

## PRESS RELEASE

### ROYAL TELEVISION SOCIETY ANNOUNCES WINNERS FOR RTS TELEVISION JOURNALISM AWARDS 2021

- **BBC takes home nine awards including Interview and Scoop of the Year**
- **John Ryley, Sky News, recognised with Outstanding Contribution Award**

London, 24 February 2021 – The Royal Television Society (RTS), Britain’s leading forum for television and related media, announced the winners for its 2021 Television Journalism Awards at a virtual ceremony held this evening on the RTS website. The celebrations were hosted by Mishal Husain, Presenter, BBC Radio 4 and BBC News at Ten.

This year, the ‘Judges’ Award’ was given to all the technical teams in recognition of the ingenuity, innovation and speed they demonstrated this year to keep journalism on the air.

In individual awards, the BBC led the way, taking home nine wins across the 19 categories including ‘Scoop of the Year’ for BBC Breakfast’s *Free School Meals*, as well as ‘Interview of the Year’ for The Andrew Marr Show’s interview with the Chinese Ambassador, which the jury described as “a masterclass in technique, gutsy and went for the jugular”. ‘Television Journalist of the Year’ was awarded to Clive Myrie, BBC News, as well as ‘Network Presenter of the Year’ for his versatile, measured and compelling style.

Sky News garnered five awards this evening, receiving ‘News Channel of the Year’, as well as John Ryley being recognised with the prestigious ‘Outstanding Contribution Award’ for his impressive 30-year career, working for many of the UK’s major broadcasters throughout his tenure and effecting genuine change in the industry.

Chair of the Awards, Simon Bucks, said: “This has been an incredibly challenging year for all journalists and news organisations. Despite the difficulties of covering the Covid-19 pandemic, all the broadcasters who enter these awards have distinguished

themselves with some remarkable coverage and every one of the nominees would have been a worthy winner. Moreover, many of them were not about the Coronavirus, but a range of other important stories which in any normal year would have dominated the agenda. I congratulate them all.”

“I am also immensely proud that despite all the constraints the RTS has managed to run the Television Journalism Awards so successfully.”

For further information and to view the full awards ceremony please visit:  
<https://rts.org.uk/award/tvj2021>

Please see below the full list of winners and nominees including the Jurys’ comments:

### **Breaking News**

#### **WINNER - Beirut Blast *Al Jazeera English***

*“All three shortlisted entries brilliantly reported three very different breaking stories – all of them as shocking as they were dramatic. Two had the advantage of pre-arranged facilities which gave them additional, powerful material – and both used them to full effect. The winner, however, was raw reportage at its very best – and largely the work of a single resident correspondent working tirelessly for hours at a stretch. The judges agreed it was a journalistic tour de force. She not only captured the essential details of what had happened, and demonstrated its impact, but underpinned the narrative with key background information, local knowledge and political context.”*

Nominees:

- Coronavirus - Boris Johnson rushed to hospital *BBC News for BBC News Channel*
- London Bridge Attack *Sky News*

### **Camera Operator of the Year - David McIlveen**

#### **WINNER - BBC News at Ten *BBC News for BBC One***

*“David’s work demonstrated a mastery of composition and lighting. Clearly, a cameraman with all the technical skills and a sympathetic eye on the story narrative. He managed to create new ways of filming sequences which had the expert jury panel wondering how he achieved his results.”*

Nominees:

- Dan Morgan *Sky News*
- Natalie Thomas *Reuters Video News for Thomson Reuters News*

### **Current Affairs – Home**

**WINNER - Panorama - The Forgotten Frontline *BBC Panorama for BBC One***

*“This excellent film combined both heart and policy. It demonstrated great storytelling and analysis, with extraordinary interviews. It was a searing, emotional film, very powerful and gave a devastating account.”*

Nominees:

- Hunting the People Smugglers (Exposure) *David Modell Productions for ITV*
- In Cold Blood (Exposure) *Darlow Smithson Productions for ITV*

**Current Affairs – International**

**WINNER - BBC News Arabic - The Schools that Chain Boys *BBC News Arabic for BBC iPlayer***

*“The jury felt there was a very strong set of entries this year. There were two outstanding entries covering the pandemic but the winning entry told a different story altogether. It was a detailed and forensic exposé of the shocking abuse of young boys in Islamic schools in Sudan, featuring the eyewitness accounts of two of the boys.”*

Nominees:

- Into the Red Zone *Sky News*
- This World - Italy's Frontline: A Doctor's Diary *BBC TV Current Affairs London, Mongoose Pictures & PBS Frontline for BBC Two*

**Daily News Programme of the Year**

**WINNER - ITV News at Ten *ITN / ITV News for ITV***

*“This was a very closely fought contest with breakfast programmes, daily news shows and main bulletins all delivering outstanding entries. The winning entry combined compelling storytelling on a wide range of subject matters, with great reportage, writing and presenting.”*

Nominees:

- BBC Breakfast *BBC News for BBC One*
- BBC News at Ten *BBC News for BBC One*

**Digital Award**

**WINNER - Need To Know - 2019 UK General Election Series *Seth Goolnik & Warren Nettleford ntk.network***

*“This is the second year of this award. It tested our industry's ability to rise to the challenge of telling stories on digital platforms. The winning entry is a newcomer. Designed to make political journalism engaging for young people, the service was initially broadcast on the Snapchat platform covering the final weeks of the*

*2019 General Election campaign. The jury appreciated its storytelling techniques - combining a lightness of touch and humour to tell important political stories."*

Nominees:

- Being Black At Cambridge *BBC News for BBC News Online / BBC iPlayer*
- Go There - Fear and anxiety in the epicenter of the Wuhan coronavirus outbreak *CNN*

### **Interview of the Year**

**WINNER - Andrew Marr and the Chinese Ambassador - The Andrew Marr Show  
*BBC News for BBC One***

*"Fantastic example of TV interviewing art at its best. It was a masterclass in technique, gutsy and went for the jugular, showing a brilliant use of silence. Made me proud to be a British journalist, Andrew was respectfully, rude and across his brief... it was a real coup."*

Nominees:

- Channel 4 News - Ciaran Jenkins / Michael Gove *ITN for Channel 4*
- CNN Tonight - Sara Sidner Interviews Minneapolis Police Chief with Floyd *Family Live CNN*

### **Nations and Regions Current Affairs**

**WINNER - Unequal Force? A BBC London Special *BBC London for BBC One***

*"Unequal Force? was judged to be an outstanding piece of journalism. It was a brave, moving, and shocking programme, investigating the relationship between black people and the police in the capital over the past 50 years. The judges felt the effort put into getting the community to trust the programme makers had paid off in the quality of the interviews. It was a timely and compelling watch that was informative, balanced and unsettling."*

Nominees:

- Disclosure: Scotland's Lockdown *BBC Scotland for BBC One Scotland*
- Spotlight - The Killings of the Three Scottish Soldiers *BBC Northern Ireland*

### **Nations and Regions News**

**WINNER - Coronavirus in London: Who's hit the hardest? *BBC London for BBC One***

*"This year's submissions were all big news stories but the judges agreed the standout entry was an astonishing and prescient journalistic endeavour. There have been many programmes about Coronavirus but this was agenda-setting journalism based on meticulous research and a deep understanding of the region. Using a series of well-*

*crafted films and an excellent reporting team, the programme established, well before others, how ethnic groups have been disproportionately impacted by Covid-19.”*

Nominees:

- ITV News Calendar - Jack Charlton Tribute *ITV Yorkshire for ITV*
- ITV News West Country - The toppling of Colston *ITV West Country for ITV*

### **Nations and Regions Presenter of the Year**

**WINNER - Hannah Miller - Granada Reports *ITV News Granada for ITV***

*“The judges commended Hannah’s ability to represent her audience in everything she tackled. They were impressed with how she got to the heart of each story with her probing style and authority but they also praised her warm personality and courtesy. Her storytelling technique was another measure that made her entry stand out, with tightly written scripts, which always complemented the pictures. They felt she truly symbolised her region.”*

Nominees:

- Riz Lateef *BBC London for BBC One*
- Charlene White - *ITV News London ITN / ITV News for ITV*

### **Network Presenter of the Year**

**WINNER - Clive Myrie - *BBC News at Ten; BBC News at One; BBC News Channel BBC News for BBC One and BBC News Channel***

*“Many of the entries for this hard-fought award won praise from the jury and the final three reflected the diverse nature of the category. The three nominees were three very different presenters with contrasting styles and specialities. But there was unanimous agreement on the qualities of the winner. Brilliant, versatile, measured, compelling, relaxed but reassuring and empathetic were just some of the adjectives they used. The jury agreed the winner had had an astonishing year – as excellent as a package maker and interviewer as a studio and location presenter.”*

Nominees:

- John King *CNN*
- Victoria Derbyshire *BBC News for BBC News Channel, BBC Two & BBC One*

### **News Channel of the Year**

**WINNER - Sky News**

*“This year – more than any other – was one when the news channels were not just a real-time window on the world. As the Covid pandemic unfolded, they fulfilled a vital function providing crucial information, as it emerged, that affected us all. Viewers - hungry for instant facts and analysis – turned to them as well as the scheduled news programmes. The judges agreed that all three nominated channels did a first-class*

*job reporting the virus and explaining the medical science and data with which we are now, sadly, all too familiar.*

*If that wasn't enough there were other huge stories too – notably the death of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter movement, climate change and the final chaotic days of the Trump Presidency. In a close-run contest, the winning channel was distinguished by its high-quality global coverage but in particular by its revelations on the Covid crisis in Britain's care homes – which as the jury said – was a real national scandal.”*

Nominees:

- BBC News Channel
- CNN International

### **News Coverage – Home**

#### **WINNER - Covid UK Sky News**

*“All entries covering the Covid crises were of an exceptionally high standard, but Sky's coverage stood out because of its variety of angles and insight into the lives of ordinary people. From the packed hospital wards to the A level students, from the government dithering to the data, and from those in high-rise blocks in the shadow of Grenfell to the joyous “and finally” tale of the Manchester DJ trying to lift spirits in a rooftop rave, Sky's output was a must watch during these difficult times.”*

Nominees:

- Covid and the care home crisis *BBC News for BBC One*
- The Tavistock's Gender Identity Development Service – *Newsnight BBC Two*

### **News Coverage – International**

#### **WINNER - A Warning from Italy Sky News**

*“The judges said these reports were a wake-up call for the United Kingdom wondering how the pandemic would impact at home. Stuart Ramsay's scripts were prophetic of the disasters which were yet to come and contained warnings which went unheeded. Powerful and brave journalism which deserves first place amongst very strong competition.”*

Nominees:

- The Death of George Floyd *CNN*
- Beirut Explosion - *ITV News ITN / ITV News for ITV*

### **News Technology**

#### **WINNER - The Trump data leak - Channel 4 News *ITN for Channel 4***

*“Another example of journalists making sense of big data came from Channel 4 News who made headlines around the world with their investigation into the Trump administration’s manipulation of data. A small team of journalists came up with a range of technology solutions to painstakingly access and interpret vast amounts of data. They revealed, amongst other things, the Republican strategy for preventing voting in black communities. This, said the judges, was data reporting at its best – an extraordinary combination of technology and journalism in the tradition of All The Presidents Men.”*

Nominees:

- BBC News Online: What Covid-19 means for you *BBC News for BBC News Online*
- Sky News Remote: Life after Lockdown *Sky News*

### **Scoop of the Year**

**WINNER - Free School Meals *BBC Breakfast for BBC One***

*“This year’s Scoop of the Year was the product of great contact building, perseverance, diplomacy and a clear eye for a story. Everyone wanted this exclusive but only one team got it and it made headlines everywhere for days.”*

Nominees:

- Abuse in British Gymnastics – ITV News *ITN / ITV News for ITV*
- Inside Italy's Red Zone *Sky News*

### **Specialist Journalist of the Year**

**WINNER - Nick Martin *Sky News***

*“This year the field was dominated by excellent reporting from the Covid frontline, but Nick Martin’s portfolio was distinguished for his work on care homes. As an expert in social care from before the crisis, he was one of the first to raise the alarm about residents being discharged from hospital back to care homes without a negative Covid test. He brought to life the human dramas of care home residents and their relatives while holding politicians to account. All in all, he’s a damn good journalist with great attention to detail.”*

Nominees:

- Gary Gibbon - Channel 4 News *ITN for Channel 4*
- Victoria Macdonald - Channel 4 News *ITN for Channel 4*

### **Television Journalist of the Year**

**WINNER - Clive Myrie *BBC News for BBC News Channel***

*“The tragic story of the Coronavirus pandemic has produced some remarkable reporting on all channels and that was reflected in the strength of the entries in this*

*year. The three nominees all demonstrated great journalistic strength, powerful writing and real humanity in their work, but one stood out for the judges for the all-round quality of their reporting.”*

Nominees:

- Alex Crawford Sky News
- Robert Moore - ITV News ITN / ITV News for ITV

### **Young Talent of the Year**

#### **WINNER - Renata Brito - Video Journalist *The Associated Press***

*“In the 25th anniversary of the Young Talent award - launched in memory of John Schofield, the BBC and ITN reporter shot and killed in Croatia - the judges were delighted at the strength and range of talent nominated. All of those entered were outstanding in some respect and deserve praise. It is extremely encouraging for the future of TV journalism.*

*Agency journalists have been the unsung heroes and heroines of last year when many newsrooms could not deploy as they'd wish. Renata's portfolio showed an extraordinary range, tracking the impact of the pandemic from Europe to Brazil, and migration across the Mediterranean. With great commitment she got inside stories when others couldn't and showed great initiative and compassion.”*

Nominees:

- Rianna Croxford BBC News for BBC One and BBC News Channel
- Fadi Al Halabi - Channel 4 News ITN for Channel 4

### **Judges' Award**

#### **WINNER - Technical Teams**

*“The pandemic and lockdown forced the industry to devise new ways of content gathering, and in the frontline were hundreds of colleagues – the technical and engineering teams - whose contributions are rarely recognised in these awards.*

*They not only had to innovate at speed, often they were the only people who routinely had to go to work despite the personal risks.*

*As one juror said pithily “they kept journalism on the air.””*

### **Outstanding Contribution**

#### **WINNER - John Ryley, Sky News**

*“The Outstanding Contribution award goes to a journalist who really has done what it says on the tin – effected genuine change in our business. I have witnessed it first-hand over 30 years. He has worked for all three of the major UK broadcasters. His style is innovative, idiosyncratic.*

*His integrity, influence and authority, colossal.”*



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**About The Royal Television Society:**

From glamorous award ceremonies to lively debates, the RTS embraces all aspects of television, and is open to anyone with an interest in the medium.

As an educational charity, we encourage and celebrate work in television and its related fields, from finding out how the nation's favourite shows are made in our Anatomy of a Hit series, to celebrating burgeoning talent at our annual Student Awards.

The industry's most talented individuals give us an insight into the work that goes into making cutting edge contemporary TV. From Government ministers and CEOs to workshops with great runners, our events look at every part of the business.

Our annual Television Journalism, Programme, Craft and Design, and Student Awards celebrate achievements across the broadcasting industry.

Each year, we offer Television Production and Technology bursaries to help those from less affluent backgrounds get a foothold in the industry, and Masterclass sessions bring together students, academics and industry heads.

Global television leaders gather to discuss what the future holds for television at our London Conference or the RTS Cambridge Convention.

Alongside our engaged community of around 5,000 full members, the Society is supported by Britain and the world's biggest broadcasters, producers and consultants, including Principal Patrons BBC, Channel 4, ITV and Sky.

Originally founded as the Television Society in 1927, the Society was granted its Royal title in 1966 and HRH The Prince of Wales became Patron of the RTS in 1997.

Today, 15 regional and national groups curate lively events and awards around the UK and Ireland, from Glasgow to Galway.

RTS Futures, which is aimed at those in their first two years of employment, organises an exciting roster of discussion, training and social occasions. Recent events have included workshops on learning how to format shows and how to survive as a freelancer, and expert panels explaining how to be the best researcher and how to make it on-screen.