

## *Henry Ian Cusick*

### *Biography*

- **Birthplace:** Trujillo, Peru
- **Birthday:** April 17, 1967

Though his Emmy-nominated role as Desmond, the wild-eyed inhabitant of the hatch on the pop culture phenomenon "Lost" (ABC, 2004 - ) earned him his largest audience to date, actor Henry Ian Cusick already enjoyed a sizable fan base, thanks to his acclaimed stage performances in the United Kingdom, as well as appearances in television series and features on both sides of the Atlantic. Cusick's multi-ethnic looks and Scottish burr may have had something to do with the very vocal female contingent of his impressive fan base.

Born April 17, 1969 in Trujillo to Scottish and Peruvian parents, Cusick grew up bilingual (English and Spanish) and moved several times during his adolescence and teenage years. He resided in Trinidad and Tobago before settling in Newton Mears, near Glasgow, Scotland, at the age of 15. The aspiring actor received his dramatic training at the Royal Scottish Academy of Drama and Music (and according to some reports, was kicked out) before joining the acclaimed Citizens' Theatre in Glasgow. Performances in numerous productions there and at other theaters, including the Royal Shakespeare Company and Edinburgh International Festival, were soon to follow, including "Othello," "The Birthday Party," and "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof." His turn in the title role of a 1995 production of "Torquato Tasso" at the Royal Lyceum in Edinburgh earned him a nomination for the Ian Charleson Award, which was given to classical actors under 30.

Cusick made sporadic appearances on British and Scottish television in the late '90s and beyond, turning up in nine episodes of the long-running BBC medical series "Casualty" (1986- ), and appearing in a recurring role on the acclaimed comedy "The Book Group" (BBC 4, 2001-02), as well as several TV feature productions. Cusick's first theatrical film was Neil LaBute's adaptation of the A.S. Byatt novel, "Possession" (2002) starring Gwyneth Paltrow, though Cusick was uncredited for his role. He gained more visibility as the famed (and tragic) 19th-century paleontologist Gideon Mantell in "The Dinosaur Hunters" (2002), a fascinating documentary about the early days of dinosaur research that was produced by BBC 4 and aired in the United States on public television.

Cusick also portrayed Jesus in "The Gospel of John" (2003), a theatrical feature from The Visual Bible Ltd. In interviews, he credited his devoutly Roman Catholic mother for giving him perspective for the role and the gospel on which it was based. More television in the UK followed in 2004-05, including an appearance in an episode of the popular "Midsomer Murders" series (BBC/A&E, 1997- ). But it was on American TV that Cusick found a whole new tier of fame on two extremely popular series.

First was "24" (Fox, 2001- ), where Cusick played German intelligence officer Theo Stoller in two episodes; his character bumps heads with Jack Bauer (Kiefer Sutherland) in their mutual attempts to track down terrorist information broker Collette Stenger (Stana Katic). This was followed by the recurring role of Desmond Hume on "Lost," and the considerable fan and critical attention that came with all who participated in both shows.

Hired by "Lost" producer Carlton Cuse, after a chance encounter at the home of a mutual neighbor (fellow Scottish actor Brian Cox), Cusick embraced the role of Hume and its complexities whole-heartedly, finding himself quickly among the show's most popular players. A former member of the Royal Scots Regiment of the British Army who sets sail on a race around the world to forget about a woman he loves, Hume was shipwrecked on the show's mystery island and indoctrinated into the procedure of re-setting the countdown clock which could bring about the end of the world. His discovery by the show's castaways sent seismic ripples through their ranks; not only did Jack (Matthew Fox) recognize him from late night workout sessions in Los Angeles, but Locke (Terry O'Quinn) fell prey to the same obsession over the countdown clock that had beset Hume. The finale of the second season found Hume destroying the hatch that contained the computer, but with the launch of the third season, he was alive, and apparently, in possession of psychic powers, as demonstrated by an impromptu lightning rod he built to save Claire (Emilie de Ravin).

Cusick's intense performance earned "Lost" its sole acting Emmy nomination in 2006, and the audience response to his character ensured that he would join the cast as a series regular in its third season. Permanency seemed to have been a theme in Cusick's life that year, as he also married his longtime companion, theater director Annie Wood in '06. In addition to his duties on "Lost," Cusick appeared in the supernatural feature "Half Light" (starring Demi Moore) and the dark fantasy "9/Tenths" (with Gabrielle Anwar), both of which were released in Cusick's very busy 2006.

## **EDUCATION**

**Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Glasgow, Scotland**

## **SIGNIFICANT OTHERS**

Annie Wood - legally wed on July 15, 2006, in a civil ceremony following fourteen years of common law marriage

## **Milestones**

2006 Joined the fifth season of the Fox series "24," in the recurring role of Theo Stoller

2006 Played Demi Moore's husband in the romantic thriller "Half Light"

2005 Joined the cast of "Lost" (ABC) in a recurring role as Desmond; became a series regular in the third season

2004 Cast as Dr. Peter Campbell in Lifetime's original movie, "Perfect Romance"

2003 Played Miles, a series regular in the acclaimed BBC series, "The Book Group"

2003 Portrayed Jesus in "The Gospel of John"

2001 Cast as Dr. Talbot in the Scottish series, "2000 Acres of Sky" (BBC)

2001 Cast as Jason on the BBC series "Casualty"

**1998** Cast in "Anthony and Cleopatra," with Alan Rickman and Helen Mirren for The Royal National Theatre

1994 Played the title role in the Edinburgh International Festival production of "Torquato Tasso"

1993 First lead role opposite Rupert Everett as Dorian Gray in "The Picture of Dorian Gray" at Citizens' Theatre

**1992** Joined the Citizens' Theatre