



Sherlock Holmes
against
Conan Doyle

52' |
Delivery: End of July 2017

Series director and author: Michel Le Bris
Episode director: Emmanuelle Nobécourt

Sherlock Holmes

against

Conan Doyle

THE “WE ARE A LEGEND” SERIES

One day they suddenly appear in the pages of a book, and their success is explained by the fact that they capture something described as the “zeitgeist” possibly embodying it. But no sooner than they are born do they escape from their creators, traveling across continents, then centuries, and finally becoming immortal – it seems that they express something crucial about us and the world we live in.

SHERLOCK HOLMES AGAINST CONAN DOYLE

Created in 1887 by Conan Doyle, mostly out of financial necessity, Sherlock Holmes almost immediately escaped his creator’s control, carried off by the enthusiasm of a public that shaped his clothes, physical appearances, favorite objects, and finally took Holmes to be a real, living character, one to be written to and asked for help.

Very quickly, the author entered into a struggle – wishing to write other, far more important, books! But it was impossible to resist the pull of this very lucrative revenue stream, and the stories that the public was clamoring for. Doyle first attempted to kill off this bothersome Holmes, sending him over the precipice along with his enemy (and double?), the Professor Moriarty. For a while Conan Doyle believed he had succeeded: hugely famous, he was invited around the world; his historical novels were acclaimed; he was an advocate for justice; was impassioned with Spiritualism, made several inventions.

But there was no escaping Sherlock Holmes who soon demanded to be brought back to life. By other authors if necessary. Conan Doyle had no choice but to resuscitate him. And thus the unfortunate

In this series, we intend to tell the story of these myths that accompany and live within us across ages and cultures, as if to reveal to us a great secret.

Future episodes: King Arthur, Dracula, Tarzan, Don Juan, Robinson Crusoe, Frankenstein, Jim Hawkins, Don Quichotte, Alice...

writer found himself transformed into the secretary of his creation, swamped with letters that he was asked to pass on to the detective...

But was it not Holmes who had taken possession of Doyle? By Conan Doyle’s death in 1930, Baker Street’s best known detective had already been brought to life 100 times on the silver screen and been the center of 40 plays. At present there have been at least 260 movie adaptations, over one thousand TV versions, and at least 1,000 pastiches – more than for Dracula, Frankenstein, Napoleon or Jesus-Christ. Sherlock Holmes is more alive than ever.

Why is it so successful? That is this story we intend to tell.

Our account has its share of surprises. Including Dr. House, directly inspired by Sherlock Holmes, or a series in which the famous detective is played by a woman, or one of these entirely pixelated adaptations in which video game players can enjoy shedding light on new cases.

TREATMENT

A story with three levels:

- Firstly, the forgotten but surprising true adventure story that was the life of Conan Doyle, a larger than life character with a multiplicity of talents and passions.

- Secondly, there is the way that Doyle's creation, Sherlock Holmes, almost immediately took on mythical proportions, which each seemed to recognize, as the creation appeared to become autonomous and engaged in a struggle to the death with its creator.

- Finally, there's the story of how, having attained a mythical status, Sherlock Holmes left behind his era, the one he was supposed to incarnate, and travelled across time and cultures, all the while both remaining the same and speaking directly to us today, of us, and of the world.

A narrator, the guiding thread:

He will tell this story exactly, providing its guideline.

Interviews? Yes, but not too many:

Our preference will go towards participants who are creators, participants in renewing the myth, rather than theoretical experts. We have in mind: the directors of the new BBC series, Mark Gatiss or Steven Moffat; the actors who have brought Sherlock Holmes to life, such as Benedict Cumberbatch; a member of France's Holmes Society, Thierry Saint-Joanis; the author Joann Sfar, who recreated the character Professor Bell in his comic books (Conan Doyle's inspiration for Sherlock); or the author and expert in fairies, Pierre Dubois, to explain Conan Doyle's belief in their existence.

Rich and varied archival material:

Amid all the adaptations and recreations - in movies, television, theatre, video games - we think it's worthwhile to allow the creator himself to have his say with the help of his own words and audio recordings of Conan Doyle. As to the character, we will make use of images from the most exceptional of the movies, such as Peter Cushing in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, the TV series starring Jeremy Brett, or the recent series *Elementary* (CBS) and *Sherlock* (BBC), and also with these adaptations' actors and directors.

Animation:

The main characters will be brought to life through animation, whether they really existed, such as Conan Doyle, or were merely products of the imagination, such as Sherlock Holmes or his assistant, Doctor Watson.

« My name is Holmes - Sherlock Holmes »:

The movie might start with a quick cut edit of film clips from the past and present, showing the faces of those who have best brought the character to life (Clive Brook, Basil Rathbone, Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Jeremy Brett, Vasily Livanov), and the most unexpected matches (Larry Hagman, aka J.R. Ewing, Roger Moore, Charlton Heston, Lucy Liu...), each as he or she says the line: "*My name is Holmes.*" The last to appear would be Benedict Cumberbatch, who has managed to create a new Sherlock in the BBC's recent relaunch, already a cult series.



MICHEL LE BRIS,
SERIES DIRECTOR
AUTHOR

A writer and novelist, he was a finalist for the Goncourt Prize for *The Beauty of the World* (2008), and is the director of the *Astonishing Travelers Festival* (*Etonnants Voyageurs* in Saint Malo, France), described by JMG Le Clézio as “the world’s best literary festival.” Involved in radio and television, he has also authored many documentaries on important explorers and literary figures for Arte and France 3, including John Steinbeck, Jack London, Martin and Osa Johnson, or even a history of piracy.

EMMANUELLE NOBÉCOURT,
EPISODE DIRECTOR

French Emmanuelle Nobécourt has been a **filmmaker** since 1996. She directed more than 30 documentary films about various topics including history, culture, psychoanalysis, education and human interest. Her approach of documentaries is driven by the wish to tell stories and explore all kinds of narrative possibilities without preconceived notions. Her latest achievements include *The three deaths of Mussolini*, 52', France 5, Procirep, Toute l'Histoire, Flach Film - *Charles Pathé Léon Gaumont, the real Rivals of cinema*, 90', ARTE, Gaumont - Pathé Archives, Procirep, Planète+, RTBF, RTS, Program33 - *Marcello Mastroianni, the Perfect Italian*, 52', ARTE, Avrotros, RTS, SH-Channel 8, SBS, Program33.



PRODUCTION

GEDEON Programmes - 155, rue de Charonne 75011 PARIS

PRESIDENT

Stéphane Millière Tel 01 55 25 59 21
smilliere@gedeonprogrammes.com

PRODUCER

Corine Janin Tel 01 55 25 59 15
cjanin@gedeonprogrammes.com



GEDEON
programmes

www.gedeonprogrammes.com