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NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PRESENTS

# BARKSKINS

LIMITED SERIES

PREMIERES TUESDAY 4TH AUGUST 9PM





**National Geographic's new eight-part limited series, *Barkskins*, created by Elwood Reid and based on the bestselling novel of the same name by Annie Proulx, transports viewers to the wild frontier of the late 17th century.**

The gripping drama features a stellar ensemble cast led by **David Thewlis** (*Wonder Woman*) and **Marcia Gay Harden** (*The Newsroom*). *Barkskins* examines the mysterious massacre of settlers in the vast and unforgiving wilds of 1690s New France that threatens to throw the region into all-out war. Likely suspects abound – the English, the Hudson's Bay Company and a band of Kanien'kehá:ka (Iroquois) possibly in league with the English looking to drive the French from the territory – but who or what brought these settlers to such a tragic end? *Barkskins* premieres Tuesday 4th August at 9pm with back-to-back episodes over four weeks.

*Barkskins* is set in Wobik, a small settlement in what is now the Canadian province of Quebec. As the Catholic Church sends Jesuit priests to convert the indigenous people, France sends indentured servants to populate its territory, along with "Filles Du Roi" ("Daughters of the King"), young women to be matched with husbands, start families and help the colonies prosper. This disparate group of outcasts, rogues and innocents must navigate brutal hardships, competing interests and tangled loyalties at the crossroads of civilisation: 1690s New France.

The series tells a thrilling story of exploration, adventure and ambition among dreamers and fighters – some with a utopian vision of the world, others crass and conniving, but all navigating the perils of a treacherous new frontier. As tensions escalate, unlikely alliances are forged, old antagonisms deepen and new families are formed against the seemingly endless natural riches and hidden dangers of the new American continent. *Barkskins'* depiction of the collision between civilisation and commerce is timeless, as is its spirit of adventure, natural wonder and survival of the fittest.

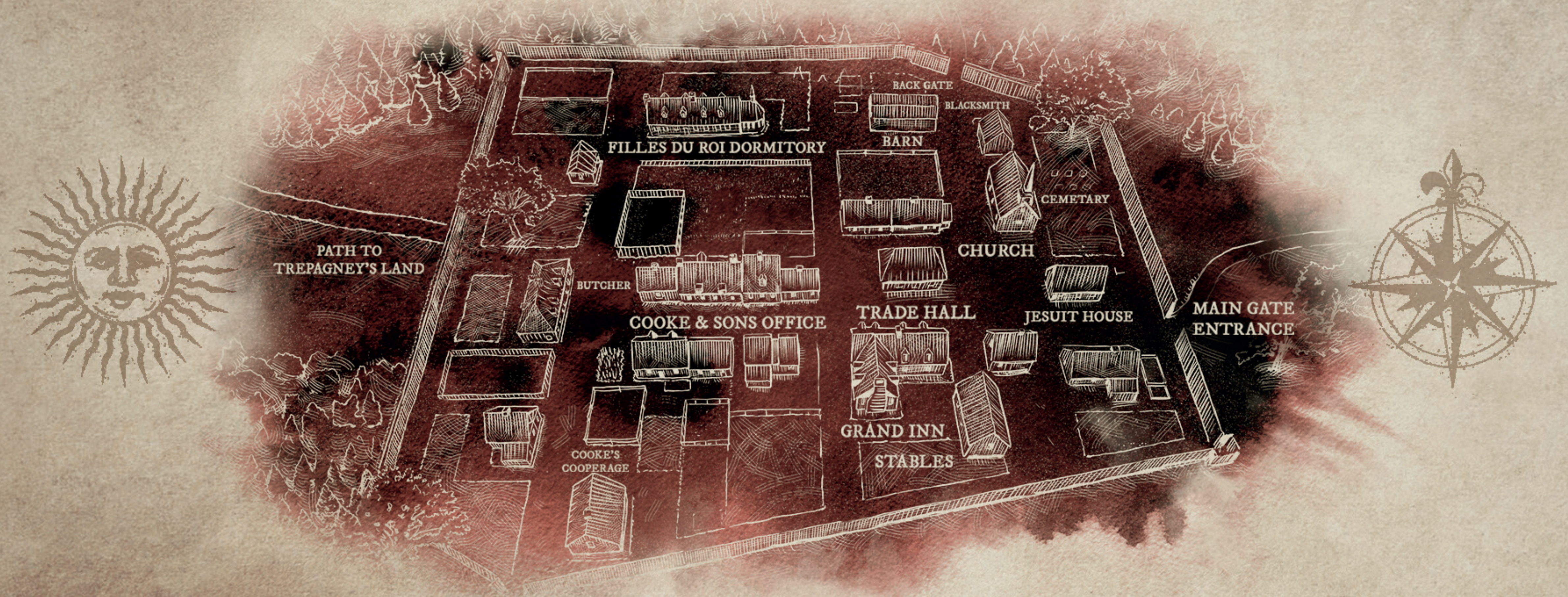
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# MAP OF WOBIK NEW FRANCE



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## EPISODE SYNOPSES

### EPISODE 1

#### **NEW FRANCE (PILOT)**

In the series premiere, a boat arrives in Wobik carrying indentured servants and Filles du Roi. Trepagny travels to town to collect his new men. Melissande and Delphine are among the Filles du Roi who are prepared for their fate by Mother Sabrine. Meanwhile, Hudson's Bay agents Goames and Yvon question the Innkeeper Mathilde about the events surrounding a recent tragedy at the creek.

### EPISODE 2

#### **THE TURTLE KING**

Freshly escaped from indentured servitude, Duquet finds himself at the mercy of the vast and untamed forest of New France. Goames entrusts Mathilde with the protection of the survivors from the creek massacre. Mari enlists Sel's help to discover Trepagny's secret. Gus enlists his son in a ploy to redeem his standing with Cooke. Trepagny receives a letter from Quebec that will change the course of his life.

### EPISODE 3

#### **THE SUGARED PLUM**

As she recovers from her attack, Mathilde restores the Inn to order and gets back to business. Trepagny joins the eligible men of Wobik as they are formally introduced to the Filles du Roi during a night of merriment and matchmaking. Meanwhile, Sel gets to work on Trepagny's plans and Duquet attempts to prove his worth to a new master

### EPISODE 4

#### **THE LAW OF TWO**

The Iroquois come to Wobik to collect their dead. Trepagny leads Melissande back to the Doma while Delphine embarks on her new life with Pierre Gasquet. Goames and Yvon travel to Quebec to seek answers from Captain Wale of the Hudson's Bay Company. Mathilde receives an unsavoury proposition. Sel encounters the other inhabitants of the forests of New France.

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## EPISODE SYNOPSES

### EPISODE 5 **BUTTER MILK**

Mathilde encourages Bouchard to re-establish his authority in Wobik before the arrival of Intendant Nicolas de Fer. Cooke is made to answer for Gus LaFarge's sloppy work at the Inn. Trepagny solicits the help of the Wendats for a dangerous rescue mission. Meanwhile, Mari meets Melissande for the first time and Delphine's fate changes course.

### EPISODE 6 **THE WOBBLE**

Trepagny and Bouchard incite war with the Iroquois when they attempt to rescue Sel and Father Gabriel from their capture. While the fate of the men hang in the balance, Melissande travels to the safety of Wobik's walls and is reunited with an old friend. Cross shows Goames and Yvon how he plans to move on from the Hudson's Bay Company. Cooke's loyalty to his late wife is tested.

### EPISODE 7 **BEEES IN A BOTTLE**

Trepagny is reunited with Melissande who remains wary of the Iroquois threat. Mathilde encourages Delphine to entertain Cooke's interest. Sel and Duquet meet for the first time since Duquet's escape from Trepagny's contract. Cooke is tasked with retrieving the dead priests and Deputy Guy from the site of the battle.

### EPISODE 8 **THE BLACK SUN**

As winter looms, preparation for Trepagny and Melissande's wedding begin. Melissande comes up with a solution for Mari that would allow her to continue living on Trepagny's Doma. In Wobik, Delphine and Cooke explore the potential for a future together over Cooke's famous lavender and honey tea. Meanwhile, Duquet makes a deal with Goames that could spell Wobik's end.





DAVID THEWLIS  
as  
**CLAUDE TREPAGNY**  
*A wealthy landowner with grand visions for New France.*



KANIEHTIIO HORN  
as  
**MARI**  
*a French and Wendat Nation woman who lives with Trepagny and suspects he is planning to marry a French Filles du Roi.*



CHRISTIAN COOKE  
as  
**RENE SEL**  
*An uncynical and morally sound indentured servant to Trepagny.*



JAMES BLOOR  
as  
**CHARLES DUQUET**  
*A scrappy, industrious scoundrel signed to servitude under Trepagny.*



MARCIA GAY HARDEN  
as  
**MATHILDE GEFFARD**  
*An innkeeper and burgeoning power player in the town who knows everyone's secrets.*



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LILY SULLIVAN  
as  
**DELPHINE**  
*An innocent Filles du Roi with a terrible secret.*



TALLULAH HADDON  
as  
**MELISSANDE**  
*A calculating young Filles du Roi who is set to marry a French man and help populate the new land.*



DAVID WILMOT  
as  
**CONSTABLE BOUCHARD**  
*French King Louis XIV's cantankerous local constable who is tasked with keeping law and order in the lawless town of Wobik.*



THOMAS M. WRIGHT  
as  
**ELISHA COOKE**  
*A cutthroat barrel maker, who has schemed his way into New France.*



ANEURIN BARNARD  
as  
**HAMISH GOAMES**  
*A mysterious agent of the rapacious Hudson's Bay Company who has a hidden personal agenda.*



ZAHN MCCLARNON  
as  
**YVON**  
*A Harvard-educated Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) man of the Hudson's Bay Company.*







## DAVID THEWLIS AS MONSIEUR CLAUDE TREPAGNY

Past features range from Charlie's Kaufman's award winning, colourful animation *Anomalisa*, Justin Kurzel's take on *Macbeth* in which Thewlis plays "King Duncan" alongside Michael Fassbender and Marion Cotillard, and Working Title's Kray-twin gangster thriller *Legend* directed by Brian Helgeland, in which Thewlis stars alongside Tom Hardy, Taron Egerton and Emily Browning.

Thewlis's other credits include the BBC adaptation of JB Priestley's classic *An Inspector Calls*, directed by Aisling Walsh for Drama Republic, in which he plays the title role of "The Inspector"; Terrence Malick's *New World*; Roland Emmerich's *Anonymous*; Steven Spielberg's *War Horse*; Luc Besson's *The Lady*; Dean Parisot's *Red 2*; Terry Gilliam's *Zero Theorem*; John Boorman's final feature film of his career, *Queen and Country*; the heart-breaking *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*; Ridley Scott's *Kingdom of Heaven*; Bernardo Bertolucci's *Besieged*, opposite Thandie Newton; and, of course, the Oscar®, BAFTA, SAG and

Golden Globe®-winning Stephen Hawking biopic *The Theory of Everything* with Eddie Redmayne and Felicity Jones.

Thewlis is known to many for playing the enchanting "Remus Lupin" in the *Harry Potter* franchise. Other unforgettable roles include his award winning performance as rambling street philosopher "Johnny" in Mike Leigh's *Naked* and the video artist "Knox Harrington" in the highly acclaimed cult hit *The Big Lebowski*.

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## MARCIA GAY HARDEN AS MATHILDE

Marcia Gay Harden won the Academy Award® in 2001 for her stunning portrayal of Lee Krasner opposite Ed Harris in the feature film *Pollock*, about pioneer abstract expressionist painter Jackson Pollock and his artist wife. The film re-teamed her with Harris, with whom she had performed on stage in the New York Shakespeare Festival premiere production of Sam Shephard's *Simpatico*. In addition to the Oscar®, Harden won the New York Film Critics Award for Best Supporting Actress and was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award.

Harden also stars in director Clint Eastwood's critically hailed, Oscar® winning *Mystic River*, alongside a stellar ensemble cast including Sean Penn, Tim Robbins, Kevin Bacon, Laurence Fishburne, and Laura Linney. She also can be seen in *Mona Lisa Smile*, directed by Mike Newell, with Julia Stiles, Kirsten Dunst, and Maggie Gyllenhaal; and as part of the ensemble cast of John Sayles' *Casa de Los Babys*, along with Daryl Hannah, Lili Taylor, Mary Steenburgen, Rita Moreno, and Maggie Gyllenhaal.

The Coen brothers first discovered Harden, giving her the female lead in their critically acclaimed feature *Miller's Crossing* opposite Albert Finney, Gabriel Byrne, and John Turturro. She moved on to the leads in *Late for Dinner* and *Used People*. Harden's other features include *Space Cowboys*, directed by Clint Eastwood and starring Eastwood, Tommy Lee Jones, Donald Sutherland, and James Garner; *Meet Joe Black*, which starred Brad Pitt and Anthony Hopkins; *Flubber* with Robin Williams; *Desperate Measures* with Andy Garcia and Michael Keaton; *Safe Passage* with Susan Sarandon, Sam Shepard, and Robert Sean Leonard; the acclaimed independent feature *Crush*, which was a hit at the Cannes Film Festival; the blockbuster comedy *The First Wives Club*; and *Gaudi Afternoon*, directed by Susan Seidelman and starring Judy Davis, Juliette Lewis, and Lili Taylor. Harden received the Spirit of Sundance Award for her richly layered work in *The Spitfire Grill*, which also won the festival's Audience Award.

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## CHRISTIAN COOKE AS RENE SEL

Christian Cooke joined the cast of *Witches of East End* in season two as Frederick Beauchamp, the son of Joanna and Freya's twin brother.

Christian began his acting career at the age of 10 when he appeared in a production of *Bedazzled* at the Bingley Arts Centre. His first television appearance was in a commercial for *Birds Eye* beef burgers. His career has progressed from there.

He has guest starred on *Doctors*, *The Royal*, *Casualty* and *George Gently*. He starred on one episode of the BBC's *Robin Hood* as Will Scarlett's younger brother, Luke Scarlett. He also guest starred on the 2008 *Doctor Who* episodes "The Sontaran Stratagem" and "The Poison Sky", playing soldier Ross Jenkins, who dies in the latter episode.

In 2010 Christian played the lead role of Freddie in Ricky Gervais' *Cemetery Junction*. He also starred in the critically acclaimed Channel 4 four-part drama *The Promise*, directed by Peter Kosminsky. He also starred on the 1950s Miami-set drama series *Magic City*.

Film credits include 2013's *Romeo and Juliet* along with Damian Lewis and Stellan Skarsgård, and *Fare*, in which Christian plays the lead role of Dominic, a New Yorker looking for a ride out of the city who is picked up by a mysterious cab driver.



## DAVID WILMOT AS CAPTAIN BOUCHARD

David Wilmot is an award-winning Irish actor, whose theatre credits include his Tony®-nominated Broadway performance as Padraic in *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*. On television he was nominated as Best Actor at the Irish Film and Television Awards for his role in the series *The Clinic*.

His feature film work includes appearances in Jim Sheridan's *The Field*, Neil Jordan's *Michael Collins*, Alan J. Pakula's *The Devil's Own*, Paddy Breathnach's *I Went Down*, John Schlesinger's *The Tale of Sweeney Todd*, John Boorman's *The General*, Peter Howitt's *Laws of Attraction*, *The Guard*, *Shadowdancer*, *Good Vibrations*, *Anna Karenina*, *Calvary*, *Gold* and *'71*.

He was named Best Supporting Actor and nominated as Best New Talent at the 2003 Irish Film & Television Awards for his performance in John Crowley's *Intermission*.

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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**Images are available at:**  
[Image.net](https://www.image.net)

**Previews are available at:**  
[Readytoair.net](https://www.readytoair.net)

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