

UK: CUE

British Film, Theatre & Television On Both Sides of the Atlantic

www.uk-cue.com Spring 2012

West End to Broadway

Enduring Exchange Carries On Theatrically

Doctor Who

A Long Strange History, Its Rebirth Continues

Writer on a Roll

Abi Morgan on Writing for Oscar Winner Meryl Streep

Also in this issue

The Downton Abbey Craze
2012 Olivier Awards Noms
James Bond's Literary Roots
Kevin Spacey's Richard III
Latest 'Masterpiece' Detectives
and much more...

England's Glory

Carey Mulligan Poised For A-List

By Graham Fuller

THE TRUTH IS SHE NEVER LEFT YOU.



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Why This Magazine?

The catalyst was Steve Jobs's unfortunate passing last fall, prompting me to take the publishing plunge and act on a 'Think Different' concept embedded in my brain for some time – nearly five decades, in fact.

As a self-avowed Anglophile, I'm able to trace my Anglophilia back to when I was a kid in the mid-1960s collecting Matchbox cars that were manufactured in East London. Around the same time I fell under the spell of Beatlemania.

While in the fifth grade I distinctly remember once after school watching the 'Million Dollar Movie' on New York's Channel 9 and being mesmerised by the opening sequence of the British film *Georgy Girl* in which Lynn Redgrave gets a new hairdo and then washes it out on the streets of Swingin' London. Obviously my 10-year-old self missed all the heady subtext of *Georgy Girl's* relatively dark themes of unwanted pregnancy and adultery. In any case, it was the first British movie I ever saw, not including Dick Van Dyke's often maligned Cockney accent in *Mary Poppins*.

To help things along, my parents' record collection at the time included the soundtrack of *My Fair Lady*, starring Rex Harrison and Julie Andrews, giving me my first taste of British theatre, albeit aurally. During my impressionable

teenage years, of course, I ingested large amounts of *Monty Python's Flying Circus*.

My fate thus sealed, I was destined to publish and edit *UK:Cue*, the world's first magazine to spotlight the best 'British Film, Theatre and Television on Both Sides of the Atlantic'. Why *Cue*? Because all three art forms require cues from a director.

The timing for such a publication seems to be perfect, given last year's royal wedding, in which 22.7 million individuals stateside tuned in at 6 a.m. (EST) to watch William and Kate tie the knot, the Diamond Jubilee celebration this spring of the Queen's 60 years on the throne, and this summer's Olympics in London.

Meanwhile, Brits seem to be infiltrating American mainstream television, as epitomised by *Downton Abbey's* massive success – the second most-viewed TV show in the US during the Super Bowl.

The next Monday night I was watching *Two and a Half Men*. Ashton Kutcher's character Walden has an English girlfriend Zoey (Sophie Winkleman). She and her daughter dominated the episode with various Britishisms. Then the premiere of *Smash* featured several English characters, including a theatre director (Jack Davenport) working on a Broadway show, only to be interrupted by a K-Y Jelly commercial

whose talent was a British couple.

UK:Cue will highlight not only current productions emanating from Britain, but also overlooked classics from yesteryear. There will be lots of variety. In this issue alone, you'll find: costume drama, sci-fi, Shakespeare, action-adventure, horror, soap operas and detectives.

Future issues will be sure to cover comedy, World War II, contemporary drama and documentaries. Sorry, no plans for much coverage of reality TV.

To all the naysayers who told me I was crazy to launch a print magazine (a digital app is also in the works) in the 21st century, all I can say is that the proof is in the pudding of the following pages, and my stellar Anglo-American editorial team has delivered the goods.

Indeed, the purpose of this 'prototype' edition of *UK:Cue* was to prove the concept that one magazine could cater to the needs of Anglophiles and expatriates alike who require a British accent in their entertainment fare.

I welcome feedback, especially from potential investors. Cheers,

Larry Jaffee is the founder of **UK:Cue**. A media professional with more than a quarter-century of journalism experience, Jaffee regularly contributed articles to *The New York Times* at the age of 23, was published in *Rolling Stone* at 24 and edited the legendary resort newspaper *The Fire Island News* at 25. Since then, Jaffee has run various magazines, conferences and websites in the entertainment and media industry. For the past 20 years he has published and edited continuously the *Walford Gazette* (www.wgazette.com), a quarterly newspaper published with permission from the BBC – the world’s only publication dedicated to *EastEnders*, and is the co-author/editor of the books *Albert Square & Me: The Actors of EastEnders* and *Walford State of Mind*. He currently blogs about entertainment and music for Huffington Post UK and Rock’s Backpages.

Jonathan Boorstein is a freelance journalist covering film, food, design, travel and the arts. A social media enthusiast, he tweets as @solodiner and contributes the “Manhattan Dining Alone” column to Examiner.com.

Paula D’Alessandris is the Artistic Director/Founder of Mind The Gap Theatre, dedicated to producing the best new British plays in New York City in an exchange of new works between the US and UK (www.mindthegaptheatre.com). She is also a freelance theatre director, and a lifelong Anglophile obsessed with Walkers Thai Chili Crisps.

Randee Dawn is an entertainment journalist based in New York City, who given her druthers would rather be full-timing it out of London. She has written for publications including *Variety*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *NME* (*New Musical Express*) and TODAY.com, and is the co-author of *Law & Order Special Victims Unit: The Unofficial Companion*.

Barnaby Edwards is an expat living in New York City. He’s been a *Doctor Who* fan from age 6 and now runs the DWNY (*Doctor Who* New York) fan group and occasional events under the banner Who York. You can find out more at dwny.org. He has an essay in *Outside In*, a forthcoming book on classic *Doctor Who*, due to be published this summer by ATB Publishing.

Graham Fuller is a film editor at artinfo.com and a film critic at theartsdesk.com. He also contributes to *Vanity Fair*, *Film Comment*, *Sight & Sound*, *Cineaste* and *The New York Times*. He is the editor of *Potter on Potter* and *Loach on Loach*, both published by Faber and Faber. His website is inalonelyplace.com.

Charles S.P. Jenkins was born in London and came to work in the US after living in Paris, Amsterdam, Bern and Toronto. For most of his life, he was an academic, but decided to go to medical school in his late forties. He recently embarked on his third career as a writer and has published four novels. He also has two websites where he publishes short stories of London (eastend-memories.org and cspj-londontales.blogspot.com).

Pamela Knight is a journalist, translator and copy editor. She was born in England and lived in France and Switzerland, where she worked at Business Europe, before transplanting to the US. Her work experience in New York has ranged from reporter at *Sports Illustrated* to bilingual editor at UNICEF, the United Nations Children’s Fund.

Budd Margolis is an American who has lived in London for 25 years and has not lost his accent. He won an Emmy for a documentary he directed in East Germany and France and then became head of factual programming for Scandinavia’s first commercial TV channel. In London Margolis worked for TWI, Sky TV and Eurosport, QVC UK and British Telecom.

Michael McCarthy, a man of few words except when he is writing plays or analyses of *EastEnders* characters, lives in Hartsdale, New York.

Donna Marie Nowak is a freelance writer and cartoonist with over 100 publication credits, including three books, including her latest, *Just Joan: A Joan Crawford Appreciation*. She also writes mysteries and thrillers for the radio, and is currently writing her first novel.

Teri Robinson is a New York City-based writer whose work has appeared in *The New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *BusinessWeek*, *Inc.* and numerous publications and websites. Her screenplays and short films have been screened at film festivals around the world and have won numerous writing and production awards.

Elizabeth Sharland trained at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. Her first job was with the Old Vic Company, touring Australia when Katharine Hepburn and Robert Helpmann played the leads. In her first job in the US she was Yul Brynner’s PA on his last tour of *The King and I*. She has had two plays produced in New York, and three in London. She has written eight books on the theatre, including *The British on Broadway* and *The Private Life of George Bernard Shaw*. Her website is www.sharland.com.

LONDON – The most prestigious event on the UK's theatrical calendar, the 36th Olivier Awards with MasterCard will be held here at the Royal Opera House on Sunday, 15 April 2012, hosted by West End stars Michael Ball and Imelda Staunton.

For the first time, there will be a live-show relay of the awards to New York's Jazz at Lincoln Center celebration, where an invited audience of VIPs, including British stars on Broadway and high-profile industry figures, will gather to celebrate the awards.

The Royal Shakespeare Company's *Matilda The Musical* leads this year's

2 0 1 2

OLIVIER AWARDS

MasterCard

Nominations

Olivier Awards with MasterCard nominations, recognised in 10 categories, the maximum number of eligible awards for a musical at this year's awards. Multi award-winning lyricist and musical theatre royalty Sir Tim

Rice is to be honoured with the Special Award at the ceremony.

Established in 1976 as the Society of West End Theatre Awards to celebrate the range and quality of talent in the world capital of theatre, the Oliviers were rebranded in 1984 in honour of Lord Olivier and are administered by the Society of London Theatre.

Nominations in the principal categories, announced 15 March, are as follows:

For the full list of nominees and the final winners, please visit: www.olivierawards.com.

BEST NEW PLAY

COLLABORATORS at the Cottesloe
JUMPY at the Jerwood Theatre
Downstairs at the Royal Court
THE LADYKILLERS at the Gielgud
ONE MAN, TWO GUVNORS at
the Lyttelton

BEST REVIVAL

ANNA CHRISTIE
at the Donmar Warehouse
FLARE PATH
at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING
at Wyndham's
NOISES OFF
at the Old Vic

BEST ENTERTAINMENT AND FAMILY

DERREN BROWN – SVENGALI
at the Shaftesbury
MIDNIGHT TANGO
at the Aldwych
POTTED POTTER
at the Garrick
THE TIGER WHO CAME TO TEA
at the Vaudeville

BEST ACTRESS

CELIA IMRIE
for *Noises Off* at the Old Vic
LESLEY MANVILLE
for *Grief* at the Cottesloe
KRISTIN SCOTT THOMAS
for *Betrayal* at the Harold Pinter
MARCIA WARREN
for *The Ladykillers* at the Gielgud

RUTH WILSON

for *Anna Christie* at the Donmar
Warehouse

BEST ACTOR

JAMES CORDEN
for *One Man, Two Guvnors* at the
Lyttelton
BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH and
JONNY LEE MILLER
for *Frankenstein* at the Olivier
DAVID HAIG
for *The Madness of George III* at the
Apollo
DOUGLAS HODGE
for *Inadmissible Evidence* at the Don-
mar Warehouse
JUDE LAW
for *Anna Christie* at the Donmar
Warehouse

BEST ACTRESS IN A MUSICAL

KATE FLEETWOOD
for *London Road* at the Cottesloe
SARAH LANCASHIRE
for *Betty Blue Eyes* at the Novello
**THE FOUR PERFORMERS PLAY-
ING MATILDA**
in *Matilda The Musical* at
the Cambridge
SCARLETT STRALLEN
for *Singin' in the Rain* at the Palace

BEST ACTOR IN A MUSICAL

BERTIE CARVEL
for *Matilda The Musical* at the
Cambridge
NIGEL LINDSAY
for *Shrek The Musical* at the Theatre
Royal, Drury Lane

REECE SHEARSMITH

for *Betty Blue Eyes* at the Novello
PAULO SZOT for *South Pacific* at
the Barbican

BEST NEW MUSICAL

BETTY BLUE EYES
at the Novello
GHOST THE MUSICAL
at the Piccadilly
LONDON ROAD
at the Cottesloe
MATILDA THE MUSICAL
at the Cambridge
SHREK THE MUSICAL
at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane

BEST MUSICAL REVIVAL

CRAZY FOR YOU
at the Regent's Park Open
Air Theatre
SINGIN' IN THE RAIN
at the Palace
SOUTH PACIFIC
at the Barbican
THE WIZARD OF OZ
at the London Palladium

BEST DIRECTOR

SEAN FOLEY
for *The Ladykillers* at the Gielgud
NICHOLAS HYTNER
for *One Man, Two Guvnors* at the
Lyttelton
RUFUS NORRIS
for *London Road* at the Cottesloe
MATTHEW WARCHUS
for *Matilda The Musical* at the Cam-
bridge

6th Annual BritWeek™

LOS ANGELES – For the sixth consecutive year, **BritWeek** celebrates British excellence in California this 24 April to– 7 May. Events here as well as in Orange County and San Francisco throughout the two weeks showcase the US-UK Special Relationship and involve co-operation from US and UK government entities,

leading businesses and local organisations of all sizes.

The programme features art and design, film and television, music, theatre, literature, science and technology, fashion, retail, cuisine, pro sports, vintage cars, business innovation awards, star-studded red-carpet receptions and charity galas.

Details of all events can be found at www.britweek.org. Highlights below.

24 April

BritWeek Red Carpet Launch 6.30 p.m.—8.30 p.m.

An exclusive, invitation-only, Champagne Reception at a private estate will launch the Sixth Annual BritWeek.

25 April

Business Innovation Awards, **Four Seasons Hotel, Beverly Hills** 6.00 – 9.30 pm

Businesses with joint operations in the UK and California will be recognised by the Brit Week and UK Trade & Investment for their achievements in innovations (Design, Technology, Service Provision, Philanthropy, and Marketing & Communications) before an audience of elite international commercial players, as well as the wide California business community. Awards will be presented at a special dinner. Keynote: TED's most downloaded speaker Sir Ken Robinson

26 April

Art Battle Block Party and BritWeek Artist Competition
Farmers and Merchants Bank and Continental Gallery, Downtown Los Angeles
Thank You For Creating (T4C) is the first-of-its-kind global artists competition that celebrates the 2012 Summer Games in London by promoting the spirit of unified competition amongst the British and Angeleno artistic communities. Winners will have their works shown at the prestigious Finalists Exhibition in London during the Summer Games from July-August 2012.
www.thankyouforcreating.com

27 April

Film & TV Summit **Intercontinental Hotel** **Los Angeles** 8.30 am – 12 noon

Sponsored by *Variety* magazine, the half-day Summit and Luncheon will feature insightful discussions on current topics and explore the challenges and opportunities from both creative and business perspectives in the two most globally successful filmmaking clusters in the world: Britain and Hollywood. Each session will be led by a panel of US and UK entertainment industry leaders from the film, television and digital media worlds. Keynote speaker: Graham King, producer of *Hugo*

1 May

Fashion and Style event **Essentials London,** **Melrose Avenue**

3 May

Lecture at UCLA Faculty Center
4pm
Professor of American History at Oxford University, Dr. Pekka Hamalainen will give a lecture his prize-winning book *The Comanche Empire*.

4 May

'An Evening with Piers Morgan'
6 pm-10 pm
The Beverly Wilshire Hotel, Beverly Hills
BritWeek Gala Dinner
CNN's Piers Morgan will be honoured at the highly anticipated BritWeek Gala Dinner, which annually honours notable



CNN talk show host Piers Morgan will be honoured 4 May

public figures and raises critical funds for important causes. Past honorees have included AEG Worldwide President and CEO Timothy J. Leiweke, Sir Richard Branson and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. The dinner will be attended by 500 guests, including prominent leaders from high-profile business, aerospace, manufacturing, legal and entertainment companies, local political figures, and many distinguished guests of British and European Consulates.

5 May

BritWeek Christopher Guy Red Carpet Design Awards
Special Guest:
British Designer Philip Treacy
Christopher Showroom, West Hollywood
6-8 pm



A Very Special

The media exchange between America and the United Kingdom has several challenges quite apart from the vastly different realities of commerciality and perceptions of risk.

American showbiz entrepreneurs have always had to be more ambitious than the Brits when it comes to exploiting TV. The Yanks know business. Great series such as *Breaking Bad*, *Mad Men*, *Boardwalk Empire*, *The West Wing*, *The Sopranos*, *The Wire*, *Desperate Housewives* and many others have succeeded and drawn much deserved popularity and accolades across the British Isles and the Continent. As channel capacity exploded in what was once a monopolised national TV channel market across Europe, so too did the demand for content, and America had plenty of affordable content to provide.

The Brits started work in the protected environment of the BBC – at times colloquially referred to as “Auntie” – and focused on culture “period pieces” and the ability to work in a risk-adverse creative environment. Such endeavours were seen as contributing to the national fabric, as benefit-

ted a national TV channel subsidised by the £145.50 (\$230.50) annual TV tax, which raised \$5.8 billion in 2010–2011. Not at all like the constant fund-raising that PBS has to endure. Today, much of the creative genius for American TV resides on the wealthy cable networks HBO, AMC, Showtime and others.

British and European TV and film concepts are very often re-engineered for the American audience while American fare and formats generally end up unaltered on UK screens. The European audi-

ence is able to tolerate and adapt to different cultures more readily than the American audience, mostly because geography has always made this skill a necessity. But clearly, as cultures are exposed to each other, terms, phrases and slang are mixing into the everyday jargon of US and UK society. One can listen to this influence across all strata of society, from the high end to Pop and street culture.

British film production is growing, as success after success has fuelled the investment interest in this industry. *The King's Speech* was cre-

The American classic TV series *All in the Family* (right) was based on the British TV series *Till Death Do Us Part* (below).



Relationship

ated for an estimated \$15 million and has earned over £375 million, and the *Harry Potter* series continues to be profitable.

talent from abroad. Viewing the Academy Awards from Britain, one would think it was a British affair with either a great or good outing

British and European TV and film concepts are often re-engineered for the American audience while American fare and formats generally end up unaltered on UK screens.



Historically, there is a long tradition of British influence on American culture. Walt Disney, the factory studios and TV companies bought, borrowed and lifted stories from the very beginning and employed actors, writers and other creative

for the British-connected candidates and winners.

British programmes such as *All in the Family*, *Three's Enough*, *Steptoe & Son* (which became *Sanford & Son*), *One Foot in the Grave*, *The Simpsons*, *Antiques Roadshow*, *Who*

Wants to Be a Millionaire? (admittedly somewhat similar in format to the 1954 American show the *\$64,000 Question*), *American Idol*, *Britain's Got Talent*, *The X Factor*, *The Office* and others, have created a vibrant exchange that has fostered the non-virtual English language and culture exchange – a 'special relationship' and connection between the markets. Many of these formats are sold across the world where they are localised and enjoy remarkable success.

Interest in other European productions is growing as well in both markets. The Americanised versions do not always have as much success as the ninth-season series of *Shameless*. In my opinion, *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* by Columbia Pictures with Daniel Craig is not nearly as gripping as the Danish-funded Swedish Stieg Larsson film series. The Americanised version of the Danish TV series *The Killing* was diluted and drab compared to the subtitled Danish TV version I screened.

Technology is changing our viewing habits, and access is exploding across multiple platforms. We now see poor-quality cellphone videos on the national news, and a man chasing and screaming at a dog in Richmond Park will gain more traffic than some evening broadcast fare. Standard definition channels suffer when high definition is available, and most TVs sold today are connected to the Internet and known as smart TVs.

Viewing trends are growing, and British production houses will have to step up their game and accept as much risk as early explorers once did, to match the global opportunity and demand. □



NY Theatre Scene

This season we can look forward to several amazing shows transferring from the West End to Broadway. Among them the highly anticipated return of Andrew Lloyd Webber/Tim Rice's *Evita*. Director Michael Grandage brings his 2006 production of this classic musical to the Marquis Theatre, featuring Ricky Martin and Michael Cerveris. The fabulous Elena Roger reprises her role as the First Lady of Argentina, Evita Peron.

Venue: Marquis Theatre, 1535 Broadway

Previews begin March 15; opening April 5

For tickets: 800-745-3000 or visit www.ticketmaster.com www.evitaonbroadway.com

The London pop-musical *Ghost* arrives at the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre this spring. Based on the 1990 film of the same name, *Ghost* follows Sam who, after being murdered in a robbery, tries to warn his girlfriend Molly of the danger she is in by using a questionable medium, Oda Mae Brown. Bruce Joel Rubin adapts his own Academy Award-winning script for the stage. Music and lyrics by Glen Ballard and Dave Stewart (Eurythmics). Matthew Warchus (*La Bête*, *The Norman Conquests*) directs.

Venue: Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 West 46th Street

Previews begin March 15; opening April 23

For tickets: 800-745-3000 or visit www.ticketmaster.com www.ghostonbroadway.com

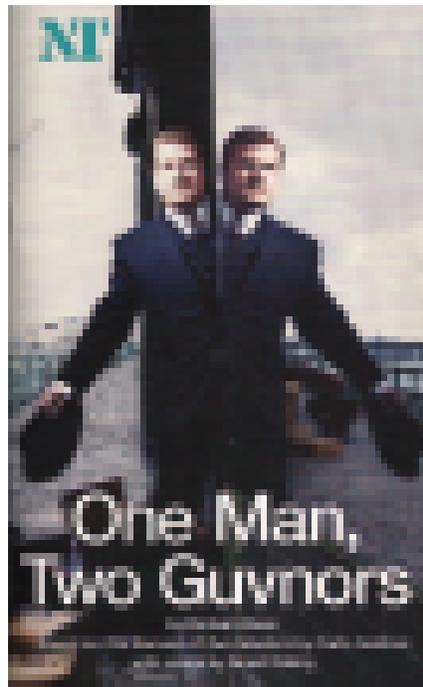
Olivier nominee Tracie Bennett comes to Broadway as Judy Garland in this five-star production of Peter Quilter's *End of the Rainbow*. Directed by Terry Johnson (Olivier Award winner, *La Cage aux Folles*) the show is set not long before her death, as Judy Garland prepares for her Talk of the Town season in London. With a six-piece onstage band and classic numbers this is a must-see for any Judy Garland fan.

Venue: Belasco Theatre, 111 West 44th Street

Previews begin March 19; opening April 2

For tickets: 212-239-6200/800-432-7250 or visit www.telecharge.com endoftherainbowbroadway.com

The highlight of the upcoming season has to be the transfer of the National Theatre's fabulously funny



James Corden takes *One Man, Two Guvvners*, to Broadway, following a successful West End run.

One Man, Two Guvvners to Broadway. Nicholas Hytner expertly directs Richard Bean's hysterical take on Goldoni's *The Servant of Two Masters*. James Corden (*Gavin & Stacey*, *Doctor Who*) is outstanding as manic and ravenous Francis, desperately trying to keep his two employers from finding out about each other. Wonderfully witty as well as expertly slapstick, this is one play not to be missed.

Venue: Music Box Theatre, 239 West 45th Street

Previews begin April 6; opening April 16

For tickets:

212-239-6200/800-432-7250 or visit www.telecharge.com onemantwoguvvnersbroadway.com

More British theatre in New York City this spring:

Mind The Gap Theatre presents the US premiere of Georgia Fitch's *adrenalin...heart*, a 70-minute roller-coaster ride through a doomed affair.

Venue: Space on White, 81 White Street

Runs April 26–May 20

For tickets: 212-352-3101 or visit www.theatermania.com www.mindthegaptheatre.com

Roundabout Theatre presents a new production of Simon Gray's comedy *The Common Pursuit*.

Venue: Laura Pels Theatre, 111 West 46th Street

Previews begins May 4; opening May 24

For tickets: 212-719-1300 www.roundabouttheatre.org

There is certainly plenty of the Best of British to be seen this spring in NYC! □



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Central is holding auditions/interviews now for entry in October 2012. Contact us for details and course information.

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Channel Hopping Ahead

No Kitchen Required (3 April, BBC America)

This original “adventure cooking competition series” from the Beeb’s home in America mixes *Top Chef* with *Survivor* (sort of) as they throw three chefs into a remote location where they will have to hunt, forage and collect ingredients to make a meal that will impress the locals. Can we even hope one of those chefs will be Gordon Ramsay?



Queen Elizabeth II will be feted on 5 June with an ABC-televised concert, featuring an all-star line-up, commemorating her 60th year on the throne.

Richard Hammond’s Crash Course

(16 April, BBC America)

The one member of the UK’s *Top Gear* who can speak from experience about what it’s like to be in an actual car crash, Hammond – aka “Hamster” – will journey across the US to learn how to operate America’s largest and most dangerous vehicles. He’ll have only days to figure out how to master these oversized monstrosities, which will lead to suspense – but hopefully no further injuries.

The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Concert

(5 June, ABC)

Her reign is older and even more legendary than the Doctor’s, and as she hits 60 years on the throne the music world has decided to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II with some classical and modern musical numbers. The concert, which currently features performances from Kylie

Minogue, Stevie Wonder, Paul McCartney, Tom Jones and Elton John, will take place onstage just outside Buckingham Palace. (Wonder if she’ll ask them to turn down the volume toward the end of the day!) Downside: It’ll only be fully available on British TV, but ABC will show highlights of the 4 June concert the following day.

Doctor Who (Fall, BBC America)

While the next 14 episodes of *Who* have just started shooting, “when” is the real question on everyone’s mind. The answer: Not soon enough. Matt Smith (The Doctor) is returning, the Ponds (Karen Gillan and Arthur Darvill) will have one last major adventure with their leader, and guest stars confirmed include Rupert Graves, David Bradley and Mark Williams. Oh, and of course: There will be a new companion.

Copper (Fall, BBC America)

Think police, not the metal and you’re on the right track. The original crime drama from *Homicide: Life on the Street*/*Oz* team of Tom Fontana (co-creator with *Southland*’s Will Rokos) and producer Barry Levinson is set in 1860s New York City and focuses on an Irish-American policeman (Tom Weston-Jones) who works in one of the city’s roughest neighbourhoods. He pairs up with the son of a wealthy industrialist (Kyle Schmid) and an African-American physician (Ato Essandoh), all of whom are all haunted by a shared Civil War experience. Sure, it’s American drama – but with a decidedly British flair.

Chelsea General (Fall, TNT)

Although David E. Kelley’s (*Ally McBeal*, *The Practice*, *Harry’s Law*) new medical drama takes place in the US – and is based on CNN medical correspondent Sanjay Gupta’s forthcoming novel, *Monday Mornings* – the real draw for true Anglophiles will be the casting of Jamie Bamber in a lead role. As a star vascular neurosurgeon, he’ll probably have to put on his Yank accent, but we all know that the actor in *Battlestar Galactica*/*Law & Order: UK* is a London boy at heart. □

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Abi's Words, Meryl's

the more controversial political leaders of the 20th century, crafted by a playwright-turned-screenwriter who seems to have a unique perspective on shaping challenging, multilayered and not always sympathetic characters for both the small and large screen.

The daughter of a theatre director and an actress, Morgan was behind not just *The Iron Lady* this year, but also the script for the rule-breaking *Shame* and the critically acclaimed BBC series, *The Hour*, which will air a second series of episodes later this year. She's a busy woman – but never too busy to want to delve into Thatcher, history and the uses of power. She spoke to *UK:Cue* TV Editor Randee Dawn.

UK:Cue: What were the

inherent challenges in portraying the kind of power Margaret Thatcher wielded – were you concerned about walking the line between sympathy and monstrosity?

Abi Morgan: Obviously, she's iconic. So inspirational to women, but she's also reviled. My starting point was I wanted to look at power and the counterpoint of power, and what it meant to look back at that power. Looking at our Prime Ministers now and what hap-

When Abi Morgan started out writing a script about former UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, she couldn't have known that *The Iron Lady* she was forging would ultimately win portrayer Meryl Streep her third Academy Award, which is exactly what happened at the end of February.

Yet even if the film received mixed reviews, no one could question that the iconic actress had been given a kind of present: a thoughtful, insightful look at one of

Photo: Richard Saker

pens to them once they're no longer in cabinet. When you've become Prime Minister you've reached your limit, and there's

Oscar

nowhere else to go. Taking on someone like Margaret Thatcher you have to balance the

sheer volume of events and breadth of experience and moments that are owned by the public – and that can be

If you're going to write anybody vividly and commit to that writing, you have to live in their shoes for a while.

overwhelming. Hers is a varied, complicated life and you were trying to find a simple arc through that much material. It became about what I took out as much as what I put in.

UK:Cue: You were initially inspired by an article written by Thatcher's daughter Carol, who noted that her mother was experiencing dementia. How did that give you a starting point?

Morgan: When I took this on it was also meant to be a study of a brilliant mind that becomes refracted with age and decline. We all die washing the teacup, whether you're prince or pauper – so to me that was interesting. But the challenge with Margaret Thatcher is that she's reviled and revered by so many, and I wanted to get into some of those challenges – a sense of isolation, which is inherent in being where the buck stops. Her philosophy was life to the power of one. And that in and of itself, the conviction that took this girl from Grantham to somewhere – you have to weigh that journey against the legacy that she left be-

hind. I was writing a very personal story, but a public life.

UK:Cue: Were there specific issues you had to deal with that wouldn't have come up had she been male?

Morgan: One of her cabinet ministers said he thought her class was a bigger hurdle than her sex. I think certainly some of the fury that has come out about her and some of the hatred people have felt towards her has been magnified be-

cause she was a woman and defied expectations, but what was really extraordinary about her is she came from a completely different class than the rest of her cabinet. She was an extraordinary leader and in many ways both man and woman in her approach to politics. Also, she had a unique father, and surrounded herself in many ways with some novel men. Her father was hugely supportive of her career, and he pushed her, so he was her role model.

UK:Cue: Did you end up empathizing with your protagonist, then?

Morgan: If you're going to write anybody vividly and commit to that writing, you have to live in their shoes for a while. One can appreciate the challenges and pressures of what it means to be Prime Minister. She still had this almost myopic drive to her – she only slept four hours a night; if you read her memoirs you see again and again there is this incredible work ethic. I found that compelling and in some ways admirable. She was a kind of polymath – a biochemist who

trained as a lawyer and then a homemaker with twins and then went into politics. But part of her brilliance was also her downfall; she became so enamoured with her own perspective that it became harder to filter the opinions of others.

UK:Cue: Last year *The King's Speech* made a real splash during awards season; this year we had several historically-based films, including *The Iron Lady*, winning prizes left and right. Why do audiences like seeing history-based films, above and beyond whether they're just done well?

Morgan: I think we use our past to filter our present, so there's something in historical characters we recognize. We have some investment with them. *The King's Speech* was extraordinary because everyone used to talk about the brother Edward, and then you saw this other prince come out of the shadows. The job of the filmmaker, writers and actors is to bring these characters out of the shadows. I'm fascinated with historical figures, but it's also an act of creation – the point of commenting on a historical figure is to put them in the context of our times.

UK:Cue: You weren't nominated for your writing at this year's Academy Awards, but you did get nominations from BAFTA for both *The Iron Lady* and *Shame*. What was it like to have the spotlight on yourself?

Morgan: They're very different films, and will be judged in very different ways. And thank God – I think all the focus was on Michael (Fassbender, star of *Shame*) and Meryl. Just cancel me out. ☐

The West End to Bro

It is very easy to make sweeping statements about the difference between the British theatre scene versus Broadway and the American theatre. Any thespian who travels between London and New York attending openings and perhaps closings of plays and musicals, has their own opinion, their likes and dislikes, and it is interesting to compare notes.

In 1964 Richard Burton played the title role in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* for 137 performances on Broadway, having previously played it on the London stage. The New York production was made into a Warner Bros. film that was distributed to US cinemas. Burton duels here with John Cullum as Laertes. ▼



During the golden age of the West End ('40-'50s) when Sir Laurence Olivier, Vivien Leigh, Sir Ralph Richardson, Sir John Gielgud, Dame Edith Evans, Sir Alec Guinness and a host of other celebrities were playing either in the West End or at the Old Vic, Broadway producers were bidding to bring them over to New York. Alexander Cohen was the leader in arranging the transfer of productions, including Peter Cook and

Dudley Moore in *Beyond the Fringe*; *Home* by David Storey, starring Sir John and Sir Ralph, which won the NY Drama Critics Circle Award; Dario Fo's *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, starring Jonathan Pryce; Harold Pinter's *The Homecoming*, directed by Sir Peter Hall; Richard Burton's *Hamlet*; Peter Shaffer's *Black Comedy*, directed by John Dexter, which introduced Michael Crawford and Lynn Redgrave to Broadway; and Chekhov's *Ivanov*, starring Vivien Leigh and Sir John. Ticket prices were reasonable and the productions were sold out. There seemed to be more straight drama than musicals. Broadway had its own stars but they seldom travelled to London to perform.

Sir Noël Coward, Sir Terence Rattigan and Graham Greene were the popular playwrights, not forgetting Shakespeare. When the Oliviers brought a season of his plays to New York just after the Second World War they caused a sensation on Broadway. Sir Noël's plays are still very popular to this day.

Then Off-Broadway came into being. Here you could see new American plays, by creative writers. Many actors enjoyed working in these productions, because they were not usually revivals, or musicals, but part of the fabric that gives us good playwriting and new drama, the subject matter often not being commercial enough for

Broadway. The same is true of the Fringe theatres in London.

Then, of course, came Sir Cameron Mackintosh and Baron Andrew Lloyd Webber and the mega-musical! They opened on both sides of the Atlantic. Drama and straight plays suddenly were no longer as popular. Who could compete with these spectacular productions? Broadway theatres raised their prices to cover the enormous costs for these productions, and going to see a show now cost nearly double.

Critics wrote that people could only afford to attend a show for a special event, an anniversary, a birthday or some other celebration because of the ticket prices. Going to see a serious dramatic play was no longer so desirable. Most drama moved to Off-Broadway and Off-Off-Broadway or to the subsidised theatres, which could afford to produce them.

Musicals became the stuff of Broadway. They were also popular in London but the straight plays still flourished in the West End even when the mega-musicals opened, and they still do.

The Royal National Theatre and the Old Vic are still keeping traditional drama alive, helped by a legacy of celebrated actors and actresses. The legendary actors like the Oliviers built up their reputations by working for years in one company – the Royal Shakespeare Company or the National – whereas today, actors cannot afford to do this as film work is much more lucrative, so they travel far and wide

dispersing their talents, therefore losing some of their following and fans who adore those West End actors. Kevin Spacey who has been

Last year, the Royal Shakespeare Company, playing in the exact replica of their theatre back home, presented an extraordinary Shake-

on the ground in front of the stage and be transported back to Elizabethan times without paying a fortune. Mark Rylance devoted many

adway Connection



▲ *Billy Elliot The Musical* closed this past January on Broadway after a successful run that extended 13 Nov. 2008 - 8 Jan. 2012. The show was based on a 2000 film, and was first adapted for the West End stage in 2005. It won an Olivier Award for Best New Musical in 2006 and Best Musical Tony Award in 2009.

the director at the Old Vic since 2003, is the exception: he seems to be able to juggle three balls in the air, with his directing and producing, as well as Hollywood filmmaking.

The same applies on Broadway. Actors leave to make films, because they can't afford to play on Broadway for very long, especially with multimillion fees waiting for them in Hollywood. It wasn't so long ago that people in the profession were dismayed if a favourite actor in the theatre accepted a Hollywood contract.

Richard Burton, for example, who had been offered the directorship of the Old Vic, and had made his name playing Shakespeare, shocked his fans and followers when he left the Old Vic and went off with Elizabeth Taylor.

Now that Actors' Equity on both sides of the Atlantic have relaxed the rules concerning transfers of actors, we will see more US actors in London and vice versa.

team have also been working for a number of years on these visionary ventures, a truly remarkable step forward towards transferring the best of London theatre and thereby giving New York audiences a rare opportunity to see them live.

Because Shakespeare was British, followed by centuries of playwrights, actors and producers, it seems as if British productions will always be popular in New York even though American drama has its own wonderful historic legacy. Alan Alda took *Our Town*, Thornton Wilder's classic play, to London, and it was great to have an American actor play the character of the Stage Manager on the West End stage.

It seems ironic that an American actor, Sam Wanamaker, raised the money and was directly responsible for the rebuilding of Shakespeare's old theatre, the Globe. It took Wanamaker many, many years to do, and the Globe is now one of the leading attractions in London. You can sit

spere season in the Park Avenue Armory in Manhattan. It was a brilliant success and one that will long be remembered. The Brooklyn Academy

years to establishing the new theatre venue as its first director, as well as its lead actor. As Sam Wanamaker had died before the theatre opened, Mark invited Sam's daughter Zoe to recite Shakespeare at the opening ceremonies, which was a very inspiring and moving event.

There have been attempts to convert the old circular fort on Governor's Island off Manhattan into a replica of The Globe, but so far no success. If an American could do it in London, maybe it will take a Britisher to do it in New York.

Considering how much the theatre scene has changed in the last 10 years it is interesting to see what direction commercial theatre will take. Obviously Broadway producers still think that casting a Hollywood actor, or a well-known star, will help the box office, and it usually does.

Now that the National Theatre has begun filming their productions we can also watch National Theatre Live at some prestigious cinemas throughout the US. It has just been announced that this year's Olivier Awards ceremony (see page 6) will have a live feed to show the best of the West End productions to Broadway audiences to boost tourism.

The theatre scene in London for the coming season is full of exciting productions. *Matilda the Musical* from the Royal Shakespeare Company comes direct from Stratford-upon-Avon, *Singin' in the Rain* comes from its success at the Chichester Festival, and there is the revival of George Gershwin's

Continued on page 30



Cover Story

The latest in a long line of English roses transplanted to America, albeit impermanently, Carey Mulligan may yet fare better in Hollywood than Madeline Carroll, double Oscar-winner Vivien Leigh, Deborah Kerr, Julie Andrews and Julie Christie. Her technical brilliance and emotional

England's Glory

By Graham Fuller

intelligence have so far led her to two great film performances, in 2009's *An Education*, her breakthrough, and 2010's *Never Let Me Go*, and two on the stage, in the 2008 Broadway production of *The Seagull* (imported from London's Royal Court) and off Broadway in the 2011 adaptation of Ingmar Bergman's film *Through a Glass Darkly*.

Carey Mulligan crosses the pond

If there is a contemporary English model for success in America, it is the beloved Kate Winslet, but Mulligan, it seems, lacks Winslet's natural ebullience or gregariousness. Nor is it entirely clear what she wants from her career, although it's self-evident from her choices so far that acting in roles of increasing psychological depth is infinitely more important to her than red-carpet fame. It's telling that when in 2009 she was on the publicity party circuit with Colin Firth, with whom she shares a publicist, the newcomer asked him not to introduce her to celebrities.

And when *The New York Times's* Richard Goldstein hosted a Sunday afternoon talk with Mulligan in January and described her as "a genius" and "the greatest actress of her generation", he clearly embarrassed a woman who couldn't be less vainglorious, and who is possibly still shy. Voiced in public in front of Mulligan, these compliments seemed excessive; in retrospect, it's difficult to argue that they're not founded in reality.

She isn't a showy actress either, but one who finds her way to the truth in subtle ways. A measure of Mulligan's unsettling talent is that in *Shame* (2011), a film as awkward as it was controversial, she should cut to the heart of its sexual neurosis in a scene that is outwardly serene but loaded with pain and damage. Mulligan played Sissy, a blowsy lounge singer in her early twenties who has a habit of cutting herself and is an unwelcome guest at the Manhattan apartment of her sex-addicted brother Brandon (Michael Fassbender). Incest – it's not clear with whom – or some other psychosexual trauma has blighted the lives of these sibs.

Mulligan is off-kilter in the scenes in which she overwhelms Brandon with affection, though whether that's because the character's forced coltishness sat uneasily with the actress or because Brandon's instant flinching from any expressions of intimacy exaggerated Sissy's effusiveness is hard to tell; maybe it was a little of both.

However, Mulligan's haunting nightclub rendition of 'New York, New York', which elicits a tear from the stony Brandon, lifted the movie onto a higher plane. The director

Steve McQueen held a close shot on Mulligan, suddenly glamorous with her crimson lips and golden ringlets, for most of the song, rendered calmly and perfectly by Sissy, but with a kind of drowsy, solipsistic madness. It is beautiful and terrible, a song of narcosis – of necrosis. The lines "I'm leaving today" and "I want to wake up in a city that doesn't sleep" have never sounded more ominous. (Never mind Bryan Ferry or Cassandra Wilson, I want my album of Carey Mulligan jazz standards now.)

The lyric "If I can make it there, I'll make it anywhere" has special resonance, of course, for the 26-year-old actress. She has already made it in New York.

Her portrayals of the fatalistically romantic Nina in *The Seagull* and of the schizophrenic Karin in *Through a Glass Darkly* were quiet triumphs. As Nina faced the eclipse of her dreams, Mulligan wept through her lines towards the end of *The Seagull* on the night I saw her (and apparently on others); sitting ten rows away from her, I found it hard not to reciprocate. The arc of Karin, who strips both physically and mentally, was more of a slow, inexorable decay, and thus more chilling. In the

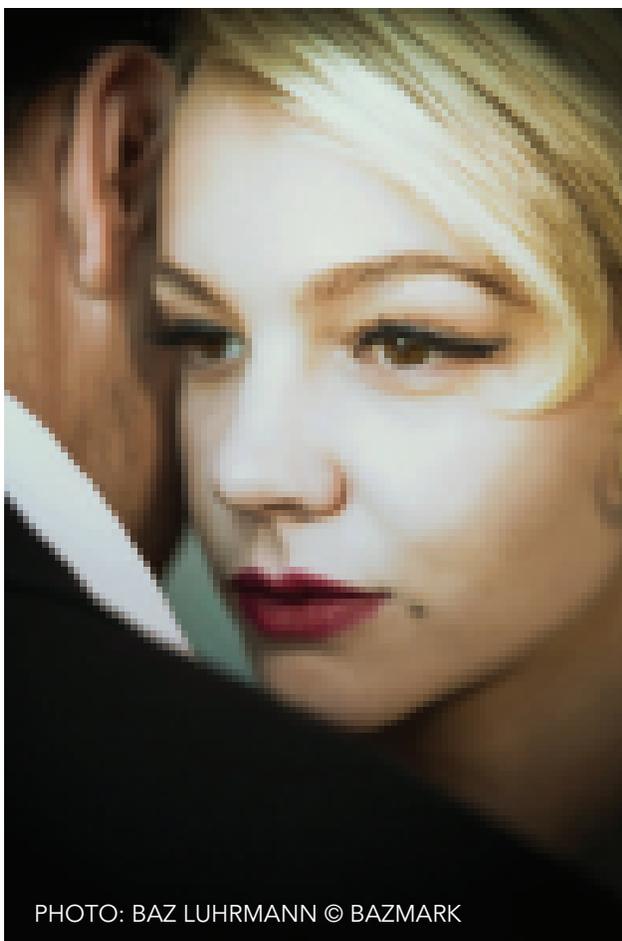


PHOTO: BAZ LUHRMANN © BAZMARK

Mulligan photographed 2 Nov. 2010 in New York auditioning for the role of Daisy Buchanan in the forthcoming *The Great Gatsby*.

Mulligan's stage portrayal of the schizophrenic Karin going through a slow, inexorable decay in the Atlantic Theater Workshop's *Through A Glass Darkly* was 'chilling.' Shown here with Ben Rosenfield.



West End and on Broadway, Mulligan should do her Ophelia before it's too late and her Desdemona right after.

The thought of her doing *A Doll's House's* Nora Helmer and Miss Julie is no less tantalising, for didn't Ibsen and Strindberg have an actress like Mulligan in mind when they wrote these roles a hundred years before her birth in Westminster on 28 May 1985?

When Mulligan's great ingénue turn in *An Education* made her a star overnight, she was frequently contrasted with Audrey Hepburn, because of the faint resemblance of her character, Jenny Mellor, to Hepburn's gamines, desperate for experience and exposed to the mentoring of older men, in *Roman Holiday* and *Funny Face*. But the comparison was not entirely help-

ful. Full of nervous energy, Hepburn was a garrulous actress with an endearingly brittle attitude. Mulligan is an infinitely more interior and quietly reactive actress: remember the chastening scenes in *An Education* in which Jenny, a sophisticated schoolgirl diverted from her path to Oxbridge by the lure of a champagne lifestyle, contemplates the hollowness of the lover, David (Peter Sarsgaard), who has inefficiently devirginised her.

She is even more mournfully stunned – and magnificent – in the scene in *Never Let Me Go* where her character, the 'carer' Kathy H, and the boy she loves, the doomed organ donor Tommy D (Andrew Garfield), are told that there never had been a deferral plan for donors in love: death awaits him and then her in short order.

American cinema still poses a big question for Mulligan. Despite her Best Actress Oscar nomination for *An Education* and her magazine cover-girl status, Mulligan has yet to conquer Hollywood. She has worked for Michael Mann (blink and you miss her prostitute in 2009's *Public Enemies*) and Oliver Stone (as Gordon Gekko's daughter in the following year's *Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps*) and was excellent as the young mother wooed by Ryan Gosling's character in last year's *Drive*, although some said she was miscast. The acid test will be her Daisy Buchanan, her first studio lead, opposite Leonardo DiCaprio, in Baz Luhrmann's *The Great Gatsby*, a prestige picture due for a Christmas Day release and, perhaps, a raft of Oscar nominations.

It's evident from her choices so far that acting in roles of increasing psychological depth is infinitely more important to her than red-carpet fame.

When Mulligan's great ingénue turn in *An Education* made her a star overnight, she was frequently contrasted with Audrey Hepburn.

There is good cause to believe this Brit is right for Daisy, a quintessential American role. Early in her career, Mulligan emerged as a naturally sympathetic actress. Encouraged by *Gosford Park* and *Downton Abbey* writer Julian Fellowes, she found her way into the 2005 Jane Austen adaptation *Pride & Prejudice*, playing a silly, giggly Kitty Bennet. That same year, she was sweet, grave, anxious and beautiful as Ada Clare, the orphan weighed down by her lover's ru-

Mulligan is too intent on being challenged to settle for likeability: she has excelled as weak, selfish, or blinkered characters, too.

inous obsession with a lucrative legal victory in the Dickens miniseries *Bleak House*. Anyone who saw these teenage performances could have predicted her rise.

Doctor Who cultists then acclaimed her for her sleuth Sally Sparrow, the nerveless protagonist – a post-modern Nancy Drew – of a techno-Gothic-tinged 2007 episode called 'Blink'. In TV's *My Boy Jack*, also from 2007, Mulligan's Elsie fiercely opposed the wishes of her jingoistic father, Rudyard Kipling, to send her brother, played by Daniel Radcliffe, to the Western Front during World War I (where, in reality, Lieutenant Jack Kipling was killed in 1915). She was so intriguing as the witness of that tragedy of wrong-headed paternalism that you wondered what became of Elsie Kipling (who lived on, a philanthropist, until 1976).

Yet Mulligan is too intent on being challenged to settle for likeability: she has excelled as weak, selfish, or blinkered characters, too. In the 2006 miniseries *The Amazing Mrs. Pritchard*, she was Emily Pritchard, the eldest daughter of the eponymous supermarket manager (Jane Horrocks), who makes a stand for ordinary people's rights and is rushed to power as the new British Prime Minister (pure wish-fulfilment for anti-



**An Education:
Breakthrough role**

Thatcherites). Emily's response to her mother's election is immediately to go off the rails. She disastrously poses topless for a national tabloid and plummets into slatternliness as a failing university student. The source of her misery is not so much her mother's ascension, however, than an incriminating secret held by her father (Steven Mackintosh); her furious, damning confrontation with him cut through the perception that Mulligan was going to be typecast as a costume-drama maiden.

So did her Isabella Thorpe, in the 2007 ITV film of *Northanger Abbey*, her second Austen. Here was an entrancingly feckless Mulligan – coquettish, cunning, utterly false – and one with a décolletage. She was no less pleasing in a tiny role in *When Did You Last See Your*

Father? (2007). She played Rachel, a young woman who is earnestly desired by the young protagonist, Blake, who's on holiday with his dad (Jim Broadbent), but who is clearly turned on more by the dad's ceaseless flirtatious banter. (Poor Matthew Beard, who played both Blake and the youth orchestra friend who's enamoured of Jenny in *An Education* but is completely overshadowed by David, the playboy con man who whisks her off to Paris. Lucky Peter Sarsgaard, who as well as playing David was Trigorin to Mulligan's Nina.)

Emily, Isabella and Rachel all illustrate Mulligan's capacity for playing women who aren't especially nice (although in Emily's case at least there are mitigating circumstances), and whoever said that Daisy was nice? Mulligan's job in *The Great Gatsby* will be to make Daisy charming, shallow, frivolous, fickle, cynical, bored, insecure, and irreducibly alluring, without making her seem like a misogynistic construct.

Several A-listers under 30 come to mind who could get four-fifths of the way there, and one or two are more obviously dazzling and seductive than Mulligan, or more comfortable with being sardonic. She alone, though, has the capacity to radiate all of these qualities without sacrificing empathy – which will be the key to making Daisy not only tolerable but fascinating. It will be a Geiger counter for Mulligan's 'genius', and for her ability to inhabit a sensibility forged from Hollywood glamour, materialism, vanity, and the erosion of what Americans think of as their core values. Who's to say she won't pull it off? ☐

The current Doctor Who, as played by Matt Smith

courtesy of BBC America

Doctor Who: Really Bigger on the Inside

Doctor Who. Two words that mean so much to so many generations of British children. It represents Saturday afternoons in front of the telly; silly knock-knock jokes; deadly pepperpots; police telephone boxes that are bigger on the inside than the outside, and adventures galore throughout time and space. It is a British institution and as quintessentially English as tea and biscuits.

For the uninitiated: This is a show about a man with two hearts who travels around time and space in a machine disguised as a British 1960s police box. He fights injustice wherever he finds it, feels that human beings are “quite his favourite species”, and when his body wears out he can change it for a completely different one. This last facet of the character is one of the strokes of genius that has helped

ensure the show’s longevity, by giving a plot-based reason for changing the lead actor periodically, and thus refreshing the whole show on a regular basis. All long-running shows go through metamorphosis over time, but with *Doctor Who* it is built into its very DNA.

The current lead writer of the show, Steven Moffat, also known for *Sherlock*, *Coupling*, and as the writer of the recent *Tintin* movie,

calls it the “greatest idea for a television show ever,” and I am hard pressed to disagree with him. One week you can have an adventure in revolutionary France, and the next be fighting monsters on the Planet Flim Flam in the year 5 billion! There’s no lack of variety.

First broadcast the day after Kennedy was assassinated, the show is getting ready to celebrate its 50th year – a staggering milestone for its fans and the BBC, which has had a love-hate relationship over the years with this strange little series that is now one of its flagship productions. Originally conceived as a children’s show, the Beeb figured it could both educate and entertain in the time slot between Saturday afternoon sports and Saturday evening entertainment shows. (A quick note here for American readers: In the UK, Saturday night is the biggest television night of the week, which is quite bizarre for a country where the highlight of a Saturday night is a special edition of *Cops*).

The education was slowly phased out by the mid-1960s, and it became the adventure series that it remains, at its core, today. During the 1960s and the 1970s the various incarnations of the Doctor captured the hearts of British schoolchildren, and it became a national institution, and a fixture on the television schedules.

But it wasn’t always roses for fans of the *Doctor*. During the 1980s it was the redheaded stepchild of the BBC. For 16 years in the 1990s and early 21st century, there was no new *Doctor Who* (save for an ill-fated TV movie on the US Fox network in 1996). The show became the subject of jokes about wobbly sets, cheap-looking monsters and bad acting. (For the record, these flaws did happen from time to time but the sets only wobbled twice. It’s often the imperfections that inspire love and passion among fans.)

All this changed in 2005 when the series came roaring back to TV with a large budget, star power, marketing muscle and publicity galore. It was an immediate sensation and became the most important show on British television. When America caught up a couple of years later, it became the biggest show on BBC America, leading to Times Square subway billboards and bus adverts in New York and Los Angeles, and appearances by the lead actors on a CBS late-night talk show (*Late Night with*

Continued on page 24

They’re Not Doctors, But They Played One on TV

Eleven actors have played the Time Lord since 1963. The first Doctor was played by William Hartnell (1963–1966), who portrayed him as a crotchety old man. In the spirit of the mid-1960s, Patrick Troughton (1966–1969) sported a Beatles-style haircut. The 1970s brought colour to the role in the shape of Jon Pertwee (1970–1974) who was the most James Bond of all the Doctors, with his love of gadgets and the finer things in life, including cheese and wine.

The fourth Doctor, until the arrival of the new series, was the Doctor that American audiences most remember. With his long scarf, fruity voice, and love of jelly babies, the role made Tom Baker (1974–1981) into a star. At seven years, he is still the longest-serving Doctor, and with him the show reached heights of popularity that wouldn’t be seen again until 2008.



William Hartnell

Peter Davison (1981–1984) was, until 2010, the youngest actor to take on the role, and he played a fresh-faced Doctor who seemed to lose as often as he won.

His replacement, Colin Baker (1984–1986), took the baton during the most turbulent period of the show’s history, when it was put on ‘hiatus’ by the BBC.

The last Doctor of the initial 26-year consecutive run of the show was Sylvester McCoy (1987–1989), who had a love of playing the spoons and brought a sense of whimsy to the role that had been missing since the late 1970s.

In 1996, for one night only, Paul McGann (1996) played the Doctor in a Fox-produced TV movie, foolishly programmed against the last-ever episode of *Roseanne*.

Christopher Eccleston (2005) was the actor chosen to bring the Doctor back to our screens in Russell T. Davies’s reimagining of the show. Sadly, his gruff, wounded Doctor was with us for only one year, but what a year it was.

The 10th Doctor, David Tennant (2006–2010), marked the first time that a *Doctor Who* fan had taken on the role he grew up with, and with his tight brown suit and the energy and verve he brought to the role, he became the first to challenge the fourth Doctor as the most recognisable. When he left the show it was front-page news.

The actor with the unenviable task of following that was also the youngest to take on the role. Matt Smith (2010–?) has been more than up to the challenge and relishes what he calls ‘the best role on television,’ making bowties and fezzes cool in the 21st century! □

Doctor Who: Really Bigger on the Inside

Continued from page 22

Craig Ferguson), whose host is a Scot.

So how did *Doctor Who* become popular again? It seems to have broader appeal than anyone in 1963 could possibly have imagined, and evolved into a programme that celebrates the infinite variety of the universe. A large part of *Doctor Who's* appeal is undoubtedly the actors who have assumed the part over the years (see page 23). Each has put his own stamp on the role. (For the record, my own answer to

sentential success factor, and the Doctor has a universe full of enemies! The most famous are the deadly Daleks, a thinly veiled Nazi metaphor, given their intent to keep their race

pure. The early 1960s fear of nuclear conflict also influenced the programme. 'Dalekmania' spawned two big-budget films, featuring Peter Cushing as Doctor Who. The Daleks' look has barely changed since their first appearance in the sixth episode; it's a testament to their iconic nature. Their rasping chant of "Exterminate" has been a presence on playgrounds ever since.

Besides Daleks, the Doctor has fought Cybermen, Sontarans, Ice Warriors, Weeping Angels, and crossed wits with more mad scientists than you can shake a fist at; met Marco Polo, Queen Victoria,

Van Gogh, and has his own Moriarty-type nemesis in The Master, since every self-respecting hero needs someone like that to make mischief in their lives.

The valuable contributions of *Doctor Who's* teams of imaginative writers coming up with memorable characters and storylines cannot be overstated, and this has never been more true than in its current configuration. Russell T. Davies and Steven Moffat have stamped the show with their own styles, which sit alongside their passion for the show that they grew up with. This love and passion result in a feel-good show that can move you to tears one moment, and five minutes later thrill you to the spectacle of the Doctor facing down invading hordes or monsters.

Perhaps the most underrated yet most important cog in the *Doctor Who* zeitgeist is the machine itself that takes the Doctor from place to place – the blue box that is bigger on the inside than it is on the outside. The TARDIS takes the Doctor to places that may seem strange and alien. Combined with the elements discussed above, *Doctor Who* epitomizes a good story well presented on screen, thus resulting in a show that is bigger on the inside. □

On the set of the new season



The Doctor faces down a Silent.

that constantly-asked-question is "all of them".) A magnetic leading man and a likable companion to share in the adventures sounds like formula, but scary and compelling monsters are a third es-

QUICK
TAKE

WHY I LOVE DOCTOR WHO...

In choosing my favourite all-time series, I pondered *Peep Show*, *Gavin & Stacey*, *The Fades*, *Press Gang* and even *Corrie*.

In the end, I think a quote from *Doctor Who* sums up why I adore this television show above all others (US or UK).

"There are worlds out there where the sky is burning, and the sea's asleep, and the rivers dream. People made of smoke, and cities made of song. Somewhere there's danger, somewhere there's injustice, and somewhere else the tea's getting cold! Come on, Ace – we've got work to do!"

– John Broughton, Atlanta (Kickstarter contributor, see page 37)

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The Origins of James Bond

Before James Bond was nauseated by the scent and smoke and sweat of a casino at three in the morning at the beginning of *Casino Royale* in 1953, Richard Hannay ran up and down Thirty-nine Steps, Bulldog Drummond beat up any member of an ethnic or religious mi-

nority that dared to think he was equal to an Englishman, and Nayland Smith thwarted yet another of Fu Manchu's macabre plans for revolution, if not world domination.

These heroes were Bond's literary fathers. The tradition of Empire and the spy story in late Victorian,

Edwardian and post-World War I thrillers were concepts Ian Fleming was aware of, played with, and, in some cases, stole from.

"James Bond is the culmination of an important but much-maligned tradition in English literature," wrote William Cook in the British political and cultural weekly, the *New Statesman*. "As a boy, Fleming devoured the Bulldog Drummond tales of Lieutenant Colonel Herman Cyril McNeile ... and the Richard

Hannay stories of John Buchan....

[Fleming's] genius was to repackage these antiquated adventures to fit the fashion of post-war Britain."

Fleming himself wasn't shy about acknowledging the debt. In the Hong Kong chapter of his travel book, *Thrilling Cities*, he jokes about his impression of fan-tan from his Fu Manchu days. He also buried his Fu Manchu clone under a ton of bird shit at the end of *Dr. No*.

Sax Rohmer, the creator of Fu Manchu, was another strong influence, as were Dornford Yates, Edgar Wallace and E. Phillips Oppenheim. *Casino Royale* is practically an anthology of his influences: the location and atmosphere of international intrigue among the beau monde at a casino in the south of France comes right out of Oppenheim; the ethnic villain from McNeile – not that Buchan or Wallace didn't look upon anyone who wasn't English with suspicion; the

carpet beater scene from Rohmer (whose sadistic imagination was a source as well as an inspiration to Fleming); and from Yates, the Bentley – Bond's car before the Aston Martin – racing across the Riviera. Bond's specially equipped cars to facilitate smuggling guns (if not a whole arsenal) into France on the Channel crossing are also derived from Yates, whose novels hum with powerful cars.

It's easy to think that the iconic character originated with Sean Connery, but franchise creator Ian Fleming's muse were other authors before him

Bond most closely resembles Buchan's Hannay: a man of independent means who chooses to spend his time protecting England from those who seek to destroy her. Bond comes from as much the right background and knows as many of the right people as any Edwardian hero. While the 'obit' in *You Only Live Twice* makes this clear, it's apparent in even the earliest books. (Well, there is that Bentley....) Both Yates's Jonathan Mansel and McNeile's Bulldog Drummond were also wealthy. Oppenheim's characters were, of course, aristocratic, if not aristocrats. What Fleming brought to the table was that Bond had a job and was a professional.

Although some of the villains came from the best families, went to the best schools and belonged to the best clubs, more usually they were neither English nor knew their place. Rohmer created the most notorious example, Fu Manchu (though not the so-called





“yellow peril” itself, that happened half a century or more earlier); the genre is cluttered with German and Italian villains as well as Catholic and Jewish ones.

Fleming made the villains larger than life through caricature and gave them motivations beyond minority status, even if it were just working for SMERSH in the earlier books and SPECTRE in the later ones.

Nevertheless, the roll-call is telling. *Le Chiffre* (*Casino Royale*) is French; Mr. Big (*Live and Let Die*), black; Hugo Drax (*Moonraker*), German; the Spang brothers (*Diamonds Are Forever*), Italian (Mafia); Red Grant (*From Russia With Love*), Irish (working with the Russians in SMERSH); Dr. No, Chinese; Auric Goldfinger, Jewish; and Francisco Scaramanga (*The Man with the Golden Gun*), Hispanic (Kingsley Amis made the case for Scaramanga being homosexual and attracted to Bond).

As for the SPECTRE novels – known to Bond aficionados as the ‘Blofeld trilogy’ – Ernst Stavro Blofeld is vaguely Germanic, while his sidekick in *Thunderball*, Emilio Largo, is clearly Italian. Blofeld’s relationship with his subsequent sidekick, Irma Bunt, echoes that of Carl and Irma Peterson in *Bulldog Drummond*. The coincidence of the first names is also inter-

esting.

As for the villains’ dastardly plans, Fleming proves to be as much a thief as a student of Rohmer’s. Mr. Big machine-gunning a train in *Live and Let Die* comes from Rohmer’s President Fu Manchu, while Blofeld’s Garden of Death in *You Only Live Twice* is a landscape architect’s gloss on Fu Manchu’s laboratory garden in *The Hand of Fu Manchu*.

More important, however, is the deliberately unbelievable plot. Where Rohmer pushes this into camp (his career began with writing sketches for the theatre and music hall), Fleming goes to great pains to make things seem just maybe possible. Fu Manchu discovers the alchemist’s secret to transmuting base metal into gold is to burn human flesh (*The Trail of Fu Manchu*); Goldfinger simply breaks into Fort Knox.

And what did Fleming leave for Bond’s progeny to take and adapt?

Fleming’s last thriller, *The Man with the Golden Gun*, was published after his death and is not well regarded. At the time it received polite reviews.

Anthony Lejeune, however, made an interesting observation in the U.S. National Review: “In a sense Fleming’s job was finished. He had irrevocably transformed the genre in which he worked.” □

SKYFALL

007

Daniel Craig returns to play James Bond for the third time in *Skyfall*, the 23rd film in the franchise.



Next Up: Skyfall

Difficult as it is for many of us to believe, the first James Bond movie was released 50 years ago. There will be, of course, the usual anniversary CD and DVD collection packages. More important, there will be a new 007 movie, *Skyfall*, the 23rd in the series.

With locations as diverse as China, Turkey and Scotland, *Skyfall* will be Daniel Craig’s third outing as Bond. Dame Judi Dench will return as M – after seven movies, she now owns the part as much as Bernard Lee ever did. Other cast members include Javier Bardem, Ralph Fiennes, Albert Finney, Naomie Harris, Bérénice Marlohe, Helen McCrory and Ola Rapace. Ben Winslow will appear as a rather youthful Q, marking the character’s long-awaited return to the series.

Skyfall is being directed by Sam Mendes from a script by John Logan, Peter Morgan, Neal Purvis and Robert Wade.

The premise of *Skyfall* is that James Bond’s personal and professional loyalties conflict when a secret from M’s past threatens both MI6 and her. Bond, of course, has to find and eliminate the threat, distracted by the usual set pieces, exotic locations and beautiful women.

Meanwhile, rumours about the new film abound. Will Bond be the cool killer he’s supposed to be or the cold assassin of the last two movies? Will Thomas Newman compose the score? What is The Stig from *Top Gear* doing in Bond 23? Will the traditional gun barrel make a comeback? Will Miss Monypenny? Will Blofeld? Who will perform the title song?

And most important of all, will the plot make any sense? □

EastEnders' Jessie Wallace as
Coronation Street's Pat Phoenix

By Charles S.P. Jenkins

On 9 December 1960, the commercial television channel in Britain aired the first performance of what would become the world's longest-running soap opera, *Coronation Street*. The programme was initially presented twice weekly in the early evening and lasted for 30 minutes. What was special about this programme was that its setting was a street in a working-class area of a city in the county of Lancashire, which is in the North of England and was once famous for both heavy industry and the manufacture of cotton goods. Today Lancashire is perhaps best known for including the city of Liverpool and being where the Beatles came from.

The television company did not give *Coronation Street* much hope of surviving. After all, why would people in the south, and by this they meant London and the surrounding counties, which was where the real money is, be interested in the daily lives of workers in the north? As it turned out, they were. The programme went on to enjoy great success and was seen in many countries including Canada and the US, although it never really caught on here. This is unfortunate, as the programme introduced a wide variety of characters with great dramatic and comic abilities. Although the show has always had interesting characters, my own knowledge of it was only between 1960 and 1965 when the original characters reigned supreme. Most of them quickly became household names, and the country began following the doings on the Street.

However for me, there was one character in particular that caught not only my eye, but that of just about every man in Britain. Elsie Tanner was a middle-aged sex symbol of the first order. She had been married during the Second World War and had two children. I never did discover what happened to her husband. However, just about everyone on the Street knew that Elsie, as she was

The Voluptuous Women of British Soap Operas

Elsie Tanner was a middle-aged sex symbol of the first order, catching the eye of just about every man in Britain.

fondly called by viewers, had never been without a companion and had enjoyed a great deal of fun with the American soldiers during the war.

Elsie Tanner appeared in the programme for various periods of time between 1960 and 1983 and was played by Patricia Phoenix, an actress of some merit who had appeared on the stage and in a few films up until then. The best word to describe both Ms Phoenix and Ms Tanner, as far as I was concerned, was voluptuous.

She was, as Jane Russell used to say, a full-figured girl. Elsie was no supermodel weighing nothing. Elsie was someone who would fit in a man's arms and would no doubt have been most responsive. She was a girl who enjoyed a gin-and-tonic and a joke with the men in a pub. She knew how to laugh and never took herself seriously. Although she had a certain reputation and was thought of, by some, as being loose, she nonetheless had standards and, in her own way, was quite a moral character. She was always smartly dressed and wore clothes bought in the shops of the local High Street. She often wore what were called costumes (a skirt and jacket) or skirts and blouses. Her skirts were straight and tight and came down to the knee. She always wore nylon stockings with high-heeled shoes.

Early on in the series, she wore white blouses unbuttoned to reveal more than a hint of cleavage. Her dark brown hair, which no doubt was rinsed, was back-combed high at the front in the bouffant style with either a French pleat or bun at the back. In those early days, she wore a coat with a fake fur collar and was never seen outside without full make-up. She was, as I have

said, voluptuous.

'Elsie Tanners' were seen about Britain at that time – in any decent public house or working in an office, a factory and even a bank. These women of a certain age and with a questionable history had perhaps shown poor judgement and now supported themselves, and most had a child or two from a man who had long since left. The Elsies of the time had been treated badly by men they had trusted, yet this had not dampened their joie de vivre. The Elsies of this world had the ability to make any man feel good. They were good company in a pub and always the centre of attention at the bar. If a man was lucky enough to take one out, he would always have a good time despite her not letting him into her house at the end of the evening.



More than 20 million people in the UK watched Elsie Tanner get married on *Coronation Street* in 1967.

I was very taken with Elsie Tanner in my youth. She was every young man's dream – the voluptuous older woman who would take an interest in you and teach you all

she knew.

British soap operas differ greatly from their American counterparts. Watching soaps here, I noticed that everyone seems relatively well-off, with expensive clothes and homes. The women have perfectly coiffed hair along with full make-up even in the morning. Occasionally Elsie appeared in her old-fashioned dressing gown and without make-up, which revealed that she would not see 40 again! Here, the men are all handsome and fit. Not a pot belly in site. Everyone goes to the gym and never seems to eat. Each soap opera here has a glamorous villainess with long fingernails proving that she never does any housework. However, these sirens pale when placed beside a real Elsie. As I aged, I was saddened to see fewer and fewer Elsies walking around. Our world has changed, and society now seems obsessed with youth. I cherish my memories of Elsie and Patricia Phoenix and thought that there would never be a character of her ilk again. However, as they say, good things happen to him who waits.

Like *Coronation Street*, *EastEnders* deals with working-class characters and themes. Again, the characters look like real people and not like those in a magazine or in American soaps. Early on in the series, there were several characters with the potential to fit the Elsie mould. My favourite character of those early days was Kath – Kathy Beale, later Kathy Mitchell, Ian's mother who went to South Africa and remarried. Kath sounded like a true East Ender and with time could have laid claim to Elsie's crown. She was not perhaps as voluptuous as Elsie, but then who could be?

Angie Watts was very much an

Continued on page 40

Spacey as Richard III 'Owns the Stage'

At the Brooklyn Academy of Music's production this winter of *Richard III*, Kevin Spacey plays the deformed, power-lusting duke turned king with a gruelling physicality, a quick wit and a sinister quirkiness.

Although known more for his acting roles in such Hollywood movies as *The Usual Suspects*, Spacey has been at the helm of London's Old Vic Theatre company since 2003. *Richard III* reunited the American actor with British director Sam Mendes, who also directed him in the film *American Beauty*, for which they both won Oscars. The play is one in a series of productions for The Bridge Project, a collaboration between The Old Vic, BAM and Mendes' company, Neal Street.

In this *Richard III*, the cast are clothed in more modern garb, with Spacey wearing a black leg brace velcroed around his leg and Richard's characteristic hump concealed under his white dress shirt. As Spacey drags both twisted leg and equally twisted mind across the sparsely set stage, often with no more than a chair as a prop, other characters – Queen Elizabeth, Margaret, Richmond, Stanley et al. – enter and exit through wooden doors lining either side of the set.

At a little over three hours' running time (with a 20-minute intermission in between the two-hour first half and the shorter second half), *Richard III* is typical of the Bard, who wasn't known for his

brevity. But despite the lengthy tale, not once is the audience lulled into boredom, the pacing so dead-on that one moves right along with it.

It takes a nimble tongue not to trip over the Bard's words and deliver them in perfect cadence without robbing them of meaning or emotion... or humour. But the cast of *Richard III* does just that with such aplomb that it might feel as if you're at the Globe Theatre, listening to Shakespeare's contemporaries perform, rather than an American movie star and the actress (Haydn Gwynne) who brought the bawdy, rough-edged dance teacher in *Billy Elliot* from the London stage to Broadway and nabbed a Tony nomination for it.

Gwynne plays the noble, proud Queen Elizabeth, whose despair – from losing her young sons (forever remembered as the Princes in the Tower) after Richard's deadly play for the throne – is palpable.

But it is Spacey who owns the expanse of the stage – and most of the air in the theatre. And, after *Richard* meets his end, as he dan



PHOTO: ©JOAN MARCUS, 2012

gles upside down above the rest of the cast, it's difficult not to wonder how many physical therapists, mineral baths and massages it takes to restore Spacey's body to its original state after each performance.

Richard III opened at the Old Vic, and then embarked on a world tour, ending its run at BAM. ☐

The West End to Broadway Connection

Continued from page 17

an extension of the hit comedy *One Man, Two Guvnors*, which is a new version of *The Servant Has Two Masters* by Carlo Goldoni, updated by Richard Bean. It has transferred twice from two other London venues because of its great success, not to mention opening on Broadway this spring.

So it continues.... and because of the time it takes to travel, the cost of accommodations and the inconveniences, perhaps we can now justify the high ticket prices in Manhattan by waiting till these British productions arrive here!

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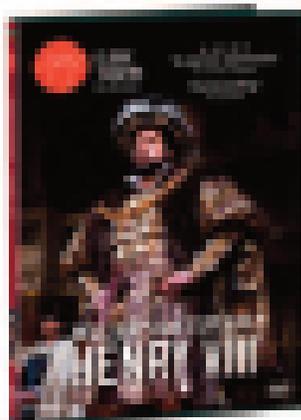
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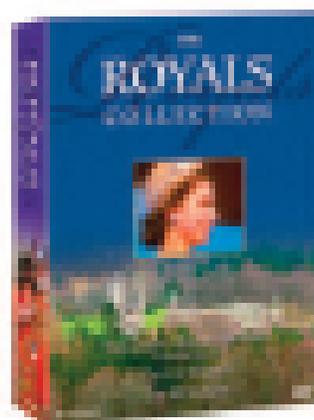
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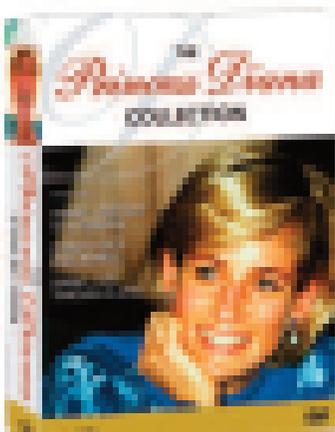
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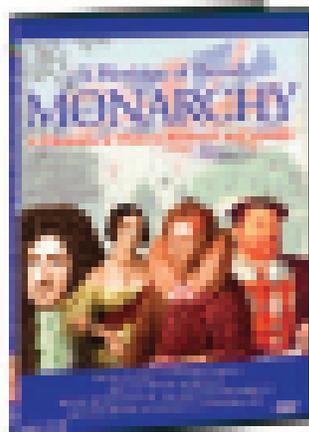
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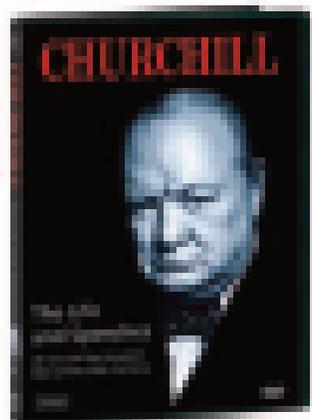
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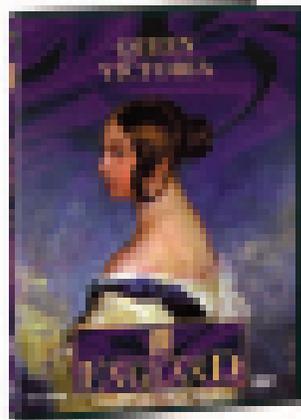
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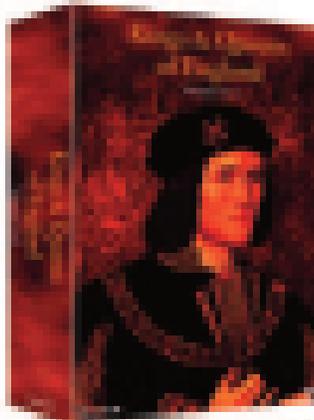
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The Iron Lady: Why Streep Won

Anyone who saw *The Iron Lady* was not surprised by Meryl Streep's Best Actress Oscar win. Virtually a female Zelig, Streep morphed herself into the former British Prime Minister, capturing the politician's every mannerism.

Two for two in its nominations to wins (Best Makeup was the other), *The Iron Lady* was otherwise slighted by the Academy. In accepting the award (her third Oscar in an illustrious career), Streep first paid homage to her hairdresser, J. Roy Helland, whom she first worked with on *Sophie's Choice* 30 years ago.

Not any ordinary hairdresser, Helland deservedly shared the Oscar with *The Iron Lady's* other makeup genius, Mark Coulier. Adding to Helland and Coulier's craft, Streep nailed every nuance of Thatcher's unmistakable voice.

One wonders why *The Iron Lady* wasn't held in the same company as the other leading films. This probably had more to do with Academy voters' ambivalence about glorifying Margaret Thatcher than its quality as an overall cinematic experience.

I've seen on DVD several other conventional British biopics that didn't cross the Atlantic about the rise and fall of Thatcher, and they didn't come close to making the Tory leader a sympathetic character.

Streep clearly understood this when taking the role.

Some critics thought it was in bad taste that the movie be made while Baroness Thatcher is still alive, and reportedly suffering from Alzheimer's. So much of the film showed her as a feeble old woman

recognised by the public, even at her advanced age.

But thankfully *The Iron Lady* quickly recovers, and the rest of the film's first-rate editing, sound, music, etc. draws the viewer in, despite one's politics. (For the record, this review is being written by an American of liberal views, who despised Thatcherism.)

Because *The Iron Lady* was about an arrogant individual's ambition, as opposed to the more palatable and universal theme of an individual overcoming a disability, which could be

better grasped by moviegoers, the film was not held in the same esteem as last

year's *The King's Speech*. That period of British politics somehow won over the American Academy voters and took many of the major awards.

Nevertheless, go watch *The Iron Lady* on DVD, especially if for no other reason than Streep's incredible performance. □



Courtesy of the Weinstein Company

still talking to and seeing her dead husband Dennis, playfully portrayed by Jim Broadbent. That focus by director Phyllida Lloyd and screenwriter Abi Morgan didn't bother me. Widows and widowers truly in love with their departed spouses no doubt and understandably have a problem letting go.

I did have a problem with the ridiculousness of the film's opening scene, in which Thatcher goes unnoticed walking the streets of a rough-looking section of London, and purchases from a corner grocery a pint of milk with coins from her handbag. I assure you the former Prime Minister does not live in such a neighbourhood, nor would her round-the-clock security team allow her to wander the streets unaccompanied. And it's doubtful that she wouldn't be



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Review

Bette Davis Does Hammer

The *Nanny* is a 1965 psychological suspense thriller from Hammer/Seven Arts Films, the British studio known for its horror films, starring Bette Davis as an elderly, dutiful nanny who looks after an upper-class household.

The film, which recently had a rare New York screening, opens with Virginia Fane (Wendy Craig), in a state of unease because her 10-year-old son, Joey (William Dix), is being released from the juvenile mental hospital for disturbed children in which he has spent the past two years after his baby sister drowned in the bathtub.

Helpless and suffering from deep depression after her daughter's unexpected death, Virginia reverts to an infantile dependence on Nanny once more, seeking reassurance from overwhelming fears through Nanny, who spoon-feeds her at one point. Joey's arrival makes those fears palpable as he is macabrely obsessed with death and intensely hostile to Nanny, refusing to eat what she makes or sleep in the room she created for him. In fact, he insists, as he had before he was sent away, that she was responsible for his little sister's drowning and is out to murder him. He may be lying, but is he? Is there something terribly wrong with dear old Nanny?

Originally the role of the nanny was offered to Greer Garson, but after Garson turned it down, it was accepted by Davis three years after her Grande Dame Guignol debut in *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?* Although she had an adversarial relationship with British director Seth Holt, who started his film career at



Ealing, Davis took his advice on keeping her character internalised and gives an extremely subdued, nuanced and full-blooded performance that is sympathetic and unsettling. In her sombre uniform and with caterpillar brows, Davis looks like an elderly version of her Charlotte Vale from *Now, Voyager*, but this time she is both poignant and chilling. Child actor William Dix meets her head on with a remarkable, believable performance.

Things come to a boil when Virginia is taken to the hospital with food poisoning and Joey has been seen fumbling in the medicine cabinet and in the kitchen. With his cold, distant father away and his mom in hospital, Joey refuses to be left alone with Nanny, and Aunt Pen (Jill Bennett), Virginia's sister, comes to stay the night. One small problem: Aunt Pen has a heart condition. She mustn't be frightened.

(And she's in a Hammer horror film). You do the maths on the odds.

The Nanny is effectively creepy and ambiguous, with often eerie black-and-white photography by Harry Waxman and a well-constructed script by Hammer veteran Jimmy Sangster that keeps things restrained as the dread and darkness mount.

One of the most frightening scenes is when Pen wakes up in a cold sweat in the middle of the night in Virginia's bed and decides to go to the kitchen for a cup of tea. Naturally, the hallways look Gothic and shadowy. She sees Nanny at the door of the boy's room, which he has barricaded, holding a pillow. Why is Nanny bringing Joey a pillow in the wee hours of the night?

Many '60s-era themes are contained here, such as youth and class rebellion and icky family skeletons in the closet. □

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The New Detectives

Two new detectives have joined the hallowed halls of mystery. Move over Poirot, Miss Marple, Foyle, Lewis and Morse, and make room for Zen and Brodie.

Despite his name, Zen's not a Buddhist monk, far from it. The creation of author Michael Dibdin, Aurelio Zen, a native of Venice, is a detective in Rome's murder squad. A true believer in the law and in justice, Zen is surrounded and threatened by corruption. 'Watch your back' is his motto.

Zen, played by veteran British actor Rufus Sewell, is so cool in his sunglasses and designer threads. The actor makes it all look so easy, as the character always registers more than what is going on, adept at thinking on his feet. Zen, married but separated and living with his mother, is having an affair with Tania, a secretary working on the squad, played by a hot-blooded Caterina Murino. These two actors complement each other perfectly.

Rome, its ancient streets and boulevards, is a character in *Zen*, as is Oxford in *Inspector Lewis*. Zen delivers both story and character. Don't be surprised if, watching Zen, you suddenly hanker after a hearty pasta, a rich, full-bodied red wine, and top it off with a slice of cheesecake, a double espresso and a shot of anisette. Eat. Drink. Enjoy.

The next contender in the *Masterpiece* stakes, Jackson Brodie, first emerged as a detective character created by Kate Atkinson in a series of novels, which, like the TV series, is situated in Edinburgh, the hard-scrabble Scottish capital perfect for noir. The city's landscapes are one



Every detective of the 'Masterpiece' series comes with personal baggage.

of the pleasures of these stories, much like *Zen's* Rome.

Every detective of the *Masterpiece* series has come carrying back stories, full of personal baggage.

Brodie is plagued with more than his share of demons. He lost his sister, while she was still a child, murdered, her body taken from a river, all in his sight. An older brother, also at the river that day, has been institutionalized; he inhabits a silent world that Brodie can't penetrate.

At one time a detective inspector on the Edinburgh police force, Brodie was never able to let go of the cases he investigated. Obsessed with justice, he burned out. The divorced father of a daughter much wiser than her years, Brodie is informed by his ex-wife that she is taking their

daughter to live in New Zealand. Alone with nightmares of his murdered sister, Brodie is haunted by his failure to protect her, while pursuing a livelihood as a private detective, handling several investigations simultaneously.

When he sees the body of a woman floating in the sea, Brodie the former cop becomes obsessed yet again.

The actor Jason Isaacs fully inhabits Jackson Brodie, body and soul. A veteran of an American cable TV series, *Brotherhood*, he has a rugged, lived-in face that speaks volumes, a man who won't or can't back away from those who need him.

Both series are available on Region 1 DVD: *Zen* via BBC Worldwide and *Case Histories* via Acorn Media. □



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Who says there's no such thing as society?

Thank You

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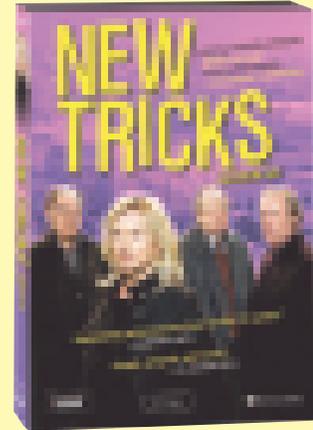
UK:Cue has been launched with the help of Kickstarter.com, the crowd-funding website that assists creative folks to get their projects off the ground. The following individuals contributed financially through Kickstarter towards the production of this magazine, and I am most grateful to them.

– Larry Jaffee

(in alphabetical order)

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New Tricks: Not the Same Old Cold Cases



Acorn Media

Editor's note:

Married couple Les Luchter and Phyllis Fine, both Anglophile writers, took advantage of the Kickstarter reward of submitting an explanation of their favourite TV show and why. Fellow contributor John Broughton chose Doctor Who (see page 21).

**I'M A
BACKER**

"It's alright, it's okay. Doesn't really matter if you're old and grey." With those opening words of its theme song, *New Tricks* touts its basic premise: older folks doing things they don't ordinarily do on TV – like solving cold cases.

For us, facing a job market unfriendly to anyone over 40, *New Tricks* is comforting. The charm and humour of the senior-citizen detectives – self-assured Gerry, reserved Jack, quirky Brian – counteract increasingly convoluted mysteries.

Somewhat reluctantly leading this "old boys' club" is Detective Superintendent Sandra Pullman, younger and female, yet no spring chicken herself. Demographics be damned – this team rocks!

Les Luchter and Phyllis Fine,
Brooklyn, NY

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Fifty Years of The Avengers

Last year, Patrick Macnee, who as Major John Steed, was one of the agents extraordinary who were *The Avengers*, posted on his website: “Fifty years ago – on January 7, 1961, the first episode of *The Avengers* was broadcast. On February 9, 1961 – the Beatles made their debut at the Cavern Club in Liverpool, England. A coincidence? Or was that year truly the moment when the grey England of the 1950s bloomed into something way more colourful?”

The always charming, now 90-year-old Macnee is on to something there. To be fair, in 1961 it was really just a bud; it bloomed a couple of years later into its full Austin Powers glory as the mod and camp swinging sixties, Carnaby Street



▲ Diana Rigg as Emma Peel

that made the series memorable, groundbreaking, and a cult classic to this day.

It was, in the early sixties, an idea whose time had come. In addition to Honor Blackman’s Dr Cathy Gale, the first ‘*Avengers* girl,’ there were Barbarella and Modesty Blaise in the comics; Caprice and Fathom in the movies; and Honey West and The Girl from U.N.C.L.E. on television, among many, many others.

But *The Avengers* provided more than just a beautiful, intelligent, karate-chopping woman in a black leather catsuit. There was the sophisticated, suggestive relationship between Steed and, in order, Gale, Emma Peel and Tara King. There was also a gentle mocking send-up of both traditional and modern Britain, a witty self-aware camp take on the world. (A favourite was the shop that sold old school ties to gentlemen who didn’t have an old school.) In addition, there were the

whimsical, and, in some cases, deliberately unbelievable, plots. And then there were the Cybernauts, who were a lot more menacing than any Dalek that *Doctor Who* ever faced.

The introduction of Blackman made *The Avengers* an instant hit. She set a fashion trend for leather. Macnee was photographed with Twiggy (one of the iconic fashion models of the sixties). Macnee and Blackman even recorded a novelty song, “Kinky Boots”. While a flop at the time, it was successfully re-released in the early nineties, ultimately charting in the top ten.

When Blackman left (for a role in *Goldfinger*) and was replaced by Diana Rigg, *The Avengers* were ready to invade the United States. With a new, clever, main title theme from Laurie Johnson, a Lotus Elan for Mrs Peel (a mod contrast to Steed’s neo-Edwardian Bentley), Steed and Mrs Peel quickly became a weekly addiction.

Sadly, that audience proved more loyal to Rigg than to the show as a whole, and her replacement, Linda Thorson, saw the end of the series. Over time, Thorson’s King episodes have proved to be as strong as any with Rigg or Blackman.

Both Thorson and Blackman attended the symposium, along with such other *Avengers* alumni as writer/producer Brian Clemens and director Robert Fuest, who was responsible for some of the more stylish episodes in the series (as well as the elegant and macabre Dr. Phibes movies with Vincent Price). Macnee, among others, sent video greetings.

Continued on page 40

Steed Goes For the Gold, Emma Plays Shrinking Violet

fashion, the Fab Four, and, here in the States, the British invasion. But for diehard *Avengers* fans, it will always be all about Steed and Mrs. Peel.

The series had a run beyond those two golden years, ending just before the close of the decade. To celebrate and commemorate the entire eight-year span, a symposium was held at the University of Chichester, 25 and 26 June 2011, with some 350 fans and aficionados attending.

When the series began, *The Avengers* were both men, and Steed was the sidekick. When Steed was “promoted,” the idea of his sidekick being a woman surfaced. Macnee has claimed it was that idea

The Voluptuous Women of British Soap Operas

Continued from page 29

Elsie character – lively, fun-loving and potentially voluptuous. But Angie had been beaten down and hurt too many times and, although she was a fighter, she was sadly not a survivor and eventually drank herself to death.

Recently, her daughter Sharon has taken on the look of an Elsie. She has grown into an attractive woman and is on her way to becoming a full-figured girl. But Sharon is a businesswoman and no pushover and is able to run a pub and a club. Her choices in men are perhaps not the best, but she seems able to survive her entanglements. Tiff – Tiffany, second wife of Grant Mitchell – was a young girl when she first arrived and began to hang out with the ever loud and irritating Bianca. Although she was a pretty young girl, her personality needed work. Still, as her character matured, she grew into a reasonable landlady of the pub. I think that she had the potential to become a not-half-bad Elsie, but she was killed off too soon.

In the past few years, the Slater girls have appeared, one of whom is very much the modern young working-class woman – Kathleen, or Kat, as she is known. Kat always wears far too much make-up and wears clothes that are too tight and too short with necklines that plunge just that bit too much.

However, every time I return to the East End of London, I see lots of Kat-types shuffling about the streets, pushing prams with one or two screaming babies in them or else looking for an outfit or a top to wear to a club with hopes that it will attract Mr Right!

The actress who plays Kat, Jessie Wallace, has become accomplished in her screen profession. She has found her perfect soulmate, Alfie Moon, and has become a good landlady, yet remains fiery with an inability to control her temper. What I like about Kat, and I don't believe this has ever been mentioned in the series, is that she obviously likes her food, may well have a weight problem and is constantly on a diet. I expect her to become voluptuous with age.

BFS Entertainment, a Canadian DVD company, last year released for North American consumption *The Road To Coronation Street*. The BBC film was made to mark the 50th anniversary. As good as the actors were in this film, the one character that totally blew me away was the actress playing Elsie Tanner. She not only looked the part, she lived it

and brought back many memories of Patricia Phoenix. She captured perfectly that combination of glamour and earthiness in her portrayal of Elsie. I was happily surprised to see that she was being played by Jessie Wallace.

Unfortunately no television channel in this country has brought us Ms Wallace's other BBC film, *The Marie Lloyd Story*. Marie Lloyd, a true East Ender and a relative of mine, was the greatest music-hall star of her era, known equally in Britain and here in the US. She was a hard-living star of the first order, both talented and controversial,

who led her life the way she chose. She was voluptuous and earthy, but sadly she too had poor judgement and never found the happiness she sought. From the few clips that I have seen on You Tube, Jessie Wallace does a brilliant job.

It is tragic that there is no real British film industry any longer, as someone like Jessie Wallace will not get the exposure that would make her a star. Hollywood is, alas, too busy making action films and films that appeal to huge audiences. So potentially great stars, especially from outside this country, are lost, and will never achieve the acclaim they deserve. ☐



Fifty Years of The Avengers

continued from page 39

Macnee, among others, sent video greetings. While the more serious side of the weekend was an insight into British television history and production of the sixties, the lighter side was about Avengers memories and memorabilia. One participant claimed that the abundance of props and posters made him feel as if he were in an Avengers episode.

Neither Rigg nor ITV, which produced the original series, participated. At this point Rigg's refusal to en-

gage *The Avengers* fan base has become part of the tradition. The geeks would more likely be upset if she were to change her mind. That ITV will now have little to do with a series that helped make its name remains baffling.

But when all was said and done at Chichester, it was about the fans of *The Avengers* in all its forms. Just as for aficionados of Sherlock Holmes, it will always be, "Quick, Watson, the game is afoot"; for aficionados of *The Avengers*, it will always be, "Mrs. Peel, we're needed". ☐

He Calls LA Home Now

Darren Darnborough buggered off to Tinseltown from Blighty in 2007, in search of fame and fortune like thousands of British actors before him. Five years on, he's still plodding ahead in Hollywood, auditioning for major TV series and pilots alike.

A veteran of such top TV shows as *True Blood*, *EastEnders* and *The Bill*, Darnborough also appeared in more than 40 commercials throughout the world for major brands including McDonald's, Budweiser and Dr. Pepper. He's also working to get a feature film he co-developed off the ground: *Andy and Chaz Bugger Off to America* (he's Chaz; see andyandchaz.com). Darnborough spoke with **UK:Cue** founder Larry Jaffee about the current British invasion on American television and how well UK humour travels across the Atlantic.

UK:Cue: There seem to be a lot of Brits on American TV these days.

Darren Darnborough: I was watching *Walking Dead* the other night, and there were a bunch of Brits in that. Andrew Lincoln is the star and he's British, and my friend Lauren [Cohan] just joined the cast and she's British. It's quite incredible. There are a lot of Brits at work here. Did you hear ABC is remaking *Only Fools and Horses*?

UK:Cue: There's not a recent great track record of Ameri-

cans remaking British TV. *Coupling* failed miserably here. On the other hand, *The Office* worked.

DD: I personally don't like the US *Office* but it's done very well.

UK:Cue: In terms of comedy, do you sense any difference in tastes between what Americans appreciate vs. British audiences?

DD: Yes, when we had the *Andy and Chaz Bugger Off to America* premiere we had a mixture of British and American crowds. The British and Americans laughed at different moments. Personally, I think Americans are much more attuned to loud, slapstick visual humour. British people love clever. British humour is more underlying, dry. The jokes tend to be in the lines and words, and the actual story, whereas in American humour it's

what you do in the moment. When I read comedy script, I have to make it funny with my expression.

UK:Cue: How did *Andy and Chaz Bugger Off to America* come about?

DD: That came as a result of the writers' strike a few years ago. There weren't auditions because they weren't making TV shows, but you could make stuff for the Internet. Some friends and I got together to shoot some stuff. We finished it just when the writers' strike ended. The first person we showed it to was the former president of Warner Bros. Television, who was responsible for *Friends* and *ER*. He loved it and bought the option straight away. It went through a period of being a TV pilot. Then we moved it back to being an Internet series, and give it some traction for a feature film.

UK:Cue: What happened to the pilot?

DD: He's a great producer. But the television market is very particular. To get it on TV at this stage would either mean changing it drastically, and then waiting ages until the schedule became available. We liked developing it as a feature better. We have some producers interested in the feature-length script, so we're now fund-raising up to \$3 million to make the movie. The Web series is the first 20 minutes of the feature-length script, but it will be reshot. The idea is the guys cross America on a wild and crazy ride, causing trouble in every state they pass through. ☐

www.andyandchaz.com

I never felt like I didn't belong here.

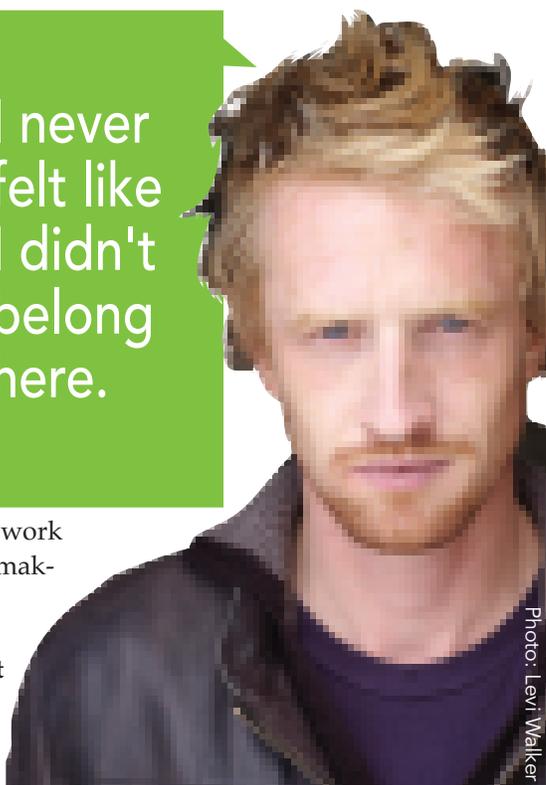


Photo: Levi Walker

For Sale: Downton Abbey

By Randee Dawn

No, you can't buy Lady Mary's earrings, but here are some ways to keep yourself in the fandom until Season Three arrives

In *Downton Abbey*, PBS has the biggest hit on its hands in years – the second season finale registered 5.4 million viewers, a huge number for public television. But just watching the show

isn't enough for viewers, who want to get their hands on merchandise. PBS has had some bad luck with initial ideas (the show shut down an attempt to sell jewellery inspired by the characters), so enterprising fans and publications have taken the matter into their own hands with paper dolls, trading cards and T-shirts. "It's

very flattering," says show creator and writer Julian Fellowes, who dispatched a production assistant to obtain some of the paper dolls. "I think they're absolutely hilarious."

Downton Abbey Paper Dolls

Cost: Free

Source: New York magazine

Location: <http://tinyurl.com/75s6jha> Photo: Adam Weinberg

Can't wait for the next season? Make your own live-action fan fiction with paper replicas of the Dowager Countess, Lady Sybil, Thomas and O'Brien, Matthew and Lady Mary. Then, please take pictures and send them in care of

UK:Cue.

Illustration: Kyle Hilton



Illustration: Chad Thomas

Downton Abbey Valentines and Trading Cards

Cost: Free

Source: *Vanity Fair*

Location:

<http://tinyurl.com/7j5a6u5> and

<http://tinyurl.com/76xa4ej>

Share your affection for a loved one, or just invent new ways to swap out your

favourite cast members with these hilarious takes on the show's schemers, lovers and fighters.

Free Bates! T-shirts

Cost: \$20 plus shipping

Source: Busted Tees

Location:

<http://www.bustedtees.com/freebates>

You know he's wrongly imprisoned. Show your support for Mr. Bates by sporting a T-shirt he wouldn't be caught dead in.



Photo: Adam Weinberg

Downton Abbey Tour of Locations

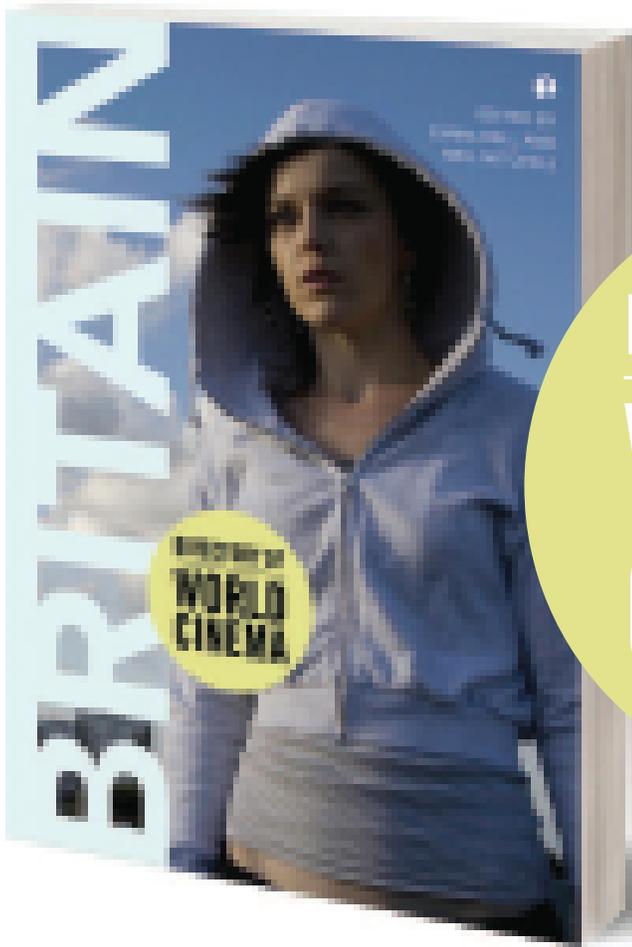
Cost: 55£/\$87 (approx.)

Source: Brit Movie Tours

Location:

<http://britmovietours.com/bookings/downton-abbey-tour/>

The trip promises you can "become Lord or Lady Grantham for the day", but you'll still have to wear comfortable shoes as you'll be doing a lot of walking, wandering inside and out of Highclere Castle, the estate used in the series, and the Oxfordshire village nearby. The trip includes a professional guide, coach transport and entry fees to the house and gardens – but alas for Americans, not the airfare and hotel reservations you'll have to make first.



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