

About 4 Statement of Promises 2003 In the next two years, Channel 4 will have two priorities: securing its competitive performance in an increasingly deregulated market and giving greater clarity to the nature and scope of its public service remit.

Channel 4 will have to grow its ideas from the core channel across other platforms to create a coherent and sustainable presence in the digital multi channel world. It is our priority to ensure that all aspects of Channel 4's output are more closely connected.

In 2002 and 2003 Channel 4 has to prove that it remains possible, in a digital world, for a channel without public funding to place its public service values to the fore at the same time as it remains commercially competitive. Without commercial success, Channel 4 will not earn the income to fund those projects of cultural risk and diversity that it would not make commercial sense for a shareholder based enterprise to undertake. Channel 4 needs commercial ambition to fulfil its cultural ambitions.

This will not be easy. Channel 4 faces a number of competing pressures: an increasingly commercial BBC, the prospect of a single ITV and a new owner of Five. There will be an increase in multi channel viewing that will further grow channels which treat content as acquired product not as creative risk. Channel 4 will also have to secure a relationship with the independent production sector which will allow broadcaster and producer mutually to maximise the value of their ideas and will not merely reduce the ability of the channel to commission a diversity of programme suppliers.

We will build our strategy around our reputations: non-conformist, provocative and thought provoking, intelligent and outward looking, funny, surprising, fearless and risk taking. We will be the channel that offers the independently minded view in public service broadcasting. Channel 4 will contribute to the democratic debate as the place where interrogative and free spirited minds can both enrich and challenge the assumptions of

modern Britain, and connect its present to its past and future. This is the key to our remit to be educative, culturally diverse, and distinctive.

The Overview

Innovation

The Channel is committed to innovation and distinctiveness in peak. We will experiment with different formats to pair with Hollyoaks for the 6pm slot. The Salon will be the first of these series. We will revive Saturday nights with bold new shows such as Boys and Girls and Without Prejudice. Entertainment will continue to bring new formats and new talent to the screen, and will develop new cross genre ideas including comedy drama and comedy documentary. In performance, Operatunity will discover the classical musical potential of the British public and offer talented singers a real chance to break into the opera world. Klinghoffer will be the most ambitious work of performance ever undertaken by Channel 4. We will continue to innovate with architecture and design, launching a major two year initiative to regenerate and improve public spaces in British towns and cities. Alt TV will continue to bring new directors and new voices to the Channel in a half hour early evening slot.

Risk and new talent

We will make the most of our ability to take risks in all genres, and we will find outlets for experimental documentaries and dramas as well as new discussion formats. We will push new forms and approaches in History and Science. We will create a weekly zone to showcase the experimental and the work of new talent from our Independent Film & Video Department. In 2003 this zone will run for twenty weeks, with a mix of drama and documentary including new commissions and acquired films from experimental directors around the world. One initiative, Documentary,

About 4 Statement of Promises 2003

brings two coproductions with Lars Von Trier to Channel 4. In drama, *Coming Up* is a series of experimental films bringing new voices to the screen with eight contemporary urban coming of age stories made by first time directors and writers. And there's a new approach to late night discussion with *Heavy TV*, an eight part series bringing underground urban culture to the screen.

Imagination

The greatest shift in 2003 onscreen will be the prominence and scope of British contemporary drama. We aim to run original drama for fifty weeks of the year.

Non conformism and individual authorship

We will set aside slots for new voices and non conformist opinions in different genres. We will make time for signed opinion. Behind the camera we will support powerful authorship such as True Vision's *Dying for Drugs* and Kim Longinotto's *Female Circumcision*.

Diversity

Ethnic and cultural diversity will stay at the top of the agenda for Channel 4. We will implement on-screen diversity targets for all departments in the Channel and ensure that the independent production sector recognises our multicultural ambitions. We will show series such as *A Second Chance* and *Forbidden Fruit*, and we will bring new voices to the Channel in strands such as *Made in Britain*. Offscreen we are spending £600,000 on training schemes to improve diversity in our commissioning team and in the independent sector, and we will continue to chair the Cultural Diversity Network.

Educational purpose

Channel 4 will continue to work more closely with 4Learning to strengthen our educational proposition. We will focus on key seasons in peak such as *Fat and Autism*, but we will avoid focussing solely on problems and look at engaging ways to offer life skills. We will support long term series such as *First Love* on teenagers and their relationships. We will show major disability series including *Born to Be Different*.

Contemporary

We will ensure that Channel 4 will be the catalyst for contemporary debate, whether it be geopolitical issues or more domestic issues including immigration, multiculturalism and changes in family life.

Interrogative

We will offer an interrogative look at what is happening in Britain and abroad including a season on *Segregated Britain*.

Programmes in 2003 and 2004

Drama

In 2003 we will realise our ambition to have drama as part of the fabric of the schedule, and there will be more drama offered this year than C4 has ever had. We start the year with *Buried*, and there are other ambitious series such as *40* and *Second Generation*, as well as long running dramas such as *20 Things to Do Before You're 30*, *Teachers* and a new drama on the lives of modern nurses.

Comedy and entertainment

In 2003 Graham Norton will develop his role at the heart of the Channel. We will see the return of comedy successes including *The Book Group*, *Peter Kay*, *Sacha Baron Cohen*, *Bo Selecta* and *Rory Bremner*, but there will also be a major commitment to new talent including *Jimmy Carr*, *Richard Taylor* and *Mark Wooton*. *Your Face or Mine* is a new confrontational reality game show for early evening, and *Boys and Girls* is a major new Saturday night event encouraging audience participation and working across Channel 4 and E4. We will continue to innovate with series crossing genres, including *Without Prejudice*, a game show with a serious point, *POV TV*, narrative comedy constructed from the different points of view of the participants, and *The People's Book of Records*, more anarchic humour in the tradition of *Banzai* and *Trigger Happy TV*. *Green Wing* is an innovative comedy drama planned for 2004.

Events

Channel 4 will build major new events in 2003 including *Test Pit Challenge*, a week long chance to participate in the successful *Time Team* franchise. We will cover the Hajj live.

About 4 Statement of Promises 2003

News and current affairs

Channel 4 will maintain its lead in foreign coverage and investigations, and build on its success in multicultural news and current affairs programmes. We are carving out a new regular Saturday slot as a home for current affairs' analysis and commentary on political and policy issues. We plan to develop Powerhouse into a stronger political and business programme based around a new Channel 4 News at Noon. We also plan seasons on major public policy issues. Channel 4 will also build on its strong investigate reputation in Unreported World and Dispatches.

International

Channel 4 values its strong reputation for international programmes, and we will start 2003 with a major season on China. 2003 will also see The Last Peasants and Women and Islam.

Documentary

The Documentaries department will aim to combine ambition, intelligence and popular sensibility, taking risks with new talent on screen and behind the camera. We will also innovate by combining the documentary form with both drama and entertainment values. Cutting Edge will return with a more journalistic edge. We will offer new formats including Wife Swap and Parents and Children as well as contemporary single documentaries on popular culture. Series include Air Crash, Desert Darlings and Extremists. We will ensure that the department continues to offer a talent ladder to people progressing from Independent Film and Video to peak time documentaries. We will also offer under-represented voices an outlet. Gay programmes in 2003 include Gay Dads and Gay Children.

Education

Education is at the heart of Channel 4's purpose. We will offer seasons and campaigns as well as programmes on adult lifeskills that are engaging and educative. In 2003 there will be programmes on the Age of Consent, Autism, The Real ER and Parkinsons disease. Features will develop subject areas beyond property including relationships, financial advice and other life skills.

In a multichannel digital world Channel 4 has to focus its public service commitment where its reputation lies, and we will concentrate on the teenage and young adult audience. This is an audience not already served by the BBC or other channels, and open to the values and informal learning Channel 4 can offer.

About two thirds of 4Learning's budget for schools programmes and other resources will be spent on the 14 to 19 age group. An initiative with the working title The Stuff of Life will include a survey of teenagers lifestyles and aspirations, two series on drugs, a series of docudramas about sexual dilemmas, and two series offering insights into the world of work, with an accompanying website. There will also be programmes supporting the new applied GCSEs, including series on Applied Science, Applied Business and Leisure and Tourism, again with an accompanying website. A series and website investigating Channel 4 itself will be a resource for media education. Within the one third of 4Learning's budget being spent on the 3 to 14 age group, highlights will be a thirteen part animated series on science for infants, and a new monthly series on citizenship for 10 to 14 year olds, replacing 4Learning's weekly news and current affairs series First Edition.

The Programme Support team will work closely with the channel's commissioning departments and provide support for 8 hours of adult programming per week. We will explore the use of new technologies to reach as wide an audience as possible.

Disability

Programmes focussing on disability will include the three part series Born to be Different, Mixed Love, the history documentary Ivar the Boneless, and a number of potential Matt Fraser projects. We will encourage the participation of the disabled onscreen and behind the camera, for example in Book Group II. Vee TV continues, with resources for training and career development for deaf members of the team. Off air Channel 4 is supporting ten disabled actors (including two deaf actors) on a bursary scheme at the Actors Centre in London. We will also continue to promote and improve the disability database Four All and to implement our Broadcasters Disability Network Action Plan.

About 4 Statement of Promises 2003

Multicultural programmes

We want the Channel to reflect contemporary Britain across all our departments. Specific multicultural series in 2003 and 2004 include *A Second Chance*, *Forbidden Fruit* and *Soul Nation*. There will also be a *Segregated Britain* season, including an analysis of the effects of multiculturalism in the UK from journalist Kenan Malik. Channel 4 will launch *Heavy TV*, an eight part late night discussion show featuring the newest multicultural talent, and we will continue to bring ethnic minority opinion formers to the screen in peaktime programmes including *Black Like Beckham*, *Whitey Blighty*, *Takeaway Wives* and *White Girls Are Easy*. In other departments we will push multicultural casting across all our output, and for the first time we have set onscreen diversity targets for all departments.

Multicultural initiatives

We will appoint a senior editorial figure to spearhead diversity initiatives across the Channel, and we are taking on three trainee deputy commissioning editors from ethnic minorities in order to increase the diversity and range of our commissioning team. We are also working closely with the independent sector to improve the diversity of production teams and to ensure that all companies fulfil our requirements for ethnic and cultural diversity. We continue to chair the Cultural Diversity Network and are organising a major debate on Multiculturalism and Television in February.

Specialist factual

In History Channel 4 will continue to distinguish itself from the competition with programmes of real distinction and purpose. In 2003 these will include Niall Ferguson's *Empire*, a deliberately authored landmark series with a revisionist argument on the achievements of the British Empire. We also will show *SAS, Winston's War*, a ten part series taking a global perspective on the First World War, *Carthage*, the 18th Century season and a range of more contemporary history documentaries. We will build on the strengths of presenters such as David Starkey, Bettany Hughes and Tony Robinson. *Time Team* will continue to grow, and in 2003 will extend into a major public event with the *Time Team Test Pit Challenge*.

We will rethink how to develop and popularise

core science in peak time. This will be evident in the next two to three years. Science in 2003 includes series on DNA and String Theory, as well as *Leonardo's Machines*, *Gods in the Sky*, *Men of Iron* on Brunel and Stephenson, and the *Dambusters*. The format series *Scrapheap Challenge* and *Salvage Squad* will develop and *Full Metal Challenge* will come crashing to the screen.

Religion

Religion on Channel 4 will continue to offer programmes on a range of faiths and beliefs, and will look at the international and domestic issues raised by religion. In 2003 we will make the Hajj a major event in peak time, with documentaries and daily coverage. There will be a run of *Witness*, and series including *Soul Searching*, *Magic*, *Pagans and Christians* and *Some of My Best Friends...* In addition Channel 4 will chart the beliefs underpinning the different communities in live coverage of the Orange Order during the marching season in Northern Ireland. The new Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, will be hosting a new discussion programme.

Arts

Major series in 2003 include *The Novel*, *Van Gogh* and *Jewish Comedy*, as well as an extended run of the cutting edge *Art Show*. Channel 4 is also planning a major initiative to improve public spaces in Britain. Over eighteen months local people will be able to work with designers and architects and spend a million pounds to make their town a better place to live. The major performance event of 2003 is Penny Woolcock's version of John Adams' *Klinghoffer*. This groundbreaking film is given even greater resonance by current international tensions, and has been invited to the Sundance and Rotterdam film festivals as well as having a theatrical release. The other major performance event will be *Operatunity*, a competition to find and train a new generation of opera stars. Twenty were chosen from two thousand applicants and trained with the English National Opera before the final winner was chosen. Channel 4 is also making *The Voice*, a three part series on the art of singing and the greatest voices. In dance, Channel 4 has collaborated with the Arts Council to make six new dance films. The *4Dance* season will showcase these as well as acquired films on British dance. Longer term arts projects include the next series from Matt Collings, *Matt's Old Masters*.

About 4 Statement of Promises 2003

Sport

South Africa will be the major cricket series in 2003. We will continue our racing and World Rally coverage, and our new acquisition, Skiing on 4.

The independent sector

Channel 4 will continue to be the Channel that contributes most to the health and vitality of the independent production sector. We will work with a greater range and diversity of companies than any other broadcaster.

Following the Programme Supply Review, Channel 4 will commit to a new code of conduct reached in consultation with PACT. We will continue to find ways to maximize the mutual value of programmes with the independent sector. C4I and Consumer Products will continue to contribute to the independent sector through co-production, investment in programme development and deficit funding as well as producers' shares of revenue.

In 2003 Channel 4 will commit to spending 30% of our production resources outside London, and the Nations and Regions team based in Glasgow will continue their key role in supporting and developing regional businesses. The Channel will build on the Creative Cities initiative, a diverse range of projects aimed at regional sector development. Channel 4 will also continue our Regional Development Programme training researchers in regional companies.

Channel 4 will also be making a major contribution to diversity in the independent sector with our three training schemes for junior researchers, researchers and producer/directors from ethnic minorities.

New channels and cross platform

Channel 4 will be working closely with 4Ventures through 2003 to focus on the Channel's values and reputation.

Filmfour Ltd has been refocused with Tessa Ross appointed the new Head of Film. The priority is to concentrate on Channel 4's reputation for supporting new talent. There will be a major regeneration of the development slate, focussing on strong scripts and new

voices. Channel 4 has committed to £10 million investment a year and plan to be making seven to eight films a year. We will also continue our commitment to the FilmFour Lab, and the main Channel will showcase its initiatives throughout 2003 and 2004.

We will be working more closely with E4 editorially and strategically.

In Cross Platform, new initiatives will include The Salon, Family Tree and Mayflower. We will continue to build on the technological breakthroughs associated with Big Brother in all media.

Tim Gardam
Director of Television
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