# Jeff Pope’s Suspect revisits the tragic shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes



Jeff Pope’s new four-part drama series, Suspect: The Killing of Jean Charles de Menezes, premieres on Disney+ on 30 April, revisiting one of the most tragic and controversial episodes in recent British policing history. The series revisits the fatal shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes, a Brazilian electrician mistakenly identified as a terrorist and killed by Metropolitan Police officers at Stockwell Tube station in London on 22 July 2005, just weeks after the 7/7 bombings.

Fifteen days prior to the shooting, London had suffered coordinated suicide bombings across its public transport network that killed 52 people and injured hundreds, with additional failed bomb attempts occurring just a day before De Menezes’s death. Initial police and public reactions at the time wrongly hailed the shooting as a success against terrorism. However, it was soon revealed that De Menezes was entirely innocent, his killing stemming from a series of flawed operational decisions and misidentifications.

Pope, an acclaimed screenwriter and producer with decades of experience in true crime drama, said in an interview with The Independent that his initial impressions had mirrored public sentiment of the time. He reflected, “I’d completely forgotten about the 21/7 attacks. My memory was that Jean Charles vaulted the barrier, ran down the escalators and behaved in an odd way when challenged, inadvertently bringing it on himself. Of course, none of that’s true.” This realisation came after re-examining the case and speaking with officers and witnesses, revealing a deeply muddled and poorly executed police operation.

The drama explores the events surrounding the tragic shooting, including how De Menezes happened to live at an address connected to a suspect from the failed 21/7 bombing attempts, problematic surveillance practices, and officer miscommunication. Notably, Cressida Dick, then overseeing the surveillance operation and later Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, was reportedly late to an essential briefing that morning, contributing to the confusion that unfolded. Radios malfunctioned on-site, officers arrived late, and there was uncertainty whether firearms officers had a clear shoot-to-kill order or were ordered to challenge him first.

According to Jeff Pope, “The operation was poorly planned and poorly executed. Afterwards, the police did what they do whenever something happens that threatens public trust in them, which is to deny it and get us to look away; say ‘Nothing to see here’ or ‘We’ve already fixed it’.” The Metropolitan Police issued a statement of regret and apology ahead of the series release but have not admitted to specific failings, leaving the De Menezes family’s pursuit of closure unresolved. The family acted as consultants on the series.

The drama takes a multi-perspective approach rather than focusing on a single protagonist. It features portrayals of Jean Charles himself, the would-be 21/7 bombers, a whistleblower from the Independent Police Complaints Commission, armed officers, and senior Metropolitan Police figures including Cressida Dick (played by Emily Mortimer), former Commissioner Sir Ian Blair, and Brian Paddick. Pope emphasises that the series includes only verified facts, piecing together a complex picture from official inquiries, inquests, and interviews.

Jeff Pope’s body of work is notable for its focus on gripping, often grim true crime stories that invite scrutiny of institutional failings and human impact. His previous productions include Appropriate Adult, The Reckoning, and A Confession. Regarding the policing institution, Pope acknowledges their successes—such as swiftly capturing the 21/7 bombers without further loss of life—but critiques systemic problems. “The overwhelming majority of police officers are a force for good,” he said, yet added that the Metropolitan Police “do not suit the world today” where transparency is demanded. He noted progress under new leadership but lamented internal resistance to addressing widespread issues within the force.

Beyond crime dramas, Pope has also produced award-winning films depicting forgiveness and friendship, including Mo and Philomena and Stan and Ollie. His latest work, The Penguin Lessons, a feature film set against Argentina’s brutal military dictatorship, was made with his signature blend of darkness and humanity.

Suspect: The Killing of Jean Charles de Menezes promises a carefully constructed, emotionally potent examination of a controversial moment in London’s post-7/7 terrorism era, blending investigative rigour with dramatic storytelling in a bid to illuminate the complexities and consequences surrounding this historic tragedy.

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

## Bibliography

1. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suspect:\_The\_Shooting\_of\_Jean\_Charles\_de\_Menezes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suspect%3A_The_Shooting_of_Jean_Charles_de_Menezes) - This Wikipedia article provides details about Jeff Pope's new TV series, 'Suspect: The Shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes,' and its premise, highlighting the 2005 killing of Jean Charles de Menezes and its connection to the failed 21/7 bombings.
2. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt28197237/> - IMDb offers additional information about the series 'Suspect: The Shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes,' including its plot and the tragic events surrounding the death of Jean Charles de Menezes.
3. <https://www.rottentomatoes.com/tv/suspect_the_shooting_of_jean_charles_de_menezes/s01> - Rotten Tomatoes provides reviews and ratings for the series, which explores the complexities of the Jean Charles de Menezes case, offering a platform for critical analysis of the drama.
4. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2005_London_bombings> - This article on Wikipedia details the 2005 London bombings and their aftermath, including the failed 21/7 bombing attempts, which set the stage for the mistaken shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes.
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6. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/jean-charles-de-menezes-met-police-shooting-anniversary-london-tube-b2130154.html> - The Independent offers historical insights into the shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes, reflecting on the immediate reactions and the subsequent investigations, aligning with Jeff Pope's reflections on the case.
7. <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/features/jean-charles-de-menezes-jeff-pope-steve-coogan-b2734355.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data