

# JANE SAYERS' CV

## Executive & Series Producer in TV and Corporate film production

Formerly an Executive Producer with world renowned Darlow Smithson Productions, Jane is a multi-award winning filmmaker with 26 years experience in television and corporate film production. She has written, produced and directed dozens of hours of programming for global broadcasters including, BBC, Channel 4, PBS, Discovery Channel and National Geographic.

Jane works on a broad spectrum of films from £multi-million live TV broadcasts, to low budget social media films for corporate clients. A pedant for detail, she ensures every film she makes is beautifully crafted and that the process of producing that film has been positive for everyone involved. She loves recruiting and heading-up creative teams, and enjoys bringing the best of everyone's combined talent to the screen.

As well as being a highly skilled creative with instinctive editorial judgement, Jane has good business acumen, manages complex relationships and finds creative solutions to any obstacles.

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### Shell International

#### Oct 2016 – Present

Jane currently works as a Commissioning Executive Producer within Shell's internal Film Unit, which was first set up 80 years ago by John Grierson and some other early documentary makers in the UK. In this role Jane commissions independent production companies to create a huge raft of programming for Shell's internal and external audience. Jane works symbiotically with some of the UK's best talent to achieve films with really high production values, which bring Shell's messaging to life.

### Bigger Bang Communications

#### April 2015 – Oct 2016

In this role Jane Series Produced large-scale international documentary programming, and Exec Produced the company's corporate productions. She is responsible for selecting the talent and agencies required to bring these productions together, for heading up the production team at Bigger Bang and ensuring the films deliver on budget and beyond expectations.

Some of Jane's productions at Bigger Bang:

#### **Stephen Hawking's Favourite Places** Curiosity Stream – Series Producer *Emmy Winner 2017*

1 x 30' visual effect extravaganza where Professor Stephen Hawking boards a spaceship to cruise around the universe to show us his favourite places – from Black Holes to the Big Bang, from Saturn to Santa Barbara!

#### **Dispatches – Trouble on the Trains** C4 – Executive Producer

1 x 30' current affairs documentary for the Dispatches strand about the British Transport Police's efforts to deal with racist and intimidating behaviour from football fans travelling to and from fixtures. Jane proposed the film & negotiated the access with the British Transport Police.

#### **Genius by Stephen Hawking** PBS / National Geographic – Series Producer & Director

Jane series produced this 6 x 60' series and directed 1 episode. Professor Hawking believes anyone can think like a Genius, so each episode takes 3 ordinary people on a week-long journey of discovery, to see if they can think like some of the greatest geniuses of the past and answer some of humanity's most enduring questions. Jane was responsible for assembling the editorial team, finalising the content of each film, location selecting, hiring crew and editors, liaising and filming with Stephen Hawking and ensuring the smooth running of the whole production. Broadcast in 170+ countries.

### **Destination Mars** Curiosity Stream – Series Producer

5 x 15' documentaries about the Netherlands-based Mars One, an organisation that has a bold plan to land humans on Mars in 2027, on a one-way trip. The films include interviews with: internationally renowned scientists, Mars One and wannabe astronauts, as well dramatic enactments of a future Mars landing. This was the first series commissioned by the new subscription internet factual TV station – Curiosity Stream.

## **Darlow Smithson Productions**

### **June 2011 – April 2015**

Jane Series Produced a lot of DSP's factual television output. She took both editorial and financial responsibility, ensuring productions met broadcaster expectations, conformed to safety standards, hit the required schedules and came in within budget. In 2012 Jane also began running DSP's Ad Funded TV & Corporate Film Unit, Exec-Producing films for diverse organisations: National Geographic, Eurosport, Fox TV, Shell, Turkish Airlines. Output included character lead ob-doc, short films on topics as diverse as mine clearance & air pollution, and long-term feature length docs on mega-engineering projects. The awards shelves were heaving!

Jane's TV films at Darlow Smithson include:

### **Richard III: The Burial of the King** Channel 4 – Series Produced

Jane Series Produced 7 hours of unique live programming for Channel 4, all broadcast from a huge OB set up outside Leicester Cathedral. Crammed with beautifully crafted VT's the programming followed the re-interment of Britain's last medieval King, dug up from a council car park in 2012 and now buried in Leicester Cathedral in the 21st Century.

*"You can chalk that one up as a triumph" – John Hay, C4.*

### **Inside Turkish Airlines** NGC People – Exec Produced

Jane Exec Produced this ad-funded hour long ob-doc looking behind the scenes at Turkish Airlines and seeing what it takes to keep their fleet and passengers in the air during a busy summer weekend in Istanbul's Ataturk airport.

### **The Road to Rotterdam** Eurosport – Exec Produced

A fast turnaround ob-doc about Shell's Eco-Marathon - a student car race where teams from across Europe attempt to see whose car travels furthest on the least amount of energy. High drama, high energy, high passion. *Communicator Award*

### **Infested!** Animal Planet – Series Produced

6 x 60' fast paced drama-docs about hideous infestations of people's homes – from poisonous spiders, to rabid bats, hairy crazy ants and rats. Jane ran a team of 5 story finders, 3 drama-directors, 3 documentary producers and 6 editors. The drama recon was shot in Canada and enhanced with complex VFX to bring the horror of infestation to life.

### **The Road to Houston** Fox – Exec Produced

A 4 part ob-doc series and a feature length doc following student teams involved in the American leg of Shell's Eco-Marathon in Houston. We followed the highs and lows of 3 teams from across the Americas as they competed in this prestigious eco-car race. *Cannes Corporate Film & TV - Dolphin Winner*

### **Seconds from Disaster** Nat Geo Intl. – Series Produced

Jane rose from Producer, through Drama Director to Series Producer on the final 2 series of this drama-doc series unpicking the events that lead up to renowned international disasters, such as the Deepwater Horizon oil rig explosion, the Mumbai Terror Attacks and train and air disasters. Jane was responsible for producing all the drama re-enactments, which often meant filming in challenging environments, using large casts and some extraordinary pyro-technics and visual effects.

### **Hawking in Brief** Channel 4 – Series Directed

A series of 4 short documentaries, illuminating some of Professor Stephen Hawking's opinions. This 4 part enlightening series was aired in advance of DSP's feature doc "Hawking".

### **Hawking** Channel 4 – Reversion Producer

Reversioned Stephen Finnigan's spectacular theatric release bio-pic about Stephen Hawking's life, re-working it for a TV audience.

### **Timebomb Iceland FIVE – Reversion Producer**

Reversioned Duncan Copp's PBS film, about the Eyjafjallajokull volcano in Iceland. Turning it into an hour of accessible and fascinating science for FIVE.

## **Freelance Shooting Producer/Director**

### **2000 – 2011**

In this role Jane often took sole responsibility for shooting, producing and directing documentaries from the development stages through to delivery to the broadcaster. Jane worked at different independent companies and also was contracted as a freelancer inside the BBC. Most of Jane's films were for primetime viewing. Jane would select other freelance talent to work alongside her: Film Editors, Assistant Producers & Researchers where appropriate.

Jane also set up her own production company, Mojo Productions, in 2006 to make the increasing number of corporate and training films that she was being asked to produce.

A selection of Jane's freelance films:

### **Too Old To Be A Mum? CTVC, BBC-1 – Produced & Directed**

A 1 x 60' documentary looking at the challenges and difficulties faced by some of the world's oldest mothers – all of whom defied the menopause and achieved pregnancy using egg donors and IVF.

***"This film tiptoed through eggshells with an equanimity that did its maker's proud" - Daily Telegraph***

### **This World – I Believe in Miracles BBC Current Affairs – Shot & Directed**

1 x 40' documentary following miracle believers. An American man who's blindness was miraculously cured after praying to a deceased nun – she was then beatified as a Saint. An elderly father and daughter on a pilgrimage from Lancashire to Lourdes – hoping to find a miracle cure for his ill health.

***"As packed with good things as a Christmas cake" – The Spectator***

### **Murder Blues Films of Record, BBC-1 - Series Directed**

Jane directed 2 of the 3 x 60' ob-docs in this series for 9pm BBC1. They followed Trident, the Met Police's elite squad of officers who focus on gun crime within the black communities of London, investigating murders and shootings across the capital. ***"Observed documentaries don't get much better than this" - The Independent***

### **Welcome to Potters Bar Films of Record, BBC-1 – Shot & Directed**

A 1 x 60' film for 9pm BBC1 following the initial police investigation into the fatal train crash in 2001 where 7 people died, and following the grieving families and injured survivors as they pieced their lives together.

***"An exceptionally moving and dignified film" The Guardian submitted for a BAFTA by BBC***

### **Every Gun Tells A Different Story Mojo Productions – Produced & Drama Directed**

A 1 x 60' recreating the New Year's Eve murders of teenagers Charlene Ellis & Leticia Shakespeare, and a gun-running gang importing weapons from Eastern Europe. The film focuses on how the new National Ballistics Intelligence Service would have solved these crimes within hours of them taking place.

### **Chinatown Films of Record, BBC-2 – Edit Produced**

Jane was brought in to Edit Produce 1 x 60' observed documentary. It followed 3 generations of Chinese takeaway owners in Britain with very different lives – but all determined to survive, no matter what sacrifice.

***"This film made its points with great power" – The Times***

### **The Truth About Crime with Nick Ross Mentorn, BBC-1 – Shot & Edit Produced**

3 x 60' documentaries that audited every crime that took place in a typical UK city, over a fortnight. It followed the victim's cases right through the criminal justice system & questioned if there are better ways of dealing with crime.

**NABIS** Mojo Productions - Shot & Directed

1 x 25' drama made to look like an ob-doc, following police as they use the National Ballistics Intelligence Service to help them detect the criminals involved in an attempted shooting in Birmingham and a murder in Bristol.

*International Visual Communications Association - Award Winner*

**Monty Don – Growing Out of Trouble** BBC-2 – Edit Produced

Jane edit produced 1 x 60' documentary following the gardener Monty Don's charitable attempts to get a group of heroin addicts off drugs and into farming.

**Potters Bar – Search for the Truth** Films of Record, BBC-1 – Shot & Directed

An epic 1 x 60' observed-documentary made over 4 years. It followed the twists and turns of the Police investigation into the train crash that killed 7 people in 2001. Using remarkable access the film shows police uncovering sensational evidence about maintenance that affects the whole rail network.

*"An engineering murder mystery – a difficult thing to do and very well done" – The Guardian*

**Breaking Down the Barriers** Mojo Productions – Drama Directed

A drama-doc for the National Policing Improvements Agency reconstructing one of the most audacious serious and organised crimes in the UK – the multi-million pound cashpoint theft. Focusing on how the new Police National Database could have detected the crime much quicker and halted the crime spree.

**Panorama - When Cops Kill** Films of Record, BBC-2 – Shot & Directed

1 x 40' film looking at new scientific research that explains what happens inside the brain and body of an armed police officer just before they pull the trigger.

**Who Cares For Granny?** Films of Record, FIVE - Directed

1 x 60' cross-genre doc - combining observed and undercover filming. It revealed the human side of the cash crisis in the elderly care sector – looking at a good care home closing for financial reasons, and financially stable care homes where many suffer neglect and abuse.

**Communication & Persuasion** Mojo Productions – Written, Produced & Drama Directed

3 x 60' DVD based training session for the Met Police teaching officers communication and persuasion skills. A mix of documentary and dramatic reconstruction, which looked at the psychology of police interaction with people suffering mental health issues, or extreme behavioural problems.

**Child Lifers** Atlantic Productions – Shot & Directed

A speculative project funded by Atlantic Productions about 4 people in American jails who got life sentences as children and aren't entitled to parole. The USA is the only country that still sentences minors to life.

**Nicola Benedetti – A Winning Story** BBC-2 – Shot & Directed

1 x 60' observed documentary about the talented young violinist who won young musician of the year 2004. Charting her life at home and on tour, including her American debut, and her album recording at Abbey Road Studios.

*"This intimate portrait is a rare tea-time treat" – Radio Times*

**CountryCide?** BBC Current Affairs, BBC-2 – Shot & Directed

2 x 40' observed documentaries about life in rural Mid Devon after the foot and mouth crisis. One film focused on the demise of farming, and one on the village turmoil created as a nursing home is replaced by a persistent offenders rehab centre.

**Protecting the Public & Your Information** Mojo Productions – Written, Produced & Drama Directed

A drama-doc for the National Policing Improvements Agency looking at how the new Police National Database can provide a better policing service and increased protection for vulnerable people in society.

## Jane Sayers' CV

### **Starman** Yipp Films, TTTV – Drama Produced

1 x 30' drama about two tearaway brothers in the North East who head off on an adventure – an aborted robbery, an unexpected trip into the north sea, an encounter with the Milky Way and a chance meeting with the man who might be their father. **RTS Award for Best Non Factual programme**

### **Posh Rock** Ricochet Digital, E4 – Shot & Directed

2 x 30' ob-docs for this 10 part series about the wealthy kids who flock to the town of Rock in north Cornwall each summer.

### **Miami Water Cops** Just Television, UK Horizons – Shot & Directed

Jane filmed 5 of the 10 x 30' docs about the detectives and US Special Forces protecting Florida's waterways from crime.

### **Baby Shopping** Chapter One, Channel 4 – Shot & Directed

An emotional 1 x 30' film following a British woman, on a trip to China to meet and collect her second adopted daughter.

### **Bodies of Evidence** Just Television, FIVE / UK Horizons – Series Directed

6 x 30' drama docs about forensic pathology, looking at murder cases solved by entomology, orthodontics & archaeology.

### **Naked in Nevada** Chapter One, Channel 4 – Shot & Directed

A quirky 1 x 30' doc following a single mum to "Burning Man" a radical free expression arts festival in the Nevada desert.

### **Mad Pride** ID World, Channel 4 – Shot & Directed

A 1 x 30' observed documentary following 2 self-confessed "nutters" during London's Mad Pride Week.

### **The Big London Issue** Just Television, LWT – Shot & Directed

Jane shot and directed 3 of these 6 x 30' magazine films containing social action campaigning pieces.

## **Early Career**

### **1991-2000**

Jane started her career working in the BBC's Documentary Features department, as Personal Assistant to the Manager. She later moved into production working as PA to some of the UK's most renowned documentary makers: Paul Watson and then Stephen Lambert. From there Jane moved into the independent sector working with Michael Palin on his global travels, then spending 2 years as a Production Coordinator at Mosaic Films, where she also learned to shoot and direct documentaries. She has worked as a highly sought after freelance filmmaker ever since.

## **Education & CPD**

Jane's passion for the audio-visual arts started with classical ballet at age 3. She trained as a professional dancer until 17, when injury prevented her from continuing. She then studied Contract Law and Biology at A' Level and gained 11 business and secretarial qualifications before joining the BBC.

Jane has always maintained continuous professional development. She has learned to use many different cameras and editing software. She has trained across some diverse areas, all with a view to improving her filmmaking and producing abilities: Managing Difficult People, Interviewing Skills, Risk Assessment, First Aid, Counselling, Training as a Trainer, Helicopter Underwater Escape and Scuba-Diving.

Jane has a passion for knowledge sharing and has always actively encouraged new talent in the documentary industry, training younger team members on skills that will be useful to them. She also volunteers as a mentor through a reputable industry scheme and is an active member of Director's UK.