

JAMES PARRIS – PRODUCER & DIRECTOR

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I want to tell confronting, archive-first stories that transform our understanding of our contemporary history, and challenge narratives we think we already know. I am looking to learn from the very best, and to continue developing as a director of ambitious documentaries for television and cinema.

→ BA (Hons) - 1st Class - History - Cambridge

→ USA “I” Visa valid until 2028

TSUNAMI (w/t)

Series Producer & Producer-Director (Ep 3)

4x44' - Blast Films for Nat Geo - Tx Autumn 2024 - exec. Tanya Winston, Danny Horan, Daniel Bogado

Work ongoing on a major documentary series to mark the twentieth anniversary of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, which claimed over two hundred thousand lives. The films will combine hours of unseen archive video with survivors' testimony to examine the kindness, bravery, and resilience people are capable of in the most extreme and difficult circumstances.

* Under contract until June 2024 *

DAYS THAT SHOOK THE BBC

Producer & Producer-Director (Ep 3)

3x60' - BBC Studios for BBC2 - Tx August 2022 - execs. Denys Blakeway, Abigail Priddle

To mark the BBC's centenary, David Dimbleby authored a three-part series examining the ways in which the Corporation has tried, succeeded, and failed to live up to its promise to the nation. The series explores crisis moments in the BBC's recent history, including the Jimmy Savile affair, the Iraq War, and Martin Bashir's interview with Princess Diana. I produced & directed the third episode, which interrogated the BBC's fractious relationship with the British people, from race relations in the Windrush age, through the Falklands and Murdoch's assault on public service broadcasting, to present-day clashes over immigration and no-platforming.

“It's a complicated, provocative film that touches on big ethical questions... There are startling moments” - The Sunday Times on Episode 3

GOLD RUSH: OUR RACE TO OLYMPIC GLORY

Producer & Producer-Director (Ep 3)

3x60' - Blast! Films for BBC1 - Tx July 2021 - exec. Tanya Winston

I was brought on board by Blast! In May 2020 to develop a longform proposal for a series charting the rise of British Olympic sport from 'also ran' to 'superpower'. I then produced the series, conducting over 60 background conversations, and arranging on-camera interviews with an array of Britain's greatest Olympians, as well as strategic players including three former Prime Ministers. Due to Covid, I was the only editorial team-member on location, directing camera and conducting in-person interviews, incl. Cherie Blair, Baroness Sue Campbell, Katherine Grainger, and Ellie Simmonds. I produced and directed the final episode of the series.

Nominated for a Grierson Award 2022 for Best Sports Documentary

TAKING CONTROL: THE DOMINIC CUMMINGS STORY

Producer

60' - BBC Current Affairs for BBC2 - Tx March 2020 - exec. Mike Radford

I produced a single documentary presented by Emily Maitlis that charted the rise of Dominic Cummings and what that told us about our politics, populism, and euroscepticism since the 1990s. We met significant resistance to talking on the record about such a powerful figure at a time of ongoing turbulence within government, but I secured a diverse range of interviews with Cummings' allies and opponents, incl. Daniel Hannan, Douglas Carswell, Rory Stewart, and Gina Miller. I conducted numerous on-camera interviews, including Peter Mandelson, Dominic Grieve, and Matthew D'Ancona.

THE CAMERON YEARS

Producer

2x60' - BBC CA for BBC1 - Tx Sept 2019 - Menace Prods., execs. Denys Blakeway, Melanie Fall

Coinciding with the publication of his autobiography, I produced a two-part series telling the story of David Cameron's time in politics, from his capture of the Conservative Party in 2005 to his downfall following the Brexit vote in 2016. At the heart of the series sat an exclusive interview with Cameron, conducted over ten sessions, for which I created extensive briefings and question documents for interviewer Denys Blakeway. I secured interviews with a range of his allies and opponents, from George Osborne and Nick Clegg, to Michael Gove and David Davis, and personally conducted interviews with Kate Fall, Gabby Bertin, and Andrew Feldman. I co-wrote the scripts with Denys and SD Ian Leese, and worked throughout the edit to shape the series until transmission.

PRINCE CHARLES: THE MONARCH AND THE MAN

Assistant Producer

60' - ITV - 2018 (Tx 2023) - MultiStory Media, exec. Mike Blair

Having worked on The Longest Reign, Jonathan Dimpleby invited me to return for a sister programme: an assessment of the man who will become our next king, based on Jonathan's biography and his personal experience. PD Jamie Muir and I co-wrote an extended guide script, which was then adapted in close collaboration with Jonathan. I secured access to a number of royal locations, including HMV Britannia, Highgrove, and Dumfries House. On location I acted as sound recordist, camera assistant, and script supervisor. I worked through the edit, continuing to source and organise archive material and shape the narrative.

THE LONGEST REIGN

Producer

95' - ITV - 2017 (Tx 2023) - MultiStory Media, exec. Mike Blair

Feature documentary broadcast on the death of Queen Elizabeth II. I was brought on board by PD Robin Barnwell to produce a series of longform research documents while he was abroad shooting another project. On his return, I remained on the project, co-writing a guide commentary script for Jonathan Dimpleby. I conducted exhaustive archive research, organised the archive log, and negotiated access to locations including Westminster Abbey and St Paul's Cathedral. On location, I acted as sound recordist and script supervisor. The archive research period continued through the edit, and I acted as archive wayfinder for Robin and editor Guy Creasey and as edit producer on days when Robin was away filming.

INDIA IN A DAY

Post-production Researcher

90' - Google - Tx Nov 2016 (online) - Scott Free, execs. Ridley Scott and Anurag Kashyap

India in a Day was part of Google's 'In a Day' franchise: feature films constructed purely from user-generated footage, shot concurrently over a single 24-hour period. I joined the team during post-production to help parse over 400 hours of video, making editorial selections of material I felt would be crucial to the film, and using Avid to assemble these clips into themed sequences for editor Beverley Mills (Aftermath, Scott Free) and director Richie Mehta (Delhi Crime, Netflix). The film premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival.

Development work:

I have extensive experience working on funded and unfunded developments, from early-stage pitches to long-form treatment decks and development shoots. Most recently I was sent by BBC Studios to Minkowskie, Poland, to self-shoot a two-day archaeological excavation of buried Nazi gold.

I have an active slate of projects that I am developing personally, and always keen to discuss.

References:

MELANIE FALL - Executive Producer (Menace Productions) - melaniefall@icloud.com - 07765 251229

TANYA WINSTON - Creative Director (Blast Films) - twinston@blastfilms.co.uk - 07775 841248

DANIEL BOGADO - Series Director - daniel.bogado@gmail.com - 07738 624578

LAURA MILLER - Line Producer - lmiller@blastfilms.co.uk - 07711 047938