



ITV COMMISSIONS CRIME THRILLER, *PAYBACK*, STARRING MORVEN CHRISTIE, PETER MULLAN AND PRASANNA PUWANARAJAH AND PRODUCED BY JED MERCURIO'S HTM TELEVISION AND WRITTEN BY DEBBIE O'MALLEY

****WITH BRITBOX INTERNATIONAL AS CO-PRODUCTION PARTNERS****

ITV's Head of Drama, Polly Hill has commissioned six-part crime thriller *Payback*, produced by Jed Mercurio's HTM Television, starring Morven Christie, Peter Mullan and Prasanna Puwanarajah, and written by acclaimed screenwriter Debbie O'Malley.

A compelling character-led series, *Payback* follows Lexie Noble, played by Morven Christie (*The Bay*, *The A Word*, *Ordeal by Innocence*), as she becomes entangled in a perilous police operation to topple a notorious crime lord, Cal Morris, played by Peter Mullan (*The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power*, *The Underground Railroad*, *Ozark*).

Commented Morven Christie:

"I fell in love with Lexie from the first page, and I'm absolutely delighted to be working with Peter and this wonderful team in my hometown."

With an idyllic family lifestyle in the suburbs of Edinburgh, Lexie is unaware her husband, Jared, has been laundering Cal Morris' illegal earnings on a vast scale. Jared's every move is being monitored by financial investigators DC Jibrán Khan (Prasanna Puwanarajah) and DCI Adam Guthrie (Derek Riddell), who are determined to use the Noble family to bring Cal Morris to justice.

A partner in Jared's business, Lexie is forced into working for Cal, at the same time as the police net inexorably tightens. Soon Lexie finds herself walking a treacherous tightrope between Cal and the police in which her safety, and even her life, are in grave danger.

Commented Polly:

"*Payback* is a brilliant thriller which questions how well you know your partner and as the secrets come out, asks who you can trust. Debbie has written compelling scripts that will keep the audience hooked and surprised. I'm delighted to be working with Morven Christie again, and of course Jed Mercurio and Madonna Baptiste at HTM Television."

HTM Television's Creative Director, Jed Mercurio (*Line of Duty*, *Bodyguard*, *DI Ray*) is working alongside Polly Hill, Madonna Baptiste (*DI Ray*, *Stephen*, *Black Mirror*) and Diederick Santer on behalf of BritBox International.

Jed will executive produce the series, alongside Madonna Baptiste, Debbie O'Malley and Diederick Santer on behalf of BritBox International.

Payback will be directed by Jennie Darnell (*Trigger Point*, *Line of Duty*, *Holby City*) and Andrew Cumming (*Clique*, *The Origin*, *Cold Feet*) and produced by Eric Coulter (*The Control Room*, *Shetland*, *Bodyguard*).

Commented Madonna Baptiste and Jed Mercurio on behalf of HTM Television:

“Working with Debbie has been a joy, and everyone at HTM is proud to bring her thrillingly propulsive crime series to screen. We are very excited to announce a stellar line up of acting talent and pleased to be working with immensely talented directors and production team.”

The series has been created by Debbie O’Malley who is known for her work on *Call the Midwife*, *Humans* and *Harlots*. Debbie’s three- part series, *The Guilty*, also aired on ITV in 2013.

Commented Debbie O’Malley:

“I’m delighted to be working with such a high-calibre team at HTM Television and a truly superb cast to bring Lexie Noble’s story to life.

Following our ordinary wife and mother through the loopholes and increasingly grey areas of fiscal malpractice, into the murky world of organised crime, *Payback* poses the disconcerting question: just how far might any of us go, if we thought we could get away with it?”

The drama will be filmed in Glasgow, Edinburgh and surrounding areas.

BritBox International will co-produce the series and be the exclusive home to the series in the US, Canada, Australia, South Africa, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Norway. The BritBox deal was negotiated by Hat Trick International, which also represents the show globally.

Press contacts:

Janice Troup Email: Janice.Troup@itv.com

Callum Bracken Email: Callum.Bracken@itv.com