

ITV commissions compelling four part drama, Ruth, about the life of Ruth Ellis, starring Lucy Boynton

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[Drama](#)

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[Photo credit: Sasha Marro]

The gripping story of Britain's last woman to hang, Ruth Ellis, has been commissioned by ITV as a four-part drama, Ruth, starring Lucy Boynton in the title role, written by Kelly Jones and produced by Silverprint Pictures (part of ITV Studios).

Set in 1955, Ruth has been commissioned by ITV's Head of Drama Polly Hill and Drama Commissioner, Huw Kennair Jones. Huw will be responsible for overseeing

production of the series on behalf of ITV. Ruth will premiere on ITV1 and the series will be available for streaming on ITVX.

Told over two parallel timelines, Ruth reveals secret truths about the case which have remained hidden for decades, poses tantalising questions about what really happened in the months before Ruth killed her lover David Blakely, and sheds light on the life of one of Britain's most infamous murderesses.

The drama depicts Ruth's entry into a dizzying upper class London world that promises so much, but ultimately delivers treachery. We follow her glamorous lifestyle as a young nightclub manageress, her abusive relationship with the man she later gunned down in cold blood, her arrest, trial and the subsequent legal fight to reprieve her before she was hanged by infamous hangman, Albert Pierrepoint, in Holloway Prison, aged just 28.

Commented Lucy Boynton:

"Ruth Ellis' story is a fascinating one. Both she and this complex case have always evoked a strong reaction, and with Kelly's insightful scripts I'm looking forward to bringing a new perspective to both familiar audiences as well as those who are unaware of her mark on British history."

Lucy has most recently appeared in ITV's three-part adaptation of Agatha Christie's *Why Didn't They Ask Evans?* adapted and directed by Hugh Laurie. Her credits also include *Bohemian Rhapsody*, *The Ipcress File* and newly released biographical film, *Chevalier*.

A compelling legal and emotional rollercoaster which explores Ruth's arrest and trial and the subsequent race against the clock to reprieve her. Ruth, is based on Carol Ann Lee's acclaimed biography *A Fine Day for Hanging: The Real Ruth Ellis Story*, and has been adapted by Kelly Jones (*The Long Call*, *Des, Baptiste*) and will be produced by critically acclaimed producers, Silverprint Pictures, whose portfolio includes *Shetland*, *Vera* and *Flesh and Blood*.

Silverprint's Creative Director, Kate Bartlett (*Shetland*, *Vera*, *Flesh and Blood*, *The Long Call*) will executive produce the series alongside Antonia Gordon, Development Director for Silverprint Pictures.

Kelly Jones will write all four scripts and Angie Daniell (*Vigil*, *The Long Call*, *Alex Rider*) will produce the series. Lee Haven Jones (*Passenger*, *Feast*, *The Long Call*) will direct all four episodes.

Commented Huw Kennair Jones:

“There is so much more to the Ruth Ellis story than we think we know. Kelly's scripts brilliantly explore not only how the emotional and physical abuse she suffered drove her to commit a terrible crime but also the desperate last-minute attempt to save her as she and her supporters battled an unforgiving Establishment.

We're thrilled to be working with Lucy Boynton and Silverprint Pictures to bring this compelling story to the ITV and ITVX audience.”

The powerful mystery of what compelled Ruth Ellis to take the life of the man she was in a passionate but toxic and volatile relationship with will reveal that there was more to this crime of passion than Ruth was prepared to say. Her silence, and resistance to speak of what happened between her and dashing racing driver, Blakely, is far more complex than she admitted.

Ruth's solicitor, the low-status but intelligent and sensitive John Bickford, starts to realise some of what she has suffered and believes they must make a case for provocation.

With stakes that could not be higher, literally life or death, Bickford begins his own investigation and uncovers details that could have saved her life had those facts been aired in court.

Commented Kate Bartlett:

“We are delighted that Lucy Boynton will be playing Ruth and know that she will bring all the subtlety, nuance and brilliance of Kelly's beautiful scripts to life. Ruth Ellis's story is such an intoxicating, fascinating and resonant one and it has been wonderful having Carol Ann Lee's definitive book about Ruth to work with. We can't wait to bring it to screen.”

With an eclectic and diverse development slate, Silverprint Pictures are committed to working with new and established voices to produce vibrant, distinctive and emotional stories for UK and international audiences across the world.

Ruth is produced in association with ITV Studios, which will handle global distribution.

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