

Creative Cities

**Quarterly report on Channel 4's
work in the UK's regional cities**

April 2007

production- talent- innovation- research & development- public service



**CREATIVE
CITIES**

DAYTIME COMMISSION FOR BIRMINGHAM COMPANY

Hotbed Media in Birmingham has won a major daytime game show commission from Channel 4. The two week pilot show, *Win My Wage*, will be broadcast when *Deal or No Deal* is off air in July. The show gives the contestant the opportunity to win the annual salary of one of eight panel members who range from a maggot farmer to an internet millionaire and who have annual incomes between £3,500 and £100,000. Each of the ten episodes, which will be filmed at studios in Leeds, will run for 45 minutes.

*Channel 4
spends 30%
of its
originated
programming
budget
outside
London*

BELFAST COMPANY TO LEAD TALENT INITIATIVE

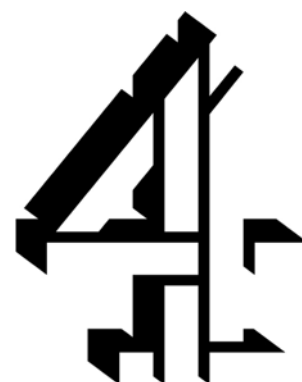
Double Band Films, based in Belfast, has been selected to lead a major Channel 4 project designed to uncover and support new talent working in the creative industries in Northern Ireland. Earlier this year, Channel 4 launched '4Talent' - the umbrella brand that encompasses all of Channel 4's talent development initiatives, across all sectors of the creative industries. The new Northern Ireland initiative - '4Talent Northern Ireland' - will have more of a regional focus, giving individuals the opportunity to take part in the broadcaster's schemes, workshops and masterclasses right on their doorstep and with an emphasis on careers in the independent production sector.

CARDIFF COMPANY WIN POKER COMMISSION

Cardiff-based production company, Presentable, has been commissioned by Channel 4 to produce *Party Poker's Poker Nations Cup*, in which top international players bid for a chance to represent their country. The 9x60 minute series is currently being broadcast. Presentable is also producing an 8 x 60-minute series *Late Night Poker*, culminating in a 90-minute episode in September.

HIGH PROFILE SERIES FROM NEW GLASGOW COMPANY

A series from Glasgow company Finestripe Productions - which was set up only 18 months ago – was launched at Channel 4 to an audience of national journalists. The More4 series, *Shrink Rap*, features psychologically-based conversations between celebrities and Dr Pamela Connolly. With interviews secured with high profile celebrities Stephen Fry, Sarah Duchess of York, Robin Williams, David Blunkett and Sharon Osbourne, *Shrink Rap* received considerable media coverage. This is the second Channel 4 series from the newly established company – the first being a series of short films for daytime.



BELFAST EVENT FOR VIEWER ENQUIRIES TEAM

Channel 4, in partnership with the Northern Ireland Film & Television Commission, is holding a reception in Belfast at the end of April to introduce the Channel 4 dedicated staff at GEM – the recently appointed viewer enquiry services and Video on Demand team - to local producers and others involved in the industry as part of their ongoing training programme. The new Belfast-based team successfully dealt with calls from the public during the *Celebrity Big Brother* furore in the first few weeks of their appointment. During the same day, two commissioning editors from factual entertainment and documentary departments will also brief local producers on opportunities at Channel 4.

EDINBURGH, DUBLIN, BIRMINGHAM & BATH TASTE EVENTS

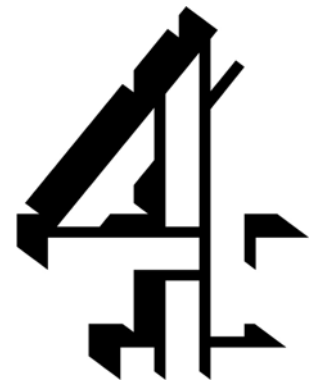
Channel 4 are launching 'Taste Festivals' in regional cities: Edinburgh, Dublin, Bath and Birmingham in June and July. The Taste Festivals will showcase each city's finest restaurants and celebrate local culinary talent in picturesque outdoor city venues. Visitors will have the opportunity to try sample-sized signature dishes at a fraction of restaurant prices, while also sampling fine wines. The Festivals will also feature special gastro events including *The F word* and *River Cottage* demonstrations.

CURRENT AFFAIRS SERIES FOR OXFORD COMPANY

Channel 4 has commissioned Mentorn Oxford to make a 10 x 60 minute current affairs series, called *The Insider*. A range of participants - including journalists, politicians and members of the public - will share their thoughts on controversial subjects such as the role of orphanages and how to tackle Britain's binge-drinking culture.

SHORT FILM COMMISSIONS FOR NEWCASTLE COMPANY

Yipp Films in Newcastle – best known for the award winning documentary *The Boy Whose Skin Fell Off* – has been commissioned to produce two series of four short films for Channel 4. *The Cost of Living* follows four people and their spending habits over the course of a month. *Where There's A Will...* will reveal what people hold most dear and who will be the recipient of it when they have gone.



*Channel 4
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SCIENCE PRESENTER SEARCH IN CARDIFF, GLASGOW, OXFORD & BELFAST

Channel 4 is sponsoring NESTA FameLab 2007, a national competition to find talented scientists and engineers who can share their knowledge and enthusiasm with the public in an entertaining way. Regional heats were held during March and April including Cardiff, Plymouth, York, Glasgow, Oxford and Belfast. The best presenters will go forward to the final at the Cheltenham Science Festival in June, although all participants have the opportunity to take part in a free one-hour masterclass in presentation and communication skills. Seven of the ten finalists last year were from outside London. The prize package includes an internship with Channel 4.

*Channel 4
works with
100 regional
companies
each year*

CHANNEL 4 SUPPORTING NEW SCOTTISH COMEDY TALENT

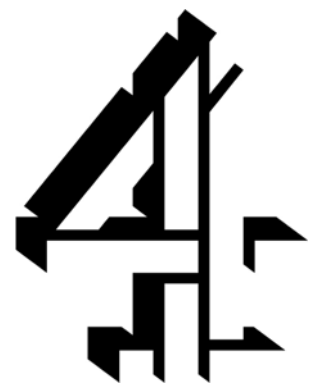
Channel 4 is supporting new comedy talent in Scotland by providing funding for the development of comedy ideas from three Scottish production companies. Endemol Scotland and Comedy Unit, both in Glasgow, and Young Films on the Isle of Skye are all developing cutting edge ideas from new writers and performers for the Channel's Comedy Lab series.

OXFORD COMPANY WINS MAJOR AWARD FOR C4 SHOW

Quicksilver Media Productions in Oxford picked up a prestigious award at the RTS Journalism Awards for a show commissioned by Channel 4. *Iraq - the Death Squads* won the 'Current Affairs: International Award' and was commended by the judges for bringing "real insight to bear on the sectarian murder campaign at the centre of Iraq's civil war". Quicksilver was set up in Oxford as a spin out from Mentorn Oxford and the start-up was supported by funding from Channel 4.

E4 COMMISSION FOR BRIGHTON COMPANY

Ricochet South in Brighton has won a new ten-part series from Channel 4's digital channel E4 on the subject of unusual attitudes to sex. *Sex Trial* (working title) is set in a court room where couples air sexual disputes. Meanwhile the company has also secured a number of re-commissions with Channel 4 including *It's Me or the Dog*, *Supernanny* and *Selling Houses Abroad*.



OVERSEAS VISIT FOR BRISTOL, BATH, GLASGOW, BELFAST & MANCHESTER COMPANIES

TRC (The Research Centre), hosted and supported by Channel 4 in Glasgow, took participants on its International Programme to New York and Washington DC for a four day visit to major broadcasters. Seven companies – Touch (Bath); Testimony (Bristol); Turn On TV (Manchester); Hopscotch, MMTV and The Comedy Unit (Glasgow); and Stirling Film & TV (Belfast)– visited a total of eleven companies, ranging from WNET and the newly launched Voom HD Channel through to HBO, National Geographic and Discovery. The aim was to make connections and gain a clear understanding of what the US market currently requires and how best ambitious UK independent production companies can work with them. All the course participants are now in some stage of dialogue with at least one broadcaster as a result of the trip.

DOCUMENTARY COMMISSION FOR BRISTOL COMPANY

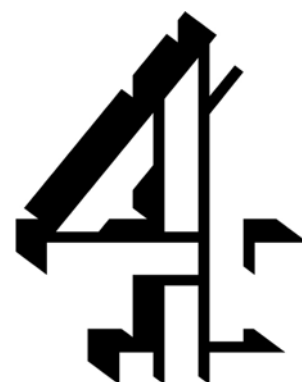
Channel 4 has commissioned Bristol company Diverse West to produce a documentary featuring explorer and adventurer Bear Grylls. The former SAS instructor will attempt to fly to the top of Everest in a motor powered paraglider. Diverse West was set up three years ago with significant start-up support from Channel 4, South West Regional Development Agency and South West Screen.

CHANNEL 4 HELPS JOBSEEKERS IN YORKSHIRE

Channel 4's new Talent Manager, Jo Taylor, is attending events throughout the UK to support new talent seeking employment in the television industry. In mid-May, Channel 4 will have a strong presence to assist media jobseekers living in Yorkshire. At the Careers Futures careers day in Huddersfield, Jo will be holding one-to-one sessions to advise participants on how best to get into the industry.

BRISTOL NEW MEDIA SESSION SUPPORTED BY CHANNEL 4

Channel 4 Nations & Regions Director Stuart Cosgrove hosted a full day 'Media Innovation Lab' workshop in Bristol, in partnership with South West Screen. The aim was to promote and encourage innovation in the business development of new media companies in the South West of England. The digital media companies who participated were encouraged to consider Channel 4 as a business client and develop ideas beyond programming content which would help the broadcaster deliver on its public service broadcasting commitments.



*Channel 4
reflects the
diversity of
life across
the UK*

Channel 4 is the biggest investor in independent creative business in the UK

BIRMINGHAM HEALTH SERIES MAKES A RETURN

Maverick TV in Birmingham has been commissioned by Channel 4 to produce a new series of the health series *Embarrassing Illnesses*, which has not been on air for several years. The series, worth almost £700,000, will consist of eight 30 minute episodes and will feature people willing to expose their embarrassing illnesses and innovative ways to cure them.

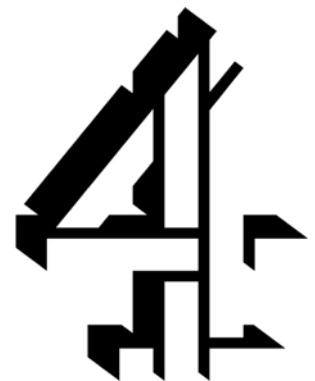
*Channel 4
invests £5m
in training
and new
talent
development*

RADIO COMEDY COMMISSION FOR MANCHESTER COMPANY

Channel K in Manchester, a regional office of Channel X which was set up with the financial support of Channel 4 and North West Vision, has secured a commission from the broadcaster's radio venture, 4Radio. Channel K will produce a series of 12 shows, at 15 minutes each, featuring sketches from new and established comedy writers and performers.

REGIONAL FINALISTS IN NATIONAL RADIO COMPETITION

Channel 4 Radio and 4Talent launched their first ever nationwide search to find fresh drama-writing talent for commercial radio. The competition is to give four aspiring writers the opportunity to have their scripts professionally produced and broadcast on Channel 4 Radio. Over 500 entries were received from throughout the UK and five of the eight shortlisted writers are from outside London, from Northern Ireland and the English regions. They will now receive top industry mentoring before the final four winners are selected.



REGIONAL COMPANIES MEET CHANNEL 4 HEADS

Channel 4's Chief Executive, Andy Duncan, welcomed the companies participating on the Channel's Researcher Development Programme (RDP) with a special reception in the London headquarters, which was followed by two days of meetings with commissioning editors. Eleven companies – from Belfast, Cardiff, Bristol, Brighton, Plymouth, Glasgow, Dublin and Newcastle – benefit from the RDP which enables them to employ a researcher for a period of a year and gives both the researchers and company executives privileged access to commissioning editors.

NEW COMEDY PROJECTS IN DUNDEE, EDINBURGH & GLASGOW

Gags To Go, a national search for new comedy for mobile phones, was launched in Glasgow by 4Talent Scotland in March. The competition, which is supported by Scottish Enterprise, is being produced by Glasgow production company The Comedy Unit. Nearly 700 entries were received, and the best will be performed at live events in Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow in May. Comedy fans can sign up to get films of the best gags delivered daily to their mobile phones, or by email, for ten days in June. The four best new comedy writers will win a paid placement with The Comedy Unit, and the chance to make a pilot podcast for 4Talent.

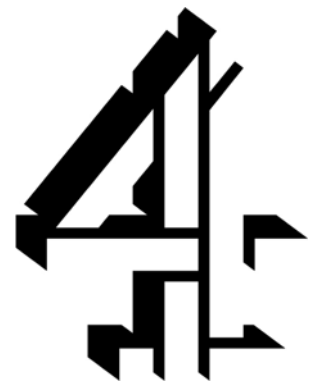
4Talent Scotland also showed its support for new comedy with two events as part of the Magners Glasgow International Comedy Festival in March. *Funny Bits* was a screening of new comedy shorts from across the UK, and *Shot At TV*, hosted by Channel 4 Nations & Regions Director Stuart Cosgrove, brought together comedy commissioners from Channel 4 and the BBC, as well as comedy producers, to explain how to break into TV comedy.

PODCASTING PROJECT BENEFITS GLASGOW, DUNDEE & EDINBURGH COMPANIES

4Talent Scotland also joined forces with Scottish Enterprise to produce *Pod-Plan*, a business development programme focusing on podcasting. Online radio station and podcasting specialists Inner Ear Ltd is currently delivering this programme, which teaches small companies how to plan, source, produce and distribute podcasts, and helps them come up with a plan to introduce podcasting into their business model. The five selected companies to take part in 'Pod-Plan' were announced as Awaz FM Radio, television production company Clarity Productions, Sigma Films (all based in Glasgow), as well as Edinburgh new media company Fifty Nine and Clash Magazine in Dundee.

MAVERICK LANDS 4HOMES CONTRACT

Maverick TV's rapidly expanding Birmingham-based new media department has added www.channel4.com/4homes to its portfolio of Channel 4 websites, providing programme support for shows including *Grand Designs*, *Property Ladder*, *How Clean is Your House?*, and *Relocation*, along with online magazine articles, blogs and games.



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