



Out of the box thinking: Baasit, Umar and Sid

# THE MIND Goggles...

As Gogglebox turns ten, **Paul Simper** talks all things telly with dad Sid from the Siddiquis, the only original remaining family on the show...

**Where are you today?**

I am sitting on the brother or sister of the sofa where we normally sit, which is on the other side of this wall. See this picture behind me? It's actually a hatch for food if we have guests in the other room. We have got doors as well; we don't climb through the hatch.

**Congratulations on being the longest-running Gogglebox family. Why do you think you are so loved by the viewers?**

I think it is quite cute in a way that a father and his sons - it could be father and daughters although they are shy, so they don't come on - watch TV together. We try to be as we are. We are not very good actors. We are what we are so that is probably another element of it.

**Didn't you and your sons Baasit, Raza and Umar used to do am-dram together?**

Yes, I played Widow Twankey. The best part was when we finished that show and went to change and two medium-sized onions fell out of my dress.

**Which past Gogglebox family do you miss the most?**

I would say Leon and June [he died in 2017, she died in 2020], but all of them have been brilliant and all of them have had moments as well. I'm just thinking about some of the things that Scarlett [Moffatt] used to say. They were just hilarious. And the Michaels had their moments as well.

**What has been the most excruciating show you've had to watch? You seem to have sat through quite a lot of Naked Attraction...**

The sad thing about Naked Attraction is you can't remember the faces of any of the people, but you do remember other things.

Another embarrassing one was that film American Pie a few years ago. I was expecting some sort of cake or pie to appear and that wasn't the case. You can understand my embarrassment. We say, 'Oh, we are pros. We are grown-ups. We're OK.' But it can get a bit hot under the collar.

**How many hours of the week are you on Gogglebox duty?**

We do one or two nights filming each week. The film crew comes at about one o'clock to set everything up. We normally start about three o'clock and we finish about 9pm. By the time they've set up and then taken the equipment away, you're looking at about eight hours.

**Which TV drama has had you the most gripped over the years?**

Line Of Duty. When it finished, I had to go back and watch it all again because there are things you've missed. That for me was the ultimate TV drama.

**Which TV show has let you down?**

The disappointment for me is those American shows with the ghost hunters.

There is no ending to them ever. I would love to see just one time they catch a ghost. It's just all the overacting of the ghost catchers.

**If you could appear in any TV show, which would it be? Your boys have teased you for having Prue Leith's hair!**

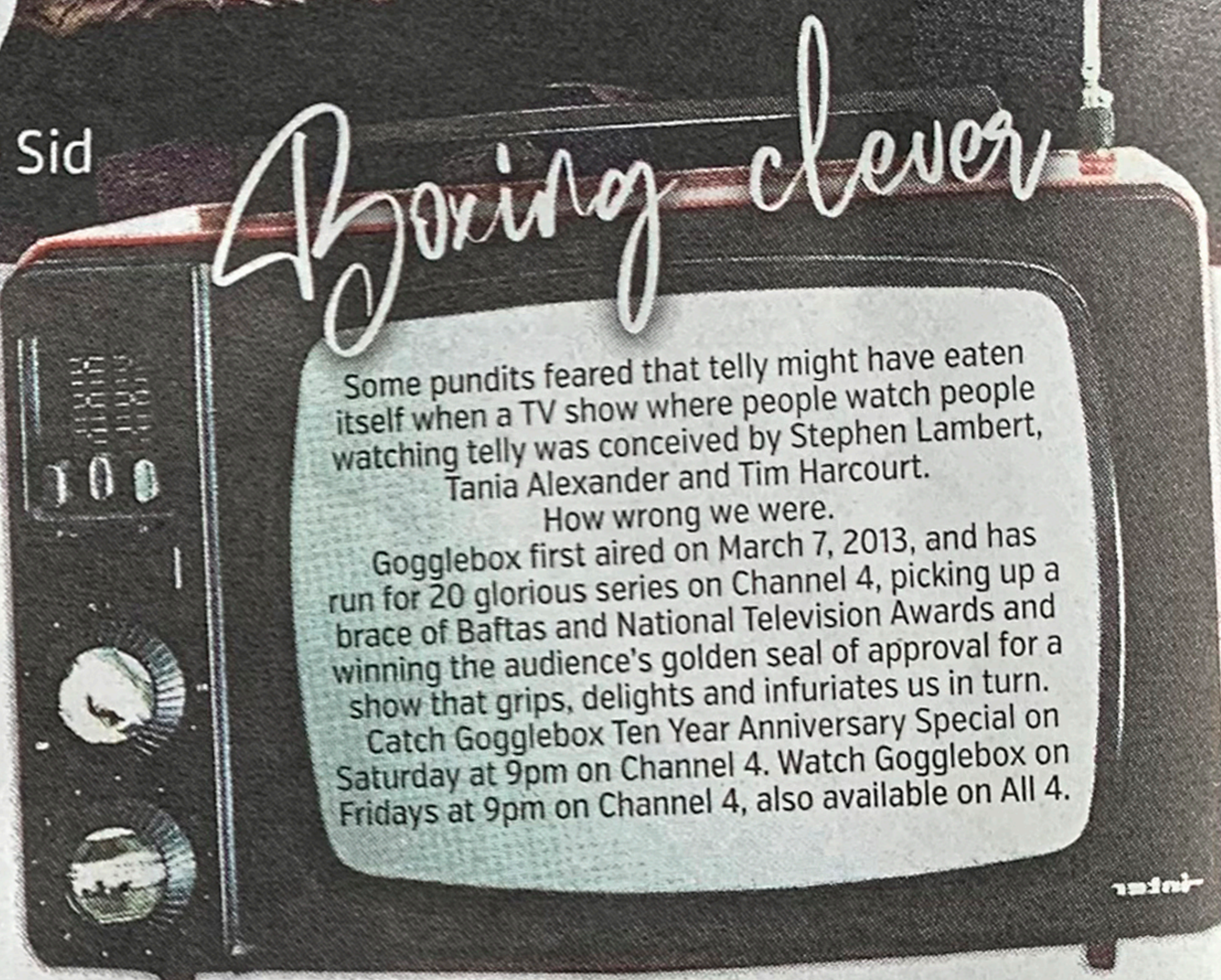
This is it, isn't it? Every time we watch something like Bake Off or Strictly or the Jungle it is usually pointed out that it would suit me. I don't know why. I'm really hopeless on all those things. I do a bit of cooking but I wouldn't say I'm so brilliant that I could do Bake Off. Although I do dad dancing, Strictly would kill me. I might have a go at I'm A Celebrity... if I didn't have to eat anything.

**Which TV show has moved you the most?**

It's when animals are involved. There was one where a mother elephant had to leave her baby behind. She needed to catch up with the rest of her herd and she couldn't manage the baby as well. That really killed me almost.

**What unusual places have you been asked for a selfie?**

Most selfie requests are at the local tip. I am a frequent user. I am usually at my worst because you have been doing some building work or digging and you are covered in mud. They seem to find that quite an attractive photoshot of me. You can't cater for all tastes, can you?



*Boxing clever*

Some pundits feared that telly might have eaten itself when a TV show where people watch people watching telly was conceived by Stephen Lambert, Tania Alexander and Tim Harcourt.

How wrong we were. Gogglebox first aired on March 7, 2013, and has run for 20 glorious series on Channel 4, picking up a brace of Baftas and National Television Awards and winning the audience's golden seal of approval for a show that grips, delights and infuriates us in turn. Catch Gogglebox Ten Year Anniversary Special on Saturday at 9pm on Channel 4. Watch Gogglebox on Fridays at 9pm on Channel 4, also available on All 4.

**Wasn't there also some incident in a car park in Derby?**

Yes, I parked the car, but I didn't have the right change for the machine. I was faffing around and a young lad spotted me. He just went berserk. He wanted an autograph but neither of us had paper or a pen. He's running around asking everybody if they've got a pen and paper. Nobody had any paper and by that time we both had to go so we called it a day.

**Do you get to keep the Bafta and NTA awards that Gogglebox has won?**

I don't think we are trusted with things like that. We would probably do something silly with them and it would be disgraceful.

**SEEING RED...**

Scarlett Moffatt became known for her killer one-liners. Here are some of her most incisive remarks...

On Lilly Cooper appearing on Penelope Keith's Hidden Villages: 'Is she p+eed or just really posh?'

On All 4's Body Fixers: 'It's like DIY SOS but for people.'

On Towie's Joey Essex visiting a medium: 'She can speak to all those dead people and yet not one of them has told her that her hairstyle is s+...'

On Simon Cowell wearing sunglasses indoors on Britain's Got Talent: 'He can because he's Simon Cowell. Who is going to go up to him and say, "You look a knob?"'



**In Loving Memory**



The show's original narrator was late comedy legend Caroline Aherne whose own creation, The Royle Family, is the spiritual forerunner of Gogglebox in TV sitcom form. We also bade sad farewells to June and Leon Bernicoff (both pictured), 82 and 83, from Merseyside; Pete McGarry from Clacton-on-Sea, Mary Cook, 92, from Bristol, Andy Michael, 61, from Brighton and the show's long-time publicist at Channel 4, the brilliant Lesley Land.



**JUST PRESS PAWS**

- Furry friends on the Gogglebox sofas**  
 Abbie & Georgia - Vinnie (Staffordshire bull terrier)  
 Dave & Shirley - Rupert & Bleu (French bulldogs)  
 Ellie & Izzi - Mick, Madge, (Italian greyhounds) Morris, Fudge (dachshund) Cookie (chihuahua)  
 Stephen & Daniel (top right) - Betsy, Babs and Princess (poodles)  
 Mary & Giles (top left) - Merlin (Tibetan Spaniel)  
 The Malones (left) - Dave and Bob (rottweilers) and new puppy Tilly (not pictured)  
 Pete and Sophie - Colin (corgi)  
 Siddiquis - cats Rocky & Tashi (tonkinese)