

# ITV commissions true crime drama, **Until I Kill You**, starring Anna Maxwell Martin and Shaun Evans

Published Wed 15 Feb 2023



## [Drama](#)

*[Anna Maxwell Martin - photo credit: Carla Guler] [Shaun Evans - photo credit: Faye Thomas]*

## **ITV commissions true crime drama, **Until I Kill You**, starring Anna Maxwell Martin and Shaun Evans**

**Produced by World Productions and written by Nick Stevens**

The extraordinary true story of Delia Balmer, who survived a near-fatal relationship with murderer John Sweeney, is the subject of a new four-part drama, *Until I Kill You*, commissioned by ITV's Head of Drama Polly Hill from globally

renowned ITV Studios label, World Productions.

BAFTA-winning actress Anna Maxwell Martin (*Motherland*, *A Spy Among Friends*) will take the role of Delia Balmer, whilst renowned actor and director Shaun Evans (*Endeavour*, *Vigil*) will play John Sweeney. *Until I Kill You* will premiere on ITV1 and ITVX.

Commented Anna Maxwell Martin:

*"Telling an important story with the excellent team from World Productions, producer Ken Horn, director Julia Ford and a brilliant cast is always an exciting proposition! As it is brought to life by Nick Stevens, hopefully we will do Delia due diligence."*

Commented Shaun Evans:

*"I've previously worked with World Productions and ITV separately, so I'm looking forward to joining forces to tell this story. A story that is quite rightly told through the victim's lens, Delia. We have an excellent script from Nick Stevens and I couldn't be more delighted to work with Anna."*

Based on Delia Balmer's book, *Living with a Serial Killer*, *Until I Kill You* is written by Nick Stevens (*The Pembrokeshire Murders*), and executive produced by multi-award winning World Productions CEO, Simon Heath (*Save Me*, *Line of Duty*, *Anne*) Delia Balmer narrates the ordeal she suffered at the hands of John Sweeney, and her traumatic journey through the police and criminal justice system as they attempt to prosecute him for his crimes.

The series has been commissioned for ITV by Polly Hill and Drama Commissioner, Huw Kennair Jones. Huw will oversee production of the drama from ITV's perspective.

Commented Huw Kennair Jones:

*"Delia Balmer's story is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit when facing unimaginable evil. Nick Steven's scripts have brilliantly captured the fortitude of a truly remarkable woman and her journey to achieving justice and the obstacles she had to overcome."*

*"We're thrilled to be working with Nick, Simon Heath and World Productions again, the team behind *The Pembrokeshire Murders* to bring this extraordinary story to the ITV1 and ITVX audience."*

In 1991 Delia leads an itinerant and solitary life in London working as an agency nurse. When she meets fellow free-spirit John Sweeney in a local pub, it seems like the connection she has been searching for.

As the relationship develops, Sweeney's artistic, anti-establishment persona gives way to a darker side, culminating in a series of violent attacks on Delia, during which he tells her he killed his former girlfriend and disposed of her body in an Amsterdam canal.

Sweeney is arrested but, due to a catastrophic failure by the court to realise how dangerous he is, granted bail. He immediately pursues Delia and subjects her to a horrific, near-fatal attack. She survives, but Sweeney evades capture and disappears.

Shattered by the trauma and injuries inflicted by Sweeney, Delia bravely seeks to rebuild her life. But Sweeney returns seven years later and is arrested for the murder of another girlfriend in North London. Delia's fragile recovery is shattered all over again as she has to face Sweeney in open court, her testimony vital to the prosecution case against him.

This is the story of one woman's astonishing will to survive through physical and emotional torment, despite the failings of the institutions which were meant to protect her.

Executive Producer Simon Heath commented:

*"Delia's story is a unique and powerful one of a woman who survived terrible violence at the hands of a man who should never have been free to commit his heinous crimes. Delia's story shines a light on the failings of the legal system to deal with male violence against women and so sadly still resonates today."*

The Producer is Ken Horn (The Devil's Hour, Line of Duty, The Diplomat) and the Director is Julia Ford (Everything I Know About Love, The Bay).

Nick Stevens is renowned for his work in the true crime genre and has been responsible for writing the hugely successful The Pembrokeshire Murders, a three-part drama starring Luke Evans which won the Welsh BAFTA for Drama in 2022.

Nick also collaborated with World Productions on In Plain Sight, a drama about Scottish serial killer Peter Manuel, starring Martin Compston and Douglas Henshall, which won the RTS Scotland Best Drama Award in 2017.

Screenwriter Nick Stevens commented:

*“A few months after reading Living with a Serial Killer, I had my first meeting with Delia Balmer. She was unlike anybody I'd ever met before. Still suffering from PTSD ten-plus years after John Sweeney’s conviction, Delia is, though she would never admit it, a hero. A survivor whose determination to pursue the good in life – to dance, to travel, to live - is ultimately greater than her demons. I am hugely grateful to Delia, and the police who worked with her to finally secure Sweeney’s conviction, for enabling us to tell Delia’s incredible story.”*

Filming will commence on Until I Kill You during February 2023.

World Productions are the producers of Line of Duty, Bodyguard, Vigil, Anne, Save Me, The Pembrokeshire Murders and Karen Pirie, as well as soon to be aired The Hunt for Raoul Moat and medical thriller, Malpractice, both premiering on ITV1 and streaming on ITVX.

World Productions produced the highest rated dramas of 2021 on ITV and BBC1 in The Pembrokeshire Murders and Line of Duty. World was awarded Best Independent Production Company at the Broadcast Awards in 2022 and recently won an International Emmy for Vigil.

Until I Kill You is produced in association with, and distributed internationally by, ITV Studios.

The production has received support from the Welsh Government via Creative Wales.

[end]

Press Contacts

[sarah.gaffney@itv.com](mailto:sarah.gaffney@itv.com)

Picture Contacts

[patrick.smith@itv.com](mailto:patrick.smith@itv.com)

Viewer enquiries

<https://www.itv.com/contact/how-to-get-in-touch>