



Simon Tofield Q & A

How did SC come about

SC came about from me wanting to learn a computer programme called Flash. At the time, I had a tiny black kitten called Hugh and one morning he had been climbing all over me trying to wake me up for his breakfast so I decided to use this event as the basis of a short film to help me learn the programme.

Did you ever think it would be a huge success

No, I was very surprised by the success because I didn't think anyone would ever get to see it at all. It was an accident that it got posted onto youtube, but I am delighted that people love it and want to see more of his antics. I consider it an honour.

Do you have a cat

I have three cats and they are all quite different in character. The eldest is called Jesse and she is nearly nine now. She is a real lap cat and doesn't like to go far from my side when I am home. Maisy was a rescue cat who continued to grow to vast proportions and is huge compared to the others but is a real sweetie when I get home at night. The third is a tom called Hugh who was a rotter as a kitten and terrorised the others with endless hunting games.

He's calmed down a lot now and they all live together harmoniously.

Does he inspire your animation

The first film was inspired by Hugh's antics when climbing over me, but the other two contribute enormously especially in the book. Each film has been influenced by a particular cat but its true to say that they have a little of the others in there too

What's the most annoying thing your cat has ever done

Jess has to be the most annoying because her need for constant attention can be a real problem in the evening when I am trying to sleep. She is always thinking of new ways to get my attention and its become a war of wits which I always lose

How did you come up for the ideas for the book

I worked at home with the cats for company and inspiration. Just being with them made the ideas flow. If I had a dry spell, I would wander into the garden with them and it wouldn't be long before they would do something to kickstart my imagination again, whether they were chasing flies or climbing trees, there would always be fresh material for gags ideas.

Why do you think SC has become such a huge phenomenon online

I think its down to people seeing their own pet in the animations . The mannerisms I put into the animations and the ideas I develop all ring bells with cat owners worldwide and the universal cat behaviour I create has made people very attached to my work as if it was their cat in the films. I like that aspect.

What is the future of SC

I would love to do more books about SC. The books have enabled me to expand his world and I have loved seeing where this has taken him. I will do more films too, but the books have provided me with a very quick medium to create a wider world for the cat and his friends.

What names have people given to the cat and what other ideas did you have before you come up with this one

Fortunately, no one has tried to stick a name on the cat, because people either see it as their own cat, or girls think it's a girl cat and boys think it's a male cat.

what animations inspire you and why

I have always been a fan of the British independent animation scene, especially the humour aspect. Its nice to be a part of that.

what's your all time favourite cartoon cat and why

Probably Tom and Jerry which I grew up with. Tom and his timeless frying pan over the head joke can be seen in all my work plus the classic 'look to camera' gag.