

RTS West of England 18/19.

Bristol's AGM took place in July. **Chair Lynn Barlow** will continue for another year, supported by two vice chairs, **Fiona Francombe** from Bottleyard Studios and **Rachel Drummond-Hay**, **Drummer Productions**. We also welcomed a new secretary **Greta Spokauskaite** from Icon Films. **Wendy McCombe** will continue as treasurer.

We also agreed to rename the centre: **RTS West of England**.

In **September**, our annual influencer's session welcomed ITV head of factual **Jo Clinton-Davis**. Seventy-five people joined the audience at the Everyman Cinema in Bristol, to hear **Jo** share her vision for producing factual content "which will be ballsy and stand out on the EPG" in conversations with Exec producer, **Stephen McQuillan** from Icon Films.

The team behind Arctic thriller **Fortitude** came to Bristol on 24th **October** to share their experiences of producing high-end drama for Sky Atlantic and run a **writer's workshop**.

24 local writers attended a writer's workshop with **Fortitude** creator/writer Simon Donald, Executive Producer and MD of Fifty Fathoms Patrick Spence and script producer Ben Stoll.

In the evening, **175** a packed audience in Screen One at The Watershed enjoyed a preview screening of **Fortitude series 3, episode one**.

In November, **Indie Club CEO, Charles Launder** talked to 32 owners and CEO's from Bristol's growing production, post production and VFX sector, at the **Chair's annual supper** at Hotel du Vin.

On November 28, we teamed up with **Bristol Digital Cities** and **Screen Skills** for our annual **Futures Festival** at watershed.

We had **200** young people registered and a packed evening of talks and show and tell sessions plus **18 Indies**, including post production, news and visual effects offering speeding dating.

Our **student award** submissions closed with **63 entries**, double last year and our highest ever with good representation from Universities, FE Colleges and Studio Schools across the region.

We are delighted to welcome our sister centre – **Devon and Cornwall** to be part of our annual awards next year. We have reworked the format for the evening to make it 90 minutes, without a break.



Deborah Frances-White hosted the annual awards at Bristol Old Vic in March

Our year begins with judging - putting the finishing touches to our student awards and welcoming more than 50 judges to Watershed in Bristol to discuss and argue and final decide on the year's winners for our main awards in March. Docs commissioner at Channel 4's Alisha Pomeroy, is chair of judges.

In February, there was standing room only at the **Everyman for our student awards**, after our highest number of entries. Mike Gunton, Creative Director at the BBC's Natural History unit gave a keynote about storytelling.

The University of Gloucestershire won two awards in Factual and Comedy and Entertainment; the University of the West of England also won two in animation and short form. Bath Spa took the drama prize *Glous won the RTS and UWE for Animation at the awards at Southbank in June.

In March, we held our second workshop in partnership with Bristol Media and Abbas Law, looking at consent, contractual, legal and regulatory challenges when negotiating access for documentaries. More than 20 took part.

Story Films' factual drama – **The Interrogation of Tony Martin** – was the biggest single winner on the night at the WoE annual awards in front of 400 at the newly refurbished Bristol Old Vic.

David Nath took the director award and the series also won the editing and scripted categories.

The BBC's NHU won two for *Dynasties* – cinematography and grading. The Natural History Award went to Natural World for Pangolins.

Writer, comedian and host of the Guilty Feminist podcast, Deborah Frances-White was our brilliant host. We can't thank her enough. She only took the gig a week before, when the host we had booked had to pull out.



In May, we were steeped in the **Netflix series Our Planet**, made in Bristol by Silverback Films. WoE chair, Lynn Barlow, chaired a joint RTS/Wildscreen panel with the production team at 30 Euston Square in London and later in the month, there was another sell-out audience in Bristol for a screening and discussion with the Social Media Halo team behind the complementary campaign about climate change and biodiversity.

In June, we have a screening of feature documentary **Last Breath**, made in Bristol by director Alex Parkinson. We have partnered with the Farm Bristol for the event with a drinks reception after the screening at their new premises.

Alongside our events and awards, we have two working groups in the committee; one to look at increasing diversity and one to review the annual awards event. We have also unanimously agreed to be available as mentors for the RTS bursary programme.

We have renewed our partnership with the Square Club.

Lynn Barlow.
Chair, West of England Centre.
July 2019.