

**Speech to national newspaper media correspondents, Julian Bellamy,  
Controller, Channel 4  
25<sup>th</sup> March 2009**

**(CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY)**

Welcome to the Channel 4 Spring/Summer 2009 launch and to our home here in Horseferry Road.

Our relocation reflects the tough times we are all in. But amidst the gloomy forecasts and the debates about the future of Channel 4 and public service broadcasting, I want to use today to talk about what lies at the heart of it all – brilliant programmes.

A combination of the global recession and Channel 4's funding gap means finding the investment to commission enough distinctive, public service programmes has never been more challenging.

But I would argue, we do a remarkable job with what we've got. In the first 3 months of this year we have **won 8 Oscars, more RTS awards** than anyone else, an incredible 20 BAFTA nominations and **Broadcast Channel** of the year. Its seen **Red Riding, Heston Blumenthal, Christianity a History** and a host of other programmes that represent Channel 4 at its best – new, distinctive, opinionated, entertaining.

In performance terms, the first 3 months of 2009 has seen Channel 4 buck the market. While almost everyone else in television is seeing share decline, we're the only terrestrial channel to **GROW peaktime share** this year so far; **More 4** is up 17 percent. **E4** is up 12 percent.

This Spring/Summer is all about maintaining that momentum.

The centrepiece is a big campaigning season on **"Britain's Forgotten Children"** – a week of programmes about the thousands of children trapped in the care system.

We want to spark a major debate on this issue with a range of programmes including **"Adopt me"** - a big 3-part documentary series on finding homes for hard to adopt kids. There are special editions of Cutting Edge and Dispatches, plus a powerful single Drama **"The Unloved"** from the Oscar nominated actress Samantha Morton. Drawn from her own childhood experiences, it's an intimate child-eye's view of life in the care system today.

As the success of **'Red Riding'** and **'The Devils Whore'** demonstrates, we punch well above our weight in drama and this Spring/Summer we have **"Endgame"** – a feature length political thriller starring William Hurt and Jonny Lee Miller. And I'm delighted to announce we have secured **Julie Walters** to play **Mo Mowlam** in a new single drama for Channel 4. It seems fitting that

one of the nation's best loved actresses will play one of the nation's favourite politicians. Filming starts this summer and we'll see it on air early next year.

Spring/Summer sees a big push into new History and Science. There's the return of David Starkey and Rupert Everett's new series, but my personal favourite is '**Animal Autopsy**' - a big new show that reinvents the natural history genre - revealing the wonders of evolution by dissecting some of the world's biggest, most extraordinary animals.

Believe me you'll never look at an elephant in the same way again once you've seen its digestive tract laid out on the floor with intestines as wide as a human torso.....

Documentary also plays a central role this season. In addition to our brand new religion strand "**Revelations**", we have a clutch of major documentary series this summer - all of which aim to provide an unparalleled insight into major institutions that govern our lives. The two real stand outs are "**The Hospital**" which is an utterly chilling insight into the frontline NHS and '**The Benefit Business**' which looks at how the world of pensions and benefits is coping with the biggest reforms in a generation.

The centrepiece of our Comedy and Entertainment this season is **Alan Carr's new chat show** for Sunday evenings. Alan is a huge star for the Channel and it's great to see him take the helm of his own chat show. **Charlie Brooker** hosts our other big new entertainment show this summer - '**You have been watching**' is an irreverent, satirical comedy- come panel show on the week's television in Charlie's unique acerbic style.

All of these programmes are in addition to a raft of other new shows from a host of star names - from Gordon Ramsay and Kirsty Allsop, Gerry Robinson to David Starkey. And of course our schedule stalwarts, **Cutting Edge** and **Dispatches**, continue to be on cracking form .... look out for a major 2-parter from **Will Hutton** that will be the most in-depth analysis yet of what went wrong in the banking crisis.

Even under these very tough conditions, I hope you'll agree that there's a huge range of exciting new shows coming through this Spring/Summer.

And here's just a little taste of what's coming up.

Full press pack and available at [www.channel4.com/presspack](http://www.channel4.com/presspack)