

BritBox UK announces raft of debut originals

Published Wed 22 Jul 2020



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London, July 22nd: BritBox UK, the streaming service created by ITV and the BBC today confirmed four original commissions.

In addition to **A Spy Among Friends**; the limited series based on the best-selling book written by Ben Macintyre and produced by ITV Studios' BAFTA award-winner Patrick Spence (Fortitude, The Eddy), BritBox UK has greenlit a raft of scripted drama. **The Beast Must Die**, **Crime** and **Magpie Murders** will debut exclusively on the UK streamer.

An original British five-part revenge thriller, **The Beast Must Die** is being produced by New Regency Television and Ridley Scott's Scott Free. New Regency is also the international distributor on the production.

Starring Cush Jumbo OBE (The Good Wife, The Good Fight, Deadwater Fell), Billy Howle (MotherFatherSon, On Chesil Beach) and Nathaniel Parker (The Inspector Lynley Mysteries, The Outcast, Vanity Fair) and based on the novel by Nicholas Blake (pen name of Poet Laureate Cecil Day-Lewis CBE), *The Beast Must Die* tells the story of a grieving mother who infiltrates the life of the man she believes killed her son. Bafta, Golden Globe & Emmy nominated Jared Harris (Chernobyl, The Crown, Mad Men) is also poised to star.

The Beast Must Die is being directed by Dome Karukoski (Tolkien, Tom of Finland), produced by Sarada McDermott (Bridgerton, Official Secrets) and adapted for the screen by screenwriter Gaby Chiappe (Their Finest, Shetland, Vera). Executive Producers are Ed Rubin and Emma Broughton for New Regency, Marina Brackenbury and David W Zucker for Scott Free, Nathaniel Parker and Gaby Chiappe.

Ed Rubin, Head of New Regency Television International said: “We are tremendously excited to be bringing Nicholas Blake’s gripping novel to the screen, as the first drama for New Regency Television out of the UK – and one of the first BritBox originals. It’s been adapted brilliantly by Gaby, and we couldn’t ask for a more talented cast and team to bring it to life.”

Marina Brackenbury, Head of TV and Film at Scott Free UK added: “*The Beast Must Die* is both intensely emotional and thrilling, with a fresh and exciting psychology at play between all the characters; Dome and our stellar cast each bring a very personal take to the material which - along with our partners New Regency, BritBox and Nathaniel Parker - we feel will undoubtedly translate as a must see for audiences.”

Irvine Welsh (Trainspotting) will adapt his first TV drama, based on his novel **Crime**, alongside long-standing screenwriting partner Dean Cavanagh (Wedding Belles). Set in Edinburgh and directed by James Strong (Liar, Broadchurch) the six-episode production will star Dougray Scott (Mission: Impossible 2, Hitman, My Week with Marilyn) as Detective Inspector Ray Lennox, who is investigating the disappearance of a schoolgirl while battling his own personal demons.

Crime is being produced by Buccaneer Media, Tony Wood and Dougray Scott. Executive producers are Irvine Welsh, Dean Cavanagh, Richard Tulk-Hart and James Strong.

Irvine Welsh said: “Delighted that BritBox have picked this up. Lennox is a compelling character for me, not so much a cop as a broken avenging angel. So

don't expect a run of the mill cop show, and nonces beware."

Crime is distributed worldwide by Cineflix Rights.

Magpie Murders is adapted from the bestseller written by Anthony Horowitz OBE. It has been commissioned by BritBox alongside MASTERPIECE on PBS and will be produced by Eleventh Hour Films.

Lauded as "a magnificent piece of crime fiction" and "an ingenious novel within a novel" by The Sunday Times, Magpie Murders topped multiple best-seller lists. Its international awards included the prestigious Macavity Award for Best Novel.

A beguiling murder mystery with a solution that will both astonish and shock viewers, the plot of Magpie Murders revolves around the character Susan Ryeland, an editor who is given an unfinished manuscript of author Alan Conway's latest novel, but has little idea it will change her life.

Jill Green, Eleventh Hour Films said, "This is an extraordinary and distinctive drama. I don't think there's ever been a crime show like it with a strong female lead treading the line between reality and fiction as she fights to uncover the truth."

Anthony Horowitz said, "Magpie Murders is my most successful novel and it wasn't easy to adapt. But I think the result is a completely original drama that will delight and beguile audiences in equal measure."

Reemah Sakaan, Group Director ITV SVOD and Chief Creative & Brand Officer BritBox Global said: 'BritBox Originals need to be bold, bingeable and distinctively British. Creating this exceptional roll call of talent, stories and productions in our first drama slate to add exclusively to the treasure trove of BritBox boxsets from every UK PSB is something no one else can do, we can't wait to bring them to subscribers.'

Kevin Lygo, ITV's Director of Television who leads BritBox UK Originals said: 'BritBox stands for the best of British and with this high calibre slate of Original Drama commissions, we are bringing the very best of UK creative talent to a UK streamer for the first time.'

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Editor's notes

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About BritBox UK

BritBox is a digital video subscription service created by the BBC and ITV. The service brings the very best in past, present and future British programming and award-winning content to viewers all in one place for £5.99 per month in HD. British TV boxsets from All 4 and British films from Film 4 will launch on the service in 2020. The service includes high quality factual and entertainment content from Channel 5 plus original British comedies from Comedy Central UK. BritBox features the biggest collection of British content available on any streaming service, and brand new commissions for British production companies specifically created for BritBox. BritBox also offers expert curation and playlists that will enable viewers to easily find programmes they know and discover new favourites via web, mobile, tablet, connected TVs and streaming devices including Fire TV, Apple TV & Chromecast. Content on BritBox can be downloaded and viewed offline where rights allow.

About New Regency

Founded in 1991 by renowned producer Arnon Milchan, New Regency is actively engaged in entertaining the world. The company has produced some of the most successful and critically-acclaimed films of all time with over 140 films and more than 50 television series in the company's vast library, including Academy Award®-winner "The Revenant" (2016), the back-to-back Academy Award®-winning Best Pictures, "12 Years A Slave" (2014) and "Birdman" (2015) as well as the 2018 box office hit "Bohemian Rhapsody." New Regency is dedicated to continuing to foster its unparalleled filmmaker relationships and today boasts partnerships with the most acclaimed and sought-after creative forces in the industry.

New Regency has recently focused efforts in expanding its content creation to include a dedicated team focused on television development and production for a global audience. Based out of London, New Regency Television International draws from the company's long-established relationships with the best writing, directing, and producing talent. The division is focused on developing and producing high-end, authored and distinctive scripted content for the global marketplace.

New Regency's upcoming film slate includes Adrian Lyne's DEEP WATER, starring Ben Affleck and Ana de Armas, EVERYBODY'S TALKING ABOUT JAMIE, a film adaptation of the acclaimed musical starring Richard E. Grant, Sharon Horgan, Sarah Lancashire and newcomer Max Harwood, an untitled original film from David O. Russell starring Christian Bale, Michael B. Jordan and Margot Robbie, as well as Robert Eggers' THE NORTHMAN starring Alexander Skarsgård, Nicole Kidman and Willem Dafoe.

About Scott Free

Scott Free, founded in 1995, is the film and television production vehicle of acclaimed filmmaker Ridley Scott. In the 25 years since Scott Free was formed, the company has earned over 100 Emmy nominations with 22 wins, and 28 Golden Globe nominations for its television projects. Current productions include the forthcoming HBO Max sci-fi epic, RAISED BY WOLVES, the first-ever television series helmed by Ridley Scott, a drama about androids raising human children in an outer space colony; THE GOOD FIGHT, the critically-acclaimed CBS All Access spin-off of THE GOOD WIFE recently ordered to season five; an inventive heist anthology series, JIGSAW, to shoot in 2021 for Netflix; and Steve Knight's upcoming adaptation of Charles Dickens' classic GREAT EXPECTATIONS for FX/BBC1. Other recently hailed Scott Free productions include Amazon's epic drama, THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE; two seasons of the AMC psychological horror series, THE TERROR and the BAFTA-winning TABOO for FX/BBC1.

About Buccaneer Media

Buccaneer Media is a London-based international content production company led by joint CEOs Tony Wood and Richard Tulk-Hart.

The company's mission is to partner with the industry's best talent, global streaming platforms and broadcasters around the world to create premium scripted content for the international marketplace. Buccaneer currently has projects with partners including ITV, Viaplay, Netflix, Wildbrain, NRK and Acorn.

Buccaneer is currently collaborating with a world-class stable of literary and directing talents including Lars Lundström, Oystein Karlsen, Charley Miles, Ingeborg Topsoe, Harry Wootliff, Irvine Welsh, Dougray Scott, Elizabeth MacNeal, Rose Lewenstein, Baltasar Kormakur and John Brownlow.

Previous productions include 'Desi Rascals', the award-winning co-production with Gurinder Chadha ('Bend It Like Beckham') for Sky and scripted drama 'Marcella' which aired to global critical acclaim and saw Anna Friel winning an Emmy for her

lead performance as Marcella Backland. The crime thriller for ITV and Netflix was written and created by Hans Rosenfeldt ('The Bridge'). Season 3 will air worldwide in 2020.

Buccaneer Media was formed as a joint venture with Cineflix Media in 2013.

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About Eleventh Hour Films

Established in 2010, Eleventh Hour Films is an ideas driven independent production company with a breadth of experience producing drama of the highest quality, both in the UK and internationally. EHF is currently enjoying critical acclaim with the globally successful Alex Rider series, a thrilling 8 part adaptation of the best-selling coming-of-age spy novels from Anthony Horowitz. The series premiered on Amazon Prime Video in the UK in June 2020, has sold in over 100 territories worldwide, and is launching on IMDb TV in the USA on November 13. The series stars Otto Farrant as Alex Rider, alongside Stephen Dillane, Vicky McClure and Andrew Buchan.

The company's other productions include Safe House (ITV), New Blood (BBC One), Foyles War (ITV), Collision (ITV).

About MASTERPIECE

Winner of 83 Primetime Emmys® and 16 Peabody Awards, MASTERPIECE has been essential Sunday night viewing for millions of fans since 1971. Susanne Simpson is the executive producer and Rebecca Eaton is the executive-producer-at-large for the series. Funding for MASTERPIECE is provided by Viking and Raymond James with additional support from public television viewers and contributors to The MASTERPIECE Trust. Presented on PBS by WGBH Boston, MASTERPIECE is known for recent hits such as Sherlock, Downton Abbey and Victoria, and beloved classics such as Upstairs Downstairs, Prime Suspect, The Forsyte Saga and Poldark.

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