



THE SPECSAVERS CRIME THRILLER AWARDS 2009 CUT TO THE HEART OF FILM, TV AND BOOKS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Specsavers, Cactus TV and ITV3 in partnership with the Crime Writers' Association (CWA) are pleased to announce they will join forces to celebrate the **Specsavers Crime Thriller Awards 2009**. Following the success of last year's inaugural event on ITV3, the 2009 event will be merged with the Crime Writers' Association Daggers and the new combined "**Specsavers Crime Thriller Awards on ITV3**" will take place on Wednesday, 21st October, 2009.

The exciting new partnership is a 3 year deal between the four parties. The initiative has the support of leading publishers and highstreet retailers and will have posters and stickered books in shops and supermarkets and coverage in the press, reinforcing the Specsavers Crime Thriller Awards as a major industry event.

The culmination of a six-week season of ITV3 crime and drama programming, the **Specsavers Crime Thriller Awards** ("Daggers") will be a glittering occasion at London's Grosvenor House Hotel. The awards ceremony will celebrate the crème de la crème of Crime & Thriller fiction with awards focusing on the best of British and International crime thriller novels.

Literary Awards presented will include the CWA Gold Dagger for best crime novel of the year, the CWA Ian Fleming Steel Dagger for best thriller, the CWA John Creasey (New Blood) Dagger for a new author of note, and the Hall Of Fame Dagger, which honours the achievements of the genre's greatest exponents, past and present. In addition, the evening will introduce a brand new award – the ITV3 Bestseller Dagger, sponsored by Specsavers – voted for by ITV3 viewers.

The **Specsavers Crime Thriller Awards** will also celebrate crime fiction off the page with awards focusing on the greatest crime and thriller films and TV dramas of the year – along with the actors who brought the characters to life. Each award of the evening will be presented by celebrity faces with a connection to the world of crime fiction – last year's presenter's included Dame Helen Mirren and Ricky Gervais.

Crime Writers' Association Chair Margaret Murphy comments: "The Crime Writers' Association Daggers have been synonymous with quality crime writing for over fifty years. This exciting partnership with Cactus TV and ITV3 will enable us to create a mass media platform for the Crime Writers' Association's proud heritage in recognising great crime writing talent. We are delighted that the CWA Gold Dagger, Ian Fleming Steel Dagger, and John Creasey (New Blood) Dagger will benefit from this increased exposure and we look forward to reaching a new audience for what is already publishing's most popular genre."

Specsavers have been appointed as event sponsor and are keen to pursue an involvement with the audience for crime writing, whether it be readers, TV viewers or film goers. The 3 year partnership between Specsavers, Cactus TV, ITV3 and the Crime Writers' Association represents a serious move into entertainment and arts sponsorship for the UK's market-leading optician.

Specsavers marketing director, Richard Holmes, says: "The Specsavers brand has a wonderful fit with both reading and books. To have an association married so neatly through the **Specsavers Crime Thriller Awards** is a great opportunity not just for Specsavers but also the publishing and book retail industries as we work together to lift the profile of the awards."

In the run-up to the glittering awards, ITV3 will broadcast weekly documentaries, profiling six of the greatest crime writers working today: **Colin Dexter, Ian Rankin, P D James, Lynda La Plante, Val McDermid** and **Ruth Rendell**. In 2008, the series reached 3.12m viewers. These documentaries will also highlight the shortlists for the new literary awards as well as interviews with the shortlisted writers for the the ITV3 Bestseller Dagger, sponsored by Specsavers.

The **Specsavers Crime Thriller Awards** are commissioned by Claire Zolkwer, Commissioning Editor, Entertainment on behalf of Emma Tennant, Controller ITV Digital Channels. The Executive Producer for Cactus TV is Amanda Ross.

Claire Zolkwer said: "Last year's Crime Thriller Season showcased the wonderful assets we have in crime and thriller drama while also giving us the opportunity to introduce the author talent behind some of the best loved series on television. ITV3 is delighted to be working with Cactus TV once again on this popular project and playing our part in bringing the illustrious 'Daggers' into the nation's sitting rooms."

Amanda Ross, Managing Director Cactus TV, adds: "We are delighted to have a new 3-year partnership with the Crime Writers' Association to ensure the future of the **Specsavers Crime Thriller Awards** and to establish it as a major event in the awards calendar. This is an extremely popular fiction genre and we will ensure that its creators and performers get the recognition they richly deserve."

The televised ceremony which will transmit on ITV3 later in October will combine the Crime Writers' Association's most prestigious awards with the major categories featured in 2009's Crime Thriller Awards:

- **The CWA Gold Dagger** for the best Crime Novel of the year.
- **The CWA John Creasey (New Blood) Dagger** – for first books by previously unpublished writers, awarded in memory of CWA founder John Creasey.
- **The CWA Ian Fleming Steel Dagger** – for the year's best thriller.
- **The ITV3 Bestseller Dagger, sponsored by Specsavers** – voted for by ITV3 viewers.
- **The Hall of Fame** – honouring the achievements of the genre's greatest exponents, past and present.
- **The Film Dagger** – for the best big-screen crime thriller story.
- **The TV Dagger** – for the best small-screen crime thriller drama.
- **The International TV Dagger** – for the best TV crime thriller drama from around the world.
- **The Best Actress Dagger** – for the female star of a crime thriller drama.
- **The Best Actor Dagger** - for the male star of a crime thriller drama.

The shortlists for each of these award categories will be announced to the public on 4th September, 2009.

Notes to Editors:



About Specsavers Crime Thriller Awards

The **Specsavers Crime Thriller Awards 2009** will take place on Wednesday, 21st October at London's Grosvenor House Hotel and will be televised on ITV3 later that month.

The ITV3 Crime Thriller Awards 2008 achieved an average audience of 314,000 viewers and a 3.1% share and reached 589,000 people on the 6th October. It performed +1.2 points above the slot average. The repeat on 9th October brought the overall audience up to 377,000, and brought the reach up to 716,000. For ABC1 Adults, the awards show performed half a share point above the 2008 slot average.



About Cactus TV:

Cactus TV is a member of the ALL3MEDIA group and run by husband and wife team Simon and Amanda Ross. Productions include Saturday Kitchen for BBC1, Hairy Bikers Food Tour of Britain for BBC2, Rachel Allen, Galaxy British Book Awards and 8 years of the Richard & Judy show live from Cactus studios.



About ITV3:

ITV3 is the UK's second most popular digital channel and has been watched by over 35 million people so far in 2009. ITV3's focus on character driven narrative and drama helps the channel attract an upmarket audience – with 67% of ABC1 adults watching the channel in 2009. ITV3 is available on Freeview (channel 10), Freesat (115), Sky Digital (119) and Virgin Media (116).



About Specsavers:

Specsavers was founded by Doug and Dame Mary Perkins in 1984 and is now the largest privately owned opticians in the world. The couple still run the company, along with their three children. Their eldest son John is joint managing director.

Specsavers has more than 1,340 stores throughout the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Spain and Australia. The group plans to continue its successful international expansion by opening stores in New Zealand. Annual turnover for the Specsavers Group is forecast to reach a record £1.4 billion in 2009.

Specsavers was voted Britain's most trusted brand of opticians for the eighth year running by Reader's Digest in 2009.



About the Crime Writers' Association:

The Crime Writers' Association has a membership of over 450 writers of fiction and non-fiction. Its main aims are to promote the crime genre and to support professional writers. The CWA has been providing social and professional support for its members for more than half a century, as well as administering the prestigious Dagger Awards.

The Daggers name and Crossed Daggers logo are registered Trade Marks of the Crime Writers' Association, and are used under licence.

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