

Second series of critically acclaimed drama Karen Pirie begins production in Scotland

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[Drama](#)

Second series of World Productions' critically acclaimed drama Karen Pirie begins production in Scotland for ITV, ITVX, STV and STV Player

- Lauren Lyle, Emer Kenny, Chris Jenks and Zach Wyatt confirmed to return to BAFTA Scotland nominated series

ITV and award-winning production company World Productions (The Pembrokeshire Murders, Line of Duty, Malpractice) have announced filming has commenced on the highly-anticipated second series of cold-case murder drama Karen Pirie.

The 3 x 120' drama, based on acclaimed author Val McDermid's A Darker Domain and adapted by Emer Kenny (The Curse, Save Me Too) will see the return of Lauren Lyle (Outlander, Vigil) as the fearless young Scottish investigator Karen

Pirie.

Lauren was recently awarded both Best Actress Television and the Audience Award for Favourite Scot on Screen at BAFTA Scotland for her performance in series one.

Also reprising their roles are Chris Jenks (*Sex Education*, *Vigil*) as DC Jason 'Mint' Murray, Zach Wyatt (*Timestalker*, *The Witcher: Blood Origin*) as DS Phil Parhatka, Steve John Shepherd (*Harry Potter*, *Karen Pirie*) as DCS Lees, Emer Kenny as River Wilde, and Rakhee Thakrar (*Wonka*, *Sex Education*) as Bel Richmond, as they reinvestigate the 1984 kidnapping of heiress Catriona Grant and her baby son.

The series has been commissioned by ITV's Head of Drama Polly Hill and Drama Commissioner Huw Kennair-Jones. Huw will oversee production on behalf of the broadcaster. *Karen Pirie* will air on ITV1 and be available for streaming on ITVX. World Productions are part of ITV Studios.

In the present, Lauren Lyle's *Pirie* will be joined by Saskia Ashdown (*Six Four*) as newcomer DC Isla Stark, James Cosmo (*Braveheart*) and Frances Tomelty (*Unforgotten*) as Catriona's parents, oil magnate Sir Broderick Grant and his ex-wife Mary, and John Michie (*Holby City*) as Fergus Sinclair, the father of Cat's son Adam.

At the centre of the police case in 1984 will be Julia Brown (*World on Fire*) as Catriona Grant. She will be joined by Mark Rowley (*One Day*) as Mick, Kat Ronney (*Dinosaur*) as Bonnie, Conor Berry (*Schemers*) as Andy and Stuart Campbell (*The Winter King*) as Kevin. Jamie Michie (*Back to Life*) will play young Brodie Grant, Madeleine Worrall (*The Legend of Tarzan*) will play young Mary Grant and Jack Stewart (*Outlander*) as young Fergus. The original investigation will be helmed by Thoren Ferguson (*Rebus*) as DI Anderson and Helen Katamba (*The Nest*) as DC Laurel Blair.

In the turmoil of 1984, when young heiress to the Grant oil fortune Catriona Grant is kidnapped at gunpoint with her young son, it's assumed that the motivation is political. The huge investigation creates an uncontrollable press storm... but when the culprits unexpectedly fall silent, the case runs cold. Cat and Adam are never seen again.

Forty years later, when a man's body is discovered, *Karen Pirie* is assigned to reopen the case in complete secrecy. With the first key piece of evidence in decades, *Karen* must try to unlock one of Scotland's most infamous mysteries, whilst battling increasing media attention. What happened to Cat Grant and why

do sinister forces want the secrets of her disappearance to remain hidden?

CEO and Executive Producer, Simon Heath at World Productions said:

“I’ve never been asked so often about when a character is returning to our screens. Well Karen is back again – as whip smart as ever with an intriguing new cold case from the 1980s. Drawn from Val’s terrific novel, Emer’s tremendous scripts have attracted an exciting new guest cast to join our established names. I can’t wait for everyone to see the finished show.”

Writer and Executive Producer, Emer Kenny said:

“I’ve never related to a character more than Karen Pirie. When she’s laughing, I’m laughing. When she’s stressed, I’m stressed. When she turns to drink... well, you get the idea. So I’m delighted to be bringing her back to your screens, now a Detective Inspector with more power, more confidence, and some of the same iconic sweater vests. We have a dazzling cast, an heroic crew, and epic plot-twists. If Karen Pirie isn’t already your favourite detective, I promise she will be soon.”

Commented Huw Kennair-Jones:

“After the well-deserved success of the first series, it's great filming has started again on Karen Pirie and that we're returning to the brilliant characters and world Emer has created. And with a stellar cast led by the BAFTA Scotland winning Lauren Lyle and produced by the always excellent World Productions, the second series promises to deliver a gripping story that'll keep the ITV and ITVM audiences guessing until the very end. We can't wait for it to hit the screens.”

The first series launched with 6.6m viewers and averaged 5.9m across each episode, making it one of the most watched new dramas on ITV in 2022. As the winner of Best Drama Series at the Celtic Media Festival in 2023, Karen Pirie has been described as ‘modern and fresh’ by The Times, praised for being ‘meaty, well-paced and sure-footed’ by The Guardian, and ‘the best new police serial this year’ by the Daily Mail.

Karen Pirie will be executive produced by Simon Heath, CEO and Emma Luffingham, Head of Development at World Productions, alongside Emer Kenny and Val McDermid. Gareth Bryn (Line of Duty, The Gathering) will direct alongside Amanda Blue (The Gathering, Maternal) and Marcus Wilson (Doctor Who, Luther) will produce.

It is produced in association with ITV Studios, which handles global distribution.

Filming has begun in Scotland and will continue in Malta.

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