

Interviews with Creator/Writer Anthony Horowitz and Lead Actor Michael Kitchen

THE SUMMER OF  
**MYSTERY!**  
BRAND NEW SEASON

# FOYLE'S WAR SERIES II

on MYSTERY!

Sundays, July 18 through August 8, 2004 from 9 to 10:30 on PBS

*Creator and Writer - Anthony Horowitz*

Anthony Horowitz, the creator and writer of *FOYLE'S WAR*, has written so many murder stories that he has been called "a one man crime wave". However, with *FOYLE'S WAR*, he is trying to do something new.

"After Midsomer Murders and Poirot, I wanted to write a slightly more complex drama which didn't just add up to 'oh yes, the butler did it!' The moment I decided on a World War Two setting, I knew I had a fantastically rich backdrop for the series."

"1940 in particular was an incredible year in British history with the fall of Norway, Dunkirk, the collapse of France-all of which are part of our story. Until I began my research, I didn't realize just how close we came to losing the war ... and of course there was a great sense of nervousness, verging on paranoia, throughout the country. It was a very interesting time to contemplate murder."

"The war also adds a moral dimension which we haven't seen before. Here we have a detective-Christopher Foyle-who constantly questions what he's doing and why. After all, what is the relevance of one single murder in a country house when hundreds of murders are being committed every day less than fifty miles away? This is particularly true in the first episode where the victim happens to be a German woman and as Foyle begins his investigation, everyone is saying to him 'She's German. She's the enemy. Who cares?'"

The setting of *FOYLE'S WAR* is Hastings and the south coast of England - a natural choice.

"The geography is varied with beaches, ports, seaside towns as well as working villages, farms and manor houses. And it was all happening on the south coast. This really was the front line with the stations under guard, the beaches blockaded and the local populace expecting an invasion at any time."



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Anthony undertook detailed research in order to create the settings and characters in *FOYLE'S WAR*, working closely with the Imperial War Museum.

"I don't think of this as period drama. It's a very modern world and one that's still with us today. After all, people who fought in the war are still alive and many of the issues raised are still very much with us today. For example, we built a huge internment camp for the first episode at exactly the same time as many of the tabloids were debating the issue of refugees arriving in Dover. The second episode touches on anti-Semitism, which is also a hot topic today."

Anthony was delighted with the casting of Michael Kitchen in the leading role.

"Michael is a magnificent actor. He studied every script, brought detailed notes to the set and certainly kept me on my toes. He didn't want to play a man who just walks into a room and asks questions and we worked together, developing the character of this very private but very dedicated man."

"It was also a lot of fun playing him off against the other cast members. Unusually, we have a team of three. Foyle has a sergeant-Paul Milner-a troubled character who has had a leg blown off in Norway. And Sam Stewart, his driver, is a real fish out of water, a vicar's daughter caught up in this very masculine world. There's a great deal of humor and warmth between the two."

"And finally, there's Andrew, Foyle's son. Andrew is in the RAF: the archetypal British hero. My admiration for the young pilots of World War Two is so huge that I wanted to include something of their story in the series. And of course Foyle is walking on a knife-edge. He lost his wife some years before. Will he now lose his son?"

This is Anthony's first long-running television series developed with his wife, producer Jill Green, although the two were also responsible for *Menace*, which screened to critical acclaim in the UK.

"It's not always easy working with your wife," Anthony says. "She's the only producer who can actually kick me out of bed to do rewrites. But at the end of the day, she was as determined as I was to make *FOYLE'S WAR* a success and I think the production values are superb. We took over Whitehall, we blew up buildings, we flew Spitfires ... whatever I wrote, she somehow managed to do."

Anthony created *Midsomer Murders* (with director, Jeremy Silberston) and *Murder in Mind*, which is now in its third series for the BBC.

"I am fascinated by the heightened emotions that surround a murder and I like my dramas to be intellectual puzzles which I hope people will enjoy solving. *FOYLE'S WAR* is a drama first and a murder-mystery second. I think it's my best work and I hope the viewers will agree."

*Michael Kitchen plays Detective Chief Superintendent Christopher Foyle*

Creating the character of new TV detective Christopher Foyle in *FOYLE'S WAR* was a challenge Michael Kitchen was delighted to rise to.

"I was attached to quite a few projects when Foyle first came to me in its early drafts as The War Detective. Even then it was very high quality, always attractive, always going to be a strong contender and no great surprise when it was greenlit."

"Jill Green and Anthony Horowitz were great to work with and seemed happy to accommodate what I suggested."

"Some writers are very tight about what they've written which can be restricting. Anthony was very easy, very loose and we worked to get a draft which was going to get, hopefully, the best out of me and towards a script which flowed."

A policeman like his father before him, Christopher Foyle is a steadfast and dedicated officer who has risen through the ranks to become Detective Chief Superintendent. But rather than resting on his laurels, Foyle wants a transfer out of the force.

As the film progresses, information about Foyle's own life starts to emerge. A widower since the death of his wife from typhoid five years earlier, he is somewhat introspective, but the loss has brought him closer to his son Andrew (Julian Ovenden).

"Hopefully the relationship with his son reveals a warmer side to Foyle," says Michael. "Hopefully too, a lot of unspoken stuff between them gives the whole family story a depth which will be looked at in later episodes."

Foyle is assisted in his work by driver Samantha Stewart (Honeysuckle Weeks) and police sergeant turned soldier Paul Milner (Anthony Howell).

"I believe there's a lot to be had in the future out of the relationship between Foyle and Sam. I'd hope there's a strong indication of this in the first film and that the difference in their relationship between their first meeting and the end is apparent."

"I was pleased to work with Honeysuckle again - we worked on a radio production of Bleak House together - but I'd never met Robert Hardy or Edward Fox before."

Describing the character of Foyle, Michael adds: "It's perhaps not a bad idea at this stage to leave as many open doors as possible. One of the biggest things was to try and find a way of avoiding the orthodox question and answer route and find instead an alternative way of releasing whatever is necessary to the audience."

Michael could soon find himself joining the roll call of famous TV detectives.

"I think there's great potential in *FOYLE'S WAR* and the character is open for development. Some of the crew I'd worked with before, such as David Odd, Claire Kenny, Ros Ebbut and Jon Best, but all of them and their departments are really clever people. I enjoyed doing it a great deal. Few jobs have had such a good feeling throughout," he says.

Michael's career spans film, television and theatre where he has worked extensively for the RSC and Royal National Theatre.

His many television credits include Lorna Doone, The Railway Children, Oliver Twist, Sunnyside Farm, Reckless, The Hanging Gale, Dirty Old Town, Dandelion Dead, The Justice Game and most recently, the role of Jack Turner in A&E.

Michael's film roles include Proof of Life, The World is Not Enough, Goldeneye, Enchanted April, Russia House and Out of Africa.

SOURCE: Greenlit Productions

*Foyle's War* is a Greenlit Productions production presented on PBS by WGBH Boston. It was written and created by Anthony Horowitz. It was directed by Jeremy Silberston (Episodes 1, 2, 4) and David Thacker (Episode 3). The producers are Jill Green (Episodes 1-4) and Simon Passmore (Episodes 2-4).

MYSTERY has been presented on PBS by WGBH for over thirty years. Rebecca Eaton is executive producer. Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Russell Baker is series host.

MYSTERY is closed captioned for deaf and hard-of-hearing viewers, and described for people who are blind or visually impaired by the Media Access Group at WGBH. The descriptive narration is available on the SAP channel of stereo TVs and VCRs. For more information about MYSTERY, visit the series Web site at [pbs.org/mystery](http://pbs.org/mystery).

WGBH Boston is America's preeminent public broadcasting producer. One-third of PBS's primetime lineup and companion Web content, as well as many public radio favorites, are produced by WGBH. The station also is a pioneer in educational multimedia and in access technologies for people with disabilities.

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### Additional Press Information

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