# A trans bar owner turns up in queer icon Suranne Jones' latest adventure, Frauds (five stars in The Guardian!)



Suranne Jones and Jodie Whittaker headline ITV’s six-part heist thriller, Frauds, a series that brings a fresh yet familiar twist to the crime drama genre. The show centres on Bert, portrayed by Jones, a tough, savvy ex-con battling cancer, who is released from a Spanish prison with one last heist in mind—a daring plan to steal and replace Salvador Dalí’s provocative painting, Face of the Great Masturbator, at the Reina Sofia Museum. This audacious plotline, crafted by writer Anne Marie O’Connor in collaboration with Jones, deftly plays with heist and action movie tropes while exploring themes of loyalty, desire, and deception.

Frauds stands out not only for its thrilling narrative but also for its sharp focus on complex female characters navigating a male-dominated world. Jones delivers a blistering performance as Bert, embodying a character who is as fierce as she is playful, often flirting aggressively with her former crime partner Sam, played by Whittaker. Their chemistry—laden with sexual tension and ambiguous pasts—adds depth and nuance to the story. Whittaker’s Sam, aiming to leave criminal life behind, is somewhat less defined by the script but is made memorable by Whittaker’s committed portrayal, particularly in moments when the pair adopt humorous disguises that evoke the irreverent spirit of classic British comedy duos.

The supporting cast enriches this female-led drama with memorable performances that blend charisma and subtlety. Elizabeth Berrington shines as Jackie Diamond, a sharp, somewhat insecure middle-aged magician’s assistant confronting sexism and invisibility, while Talisa García’s role as Miss Take—a trans woman running a drag bingo bar—adds important LGBTQ+ representation, reinforcing the series’ inclusive and contemporary sensibility. Karan Gill brings warmth and charm as Bilal, the earnest yet anxious forger, adding a relatable human element to the high-stakes plot.

Set against the vibrant backdrop of Southern Spain and Madrid, the series benefits from cinematic visuals that elevate the heist’s grandeur. The use of wide-angle shots of iconic locales such as a bullring and a beautifully lit church lends the show an epic feel rare for television thrillers. The production’s investment in location and set pieces is evident, particularly in the climactic sequences, which are executed with impressive scale and energy.

Yet, while Frauds offers moments of brilliance and compelling performances, it is not without flaws. Certain plot points strain plausibility, and the pacing occasionally wavers. Some reviewers note that the script doesn’t always fully flesh out Whittaker’s character, leaving parts of the dynamic between the leads less explored than one might hope. Despite these shortcomings, the series serves as a testament to Jones’s formidable screen presence and creative vision—she not only stars in the series but also produces it through her company, TeamAkers.

Jones’s career, marked by acclaimed stage and television roles in Gentleman Jack, Vigil, and Doctor Foster, underscores the curiosity around her cinematic potential. Her performance in Frauds showcases her range and charisma, combining noirish intensity with moments of childlike joy and irreverence. The series thus becomes a platform that highlights a performer deserving of broader recognition in film, where nuanced, mature roles for women are still in demand, especially those nearing fifty—a demographic often sidelined by mainstream cinema conventions.

Frauds is also significant for its grounded and authentic feminist undertones. It portrays women who are street-smart and unapologetically flawed, challenging societal expectations without resorting to stereotypes. The series defies the glitzy, glamorous heist formula of ensembles like Ocean’s 8, opting instead for a more raw and earthy depiction of female camaraderie and resilience.

Set to air on ITV and STV with streaming on ITVX and STV Player, Frauds marks an ambitious addition to contemporary British television, offering both thrills and thoughtful portrayals of womanhood. While it may not achieve perfection, its vivid characters, intriguing relationships, and atmospheric settings promise an engaging viewing experience that resonates beyond the heist. Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.the-independent.com/arts-entertainment/tv/reviews/frauds-review-suranne-jones-jodie-whittaker-itv-b2839611.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.itv.com/presscentre/media-releases/itv-commissions-heist-drama-frauds-created-suranne-jones-and-anne-marie-oconnor> - ITV has commissioned a six-part heist drama titled 'Frauds', created by Suranne Jones and Anne-Marie O'Connor. The series stars BAFTA and RTS award-winning actresses Suranne Jones and Jodie Whittaker as skilled confidence tricksters who reunite after a decade-long separation. The plot follows Bert (Jones), released from a Spanish prison due to a terminal illness, who seeks to pull off one final art heist, drawing her former partner Sam (Whittaker) back into the world of crime. The drama is set in Southern Spain and will air on ITV and STV, with streaming available on ITVX and STV Player. Filming has recently begun in Spain. ([itv.com](https://www.itv.com/presscentre/media-releases/itv-commissions-heist-drama-frauds-created-suranne-jones-and-anne-marie-oconnor?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.itv.com/presscentre/presscentre/presscentre/presscentre/media-releases/itv-confirms-stellar-supporting-cast-thrilling-heist-drama-frauds-starring-suranne> - ITV has announced the supporting cast for its upcoming heist drama 'Frauds', starring Suranne Jones and Jodie Whittaker. The cast includes Talisa García, Christian Cooke, Elizabeth Berrington, and Karan Gill. The series follows Bert (Jones) and Sam (Whittaker), two former partners in crime reunited after a decade apart. Bert's release from a Spanish prison due to a terminal illness prompts her to plan one final art heist, drawing Sam back into the world of crime. The drama is set in Southern Spain and will air on ITV and STV, with streaming available on ITVX and STV Player. Filming has recently begun in Spain. ([itv.com](https://www.itv.com/presscentre/presscentre/media-releases/itv-confirms-stellar-supporting-cast-thrilling-heist-drama-frauds-starring-suranne?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://rts.org.uk/article/suranne-jones-and-jodie-whittaker-star-itv-heist-drama> - Suranne Jones and Jodie Whittaker are set to star in ITV's six-part heist drama 'Frauds'. The series follows Bert (Jones) and Sam (Whittaker), two former partners in crime reunited after a decade apart. Bert's release from a Spanish prison due to a terminal illness prompts her to plan one final art heist, drawing Sam back into the world of crime. The drama is set in Southern Spain and will air on ITV and STV, with streaming available on ITVX and STV Player. Filming has recently begun in Spain. ([rts.org.uk](https://rts.org.uk/article/suranne-jones-and-jodie-whittaker-star-itv-heist-drama?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.itv.com/presscentre/media-releases/first-look-suranne-jones-and-jodie-whittaker-star-female-fraudsters-itvs-heist-drama> - ITV has released first-look images for its upcoming heist thriller 'Frauds', starring Suranne Jones and Jodie Whittaker. The series follows Bert (Jones) and Sam (Whittaker), two former partners in crime reunited after a decade apart. Bert's release from a Spanish prison due to a terminal illness prompts her to plan one final art heist, drawing Sam back into the world of crime. The drama is set in Southern Spain and will air on ITV1 and ITVX later this year. ([itv.com](https://www.itv.com/presscentre/media-releases/first-look-suranne-jones-and-jodie-whittaker-star-female-fraudsters-itvs-heist-drama?utm_source=openai))