

# The Star and Shadow Cinema presents: Alien Nation: A Season of Cult British TV (17 to 24 July 2011)

A celebration of the freaky, spooky and obscure side of UK television drama. Programmed by James Leggott (Lecturer in Film and TV, Northumbria University) from the darker corners of the BBC archives, with special guest introductions, this is a rare chance to catch some of the most haunting telefantasy ever transmitted. Expect angelic encounters, sacrificial offerings, gothic nightmares, dinner parties from hell, a very frightened Jane Asher, BBC Radiophonic weirdness... and Michael Parkinson being possessed by an evil spirit.

**Sunday 17th July, 7.30pm: The Stone Tape (1972, 90min)**

**Wednesday 20th July, 7.30pm: Ghostwatch (1992, 95min)**

**Thursday 21st July, 7.30pm: Penda's Fen (1974, 90min)**

**Sunday 24th July, 7.30pm: Schalcken the Painter (1979, 70min) + The Exorcism (1972, 50min)**



**Sunday 17th July, 7.30pm: The Stone Tape (1972, 90min)**

The "Alien Nation" season of British telefantasy opens with this startling fusion of science fiction and supernatural horror. Penned by Nigel Kneale (the Godfather of British telefantasy) and first broadcast as part of the BBC's tradition of ghost tales for Christmas, this futuristic story concerns a group of scientists who discover that their newfangled recording device is picking up disturbing transmissions from the past.

**Wednesday 20th July, 7.30pm: Ghostwatch (1992, 95min)**

This infamous BBC mockumentary about an evil spirit possessing a suburban household was taken by some audiences as a genuine live broadcast upon its first (and only) broadcast on Halloween in

1992. A prophetic satire on reality television, it is also a multilayered ghost story that repays repeated viewing. Its writer, Stephen Volk, will be present to introduce and discuss the film.

**Thursday 21st July, 7.30pm: Penda's Fen (1974, 90min)**

A true cult classic about a teenage boy's fantastical encounters with angels and pagan rulers, Penda's Fen is an enigmatic meditation on themes of nationality, sexuality, myth, masculinity and religion. Written by David Rudkin and directed by Alan Clarke (of Scum and The Firm fame), it was a visionary, cinematic contribution to the BBC's "Play for Today" strand.



**Sunday 24th July, 7.30pm: Schalcken the Painter (1979, 70min) + The Exorcism (1972, 50min)**

The "Alien Nation" season of weird and haunting UK telefantasy concludes with this double-bill of two gems highly rated by connoisseurs of 1970s TV horror. The first is a gorgeous, brooding drama about the downfall of the seventeenth century Dutch painter Godfried Schalcken. The second is a politically-charged frightener about a dinner party disturbed by supernatural forces.



This season is being programmed with the support of Northumbria University, as part of the International Conference "Alien Nation: A Conference on British Science Fiction, Horror and Fantasy Television" (20-21 July 2011)

At the Star and Shadow Cinema, Stepney Bank, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 2NP – [www.starandshadow.org.uk](http://www.starandshadow.org.uk)