



BANCROFT



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Part of ITV Studios

Introduction



Sarah Parish leads the cast of ITV's new thriller Bancroft starting Monday December 11 at 9pm.

Scheduled across four consecutive nights Bancroft is a dark and compelling thriller, with a tortured female detective at its heart.

Created and written by Kate Brooke (*Mr Selfridge*, *Ice Cream Girls*, *The Making of a Lady*), leading actress Sarah Parish (*Broadchurch*, *W1A*, *Cutting It*) plays respected police officer DCI Elizabeth Bancroft, a woman with dark secrets in her past.

Ruthless and courageous, Bancroft is a brilliant copper. She has given her life to the police force. Consequently, she's trusted and adored by her colleagues and promotion to Detective Chief Superintendent looks assured. Bancroft is running an operation to bring down the pernicious and vicious Kamara gang. She adopts dubious methods, but the most violent brother, Athif (Amit Dhut), rules the local town with an iron fist, so it's hard not to applaud her actions.

Joining Sarah is acclaimed actress Faye Marsay (*Game of Thrones*, *Black Mirror*, *Love Nina*), who takes on the role of DS Katherine Stevens, an ambitious fast-tracked recruit. When Katherine is assigned to a particular cold case, she unwittingly disturbs the ghosts of the past and what she unearths shakes Bancroft to her core.

International actor, Linus Roache (*Vikings*, *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*) makes his return to British television. Linus plays Tim Fraser who was widowed when his wife, Laura, was brutally murdered in their home 27 years previously, an unsolved crime Elizabeth seems to know more about than she's letting on. This knowledge won't stay buried and it seems Elizabeth Bancroft will be forced to confront her demons.

Introduction continued:

Produced by Phil Collinson (*Midwinter of the Spirit, Coronation Street, Dr Who*) and directed by John Hayes (*Vera, Home Fires*), Bancroft explores what happens when heinous crimes, long buried, come back to haunt us.

Filmed on location in and around Bolton and the North West, this new series also features Amara Karan (*The Night Of, Stan Lee's Lucky Man*), Adrian Edmondson (*War and Peace, Prey*), Art Malik (*Cold Feet, Indian Summers, Homeland*), Kenneth Cranham (*War and Peace, Rome*), Adam Long (*Happy Valley, Home Fires*), Lee Boardman (*The Five, Da Vinci's Demons*) and Steve Evets (*One of Us, Looking for Eric*).

Bancroft is the first commission from the ITVS drama label, Tall Story Pictures, founded by drama producers Francis Hopkinson and Catherine Oldfield. Francis is an executive producer alongside series creator and writer Kate Brooke.

The series will be distributed internationally by ITV Studios Global Entertainment.



Character biographies

ELIZABETH BANCROFT (Sarah Parish)

Detective Superintendent Elizabeth Bancroft is an exceptional, highly-competent police officer with an excellent track record. Elizabeth is incredibly ambitious and is focused on getting good results - even if it means bending the rules. She understands crime and can get into the heads of criminals. Elizabeth can go rogue, and doesn't mind getting her hands dirty. Being a woman in the force hasn't always been easy, but Elizabeth's a bloody good copper who enjoys huge respect and admiration from colleagues.

Elizabeth is devoted to her son Joe, having brought him up as a single parent (for the most part, after splitting with her ex, Brian). They share an extremely close emotional bond. Everything she does is for him. If the truth be told, she is overly protective of him and wants to keep him all for herself.

Elizabeth can't stand mess: she likes everything to be 'just so' and under control. If Elizabeth ever feels out of control or threatened, she acts out. In this way, Elizabeth also demonstrates that she is a highly-intelligent, manipulative and is a strategic thinker who knows how to get what she wants. If that fails, Elizabeth gets increasingly ruthless and even dangerous.

Emotionally, Elizabeth cuts a dark and complex figure. She can be warm and funny, but can switch quickly to be cold and detached. Elizabeth has many memories that she has successfully buried, but Katherine's investigation into Laura Fraser's case brings it all back to haunt her. And when Tim Fraser turns up out of the blue - it becomes clear that there is so much more to Elizabeth than meets the eye.

Elizabeth was devoted to Tim the way she is with Joe: strong and protective, caring but controlling. In her own way, Elizabeth has always loved Tim, yet for someone like Elizabeth - we learn that 'love' isn't straightforward.

KATHERINE STEVENS (Faye Marsay)

Detective Sergeant Katherine Stevens is a sparky, young police officer (early 20s) on the fast-track programme. To make it onto this programme, Katherine will have demonstrated her intelligence, education, physical capabilities - and ambition. Katherine has a strong moral sense of right, wrong and delivering justice. Sometimes she speaks before she thinks.

Until now, a frustrated Katherine has mostly been trapped behind a desk. When Walker offers her cold cases, Katherine jumps at the chance and soon becomes emotionally involved in the Fraser case. She becomes determined to discover the truth, and despite problems with the case file and missing evidence - Katherine won't let it go.

After a chance meeting, Katherine catches Elizabeth's attention and the two forge a close and genuine bond. However, when Elizabeth learns that Katherine has re-opened Laura's case, she exploits Katherine's trust so she can keep an eye on any progress with the Fraser case.

Character biographies

KATHERINE STEVENS CONTINUED:

She becomes determined to discover the truth, and despite problems with the case file and missing evidence – Katherine won't let it go.

After a chance meeting, Katherine catches Elizabeth's attention and the two forge a close and genuine bond. However, when Elizabeth learns that Katherine has re-opened Laura's case, she exploits Katherine's trust so she can keep an eye on any progress with the Fraser case. Katherine is in awe of Elizabeth and is slightly blinded by her – but she is sharp and questioning – which means it's only a matter of time before Katherine starts to get too close to the truth about what really happened to Laura Fraser...

Like Elizabeth, in her personal life Katherine cuts a lonely and dissatisfied figure. She is having an ill-advised affair with married colleague Andy Bevan, and whilst they have great sexual chemistry, Katherine knows it's going nowhere. When Joe Bancroft comes into her life, Katherine thinks he's the kind of guy she knows she *should* go for – so she gives it a go. Katherine genuinely likes Joe, but perhaps not enough – he soon becomes 'useful' in getting access to Bancroft.

TIM FRASER (Linus Roache)

Tim was at university with Elizabeth, so they are around the same age. Upper-middle class and from the home counties, Tim studied law at university. When he graduated he went into criminal law, starting work with the CPS and so has criminal legal experience. After Laura's death and his move to London, Tim has become incredibly successful at work. He is now a highly-respected barrister with a reputation at stake.

Tim is charming, affable and attractive – and he knows it. Borderline arrogant, he's one of those people who's happy to let others help him out and 'take care' of him. He likes things easy – uncomplicated – which is why he followed Elizabeth's lead in the aftermath of Laura's death – and then fled to London after their affair. His rebound marriage to Freya is troubled, but Tim loves his teenage daughter Amber dearly. He is incredibly protective of her. He lost Laura and he won't take risks with Amber.

Tim has always liked having Elizabeth around: at uni she propped him up, cooked for him, probably helped him get to lectures on time...that kind of thing. To have Elizabeth around was also an ego-boost, because deep-down Tim always knew Elizabeth liked him but he never went there. He always kept her dangling, until after Laura's funeral when they finally had an intensely passionate but brief affair. He knew sensed that there might be something of a darker, more complicated side to Elizabeth, but again, for ease – he always looked the other way.

Character biographies

ANYA KARIM (Amara Karan)

Anya Karim is a forensic scientist. She grew up locally, in the same community as the powerful and criminal Kamara family. Anya even dated Athif at one point – and was friends with Zaheera - though her relationship with Athif was never a healthy one. Ever the bully, when Anya wanted to study and further her education, he tried to keep her down. However, Anya was determined to broaden her world. She went off to university but her professional success has come with a price: she sacrificed her family in the process, who want nothing more to do with her. Interestingly, after graduating she moved close to her roots, but far enough away to lead her own, independent life.

At work, Anya can be direct bordering on the blunt. She's smart and knows her stuff. Together, she and Katherine forge a new and efficient working relationship based on mutual respect. This is cemented when the two kick-box together – a shared hobby where they can talk tricky stuff through and clear their heads. The fact she's slightly older than Katherine and been through much more leads Anya to be more pragmatic and realistic rather than blindly idealistic. Her feet firmly on the ground, Anya doesn't want to get too 'involved' in anything; her overriding instinct is to keep her head down and get the job down. She has kept her past and Kamara associations secret from the police, for fear it could harm her career prospects.

JOE BANCROFT (Adam Long)

Joe is Elizabeth's only son. He has always believed that Elizabeth's ex, Brian, is his father. So in his eyes, he is the child of two police officers. Kind and caring, 27 year old physiotherapist Joe has always lived under his mother's roof and has never had a taste of real independence. There's no doubt that he dotes on his, but there are also definitely times where Joe feels suffocated by her protective instincts and neediness with him. Sometimes, it's like he's being kept on a leash. Joe is also often subject to Elizabeth's manipulation.

Joe's never been very lucky in love. He had one serious girlfriend before, whom he claimed Elizabeth 'saw off'. When he meets Katherine: young, brave, intelligent and also favoured by his mother – Joe falls for her. He is a very modern young man: in touch with his feelings and isn't afraid to express them when necessary.

ATHIF KAMARA (Amit Dhut)

The eldest of the two brothers, Athif is a steroid-pumped and hyper-masculine gang leader. He's ruthless and unkind, misogynist and dangerous. Athif is a psychotic bully who terrorised his brother and other members of his community growing up. We also know he tried to stop Anya from getting away to go to university. Athif and his associates have long been associated with many violent and drug-related crimes, even rape. He runs the Highwater Estate with brutal efficiency but is getting bored; he's keen to expand his criminal tentacles. Athif has big ambitions, and is on the brink of breaking into the illegal arms trade. Most worryingly, he's willing to sell guns to the highest bidder...

Character biographies

DAANISH KAMARA (Ryan McKen)

The younger brother of Athif, Daanish has always been treated as second-best. Daanish is the brains where Athif is the brawn. He grew up in fear of his elder brother and his mother, who always saw him as lesser.

Daanish is married to Zaheera, with whom he has a son named Rahid. Daanish is truly in love with Zaheera and will do anything to protect his family even grass on his elder brother which puts all their lives at risk. Elizabeth persuades Daanish to give up his brother in return for police protection and favourable treatment in court as an informant. But, most tantalisingly of all, Elizabeth offers him his brother's empire. In Daanish, Elizabeth sees a smart and sensible man with whom she can work, and offers to help prop him up as the new Kamara gang leader. Not for financial backhanders, but for mutually-beneficial cooperation. She knows crime won't go away, so she might as well have a good relationship with the main man behind most of the crime in her city. Daanish eventually trusts Elizabeth and goes along with her idea, and so it seems like the start of a very interesting friendship indeed.

ZAHEERA KAMARA (Anjali Mohindra)

Daanish's wife, Zaheera, can be emotionally vulnerable but has a sensible head on her shoulders. Her marriage to Daanish is more equal than the marriage between Athif and Ayeesah, in that they actually love each other. Mrs Kamara seems to regard Zaheera with some suspicion; perhaps she feels as if no woman is good enough for her boys.

Zaheera is devoted to Rahid, and worries about Athif's negative influence on her young son as he grows up. Zaheera is devastated by Ayeesah's death; it's a big moment of realisation for her. She wants out of their current life, and encourages Daanish to give up his brother in return for his freedom. Zaheera is brave, and takes a massive risk for a better life for her family.

MRS KAMARA (Shameem Ahmad)

Mother to Daanish and Athif, Mrs Kamara is known to the police and is disdainful of them. Mrs Kamara is a very strong matriarchal figure, who lives in great comfort amidst the spoils of her family's crimes on the edge of an estate that lives in comparative poverty. She pulls a lot of strings behind the scenes, and it's also not unknown for her to get her hands dirty. She idolises her sons, especially Athif.

Character biographies

LEN DORMAN (Steve Evets)

The widowed father of Laura Fraser, Len Dorman has nothing much in his life until Katherine comes to tell him she's reopened his dead daughter Laura's case: Katherine gives him hope.

Len was a miner and got caught up in the violent Battle of Orgreave with the police in 1984. Having lost his job in the pits, Len found himself on the wrong side of the law a few times for petty crimes. Len's past as a miner went against him when DI Charlie Haverstock investigated Laura's murder; Haverstock hated miners, and Len hated the police. Len was in jail when Laura met Tim Fraser, and regrets that after he came out he drifted away from his daughter.

At first sceptical that a copper as young as Katherine might shed some new light on Laura's death, Len soon starts a fatherly rapport with Katherine as he is desperate for closure. He can't rest until the killer, who so brutally murdered his daughter, is caught.

LAURA FRASER (Lily Sacofsky)

Tim Fraser's ex-wife, Laura, was a young bride in her early 20s who was in the early stages of pregnancy when she died. A local lass, Laura was fashionable and fun. Uneducated but incredibly savvy and ambitious, Laura worked in a busy city bar and was very sociable. Laura had a chaotic, spirited and vivacious personality and that's what Tim loved about her. She was so different to him, in personality and background. Theirs was a runaway romance: Laura and Tim couldn't get enough of one another and things soon escalated to a hurried marriage which was all very much 'in the moment'. However, there was a different side to the bubbly, popular girl who was so cruelly murdered. Laura was not the angel everyone thought she was...

ALAN TAHEERI (Art Malik)

Retiring Detective Chief Superintendent Alan Taheeri is driven by getting results. As ever with high-ranking police officers, he's become more of a political figure and is the public face of the local police. Taheeri has worked his way up through sheer grit and determination, and now enjoys his high status. But he hasn't forgotten where he comes from; he also likes to look after his team.

Taheeri feels like his time is up: the force is not what it was when he joined and he feels the station needs fresh blood. Taheeri sees Bancroft as his natural successor, but, as with any prudent manager/politician, Taheeri knows he needs a backup. This is why he invites Clifford Walker to apply for his job too because it's best to have his bases covered. And as with any seasoned manager or politician, Taheeri knows when something needs to be buried - even if it's slightly against the rules.

Character biographies

CLIFFORD WALKER (Adrian Edmondson)

The uniformed Superintendent Clifford Walker works in parallel to Elizabeth Bancroft. Unlike Elizabeth, Walker spends most of his time behind a desk. Walker's outlook on policing is more data and performance driven and more managerial. The cold case initiative appeals to Walker because it means his stats might be improved, along with his chances for Taheeri's job.

Walker is professorial, his office is filled with books and he likes to think of himself as something of an intellectual and a strategic thinker. He's taken a shine to Katherine: he sees great talent in her and is happy to mentor/guide her through her fast-track programme.

Walker and Bancroft have history which manifests itself as an old rivalry that goes back years. It's safe to say that whilst they aren't the best of friends, they are the healthiest of competitors.

GEORGE MORRIS (Lee Boardman)

Detective Inspector George Morris is a very experienced police officer. He's risen through the ranks thanks to time-served and solid competence. Stoic and reliable, George isn't one to make a fuss and likes to get on with the job. Underneath his reserved professional veneer, George is very empathetic and kind.

ANDY BEVAN (Charles Babalola)

Detective Sergeant Andy Bevan is one to watch. He's really ambitious and competitive: even though he's sleeping with Katherine he sees her as professional competition and would prefer to keep her off his team. He's done well to get where he's got for his relatively young age, but he's easily distracted and sometimes acts before he thinks. Despite being married with a young family, his charm and looks make him a bit of a ladies' man. He still has much to learn: if he makes a mistake he's prone to sulking, but he's keen to impress and get good results.

CHARLIE HAVERSTOCK (Kenneth Cranham)

The long-retired DI Charlie Haverstock was a coppers' copper: a politically incorrect, blokey detective who loved being the boss and liked to run investigations his way or the highway. Now terminally ill, when Katherine reopens the Fraser case Haverstock's conscience gets the better of him: he knows he didn't work the case as hard as he should have because he clashed with the victim's father, Len Dorman, a miner. Haverstock is a decent man who probably made many big mistakes

Production interview

Q&A with Phil Collinson – Producer

Q: How did Bancroft come to the screen?

“The writer and creator Kate Brooke wanted to write about why people do bad things. That was at the heart of it. We tread a fine line with the audience in on some of what has happened almost right from the beginning. They are asked not to judge but to be intrigued.

“There are a lot of crime dramas out there but this offers something new. I never want to make something that looks like something else. You always want to make something that is new, different and feels fresh. Bancroft has allowed us to be a bit bolder about the way it looks and feels. Lots of night shooting, lots of people in shadows in that slightly murky world of the night.”

Q: Who is Elizabeth Bancroft?

“Elizabeth Bancroft is a highly respected senior police officer dedicated to her job. She passionately believes in cleaning up the streets and making the world a better place for people. There are many things about her that are really admirable. She gets things done. But this murder case from the past comes back to haunt her.

“It’s a terrific performance from Sarah Parish. She has not tried to soften the edges of this woman. This is a hard-nosed, driven woman. She has made sacrifices in her life, her marriage hasn’t worked out, and she’s pushed herself hard to get to where she is.”

Q: What about the rest of the cast?

“Linus Roache as Tim Fraser is really exciting. We haven’t seen that much of him on British television for a while. He is a fantastic actor. The real deal. Linus inhabits the character and is so committed to what he does. It was terrific to have him on board.

“Faye Marsay as Katherine Evans is going to be a real star. Bancroft and Katherine are almost polar opposites. Katherine is near the beginning of her career while Elizabeth is near the top of the ladder and sees a lot of herself in this young woman.

“Amara Karan plays Anya, a super clever, driven woman who has climbed high and made something of herself. While Adrian Edmondson as Supt Clifford Walker is a brilliant actor known usually for comedy delivering a stand out performance . As always, there is such a fine line between humour and tragedy and he is great at that. He has such a great energy on set and is razor sharp. We have a really strong supporting cast though.”

Production interview

Q&A with Phil Collinson continued:

Q: How did you approach the 'flashback' scenes featuring some of the characters as their younger selves?

"The past casts a long shadow all the way through this drama. The murder victim Laura Fraser died 27 years ago when Elizabeth was a young policewoman. And yet Bancroft has never been able to get away from that case. So there are lots of moments where we see Laura bleeding through into the present, when Bancroft looks in mirrors, when she sees her out of the corner of her eye. There's a real sense of the past and present blurring.

"And we do go back in time. We didn't want to re-cast the roles for that. So with the marvel of modern computer generated effects in terms we were able to de-age Sarah as Elizabeth and Linus as Tim. So Sarah is playing the same character 27 years ago in those scenes as well.

"There's a big post-production process which lets that actor perform as the character's younger self. It's so much better than casting a younger actor because that catapults you out of the drama for a moment. It was really important for us to do that. We spent a lot of time and money to see Bancroft as a young woman and really believe it. It feels like you are looking back into the mists of time.

"Sarah performs the scenes completely unencumbered. She's not in a green suit. She hasn't got dots on her face or anything like that. She plays the emotion and reality of those scenes, of what happened all that time ago, as with any other scene.

"We're very careful about how we light it, the hairstyle we give her. And then in post-production some very clever people go through it digitally frame by frame and take her back in time. It's a very interesting process. But at the heart of it is the ability to look into the past and link it to the present. Because that's what the script does all the time."

Q: What were some of the main locations used?

"We didn't want this to feel like every other police show you watch. We looked at film noir and some American influences. And so we went to Bolton very deliberately. Bolton has an incredible Victorian crescent, town hall and civic centre. It really feels like Paris or New York around there with the old cobbled streets and big sandstone buildings.

"Then once you get inside there are long marble corridors and great big open spaces. The CID office is a large old room with pillars in it. Lots of old, dark wood. We tried to make it feel like the present inhabiting locations with lots of history bearing down on them.

"So this modern world is crashing together with the past. A sense the past is around you all the time. A happy by-product of that was we got really handsome locations. The whole thing feels special. Steeped in history.

Production interview

Q&A with Phil Collinson continued:

“Then you have the another world which is really modern, disposable and neon. The locations are a big star of this show and really important to the atmosphere of the whole thing.”

Q: Did you film any big set pieces?

“We have some big set pieces to add bursts of excitement. But on the whole it’s a really beautiful and considered production, all about the characters. They’re not racing around in fast cars. Rather than being about the business of crime it’s about what drives people. What makes you want to be a police officer? What they are there to do is solve crime and give people answers. And you see how crime damages other people’s lives.

“When you talk to people involved in solving crimes or saving lives, they are very driven people. There’s a real heroism about that. Katherine is captivated by the story of Laura and desperately wants to solve this crime because of what it’s done to Laura’s father, Len (Steve Evets). Because of the injustice she feels about what the original investigation was like 27 years ago. There is a big part of Len frozen in time at that moment 27 years ago when his daughter died.

“Death is a massive thing we all have to come to terms with. None of us are getting out of this alive. It’s a part of life. And yet we’re afraid of it and we don’t talk about it in the way we should. We allow it to overwhelm us. There is a lot still to be understood about death and how we relate to it.

“Len still has all those questions about what happened to Laura. He’s almost never been able to move on from that. As I imagine you can’t when you don’t get answers about what’s happened to somebody and how their life ended. There are lots of big grown up questions in this drama.”

Q: Do you think we can ever understand how a killer who has not been caught can live with the guilt of what they have done?

“I think we all carry guilt with us. It’s something people can identify with. It might be about the way you treated an ex-partner, your relationship with your parents, something that happened at work and so on. Everybody recognises guilt. But obviously the guilt in this story is particularly intense. Someone has killed somebody and that’s a massive thing. I can’t even begin to imagine how you reconcile that. But how interesting to look at someone who has?”

Production interview

Q&A with Phil Collinson continued:

Q: What was it like working with the director John Hayes?

“John is a really great director. A great director leads from the front and has a really strong, clear vision for the show which is exactly what John had for the drama. The best directors are then able to translate that through to the design department, the costume, make-up departments, to locations, so when a character walks in and sits down in their kitchen they really feel at home for the audience. You believe that’s where they live, how they would dress and how they feel.

“He was really definite about what he wanted this show to be and translating that across to people. Drove everybody insane, ‘No, that’s not good enough yet, that’s not the right location, the windows are too small, we need more colour than that.’ But people working in telly love that. They love to be led. And they love that certainty. It also allows them to be brilliant. Because they know what he wants. I really enjoyed working with John. He has produced something really beautiful. It feels special.”

Q: This feels like a golden age for television drama. Do you agree?

“It’s really exciting for people like me. My career has grown up through this whole revolution. I started 25 years ago when there was no internet. I was a script editor and you had to do your research on the telephone or in person, going to meet and interview people. The Internet has revolutionised the way we make television.

“But also the way we film it and the way people consume it is changing. I made a show that was picked up by Netflix and I cannot tell you the number of people who saw it and spoke to me about it.”

“Shows have a long life now. Much longer than they ever had before. You’ve got the opportunity to reach people right across the world with your work. That is so exciting. For all of us. Our industry is changing.

“And as a viewer, you can turn on a show from around the world. The barriers are breaking down. With some incredible actors and other talent involved in television drama.

“For a channel or a streaming service, drama is one of the things that defines you. You look at the big shows like Doctor Who, which I produced, Broadchurch and so on, they can become the programme that everybody talks about. They can really set the agenda in terms of how we feel about a channel and a subject matter. It can really shine a light on that. There’s a real place for drama. It’s a really exciting time to be in television drama.”

Q: How do you reflect on your Bancroft experience?

“Elizabeth Bancroft is a fantastic, multi-faceted character and I think we’ve made a beautiful looking show driven by a really memorable character. I hope the audience are as fascinated by her as I am.”



Cast interviews

Q&A with Sarah Parish – Elizabeth Bancroft



Q: Who is Elizabeth Bancroft?

“She is a police detective superintendent who is excellent at her job. Her team like her. She’s confident and works incredibly hard. Elizabeth is very ambitious and aiming to become a detective chief superintendent. But there is something in her past she is covering up. And it is about to raise its ugly head and come knocking on the door again.

“I liked the fact Elizabeth Bancroft had so many layers to her. There was so much going on for her at any one moment. She was incredibly complex and fiercely focused. She was different. It’s quite nice playing someone that isn’t always redeemable.”

Q: The story involves a case from the past. What happened?

“Laura Fraser was killed some 27 years ago. It appeared someone, believed to be under the influence of drugs had broken into her house, taken some of her jewellery and killed her. It was a particular violent murder. Laura was stabbed many times. But the case was never solved and is still open.

“A young detective called Katherine Stevens, played by Faye Marsay, is now working on this old cold case. Elizabeth really admires Katherine and her tenacity and thinks she is a very good police officer.”

Cast interviews

Q&A with Sarah Parish continued:

Q: We also see Elizabeth as a young policewoman 27 years ago. How was that filmed?

“We use an amazing company who have managed to achieve this incredible anti-ageing effect on some of us. So you get to see Elizabeth when she was much younger, first starting out in the police force.

“Those scenes were technically quite tricky as your movement is limited. It’s much easier for the technical team to face map you if you’re fairly static.

“You were able to move quite a lot but they were very clear about the way it had to be lit and what movement you could do and what movement wouldn’t work. So there were slight restrictions but not anywhere near as much as I thought there would be.

“I saw tiny bits on screen when we were filming and it looks amazing. Just incredible. Because it looks so real. It doesn’t really look like you when you were young. It looks like a younger version of who you are now.

“It’s much better than simply using a different actor for the younger scenes. There is always something intrinsically not right about them. To use the same actor is great. You’ve got the same intention, the same energy. It works really well.”

Q: What were you doing back in 1990?

“I was still at drama school in my second year.”

Q: How would you describe Elizabeth’s relationship with Supt Clifford Walker (Adrian Edmondson)?

“They are very different police officers. Cliff does things very much by the book. Very staid. Ticks all the boxes. Whereas Elizabeth is quite maverick and much more hands on, has her own team, does her own thing. The two of them don’t get on at all. Cliff thinks he should get the detective chief superintendent job because he does things in what he views as the proper way. While Elizabeth pushes the boat a little too far out at times.”

Q: How was it working back in the North West where you filmed Cutting It?

“It was lovely to go back. I got a flat in Manchester’s Northern Quarter very near where I used to live the last time I was working there. So that was quite nostalgic and brought back a lot of memories. I got to see a lot of friends that live there. It was really nice to return.

“Most of our filming was in Bolton, Rochdale and around that area. We have a scene in a bowling alley and that really is me bowling. I got quite a few strikes on that day, funnily enough. I’m really not a bowler at all. Yet for some reason I managed to pull it out of the bag that day. Although I’m not anywhere near as competitive as Elizabeth.”

Cast interviews

Q&A with Sarah Parish continued:

Q: Did you film many action scenes?

"I did do quite a few stunts. I was pretty black and blue at the end of some weeks just from doing a lot of falling over and other things. It was quite hard work. But I like doing all my own stunts.

"We have a chase scene which is very exciting. When we had action scenes our director John Hayes would storyboard them in great detail. Which is so good for an actor. Because it's all got to be filmed the wrong way around and you want to see how it is meant to unfold bit by bit. Then you know exactly what you're doing, when you're going to do it and what it's going to look like on screen. He was brilliant."

Q: Do you think we can ever understand how a murderer who has evaded justice can live with the guilt of what they have done?

"I think there is an ability just to cut something off, put it in a box in the back of your brain, forget about it and get on with it. Some people just have that ability. They can compartmentalise.

"But I can understand that rollercoaster people go on when they've lied. They start to cover up that lie and it just becomes a huge web of deceit they can't get out of. I've seen people do that and seen it spiral out of control."

Q: Is this an exciting time to be involved in television drama?

"It's the golden age of TV drama. You've got film people coming into television. TV writing is where it's at today. If you go to the cinema it's just full of big blockbuster films. There's not a lot of nuance in film at the moment. Whereas TV drama has taken a front seat and it's where everyone wants to be.

"That's why we've got series like Big Little Lies with Nicole Kidman and Reese Witherspoon. Things with really big stars in. Because they know they are going to be able to tell a proper story again. Like they used to be able to do with films. Now it's all got to be about money and box office. But people want to tell stories."

Q: How do you reflect on your Bancroft experience?

"It was absolutely exhausting with a lot of night shoots. We did a lot of split days, which are always really tiring. It was a very full on job for me. I hadn't played a big lead like that for quite a long time.

"But I remembered how lovely it is to be in all day every day. You become so much part of that crew, the set and the piece. It's almost easier than coming in twice a week to do your bit. If you're in working all the time you suddenly become that person, that character, and it's much easier. I absolutely loved it."

Cast interviews

Q&A with Sarah Parish continued:

Q: What's the latest on the Murray Parish Trust?

“Jim and I are still working very hard on the Murray Parish Trust. We've reached our first £500,000, which means the government has now matched us so we have £1 million in the bank and can start the build. There is still quite a long way to go. But it's starting to snowball and people are getting much more involved. So we're thrilled with how it's going.”

Cast interviews

Q&A with Linus Roache - Tim Fraser



Q: Why did you want to be involved in Bancroft?

“There were a couple of things. I had worked with Kate Brooke, who created and wrote Bancroft, before. I did *The Making of a Lady* with her. I very much enjoyed that collaboration and she approached me about this role, saying she had me in mind for it.

“Then when I read the scripts, it was a fresh take on the crime genre, which I’m a fan of. How many shows have we got about criminal justice? Hundreds. But it’s always interesting when there’s a new take on it. With a superb role for Sarah Parish as Bancroft. What a great leading character to have.”

Q: Who is Tim Fraser?

“Tim Fraser is a very powerful Crown Prosecution Service lawyer. During his first marriage when Tim was a young man his pregnant wife was murdered. So he lost both his wife and his first child in a tragic murder case where no killer was caught.

“He’s now moved on and it’s 27 years later. Suddenly this case has come to life again and the past he has tried to move beyond is brought into the present. So Tim goes on this journey to discover what happened. We don’t quite know at first what Tim’s relationship is to Bancroft but that unravels and emerges through the course of the drama.

Cast interviews

Q&A with Linus Roache continued:

“His soaring career is part of the way he has dealt with the tragedy in his life. Because no killer was found he’s thrown himself headlong into the pursuit of justice. He’s not a defence lawyer. He just prosecutes. He’s tried not to think about this tragedy for 27 years. Now he has to re-live it.

“What was interesting about the role was that I’ve played lawyers and prosecutors quite a few times. Normally all you see is them doing their job, being a professional in court, seeking justice. This was a role where you see the personal, the underbelly, the flipside of this character and you never get to see him in action as a professional.

“Tim now lives in north London with his partner Freya and daughter Amber. But he’s in a failing marriage and he puts all of his energy into his only child. She’s his light, his hope, his everything.”

Q: You also appear in ‘flashback’ scenes. How was that filmed?

“It’s very interesting to have a story that totally relies on the past feeling authentic. If that history from 27 years ago doesn’t feel real, it will be hard to buy the situation in the present day. So when it came to the question of, ‘How do we do the young Tim, young Liz etc,’ I was a little nervous. ‘How far can I play down in age?’ And if they’re going to choose another actor to do it, to double for you as the younger Tim, it’s very hard to pull off. However much you might look like someone else, it’s a different energy, a different person.

“I’d rather do it myself if I can so I called up our director John Hayes. And he said, ‘We’ve got the guys who did Nocturnal Animals, who do this face mapping, de-ageing, CGI process on film.’

“I’d just seen Nocturnal Animals and my wife and I were blown away, saying, ‘How did they make Jake Gyllenhaal and Amy Adams look like that?’ Because it was so good. Then I found out it’s a combination of lighting, make-up and this computerised technique.

Cast interviews

Q&A with Linus Roache continued:

Q: And working with Sarah Parish?

“Sarah Parish is amazing. It’s such a brilliant piece of casting for the role. She’s a great scene partner. Very immediate. Very dynamic and very free. Nearly all of my scenes are with her. John allowed us to explore the scenes and really push the edge of them. We were given the room to dig deep into the roles.”

Q: Was it an added bonus Bancroft was filmed near your own roots?

“We filmed in Bolton and Manchester. That was lovely. I got to stay up there with my dad. That was really nice. My wife is from Rochdale so we did a quick visit there too. It’s really nice to go back. There seems to be more drama being filmed up there now which is great.”

Q: Laura’s killer has evaded justice for 27 years. How can people live with that guilt?

“It’s hard to imagine how anyone could live with the guilt of what they had done for so long. But we are very complex beings, aren’t we? It’s possible to cut off and bury things. They just have to live with it. And then you get into the realms of what is a sociopath? What makes up narcissistic personality disorder? How do people live with that? I don’t think we will ever really know.”

“So I was sold. It was brilliant. Amazing they had got that technology involved. It’s so subtle yet so powerful. The whole premise of this story relies on what happened 27 years ago and feeling connected to that. So they can’t just feel like flashbacks. They have to feel like they are real memories that you believe.”

Q: What was it like working with the director John Hayes?

“It is a great script and I love Kate’s work. But what made the job really special was talking to the director John Hayes from the start and really feeling his vision for the piece. It’s delicate stuff to get right. A little larger than life. Not your average gritty copy show. It needs to feel a little heightened, a little beyond the real. And John had this very strong, clear vision. It was very exciting.”

“You felt that team work, focus and leadership. He brought everybody into the same world, which is so important. I think Bancroft will have a real scope, range and entertainment to it. I’m very proud to have worked on it.”

Cast interviews

Q&A with Linus Roache continued:

Q: Laura's father has a mobile phone but never switches it on. How do you feel about the rise of things like social media versus less face to face human contact?

"It's a predicament. I'm not really very social media savvy myself and I shy away from it. But I try to be a little bit philosophical about it. As we develop as a society, through connectivity we go through different trials and errors of what works and what doesn't work.

"There might be some benefits to this in the long run in terms of how it's connected the world and broken down borders, boundaries and barriers. It potentially opens up to a greater empathy for more people.

"I don't understand necessarily what this generation is really learning from it or whether everybody is becoming disconnected and de-humanised by it. I don't think that's true. I'm hopeful that human beings won't lose the human touch and the face to face.

"If anything, it's bringing some people back to it and wanting it more. We're learning to adapt to and live with social media. It's going to be our own consciousness that will make a difference as to how it's used and what it's used for. I'm hopeful. I'm not pessimistic about it.

"We've had no internet in New York for three days, which is unheard of. Not all of New York but the particular company. My wife and I have had three nights of staying in, reading books and not going on the internet. And it's been fantastic."

Q: A wedding video features in the story with police having to seek out an old machine to watch it. A reminder of how much the world of television and film has changed in our lifetime?

"I'm very excited, particularly by television right now. I think we're in another golden age of television. I continue to be impressed by the freedom, the range and scope of stories that can be told now. And the risks people are taking.

"Not so long ago, if you were on telly in Britain on a Sunday night that was it everybody watched it. But now there is just so much content out there. Now you can choose what to watch, when to watch, how much to watch. The customer decides.

"It's impossible to keep up with everything. But you don't have to anymore. You gravitate to things because of reviews, because of friends and recommendations. And there is money out there to make these dramas. These platforms keep expanding. Not least with ITV in the UK making fantastic dramas which cross borders and reaches international stages. It's a very exciting time.

"We all yearn for good stories. That's timeless. Which is why drama leads the way. I'm trying to get into the world of producing and writing myself. There is room now. If you've got a story to tell there's a place to tell it."

Cast interviews

Q&A with Amara Karan – Anya Karim



Q: What attracted you to the role?

“The character, Anya Karim, starts the story as a formidable ally, but as the story goes on she is confronted with a hell of a lot more than she imagined. So I guess it was the high stakes and the conflicting loyalties, that were really interesting for me to explore. The script was on the money, contemporary and relevant. With a wonderful wealth of characters and complexity.”

Q: Who is Anya Karim?

“Anya is a pathologist who has worked very hard to get away from her background, which is revealed later in the story, when those from her past come back in her life. Then she has to reckon with what she’s tried to push away in her past, versus her responsibility right now, which is finding the truth.

“I thought it was wonderful my character is in a predicament that is affecting her objectivity about the case. She is working for the law but is also human.

“But as they work together, they realise they have complementary skills and experience. I thought that was a great story arc and I loved how real it was. Anya knows what she wants, she knows what she’s doing, she’s a professional and expects the same sort of standards from Katherine and others.

“As the story goes on, the audience gets ahead of us in terms of what has happened.”

Cast interviews

Q&A with Amara Karan continued:

Q: Were you a fan of science at school?

"I loved science at school. It was taught brilliantly. Chemistry and maths were my favourite subjects. And I always found forensic science fascinating. What you can discover. And what we humans leave behind. Traces of all kinds of things. It's incredible. We leave more behind than we think.

"But also looking at how criminal cases from the psychological viewpoint is really fascinating. The motivation to do something violent, like murder, and how a person lives with their shame is so interesting to explore.

"When it comes to feelings of guilt, I think you justify your actions to yourself, in order to live with yourself if you've done something like kill somebody. And then you need to push away all the things you don't want to confront. It's self-preservation. It's survival."

Q: How would you describe Anya's relationship with Elizabeth Bancroft, played by Sarah Parish?

"When they first meet Anya is impressed by Bancroft. As I was of Sarah Parish. I thought she was fabulous! Elizabeth Bancroft projects success, compassion, intelligence, wit - the best qualities. And so she is a role model to women like Anya, who have high reaching ambition."

"Anya is working with DS Katherine Stevens, played by the fantastic Faye Marsay. They are an unlikely team. They are not on the same wavelength and wouldn't really be friends in other circumstances. But they are thrown on to this case together and are initially both reluctant to get involved with it. Because it's an old case.

Q: Anya wasn't totally honest when vetted for the police. Have you ever stretched the truth to try and get a job?

"I've definitely claimed skills in horse riding that I didn't have. My CV has seen all kinds of sports skills on it. And claims at being masterful at circus tricks as well!"

Q: You attended both the Golden Globes and the BAFTA TV Awards. Do you ever pinch yourself as to how your career has gone?

"I absolutely do pinch myself. It becomes more and more unreal. It's a wonderful thing. It's been a remarkable journey.

"When I was very little I felt a million years away from anything and anyone. It's nice to feel the world is growing smaller. It also gives you a sense of confidence, security and a lack of fear. That you can scale big mountains.

Cast interviews

Q&A with Amara Karan continued:

“At the moment I'm able to only do the stuff I like. First of all I'm lucky to have work. But to be able to be part of projects you are really proud of, is an extra bonus. It's a very exciting moment. I have come a long way for a person who was too afraid to give it a chance because it was just too unrealistic.

“You're also there because lots of other people have also done their jobs amazingly along the way. So I feel tremendously proud of representing the whole team of people I'm working with. Those accolades, particularly things like the Golden Globes and the BAFTAs, are a massive team effort. I'm definitely there representing a huge army of people.”

Q: Do you think this is a golden age for television drama?

“This is a very exciting time when there is a huge desire for great drama to be shown on these massive television screens people have now. In my lifetime I never thought television would become this mega medium. When I grew up film was the most dominant media. And now television is doing some spectacular storytelling. All having the range, the talent, the personnel we never imagined it would.

“That's a huge technological change that has happened in my lifetime and during the course of my career in the last 10 years. It's a short time but it makes you realise how fast the world changes. And how fast technology changes the way we work.

“Any of the old ideas I had have just been blown out of the water and it's really exciting. Dramas have a longer life span with recordings, on demand box sets and so on.

“Television being a water cooler moment, an event, is harder to find. I was fortunate enough to be part of an HBO drama called *The Night Of*, which was broadcast 'live' episode by episode, here in the UK and in the US. On social media you can see people's reactions immediately and directly as each episode unfolds. That's really special. It created a buzz. A moment. A word of mouth that flew around.”

Q: Anya is involved in a chase sequence at a storage facility. How was that to film?

“Our director John Hayes and I enjoyed shooting that. It's a cinematic sequence where you see the cat and mouse chase and the tension building up. Will this person get caught? The audience can feel I'm getting closer and closer. It's fulfilling to film because that kind of storytelling is really exciting for an audience.

Cast interviews

Q&A with Amara Karan continued:

Q: One of the characters has a mobile phone but never switches it on. You make use of social media but could you do without your phone?

“I think you can live happily without a mobile phone and social media. You can choose the life you want to live. Being able to connect to people has advantages, but generally I find that social media is not that fun, actually.”

“There are times when I like to observe a social media and technology abstinence. I turn off all the screens and just allow myself to be in awe of nature.”

Synopsis

Episode one



1990 - Laura Fraser (Lily Sacofsky), pretty and in her early 20s, walks happily along the street home. Later on, her worried neighbour has called the police as she isn't answering the door. A dark-haired WPC Elizabeth Bancroft (Sarah Parish) approaches and looks through the letterbox and sees that Laura Fraser bloodily and brutally murdered in her own home.

2017 – the young and ambitious DS Katherine Stevens (Faye Marsay) grumbles to Superintendent Cliff Walker (Adrian Edmondson) that she's always stuck behind a desk; when will she get to go proactive? Walker gives Katherine a stack of cold cases to be getting on with. The first is the unsolved murder of Laura Fraser from 27 years ago.

Elizabeth Bancroft is now Detective Superintendent, and is pursuing a long-term case against a violent gang led by Athif Kamara (Amit Dhut), whose family 'controls' the notorious Highwater Estate. During a high-stakes operation with colleagues DI George Morris (Lee Boardman) and DS Andy Bevan (Charles Babalola), Athif doesn't turn up for a drugs drop. Athif's brother Daanish (Ryan McKen) is there instead, causing havoc when he takes an innocent hostage. Bancroft takes a massive risk and saves the day, heroically bringing Daanish into custody, although Athif is still at large.

Katherine teams up with forensic scientist Anya Karim (Amara Karan) on the Fraser case. The working theory was that it was burglary that went wrong. Frustratingly, the file is a mess and the forensics are missing.

Cast and Production Credits

Cast Credits

Elizabeth Bancroft.....	SARAH PARISH
DS Katherine Stevens.....	FAYE MARSAY
Tim Fraser.....	LINUS ROACHE
Joe Bancroft.....	ADAM LONG
Anya Karim.....	AMARA KARAN
DS Andy Bevan.....	CHARLES BABALOLA
DI George Morris.....	LEE BOARDMAN
Superintendent Cliff Walker	ADRIAN EDMONDSON
DCS Alan Taheeri.....	ART MALIK
Len Dorman.....	STEVE EVETS
Daanish Kamara.....	RYAN MCKEN
Zaheera Kamara.....	ANJLI MOHINDRA
Athif Kamara.....	AMIT DHUT
Charlie Haverstock.....	KENNETH CRANHAM
Mrs Kamara.....	SHAMEEM AHMAD
Freya Fraser.....	CLARE MCGLINN
Amber Fraser.....	EDEN OTTMAN
Laura Fraser.....	LILY SACOFSKY
Becky.....	CHARLIE MAY-CLARK
DCS Jim Stuart.....	NEIL ASHTON
Bev.....	NICOLA SMYTHE



Cast and Production Credits

Production Credits

Executive Producers.....	FRANCIS HOPKINSON & KATE BROOKE
Writer.....	KATE BROOKE
Director.....	JOHN HAYES
Producer.....	PHIL COLLINSON
Line Producer.....	DESMOND HUGHES
Director of Photography.....	RICHARD STODDARD
Casting Director.....	KELLY HENDRY
Costume Designer.....	LOUISE PAGE
Make Up & Hair Designer.....	SAM MARSHALL
Production Designer.....	DAVID BUTTERWORTH
Art Director.....	GAVIN LEWIS
Sound Mixer.....	CHRIS ATKINSON
Script Executive.....	BEN MORRIS
Editor.....	JAMES TAYLOR
First Assistant Director.....	SIMON NOONE
Second Assistant Director.....	SIMON DALE
Location Manager.....	PHIL GATES
Head of Production.....	GAIL KENNETT
Stunt Coordinator.....	GORDON SEED

