

tvbizz

RUSSIA

NATPE EUROPE SPECIAL

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50 CENT'S POWER

THE LYTHGOE DYNASTY
Rules of success

ENDEMOL vs CHANNEL ONE:
Who will win?

NATPE CEO PROMISES
*An even better market
in Prague*

THICKER THAN WATER



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THE POWER OF *creativity*

Dear readers,

Nearly two months have passed since TVBIZZ Russia was launched at MIPTV in Cannes. Now, we are back with a new edition with lots of great stories from the Russian and international TV scene crowned by an interview with Curtis Jackson - 50 Cent.

While the main topic of our debut was Times of Change, now we are betting on the subject of creativity, the power of original ideas and the readiness to break old barriers and concepts in order to create something that would truly change the way people perceive television - from a simple mode of everyday consumption to an exquisite form of art.

We are very happy to see that this process which is already a norm in the major international markets has started in Russia as well. Producers, directors, cameramen and TV execs are becoming more daring in their work willing to experiment and shake up the status quo. These efforts are recognized not only by the Russian viewers and industry people but also by the international TV

community. The critical analysis of Valery Todorovsky's *Ottepel* made by US script writer Neil Landau clearly proves this point.

Furthermore, innovative Russian formats like *Moimi Glazami* are selling abroad showing that creative minds can break borders and reach a global audience. Zaur Bolotaev, one of the best young directors and cameramen in Russia, shared with us some of the details on the development of the format and how it was sold for an adaptation to the United States.

We have also anticipated what will be another revolutionary project for the local market. Sreda's new production *Sarancha* is the first ever erotic thriller in the history of Russian television. This daring series will most probably shock the majority of (conservative) viewers but will certainly break new barriers and once again change our perception of Russian television.

It's time to celebrate the Power of Creativity.

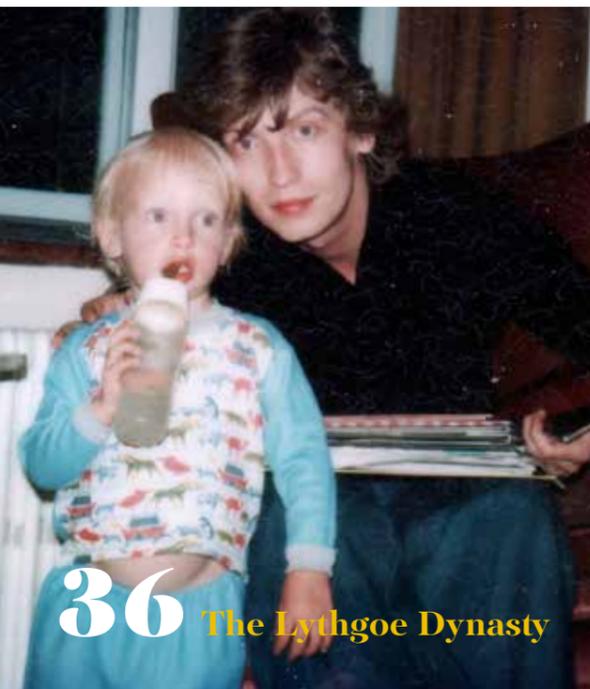


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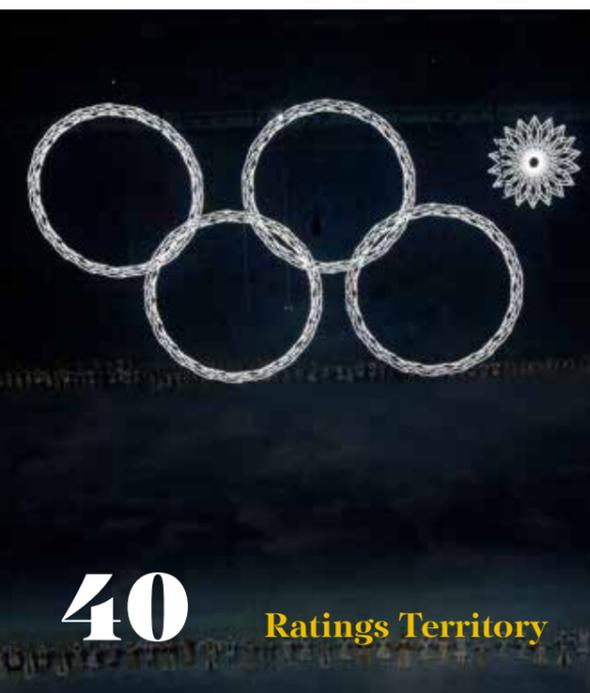
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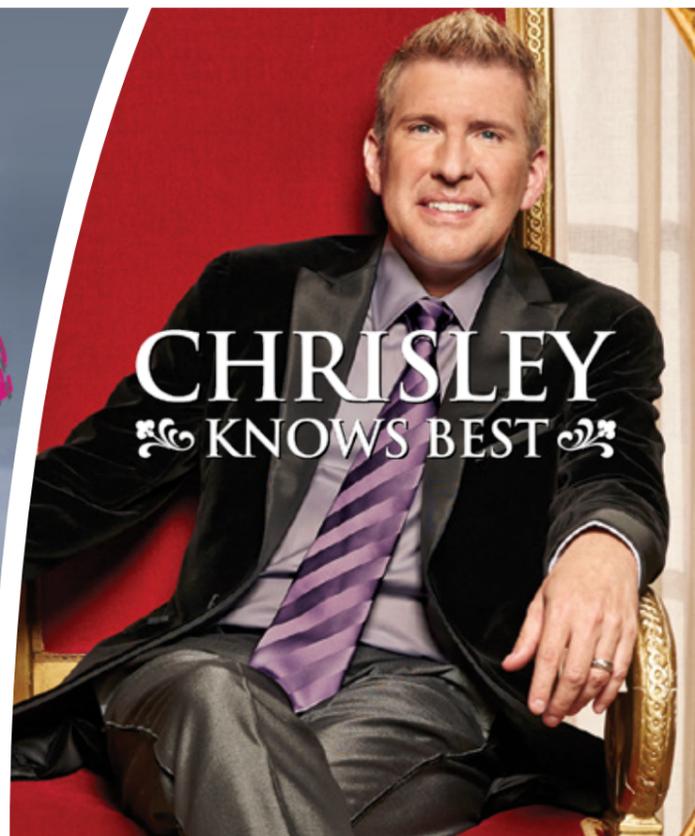
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■ *Magnificent Century conquers the US*

Global Agency has sold the hit Turkish drama *Magnificent Century* to MundoFox in the United States. The series will be aired under the title *El Gran Sultan* (The Great Sultan) and is set to premiere soon. Meanwhile, the series finale in Turkey generated 3.9 million liras in ad revenues for Star TV becoming the biggest selling episode for a Turkish drama ever.

■ *CET21 increases revenues, reduces losses*

CET21, the company which operates Czech market leader TV Nova, reported lower losses in Q1 2014. The consolidated loss was 16.6 million USD – half of the 33.8 million loss reported in 2013. Revenues for the CME-owned company rose to 56.8 million from 48 million in last year's first quarter.



■ *RTVS elects new GM, nullifies decision later*

RTV Slovenia was forced to stop the procedure of electing a new GM following a temporary order issued by the Ljubljana Labour Court. The order was issued following a request by Natasa Pirc Musar whose appointment as the new head of the broadcaster was annulled after it became clear that two of the members of the Programming Council who voted for her were not eligible for the position. Former GM Marko Filli will be serving as Acting GM until the case is resolved.



■ *New head at TVR*

Stelian Tanase, interim head of the Romanian public broadcaster SRTv (TVR), was named GM, following a vote in parliament last week. He has been occupying the interim chief position since December 20, 2013.

■ *Premiere for Russian Bones*

CTC will shortly launch the local adaptation of US crime hit *Bones*. The series will make its debut on the channel three years after the net acquired the rights to adapt the show. The Russian version counts 24 episodes and has been produced by GoodStoryMedia.



■ *Ukrainian nets to invest in local series after conflict with Russia*

The amount of money that Ukrainian channels are spending on Russian content is more than enough to produce their own product, especially series, according to 1+1 Media's GM Alexander Tkachenko. "Only one Russian media group said that from exports to Ukraine every year it gets more than 30 million US dollars", - he said. Tkachenko pointed out that other Ukrainian media groups are not ready to openly support a position to reject Russian content, following the conflict between the two countries.



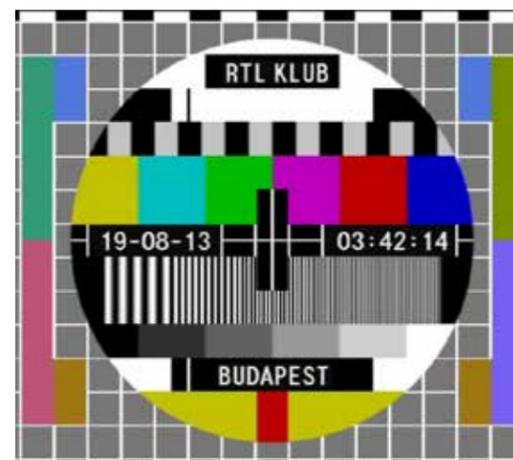
■ *First joint project between Discovery and Channel One*

Discovery Networks CEEMEA announced its first joint project with Russia's Channel One. *Kolyma Highway* (Trassa Kolyma: Dobrat'sya Vopreki) will premiere in Russia on September 1, 2014 on Discovery Channel right after which it will be broadcast in more than 100 countries in the region. The truthful and sometimes shocking program takes the viewers across the Kolyma Highway – one of the most dangerous highways in the world.



■ *Show TV goes back in the hands of the state*

Turkey's Savings Deposit Insurance Fund (TMSF) seized Show TV once again after a court detected irregularities in the sale of the TV channel to Ciner Media Group last year. The court upheld a request by businessman Erol Aksoy who claimed he held shares in the channel and asked to nullify the deal. TMSF sold Show TV to Ciner Holding for \$402 million without an open tender: the state got only \$97 million after the channel paid \$305 million for its debt, sparking criticism among the public.



■ *Advertising tax threatens media market in Hungary*

The Hungarian government has introduced a new advertising tax to be imposed on media companies, publishers, billboard users and online advertisers. The progressive levy is payable on revenues and the rates go higher as revenues rise and is expected to bring some HUF 8-10 billion to the state budget. There will be six rates from 0% to 40% depending on the revenues.

According to a last-minute modification of the bill, the tax base for 2014 may be reduced by half of last year's deferred losses. This could favor RTL Klub rival TV2 Hungary which finished 2013 with a negative result. RTL Klub reacted immediately by asking President János Áder not to sign the law and refer it back to Parliament for reconsideration.



ROD PERTH: Move to Prague will make NATPE Europe an even better market

Yako Molhov talks with Rod Perth, NATPE President and CEO, about what to expect at NATPE Europe 2014, following its relocation from Budapest to Prague.

Mr. Perth, this year NATPE Europe will take place in Prague instead of Budapest. What is the main reason for this relocation?

Our move from Budapest to Prague represents a deep and ongoing commitment to the EEC countries and their growing television and content businesses. We believe in Eastern and Central Europe, and this move represents a chance to refresh this yearly television market institution. Budapest has been a wonderful location for many years, and after careful consideration and many conversations with our customers, the consensus was that Prague will provide more flexibility that will make NATPE|Europe an even better market. We are incredibly appreciative of all of our friends in Budapest that made us feel welcome for so many years. The facilities of the Hilton Prague Hotel will enable the market, screenings, special events, networking and social events to take place under one roof. We made a similar decision when we relocated our annual U.S. market and conference to the Fontainebleau in Miami four years ago, enabling all attendees to network and do business under the same roof, maximizing return on their time and investment.

What have you planned for this year's inaugural edition in the Czech capital, based on your previous Budapest editions?

In an effort to accommodate screenings and meetings, NATPE Europe has adjusted its schedule for the upcoming market. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday will feature studio screenings that are invitation only. Registration opens on Monday for NATPE Europe, and the market floor will open Tuesday, followed by full market days on Wednesday and Thursday.

How does NATPE|Europe stand out from other similar markets and events in the region? What makes the market special and what are its strongest sides?

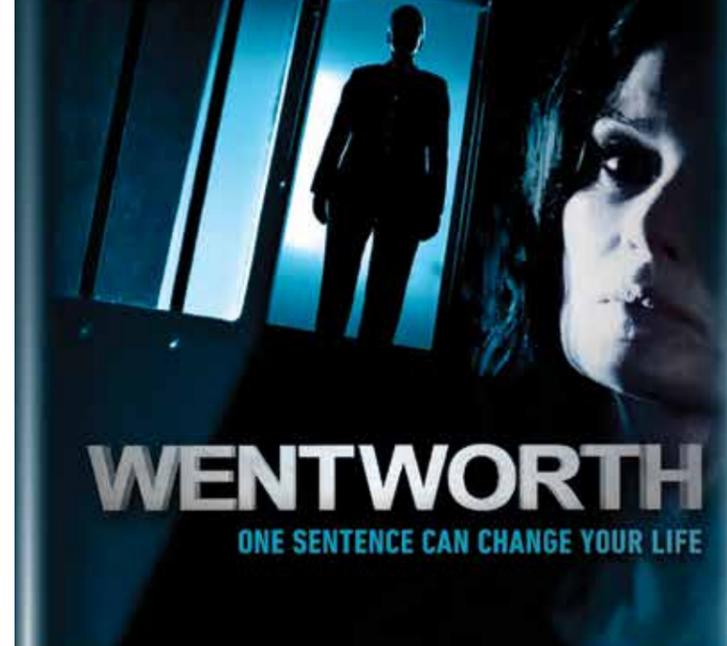
We're incentivizing buyers. We have a robust VIP buyers program and an outreach program that is language-specific that answers any questions that potential buyers have. We're emphasizing the unique reasons that NATPE Europe serves their needs unlike any other competing market. First among

them is that we're the only market to allow buyers to have a first look at all the Hollywood studios' content. That's a big, big advantage over other markets. Many of these buyers cannot afford to go to the L.A. Screenings because that's a long journey. A mere four weeks after the L.A. Screenings, they're able to see everything here in Prague.

We plan to turn the spotlight on Poland and its diverse television industry in a Showcase event. The event will place specific focus on the outstanding television programming being produced in the region alongside Poland's fast growing and fiercely competitive TV landscape. With 80% of homes now accessing pay TV via cable or satellite and more than 20 DTT channels available, Poland is now one of Europe's largest TV markets. Sponsored by leading Polish companies TVN, ATM Group and Monolith Films, the spotlight on Poland will take place at a Showcase event on Wednesday, June 25 at the Cloud 9 Sky Bar & Lounge at the Hilton Prague Hotel. All three sponsoring companies will also participate as exhibitors in the Polish Programming Pavilion on the NATPE|Europe Market Floor.

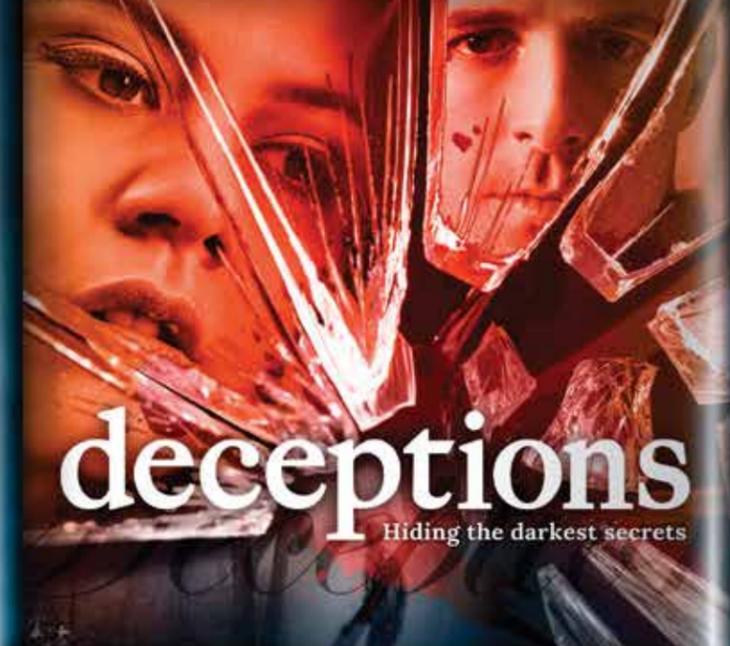
We plan to jointly host a high level breakfast summit with Tandem Communications at NATPE|Europe in Prague on Tuesday 24th June entitled Now, the Story Starts in Europe!, the summit will cover all aspects of building a global narrative and moving the international production industry to re-think how the business is run. It will feature a line-up of eminent contributors including network executives actively involved in international co-productions, European show-runners whose narratives are going global, U.S. show-runners who are breaking the mold and European production companies who are developing creative strategies.

Other highlights for market attendees include an opening-night cocktail reception at the Cloud 9 bar and lounge on the rooftop of the Hilton Prague Hotel. The event is sponsored by TV Nova, Prima, Czech TV and TV Barrandov. Even though these compete with one another, we think it's fantastic that we were able to help them understand why it might be important for them to cooperate, by welcoming everyone to their great city. It's going to be a real celebration of Prague and the culture and the city, and a fun welcome to everybody who's attending. ■



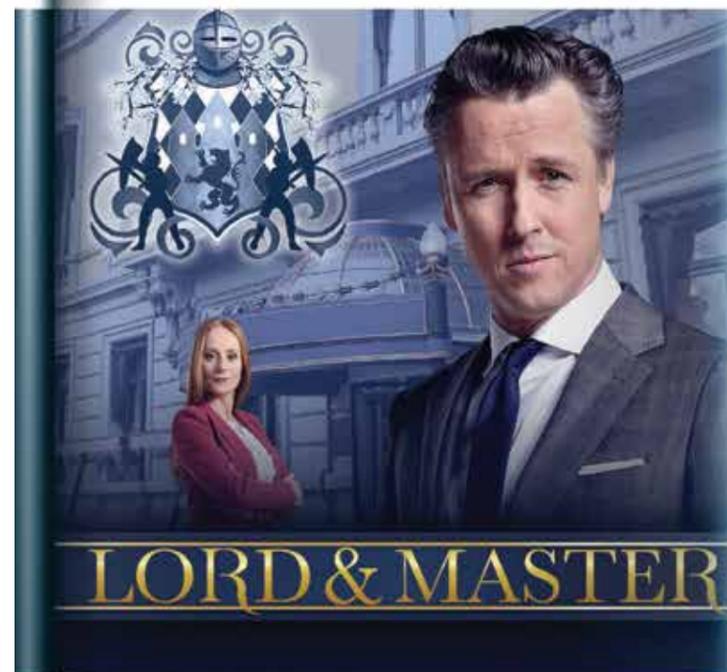
WENTWORTH

This dynamic, often confrontational, drama series is a modern prequel of *Prisoner Cell Block H*. *WENTWORTH* revisits legendary characters and their stories, taking the viewer inside an uncompromising environment that explores the politics of a women's prison.



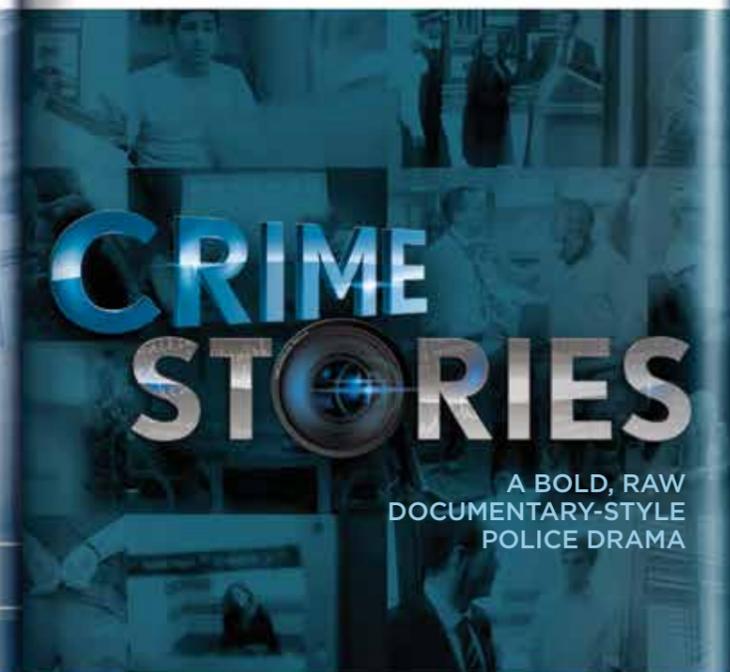
DECEPTIONS

Set under a veil of love, revenge and hidden treasure, *DECEPTIONS* is an intriguing and turbulent story of two families, bound together by a tragic murder mystery. Under this dark shroud can these two families overcome the curse that has torn them apart for generations?



LORD & MASTER

Valentin Bentinck is a handsome, charismatic private detective with a mysterious past. Valentijn solves each crime and tense situation with a smooth shrug and a smile. But will the playboy private-eye ever solve the mystery of his own past?



CRIME STORIES

This exciting cop show, tells its stories in a documentary style and semi-improvised by experienced professional actors. The use of CCTV, narrator's voice-over and interviews to camera create a visually diverse and authentic feel.

50 CENT'S POWER

Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson is among the biggest stars in the global music scene. Now, the rap icon has conquered the television business as well as the Executive Producer of several new TV series including *Power* which was renewed for a second season immediately after its premiere on Starz. Jackson shared his excitement about *Power* with Georgi R. Chakarov.

GEORGI R. CHAKAROV

The rap star conquers the TV business with brand new series **Power**



photo Starz

Curtis, you are among the biggest rap stars in the world, what provoked you to enter the TV business?

I think TV has changed and evolved greatly in recent years, the quality is similar to the level in movies now. The networks and production companies are now spending the money to have the artistic creativity you see in films on TV.

Tell us more about Power and how did you decide to back it?

I was driven to tell the story of Power based on my own personal experiences. Overall it is an outline of what a lot of people are trying to accomplish. It's showing a person at the point where they have made it to the top and are struggling between creating a new direction or staying with a different type of lifestyle.

I think a lot of people will be able to relate to the narrative and themes of Power. It is a multi-faceted romantic tragedy set in NY's club scene, it can be viewed in many different ways and the charac-

ters all portray roles that many can associate with.

Is the story related in any way to your personal life and experiences? What music will we hear on the show?

Ghost, the main character of the show, is someone that is in one lifestyle and would like to be in another, he has a legitimate business while doing things on the illegal side. There was a point in my life where I could definitely identify with some aspects of him.

I provided the music supervision for Power and the audience will hear music from my upcoming album, Animal Ambition, including the show's theme song, Big Rich Town. I wanted to let the musical component speak to the audience as they are watching the show.

You are becoming more and more active on the TV scene. What new projects are you looking into or have in development?

I executive produce Dream School on SundanceTV, which will be back for a

“ *The power that keeps me going is being able to create* ”



BIO

Curtis James Jackson III, known as **50 Cent**, was born on July 6, 1975, in the borough of Queens in New York City. His single mother worked as a drug dealer and was murdered when Jackson was only 8 years old; after her death, he was raised by his grandparents. He had boyhood aspirations to be a boxer, but he began selling drugs when he was a teenager.

In 2000, 50 Cent was the victim of a severe shooting incident that left him with multiple wounds and injuries. His breakthrough on the music scene came when he was signed by the hip-hop stars Eminem and Dr. Dre to their record labels. 50 Cent's debut release, *Get Rich or Die Tryin'*, was a massive success that eventually reached sales of 9 million units. So far, he has sold more than 30 million albums worldwide.

50 Cent started appearing in TV and movie productions in 2005. Three years later, he launched his first reality show *50 Cent: The Money and the Power*. He made his debut as Executive Producer in 2013 with SundanceTV's *Dream School*. His second project in the TV drama genre, *Power*, premiered this June on Starz.



THE SERIES

Power is an 8-episode one-hour series which tells the story of wealthy New York City nightclub owner, James "Ghost" St. Patrick, who caters to the city's elite. He wants to build an empire, turn the club into a Fortune 500 business, but there's just one problem: he is living a double life. When he is not in the club, he is the kingpin of the most lucrative drug network in New York for a very high-level clientele. His marriage, family and business all become unknowingly threatened as he is tempted to leave his criminal life behind and become the rags-to-riches businessman he wants to be most of all.

The series was created by Courtney Kemp Agboh (*The Good Wife*), who serves as executive producer and showrunner. Besides 50 Cent, Mark Canton (*300*, *Immortals*, *300: Rise of an Empire*), Randall Emmett (*End of Watch*, *2 Guns*, *Lone Survivor*) and David Knoller (*Big Love*, *Carnivàle*) also serve as executive producers. The series was produced by Starz in association with CBS Television Studios.

second season in Fall 2014, the show creates a place for troubled teens to turn their lives around in a place of learning where the educators are prominent achievers and leaders. This show is really important to me and I am so honored to be able to help offer these kids a chance to change their lives around.

You have also hosted and produced a couple of reality shows. Are you going to continue to invest in such projects?

I love all types of TV shows and am always looking at every type of potential project to see if it is the right next show for me.

How would you compare TV and film business to rap business? Which one is easier?

I don't necessarily think one is easier than the other, they're both just different processes. I take all projects very seriously and put my all into the preparation for them.

You've had many life-changing experiences in your life which one has given you the biggest inspiration? What is

the Power that keeps you going?

The power that keeps me going is being able to create.

What was the first thing you did after signing your first million-dollar deal with Aftermath?

It wasn't the first thing I did but the best thing I ever did after that deal was buying a house for my grandparents who raised me.

What does a 'normal' day look like for 50 Cent today?

There is really no such thing as a normal day for me but everyday involves me working and putting my all into whichever projects I may be working on on that particular day. That will never change.

What kind of music do you like besides rap?

I really like Justin Timberlake, I would love to work with him again. And Drake and Rihanna are on top of their game right now. ■

CHOOSE WISELY

FROM EXECUTIVE PRODUCER CURTIS '50 CENT' JACKSON

POWER

SERIES PREMIERE
JUNE 7 SAT 9P **starz**



ENDEMOL *vs* CHANNEL ONE *who will win?*

GEORGI R. CHAKAROV

In our first issue, launched during MIPTV, we featured a story titled Your Format Sounds Familiar in which we discussed the case Toch-v-Toch aired on Channel One vs. Your Face Sounds Familiar on Rossiya 1. Shortly after that Endemol announced officially that it is going to sue Perviy for copying their original format.

In association with Reed MIDEM, we continue the topic with an interview with Patty Geneste, Chairman of FRAPA, the international format industry association. In a conversation with Georgi R. Chakarov, Geneste discussed the various aspects and key elements of protecting an original format and also touched upon the problematics of starting a lawsuit and commented on the Endemol Spain vs. Channel One case.

Miss Geneste, Endemol has just filed a lawsuit against Channel One Russia claiming that they have copied Your Face Sounds Familiar with the show called Toch-v-Toch, or Exactly the Same. How hard will it be for Endemol to prove their case in court?

I think when Channel One bought the rights and started airing the original, and then when they lost it and decided to make a rip off, that would make a much stronger case because they recognized the original first. That is also a funny title for a rip-off! This is a code of conduct situation, because they have changed a few elements, and if the judge is going to analyze it element by element, you might have only one element in common - the dressing up. If you have a judge who feels he wants to analyze it like this, and not use the expert witness - you have a problem.

But if you look at the business as such, if you look at the facts, I think Endemol must have a strong case. Because it will not be only a content fight, it will also be a business code of conduct fight. But it will also depend where the court case will be filed. I would say 50-50.



Patty Geneste has worked for more than 25 years in the international television business including MTV Europe, TV10, NPO, JE Entertainment, Endemol, IdtV, Initiative Media and Absolutely Independent. She is the Founder and owner of Absolutely Independent since 1996. Her company has won several international Awards for formats like Find my Family and The Phone.

Patty is also Chairman of FRAPA and a member of the Academy of Arts & Science. She has been a jury member of the International Emmy Awards; Rose D'Or; Banff Festival; and TVLab. In 2010 and 2011 Patty was named one of the ten most influential women in the media in the Netherlands.



What will happen if Endemol win the case?

If Endemol win they need to estimate the damage. For instance if the channel that is broadcasting the original format decides to stop because of the other program, that is a really big damage. And that would be higher than 400.000 euros per episode but if they continue then the damage is based on the estimation of losing business.

How does a case normally develop in court?

I've only been once in court as an expert witness. Most of the time they use jurisprudence from other cases, not necessarily format cases, they use creative cases. They connect the current situation in court to those cases, and it's up to the cleverness of the lawyer how he turns that into the favor of his clients. Its amazing how they do this nowadays.

In such cases sometimes celebrities are brought in, for example the host of the infringed show and the producer uses them to produce the court case. And the judge actually buys it for some reason. Sometimes producers pull the tricks to the limits.

I don't like court cases at all because it also depends on what you are claiming in court. Are you claiming the idea, or like recently in the case of Red Arrow against the SBS Group and Talpa over the format Married at First Sight in the Netherlands they claimed that they infringed the code of conduct in the business. And they are continuing the court case. It is too late for mediation. And this judge he felt as if he was put into a situation where he couldn't make any decision. Instead of looking at the code of conduct, which was too difficult for him, he looked at the formats, but that was not relevant anymore. Court cases are never good for formats.

How can independent producers protect their intellectual property?

First, they need to describe their format as good as possible, make sure that in in the concept there is a unique twist, put different elements in a unique order and for gameshows it's very necessary to describe the rules. If you have created

a gameshow, then create a final game for the gameshow. If you don't create a final game you can hardly protect it. It's very important to register the complete development process.

What is also very important is to create a strong title with a logo. The title becomes the brand. If you create a brand people always want to identify with the brand. So with a strong title which becomes a strong brand, it's less difficult to protect your format.

It is also very important to know who are the reliable established companies, so you need to do some investigation. Make sure that you work with established companies in the format business cause that is also part of your protection.

And it's highly necessary to save the communication regarding the format so if there is a problem at some point you still have the email correspondence and even notebooks are important.

Is it harder to protect scripted compared to non-scripted shows? What are the main differences?

Gameshows were one of the first to be recognized as formats. Wheel of Fortune and Jeopardy! were the first formats from the 50s. Those were bartered by P&G and recognized as a unique game because the structure was so clear, nobody questioned the fact that there are rights connected to that.

Also, Who Wants to be a Millionaire created the blue light, and since then a lot of gameshows are recorded in the blue light. And Deal or no Deal, probably, was the first gameshow without questions and answers. Those structures and those little but yet important things created a new generation in gameshows but still as long as you do those elements in a completely different order and different environment, it is not such a big deal to use them.

You create a new format with sometimes existing elements which are used in other shows. However, as long as you put them in a unique order together with other newly created elements it doesn't necessary have to be a problem. But if you create a talent show with blind auditions and turning chairs

– all of a sudden everybody recognizes that as a format. But blind auditions are not new either, you can use it in other kinds of formats. Turning chairs, however, are discussable, I think it is protectable and unique in the format as such. If others use that, you have a strong case already to protect that element from being used in another show.

The most difficult area, which is a fast growing area is the factual entertainment format area. There it is very, very relevant if you want to protect your idea to have something unique attached to your idea. And the knowledge how to produce it in a combination with a strong title and of course the same structure and same story building is what it protects as a format.

If you look at the scripted formats: of course it starts with the synopsis and the settings that the writers have written and the characters description. But the script obviously in combination with the arena and synopsis is what makes it unique. Again, the unique elements of the characters in combination with the story line is what the format is on the fiction side.

If an IP owner finds out that someone has stolen the idea for their format what steps must be taken? What arguments are needed in order to prove an IP infringement in court?

First of all Frapa is not in favor of going to court for a very simple reason: the law in most countries still doesn't recognize the IP protection in formats. Then you depend even more on the judgement of the judge who has no idea what this business is about, and this depends on his mood.

What we do, when members approach us when in their eyes there is an infringement. We first ask them to send us the materials. We offer our members to analyze the case ourselves within the board. We offer them two members, each one makes their own analysis, we make a document of that and we send it to the format owner. This could be an advice to mediate, this could also be when we say, this is a tricky business, in the sense that there are couple of weaknesses there that we like to point out.

We don't say go to your lawyers because lawyers are very expensive. Because of weaknesses in the law, we advice our members to go for mediation. I have personally done successfully 5 mediations in the last 2 years and all of them were settled in a way that was satisfactory to both parties involved. Those are long extensive processes.

We have a cooperation with WIPO – Worldwide Intellectual Property Organization. If our member says we want mediation – they will approach the other party for very very low fee. First hour is for free, and then it goes up to the maximum fee of about 5.000 euro. Whereas if you would hire a lawyer and go to court, you have to add a zero to that. With mediation you can keep the friendly relation with the infringing party, cause most of the time you agree to not publicize the information and the outcome.

Sometimes the big companies are too fast with going to court because it comes from an emotional response. And usually these companies reserve some budget for any kind of problems, so they can afford it. However, we also know that some of those big parties regret that they jumped in the court so fast. ■

OTHER FORMAT WARS



Surprising or not, a report by FRAPA shows that some of today's most famous formats were actually accused of copying other intellectual properties.

In the year 2000 Castaway, the creators of Survivor, accused Endemol of infringing their format with Big Brother which had just started on Dutch TV. After four years of proceedings, the court ruled that Big Brother is an original format.

Later, Castaway sued Granada (ITV Studios) and LWT for copying the idea of Survivor to create the format I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! The defendants managed to prove that they had independently created their format without copying.

In 2004 Simon Fuller of 19TV, the creators of Pop Idol, sued the producers of The X Factor (SyCo and FremantleMedia) for £100 million for copyright infringement, breach of confidence and breach of contract. The case was solved out of court with reports that 19TV received an undisclosed payment as well as a stake in the X Factor format franchise worldwide.

The same year British producers Melville, Boone and Baccini brought three separate claims against Celador, the owners and producers of Who Wants to be a Millionaire claiming that the format infringed copyright in formats for gameshows they had created previously. Melville and Baccini's claims were settled out of court.

Last year, a Dutch court ruled that the Eyeworks format Celebrity Splash is not a copy of Banijay's diving show Stars in Danger. Celebrity Splash premiered in the Netherlands in August 2013 and has been sold to more than 20 countries since then.

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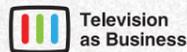
CONFERENCE AND
SCREENING OF TV FORMATS
FORMAT SHOW
15 September 2014



TV COPRODUCTION FORUM
KIEV COPRODUCTION
MEETINGS
16 September 2014



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
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17 September 2014



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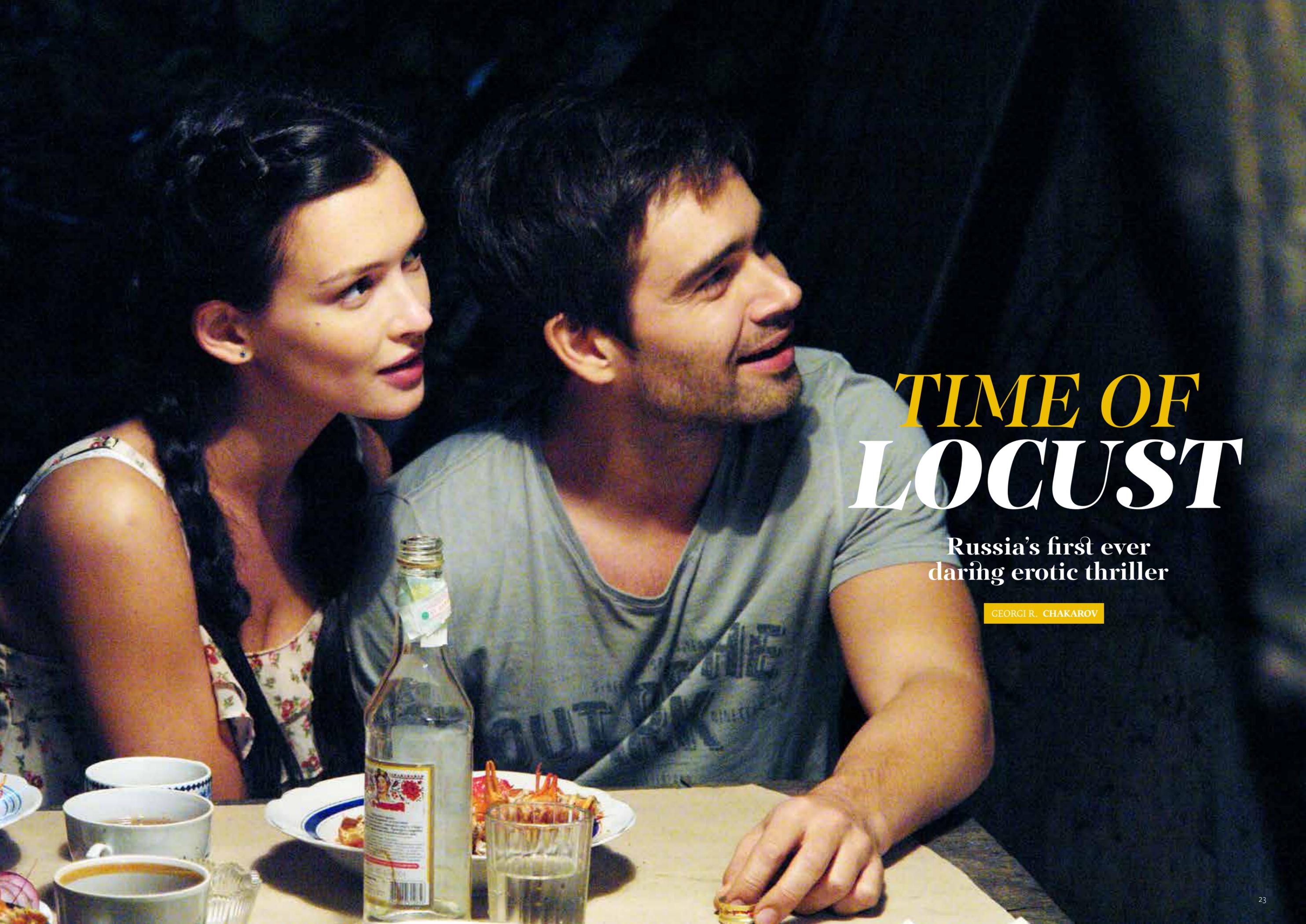
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TIME OF **LOCUST**

Russia's first ever
daring erotic thriller

GEORGI R. CHAKAROV

Sarancha (Locust) is the weird, striking title of a new TV and film project set to hit Russian screens later this year. To a foreigner like me, this word sounds quite peculiar and strong, leaving a mark in the mind with its emphasized ending. After reading the synopsis of the show and realizing that this is a tragic love story with lots of twists and turns and blood, a big question mark grew inside of me as I could see no “insects” in this story. So that was my very first question to producer Alexander Tsekalo: “Why Locust? How did you come up with that title?”

“Scriptwriter Andrey Malovichko had initially created a story under the name “Time of the Locust”. Later on this title was changed and finally turned into the stronger - “Locust”. He used this term to refer to a new generation of people which is not from yesterday but started from the origins of the perverted capitalism in Russia. Who is the Locust? These are young talented people, talented in everything. Maybe not so talented but capable. However, this is a generation that is not willing to realize its potential thru work, time consuming process and efforts. They are keen to get everything right here, right now. They want to get to the shore without crossing the river. There are no barriers for them. They don’t care about experience, it’s a waste of time, the time of their lives, their efforts. They want it all. Right here, right now.”

Back in my mind, the bugs were already moving: “Locust, really?! Do I know them? Am I one of them? I also want to have it right here, right now? What is this supposed to mean? What a cruel way to describe the state of mind of a large part of the young generation...” while Tsekalo continues to hit me: “And the obstacles that they meet on the way to their achievements, they are ready to sweep away. And the problem of this generation is that they cannot stop. They don’t want to have it tomorrow, they want it now. I want this - this is not yours - but I want it. She is married... okay, I will kill him.”

I think a bit more, trying to draw a portrait in my mind and come up with the right word. Ultra-egoism?! Is that what we are talking about here? And bam! we finally connect: “Yes, ultra egoism is the right word; it’s one of the main features of the Locust generation who think only about themselves,” Tsekalo reassures me.

First a striking word, now a striking explanation... This is really good! But my mind needs more. What else is there about this Locust that makes it so special...

I look up on the internet and here it is: a normal grasshopper becomes a locust under certain circumstances. A metamorphosis described by the Encyclopedia of Insects:

“The peculiarity of the biology of the locust is the occurrence of two phases - single and gregarious, which is differentiated by the morphology and the patterns of behavior.”

I stop for a while to think about what I just read and compare it to the story. I want to see the author right here, right now and ask a bunch of questions about these bloody insects but then continue reading:

“In its single phase the locust needs enough food to maintain its population. When there is not enough food (which most often happens in the hot dry years), the locust lays a migratory generation which forms big swarms, going through ma-



Producer Alexander Tsekalo

...jor metamorphosis - the size of the body and wings, and the grasshoppers turn into locust.”

Locust, locust, locust! Two young and beautiful people meet on a hot summer night near the sea and make love, falling desperately in love, turning from two lonely, small and ordinary grasshoppers into wild, uncontrollable locusts that stop at nothing to get what they can never have... I start feeling the desperation and the words of director Egor Baranov come as a soothing pat on the shoulder:

“This film is about a young couple and their love which they couldn’t keep. From my perspective, it is rare in modern days when you shoot a story purely about the relationships of ordinary people. About a young guy and girl who loved each other, but at some point got confused about what is really important and could not notice how they lost their love and turned into “Locust”.

OK, Egor, I get it. But why? What actually happens to these people? And who is to blame for their tragedy? Then, I find this in the encyclopedia:

“It has been proven that in order to hatch such a generation, it is enough to put a small mirror in the area of the settled locust. Seeing the numerous reflections and getting in conflict with them, the locust lays eggs with the activated alternative “migratory” program.”

Well! Time for a break! A friend has posted Queen’s I’m Going Slightly Mad on Facebook - just perfect for the occasion...

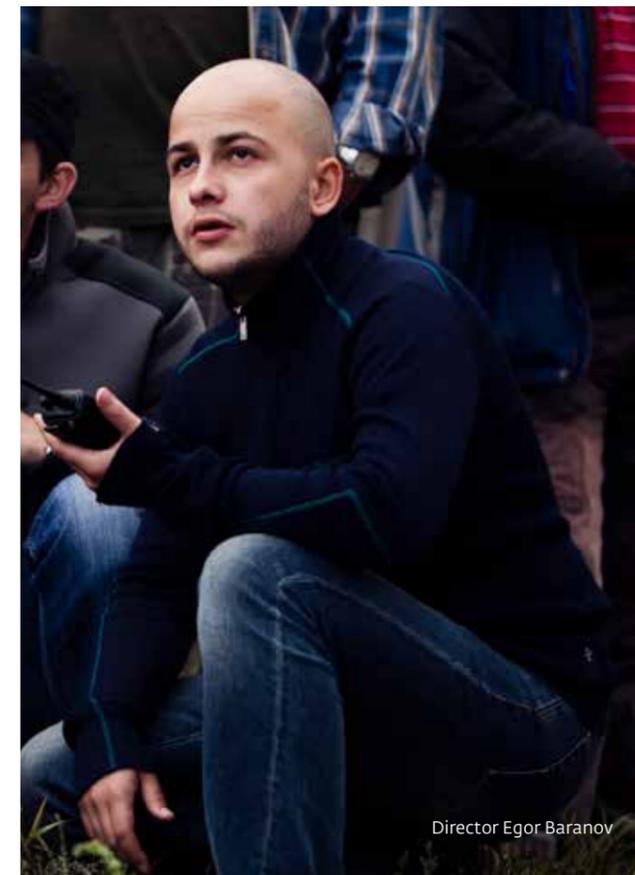
And there you have it... Meet our young lovers, Artem and Lera. She has come from Moscow to the seaside for a short summer vacation; a rich and sexy girl who just wants to party. He is a poet; a very good-looking poet that is. Eye contact, short

conversation... We all know how it works when love at first sight hits: electricity. Probably, the electricity between them becomes the cause for the summer storm which takes them to a bus stop where they make passionate love under the heavy rain...

I must warn here that hot, erotic scenes will be one of the key elements in this daring production! Also daring due to the fact that this love scene was shot in very extreme weather conditions in October as described by Baranov:

“We were not very lucky with the weather. There was a strong wind and occasional rain. On top, we were making rain for this scene as well. Once we had finally set the wide shot with the bus stop in the scene, the wind became so strong that all the water from the machine, suspended over the stop, got blown away, out of the shot. The wind also blew the lighting which we used to create the lightning effects. But I was very struck by the actors’ dedication. Between takes, they were shivering and screaming that they had frozen to the bone, but immediately upon my command, “Camera Action!”, they instantly forgot about the cold, stopped shivering and played a true passion scene.”

“Yes, this story is about love at the first sight. However, love at the first sight is a slightly fairytale-like condition. Our protagonist faces a critical moment once his beloved leaves with her parents, and they are forced to part. The breakup leads to the question: Can I live without this person? And here, perhaps, the one, who is in love, can truly understand if this is love or it was simply a sexual attraction,” Tsekalo explains.



Director Egor Baranov



He adds that this is the key moment for him. And I couldn't agree more as I see how this love, this wild passion leads to the metamorphosis and the breakup starts the the process of the two turning into locusts.

"Much is based on the passion between the two characters, on the intolerance to be apart. In this sense the word passion prevails and may be even more significant than the word love," Tsekalo points out. "There is a classical example, Romeo and Juliet, of what people are ready to do for the sake of love. But time has so much distorted the meaning of what is actually possible and what is not, so that our characters are too confused and mix these concepts. They are ready to give everything in order to be together, however, the means they use go beyond the law."

"The locusts have no king, yet all of them march in rank (Proverbs 30:27)"

But it turns out things are not as simple as they seem to be. Both Artem and Lera have their own life and we are just starting to find out about it and see what made them become what they are.

The parents are not happy with the summer romance of their beautiful Lera: the rich family is not fond of poor Artem. She must forget! And like any modern girl with good taste for life, she starts going to a psychiatrist to try and go back to her old routines... She almost succeeds before they meet again and reignite their passion.

"Under the standards of traditional morals they should have accepted that they cannot be together, and to move on with their lives. But they had an incredible motive - their love. What can you set against this? Nothing. They fought for their love," says Tsekalo.

Artem works three jobs at a time. He is not going to leave Moscow defeated. He is ready to sacrifice everything to be with Lera whose parents are actually planning to marry her to a media magnate but she chooses love instead of the good, secure life and moves in with Artem. But their sacrifice does not make them happy as they are both unable to give each other anything else but love and in the big city of Moscow this is simply not enough:

"Moscow gives nothing to noone, and if it does, this happens once. Moscow is an impudent, beautiful girl aged 30. She can give once, but don't expect more," Tsekalo notes.

They keep on fighting but life takes another turn and she is forced to marry the millionaire: "And just as it is in life: there is no one-way action, there is always a counteraction. And when those meet, you can verify whether a person is good or bad, and what kind of choice he will make - right or not. The drama starts here because there is choice. Drama is always about choice. They made the wrong choice and were unable to stop."

These series of choices in the search of happiness leads to three murders; three victims of the locust. And who's to blame?

"Everyone of them has committed these murders, even those who were killed have provoked their killing. Everyone is

THE TEAM

Producer

Alexander Tsekalo, Sreda

Director

Egor Baranov

Cameraman

Yuri Korobeynikov

Art Director

Denis Bauer

Actors

Petr Fedorov

Paulina Andreeva

Alexey Gorbunov

Evgenia Dmitrieva

Maxim Pinsker

Ekaterina Volkova

Alexander Golubkov

Ivan Shedrin

Composers:

Alexey Aygi

Oleg Chubykin

Head of International Projects

Daria Bondarenko

(bondarenko.daria@sredatv.ru)

guilty," concludes Tsekalo.

All of these complex problematics have convinced Channel One to commission the production which will premiere this fall as a four-part miniseries and a theatrical feature. This will be Russia's first ever daring erotic thriller.

Tsekalo is more than happy with the project: "Director Yegor Baranov and cameraman Yuri Korobeynikov, both young guys, filmed this story beautifully. It is not dirty, not porn. You can barely call it erotic. We were not chasing this erotic idea while shooting, it is simply one of the tools we used to express our thoughts."

"We did not want to shock anyone with naked bodies, sagging belly and hair on the back of the characters. We tried to find the border where sex looks beautiful, fascinating and at the same time does not become an erotic clip because this is a drama film and not a Playboy video," says Baranov. "There is no random scene in it, and the action is developing rapidly. We tried to shoot it not as TV series, but as a movie. We put all our soul into this picture."

On top of the high quality of production, Sreda is promising a memorable soundtrack. Locust will air this fall on Channel One. ■

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Thru My Own Eyes / TNT

ZAUR BOLOTAEV: TV SERIES ARE THE FUTURE

ALEXANDRA EGUMENOVA

Zaur Bolotaev is truly one of the best directors and cameramen of modern Russian television, a revolutionary in a way. He says he founded his own production company Focus Plus Cinema solely as a creative workshop and not a money making machine. It doesn't come as a surprise that such a person is the first in the history of television to have filmed an entire series with a subjective camera. His project has been recently sold for adaptation in the US to FOX Television Studios. The producer and director of Moimi Glazami (Thru My Own Eyes) shared details with Alexandra EgumenoVA on the production process, the sale of the format abroad and the people behind the development of progressive Russian television.

How did you come up with the idea for the project? Did the script come first or just the plan to make a subjective camera show?

Ilya Kulikov wrote the script and the dramaturgy and the story itself suggested that it has to be filmed subjectively. It couldn't be any different way – there is a soul flying around after all. Thus we decided to do it exactly this way.

How hard was it to shoot the series? According to TNT's General Producer it took more than two years to produce it.

There were some technical difficulties for it is an innovative thing. It is easy to film short episodes in the movies. But when you film everything subjectively, you need a new technology, which we developed.

The production took two years indeed. The casting for the pilot lasted 6 months; then we were thinking how to film. Then, thanks to TNT, Dulerain and Petrenko, we filmed the pilot. Valera Fyodorovich joined our team around that time. All in all, I would like to thank all the people who decided to take a risk and gave us the opportunity to film.

Which scenes were most difficult to shoot?

There are some acts where the actors talk a lot and you need to organize everything the right way. This can be difficult. But here we are all multi-professionals, having different professions at the same time; and what is difficult for us is even more difficult for others (laughing).

If you look at the innovative technology, everything is equally difficult. There are certain rules in filming that have existed for a very long time and those that are being taught. You also watch movies from which you learn the film language: you can shoot everything from a long shot. But here you need to film everything with a subjective camera. Imagine now that we are talking and I suddenly start undressing. How do we show your reaction if we are filming from your subjective? This is difficult because since we cannot see your face – we have to come up with something new. You cannot just look into the mirror to show us your reaction. When you cannot use the standard forms, everything starts changing.

It took you more than a year to negotiate the deal for the format. How hard is it for an independent Russian producer to sell a show internationally?

This is a long story. I need to clarify here that Moimi Glazami is not a format of Focus Plus Cinema, but a format of TNT. And the idea belongs to TNT, Dulerain and Petrenko; we are just the studio that produced the series. When it comes to negotiations, we just played the part of intermediary looking for potential buyers for the format. Thus, it wasn't really a negotiation process but searching. We talked to BBC among others. At the end through Bazelevs we were able to find an American company which in turn led us to FOX, to Lawrence Bender Production. As a matter of fact, the deal was signed between TNT and FOX.

On a side note, we were expecting FOX to be foxy and nimble, but everything was very simple. They are interested in everything – the crisis for ideas there is not smaller than here in Russia. America is the world's leader in many things, in-



BIO

ZAUR BOLOTAEV

Born July 28, 1981
From early childhood was interested in photography.
Graduated from camera department of Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography (studio of L.I. Kalashnikov, A.G. Rybin, and V.V. Dobronitsky) in 2009 founded the production studio Focus Plus Cinema.

FILMOGRAPHY

2012 - Thru My Own Eyes. Director, cameraman, camera director.
2010 - Interns (selected episodes). cameraman and director.

Cameraman in series Zaitsev+1 (season 1) and Moskva.Tsentrallyy Okrug (2003); and movies Reverse Motion (Obratnoye Dvizhenie) (2010), Figa.ro (2009), Bogie (Domovoy) (2008), Cargo 200 (Gruz 200), Ada's Family (Semeyka Ady) (2007), Casting (2006) and Dead Man's Bluff (Zhmurki) (2005).

Producer of movies General (Serbia, Russia: in production), Kombinat Nadezhda (in production), Until the Night Do Us Part (Poka noch ne realuchit, 2012), The Uni: New Dorm (Univer. Novaya Obschaga, 2011-2014).



cluding television. That's why they absorb everything more or less interesting. It's easy. Everything is built on agents; they run the whole process and try to make it good for us too. Also there is a very strong copyright base; the terms are very clear.

We are just in the beginning and still getting used to this. Now we are talking to a different company and maybe in the near future we will launch a feature film in America, with American directors and actors. Focus Plus Cinema will be among the producers.

Are you going to work with the American producers? Which nuances do you think they can learn from the Russian TV industry?

It is still early to talk about working. It is possible that my colleagues and I will be hired as consultants. And since the deal has just been signed, the showrunner has not been chosen yet. And the showrunner has the right to choose the director. Maybe they will not even like my candidacy. I am not worried about that. Instead what is important for me is that a Russian series will be produced in America; the precedent is important. Usually we come to them for ideas, but now it's vice versa.

When it comes to our TV industry... We used to have a so called Soviet school of film until it was destroyed and disappeared. Since the 90's we all have been learning from the American school. What can they learn from us? There are talented people everywhere in the world, roughly evenly. But it is not about talent. The question is in the openness of the market. For now I think they do not see us as a format market. Israel and the Netherlands are markets for them. We just need to prove to the world that we can make good series.

When should we expect the premiere of the American adaptation? What is the budget?

The budget is around 2 million dollars per episode. The season will consist of eight hour-long episodes. They also want to change the script a lot. The main idea will stay the same, and of course, the subjective will stay as well. When should you expect the premiere? It is still not clear, the deadlines keep being pushed. According to the contract, they have to launch the project within two years. By the way, right after visiting FOX, I started receiving numerous letters from agents with proposals from different channels. It means that our project is already on the market and perceived adequately.

Will the format travel to other countries?

I am not interested in other countries for the sale of the format. We tried to sell to BBC. Where else? France, Germany? I am not good at this, but I think there is no business for us to go there - not very strong markets. We talked to one Spanish guy, a very smiling and tanned Spaniard. He promised us the entire Spanish-speaking world. But it didn't go further than just words.

What new projects are you working on now?

We produce many projects for TNT, plus we work together with Comedy Club Production - those are production projects. Now there is a directing project as well, but all I can say is that it is a comedy.



Do you work with other channels?

For now we are not working with anyone except TNT. First of all, now TNT has an absolutely unique editorial line-up and great management team. Primarily it is Sasha Dulerain who is a multi-brain, he directs everybody very precisely, gives expert advice and without him many things wouldn't be happening. Then we have large budgets, one of the best. Plus TNT gives us the opportunity to work long time on one project, to elaborately pick actors. They do not rush, letting us edit the script during the filming, and also reshoot. I do not know better conditions, and for now we are very happy. It is also far from certain that we could do well on another channel. I have worked on motion pictures for 15 years, and for the last 4 years I have been working with TNT. During that time I have and still keep on learning a lot.

Which Russian companies do you think are more inclined to such experiments as Moimi Glazami?

I have no experience in working with other channels, but I would say Channel One. They did Gay Germanika's School (Shkola). We have a range of other revolutionary projects - TNT and its management encourages us to produce them. You can see that on this channel there is always something new, something interesting is happening. Take Interns (Interny) for example. I worked there as producer, director and cameraman. Slava Dushmanetov (Comedy Club Production) did everything, and we were just realizing everything technically. TNT gave him the opportunity and he gave the opportunity to us. Before Interns there were only the Betacam series. And when we came, we were given the opportunity to implement all new technology. We did the first sketch-coms, Our Russia (adaptation of Little Britain) for example. Moimi Glazami is not the first innovative project of TNT.

What are your favorite TV shows?

I have many favorites, but the coolest one from the existing is Breaking Bad. It's just shocking. Very powerful. It blew my mind with its dramaturgy, very distinct concept, and the work of all departments. The series of HBO usually stick out. From the Russian ones - Ottepel (Thaw) is very good. I like what we produce as a studio. Interns is a very cool series: so many episodes and the quality does not decline, which is very difficult. I like what Slepakov does. He is a modern Zoschenko. I don't know how Zoschenko was perceived during his times, but here very deep things are touched, though with humor.

Who or what inspired you to become one of the best young Russian cameramen and directors?

Many people. It is not an inspiration, it is studies and work. I worked as the second cameraman in Cargo 200 (Cruz 200) and Dead Man's Bluff (Zhmurki) with Alexey Balabanov. I learnt many interesting things. Balabanov is very wise. He was not the easiest person to deal with, but as a cinematographer - he was absolutely amazing. Dulerain gave me many things. Slava Dushmanetov. Before Interns I never filmed series, just the movies. And Slava was the first person who I worked with on the series. He used to say that 'we needed to marry movies and television'. I listened to what he said, he listened to me. This helped a lot. Before that I used to think that series was an easy work, and I don't think so anymore. I think series is the thing of the future. ■

“ *We just need to show to the rest of the world that we can shoot good series.* ”





Ottepel / Marmot-film

OTTEPEL

REACHING HOLLYWOOD STANDARDS

As part of its mission to compare the quality of Russian productions on international level, TVBIZZ Russia will be offering critical reviews of some of the most successful local series done by foreign TV professionals.

NEIL LANDAU

We start this initiative with Russia's best series for 2013: Ottepel. The series produced by Valery Todorovsky's Marmot-Film won eight awards at this year's Professional Awards for Best TV Films and TV Series, including Best TV Miniseries, Best Director, Best Music Score, Best Camerawork, Best Costumes, Best Make-Up, Best Sound Editing and Best Actress. Acclaimed US scriptwriter Neil Landau shares his thoughts on the production.

I watched the pilot episode and think it's superb! It reminds me of the Russian version of Mad Men, with elements of BBC's The Hour. The music sets the mood right from the start, and the costumes, hair and make-up, production design, cinematography and direction are all top notch. But what's even better are the actors' performances. I was drawn in immediately by protagonist Viktor (who also deserves an acting award!) in that nuanced opening scene; the writing is excellent, featuring scenes layered with irony, humor, and emotional sub-

text -- and surprises at every turn. I was completely shocked by Kostya's suicide, but dramatically it spins the plotline in a new direction, and shows each character at his/her most vulnerable. I would definitely want to see future episodes to see how these characters' story lines play out over time. I love the movie studio setting, and using the romantic visual language of movies as a backdrop.

This series doesn't follow any standard Hollywood structure for one-hour drama series; it's not a «case of the week» procedural «vertical» series. It's a horizontal, serialized series that orbits around smart, intriguing characters doing interesting things each week. The plotting is like peeling away layers of an onion, and we tune in each week to see them getting into and out of trouble. And their troubles are mostly personal, relationship based related to marriage, parenthood, career achievements (or lack thereof). If there's a traditional «story engine» or franchise to this series it's how Viktor is determined to honor the script of his late friend -- because it's Kostya's legacy.

In many ways, this series is also reminiscent of the fantastic biographical movie about the legendary director/choreogra-



Ottepel / Channel One



Neil Landau is an American script writer whose film and TV credits include the teen comedy *Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead* starring Christina Applegate, *Melrose Place*, *The Magnificent Seven*, *Doogie Howser, M.D.*, *The Secret World of Alex Mack*, *Twice in a Lifetime*, MTV's *Undressed*, etc. Neil worked for Sony Pictures Television International as a script consultant between 2004 and 2007. He is author of the bestseller *101 Things I Learned in Film School*.

His latest movie projects include the 3D animated feature *Tad: The Lost Explorer* which earned him a Spanish Academy Goya Award for Best Adapted Screenplay (2013). He is currently working on its sequel, as well as the screenplay for the new 3D animated feature *Capture the Flag* for Paramount and new animated movie, *Sheep & Wolves*, for Wizart Animation.

pher Bob Fosse in his film *All That Jazz* (starring Roy Schieder and Jessica Lange); that movie revolved around a self-destructive creative genius, and all the disgruntled women in his life -- including his ex-wife and their daughter. That movie and *Thaw* both evoke the theme that those who know (and love) us the best also know how to hurt us the most. *Thaw* is a series about people's need for intimacy and romance in their lives, and the central conflicts of this series deal with the accompanying fears of intimacy: fear of abandonment, fear of failure, fear of not being good enough, fear of rejection, fear of success -- all rooted in shame = the fear of disconnection.

I love the irony that movies are produced as shared entertainment; unlike a book, movies are meant to be experienced in groups, as a community. And yet Viktor, like Don Draper on *Mad Men*, either consciously or unconsciously pushes those who love the most him away. *Thaw* captures these internal and external power struggles through various prisms: a hopeless romantic; a cynic; a mercurial studio boss, a temperamental pregnant woman (on the verge of motherhood). *Thaw* presents relationships from all of these different perspectives and lets us draw our own conclusions. The audience gets to speculate on the moral ambiguity from our 2013-14 perspectives, while simultaneously providing us with a window into 1962 Soviet era Moscow. But this series is not a history lesson. Instead, historical events exist in the background, and the lives of these movie people are in the foreground, generating empathy, and daring us to care about each character. ■

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The Lythgoe Dynasty

RULES OF SUCCESS

The creators of international TV hits talk about family, business and the best shows on the planet

Father and son Nigel and Simon Lythgoe are without a doubt among the most famous producers in the modern TV business. The two have been involved in the creation and success of hugely popular shows like Popstars, Pop Idol, So You Think You Can Dance and American Idol. They are currently developing their first drama series based on cult film Fame as well as a pilot for a new talent show, In the Spotlight, for CBS, based on Global Agency format Keep Your Light Shining.

In an exclusive interview, the two business partners talked with Georgi R. Chakarov about television as a family business, current trends and challenges in the ever changing entertainment industry.

GEORGI R. CHAKAROV

You have a very interesting father-son relationship: Simon got his first job at the channel that Nigel was running; then the son moved to Australia and returned to the UK with Popstars which eventually resulted in the creation of Pop Idol... Tell us more about these family experiences in the TV business...

Nigel: I took Simon to work with me when he was 4 years old onto the set of The Muppet Show. I was choreographing the series because even Muppets need to learn how to dance! From then on, he was hooked and wanted to come to work with me every day.

Simon: My Dad and I have been working on and off together for over twenty years. My first job was working for him as a Production Assistant when I was 16.

At 21 years old I was working in casting and researching on the UK series Gladiators and given the opportunity to go to go Down Under to consult on the Australian version. Later I worked on the Sydney Olympics and was then poached production company Screentime who were developing a new reality follow-doc called Popstars. It was basically a reality competition putting together a pop group like the Spice Girls. The series was a smash and the beginning of reality singing competitions trend around the world.

Australia's reaction to Popstars was huge, breaking rating records. At the time Nigel was still the Controller of London Weekend Television in England. I sent him VHS tapes of the series and advised him to license the format for the UK before anyone else. Later, Nigel and Simon Fuller started their own production company, they transformed Popstars into the search for one artist where the UK decides who wins via a phone vote. Pop Idol was born and the rest is now television history...

Nigel, you are a professional dancer. How did you decide to move to the television business?

Nigel: it was a natural progression. After becoming a dancer

NIGEL LYTHGOE

Nigel Lythgoe (64) was born in St. Helen's, Lancashire, England and began dancing at 11 years of age. He danced with stars such as Gene Kelly, Bing Crosby, Cyd Charisse, Chita Rivera, Shirley Bassey, and most prestigiously, choreographed the Muppets in the 70's. Lythgoe launched Simon Cowell's TV career in 2001 with Pop Idol. In the same year he took the format to the US and it became the TV juggernaut American Idol. Lythgoe created the global hit format So You Think You Can Dance and was recently awarded the International Emmy Founders Award.



SIMON LYTHGOE

Simon Lythgoe is the son of Nigel Lythgoe. He started working as a senior runner for London Weekend Television after finishing his studies. In 1993 went to produce shows for Seven in Australia and later decided to permanently relocate to Australia. In 1999 he was employed by Screentime and produced Popstars Season 2 and 3. He then sold the format to ITV making the base to create Idols. In 2002 he moved to the USA to produce American Idol and So You Think You Can Dance with his father. In 2010 he set up his own production company Legacy Productions.

I wanted to have more control and to be creative so I became a choreographer. It wasn't long before I was camera directing my own routines and consequently became a multi-camera director. Before I realized it I was given the opportunity to oversee programs at London Weekend Television and later became the Controller of Light Entertainment.

Simon, was TV just following in the steps of your father? How did you decide to start your career in TV? Which is your most favorite project that you have worked on?

Simon: As a kid I didn't see a lot of Dad as he was always working, but I could see how passionate he was about his television shows. I got to visit the set of numerous programs and knew from a very early age that I wanted to follow his footsteps. I've worked on so many shows now and I have a few favorites. In my early twenties my Dad came out to Australia with two British comedians Hale & Pace... the show was hilarious, the crew was amazing and I got to work with my Dad after many years. My favorite show in America has been So You Think You Can Dance. I honestly loved every aspect of producing the show... from creative producing to the contestants.

Is it easier to make television with your own family? Do you have arguments about the projects you work on? Who takes the upper hand in such discussions?

Nigel: We generally agree... It depends on how passionate the other one is. It's also important to say that we don't hold mistakes against each other... if we're wrong we're wrong.

How does a normal work day look for father and son Nigel and Simon Lythgoe? How big is your creative team?

Simon: Nigel has Nigel Lythgoe Productions and I have Legacy Productions. We develop and produce shows together and we also have shows that we do separate. Every day is different depending if we're in development, production or post-production. Our shows tend to be produced all over America so we're both constantly traveling. Nigel also seems collecting

awards around the world for various reasons and certainly not just for television! Next month we're all going to Ellis Island as he is being awarded the International Ellis Island Medal of Honor for his work to promote Contemporary Dance as a significant artistic medium.

Both our companies have relatively small development teams. We're both very "hands-on", work closely with our teams from the birth of the idea to creating pitch documents and sizzle tape. I don't think a week goes by when we're not pitching a new show.

What shows do you have in development right now? Do you have regular meetings with the networks, or you just meet when you have new ideas to discuss?

Nigel: Nigel Lythgoe Productions has a full development slate and we're expanding into the scripted world. Recently, we acquired the rights to the 1980's hit series Fame and we're re-vamping it, giving it a new angle.

What kind of shows are American networks looking for at the moment? It seems like scripted has the upper hand at the moment, or?

Nigel: I agree. Scripted has the upper hand, but you can never discount reality television. For example, FOX has invested a lot of money into Utopia. Reality TV is now part of television culture and is here to stay.

Simon: Thanks to series like Idol, Got Talent and Who Wants to be A Millionaire, the American networks really do look overseas for the next big hit. Fifteen years ago it was almost impossible to sell an international format to the US, now American networks see the benefit of seeing successful series from another country.

The American networks are definitely diversifying themselves. they no longer want to be stereo typed as their Network branding dictates. For example, History doesn't really show a lot history, Syfy doesn't broadcast science-fiction and just because it's Animal Planet doesn't mean they only want programs with animals. Even the major Networks are trying to break away from their traditional audience and appeal to a younger demographic. The viewing audience has changed so much over the past decade. I too have changed my viewing habits along with my father. We both find our selves binge viewing. For example, last weekend we watched the entire series of House of Cards!

What would you say is the main difference between doing TV for US audiences, and audience in Europe, or Australia?

Nigel: American audiences like faster shows and don't mind things repeated. They also like music behind everything, be it generic background tracks or fast paced dramatic tunes.

Simon: I don't believe there's a huge difference in audiences across the world, as everyone likes to be entertained with a variety show or escape the into a good scripted drama series.

That said, there are subtle cultural differences that effect programming. Australians love a good home renovation make over show, the UK still enjoys a theatre based traditional variety performance and America loves fast paced action along

with reality follow-docs that are still rating well.

I should point out that the American audience isn't a very forgiving audience. Sometimes the UK will run something, see it's not working and try again. The Americans will shorten or cut the entire season after only an episode.

What do you think about the huge success of Netflix?

Simon: Honestly, I love Netflix and watch a film or one their streamed series every day. Their original programing is good and I've now become a total binge viewer. I watched 20 hours of House of Cards in one screening... it was a long night.

Binge-watching is also getting bigger and bigger. Does the entertainment (non-scripted) genre need to change in order to grab the attention of those audiences? How can this be achieved?

Simon: Live TV series like American Idol, where the viewing audience vote, will keep scheduled television viewing relevant. That, along with sporting event and news. Viewers love to interact with their program, it makes them feel more connected and in control of the outcome.

I see other types of reality shows, documentaries and scripted drama all becoming viewing-on-demand, viewers will watch that type of programming when they choose to. I don't see the content changing, but the way we inform the audience on how and where to watch a new downloadable series will and does have to change.

What are yourv favorite shows on TV right now? Which of the upcoming shows in the US are you most looking forward to?

Nigel: True Detective, The Blacklist, and I'm looking forward to Game of Thrones season 4... and of course, So You Think You Can Dance.

Simon: This is a golden age for scripted drama right now. In my option BBC's Sherlock is quite possibly one of the best written and produced series of all time. I also enjoy The Blacklist, The Americans, Downton Abbey and sci-fi series Doctor Who.

From a professional perspective, I'm looking forward to seeing ABC's Rising Star and how they deal with voting system on an app across America's three time zones. For my enjoyment, I'm looking forward to the FOX series Gotham.

If you could run a channel together which one would you pick? And what positions would you choose?

Simon: Nigel is already heavily investing in YouTube dance channels... but honestly I think we both enjoy producing too much and don't like the politics of networks.

Do you attend international markets like MIPTV? Do you think they are still relative by means of finding out about new shows?

Nigel: No and yes.

Simon: Definitely... MIPTV and MIPCOM connects the global market. There are other conferences that I also attend like Real Screen and BANFF. ■



RATINGS TERRITORY

TVBIZZ Russia looks at the most interesting moments of the past TV season in Russia



4 vs 5

The Opening Ceremony of the Winter Olympics in Sochi attracted the attention of millions of viewers all over the world. Probably the most memorable moment from the event was the opening of four of the five Olympic rings. While the whole world saw that there was a problem with that element, viewers in Russia got the full five rings as the local nets aired a recording from the rehearsal of the ceremony.



KITCHEN

CTC's Kitchen is currently the most popular comedy series in Russia. The third season of the show was aired in March and scored 24.9% share in the 10-45 demo. The YBW Group format will be adapted in the US.



INSOMNIA

Dixi Media's *Insomnia* (*Bessonitsa*) became the first series in Russian TV history to premiere first on the internet before airing on a channel. The 4-million-euro project is currently available on *DixiFlex.ru*. The 12 episodes will be aired on NTV in fall 2014.

EXACTLY THE SAME

The transfer of *Your Face Sounds Familiar* from Channel One to Rossiya 1 gets the title *Scandal of the Year*. The first season aired on Channel One became the most watched premiering entertainment project of 2013. The second one aired on Rossiya 1 with much lower ratings. Now, Endemol is suing Channel One for copying their original format with their alternative offering *Exactly the Same* (*Toch-v-Toch*).





SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE

In a funny video earlier this season, TNT advised its sister net NTV (both owned by Gazprom Media) not to make comedies, simply because they can't. And they were absolutely right! The premiere of the Russian adaptation of US favorite Saturday Night Live flopped badly. NTV axed the show immediately after its pilot scored only 4% share.

ASHES

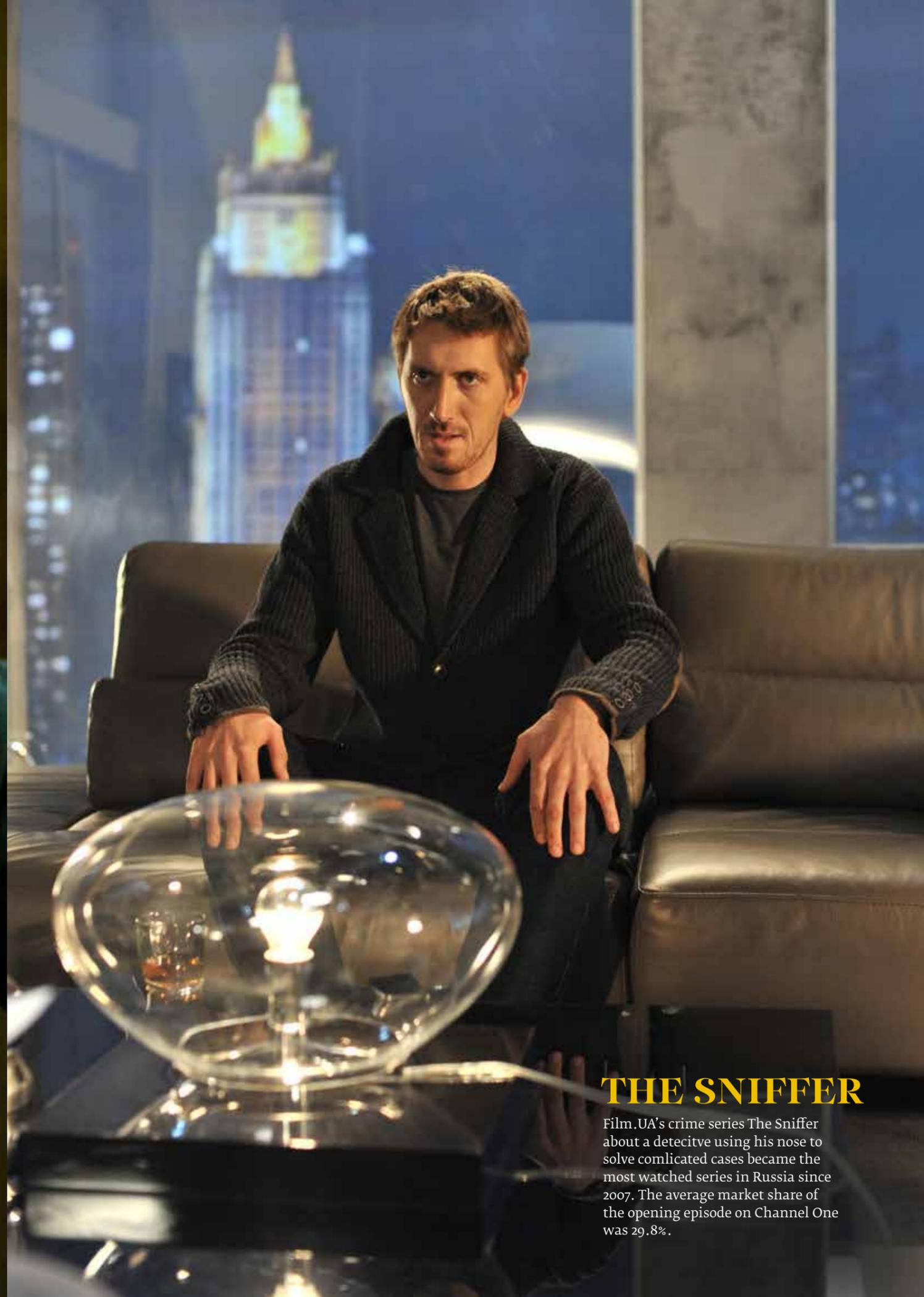
WeiT Media's war time drama *Pepel* (*Ashes*) broke a five-year old record with its premiere on Rossiya 1: 9.9%/26.3% share (18+) and 8.9%/26.3% share (4+). Aired in November, it could only keep the record for a month, as *The Sniffer* took its title in December.





OTTEPEL

Ottepel (Thaw) became the most discussed series of the season, and not only for the naked scenes with Evgenia Brik and Anna Chipovskaya. The masterpiece of producer and director Valery Todorovsky, shown on Channel One, however, melted away too soon. The series aired 12 episodes in six days grabbing an average share of 17.2% in the 14-59 demo.



THE SNIFFER

Film. UA's crime series The Sniffer about a detective using his nose to solve complicated cases became the most watched series in Russia since 2007. The average market share of the opening episode on Channel One was 29.8%.



HOLMES

The highly expected modern remake of the classic Soviet series about Sherlock Holmes turned into a major flop for Rossiya 1. The series averaged below 9% share in the 25+ demo.



DEPARDIEU

Gerard Depardieu made his debut in a Russian TV series in TNT's sitcom Zaitsev+1. The Frenchman-turned-Russian could not help increase the ratings of the show. The 16 episodes of the third season got 14.6% share in the target demo 14-44.

Russia's BIGGEST TV SERIES PRODUCERS

The Association of Cinema and Television Producers has named the biggest TV series producers in Russia in 2013

ZINA SHUMOVA

The Association of Cinema and Television Producers reports that a total of 386 fiction premieres were aired in 2013. Out of those, 209 were TV films (1-4 episodes); 130 - miniseries (5-24 episodes); 28 - long-running series (24+ episodes) and 19 sitcoms.

Compared to 2012, little has changed on the market. The tele-novela genre disappeared from primetime while all channels, except TV3 and Channel 5, relied on high-quality miniseries. The volume of TV films increased by 25%, mainly due to the

entrance of two new active players on the market - TV Center and Domashny.

The biggest number of TV series was aired on Rossiya 1 (1181 hours) and NTV (1145 hours). Channel One (628 hours) reduced the volume of soap productions to the minimum, while keeping the number of TV film productions low. In 2013 CTC aired a total of 239 hours of premiering series, while over at TNT that number was 129.

THE MOST PRODUCTIVE PRODUCTION COMPANIES IN RUSSIA (based on volume of aired premieres in 2013)

10



WEIT MEDIA

75 EPISODES, 7 PROJECTS, 2% SHARE

Producer: **Timur Weinstein**

Productions in 2013: Family Circumstances (Rossiya 1), *Three in Komi* (Hot in Cleveland, Channel One), It's Gonna be a Bright Day (Rossiya 1), etc.

9



LEAN-M

81 EPISODES, 3 PROJECTS, 2% SHARE

Producer: **Maria Smirnova**

Productions in 2013: Lavrova's Method 2 (CTC), The Voronins (CTC), *The Eighties 2,3* (CTC).

8



GAMMA PRODUCTION

84 EPISODES, 4 PROJECTS, 2% SHARE

Producer: **Viktor Budilov**

Productions in 2013: Sea Devils (NTV), *The Shores of My Dream* (Rossiya 1), Load (Rossiya 1), etc.

7



DIXI MEDIA

98 EPISODES, 4 PROJECTS, 2% SHARE

Producer: **Efim Lyubinsky**

Productions in 2013: The Game (NTV), *The Mine* (NTV), Karpov 2 (NTV), etc.

6



TRIKS MEDIA

124 EPISODES, 14 PROJECTS, 3% SHARE

Producers: **Inessa Yurchenko, Sergey Sheglov**

Productions in 2013: Brotherhood of Paratroopers (NTV), Provincial (NTV), Strange District (NTV), etc.

5



RUSSKOE

152 EPISODES, 25 PROJECTS, 4% SHARE

Producer: **Irina Smirnova**

Productions in 2013: Shores (Rossiya 1), Veronika (Rossiya 1), *Queen of Bandits* (Rossiya 1), etc.

4



HARMONY

323 EPISODES, 2 PROJECTS, 8% SHARE

Producer: **Yuri Belenky**

Productions in 2013: *The Secrets of the Institute for Noble Maidens* (Rossiya 1), Kiss the Bride (Rossiya 1).

3



FORWARD FILM

335 EPISODES, 23 PROJECTS, 8% SHARE

Producer: **Andrey Kamorin**

Productions in 2013: Cowboys (NTV), Khabarov's Principle (NTV), *Investigation Secrets 12* (Rossiya 1), etc.

2



STAR MEDIA

451 EPISODES, 52 PROJECTS, 11% SHARE

Producers: **Vladislav Ryashin, Valentin Opalev**

Productions in 2013: Freud's Method (Channel One), Kill Stalin (Channel One), *Bomb* (Rossiya 1), etc.

1



TELEALLIANCE MEDIA GROUP

522 EPISODES, 7 PROJECTS, 13% SHARE

Producer: **Alexander Levin**

Productions in 2013: You Are Not Alone (Channel One), Housekeeper (Channel One), *Fifth Guard* (TV3), etc.

THE VOICE RUSSIA

a winning formula

Dana Romantsevichus, the youngest author in TV BIZZ Russia's team, looks at the elements part of winning formula of The Voice Russia which had millions of viewers tune in to Channel One every Friday night.

DANA ROMANTSEVICHUS

The Russian audience was already familiar with Talpa's format The Voice thanks to the internet by the time it was launched in the country. The success of the project was in a way predetermined even before it came to the TV screens, but it was possible that it wouldn't be enough. The realization of the Russian production had to not only conform to the quality of the international versions, but also surpass it. And it was exactly what happened, and not only in terms of the picture on the screen and the live sound, but also the atmosphere, which the host, famous coaches and talented contestants were able to create.

The Russian viewer was much kinder and sensitive compared to the American one. The audience of Channel was shocked that the participants and the coaches did not compete for the main prize but strived to find the true Voice. The task of Gradsky, Bilan, Pelageya and Agutin was not to find a talented person, but to help them demonstrate their talent and be ready for all the hidden rocks of the show business. In other words there was no atmosphere of confrontation between the participants and the coaches. The main rule of all the contest formats, the relentless competition between contestants, was broken by the Russian version of The Voice, which brought much acclaim and popularity for Channel One's version abroad.

However, Perviy could not completely abandon the humor and irony on the screen. Dmitry Nagiev as a host gave his share. The quotes from the man in the

The Voice / Channel One

black jacket are still walking around the internet in the form of humoresques. The host is considered to be that particular most scandalous part of the format in Russia which is usually perceived to be over the top in the other adaptations of The Voice.

Moreover the audience was happy to see that this time the musical show included only live performances, which the previous shows lacked (even Star Academy). This time the quality of sound played a big part in the success of the project, which is reflected in the viewers' comments on social networks that keep jokingly suggesting to switch Russian pop stars with the participants from The Voice, and then everyone will know about Russia'. The fact is, everyone already knows about Russia because our adaptation of The Voice is considered to be among the best in the world.

"The Voice already locally produced in 55 countries in 3 years time still had the challenge of winning over the Russian viewers. Talpa partnered up with the leading broadcaster, Channel One, but that was not going to guarantee its success. It had to be a combination of many key elements, says Laura Rhodarmer, SVP Licensing at Talpa International. «The strong synergy built between Talpa, Channel One and the production company resulted in the huge success of The Voice in Russia. Talpa's strategy in each country is to be fully part of the whole production process. This ensures the success of our formats in every country."

This strategy definitely proved itself in Russia pulling huge ratings like 55.9% share in the final live show. This Talpa approach succeeded for The Voice Kids in Russia as well attracting super model and founder of the Naked Heart Foundation (Charity organization for children) Natalia Vodianova to host the show. The Voice Kids managed to steal the hearts of the viewers across Russia and maintain the leadership in its timeslot.

Other key formats like The Winner Is and Utopia are also attracting attention in Russia. The Winner Is airs locally in 33 countries, while Utopia, the ground breaking new reality show, which is set to launch on Fox in the United States, Sat.1 in Germany, TV8 in Turkey and Prima TV in Romania, is currently under negotiations in more than 20 countries worldwide. ■



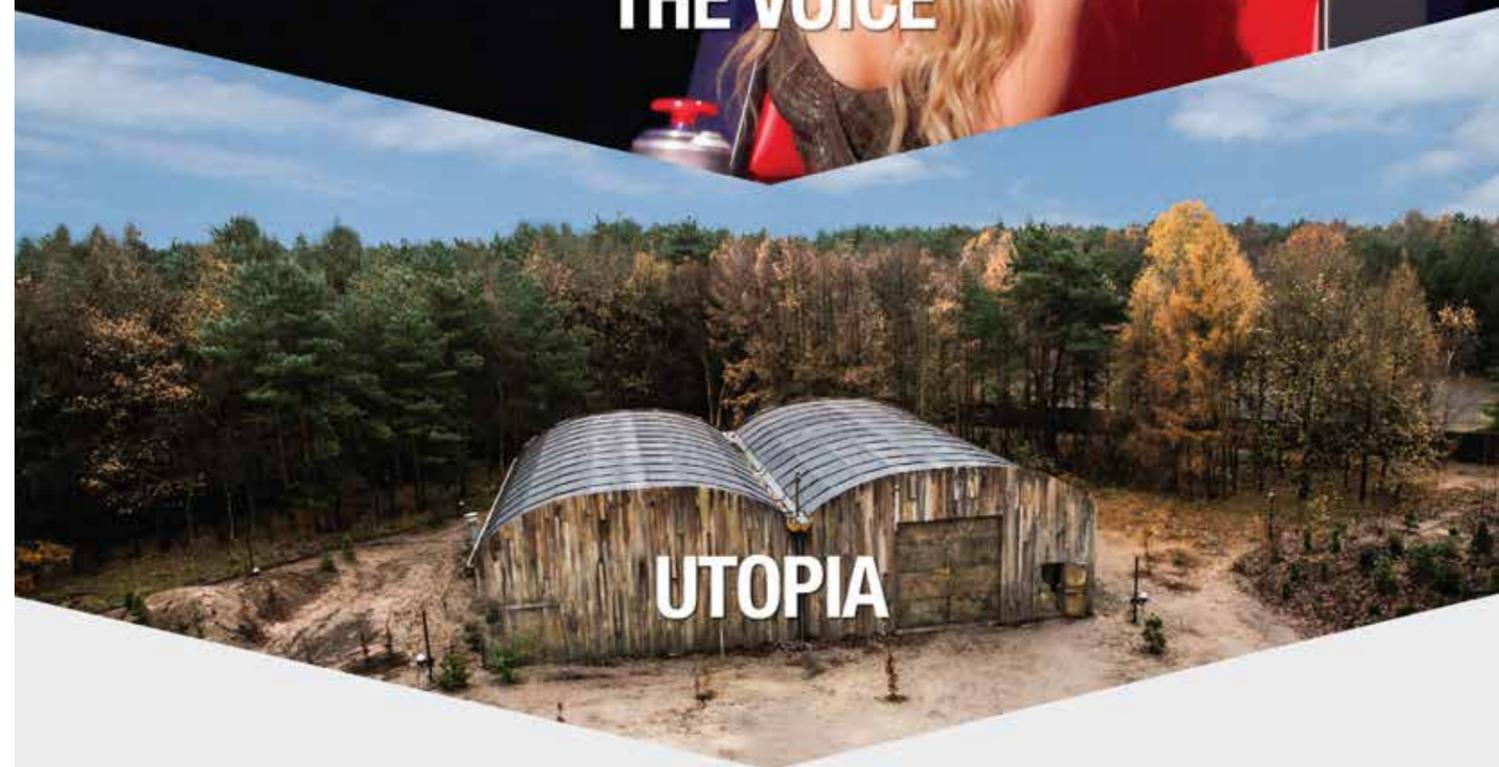
The Voice Kids / Channel One



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THE VOICE



UTOPIA

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