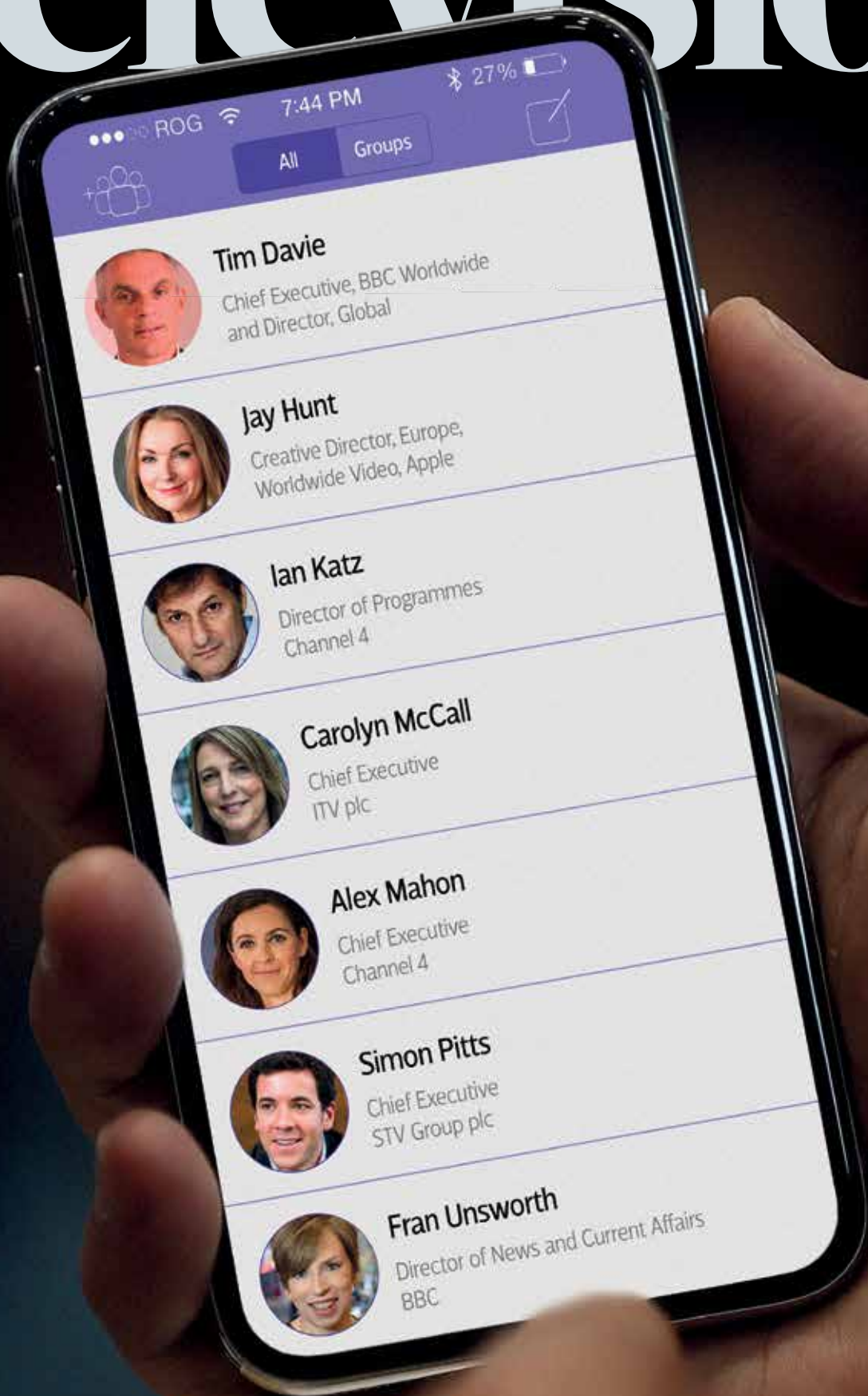
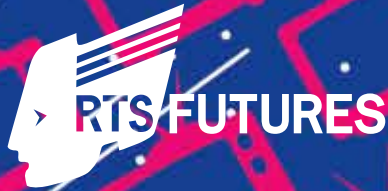


Television



The class of 2018



TV CAREERS Fair

EDINBURGH
INTERNATIONAL
TELEVISION
FESTIVAL
brought to you by
YouTube ETV

6 February

10:00am-4:00pm

Business Design Centre, London N1 0QH

NFTS

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FILM AND
TELEVISION
SCHOOL



From the CEO



Welcome to 2018. In this issue of *Television* we have assembled a line-up of features that reflects the new TV landscape and its stellar class of 2018.

Pictured on this month's cover are some of the sector's leaders who are certain to be making a big splash in the year ahead – Tim Davie, Ian Katz, Jay Hunt, Carolyn McCall, Alex Mahon, Simon Pitts and Fran Unsworth.

Each one of these senior executives has a new or bigger job. The spotlight will be on them and the decisions they make during 2018. I personally wish them all well and look forward to hearing about their plans as the year progresses.

With luck, some of these industry leaders will be joining RTS events in the coming months, so we can hear from them directly.

Following the excesses – and perhaps stresses – of Christmas, our January edition contains what I hope readers will agree is some much-needed light relief. Don't miss Kenton Allen's pulsating review of 2017. I guarantee that it's laugh-out-loud funny.

Also bringing a light touch to this month's *Television* is Stefan Stern's take on some familiar TV types. I'd also like to commend Russel Herne's stunning cartoons, which accompany Stefan's piece.

Other highlights include a diary from the super-energetic Kirsty Wark and Our Friend in the West, Julian

Hector, who recalls a very special evening in Bristol when a certain 91-year-old natural history presenter was, not for the first time, the centre of attention. Did anyone mention *Blue Planet II*?

Our industry map looks like it's being redrawn dramatically. Disney's historic \$52.4bn bid for 21st Century Fox is among a number of moves responding to the need for scale. We will be looking at this trend in the coming months.

I wish all our readers a prosperous and very happy New Year.

Theresa

Theresa Wise

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National events

RTS FUTURES

Tuesday 6 February

**RTS Futures TV Careers
Fair 2018**

10:00am-4:00pm

Venue: Business Design Centre,
52 Upper Street, London N1 0QH

RTS AWARDS

Wednesday 28 February

**RTS Television Journalism
Awards 2018**

Sponsored by GuestBooker

Venue: London Hilton on Park
Lane, 22 Park Lane, London
W1K 1BE

RTS AWARDS

Tuesday 20 March

RTS Programme Awards 2018

In Partnership with Audio
Network

Venue: Grosvenor House Hotel,
86-90 Park Lane, London
W1K 7TN

RTS AWARDS

Friday 22 June

**RTS Student Television
Awards 2018**

Venue: BFI Southbank, Belvedere
Road, London SE1 8XT

RTS CONFERENCE

Tuesday 18 September

RTS London Conference 2018

Sponsored by Viacom

Venue: Kings Place, 90 York Way,
London N1 9AG

Local events

BRISTOL

Tuesday 6 February

Student Television Awards

Venue: TBC

Sunday 11 March

RTS West of England Awards

Venue: TBC

■ Belinda Biggam

■ belindabiggam@hotmail.com

DEVON & CORNWALL

■ Jane Hudson

■ RTSDevonandCornwall@rts.org.uk

EAST

Thursday 15 March

Annual Awards

Venue: Norwich University of the
Arts, Francis House, 3-7 Redwell
Street, Norwich NR2 4SN

■ Nikki O'Donnell

■ nikki.odonnell@bbc.co.uk

LONDON

Wednesday 24 January

BBC World Service

6:30pm for 7:00pm

Venue: TBC

Wednesday 7 February

Student Television Awards

6:30pm for 7:00pm

Venue: ITV London Studios,
Upper Ground, London SE1 9LT

Wednesday 21 February

**Future past: Will archives
survive digitisation?**

Joint RTS London and Focal
International event. Panellists:
Steve Daly, head of technol-
ogy, information and archives,
BBC; Dale Grayson, director
of content management and
information policy, ITV; Charles
Fairall, head of conservation,
BFI National Archive; Tom Blake,
commercial director, Imagen.
Chair: Sue Malden, Chair of
Focal International. 6:30pm for
7:00pm

Venue: ITV London Studios,
Upper Ground, London SE1 9LT

Wednesday 7 March

**Building a buzz: What makes
a good PR campaign?**

6:30pm for 7:00pm

Venue: ITV London Studios,
Upper Ground, London SE1 9LT

Wednesday 2 May

**Gaming and TV: What's the
score?**

Panellists: Steve McNeil, writer,
comedian and streamer; Sam
Pamphilon, actor, writer and
comedian; Julia Hardy, presenter,
journalist, YouTuber and broad-
caster. Chair: Ellie Gibson, jour-
nalist, presenter, comedian and



author. 6:30pm for 7:00pm

Venue: ITV London Studios,
Upper Ground, London SE1 9LT

■ Daniel Cherowbrier

■ daniel@cherowbrier.co.uk

MIDLANDS

■ Jayne Greene 07792 776585

■ jayne@ijmmmedia.co.uk

NORTH EAST & THE BORDER

Saturday 24 February

Annual Awards

6:00pm onwards

Venue: Hilton Newcastle
Gateshead Hotel, Bottle Bank,
Gateshead NE8 2AR

■ Jill Graham

■ jill.graham@blueyonder.co.uk

NORTH WEST

Wednesday 28 February

Student Television Awards

Venue: TBC

■ Rachel Pinkney 07966 230639

■ RPinkney@rts.org.uk

NORTHERN IRELAND

Tuesday 20 March

Student Television Awards

Venue: The Black Box, 18-22 Hill
Street, Belfast BT1 2LA

■ John Mitchell

■ mitch.mvbroadcast@btinternet.com

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

■ Charles Byrne (353) 87251 3092

■ byrne.cd@iol.ie

SCOTLAND

Wednesday 31 January

Student Television Awards

Venue: TBC

Wednesday 9 May

RTS Scotland Awards

Venue: TBC

■ Jane Muirhead

■ scotlandchair@rts.org.uk

SOUTHERN

Friday 23 February

Student Television Awards

Venue: TBC

■ Stephanie Farmer

■ SFarmer@bournemouth.ac.uk

THAMES VALLEY

■ Tony Orme

■ RTSThamesValley@rts.org.uk

WALES

Wednesday 31 January

Student Television Awards

Venue: TBC

■ Hywel Wiliam 07980 007841

■ hywel@aim.uk.com

YORKSHIRE

Wednesday 28 February

Student Television Awards

Venue: TBC

Friday 6 July

Annual Awards

Venue: TBC

■ Lisa Holdsworth 07790 145280

■ lisa@allonewordproductions.co.uk

TV diary

Kirsty Wark salutes the power of documentary storytelling and has a close encounter with organised crime



It's the party season but, rather than the usual dry sausage rolls and even drier quiche, BBC Scotland's catering team pulled out the stops for the celebration of 10 years at PQ – that's Pacific Quay to the uninitiated – on the River Clyde.

I have a love-hate relationship with the building. I love the architect, David Chipperfield, but the vast liner on the Clyde has often felt rather austere and underpopulated.

We made *The Review Show* there and, most memorably this year, it was the best and most modern-looking part of the BBC's general-election night.

At the bash, Steve Morrison, the new BBC board member for Scotland – or is that BBC Scotland's member on the unitary board? – took us through his early career at BBC Radio Scotland.... a path that, rather spookily, I followed six years later.

Donalda MacKinnon, the director of BBC Scotland, set out her huge ambition to transform the corporation's services in Scotland and to the world, partly via the BBC's new TV channel in Scotland.

She then introduced the new man who's going to deliver it... all the way from BBC Northern Ireland, ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Steve Carson. He has the vision, the drive, and, hopefully, he has a few Bitcoins to make the figures work.

■ I've been working on a BBC documentary (which will go out on BBC Two Scotland early in the New Year)

on a writer who deserves to be in the pantheon of great 20th-century novelists, but who has never had the wide recognition of, say, John Updike.

He, incidentally, admired her, describing her as "one of the few writers on either side of the Atlantic with enough resources, daring and stamina to be altering as well as feeding the fiction machine".

Muriel Spark, whose centenary in February is already being celebrated with a wonderful exhibition at the National Library of Scotland, has loyal and devoted fans all over the world.

But I hope that our BBC documentary may spark (sorry) fresh interest in her mordant, ruthless, whip-cracking, word-snapping books, from *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* to my favourites, *The Girls of Slender Means* and *A Far Cry from Kensington*.

I can hardly believe that, when I studied Scottish literature at Edinburgh University in 1973, she was not on the reading list! She was simply a brilliant, economic wordsmith who happily killed her characters at will, and enjoyed the moniker "the genteel assassin".

She was also incredibly stylish and adored expensive clothes and fine jewellery. Fishing through her wardrobes at the house where she lived in Italy for many years before her death in 2006, I came upon a perfect brown velvet hat, complete with a net veil.

I remembered that she wrote a poem about hats, and that it was by the tilt of their hats that the five girls of the Brodie Set were identified. She

was never one to waste anything. How Scottish of her.

■ Earlier, I hosted a BBC event at Bafta to herald the BBC's big international organised-crime drama series, *McMafia*, starring James Norton. Naturally, I thought they'd asked me because it was Scottish and set in Scotland, home of quite a lot of organised crime. But I was wrong on the first two counts.

It's based on Misha Glenny's non-fiction book of the same name and, although anchored in London, it is a truly thrilling, violent but emotionally engaging and moving story of international crime, connecting London, Russia, India and Israel and more.

The performances are terrific. I can't think of a better thing to do on New Year's Day than to make a date with *McMafia*. Oh and the title is a nod to McDonald's – it's everywhere.

■ It's Bafta screener season and at the weekend my husband, Alan Clements, and I watched the gripping, horrifying *LA 92*, an entirely archival, observational documentary, with a lot of unseen footage, which goes a long way to explaining why America has such a bad recent history in race relations.

It also reinforces my view that documentary often beats fictionalised storytelling. Think *Senna*, *Blackfish* and even the controversial *Trophy*. They just make a more lasting impact.

Kirsty Wark is a television journalist and presents BBC Two's Newsnight.



Cupcakes for Armageddon

January

I can barely remember what I had for breakfast, so thinking back to January 2017 is a little challenging. From memory, I think we were all discussing whether Jay Hunt was going to host *The Great British Bake Off*.

Certainly, we were all discussing those Jay Hunt rumours, which must have been about the vacant position of *Bake Off* chair.

In other news, we were all braced for the Great British Drama Boom and hoping that Left Bank Pictures wouldn't get any more commissions from SVoD services that hadn't yet been invented.

In programming, Tom Hardy grunted about in the mud for *Taboo*, lots of famous faces grunted about in the snow for *Fortitude 2* and there was grunting of

Review of the year

Kenton Allen fast-forwards through 2017. He is terrified by Trump and thrilled by *Bake Off*, but looming over everything is Netflix

a very different kind when *Apple Tree Yard* made its Sunday night debut on BBC One.

Across the Pond, and presumably to deflect us all from the horror show that was the inauguration of the Donald,

our chums at Netflix were promising to launch a new drama series on the hour, every hour, for the next 12 months, until we all started to bleed from the eyeballs. It's going to be a fun year! Unless Trump does something stupid... like provokes the North Koreans into testing out their nukes or retweets some random British fascist fake news. But he wouldn't do that – we all pray.

February

One of my favourite actors, Kevin Spacey, is back for *House of Cards* season five. I love Kevin Spacey. He is the best.

In other news, Big Talk starts shooting season seven of *Cold Feet*. This involves plenty of trips to Manchester. I can't help wondering why Channel 4 doesn't move to this fabulous city.

Note to self, someone should suggest it but I mentally note, like a teenager, #itwillneverhappen.

Broadchurch season three launches on ITV. Critics say the show is back to its best. *The Nightly Show* also launches on ITV. Critics slay the show. But I suspect Kevin Lygo knows what he's doing. I love Kevin Lygo. He is the best.

March

Bloody hell! It's all kicked off at Channel 4. First up, 50% of *The Mighty Boosh* and a brilliantly witty Danish lesbian are hosting *GBBO*. Those Jay Hunt rumours have now gone bonkers. Not least because, in the world's worst-kept secret, David Abraham has announced he is standing down as CEO to start a *GBBO*-themed cupcake shop, I think.

Tipped candidates include Jay Hunt, J Hunt and Jacqueline Hunt, alongside the likes of Julian Barratt of *The Mighty Boosh*, Mel and Sue (job-share box tick) and Kevin Lygo. I love Kevin Lygo. He is still the best.

Across the Pond, as we annoyingly call the nearly 9,000km gap between the UK and West Coast US, the spring season kicks in: *13 Reasons Why* and *Iron Fist* premiere on Netflix, followed soon by *Girlboss* and *Dear White People*.

Everyone in US network TV has a collective aneurysm and all that anyone can talk about in the UK is Prue Leith. Despite what people say about Prue, she's the best. I follow her on Twitter because she's "hilarious".

April

It's MIPTV. Yay! We don't go: we prefer the October event, as, it seems, do most of our colleagues. Channel 4 relocation bingo kicks off.

Speculation about Channel 4's new CEO steps up a gear and Charlotte Moore is talked of as a front runner – although it seems that no one has actually talked to her about it.

Fox's takeover of Sky is approved by Eurocrats. Ofcom takes over regulating the BBC. All of this is "fascinating" but "it's the programmes, stupid", as the nation is gripped by *Line of Duty* on BBC One and Jeff Pope's *Little Boy Blue* on ITV. Meanwhile, *Better Call Saul* season three debuts on Netflix.

In an act of defiance designed to stop the flood of 16- to 24-year-olds migrating to SVoD services, the BBC retaliates: *The One Show* runs a 15-minute story on the resurgence of caravanning. Take that, you Yankee SVoD bastards!

In what will become a defining

moment for the creative – and many other – industries, Bill O'Reilly, the hugely successful and commercially valuable Fox News commentator, is forced to resign over allegations of sexual misconduct. In unrelated news, Amazon announces a new drama series, *I Love Dick*.

May

Those Jay Hunt rumours are back:

- a) Jay is going to be the new CEO of Channel 4;
- b) Jay is going to run Apple/Facebook/Amazon/Uber/Deliveroo;
- c) Jay is going to replace Bill O'Reilly on Fox News. I place a bet.

EVERYONE NOT WORKING FOR NETFLIX STRAPS ON NAPPIES

Then, sadly, it emerges that Adam Crozier is going to step down from ITV after seven years. I place another bet. We are genuinely gutted at Big Talk Towers. Adam has been a brilliant and transformational leader of ITV. He's also a thoroughly nice bloke and has always taken the time to keep across what we're doing and buy us breakfast once or twice a year. He will be sorely missed.

While all this is going on, Theresa May, having called another bloody election, has then declined to take part in any leaders' election debates. That's democracy, folks!

June

Those Jay Hunt rumours were all bollocks. It's announced that Alex Mahon is the new CEO of Channel 4. Jay leaves Channel 4. Those "who is going to replace Jay Hunt?" rumours start in earnest. I place a bet on Prue Leith. And a side bet on Julian Assange.

July

Just before everyone buggers off for August, all kinds of fun and games begin. First up, the BBC make a total Horlicks of announcing its top stars' pay, which erupts into a massive gender pay-gap issue. Tony Hall actually considers gender reassignment in a bid to appease his top female stars.

Next, the BBC announces Jodie Whittaker as the first female Doctor Who and Paul Dacre's head explodes.

Then, to add insult to *Daily Mail* sexist

claptrap injury, ITV announces that Carolyn McCall will be its new CEO.

Back to the programmes: *Love Island* becomes a break-out hit for ITV2, with a show that young people actually watch, shock! *The Handmaid's Tale* wows audiences with its overall brilliance and general lack of Netflix involvement.

Hulu goes up in everyone's estimation, until Netflix announces that it has 100 million subscribers and is worth almost nine times ITV, at \$60bn. Everyone not working for Netflix straps on nappies for the rest of 2017.

August

No one at any UK broadcaster returns a call or email, so I resort to catching up on *House of Cards* and *Baby Driver*, Edgar Wright's latest Big Talk Pictures film, also starring Kevin Spacey.

It's released to critical and huge commercial success. I love Kevin Spacey. He is the best. *GBBO* launches on Channel 4 and is an instant hit. Shops sell out of cake-making gubbins. Prue Leith adds thousands of Twitter followers. Everyone is thrilled.

September

Big Talk launches an awful lot of shows all at once, which is terrifying: *Diana and I*, *Back*, *Cold Feet* season seven, *Time-wasters*. I start drinking even more heavily than normal. Meanwhile, Peak TV reaches a new frenzy.

No one does any work other than discussing what they've been watching or listing the shows they have yet to watch. *Narcos* series three, *Deuce*, *American Vandal*, *Big Mouth*, *Tin Star*, *Liar* – and that is just up to 3 September.

In response to the SVoD threat, *The One Show* dedicates a whole show to knitting. It's a golden age, says everyone.

October

Mipcom. Those Ian Katz rumours start. Otherwise, it's biz as usual, with the FAANGs announcing even more ambitious programming slates and an arms race of expenditure on drama. At this rate, it won't be long before one of them strikes a deal to remake *Lord of the Rings*, I remark over a bucket of rosé.

There doesn't seem to be a more appropriate place to read the *New Yorker* and *New York Times* revelations about Harvey Weinstein than where I'm staying – the Majestic Hotel – apparently, the scene of some of his execrable behaviour.

Back in London, a domino effect ►



The Handmaid's Tale: some male TV executives confused their 'rights' with those exercised by the rulers of Gilead

Channel 4

› kicks in and it feels like society is shifting on its axis and moving towards a far better place. But it is going to be a very painful process.

As a diversion from the daily tsunami of horrific revelations, I check in on Prue Leith's Twitter feed. She's in Bhutan and... Jesus Christ, Prue! Not now! I stop following Prue as I hear she's a big fan of *Stranger Things* and I don't want any more spoilers after Bhutangate.

Meanwhile, those Ian Katz rumours are true! *Channel 4 News* is strangely quiet on the subject. Goodness knows why. Those other Jay Hunt rumours are eventually proved to be true, as it is revealed that she is to be Apple's new European content head.

I ponder emailing Jay about getting a new iPhone X before anyone else, but decide against this. I write to Zack Van Amburg, instead.

Andy Harries manages to piss off the entire industry in the US and UK by getting the first major UK drama commission from YouTube Red. *Origin* is a sci-fi series that will cost \$20m an episode – just for Left Bank's fees and Andy's hairdresser. God knows what the actual show will cost but, next time I see Andy Harries, he's buying me a small country.

November

Monday morning. Amazon announces that it is spending \$250m on the rights

to *Lord of the Rings*. These tech guys are crazy, I think, while perusing the overnights. Three terrestrial shows get more than 10 million viewers on Sunday night – *I'm a Celebrity...*, *Blue Planet* and *Strictly*. Those linear-TV guys have still got some moves, I muse, as I scan the web, expecting to discover that Netflix has signed David Attenborough and a shoal of yellow fin tuna on exclusive deals to join Shonda Rhimes.

I PONDER EMAILING JAY ABOUT GETTING A NEW IPHONE X BEFORE ANYONE ELSE

But, sadly, this is not true. What is true is that the sexual harassment scandal has gained further traction, with almost daily stories of unforgivable behaviour from those that should know better from all walks of life.

Netflix is not immune. Those Kevin Spacey rumours surface and Netflix subsequently halts production on *House of Cards* and removes him from the show. I don't like Kevin Spacey.

December

Expensive bits of California are on fire. And the news of the landmark acquisition of Fox by Disney creates an earthquake. Everyone says this is Murdoch getting out of the entertainment business, until it's revealed that the Murdochs will be the largest shareholders in Disney. The Canny Old Fox has entered the Mouse House.

We're now at Peak Sexual Harassment Scandal. Every time I get an email alert, I expect it to be a revelation that another "star" has been exposed for inappropriate behaviour.

It can't be long before Homer Simpson's time is up. In a parallel universe, the BBC wakes up and announces exciting plans to launch an SVoD service. Only 10 years and 100 million Netflix subscribers too late. But, hey ho.

I doubt the BBC could have commissioned *The Crown*, watching the storylines in season two, which has just "dropped", as young people say. Also "dropped" are *Mindhunter*, *The Grand Tour* season two and, for the love of DHL, an avalanche of Bafta DVDs.

I've worked out that, if I don't sleep at all over Christmas, I've just about time to catch up on all my 2017 viewing before 3 January. See you on the other side. ■

Kenton Allen is Chief Executive of Big Talk Productions.

The ultimate TV reality stars

Television tribes

Stefan Stern takes a sideways look at some of the key players who keep Planet TV spinning

Some things change, some stay the same. As the industry gets back to work this new year, there will be talk of new commissions, new hires, new ventures and, possibly, even a few new scandals.

But look around the office or your professional networks and a few familiar characters will be looking back at you. They are still there. Here is a small selection of them. Remind you of anyone?

The runner

It's not an easy life being Philip, you know. Sometimes misunderstood. Often overworked. And occasionally looked down on by colleagues who have forgotten what it's like to start at the bottom, and who can be impatient with that "know-nothing" youngster who has never heard of Michael Grade or Joan Bakewell.

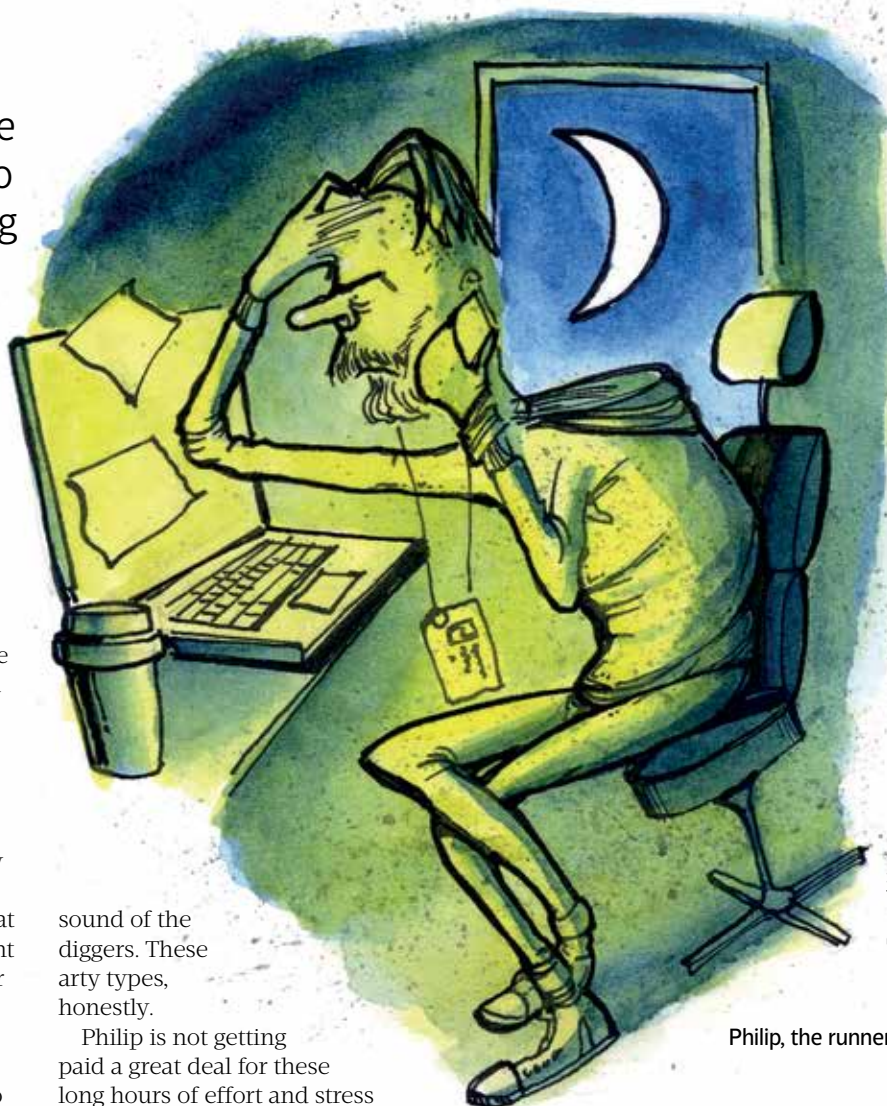
At the end of a long day's filming, when more senior figures are free to go home, Philip will still be there till quite late at night, putting in the calls, getting some knock-backs, and worrying about how he will explain his failure to sort out a full cast list of interviewees when the execs stroll in the next day.

And, really, was it Philip's fault that the location he'd picked for the street scene turned out to be next on the list for the council's programme of road-works? If the actors knew how to project properly they could have made their voices heard over the

sound of the diggers. These arty types, honestly.

Philip is not getting paid a great deal for these long hours of effort and stress (and, not so long ago, he wasn't being paid at all). But does he get much gratitude? No, he does not.

Still, he means well, and rarely causes so much of a disaster that he can't be bailed out by one of his more experienced colleagues. And, for all the mishaps, it might be wise not to get on the wrong side of him: he's a fast learner is Philip. He's determined and, one day, it might be him who is calling the shots and hiring some veteran producers – who will be grateful to get the gig.



Philip, the runner

The writer

The spark of life. That's what Louise delivers. Straight-talking, sassy banter and laugh-out-loud laughs. Since her breakthrough 30 years ago, with a semi-autobiographical drama about her childhood in Hull, Louise has been the person to turn to for dialogue that resonates with viewers and makes people laugh.

There's just a bit of a problem. Louise does not always see eye to eye >

› with some of her executive producers. They miss the flair and verve of some of her earlier work. She thinks she's writing better than ever, and it's the producers who struggle to take a decision or make up their minds about what they really want.

But what the series producers never see, in their smart, central-London offices, is that picture of Louise hammering away at her MacBook in the early hours of the morning, working on draft after draft, chuckling occasionally as she finally gets a joke to work, all in the quest to find the magic form of words that will bring the drama to life.

Louise has worked long and hard in the service of the great British viewing public. She has made the country laugh, and cry, over and over again, and the audiences still love her even if the execs don't always get the joke quite as quickly as the viewers do.

Louise, the writer



The head of sales

For Anil, the dealmaker, there is no language too colourful and no bikini too small. The lesson of *Love Island*, Anil says, is that there is a huge market for bronzed, buff nonsense. Bums on screens will deliver bums on seats, mega ratings, and massive ad revenue.

When he hears the word culture, Anil frowns. How much money do the beautiful creative people pull in? Who do they think pays their wages and gets their arty programmes made, anyway? The lack of respect – and suspicion – between Anil and the creatives is mutual.

Anil likes data. He wants ratings. Eyeballs equal ads. “What do points make? Prizes!” he can often be heard saying, like Brucie. “Now, he understood show business and what people want,” says Anil.

But, while others embrace the online digital future, and marvel at the power of the new channels such as Netflix or Amazon – or YouTube – Anil is not so sure. He liked his old world of control. How can you sell ads in the box-set era? If people are bingeing and



Anil, the salesman

skipping ads, where's the future for him?

Creative product placement, native and targeted ads may offer a life-

line. Anil has never ducked a challenge and he is confident that he will find a way to keep selling. If he can keep the quota of arty crap down, and keep the flow of surprise hits coming, all will be well. There will still be water-cooler telly moments that advertisers find irresistible, even if everyone on every single programme has to appear on screen in their swimming costume.

The presenter

He likes to see the whites of his interviewees' eyes, does Robin – but, magically, his hair remains a deep chestnut brown, even after all these years. His hair is very important to him. The hair is crucial.

It takes a steely nerve and a quick brain to front-up, live, night after night. It's not just about reading an Autocue. Oh, no. An encyclopedic knowledge of

world events and current affairs is needed to handle breaking news stories and slippery or evasive guests.

How Robin maintains these energy levels and this sort of commitment, even now, is a matter of some speculation. The spa visits, the personal trainers, the “refuelling” – it’s a mystery. Maybe the story will come out one day.

And, if presenting all this output were not enough, once the show is over, Robin leaps on to Twitter to do battle with ignorant critics and flirt with his many admirers, male and female. For the right fee (a big one), he will host your industry awards or make a travel programme – if the location and the size

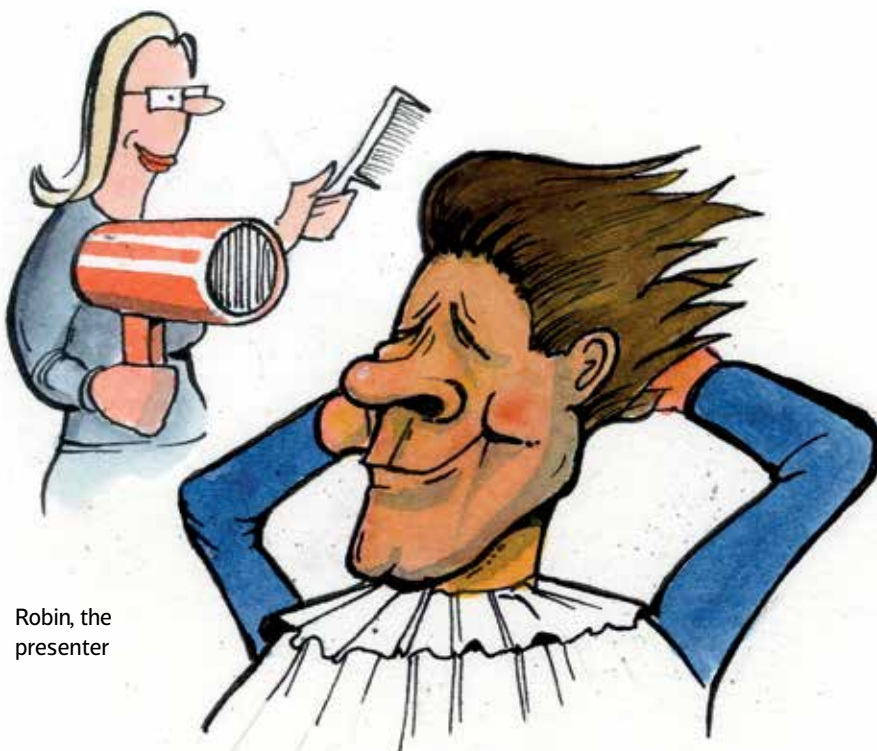
of the cheque pass muster.

Of course, there are some younger rivals snapping at his heels, some brilliant female presenters who are overdue a promotion. Change is coming, and the modern world cannot be kept out much longer. He won’t cling on for ever. But, while he’s still in possession of the prime slots, Robin is going nowhere. They’ll have to drag him out of there. By the hair, probably.

The super indie

Marjory may have left the BBC under a bit of a cloud, but look at her now. Everyone wants a piece of her – or at least some of her “content”. Wielding her two smartphones, and navigating an immensely crowded schedule, Marje weaves her way from meeting to meeting, to LA, New York and back to London, selling, selling, selling. It’s a new world out there and Marjory’s shows are smashing it.

Once upon a time, spectrum scarcity kept things under control. The schedule mattered, and there were huge audiences to be won. This was the



Robin, the presenter



Marjory, the super indie

world that Marjory grew up in and in which she learned her trade. But there could only be one channel controller back then, one head of drama – and Marjory’s face did not fit.

But now look. Amazon, Netflix, Apple... there are just so many new customers out there. Viewing habits are transformed. Box sets and binge-viewing sessions rule. And there is no end of talent heading in Marjory’s direction, because a super indie such as hers can open some crucial doors.

So what else has she got up her designer sleeve? She’s not telling. But sagas, gritty thrillers, period dramas and comedies all form part of her repertoire. There are great roles for established movie stars who like the idea of committing to lavishly funded series. There are breakthrough roles for beautiful, aspiring

stars who are not put off by shooting scenes packed with sex and violence.

And, at the apex of it all, there is Marjory: closing deals, producing great “content” and making an awful lot of money. ■

All illustrations: Russel Herniman

ITV's first lady



ITV

Steve Clarke profiles ITV's new CEO, Carolyn McCall, and examines some of the challenges facing her

For many people working in TV, the only opportunity they have had to observe Carolyn McCall has been at the *Guardian's* annual post-MacTaggart lecture dinners, held at the Edinburgh TV festival.

As the newspaper's Chief Executive, she co-hosted the events alongside the then-editor, Alan Rusbridger. This lack of visibility in TV circles is about to change as she prepares to take over as the first female head of ITV.

"There have been some quite senior women running distribution companies in British TV, but I think I'm right in saying we've never before had anyone quite like Carolyn working in our business at such a senior level," says one veteran TV executive.

In common with her predecessor at ITV, Adam Crozier, she is completely new to TV. She is, unusually for a new

TV chief, highly experienced at running a FTSE 100 company. Equally important, she is deeply knowledgeable about the advertising market and its complexities.

It is this latter skill that will be tested in the years ahead. Despite Crozier's successful rebalancing of ITV's business to the point where it operates as a global producer of scale, securing advertising revenue remains pivotal to ITV's success.

While advertising today accounts for 47% of ITV's turnover, it still delivers 75% of the firm's profits

Dame Carolyn (she was made a dame in 2016 for services to the aviation industry) joins the broadcaster at a time when ad-funded TV businesses across the world are under pressure from the likes of Facebook and Google.

Many media buyers are now biased in favour of digital, rather than traditional advertising media. So, one of the new CEO's first jobs will be to persuade these people of ITV's effectiveness as a marketing tool against a backdrop of Brexit jitters.

"Carolyn understands conventional and digital advertising and the strengths and weaknesses of both," points out a media insider. Exactly how much of ITV's advertising challenges are down to structural or cyclical factors is a moot point. But, following a difficult 2017, during which British broadcasters

when the broadcaster was searching for the best person to succeed Crozier.

At the *Guardian*, where she worked from 1986 to 2010, she successfully helped the newspaper move to the digital space.

"Carolyn enabled the *Guardian* to become a major online brand," says someone who has taken a keen interest in the upward trajectory of her career over the years. "She understands what it means to be digitally challenged and to make the transition to the digital era."

Others point out that the *Guardian's* web presence, however brilliant, has not been a cash cow. "What people forget when they talk about Carolyn is

that, while the *Guardian's* free online model has brought it millions of new readers across the world, it has never been a financial success," observes media journalist Torin Douglas.

He accompanied her and other *Guardian* executives on a wine-tasting trip to the Loire for its big advertisers back in 1986. At the time, the newspaper wanted to persuade the marketing community to remain with the *Guardian*, rather than move their business to the newly launched *Independent*.

McCall, who'd spent a brief spell as a teacher at Holland Park School, was then working as a planner in the advertising team at the *Guardian*. "She was brilliant at her job, very personable, and built an excellent young team," Douglas recalls.

Brought up as an only child in India by British parents, ITV's new CEO was educated there and in Singapore, followed by a spell in her teens at a Catholic boarding school in the UK.

At the University of Kent she read history and politics, subsequently taking a masters in politics at the University of London.

At the *Guardian's* sales department she was guided by her mentor, Caroline Marland, Fleet Street's first female advertising director. Together, the two women succeeded in turning the paper into a formidable advertising medium, thanks in large part to the hundreds of public-sector and

education job ads aggregated in special, weekly sections and a hefty media section (previously unknown in Fleet Street).

In 2006, she succeeded Bob Phillis as CEO of the Guardian Media Group, having been appointed Managing Director of Guardian Newspapers six years earlier.

Married with three children, Dame

Carolyn, 56, is famous for being hyper-organised and for her relentless dedication to the job at hand.

She is also known for her inclusive approach to running companies. "She loves building teams and leading from the front," notes an admirer. "She has a really open,

transparent style of management."

In 2016, she was approached to run Marks & Spencer. It is understood that one of the reasons she turned the job down was because she was interested in working again in media, rather than in retail.

At EasyJet, she maintained her contacts in advertising and is perhaps better connected with the world of advertising than anyone who has ever run ITV.

So, how will Carolyn McCall outmanoeuvre the online tech giants, which are moving into the business of commissioning long-form content for platforms such as YouTube Red?

Expect to see a greater emphasis on individually targeted advertising and greater use of data – and more collaboration between ITV, Channel 4 and Sky as they find common cause against the Silicon Valley behemoths.

"We need to keep the value of our mass audience, which is a real asset, but we need to ensure that TV advertising is data-rich and targeted," says one ITV insider.

That she comes to ITV unburdened by any baggage of having worked in television before could prove be a big advantage. One experienced TV head suggests this may result in a close working relationship with Channel 4's new CEO, Alex Mahon. "That would be a very formidable alliance," he forecasts.

Few would disagree. ■

SHE LOVES BUILDING TEAMS AND LEADING FROM THE FRONT. SHE HAS A REALLY OPEN, TRANSPARENT STYLE OF MANAGEMENT

Rex Features

have battled an advertising downturn, ITV's ad revenues appear to have ended strongly.

McCall's seven-year tenure as CEO of EasyJet was crucial to her landing the ITV job. After joining the company in 2010, she turned it into one of Europe's best-performing airlines, almost quadrupling its share price.

That she did it without ever having worked in aviation before was a point not lost on ITV.

Michael O'Leary, head of rival Ryanair, once famously labelled her a "media luvvie" but he ended up eating his words. "I clearly underestimated her and I was proved wrong," he told the *FT*. "She forced us to up our game on customer service. EasyJet and the industry are better as a result of her tenure."

It is sometimes overlooked that EasyJet and ITV are both regulated, international companies – something that clearly weighed in her favour

Online video

Google hails a world of opportunity

The search engine giant's European head, **Matt Brittin**, tells the RTS why online and TV need to work together



Matt Brittin

Broadcasters fear that the global tech giants are hungry for their audiences and advertising. They are probably right to be fearful, but Google's Matt Brittin had some soothing words for Britain's TV community, mixed in with criticism, when he spoke at a sold-out RTS event in late November.

"It's a wonderful industry, but it's incredibly inward-looking in the UK," he said. "Don't take this as me being rude, but – as a Brit who's proud of, and has grown up with, our amazing content – [I urge you to experiment] with different platforms and technologies. I really believe that there's an enormous opportunity for original British content."

"We need some positive opportunities for export right now and the [online] audience is there, it's growing and it's going to double in the next five years."

He continued: "People are watching more video than ever before. If you're making great video content, there's never been a better time to build an audience – 3.5 billion people online today; 5 billion online by 2020."

As Google's head of business and operations in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, he was in conversation with journalist Kate Bulkley at the RTS early-evening event.

She wanted to know whether he accepted that YouTube (snapped up by Google in 2006 for what now seems the ridiculously small sum of £883m) should face greater regulation in the UK. "YouTube is a significant video consumption platform," she argued. "You're looking more and more like a broadcaster. Why shouldn't [you] be regulated like a broadcaster?"

Paul Hamparsumian

[COMMERCIAL BROADCASTERS] NEED TO SHOW UP, WISE UP AND SPEED UP

The Google executive agreed that YouTube was now a huge platform: "About 1 billion hours [of video] are watched every day, of which about 100 million hours are on television screens – that's actually the fastest growing of the screens."

But he did not accept that YouTube was a broadcaster – which he defined as an organisation that commissions programmes from "professional content creators" to fill airtime. "On YouTube, anybody with a smartphone can upload video content to a YouTube platform and it can be accessed anywhere. That feels slightly different to a broadcaster."

He was adamant that YouTube was already sufficiently regulated: "We have to comply with all the rules in all the countries in which we operate. We're not a broadcaster, but we do have responsibilities and regulations that we need to comply with."

Lord Puttnam, the film producer, is prominent among those who have argued for greater regulation of the tech giants. Indeed, he used an RTS lecture in October to advance the case that legislation – together with robust journalism – was required to protect democracy.

"I'm a big fan of Lord Puttnam – he's a fantastic industry figure but also a thinker on issues," said the Google chief. "I don't think any business person is going to put their hand up and say, 'We need loads more regulation.' But we are regulated. We don't have the same set of rules as a newspaper or a television station – and I think that's appropriate."

With the launch of its new subscription service, YouTube Red, in the US two years ago, Google has started to commission original, professional ▶

Exploit your data to boost revenue

Google's Matt Brittin mounted a stout defence against charges that his company is hoovering up both advertising data and television's advertising revenues.

'Data is the new oil – everybody wants data,' suggested event chair Kate Bulkley. The Google executive strongly refuted this assertion: 'Oil is a scarce resource, the control of which has, historically, led to tremendous wealth.'

'Data is an infinite resource – we're creating data at an astonishing rate. With oil, either you've got it or we've got it – we can't both have it.'

'With data, you and I and everyone in this room can all have the same data and all use it at the same time, and we can combine it with our own data.'

'It's not [about] having data – it's what you do with it.'

The chair tried a new line of attack. 'TV companies think that you are after their advertising money,' she said. 'Your business model is advertising.'

'Absolutely right, and we will compete violently for advertising just

like the rest of the industry does,' he responded.

But the Google chief claimed that YouTube was generous with the advertising revenue it pulled in, returning much of it to the people making its videos and programmes.

'On YouTube, when we put advertising around content, the majority of the revenue goes to the content creator,' he said, adding that 'the split is around the 50:50 mark'.

Moreover, he argued, YouTube attracted a different type of advertiser to those buying spots on linear-TV: 'People often say that Facebook and Google are taking all the money out of the market... but search advertising is a whole new category of advertising.'

'When you look at a TV company or a newspaper, they typically have 100 to 200 advertisers that represent 80+% of the total revenue.'

'Google has millions of advertisers – the vast majority are small companies that have never advertised on television or in the newspapers.'

QUESTION & ANSWER

Q What can online platforms offer sport?

A Matt Brittin: There are huge opportunities for sports – some do it well, some are just starting, some haven't figured it out, yet.

Will we bid for big sports rights? We have done – for cricket in India in the past as an experiment – [but] I don't think, right now, that the advertising model is enough to fund that kind of bid; a subscription model might be.

I don't think that we're going to be at the front of the queue on subscription models for a while, but who knows? It depends on the consumer.... But I do think that

there's an opportunity for every sport and every hobby to be online and share its passion.

Q Do you have three pieces of advice for a commercial broadcaster?

A Matt Brittin: Show up, wise up and speed up....

Show up: be where the digital stuff is happening... you've got to be where people are....

Wise up: data is abundant and can be used by everyone, but it's totally useless unless it leads to an insight that can allow you to take action.... [In] the digital world, every interaction can make you smarter....

Speed up – literally. If a mobile page takes more than three seconds to load, 50% of people leave. Speed is now the killer app online and on mobile [and there is] also speed of organisational change.... 5 billion people [will be online] by 2020 on 25 billion connected devices.



► content. Just like, some would argue, a broadcaster.

“Ideally, you want a combination of advertising, subscription and pay-per-view services in the digital world,” explained Google’s European business head. “You want people to have lots of different ways to monetise their content over time.”

With YouTube Red already available in Australia, Mexico, New Zealand and South Korea, it would come to the UK “at some point”, he added. “It’s been relatively popular so far. It gives you a whole bunch of benefits, including exclusive content [and] some music capability.”

But he denied that the company had “any ambition to follow” the model of SVoD companies such as Netflix. “YouTube will remain overwhelmingly this enormous platform where people can share and find content of all sorts.”

Later on at the RTS event, he tackled the eruption of fake news online, and Google’s response to it. The company wanted “good content to thrive and have a sustainable business model,” he said, “and we want to stop bad actors and bad content”

Google News, which launched 15 years ago and now aggregates news from 80,000 accredited sources, provides some of that “good content”, he argued.

Google’s approach to the “bad content” was to “follow the money” and

remove the economic incentive to produce fake news.

“Why was a Macedonian village publishing 100 websites about the US elections, purporting to be from US newspapers?” he asked. “Because they could make money. We don’t want them to make money from our programmes, so we have tried to introduce much better screening for misrepresentation – you have to be who you say you are.”

At the end of the evening, he sought to reassure broadcasters worried by

the rise of the online platforms: “At Google, we love the TV industry and we want to be partners in the transformation. Some bits of it are bumpy, but, genuinely, it’s a huge opportunity.

“I hope we can be partners in making amazing content that comes from here and thrives across the world.” ■

The RTS early-evening event ‘In conversation with Matt Brittin’ was held at The Hospital Club in central London on 29 November. The producer was Paul Naha-Biswas.

Making the web safe for brands

Over the past year, brands have withdrawn business from YouTube in response to their ads inadvertently being placed next to extremist material and inappropriate videos of children.

At the RTS event, Google’s Matt Brittin explained how YouTube had been addressing this problem. ‘We’ve put in place a combination of policies [and] enforcement processes, and [worked] closely with real experts in some of these types of content – we’ve made real progress,’ he said. ‘One of our challenges has been: how do you identify these things at speed and address them before they get any audience at all – this is where

we use a combination of people and machines.

‘People look at and classify videos against these policies, including working with expert non-governmental organisations and language experts, and then [use] what they’ve done to train machines.’

The Google executive claimed that ‘more than 83% of the content we remove for violent extremism is removed before it meets any human “flagger”’.

Since June, when YouTube introduced a new child protection policy, he said, 2 million videos no longer supported advertising and 165,000 videos had been removed altogether.



Adam Lawrence

Cool for Katz

Ian Katz starts his career at Channel 4 on 8 January buoyed up with the confidence that comes from defeating far more experienced TV rivals for a plum job. He convinced the new Chief Executive, Alex Mahon, that he possesses the ideas, drive and maverick light touch to sustain the broadcaster's creative crackle.

As an outsider, the new director of programmes, who is 50 in February, argued that Channel 4 must, above all else, be distinctive. He wants more edgy disruption brought into the schedules, which, arguably, were polished to something of a monotone by the powerful influence of his predecessor, Jay Hunt.

This is not so different from Mark Thompson's mantra of "Do it first; make trouble; inspire change", which he promulgated when he took over Channel 4 in 2002. The challenge is, of course, how to do it.

The shock over Katz's lack of broadcasting experience that engulfed the company when his appointment was

Channel 4

Channel 4's new director of programmes, **Ian Katz**, is well equipped to bring a new vitality to the broadcaster, says **Maggie Brown**

announced on 31 October has been replaced by detached pragmatism. "That's a matter for Alex Mahon," snaps one senior Channel 4 commissioner, when approached for comment.

But there is still concern that powerful independent producers may opportunistically see him as a blank sheet of paper to inscribe their interests upon. The size of his annual budget for original programmes – even in an ad recession – of some £450m to £500m inevitably

engenders respect and fuels the hope that there will be new favourites.

"I'm really excited about the Channel 4 opportunities opening up for us," says Jamie Isaacs, who heads Avalon Television's factual division.

A clue to Katz's remarkable elevation from his previous role editing *Newsnight* can be found in his track record as a former editor of the *Guardian's* tabloid supplement, *G2*. From 1998 to 2006, he ran a mischievous publication and delighted in the juxtaposition of high and low culture.

G2 embraced short, quick-fire regulars such as *Pass Notes*, serious long reads and introduced a range of prominent new columnists, including the great Charlie Brooker. At that time, Katz was viewed by the paper's old guard as too tabloid.

Stephen Lambert, CEO of Studio Lambert and a friend who encouraged him in his candidacy, says he will bring that *G2* "fizz and energy" to Channel 4. But adds that his friend will also need to pay attention to 9:00pm returning series, which ➤

➤ would include Lambert's own production *Gogglebox*.

Daily newspapers tend to hone buzzy characters; Katz, after 23 years of *Guardian* deadlines, is a fast worker. Within two weeks of his appointment, he had held introductory meetings with Channel 4 commissioning chiefs and department heads, and placed obligatory calls to key talent, including Jon Snow, who is emphatically back in favour.

Fresh from one such conversation, Kelly Webb-Lamb, Channel 4's head of factual entertainment, told the *Televisual Factual Festival* on 14 November: "I feel really upbeat and positive about it. Having someone coming in who doesn't have the received wisdom of what works for factual entertainment will be a creative challenge.

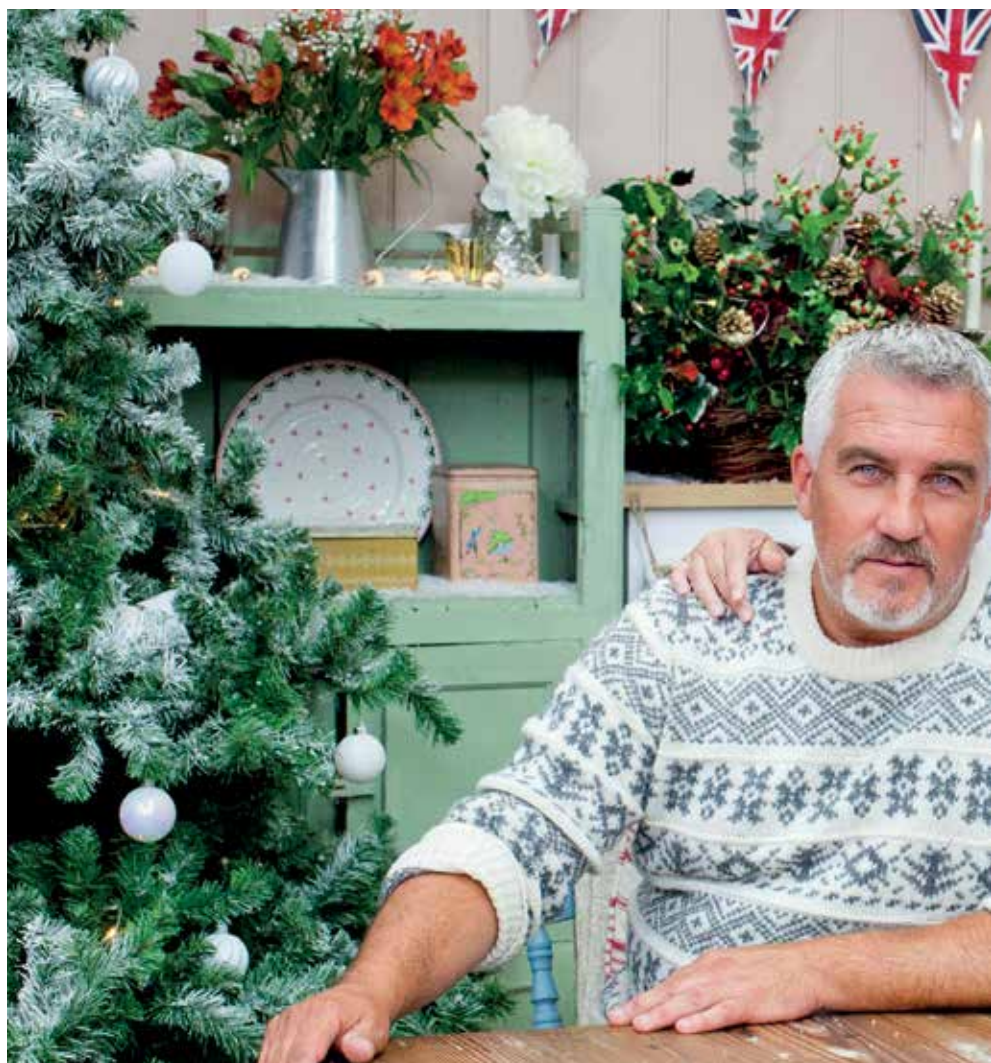
"Already, [he has] some questions. That's where brilliant creativity comes from. I feel that it is genuinely an opportunity to rethink the way we make things, what we make things about and who we make them for."

This suggests a dialling down of celebrity factual entertainment, or, at least, a more careful use of such shows. Expect, too, a return to shorter series, more single documentaries and fewer formatted shows. Nick Mirsky, Channel 4's head of documentaries, who was speaking at the same conference as Lamb, talked up a quirky, three-part comedy-documentary, *Inside the EU*.

Another shift will flow from Katz's stated intention to run Channel 4 commissioning in a more devolved way. During his predecessor's reign, some referred to Hunt as "the Monarch" and feared her piercing intelligence. Her "diktats" included a recent ban on more dating shows.

The new director of programmes knows that he has gaps in his knowledge. Even the fastest of learners would struggle to master the computerised programme schedule and the detail of fulfilling remit quota targets. He will need a strong and experienced team around him until he grasps all the arts of television.

His main job is to have and select ideas. He is open to the prospect that Channel 4's existing commissioners may already be ideas mines. So it is



likely that he can avoid the wholesale changes of the 2010-13 period. Then, almost every department head outside of news and current affairs changed.

Hunt had the experience to know when to strip a series across successive days (as with *The State*) because she had done this at BBC One. She also knew how to analyse a pilot and adjust it for success. Remember, *Googlebox* was not an overnight sensation.

It was Hunt who alighted on Noel Fielding for *The Great British Bake Off*. Her successor will have to rule as *primus inter pares*. He promises more space for differences of tone and taste.

On his two-month gardening leave from *Newsnight*, Katz has been on his best behaviour, avoiding blunders such as his tweet after joining *Newsnight* in 2013 – when he lambasted stock political interviews and called Labour MP Rachel Reeves "boring, snoring".

An unsuccessful bid to land the *Guardian* editorship in 2014 made him look slippery. But his lengthy experience of news and current affairs – he

rose to deputy editor of the *Guardian* – is an essential part of his skillset.

Prash Naik, the outgoing head of legal affairs at Channel 4, emphasises that, in a crisis, the director of programmes must serve as a shield to protect the chief executive (ultimately, the editor-in-chief) and the broadcaster's reputation.

As a current affairs expert, the programme chief knows the station needs more raw, live debate, partly to reflect Brexit and the Government's predicament. He admires *Channel 4 News*, despite its recent gaffes. One swift way to make an impact at the broadcaster (given that it will take two years for his first commissions to come through), would be to run more live debate and satire.

The channel-defining cult comedy-drama *Black Mirror* was lost to Netflix in 2015. Another cancelled favourite of Katz's is the East End gang drama *Top Boy*, which is being revived by Netflix.

Humans, soon returning for its third series, is another show that gets a big tick from him. The broadcaster has



The Great Festive Bake Off

The challenges facing Ian Katz

The Great British Bake Off has given a boost to Channel 4, bringing it large audiences for the first time since it possessed *Big Brother*. But ratings still swing wildly. Gogglebox (launched in 2013) is the broadcaster's most consistently successful and profitable strand.

Channel 4 has seen the rights to horse racing and Formula One whisked away, after working hard on their presentation. It needs replacement sports, especially new, youth-skewing ones. And it also needs programmes that impress the Channel 4 brand on the young. E4 is under pressure from ITV2.

Channel 4 is hunting for fresh 9:00pm programmes to replace – and reduce dependency on – fixed-rig shows such as *One Born Every Minute* (launched in 2010) and *24 Hours in A&E* (2011).

These are commissioned in long runs and rely on access agreements. Arguably, they have edged out fresh, risk-taking programmes, but they have buttressed audience share and, therefore, ad income.

Established 8:00pm features, including long-running property shows, form the backbone of profitable More4. Ian Katz will have to address this tension, trading reliability for risks.

Survival formats, including *The Island*, are out of favour. *Eden* flopped and *Mutiny* overspent.

Drama matters. However, *Electric Dreams*, the series of co-produced Philip K Dick adaptations, failed to ignite viewers.

Grayson Perry is a treasure, but arts, music, culture and authored history have been neglected. The broadcaster has sought programmes on Muslim issues, though it spent nothing on religion, per se, last year.

Channel 4

been concerned that top producers will pick Netflix over Channel 4, but it has been assured that they know the value of working for a linear broadcaster.

New comedy acts are needed. Entertainment is in the doldrums, beyond *The Last Leg*. Alan Carr: *Chatty Man* is lacking a vehicle.

And then there is relocation. Along with Mahon, the new programme director has committed to making meaningful changes, not token ones. By which, he means having commissioners located in regional production centres, rather than a couple of hundred back-office jobs leaving London.

Katz, born in South Africa, is a North Londoner, who lives in Islington and attended University College School and New College, Oxford. His wife, Justine Roberts, founded and runs Mumsnet. They have four children, so knows from his own experience that teenagers rarely, if ever, watch scheduled TV.

In common with opinion leaders and politicians, he was shaken by the Brexit vote but regards it as evidence

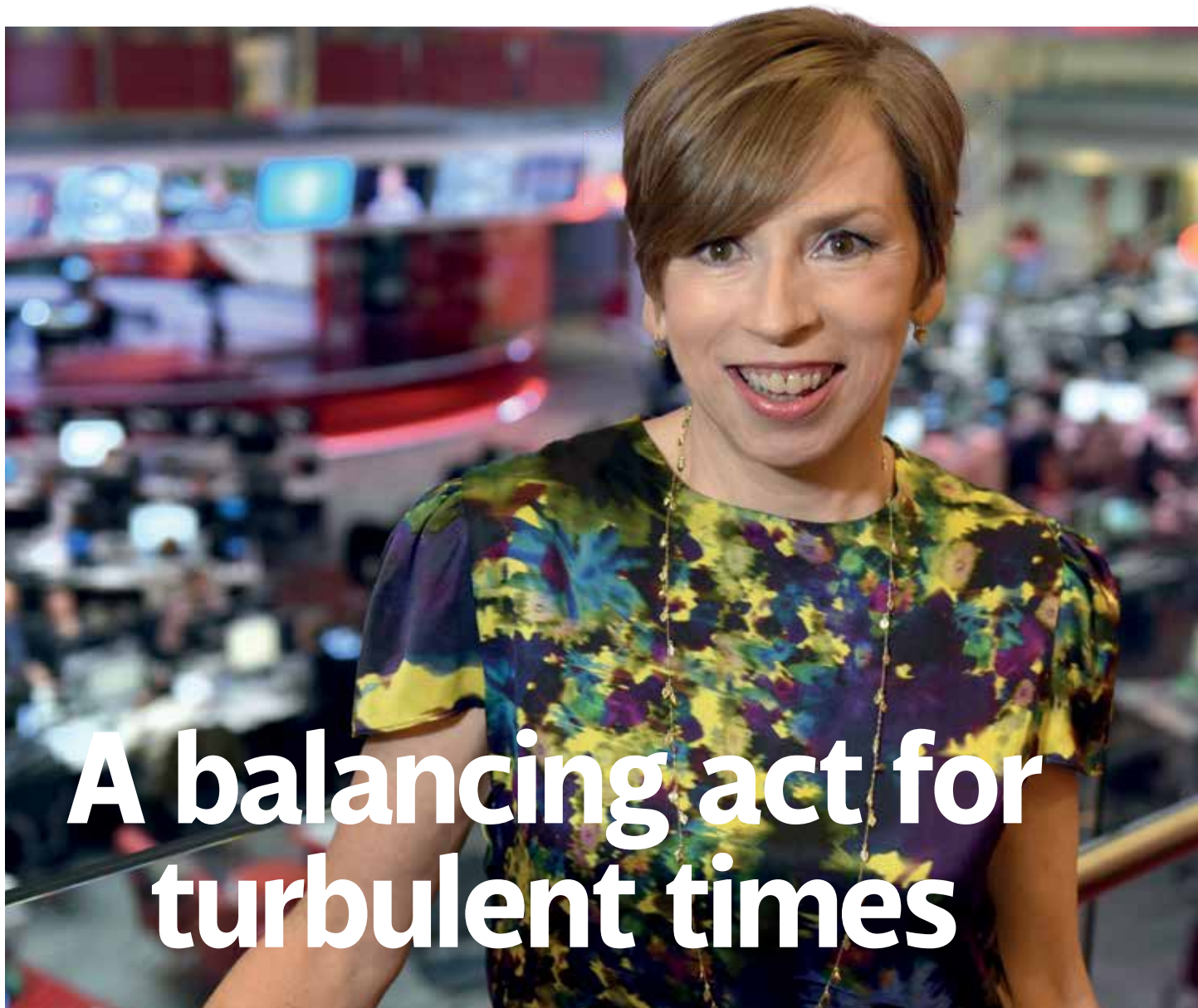
that news organisations and many politicians were out of touch.

The new programme director will focus on driving forward the All4 digital platform, with its 16 million registered users (though not all are using it). Offering catch-up and archived programmes, and working towards personalised advertising, it is the major legacy of David Abraham's regime and key to retaining Channel 4's youth and young-adult audience. The launch of *Walter Presents*, which appeals to more mature viewers, has underscored its potential as a host.

As a newspaper executive, Ian Katz wrestled wrestling with the digital revolution a decade before broadcasting was hit by similar disruption. He ran the *Guardian's* internet site for a while.

So he starts with confidence. But the moment he begins rejecting proposals from independent producers, the honeymoon will be over.

"Taking that job is like being a goalie," quipped Avalon's Jamie Isaacs. "You are going to be hit – it goes with the job." ■



A balancing act for turbulent times

Fran Unsworth will need no reminding that the BBC calls itself “the biggest provider of news in the UK” and “the world’s largest broadcast news organisation” and that it recently announced the “biggest expansion since the 1940s” in international operations.

With more than 35 years’ experience of working for the corporation, she also knows that BBC News regularly quotes independent evidence that it is, “by far, the most trusted and impartial news provider in the UK”.

At 77% of the UK population, the reach of BBC TV news is double that of its nearest competitor. And it has a threefold lead in online news.

The corporation calculates that its “total global news audience” last year was no fewer than 345.5 million

BBC News

Stewart Purvis argues that **Fran Unsworth’s** experience will be vital in her new role as the BBC’s head of news

people. While everyone else hacks away at their local news operations, the BBC has found enough cash in its attic to scrap planned cuts of £10m to its local radio stations.

In other words, Unsworth, who was the favourite to land the job, having overseen an expansion of the World Service, will be running an empire that encompasses TV and radio journalism

across the globe, websites, podcasts and Snapchat.

She can expect an annual salary of around £350,000 and, based on her predecessor James Harding’s expenses for 2016–17, can anticipate travelling as far afield as New York, Moscow, Riyadh, Istanbul and Milton Keynes and spend five nights at the Davos economic summit.

One of her big decisions will be how to run the place and how to divide her day between management and journalism. Spend too much time in those meetings brilliantly parodied in *WIA* and you lose touch with the day’s news. Avoid them to focus on journalism and you won’t be there to say “bollocks” when a “brilliant, brilliant” director of strategic governance makes a move on your patch.

The buck will absolutely stop with

her on how £80m is to be saved each year until 2022 from the licence-fee-funded news operations.

We don't know what percentage this represents of the total BBC News budget, because that figure isn't published. What we do know is that the BBC's two TV news channels have to shave 10% off their total costs. Neither can be considered over-resourced compared with their competitors.

BBC Newsgathering has to "streamline" its operations by sending fewer people to cover the same story. And Ofcom is due to review the BBC's operations in the English regions – also part of the news empire.

Some £8m per year is already being moved out of internal budgets to pay for 150 "local democracy reporters", employed by external regional news organisations.

The BBC's Annual Plan has a long and ambitious to-do list for Unsworth. Just a few examples: more impact on young audiences; more Reality Checks and other ways of fighting back against fake news; more "slow news" to develop greater understanding of events; more video on mobile through the BBC News app. A lot more seems expected for less money.

There are those in BBC News who think that the cost-cutting has been left late and that the new director will have to cut deeply and painfully in order to meet the targets.

Moreover, sorting out equal pay for the men and women in BBC News earning under £150,000 is likely to be another net cost. This issue appears to have been simmering long before the names of on-screen talent paid more than £150,000 were disclosed.

Coincidentally, while the overall savings target is £80m, an equivalent figure is arriving in new money from the UK government. In an unusual and little noticed "give and take" process, the BBC promised savings to take on the cost of free TV licences for the over-75s, but was then offered money by the government for a significantly enhanced World Service.

However, central newsroom jobs

aren't exactly interchangeable with those in new language services in Amharic, Igbo, Marathi and Pidgin English.

As a result of a separate government decision made during the Charter review process, Unsworth will be the first to face a fully independent outside regulator, who can rule on the BBC's impartiality.

My own experience as a senior Ofcom executive was under the old

A LOT MORE SEEMS EXPECTED FOR LESS MONEY

system. Then, the regulator had the final say on what used to be called "harm and offence, taste and decency" but not on "impartiality and accuracy", which the BBC kept to itself.

I would categorise the BBC's attitude to Ofcom as unduly aggressive, bordering on hostile to the very idea of independent regulation. A sign that this mindset has not completely disappeared under the broader system of Ofcom oversight emerged this autumn, during a dispute between the two organisations over audience complaints.

This was resolved only when Ofcom demanded that the BBC publish the data about such complaints that ITV and Channel 4 already disclosed.

One way of the BBC limiting such clashes with Ofcom is to admit to on-air mistakes earlier than it has traditionally done. This may explain the recent decision by the BBC's executive complaints unit to overrule the *Today* programme and to apologise for breaching editorial guidelines by allowing Lord Lawson to claim that global temperatures had not risen in the last decade.

The item was transmitted in August. The apology was made in October. In the world of complaints handling, that is prompt.

The downside for the director of news is that she may be perceived as

failing to stand up for her team sufficiently at a time when Brexit has created new and lasting levels of toxicity.

At an industry event last year, a BBC executive was asked why ITV, not the BBC, had the bright idea of using George Osborne and Ed Balls as election-night pundits. The executive replied that the BBC could not have done so because both men were anti-Brexit.

It sounded like a symptom of what some academics have called "regulated equivocation", where "objectivity is trumped by impartiality".

Lord Hall has said that Fran Unsworth brings a "combination of excellent news judgement, authority, management know-how and the trust of her colleagues, both in news and across the BBC."

The new chief's experience is beyond doubt. She is a known quantity, unlike James Harding, who was a newspaper person through and through.

Her previous roles include working as the BBC's home news editor, head of news gathering and deputy director of news and current affairs. Tellingly, she was acting director of news and current affairs in 2012-13, following the Jimmy Savile scandal.

Running BBC News and Current Affairs has always been one of British broadcasting's biggest and most demanding jobs. Her appointment can be interpreted as turning to an experienced hand during a time of unprecedented challenges for everyone working in broadcast news.

Crucially, she is no stranger to cutting costs. Three years ago, she explained to me: "Another £50m [of cuts], well, it's going to be tough. I'm not saying it's going to be easy. But I think the challenge is to do it in a way that the audience doesn't notice. And the fact that we've done it before gives me some kind of hope." ■

Stewart Purvis was one of the BBC's first news trainees in 1969. He joined ITN in 1972 and went on to become editor-in-chief and Chief Executive. He is currently a non-executive director of Channel 4 and writes here in a personal capacity.

RTS Masterclasses I

The road to the top is rarely a straight one, as **Matthew Bell** and **Steve Clarke** report

Andy Harries CEO, Left Bank Pictures

The Chief Executive and co-founder of Left Bank Pictures claimed his TV career had been “very up and down”. He recalled: “One of my biggest disasters was being a TV presenter – I was put on screen and it ended in total humiliation, with me being fired at the end of the show.”

It has certainly been a varied career. Andy Harries spent his formative TV years at Granada, making factual programmes, including *World in Action*, before becoming a freelance producer and director.

In 1992, he was appointed Granada’s controller of comedy (his “greatest love”), making *The Mrs Merton Show* and *The Royle Family* with the late Caroline Ahearne. In 2000, he took over drama at the company, subsequently reprising police series *Prime Suspect* following a gap of seven years: “I had a bit of an obsession with Helen Mirren – I thought she was the greatest actress in the UK.”

The Deal, documenting the leadership “pact” between Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, saw Harries work with writer Peter Morgan. It won numerous awards and marked the start of a long, successful partnership, which includes *The Queen* (again starring Mirren) and now *The Crown*. “Writers are what it’s all about,” said the Left Bank chief. “The key to my career as a scripted [producer] has always been my relationship with writers.”

He set up Left Bank Pictures a decade ago and the drama specialist has gone from strength to strength, moving beyond traditional UK markets to work with US tech giants such as Netflix and Amazon. “If you’re going into media, you’ve arrived at a fantastic time – the [TV] world has totally changed,” he said. “Streaming services from tech companies have taken over.”

Running his own indie has also



RTS Student Programme Masterclasses

given him more control over output: “If you wouldn’t watch the show – don’t make it.”

David Nath Co-founder, Story Films

David Nath served his apprenticeship on a local newspaper. “It was a brilliant training ground for work in television because you learnt how to tell a story,” he said.

Journalism helped to prepare him for a career that has been characterised by hard-hitting, often heartbreaking, documentaries. Channel 4’s 2001 film *Brian’s Story* followed a Cambridge graduate reduced, by mental illness and alcoholism, to homelessness.

There was no happy ending – Brian Davis was found dead before the programme was broadcast, leaving Nath with a difficult decision: “The last time I saw him, we had a good conversation about what the film was. I felt he was in a position at that point to give consent.”

Wanting to spend more time with

his young family, Nath moved into executive producing, first at LWT and then with indie Betty, but the lure of directing proved too strong.

“You can forget the reason that you went into [TV] in the first place,” he said. “I need to make films because it makes me the person I am.”

Since returning to directing, he has won Baftas for Channel 4 series *Bedlam* and *The Murder Detectives*. The former was filmed at an NHS mental health trust; the latter examined all facets of a murder in Bristol.

In 2016, he and fellow film-maker Peter Beard co-founded Story Films to make documentaries and fiction. Nath has already notched up two single dramas for Channel 4: *The Watchman*, starring Stephen Graham as a CCTV operator who goes rogue; and *Unspeakable*, with Indira Varma, who suspects her boyfriend may be a paedophile.

The subject matter of the dramas wouldn’t be out of place in a documentary, he conceded: “We don’t put ourselves in a straitjacket about the form a film will take. We look at the most visceral way of telling [the story] – it could be documentary or it could be drama.”



Andy Harries (right)
being interviewed
by Alex Graham

HAVING CAREER LOWS GIVES YOU A STEELINESS THAT YOU ABSOLUTELY NEED IN THIS BUSINESS... WORKING IN TV CAN BE A BIT OF A ROLLER-COASTER RIDE

With competition from social media, TV journalists are under acute time pressure to publish, but it is always better to wait until the facts are checked.

"There have been times when mistakes have been made," she stressed. "Our approach now is to check first and not just retweet and put stuff out unless you can verify it."

She acknowledged that talking to people in stressful situations, such as a riot or a tragedy like the Grenfell fire, was challenging for reporters. Being polite and respectful of individuals' privacy was paramount.

On the subject of diversity, Soni acknowledged that broadcast newsrooms have a huge amount to do to reflect the social and racial make-up of the nation: "A lot of newsrooms are still very white and very male. There are a lot of people who went to private school.

"My own background [she was brought up on a Leicester council estate] meant that I could bring a different perspective to the newsroom. We do need to better reflect the communities we serve."

Angela Jain MD, ITV Studios Entertainment

Never underestimate the power of TV. That was one of the key points made by factual entertainment specialist Angela Jain during the final masterclass.

Ten years ago, she found herself at the centre of the *Celebrity Big Brother* racism row involving the Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty and Jade Goody.

As head of the *Big Brother* commissioning team at Channel 4, it was Jain's job to help douse the media firestorm that erupted when Goody was accused of racially abusing Shetty in the *Big Brother* house.

"In many respects, I define it as my absolute career low," recalled Jain, now Managing Director of ITV Studios

Entertainment, where she oversees such shows as *I'm a Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here!*, *Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway*, *University Challenge* and *Love Island*. "I was door-stepped, I couldn't live in my house and I had a 15-month-old child at the time."

She added: "You think that you're just making a television show but its impact can be far-reaching. Every day, I think about that. The decisions that I make are completely influenced by the power of television.

"Uninvited, you go straight into people's living rooms and that carries with it a responsibility. It's exciting but, when the shit hits the fan, it's really quite horrible."

However, the entertainment executive learnt from the experience: "You're a stupid person if you make the same mistake twice.... Now, I can definitely see that situation before it occurs....

"Having career lows gives you a steeliness that you absolutely need in this business. You have to be pretty Teflon-coated because working in TV can be a bit of a roller-coaster ride."

As channel commissioner at E4, Jain commissioned such hits as *The Inbetweeners* and *Misfits* as well as buying *The Big Bang Theory* and *Glee*.

She urged people from all backgrounds to consider working in TV: "If I can do it, then anyone in this room can.... The challenge for people like me is to make TV feel as open as possible. There's plenty of work there but I think people feel that it's not for them.

"The more I can say that it is for you – because working in TV should be for everyone – the happier I feel." ■

The RTS Student Programme Masterclasses were held at the IET in central London on 14 November. The sessions were produced by Helen Scott. The interviewers were Alex Graham, Joint CEO, Two Cities Television; Ruth Pitt, creative director, Under the Moon; Deborah Kelly, head of training and communications, Thomson Foundation; and Boyd Hilton, entertainment director, Heat magazine.

Darshna Soni Channel 4 News home affairs correspondent

Darshna Soni stressed the importance of getting under the skin of a news story: it is imperative for reporters to leave their desks, knock on people's doors and make contacts.

"If the story is too good to be true, then it probably is," she reminded the audience. As a Midlands-based journalist who came to reporting relatively late in her career – her first job was working for one of Britain's first black MPs, Bernie Grant – Soni advised against taking everything on social media at face value.

A far better way of discovering the truth of any situation is the traditional journalistic method of talking to people face-to-face. That way, it is possible to build up a network of contacts, who can help you sift facts from fiction and alert you to what's really happening.

"Don't be lazy, don't just look on Twitter or Facebook. Get out there, yourself, and actually see what's happening," she advised.

RTS Masterclasses II

The first priority is hands-on experience, hear **Matthew Bell** and **Steve Clarke**

Sound

Sound has often been dubbed the “Cinderella” craft of the TV industry, but this was not a description that found favour with recordist Mick Duffield and sound supervisor Kevin Duff.

Duffield is usually found on location, whether that’s in the Alps for the Bafta award-winning documentary film *Touching the Void* or China for BBC Two’s *The Story of China*. For the former, he had to capture sound from a crevasse in a glacier, 4,000m above sea level and with temperatures far below zero.

“One of the wonderful things about the job is that you get put in the most extraordinary situations and gain privileged access to all kinds of environments,” he said.

Duff works on studio and live shows, combining both specialisms for *The Voice* on BBC One and, now, ITV.

Earlier this year, he supervised the sound at the Ypres concert to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Passchendaele for BBC Two. “That was a big job and quite terrifying, but [it gave me a] buzz,” he said. “If you capture the sound, that’s [the] hit.”

Discussing his fondness for live sound, Duff said: “It is about capturing the moment. Some of my favourite recordings aren’t the [best quality], but you can hear an atmosphere.”

Camerawork

Wildlife cinematographer Sophie Darlington and director of photography Christopher Titus King have seen the world from behind a lens. “I’ve been from the bottom of the Pacific Ocean to the top of a volcano in Ethiopia and everywhere in between. I’ve had the most amazing experiences – and been paid to do it,” said King, whose work straddles documentary (BBC One’s *Seven Ages of Britain*) and drama (History mini-series *The Bible*).

Darlington has shot cheetahs in Africa, macaques on a tropical beach

The Voice

RTS Craft Skills Masterclasses

in Thailand and bears in Alaska for programmes such as the BBC’s *Planet Earth II*. “If you do what we do, you have to love it because it’s not easy. It’s pretty much an all-consuming passion,” she said.

The footage of the macaques feasting on seafood is stunning, but it came at a cost: “I arrived back after three weeks with lacerations on my legs, and [covered in] sand fly and mosquito bites.”

While they both get to use the latest kit, they argued that the photographer’s eye matters more. “How you control the light that you capture in the lens,” said King, “and what you choose to [shoot] makes you a cameraperson.” And, added Darlington, “It doesn’t matter what camera you have, if the story’s no good you’re on to a loser.”

Editing

The importance of gaining early, hands-on experience as an editor was stressed by two experienced practitioners.

Film editor Johnny Rayner was disappointed that his tutors at university failed to provide useful tips on how to land a job in the industry. “It was all theory,” he said. “We were told some pretty negative stories about the industry, which was not helpful.”

However, via a contact, he secured work at a commercials production house. “That wasn’t what I wanted to do, but I was willing to do anything and do showreels and learn what everyone did on set,” he said. “I taught myself Final Cut Pro and Premiere. After a couple of years, I jumped from the commercials house to an edit house that did commercials and music videos. I made a short film and used that to teach myself Avid.”

Samuel R Santana, documentary and film editor, told students that it was important not “to be sniffy” about working on low-budget films.

“I did a very short, online course in order to get into low-budget TV. It was great experience and led to me working on National Geographic documentaries,” he said. “You shouldn’t be sniffy about low-budget productions as an editor because it’s fantastic experience. When you’ve got really tight deadlines, it makes you think quicker.” ■

The RTS Craft Skills Masterclasses were held at the IET in central London on 15 November. The sessions were produced by Helen Scott. The session chairs were: Ruth Pitt, creative director, Under the Moon (editing); Helen Scott (camera-work); and Andrew Sheldon, creative director, True North (sound).

OUR FRIEND IN THE WEST

As BBC Studios' Natural History Unit turned 60 this autumn, 2017 was a particularly exciting and busy year. But I was nervous about whether *Blue Planet II* would equal the impact of *Planet Earth II* almost a year previously.

In November 2016, *Planet Earth II* attracted record TV audiences in the UK; the series went on to win RTS, Bafta and Emmy awards. That sequence of racer snakes hurling themselves at hatchling marine iguanas won a Bafta for TV's most memorable moment.

Hence, my nervousness on Wednesday 4 October, a week before the Bristol premiere of *Blue Planet II*. Press pick-up had been extraordinary and positive; the London royal premiere the week before had gone well.

There were 106,000 ticket applications from the public for 200 seats. My colleagues impressed on me: "He's a rock star... we can fill Wembley Stadium and Ashton Gate Stadium simultaneously... This is greater demand than Glastonbury!" Sir David Attenborough was coming.

The *Blue Planet II* team had taken upward of four years to get here, with more than 1,000 hours spent in deep-sea submersibles and over 1 million feet of accumulated descent filming during the series.

Audiences come to natural history super-landmarks to escape and be immersed in awe and wonder. *Blue Planet II* is the first big natural history landmark to embed strong environmental stories within the body of the programmes.

We wanted to do this, but was it a

Julian Hector, head of BBC Studios' Natural History Unit, remembers a very special premiere in Bristol



risk to draw the audience away from the wonder?

The Bristol premiere was attended by numerous VIPs. They included former heads of the Natural History Unit (NHU) John Sparks, Alastair Fothergill, Keith Scholey, Neil Nightingale, Andrew Jackson and Wendy Darke.

The NHU was founded in 1957 by the then-head of BBC Bristol, Desmond Hawkins. He tried to persuade David Attenborough to come to Bristol to head it up but, alas, David had his own fledgling Travel Unit, based in London.

The premiere kicked off at 7:30pm and we were led to our reserved seats. Tony Hall was sitting next to me in the front row.

A few seats along were Sir David and Liz Bonnin. Liz had kindly agreed to host a question and answer session with Sir David and the *Blue Planet II* production team following the screening.

I noticed that Sir David looked a little fidgety. He stood up and walked over to Tony Hall and whispered into the DG's ear something along the lines of: "Do you want to sit at the back with me?" An exodus from the front row ensued as everyone followed Sir David.

My speech presented the natural world as a global commons that keeps all humanity alive. I pointed out how the natural world informs our humanity through human expression.

For 60 years, the NHU has delivered the wildlife close-up and defined new boundaries of technical innovation.

It was 1979's *Life on Earth*, produced by Chris Parsons and presented by Sir David, which spawned the super-landmark series.

Chris went on to lead the NHU. He was a hero in our history but is sadly no longer with us.

The Bristol premiere ended with rapturous applause from the audience, who were thrilled by our latest super-landmark. I shall never forget the sight of the amazingly youthful Sir David skipping down the stairs with Tony Hall and Liz Bonnin to join the production team for the Q&A.

What an extraordinary week that was. It brought together people who share a common vision to bring the wonder of the natural world to people's lives and who will never tire of giving nature a voice. ■

Julian Hector is head of the Natural History Unit, BBC Studios.

Painting a horse while riding a horse and concealing pineapples on their person are just two of the ridiculous challenges that have been set for comics who have appeared on *Taskmaster*.

The hit Dave game show has racked up five series since its launch in the summer of 2015 and it held a “champion of champions” special this December. It has also earned nominations for the RTS, Bafta and Emmy awards.

Yet, despite a couple of successful runs at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe (see box, opposite), broadcasters were reluctant to commission *Taskmaster* until UKTV’s then senior commissioning editor, Richard Watsham, gave it the green light.

At a sold-out RTS Futures event in early November at the London Transport Museum, the team behind *Taskmaster* – including its creator, comedian Alex Horne – revealed how they got TV’s oddest game show made.

“This was a really brave commission. No one else commissioned it because they couldn’t quite [visualise] it – they could see the enthusiasm but it felt risky,” said UKTV deputy director of commissioning Hilary Rosen. She has looked after the show at the broadcaster from the start.

Taskmaster didn’t follow the template of TV’s popular panel series: standalone shows, with different panellists each week. “We had to commission several episodes of [*Taskmaster*] because it has a narrative arc. The same people are in the show every week. No one else was doing that at the time,” explained Rosen.

“[UKTV] was very supportive and trusted us,” said executive producer and series director Andy Devonshire. “It’s not a panel show – and it’s a bit strange.”

The first series aired on Dave in the summer of 2015 with a top-notch panel of Frank Skinner, Josh Widdicombe, Roisin Conaty, Romesh Ranganathan and Tim Key. “We got Frank involved [and he] was crucial in terms of getting [that]

Matthew Bell learns how *Taskmaster* made the journey from the Edinburgh fringe to UKTV’s Dave

A panel show like no other



Taskmaster Greg Davies and show creator Alex Horne

calibre of people,” said Horne. Most of the tasks are invented by Horne. He described the process as similar to “coming up with a joke” but with a crucial difference: “I write the opening line and get a better comedian to write the punchline.”

The first part of the show is shot in a west London house where most of the tasks are attempted.

Occasionally, it goes further afield. Horne’s favourite task – “Impress the mayor” – took *Taskmaster* to Chesham Town Hall.

Not all tasks work, said series producer Andy Cartwright, who explained how “Burst the bubble wrap” was tried and failed in three series. “Everyone ended up stamping on it,” he said, which made for dull telly. The same task cropped up in the Swedish version of the show but worked better. “They were allowed to use petrol and torched it, which got rid of the bubbles very quickly,” said Devonshire. When the tasks for an episode have been filmed, the show takes to the studio where the “taskmaster”, comedian Greg Davies, assisted by Horne, passes judgement and awards points for the panellists’ performance.

“People have asked, ‘Were you annoyed that you didn’t get to host your own show?’” said Horne. But he revealed that Davies had always been his choice for the role: “Greg is ideal and it was always the plan. I love my role as sidekick.”

Rosen added: “We could say, ‘We always knew that Greg and Alex would have great chemistry – it was obvious from the start’ – but it’s not.

“Greg is known to be an extremely nice and popular person. But that doesn’t necessarily mean that the chemistry is going to [work] – you’ve got to be lucky.” ■

The RTS Futures event ‘Taskmaster masterclass: get your idea on TV’ was held at the London Transport Museum on 8 November. It was chaired by Sky commissioning editor Bill Hobbins

and produced by Tara Magan and Tom Popay.

QUESTION & ANSWER

Q Is *Taskmaster* expensive to make?

A Andy Devonshire: It is time-consuming – the scheduling of the comics is always tricky... but it’s not a massively expensive show. Its lo-fi nature is its beauty.

A Andy Cartwright: Andy [Devonshire] makes it look like an incredibly big production but it’s a crew of two [director of photography and second camera].

A Hilary Rosen: We never discuss our budgets... but our budgets are competitive to other channels.... We match the budget to the idea.

Q Why did you want Greg Davies to host the show?

A Alex Horne: I’ve done a lot of stand-up gigs and knew [Greg] from the circuit. I’d never worked with him on a TV show or done anything together on a stage. But I knew him enough to know he was right for the job....

He can do anything off the cuff, whereas I like doing a lot of anal preparation... so he knows I’ve got

the facts and figures, and I know he’s got the jokes.

Q How do you cast the show?

A Alex Horne: It starts with us thinking about which people would be great in the show.... For example, Jon Richardson would be great – I know him, he’s a funny bloke. [Then we think], who would work well with Jon – we can’t have another grumpy, short man.

So, we build it from one person.... We never have anyone we don’t want and [Dave] doesn’t have anyone it doesn’t want.

A Hilary Rosen: The casting of the show is something that we collaborate on and it takes a long time.

Q During pitching, was there one element you were desperate to keep in the show?

A Alex Horne: We wanted to have the same people in every episode – that seemed like it was breaking a mould.... We had to persuade [the commissioners] that it was more like a sitcom than a panel show.

People didn’t think [audiences] would tune in the next week to see the same people do the same things – [in fact,] people got to know the contestants and followed them.

Taskmaster: its life before TV

‘One of the many drawbacks of having children is that you can’t have as much fun as you used to. [My first child] was born in May [2009] and I wasn’t allowed to go to the Edinburgh Festival, which was the first time in a decade,’ recalled Alex Horne. ‘Tim Key did go – who was my friend – and he managed to win the Edinburgh Comedy Award that year. I wanted to be pleased for him, but was very jealous.’

Horne decided to launch his own awards, ‘Taskmaster’, and signed up 20 comics to compete. Every month of the year before the 2010 festival, Horne emailed them a challenge.

The first task he sent them was: ‘Deposit some money in my bank account – most money wins. Mark Watson put nearly £200 in; no one else

got over a pound – and that funded the project.’ Other tasks followed. ‘Send me something large through the post’ elicited copies of Eddie Large’s autobiography, while Key found a hedgehog in just eight minutes.

At the festival, all 20 comics were on stage with Horne as he reviewed their efforts. ‘It was a fun night, but it was long and unwieldy,’ recalled Horne, who halved the numbers of comics for a repeat performance at Edinburgh the following year.

Horne’s management company, Avalon, whose TV arm makes the sitcoms *Catastrophe* and *Man Down*, thought the Edinburgh show would work on screen, so ‘we filmed the [show], turned it into a pitch and started taking it around different TV companies’.

The RTS Futures Christmas Quiz was back at ITV's London Studios in 2017, and hosted by comedian Sue Perkins and *Naked Attraction*'s Anna Richardson, ably assisted by presenter Ria Hebden. Teams of young Futures members joined forces with industry heavyweights to battle it out across eight rounds of hard-hitting TV trivia. The Mile Sky Club took home the series of small plastic trophies on the night, as well as tickets to the filming of Channel 4's *The Last Leg*. Limping in to last place were the Hairy Baubles, Discovery's team.

Can you match wits with the winners? How do your baubles compare?

True or false

- 1 Scarlett Moffatt trained as a ballroom dancer. True or false?
- 2 Blue Peter's longest-serving female presenter was Valerie Singleton.
- 3 Meghan Markle was the 'briefcase girl' on the American version of *Deal or No Deal*.
- 4 Ant and Dec's first ever series, *Byker Grove*, was set in Sunderland.
- 5 Eric Spear, composer of the *Coronation Street* theme tune, received a grand total of £6 for his work.
- 6 Singer, presenter and actor Emma Bunton had a cameo role on *Neighbours*.
- 7 Award-winning documentary-maker Louis Theroux was in a cover band in his university days.

TV talent

- 1 Bruce Forsyth was well known for his catchphrases. Which of the following were his: 'I'm in charge', 'Good game, good game', 'Here, pussy, pussy', 'Give us a twirl'?
- 2 Which TV actor who made the big time on *The Wire* got his first break acting in *Crimewatch* reconstructions?
- 3 Comedy legend Lenny Henry is one of the founders of Comic Relief. What year did he kick it off?
- 4 What connects TV legend Clare Balding and national treasure Mo Farah?



From left: Anna Richardson, Sue Perkins and Ria Hebden

Paul Hampartsoumian

Xmas quiz

Televisual history

- 1 1970s: Which children's series told of life in a London comprehensive?
- 2 1970s: What made up the Bouquet in the series with Susan Penhaligon?
- 3 1980s: What were the students at the New York High School of Performing Arts seeking?
- 4 1980s: Whose shooting in November 1980 was watched by 27 million people?
- 5 1990s: Which series starred Robbie Coltrane as a police psychologist?
- 6 1990s: On which long-running current affairs programme did Diana, Princess of Wales give her first solo interview in 1995?
- 7 2000s: Who was the first housemate ever to be evicted from the British *Big Brother* house?
- 8 2000s: *The Apprentice* has been running for 13 series. Who was the first-ever winner in 2005?

Christmas on the box

- 1 Jamie Oliver's controversial 2016 Christmas dinner recipe was highly calorific. How many calories per person, and to the nearest thousand, for the full Christmas lunch?
- 2 Every year, Channel 4 broadcasts an alternative Christmas message. In 2004, it was given by some popular animated characters. Who were they?
- 3 No Christmas is complete without a crackling fireplace on your TV... Netflix offers six fireplaces to choose from. How many are on Amazon Prime Video?
- 4 British TV star Benedict Cumberbatch is starring in a new version of *The Grinch*. In which year did the Grinch originally steal Christmas?
- 5 Which movie did *Radio Times* readers vote as their favourite in 2016? Was it *Love Actually*, *Elf* or *It's a Wonderful Life*?
- 6 Last Christmas, which home-grown show did we Brits stream most on Netflix?
- 7 What year did Alexandra Burke win *The X Factor*, and what was the name of her Christmas No 1?
- 8 Finally, did you pass out before seeing who replaced Peter Capaldi as the Doctor this Christmas? Who was it? ■

ANSWERS

2 Marge and Lisa Simpson	3 121	4 JR Ewing's	5 Cracker	6 Pandora	7 Sada Walkington	8 Timothy Campbell	1 7,000	2 2008 Halliwell	3 Jodie Whittaker
1 True	2 False	3 True	4 False	5 True	6 True	7 False	8 False	9 True	10 True
1 All of them	2 Idina Menzel	3 1985	4 CB invented the robot	5 Rastamouse	6 Anna Richardson on <i>Naked Attraction</i>	7 ITN Productions	8 Jay Hunt	9 To cut Kevin Spacey	10 Grange Hill
1 Love Island	2 BBC	3 1985	4 CB invented the robot	5 Rastamouse	6 Anna Richardson on <i>Naked Attraction</i>	7 ITN Productions	8 Jay Hunt	9 To cut Kevin Spacey	10 Grange Hill
1 Love Island	2 BBC	3 1985	4 CB invented the robot	5 Rastamouse	6 Anna Richardson on <i>Naked Attraction</i>	7 ITN Productions	8 Jay Hunt	9 To cut Kevin Spacey	10 Grange Hill
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1 Love Island	2 BBC	3 1985	4 CB invented the robot	5 Rastamouse	6 Anna Richardson on <i>Naked Attraction</i>	7 ITN Productions	8 Jay Hunt	9 To cut Kevin Spacey	10 Grange Hill

Hosted by **Iain Stirling**, the awards were presented
on 27 November at the London Hilton, Park Lane

RTS Craft & Design Awards 2017

Design & Craft Innovation

Planet Earth II

BBC Studios, The Natural History
Unit for BBC One

'A documentary series that was simply gorgeous to look at. It brought us a world of wildlife drama bigger and better than ever before, clearer, brighter and more comprehensive.

'From their home in Bristol, these brilliant programme-makers have, for over half a century, pioneered the use of ground-breaking technical and creative innovation to open our eyes to the wonders of the natural world. But technology can only take us so far. Like all great programmes, it needs dedicated, talented professionals across the whole production.

'One reviewer said... "It has become predictable to heap superlatives upon the BBC Natural History Unit and wax lyrical about Attenborough's status. But both institutions should be treasured while we're lucky enough to still have them."

The winners and nominees of
all 31 awards are listed over the
following seven pages >



BBC



Music – Original Title: *Victoria*

BBC

Costume Design – Drama

Joanna Eatwell, *Taboo*

Scott Free London and Hardy, Son and Baker for BBC One and FX

‘Just sensational. It was lavish, and textural, with incredible detail.’

Nominees:

Rosalind Ebbutt, *Victoria – Series 1*, Mammoth Screen for ITV

James Keast, *Guerrilla*, Fifty Fathoms for Sky Atlantic and Showtime

Costume Design – Entertainment and Non Drama

Caroline Pitcher, *White Gold*

Fudge Park Productions for BBC Two

‘The costumes were utterly joyous and original... like photographs come to life.’

Nominees:

Vicky Gill and the Costume Team, *Strictly Come Dancing 14*, BBC Studios Entertainment for BBC One

Heather MacVean, *The Keith and Paddy Picture Show*, Talkback for ITV

Design – Programme Content Sequences

Made in Colour, *Finding My Family – Partition*

Made in Colour for CBBC

‘Outstanding cinematic and evocative piece.... Incredible on the budget.’

Nominees:

Made in Colour, *Inside My Head*, Made in Colour for CBBC

Marc Knappont/The Brewery, *The Marvellous World of Roald Dahl*, BBC Studios/Pacific Quay Productions for BBC Two

Design – Titles

Huge Designs – Hugo Moss, Paul

McDonnell and Ben Hanbury, *Fearless*, Mammoth Screen for ITV

‘Powerful, creative and stand-out. A real extension of the show. Nice concept and well crafted.’

Nominees:

Patrick Hall, *Broken*, LA Productions for BBC One

Alex Maclean, *The Durrells II*, Sid Gentle for ITV

Design – Trails and Packaging

Rob Heath, John Cryer, Shizuka Hata and Rachel Warr, *Film Fear*

Platform Post and 4Creative for Film4

‘Fantastic campaign. Brilliant copy, witty and good use of music.’

Nominees:

BBC Marketing Team, *Taboo*, Scott Free London and Hardy, Son and Baker for BBC One and FX

Richard Gort, Julian Gibbs, Reuben Armstrong and The Intro Team, *Mexican F1 Grand Prix – Channel 4 Formula 1*

2016, Intro/Whisper Films for Channel 4

Director – Comedy Drama/ Situation Comedy

Damon Beesley, *White Gold*

Fudge Park Productions for BBC Two

‘Nostalgically embraced the period with a great soundtrack. It had great ambition [and] a great balance of dark humour and slapstick comedy.’

Nominees:

Peter Kay, *Peter Kay’s Car Share*, Goodnight Vienna Productions for BBC One

Tom Marshall, *Chewing Gum*, Retort for E4

Director – Documentary/ Factual and Non Drama

Dan Edge and Lauren Mucciolo, *Last Days of Solitary*

Mongoose Pictures and Frontline PBS for BBC Four

‘An exquisitely crafted assault on the senses. Directed with humanity, confidence and restraint.... Shot over three years, with astonishing access. It is an outstanding testament to the directors’ mental strength and creative ability.’

Nominees:

Arthur Cary and Jonathan Taylor, *American Justice*, Minnow Films for BBC Two

Marcus Plowright, *American High School*, Swan Films for BBC Three



Host Iain Stirling



All pictures: Richard Kendal

1 Design & Craft Innovation: *Planet Earth II*

4 Design – Titles: *Fearless*

7 Director – Documentary/Factual and Non Drama: *Last Days of Solitary*

2 Costume Design – Entertainment and Non Drama: *White Gold*

5 Design – Trails and Packaging: *Film Fear*

8 Director – Drama: *The Witness for the Prosecution*

3 Design – Programme Content Sequences: *Finding My Family – Partition*

6 Director – Comedy Drama/Situation Comedy: *White Gold*

9 Editing – Documentary/Factual: *Bring Me Back To Life*



Triple award winner: *Taboo*

BBC

Director – Drama

Julian Jarrold, *The Witness for the Prosecution*

Mammoth Screen and Agatha Christie Productions for BBC One

‘A beautiful crafted and complete vision that brought performances, camera work, sound and design together to make a rich and classy production.... It found a new way to present a period piece that felt relevant, contemporary and exciting.’

Nominees:

Philippa Lowthorpe, *Three Girls*, BBC Studios in association with Studio Lambert for BBC One

Euros Lyn, *Damilola, Our Loved Boy*, Minnow Films for BBC One

Editing – Documentary/Factual

Sam Santana, *Bring Me Back To Life*

The Garden Productions for Channel 4
‘An arresting mix of brutal observational documentary, haunting reality and honest, heartfelt video.... Poetic editing at its finest. Outstanding.’

Nominees:

Editing Team, *The Trial: A Murder in the Family*, Dragonfly Film and Television for Channel 4

Production Team, *Planet Earth II*, BBC Studios, The Natural History Unit for BBC One

Editing – Drama

Úna Ní Dhonghaíle, *Three Girls*

BBC Studios in association with Studio Lambert for BBC One

‘The skill and expertise to weave multiple, non-linear timelines together while enhancing the emotional context was outstanding. The shot selection was incredibly poignant and sensitively constructed.’

Nominees:

Patrick Hall, *Broken*, LA Productions for BBC One

Johnny Rayner, *Murdered for Being Different*, BBC Studios for BBC Three

Editing – Entertainment and Comedy

Editing Team, *Love Island – Series 3*

ITV Studios / Motion Content Group for ITV2

‘Outstanding editing, packed full of personality, with an exceptionally slick quality, especially given the tight turnaround of this daily reality show.’

Nominees:

Matt Brown, *Peter Kay’s Car Share*, Goodnight Vienna Productions for BBC One

William Webb, *White Gold*, Fudge Park Productions for BBC Two

Editing – Sport

Matt Roberts, Kevin Evans, Jordan Buckingham and Scott Deaming, *UEFA Champions League Final 2017 – Real Madrid vs Juventus*

For BT Sport

‘Perfectly timed edits, fabulous shot selection and subtle sound design, all centered around the intelligent and eloquent storytelling of Loyle Carner.’

Nominees:

Andy Collins, *Silverstone Grand Prix – Opener*, Whisper Films for Channel 4

Timothy Lee, Lukas Musil, Marc Connor and James Wilson, *2017 UEFA Champions League Final*, IMG Productions for BT Sport

Effects – Digital

The Digital Effects Team, *One of Us, The Crown*

Left Bank Pictures for Netflix

‘Flawless, breathtaking and utterly true to the world it was trying to convey without you ever being able to see the join... hard to believe that digital effects could ever have been done better.’

Nominees:

BDH Creative Digital Effects Team, *The Secrets of Your Food*, BDH Creative/ BBC Science for BBC Two

Justin Hutchinson-Chatburn, *Framestore, Glassworks and Painting Practice, Black Mirror: Playtest*, House of Tomorrow for Netflix

Effects – Special

Real SFX, *Sherlock*

Hartwood Films/Masterpiece for BBC One

‘Brilliant, not only in execution and imagination but in their sheer range across the programmes... love, effort and attention to detail in every scene.’

Nominee:

Chris Reynolds, *The Crown*, Left Bank Pictures for Netflix

Lighting for Multicamera

Nigel Catmur, *World War One Remembered: Passchendaele – For the Fallen*

BBC Studios for BBC One and BBC Two
‘Subtle, sympathetic lighting... contributed to the power and emotion of the event. A hugely impressive achievement.’

Nominees:

Andy Hibbert, *Peter Kay’s Car Share*, Goodnight Vienna Productions for BBC One

Gurdip Mahal, Rob Bradley and Bill Peachment, *Let It Shine*, BBC Studios for BBC One



All pictures: Richard Kendal

1 Editing – Drama: *Three Girls*

4 Effects – Digital: *The Crown: One of Us*

7 Multicamera Work: *One Love Manchester*

2 Editing – Entertainment and Comedy: *Love Island – Series 3*

5 Effects – Special: *Sherlock*

8 Multicamera Work – Sport: *2017 IAAF World Athletics Championships*

3 Editing – Sport: *UEFA Champions League Final 2017 – Real Madrid vs Juventus*

6 Make Up Design – Entertainment and Non Drama: *The Drug Trial: Emergency at the Hospital*

9 Music – Original Score: *Damilola, Our Loved Boy*

Make Up Design – Drama

Erika Okvist, Jan Archibald and Audrey Doyle, *Taboo*

Scott Free London and Hardy, Son and Baker for BBC One and FX

‘... so distinctive and original, fully fitting the narrative. Each character was enhanced and brought to life by the make-up, across the main and supporting cast. There was a strong concept, with a thorough approach to detail, lavish and gorgeous.’

Nominees:

Nic Collins, *Victoria – Series 1*, Mammoth Screen for ITV

Jenna Wrage and Harriet Thompson, *Murdered for Being Different*, BBC Studios for BBC Three

Make Up Design – Entertainment and Non Drama

Siobhán Harper-Ryan, *The Drug Trial: Emergency at the Hospital*

Raw TV for BBC Two

‘Jaw dropping in its veracity. It was totally believable, restrained, but brilliant. It was superbly executed, and a fantastic achievement on a low budget.’

Nominees:

Lulu Hall, *The Windsors – Christmas Special and Series 2*, Noho Film & Television for Channel 4

Nadine O’Toole and Reza Karim, *The Keith and Paddy Picture Show*, Talkback for ITV

Multicamera Work

Richard Valentine and Matt Ingham, *One Love Manchester*

BBC Studios for BBC One

‘Despite the restrictions on time and resources, this production perfectly captured the emotionally charged event, making the crowd a key part of the experience.’

Nominees:

Camera Team, *World War One Remembered: Passchendaele*, BBC Studios for BBC One and BBC Two

Nikki Parsons and the Camera Team, *Strictly Come Dancing 14*, BBC Studios – Entertainment for BBC One



Double award winner: *Three Girls*

BBC

Multicamera Work – Sport

Helen Kuttner, Tim Moses, Mark Dennis and Camera Team, *2017 IAAF World Athletics Championships*

Sunset+Vine (Host Broadcaster)

‘The skill shown by the production team, shifting effortlessly between different events. The story behind every moment was captured perfectly with effortless camerawork.’

Nominees:

Pete Andrews, Micky Payne, Bill Morris and Dave White, *The Boat Races 2017*, BBC and CTV for BBC One

Matthew Griffiths, Chrissie Collins, Sam Maynard and Andrew Jackson, *Six Nations Wales vs England*, BBC Sport and Telegenic for BBC One

Music – Original Score

Dru Masters, *Damilola, Our Loved Boy*

Minnow Films for BBC One

‘Incredibly sensitive.... An exceptional score, for an exceptional film.’

Nominees:

Rupert Gregson-Williams, *The Crown*, Left Bank Pictures for Netflix

Natalie Holt, *Three Girls*, BBC Studios in association with Studio Lambert for BBC One

Music – Original Title

Martin Phipps, *Victoria – Series 1*

Mammoth Screen for ITV

‘A masterpiece [with] a haunting, yet glorious theme.’

Nominees:

Dan Jones, *SS-GB*, Sid Gentle Films for BBC One

Max Richter, *Taboo*, Scott Free London and Hardy, Son and Baker for BBC One and FX

Photography – Documentary/ Factual and Non Drama

Production Team, *Planet Earth II*

BBC Studios, The Natural History Unit for BBC One

‘Brilliantly creative and innovative... [involving] incredible camerawork.’

Nominees:

Arthur Cary and Jonathan Taylor, *American Justice*, Minnow Films for BBC Two

Dan Edge and Tim Gucza, *Last Days of Solitary*, Mongoose Pictures and Frontline PBS for BBC Four

Photography – Drama & Comedy

Matt Gray, *Three Girls*

BBC Studios in association with Studio Lambert for BBC One

‘The emotional intimacy of the photography enabled you to be inside the characters’ heads during this incredibly powerful and emotional story.’

Nominees:

Carlos Catalan, *Broadchurch – Series 3*, Kudos/Imaginary Friends/Sister Pictures for ITV

Gavin Finney, *The State*, Archery Pictures for Channel 4



Music – Original Score:
Damilola, Our Loved Boy

BBC



All pictures: Richard Kendal

1 Photography – Documentary/Factual and Non Drama: *Planet Earth II*

4 Production Design – Drama: *Black Mirror: Nosedive*

7 Sound – Entertainment and Non Drama: *World War One Remembered: Passchendaele*

2 Photography – Drama & Comedy: *Three Girls*

5 Production Design – Entertainment and Non Drama: *Britain's Got Talent*

8 Judges' Award: *World War One Remembered: Passchendaele*

3 Picture Enhancement: *Hospital*

6 Sound – Drama: *Taboo*

9 Lifetime Achievement Award: Tony Revell

Judges' Award *World War One Remembered: Passchendaele*

BBC Studios for BBC One and BBC Two

'The Judges' Award goes to a live event that, while being incredibly complex and ambitious, was nevertheless delivered with a flawless brilliance. It was a true collaboration of content and technology working seamlessly as one to enable the history of the First World War to be brought to a live television audience in an innovative and original way.

'From the incredible projection mapping to the detailed and emotive storytelling, together with orchestras, military bands, choral music, never-seen-before archive, global stars, and, not least, a team of hugely talented people, these elements all came together to tell the tragic story of one of the most horrific battles of the First World War in the place where it happened, a century on.... A truly memorable and engaging piece of television.'

Lifetime Achievement *Tony Revell*

'This year's award deservedly goes to a sound supervisor who, for more than 30 years, has been at the very top of his game.

'From *Top of the Pops* to *Only Fools and Horses*, from *The Eurovision Song Contest* to *Strictly Come Dancing* – on every type of programme imaginable – his contribution to television has been, and continues to be, immense.

'It is in live situations where he raises the bar and sets the standard for others to follow, whether it's the BBC's Millennium Night Celebrations – over 48 hours of live, global television – or *Children in Need*, *Comic Relief*, *The Voice*, *Eurovision* and *Strictly*. He is a hugely talented, and yet incredibly modest, man. He is, quite simply, one of the good guys.'



Triple award winner:
*World War One
Remembered:
Passchendaele*

BBC

Picture Enhancement

Dan Gill, *Hospital – Series 2*

Label1 for BBC Two

'Displaying powerful rawness... the picture enhancement [took] this excellent production to another level without attempting to over-beautify or hype it.'

Nominees:

Ross Baker, *The Missing – Series 2*, New Pictures for BBC One and Starz

Patrick Hall, *Broken*, LA Productions for BBC One

Production Design – Drama

Joel Collins and James Foster, *Black Mirror: Nosedive*

House of Tomorrow for Netflix

'This drama was total design. It drew you in and felt hyperreal. The colour palette was extremely effective.'

Nominees:

Grenville Horner, *Man in an Orange Shirt*, Kudos for BBC Two

Sonja Klaus, *Taboo*, Scott Free London and Hardy, Son and Baker for BBC One and FX

Production Design – Entertainment and Non Drama

Florian Wieder, *Britain's Got Talent*

Thames Syco for ITV

'It looked like an expensive chocolate box. Very clever use of filling a space and using tiered seating to give the impression of a real theatre.'

Nominees:

Antony Cartledge, *Murder in Successville*, Tiger Aspect/Shiny Button Productions for BBC Three

Mo Holden, *The Windsors – Christmas Special and Series 2*, Noho Film & Television for Channel 4

Sound – Drama

Sound Team, *Taboo*

Scott Free London and Hardy, Son and Baker for BBC One and FX

'An outstanding piece of work with huge attention to detail.'

Nominees:

Brian Nelson and Gary Desmond, *Broken*, LA Productions for BBC One

Sound Team, *Sherlock – Series 4*, Hartswood Films/Masterpiece for BBC One

Sound – Entertainment and Non Drama

Sound Team, *World War One Remembered: Passchendaele*

BBC Studios for BBC One and BBC Two
'A technical feat that took a huge amount of effort... a stunning example of sound craft of the very highest technical and creative standards.'

Nominees:

Gary Kelly, *Ambulance – Series 2*, Dragonfly Film & Television for BBC One
Production Team, *Planet Earth II*, BBC Studios, The Natural History Unit for BBC One ■



WGW Mitchell (left), honorary secretary of the Television Society 1929-44, with John Logie Baird, preparing for a demonstration

Do you need £4,000 for a history of television project?

Previous recipients



1 2017: Birmingham City University recorded interviews with programme-makers to expand its online oral history of BBC Pebble Mill, 1971 to 2004.



2 2016: The Scottish Broadcasting Heritage Group recorded interviews with people who worked at and watched STV from 1957 to 2017.



3 2015: Oral history project by former Granada staffers Stephen Kelly and Judith Jones, with interviews published at: www.granadaland.org



4 2014: Shared between Dr Sheldon Hall, whose *Armchair Cinema* is a study of feature films on British television, and Marc Scott, who has researched the unofficial development of TV in Australia



5 2013: Barry Fox has built a website (www.tekkiepix.com) to present his collection of historical consumer electronics imagery and documents.



6 2012: Paul Marshall researched a biography of Alan Archibald Campbell Swinton, the early visionary of all-electronic television



7 2012: Simon Vaughan digitised the 300-page 'Black Book', the first manual of the Marconi-EMI electronic television system, installed in 1936



8 2011: David Rose presented an illustrated retrospective of his exceptional career as a groundbreaking television and film producer to a large number of live audiences



9 2008/2010: Steve Arnold digitised back issues of *Radio Times* to make a searchable online archive of articles and schedules



10 2010: John Wyver conducted interviews on the presentation of theatre plays on British television



11 2009: Ronald Sandell, a key planner of the analogue terrestrial transmitter network, conducted research for a book, *Seventy Years Before the Masts*



12 2005: John Grist wrote a biography of Grace Wyndham Goldie, the first Head of BBC Television News and Current Affairs



13 2004: Don McLean compiled an authentically accurate audio two-CD presentation of the beginnings of TV in Britain



14 2001: Simon Vaughan, archivist of the Alexandra Palace Television Society, printed a collection of 1,200 photos by the father of television lighting, Desmond Robert Campbell

Apply now for the 2018 Shiers Trust Award

The Trust can make a grant of up to **£4,000** towards publishing work on any aspect of the history of television

Objectives

The promotion of public education through the study and research of the history of television in all its aspects and without regard to country of origin, including the development and encouragement of publications and associated projects such as bibliographies and monographs on particular aspects, provided that the results of such study and research shall be published and that the contribution made by the Trust shall be suitably acknowledged in any publication.

Criteria

Grants will be given to assist in the completion of new or unfinished projects, work or literature specific to the objectives of the Trust. 'Literature' is defined as including audio-visual media such as DVDs and websites.

The Trustees must be satisfied that the work they are supporting either could not be finished or published without the grant and that, with it, the work will be completed, or, the grant will provide the initial phase of a project that will be continued and completed with other identified funding.

Applications will be considered broadly in support of research, development, writing, editing or publication. Grants for research will require that the results of the work will be made known and accessible through appropriate means. In the case of literature, projects must have a real prospect of publication. Applicants must demonstrate that their work will have a clear expectation of making a significant contribution to the objectives of the Trust.

Applicants will be required to satisfy the Trustees of the soundness of their projects, and identify any grants from other sources. The Trustees will not make commitments to support recurring funding, nor make grants to cover fees or maintenance of students undertaking courses.

George Shiers

George Shiers, a distinguished US television historian, was a long-standing member of the RTS. Before his death in 1983, he and his wife, May, provided for a bequest in their wills. The Shiers Trust grant, now in its 18th year, is normally worth £2,000. This year, to mark the 90th anniversary of the RTS, it has been raised to £4,000. Grants will be considered and approved by the Trustees who may, at their discretion, consult appropriate experts to assist their decisions. In assessing priorities, the Trustees will take into account the sums of money available.

Application procedure

Applications are now invited and should be submitted to the Trustees by Friday **30 March 2018** on an official application form (available from the RTS, address below). Applications should set out the nature of the project in not more than 500 words. Supporting documentation may also be included. Details of your experience or qualifications should be provided. Applicants should ensure that their project conforms to all the criteria. Applications should be accompanied by a budget that clearly identifies the sum being requested for a grant and the purposes for which it will be used. **Application forms are available either from the RTS website:**

www.rts.org.uk

or **Clare Colvin, to whom they should be returned:**
Clare Colvin, Archivist, Royal Television Society,
3 Dorset Rise, London EC4Y 8EN.
clare@rts.org.uk

Lord Bragg celebrates RTS at 90

Yorkshire Centre **Matthew Bell** reports from Leeds on a day of events marking the birth of the Society

Melvyn Bragg described TV as the “greatest communication medium ever developed” at the Yorkshire Centre’s celebration of the 90th anniversary of the Royal Television Society.

The Society was founded in September 1927, following a lecture at Leeds University by television pioneer John Logie Baird. Enthused by hearing about Baird’s experiments, a society was set up for – in the words of its first Chair, Dr Clarence Tierney – those “interested in the progress of television”.

“Invented before TV – the RTS was always ahead of its time,” said RTS Yorkshire Chair Fiona Thompson, when introducing the long-time host of *The South Bank Show* to a sell-out crowd at ITV’s Leeds Television Centre in late November.

RTS Yorkshire and ITV Yorkshire were hosting a day of events, including a TV quiz, and tours of the Emmerdale Studio Experience and ITV Archive. Experts from the BBC, the British Film Institute, Yorkshire Film Archive and Focal International (which represents commercial audio/visual libraries) were on hand to discuss their archives.

During a wide-ranging address, the TV veteran argued: “All new inventions provoke wonder and horror,



Melvyn Bragg

Paul Harness

hope and fear.” Television, too, had “a dark side”, he said.

He discussed George Orwell’s 1984, in which citizens are under constant surveillance from “telesccreens”: “Here we see, at its most naked, television watching us – the eye of the world has become the camera eye on those who live here. This country is said to be the most CCTV-intensive nation on the planet.”

Noting the power of TV, Lord Bragg said: “We recognise its ability to shift millions of pounds-worth of merchandise on the commercial channels every week.”

The Brexit campaign and the “populism of [various politicians] had shown how “mendacious messages”

could sway opinion. “Yet this is child’s play, compared with what could be done to scare and cower people with the help of mass surveillance, which grew out of the specific pursuits of TV.”

He argued, however, that television was also “a force for good”. The arts supremo apologised for offering his own programme, *The South Bank Show*, which celebrates its 40th birthday this month, in evidence. “[It

has] a good size, democratic audience, many of whom were largely unable to see, hear or even read the greatest artists until a very few decades ago, thanks, of course, to television.”

He picked two highlights from the vaults of *The South*

Bank Show, which was broadcast on ITV until 2010 and has aired on Sky Arts since 2012.

Forty years ago, recalled the peer, he wanted to “change the way TV did arts”. Specifically, he wanted to challenge the idea that the so-called high arts, such as opera, were inherently superior to popular culture.

The first-ever episode of the show, on 14 January 1978, featured an ex-Beatle. The arts broadcaster recalled: “We got slaughtered for that, but I started with Paul McCartney to show I was serious [about my mission].”

His second highlight was the programme devoted to Ingmar Bergman (also in 1978), whose film, *Summer with Monika*, was the first subtitled movie Bragg saw. “I came out of that cinema completely transformed. I realised films weren’t just about actors but writers and directors, [too]. I became obsessed with Bergman.”

Among those who turned down appearing on *The South Bank Show* were Samuel Beckett, with whom Bragg “had a nice tea and chatted about cricket”, and Graham Greene.

Responding to a question about London’s economic dominance of the UK, he labelled the treatment of the North of England a “disgrace”, accusing the Thatcher Government of the “destruction of 3 million skilled jobs in the 1980s because they were in Labour strongholds”.

The broadcaster – who sits in Parliament as a Labour peer and was brought up in Cumbria – added: “What is amazing about the North is its people, their resilience and good humour.”

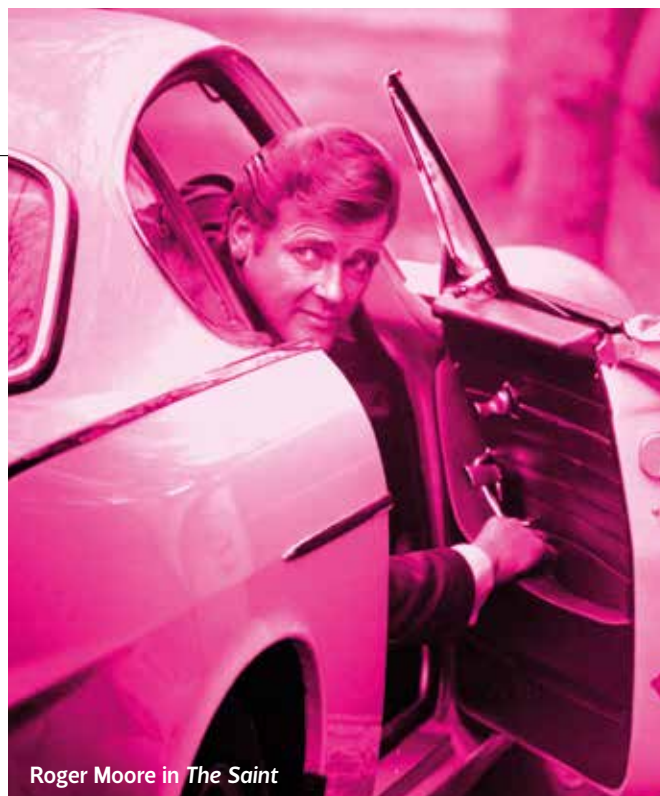
TELEVISION ALSO HAS A DARK SIDE

Visitors were admitted to the vaults of the ITV Archive in Leeds to mark the 90th anniversary of the RTS.

The archive hosts an astonishing collection, bringing together programmes from ITV's former regional companies, as well as classic British movies. The latter include: Alfred Hitchcock's early films such as *The 39 Steps*; Powell and Pressburger classic *Black Narcissus*; and David Lean's *Great Expectations*.

It houses more than 250,000 hours of TV and film. The archivists preserve two copies of every show ITV broadcasts or distributes, keeping one safe in the master vault. Older programmes are restored and digitised, with priority given to those on the "at risk register", where only one tape, often in a poor condition, survives.

As well as restoration, the ITV Archive also makes its content available to other broadcasters and programme-makers. "We have so many iconic TV shows in our catalogue, with so much amazing content," said the archive's



Roger Moore in *The Saint*

Inside the archive

director, Dale Grayson, who name checked *The Saint*, *Thunderbirds* and *World in Action*.

He explained that the archive's best-selling content tends to be the "no gore" crime dramas such as *Poirot*. Clips of celebrity interviews and music performances from shows such as Tyne Tees Television's *The Tube* are also heavily in demand.

The archive is growing from gifts. Melvyn Bragg recently donated 8,000 tins

of film, which were shot but not used on *The South Bank Show*, to the archive. "It's a feast: seven hours of unseen Norman Mailer; hours and hours of stuff by Pavarotti and Eric Clapton," he said.

"Archives like ITV's," Lord Bragg added, "are fast becoming the repositories of the public and private lives of the nation. It's extraordinarily important that they are properly preserved."

Matthew Bell

Shiver North shines in TV test

■ The competition was fierce at the RTS Yorkshire quiz, which followed Melvyn Bragg's lecture, with all the major players in the region fielding teams.

Participants – who deemed the quiz 'tough but entertaining' – included Daisybeck Studios, BBC Yorkshire, True North, ITV Yorkshire, ITV

Archive, Leeds Trinity University, Leeds Beckett University and, the ultimate winners, Shiver North.

They were subjected to five fiendish rounds of questions covering TV history, from John Logie Baird's first demonstration to the 2017 RTS Awards, via the first Moon landing, the 1966 World Cup and the Royal

Variety Performance. Local knowledge was tested with questions about *Emmerdale*, *Last of the Summer Wine* and Harry Graton. The final 'What year?' round was illustrated with some nostalgic clips from the ITV archives, including a fresh-faced Ken Barlow from the 1960s.

Lisa Holdsworth

RTS events IN BRIEF

Midlands travels back to the 1930s

Norman Green brought the early days of the BBC alive at a joint RTS Midlands/IET event in Birmingham in November.

The first head of technology at ITV Network and founder of the RTS London Centre, he came armed with a series of fascinating test transmissions and films from the 1930s. The BBC officially launched its TV service from Alexandra Palace, London, on 2 November 1936. Its first major outside broadcast was the coronation of George VI in May 1937. This technological breakthrough was captured in a BBC film, *Televising the Coronation Procession*, shown at the event.

Media boot camp pitches up in East

Forty students tried their hand at making films on a smartphone, pitching a documentary idea and making a radio news show at the latest "Breaking into broadcasting boot camp".

The event was held at Norwich University of the Arts in late November, and hosted by Fran Acheson of the BBC Academy in collaboration with RTS East and BBC East.

The day began with sessions given by BBC smartphone and video journalism trainers Marc Settle and Deirdre Mulcahy, respectively. Then the students – from creative and media courses at Norwich universities – split into two groups: one half made radio shows, the others learned about what makes a good TV news and current affairs feature.

ITV drama enjoys winning night

North West Centre Heartbreaking ITV factual drama *Little Boy Blue* enjoyed a triumphant night at the RTS North West Awards in early November, taking home three top prizes.

The programme, about the murder of 11-year-old Rhys Jones in Liverpool in 2007, took the Drama prize. It also secured an award for its writer, Jeff Pope, and the female drama performance prize for Sinead Keenan.

More than 450 industry professionals and guests attended the awards ceremony, which was held at the Hilton Deansgate in Manchester and hosted by Robert Rinder from ITV court show *Judge Rinder*.

Sean Bean won the male drama performance award for his role as a troubled priest in Jimmy McGovern's BBC One drama *Broken*. The series' director of photography, Joel Devlin, also received a craft award.

Peter Kay's *Car Share* won two comedy prizes: the hit BBC show took home both the Comedy award and Performance in a Comedy prize, the latter for its co-star, Sian Gibson.

Coronation Street was another show to pick up two prizes: Kym Marsh won Performance in a Continuing Drama and the soap also took the Storyline award for *Michelle's Late Miscarriage*.

Manchester indie Blake-way North won two awards: Current Affairs, for BBC One's *Kicked Out: From Care to Chaos*, and Children's – School Age, for CBBC's *My Life: Born to Vlog*.

Nina Warhurst was named Regional News Journalist for her work on *BBC North West Tonight* and *Sunday Politics North West*, while *BBC North*



Sinead Keenan in *Little Boy Blue*

ITV

West Tonight: Manchester Bomb Compilation triumphed in the Regional News Programme category.

The high number and standard of entries, said RTS North West Chair Cat Lewis, was a "reflection of the fact our region now hosts not only the second-largest creative industries sector in the country, but also the second-largest in the whole of Europe".

The CEO of Manchester-based indie Nine Lives Media added: "Television drama is continuing to enjoy a golden age, led by the amazingly talented writers and producers based in Liverpool and Manchester.

"Moreover, the number of programmes made in all the other TV genres continues to grow."

Matthew Bell

RTS North West winners

Single Drama or Series • *Little Boy Blue* • ITV Studios for ITV

Performance in a Single Drama or Series – Male • Sean Bean: *Broken* • LA Productions for BBC One

Performance in a Single Drama or Series – Female • Sinead Keenan: *Little Boy Blue* • ITV Studios for ITV

Scriptwriter • Jeff Pope: *Little Boy Blue* • ITV Studios for ITV

Performance in a Continuing Drama • Kym Marsh: *Coronation Street* • ITV Studios for ITV

Continuing Drama Storyline • *Coronation Street: Michelle's Late Miscarriage* • ITV Studios for ITV

Comedy • Peter Kay's *Car Share* • Goodnight Vienna for BBC One

Performance in a Comedy • Sian Gibson: *Peter Kay's Car Share* • Goodnight Vienna for BBC One

Single Documentary • *The Selfless Sikh: Faith on the Frontline* • BBC Studios for BBC One

Factual Series • *Sex, Drugs & Murder: Life in the Red Light Zone* • BBC Studios for BBC Three

Factual Entertainment • *Watchdog Live* • BBC Studios for BBC One

Regional News Journalist • Nina Warhurst: *BBC North West Tonight* and *Sunday Politics North West*

Regional News • *BBC North West Tonight: Manchester Bomb Compilation* • BBC North West for BBC One

Regional Story • *Inside Out North West: Who's Driving You Home?* • BBC North West for BBC One

Entertainment • *The Real Housewives of Cheshire* • Monkey Kingdom for ITVBe

Current Affairs • *Kicked Out: From Care to Chaos* • Blakeway North for BBC One

Sports • *Sports Personality of the Year 2016* • BBC Sport for BBC One

Animation/Puppetry • *Twirlywoos: More About Twirling* • Mackinnon and Saunders/Ragdoll Productions for CBeebies

Children's – Pre-School • *Justin's House: Justin's Last Badge* • CBeebies

Children's – School Age • *My Life: Born to Vlog* • Blakeway North for CBBC

Learning or Education (In Memory of Katy Jones) • *When I Worry About Things* • Mosaic Films for BBC Learning

Low-budget • *Rugby League Live Streaming: Siddal vs Toronto Wolfpack* • BBC Sport for BBC Sport

Use of Multiplatform • *Hollyoaks: #MyJadels* • Lime Pictures for Channel 4

Production – Craft • Joel Devlin: *Director of Photography, Broken* • LA Productions for BBC One

Post-production – Craft • Tina & Bobby: *Digital Imaging fx/Blue Spill/Fifth Wall vfx* for ITV

Midlands Centre Neil Morrissey and *Line of Duty* creator Jed Mercurio received a Baird Medal each at the RTS Midlands Awards in November.

The Midlands-born actor, who made his name on BBC One sitcom *Men Behaving Badly*, also starred in World Productions' police corruption series *Line of Duty*. Jed Mercurio was raised and went to university in the Midlands.

BBC Studios' *Doctors* won the Outstanding Contribution to the Region award, with the soap's Dido Miles picking up the Acting Performance prize.

Local channel Notts TV celebrated two awards: Hugh Casswell was named Broadcast Journalist of the Year and Richard Minkley, Outstanding New Talent.

ITV performed strongly in the news categories with Des Coleman from *ITV News Central* named Midlands On-Screen Personality and *ITV News Central East* winning the News Programme of the Year Award, for *Claudio Ranieri Sacked*.

The BBC also made its mark, with its regional news and current affairs programme, *Inside Out*, winning two awards. *Inside Out East Midlands* won the Current Affairs Feature award, for *Sports Direct: What Happened Next?*, and *Inside Out West Midlands* took home the Diversity Award for *Ed Doolan's Battle with Dementia*.

Two shows won awards for a third year running: the BBC's *Father Brown* (Fictional Programme) and Channel 4's *Travel Man: 48 Hours in...*, fronted by Richard Ayoad, (Factual Programme).

The Midlands Awards were held at the National Motorcycle Museum and hosted by two of the region's news presenters, *Midlands Today*'s Nick Owen and *ITV News Central*'s Bob Warman.

The RTS Midlands' Student



Neil Morrissey (left) and Jed Mercurio

Aston and Ainsworth Photography

Line of Duty duo win Midlands' Baird Medal

Television Awards were held on the same evening, with Staffordshire University claiming four prizes. Liam Young won the Comedy and Entertainment prize for *The Ketchup Conspiracy*. Giorgia Perini took both the Short Feature and Production

Design craft award for *#Jumpfrompaper*; and Matthew Jopling won the craft award for Sound for *TJWhite Gunmakers & Co*.

Students from Birmingham City University won two awards: Nina Parker Noon scooped the Animation prize

for *The Cosmonaut* and Andrea Haenze took the Factual prize for *Byc Moze*.

The University of Lincoln student film *Jessica*, also picked up two awards (for Drama and the craft award for Editing).

Matthew Bell

RTS Midlands winners

Baird Medal - Jed Mercurio and Neil Morrissey

Outstanding Contribution - *Doctors* - BBC Studios for BBC One

Acting Performance - Dido Miles, *Doctors* - BBC Studios for BBC One

Fictional Programme - *Father Brown: The Star of Jacob* - BBC Productions for BBC One

Factual Programme - *Travel Man: 48 Hours in...* - North One Television for Channel 4

Current Affairs Feature - *Sports Direct: What Happened Next?* - *Inside Out East Midlands* - BBC for BBC One

Broadcast Journalist - Hugh Casswell - Notts TV

On-screen Personality - Des Coleman - *ITV Central* for *ITV News Central*

Outstanding New Talent - Richard Minkley - Notts TV

News Programme - *Claudio Ranieri Sacked* - TV Central for *ITV News Central East*

Diversity Award - *Ed Doolan's Battle with Dementia, Inside Out West Midlands* - BBC for BBC One

Promotional Programme - *Holy Ground* - Vermillion Films/ Javelin Block for Channel 4

Excellence in Digital Content - *First Acts* - Rural Media/Maverick TV for Channel 4

Excellence in Production Craft Skills - *Animation and visual effects* - Second Home Studios

Student Animation - *The Cosmonaut* - Nina Parker Noon, Birmingham University

Student Comedy and Entertainment - *The Ketchup Conspiracy* - Liam Young, Staffordshire University

Student Drama - *Jessica* - Patrycja Reimus, Saul Tyler, Isaac Tingey, Laura O'Brien and Matt Captieux, University of Lincoln

Student Factual - *Byc Moze* - Andrea Haenze, Birmingham City University

Student Short Feature - *#Jumpfrompaper* - Giorgia Perini, Staffordshire University

Student News - *Music on Prescription* - Anna Butler, Nottingham Trent University

Student Craft Skills - Sound - *TJWhite Gunmakers & Co* - Matthew Jopling, Staffordshire University

Student Craft Skills - Editing - *Jessica* - Patrycja Reimus, Saul Tyler, Isaac Tingey, Laura O'Brien and Matt Captieux, University of Lincoln

Student Craft Skills - Production Design - *#Jumpfrompaper* - Giorgia Perini, Staffordshire University

Student Craft Skills - Camera - *Teafe: Life for Tea* - Xiaoping Yan, University Of Derby

Student TV fest makes its mark

Bristol Centre “The energy in the room is incredible,” said Watershed Managing Director Dick Penny, looking on at the second RTS Bristol Student Festival in full swing.

More than 180 students from across the region signed up for the RTS event – held at the city’s Watershed, in early November – and arrived armed with CVs and showreels. Staff from 15 of Bristol’s leading production and post-production companies were on hand at stalls to offer advice and provide information.

Aardman Animations senior digital producer Gavin Strange kicked off the evening with a presentation on why creative careers are best. Strange is an illustrator, filmmaker and digital designer, who also appears in CBBC show *Art Ninja*.

Three 20-minute panel events on documentary film-making, talent and production management ran alongside “speed dating” tables, where quick-fire advice was dispensed to the students.

Plimsoll Productions, Wall to Wall, Icon Films, Silverback, RDF West, Drummer TV, ITV News, the BBC, Films@59, Doghouse, Tigress, Keo West, Evolutions and BDH (which demonstrated virtual reality) were joined at the event by the Edinburgh International Television Festival Network.

The RTS Bristol Committee thanked the volunteers “for giving up your evening to inspire the next generation – we hope you spotted some amazing talent”.

Lynn Barlow



Game of Thrones:
on location in
Northern Ireland

Sky

Northern Ireland Centre RTS Northern Ireland puts television events at the heart of Belfast media festivals

Thrones’ chief crowned

Stellify Media walked away with two major prizes from the RTS Northern Ireland Programme Awards in mid-November.

The Belfast indie won the Comedy and Entertainment award for its unlucky-in-love BBC One show *Beauty Queen and Single* and the Factual Entertainment Award for Channel 5’s *In Solitary*, which looked at how a group of volunteers reacted to

spending five days in solitary confinement.

Producer Mark Huffam received the Judges’ Award in recognition of his outstanding contribution to local television and film production. The producer, who was born in Antrim, has produced many TV shows and films, including *Saving Private Ryan* and the first series of *Game of Thrones*, much of which was filmed in Northern Ireland.

Filming commitments

meant that he was unable to attend the ceremony at the Belfast arts venue, the MAC, but he said, via a video message: “It’s great to see how Northern Ireland film and television is thriving in the current climate, largely down to a lot of self-motivated individuals and entrepreneurs who have helped grow the industry at a rapid rate.”

He added, making reference to the current lack of devolved government in the province: “This couldn’t have been done without the support of Northern Ireland Screen and also [the] local government, who have been fantastic and very supportive – I’d quite like to see them back at work soon.”

BBC Northern Ireland picked up two awards, for Current Affairs and News, both relating to its coverage

Northern Ireland winners

Judges’ Award - Mark Huffam

Drama - *Line of Duty* - World Productions for BBC One

Comedy and Entertainment - *Beauty Queen and Single* - Stellify Media for BBC One

Factual Entertainment/Features - *In Solitary* - Stellify Media for Channel 5

Specialist Factual - *Wild Ireland: Edge of the World* - Crossing the Line Films for BBC Two

Documentary - *The Good Terrorist* - Tern Television and Borough Productions for Channel 4

News Coverage - *A Nolan Show Investigation* - BBC Northern Ireland

Current Affairs - *Spotlight: Burn to Earn* - BBC Northern Ireland

Children’s/Animation - *Secret Lives of Boys* - Zodiak Kids Studios for CBBC

Interactive Entertainment - *Tara’s Locket – A VR Story for Children* - Big Motive

Original Music Score - *The Salty Chicken* - Sixteen South

The RTÉ of the future

RTÉ Director-General Dee Forbes set out her vision for the future of Ireland's national public service broadcaster at the annual Dan Gilbert Memorial Lecture.

Speaking before a packed house at Belfast's MAC, she said: "Public service media has never been more necessary or more relevant than it is today."

The RTÉ chief put a strong focus on young audiences: "We must now prepare and re-imagine RTÉ for the next generation – a generation that has never been without the internet, the smartphone, on-demand video services, social media and access to the best programming and content from all over the world."

RTÉ plans to invest in a short-form production unit, the Digital Lab, to create content for online and, in particular, younger audiences.

Navada Group



The Director-General announced that cuts in drama would be reversed: "We plan to fix this over the next five years and help build a strong Irish drama sector."

Following her lecture, BBC NI broadcaster William Crawley hosted a Q&A session, during which she discussed

Brexit, RTÉ licence-fee reform and advertising. She advised TV newcomers to talk to as many people as possible in the industry. She recalled the importance of the RTS to her, in terms of building contacts, when she worked in London earlier in her career.

Sara Gunn-Smith

Social media can build an audience

A joint RTS Northern Ireland/Film Hub NI event, "Virtual watercooler: audiences, content and creatives", investigated how TV and film can harness the power of social media.

A panel of film marketing specialist Jo Taylor, Eximo Marketing founder Andi Jarvis and RTS NI Chair and Stellify Media joint MD Kieran Doherty discussed the influence of social-media platforms on audiences at the Belfast arts venue, the MAC.

The panel was chaired by Hugh Odling-Smee, project manager of Film Hub NI, one of nine hubs around the UK that aim to increase audiences for independent cinema.

Jo Taylor talked about her work managing the grassroots campaign to promote the release of the Ken Loach film, *I, Daniel Blake*, while Kieran Doherty discussed Stellify's approach to promoting the revamped show *Blind Date*.

Twitter was highlighted as the best way to communicate with audiences – and to get instant feedback on shows.

The panel also discussed "watercooler" moments, with the Stellify MD arguing that casting was key in TV. He said that executives were moving away from casting people to generate conflict in reality shows; the new approach was to pick people with something interesting to say, who would organically create great TV moments.

Sara Gunn-Smith

■ The RTS Northern Ireland events formed part of BBC Digital Cities Belfast, which took place from 11 to 17 November, and the Belfast Media Festival (16 and 17 November).

of the political scandal that followed the failure of a renewable energy incentive scheme, *Spotlight: Burn to Earn* and *A Nolan Show Investigation*.

Jed Mercurio's police corruption series, *Line of Duty*, which is made in Belfast by World Productions, took the award for Best Drama.

"Congratulations to all our winners, who represent the best of the exceptional talent coming out of Northern Ireland in recent years," said Sarah McCaffrey, Chair of the NI Programme Awards 2017.

The awards, which were hosted by RTÉ and BBC presenter Angela Scanlon and comic Michael Smiley, were held with support from BBC NI, Northern Ireland Screen, Channel 4 and UTV. The main sponsor was Belfast post-production facility Ka-Boom.

Matthew Bell

Students benefit from industry advice

■ RTS Futures Northern Ireland held a highly successful careers day at Queen's University Belfast as part of BBC Digital Cities Belfast Week. The day featured a series of workshops and masterclasses run by industry professionals.

David Monaghan and the BBC Make It team offered a 'social media surgery', while Kitty Crawford, Chair of the trade association Games NI, ran a gaming workshop.

BBC NI talent manager Helen Thompson and Nicola McConville organised

a 'creative clinic', which focused on how TV newcomers can stand out in CVs and interviews. The clinic was followed by a speed-dating event, with TV executives offering careers-related advice.

The day's events were rounded off with a panel discussion aimed at giving industry entrants the information to kick-start their careers, and which featured a speech by Zodiak Kids development executive Raymond Lau.

Georgina Parkinson

The secrets of Horrible Histories

London Centre CBBC's *Horrible Histories* was the subject of RTS London's production focus in November – with a team of creatives from Lion Television explaining how they put the show together.

Series producer Tom Miller hosted the panel, which included historical consultant Greg Jenner, writer Ben Ward, make-up designer Vicky Voller, production designer Antony Cartledge and actress Jessica Ransom.

"The key thing about *Horrible Histories* is that everything starts with the history – the facts," said the producer, who illustrated this point throughout the evening with clips of sketches and songs from the show.

The series first aired in 2009 and is based on the books written by Terry Deary. It has been festooned with awards – at one point the show received four successive Baftas and a Prix Jeunesse for best children's show of the past 50 years.

Greg Jenner and his team of researchers find potential subjects. Months of research enable them to compile folders of facts you may or, more likely, don't know about the Saxons or Shakespeare.

He then presents the research to the writers – *Horrible Histories* has around 10 – who work on ideas that will entertain the show's audience, while giving them both accurate history and jokes.

"It's a writers' room like no other," said Ben Ward. "It's not about finding the funniest things, but finding the most interesting things in history – and making them funny."

Nick Radlo

How Casualty was shot in just one take



Casualty director Jon Sen

Southern Centre How do you go about directing the longest single take in British TV history? This was the question set for *Casualty* director Jon Sen by RTS Southern Centre at Southampton Solent University in November.

In front of an audience of students from Solent and Bournemouth University, the director gave an insight into the job of masterminding the 52-minute, single-shot episode, which aired last July.

He explained that the

programme – a celebration of the 30th anniversary of BBC One series *Casualty* – was shot in a single take to heighten the sense of drama in a busy A&E department.

For cast and crew, it was a huge creative and technical challenge. Concerned that operating the camera would be too onerous for one person, two handover points were built in to the plan. All the floor crew dressed in scrubs, in case they appeared in shot.

Cast and crew worked together to choreograph the whole show. It was recorded eight times over the course of four days, with the final take being used for transmission. "It became almost like a piece of theatre," said the director, "with two performances a day for a week."

He based himself in the gallery, relying on the skills of the cast and crew to get the job done. He paid particular tribute to the work of the camera team.

Stuart Ray

Plymouth's Delicious treat

Devon and Cornwall Devon and Cornwall held its annual "Breaking into media" event at the Theatre Royal in the centre of Plymouth in early November.

The "getting in and getting on" panel featured a veritable army of TV talent, with Denham, Twofour, Silverstream TV, Beagle Media, Elixel, iMarvel, the BBC and Sky all represented. It offered tips and hard-earned advice on getting started in TV to an

audience of more than 150 students from schools, colleges and universities in the region.

A networking lunch for the students with the panellists was followed by a session with producer Phillippa Giles and screenwriter Dan Sefton, who discussed their show *Delicious*. The Sky 1 programme recently finished principal photography on its second series, which is due to be broadcast after Christmas.

The drama about food, love and infidelity stars British comedy legend Dawn French, *Game of Thrones* star Iain Glen and Emilia Fox from *Silent Witness*. Its first series drew Sky's biggest audience for a drama in 2016.

Producer and writer talked about the development of the show, and highlighted the advantages of setting and shooting a drama series in the region.

Kingsley Marshall

Gogglebox



Channel 4

Shows worth celebrating

Matthew Bell hears format king Stephen Lambert relive the hits that have fuelled a long TV career at an RTS London event

It doesn't feel like it's a bad time to be a producer – there are more buyers than ever,” Stephen Lambert told the audience at RTS London's Christmas event.

The TV exec – the creative brain behind TV hits *Gogglebox*, *Wife Swap* and *Faking It* – was in conversation with Lisa Campbell, director of the Edinburgh International Television Festival, in December.

Almost a decade ago, he launched his own indie, Studio Lambert – named after his father's Soho commercials production company. As a young boy, Stephen appeared in some of its ads.

His company subsequently enjoyed success with *Undercover Boss*, a big hit in the US. Recently, the indie has begun to make scripted shows, poaching Sue Hogg from the BBC to run its drama department. Its first show – the BBC drama about the Rochdale child sex abuse ring, *Three Girls* – aired to critical acclaim earlier this year. “We've got lots of other dramas coming down the pipeline,” he said.

“At least half the shows we are making are for American customers – that's a huge change.” Until recently, UK drama producers were making shows “95% of the time” for the BBC and ITV.

However, although the new money from the US streaming giants was welcome, “it's less attractive in so much as they take global rights – our model has been to create shows that, if they're successful, we can sell all over the world”.

The decision to remove the BBC's 50% in-house production guarantee was “well overdue”, he said. “The idea of spending half the programme budget on one supplier, regardless of the quality of their ideas, was a crazy idea. I think [BBC Studios] will struggle to maintain the share of the spend that it was guaranteed in the past.”

Entertainment is another new genre. The indie has made a pilot, *Catch Me Out*, for the BBC, which he described as a “studio entertainment version of *Faking It*”. In the

show, the audience has to pick out the novice in a professional variety act.

Catch Me Out is already in production for a channel in Thailand. “Hopefully, it will be made here, too – we need the BBC to get on with making a decision,” he said.

The TV boss began his career at the BBC, making films for its documentary strands, *40 Minutes* and *Inside Story*, many of which were shot in war zones.

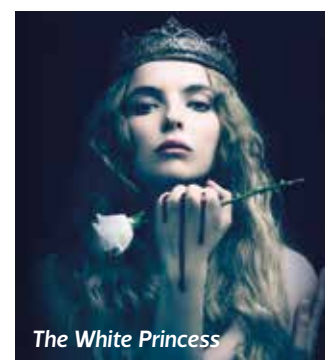
“I was interested in telling the human story behind people in situations, very often, of conflict,” he said. “We had an enormous amount of freedom. It was up to us to choose what programmes we wanted to make – that seems a long way away now. Everything is now controlled by the people at the centre.”

He left the BBC for the independent sector, joining RDF Media in 1998 and creating two award-winning formats, *Wife Swap* and *Faking It*. He described the latter as “probably the most-loved programme I've ever made”.

ONLINE at the RTS

■ It was recently announced that RTS award-winning show *Fleabag* would return for a second series. We caught up with the show's producer, Lydia Hampson, who told us how she worked with creator and star Phoebe Waller-Bridge to shoot the series like a drama, but cut it like a comedy. “We were trying to go for the ambition of drama, but not at the expense of the laughs,” she explained (www.rts.org.uk/LydiaHampson).

■ The RTS turned 90 this year. To celebrate the occasion, we spoke to a number of familiar faces to find out what they thought made TV special. From Jon Snow's memories of the coronation to Sanjeev Bhaskar's recollections of watching telly with his mum, it's a nice opportunity to look back over what the RTS and the industry have achieved over nine decades (www.rts.org.uk/RTSat90video).



UKTV

■ Travelling further back in time, showrunner Emma Frost spoke to the RTS about her new historical series, *The White Princess*, which recently aired on UKTV Drama. Frost discussed why the Wars of the Roses is the perfect period for a show where women drive the narrative and where the storyline spans life, death and politics (www.rts.org.uk/TheWhitePrincess).

Pippa Shawley

OFF MESSAGE

Phew, that was the year that was! If you haven't already read Kenton Allen's brilliant retrospective on 2017, then please do so immediately.

Who knows what the coming months have in store, but two recent high-level appointments sound promising. First, Lord (Terry) Burns, ex-Chair of Channel 4, replaces the legendary Patricia Hodgson at the regulator this month. A wiser, more astute operator at broadcasting's high table would be hard to find.

Terry's appointment looks encouraging from the perspective of Horseferry Road should any future government consider altering Channel 4's status as a public service broadcaster.

■ **The other appointment is to the Channel 4 board. Off Message was delighted to see a Whitehall U-turn, with a place on the board being given to the erstwhile Deputy CEO of Arts Council England, Althea Efunshile.**

Readers will need no reminding that Althea's elevation to the Channel 4 board was mysteriously vetoed by culture secretary Karen Bradley back in November 2016.

Instead, four white men were added to the body at that time. Two other new members of the board are Fru Hazlitt, who, not so long ago,

worked for ITV, and film-maker Tom Hooper, whose dad, Richard, can fill in any gaps Tom might have in his knowledge of broadcasting – Hooper Snr is a former Ofcom Deputy Chair, who also chaired the Radio Authority.

■ Off Message is a big fan of arts programmes. Sky Arts often excels, but two recent shows in the *Passions* series were serious standouts.

If you missed them and like literature, then do check out Andrew Motion on the enigma that was Philip Larkin and Giles Coren doing his inimitable routine on the woman whose face we see every time we spend a tenner – Jane Austen.

His *I Hate Jane Austen* was, in fact, less binary than the title implies. By the end of the show, Giles had begun to enjoy the novels of the woman whose legacy helped to invent period drama.

Also, it was good to see ITV back to backing the arts, with this month's *Great Art*, presented by the engaging Tim Marlow.

■ **By the time you read this, audiences and critics will have given their verdicts on BBC One's three-part Christmas adaptation of *Little Women* starring Angela Lansbury and Michael Gambon.**

Playground, the show's matchless production company, also made the superb recent version of *Howards End*.

This latest screen reimaging of

Little Women was written by Heidi Thomas who, as the creator of *Call the Midwife*, needs no introduction.

Speaking at a recent Broadcasting Press Guild lunch, the wordsmith gave an interesting insight into what makes a successful screenwriter.

"Graft" was the secret to getting all those words down in the right order, opined Heidi.

"It is, literally, about rolling up your sleeves and getting the job done," she explained.

And as for the seasonal special of *Call the Midwife*, Heidi revealed that sometimes people tweet her to say: "I'm looking forward to the *Call the Midwife Christmas Special* more than I am to Christmas!"

Off Message couldn't possibly comment.

■ Staying at the top of what we must still call Fleet Street is never easy.

It was, therefore, gratifying last month to see the *Times* honouring the brilliant Andrew Billen – whose interviews are regular highlights of *Television* – with a long-service award.

Andrew has been writing for the *Times* these past 15 years. His TV reviews were essential reading for anyone serious about the medium. Alas, Andrew stopped writing regular reviews in August, but, thankfully, remains a staff feature writer on the paper.

Off Message sends its congratulations to him.



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