

## BFI Southbank presents a weekend of Forensic Television April 25-26

With TV discovery *The Hidden Truth*, not seen since 1964



**Thursday 5 March 2015, London**

**BFI Southbank** will present a special weekend of screenings and events dedicated to **Forensic Television**, taking place from **April 25-26**. The weekend will look at how advances in forensics have been reflected in TV crime drama, and how factual TV programmes have reported on the world and work of forensic scientists. The highlight of the weekend will be a screening of an episode of 60s series *The Hidden Truth* starring **Alexander Knox**; the episode has long been thought **Missing, Believed Wiped** and this will be the first screening since its original transmission in 1964. The enduringly popular TV crime genre has produced some huge hits on both sides of the Atlantic and the weekend will celebrate some of the biggest, including *Prime Suspect*, *Silent Witness* and *CSI*, the latter of which will spark discussion about the ramifications of the 'CSI effect' on TV and real-life practice in a special event *The Changing Face of Forensics*. The weekend coincides with Wellcome Collection's major new exhibition '*Forensics: The Anatomy of Crime*' (26 February – 21 June).

The weekend will kick off on Saturday 25 April with *Murder Rooms: The Dark Beginnings of Sherlock Holmes* (BBC, 2000) starring **Ian Richardson**, **Robin Laing** and **Charles Dance**. Inspired by the relationship between Arthur Conan Doyle and the pioneering forensic pathologist Dr Joseph Bell, this drama sheds light on the real-life events that sparked Doyle's creation of the infamous forensic detective. Also taking place on Saturday 25 April *Just the Facts* will be a compilation of reports and extracts from documentaries that have looked at the real-life stories of forensic detection. These extracts will include *Horizon: Crime Lab* (BBC, 1973) – a comparison of crime labs in the UK and US, *Horizon: 40 Years of Murder* (BBC, 1977), a look at the work of a forensic pathologist at Guy's Hospital in London, and *Antenna: DNA in the Dock* (BBC, 1990) in which legal expert Robin White examines the doubts surrounding genetic fingerprinting. To conclude the first day will be a screening of three **50s and 60s Crime Dramas**, including an extract from the sole surviving episode of *Murder Bag* (ITV, 1957), which introduced one of ITV's earliest police heroes - Detective Superintendent Lockhart (Raymond Francis). Also screening will be an episode of *The Expert* (BBC 1968/69), a prestigious production and the first BBC2 series made in colour. The programme will be completed by a screening of *The Hidden Truth: One for the Road* (ITV, 1964). Long thought **Missing Believed Wiped**, this series followed an independent forensics team called in to work particularly tricky cases and this is the first screening of the drama since its transmission is 1964.

The programme on Sunday 26 April begins with ***The Changing Face of Forensics***, an illustrated discussion on the changing face of forensics on TV and the impact it has had on real policing methods. The event will chart the development of this drama sub-genre with clips from early examples to more recent exponents such as ***Cracker***, ***Waking the Dead***, ***Silent Witness***, ***Wire in the Blood*** and ***The Body Farm***, which all followed in the footsteps of ***Prime Suspect*** (ITV, 1991). The weekend will conclude with a screening of the first two episodes of this ground-breaking drama starring **Helen Mirren**, **Tom Bell** and **Zoë Wanamaker**. ***Prime Suspect*** completely transformed the way police procedural shows dealt with science, and had a huge influence on both sides of the Atlantic. ***Prime Suspect*** pioneered a new gory realism in the depiction of victims which, although controversial at the time, alerted programme makers to the fact that audiences had developed stronger stomachs and paved the way for shows such as the pathology-driven ***CSI*** franchise and Scandinavian dramas such as ***The Killing***.

This event will be followed in June by **Pop Forensics** (Fri 5 – Sat 6 June), a two-day event of film screenings and discussion on forensics in popular culture at Wellcome Collection, including free screenings of a selection of feature films. More information will be announced on Wellcome Collection's website in due course.

**– ENDS –**

**Press Contacts:**

**Liz Parkinson – Press Officer (Acting), BFI Southbank**  
[liz.parkinson@bfi.org.uk](mailto:liz.parkinson@bfi.org.uk) / 020 7957 8918

**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

**EVENT LISTINGS:**

**Murder Rooms: The Dark Beginnings of Sherlock Holmes**

*BBC 2000. Dir Paul Seed. With Ian Richardson, Robin Laing, Charles Dance. TRT 120min*

A drama inspired by the relationship between Arthur Conan Doyle and his tutor, pioneering forensic pathologist Dr Joseph Bell. Together they embark on a disturbing case dealing in death, drugs and disease in the highest circles and lowest depths of Edinburgh. Dave Pirie's masterful drama (a huge favourite among Sherlockians) sheds light on the real-life events that sparked Doyle's creation of fiction's first forensic detective.

**SAT 25 APR 16:00 NFT3**

**Just the Facts**

*TRT c90min*

A hosted compilation of reports and documentaries that have looked at the real-life stories of forensic detection, including extracts from:

**Home Office Forensic Laboratory at Aldermaston** (BBC 1968). Rare surviving news report on the (then) state-of-the-art crime lab technology, including an interview with lab chief Dt Egon Holden.

**Horizon: Crime Lab** (BBC 1973). This comparison of crime labs in the UK and US – which remarks on the general superiority of the British model – includes interviews with the heads of crime labs across the UK.

**Horizon: 40 Years of Murder** (BBC 1977). A look at the work of forensic pathologist Prof Keith Simpson of Guy's Hospital.

**Antenna: DNA in the Dock** (BBC 1990). Legal expert Robin White examines the doubts surrounding genetic fingerprinting.

**SAT 25 APR 18:30 NFT3**

**50s and 60s Crime Dramas Crime Bag**

*ITV 1957. 25min*

Extract from the sole surviving episode of the *Murder Bag* series (occasionally named *Crime Bag* if the featured crime wasn't murder), which introduced one of ITV's earliest police heroes – Detective Superintendent Lockhart.

**+ The Hidden Truth: One for the Road**

ITV 1964. Dir Lionel Harris. With Alexander Knox, Zia Moyheddin, Ruth Meyers. 50min

Long thought lost, this four-part series followed the cases of Professor Robert Lazard, head of an independent forensics team called in to work particularly tricky cases.

**+ The Expert**

BBC 1968/69. 50min

For this prestigious production (the first BBC2 series made in colour) the producers appointed Professor John Glaister as technical advisor, a former professor of forensic medicine and public health at the University of Glasgow. The forensic pathologist, writer and barrister Bernard Knight (best known for recovering all 12 bodies in the Fred West case) also contributed several storylines.

**SAT 25 APR 20:40 NFT3**

**The Changing Face of Forensics**

TRT 90min

Join us for an illustrated discussion on the changing face of forensics on TV and the impact it had on real policing methods. We chart the development of this drama sub-genre with clips from early examples to more recent exponents such as *Cracker*, *Waking the Dead*, *Silent Witness*, *Wire in the Blood* and *The Body Farm*, which all followed in the footsteps of *Prime Suspect*.

Tickets £6.50

**SUN 26 APR 15:50 NFT3**

**Prime Suspect**

ITV 1991. Dir Christopher Menaul. With Helen Mirren, Tom Bell, Zoë Wanamaker. Ep1 + Ep2 TRT 200min (plus interval)

This drama completely transformed the way police procedural shows dealt with science, and had a massive influence both sides of the Atlantic. It's also been quoted as a major inspiration for the pathology-driven *CSI* franchise and Scandinavian dramas such as *The Killing*. *Prime Suspect* pioneered a new gory realism in the depiction of victims which, although controversial at the time, alerted programme makers to the fact that audiences had developed stronger stomachs. See for yourself as we screen the very first episodes.

**SUN 26 APR 18:10 NFT3**

**Pop Forensics Fri 5 – Sat 6 June**

Wellcome Collection will be hosting a two-day event of film screenings and discussion to explore the way forensics is portrayed in popular culture and how this might affect the courtroom. Films include *Mystery Street*, *Manhunter* and *Murder By Numbers*. Book from 29 May at [wellcomecollection.org/forensics](http://wellcomecollection.org/forensics) or on 020 7611 2222. This is part of a series of events to accompany Wellcome Collection's free exhibition 'Forensics: The anatomy of crime,' open from 26 Feb to 21 June

**About the BFI**

The BFI is the lead body for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of British and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Championing emerging and world class film makers in the UK
- Investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

The BFI Southbank is open to all. BFI members are entitled to a discount on all tickets. BFI Southbank Box Office tel: 020 7928 3232. Unless otherwise stated tickets are £11.00, concs £8.50 Members pay £1.50 less on any ticket. Website [www.bfi.org.uk/southbank](http://www.bfi.org.uk/southbank)

**Tickets for FREE screenings and events must be booked in advance by calling the Box Office to avoid disappointment**

**BFI Shop**

The BFI Shop is stocked and staffed by BFI experts with over 1,200 book titles and 1,000 DVDs to choose from, including hundreds of acclaimed books and DVDs produced by the BFI.

**The benugo bar & kitchen**

Eat, drink and be merry in panoramic daylight. benugo's décor is contemporary, brightly lit and playful with a lounge space, bar and dining area. The place to network, hang out, unpack a film, savour the best of Modern British or sip on a cocktail.

There's more to discover about film and television through the BFI. Our world-renowned archival collections, cinemas, festivals, films, publications and learning resources are here to inspire you.

**About Wellcome Collection**

Wellcome Collection is the free visitor destination for the incurably curious. Located at 183 Euston Road, London, the venue explores the connections between medicine, life and art. The building comprises a range of gallery, research and studio spaces, a public events programme, the Wellcome Library, a café, restaurant, bookshop, and a wide range of event spaces for hire.

Wellcome Collection is part of the Wellcome Trust, a global charitable foundation dedicated to improving health. We provide more than £700 million a year to support bright minds in science, the humanities and the social sciences, as well as education, public engagement and the application of research to medicine.

**For more information about Wellcome Collection contact Holly Story, Assistant Media Officer:**

E: [h.story@wellcome.ac.uk](mailto:h.story@wellcome.ac.uk) T: 02076118248.

**\*\*\* PICTURE DESK \*\*\***

**A selection of images for journalistic use in promoting BFI Southbank screenings can be found at [www.image.net](http://www.image.net) under BFI / BFI Southbank / April 2015 / Forensic TV**