

For Immediate Release

Bristol – 9th September 2015

Icon Films explores the true story of England’s Vampires for Channel 4 and WNET

Leading UK TV production company Icon Films, has been commissioned by Channel 4 to produce a 1 x 60 England’s Vampires in association with THIRTEEN Productions LLC for WNET.

Icon Films is to produce ‘England’s Vampires’ a one hour documentary that brings together medieval manuscripts, new archaeological finds and a shocking interview with a real-life vampire slayer shedding light on disturbing rituals from Europe’s past and to show that Dracula’s roots lie in fact not fiction.

In 2004 Professor John Blair from Oxford University, made the connection between folktales from Medieval manuscripts describing rituals to dispatch the walking dead and archaeological finds of disturbed Anglo Saxon graves. There was a striking similarity between the violent actions performed on the skeletons in the grave and what was described by the texts. Could this be proof that the folktales were real? Then Professor Blair came across a case of a vampire slaying in modern Romania. The ritual that the vampire slayer described bore striking similarities to those described by the medieval text. The three pieces of evidence stack up to suggest that in Medieval England there was indeed a belief in Vampires.

The documentary goes on to explore why this belief in vampires may have existed and why people were motivated to perform such gruesome acts on a corpse.

Channel 4 and THIRTEEN commissioned the documentary, which will be distributed by PBS Distribution.

‘Commissioned for Channel 4’s Secret History strand and PBS’s Secrets of the Dead strand, it is exciting to bring together historical and archaeological evidence to shed new light on a part of our history that until now has been little known about and even less understood. The results make chilling Television’ said Owen Gay, Executive Producer, Icon Films

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Notes to Editors

Icon Films

Icon Films has a reputation for originality, excellence and entertainment across the breadth of factual genres including science, history, exploration and natural history, having produced over 300 hours of factual programming over 25 years for UK and international broadcasters.

Headquartered in Bristol, the UK's capital of natural history TV production, Icon Films creates award-winning programming for broadcasters including the BBC, Channel 4, Five, ITV, National Geographic, Discovery Networks, Arte and PBS. The company is listed in Realscreen's Global 100 top independent production companies as voted for by broadcasters, producers and distributors in the global non-fiction content industry.

River Monsters, Icon Films' hit series for Animal Planet US is the best performing series in the network's history. Now in its eighth series it is presented by angling explorer Jeremy Wade.

Other recent Icon Films productions include **Ben Franklin's Bones** (1 x 60 WNET), **Betty White's Smartest Animals In America** (2 x 30 GAC), **Africa's Fishing Leopards** (1 x 60 BBC, Nat Geo WILD US), **Spawn of Jaws 2 The Birth** (1 x 60 Discovery Channel), **Survive The Tribe** (6 x 60 National Geographic Channels), **Africa's Giant Killers** (1 x 60 BBC, Animal Planet), **Animals Through the Night – Sleepover at the Zoo** (1 x 90 BBC4), **Bigfoot Files** (3 x 60 Channel 4 / National Geographic US), **Hustling America** (3 x 60 Channel 5), and **Bones of the Buddha** (1 x 60 National Geographic / WNET / ARTE)

Icon Films' senior management team includes Creative Director Harry Marshall, Managing Director Laura Marshall, Director of Production Andie Clare, Commercial Director Lucy Middelboe and Executive Producer Stephen McQuillan and Finance Director Jonathan Jackson www.iconfilms.co.uk

