

Crisis

1973 – 1977

A Radio Series Broadcast Log By:

Stewart Wright

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First Show: 11/22/1973.

Last Show: 12/29/1977.

Number of Shows: 152. (See **Special Christmas Show:**)

STATUS NOTE:

Effective Friday, March 31, 2017 Jim French Productions has ceased producing new shows.

Starting in July 2017, new episodes of *The Adventures of Harry Nile* and *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* are being produced on a less frequent basis. These episodes will only be broadcast on Seattle radio station KIXI and they will be available for listening on the *Imagination Theatre* YouTube channel.

BACKGROUND:

The 1972 through 1978 Jim French radio programs were the major contemporary component of a mix of radio programs that also included mainly shows from the Golden Age of Radio that were aired on KVI during much of the 1970's. These Radio shows were aired nightly under an "umbrella title" that was called *The KVI Theater Of The Mind*. Jim's shows were generally aired on Thursday nights. At the time, KVI was part of the Golden West Radio Network: KMPC - Los Angeles, KSFO - San Francisco, KEX - Portland, and KVI - Seattle. The Golden West Radio Network was owned by radio's singing cowboy, Gene Autry.

Crisis was the third Jim French-created radio series to air on KVI. *The Tower Playhouse*, a short-run anthology series, was the initial Jim French series to air over Seattle radio and ran for 10 episodes. It was followed by 49 episodes of *The Adventures of Dameron* that starred KVI on-the-air personality Robert E. Lee Hardwick, as a high-priced, globe-trotting troubleshooter.

SERIES DESCRIPTION:

An anthology series, *Crisis* consisted of mainly dramas with a few comedy

episodes. A wide-range of genres were represented in the series: mysteries, psychological and political thrillers, science fiction, action, romance, adventure, crime, and fantasy. Even the long-running and highly popular *The Adventures of Harry Nile* got its start on *Crisis*. Perhaps Jim's opening, used in the early episodes, best sums up the basic *Crisis* concept:

"Sooner or later, when you least expect it, there comes a point of no return. A dead-end from which there seems no escape. A moment in time. A moment of Crisis!"

During the long run of *Crisis* there were many memorable episodes. Scripts often placed people in extraordinary situations. Even those with seemingly straight forward script plot lines often had unusual and unexpected twists. In "Saturday, It Rained," an escaped convict terrorizes an old woman in her home, but is she completely defenseless?" "The Payoff" featured a pillar of the community, a priest, taking underworld bribes. "The Silver Egg" a fantasy set in 13th century England, tells the story of a mysterious artifact that hints at interplanetary visitors. "The Survivor" relates the unsettling tale of the sole survivor of Armageddon. The primary character in "Captive Audience," an unemployed actor gets a big chance to audition for a movie producer; but he has to solve a murder to do it! "The Late Comer" focuses on a pair of RAF buddies who encounter a phantom on the moors of England while on their way to a squadron reunion. Screenwriter Jeffrey David Boam's (*Lethal Weapon 2 & 3* and *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*) wrote the radio play, "The Man Who Never Slept," tells the story of a relentless Pinkerton man on the trail of a fiendish killer and employing a dangerous ruse to try to get his man.

Puget Sound radio audiences were regularly treated to wonderful performances by nationally-known and local actors during the multi-year run of *Crisis*. Han Conried set a high standard with the premiere episode, "The Loophole." Francis Xavier Aloysius James Jeremiah Keenan Wynn played an aging ex-con in the "Robin Hood Heist." Jim wrote the scripts for the preceding two episodes specifically to showcase the talents of these actors. Many listeners would swear that Jimmy Stewart appeared in the *Crisis* episodes "The New Leaf," "The Man Who Came Too Close," and "Full House." Actually this was local radio personality Terry McManus doing his Jimmy Stalwart impression of Stewart. Two episodes, "Masks" and "Full House" featured the incredible voice talents of KVI on-the-air personality, Robert O. Smith, doing a myriad of characterizations.

Some of the performers in the early series were staff members of KVI and other radio stations and not professional actors. Several on-the-air radio personalities proved themselves to be quite good actors: McManus, Smith, Jack Morton, Ray Court, Robert E. Lee Hardwick, and Phil Harper. As the series progressed, professional actors appeared much more frequently.

Two of the first local professional actors to come on board were Pat French and Doug Young; both had worked on-the-air during Radio's Golden Age. Pat had worked on Seattle radio as Patricia Soule before meeting Jim French in California and getting married. Pat acted and directed in Seattle stage

productions, did voice-over work on radio and television, and taught drama and voice-over commercials. For many years before retiring in 2011, she was the primary director for Jim French Productions, appeared in over 425 of Jim's radio dramas (including 113 episodes of *Crisis*), and played the role of Murphy on *The Adventures of Harry Nile*. Doug had previously worked on radio in Hollywood. His nearly 150 performances in Jim French audio dramas included starring in the first episode of *The Tower Playhouse*: "BEacon 3699," co-starring as Emile St. Clair in *The Adventures of Dameron*, and appearing in 42 episodes of *Crisis*. Pat and Doug would be joined by Lee Paasch, Arthur Cahn, Ted D'arms, John Gilbert, Michael Morgan Dunne, Dick Arnold, and other Seattle area actors. In addition to being the director, producer, and the primary writer for the series, Jim French also frequently acted (usually uncredited) and functioned as the announcer/narrator.

Sidebar - Memorable Villains and The Actor Behind Them

While Jim French usually cast himself in supporting roles, his considerable acting skills were apparent in two of his infrequent leading roles. In the episode "Desperation Island," which was written by J. R. Van Houton, Jim French played the lead, a thoroughly despicable character named Gene Matthews. In the closing of the episode, Jim explains why he played the role, "Gene Matthews got what was ruddy well coming to him if you ask me. What a rotten sort of person to have to portray. That's why I couldn't bring myself to ask any of our other players to play Gene Matthews and I had to do the job myself."

Over 30 years later, in the Summer of 2008, this fan of Jim French's work remembered his fine portrayal of Gene Matthews and suggested that Jim should play one of the most evil villains in the Conan Doyle Canon in the then upcoming production of the episode of *The Classic Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* whose title bears the name of the man who the sleuth called, "The worst man in London:" Charles Augustus Milverton. The primary actors in the series, John Patrick Lowrie (Holmes) and Lawrence Albert (Dr. Watson) convinced French that he was right for the role. Jim played the Milverton role with a wonderful malevolence.

CREW:

Creator: Jim French.

Writers: Jim French wrote or adapted scripts for 131 *Crisis* episodes. Tony Aries, Jeffrey David Boam, Neil Ries, J. R. Van Houton, Jack MacDonald, Michael David McGuire, and others contributed the remaining scripts.

Directors: Jim French, Tony Aries, and Pat French.

Producer: Jim French.

Music:

Sound Effects: Jim French, Jeff Thompson, Scott Bennett, Stew Conway, Bruce Roggeron, Warren Berry, and others.

Announcers/

Narrators: Jim French, Robert O. Smith, and Jack Spencer.

Engineer: Kearney Barton, Lou Lathrop, and others.

CAST:

Guest Stars:

John Amendola, Shirley Aries, Richard Arnold, Norm Bobrow, Arthur (Art) Cahn, Albert (Al) Clarke, Mark Adler Corbell, Ray Court, Ted D'arms, Michael Morgan-Dunne, Jim French, Pat French, Don George, Ben Gorlick, Jay Green, Phil Harper, Paul Herlinger, Stephen Hilliard, John Judkins, Tony Karloff, Jim Kelly, Duncan MacClean, Merrill Mael, Terry McManus, Russell (Russ) Mohney, Jack Morton, Loy Norrix, Lee Paasch, Ross Perry, Neil Reese, Mike Reynolds, John Roeder, Rosemary Roraback, Robert O. Smith, Dick Stokke, Bill Swain, John (Johnny) Walker, Mark Wayne, Brooks Woolley, Douglas (Doug) Young, and many others.

While mainly Seattle-area talent were employed on *Crisis*, several nationally-known performers appeared, including: John Astin, Patricia Barry, Eddie Bracken, Hans Conried, Bob Crane, Patty Duke, Ruta Lee, Guy Madison, Roddy McDowall, Tom Smothers, and Keenan Wynn. These actors appeared in episodes that Jim French specifically wrote for them.

EPISODE NOTES:

Double-Length Episodes:

Most Jim French *Crisis* shows were approximately a half-hour in length with commercials. The following *Crisis* episodes are double-length, approximately 55 minutes long with commercials:

"Clockwork"

"Panzerlied"

"West For My Health"

Multi-Part Episode:

Crisis

"Sins Of The Father" is comprised of two single-length shows.

Special Christmas Show

In mid-December, 1974, Jim French recorded his adaptation of Charles Dickens "A Christmas Carol" in front of an audience at The Cirque Dinner Theatre. "A Christmas Carol" was the first of well over 300 Jim French radio shows that would be recorded with an audience present. While technically not part of the *Crisis* series, this hour-long audio drama aired over KVI on Christmas Eve and Christmas day, 1974 and 1975 as part of *The KVI Theatre of the Mind* programming.

Crisis/The Adventures Of Harry Nile:

Four episodes of what would later become *The Adventures Of Harry Nile* series: "West For My Health," "Seattle Blues," "The Neptune Trading

Company," and "Malibu" were first aired as part of the *Crisis* series. When Jim French decided to make a *Harry Nile* series, these shows were aired again in late 1977 as the first four episodes of *The Adventures Of Harry Nile*.

Re-Use of Previously Aired Script:

"Concerto For Charlie"

There are 2 different versions of this show.

"Concerto For Charlie" – 1st Version.

Initial airing on KIRO – 1965.

This first version was broadcast on KIRO sometime in early 1965 and was about 30 minutes long.

"Concerto For Charlie" – 2nd Version.

Initial airing on KVI – 08/21/1975.

This version of "Concerto For Charlie" was a new production and broadcast as part of the *Crisis* series on KVI. It is approximately 22 minutes in length without commercials.

This *Crisis* version first aired on *Imagination Theatre* on 03/23/1997.

New Productions of Previously Aired Script:

"Clockwork"

There are 2 different versions of this show.

"Clockwork" – 1st Version.

KVI – 05/13/1976.

The first production of this show was on the *Crisis* series. This version will not be aired again.

"Clockwork" – 2nd Version.

Initial airing on *Imagination Theatre* – 01/28/2001.

The second production of this show aired as part of the *Imagination Theatre* series and featured a new cast and an extensively rewritten script by Jim French and Larry Albert with character and plot line changes and a different ending.

Shows Pulled From Circulation:

From information supplied by Larry Albert of Jim French Productions, the following shows have been pulled from circulation:

"You Ain't Heard Nothing Yet"

"The Custom Job"

"The Seer Of Sutter St."

"Rover"

Re-Airing of Episodes:

Over the years, reruns of *Crisis* episodes have been a staple on the various umbrella series of Jim French shows originating out of the Seattle area on KVI, KIRO, KNWX, and KIXI. All but 10 of the 152 episodes have aired at least once on the syndicated *Imagination Theatre*. Most of these airings of *Crisis* episodes

occurred during the first ten years of *Imagination Theatre's* run (1996-2006).

The first re-runs of *Crisis* episodes on KVI started in Fall, 1974 for a six week period. In April, 1975, five specially selected episodes of the series were re-run. During the mid-Spring through early Fall, 1977 programming for *The KVI Theater Of The Mind* was often pre-empted for Seattle Mariners baseball games. During this time frame, when not pre-empted for baseball, earlier *Crisis* episodes were re-aired.

When the production of new *Crisis* episodes ceased with the airing of "Mama Has a Gift" on December 29, 1977, re-runs of earlier episodes of the series continued to be heard on Thursday nights over KVI through early June, 1978.

Crisis Descendants: The Stand-Alone Shows

While the production of *Crisis* ended in 1977, the idea behind the series still survives. When Jim French shows returned to the Seattle airwaves on *The KIRO Mystery Playhouse* in the early 1990's, new scripts were regularly aired that were not part of a specific continuing series such as *The Adventures of Harry Nile*. Over 180 of these scripts have been aired. Production of these non-series specific, "stand-alone" shows continues on *Imagination Theatre* and they are listed in two broadcast logs I have compiled

Jim French Shows (Seattle)

Imagination Theatre

These broadcast logs are in Adobe Acrobat PDF format and can be found at:

<http://www.old-time.com/otrlogs2/index.html>

LOG:

Collector-assigned and alternate titles that have surfaced are shown in square brackets [] in a separate line immediately following the primary show title entry.

All dates are the date of original airing on Seattle radio. Dates of re-run airings are not listed.

Date	Title
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Thursdays – 7:00 PM	
11/22/1973	The Loophole
11/29/1973	Along A Dark Road
12/06/1973	Nightmare
12/13/1973	A Semi-Private Room
12/20/1973	The Perfect Man
12/27/1973	The New Leaf
	[A New Leaf]
01/03/1974	Those Against Hayden
01/10/1974	Ask Me Any Question
01/17/1974	The Last of Simeon Buell

01/24/1974	Josephine
01/31/1974	The Exiles
02/07/1974	Foursome
02/14/1974	Habitat
02/21/1974	Saturday, It Rained
02/28/1974	Shortcut
03/07/1974	The Payoff
03/14/1974	The Custom Job
03/21/1974	A Message from the Other Side
03/28/1974	License To Kill
04/04/1974	The Last Resort
04/11/1974	The Thing In The Woods
04/18/1974	Amazon House
04/25/1974	The Vilkmán Theory
05/02/1974	The Appearance Of Evil
05/09/1974	Uncle John's Trouble
05/16/1974	Surgery At Gunpoint
05/23/1974	A Death On East 89th
	[A Death On E. 89th]
	[Death On East 89th]
05/30/1974	The Door of Lotim
06/06/1974	Boomerang
06/13/1974	The Scent of Lilacs
06/20/1974	The Face Is Familiar
06/27/1974	Happy Birthday
07/04/1974	No Traveler Returns
07/11/1974	The Summer House
07/18/1974	A Good Suit of Clothes
07/25/1974	The Squeeze
08/01/1974	Bellamy Bridge
08/08/1974	Comedy in Three Acts
08/15/1974	Desperate
08/22/1974	A Warm Night In Bunche County
	[A Warm Night In Bunch County]
08/29/1974	Night Rider
	[Nightrider]
09/05/1974	Game of Chance
09/12/1974	First Hand Experience
09/19/1974	The Sins Of The Fathers Part 1
09/26/1974	The Sins Of The Fathers Part 2
10/03/1974	The Dear Departed
	[The Departed]
10/10/1974	Luck
10/17/1974	Pay As You Exit
10/24/1974	The Lagoon
12/12/1974	Love, Murder, and April Showers

12/19/1974	Corpus Delicti
12/26/1974	Building B-2000
01/02/1975	The Robin Hood Heist
01/09/1975	Incident at Moondown
01/16/1975	The Appointment
01/23/1975	You're A Long Time Dead
01/30/1975	Murder Among Nice People
02/06/1975	The Passenger
02/13/1975	The Seer of Sutter Street [The Seer of Sutter St.]
03/06/1975	The Lesser of Two Evils [The Lessor of Two Evils]
03/13/1975	The Gypsy
03/20/1975	The Man Who Could Fly
03/27/1975	Cliffhanger [Cliff Hanger]
04/03/1975	Panzerlied
04/17/1975	The Guest in Room 13
04/24/1975	The Bus To Buena Vista
05/01/1975	Star Light, Star Bright
05/08/1975	Latent Image
05/15/1975	Night Tapes
05/22/1975	Welcome to Utopia
05/29/1975	Trial At Wolftrap [Trial at Wolf Trap]
06/05/1975	The Haunted Plumbing of Harold Poole
06/12/1975	There's Something I Didn't Tell You
06/26/1975	Desperation Island
07/03/1975	The Beasts
07/10/1975	Broadcast from Big Falls
07/24/1975	The Fall Of The Year [Fall Of The Year]
08/07/1975	Gravtrak 449 [Gravtttrak 449]
08/21/1975	Concerto for Charlie
08/28/1975	Anything the Mind Can Conceive
09/04/1975	The Presence
09/25/1975	The Tweed Cap
10/02/1975	The Unmasking
10/23/1975	Mayday Signal
10/30/1975	My Name Is Noah Singlet & I'm Dead [My Name Is Noah Singleton And I'm Dead]
11/06/1975	Jinni: With a J
11/20/1975	King, Queen, Jack
11/27/1975	Strange Reunion
12/04/1975	The Outlaw at Emmett's Caf�

	[Outlaw at Emmett's Café]
12/11/1975	Siren In The Night
12/25/1975	The Spirit of Christmas
01/01/1976	West For My Health
01/08/1976	Hard Evidence
01/15/1976	Scorpio Rising
01/22/1976	The Risk
02/12/1976	And Presumed Dead
02/19/1976	What Makes Dogs Howl?
02/26/1976	Masks
03/04/1976	The Couple Next Door
03/11/1976	Flight Plan
03/18/1976	The Man Who Never Slept
	[The Man Who Never Sleeps]
03/25/1976	The Best Thing For Sheila
04/01/1976	The Survivor
05/13/1976	Clockwork
05/20/1976	League of the Lost
05/27/1976	Grandpa and the Queen of Venus
	[Grampa and the Queen of Venus]
06/03/1976	Dark in the Street
06/17/1976	Homecoming
09/09/1976	Something in the Mind
09/16/1976	The Clean Up Man
	[The Cleanup Man]
	[The Clean-up Man]
09/23/1976	Once Upon a Time
09/30/1976	The Silver Egg
10/07/1976	The Miller
10/14/1976	You Ain't Heard Nothing Yet
10/21/1976	The Executioner
10/28/1976	Birthright
11/11/1976	A Blade Of Grass
11/18/1976	The Art of Getting Even
12/02/1976	Seattle Blues
12/09/1976	The Voice of Alec Bellamy
12/16/1976	Rover
12/30/1976	The Last Thing Laura Said
01/06/1977	Home Is The Hunter
01/13/1977	The Man Who Came Too Close
01/20/1977	Ginza Express
01/27/1977	The Gadget
02/03/1977	The Possession of Victor Fraley
02/10/1977	The Flaw
02/17/1977	The Neptune Trading Company
02/24/1977	Scene Of The Crime

03/03/1977	The Captain
03/10/1977	Full House
03/17/1977	Flanagan's Legacy
03/24/1977	The Franklin Phantom
03/31/1977	Technical and Educational Development
04/14/1977	The Bottom Line
04/21/1977	Reunion
04/28/1977	The Pigeon
05/19/1977	Malibu
07/07/1977	A Betting Man
10/06/1977	The Doomsday Clock
10/13/1977	Captive Audience
10/20/1977	A Gift From Stacy
10/27/1977	Ulterior Motive
11/03/1977	Side Trip
11/10/1977	The Late Comer [The Latecomer]
11/17/1977	Used Ta Go With a Girl Like That [I Used Ta Go With a Girl Like That]
11/24/1977	I Saw What You Did
12/01/1977	Pleasantville
12/08/1977	Departure
12/22/1977	McCumber's Miracle Tonic [Macumber's Miracle Tonic]
12/29/1977	Mama Has a Gift

AVAILABILITY:

As of 03/31/2017 Shows can no longer be purchased through Jim French Productions.

THESE SHOWS ARE STILL PROTECTED UNDER COPYRIGHT LAW and should be purchased only from authorized dealers.

TOPICS ENTERTAINMENT

Act One Audio CD Sets:

In 2003 four sets of 3 Compact Discs were released for sale by Topics Entertainment. Each set contained a mixture of 9 *Crisis* and Stand-Alone episodes. The sets were sold as:

- Act One Audio Mysteries
- Act One Audio Sci-Fi
- Act One Audio Suspense
- Act One Audio Thrillers

These compact disc sets are no longer widely available.

JIM FRENCH PRODUCTIONS:

Weekly *Imagination Theatre* Compact Discs

The weekly *Imagination Theatre* shows were distributed to affiliate radio stations via Compact Disc. These CDs could also be purchased by the general public. Each CD contained the original show in the same high broadcast quality as delivered to affiliate radio stations.

Of the 152 episodes of *Crisis*, 142 episodes aired on *Imagination Theatre*. These weekly shows CDs are no longer available.

MP3 Downloads.

Roughly a third of the individual episodes of this series were available for download in MP3 format. All shows were without commercials.

SOURCES CONSULTED:

Radio Broadcasts:

Various tapes and CDs from Jim French Productions, Countertop Video, and Topics Entertainment.

Imagination Theatre Compact Discs: 1996 - 2017.

Program Listings:

Imagination Theatre Episode Guides 1996 - 2006.

Imagination Theatre program information supplied by Jim French Productions 2002 - 2017.

Correspondence and Conversations:

Correspondence and Conversations with Jim French and Larry Albert of Jim French Productions, 1998 - 2017.

Information supplied by Larry Albert 2001 - 2017.

Correspondence with Arlene Osborne 2000 - 2002.

Interviews:

Interviews with Jim French and Phil Harper conducted by Stewart Wright in 1998.

Radio Enthusiasts of Puget Sound interviews of Jim French conducted in 1991 and 1996.

Books:

Schneider, John F. *Seattle Radio*. Charleston, SC, Arcadia Publishing, 2013.

Newspapers and Periodicals:

Radio Recall

(The Journal of The Metro Washington Old-Time Radio Club)

The End of An Era by Stewart Wright, April, 2017.

Seattle Post-Intelligencer: Various Dates 1987 to 2009.

Seattle Times: Various Dates 1952 - 1978 and 1991 - 2000.

Series Broadcast Logs:

Series Broadcast logs compiled by Stewart Wright:

Jim French Shows (Seattle)

The Tower Playhouse,

The Adventures of Dameron,

The Adventures of Harry Nile,

The Classic Adventures of Sherlock Holmes,

The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes,

The Hilary Caine Mysteries,

Raffles, the Gentleman Thief,

The Strangeseeker aka Kincaid the Strangeseeker,

Imagination Theatre

and

Kerides, The Thinker

These broadcast logs are in Adobe Acrobat PDF format and can be found at:

<http://www.old-time.com/otrlogs2/index.html>

Internet:

Various Web pages at Jim French Productions website:

Web site is no longer active.

WSU Media Materials Services

<http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu>