

= Steven Moffat =

Steven William Moffat , OBE ( / ˈstiːvən ˈmɒfət / , born 18 November 1961 ) is a Scottish television writer and producer , known for his work as showrunner , writer and producer of the British television series Doctor Who and Sherlock .

Moffat 's first television work was the teen drama series Press Gang . His first sitcom , Joking Apart , was inspired by the breakdown of his first marriage ; conversely , his later sitcom Coupling was based upon the development of his relationship with television producer Sue Vertue . In between the two relationship @-@ centred shows , he wrote Chalk , a sitcom set in a comprehensive school inspired by his own experience as an English teacher .

A lifelong fan of Doctor Who , Moffat 's first work on the series was the script of the parody episode The Curse of Fatal Death in 1999 . He then wrote six episodes of the revived series which began in 2005 ( " The Empty Child " , " The Doctor Dances " , " The Girl in the Fireplace " , " Blink " , " Silence in the Library " , and " Forest of the Dead " ) . In 2010 he replaced Russell T Davies as showrunner , lead writer and executive producer . The same year , he created Sherlock along with Mark Gatiss . In January 2016 , it was announced that Moffat would step down from being showrunner of Doctor Who after the spring 2017 season finale , and that Broadchurch creator Chris Chibnall would take over . He also co @-@ wrote Steven Spielberg 's The Adventures of Tintin : The Secret of the Unicorn in 2011 .

Moffat has won several awards , mainly for Doctor Who and Sherlock , including an Emmy Award , five BAFTA Awards and four Hugo Awards .

= = Early life and Press Gang = =

Moffat was born in Paisley , Scotland , where he attended Camphill High School . He studied at the University of Glasgow , where he was involved with the student television station , GUST ( Glasgow University Student Television ) . After gaining an MA degree in English from Glasgow , he worked as a teacher for three and a half years at Cowdenknowes High School , Greenock . In the 1980s he wrote a play entitled War Zones ( performed at the 1985 Glasgow Mayfest and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe ) and a musical called Knifer . His father , Bill Moffat , was a head teacher at Thorn Primary School in Johnstone , Renfrewshire ; when the school was used for Harry Secombe 's Highway in the late 1980s , he mentioned to the producers that he had an idea for a television series about a school newspaper . The producers asked for a sample script , to which Bill Moffat agreed on condition his son write it . Producer Sandra Hastie said that it was " the best ever first script " that she had read .

The resulting series was titled Press Gang , starring Julia Sawalha and Dexter Fletcher , and ran for five series on ITV between 1989 and 1993 , with Moffat writing all forty @-@ three episodes . The programme won a BAFTA award in its second series .

During production of the second series of Press Gang , Moffat was experiencing an unhappy personal life as a result of the break @-@ up of his first marriage . The producer was secretly phoning his friends at home to check on his state . His wife 's new lover was represented in the episode " The Big Finish ? " by the character Brian Magboy ( Simon Schatzberger ) , a name inspired by Brian : Maggie 's boy . Moffat brought in the character so that all sorts of unfortunate things would happen to him , such as having a typewriter dropped on his foot .

= = Joking Apart = =

By 1990 , Moffat had written two series of Press Gang , but the programme 's high cost along with organisational changes at backers Central Independent Television cast its future in doubt . As Moffat wondered what to do next and worried about his future employment , Bob Spiers , Press Gang 's primary director , suggested that he meet with producer Andre Ptaszynski to discuss writing a sitcom . Inspired by his experience working in education , Moffat 's initial proposal was a programme similar to what would become Chalk , a sitcom set in a school that eventually aired in

1997 . During the pitch meeting at the Groucho Club , Ptaszynski realised that Moffat was talking passionately about his impending divorce and suggested that he write about that instead of a school sitcom . Taking Ptaszynski 's advice , Moffat 's new idea was about " a sitcom writer whose wife leaves him " . Moffat wrote two series of Joking Apart , which was directed by Bob Spiers , and starred Robert Bathurst and Fiona Gillies . The show won the Bronze Rose of Montreux and was entered for the Emmys . In an interview with Richard Herring , Moffat says that " The sit @-@ com actually lasted slightly longer than my marriage . " Fiona Gillies , who played the adulteress Becky , says that she was aware that some of her dialogue was based on what had been said to Moffat during his own separation . Moffat recycled his own dialogue : when he had learned that his wife 's lover was a fan of Press Gang , he replied , " Well , did he have to fuck my wife ? Most people just write in ! " . The line , with the expletive replaced by " shagged " , was used in the first episode of Joking Apart .

Speaking about the autobiographical elements of the show , the writer jokes that he has to remember that his wife didn 't leave him for an estate agent ; his wife was an estate agent . Conversely , his later sitcom Coupling was based on his relationship with his second wife , TV producer Sue Vertue . Moffat reused the surname " Taylor " , which is Mark 's surname in Joking Apart , for Jack Davenport 's character Steve in Coupling .

He wrote three episodes of Murder Most Horrid , an anthology series of comedic tales starring Dawn French . The first ( " Overkill " , directed by Bob Spiers ) was identified by the BBC as a " highlight " of the series . His other two episodes were " Dying Live " ( dir . Dewi Humphreys ) and " Elvis , Jesus and Zack " ( dir . Tony Dow ) .

= = Chalk and Coupling = =

Between marriages , Moffat claims that he " shagged [ his ] way round television studios like a mechanical digger . " According to an interview with The New York Times , Moffat met television producer Sue Vertue at the Edinburgh Television Festival in 1996 . Vertue had been working for Tiger Aspect , a production company run by Peter Bennett @-@ Jones . Bennett @-@ Jones and his friend and former colleague Andre Ptaszynski , who had worked with Moffat on Joking Apart , told Moffat and Vertue that each fancied the other . A relationship blossomed and they left their respective production companies to join Hartswood Films , run by Beryl Vertue , Sue 's mother . The couple have two children together : Joshua and Louis .

Before Moffat left Pola Jones for Hartswood , Ptaszynski produced Chalk , the series that the writer had pitched to him at the beginning of the decade . Set in a comprehensive school and starring David Bamber as manic deputy head Eric Slatt and Nicola Walker as Suzy Travis , the show was based on Moffat 's three years as an English teacher . The studio audience responded so positively to the first series when it was taped that the BBC commissioned a second series before the first had aired . However , it was met less enthusiastically by critics upon transmission in February 1997 , who had taken exception to the BBC 's publicity department comparing the show to the highly respected Fawlty Towers . In an interview in the early 2000s , Moffat refuses to even name the series , joking that he might get attacked in the street .

After production wrapped on Chalk in 1997 , Moffat announced to the cast that he was marrying Vertue . When she eventually asked him for a sitcom , he decided to base it around the evolution of their own relationship . Coupling was first broadcast on BBC2 in 2000 , with his wife producing for Hartswood Films . The series proved to be highly successful , running until 2004 and producing four series and twenty @-@ eight episodes , all written by Moffat . He also wrote the original , unbroadcast pilot episode for the U.S. version , also titled Coupling , although this was less successful and was cancelled after four episodes on the NBC network . Moffat has blamed its failure on an unprecedented level of network interference .

= = Jekyll , Tintin , and Sherlock = =

He wrote the Hartswood Films drama series Jekyll , a modern version of The Strange Case of Dr

Jekyll and Mr Hyde , which aired on BBC One in June and July 2007 . In an interview with The Age , James Nesbitt , who played the eponymous character , called Moffat " an eccentric , shy fellow " , while commending his writing as " inventive and dark and funny " .

In June 2007 Moffat told The Stage that he was working on a new sitcom . Provisionally titled Adam and Eve , it concerned a boss and his personal assistant , who are long @-@ term friends but never get together . In October 2007 it was reported that Moffat would be scripting a trilogy of The Adventures of Tintin : The Secret of the Unicorn films for directors Steven Spielberg and Peter Jackson . According to The Times newspaper , Moffat had to be " love bombed " by Spielberg into accepting the offer to write the films , with the director promising to shield him from studio interference with his writing . He had intended to complete work on the whole trilogy before resuming work on Doctor Who , but the intervening WGA strike meant he could submit a finished script for the first film only . In July 2008 , Moffat was quoted by the Daily Mail as saying : " I could not work on the second Tintin film and work on Doctor Who . So I chose Doctor Who . " Moffat says that Spielberg was " lovely " about his decision . The script was completed by Edgar Wright and Joe Cornish , with a part of Moffat 's script used in the film .

Moffat remains a writer for Hartwood Films even after his appointment as show @-@ runner for Doctor Who . During their journeys from London to Cardiff for Doctor Who , Moffat and Mark Gatiss conceived a contemporary update of Sherlock Holmes , called Sherlock . Benedict Cumberbatch was cast as Holmes , with Martin Freeman as Dr Watson . A 60 @-@ minute pilot , written by Moffat , was filmed in January 2009 . The pilot was not broadcast , but three 90 @-@ minute episodes were commissioned . Moffat wrote the first of these , " A Study in Pink " , which was broadcast on 25 July 2010 on BBC One and BBC HD . A second series was broadcast in January 2012 , for which Moffat wrote the episode " A Scandal in Belgravia " , with a third following in January 2014 .

= = Doctor Who = =

Moffat has been a fan of Doctor Who since childhood . In 1995 , he contributed a segment to Paul Cornell 's Virgin New Adventures novel Human Nature . His first solo Doctor Who work was a short story , " Continuity Errors " , published in the 1996 Virgin Books anthology Decalog 3 : Consequences . In 1999 he scripted the parody Doctor Who and the Curse of Fatal Death , which aired as part of Comic Relief 's Red Nose Day charity telethon . The co @-@ producer for that year 's Comic Relief telethon was Moffat 's then @-@ new wife , Sue Vertue .

In 2004 , Moffat was signed to write for the revival of Doctor Who . He became known , according to The Guardian , for writing " the clever , darker episodes " of the first four series of the show . His contribution for the 2005 series was the two @-@ part story " The Empty Child " / " The Doctor Dances " . In the DVD audio commentary he says that he waited forty years to see his name appear on top of that theme music . He wrote an episode for each of the two following series : " The Girl in the Fireplace " in the 2006 series and " Blink " in the 2007 series . Moffat won the Hugo Award for Best Dramatic Presentation , Short Form three years in a row for his contributions . " The Girl in the Fireplace " and " Blink " were both nominated for Nebula Awards . " Blink " also gained him the BAFTA Craft Award for Best Writer , and a BAFTA Cymru Award for Best Screenwriter . In the Doctor Who Magazine reader poll for the 2007 series , Moffat was voted as best writer and " Blink " as the best story . He also wrote the 2007 Children in Need " special scene " " Time Crash " .

He wrote a two @-@ part story for series four in 2008 , titled " Silence in the Library " / " Forest of the Dead " , making Moffat and series executive producer Russell T Davies the only writers to have contributed scripts to the first four series of the revived show . In March 2008 , Davies said that he often rewrote scripts from other writers , but didn 't " touch a word " of Moffat 's episodes . Moffat 's script for series four secured him his fourth consecutive Hugo Awards nomination , though it did not win .

The BBC announced in May 2008 that Moffat would be taking over from Russell T Davies as head writer and executive producer for the revived show 's fifth series , to be broadcast in 2010 , although Davies had initiated discussions with Moffat regarding this as far back as July 2007 . Commenting on his appointment , Moffat said it was " the proper duty of every British subject to come to the aid of

the TARDIS " . Production on Moffat 's time in charge of the programme began in July 2009 . As executive producer and head writer , he was significantly involved in casting Matt Smith as the Eleventh Doctor . Smith first appeared as the Doctor at the end of Davies and David Tennant 's final episode , the second part of The End of Time , in a short post @-@ regeneration scene that Davies left for Moffat to write himself . Moffat wrote the scene in " about ten minutes " as " a bit of fun banter " for the new Doctor .

In addition to his television episodes , Moffat has also contributed stories to Panini Publishing 's Doctor Who Storybook series , penning the short stories " What I Did on My Christmas Holidays By Sally Sparrow " for the 2006 book ( which later formed the basis of his TV episode " Blink " ) , " Corner of the Eye " for the 2007 volume and " A Letter From the Doctor " which opens the 2009 Storybook .

In June 2015 , Moffat was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire for his services to drama .

= = Writing credits = =

= = Awards and nominations = =