



DRAMA

AUTUMN HIGHLIGHTS 2004



DIRTY WAR

The BBC's Drama and Current Affairs departments have joined forces to co-produce *Dirty War*, a drama presenting a hypothetical scenario of a radiological "dirty" bomb attack on London, written by Dan Percival and Lizzie Mickery.

As the "war on terror" becomes the defining issue of the early 21st century, *Dirty War* confronts the reality of the situation faced by Britain today. Following the events of 9/11 and in Madrid in March 2004, both the Metropolitan Police and MI5 have said that it is only a matter of time before a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear attack is launched on a Western city.

Dirty War is a fictional drama based on extensive research into the preparations made by the UK's emergency planners, government and the emergency services to deal with this threat.

While the film presents a hypothetical scenario of a terrorist attack on London, its focus is the reaction to this attack – particularly by the emergency services and government agencies – and the characters caught up in the unfolding drama. *Dirty War* blends drama and documentary techniques to offer a very human and realistic insight into a terrifying fictional scenario.

SILENT WITNESS

After eight years of identifying victims and uncovering the culprits behind a variety of gruesome deaths, Professor Sam Ryan (Amanda Burton) bids farewell to the world of forensics, when she is forced to face her past and her reasons for doing her job.

Sam's departure results in promotions for her sidekicks, Dr Leo Dalton (Will Gaminara) and Dr Harry Cunningham (Tom Ward), and the introduction of new recruit Nikki Alexander (Emilia Fox). She is a driven, bright young archaeo-pathologist who shares their unquenchable desire to uncover the truth.



NORTH AND SOUTH

Set against the backdrop of Victorian England's industrial North, Daniela Denby-Ashe and Richard Armitage head the cast in this adaptation by Sandy Welch of Elizabeth Gaskell's passionate love story, North And South.

Margaret (Denby-Ashe) is a privileged, middle-class southerner, who is forced to settle in the northern town of Milton. Her distaste for the town and its people extends to handsome and charismatic cotton mill owner, John Thornton (Armitage), whom she believes epitomises everything she dislikes about the North.

Over time, however, Margaret begins to settle in Milton, her social conscience awakens, and she befriends some of the local mill workers, learning about their poverty and workplace struggles. As events conspire to throw Margaret and Thornton together, the two spirited characters' repressed physical attraction for one another grows – but they must conquer prejudices of class and circumstance.

A strong supporting cast includes Sinead Cusack, Lesley Manville, Tim Pigott-Smith, Pauline Quirke, Brendan Coyle, Jo Joyner and Rupert Evans.





BLACKPOOL

David Morrissey, Sarah Parish and David Tennant star in Peter Bowker's *Blackpool*, a startlingly fresh musical drama about one man's ambition set in the "Las Vegas of the North".

Flawed hero Ripley Holden (Morrissey) is a charismatic family man who trained at the school of hard knocks. He is poised to make top dollar as *Blackpool* reinvents itself as the Las Vegas of the Lancashire coast. But family life begins to take its toll on Ripley and, when the body of a young man is found in his showpiece arcade, he finds himself brought down by a series of events that spiral out of control.

Sarah Parish is Ripley's neglected wife, Natalie; John Thomson is Terry Corlette, Ripley's close associate; Georgia Taylor is Shyanne, Ripley's teenage daughter; and David Tennant is DI Carlisle, the investigating officer who is determined to get to the truth, no matter what it takes.

This bold, edgy and original drama serial combines entertaining storytelling with familiar musical numbers.

SPOOKS

Rupert Penry-Jones and Tim McInnerny join the cast of the Bafta award-winning spy series.

The team is in disarray. Tom has disappeared in sensational circumstances – and Zoë and Danny don't know if they'll see him again – and Harry is seriously injured. Was it treachery? Newcomer Adam Carter (Penry-Jones) is recruited by Harry from MI6 to galvanise the group into discovering the truth. *Spooks* stars Matthew MacFadyen as Tom, Keeley Hawes as Zoë, David Oyelowo as Danny, Peter Firth as Harry and Tim McInnerny as Oliver Mace.

The award-winning *Spooks* website returns to support the series at bbc.co.uk/spooks. Viewers watching on digital TV can press the Red button after the show, where Harry will take them through a series of spy training modules to prepare them for an interactive TV mission later in the series. There is also an opportunity to get a sneak peak at forthcoming episodes and win *Spooks* prizes.



MONARCH OF THE GLEN

Tom Baker and Simone Lahbib join the acclaimed cast for another series of the feel-good Highland drama.

Baker plays unruly pensioner Donald MacDonald, who returns to his Highland home after a 40-year absence. Lahbib is career woman Isobel Anderson, who turns her back on the big city to run her late grandmother's rundown croft. Both homecomings bring with them a catalogue of surprises, not least for the MacDonald family.

With the new laird, Paul Bowman, in place, Glenbogle faces a bright new future.

The cast includes Monarch favourites Susan Hampshire, Lloyd Owen, Dawn Steele, Hamish Clark and Alexander Morton.

JUDGE JOHN DEED

Martin Shaw reprises his critically-acclaimed role of John Deed, the judge who is not afraid to question the establishment, in a new series of the drama written by Gordon Newman.

The eponymous judge has more than enough on his plate, not only in his ongoing battles with the powers that be, but also dealing with his daughter, Charlie (Louisa Clein), who has followed in her father's footsteps by embarking upon a legal career of her own.

Jo Mills (Jenny Seagrove) is also trying to balance her home life and work life, with a new foster child to look after.



A THING CALLED LOVE

Paul Nicholls makes his debut in a leading role in William Ivory's bold and surprising modern-day tale of one man's search for true love, set in the vibrant city of Nottingham.

The serial charts hopeless romantic Gary Scant's (Nicholls) attempts to comprehend the mysteries of the human heart. Life seems almost perfect for painter and decorator Gary; he is close to his earthy, working-class friends and family, and happy with his long-term girlfriend, Mel (Kaye Wragg). But when a night out with the lads from football takes an unexpected turn, Gary's comfortable notions about true love are shattered. This sets him on a quest to find his soul mate – and a love that demands no compromise. Joining him on his search is his close friend, Paula (Liz White), the only person who truly understands him.

The cast also includes Ben Miles, Roy Barraclough, Chris Gascoyne and Karl Collins. It is currently filming in Nottingham.

