

Broadcast

21 April 2017 broadcastnow.co.uk

GLOBAL FORMATS
Why South Korea
is a hot spot **P19**

SPORT OBs
The rise of remote
production **P22**

HOSPITAL PEOPLE
Filming patiently
around patients **P28**



BBC Studios spreads its wings

Commercial subsidiary has wasted no time in beginning pitching to other broadcasters

BY HANNAH GANNAGÉ-STEWART

BBC Studios' top creative talent have made aggressive moves to secure third-party commissions during its first fortnight as a commercial subsidiary.

Its key producers have been meeting and pitching commissioners at ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5, taking advantage of the ability to take ideas outside of the BBC for the first time.

BBCS head of development Damon Pattison said the meetings began on 3 April, the day the subsidiary launched.

"We've been planning this for long enough so everyone's straight out the door and talking to commissioners," he said.

Murdered By My Father producer Aysha Rafeale, head of BBCS' Documentary Unit, has already met with commissioners including C4 head of documentaries Nick Mirsky and head of specialist factual John Hay, and has lined up pitches with ITV director of television Kevin Lygo and Sky non-scripted chief Phil Edgar-Jones.

She is keen to produce factual dramas in the vein of *The Lost Honour Of Christopher Jefferies* for ITV and *Captive* for Netflix.

"One of the most exciting things we've done for the BBC recently was [iPlayer original] *Carnage* with Simon Amstell," she said. "It was fabulous and inventive, with talent at its heart. I could easily imagine that C4 or Sky Arts would have loved to have that."

BBCS director Mark Linsey added that he has held "top-level



Murdered By My Father: producer Aysha Rafeale is eyeing factual dramas

conversations" with a range of UK broadcasters and commissioners.

"There is a genuine appetite to hear our creative ideas and work with BBC Studios' talent," he said.

I could easily imagine C4 or Sky Arts would have loved to have Carnage with Simon Amstell

AYSHA RAFAELE
BBC STUDIOS

Digital giants including Netflix and Amazon are next on the priority list, alongside major US networks including Discovery, Nat Geo and PBS.

The feeling of "excitement" within Studios at the prospect of developing ideas for external

buyers is coupled with a changing dynamic between the *Strictly Come Dancing* producer and BBC commissioning.

"Before April, there was no imperative to make a quick decision about in-house ideas, whereas suddenly there is. There's a clock ticking now every time we pitch something," said one source.

Several commissioners from across the industry gathered at BBC Studios' launch party at the Design Museum on 6 April, where director general Tony Hall and BBCS boss Mark Linsey talked up the 'historic' nature of the move.

Hall's support is appreciated inside BBCS, particularly his feeling that it can compete on a global stage.

However, the transition is not without its challenges. The firm is still battling through the tendering process, with high-profile series including *The One Show* thought to be coming up for consideration soon.

The *Doctor Who* producer is also competing with the wider industry to hire top talent. Linsey has already approached several "rain-makers", top producers he feels are guaranteed to win business.

However, it is understood that he has already come up against sibling subsidiary BBC Worldwide during negotiations with one high-profile creative talent. ☹

