



TV PREVIEW

# The Mezzotint

+ Q&A with director Mark Gatiss and cast members Frances Barber, Robert Bathurst and Nimesh Patel. Hosted by Matthew Sweet.

*'For sale: Interesting mezzotint: View of a manor-house, early part of last century.'*

It's 1922 and in the heart of an old English college, Edward Williams receives an engraving of an unknown country house. An imposing facade. A sweeping lawn. And, just perhaps, something else...?

Laced with M. R. James' trademark terror, *The Mezzotint* will guarantee a chill in the air for viewers this Christmas.

Rory Kinnear (*Years & Years*, *No Time to Die*) stars as Williams, alongside Robert Bathurst (*Cold Feet*, *Downton Abbey*) as Garwood, and Frances Barber (*Doctor Who*, *Semi-Detached*) as Mrs Ambrigail. *The Mezzotint* also stars John Hopkins (*Poldark*, *Lucky Man*), Emma Cunniffe (*Roadkill*, *Unforgotten*), Nimesh Patel (*Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *Indian Summers*), and Tommaso Di Vincenzo (*Dracula*).

*The Mezzotint* is the latest ghost story for Christmas from Mark Gatiss on the BBC, following *Martin's Close* in 2019, *The Dead Room* in 2018, *The Tractate Middoth* in 2013, and *Crooked House* in 2008. All were a ratings hit, with *Martin's Close* becoming BBC Four's most watched programme of 2019, with 1.5 million viewers (30-day consolidated figure).

Mark Gatiss says: 'It's delightful to be bringing a little seasonal unease to the nation once again and this famous M. R. James story is just the ticket. We've assembled a top-notch team to bring this eerie mystery – and a certain enigmatic old picture – to life.'

Piers Wenger, Director of BBC Drama, says: 'I'm delighted that Mark Gatiss has assembled such an outstanding cast to conjure up another unmissable ghost story for BBC Two and iPlayer this Christmas. *The Mezzotint* is classic M. R. James, and the perfect slice of horror to thrill us this festive season.'

## About the panel

**Mark Gatiss** has had a long and varied career as a writer, director and producer behind the camera, as well as being a critically-acclaimed actor and published author.

His early success on television was as part of the comedy troupe *The League of Gentlemen*, for which he both wrote and appeared onscreen as various characters.

He had a childhood passion for *Doctor Who* and both wrote for and starred in the modern revival. He was also the writer and executive producer of *An Adventure in Space and Time*, a 90 minute dramatisation of the genesis of the series as part of the show's 50th Anniversary celebrations in 2013.

Mark is the co-creator and executive producer of *Sherlock*, the hit BBC series starring Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman which has seen unprecedented global success and in which he also plays Sherlock's brother

Mycroft Holmes. The show has won a total of nine Emmys and twelve BAFTAs across its four series.

Mark's other writing credits for television include episodes of *Nighty Night* (2004 – 2005) *Crooked House* (2008), two episodes of Agatha Christie's *Poirot*, his adaptation of HG Wells's *The First Men in the Moon* (2010) and all three episodes of the documentary series *A History of Horror* (2010) and its one-off sequel *Horror Europa* (2012), all of which he presented as well. Most recently he wrote and presented two art documentaries for BBC4 – one on John Minton and the other on Aubrey Beardsley.

In 2017, he curated and directed *Queers* – a series of eight monologues for BBC Four to mark the 50th Anniversary of the 1967 Sexual Offences Act which saw the partial decriminalisation of male homosexuality.

Recent acting roles include The Duke of Marlborough in the BAFTA-winning and Oscar-nominated *The Favourite* (2018), Disney's *Christopher Robin* (2018), BBC One's *Gunpowder* (2017), *Wolf Hall* (2015), Peter Mandelson in James Graham's *Coalition* (2015) and Tycho Nestoris in HBO's *Game of Thrones* (2014-2017). He recently starred opposite Anthony Hopkins and Olivia Colman in the award-winning screen adaptation of Florian Zeller's *The Father*.

Upcoming movie roles include *Mission Impossible 7* and *Operation Mincemeat*.

On stage, he has starred alongside Tom Hiddleston in *Coriolanus* (2013), as Harold in Mart Crowley's *The Boys in the Band* (2016) and as Doctor Shpigelsky in Patrick Marber's adaptation of Turgenev's *Three Days in the Country* for which he received the Olivier Award for Best Actor in a Supporting Role. In November 2018 he took the titular role in *The Madness of George III* at the Nottingham Playhouse – the best-selling show in the theatre's history.

Most recently he co-created and executive produced the BBC and Netflix drama *Dracula*. In addition to *The Mezzotint*, for Christmas 2021 he has written and directed *The Amazing Mr Blunden* for Sky One, which he stars alongside Simon Callow and Tamsin Greig. He will also be starring as Jacob Marley in a new adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* which he has written for the Nottingham Playhouse and Alexandra Palace, due to open later this year.

**Frances Barber** is an award-winning actress whose work has combined leading roles in theatre, film & TV in the UK.

Seasons at The RSC, The National & London's West End have seen her play a variety of parts in Shaw, Chekhov (Sonya in *Uncle Vanya*, for which she received her second Olivier Nomination and a TMA award for Best Actress), Tennessee Williams, Shakespeare and many contemporary playwrights. She created the leading role, Billie Trix, in the Pet Shop Boys' musical, *Closer to Heaven*, for which she won a Best Actress in a Musical Award. She toured the US in 2007 in *King Lear* and *The Seagull*, directed by Sir Trevor Nunn, starring Sir Ian McKellen.

On film, she has worked with Mike Leigh, in Stephen Frears' *Prick Up Your Ears* and *Sammy and Rosie Get Laid*, Peter Greenaway, John Irving, Tom Hooper and Kenneth Branagh amongst many others. On TV, she has played innumerable roles in drama series for the BBC, ITV, Channel 4 & Sky. Recent credits include *Whitstable Pearl* for Acorn TV; *The Chelsea Detective* for Acorn/BBC TV; *Dodger* for NBCUniversal Studios/BBC and *The Mezzotint* for Can Do Productions/Adorable Media for BBC. Previous television credits include *Semi-Detached* for BBC Two; *The Split* for BBC One; *The Queen and I* for Sky; *Father Brown* and *Mapp and Lucia* for the BBC; *Medici: Masters of Florence* made by Lux Vide for Netflix and *Psychobitches* for Tiger Aspect. She played Kovarian in *Dr Who* and in *Silk*, the hard-hitting QC Caroline Warwick, for

which she was nominated for a prestigious Silver Dagger Award. Her latest film credits include *A Bird Flew In* [Goldfinch Entertainment] and *Trick or Treat* in which she won the Best Actress Award, and the film took home Best Feature Film at the Marbella International Film Festival, 2019.

She played the title role in Phyllida Lloyd's ground-breaking all female production of *Julius Caesar* at the Donmar Warehouse which transferred to the St Ann's Warehouse in New York. Recent theatre includes *What the Butler Saw* at the Mark Taper Forum, L.A; *The School for Scandal* at the Lucille Lortel Theatre, New York, *Madame Rubinstein* at the Park Theatre and *An Ideal Husband* at The Vaudeville Theatre. In 2019/2020 Frances enjoyed a sold-out run in Edinburgh and then a transfer to Leicester Square Theatre of *The Pet Shop Boys* and Jonathan Harvey's one woman show *MUSIK*, in which she reprised the role of Bille Trix, which was created for her in their musical *Closer To Heaven*. Frances was awarded Best Lead Performance in a Musical in the 2021 OFFIEs awards. Most recently Frances has completed a sell-out run as Polonius opposite Sir Ian McKellen's *Hamlet* at Windsor Theatre Royal.

**Robert Bathurst's** many series on television include *Cold Feet*, *Toast of London*, *Downton Abbey*, *Joking Apart*, *Emma*, *Wild at Heart* and *My Dad's The Prime Minister*. Theatre performances in London and the UK include plays by Shaw, Shakespeare, Coward, Frayn, Ibsen, Chekhov, Wilde and Aphra Behn; he co-devised and produced *Love, Loss & Chianti*, a stage performance for two actors, musicians and cartoon animation based on narrative poems by Christopher Reid. He played the title role in Mike Bartlett's *King Charles III* at the Chicago Shakespeare Theatre. His reading of Louise Penny's Inspector Gamache novels for MacMillan Audio won him the 2020 Audie Award for Best Male Narrator. This year he co-directed a film about jockeys, *The Fall*, which is currently available on SkySports. He writes for *The Oldie* magazine on showbiz and horseracing. In addition to *The Mezzotint* recent TV includes *The Larkins* (ITV), *Munich – The Edge Of War* (Netflix), *Dr Who* (BBC) and the new series of *Toast of London* (BBC).

**Nikesh Patel** is currently shooting *The Devil's Hour* for Amazon. He was recently seen opposite Rose Matafeo in her new BBC Three/HBO Max series *Starstruck*, playing the lead role of 'Tom Kapoor', season 2 of which will be out soon. Before that he most recently starred as 'Kash' in Mindy Kaling's ten-part *Four Weddings and a Funeral* for Hulu and played 'Foaly' in Disney feature *Artemis Fowl*, directed by Kenneth Branagh. Nikesh trained at the Guildhall School of Drama and was named as the 2010 Screen's UK Stars of Tomorrow.

**Matthew Sweet, Writer and Broadcaster** is author of *Inventing the Victorians* (2001), *Shepperton Babylon* (2005) and *The West End Front* (2011). A familiar voice in British broadcasting, he presents *Free Thinking* and *Sound of Cinema* on BBC Radio 3 and *The Philosopher's Arms* on BBC Radio 4. He has judged the Costa Book Award, edited *The Woman in White* for Penguin Classics and was Series Consultant on the Showtime/Sky Atlantic series *Penny Dreadful*. In the BBC2 drama *An Adventure in Space and Time* he played a moth from the planet Vortis. His fashion history column, *The Line of Beauty*, appears in *1843* magazine. His latest book, *Operation Chaos: The Vietnam Deserters Who Fought the CIA, the Brainwashers and Themselves* is published by Picador.

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## THE MEZZOTINT

*Director:* Mark Gatiss

*Producer:* Isibéal Ballance

*Adapted by:* Mark Gatiss

*Written by:* M. R. James

*Director of Photography:* Kieran McGuigan

*Production Designer:* Bobbie Cousins

*Costume Designer:* Claire Finlay

*Make-Up Designer:* Claudia Cavalli

*Composer:* Blair Mowat

## Cast

Rory Kinnear (*Williams*)

Robert Bathurst (*Garwood*)

Frances Barber (*Mrs Ambrigail*)

John Hopkins (*Binks*)

Emma Cunniffe (*Mrs Filcher*)

Nikesh Patel (*Nisbet*)

Tommaso Di Vincenzo (*Gawdy*)

UK 2021

30 mins

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## IN PERSON & PREVIEWS

### TV Preview: The Mezzotint + Q&A with director Mark Gatiss

Tue 7 Dec 18:10

### TV Preview: The Tourist + Q&A with actors Jamie Dornan, Danielle Macdonald, Shalom Brune-Franklin and creatives

Tue 7 Dec 20:30

### Exclusive Preview: Swan Song + pre-recorded Q&A with director Benjamin Cleary, producer Rebecca Bourke and actors Mahershala Ali and Naomie Harris

Wed 8 Dec 17:15

### Preview: Boiling Point + Q&A with director Philip Barantini and actors Ray Panthaki, Lauryn Ajufu and Alice Feetham

Wed 8 Dec 20:30

### TV Preview: Ghosts Christmas Special + Q&A with actors Simon Farnaby, Martha Howe-Douglas, Jim Howick, Lolly Adefope and Kiell Smith-Bynoe

Thu 9 Dec 18:10

### tick, tick... BOOM! + pre-recorded Q&A with director Lin-Manuel Miranda, producer Julie Yoh, executive producer Julie Larson, writer Steven Levenson and actors Andrew Garfield, Vanessa Hudgens, Alexandra Shipp, Robin de Jesus and Judith Light

Thu 9 Dec 20:30

### Patti Boulaye

Sun 12 Dec 15:30

### Woman with a Movie Camera: Bridget Jones's Diary at 20 + Q&A with director Sharon Maguire

Thu 16 Dec 18:00

### Preview: Wheel of Fortune and Fantasy (Guzen to sozo)

Wed 29 Dec 18:00

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## REGULAR PROGRAMME

### Bogarde at 100: The Servant

Thu 9 Dec 18:15; Thu 16 Dec 20:45; Mon 20 Dec 14:00 (Seniors' matinee + Q&A TBC); Tue 28 Dec 18:30; Wed 29 Dec 17:55

### African Odysseys: Billy Bang Lucky Man + intro by author Kevin Le Gendre, and Q&A with co-director Markus Hansen

Sat 11 Dec 17:30

### Silent Cinema: The Virginian + intro by BFI Curator Bryony Dixon

Sun 12 Dec 13:00

### Seniors' Free Archive Matinee: So Long at the Fair + Q&A (TBC)

Mon 13 Dec 14:00

### Relaxed Screening: The Black Balloon

Tue 14 Dec 18:10

### Projecting the Archive: I Could Go On Singing + intro by BFI Curator Josephine Botting

Thu 16 Dec 18:15

### Terror Vision: The Shout

Thu 30 Dec 20:50

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