

Press Release

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JOHN LE CARRÉ THRILLER *THE LITTLE DRUMMER GIRL* AND AN EPIC ADAPTATION OF *LES MISÉRABLES* LEAD BBC FIRST'S SLATE FOR 2018/19



BBC First today announced an impressive raft of new dramas which will premiere on the channel in 2018/19 with stars like **Idris Elba**, **Alexander Skarsgård**, **Michael Shannon**, **Lily Collins**, **Dominic West**, **Tim Roth**, **Christina Hendricks** and **Jenna Coleman** heading to screens.

Highlights include an adaptation of **John le Carré's** spy thriller *The Little Drummer Girl* from the makers of *The Night Manager*; an epic reworking of **Victor Hugo's** literary masterpiece, *Les Misérables*; *Baptiste*, a spin-off from the hugely successful *The Missing*; and *Press*, a series set in the rival newsrooms of a left-leaning broadsheet and a thriving tabloid.

Idris Elba makes a welcome return to the role of *Luther* in what promises to be the most thrilling series yet; Tim Roth, Christina Hendricks and **Genevieve O'Reilly** return to the Canadian Rockies for a second series of the dark crime drama *Tin Star*; and new series of ratings hits *Peaky Blinders*, *Victoria*, *Call The Midwife* and *Death in Paradise* will all come to the channel in 2019.

A trailer of BBC First's upcoming drama can be viewed [here](#)

Tim Christlieb, Director of Branded Services, BBC Studios, Australia and New Zealand, said: "This line-up is absolutely packed full of everything BBC First stands for – brilliant storytelling, immaculately produced and jam-packed full of the best acting talent. It definitely promises to keep BBC First on its growth trajectory, which has seen the channel increase its audience share each year since 2015*. Nowhere else will you see such an incredible range of premium British drama in one place. And, as viewers change the way they view, we have responded by offering extended catch-up periods on some of our biggest titles."

In the year to date, live audiences on BBC First have seen an increase of 25% YOY for Total People and 49% for P25-54.** This has made the channel an attractive destination for advertisers and sponsors with Travel Associates and Smeg both signing on as channel sponsors in 2018.



Speaking at the launch, Liam Keelan, BBC Studios' Global Scripted Portfolio Director, said: "There is more investment in British drama than ever before. The audience's appetite for drama shows no signs of decreasing, and the BBC is the biggest commissioner of drama in the UK, accounting for 47% of drama commissioned across free to air, pay TV and SVOD. The battle for on and off screen talent is high but BBC Studios has invested in a network of independent producers, as well as producing and investing in shows in our own right, and continues to work with the best in the business."

BBC FIRST HIGHLIGHTS:

THE LITTLE DRUMMER GIRL

Based **John le Carré's** spy thriller, *The Little Drummer Girl* is the latest adaptation from the team behind the BAFTA, Emmy and Golden Globe winning series *The Night Manager*. Starring **Alexander Skarsgård** (*Big Little Lies*), **Florence Pugh** (*Lady Macbeth*) and Academy Award nominee **Michael Shannon** (*The Shape of Water*), the series is directed by visionary filmmaker **Park Chan-wook** (*Old Boy*, *The Handmaiden*). Brilliant young actress Charlie strikes up an acquaintance with an intriguing stranger while on holiday in Greece, but it rapidly becomes apparent that his intentions are far from romantic. The man is Becker, an Israeli intelligence officer, who entangles her in a complex and high stakes plot orchestrated by Israeli Spymaster Kurtz. Set in the late 1970s, yet sharply contemporary, *The Little Drummer Girl* weaves a dynamic and exciting story of espionage and international intrigue, love and betrayal.

LES MISÉRABLES

Adapted by **Andrew Davies** from Victor Hugo's 19th Century classic, *Les Misérables* stars **Dominic West** as Jean Valjean, **David Oyelowo** as Javert and **Lily Collins** as Fantine. The series brings to life a vast and unforgettable cast of characters and tells the story of Valjean, a former convict unable to escape the shadow of his past life, and his relentless pursuit by the chilling police officer Javert. Their cat and mouse relationship plays out against the epic backdrop of France at a time of civil unrest.

LUTHER SERIES 5

Golden Globe winning Idris Elba returns to the iconic role of DCI John Luther with a fifth series created by Emmy-nominated writer **Neil Cross**. Luther and new recruit D.S. Catherine Halliday played by **Wunmi Mosaku** investigate a series of horrific killings in London. But as the case brings him closer than ever to the nature of true evil, a reluctant Luther must also face the ghosts of his own past. Striding back into the line of fire, he must choose who to protect... and who to sacrifice. Whatever his next move, it will have devastating consequences for those around him – and will change John Luther forever.

BAPTISTE

Tchéky Karyo reprises his role as French detective Julien Baptiste from *The Missing* in a spin-off series. Baptiste and his wife are on a visit to Amsterdam when the Chief of Police – who also happens to be an old girlfriend – seeks out his help due to his renowned and methodical crime-solving skills. He is rapidly embroiled in a case that looks beyond the beautiful streets, canals and house of

Amsterdam to the seamy underworld beneath. The series also stars **Jessica Raine** (*Patrick Melrose*) and **Tom Hollander** (*The Night Manager*).

PRESS

Written by **Mike Bartlett** (*Doctor Foster*) and set in the fast-paced and challenging environment of the British newspaper industry, *Press* explores the personal lives and constant professional dilemmas facing the journalists who work at two rival newspapers. The series follows their lives as they attempt to balance work and play, ambition and integrity, amid the never-ending pressure of the 24-hour global news cycle and an industry in turmoil. The series stars **Charlotte Riley** (*Peaky Blinders*) as the talented and hardworking Deputy News Editor of The Herald, a left-leaning broadsheet; **Ben Chaplin** (*Apple Tree Yard*) as the charming and manipulative Editor of The Post; **David Suchet** (*Poirot*) as the CEO of the multimedia conglomerate that owns The Post; and **Brendan Cowell** (*Love My Way*) as the News Editor of The Herald.

TIN STAR SERIES 2

Tim Roth (*Pulp Fiction*) returns as Jim Worth, the alcoholic former London detective who moved to the town of Little Big Bear in the Canadian Rockies to escape his troubled past. That quiet life was shattered when he took on the oil company that dominates the town and re-awoke his violent alter ego in order to protect his wife and daughter after his son is killed. The second series picks up where the first left off and sees his daughter Anna seeking refuge from her parents with a family in a religious community near the town. It's not long before she discovers that the seemingly idyllic family have a disturbing secret of their own. The series also stars **Christina Hendricks** (*Mad Men*), **Genevieve O'Reilly** (*Glitch*) and **Abigail Lawrie** (*The Casual Vacancy*).

VICTORIA

Starring **Jenna Coleman** (*Doctor Who*) and **Tom Hughes** (*Paula*), series three promises some new faces, more drama and more intrigue. Starting in 1848 it covers a turbulent and uncertain time for both Europe and the monarchy. With revolutions on the continent and the Chartist movement reaching its peak in London, Victoria is under pressure from the government to leave London for her own safety and beneath the façade of their united bond, Victoria's relationship with Albert is at breaking point. **Laurence Fox** joins the cast as wayward Foreign Secretary Lord Palmerston and **Kate Fleetwood** as Victoria's sister, who makes an unexpected return into the Queen's life.

CALL THE MIDWIFE

The Christmas Special will guest star **Miriam Margolyes** (*Harry Potter*) as the forthright and indefatigable Sister Mildred who arrives at Nonnatus House together with four Chinese orphans. Having fled China, the child refugees were found abandoned in Hong Kong and are being adopted in the UK as part of the World Refugee Project. With Christmas preparations in full flow and the midwives busy caring for the expectant mothers of Poplar, these unexpected visitors cause joy and chaos in equal measure.



Series 8 starts in the spring of 1964 with the eagerly anticipated birth of the Queen's fourth child and two new Sisters who have been sent to live and work at Nonnatus House.

DEATH IN PARADISE

Ardal O'Hanlon returns as DI Jack Moone. The Saint Marie police are joined by new recruit, Officer Ruby Patterson (**Shyko Amos**), who also happens to be Commissioner Patterson's niece, which gives the team a challenge or two.

Images are available [here](#)

An embeddable promo is available [here](#)

* Source: OzTAM National STV Panel, 2am-2am, Jan15– Jul18, Total People, Consolidated 7

** Source: OzTAM National STV Panel, 2am-2am Jan18 – Aug18 v STLY Live

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About BBC Studios

BBC Studios, a global content company with British creativity at its heart, is a commercial subsidiary of the BBC Group. Formed in April 2018 by the merger of BBC Worldwide and BBC Studios, it spans content financing, development, production, sales, branded services and ancillaries. BBC Studios' award-winning British programmes are internationally recognised across a broad range of genres and specialisms. It has offices in 22 markets globally, including seven production bases in the UK and production bases and partnerships in a further nine countries around the world. The company, which makes 2500 hours of content a year, is a champion for British creativity around the world and a committed partner for the UK's independent sector. BBC Studios has revenue of £1.4bn, and returns around £200m to the BBC Group annually, complementing the BBC's licence fee and enhancing programmes for UK audiences.

About BBC Studios in Australia & New Zealand

The BBC Studios business in Australia and New Zealand is primarily content sales and branded services, with a newly established production arm. It wholly owns seven channels: BBC First, BBC UKTV, BBC Knowledge and CBeebies on Foxtel and Fetch TV in Australia; BBC Living on Fetch TV; and BBC UKTV and BBC Knowledge on Sky TV in New Zealand. It distributes great British content from the BBC and other British producers to free-to-air, subscription channels and SVOD platforms and works with partners to bring BBC Studios DVDs, consumer products and live events to the local market. The new production arm in Sydney will produce BBC formats for the local market and create new IP.

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