

GAUMONT'S UK DIVISION SECURES RIGHTS TO DEBUT CRIME NOVEL *SIXTEEN HORSES*

Monday 22 April: The rights to debut literary thriller *Sixteen Horses*, written by Greg Buchanan, have been snapped up by Gaumont UK (part of Gaumont, the world's oldest film company and leading global production company) following a competitive bidding war, to be developed into a drama series.

Sixteen Horses, which is published by Mantle Books/ Pan Macmillan and set for release in the UK on April 29th and the 20th July in the US via Flatiron Books, is already creating excitement having been picked as one of the literary titles to be covered in BBC Two's next series of *Between The Covers*.

Gaumont UK pursued the book for two years after being enthralled by the first chapter in 2018 and won the rights to the story following a competitive bid, which saw multiple buyers vying for the book option. The drama development is led by executive producer **Alison Jackson** (*Tin Star, Ashes to Ashes, Hunted*), who also helms Gaumont's UK growing London-based division, and Gaumont UK's Senior Development Exec Jamie Jackson.

Described by renowned crime novelist Val McDermid as *"Unlike anything else... Sixteen Horses is a deeply disconcerting ride. Irresistible."* *Sixteen Horses* is an extraordinary and haunting thriller, set in a small British seaside community the rest of the world has left behind. Following the discovery of sixteen horses' heads on a farm, each buried with a single eye facing the low winter sun, Ilmarsh's local police detective Alec Nichols and forensic veterinarian Cooper Allen soon uncover evidence of a chain of crimes in the community – disappearances, arson, and mutilations – all culminating in the reveal of something deadly lurking in the ground itself. In the dark days that follow, the town slips into panic and paranoia. Everything is not as it seems. Anyone could be a suspect. And as Cooper finds herself unable to leave town, Alec is stalked by an unseen threat. The two investigators race to uncover the truth behind these frightening and insidious mysteries – no matter the cost.

With a fascinating and compelling female character at the heart of the narrative, the development of *Sixteen Horses* taps into a myriad of key themes which are central to Gaumont UK's focus to create bold, ambitious, and entertaining drama.

***Sixteen Horses* author Greg Buchanan said:** *"So many of my influences in writing Sixteen Horses were from television and cinema - Don't Look Now, Picnic at Hanging Rock, Blue Velvet and True Detective - that I'm fascinated to see how the novel's dark, existential atmosphere translates back on to screen. I am thrilled to be working with the team at Gaumont UK - of all the studios we spoke with, their vision was closest to what I'd imagined, and I can't wait for audiences to see the results of our collaboration."*

Gaumont UK CEO and executive producer Alison Jackson said: *“Sixteen Horses is an utterly fascinating story, wonderfully written by Greg in a cinematic way that we believe will translate beautifully to the screen, and appeal to audiences both in the UK and globally. Gaumont UK is passionate about developing stories from a uniquely British perspective and discovering new voices, of which we have both in Sixteen Horses.”*

The deal to bring *Sixteen Horses* to the screen was negotiated by Michelle Kroes on behalf of CAA. The drama series adaptation will be produced by Gaumont UK and executive produced by Alison Jackson. The optioning deal further expands Gaumont UK’s diverse slate of original content, which also recently acquired the rights to *Dressed For War: The Story of Audrey Withers, Vogue editor extraordinaire from the Blitz to the Swinging Sixties*.

Sixteen Horses will be published by Mantle Books/ Pan Macmillan in the UK on 29th April, Flatiron Books in the US on 20th July, with multiple international territories to follow. The novel has recently been announced amongst the series two line-up of *Between The Covers*, BBC Two’s six-part series designed to bring the nation together through the enjoyment of reading, as a part of BBC Arts’ Culture In Quarantine initiative.

-- ENDS --

For further information please contact:

Charlie Wainwright or Lily Hawkins:

gaumont@premiercomms.com

Lily.Hawkins@premiercomms.com



Notes To Editors:

About Gaumont UK

Gaumont UK was launched to produce exceptional original British drama for the global market. Led by executive producer and CEO Alison Jackson (*Tin Star*, *Hunted*, *Ashes to Ashes*), Gaumont UK have several projects in development for terrestrial channels and the streaming market. In addition, Gaumont UK recently produced the third series of Sky Atlantic's hugely successful Tim Roth drama *Tin Star*, which Jackson executive produced, alongside *Kudos*.

About Gaumont

Formed in France in 1895, Gaumont is the first film company in the world, celebrating 125 years of history and innovation. With offices in Paris, Los Angeles, London, Köln and Berlin, Gaumont remains an industry leader, producing and distributing high-quality TV programming and films.

Specializing in producing local stories with global appeal, Gaumont's current slate includes talent-driven, diverse, and distinctive titles across multiple languages for the world's leading global streaming platforms and channels:

In production for Netflix, *Narcos*, 6th season, *F is for Family* 5th season, *High in the Clouds*, the animated feature developed together with Paul McCartney, *Samurai Rabbit: The Usagi Chronicles* based on the comic books by Stan Sakai, *The Barbarians*, the period epic drama set in Germany, 2nd season and *Arsène Lupin*, directed by Louis Leterrier and starring Omar Sy in France.

In the UK, *Tin Star*, airing its 3rd season for Sky and Amazon Prime, and globally *Trial 4* for Netflix, is a new docu-series by Jean Xavier de Lestrade (*The Staircase*).

For Amazon Prime Video US, *Do Re & Mi* with Kristen Bell, *El Presidente* co-created by Armando Bo and Pablo Larraín in Latin America and the espionage show *Totems* in France.

For Apple TV+ based on the Zen Shorts book series of Jon. J. Muth, *Stillwater*.

Gaumont co-produces and distributes around ten films a year in theaters. The film library encompasses over 1400 titles from prestigious directors such as Louis Malle, Jean-Luc Godard, and more recently, Toledano and Nakache for *The Intouchables*, the highest-grossing French-language movie to date with over \$450 million in revenue to date.

