

= William B. Davis =

William Bruce Davis ( born January 13 , 1938 ) is a Canadian actor and director , best known for his role as The Smoking Man on The X @-@ Files . Besides appearing in many TV programs and movies , Davis founded his own acting school , the William Davis Centre for Actors Study . In his personal life , Davis is an avid water @-@ skier , lectures on skepticism at events such as the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry 's CSICon , and advocates for action on climate change . In 2011 Davis published his memoir , Where There ? s Smoke .... The Musings of a Cigarette Smoking Man .

= = Early life and education = =

Davis was born in Toronto , Canada , to a lawyer father and psychologist mother . He began his acting career as a child in 1949 , in radio drama and summer stock theatre . His cousins Murray and Donald Davis ran the Straw Hat Players in Ontario in the late 1940s and early 1950s , and rehearsed in the basement of Davis ' house . When they needed a boy they gave William his first professional acting job . He went on from there to have a career as a boy actor on Canadian Broadcasting Corporation radio before his voice broke . In 1955 he enrolled in the University of Toronto to study philosophy , but actively pursued a career as an actor alongside future actor Donald Sutherland . In 1959 , he graduated from the University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Arts in philosophy . While at university he switched his attention from acting to directing and with his partner , Karl Jaffary , took over and ran the Straw Hat Players for four years .

= = Career = =

In 1960 Davis went to England to train at LAMDA ( The London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art ) . He worked in the UK for the next five years directing in repertory theatres and acting schools . He was artistic director of the Dundee Repertory Theatre . His last position in the UK was as an assistant director at The National Theatre of Great Britain under Laurence Olivier where he worked with Albert Finney , Maggie Smith , Derek Jacobi , and Ronald Pickup among others . He returned to Canada in 1965 to work at The National Theatre School of Canada and soon , at the age of 28 , was appointed artistic director of the English Acting Section . During this period he was also active as a freelance director at major Canadian theatres . In 1971 he joined the newly formed Drama Department at Bishop 's University in Lennoxville , Quebec . While there he became the founding artistic director of Festival Lennoxville , a professional summer theatre that ran for the next decade .

Returning to Toronto in the late seventies Davis spent several years as a radio drama director and on the faculty of Humber College . In demand as an acting teacher during this period , he resumed acting after an absence of nearly twenty years . Davis earned a number of roles on stage and film before accepting the position of artistic director of the Vancouver Playhouse Acting School , which required relocating with his wife and family . Davis writes in his memoir , " And so , in the fall of 1985 , we hitched our second hand boat to our second hand car and drove across the country " .

While his time at the Vancouver Playhouse was short @-@ lived , he remained in Vancouver where he founded his own acting school , The William Davis Centre for Actors Study , a training ground for several future stars including Lucy Lawless . Acting roles became more frequent leading to his iconic role , The Smoking Man ( also referred to as " The Cancer Man " ) , on The X @-@ Files where he made frequent appearances for the next nine years . In addition to The X @-@ Files , Davis has played a wide range of roles , on series from Stargate SG @-@ 1 to Smallville and a host of television movies and other projects . From time to time he attends fan conventions , signing autographs and copies of his memoir .

In recent years Davis has returned to directing for theatre and film . He wrote and directed three short films and co @-@ wrote and directed several episodes of a television series for CBC Television , 49th & Main . In 2011 he directed two plays for The United Players of Vancouver , Waste by Harley Granville Barker and Hay Fever by Noël Coward . Most recently he directed The

Habit of Art ( 2013 ) by Alan Bennett , Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Jersey Lily ( 2015 ) by Katie Forgette and Robert Bolt ? s A Man for All Seasons at the Jericho Arts Centre in Vancouver , British Columbia .

During that period , he also aired in 10 episodes of the Canadian hit show Continuum as Older Alec Sadler on Showcase . Most recently , Davis has reprised his iconic X @-@ Files role in the six @-@ episode Season 10 . [ 17 ] Fox aired the six @-@ episode event from January 24 ? February 22 , 2016 , and enjoyed great ratings , making each four @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half @-@ hour session in the make @-@ up chair worth it for the ? iconic ? villain .

= = Personal life = =

Despite being known for his smoking character , Davis quit smoking in the 1970s ; when The X @-@ Files started up , he was given a choice between herbal cigarettes and tobacco cigarettes . At first , he chose to use tobacco cigarettes , but switched to herbal because he was afraid of becoming addicted to them again . Davis used his notoriety on the show to assist The Canadian Cancer Society in its programs to combat smoking . In 2014 , Davis donated his investments that support fossil fuels to the David Suzuki Foundation in an effort to both ethically invest , and help fund work to fight climate change . Davis is a passionate advocate for action in response to climate change , believes it is a critical issue of our time and speaks on the subject often . Taking action on a personal level , Davis drives a Tesla powered by hydroelectricity .

He is also a former national champion water skier and for a time held various records in older age divisions . In a conversation with Brendan Beiser , Davis states he holds the record for tricks in his age category , adding " I did hold the slalom record until this past year until some young whippersnapper of 65 from Ontario took the record away from me " .

In 2011 , Davis married Emmanuelle Herpin . He has two daughters , Melinda and Rebecca , from an earlier marriage . He also has two grandchildren .

= = Skepticism = =

While on The X @-@ Files , Davis was constantly challenged by The X @-@ Files fans about his non @-@ belief in the paranormal and aliens . Davis credits Barry Beyerstein and Committee for Skeptical Inquiry ( CSI ) for introducing him to the skeptic community . Davis became increasingly involved in the skeptical movement and began to give lectures as a skeptical spokesman at universities across North America and at skeptic conventions , including CSI 's CSICON in New Orleans .

When asked about his belief in the paranormal at the London Film and Comic Con in 2010 , Davis replied , " The onus is on you to prove the extraordinary ... I did a lot of research and saw where a lot of the arguments were wanting . "

Interviewed by Jacob Fortin on guilt about being a skeptic on a show that Richard Dawkins campaigned against , Davis replied that at first he had some trepidation until realizing that Dawkins " had no evidence whatsoever and presented none " that the show encouraged people to think uncritically . " The show is fiction ... it isn 't a documentary . " In another interview with Justin Trottier of Center for Inquiry Canada Davis answered similarly , adding that from his own informal polls of audiences of X @-@ Files fans it seemed there was no greater belief in the paranormal than the normal population and he comforted himself with this thought .

Asked about a debate Davis moderated with alien abduction believer John E. Mack , Davis said that many people expected him to support Mack , but they discovered that he was " way on the other side " . Davis recounted that he had some great discussions with Mack ; " He was brilliant ... he was wrong , but he was very good ... One of the problems with human intelligence is that we are so good at defending ideas that we arrived at irrationally . "

= = Filmography = =

== Film ==

== Television ==