to be down there all day and there’s no light, there’s no amenities. And... and trying to get in as much as we could get in, in a day, with no sense of time or anything.

It was a very strange experience. So, that helped me get to that place, ‘cause I was pretty beaten up by then. It was towards the end of the shoot and I was... physically in pain and it was kind of a miserable situation [*chuckles*] that we were all in. And I think if we had shot that in the first two weeks, I don’t know if I would have gotten there. But by the time we shot that scene, at that—at the end of the day, of that type of day, of the prior three weeks, it was—it helped me to get to that place.

00:11:27 Jesse Host It’s a movie about a man who loses his wife. Did it—and you’re a married man and a father. Did you... find yourself thinking about what it would be like to lose your life partner?

00:11:44 David Guest Absolutely. Yeah. I mean, that was really one of the things—probably the only thing, you know, that I had that I was thinking about. I was thinking about Amber and I was thinking about my daughter and I was thinking about would I ever see them again and the idea of trying to verbally shout out and express this connection to them. And the, you know, the real-life woman—in the film, the wife of the guy I play, it was—again, this is all based on a real story. Thea. Like, I said the word “Thea”, but I was thinking of, you know, my family.

00:12:33 Jesse Host That’s a hard thing to think about.

00:12:35 David Guest Yeah. Yeah, and I—again, I—it’s—I can’t impress upon you enough that how... [*sighs*] emotionally fragile I was by the time we were shooting that scene. I mean, we still had another probably week and a half to go, I think. But—and the first week was pretty easy. First week’s shooting was, you know, it was the stuff with Debra. You know, the flashbacks with my wife and then all the flashback stuff and the stuff on the—you know, where I’m, like, driving up to the woods and getting ready to go. That was all the first week. So, it was relatively easy. But by the time we got there, it was—I mean, it—this thing beat the [*censored*] out of me. And not—I also hadn’t

seen my wife and daughter. That was the longest—the first time I ever had a long stretch where I didn't see my daughter for a long time.

And—yeah. Again, I don't—I don't mean to sound—I'm hearing myself and I sound very—I sound like one of those actors who, you know, prattle on and on about that kind of stuff and it gets a little annoying. But it was—it really was the hardest thing I've done, for sure.

00:13:54 Jesse Host

You know, I've followed your career for a really long time and I feel like I don't know very much about your childhood and adolescence, other than that, you know, you lived mostly in Georgia and it was a little weird to be Jewish in Georgia, when you were a kid.

[David confirms.]

00:14:27 David Guest

I don't think I know much. So, maybe you could tell me what your—for example, what your parents were like?

Uh, well. My... I'm estranged from my dad and have been since I was—the last time I spoke to him was when I was 19. And that was a very psychologically strange thing. My—in our relationship, I should say. The rest of my family's. My mom and two other—two younger sisters. We moved constantly. I was born in Atlanta. I moved a year later and I moved almost every year until I was nine and a half and moved back to Georgia, but lived in Florida in three different places, lived in Connecticut in two places, lived in New York for three places before going back to Georgia. And my dad was the sole reason for that.

He was—he's like a *[censored]* con man. He's one of those—he's very narcissistic. There's a lot of Trump qualities to him in that he's not vicious or cruel, but he's insane—you know—psychopathically narcissistic and nothing was ever his fault. He, you know, would quit jobs before they could fire him. He'd get fired or he'd quit right before they were gonna fire him, but nothing was ever his fault. He was always the victim. Insanely irresponsible. Clearly was one of those people—and this is—applies to men and women, but who I think had a romantic idea of like, "Oh, I'm gonna—I'll be a father and I'll have kids. It'll be fun." And then had some kids and went, "Eh, it's not for me." And took off. And left us in incredible debt in a place that nobody was really comfortable with. My mom's from New York; she's from Westchester.

So, there—so, I had a *[censored]* dad. I was Jewish. And I grew up in the South and I grew up very poor. And I think that it's not even close to—close contest as to what shaped me the most, and that was being poor. I think it informs everything about me and my behavior—some ways, some positive and some negative. But nothing's been more—nothing's shaped me more than growing up poor.

00:16:34 Jesse Host

Was it being poor—that kind of being poor where you don't feel confident that you'll have necessities? Food and a place to live and that kind of thing?

00:16:46 David Guest

Yes and no. I mean, it was always—like, we got evicted a couple times and I think that's one of the probably five hardest things I ever had to deal with, was I got picked up at the bus stop by our

neighbor, Mr. Peters. And he picked up my sister Wendy and I. And the bus stop wasn't that far. It wasn't like you had to get picked up. It was, you know, maybe a 15-minute walk. You know? Through this apartment complex and... and so that was a little odd. And he basically was up there to—'cause my mom and dad were dealing with what was happening—he was up there to basically kind of soften the *[laughing]* landing, as it were. By the—so that we would understand by the time we drove down there. And they had taken our stuff and they were just throwing it on the sidewalk. You know, we were—this was in an apartment complex. And just, literally, they locked some stuff.

They were taking things out of my room. I had a ham radio that wasn't really practical, but I liked the idea of it and I—for some reason, that was a cool thing. And, you know, they took that 'cause they were gonna, you know, take it for—you know. Compensation or whatever. And they were just taking things and other stuff they were just throwing out onto the grass and the—you know, the sidewalk. And some things were breaking, and it was like, "That's my bed! That's my—those are my books!" And just tossed in a, you know, bag. And... you know. That's one of the most heartbreaking things I've—you know. And then my sisters and I had to split up and we had to stay with people, different people, and our neighbors were super, super-nice and—you know, people were offering, like, "Well, David can stay with us for a week and, you know, Wendy can stay down here." You know. And we still had to go to school.

And they—you know, it turns out my dad had lied about paying rent and hadn't paid rent in months and months and months and lied to my mom and all that. Um. So, it never—we were never, like, sleeping in the car and I can't say that we went without food for—ever for more than a meal, maybe. We, you know, there are plenty of—one year for Chanukah I got Slim Jims.

[Jesse chuckles.]

I remember that. Which was, like, a practical—it's true! It's true. *[Chuckles.]* I got Slim Jims. That was my—was my holiday present. Um... but! You know. My—it didn't take too long, no more than a couple years, for my mom to slowly build credit. And she started with—I think she started with a gasoline card. She got, like, a Shell credit card or something. And then paid that off for a few months, you know, and then never missed a payment and then got a—I believe a Sears card, a Sears credit card-type thing. And then, you know, would buy x amount of purchases per month, pay it off, make sure she did that.

And she eventually got credit and it—and that changed a lot of things for us, too. 'Cause she's very—she's very responsible with money.

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| 00:19:49 | Jesse | Host | I'm sorry to laugh at the—at the Slim Jims for Chanukah. |
| 00:19:53 | David | Guest | No, it's true! I mean, I know that it's—I know what response it gets. I'm, you know, a... |
| 00:20:01 | Jesse | Host | A professional comedian. <i>[Laughs.]</i> |
| 00:20:03 | David | Guest | But yeah. There's—there was, you know. It wasn't great. |

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| 00:20:09 | Jesse | Host | I imagine them coming to you directly from the Ultimate Warrior, or whoever was the—the pro wrestler. |
| 00:20:14 | David | Guest | No, this was pre—this was pre-Macho—wait, Randy— |
| 00:20:20 | Jesse | Host | Macho Man Randy Savage. That’s who it was. |
| 00:20:23 | David | Guest | <i>[Laughing.]</i> It was pre-Macho Man. Yeah. |
| 00:20:26 | Jesse | Host | <i>[Imitating Randy Savage.]</i> HAP-py Chanukaaaa! |

[They laugh.]

There is, like—I mean, you laugh at it, but you know, you laughed a couple times telling those stories. I remember once, in therapy, my therapist saying, “You know, you’re always smiling when you say the most painful things that have happened in your life.” And she says, *[laughing]* “I don’t know—I don’t know if this is something I’m supposed to tell you, as a professional therapist, but therapists call that ‘incongruous affect.’”

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| 00:20:54 | David | Guest | I get it! Yeah. |
| 00:20:55 | Jesse | Host | I guess it’s a way of managing that kind of thing. |
| 00:20:58 | David | Guest | Yes, that’s totally what it is. |
| 00:20:59 | Jesse | Host | But you must have been particularly good at it, given your—given your career and the success that you’ve had. You know? |
| 00:21:06 | David | Guest | I—yeah. I mean, I suppose so. And I think, as hard as it—as it was, you know, always being the new kid for a long time and having to pack up and, you know, no sense of stability and—you know, here’s a new school with new people. And you know, trying to suss out as quickly as you can, “Do I wanna sit here? Do I wanna sit there? Like, that guy or that girl or what am I gonna do? And who’s gonna pick on me and who’s gonna like me?” And you know, part of it is not being so glum and dour and just being able to try to let it—let it slide and not let it pull you down too much. |
| 00:21:50 | Jesse | Host | We’ll finish up with David Cross in just a minute. <i>Mr. Show with Bob and David</i> , the sketch series that he created with Bob Odenkirk, premiered 25 years ago. Twenty-five! We’ll talk about the show after the break. It’s <i>Bullseye</i> , from MaximumFun.org and NPR. |
| 00:22:07 | Music | Transition | Relaxed, breezy music with light vocalizations. |
| 00:22:08 | Jesse | Promo | This message comes from NPR sponsor Headspace. |

Life can be stressful, but 2020 has challenged even the most difficult times of life. You need stress relief that goes beyond quick fixes. That’s Headspace. Headspace is your daily dose of mindfulness in the form of guided meditations in an easy-to-use app. Overwhelmed? Headspace has a three-minute SOS meditation for you. Go to Headspace.com/Bullseye for a free month trial with access to Headspace’s full library of meditations for every situation.

[Music fades out.]

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| 00:22:45 | Promo | Clip | Music: Eerie, unsettling music. |
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Sidney Madden: Since the 1980s, hip-hop and America’s prisons have grown side-by-side.

Rodney Carmichael: And we’re gonna investigate this connection to see how it lifts us up and holds us down.

Speaker: Hip-hop is talking about what we live. Trying to live the American dream, failing at the American dream—

Sidney: I'm Sidney Madden.

Rodney: I'm Rodney Carmichael. Listen now to the *Louder Than a Riot* podcast, from NPR Music.

Sidney: Where we trace the collision of rhyme and punishment in America.

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| 00:23:15 | Music | Transition | <i>[Music ends with the sound of sirens and a slamming cell door.]</i> |
| 00:23:16 | Jesse | Promo | Warm, relaxed music. Hey, friends! Jesse here, the founder of Maximum Fun, and I have some really great news to share with you. This year has brought a lot of changes for all of us, and one tradition that we were grateful to be able to hold onto is our annual pin sale to benefit charity. This year, through your generosity and love of pins, you helped raise \$95,400 for Give Directly. If you're a member and you bought pins, they'll ship in January. In the meantime, your support will provide direct cash relief to families impacted by COVID-19 across the United States. Even in this incredibly tough year, the MaxFun community remains extraordinarily kind. And whether or not you bought pins, you can continue to help by heading to GiveDirectly.org . And as always, thank you. |
| 00:24:09 | Jesse | Host | <i>[Music fades out.]</i> Welcome back to <i>Bullseye</i> . I'm Jesse Thorn. If you're just joining us, I'm talking with David Cross. David is a comedian. He co-created the sketch series <i>Mr. Show with Bob and David</i> , along with Bob Odenkirk. He's acted on TV shows like <i>Arrested Development</i> and <i>The Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt</i> . These days, he's starring in a new movie, a drama. <i>The Dark Divide</i> tells the story of a science writer and butterfly expert who spent six weeks hiking through the forest in Washington State. It's available to rent or buy digitally now. Let's get back into our conversation. |
| 00:25:02 | David | Guest | It seems like you had a pretty clear idea of getting out of Dodge, even if you didn't have necessarily a clear idea of exactly what that would entail in the—you know, medium- to long-term. But you kind of... finished high school and moved to New York. Yeah. Well, I—the day—I believe it was the day after I graduated, I went to New York for the summer and really it was about four months. And I did standup a couple times at Catch a Rising Star where, you know, you just wait in line all day to get a spot and, you know, get on at 12:50 a.m.. And then moved back to Georgia. And I was there just to save up money to go to school and I had applied to NYU and Emerson College, in Boston. I knew I wanted to go to New York or Boston. But I knew <u>for sure</u> that I was getting out of Atlanta. That was extremely important. And I—my first choice was New York, but I was happy to go to Boston as well. And, you know. Things worked out. So. Can't complain. |
| 00:25:56 | Jesse | Host | I mean, I think even just standing in line all day to get five minutes at Catch a Rising Star at 12:50 in the morning is a big deal when you're 17 or 18 years old. That's certainly more than I was capable of at the time. |

00:26:10 David Guest Yeah, and I had no money. I remember—and I almost got in a fight with a guy, too. I remember I was staying at my grandmom’s, where my mom grew up, in White Plains, New York. And I took the train in. You take a bus to the number 4 Woodlawn subway. I would take a bus to the subway and then take the 4 all the way in. And then you go, and you wait until they—I think they drew names or something like that? I can’t remember how it worked, but you signed up and there were a bunch of people. I remember almost getting in a fight with a guy—it was something about cutting in line or some *[censored]*.

And then—and then you wait around. Then you wait—you have to come back to find out if you’re gonna perform and that’s, like, at six, I wanna say? And then you just have to wait until you’re up. And you know, it’s not like you have free drinks or anything like that. I think I had about ten bucks. So, I got a calzone and ate, like, a third of it and then lugged it around with me all day, like, if I *[laughs]* went to like the library. And I lugged around this calzone there, had some of it for dinner, and then I had some of it for a midnight snack! And then *[laughs]*—and I did my set and, you know, whatever. I don’t even know. I don’t even know if the train ran back then, at night, or—certainly bus. I don’t know. But, um... yeah, the worst part was just waiting around. I mean, granted, you’re in Manhattan, so it was cool. But it’s not like you get any money for anything. It’s just walking around and... yeah.

00:27:49 Jesse Host But I mean, even then you knew enough to know that that was what you wanted.

[David agrees.]

00:27:59 David Guest That’s pretty significant. But also, let’s not gloss over the fact that I wasn’t very funny. I wasn’t good. I had not developed anything. I had no—my voice was—I didn’t have any kind of comedy style. It was all over the place. It wasn’t anything *[laughs]*—it wasn’t anything, you know, like—this like, “I know I can sing, damn it!” *[Laughs.]* You know? None of that. So, yeah.

00:28:23 Jesse Host At the time that you were doing standup comedy in Boston, probably one of the most legendary standup comedy scenes anywhere at—in the—in the history of standup comedy.

00:28:32 David Guest *[Interrupting.]* It’s amazing! Just crazy. Crazy—it’s crazy, it’s crazy to think about.

00:28:37 Jesse Host Also, I think interestingly like—still, the standup boom of the, you know, of the 1980s kind of continuing along and so, it was a—it was a legendary standup comedy scene that had many, many, many kinds of voices from the most—you know, big-shoulder sport coat with the sleeves rolled up to, you know, you and Janeane Garofalo inventing what was, you know, alternative comedy five or ten years later.

00:29:09 David Guest Well, I will give all the credit to Janeane.

00:29:12 Jesse Host Contributing to the invention of.

[David echoes the sentiment.]

I won’t ask you to take credit for that.

00:29:16 David Guest Janeane is really—she was responsible for more of that than people, I think, really know. I mean, she really—she really changed it. And she was successful. You know? Like, there were plenty of people—myself and others that were kind of—you know, shared the same kind of thing that were doing it, but weren't quite as successful for quite a while. And Janeane was helpful in making myself and those other people successful. You know? She was a—absolutely a pioneer, for sure.

00:29:47 Jesse Host The thing that made your career—at least, *[laughs]* for me and fellow comedy nerds outside of LA, Boston, and New York—was *Mr. Show with Bob and David*, the HBO sketch series that you co-created with Bob Odenkirk. You know. That show was a show that, ratings-wise *[laughing]* or whatever—whatever HBO uses to determine success—got by for a few years, but you know—it was long before people were looking to cable television, for the most part, for—you know, for great TV shows. It was a sort of—it was a sort of late-night secret for people who knew about it.

00:30:29 David Guest It was just the 25th anniversary of the show.
Yeah, I saw that! I didn't know that until I saw on Twitter there was a... somebody posted that. That's—that's interesting. *[Chuckles.]*

00:30:37 Jesse Host And you and almost everybody involved in the original show, on the creative side, did a series with Netflix a couple of years ago called *With Bob and David* that was a sort of reprise of the show. And I wonder, between those two things—you know, if you've had opportunity to reflect on that time in your life? Like, if any of your feelings about it have changed?

00:31:02 David Guest Uhhh. I—um, they—I don't think they've changed. They've become more solidified and—actually, this—about... I don't know, eight, nine, ten months ago, Bob is currently—I think he's done, actually. Hopefully it'll be out soon. But he's written a book, a memoir, and you know, said, "Hey, I'm gonna be coming to you with some help and questions and wanna talk to you about the—you know, the *Mr. Show* 'Run Ronnie, Run' chapters."

And I was like, "Yeah, of course."

And up until then, I hadn't really thought about stuff outside of just kind of, you know, doing interviews like this occasionally or—you know, maybe when we were promoting *With Bob and David*. But it did give myself and the two of us an opportunity to really reflect and have a conversation about it. Which we hadn't really had. And, you know, it was very interesting, and I'll be—I'm curious to see what comes out in his book, based on our conversations. And you know, Bob and I are very, very close. Very good friends. Still, you know, remain close. And one of the craziest things? His daughter *[laughs]*—I remember when she was born. His daughter now babysits my daughter occasionally. She's down the street. She goes to Pratt, and that's just mind-blowing to me that, like, his daughter—like, there's Erin sitting in my kitchen, hanging out with my daughter. It's the craziest—that's a—that's a real, "Hey, I'm old" signifier. More than whatever kind of random, "Oh, it's the 20th anniversary! It's the 25th anniversary!" And you go, "Oh, wow!"

But looking at that, looking at Bob's daughter, you know, hanging out, babysitting my daughter is really something. But I'm still as

proud of it as I ever was. Occasionally, I'll—somebody'll put a link to a sketch that you can't really see it, it's me at a—on a Twitter thing will be like, "Hey! That reminds me of this *Mr. Show* sketch." And then, you know, I'll click on it and it's something I haven't seen since we did commentary for the DVDs for whatever, however long ago that was. And I'll watch it and go, "That's a good sketch! I like that. That's smart. It's got a beginning, a middle, an end. I didn't see that coming!" And you know, yeah. I'm proud of it.

00:33:36 Jesse Host Do you feel like—I'm trying to think of how to phrase it, but do you feel like... secure? Comfortable in what I guess you would call your—?

00:33:47 David Guest *[Laughing.]* My golden years?

00:33:49 Jesse Host *[Chuckles.]* I was gonna say your legacy! But I don't wanna suggest that you don't have—that you haven't been doing wonderful work and don't have wonderful work ahead of you, for decades!

00:34:00 David Guest *[With an elderly affectation.]* Ooooh, Jesse! When I look back at what I—

00:34:05 Jesse Host What I mean about it is like do you still feel like—do you—do you feel like you need to be feisty and defend your territory or do you feel like, "Man, I've—I've really accomplished some stuff and—you know—I'm in a—I'm in a spot where I can look forward to a kind of artistic security"?

00:34:28 David Guest Uh, yeah. I mean, I feel the latter more than the former. I feel like I'm happy with the—you know, I can point to a shelf with my stuff that I've done and go, "Yeah. I mean, well, that's pretty good. Well, that thing's not very good. But most of this is good! Yeah! This is—I'm happy with that." And I am happy with it. And I'm happy with the people I've been able to collaborate with and I've been happy to have so many of the opportunities I've been given and I guess I'm at a place now where—not that somebody is just gonna automatically greenlight some pitch, regardless of what it is—but I will—people will give me the time and, you know, perhaps millions of dollars to make an idea that I thought of. And that's a good place to be in your career. You know? That at least I'll get the time and the respect to sit down and pitch my idea. And people will, you know, seriously consider it. And that's—that's pretty much, you know, mostly what I could hope for.

00:35:35 Jesse Host Well, David, I sure appreciate you sharing this time with me and making time for it.

00:35:42 David Guest Absolutely. My pleasure.

00:35:43 Jesse Host And thank you for all your wonderful work, all of your—over these decades. It means a lot to me.

00:35:48 David Guest Well, thank you! That's nice to hear and, you know, hopefully a couple years down the line there'll be something else worthwhile to promote and remember.

[They chuckle.]

00:36:01 Jesse Host And we'll do it again!
David Cross. His new movie, *The Dark Divide*, is available to buy or rent on a bunch of platforms—Amazon, Apple, Google, etc.—and if you need a comedy chaser, David also released a standup album this year. It's called *Oh Come On*. And if you haven't seen *Mr. Show*, well, you should definitely watch *Mr. Show*.

00:36:19 Music Transition Bright, electronic music with light vocalizations.

00:36:25 Jesse Host That's the end of another episode of *Bullseye*. *Bullseye* is created from the homes of me and the staff of Maximum Fun, in and around greater Los Angeles, California—where it was briefly colder, so I went and got my sweaters from the garage. Then it was 92 degrees outside.

The show is produced by speaking into microphones. Our producer is Kevin Ferguson. Jesus Ambrosio and Jordan Kawling are our associate producers. We get help from Casey O'Brien and Kristen Bennett. Our interstitial music is by Dan Wally, also known as DJW. Our theme song is by The Go! Team. Thanks very much to them and to their label, Memphis Industries, for sharing it with us.

If you wanna hear the latest about what we're up to, you can keep up with the show on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. We post all of our interviews there. And I think that's about it. Just remember: all great radio hosts have a signature signoff.

00:37:17 Promo Promo **Speaker:** *Bullseye with Jesse Thorn* is a production of MaximumFun.org and is distributed by NPR.

[Music fades out.]