

## PRESS RELEASE

## Troy Kennedy Martin



In February the **NFT** will celebrate **Troy Kennedy Martin**'s contribution to British film and television with a season of his finest work. As the writer of hits such as **The Italian Job** (1969) and **Z Cars** (1962) we are delighted to welcome him on-stage for an exclusive interview to discuss his writing career following a screening of the iconic ex-con caper film.

Kennedy Martin cut his teeth with TV plays such as *Incident at Echo Six* (1958), and first struck gold after co-creating *Z Cars* which revolutionised police drama. An instant hit with topical storylines and complex characters, it was a welcome antidote to the cosy predictability of *Dixon of Dock Green*, injecting the genre with much needed energy and realism. In 1975 the formula experienced another seismic shift with the arrival of **The Sweeney**, for which Kennedy Martin was one of the writers. **John Thaw** starred as the brutal Detective Inspector Jack Regan, who headed up the unscrupulous, tyre-screeching Flying Squad against vicious, gun welding villains.

**Reilly, Ace of Spies** (1983) was another astonishing success for Kennedy Martin. An epic twelve-part espionage thriller packed with excitement and intrigue, it turned actor **Sam Neill** into a household name. He then delivered what is arguably his greatest work, **Edge of Darkness** (1985), an ambitious BBC drama series which received six **BAFTA** Awards. It proved so successful with the public that the programme received a repeat run on BBC1 - a mere ten days after the final episode was broadcast on BBC2. Another triumph for the big screen was **Kelly's Heroes** (1970) with a cool as ever **Clint Eastwood** and **Donald Sutherland** playing an infectiously funny oddball.

Season coincides with the publication of Lez Cooke's new study of the writer.

[www.bfi.org.uk/troykennedymartin](http://www.bfi.org.uk/troykennedymartin)

**Event Listings:**

## **Interview with Troy Kennedy Martin**

**Tue 6 Feb 8.30 NFT1**

Following a screening of *The Italian Job*, we are proud to welcome renowned screenwriter Troy Kennedy Martin for an on-stage interview about his writing career for cinema and TV.

## **Screening Listings:**

### ***The Italian Job***

**Tue 6 Feb 6.30 NFT1; Sat 10 Feb 4.00 NFT1; Wed 28 Feb 8.40 NFT2**

A cockney criminal and his gang of merry men plan a dazzlingly audacious robbery in Turin; an iconic fantasy of true-Brit Minis outmanoeuvring the law in the Fiat heartland ensues. Sexy, fast-paced and choc-a-bloc with memorable one-liners, it is one of those films (like *The Great*

*Escape* and *The Magnificent Seven*) which has inveigled its way into the hearts of the nation, delighting old fans and attracting new with every screening.

UK-USA 1969 | Dir Peter Collinson | With Michael Caine, Noël Coward, Benny Hill | 100 mins | J-Cert PG.

**Joint ticket available (Tue 6 Feb only) £11.50, concs £8.25.**

Canada 1990 | Dir Donald McWilliams | 117 mins.

### ***Diary of a Young Man* (episode 1)**

**Thu 1 Feb 6.20 NFT2; Tue 13 Feb 8.45 NFT3**

The young man was Joe, fresh in London from Hartlepool, and seeking job, flat and girls. His 'diary' was both a controversially frank affair (for its time), and a stylised attempt to subvert the wholly naturalistic ethos of TV drama.

Survival, or They Came to a City | BBC 1964 | Dir Ken Loach | With Victor Henry, Nerys Hughes | 45 mins.

### **+ *The Man Without Papers* (extract)**

The surviving reel of a compelling socio-political thriller driven by phone calls: a fascinating fragment.

The Wednesday Play | BBC 1965 | Dir Peter Duguid | With Benito Carruthers, James Maxwell | c20 mins.

### **+ *Chase***

From *Six*, a BBC series which gave writers and film-makers free range to experiment, an exciting, almost surreal location-shot drama of a motorist being chased by a gang of motorcyclists.

*Six* | BBC 1964 | Dir Michael Elster | With Ken Jones, Rodney Bewes | 33 mins.

### ***Diary of a Young Man* (episodes 5 & 6)**

**Thu 1 Feb 8.40 NFT2; Fri 16 Feb 6.20 NFT2**

The final chapters of a series inspired by Brecht and heralded by an article Kennedy Martin wrote in the magazine *Encore*, championing a 'new language, new punctuation, new style', and positing a more visually-oriented narrative drama, with editing a vital component in its structure. This was the fascinating upshot.

Ep 5: *Life, or A Girl Called Fred* | Dir Ken Loach / Ep. 6: *Relationships* | Dir Peter Duguid | both BBC 1964 | both 45 mins.

### ***Z Cars* + *The Sweeney***

**Sat 3 Feb 4.00 NFT2; Thu 22 Feb 8.40 NFT2**

The police drama was revolutionised by *Z Cars*, Kennedy Martin's biting response to the complacency of traditional police series. This episode presents an array of 'weekend-starts-here' dilemmas for the Newtown force. A decade later Troy's brother Ian instigated another seismic shift with the barnstorming, tyrescreeching *Flying Squad* actioner *The Sweeney*. Troy contributed some of that series' most memorable episodes, including this yarn that spins out from Jack Regan's attempt at a Saturday night out.

Z Cars: Friday Night | BBC 1962 | Dir John McGrath | 51 mins / The Sweeney: Night Out | Euston/Thames 1975 | Dir David Wickes | With John Thaw, Dennis Waterman | 52 mins. Diary of a Young Man (episode 1)

### **Out of the Unknown + Colditz**

**Sat 3 Feb 8.40 NFT2; Thu 22 Feb 6.20 NFT2**

The famous anthology series Out of the Unknown initially utilised works from the giants of science fiction. Here Kennedy Martin adapted Frederick Pohl's short story about the age of robots and super-consumerism. In The Guests, an episode of the lavish series about POWs in Colditz and their tireless attempts to escape, it's imperative that the inmates help spring three commandos before the SS realises who they are.

Out of the Unknown: The Midas Plague | BBC 1965 | Dir Peter Sasdy | With Graham Stark, Sam Kydd | 60 mins / Colditz: The Guests | BBC 1974 | Dir Ken Hannam | With David McCallum, Jack Hedley | 53 mins.

### **Reilly – Ace of Spies + Fall of Eagles**

**Sun 4 Feb 4.00 NFT2; Mon 26 Feb 6.20 NFT2**

Reilly was a smash-hit espionage series based on the real life exploits of Sigmund Rosenblum, a double agent in WW1. In this gripping episode Reilly is sent to steal plans for a naval gun from a German weapons factory. Fall of Eagles was a 13-part drama series tracing the history and decline of the old monarchies of Europe. This episode looked at Tsar Nicholas after the incendiary events of 1905.

Reilly – Ace of Spies: The Visiting Fireman | Euston/Thames 1983 | Dir Martin Campbell | With Sam Neill, Leo McKern | 60 mins / Fall of Eagles: The Appointment | BBC 1974 | Dir David Cunliffe | With Charles Kay, Freddie Jones | 50 mins.

### **Kelly's Heroes**

**Fri 9 Feb 8.15 NFT3; Sat 17 Feb 6.00 NFT3**

Clint Eastwood stars as the laconic Kelly, commanding a motley crew of WW2 American soldiers who suddenly become inspired when they realise a fortune in Nazi gold is within their grasp. There's an unusual air of logistical authority to this caper, but the enduring image is of pre-hippy Oddball (Donald Sutherland) mouthing 60s peacenik phrases as he careers his tank over enemy territory.

USA-Yugoslavia 1970 | Dir Brian G Hutton | With Telly Savalas, Don Rickles | 143 mins | J-Cert PG.

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### **Booking information**

The NFT is open to all. BFI members are entitled to a discount on all tickets.

NFT Box Office tel: 020 7928 3232. Unless otherwise stated tickets are £8.60, concs. £6.25. Members pay £1 less on any ticket. Website [www.bfi.org.uk/nft](http://www.bfi.org.uk/nft)

### **Notes to Editors**

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