# Disney+ to premiere drama revisiting the tragic shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes



In a new dramatic portrayal set to premiere on April 30 on Disney+, the tragic shooting of Brazilian electrician Jean Charles de Menezes by London police in 2005 is brought back into public focus. The four-part miniseries, titled "Suspect: The Shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes," explores the fatal incident that occurred in the aftermath of attempted bombings on the London Underground.

Jean Charles de Menezes was fatally shot by two police officers who mistakenly identified him as a suicide bomber. The killing took place a day after failed attacks involving homemade explosives on London’s public transport system — incidents that heightened tension and pressure on security forces in the capital. The earlier bombings of July 7 had resulted in 52 deaths and were still fresh in public memory when de Menezes was shot. His death remains one of the most contentious episodes in the history of the Metropolitan Police.

At the age of 27, de Menezes was living in an apartment building police suspected was harbouring one of the bombing suspects. On the morning he was killed, he was merely on his way to work. Armed officers followed him into a London Underground carriage and fired seven shots at close range. The officers involved testified during an inquest that they genuinely believed de Menezes was one of the perpetrators from the failed bombing attempts.

The miniseries, written by Jeff Pope—known for previous fact-based dramas such as the Laurel and Hardy biopic “Stan & Ollie” and the Irish church abuse story “Philomena”—presents the event as a consequence not only of police mistakes but of bad luck and misinformation. Speaking to The Independent, Pope described the police operation as “poorly planned and poorly executed” and criticised the subsequent “obfuscation, by denial, by evasion” that blocked the family’s pursuit of closure.

The detailed retelling highlights how police surveillance was hampered by errors, including a key surveillance officer missing a clear view due to an unscheduled break. The timing of police action was delayed, allowing de Menezes to reach the train unchallenged through a packed station. According to Pope, the misinformation surrounding the incident—such as claims de Menezes ignored officers’ warnings or behaved suspiciously with bulky clothing—was not a deliberate cover-up but stemmed from confusion and a protective instinct among officers.

The series aims to challenge lingering false narratives that contributed to public misunderstanding about the case. Pope said, “I started to really dig into it … and what I discovered made me angry because it’s not true,” referring to the cumulative myths that had shaped perceptions of the shooting.

The case sparked a protracted legal struggle by de Menezes’ family seeking accountability. While no police officers were criminally charged, the Metropolitan Police was fined for endangering public safety. Civil litigation was settled confidentially in 2009, and in 2016 the European Court of Human Rights upheld the decision not to prosecute officers. Prominent figures involved in managing the investigation, including Cressida Dick—who later became head of the Metropolitan Police—and then-commissioner Ian Blair, were cleared of wrongdoing.

The drama arrives in the context of recent British docudramas addressing social issues through detailed storytelling, joining works like ITV’s “Mr. Bates vs The Post Office” and Netflix’s “Adolescence.” Actor Russell Tovey, who portrays Deputy Assistant Commissioner Brian Paddick in the series, described "Suspect" as “a hard watch and it’s disappointing watch,” noting the absence of a definitive moment of justice. Nonetheless, he emphasised the power of drama to influence public opinion, saying, “A drama in your living room hits home quicker than any government rhetoric, quicker than any op-ed piece. Drama changes the world.”

For the de Menezes family, the series is seen as a means of restoring the humanity of Jean Charles de Menezes beyond the headlines and official statements. Maria de Menezes, his mother, expressed hope that the portrayal would affirm her son’s innocence and counter longstanding doubts. “I want them to see the reality that my boy was innocent,” she said. “I want to believe that from now on things will be different… that the boy was not guilty of anything, that the boy was innocent. They killed an innocent boy.”

By presenting the fatal shooting and its aftermath with renewed scrutiny and empathy, the upcoming series seeks to revisit a deeply painful chapter in London’s recent history and offer a new perspective on a case that continues to provoke debate.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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