



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## *News Release*

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### **Spy Week events put espionage and intrigue in the spotlight**

Illuminating stories of double agents, code breakers and surveillance are spotlighted in a festival of film and fiction organised by the University of Edinburgh.

The intriguing worlds of spying and espionage in fiction and history will be explored at the annual Spy Week from Monday, April 16 to Friday, April 20.

Among this year's highlights is a discussion with leading academics on the secret world of Muriel Spark.

The acclaimed Edinburgh-born author, who worked for UK foreign intelligence service MI6 before embarking on her literary career, will be the focus of an event at the National Library of Scotland.

The discussion is part of *Muriel Spark 100*, a year of events marking the centenary of her birth and will explore how spying is portrayed in her work.

Spy Week's fifth anniversary is celebrated in an opening debate at the University about the role of spy fiction today.

Award-winning spy novelists Jeremy Duns and Edinburgh-based Aly Monroe will explore the changing role of the spy in fiction, television and film. The event is sponsored by the podcast series, [Spybrary.com](http://Spybrary.com).

In another event a leading intelligence expert will consider the uneasiness about secrecy and conspiracy in the contemporary world.

Mark Laity, Director of Communications at NATO's military headquarters, SHAPE, will talk about contemporary responses to surveillance culture in an event at the University.

Leading historians and biographers Stephen Dorril, author of many books on the history of secret services and Andrew Lownie, most recently the author of *Stalin's Englishman: The Lives of Guy Burgess*, will dig into the secret lives of spies and the challenge of writing about them in an event at Blackwell's Bookshop.

A final event explores the differences between detective stories and spy fiction.

Award-winning novelists Mick Herron – author of the Slough House series – and Denise Mina, whose *The Long Drop* was Scottish Crime Novel of the Year in 2017 – will talk about mysteries and conspiracies at St Cecilia's Hall in Niddry Street.

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Screenings at Edinburgh Filmhouse will present big screen adaptations of *36 Hours*, a 1965 American suspense film, based on the short story *Beware of the Dog* by Roald Dahl and *The Boys from Brazil*, a 1978 British-American science fiction thriller nominated for three Academy Awards.

Also showing will be the first Taiwanese-language spy film, *The Best Secret Agent*, a remake of a 1945 movie of the same name, which caused a sensation in Shanghai.

Professor Penny Fielding, of the University of Edinburgh's School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures, said: "We are delighted to work with other cultural bodies in Edinburgh to bring the very best contemporary spy writers to Edinburgh for Spy Week's fifth anniversary.

"Edinburgh Spy Week is a unique public event that focuses on espionage fiction and film and the ways in which secrecy and spying run through our history and culture."

All talks at the University, Blackwell's and the National Library of Scotland are free but must be booked in advance via Eventbrite.

Edinburgh Spy Week is organised by the University of Edinburgh in partnership with the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh Filmhouse and Blackwell's Bookshop.

Details of the events at: <http://www.spyweek.ed.ac.uk/spy-week-2018/>

Twitter <https://twitter.com/spyweek>

For further information, please contact: Joanne Morrison, Press and PR Office. Tel 0131 651 4266. Email [Joanne.Morrison@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Joanne.Morrison@ed.ac.uk)