



An all-star cast announced for

# THE TRIAL OF CHRISTINE KEELER

**Sophie Cookson, James Norton, Emilia Fox and Ben Miles lead stellar cast in BAFTA award-winning novelist Amanda Coe's six-part drama for BBC One**

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

London, Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2018:

BBC One, Ecosse Films and Great Meadow today announce that **Sophie Cookson** (*Kingsman: The Secret Service, Gypsy, Red Joan*) leads the cast in the role of Christine Keeler. **James Norton** (*McMafia, War and Peace, Happy Valley*) stars opposite Cookson in the role of Stephen Ward together with **Ellie Bamber** (*Les Misérables, The Nutcracker and the Four Realms, Nocturnal Animals*) as Mandy Rice-Davies. **Ben Miles** (*The Crown, The Last Post*) will play John Profumo and **Emilia Fox** (*Silent Witness, Delicious*) stars as Valerie Profumo. **Nathan Stewart-Jarrett** (*Angels in America, Mope*) plays Johnny Edgecombe and **Anthony Welsh** (*Journeyman, Black Mirror, Starred Up*) plays Aloysius "Lucky" Gordon.

Written by BAFTA award-winning novelist and screenwriter **Amanda Coe** (*Apple Tree Yard, Room at the Top, Life in Squares*) and directed by **Andrea Harkin** (*Come Home, Clique*), *The Trial of Christine Keeler* takes a fresh look at one of the most infamous British stories: the chain of events in the 1960s that came to be known as the 'Profumo affair'.

At the centre of the storm was 19-year-old Christine Keeler (Cookson) - a young woman whom the powerful, male-dominated establishment sought to silence and exploit, but who refused to play by their rules.

*The Trial of Christine Keeler* takes us behind the headlines to tell a human story about the sexual and cultural politics of one of the most revealing and iconic stories of modern times.

Filming began this week in Bristol.

On being cast as Christine Keeler, Cookson says: "I'm delighted to be playing Christine Keeler in this new drama. Amanda Coe has written an illuminating script about a vivid, complex woman who has previously, it seems, been reduced and misunderstood. Now feels like the perfect time to reconsider her life, and redress the balance."



On being cast as Stephen Ward, Norton says: “I’m delighted to be working with the BBC on this fantastic drama. The opportunity to play Stephen Ward alongside this stellar cast and crew is something I’m really looking forward to.”

Kate Triggs, Executive Producer for Ecosse Films says: “I am thrilled that Amanda’s wonderful scripts have attracted such an exciting and stunning cast. They all bring something unique and fresh to the story and will be so compelling to watch. Sophie Cookson is the perfect Christine, embodying all her complexity and incredible spirit”.

Piers Wenger, Controller of BBC Drama, said, “Casting actresses who could authentically convey the age and experience of the young women at the centre of this piece was key to achieving Amanda’s vision for this story. I’m delighted that we have two actresses of such calibre in the roles of Christine and Mandy, and actors of real skill and complexity in James and Ben, to play alongside them.”

*The Trial of Christine Keeler* is an Ecosse Films and Great Meadow co-production for BBC One. The executive producers are Kate Triggs and Douglas Rae for Ecosse Films, Amanda Coe and Lucy Richer for BBC. Rebecca Ferguson will produce.

The series is commissioned by Charlotte Moore, Director of BBC Content, and Piers Wenger, Controller of BBC Drama.

Keshet International will distribute internationally, while working alongside Endeavor Content to co-distribute the six-part series in the US.

*The Trial Of Christine Keeler* is the first title to benefit from financial support from the KI Content Fund. Launched earlier in March this year by Keshet International with several of Israel’s largest holding and asset management companies, KI’s 5 year content fund aims to bring high-profile projects with global appeal to a wider audience by also utilising KI’s worldwide distribution prowess.

## **ENDS**

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

### **Ecosse Films**

Established in 1988, Ecosse Films is a multi award-winning production company, specialising in high-quality drama for film and television, producing 14 films and over 1000 hours of network television for BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Showtime, Starz Channel, WGBH, ABC, Netflix and Sky Atlantic.

Ecosse has achieved international success with several films; including *Charlotte Gray* starring Cate Blanchett; *Becoming Jane* starring Anne Hathaway and James McAvoy; *Brideshead Revisited* starring Emma Thompson and Michael Gambon; and the global family hit *The Water Horse*.

Ecosse also produced the hugely successful film *Mrs Brown*, starring Judi Dench and Billy Connolly, which won a Golden Globe, several BAFTAS and two Oscar nominations.

Other titles include the BAFTA nominated film *Nowhere Boy*, a teenage biopic of John Lennon directed by Sam Taylor-Wood starring Kristin Scott Thomas, Anne Marie Duff and Aaron Johnson; a romantic comedy *The Decoy Bride* starring David Tennant, Kelly Macdonald and Alice Eve; Andrea Arnold's adaptation of Emily Brontë's classic novel *Wuthering Heights* and *A Royal Night Out*, directed by Julian Jarrold, a fairy tale re-imagining of V.E. Day in 1945.

Ecosse has produced numerous TV series including BBC1's acclaimed long-running drama *Monarch of the Glen* (72 hours) and the BBC1 hit series *Mistresses*, co-produced by Ecosse as a series for the American network ABC.

For Sky Atlantic HD, Ecosse produced the thrilling drama series *Fleming*, featuring Dominic Cooper as Bond creator Ian Fleming, with a supporting cast including Lara Pulver, Annabelle Wallis, Lesley Manville, Anna Chancellor, Samuel West and Rupert Evans.

For ITV, Ecosse produced *The Great Fire* written by political editor Tom Bradby. The scale and ambition of the drama was immense as the story followed the lives and loves of both historical and fictional characters in a world where, on the surface, the rich have everything and the poor have nothing.

For BBC, Ecosse produced *Life In Squares*. Written by Amanda Coe, the three-part serial drama followed the Bloomsbury group, dramatising the exceptionally close, often fraught relationship of sisters Vanessa Bell and Virginia Woolf, and Vanessa's enduring, complicated alliance with artist Duncan Grant.