

LONDON

REBECCA HURLEY ON FILMING AT BMA HOUSE

A Grade II listed Sir Edwin Lutyens building in the heart of Bloomsbury, BMA House is perhaps best known as the home of the British Medical Association. But behind its grand façade, the building has taken on many different roles over the years – from corporate events and industry gatherings to photography and filming, with its distinctive architecture providing a backdrop for stories on screen. Its Great Hall, Courtyard, Garden, intimate rooms and more unexpected spaces offer productions a surprising range of looks within one central London location.

Film London's Fernanda Franco speaks to Rebecca Hurley, Venue Marketing Manager at BMA House, who shares what makes the building a distinctive filming location, how it works with productions, and her advice for Location Managers and Producers.

Rebecca, can you tell us about your role at BMA House and what it involves?

Rebecca Hurley: I'm the Venue Marketing Manager at BMA House, responsible for promoting our Grade II listed central London venue across meetings and events, awards, filming and photography. I work closely with our sales and operations teams to show clients not only how varied the building is, but also the level of practical support behind every booking.

I joined BMA House in 2009 and have held a number of senior event roles here, so I know the building and its possibilities extremely well. A large part of my job is telling its story through campaigns, partnerships, imagery and case studies. Sustainability is also central to our positioning and to how we operate, rather than being treated as an optional extra.

The Prince's Room at BMA House.



What makes BMA House such a unique and versatile filming location?

Rebecca: The greatest strength of BMA House is the number of very different looks a production can achieve within one central London location. It is a Grade II listed Sir Edwin Lutyens building with genuine scale and architectural detail, but it can move convincingly between period and contemporary settings. The same site has doubled for embassies, government buildings, healthcare environments and private residences.

Our enclosed Courtyard and Garden are particularly unusual in central London because they give productions attractive exterior settings with a good degree of control. Inside, the Great Hall offers 28-foot ceilings, Corinthian columns and gold-leaf detailing; the Prince's room is more intimate and characterful; and the light-filled Garden room connects directly to the outside. Alongside that visual range, productions have access to practical facilities including three-phase power, goods lifts and additional rooms for holding areas, costume, hair and make-up, and storage.

The Garden at BMA House.



What does the process look like from the first filming enquiry through to the shoot day?

Rebecca: We start with the creative brief, rather than simply asking which room a production wants. We need to understand the look they are trying to create, the proposed dates and hours,

crew size, equipment, access, power, parking, security, catering and any supporting spaces they may need. That often allows us to suggest areas they may not initially have considered, or several settings that can be combined within the same booking.

A recce is an important next step so the location and production teams can test the creative idea against the practical details. From there, we agree the spaces, access plan, timings and operational requirements, complete the necessary paperwork and keep communication close as the shoot evolves.

The Courtyard at BMA House



On the day, our team is there to help the production move through the building efficiently while protecting the venue and minimising disruption for everyone using it.

How do you balance filming with the building's day-to-day operations and other activities?

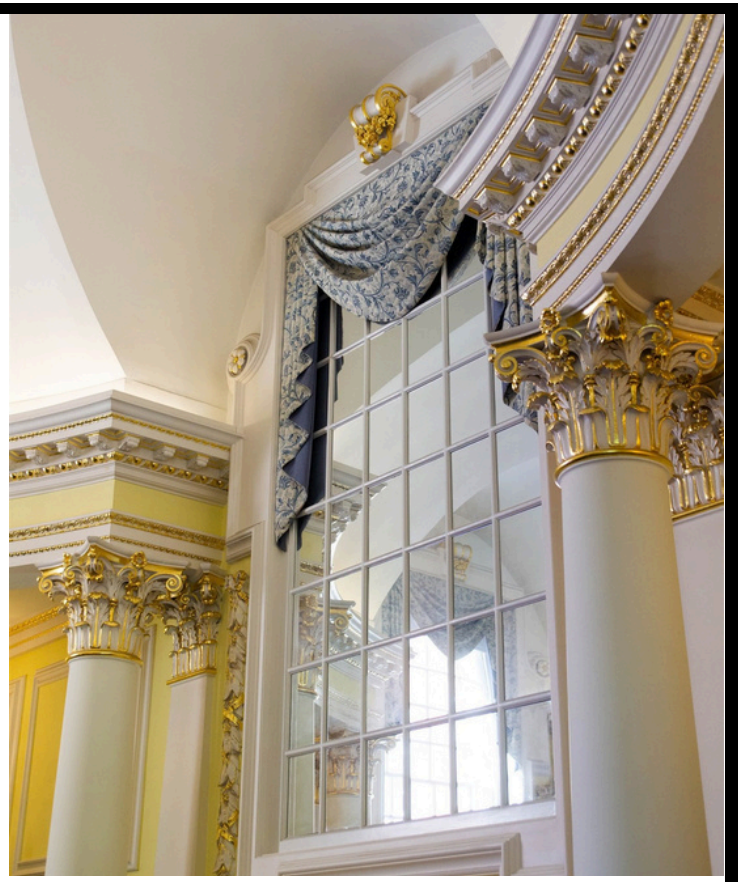
Rebecca: It comes down to detailed planning and honest communication from the start. We are clear about what is happening elsewhere in the building and the production team is equally clear about movement, noise, lighting, equipment and access. We can look at individual spaces or exclusive use, and evenings and weekends can provide useful flexibility for larger or more complex shoots.

The marbled foyer at BMA House.



Because BMA House contains so many distinct spaces, it is often possible to create defined production zones, holding areas and access routes. A carefully agreed schedule, supported by our operational knowledge of the building, allows filming and our day-to-day activity to coexist safely. We never underestimate the pace at which production requirements can change, so responsiveness matters just as much as the original plan.

What's the most unusual, ambitious or memorable filming request you've received?



A window framed by two gold-leaf columns in the Prince's Room.

Rebecca: One of the most memorable requests was when we were asked to completely change the look and feel of the Paget room for a production. The production team wanted to transform the Paget room into a five-star hotel lobby, which involved a full repaint of the walls and ceiling, changing them from off-white to a dark midnight blue.

Part of the agreement was for the production company to return everything to its original state, however, we and our clients fell in love with the new bolder look, making it a permanent change. It was a wonderful example of how a Location Manager can look at a familiar part of the building and see something completely different. Those are often the most enjoyable enquiries because they make us view BMA House through a new creative lens.

Can you share particularly rewarding or challenging filming experience you've had at BMA House?

Rebecca: 'Red Eye' is a strong example because the production used the exterior of BMA House as well as the Courtyard and Garden. Film and television schedules move quickly and requirements can change, so the challenge is to remain responsive while being very clear about the parameters of a working, listed building.

It was rewarding to see those spaces translated so convincingly on screen and to receive such positive feedback about the team's patience, clarity and support throughout the process. For me, that is the real satisfaction of Location work. The finished scene may last only a short time on screen, but behind it sits a great deal of trust and collaboration between the production and venue teams.

Can you tell us about any recent film or TV productions that have filmed at BMA House?

Rebecca: We are often bound by confidentiality, which means we cannot always talk about a production at the time it is filmed. However, credits we are able to share include 'Red Eye' for ITV, 'The Diplomat' and 'Bridgerton' for Netflix, and 'Slow Horses' for Apple TV+. What is especially pleasing is the range: BMA House can support political and espionage



Kate Wyler in the hospital reception area (Prince's Room) in Netflix's 'The Diplomat', Season 2.

drama, contemporary settings and period storytelling without losing its own sense of character.

What hidden gem at BMA House might surprise filmmakers?

Rebecca: The disused banking vault* is probably our most unexpected space. It is a striking contrast to the Courtyard, Garden and elegant ceremonial rooms people usually associate with BMA House, and it immediately suggests a very different kind of scene.

That contrast is part of the building's appeal: a recce can begin with grand Lutyens architecture and end somewhere atmospheric and completely unforeseen.

The Garden can also surprise first-time visitors. From the street, few people expect to find such a mature, tranquil and enclosed green space in the middle of Bloomsbury, complete with a terrace and pond.

What advice would you give to Location Managers or Producers considering BMA House for the first time?

Rebecca: Share as much of the visual and practical brief as possible, as early as possible, and make time for a thorough recce. A reference image, mood board or explanation of what the space needs to become can help us identify options beyond the obvious room. It is also useful discuss the full production footprint, including holding areas, costume, hair and make-up, storage, catering, power and access, rather than focusing only on the set itself.

I would also say: do not assume that a listed building cannot support a modern production. BMA House combines heritage character with practical infrastructure and a team that understands the need to find solutions. The earlier we understand the ambition, the more effectively we can help realise it.

Main courtyard gates dressed for the hospital scenes in Netflix's 'The Diplomat', Season 2.



Is there a type of production or genre you'd particularly love to see filmed at BMA House in the future?

Rebecca:I would love to see a production use the breadth of BMA House within a single story, perhaps moving between the grandeur of the Great Hall, the formality of the Courtyard, the calm of the Garden and the atmosphere of the old banking vault. A story spanning different periods would be particularly exciting because it could show how readily the building shifts between historic and contemporary worlds. Most of all, I would like to see a production discover a use for one of our spaces that none of us has imagined yet.

Film London's Production Finance Market delegates meeting in the Great Hall at BMA House, October 2026. Image: Graham Martin.



Finally, a couple of frivolous ones… What's your all-time favourite film or TV series?

Rebecca: My favourite film, without a doubt, is Disney's 'Mary Poppins'. I've been hooked since an early age. I adore this magical, charming nanny and her talking parrot umbrella, and it goes without saying I am practically perfect in every way!

If a film were made about your life, who would you choose to play you?

Rebecca: Cameron Diaz. She's always buzzing with energy and excitement for life.

A big thank you to Rebecca for taking the time to answer our questions and share her insights on BMA House.

***IMPORTANT UPDATE: Since this interview took place, the disused banking vault is now only available for filming until 30 November 2026.**



A versatile venue for filming and industry events, BMA House is also a member of Film London's Premiere Locations scheme.

Recent highlights include the Screen International Stars of Tomorrow 2026 photoshoot, facilitated by Film London, and the 20th edition of Film London's Production Finance Market and Upstream LIVE, held last week. The events brought together emerging talent, established producers, film finance professionals and other industry leaders from across the UK and around the world.

For more information on filming at BMA House, visit their website.

Find out more:

- **Film London's Production Finance Market (PFM) and Upstream**
- **Read Screen International's Stars of Tomorrow 2026 feature.**

Actor Cal O'Driscoll during the Screen International 'Stars of Tomorrow 2026' photoshoot at BMA House. Photo: Courtesy of Screen International.