

Directors UK Announces New Extended High End TV Drama Directors Career Development Programme

Directors UK and Creative Skillset's High End TV Council are delighted to announce the **High End TV Drama Directors Career Development Programme**; an expanded career development initiative to help progress and diversify the directing talent in high end TV drama.

Following on from the 2015 pilot scheme - during which five placements were offered to directors on high end TV dramas *Dickensian*, *Mr Selfridge*, *Undercover*, *The Tunnel 2* and *Humans* - Directors UK is creating six extended 12-week paid placements with production companies and broadcasters across the UK, including BBC One's *Silent Witness* and a future project from Kudos. Six directors will be placed within a drama production and will work alongside its lead director for the entire duration of the shoot - including pre and post-production. There is also a commitment to giving the placement director an opportunity to direct 2nd unit, where appropriate, and gain an on-screen credit to showcase the experience and help advance their careers within high end TV drama.

The **Directors UK High End TV Drama Directors Career Development Programme** aims to give directors a broader understanding of how shows within the genre are made, and how they differ from lower-budget and continuing drama productions. Directors will gain an insight into all areas of high end TV drama including pre-production, shooting, and post-production; ultimately giving them the skill set needed to be able to direct an episode in the future. As part of the career development programme, directors will also have access to post-placement support from Directors UK, as well as networking and advice from the production company and the lead director. It is anticipated that the placements will take place in various locations across the UK.

Richard Stokes, Executive Producer of Silent Witness, said: "*Silent Witness* has a long, successful tradition of working with and encouraging new directors. Over the last two decades the show's alumni include those who have gone on to extraordinary careers, achieving popular and critical success in television and film on both sides of the Atlantic. The new directors' scheme in collaboration with Creative Skillset and Directors UK is a terrific initiative which will provide the foundation for finding the next generation of talented visionaries not just for *Silent Witness*, but for the whole industry." Richard also produced the first two series of the *Doctor Who* spin-off series *Torchwood* for the BBC, and previously worked on *Holby City*.

Andrew Chowns, CEO of Directors UK, said: “We’re thrilled to be working with Creative Skillset again for the High End TV Drama Directors Career Development Programme. Directors UK have been working and campaigning tirelessly to improve access to directing opportunities, working closely with a range of organisations, broadcasters and commissioners to help improve fairer employment and career progression for under-represented groups in UK television. This is a unique programme that offers directors the opportunity, not only to learn and develop skills in a new and popular genre but also to gain a directing credit to add to their portfolio and improve their career prospects, a key feature needed for the industry to improve its current landscape and encourage new directors.”

The scheme is open to all qualifying directors. Applications from BAME and women directors are encouraged as the industry recognises that both are currently under-represented within film and TV directing generally.

The deadline for applications is Monday 16th January 2017. More information about the scheme, full requirements and application details are available on the Directors UK website <https://directors.uk.com/news/directors-uk-announces-new-extended-high-end-tv-drama-directors-career-development-programme/>

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Notes to Editors:

- **Directors UK** is the professional association of UK screen directors. It is a membership organisation representing the creative, economic and contractual interests of over 6,400 members - the majority of working TV and film directors in the UK. Directors UK collects and distributes royalty payments and provides a range of services to members including campaigning, commercial negotiations, legal advice, events, training and career development. Directors UK works closely with fellow organisations around the world to represent directors’ rights and concerns, promotes excellence in the craft of direction and champions change to the current landscape to create an equal opportunity industry for all.
- **CREATIVE SKILLSET** works with the UK’s screen-based creative industries to develop skills and talent, from classroom to boardroom. We support high quality professional development across TV, film and related sectors – identifying skills needs, targeting skills investment, developing key skills and growing diverse talent networks. Through our industry partnerships Creative Skillset helps to improve productivity, creativity and employability across the UK’s screen-based creative media industries.

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