

# From the Nations: Television made in Scotland and Wales

Lecture Theatre 1, Arts Building, Royal Holloway, University of London

23 and 24 November 2018



*'Saturday Night Theatre: Fade Out'* (HTV/ITV, 11 April 1970)

**23 November 2018**

**6pm Book Launch: The Memoirs of Lewis Rudd**

The launch of Lewis Rudd's new biography encompassing his extensive TV production career.

**Master of ceremonies: Tony Currie (Radio Six International and ex-STV)**

**7pm Fade Out**

HTV's first full-length drama made for the network dealing with the operations of a fictional TV company and political corruption. Based on a play by David Watson, adapted by Leon Griffiths and directed by John Nelson Burton, the production stars

Stanley Baker, George Sanders, Ronald Hines and Ann Lynn. A Harlech production. Originally transmitted 11.04.1970

8.15pm *The Sunday Drama: City Sugar*

STV's production of Stephen Poliakoff's critique of the deadening power of commercialised culture relocates the original play to Glasgow where it was also shot. Tim Curry (best-known for his part in *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*) plays the part of DJ Leonard Brazil who launches what he calls the 'the competition of the century' aimed at 'the average girl'. Produced by Robert Love and directed (on film) by Mike Vardy, the production also features a strong performance by Veronica Quilligan in the role of the music fan whom Brazil sets out to torment. A Scottish Television production. Originally transmitted 06.08.1978

9.45pm *A Class By Himself: A Rolls is a Rolls is a Rolls*

Written and starring Richard Stilgoe, *A Class By Himself* was a six-part series dealing with the misadventures of a young man Barnaby Locke sent down from Cambridge. The first and only episode to survive from the series, *A Rolls is a Rolls is a Rolls*, is a remake of the original HTV pilot involving Locke's encounter with the occupant of a Rolls Royce, Lord Bleasham, played by John Le Mesurier. A strong cast also includes Seretta Wilson as Bleasham's daughter and Peter Butterworth as his chauffeur. A HTV production. Originally transmitted 13.09.1972

10.15pm STV Closedown



# From the Nations: Television made in Scotland and Wales

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> November



'Preview: *The Horseman's Word*' (STV, 8 May 1980)

**10am Introduction and welcome: John Hill (Royal Holloway) and Chris Perry (Kaleidoscope)**

**10.15 Dramarama: *Wayfarers***

*Dramarama* was an anthology series of children's plays, commonly with a supernatural or fantasy angle. The individual plays were produced by different ITV companies and this was the third to be made by STV. A personal favourite of director David Andrews who will be in attendance, *Wayfarers* was written by Glenn Chandler (the creator of STV's crime series *Taggart*), designed by Judi Ritchie, and features early performances from versatile Scottish actors Tony Curran and Laurie Ventry. A Scottish Television production. Originally transmitted 14.07.1986

**10.45am *Garnock Way***

'Perhaps the most overtly political soap opera that the UK has ever seen', according to one writer, *Garnock Way* was a long-running series set in a fictional mining village located somewhere between Edinburgh and Glasgow. Primarily focused on the lives of the Baxter and Ross families, and their personal and emotional entanglements, the series also addressed the changing economic circumstances of the time including the

threat of pit closures, the decline of the shipyards and the politics of new towns. Although the series ran to 173 episodes, only six now survive. These include the very first written by Jack Gerson who had initially burst into television in 1961 with the hugely influential drama *Three Ring Circus* and subsequently worked on *This Man Craig* and STV's very first soap opera *High Living* (which is now completely lost). A Scottish Television production. Episode 1 originally transmitted 01.04.1976

### **11.15am The McLean Sisters – singing their way to the top!**

Presentation about the archive of Mel and Shirley McLean. The singing duo were very popular throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Recently they have digitised their archive for Kaleidoscope and they talk to Chris Perry about their career.

### **12.15pm *Airport Chaplain: The Eye of Faith***

An unusual drama series, *Airport Chaplain* features Ronald Forfar as the new chaplain at the fictional Glendinning Airport dealing with the various issues raised by the characters whom he meets. The first of a series of six, *The Eye of Faith*, is the only known episode to survive. Written by Bruce Stewart and directed by David Giles. A Scottish Television production. Originally transmitted 08.01.1980

### **12. 45pm Lunch**

### **1.45pm 'HTV and STV in context': Douglas McNaughton (University of Brighton) and Jamie Medhurst (University of Aberystwyth).**

Presentation and discussion hosted by John Hill.

### **2.30pm *Preview: The Spaver Connection***

The first of two examples of *Preview*, STV's series of half-hour plays devoted to the encouragement of new television writers, Sue Glover's play focuses on an adolescent girl's discovery of a life-changing family secret. Produced by Robert Love and directed by David Andrews (who will be interviewed after the screening), Lesley Fitzsimons stars as the female lead in a cast that also includes John Gordon Sinclair fresh from success in *Gregory's Girl*. A Scottish Television production. Originally transmitted 25.03.1982

### **3pm David Andrews in interview**

The director of many TV drama plays, series and specials, David Andrews discusses TV drama production with Chris Perry.

### **4pm Comfort Break**

#### **4.10pm *Jake's Journey***

*Jake's Journey* is an untransmitted pilot made for HTV with CBS backing. The origins of the pilot lie in an offer to Monty Python member Graham Chapman to adapt Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* which, along with co-writer David Sherlock, he took as a starting-point for a comic fantasy involving time travel. Directed by veteran Hollywood director Hal Ashby, this programme has acquired something akin to legendary status as a result of its lack of transmission and the near impossibility of being able to see it. Graham Chapman appears as Sir George (and the Queen). Peter Cook plays King Arthur. A Witzend production for HTV (1988). Untransmitted.

#### **5pm Adverts/presentation from STV and HTV.**

#### **5.15pm *Preview: The Horseman's Word***

*The Horseman's Word* was the third in STV's series devoted to work by new writers. It was also the first of three plays written by Glenn Chandler who would go on to create STV's long-running crime series, *Taggart*. Directed by Peter Barber-Fleming, the play is a stylised but genuinely eerie tale of country ritual executed with conviction by a strong cast that includes Jimmy Chisholm, Alex Norton and James Cosmo. Elements of the play were later incorporated into the *Taggart* story, 'Hellfire', also written by Chandler. A Scottish Television production. Originally transmitted 08.05.1980

#### **5.55pm Closedown**

... COME TO AN END

Closedown of TWW. Host Sir John Betjeman

A TWW production. Originally transmitted 03.03.19

This event is co-organised by Kaleidoscope and the Centre for the History of Television Culture and Production (and the Forgotten TV Drama project) at Royal Holloway, University of London.

