



Left to Right: Dennis Potter Guardian Lecture 30/10/80, Patrick Troughton in *Freedom in September* (ITV 1962), *Spitting Image: The Panto* (ITV, 1993)

## BFI SHOWCASES A HAUL OF MISSING BELIEVED WIPED TV REDISCOVERIES PLUS FESTIVE FUN AT THE TV PANTO

[facebook.com/BritishFilmInstitute](https://facebook.com/BritishFilmInstitute) | [twitter.com/bfi](https://twitter.com/bfi) | [www.bfi.org.uk](http://www.bfi.org.uk)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 12 November 2019, London**

**Missing Believed Wiped** returns to BFI Southbank on Sunday 8 December to present another thrilling programme of recent TV rediscoveries, with a focus on original TV dramas and single plays. BFI are excited to screen extracts from a **previously unseen filmed interview with Dennis Potter** as well as long lost single plays, *Freedom in September*, a Cold War era story starring a pre-Doctor Who **Patrick Troughton**, psychological hostage drama *No Harm Done* starring Coronation Street's **Helen Worth** and missing sitcom pilot *Porterhouse Private Eye* starring **Carry on... regulars Peter Butterworth and June Whitfield**.

As part of a BFI season of his work, the quintessential British TV dramatist **Dennis Potter** was interviewed by TV Critic Philip Purser for **The Guardian Lecture series at the NFT (now BFI Southbank)**, on 30 October, 1980. When BBC editors at the time made a last minute decision not to film the event for broadcast, Potter and his producer **Kenith Trodd** filmed the lecture themselves with the idea of selling it to a broadcaster. *Missing Believed Wiped* offers an audience the first glimpse of the interview since the event almost 40 years ago.

Kenith Trodd, who held the rushes in his personal archive, will introduce extracts from this revealing interview which captures a pivotal moment in Potter's prodigious TV career. Filmed on the back of *Brimstone & Treacle*, *Pennies From Heaven* and *Blue Remembered Hills*, the interview covers the playwright's thoughts on the value of television drama in the UK as well as nascent ideas for *The Singing Detective*, 6 years before the fully realised series hit TV screens.

BFI are delighted to announce that the digitised rushes are being **brought into the BFI National Archive** for long term preservation. On the rediscovery **Producer Kenith Trodd** says, "*The Guardian Lecture was missing from the archive and from Dennis's history.. There's no good account of it anywhere, or that we took it on when the BBC dropped him from their series because he wrote for "television not film". The echoes of this peculiar mindset still resonate today. This 1980 lecture gives Dennis the chance to lay waste indignantly, satirically and very memorably across a thinking-aloud landscape of entertaining and creative responses in vintage style. I'm delighted the BFI is facilitating this 'Unwiping' and that this material will be preserved for future admirers of a great talent"*

In *No Harm Done* Avenger's writer **Roger Marshall** delivers a tense family hostage drama, (ITV 1974), that unexpectedly evolves into something psychologically far more compelling. Made for the Sunday Night Theatre slot on ITV, *No Harm Done* was directed by **Don Leaver**, the award-winning television producer and director behind *Prime Suspect* and *A Touch of Frost* and stars a young **Helen Worth**, just months before she joined Coronation Street as Gail Platt.

**Joan Kemp Welch's** Play of the Week, *Freedom in September* (ITV 1962) is one of a significant cache (100 hours+) of previously thought lost single British TV dramas **recovered from the US Library of Congress Archives**. This absorbing, highly topical drama was made at the height of the Cold War, reeling from the effects of the Cuban Missile Crisis and Nureyev defection. A pre-Doctor Who **Patrick Troughton** is brilliant as an investigative journalist on the trail of a Russian musician on a cultural group visit to Britain who has gone AWOL. With fears of a potential defection, Russian operatives in London and Troughton's journalist, race to track the wayward musician down.

Rediscovered by Kaleidoscope TV, *Porterhouse - Private Eye* (ITV 1965) is a long lost pilot for a sitcom which did not graduate to a series. This terrific pilot story stars **Carry On... regulars Peter Butterworth and June Whitfield** as a bungling detective and his judo-obsessed daughter.

More *Missing Believed Wiped* treats and special guests will be announced closer to the event.

This December BFI Southbank celebrates the star-studded, staple of the festive TV schedules: the **TV Christmas pantomime**. Pantomime, that most traditional seasonal fare, has survived by constantly reinventing itself while holding on to its most fundamental tropes – a Principal Boy, men in drag, slapstick antics, corny jokes and a smattering of smutty innuendo. From glittery seasonal one-offs to Christmas Specials of established shows **It's Panto Season!** showcases the pantomimes that were made for TV, either in a theatre or TV studio, featuring a host of TV stars and celebrities playing versions of their well known small screen personas.

**Arthur Askey** (who wrote the first TV pantomime in 1937) and **Roy Castle** may have got top-billing in *Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp* (BBC, 1966) (1 December), but it's the formidable arch-panto villain **Alan Curtis** who steals every scene he's in, eliciting a chorus of hisses and boos from the audience. With a cast drawn from the stars of various stage pantomimes of the time, this seasonal one-off marks a moment of change where old theatre traditions and variety acts were increasingly coming under threat from television.

Central Television assembled a massive celebrity cast that included **Basil Brush, Les Dennis, Roy Hudd, Willie Rushton, Roy Kinnear** and pantomime Dame **Danny La Rue** for the irreverent *Cinderella: The Shoe Must Go On* (ITV, 1986) (20 December). **Barry Cryer and Dick Vosburgh's** retelling of Cinderella screens alongside *Spitting Image: The Panto* (ITV, 1993). Filmed at the Hackney Empire (still one of London's leading panto venues) this Christmas pantomime as organised by John Major takes pot-shots at all their favourite politicians, pop stars and presenters. This double bill will be introduced by *Cinderella: The Shoe Must Go On* scriptwriter **Barry Cryer** and Spitting Image performer **Steve Nallon**.

A new generation of TV comics took on the pantomime tradition with anarchic gusto. *Jack and the Beanstalk* (ITV, 1998) (22 December) written by **Simon Nye** and staged at The Old Vic sees Nye's *Men Behaving Badly* star **Neil Morrissey** playing the hapless Jack. *The Young Ones' Ade Edmundson* (in drag) is on hand to dish out some *Bottom*-style violent slapstick.

Completing the TV pantomime line-up is another double bill, *The Goodies: Snow White 2* (ITV 1981) (28 December) sees The Goodies brilliantly deconstruct the entire pantomime tradition, and *The Crackerjack Pantomime: Robinson Crusoe* (BBC, 1975). The regular Crackerjack cast are joined by various BBC sitcom stars of the 70s including **John Inman** (*Are You Being Served*), **Windsor Davies** (*It Ain't Half Hot Mum*) and **John Laurie** (*Dad's Army*) for a slapstick-heavy, intentionally corny romp, also demonstrating how far comedy has changed in the last 40+ years.

## LISTINGS

### Missing Believed Wiped, Sunday 8 December

Session 1, 3pm

*No Harm Done* (ITV 1974)

+*Porterhouse – Private Eye* (ITV 1965)

+ *Friend of the Family* (ITV 1960) Christmas 'Admag' taking a look at new technology

+**Adam Adament Promo** Sneak preview for upcoming animated version of a missing episode of the BBC1 fantasy series starring Gerald Harper that ran from 1966 to 1967.

### **Session 2, 5:40pm**

***Freedom in September*** (Play of the Week, ITV 1962)

+ **Extracts of rare interviews with Dennis Potter and Douglas Adams**

### **It's Panto Season!**

**Sunday 1 December, 2:50pm, NFT3 - Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp** (BBC 1966)

**Friday 20 December, 6:20pm, NFT3 Cinderella: The Shoe Must Go On** (ITV 1986)

+ **Spitting Image: The Panto** (ITV 1993)

**Sunday 22 December, 3:20pm, NFT2 Jack and the Beanstalk** (ITV 1998)

+ **The Panto Set** (Ch4 2003) Paul Clay's mischievous documentary poses the question 'has panto a place in the 21st century?'

**Saturday 28 December, 3:30pm, NFT2 The Crackerjack Pantomime: Robinson Crusoe** (BBC 1975)

+ **The Goodies: Snow White 2** (ITV 1981)

**Tickets for December programme are on general sale from 12 November**

- END -

### **BFI Press contacts:**

**Sarah Bemand, Press Officer, Archive & Heritage, Tel +44(0) 207 957 8940 [sarah.bemand@bfi.org.uk](mailto:sarah.bemand@bfi.org.uk)**

### **ABOUT THE BFI**

The BFI is the UK's lead organisation for film, television and the moving image. It is a cultural charity that:

- Curates and presents the greatest international public programme of World Cinema for audiences; in cinemas, at festivals and online
- Cares for the BFI National Archive – the most significant film and television archive in the world
- Actively seeks out and supports the next generation of filmmakers
- Works with Government and industry to make the UK the most creatively exciting and prosperous place to make film internationally

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter. The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Josh Berger CBE.

### **BFI SOUTHBANK**

The BFI Southbank is open to all. BFI members are entitled to a discount on all tickets. BFI Southbank Box Office tel: 020 7928 3232. Unless otherwise stated tickets are £13.75, concs £11.25 including Gift Aid donation. Members pay £2.20 less on any ticket - [www.bfi.org.uk/southbank](http://www.bfi.org.uk/southbank).

Young people aged 25 and under can buy last minute tickets for just £3, 45 minutes before the start of screenings and events, subject to availability - <http://www.bfi.org.uk/25-and-under>.

**Tickets for FREE screenings and events must be booked in advance by calling the Box Office to avoid disappointment**

### **ABOUT THE BFI NATIONAL ARCHIVE**

The BFI National Archive was founded in 1935 and has grown to become the one of the largest and most important collections of film and television in the world with over 180,000 films and 750,000 television programmes. For over 80 years the BFI has been an international leader in film preservation and guardian of Britain's unparalleled film and TV heritage. The BFI is an innovator in presenting films to audiences in new and dynamic ways, from cinemas to film festivals, outdoor events to online video-on-demand services. At the heart of all its activities is the BFI's central aim to ensure that everyone in the UK has access to the widest possible range of film and their own film heritage.

That heritage includes all-time great British directors Alfred Hitchcock, David Lean, Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger; and the rich vein of documentary filmmaking, in which Britain led the world, including the lyrical work of Humphrey Jennings. The archive also boasts a significant collection of filmmakers' papers as well as extensive stills, posters and production and costume designs along with original scripts, press books and related ephemera.

Expert teams undertake the time-consuming and complex task of restoring films at the BFI John Paul Getty Jr Conservation Centre in Hertfordshire. The BFI's most precious film materials are kept in optimum conditions in the world-leading Master Film Store in Warwickshire.

#### **ABOUT MISSING BELIEVED WIPED**

The UK's National Collection, the BFI National Archive, is the most significant collection of TV and film in the world. Missing Believed Wiped was launched by the BFI in 1993 with the aim of tracking down and screening material long missing from the official TV archives. Finds over the years have included material from television programmes such as *The Avengers*, *Till Death Us Do Part*, *Dad's Army*, *Armchair Theatre* and *Top of the Pops*. In the last 20 years over 2,000 items, once thought missing, have been recovered (by various people through various sources), the most important of these finds have been screened at the BFI's annual Missing Believed Wiped events at BFI Southbank.