

Luke Treadaway, David Morrissey, Elizabeth Tan, Jane Horrocks, Colm Meaney and Charles Dance cast in The Singapore Grip

Published Mon 11 Mar 2019



[Drama](#)

Luke Treadaway, David Morrissey, Elizabeth Tan, Jane Horrocks, Colm Meaney and Charles Dance cast in epic and ambitious adaptation of The Singapore Grip produced by Mammoth Screen

ITV and Mammoth Screen, part of ITV Studios, have today confirmed Luke Treadaway, David Morrissey, Elizabeth Tan, Jane Horrocks, Colm Meaney and Charles Dance are to lead the cast in ITV's *The Singapore Grip*. Rising star Georgia Blizzard will also star as leads in the highly anticipated series.

An epic story set during World War Two, *The Singapore Grip* focuses on a British family living in Singapore at the time of the Japanese invasion. The series has commenced filming in South East Asia.

Adapted from Booker Prize winner J.G. Farrell's novel by Oscar winning screenwriter and playwright Christopher Hampton (*Atonement*, *Dangerous Liaisons*), Olivier Award winning actor Luke Treadaway (*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *Ordeal By Innocence*, *Traitors*) plays the reluctant hero

and innocent abroad Matthew Webb.

Award winning actor, David Morrissey (The Missing, Britannia, The Walking Dead) takes the role of ruthless rubber merchant Walter Blackett, who is head of British Singapore's oldest and most powerful firm alongside his business partner Webb played by Charles Dance OBE (Game of Thrones, And Then There Were None).

With Webb's health failing, Walter needs to ensure the future of their firm is secure. He decides Webb's son Matthew is the perfect match for his spoilt daughter Joan (Georgia Blizzard). Matthew's idealism leaves Walter increasingly suspicious as Matthew himself falls under the spell of Vera Chiang (Elizabeth Tan), a mysterious Chinese refugee.

Jane Horrocks (Absolutely Fabulous, Trollied, Little Voice) plays Sylvia Blackett, Walter's wife and Colm Meaney (Star Trek: The Next Generation, Deep Space Nine, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof) plays Major Brendan Archer. Also joining the esteemed cast are Luke Newberry (In The Flesh) playing Walter's son Monty, Bart Edwards (UnREAL, Peep Show) as Captain James Ehrendorf and Christophe Guybet (Sakho et Mangane, Falco) as Dupigny.

The series will be executive produced by Mammoth Screen's Damien Timmer and Karen Thrusell, responsible for recent dramas including Poldark and The Witness For The Prosecution and the up-coming World on Fire for BBC One, NW and Parade's End for BBC Two and Victoria, Endeavour and Vanity Fair for ITV. Farah Abushwasha (The ABC Murders) will produce the series and Tom Vaughan (Press, Victoria, Doctor Foster) will direct all six episodes.

Commented Christopher Hampton:

"As a great admirer and, eventually, a friend of J.G. Farrell, I was delighted to be invited to adapt The Singapore Grip, a panoramic account of the disastrous loss of Singapore to the Japanese invaders in 1942. Close analysis of this great novel has only deepened my enthusiasm for the skill with which Farrell has combined the private story of the machinations, commercial and amorous, of the Blackett family and their struggle - described with Farrell's trademark subversive wit - to preserve and expand their prosperous rubber business with the unfolding of the cataclysmic events to which they remain totally oblivious until it's too late. Matthew Webb, our bespectacled protagonist, an idealistic innocent abroad, lands in the middle of all this, to find himself fiercely pursued by two beautiful women - an English heiress and a Chinese adventurer - and his story, with its tumultuous backdrop, is told in a style with echoes of Tolstoy and Evelyn Waugh, but still,

unmistakably, the unique voice of Jim Farrell."

Damien Timmer commented:

"For me, J.G. Farrell and Christopher Hampton is the absolute dream team – two of the finest writers this country has ever produced. Forty years after it was first written, bringing The Singapore Grip to the screen is a passion project for all of us. It's an exceptionally well-crafted novel which has been adapted with unique flair and mischief by Christopher. It's a privilege to be making this for ITV, and we hope this hugely entertaining and exotic saga will be a memorable treat for the audience."

Christopher Hampton is one of the UK's most distinguished writers, with a career spanning six decades. His plays, musicals and translations have won four Tony Awards, three Olivier Awards, five Evening Standard Awards and the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award; prizes for his film and television work include an Oscar, two BAFTAs, a Writers' Guild of America Award, the Prix Italia and a Special Jury Award at the Cannes Film Festival. Stage work includes Tales From Hollywood, The Philanthropist and Total Eclipse, plays adapted from novels include Les Liaisons Dangereuses, translations include Art and God of Carnage from Yasmina Reza, and musicals include Sunset Boulevard. Feature films include A Dangerous Method, Atonement, The Quiet American, Carrington (which he also directed) and Dangerous Liaisons, for which he won an Oscar.

J.G. Farrell (1935 – 1979) wrote the Empire Trilogy of novels: Troubles (1970), The Siege of Krishnapur (1973) and The Singapore Grip (1978) all of which dealt with different facets of colonial rule. He received the Booker Prize in 1973, and was retrospectively awarded the Lost Man Booker Prize in 2010. He died aged 44, drowning on the coast of County Cork while fishing.

ITV Studios Global Entertainment will be responsible for the international distribution of The Singapore Grip.

Production company

[Mammoth Screen / ITV Studios](#)

Press Contacts

jo.blanket@itv.com

Picture Contacts

patrick.smith@itv.com

Viewer enquiries

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