



TV PREVIEW

Three Little Birds

Three Little Birds (episode 1)

Created and Written by: Lenny Henry

Produced by: Stella Nwimo

Directed by: Charles McDougall

©/Production Company:

Tiger Aspect Productions Limited

In association with: Douglas Road Productions

Executive Producers: Lucy Bedford, Kate Crowe,

Russell T Davies, Angela Ferreira, Lenny Henry,

Charles McDougall

ITV Executive Producer: Nana Hughes

BritBox Executive Producer: Diederick Santer

Co-producer: Sarah Dibsdall

Director of Production: Sara Hamill

Production Executive: Kyla Brennan

Story Producer: Jon Rowe

Location Manager: Idris Ahmed

Post-production Supervisor: Portia Napier

CASTING DIRECTOR: Aisha Bywaters

1st Assistant Director: Toby Sherborne

Director of Photography: Felix Wiedemann

Editor: David Blackmore

VFX Supervisor: James Jordan

Production Designer: Niina Topp

Costume Designer: Caron Newman

Make-up Designer: Kym Menzies-Foster

Hair Designer: Sharon Miller

Music by: Benjamin Kwasi Burrell

Music Supervisor: Amelia Hartley

Sound Recordist: Ashok-Kumar Kumar

Stunt Co-ordinator: Marvin Campbell

Cast:

Rochelle Neil (*Leah Whittaker*)

Yazmin Belo (*Hosanna Drake*)

Saffron Coomber (*Chantrelle Brahm*)

Javone Prince (*Aston Brahm*)

Leemore Marrett Jr (*Ephraim Whittaker*)

Lenny Henry (*Remuel Drake*)

Kayla Kargbo (*young girl*)

Tierney Turner (*Saleh Whittaker*)

Malachi Hall (*Caleb Whittaker*)

Shay Descartes (*Gideon Whittaker*)

Ashleigh Smith (*Solomon*)

Eddy Brimson (*passport control*)

Martin Trenaman (*Vince the landlord*)

Gamba Cole (*Gregory*)

Akil Largie (*Barrington*)

Ahlana-Jean Adebambo (*young Hosanna*)

Sam Landon (*police officer 1*)

Nick Bartlett (*desk sergeant*)

Amy Beth Hayes (*Diana Wantage*)

Arthur Darvill (*Ernest Wantage*)

Elliott Spilling (*James Wantage*)

Annie Bissex (*Patricia Wantage*)

Angela Wynter (*Miss Eunice*)

Susan Lawson-Reynolds (*Momma Gladys*)

ITV1/ITVX 2023

54 mins

+ Q&A with Sir Lenny Henry and directors Charles McDougall and Yero Timi-Biu and composer Benjamin Kwasi Burrell, hosted by Miquita Oliver.

Spirited, moving, funny and utterly heartfelt, *Three Little Birds* is a triumphant celebration of immigration, community and the strength of Black womanhood inspired by the life-affirming stories of Sir Lenny Henry's mother and all those who have travelled to make Britain their home.

Set in 1957, post-Windrush, and amidst the booming decade set alight by promise, the rhythm of rock and roll, swing, Hollywood starlets and fabulous fashion, *Three Little Birds* will introduce Dudley and the rest of the world to gregarious sisters Leah (Rochelle Neil) and Chantrelle (Saffron Coomber) and their virtuous, bible-loving acquaintance, Hosanna (Yazmin Belo), as they board a cruise ship from Jamaica bound for a new life in Blighty.

Lured to the UK in search of new beginnings and by their older brother Aston (Javone Prince), who asks Leah and Chantrelle if they'll bring him a potential wife from back home, they convince Hosanna to give up her job as a trainee nurse and embark upon the journey to 'the mother country'. An effervescent mix of strong personalities, they all have very different reasons for leaving their family and friends behind in Clarendon, Jamaica, though they soon discover it's not all it's cracked up to be, not least the dramatic change in weather. While we learn shocking truths about the lives they left behind, the voyage of discovery is not smooth sailing for our trio, but they are determined to succeed and overcome the many obstacles of integration and build a new life in Britain.

About the panel

Sir Lenny Henry has been a performer since the age of 16. He has risen from being a cult star on children's television to becoming one of Britain's best known comedians, as well as a writer, philanthropist and award-winning actor.

In recent years Lenny's stage acting has earned him huge critical acclaim. He made his stage acting debut in 2009 in the lead role of Northern Broadsides' production of *Othello* at the West Yorkshire Playhouse, which later transferred to the West End. He has since starred in *The Comedy of Errors* at The National, *Fences* at the Duchess Theatre, *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* at the Donmar Warehouse, and *King Hedley II* at Theatre Royal, Stratford East.

Lenny's TV acting credits include *Broadchurch*, *The Syndicate*, *The Long Song* and the biographic film *Danny and the Human Zoo*. Lenny's production company, Douglas Road, has achieved success in partnership with Burning Bright on the acclaimed documentary *The Commonwealth Kid*.

As a co-founder of Comic Relief Lenny was delighted to announce this year that the British public has donated over £1 billion to Comic Relief over the last 30 years. Lenny is a strong advocate for diversity, using his voice to give talks on the subject all over the world. He has been a Trustee of the National Theatre since February 2016 and was awarded a Knighthood in 2015 for services to drama and charity.

In 2018, BBC One broadcast *The Lenny Henry Birthday Show*, looking back on Lenny's career to commemorate his 60th birthday. In autumn 2019 Faber published the first volume of his memoir *Who Am I, Again?*, around which he wrote a live show that toured the UK for two months. 2020 saw further book commissions with part two of his memoir *Rising to the Surface*, two books on the topic of diversity, and a series of children's books published through Pan Macmillan.

In 2022 Lenny was the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award at the National Television Awards. He also appeared as the hobbit Sadoc in Amazon's *Lord of the Rings* prequel *The Rings of Power* and as Balor in the Netflix series *The Witcher: Blood Origin*.

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In spring 2023 Lenny starred in his self-penned play *August in England*, which received critical acclaim during its run at London's Bush Theatre. His stage writing debut has earned him a nomination in the Best Writer category of The Stage Debut Awards.

October sees the publication of Lenny's latest children's book *The Boy with Wings: Clash of the Superkids* and the transmission of his long-awaited six-part television drama, *Three Little Birds*, on ITV. The historical drama is inspired by his mother's stories about leaving Jamaica in the 1950s for Great Britain. The same month ITV1 will broadcast a one-hour documentary, *Lenny Henry: One of a Kind* which sees Lenny looking back on his time in the entertainment spotlight with tributes from both famous faces and his family and friends.

Yero Timi-Biu is a multiple award-winning writer-director for TV and film with projects for HBO, BBC, Channel 4, BFI, and Audible. Yero directed the second block of Sir Lenny Henry's new ITV drama, *Three Little Birds* after learning the ropes as showrunner's shadow and 2nd unit director on the BBC One/Amazon psychological thriller *Chloe*. Yero has also been a staff writer on original shows for Sky One and Netflix (US).

Her short films as writer-director include *0.5%*, *Signs* (Rhianne Barreto, Vivian Oparah, Cherrelle Skeete) and *Beneath the Surface* (Babirye Bukilwa) and as director *Essex Girls* (Busayo Ige, Maisie Smith, Corinna Brown) have played in competition and won awards at international film festivals such as Encounters, Aesthetica, London Film Festival, and Hamptons International Film Festival. Yero directed the first one-hour episode of *The Read*, released in April 2022, a narrative take on Sam Selvon's novel *The Lonely Londoners* starring *I May Destroy You's* Danielle Vitalis. Yero also has her own original shows and book adaptations in development with various indies, streamers, and broadcasters internationally. Yero was one of Edinburgh TV Festival's prestigious Ones to Watch for 2020/2021.

Charles McDougall was awarded a Fulbright scholarship for film direction at USC graduate film school, followed by the UK's National Film and TV school. UK projects include: *Sunday*, which won the Prix Italia for Best Drama; *Hillsborough*, BAFTA for Best drama; *Queer as Folk*; *Cracker*; *The Secret Agent*; *Heart*; *Arrivederci Millwall*. US work includes: *House of Cards*; *Desperate Housewives* pilot, for which he won an Emmy for Outstanding Direction; *The Office*; *Sex and the City*; *Old Town Lane*; *The Good Wife* pilot; *Julia* pilot; *Ana*.

Composer, orchestrator, arranger and musical director **Benjamin Kwasi Burrell** is a jazz pianist with an eminent theatrical background. Easily as adaptable between large orchestras or simple ensembles, Benjamin composed and arranged the production of Shelagh Delaney's *A Taste of Honey* for the National Theatre in London, and was also composer and musical director for the hit play *Small Island*, adapted from the book by Andrea Levy. In 2019 he was the recipient of the Musical Director Recognition Award at the inaugural Black British Theatre Awards.

Since 2019, Benjamin has been the musical director of The House and Garage Orchestra and in 2021 he lent his music expertise to help co-ordinate the live celebration Coventry Moves Together for UK City of Culture 2021, which saw the people of Coventry tuning in via radio, online, and over social media at home for a city-wide, shared music experience. His work can be experienced in the biographical *Get Up, Stand Up! The Bob Marley Musical* at the Lyric Theatre, following the renowned reggae singer's journey from his roots in Jamaica to international stardom. You can also currently hear Benjamin's score on the National Theatre / Neal Street Productions play, *The Motive and the Cue*, directed by Oscar-winner Sam Mendes.

Miquita Oliver (host) began her career co-presenting *Popworld* with Simon Amstell; a music show which reached iconic status. Best known for her work on T4, Miquita is a skilled and respected broadcaster. She regularly hosted both Saturday and Sunday mornings on T4 until 2010 and fronted her own show, *The Month with Miquita* on 4music. Miquita presented again for 4music on their music show entitled *Rock the Look with Rimmel London* in 2014 which incorporated the worlds of music, fashion and beauty, interspersed with artist interviews.