



NEWS: for immediate release

“BRISTOL DESERVES A BAFTA FOR THE BEST PLACE TO MAKE DRAMA” SAYS EXEC PRODUCER DOUGLAS RAE

The Trial of Christine Keeler premieres Sunday 29th December following extensive Bristol shoot

BRISTOL, 19 December 2019: Ecosse Films’ six-part drama *The Trial of Christine Keeler*, which takes a fresh look at the 1960s ‘Profumo Affair’, will premiere on BBC One on Sunday 29th December, following its extensive shoot at The Bottle Yard Studios and a host of Bristol locations earlier this year.

Addressing cast, crew, Film Office and Bottle Yard staff and other local partners that supported filming at a recent private Bristol preview, **Executive Producer Douglas Rae** said: “What you have created here in Bristol is very special. To be able to produce a major drama with over 80 speaking parts and up to 500 people working on it, and to find everything you need in one city that you can get around so easily compared to London, is a remarkable thing. Bristol deserves a BAFTA for the best place to make drama.”

The highly anticipated drama starring Sophie Cookson, James Norton and Ellie Bamber filmed for 17 weeks in Bristol from Dec ’18 to Apr ’19, with full production based at The Bottle Yard Studios which also accommodated purpose-built sets housed in 15,000 sq ft of space, including interiors of Wimpole Mews (Stephen Ward’s home) and Marylebone Police Station.



Sophie Cookson as Christine Keeler and James Norton as Stephen Ward, on set at The Bottle Yard Studios (© Ecosse Films / BBC, photo credit Ben Blackall)



*Sophie Cookson, Ellie Bamber and James Norton filming *The Trial of Christine Keeler* in Bristol’s Corn Street area earlier this year*

(© Ecosse Films / BBC, photo credit Ben Blackall)

Cookson, Norton, Bamber and fellow cast members Ben Miles and Emilia Fox were spotted filming at more than 10 locations around Bristol used to recreate 1960s London, including Central Library (which doubles for Marylebone Police Station), offices above St Nicholas' Market (War Office and MI5), Wills Memorial Building (House of Commons) and Lord Mayor's Mansion House (Mayfair restaurant and hotel room). St Paul's doubled for Notting Hill and other locations included Goldney Hall, City Hall, Caledonia Place, Berkley Square, Corn Street, Small Street and Broad Street. Filming also took place for eight days at The Guildhall in Bath, which doubled for The Old Bailey.

Kate Triggs, Executive Producer says: "It has been a delight to make *The Trial of Christine Keeler* in Bristol. The Bottle Yard has been a wonderful and supportive home and along with the Film Office, has helped to make Bristol a great place to film. The locations have also been inspiring for the whole team. And the icing on the cake has been access to the best and loveliest crew and HoD's I've ever worked with."

Fiona Francombe, Site Director of The Bottle Yard Studios says: "Ecosse Films was no stranger to Bristol having made three series of *Mistresses* here. Douglas [Rae] first came out to take a look around our Studios in 2017 and we were keen to have them back for a future project ever since. It was a great pleasure to welcome them to The Bottle Yard for the making of this iconic and intriguing political drama which I am certain will be the drama highlight of this year's BBC festive schedule."

Natalie Moore of Bristol Film Office says: "*The Trial of Christine Keeler* will feature the largest number of Bristol locations used in a single drama for years, which is fantastic to see. Productions like this are bringing a great deal of employment and investment into Bristol, more than £16 million last year. We worked closely with the production team and the many properties involved to make sure filming was a smooth process for everyone, including the public. When viewers come to watch this fascinating story unfold on screen, they'll be seeing Bristol as London, and we're proud to have played our part in that."

Rachel Bowers of Bath Film Office said: "There aren't many period court rooms left available for filming, so we were delighted to offer Bath's Guildhall, to film the key Old Bailey scenes. Abbey Green was also used for a scene set in Notting Hill. We worked closely with the production to ensure they got the access they needed to these wonderful heritage locations, while also keeping what is a busy civic building open to the public."



Sophie Cookson filming at The Guildhall in Bath which doubled for The Old Bailey (left) and in Bristol's St Paul's area which doubles for Notting Hill (© Ecosse Films / BBC, photo credit Ben Blackall)

The Trial of Christine Keeler is 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*) and BAFTA-nominated Leanne Welham (*Pill*, *Endeavour*). 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*) plays 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.

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.

The Trial of Christine Keeler is an Ecosse Films and Great Meadow co-production for BBC One. Executive producers are writer Amanda Coe, Kate Triggs for Great Meadow Productions and Douglas Rae for Ecosse Films, plus Lucy Richer and Ayela Butt for BBC. The producer is Rebecca Ferguson. The series is commissioned by Charlotte Moore, Director of BBC Content, and Piers Wenger, Controller of BBC Drama.

The Trial of Christine Keeler begins on BBC One on Sunday 29th December. Episode two follows on Monday 30th December at 9pm. The remaining four episodes will transmit on Sunday nights at 9pm throughout January 2020.

For details on other shows made in Bristol and on screens this Xmas, plus what to look forward to in 2020, [click here](#).

– ENDS –

NOTES TO EDITORS

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The Bottle Yard Studios

The Bottle Yard Studios is a Bristol City Council initiative. The site, which operated for more than 50 years as a former winery and bottling plant, is now an established base for film and television production in the West of England, attracting major UK and overseas productions of all sizes. Eight stages are available at competitive rates, just 15 minutes from Bristol city centre. It also offers a giant green screen studio, extensive back lot, workshop areas, production offices, costume and make-up rooms, dressing-rooms, storage, private roadways and parking.

Productions made at the Studios include: *Hellboy* (Lionsgate), *The Spanish Princess* (STARZ), *Fortitude* (Sky Atlantic), *Poldark* (BBC One), *The Crystal Maze* (Channel 4), *Tipping Point & Tipping Point Lucky Stars* (ITV), *Eric, Ernie & Me* (BBC Four), *Ill Behaviour* (BBC Two), *Three Girls* (BBC One), *The White Princess* (STARZ), *Broadchurch* (ITV), *Trollied* (Sky1), *Crazyhead* (E4/Netflix), *Sherlock: The Abominable Bride* (BBC One), *The Living and the Dead* (BBC One), *Andy's Safari Adventures & Andy's Prehistoric Adventures* (CBeebies), *Galavant* (Disney/ABC Studios), *Wolf Hall* (BBC Two), *The Lost Honour of Christopher Jefferies* (ITV).
www.thebottleyard.com

Bristol Film Office

Bristol Film Office, a division of Bristol City Council, is dedicated to making film, TV or commercial photography shoots run as smoothly as possible when on location in Bristol. It is the one-stop-shop for all filming enquiries, providing assistance at all stages of production, from initial location and crewing advice to reces and logistical support. Bristol Film Office recorded more than £16 million inward investment generated by TV and film productions using The Bottle Yard Studios and/or Bristol locations 2018/19.

Working with partners across the city, Bristol Film Office is leading the UNESCO City of Film programme of activity delivered under the internationally respected status awarded to Bristol in 2017.

www.filmbristol.co.uk

