

LOST LATE NIGHT HORROR FOUND

Film is Fabulous! has returned a lost episode of Late Night Horror to BBC Archives. The episode was the first in the renowned series of six to be broadcast in colour. Consequently, the 16mm black and white film that was found has undergone colour recovery.

Film is Fabulous! is a charitable trust run by film collectors, cinema lovers, and vintage television enthusiasts. Its primary objective is to ensure that vulnerable film collections held in the U.K. are preserved when private film collectors, and former industry professionals, pass away. Since 2023, the team have preserved many private film collections.

Film is Fabulous! is not a treasure hunt. However, it's inevitable that missing and rare items, which have been presumed lost for decades, will be found in private collections. Numerous television shows have been recovered. An episode from the classic British horror series was recently discovered by a private film collector, and returned to BBC Archives:

- No Such Thing As A Vampire (Broadcast: 19th April 1968)

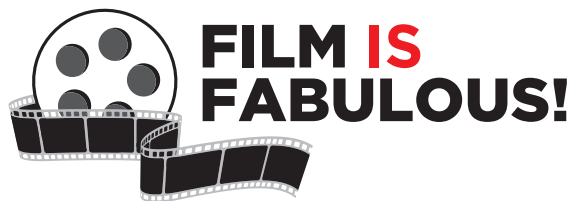
The lost episode was returned via Film is Fabulous! by film collector Darren Payne, a cinema projectionist and engineer. Darren, together with his wife, Ruby, is also the organiser of Grindfest, and a horror aficionado. The 16mm black and white print was found among a pile of film reels at The Regent in Christchurch, Dorset, where it had lain for many years.

Late Night Horror was the first-ever production to be made by the BBC in colour. No Such Thing As A Vampire was written by American author and screenwriter, Richard Matheson. It was directed by stalwart Paddy Russell, a talented artiste who had worked as assistant to Rudolph Cartier on the popular Quatermass serials more than a decade earlier.

The production had a cast of established actors. The ensemble featured Andrew Keir as Dr. Petra Gheria and Meg Wynn Owen as his young wife, Alexis. She had awoken pallid and listless, with two puncture marks on her neck. Peter Blythe played Dr. Michael Vares, friend of the Gheria's, whilst Thomas Gallagher and Cynthia Etherington were servants.

The preparation, cleaning and digital scanning of the black and white 16mm film recording was undertaken by the experts at R3Store Studios in London. However, in a further commitment to the importance of this landmark horror episode, Film is Fabulous! engaged Richard Russell and Charles Norton to restore the original colour, using a unique recovery process developed by the former.

Film is Fabulous! has collaborated with BBC Archives to return this programme for preservation. The colour recovered version of the episode will be screened at The Regent in Christchurch, on Sunday 20th September 2026, as part of the Grindfest event.



NO SUCH THING AS A VAMPIRE

Broadcast: 19th April 1968

Synopsis: Based upon the horror story written by Richard Matheson, it was directed by Paddy Russell. Alexis, the wife of Dr. Cheria, awakes screaming with blood running from two marks down her neck. The servants believe she is the victim of a vampire.



Notes: The B&W telerecording was found by Darren Payne, a cinema projectionist and engineer, and returned to the BBC via Film is Fabulous! who also arranged the scanning and restoration. It was the first-ever horror production to be made by the BBC in colour. Chroma dots are present, and colour recovery has been undertaken by Richard Russell and Charles Norton.

Archival Status: Missing

Code: 16/6ENT/40849

Running Time: 26.24 mins

Type: 16mm B&W Comopt - 970ft (Ilford Safety Sock)

Film Condition: Generally GOOD with light to medium wear. However, there are projection scratches which have damaged the emulsion in two scenes. The print has a BBC leader and countdown. The opening titles and end credits are present. Overall, this is a good print.