

## SHARMAN

Four new 90-minute films for ITV

Begins on Monday, November 4, at 8.30 p.m.

### Introduction

### SHARMAN

Clive Owen is Sharman - a streetwise private investigator whose love life is almost as perilous as his profession.

With a failed marriage behind him, a promising police career cut short by a drink and drugs problem and his investigations business teetering on the brink of collapse, Sharman is someone going nowhere fast.

But despite all his drawbacks, there is never a shortage of women ready to take their chances with Nick Sharman.

For his part, there's only one 'woman' who is a constant in his life - and that's his much loved young daughter Judith.

Based on the best-selling novels by former T. Rex and The Who roadie Mark Timlin, Sharman begins on ITV on Monday, November 4, at 8.30 p.m.

The four 90-minute films from Canton follow the success of The Turnaround - a pilot for the series shown on ITV last year which attracted more than 10 million viewers.

The new series also stars John Salthouse, Roberta Taylor, Isabella Marsh and guest stars Samantha Janus, Gina Bellman, Keith Allen, Julie Graham, Adie Allen, Ray Winstone and Anton Lesser.

Sharman star Clive Owen, says: "Sharman is a very exciting project for me. It's something I've been close to from the beginning as the rights to the book were bought with me in mind for the role.

"The last time I did a TV series was Chancer and I was determined not to do another series until I found something I was really happy with. I have turned down a lot of money in the past to do other series because I've been worried about committing myself to them long term. The character of Nick Sharman sits very comfortably with me. He's a character I could live with for quite a while."

Sharman's creator Mark Timlin is equally happy with their 'partnership'.

"When I knew Clive Owen was interested in playing Sharman I went to see him in the theatre and I immediately thought he was right for the role," says Mark. "Now when I'm writing I see Clive as Sharman."

Producer Bill Shapter, says: "Being substantially based on Mark Timlin's books, the films have their roots in an American genre of crime writing. You could see Sharman as a kind of Marlowe removed from the streets of 1930s Los Angeles and set down in South London in the 1990s. It's a descendant from the classic privateeye fantasy - fictional and entertaining.

"We tried to give Sharman a sense of place, a smell of the streets by cramming in lots of South London locations. Whatever qualities Nick Sharman does or doesn't have, he's certainly got luck - the kind of luck you need when you are in a very tight corner."

Bill, who has 30 years experience in the TV and film industry, was the producer of Screen Two's The Laughter of God starring Amanda Donohoe and Peter Firth.

More recent production credits include Beautiful Thing for Film on Four and Sharman's pilot episode The Turnaround for Canton.

The Turnaround is available on video from September 9 priced £12.99 from major retailers.

Sharman is a World Production for Canton. The executive producer is Tony Garnett and it is directed by Robert Bierman and Matthew Evans.

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Nick Sharman

Despite a Grammar School education, things started to go wrong for Sharman at an early age. After leaving his South London school for university he became involved with a group manufacturing LSD in the science laboratories and was sent down.

Despite this setback, he was later accepted into the Metropolitan Police where he was seen as a high flyer and was made a detective constable. At the same time he married Laura and they had a daughter Judith, who is and always will be, the light of Sharman's life.

His marriage broke up after three years due to his constant unfaithfulness and the pressures of his job.

Sharman, who was now drinking heavily, joined the drugs squad and began to sample the goods himself. He was thrown out when it was discovered that his growing addiction had led him to steal cocaine from the evidence locker at Brixton Police

Station. To save the Met. any embarrassment, he was allowed to resign on medical grounds without a pension, and spent a short time in a mental facility.

On his discharge, he moved back to South London, bought a flat in Tulse Hill and started his own, one man private enquiry business. This has not gone down well with the police especially as he seems to find trouble whenever he takes on a case. He has one police contact who deals with him and that is Insp. Jack Robber.

Sharman is quick-witted and charming, loyal and determined. And despite his shady past, never seems to have a problem in attracting women.

CLIVE OWEN is Nick Sharman

TV and film heart-throb Clive Owen is gearing up for his most exciting role to date - being a real life Dad.

Clive and his actress wife Sarah Jane Fenton are expecting their first child in December.

"We're absolutely thrilled and excited about the baby", says Clive. "We've been married two years and the time seemed right to start a family. We both felt ready and willing to take on the responsibility and I'm really looking forward to being a Dad.

"I've decided not to take any work for the next few months so that I can give my wife all the support she needs. This is a very special time for us and I want to be there as much as possible."

Taking a break from acting comes after one of the busiest times for Clive, who first made his mark playing Stephen Crane in the hit TV series Chancer. The actor is now one of Britain's hottest stars working on films both here and in Hollywood.

Says Clive: "It's been an amazing few years for me. After Chancer, I deliberately avoided doing another long-running TV series, although if a fantastic script had come up I wouldn't have turned it down. I was happy to go into theatre instead and bide my time for parts which I felt were really worthwhile.

"The Sharman project excited me from the start. I'd read all the books and immediately knew that it was something that I wanted to be part of. Mark's writing is witty, full of clever lines and Sharman is a very attractive character to play."

"He's down at heel and a bit seedy - in some ways he's your classic private eye. I like the fact that he's equally irresponsible in both his personal and working life."

Just before shooting the four 90-minute Sharman films, Clive had a taste of being a Hollywood star playing the lead in the £16 million film Rich Man's Wife.

"It was an amazing experience. I was there for three months and was given the complete Hollywood treatment. It was a real treat to go to the States and work in LA but Hollywood's a crazy place. I wouldn't like to live there but equally I wouldn't have missed the opportunity for anything."

Directly after finishing Sharman, Clive moved on to yet another film, a movie version of the hit play Bent.

"Bent came up just as I was finishing Sharman and it was such an exciting project I wanted to do it even though I hadn't had a day off between the two. Sharman was the most intense filming I've ever done because all the stories are told through Nick so I'm virtually in every scene. Fortunately I had five weeks rehearsing on Bent which gave me time to get into the new character and leave Sharman behind.

"We shot it in Scotland and Hertfordshire so it was rather different to Sharman's South London locations. It's a remarkable story about two homosexuals in the 1930s who end up in a concentration camp."

Clive's other television and film credits include the award-winning Close My Eyes, co-starring Saskia Reeves; Century; Bad Boys; The Darkening and An Evening with Gary Lineker with Paul Merton, Martin Clunes and Caroline Quentin.

SAMANTHA JANUS is Jane

Despite huge television and theatre success for Samantha Janus, the young actress still has one ambition left.

The glamorous 23-year-old would like to settle down with her long-term boyfriend Mauro Manero.

"I would like to have a family, buy a big house with a huge garden and have a dog! I'd love a traditional family life. I'm desperate to have children eventually."

As well as playing Nick Sharman's pin-up girlfriend Jane, Samantha has also managed this year to fit in two BBC roles - Mandy in Game On and Nicola in Pie in the Sky.

If that was not enough, she has also been wowing audiences in a West End musical.

"While I was filming Sharman I was also playing Sandy in Grease and it was always a panic at the end of the day to get back to the theatre.

"On one occasion I walked in through the stage door covered in glass and fake blood and the director thought I had been involved in a bomb in the West End. All I could think to say was 'I've just been shot' which of course made things worse, everyone assumed it was for real!"

For the part of Jane, Samantha was required to drive a car.

"As I don't have a driving licence I had to get a provisional one for the filming."

"I also had to have someone in the car the whole time so that I wasn't a danger. Even so I was still a dreadful driver and on my first attempt I reversed a 1950's Karmen Ghia into a concrete bollard.

"After that, Clive didn't have much faith in my skills as a driver and I certainly put his acting skills to the test," laughs Sam. "I was very impressed that he managed to keep a straight face in a serious scene as I was kangarooing the car out of shot!"

But help was always close at hand for Samantha,

"For one particularly tricky hill start they had to call in Terry our stunt driver for the series. He was a big guy and my blonde wig didn't do much for his macho image!"

Samantha is currently enjoying a well earned vacation after which she starts filming *Up and Under*, a film based on the John Godber stage play about a rugby team trained by a woman. Later in the year she will be travelling to the Far East on a wildlife conservation trip to help save endangered orang-utans.

GINA BELLMAN is Kiki

Gina Bellman was catapulted into the spotlight as Dennis Potter's *Blackeyes* when she was just 22.

She feels, however, that the controversial part seven years ago brought mixed blessings.

"For a long time afterwards people asked me whether I was a model before I made *Blackeyes*. It took a couple of years to shake off the legacy of the series.

"I was on the front of magazines and being talked about on the radio but luckily on the street I passed largely unnoticed because I was so heavily made up for the part. I had a wig and so much make-up that I pretty much escaped attention."

*Sharman* is the first time that Gina has not played the love interest in a television series and she is happy to hand that responsibility over to Samantha Janus.

"It was wonderful being able to play this incredibly ostentatious, petulant, South London Greek princess type and wear really garish clothes.

"Leopard skin features quite a lot for her. I would look at a girl walking down the street in leopard skin and think I could never wear that, but it's great fun being paid to wear it!

"We certainly had great fun shopping in Harvey Nichols for my outfits."

Gina was brought up in New Zealand and her interest in acting came out of her wish to tone down her accent.

"When I came to England I had a very strong accent and I was bullied at school because of the way I spoke. Like most kids I just wanted to be the same as everyone else, so I went to elocution lessons. I had a fantastic teacher who was really into drama and that is where my interest in acting started.

"My parents were never stage struck. When I announced that I wanted to be an actor they gave me an A to Z and my mum wrote in it 'good luck with your career'. It was to get me to my first audition.

"I love travelling and my job allows me to do that. Last year I left the country about 15 times!"

Gina is soon to be seen on the big screen as an assassin in Silent Trigger with Dolph Lundgren.

"I learnt how to kick-box and shoot weapons for the part. It was fun in the gym watching macho guys tremble after they had seen my class.

"I now kick-box three times a week. I didn't think that I had an aggressive nature but you can certainly get everything out of your system and feel completely refreshed after a kick-boxing session!"

JOHN SALTHOUSE is DI Jack Robber

Former The Bill actor and ex-professional footballer John Salthouse loves juggling two careers. As well as being an actor he writes and presents sports programmes and dreams of one day hosting his own sporting programme.

"I have written and presented programmes for BBC Radio 5 Live and presented a sports show on the cable station Wire TV."

John's career as a professional footballer was cut short when he fractured his ankle during pre-season training with Crystal Palace.

"I was signed up with the club by the age of 12 and turned professional at 17. But I fell over before the start of my first season, it was terrible. I went over on my ankle and I thought it was just sprained so it was never x-rayed. By the time it was diagnosed it was too late and then I was told that I could never play again.

"I was pretty lost, as playing football was all I had ever wanted to do."

John joined a friend at a drama class hoping that it would at least be a good way to meet girls.

"The class was a way of getting over the pain of having to stop playing football."

But an acting career soon beckoned as John's talent shone through and he was picked to play a part in a production at The Round House.

"When I told my parents that I wanted to become an actor my father thought I needed to see a psychiatrist but my mother was quietly delighted because she had harboured a secret ambition for years to be an actress."

John was most recently seen as a Labour councillor in *An Independent Man* and now returns in *Sharman* as DI Jack Robber - Sharman's ex-colleague in the police force - the first policeman John has played since leaving *The Bill*.

"It's a love-hate relationship between Robber and Sharman. I am the only policeman that he will talk to because he brought disgrace on the squad by getting caught. We use one another and I always get paid for my information."

John is married to actress Heather Tobias and they have a 15-year-old son, William who is following in his father's sporting footsteps and wants to be a professional golfer.

John's own father was a boxer, training many British champions while John took his Football Association coaching badge when his son's school invited him to teach football after school.

Says John: "In an ideal world as well as acting I would like to make sports documentaries and have a regular slot on television where I get to talk to sports people about the issues of the day."

MARK TIMLLN - writer

A former roadie for rock bands *The Who* and *T. Rex*, Mark Timlin turned to writing when he was made redundant from his job as a record wholesaler. He says it was a lucky escape and that he is much happier as a writer.

"Watching the series being filmed made me feel like a big kid. Having sat on my own for so long writing, to hear someone say that they are catering for 150 people for just one day's filming - I couldn't help thinking that it was all because of one silly story that I had written. It felt incredible.

"I love Sharman - I loved him from the minute I started writing about him. He's a lot braver than me, more handsome and gets lots more women than I do. Writing allows me to put all my fantasies on the page!"

Since *The Turnaround* was screened last year on ITV, Mark now writes the novels with Clive Owen in mind.

"I never really knew what he looked like but as soon as I met Clive I thought this is the guy.

"I've always seen Sharman as about 38-years-old which was the age I started writing the books 11 years"

Mark doesn't deny any similarities with his own life.

"I live about four doors up from where Sharman is supposed to live - just round the corner from his office and the pub."

"I don't have to worry about getting the A to Z out, and I even know the cafe where he has breakfast and where he buys his newspaper.

"My stories are pure fantasy. Sharman is based on Raymond Chandler's forties' hero Philip Marlowe. I wanted to see whether that type of character would transfer from Los Angeles to London. Like Marlowe, he has a sort of bruised, errant, damaged past - you know that he's been through a lot.

"Sharman has been extremely good to me. Like him I have been on the edge of the abyss more than once in my life and we have both managed to survive.

Mark has two daughters, Amelia, 18, and 20-year-old Charlotte.

"I spoil them both as much as I can and thanks to Sharman I can afford to. One of the reasons I gave Sharman a daughter was because he could have turned out to be a hard and unsympathetic character."

Mark has now written 13 novels and a book of short stories and says, "I'm already thinking about the next one!"

Sharman : Episode 1

TX : ITV on Monday, November 4, 1996, at 8.30 p.m.

Sharman (Clive Owen) is disillusioned with the life of a private detective and decides to give up the investigation business.

But when an ex-copper and old colleague of Sharman's John Reed is found dead and his wife asks Sharman to take the case, he reluctantly agrees.

The police believe Reed committed suicide by throwing himself from a tower block but his wife Ann is convinced his death is suspicious.

Sharman recruits the help of Ann's god-daughter Jane (Samantha Janus), a page 3 model and he soon falls for her ample charms.

The only lead that Sharman has is a tip-off from Ann that Reed was investigating former gangland boss Manny Dukakis, who is now a wealthy and seemingly legit businessman.

When Sharman starts to investigate Manny, he finds himself at the centre of a gangland war between the Dukakis's and a family who runs the local nightclub scene.

While Sharman tries to unravel how Reed's death and the feuding families are linked - he has the added complication of looking after his young daughter Judith, who is on a weekend visit from his ex-wife Laura.

He only has one option and that is to let Judith tag along despite the dangers....

## CAST LIST

Nick Sharman	Clive Owen
Judith	Isabella Marsh
Aggie	Roberta Taylor
Laura	Miranda Foster
Robber	John Salthouse
Jane	Samantha Janus
Ann	Anna Nygh
Em	Oscar James
Teddy	Geff Francis
Manny	Stefan Gryff
Kiki	Gina Bellman
Stathi	Anthony Venditti
Taki	Dimitri Andreas
Georgi	Patrick Baladi
Cedric	Clarence Smith

Sharman : Episode 2

TX : ITV on Monday, November 11, 1996, at 8.30 p.m.

When the drugs squad decide they need Sharman's help to infiltrate a South London gang responsible for the murder of two police officers - they don't ask him politely.

Instead they get his attention by tricking him into handling a murder weapon -giving them enough evidence to put Sharman away for 15 years.

With no other option open to him, Sharman reluctantly agrees to help them by befriending local gangsters Patsy Hughes and Roy Seeley.

Sharman's natural ability to blend in with South London's criminal lowlife immediately puts Hughes and Seeley at their ease and they soon begin to think of him as one of 'them'. Seeley, keen to impress his new friend even offers Sharman the services of Kylie (Julie Graham), one of his favourite prostitutes, on a night out on the town.

Sharman's acceptance into the gang's inner sanctum means the stakes are becoming much higher if he is rumbled - but he has no choice but to carry on.

While he is building up trust and trying to organise a drugs deal with the gang he also decides to start a relationship with Kylie despite her occupation!

## CAST LIST

Nick Sharman	Clive Owen
Aggie	Roberta Taylor
JJ	Gary Powell
Barry	Bill Cashmore
Billy	Nicholas Beveney
Brady	Keith Allen
Endesleigh	Guy Oliver-Watts
Joe	Grant Masters
Seeley	Andrew Woodall
Hughes	John Paul Connolly
Kylie	Julie Graham
Robber	John Salthouse
Lasky	George Yiasoumi
O'Dowd	Steven Hartley
Jools	Amanda Harris

Sharman : Episode 3

TX : ITV on Monday, November 18, 1996, at 8.30 p.m.

When raunchy lesbian dance duo Sandi and Mandi start getting threats from their former manager, the girls turn to Sharman for help.

Initially reluctant to act as a 'minder', Sharman gets sucked into protecting the girls from Big Des but he is insistent the arrangement is only temporary until the heat is off.

When Sharman begins to fall for one of the girls his resolve looks like weakening.

On the business front, Sharman is recruited by wealthy businessman George Bright to track down his missing 18-year-old daughter.

But what starts out as a simple job of tracking down a wayward teenager soon turns into a murder trail.

Sharman trawls the local clubs for clues and discovers that the missing Sophie had a reputation for giving away free drugs. Acting on an anonymous tip off, he searches a Brixton squat and discovers a dead Sophie with a needle still in her arm

## CAST LIST

Nick Sharman	Clive Owen
Dawn	Adie Allen
Tracey	Collette Brown
George Bright	Ray Winstone
Sophie Bright	Kelly Reilly
Aggie	Roberta Taylor
Judith	Isabella Marsh
Laura	Miranda Foster
Charlie	Anthony Trent
Bren	Jacqueline Phillips
Robber	John Salthouse
Dicks	Mark Moraghan
Mayles	Hugo Speer
Terry Southall	Cliff Parisi
Precious	Marianne Jean-Baptiste
Des	Stephen Bent
Sturrock	Phillip Bretherton
Emma	Sasha Hails
Steve	Tat Whalley

Sharman : Episode 4

TX: ITV on Monday, November 25, 1996, at 8.30 p.m.

Sharman's wedding day celebrations are interrupted when David Galillee, a manager from his bank corners him at his reception and asks to hire him.

Despite his usual money problems and the tempting offer of having his mortgage paid off in full if he plays ball - Sharman is more interested in going on his honeymoon with Dawn than striking up a deal with Galillee.

But when Dawn hears of the offer she insists Sharman must break into their honeymoon to do the job.

Galillee is involved in a money laundering operation at his bank but is unsure where the money ends up.

He starts to get cold feet about his involvement and fearing for his and his young family's safety he drafts in Sharman to find out who's behind the money operation.

## CAST LIST

Nick Sharman	Clive Owen
Dawn	Adie Allen
Tracey	Colette Brown
Galilee	Anton Lesser
Carol	Emma Cunningham
Maisie	Talya Gordon
Gabriel	Alec Gordon
Bren	Jacqueline Phillips
Charlie	Anthony Trent
Aggie	Roberta Taylor
Tommy	Rupert Proctor
Simon	Michael Clarkson
Dinah	Ruth Harford
Robber	John Salthouse
Durban	Danny Webb
Relf	Christopher Saul
Maureen	Zoe Hilson

## PRODUCTION CREDITS

Executive producer

TONY GARNETT

Producer

BILL SHAPTER

Directors

ROBERT BIERMAN

MATTHEW EVANS

Based on the books by

MARK TIMLIN

Writers

GUY JENKIN

PAUL ABBOTT

MICK FORD

DUSTY HUGHES

Director of photography

KEVIN ROWLEY

Production designer

PHIL ROBERSON

Costume designer

SHEELAGH KILLEEN

Editors

NICK McPHEE

BILL WRIGHT

ROGER WILSON

A WORLD PRODUCTION

for

CARLTON