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Film  
Forever

# THE BIG THRILL



#BFIThriller



THE **BIG**  
**THRILL**

AT BFI SOUTHBANK

Over one rollercoaster ride of a day The Big Thrill will bring together leading storytellers, screenwriters, actors, directors, composers, journalists and podcasters to help you explore why the thriller is the genre of our times.

Jump into over 15 events dissecting cinematic suspense, and interviews with some of the world's top thrill-makers. Grab a coffee in the bar as storytellers tell you the tales of the sidelined characters in classic thrillers. Debate the power of the thriller in an era of fake news and catfishing. Act as judge, jury and hangman in a live vigilante vote. Get a chance to see a rare print of a 'Missing Believed Wiped' archive classic. Hear from leading screenwriters such as Abi Morgan and leading actors such as Stellan Skarsgård and - if you dare - hold a bloody heart in the immersive Doom Room and then close the night with a mystery film.

By the time you leave there's nothing you won't know about the thriller...

We have four events in NFT1 that are individually ticketed, all other events are included in your All Day Pass.

# MORE THRILLS

Extra screenings  
across today

# MAIN TICKETED EVENTS

## The Girls Fight Back

14:00-15:30 NFT1

**Q&A with *Apple Tree Yard's* writer Amanda Coe and director Jessica Hobbs, *The Replacement's* writer-director Joe Ahearne, actor Morven Christie and producer Nicole Cauverien**

The traditional role of the female in the TV thriller has either been as the terrorised victim or as the woman detective surviving in the male-dominated world of the police procedural (*Prime*

*Suspect, The Fall, Happy Valley*). Recently, however, we've seen the emergence of a new form of TV thriller that places women at the centre of the plot - women who fight to take back control of their lives, not as victims but as rounded individuals who triumph against adversity (*Undercover, Apple Tree Yard, The Replacement*), or as figures of authority.



## The Silence of the Lambs

15:50, 18:20 Studio

20:45 NFT3

An FBI agent requires help from a psychopath in order to catch a serial killer in this Oscar®-laden thriller.



## Soundtracking Live! with Edith Bowman

16:10-17:40 NFT1

Join Edith Bowman for a special live edition of her acclaimed podcast 'Soundtracking', where she interviews directors, actors, producers and composers about the music that inspired them and the use of music in their films. She'll be joined by Grammy Award-winning composer Lorne Balfe, who scored National Geographic's *Genius*, starring Geoffrey Rush as Albert Einstein.



## Abi Morgan and Stellan Skarsgård

18:15-19:45 NFT1

The hugely popular screenwriter (*The Hour*) discusses her views on what makes the TV Thriller tick and her highly original approach to her last thriller *River* (BBC, 2015) starring Stellan Skarsgård. Hailed by critics as a breakthrough in the thriller genre, the series cleverly mixed echoes of Scandi-noir and psychological analysis. Morgan and Skarsgård will explore their unique collaboration.

## Mystery Film

20:15-22:30 NFT1

We round off The Big Thrill with a mystery... those willing to trust us will be rewarded with an early sneak peek at an upcoming thriller.



## The Last Seduction

21:00 NFT2

A young woman leaves her husband and hits the road, leaving a trail of destruction behind her.



# ALL DAY PASS EVENTS

## Doom Room

All Day Atrium

A boundary-pushing VR experience combining new technologies, installation and performance, Doom Room takes you into a hypnotic world of hyper-sensuality and suspense. Unmissable and definitely not for the faint-hearted.

## Archive Persona Non Grata

12:00-13:00 NFT2

**COI 1962. Dir David Eady. 58min**

An unusual, unlikely dramatised security training film made by the Central Office of Information at the height of the Cold War. Lonely defence department clerk Cyril Vining thinks he's found a friend when a corrupt journalist invites him to a gallery's private view. But his colleague Petrovich has other things in mind, and poor, nervous Cyril is quickly in over his head.

## KCL Key Scholars Prof. Barbara Klinger on the Female Body in Gothic Crime Thrillers

12:00-13:00 NTF3

In the latest of our Key Scholars' lecture series, presented with King's College London, we welcome Barbara Klinger (Provost Professor Emerita, The Media School, Indiana University) for a fascinating dissection of the aesthetic and cultural significance of female victims in crime thrillers - from *Psycho* to *The Silence of the Lambs* to recent international TV thrillers like *The Killing* (Forbrydelsen).

## White Rabbit Storytelling Sessions

12:00, 14:00, 16:00, 18:00  
BFI Shop

White Rabbit have created an interactive theatrical storytelling response to The Big Thrill. At the café tables we'll tell you the stories that ended up on the cutting room floor. These stories might be told by the wise gal polishing glasses in the coffee shop, the hapless driver of the getaway car, or the tipsy couple in the background of the bar scene. You may even fall in love, be forced to change your identity, be asked to deliver a vital message to a stranger, or go on the run. It's up to you what you choose to believe and how much you get involved; the vital question is: Can You Trust Us?

## The Craft of the Edit

In partnership with  
BFI NETWORK

13:15-14:15 NFT2

What makes a thriller work? In partnership with BFI NETWORK, we delve into the craft of suspense, with a special guest speaker dissecting modern classic *The Silence of the Lambs* to find out what really makes us afraid.

## Ethics of Thriller Non-Fiction

13:30-14:30 NFT3

Documentary filmmakers borrow many of the tropes from the thriller genre to elicit feelings of suspense, surprise, thrill and anxiety in non-fiction storytelling. Join this panel of documentary experts to discuss the influence of the thriller genre on the way in which filmmakers withhold facts, construct truth and reality, engage with spectators, and market the films.

## Anxious Films for Anxious Times

13:10-15:30 The Blue Room

Across a series of short illustrated talks, expert speakers will examine how thrillers reveal the deepest fear and anxieties of the society from which it emerges. Do British spy thrillers of the 60s reflect unease with the waning Empire? Do erotic thrillers of the 80s expose fear of sex at a time of heightened AIDS awareness? Join us to discover how every era gets the thriller it deserves.

## Trust No One: Conspiracy and Paranoia in the Age of Fake News

14:30-15:15 NFT2

We take a look at the history of the genre, from *The Manchurian Candidate* to *Point Break* and beyond to explore what these films reveal about their own times – and ours – and the role of the media in exposing or colluding with a cover up. Our own Woodward and Bernstein panel, hosted by Samira Ahmed, investigate.

## Shots in the Dark

14:45-15:45 NTF3

A good short thriller is a hard thing to find. In fact, of all the genres it may be one of the hardest to execute successfully. This programme offers up seven gems that hit the nail on the head, distilling the essence of the thriller in exciting and unexpected ways. Buckle up!

Archive

## The Patient Vanishes

15:30-16:45 NFT2

UK 1941. Dir Lawrence Huntington. With James Mason, Mary Clare, Margaret Vyner

A rare chance to see this long-missing thriller, recently rediscovered by archive curators as part of the BFI's 'Most Wanted' film hunt. Action and excitement beckon as popular sleuth Mick Cardby (Mason) goes on the trail of a missing girl, and finds himself in the clutches of a gang of blackmailers.

## **Philosophical Screens How Film thinks Suspense**

**16:00-17:00 NFT3**

In this special edition of our popular discussion series that explores cinema through a philosophical lens, we examine suspense; what is it, what does it do to us, and how is cinema uniquely equipped to create it? Join film-philosophers Lucy Bolton, John Ó Maoilearca and Catherine Wheatley to find out.

## **Through A Screen Darkly: Cybercrime on Screen**

**16:00-17:00 The Blue Room**

From trolling and swatting to catfishing and doxing, online harassment is growing, fuelled by the ubiquity of social media and constantly evolving methods of attack. As this new culture of fear develops among young web users, our panel will explore how moving image culture responds to 21st-century anxiety, and how cybercrime is portrayed in films and TV.

Programmed and organised by the BFI Future Film Steering Group

## **Tuko Macho**

**17:00-18:00 NFT2**

If you had the chance to condemn a criminal to death would you do it? That's the question that the Nest Collective forces on us in their web series *Tuko Macho*. A dramatisation of Kenya's issues with crime and vigilante justice, *Tuko Macho* centers on a vigilante gang who kidnap criminals in Nairobi, and asks viewers to vote on their execution or release. You will be placed in the jury's chair during a screening and live vote, followed by a chance to talk to director Jim Chuchu.

Supported by The British Council

## **Nowhere to Run? The Thriller in the Digital Age**

**17:15-18:15 NTF3**

This session will chart the evolution of the techno-thriller, from the early days of the internet into our present and beyond. Using references from cinema and moving image culture, our panellists will explore how the thriller portrays and responds to contemporary anxieties around technological innovation, the internet, privacy, and mass surveillance.

## **In the Land of Shonda...**

**17:30-18:30 The Blue Room**

Screenwriter and TV producer Shonda Rhimes' pulp TV thrillers reinvented the genre for a prime-time slot and created a new destination for women and multicultural audiences. These are high-octane dramas featuring fiercely independent, professional women sidestepping love and settling scores. But have Rhimes' 'tough women' simply created another trope for black women to contend with? Three critics, Simran Hans, Kelli Weston and Laura Kirwan-Adams, promise to fix it.

## **Finding Fanon**

**18:00-18:30 Library**

The video game is the medium we usually turn to for one-on-one thrills. We pit our wits against imaginary foes until we unplug and power down. But what happens if the action is removed from the game? Artists Larry Achiampong and David Blandy will talk about their use the *Grand Theft Auto* game landscape to make a comment on race, identity and globalisation in their piece *Finding Fanon Part Two*.

## **Radio Atlas Presents The Double**

**18:15-19:15 NFT2**

Produced for the popular Danish podcast Third Ear, *The Double* is the true story of two young men from Viborg, a small town in Denmark, who share the same name. They had never met until one fateful night in October, 13 years ago, when one Thomas Andersen tried to run over the other in his car. The screening will be presented by director Thomas Andersen.

In partnership with Radio Atlas, an English-language home for subtitled audio from around the world.

@radioatlas

## **Archive Suspense**

**18:30-19:00 NTF3**

We present a rare screening of one of the very first thrillers ever committed to film, *Suspense*, directed by Phillips Smalley and Lois Weber (who also stars in the film). A new mother, left alone in the house, is threatened by a homeless man who finds the key to the door. Don't miss this rare chance to see one of the silent short films that created a new cinematic language of suspense, presented here with a live score.

## **Psychology of Thrill and Fear**

**19:00-20:00 The Blue Room**

From heart-pounding scenes to edge-of-the seat plot twists, the thriller genre is ripe for exploring how spectators behave when exposed to strong feelings of anxiety, fear, anticipation and thrill. Join us to find out how your mind responds to adrenaline-inducing techniques such as editing, scoring and camera shots, and how we're conditioned to react to some of the most iconic, thrilling moments on screen.



## Nasty Women: Celebrating the Women in Erotic Thrillers

19:15-20:15 NTF3

The erotic thriller, which peaked in the late 80s and 90s, has gifted us with some of the most complex female characters. Our panellists investigate the best and worst of these beautiful, manipulative and ruthless 'nasty women', who more often than not outshine and outwit their hapless male counterparts in films that investigate the intersections of greed, sex and the balance of power.

## Young Writers: Reinventing the TV Thriller for Millennials

19:30-20:45 NFT2

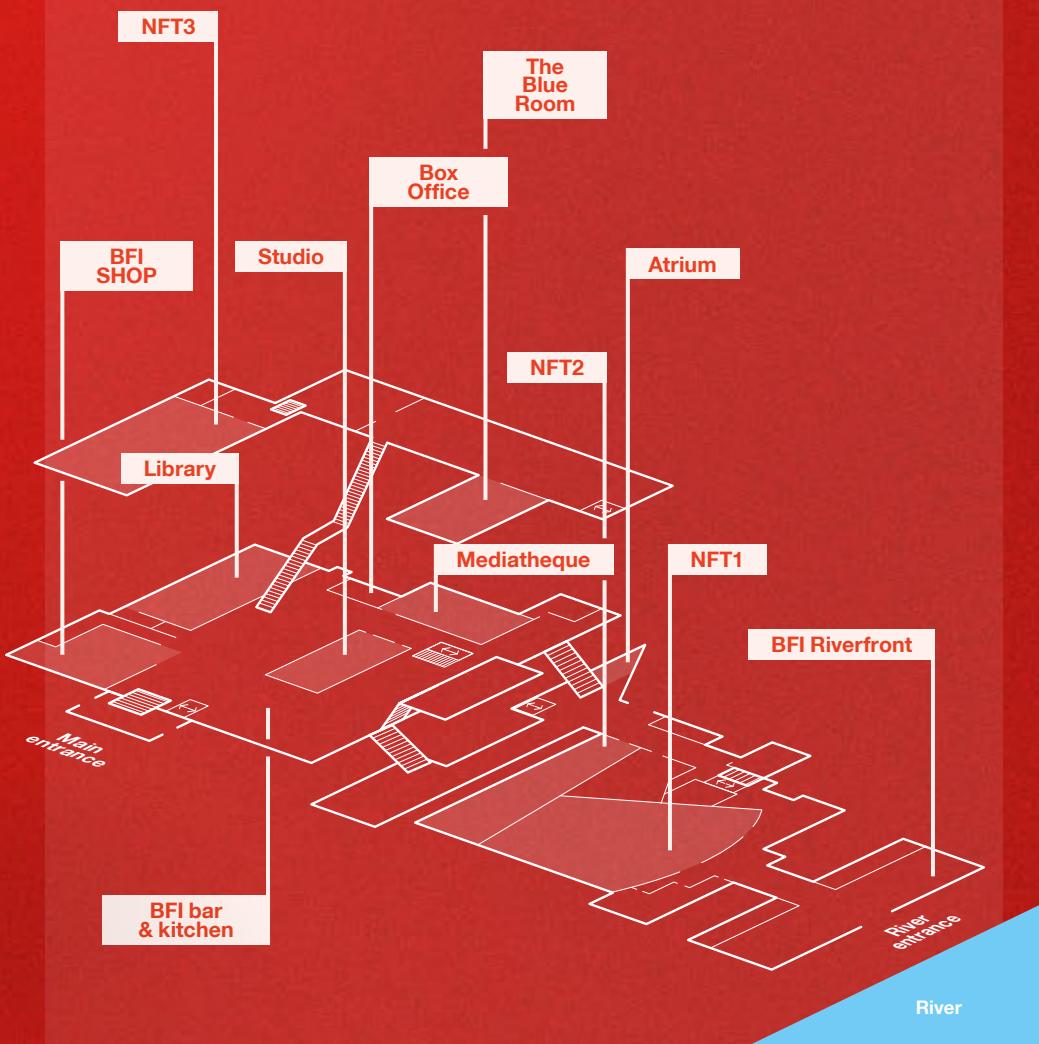
**Q&A with writers Jess Brittain (*Clique*), Marnie Dickens (*Thirteen*) & Vinay Patel (*Murdered by My Father*), and Head of the BBC Writersroom, Anne Edyvean**

BBC Three has led the way with producing online thrillers and dramas designed to specifically appeal to Millennials. These have included online-only drama *Thirteen*, *Murdered by My Father* and the massive

internationally successful *Clique* - a six-part psychological thriller set on a university campus created by *Skins* writer Jess Brittain. Our panel of young writers will examine what exciting new forms are emerging from this new breed of thriller, and what it takes to make them appeal to Generation Y/Z.



## Map



The BFI's Who Can You Trust? season of thrillers runs until the end of December, so join us for some big-screen thrills this winter

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