



The Experts

The authority for the story of the real Mary comes from the work of numerous Biblical historians, archaeologists and other academics.

The key contributors to BBC One's *The Virgin Mary* include:

Dr Tal Ilan PhD

A Jewish historian from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, specialising in the lives of Jewish women in Greco-Roman Palestine.

Dr Miriam Peskowitz

Distinguished Visiting Professor in the Department of History at Temple University, Philadelphia, specialising in the lives of Jewish women across the Roman Empire.

Prof James Charlesworth

Professor of New Testament Language and Literature at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Dr Mark Goodacre

A Biblical historian from the University of Birmingham, specialising in the New Testament.

Dr Chris Maunder

A theologian from York St John College at the University of Leeds.

Dr Helen Bond

A Biblical historian, lecturing in New Testament Studies at Edinburgh University.



Biographies

Sue Johnston

Sue Johnston admits to having a very clear image of who she thought Mary was. “It was the one we all have – of the mother-and-child Nativity scene, with Mary in her blue gown, looking very serene,” she says. Growing up in Liverpool, she went to church three times a day every Sunday. More recently, she played the Virgin Mary in *The Mysteries* at the Royal National Theatre in London.

Sue has had a wide-ranging career on screen and stage. After attending drama school in London, she acted in repertory theatre until her mid-thirties, when she landed the role of Sheila Grant in *Brookside*. Playing the part for eight years, she became a household name.

Since leaving *Brookside*, Sue has established herself as one of Britain’s leading television actresses. She is perhaps best known as the chain-smoking Barbara Royle in the cult BBC comedy *The Royle Family*, for which she has won two British Comedy Awards and been nominated for a Bafta. Her most recent screen incarnation sees her as the psychological profiler Grace Foley in BBC One’s crime drama, *Waking The Dead*.

Sue’s film work includes appearances in *Face* with Robert Carlyle and *Brassed Off* alongside Pete Postlethwaite.

David McNab Producer/Director

David McNab is an award-winning producer and documentary/drama director.

David has produced two of the BBC’s most high-profile science series of recent years: *The Planets* (1999) and *Future Fantastic* (1996). While very different in terms of style and substance, both

series were acclaimed for their use of stunning visual effects and their popular appeal.

More recently, David’s documentary for Her Majesty The Queen’s Golden Jubilee week, *A Queen’s Kingdom*, charted the changes that have taken place in Britain over the last 50 years, while *Hunt For The Death Star – Equinox* (Channel 4, 2001) received great critical acclaim. David also directed the short film *Lily And The Learning Seed*, a special-effects fantasy that was one of the highlights of London’s Millennium Dome Experience.

Jean-Claude Bragard Executive Producer

Jean-Claude Bragard has been at the BBC for almost 10 years and his recent credits include *Son Of God* (2001), *Arthur – King Of The Britons* (2002) and *Moses* (2002).

He began his career at LWT in 1980, working on current affairs and religious programmes. In 1993, he joined the BBC to make *Kicking & Screaming – A History Of Football*, and later worked on *Panorama*. Other career highlights include *Trouble With Boys*, *Canterbury* (with Nigel Hawthorne) and *Secrets Of The Pyramids*.

Jean-Claude studied Politics at Warwick University and Balliol College, Oxford.