



Spitting Image Christmas Special

Oh come all ye faithful-puppets ... seasonal satirical cheer and a second outing to ITV this year for the BritBox hit show.

Advent events to go through *Spitting Image's* legendary prism include: a *shocking* Christmas surprise for Prince Andrew; an ever-heroic Tom Cruise stepping up to save Christmas for Santa; who better to add a bit of flair to the Queen's annual Christmas message than Phoebe Waller-Bridge; Keir Starmer finally springing into action for an oncoming Christmas lunch crisis with his (always law-abiding) vigilante alter-ego, Fox Man; while poor Rishi Sunak is visited by terrifying visions including of The Ghost of Tory Glory Past.

Spitting Image has delivered record subscribers for BritBox UK, the BBC and ITV created streaming platform. Across official social media channels, *Spitting Image* content has been hugely popular with over 200 million views globally and three No. 1 trending videos on YouTube.

With the world getting smaller and more turbulent, last year celebrated *Spitting Image* co-creator Roger Law returned to head up the show's creative team, while multi-award-winner Jeff Westbrook (*The Simpsons*, *Futurama*) joined as Showrunner, leading the international writing team on the iconic British satirical take on global events. A next generation of satirical writers and voice artists are working with established talent to drive a new wave of 'public service satire'. Writers on the show include: Al Murray, Bert Tyler-Moore (*The Windsors*), Bill Odenkirk (*The Simpsons*), Brona C. Titley (*The Tracey Ullman Show*), Jason Hazeley & Nico Tatarowicz (*Charlie Brooker's Screenwipe/Murder in Successville*), Karl Minns (*Russell Howard's Good News*), Keisha Zollar (*Astronomy Club*), Laura Major (*Famalam*), Matt Forde, Patric Verrone (*The Simpsons*), with many more joining the growing team. Voice artists include: Billy West (*Futurama*), Debra Stephenson (*The Impressions Show*), Debra Wilson (*Family Guy*), Tom Stourton (*Pls Like, Horrible Histories*), Eshaan Akbar (*Mock The Week*) Indira Varma (*Game of Thrones*), Jess Robinson (*The Imitation Game*), John DiMaggio (*Futurama*), Lewis MacLeod (*Dead Ringers*), Lobo Chan (*Killing Eve*), Luke Kempner (*The Imitation Game*),

Matt Forde (*The Political Party*) and Phil LaMarr (*Pulp Fiction*), with many more joining as the puppet cast grows. The show is ultra-topical with scripts being written and new puppets made as close to each episode as possible.

Internationally, a bespoke German language version of the show has successfully launched in Germany with Der Spiegel hailing it as *“really good”* and news stories of far-right politicians from AfD considering legal action – Spitting Image: The Krauts’ Edition, includes the globally resonating content from the English language version (redubbed by Germany’s leading voice artists), with new topical local sketches (written by German comedy writers) – all filmed in the UK-based Spitting Image studio as close to transmission to ensure maximum topicality. Elsewhere the debut drew the second-best channel audience figure in Finland for its time slot and was hailed by the leading Finnish newspaper as being, *“As vicious and risqué as before”* and successfully launched in Belgium with a 22% of total TV audience share, the show is a leading title for BritBox Australia, as well as seeing millions of views in the USA via YouTube.

Produced by Avalon, Executive Producers are Jeff Westbrook, Joanna Beresford, Jon Thoday, Richard Allen-Turner and Roger Law. BritBox Commissioning Executive is Nana Hughes.

***The Spitting Image Christmas Special* will TX on ITV in the Christmas schedule (day TBC) and will premiere in advance to BritBox UK subscribers on Thursday 2nd December.**

What the press said about series 2 of Spitting Image so far...

“The reboot of Spitting Image has been a big hit since its return last autumn” ★★★★★
Mark Wareham, The Mail on Sunday

“The puppets, made to be seen in the age of HD, are finished to an even high quality than they were in the show’s influential first run... they are quite extraordinary... the quality of the puppets and the impressions was outstanding.”
Dominic Maxwell, The Times

“The scarily on-the-nose topical satire – relaunched to great acclaim last year – has been busy boiling up new batches of wickedly funny sketches ... the treats keep coming” ★★★★★
Simone Andrews, The Daily Mail

“there is life and mischief and deception and chaos... Matt Forde is doing his annoyingly good impression of the PM”
Matt Chorley, The Sunday Times

★★★★★
Mike Mulvihill, The Daily Mail

“roaringly tasteless, thoroughly mean ...very funny.”
David Butcher, The Radio Times

“when Spitting Image hits the mark, no satirical show eviscerates public figures with such a savage bite. And the impressions are amusingly spot-on, with a special shout out to Matt Forde’s Johnson.”
Vicki Power, The Daily Telegraph

“laughter helps in the face of fear, after all.”
Hollie Richardson, The Guardian / The Observer

"Resurrected to wide acclaim a year ago, the latest version's grotesque creations are every bit as on the money as the scriptwriters and performers put current issues in the spotlight"

The Daily Star

★★★★

Jason Arnopp, Heat

"the updated Spitting Image continues to pull it off"

Eleanor Relf, The Sun

"The sheer breadth and detail of the craftsmanship is remarkable and the voiceover work pretty impressive... topical satire with the handbrake truly off is thin on the ground"

Gabriel Tate, The Times

★★★★

TV Times

"side-splitting topical satire."

Dan Turner, Total TV Guide / TV Choice

"Expect LOLs-a-plenty"

Hannah Wright, Closer

Charlie Stayt: *"It is funny... it is funny"*

Naga Munchetty: *"it is, and it's supposed to be, and it is"*

BBC One Breakfast

"sharpening its knives and getting stuck in"

The Guardian

"COMEDY OF THE WEEK...bet they're sorry they've had to put the awful Trump colon into storage"

Jack Seale, Radio Times

"bitingly funny sketch show ... no one is safe from a satirical roasting."

Emily Baker, The i

"sharply satirical"

Robin Wiggs, Daily Mail

"Sometimes laughter is the best medicine... Chaotic comedy at its very best!"

The Daily Mirror & The Daily Express

"it's just as outrageous as ever"

Harry Fletcher, Metro

"A crack team of writers and voice artists"

Anna Burnside, Daily Record

"Having survived the sheer horror of watching Donald Trump's disembodied colon ... No spoilers here, but there could possibly be another furore."

Michael Hodges, Radio Times

"Reviews for series one of the new Spitting Image were almost universally positive."

Mike Ward, The Daily Star

What the press said about series 1 of Spitting Image ...

"lost none of its savagery or willingness to shock." ★★★★★

Mark Lawson, The Guardian

"so far its resurrection is pleasingly familiar to those who remember the original... they haven't, despite early reports, held back on the viciousness... in general, a B-plus"

Euan Ferguson, The Observer

"TV GOLD: The Boris sat-nav sketch and Keir Starmer's Shadow Cabinet/donkey sanctuary eeh-awing down the phone to him"

"TV GOLD: The Keir Starmer "Foxman" sketch and Meghan Markle's"

Ally Ross, The Sun

"with its Trumpian body part, hideously tweeting, one of the (horribly, brilliantly) unforgettable moments of this year's TV."

David Butcher, The Radio Times

"Throughout, the puppets and the impressions are pleasures in themselves... Spitting Image still has some fire lurking in its belly." ★★★★★

Dominic Maxwell, The Times

"a hit show... Spitting Image has provided some rare laughs... we need those puppets back soon."

Ian Burrell, The i

"some sublime moments... You can happily enjoy all that creativity while you wait for the next joke to pull in." ★★★★★

Sean O'Grady, The Independent

"congratulations on Spitting Image, we've just been watching it this morning, we could barely do the first half hour of the show, I mean seriously... thanks goodness it's back... it's as fresh as a daisy this one ... it's hilarious"

Chris Evans, Virgin Radio

"the much-missed satirical puppet show made a triumphant return" ★★★★★

Mark Wareham, The Mail on Sunday

★★★★★

Mike Mulvihill, The Daily Mail

★★★★★

Mike Ward, Daily Star

★★★★★

Simone Andrews, The Daily Mail

★★★★★

Daily Star on Sunday

"the superb new Spitting Image series on BritBox... the sharpest, funniest and most ferocious take on events you'll see all week."

Eleanor Relf, The Sun

"The first series of BritBox's Spitting Image revival went out with a bang... triumphant return as one of BritBox's first original titles, with a whole host of new distorted puppets... the platform's subscribers will undoubtedly miss the show's weekly political parodies."

Lauren Morris, Radio Times

"Trump's puppet is spot-on, looking like a swollen tuna in a wig."

James Jackson, The Times

"Better latex than never"

The Guardian

"bitingly funny puppet sketch show...Laughs when we need them most"

Sunday Mirror

"it can go to places other comedies can't"

Jack Seale, Radio Times

"... it's finally here. One of the most influential British satirical shows of all time"

Henry Mance, Financial Times

"it's very very funny"

Gaby Roslin, BBC Radio London

"hit revival"

Steve Wright, BBC Radio 2

"I couldn't agree more with the success it's having over here"

Richard Arnold, ITV Good Morning Britain

"I watched some of this last night, with some trepidation having loved it in my youth, but I actually really enjoyed it and laughed more than I thought I would... I very much enjoyed the New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Arden as the practically perfect Mary Poppins"

Rachel Burden, BBC Radio 4

"it certainly did not disappoint... it was cracking, I loved it, I highly recommend people watching it... absolutely brilliant"

Ayesha Hazarika, Times Radio

"satirical sidesplitter... We need them kept on their toes now more than ever."

Andy Halls, The Sun

"it's strangely comforting that Spitting Image can return and still (as the Twitter furore and the USA's hesitation to even screen it prove) have that power to wind folk right up! Welcome back, guys!"

★★★★

Jack Bottomley, Starburst Magazine

"has certainly got plenty of people laughing"

Total TV Guide

"it's more vicious than ever"

Ralph Jones, NME

"The first thing to say about the revived Spitting Image is that it works. This will come as a relief to those, including your reviewer, for whom the original show was a vital part of the 1980s and 90s"

Robert Hutton, The Critic

"I did watch the relaunched Spitting Image (BritBox), and some of it was quite funny. The satire of Dominic Cummings and Boris Johnson had a certain truth about it."

David Mellor (quoted in The Times)

"The show has been a huge hit with viewers due to its hilarious portrayal of likes of British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Michael Gove, Dominic Raab and Priti Patel."

Lucy Murgatroyd, The Sun

"has truly found its moment by accurately caricaturing the physiognomical state of Donald Trump (candyflossed barnet, tan not so much Palm Beach as Nagasaki)... Long may its comedic genius be with us."

Gavin Docherty, Daily Express

"ingenuity, along with the signature grotesque caricatures its talented puppetry department keep producing."

Ivan Radford, VODzilla

"its targets are once again gleaned from far and wide across the social spectrum... having merciless fun poked straight into them... the buffoonery and entitlement of Trump and Johnson ceaselessly demolished."

Brian Donaldson, The List

"The puppets are as brilliant as always"

Gerard Gilbert, The i

"I really enjoyed it again this time around... I love the look of the puppets, I like the fact that there's still a lot of savagery there, they're pretty merciless"

Fiona Shepherd, The Scotsman (on BBC Radio Scotland)

"some of it was very funny"

Bruce Dessau, Beyond The Joke/Evening Standard

"To these eyes, it's been a welcome revival: toothier than most TV comedy – bolstered by A-list writers and voice artists – with outstanding puppetcraft to marvel at"

Mike McCahill, Reader's Digest

ENDS

For more information please contact:

Dan Lloyd – DLloyd@avalonuk.com

Perrine Davari – PDavari@avalonuk.com

Sylvia Brendel – publicity@britbox.co.uk

Notes to editors

About Avalon:

Avalon is a multi-award-winning talent management, television production and live promotion group with offices in London, Los Angeles and New York.

Avalon, Artist Rights Group (ARG) and The Agency represent a prolific roster of artists including comedians, actors, presenters, writers and directors. Avalon's numerous ground-breaking returning television shows currently in production include: *Not Going Out* (BBC), the UK's longest running sitcom on air; *Taskmaster* (Channel 4), the BAFTA-winning hit entertainment format showing in 100 countries; multi Emmy-winner, *Last Week Tonight* with John Oliver (HBO); *The Russell Howard Hour* (Sky), the network's most successful entertainment show launch since 2010; *Starstruck*, a new sitcom from the 2018 Edinburgh Comedy Award winner Rose Matafeo (HBO)

Max/BBC); *Everything's Gonna Be Okay*, from creator Josh Thomas (Freeform); *Breeders*, a sitcom starring Martin Freeman and Daisy Haggard (FX/Sky); a new series of the iconic British satirical puppet show, *Spitting Image* (BritBox UK); and multiple comedy specials for Amazon Prime Video, HBO Max and Netflix.

Other landmark Avalon shows include BAFTA winning and multi Emmy nominated *Catastrophe* (Amazon Prime Video/Channel 4), *Fantasy Football League* (BBC/ITV), multi BAFTA-winning *TV Burp* (ITV), and *Workaholics* (Comedy Central USA). Avalon also distributes its catalogue of programmes to over 150 countries worldwide. Avalon has produced many globally successful podcasts and is at the top of the UK iTunes chart with the multi-award-winning *Shagged. Married. Annoyed* by Chris and Rosie Ramsey.

As a leading promoter of live comedy, Avalon produced *Newman and Baddiel: Live at Wembley*, the UK's first arena comedy show; *Jerry Springer: The Opera*, the first West End show to win all four UK 'Best New Musical' awards; and has continued to produce and promote live shows globally, as well as promoting more winners and nominees of the prestigious Edinburgh Comedy Award than any other company.

For Avalon news visit: www.avalonuk.com/press or follow [@avalonent](https://twitter.com/avalonent)

About BritBox UK:

BritBox is a digital video subscription service created by the BBC and ITV. The service brings the very best in past, present, and future British programming and award-winning content to viewers all in one place for £5.99 per month in HD. British TV boxsets from All 4 and British films from Film 4 are also available. The service includes high quality factual and entertainment content from Channel 5 plus original British comedies from Comedy Central UK. BritBox features the biggest collection of British content available on any streaming service, and brand new commissions for British production companies specifically created for BritBox. BritBox also offers expert curation and playlists that will enable viewers to easily find programmes they know and discover new favourites via web, mobile, tablet, connected TVs and streaming devices including Fire TV, Apple TV, Freesat & Chromecast. Content on BritBox can be downloaded and viewed offline where rights allow.

For more assets and imagery, please visit www.itv.com/presscentre/britbox

Follow BritBox UK on social media:

www.facebook.com/BritBoxUK www.instagram.com/britbox_uk <https://twitter.com/BritBoxPressUK>