

Duncan Singh – Series Director (PD/Edit Producer/Self Shooter)

Visually driven, imaginative series director and award winning producer with a background in blue chip factual across arts, science & history. I've delivered for Nat Geo, Netflix, Disney+, BBC, PBS and NBC.

I've developed striking looks and styles across singles and series. Track record of editorially shaping individual films and series from pitch to delivery. I'm passionate about making engaging films, with compelling human narratives and beautiful visuals. Strong writer/edit producer.

I pride myself on quickly building strong relationships with on screen talent, getting them to be honest and open on camera. Comfortable managing and directing big talent or shooting in a more observational manner. I've run large scale and complex international shoots, from the mountains of Greenland, to the deserts of Egypt and the rainforests of the Amazon.

Developed a number of commissioned singles and series for UK and international broadcasters. Science degree background.

Grierson 2017, Wellcome emerging producer 2014
I-visa

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Loud Minds (September 2022 - Present) – Producer Director

'SURVIVING EARTH' (w/t) NBC Universal

(Executive Producer Tim Haines – Creator of *Walking with Dinosaurs* / *Sinbad*)

Two scripted episodes of the eight hour mega series that will recreate critical mass extinctions in Earth's history and reveal how life survived.

- Construction of narrative for each episode, including story development and working with concept artist to storyboard entire films.
- Partnering with Milk Visual Effects (*Ex Machina*, *The Martian*) to deliver feature film level creature CGI.
- Full drama shooting; recreating the Clovis people of 12,000 years ago. Overview of casting, costume, makeup, weaponry and SFX. Integration of human actors with CGI using latest techniques.
- Shot internationally throughout 2023, using large specialist teams for highly technical filming in remote, dangerous and beautiful locations to mimic the landscape of the Earth millions of years ago.

BBC Studios (November 2021 – August 2022) – Producer Director

'EARTH, ATMOSPHERE' (1x60 BBC/PBS) *Top rating BBC2 factual series of 2023*

(Exec. Andrew Cohen, Com. Eds Jack Bootle, Tom Coveney, Patrick Holland)

Epic blue-chip science landmark, that reveals the, 4.5 billion year story of our home. The film is about the birth of life on our planet, told through the unlikely development of our atmosphere.

- Working with presenter Chris Packham to refine a series style.
- Developing large scale VFX, used across series, focusing on the development of the early Earth.
- Original Music - working with composer to shape music for the series.
- Filming internationally in remote areas of Chile, Guatemala and Iceland to deliver cinematic landscapes to show the early Earth.

ClearStory Films/Menace (March 2021 – November 2021) – Producer Director

'THE ART THAT MADE US - TO KILL A KING' (1x60 BBC)

(Exec. Michael Jackson, Denys Blakeway, Russell Barnes, Com. Eds. Emma Cahusac, Patrick Holland)

Landmark art series for the centenary of the BBC. Talented modern-day artists across portraiture, architecture, photography, design, stage and screen analyse and comment on key works from the creatively riotous 1600s.

- A wonderful mix of observational work with artists encounters, a strong chorus of expert interviewees and more heavily choreographed and dramatised moments.
- Helping to develop and refine a series style for the artist encounters. Working with big names including: Platon, Tai Shan Schierenberg, Rita Duffy, Anton Lesser, Amanda Levet and Thomas Heatherwick.

Nutopia (September 2020 – March 2021) – Series Director

'EXTRA LIFE' - PBS / BBC / NYT Magazine (4x60)

(Exec. Fiona Caldwell/Jane Root/Nicola Moody)

Series presented by Professor David Olusoga and writer Steven Johnson examining how vaccines, data, drugs and changes in behaviour have led to dramatic increases in life expectancy over the last 150 years.

- Developing and establishing a series style. The project became an unusual and interesting mix of history and cutting-edge science, told through presenter led pieces, reconstruction, graphics and archive.
 - Shooting Professor David Olusoga's material and developing presenter style across the four-part series.
 - Managing three US based directors (travel limited by covid).
 - Filming drama reconstructions and running large, complex, multi camera shoots with big crews.
 - Helping to set the VFX style for the series.
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Tailfeather Productions (May– September 2020) - Director / Development Executive

Netflix - Now Announced 'ALEXANDER THE GREAT' 6x60 Doc-Drama (TX Spring 2024)

National Geographic - 'LOST CITIES 2, WITH ALBERT LIN'

(Creative Director Lucy van Beek, HoD Fred Mercer)

Two funded developments for premium series. Development of series style guides/decks, format points and shooting style. Guiding direction of producers, initial access, conceiving and cutting sizzles with editor.

Nutopia (September- December 2019) Edit Director / Writer

'BABIES: THE SENSES' - NETFLIX (Execs. Fiona Caldwell, Sara Brailsford, Com. Ed. Kate Townsend)

Edit producing an episode of the blue chip science series streaming internationally spring 2020. The episode looked at how the senses help babies to start interpreting the world around them and what that means for their brain development.

'LIMITLESS' - Disney+ (Exec. Ruth Shurman)

Series with Hollywood star looking at how we can all live better for longer. Working up and writing on the 'strength' episode.

Blakeway/Brook Lapping – Zinc Media (Feb 2016 – August 2019) - Director / Producer / Dev Exec.

'THE LOST TOMB OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT' - National Geographic / Disney+ (1x60) - Director / Producer (2018/2019 - Exec. Lucy van Beek, Com. Ed. Bernadette Mcdaid – rated in multiple territories)

Archaeologist Pepi Papakosta is on a mission to find Alexander the Great's lost tomb. Excavating in a public garden in the centre of Alexandria, Egypt, she has discovered a rare, marble statue of Alexander, Greek treasures, and secret tunnels.

- Developed, pitched, sold then made this film – one of the first on Disney+.
- Liaising directly with channel and commissioner.
- Exclusive access, Egypt/archaeology one off special filmed over two years.
- Building crucial relationships, working closely with key talent and managing a huge team on the ground.
- Handling rapidly changing narrative on location in Egypt and in the edit. Some trips self-shot.

‘CHARLES & DI: THE TRUTH ABOUT THEIR WEDDING’ - Channel 5 / BBC Worldwide (1x90) - Director

(Exec. Denys Blakeway, Com. Ed. Lucy Willis, 1.3 million on a Saturday night)

The revealing and shocking story of the seven days that led up to Charles’ and Diana’s wedding at St Paul’s Cathedral on 29th July 1981. What the jubilant public saw versus the doubt, fear and heartbreak suffered privately by the two individuals, propelled by a fate they could not control.

- Archive driven film using rarely seen footage, with contemporary interviews.
- Working up, shaping the narrative, directing and cutting 90 min special.
- Liaising directly with channel and commissioner.
- Cutting archive in unusual ways, to heighten the emotion of the story.
- Unprecedented access to contributors including a cousin of Diana and her former nanny.
- Developing overall look, and style of the film.
- Shooting some illustrative elements of drama recon.

‘TONY ROBINSON: TOMB HUNTING’ - Channel 5, BBC Worldwide, France 5 (2x60 & 1x90) – Director

Exec. Lucy van Beek, SP/SD Owen Rodd, Com. Ed. Lucy Willis)

Tony Robinson travels to Egypt to crack open tombs that have been sealed for the last 4500 years. Extremely well received two-part history, stripped series for Channel 5, broadcast autumn 2018 beating BBC2 and C4.

- Negotiated privileged access to various Egyptian archaeology missions. Managed big talent.
- Developed narratives on the ground as situation unfolded.
- Days of director led, self-shooting on FS7. Directing UAV. Specialist shooting on gimbals, mini jib, GoPro, GH5 etc.

‘SECRET LIFE OF PUPPIES - PUPPY TALK’- Channel 5 / BBC Worldwide (1x60, TX 2017) - Director

‘SECRET LIFE OF PUPPIES - PUPPY SMART’ - Channel 5 / BBC Worldwide (1x60, TX 2017) - Director

Exec. Lucy van Beek, SP Lucy Haken, C5 Com. Ed. Sean Doyle

Natural history / observational documentaries following puppies in their first 6 months of life with a smattering of science. Using new camera techniques, all shot at their level and only featuring hands / feet / voice of any humans. The first episode is about how puppies communicate, the second how they innately learn.

- Shaping hour programmes requiring strong planning, development of theme and writing in the edit.
- Helped develop and refine shooting style for the series. Directed and shot using a mixture of traditional natural history techniques and more classically constructed factual sequences.

DEVELOPMENT: Various projects for domestic & international broadcasters - Blakeway Development Lead

Working directly with MD Lucy van Beek and head of development at Zinc Media, Selina Mehta. Developing specialist factual slate with programming for BBC, ITV, C4, C5, National Geographic, PBS, ARTE, Smithsonian and NHK. Self-shooting internationally and cutting tasters.

Commissions: 6x1hr Nat Geo *Lost Cities with Albert Lin*, 2x1hr *Tony Robinson Tomb hunting* for C5/Fr5, 4x1hr *The Farm* for Love Nature/Arte, 1hr special for Nat Geo + various funded developments

‘CHINA’S MEGATOMB REVEALED’ - National Geographic (1x90, TX Oct 2016) - Producer

Exec Lucy van Beek, Greg Sanderson, Dir. Hugh Ballantyne, Ben Duncan, NGC Com Ed. – Simon Young)

Feature length, big budget doc drama for Nat Geo with privileged access to the Mausoleum of the First Emperor.

- Produced documentary parts and shaped overall narrative of film with drama director and show runner.
- Planned and ran complex multiple crew shoot over four week filming period in Xi’an, China including dealing with immensely challenging access requirements. Gained unprecedented UAV access to the site.
- Negotiated access to cutting edge, multi spectral satellite data which allowed presenter Albert Lin to make genuine new discoveries.

'THE GREATEST TOMB ON EARTH: SECRETS OF ANCIENT CHINA' - BBC2 (1x60) - Producer

Exec. Lucy van Beek, Greg Sanderson, Dir. Nic Young, Commissioning editor for BBC – Rachel Morgan)

Dan Snow, Albert Lin and Alice Roberts – look at newly discovered links between the Hellenistic West and Qin China during the reign of the First Emperor. Huge press interest.

- Directed key sequence and shot considerable amount of material in the finished film.
 - Worked up and shaped hour programme from pitching doc following two-week access recce in China.
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BBC (April 2014 – Feb 2016) ****Grierson Award for best science documentary 2017****

'FORCES OF NATURE' - BBC1/PBS (4x1hr)

Exec. Andrew Cohen, Dir. Stephen Cooter, SP Danielle Peck, Com Ed. Rachel Morgan)

Blue chip science series presented by Professor Brian Cox exploring the science behind the beauty of the world around us. Filmed worldwide over two years.

- Edit produced segments for main show. Directing sequences for international version.
 - Setting up, organising and working worldwide including in remote, difficult and dangerous locations from filming surfing the Pororoca wave in the Amazon to ice fishing in Greenland. Writing all risk assessments.
 - Negotiating difficult access, including unprecedented access to film in the latest fighter aircraft the Eurofighter Typhoon. Facilitating negotiations between lawyers, insurance and H+S.
 - Utilising latest technology including various UAVs and 4k cameras. Good understanding of latest techniques and workflows, lenses, cable cams, motion control rigs, polecams etc.
 - Budgeting, working with and co-ordinating large crews including multiple camera ops, sparks, grips.
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DRAGONFLY - 'WILDFIRES 2014, INSIDE THE INFERNO' - BBC2/SBS (2x1hr) - Exec. C. Mottershead - Directing Producer

Specialist factual special presented by Kate Humble and Simon Reeve exploring the science behind wildfire.

- In the US produced/directed insert films examining large scale outdoor fire experiment.
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OTHER CREDITS

BBC - 'Dara O'Briain's Science Club' / BBC - 'Horizon' / BBC - 'The Reel History of Britain with Melvyn Bragg' / Shine - 'MasterChef - Series 7', / BBC - 'State Opening of Parliament' / Tiger Aspect - 'The Great British Property Scandal' / The Garden - 24 Hours in Police Custody' / Studio Lambert - 'Undercover Boss, Love Productions - 'Famous Rich and Jobless'

EDUCATION

2004 – 2007: University College London, Human Sciences BSc. (Hons) 2:1

(Dissertation: Influenza: Comparison of The Times newspaper coverage of the Spanish Influenza pandemic of 1918-1919 with that of 'Avian flu' 1997-2007).

OTHER INTERESTS

- Play club cricket for Palm Tree C.C. in North London. Keen road cyclist and triathlete.
 - Science/tech, tea, vintage steel road bikes, cricket and gardening.
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REFERENCES – ON REQUEST

Denys Blakeway
Executive Producer
Menace

Lucy van Beek
Creative Director
Tailfeather

Russell Barnes
Creative Director
ClearStory Films

Fiona Caldwell
Executive Producer
Freelance