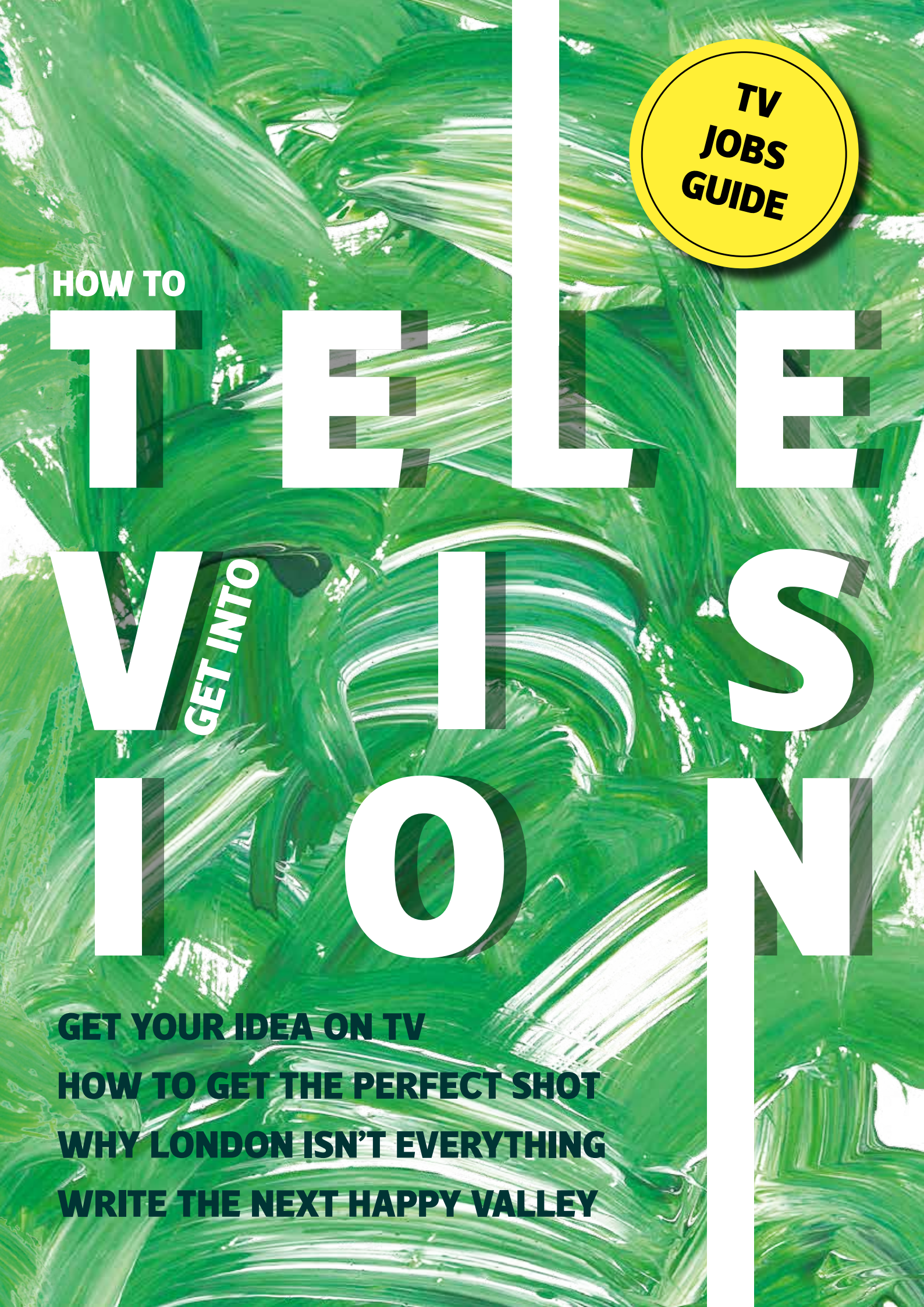
TV
JOBS
GUIDE
HOW TO
TELEVISION
GET INTO
GET YOUR IDEA ON TV
HOW TO GET THE PERFECT SHOT
WHY LONDON ISN'T EVERYTHING
WRITE THE NEXT HAPPY VALLEY

Television is not an industry for the faint hearted, but the results can be hugely rewarding. In this magazine you'll find tips and inspiration on how to get your foot in the door of this challenging and exhilarating business.

Editors: Ed Gove, Pippa Shawley
Art Editor: Aliyah Allen
Production: Gordon Jamieson
Contributors: Holly Barrett, Matthew Bell, Steve Clarke, Kate Holman, Stuart Kemp

Royal Television Society
3 Dorset Rise, London EC4Y 8EN
T: 020 7822 2810
E: info@rts.org.uk
W: www.rts.org.uk
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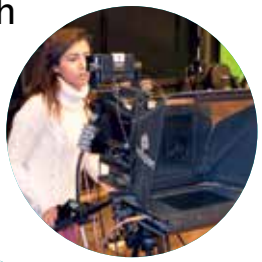
Ideas are the currency of TV, says Edinburgh International Television Festival's Holly Close



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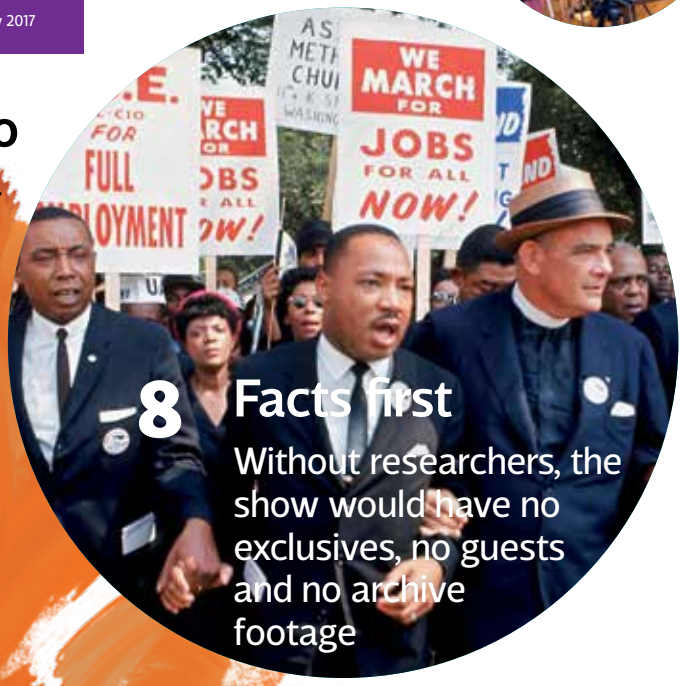

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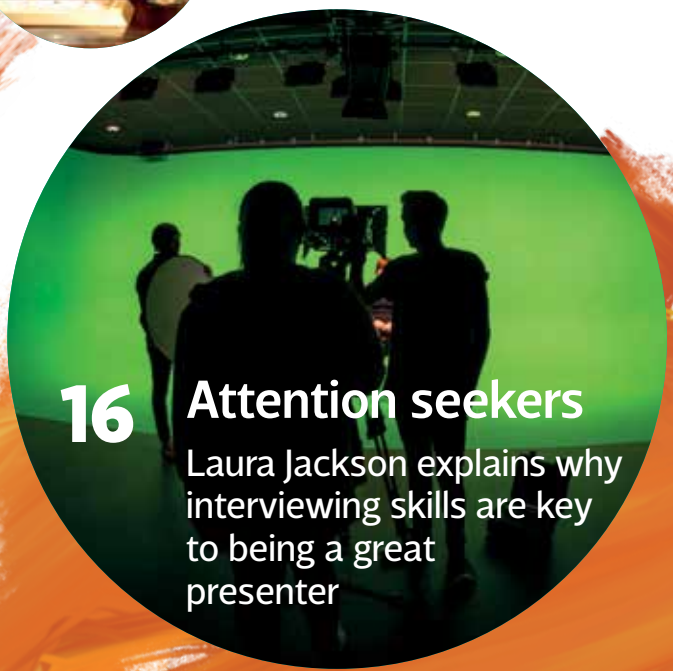

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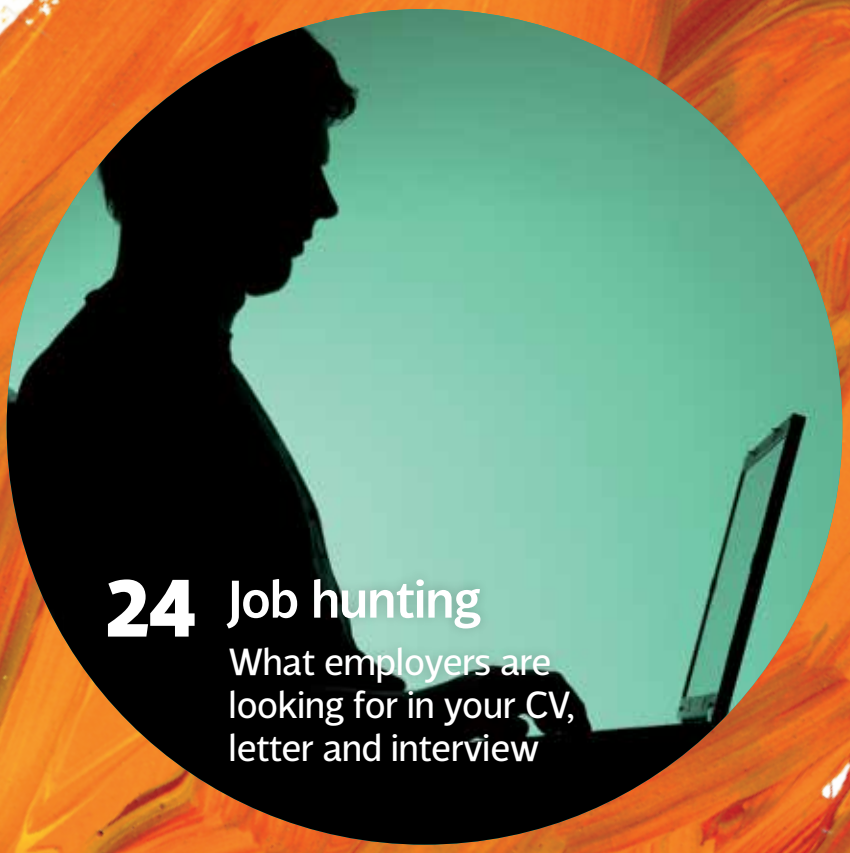

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The explorer says there's no rush... go out and get some experience first

How far could **you** run?

Start as a runner and your ambition could take you a lot further

NOTE This chart excludes the specialist technical and broadcast engineering roles, as well as on-screen talent, to concentrate on the jobs that are open to people who enter the television industry as a runner.

EDINBURGH TALENT INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION SCHEMES FESTIVAL
brought to you by YouTube

Ideas are the currency of TV, says Holly Close, talent schemes producer at the Edinburgh International Television Festival

Get your idea on TV

Pictures: iStockPhoto.com

Whether it's a sci-fi horror series set nostalgically in the 1980s, a dating show where everyone's in the nude or cameras following a day in the life of a hospital, all TV programmes have to start with an idea. And the good news is that a great television idea can come from anyone or anywhere – including from you.

But what's next when you've had that killer idea? Don't keep your thoughts to yourself – start sharing it.

With the improved quality of camera phones and the ease of uploading your own content to video platforms, if you are able to film your idea yourself, then get out there and do it.

Shows such as *People Just Do Nothing*, *Drunk History* and *Broad City* all started out online, and even the experience of shooting your own content can help spark further ideas.

It's also a great thing to talk about in interviews and, if you can see it through to the end, having a film that's ready to send to employers can be a fantastic calling card. Plus, once you have a finished script or filmed piece of content, you can enter a whole range of competitions that could see your idea end up on screen.

If your idea is too tricky to make yourself, don't discard it – applications for junior development roles and entry-level schemes, including our own talent scheme, The Network, will often ask for you to come up with an idea for a new programme. So a brilliant idea for an innovative game show or comedy short could help you take your first steps on the TV career ladder.

Once you're through the door, don't be afraid to speak up about your ideas. As *Hollyoaks* writer Roanne Bardsley advises, "working in the story team taught me that, no matter how ludicrous your idea is, you should say it out loud, because it might spark an idea in someone else, and that idea might be genius".

And if you're struggling to come up with ideas in the first place, remember that inspiration can come from anywhere.

"Soak up as much inspiration as you can from around you," says producer Chantal Barnes. "From visiting galleries and museums, to reading the paper and books, to seeing live comedy, theatre and music and playing lots of games! Lots of ideas come from seeing something that sparks off something else in your head."

Whenever inspiration strikes, keep a note of it – if ideas are the currency of TV, make sure you've always got plenty to spare.

Runner

It's the ultimate entry-level job and a hard graft. But it can open up all kinds of futures

'The people who really shine are the ones who are interested and interesting'

Unless your work ethic is really strong, a career in TV is not going to suit you. If it is, it is exciting and a real privilege," says Emily Lawson, series producer of Channel 4's *The Supervet*.

Long hours and demanding schedules are to be expected in the industry. But Stephen Day, series editor of BBC One's *The Apprentice*, suggests that landing a job on a long-running series could be the start of something big. "From year to year, they can move up [the ladder]. Runners last year become researchers on the next series."

However, the explosion in non-traditional TV means that you shouldn't be afraid to look beyond the main broadcasters. Mike Matthews, director of Channel 4's *Jamie's 15-Minute Meals*, says: "There are so many online channels out there. They're not conventional telly, but they need talented people to make content for them."

Although TV is a competitive industry, it is also deeply collaborative. Gemma Nightingale, series producer of *Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* cautions: "Every person, whether they're doing work experience or are employed as the executive producer, has their own job to do and they need to do that job well."

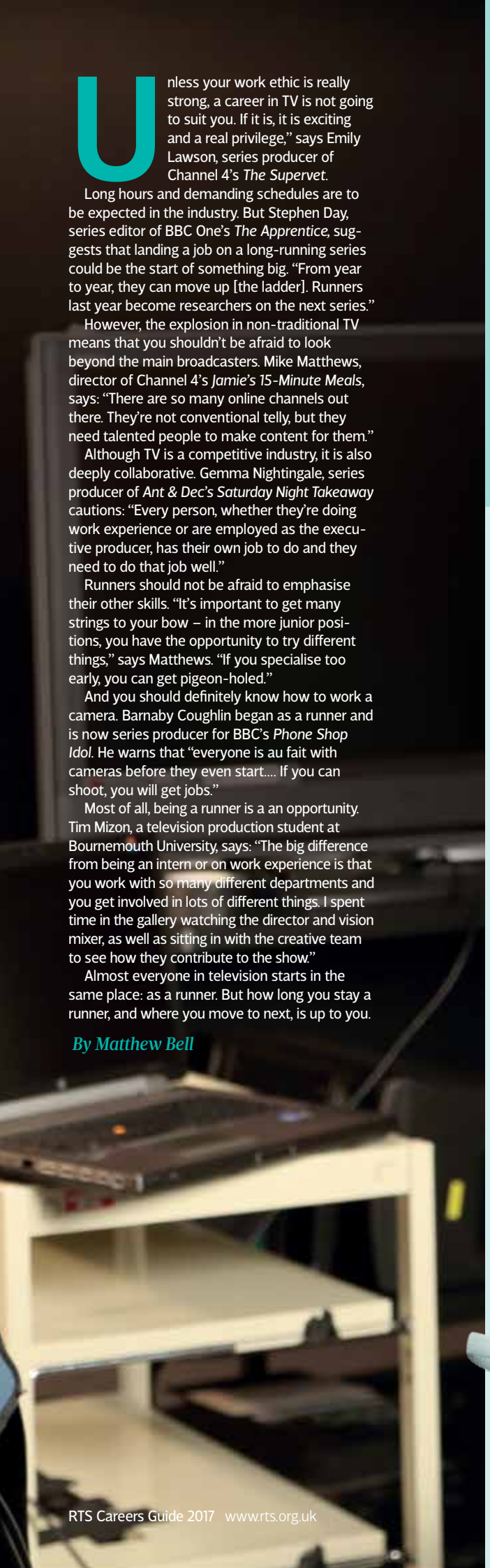
Runners should not be afraid to emphasise their other skills. "It's important to get many strings to your bow – in the more junior positions, you have the opportunity to try different things," says Matthews. "If you specialise too early, you can get pigeon-holed."

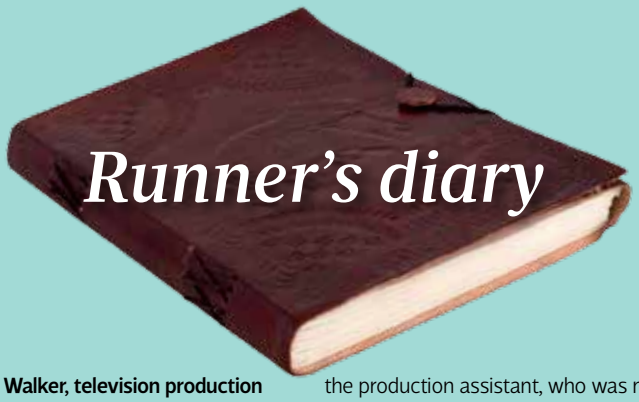
And you should definitely know how to work a camera. Barnaby Coughlin began as a runner and is now series producer for BBC's *Phone Shop Idol*. He warns that "everyone is au fait with cameras before they even start.... If you can shoot, you will get jobs."

Most of all, being a runner is a an opportunity. Tim Mizon, a television production student at Bournemouth University, says: "The big difference from being an intern or on work experience is that you work with so many different departments and you get involved in lots of different things. I spent time in the gallery watching the director and vision mixer, as well as sitting in with the creative team to see how they contribute to the show."

Almost everyone in television starts in the same place: as a runner. But how long you stay a runner, and where you move to next, is up to you.

By Matthew Bell





Runner's diary

Richard Walker, television production student, University of Gloucestershire

The email listing my tasks for the day – on the set of a reality TV series – explained that the runners were expected to rotate around three areas: registration, production crew, and looking after the general public.

Keen to make a good impression, I was half an hour early on location. There, I met the production assistant, who was my contact for the whole day.

After a quick briefing, it was clear that, to get noticed, I would need to use my initiative and be as productive as possible.

I did everything I could to be useful: tending to the general public and answering their questions, encouraging people to stand in the back to fill out the shot, and making those all-important tea and coffee runs.

Top tips

It's about enthusiasm and hard work. It's an incredibly demanding industry and [not for] anyone who wants to clock off at six.... Being a grafter, making cups of tea, carrying people's kit and learning the job as you go

Nicola Brown, producer/director, *The Secret Life of Four Year Olds* and *Educating Cardiff*

The people who stick around are fun, hard-working, resourceful and innovative.... Being rude is the worst thing you can do in telly

Mike Matthews, director, *Jamie's 15-Minute Meals*

A degree is not essential... as long as people show initiative, have intelligence and are quick learners.... These are the attributes we're looking for, regardless of qualifications.... Be a great team player and don't get above yourself

Claire Walls, series producer, *The Apprentice*

Production people want to help and are interested in people who want to learn. There's no such thing as a stupid question.... If you have the energy, passion, enthusiasm, and the bravery to be creative, that's what's going to make you stand out

Gemma Nightingale, series producer, *Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway*

Pictures: iStockPhoto.com/Shutterstock

Researcher

Top tips

Get off the internet and on to the phone – or, even better, get out of the office

Emma Loach, executive producer

Get to know as many of the producers and executive producers as you can

Annie Conlon, senior producer/director

Use multiple official and verifiable sources. Commercial resources may be sponsored and have an agenda

Carrie Britton, executive producer

Ask what you can do. Don't wait to be told. Be proactive and productive

Amy Jenkins, producer

Get over the very British concern of feeling as if you are bothering someone. That's part and parcel of our profession

Nicky Huggett, head of development, Popkorn TV

Never take information straight from Wikipedia – always check the sources

Selina Tso, researcher

Facts

Without you, the show would have no exclusives, no guests and no archive footage

Researchers are everywhere in television. While the name seems self-explanatory, additional descriptive words, such as "shooting" or "casting", can render the job title confusing and mysterious to outsiders.

Specialist researchers are easier to set apart. They include archive researchers or people who have degrees in subjects, such as science or history, relevant to the programme.

Alex Cowan has worked as a freelance archive researcher for more than 20 years. His role requires a technical but broad skillset. Being responsible for finding archive footage to convey a particular mood or event means that "you're lucky enough to be much closer to the creative coalface," he says.

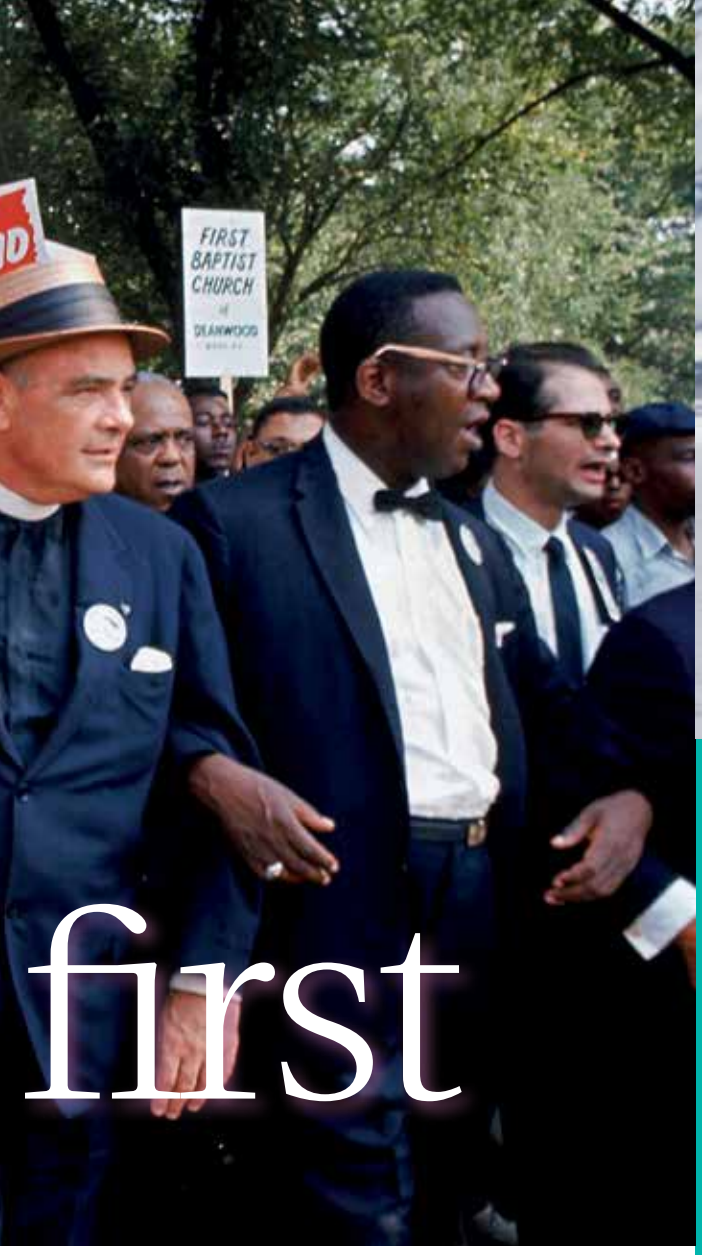
Even if a candidate for a researcher post isn't a specialist, producers tend to favour candidates with any kind of knowledge that might benefit the production. Helen Thompson, a talent manager at BBC Northern Ireland, explains: "Productions are on a short time frame. They will prefer someone who can hit the ground running, because they already have useful contacts and understanding."

Craig Langran started out as a junior researcher before becoming a development and then a casting researcher, so is well placed to outline the distinctions between the terms. "A development researcher will be writing up whole treatments and [junior researchers] might support them [with back-up] research," he says.

The ability to use a camera is very valuable for budding casting researchers who occasionally have to shoot and cut casting tapes for producers.

Langran says that there are no set criteria for becoming a "self-shooting" researcher. "Next time you're on a job [and they ask if you can shoot], say yes and work it out afterwards. Your first stuff might be crap but you'll learn quickly. They're not expecting miracles."

Archive gems: March on Washington for Jobs And Freedom, 1963 (above) and an early BBC camera in action at Alexandra Palace (right)



first

There's a fine line to walk here between pushing yourself to learn new skills as you work and misleading the producer into counting on you delivering something that you can't. "If you don't know something, don't try to blag it," advises Emily Hudson, casting executive at Studio Lambert. "Be honest if you make a mistake."

Whatever kind of researcher you become, there is a core skillset to all roles. According to Ophelia Byrne, a producer at BBC Northern Ireland, decent researchers are "determined, curious – and ready to go the extra mile".

Whether you stick to one path or do a bit of everything, strengthening your core skills and being prepared to go beyond your basic duties should help you land the researcher role that you really want.

By Holly Barrett

ONLINE ADVICE

How To Be the Best Researcher handbook
https://rts.org.uk/resource/how-be-best-researcher

Researcher tips video playlist
https://rts.org.uk/article/so-you-want-be-tv-researcher

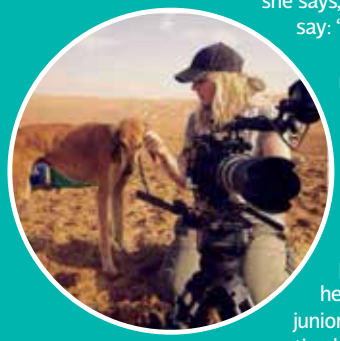
Discovery's *Predators Up Close with Joel Lambert*

Be determined, curious – and ready to go the extra mile

My big break

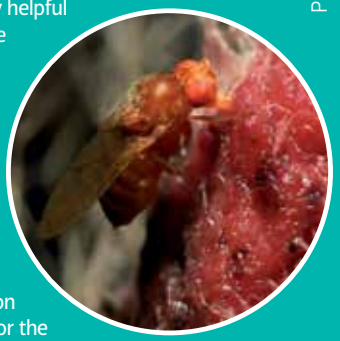
Justine Allan's career has soared since she won an RTS Student Television Award in 2010 for *Creatures of the Compost* in the Postgraduate Entertainment category – only 10 months after first picking up a camera.

Winning the RTS award "opened doors" for her, she says, and gave her "a confidence boost to say: 'You can do this'".



After receiving her MA in wildlife documentary production, Allan quit her sales job and moved to the home of nature programming in the UK, Bristol. "I knew I had to strike while the iron was hot and get moving," she recalls.

She credits a meeting with Charlotte Crosse, at the time a series producer for a CBBC wildlife show, as her a big break. She joined the BBC as a junior researcher, where the experience of creating her award-winning children's nature short was directly helpful with the tasks she was given. The post eventually led to a job as researcher for Mike Gunton, the creative head of the Natural History Unit.



After working on several projects for the BBC, she fulfilled every wildlife programmer's dream of working with Sir David Attenborough. The experience was "simply amazing", she says. "That voice just holds your attention."

Since then, she has criss-crossed the globe, from Alaska to Botswana, as an assistant producer on a six-part series for Discovery.

She has now landed her first assistant director role for a feature-length documentary that will take her to Canada and Cambodia.

Her "wild dream" – making an award-winning feature-length nature documentary – is getting closer by the day.

By Kate Holman

Justine Allan (above, on location for Discovery's *Dogs: The Untold Story*) and her own films *Creatures of the Compost* (right) and zoo footage (below)

Pictures: Justine Allen/DiscoveryBBC/Robert Kelley/Life/Getty

Editor

Good storytelling is central to editing – and editing is central to all television shows

Story first

Whatever the genre, the job of editing is all about storytelling. For scripted projects, such as dramas and comedies, an editor will have a script to work to, and choose the best combination of shots to tell the story.

"The script is like a blueprint," explains *The Crown* editor Úna Ní Dhonghaíle,

A documentary is a rather different beast. "You may be faced with 400 hours of footage shot across many years in a sprawling way. The people making the film don't know what's going to happen next," says editor Ben Stark, whose credits include *Dispatches: Baby P – The Untold Story* and *9/11: The Falling Man*.

With so much footage to deal with, and tensions running high, patience is a key requirement for the job.

"A cutting room can be a rather complicated, highly pressured space and, once you're in, you're

not getting out," warns Stark. "You want to make sure that you're all understanding enough creatively and professionally – but also human-wise – to ride those particular rapids."

While some technical ability is required to use editing software, practice is crucial to becoming a good editor.

"Try to get to grips with the craft of editing and of how best to tell the story. Don't feel that you have to have a big budget to do it," recommends Ní Dhonghaíle.

Stark agrees: "Take a film that you love and cut a trailer for it. Turn a horror film into a romance. This is what one does in the cutting room, taking material and turning it into something, hopefully, larger and different to its constituent parts."

- **If you're self-shooting, make sure you label your raw footage properly for when it comes to editing later on**
- **Remember that editing suites are high-pressure environments. This can lead to unreasonable requests**
- **Pick your moment to asking for advice. Not right before a deadline**
- **Be fearless. Know what story you want to tell and how you want the audience to feel**
- **Watch all the rushes**
- **Have confidence in a shot. Don't feel you need to cut, but also don't be afraid to cut something out**
- **Sound can help to build up the tension and atmosphere, while an absence of sound can sometimes illicit even greater emotions in the audience**

In addition to practicing your skills, this will also give you something to show people when getting advice.

Working as a runner is a common way to get into the job, and a great way to meet those already working in the industry.

"Try and meet people," says Ní Dhonghaíle, "because you don't want to finish running and not have made the contacts who might help you."

Ní Dhonghaíle says that her career highlight was seeing an episode of *The Missing* that she worked on featured on *Gogglebox*, where she could watch the effects of her editing intrigue the viewers.

Stark concludes: "You get an amazing sense of accomplishment when a seemingly disparate and, in documentary, semi-random, set of rushes [are turned into] a seamless and beautiful and moving finished film.'

By Pippa Shawley

CHOP

Editors Rupert Houseman and Yan Miles have edited cutting-edge documentary programmes, such as *Life and Death Row*, and worked on drama projects from *Game of Thrones* to *Sherlock*.

Miles enjoys the freedom he gets from working in drama, saying, "for me, it's about taking the audience on a journey, staying with it and keeping that movement".

Houseman explains the differences between shaping a story from a script in drama editing, and searching for the story within the content when editing a documentary: "It's Mars and Venus, they are so different. When you do drama, it's really about breathing life into footage and giving it a heartbeat. How you breathe life into it is a real skill.

"In docs, I'm much more of a writer than an editor – it's about finding a story and putting it on screen. There's an innate power to documentary," he says. "It's about how to measure which bit to put first in order to tell the story the right way."

Miles offers a word of advice to young editors at the start of their careers: "It's a discovery of trial and tribulation."

By Matthew Bell

Sherlock

Pictures: BBC/Netflix

Top tips

Never cut the beginning first – you don't know what exactly the film is yet

Bonnie Rae Brickman, film and TV editor

How to establish a location, how to cut a scene, how to compress time – those are skills you need to master

Bonnie Rae Brickman, film and TV editor

It's about taking the audience on a journey and staying with it, keeping it moving

Yan Miles, drama editor

Editing is about pace, and how you pace yourself as much as pacing the film

Rupert Houseman, documentary editor

Pick up your smartphone, film some videos, edit them, stick them on YouTube

Josh Douglas, assistant editor at Barcroft Media

Camera

Telling a story with pictures means working at relationships as well as your technical skills

"You definitely don't have to move down to London," insists director of photography (DoP) Chris Ramage. Since graduating from the University of Manchester in 1996, Ramage has had a dazzling career in television, working primarily in the Midlands and the north of England. He has gone from being a keen amateur photographer to DoP on one of the UK's most-loved shows, ITV's *Emmerdale*.

"I got some work experience at *Hollyoaks*," he recalls, and has not looked back. "Work experience is a fantastically good opportunity for people to get a taste of the industry and home in on what they want to do." He soon made his way into the camera department and began his journey, via lighting director on *Heartbeat*, to DoP.

On set, the director of photography has ultimate responsibility for the programme from a photographic point of view. A director will work with the actors, camera operator and DoP to decide how a particular scene will be shot.

"A big part of my job is lighting the shots and creating a good sense of mood and atmosphere," says Ramage, who believes that lighting could not be more central to camerawork. He recalls the frequent disappointment of his university days when he got photographs back from the developer. "They were really flat and [lacked] depth and any kind of character or mood," he mourns. "I didn't fully understand why that was happening until I started to appreciate the impact that lighting has on photography.

"Without light, there is no photography. It is very important to have a full understanding of that – then you can get some fantastic results." The best way to learn, he suggests, is to watch those you admire.

However, "it can be hard to progress in the camera department," he warns, "so, look at the people around you and get as much information from them as possible."

And, more than anything, practice! It doesn't matter what camera you have, he argues: "There's nothing we can't teach you once you are working in film and TV. After all, we can't expect people to have an £80,000 Arri Alexa at home!"

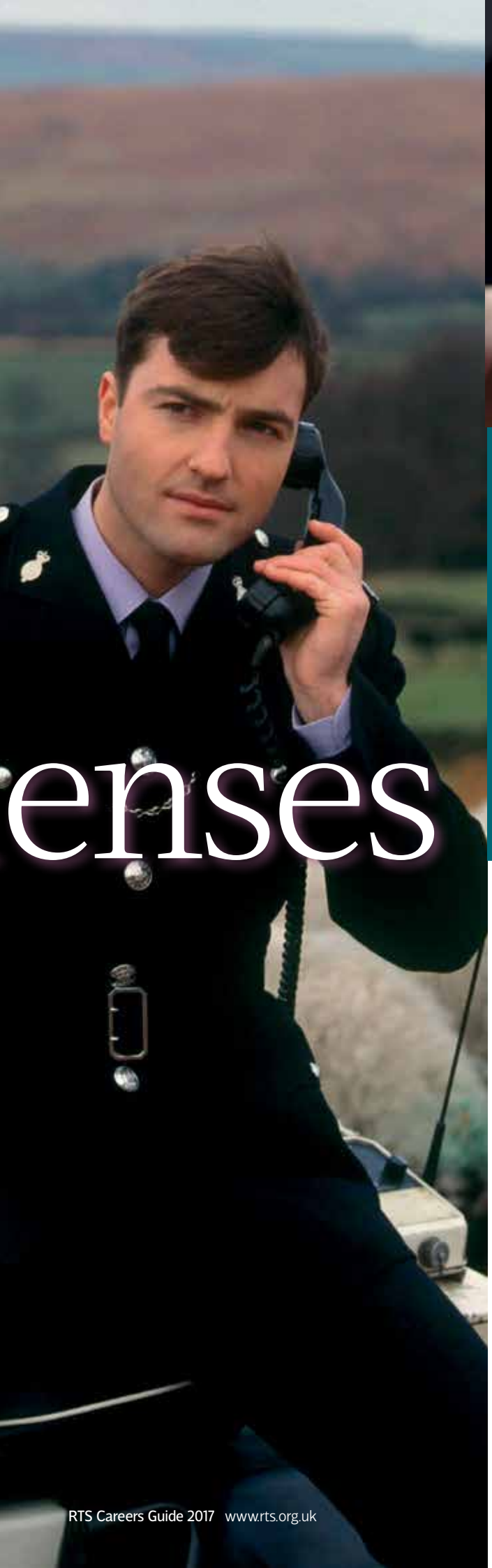
Despite being a graduate himself, he is not convinced that university is the best way into a lens-based career. "University is a great foundation," he acknowledges, "but that is all it is. Once you're in the industry, your speed of learning increases exponentially. I know camera assistants who haven't been to university, and they are going to make it in the industry because they've got dedication and patience."

Nor, he reminds us, do you need to head to the Big Smoke once you complete your course. The TV industry may have been very London-centric 20 years ago, he believes, but, "as time has gone on, there's a lot more drama in the north."

By Ed Gove

Life through l

Main picture: ITV drama *Heartbeat*
Inset: Chris Ramage



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INSIDE STORY

Inset: *Mum, Heroin and Me*

Mum, Heroin and Me, shot by Bafta-winner Steve Robinson, presents a portrait of a mother and daughter trying to love one another through the fog of addiction.

Robinson filmed in Brighton over about 10 months in 2007. He used a long-lens, handheld camera. This enabled him to get up close and personal visually while maintaining an unobtrusive distance from his subjects.

One scene depicted the young woman's first time injecting the drug in a car park at night with her partner, also a drug taker.

'I liked the juxtaposition of the intimacy of what they were doing with that industrial environment,' says Robinson.

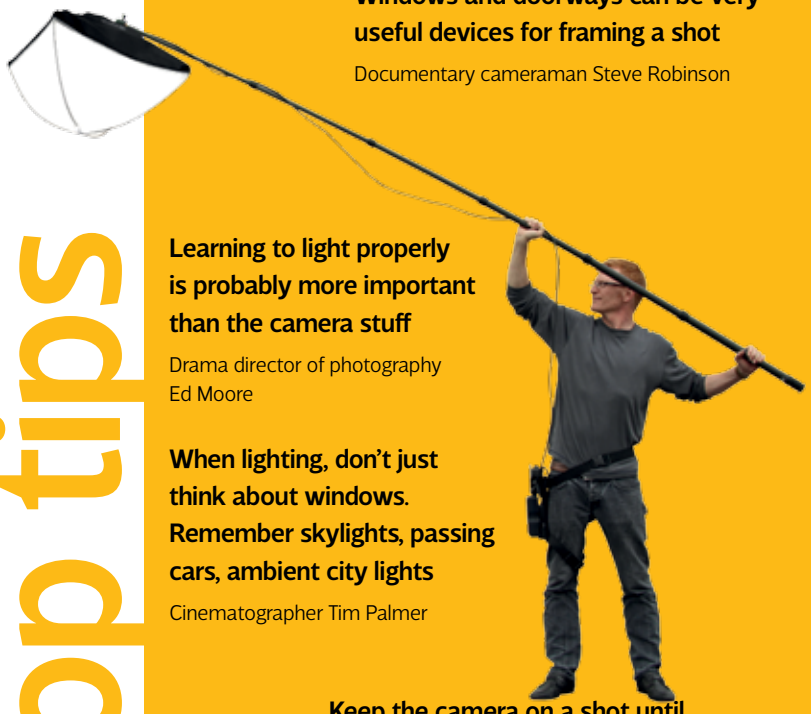
His wider shots of fixed floor lighting and car-park conduits mingled with close-ups of dirty fingernails and injecting.

Robinson also filmed the couple at a methadone clinic, where he shot them through a window receiving their drugs. 'It would have been easy to portray them as dirty and scuzzy but, actually, they were both fantastic. I wanted them to both come out with dignity,' he says.

He believes it is crucial to build a relationship with a documentary's subjects, normally over several months, to avoid any suggestion of intrusion or exploitation.

By Stuart Kemp Pix: Shutterstock/BBC/Chris Ramage/ITV

Top tips



Windows and doorways can be very useful devices for framing a shot

Documentary cameraman Steve Robinson

Learning to light properly is probably more important than the camera stuff

Drama director of photography Ed Moore

When lighting, don't just think about windows. Remember skylights, passing cars, ambient city lights

Cinematographer Tim Palmer

Keep the camera on a shot until there is a good place to cut

Series producer Kristin Hadland

Do your job well and no one will notice – but drop the ball and viewers will howl

Sound advice

Sound supervisor Robert Edwards' expertise is in live shows and events. He's worked on *The X Factor*, FA, World Cup and Champion's League finals and on the Oscar-winning documentary, *Anne Frank Remembered*.

'Nobody in television understands sound apart from the sound people,' Edwards believes. 'So, largely, you get left alone on a shoot to do your own thing. Understandably, in TV, the focus is on the pictures. But without the sound you're in a very sticky place."

'For sound, you need two things – an appreciation of systems and a basic understanding of electronics. Increasingly, that's becoming IP,' he says.

He was initially rejected by the BBC and ITV stations Granada and Thames because his colour vision was considered inadequate. 'I was told that all sound engineers had to have perfect colour vision,' recalls Edwards, who has worked in sound for 40 years.

Undaunted, he applied to the ITV station Southern Television. The company accepted him with the proviso that, if it didn't work out within three months, he'd be sacked.

Perfecting the sound for a football match requires very different skills to working as a sound engineer in the more controlled environment of a TV studio. Both are all in a day's work for Edwards.

'You've got a surprisingly large amount of control over the narrative [using sound]. You've got a crowd there.... There is a lot going on. It is about wanted and unwanted sound.

'Twenty years ago, you wanted to hear the ball being kicked so you could feel close to the action. The solution to that was to increase the number of mics around the pitch.

'The unwanted sound is the players swearing at each other. They swear after they kick the ball. Immediately the ball is hit, I have to go to another source – to where the ball is going to.'

Edwards advised: 'I get paid for doing my hobby.... But you've got to really want to do the job.... There aren't a lot of people banging on my door saying: "I want to work on *The X Factor.*" Nobody wants to sit there and take the pressure. There isn't much glamour in that side of it. It is quite a lot of hard work.

'The best sound people I know are the people who plan well. You have to plan for every eventuality. There is no substitute for hard work and no substitute for experience.'

By Steve Clarke

INSIDER SECRETS

'You're in the business of suspending people's disbelief,' says sound supervisor Louise Willcox.

After beginning her career as a shorthand typist, a chance encounter prompted her leap into sound, an interest of hers since the age of 13. Now, after more than 30 years working on programmes such as *Springwatch, The British Grand Prix* and *Children in Need*, Willcox is an authority in her field.

The role of a sound supervisor is the final step in a career that begins as a sound technician/assistant. Willcox spends days at a time shut in a dark room, mixing sound for shows, and yet, she says, her hard work is rarely acknowledged. 'You know you've done a perfect job,' she says, 'when absolutely no one notices.'

Shows such as *Springwatch* use outside mics to gather ambient countryside noise during the live show. But in pre-recorded sections, Willcox reveals, 'a dubbing editor replaces all of the noise, putting on things like people scrabbling through grass. [Creating] a false picture.'

Some sounds cannot be faked, however, and specialist wildlife recordists are sent out to gather real animal noises to be dubbed over the footage.

Pictures: Paul Hampartsoumian/BBC

Despite her success, Willcox has few formal qualifications. Her highest science qualification is an B-grade Physics O Level. Instead, she has been trained 'on-the-job', something she recommends over traditional degree courses. 'Universities do their best,' she concedes. 'But students at the BBC's Training Centre [often] say: "I have learned more in a week here than in the previous two and a half years at university."'

Nor, she says, has it been difficult being a woman in a male-dominated part of the industry: 'I have not come across anything on any job I have done where I have been overpowered by something,' she states.

It is empathy, Willcox claims, that has been the key to her success. 'What is most important in that [mixing] chair, is not that you're the best mixer, but that you are the best at understanding what your director wants in the time allowed.'

Working in sound, she says, has been 'the completion of my education. It's been a continuous learning process on an intellectual level – let alone on a technical level. I wish that I was more technically adept, but what I don't know, I go and find out!'

Springwatch

A ONE-MINUTE MASTERCLASS

With sound recordist Simon Clark

If you want to break into sound, the best thing you can possibly do is network, network, network, and speak to us!
Find out who we are. We're all available on websites such as the IPS – Institute for Professional Sound – and AMPS – the Association for Motion Picture Sound. Get in touch and tell us about yourself. Tell us how passionate you are about what you want to do.

You shouldn't get hung up on the technology.
Doing our job on location with actors and directors and all the rest of the crew is not, actually, a completely a techy job. It's all about who you get on with and how you get on with people.

Write.
When you watch the TV or you're watching a film, write down the credit of the person who recorded the sound and find out about them. When you get in contact with them, you can say 'Dear Simon, I liked your work on...' and, because we're all kind of egotistical, we'll read it and think you're absolutely wonderful.

Don't expect it to be glamorous.
A lot of people think: 'Great, I'll be in the studio recording my favourite band.' I spend most of my time standing in rain storms desperately waiting for the actor to remember their lines.

Simon Clark has worked on *Wolf Hall* and Sky1 drama *Mad Dogs*.

Top tip

The younger generation, the 18 to 30-year-olds starting out in their careers, have to be able to do be able to do both sound editing and mixing. If you say, 'I am a just a sound editor' or 'I am just a mixer', you are clearly going to reduce the amount of work you get.

Dean Humphreys, head of post production, National Film & Television School:

People you should know

IPS – Institute of Professional Sound
www.ips.org.uk

AMPS – Association of Motion Picture Sound
www.amps.net

Presenter

Attention see

ITV's *Take Me Out*

ITV's Laura Jackson explains why interviewing skills are key to being a great presenter

You're not better than anyone else just because you're the presenter," says Take Me Out: The Gossip's Laura Jackson. It was while working the door at members club Shoreditch House that Jackson got the chance to tackle the television industry.

"I got asked to go to an MTV audition through the friend of a friend" she recalls. "I didn't get the job." However, from that moment she was hooked. She managed to get herself a meeting with an agent, who offered her another audition for an online series. She went, she got the role and she was in.

Getting an agent, says Jackson, "is absolutely [essential]. There has to be some level of professionalism, and having an agent is that. They know about the job, they can put you in touch with the right people."

Getting an agent is no mean feat though. "You need to get something under your belt" Jackson advises. "I found out that the guy on reception at John Noel [talent agency] was from Huddersfield, and I'm from Huddersfield, so I sent him a showreel I put together and [a copy of] the local paper, The Huddersfield Examiner. Something a bit quirky to stand out. He said no."

The role of a presenter who only presents is a thing of the past, she believes. Everyone is now required to have far more strings to their bow. Jackson runs a supper club with DJ Alice Levine, and the pair are releasing a book later this year. Her advice? "Have a Plan B that can run [in conjunction] with your Plan A!"

Presenters, she says, have to be great team players. "Understand that everybody's role is as important as everybody else's. Everyone is a cog."

Increasingly, interviewing has become the remit of the presenter, and Laura offers a few tips: "Viewers always love the 'Where do you go for breakfast? What curry do you order?' questions."

"Being a good interviewer is really important. I always listen to Kirsty Young on *Desert Island Discs*. She's so good at it!

"There's nothing worse than an interview with a presenter who wants to overshadow the person they're interviewing" Jackson warns. Humility and authenticity are essential skills for a presenter: "It's just about not being too confident, not thinking you're too great, not being too drama school."

Wannabe presenters should be prepared for the slog, she cautions: "It's long hours, it's exhausting... you're cold, you're tired, you don't really know what's going on. A lot of people get into television by being a researcher or a runner. Dermot O'Leary started out as a researcher."

It's all about meeting people, she believes. "Networking – but not in a really gross way" she suggests. "Just chat to people. It's being persistent, but it's a gentle, applied pressure rather than being too hungry. I've learned in television that people don't like aggressive people. Aggressive ambition is not the one."

Hone your craft, she advises. Presenter courses "are not [worth it] because they're normally quite expensive. It's about hours under your belt. You have to feel confident and competent."

Getting there means lots of "baby steps" Jackson believes. "There's only a handful of people that make it to primetime. Everyone I know wouldn't want that big job before they'd done everything else. You're not ready for it."

By Ed Gove

Pictures: BBC/ITV/Paul Hampartsoumian/Arsenal Football Club

kers

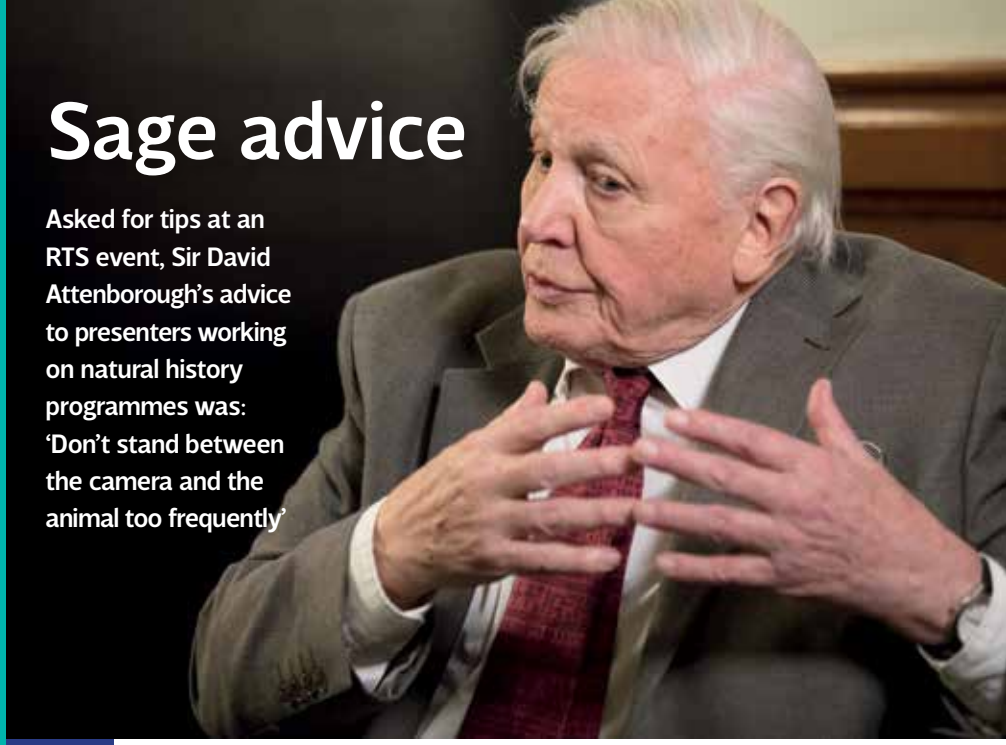
Be quirky

When *Top Gear* presenter Rory Reid was rejected after applying to the show, he sent producers a video of him rapping about the new Rolls-Royce to the BBC, 'for them to have a good long think about what they had done'.

The BBC offered him the job.

Sage advice

Asked for tips at an RTS event, Sir David Attenborough's advice to presenters working on natural history programmes was: 'Don't stand between the camera and the animal too frequently'



Top tips

Decide what your USP is, what makes you different from anyone else. It really does take quite a few years to become good as a presenter

Anna Richardson, presenter, producer and journalist

Being inquisitive, for me, is the defining thing. That makes a good presenter and a good journalist

Sue Perkins, comedian and broadcaster

The ability not to panic under pressure, because sometimes it can be pretty hectic, especially when you're hearing a whole manner of stuff in your ear, [and] especially when you're doing live TV

Alex Brooker, co-host of Channel 4's *The Last Leg*

Understand what you want, what you're going for, understand the business and be passionate. If you don't like what you're doing, it comes over

Holly Pye, director and agent

HOW TO BE AN ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

There are five golden rules, says Jasmine Dotiwala, broadcaster and executive editor at the Media Trust.

When it comes to news, it's about the five Ws: You've got to tell people who, what, where, when and why you're doing this story.

What are you bringing to the table that you simply aren't copying and pasting? If your audience can get something on another website, then what are you bringing to the conversation?

Make sure you've got at least three questions that are really, totally unique to you – because, of course, loads of journalists are going to be in there asking the same types of questions.

Make sure you're leaving your audience with some fascinating facts, some memorable moments, some quirky angles.

If you're going to be talking to celebrities and important people every day, make sure you're presentable.

Articulate yourself. Make them remember you. Do your research. Know your subject inside out so that they know you've really put some work into this. I always say that 90% is in the preparation.

Despite his tender years, ITV News' first security editor Rohit Kachroo brings a wealth of experience to the job.

'One of the joys of our industry is that there are so many ways into it. Frankly, enthusiasm, good ideas, commitment and passion for stories are all much more important than whether you did a postgraduate diploma at City University or a traineeship at Channel 4,' he explains.

When he became UK editor at ITV News, one of the first big stories he covered was that of three schoolgirls who fled their East London homes to join Isis.

In his reporting, Kachroo tried to 'humanise' the story. He recalls: 'Stories are most powerful when they hang around a character. Perhaps that's why the journey of these three girls from

East London to Syria caught the imagination so much. We followed their stories and those of their families as well – people always forget the people left behind. One of my aims, and of the team I work with, is to put a human face on these issues.'

Taking account of emotions is key to sharing a news story, Kachroo believes: 'Persistence is a key characteristic for any journalist, particularly if you want to be a correspondent – you have to push and push. But you also need – and this what people talk about far less – emotional intelligence.... You need to know where the line is [and] when you become irritating.

'Half a step before that line is the best place to be.'

By Matthew Bell

PUSHONIN

Benjamin Zand is the Young Talent of the Year winner at the RTS 2016 Television Journalism Awards. His career began while still at university, when he launched a travel website, Informed Explorer, and began producing video content. He is now the editor of BBC Pop Up – a mobile bureau that travels the world making current-affairs documentaries – as well as a programme-maker for *Panorama*, the BBC's long-running investigative series.

Born in Liverpool and without any connections in journalism or the BBC, Zand has forced his way up through hard work and talent, and, along the way, he has picked up a lot of handy advice:

There is no excuse for having a boring video.
I get a lot of people to give opinions on things that I make because I know that I am still young. I don't know everything. Don't give people the opportunity to switch off. You have to get straight into the action! More actuality! Make sure you have things going on around you. Don't interview somebody sitting in a chair. Interview someone going into a war!

I am a guy who is just obsessed with success.
Very early on, I identified where I wanted to get to. Because I identified that, when I came to the BBC I was very quickly like: "Who does that?" "What departments do that?" "How can I speak to those people?" If you are willing to sit in your underpants on a Saturday, alone, editing a video, week after week, I feel like, no matter what you want to do, you will do it.

Just dream big.
If you get upset [that] someone like Louis Theroux went to a good school, then use that as inspiration to fight against it. I remember feeling really bad, but then I was like: "You know what? Fuck it! I'm going to be the first person from Barrow Comprehensive School to be editor of something!"

I did a lot of work experience.
When I was at university, I worked at *The Scotsman*, the *Edinburgh Evening News*, Discovery and the BBC.

Discontent pushes you to go on.
The inability to find happiness in what you achieve leads to success and probably depression. You literally, obviously can do it. Why can't you? What is it about me that is different? Nothing. Just realise that you *are* adequate, you have the right to ask that question. If you place confidence in hard work, you can be confident no matter what.

At networking events, make friends.
I used to poo my pants whenever the car pulled up outside because I had never done this before. If you had never been to a networking event, never thrust yourself in front of a random person, why wouldn't you feel nervous?"

Nobody is going to offer you a job the first time they see you.
At networking events, don't try and get a job, try and make friends. That way, when the opportunity arises, you are in the position that could potentially get you a job.

By Ed Gove Pictures: Paul Hampartsoumian/BBC/Neil Hall/Reuters

Channel 4 News presenter Cathy Newman and (inset) Felix Renicks

Trial & error

By Ed Gove

Channel 4 News interactive designer Felix Renicks describes himself as a jack of all trades. 'My job involves any graphics for online, as well as design, any development and any apps we choose to try and do. Pretty much everything,' he says.

Like many people in television, what started out as a hobby turned into a full-time career. The good thing about interactive design, he laughs, is that, unlike print, 'you can make as many mistakes as you want and it doesn't cost you. It's entirely trial and error.'

His role bridges the gap between design and journalism. 'It's functional design,' he suggests. 'I usually work with a producer and they have an idea of when they need to illustrate something that they don't want to write out.'

Budding designers, he says, should not be afraid to automate themselves out of a job: 'We have a couple of in-house tools that we use for creating graphics and promo images.' Even so, they require constant updating.

Everything in the newsroom is urgent, so he rarely has an opportunity to play around with ideas before going ahead. 'You have to work very differently when the deadlines are tight,' he says. 'If you don't finish them on time, then it's not news.'

Renicks did not go down the university route. He freelanced for five years straight out of college, and built up a network of contacts. While he was working at *PinkNews* his boss recommended that he look at heading to *Channel 4 News*. 'It was accidental networking,' he says.

Good university courses, he argues, are relatively rare, because this is such a fast-changing field: 'It's really hard to do a good uni course on something that, in three years' time, will be wrong.' But he agrees that 'you can certainly benefit from doing something related'.

He is not, he points out, a computer scientist. 'Basic coding for the web', however, is fundamental to his job: 'Primarily, you need to have a grasp of graphics and a grasp of how to make something that you can look at on the web. How you do that is up to you.'

The best way to learn is to spend time online and examine what your peers are doing. 'There are all sorts of newsletters and chatrooms for new interactive people' he says. 'The good thing about the web is that you can look at everyone's work – at their code, at how they've done things.'

And, if in doubt, turn to Twitter. 'Everyone in journalism loves Twitter,' he says. 'You could email people, but it's a nice, informal way to ask a question.'

Although more UK media outlets are employing people such as Renicks, it is the US where interactive design has really taken off. 'It has become like having your own studio or camera,' he reports. 'You *have* to have someone if the company wants more than just a page of text or something really boring.'

'Papers such as the *FT* and *The Times* are doing it really well here,' he says. 'There's a lot to learn from.'

EastEnders veteran Rob Gittins shares his highs and lows as a writer

Word power

EastEnders

I have never had a proper job in my life!" insists Rob Gittins, the man responsible for some of *EastEnders*' all-time best episodes.

"Before my grandad died, he used to ask me what I was doing and this pained expression would come across his face and he'd say: 'It's no job for a grown man.'"

He has written more than 250 episodes of the long-running BBC soap, having started on the show back in 1985.

Gittins' big break came after one of his radio plays made it on to the BBC. The corporation, he points out, reads every radio play that is submitted to it.

This 15-minute drama "went out at a quarter to midnight on a Friday night" he recalls. "My mum came over to listen to it with me and fell asleep before the end!"

Do not underestimate the meaningfulness of that first credit, he says. "I don't think there's anything I have done since that has given me as much pleasure as that one play."

That first professional recognition led to a role on a fledgling TV drama, *EastEnders*, where he has remained ever since.

Despite his success, writing has never been easy. "There has not been a single episode where I haven't sat down and thought: 'I don't know what to do. This is where they are going to find me out. This is when they realise: he's not very good, is he?'"

That fear is an important part of the process, according to the scriptwriter: "You want to make it work.... Maybe that's the thing: if you care about it, you don't want it to fail."

Times have changed since Gittins began his career, and he warns that the industry is not easy for young scriptwriters. "But that simply means you've got to find a different way in," he insists.

"It's just the nature of television."

By Ed Gove

> It's no job for a grown man

Top tips

Sometimes I base characters hugely on one person. Sometimes you steal bits from here there and everywhere, and people you know. But big chunks of it come from yourself, it comes from within, it comes from aspects of your own life.

I don't really think that writers block exists. If you can't write the next scene, it's probably because you haven't done quite enough prep.

If you really believe in your talent, don't have any inhibitions or shame about putting your scripts out there

Writer Sally Wainwright, creator of *Happy Valley*

It all begins with your original stuff. You write original stuff, a producer sees it and they think you may be able to write for them.

Everyone is always on the lookout for somebody who's got a voice, and you've only got a voice by writing a play.

Rob Gittins, *EastEnders* scriptwriter

Pictures: BBC/Rob Gittins/Channel 4/Felix Renicks

Set the tone

Last Tango in Halifax

Production design offers inexhaustible challenges, believes Katy Tuxford – but it's a hard job without a car

I found it harder to get work in theatre than I have in TV – it's more cliquey," warns production designer Katy Tuxford. Since graduating with a degree in theatre design from Nottingham Trent University, Tuxford has gone on to work for shows such as *Last Tango in Halifax*, *Life on Mars* and the Channel 4 comedy *Cardinal Burns*.

The job of a production designer, she explains, is far-reaching. From finding locations for the shoot, deciding on the visual tone of the piece and managing the design budget, "you have your eyes all over it".

"Ultimately, you are responsible for every design decision and every visual decision, so the buck stops with you," she says.

Tuxford made the shift from theatre to TV with the help of the BBC's Vision Trainee Scheme, which offered a year's training across all genres and areas of production design.

After that, she worked for several years as an art director, where she managed the art department and coordinated with the production designer on a number of shows. "It's quite a big organisational role," she says. "You're working ahead, juggling the budget and keeping the production designer aware of any problems." It was while she was working on *Last Tango in Halifax* that she made the leap to production designer.

One of the best things about production design, she believes, is that "you're learning all the time. It's not a job you ever master. That's why people work in their seventies or eighties, because they've got this wealth of knowledge from life of all the locations and all the things that they've seen that makes them a better designer."

Her degree, says Tuxford, gave her a solid grounding in prop and costume making, scenic painting and an entire year in industry. "When you're starting out in those first couple of roles as an art department assistant, you're not given a lot of time or money. You have to create something out of nothing and be very imaginative," she says. "There are quite a lot of trainee and apprenticeship courses now," she reflects. "People are realising that the university courses are expensive and aren't necessarily the route in."

Indeed, the key requirements are a car, a laptop and an ability to use Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator. She warns: "As awful as it sounds, a lot of people will cast away a CV if it says the applicant doesn't have a car. A car is often more essential than a degree."

The industry is growing, she says, so anyone interested in production design just needs to get out there and "find someone in the industry and start badgering them, sending your CV, asking for meetings, and being persistent."

And, lastly, the Manchester-based production designer advises, "don't limit yourself to London. I still have the big productions on my CV."

By Ed Gove Pictures: Jan sansi/BBC

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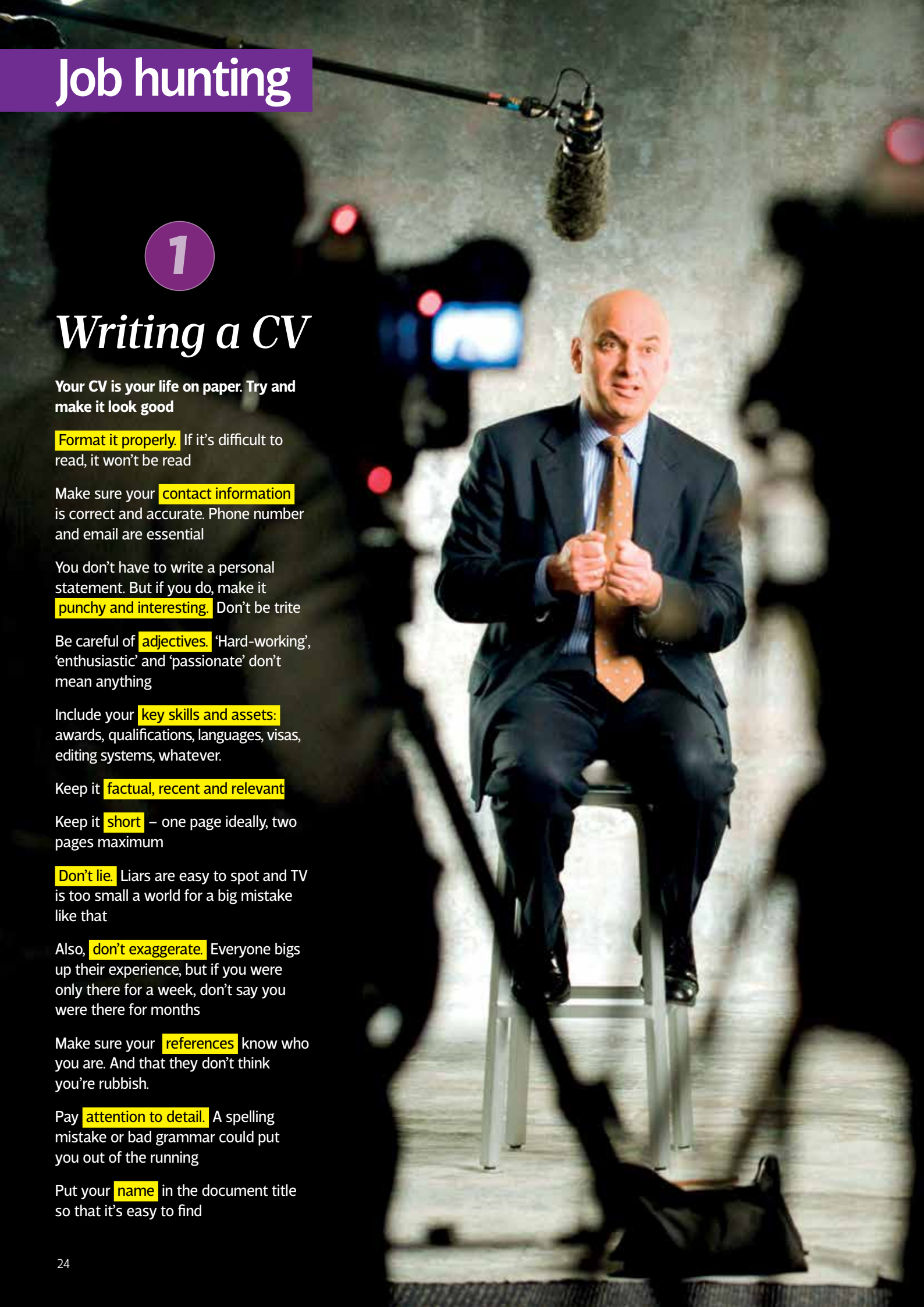
Want to learn more? GO ONLINE.

Learn how to make it in TV with tips from top telly professionals and keep up to date with industry news and events.

Visit us at rts.org.uk

ROYAL TELEVISION SOCIETY

Job hunting



1

Writing a CV

Your CV is your life on paper. Try and make it look good

Format it properly. If it's difficult to read, it won't be read

Make sure your contact information is correct and accurate. Phone number and email are essential

You don't have to write a personal statement. But if you do, make it punchy and interesting. Don't be trite

Be careful of adjectives. 'Hard-working', 'enthusiastic' and 'passionate' don't mean anything

Include your key skills and assets: awards, qualifications, languages, visas, editing systems, whatever.

Keep it factual, recent and relevant

Keep it short – one page ideally, two pages maximum

Don't lie. Liars are easy to spot and TV is too small a world for a big mistake like that

Also, don't exaggerate. Everyone bigs up their experience, but if you were only there for a week, don't say you were there for months

Make sure your references know who you are. And that they don't think you're rubbish.

Pay attention to detail. A spelling mistake or bad grammar could put you out of the running

Put your name in the document title so that it's easy to find

2 Your cover letter

There are no fixed rules for writing a cover letter. Everyone who reads it will be looking for slightly different things, but there are some clear dos and don'ts

DON'T waffle on

Cover letters should be brief. No more than one side of A4. Employers want to get a feel for what you are like, they don't want your life story. They'll call if they have questions

DON'T crack jokes

Everyone loves a funny co-worker, but no one likes a jokey cover letter. People in the media are busy. They don't have time to care about your bad jokes, and, even if they do, no one has ever hired a runner on the basis of a good one-liner. The same goes for emoticons, gimmicks, origami cover letters, kissograms, whatever. Don't risk it

DON'T be generic

Do you love TV? Are you passionate? A team player? Willing to work long hours? Excellent. Because that's what's expected. If you're not, you're in the wrong industry

DON'T use a stupid email address

It doesn't matter if katylovestoparty123@hotmail.com. A simple email address, such as katy.green@hotmail.com, will do the job

DO think about what you are after

What are your best points? What impression are you trying to give? Why are you doing this?

DO meet the job description

If you can't do the job, don't apply for it. If you can, then prove it

DO find out who you are talking to

If you were told who to address your application to, brilliant! If not, do your research. Pick up the phone if you have to. As a last resort, use 'To whom it may concern' or 'Dear [Production Company].' But never use 'Dear Sir/Madam'. Ever

DO come across as human

Some places prefer formal cover letters, some don't. If you aren't sure, keep it formal, but don't sound like a robot. You're 'excited' to apply, you are not 'most keen to express an interest'. It's wordy, boring and will make people tune out

DO mention your availability

If they want someone who can start on Monday, say you're available on Monday. If you're not available, don't apply. Simple

DO write from scratch!

Write a new cover letter every time. Copied and pasted templates don't do the job

3 So you've got an interview

Dress to impress-ish. First impressions matter, so no torn jeans or tracksuits. However, it's important you don't overdo it, it's TV, not banking. Think back to your work experience and dress slightly smarter than the people you met in the production office

Beware the 'quick chat'. A 'quick chat' is an interview. Don't be fooled. It might be in a coffee shop. Your interviewer might be cool and young and friendly, but they are not your friend. Remember that

Come prepared. Bring a copy of your CV in case they don't have one to hand, and anything else they have asked for. Write down your availability just in case, and have your contact details or business card, if you have one, to hand

Know your stuff. What has the company been working on? Did you like it? Don't be afraid to say no, but be prepared to explain why. Know what you wrote in your CV and cover letter and be able to expand upon it

Do you have anything you'd like to ask us? This is just as much a part of the interview as anything. Have some questions prepared that show you have read the job description, researched the company and could imagine yourself working for it. It is also your chance to show your interviewer what sort of things concern you and that you could envisage yourself doing this job

Don't 'we' everywhere. By all means, tell yourself that you already have the job, if that helps your confidence. But don't start telling your interviewer what 'we' will do. It's annoying

Be clean. Don't stink. How does that still need saying?

Excited? Tell them about it. If you don't seem keen then you won't get the job. You can be sure of that

Where have you been? Don't turn up late. If you're running late, call and give warning. These things happen. It's not the end of the world, but don't just leave someone hanging

Mind your vibes. When you're being interviewed, it's a test to see if they want to work with you – so don't be creepy or odd. Even a whiff of arrogance or the hint of snobbery will ensure that you're not coming back

Get in training

Take your pick

BBC Production Trainee Scheme

The BBC Production Trainee Scheme offers an 11-month contract to young people interested in TV and radio. Trainees are mentored by senior BBC staff and will be given three different work placements over the year. Past trainees have worked on shows including *EastEnders, Doctor Who CBBC* and *The One Show.*
www.bbc.co.uk/careers/trainee-schemes-and-apprenticeships/production/pts

Channel 4 Nations and Regions Apprentice

Based in Glasgow and open to anyone aged 18+, this role throws apprentices into the deep end to work with the Nations and Regions coordinator organising events and working with production companies outside of London on behalf of Channel 4. This paid opportunity lasts for 12 months.
http://4talent.channel4.com/get-involved/work-programmes/apprenticeship-programme/nations-regions-apprentice

The Edinburgh International Television Festival – The Network

The Network is a free intensive introduction to working in the TV industry. Each of the 50 Networkers will spend four days at the Edinburgh International Television Festival, learning practical TV making skills, will receive an industry mentor and get access to exclusive alumni events and job placements.
www.thetvfestival.com/talent-schemes/the-network/

Sara Putt Associates Trainee Scheme

Over seven months, trainees will receive mentoring and support from the Sara Putt Associates team in order to help present themselves professionally on set and online. The scheme is designed to enhance your confidence, employability and offer you the support to launch your career.
www.saraputt.co.uk/trainee-scheme/

Shine TV Production Scheme

This scheme is open to anyone with a passion for television – no degree required. The six-month scheme puts trainees into production or into editorial – whichever you find you have a talent and passion for. Past trainees have gone on to work on shows including *Hunted* and *The Island.*
www.shine.tv/jobs/

WriterSlam

Past winners of this writing competition won paid development commissions from TriForce Productions, while runners up have been sent on the BBC's invite-only Introduction to Writing for Continuing Drama course. There will be a WriterSlam comedy edition in Spring/Summer 2017, and a drama edition in Autumn/Winter 2017.
http://thetcn.com/writerslam/

ITV News Traineeship

Work for nine months as one of ITV's news trainees. Trainees will be based in an ITV newsroom, working alongside experienced and talented multi-platform journalists. The programme combines classroom learning with real-world experience to equip you for a career in broadcast journalism.
http://www.itvjobs.com/workinghere/entry-careers/news-traineeship/

Sky Sports News Apprenticeship

This two-year course offers school leavers the chance to work in the hub of Sky Sports News. As well as working on the planning, graphics, production and digital content of the programme, apprentices will have the opportunity to shadow reporters and work on location.
https://careers.sky.com/starting-out/apprenticeship-programmes

Broadcasters, producers and professional organisations organise a wide variety of training schemes. Here's a selection

Find even more training schemes on Pact's website at:
http://diversity.pact.co.uk/tool-kit/schemes.html

Bafta Scholarships
www.bafta.org/supporting-talent/scholarships/uk-programme

The BBC Extend Hub
schemes@bbc.co.uk

BBC Writers Room
www.bbc.co.uk/writersroom/about

Channel 4 Apprenticeships Programme
4talent.channel4.com

Channel 4 Production Trainee Scheme
lboswell@channel4.co.uk

C4 Writers scheme
http://4talent.channel4.com/get-involved/work-programmes/4-new-writers

Creative Access
www.creativeaccess.org.uk

Creative Diversity Network's Commissioner Development Programme
http://bit.ly/creativeskillsetcommissioner

Creative Skillsets Production Coordinator Programme
http://bit.ly/creativeskillsetproduction

Creative Skillsets Trainee Finder
www.creativeskillset.org

Edinburgh Festival Ones To Watch
www.thetvfestival.com/talent-schemes/ones-to-watch

Film and TV Pro
www.filmandtvpro.com/uk/signup/as/crew

My First Job in TV
https://twitter.com/myfirstjobintv

Indie Training Fund
www.indietrainingfund.com

Intermedia
www.intermediauk.org/be-mentored

Leonard Cheshire Disability
www.leonardcheshire.org

Media Parents
www.mediaparents.co.uk/

Mama Youth Project
www.mamayouthproject.org.uk

Mandy.com
www.mandy.com

Media Trust
JasmineD@mediatrust.org

Pact Indie Diversity Training Scheme
www.thinkbigger.uk.com/application

Production Base
www.productionbase.co.uk

Project Noir
www.facebook.com/groups/908933825844884

Scene TV
www.scenetv.co.uk

Sky Academy
www.skyacademy.com/get-involved/

The CallSheet
www.thecallsheet.co.uk/user/register

Royal Television Society (*see pages 28-29*)
www.rts.org.uk

The TV Collective
http://members.thetvcollective.org/register/

Think Bigger, Writers Camp
writerscramp@thinkbigger.uk.com

Pictures: Michael Kurtz/Getty Images/CSU

About Us

Love TV? So do we

The Royal Television Society is committed to helping young people make their way in television

RTS Bursaries

RTS bursaries offer financial support to those from a low-income background to study a television-related university course.

Recipients are awarded grants of £1,000 per year of their course, as well as being paired with an industry mentor.

The scheme is open to students who wish to study undergraduate degrees in television production or broadcast journalism at Creative Skillset-accredited universities.

There are also a number of grants open to those studying computing or engineering – highly sought after skills in this industry.

For more information, email bursaries@rts.org.uk

RTS Undergraduate Bursary recipients

RTS Futures

RTS Futures is the strand of the RTS dedicated to helping young adults get into the broadcast industry.

We offer events and masterclasses with accomplished industry professionals. Recent events have included a self-shooting masterclass hosted by TV survivalist Ed Stafford, a behind-the-scenes look at how *First Dates* is made and a session on TV comedy delivered by the makers of *Mrs Brown's Boys* and *8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown*.

We also run a range of practical workshops, covering everything from interview technique to basic camera skills, as well as our annual Christmas Quiz and Summer Party.

Visit www.rtsfutures.org.uk to keep in the loop.

RTS event '*Humans*... Anatomy of a Hit' / Pictures: Paul Hampartsoumian

Sam Clarke

From winning the Undergraduate Factual award at the RTS Student Television Awards in 2015 for Birdman, to becoming production executive at GoFilm, Sam Clarke's career climb has been rapid and remarkable.

He used the documentary-making skills he learnt from his TV and video production degree to follow in his father's footsteps and become a freelance cameraman.

In the past year, he has: cycled from Vietnam to Cambodia, filming a corporate group raising money for Challenge Cancer; produced a series of short documentaries for the charity Alternative Care, against the institutionalisation of children in Uganda; trekked for three days in Iceland to film for CoppaFeel! breast cancer charity; and, most recently, filmed a cycle ride from Agra to Rajasthan in aid of the British Asian Trust.

The harsh schedule and intense workload of this last trip made it his most challenging project to date. The team had to film the entire trip, as well as edit and upload daily highlights for social media.

After hearing that GoFilm was hiring an "adventure cameraman", he got in touch and secured the role of production executive. His RTS award-winning documentary Birdman was the clincher, he reveals, in getting the job. After he showed the film to the team, he said, "it gave them confidence in my ability to produce great work for them."

Sam's work day is never the same, from directing interviews, to shooting footage and editing; there is never a dull moment.

By Kate Holman

SAM CLARKE – AN RTS SUCCESS STORY

RTS Student Television Awards

The awards recognise the best television created by students across the UK and the Republic of Ireland. Anyone at college or university who can pick up a camera is invited to submit their work. Submissions are accepted from both individuals and groups.

Students can enter their work into six categories: Animation, Comedy and Entertainment, Drama, Factual, News or Short Feature.

All pieces entered are also eligible for Craft Skills Awards, which recognise the best editing, camerawork and sound across all genres.

RTS Student Television Awards success stories include the 2016 Editing Craft Skills winner Philip Wood. His documentary *Chasing Dad* was picked up by BBC Three, and he was later nominated for Best Newcomer at the 'Oscars of Documentary', the Grierson Trust Awards.

The 2012 Animation category winner, Ainslie Henderson, went on to win a Bafta just a year after collecting his RTS award.

Visit rts.org.uk/studentawards2017

Join the RTS

To access all of the Royal Television Society's events free of charge, sign up as full RTS member for £65 per year by direct debit (or £82 per year by cheque or credit/debit card).

Full members enjoy a range of benefits that include: affiliate membership to The Hospital Club, a private members club and bar for people in the creative industries; membership of On The 7th members club in MediaCity UK; plus discounts at restaurants, stores and attractions across the UK. You can even get 34% off AA breakdown cover – random but rather useful.

Visit: www.rts.org.uk.

There's no rush... go out and get some experience first

Levison Wood on TV

Explorer Levison Wood studied history at Nottingham University before joining the Parachute Regiment and serving in Afghanistan. Since then, he has filmed three series for Channel 4 documenting his journeys through Central America, the Himalayas and along the Nile. We caught up with him to find out how to make a career travelling.

You can't just get up one morning and decide to be an explorer.
Well, you can, but you're not going to get on television with that attitude. You've got to jump through lots of hoops to get there and it's not just a case of how many countries you've been to. You don't have to join the Army to get into TV, but I think it's good to have some level of expertise or niche knowledge. Once you're an expert in anything, in any industry, people will come to you. That's where you want to be.

There's no such thing as an easy route in. You've got to work for a long time to establish a reputation.
That was one of the reasons I joined the Army in the first place, because I knew that it would provide a great platform to do what I'm doing now. Look at someone like David Attenborough, he's been in the business for decades and that's why he is as well-known and as good as he is – just through sheer persistence.

Self-filming is very different to being with a crew, even though it's never more than two or three people.
When you've got three people, with a couple of bigger cameras, it does put other people on the back foot a bit. I've found that it's often a lot easier when it's just me and a local guy with a small camera: people are a bit more open, they aren't too scared – whereas they feel obliged to say certain things or are more nervous in front of a camera crew.

I see all the rough cuts of my documentaries, but I don't get heavily involved in the editing.
I think you need that fresh pair of eyes in the edit, in order to be ruthless, because there's so much footage. When you know what lengths you've been to to get the footage, whether it's climbing mountains or spending hours – if not days – trying to get that perfect shot, it is sometimes quite soul-destroying for it to not make the cut.

I feel good that I'm filming my expeditions now, but I've done some quite wild ones in the past and I couldn't have filmed them.
When I was 22, I hitch-hiked to India through Afghanistan and Iran and I think that, if I'd tried to film it, no one would have taken me seriously at that age. You need that time where you're learning and gaining the experience and credibility without having the responsibility of filming and documenting things. So, to all those 22-year-olds out there who want to be TV presenters, there's no rush. That will come later: you've got to go out and get some experience first.

By Pippa Shawley

Channel 4's *Walking the Himalayas*

From left to rigth, starting with top row: Sally Wainwright | Michaela Coel | @michaelacoel | Ore Oduba | @oreodubaofficial | Levison Wood | @levison.wood | Shonda Rhimes | @shondarhimes | Ed Stafford | @ed_stafford | Mark Wright | @wrighty_ & Ria Hebden | @riahebden | Ant & Dec | @antanddec | Lenny Henry | Krishnan Guru-Murthy | @krishgm | Affixxius | @affixxius | Bear Grylls, @beargrylls

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