



PRESS KIT



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CONTACT DETAILS:

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TECHNICAL DETAILS:

Production Format: HD 16:9 Stereo 4:2:2 colour
Frame Rate: 25 / sec
Release Format: 1920 x 1080 HD
Sound Configuration: Stereo Full Mix
Date of Production: 2018
Release Date: 2018
Duration: 52 mins

ISAN NUMBERS:

Episode 1: The Rise of Judea: 0000-0004-E98B-0001-N-0000-0000-5
Episode 2: The Fall of Judea: 0000-0004-E98B-0002-L-0000-0000-B

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SERIES SYNOPSIS: EPISODE 1: The Rise of Judea

Log Line (10 words):

Herod's ambition leads to Roman occupation and ultimately, his downfall.

Short Synopsis (400 characters):

The Rise of Judea explores the tumultuous reign of King Herod and the ascent of Roman stewardship in Judea through the words of Flavius Josephus. From his strategic marriage and political wiles to his immense cultural development and architectural marvels, Herod's destructive ambition leads him to madness, and sets the stage for the fall of the Jewish nation.

Short Synopsis (500 characters):

The Fatal Conflict Episode 1 explores the tumultuous reign of King Herod, and the ascent of Roman control in Judea. This epic story is uniquely told through the words of controversial historian Flavius Josephus, and incorporates expert interviews, dramatic recreations, and evocative CGI. Exploring Herod's blood-soaked reign, the cultural and architectural development of the region, and his descent into madness, this story ultimately sets the stage for the destruction of the Jewish nation.

Short Synopsis (840 characters):

The Fatal Conflict Episode 1 explores the tumultuous life of King Herod and unpacks the glorious rise of Judea during a challenging political climate. This epic story is uniquely told through the words of controversial historian Flavius Josephus, and incorporates expert interviews, dramatic recreations, and stunning CGI to weave a visual tapestry as rich as the story itself.

Herod's cultural legacy - the great port of Caesarea, the epic splendour of Masada and glory of the Jewish Temple - would be overshadowed by his destructive ambition and paranoia. Family political machinations and an advantageous marriage to a Hasmonean princess to patricide and assassination, Herod's obsessive nature and destructive ambition contrast his legacy as a master builder and advocate of the Jewish nation.

Long Synopsis:

Journey to first century Judea, a country wracked by civil unrest from warring heirs to the Hasmonean dynasty. Through the writing of controversial historian Flavius

Josephus, meet Herod – an Idumean, born and raised in Judea, who through political manoeuvring and a series of strange events will ascend to King.

Infamous in history for the ‘massacre of the innocents’ and a key player in the narrative of Jesus, the true story of Herod is life of obsessive ambition, relentless paranoia, and violent passions, contrasted with immense public and religious works, and great innovation.

Framed by the writing of Jewish General, historian and debated traitor, Flavius Josephus, and featuring expert insight to the political, social and cultural mores of the time from historians and archaeologists from across the globe, *The Fatal Conflict: The Rise of Judea* offers a compelling insight into a controversial figure and the history of a people.

Born in Judea to Arab parents, Herod ruled Judea from 37 BCE. His ascent to power was the result of masterful campaigns by his father during a period of political turmoil in Judea and Rome. Well-connected and highly ambitious, Herod’s father positioned his family as vital to the Roman Republic’s strategic interests in the Judean region and is well rewarded with prestige, power and citizenship. With Caesar’s assassination, the Roman Empire is in a period of violent change, and, like his father, Herod sees an opportunity to expand his influence by aligning with Rome. His knowledge of the region, and his power of rhetoric, results in Rome invading Jerusalem and installing Herod as king.

To legitimise his claim to the throne Herod marries Hasmonean princess Mariamne. But he is an unpopular leader. Unable to sway the Jewish populace, he sets his sites on historic longevity through infrastructure and architecture.

Cultivating great city works, including many fortified palaces such as the very modern city of Masada. Throughout his reign, Herod continues to build in the region, transforming Phoenician naval station into the gentile city of Caesarea, and developing the largest non-natural harbour in the region.

His political marriage to Hasmonean princess Mariamne while advantageous, is not a happy one. The popularity of the Hasmonean dynasty unnerves Herod and over time he orchestrates the deaths of the Hasmonean line, including Mariamne’s young brother, and popular High Priest, Aristobulus III. This systematic murder of the Hasmonean family line draws the attention of Rome, and Herod is forced to placate them and further commits himself to Roman interests.

His obsessive ambition undermines his sanity. His paranoia begins to take control, fuelled by his sister Salome’s own political interests. Herod accuses his wife of infidelity and she is tried and executed in public court, thus ending the Hasmonean line. His paranoia continues throughout his life, leading him to murder his own children to consolidate his position.

His persistent drive to validate his claim to the throne contrasts his political need to demonstrate his allegiance to Rome. While building an immense new Temple for the benefit of his Jewish populace, he undermines his own efforts by installing a Roman

standard within the Temple, infuriating the Jewish leaders and alienating him further. The country is plagued with revolts that would beset his rule beyond his death.

Resented by his Jewish subjects as a puppet of the Roman Empire, his reign will be riddled with scandal, civil unrest and murder, but through it all Herod will transform his country through unsurpassed building projects. He will reshape Jerusalem, but never win the love of the Jewish people.



SERIES SYNOPSIS: EPISODE 2: The Fall of Judea

EPISODE 2: The Fall of Judea

Log Line (10 words):

Judea revolts against Rome, told by controversial historian Flavius Josephus.

Short Synopsis (400 characters):

The Fatal Conflict Episode 2 explores the events that shaped the great Jewish revolt against Rome, as recorded by Jewish General, historian and perceived traitor, Flavius Josephus. From Jewish acolyte and General fighting against Roman occupation to prophet of Rome and traitor to his people, Josephus offers a front row seat to the machinations and ultimate destruction of the Jewish nation.

Short Synopsis (500 characters):

The Fatal Conflict Episode 2 uncovers the events that shaped the great Jewish revolt against Rome as told by Jewish General, historian and perceived traitor Flavius Josephus, and uniquely incorporates expert interviews, dramatic recreations, and evocative CGI to create a visual tapestry as rich as the story itself. Explore Josephus' early history as a Jewish leader and researcher, his travels to Rome, the folklore of his making as a prophet, and ultimately his involvement in the fall of Judea.

Short Synopsis (840 characters):

The Fatal Conflict Episode 2 explores the life of Jewish General, historian and accused traitor Flavius Josephus, and the events leading to the destruction of the Jewish Nation by the Roman Empire. This epic story is uniquely told through Josephus' own words, and incorporates expert interviews, dramatic recreations, and evocative CGI to weave a visual tapestry as rich as the story itself. Exploring Josephus' early struggle to understand the various Jewish sects, his journey to Rome, his mystical awakening as a prophet, and his appointment as advisor to Rome during the sacking of Jerusalem and the violent downfall of the Jewish Nation. Conflicted by the persecution of his own people and the trappings of Roman privilege, Josephus' complicity in the Roman invasion contrasts his legacy as historian of Judea.

Long Synopsis:

Visionary, prophet, historian, coward, traitor. The figure of Flavius Josephus holds a pivotal and controversial position in the story of Judea. Tasked with documenting the rise and fall of the Judean nation, Josephus details not only his defection and seemingly divine ordinance, but the destruction of his own people and their Temple.

Infamous in history as both emissary and traitor of the Jewish nation, the story of the life of Flavius Josephus is rich narrative filled with mysticism, violence, and fate, with an interesting and unreliable narrator. Through his own words, and featuring expert insight to the political, social and cultural mores of the time from historians and archaeologists from across the globe, *The Fatal Conflict: The Fall of Judea* offers a compelling insight into a controversial figure and the ruin of a nation.

Born Yosef ben Matityahu in 37 CE, Josephus never knew a Judea free from the shadow of Rome. Raised amongst the political turmoil of occupation, Josephus documents a period of internal disarray amongst the Jews and his interest in understanding these factions occupies much of his early life. Notions of Judaism were divided amongst three key groups – what Josephus calls the triad. Each had varying degrees of understanding the Torah, and accepting the rule of the Romans.

The polytheistic Romans did not understand the reverence for the Temple, and challenged the monotheistic factions of Judaism by desecrating holy sites, arresting

their leaders, installing corrupt procurators and reallocating resources through the nation. Josephus was delegated with negotiating the release of several leaders and thus began his journey from Jewish advocate to Roman ambassador.

During the voyage, the ship and almost all on board were lost at sea, and through fate or divine intervention, Josephus survived. This would be the first of many seemingly providential occurrences in Josephus' life, including the mass suicide/murder pact after the fall of Galilee – which Josephus again survived.

His religious faith and deep concern for the future of the Jewish nation compelled Josephus to side with the Roman Empire and the Romans saw an opportunity to infiltrate the Jewish resistance through their own philosophy. But having lost the trust of his people through the events at Galilee, Josephus was denounced as a coward and traitor.

Judea continued to fight against the might of the Roman Army, but the factions within and varying beliefs about God's divine intervention, led to infighting and war amongst the Jewish populace. Their resistance to Roman dominance, and guerrilla violence of the Zealots and Sicarii, culminated in the sacking of the Temple of Herod, the destruction of Jerusalem, and finally, seemingly abandoned by God, the mass suicide at Masada.

The bloodshed and devastation scattered the Jewish nation, effects still felt in the region today.

While Josephus had set out to save the Jewish way of life, his actions were interpreted as cowardice and traitorous to the Jewish nation. His horror at the systematic murder of Jews and demolition of Jewish sites compelled him to write the history of the Jewish people in order to preserve their story and redeem his role within it.



EXPERT INTERVIEWEES: BIOGRAPHIES



Professor Henry Abramson

Henry Abramson is Dean of the Lander College of Arts and Sciences in New York, and is notable for his teachings on Jewish history and Judaism as a religion. He received his doctorate in history from the University of Toronto and his research has been recognised with prestigious fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.



Professor Lawrence Schiffman

Lawrence H. Schiffman is the Judge Abraham Lieberman Professor of Hebrew and Judaic Studies at New York University and Director of the Global Institute for Advanced Research in Jewish Studies. He received his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees from the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies at Brandeis University. He is a specialist in the Dead Sea Scrolls, Judaism in Late Antiquity, the history of Jewish law, and Talmudic literature.



Doctor Rhiannon Evans

Rhiannon Evans lectures in Ancient Mediterranean Studies at La Trobe University in Melbourne, in particular, the literature and culture of Ancient Rome and its empire, as well as the Latin language and Greek and Roman mythology. She studies Roman literature of the 1st centuries BCE and CE, from Julius Caesar to the early emperors of Rome, and has published several articles on ancient ethnicity, a book on Roman culture and utopias and co-hosts the podcast *Emperors of Rome*.



Professor Jodi Magness

Jodi Magness is an archaeologist and the Kenan Distinguished Professor for Teaching Excellence in Early Judaism at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She received her Ph.D. in Classical Archaeology from the University of Pennsylvania. She specialises in ancient Palestine in the Roman, Byzantine, and early Islamic periods, and her research interests include Jerusalem, Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Masada, the Roman army in the East, and ancient pottery.



Professor Daniel R. Schwartz

Daniel R. Schwartz is an historian and the academic head of the Mandel Scholion Interdisciplinary Research Center in the Humanities and Jewish Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His postdoctoral dissertation was devoted to ancient attitudes toward the Temple of Jerusalem, and he specialises in the history and historiography of the Jews in the Greco-Roman Period. His book *Agrippa I* won the 1988 Arnold Wischnitzer Prize.



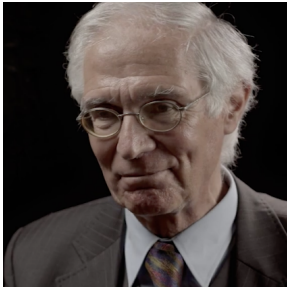
Professor Helen Bond

Helen Bond is Professor of Christian Origins at Edinburgh University and Director of the Centre for the Study of Christian Origins, the first woman to hold such a post in Scotland. She received her PhD at the University of Durham and her research focuses on the social, cultural and religious context of Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity, including Josephus, and the Roman government of Judaea.



Professor Steve Mason

Steve Mason is a Canadian historian and Distinguished Professor of Ancient Mediterranean Religions and Cultures at the faculty of theology and religious studies of the University of Groningen. His doctoral dissertation investigated Flavius Josephus' works as narratives and historical reconstructions. He is an expert in the history and literature of the eastern Mediterranean under Roman rule, especially Roman Judaea, the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, and Christian-Jewish-Roman relations.



Professor Lucio Troiani

Lucio Troiani is Professor in Department of Humanistic Studies at the University of Pavia, where he lectures in the history of Judaism in the Roman Age. He is on the editorial board of the journals *Materia Giudaica* and *Henoch*, and is an Academic at Accademia dei Lincei. He specialises



Professor Ariel Lewin

Ariel Samuel Lewin is a former professor at Bar-Ilan University and Haifa University. He is an accomplished writer and editor, and a former visiting scholar at Brown University. He is an expert on Judaic war during the Imperial Age and has directed studies about Ancient Judea and Palestine.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT:

Nik Wansbrough

Bringing The Fatal Conflict to the screen was an extreme honour, and an equally challenging experience.

The story of Judea's rise and fall at the hands of the Roman Empire is both epic and sprawling, and to present it to a general audience was no simple task, both narratively and visually.

In order to tell an engaging story, whilst fulfilling factual obligations, we needed to focus on one, tangible thread; the life and works of Flavius Josephus.

However, the writings of Josephus come with their own unique challenges. He was not bound by the same restrictions that historians and scholars are today.

He did not shy from dramatic flair, and his three major works often contradict each other, with his portrayal of characters and events often shifting to serve his intended audience.

For this reason, I elected to have our excellent array of experts drive the narrative. Throughout the two episodes, each expert details their interpretation of Josephus' words for the audience, supporting and refuting the facts as he rents them.

Visualising the story brought with it the same challenges. The works of Josephus are almost mythic in nature, and anything we could place on screen would always be an interpretation of the facts.

The impressionistic style of the program drives emotional impact and provides a sense of scale that would be impossible for us to achieve with photo-real, historical renderings.

Employing colour, light and movement, in an almost storybook style, we were able to evoke moods that could underlay the insights of our experts.

Dynamic maps were generated to drive the story as much as orient the audience geographically. The animation style, reminiscent of Greco-Roman art was developed to illustrate tangential anecdotes. And finally, dynamic footage of the environments and architectural sites that formed the historical backdrop of the story were included, bridging the evocative recreations with reality.

I believe that we have crafted a piece of work that supports the historical and emotional weight of its own content, whilst creating a truly unique experience for the viewer. Results that are extremely fulfilling.

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY:

NIK WANSBROUGH – CREATIVE DIRECTOR

After graduating with a digital arts degree specialising in digital video and animation, Nik began work as a commercial director for WildBear Entertainment in Australia. He has directed a wide variety of content - ranging from television commercials and corporate videos to full-length documentaries, including Killing Machines (2016, MTG/Viasat), Australia Doesn't Just Want to Kill You (2015, Discovery), Monsters in the Outback (2015, Flame Distribution). 'King Herod – The Fatal Conflict' is no exception to the incredibly high calibre of work that Nik delivers. With a passion for digital effects, Nik will create a visually spectacular and factually concise series.

PRODUCER'S STATEMENT:

Veronica Fury

WildBear Entertainment has a reputation for creating high end historical television, and 'The Fatal Conflict – Judea & Rome' is no exception. We are proud to have produced this 2-part series, delving into such an incredible slice of ancient history.

With the use of dramatic recreations, high quality aerial location footage and stunning CGI, while also engaging top academics and historians from around the world, we shed light on this intriguing and controversial era in time. 'The Fatal Conflict' tells a story that is seldom explored to such a great level, and told from this unique view point.

Our long-standing relationships with our international partners has ensured a smooth and successful production process throughout. Together with Director Nik Wansbrough's amazing vision and tenacity for the project, we have created a truly remarkable series, one that puts its own stamp on history ... and on the mind of the viewer.

PRODUCER'S BIOGRAPHY:

VERONICA FURY – EXECUTIVE PRODUCER / PRINCIPAL

Veronica Fury is an Executive Producer and Principal of WildBear Entertainment, with over 90 hours of primetime television and feature documentaries to her name. Veronica has worked with Australian television broadcasters ABC, Foxtel and SBS and major international broadcasters including ZDF, Discovery, Nat Geo, American Heroes Channel, TG4 and Arte France to name a few.

Veronica also has a strong track record in producing high profile, award winning feature documentaries, with large slate of projects in various stages of development and production. Feature documentary 'Iron Fist and Kung-fu Kicks', on the history of Kung-fu movies, has recently been commissioned by Netflix for production later in 2018.

<http://www.imdb.me/veronicafury>

CAST LIST:

EPISODE 1

Narrator	KEVIN SPINK
Character of Josephus narration	PETER MCALLUM
Young Herod	RICHARD LUND
Old Herod	TONY WHITE
Josephus	JUSTIN SWEETSER
Joseph	JONATHAN PAKCHUNG
Sohemus	JAY ACHARYA
Salome	JESSICA LEIGHTON
Augustus	DANIEL CHENEY
Mariamne	MIA KNIBB
Mark Anthony	MIGUEL JIMENEZ
Aristobulus III	MIVON PRINCE-LEYVA
Antipater	MARCO SINIGAGLIA
Aristobulus II	DANIEL POTTS
Hyrchanus II	JAYME TEMPLE
Jewish Women	CHARMAIN JACKSON

Jewish High Priest	RACHEL FORSYTH
Zealots	RUSS GALLAGHER
	TROY BULLOCK
	JACOB DAMANHOURI
	STEFAN ALEKSANDE
Essen	STU KIRK
Blue Soldiers	DANIEL MOLLOY
	TIM MCDONALD
Judeans	LEO CASTRO
	VYVYAN BLACK
	WADE BOYES
Jewish Youths	CHRISTOPHER ASHTON
	HAYDEN MCCRYSTAL

CAST LIST:

EPISODE 2

Narrator	KEVIN SPINK
Character of Josephus narration	PETER MCALLUM
Josephus	JUSTIN SWEETSER
Old Josephus	WILL BERGMAN
Aliturius	LUKE FROHLING
Nero	MATTHEW HOUGH
Flavius Silva	ANTHONY NIXON
Vespasian	JEREMY ROSE
Titus	RYAN CHEESMAN
Antipater	MARCO SINIGAGLIA
Aristobulus II	DANIEL POTTS
Jewish High Priest	RUSS GALLAGHER
Poppaea	CHLOE RANKIN
Jewish Women	CHARMAIN JACKSON
	RACHEL FORSYTH
Zealots	TROY BULLOCK
	JACOB DAMANHOURI
	STEFAN ALEKSANDE
Bannus	GENE BANYARD
Pharisee	DAVID-GRAHAM PARKER
Roman Soldiers	KENJI SHIMADA
	MATTHEW SCULLY
	ANDREW GROUNDWATER
	ANTHONY SAVAGE
	JUSTIN WADDINGTON
	SAM KHREICH
	SHANE SALMON
	DANIEL MOLLOY

Sicarri	ARTHUR COSTA
	BRADLEY DAVIS
Judeans	ANTHONY ROBIN
	LEO CASTRO
	VYVYAN BLACK
	WADE BOYES
	STU KIRK
Jewish Youths	CHRISTOPHER ASHTON
	HAYDEN MCCRYSTAL
Jewish Warriors	FRANCISCO BARCELLOS
	TYSON BROWN

KEY CREATIVE CREDIT LIST:

Director
NIK WANSBROUGH

Producer
VERONICA FURY

Creative Producer
ALAN ROSENTHAL

Writers
NIK WANSBROUGH
ALAN ROSENTHAL
MICHAEL EATON

Editor
NIK WANSBROUGH

Director of Photography

GEOFF ELLIS

Executive Producers

MICHAEL TEAR

SERGE OU

Produced with the assistance of
SCREEN QUEENSLAND

