

# MIKE MCDOWALL

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CV updated May 2023

## SERIES PRODUCER



## PROFILE

A highly driven, BAFTA nominated natural born communicator with vast experience at overseeing, producing, and directing primetime factual TV for the BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Channel 5, Discovery, Nat Geo and Sky One.

Expert at leading and inspiring large teams. Proven expertise at making SCIENCE related programmes. Known for creativity, sharp editorial judgement and for working with high profile talent. Rare ability to move between highbrow SPECIALIST FACTUAL and frothy FACT ENT styles. Track record of eliciting strong, quality performances from celebrities, academics, and the general public. Well versed in every aspect of production, both in the UK and abroad, including filming in the most hazardous terrains on earth. Passionate about strong narrative and cinematic imagery. Meticulous attention to detail. Contagious enthusiasm and an uplifting sense of humour.

## SKILLS

Developing formats. 15+ years' experience of turning new ideas into successful programmes, from concept to delivery. Creating visual and editorial identities for new series. Liaising with commissioning editors. Negotiating access and striking deals. Directing all kinds of crew, from the most intimate to large scale multi-camera set ups. Devising and directing dramatic reconstruction and complex CGI. Self-shooting. Managing budgets. Overseeing producers, directors, researchers and editors. Training new presenters. Conducting interviews. Commissioning music and CGI. Overseeing multiple edits. Exceptional scripting skills.

# CAREER HIGHLIGHTS



Series Producer 2022 - 2023	<b>BLUE CHIP SCIENCE DOC (UNDER NDA)</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>BLINK for CH 4 and NOVA</b></span> 2 x 120. One of the most ambitious, ground-breaking science TV projects ever attempted - based on a huge scale, spectacular automotive research 'event.' <a href="#">Key responsibilities:</a> Developing the idea, hiring a very large team, supervising a massive shoot involving more than 100 cameras, supervising the edits.
Series Producer 2022	<b>SAS - WHO DARES WINS</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>MINNOW FILMS for CH 4</b></span> 6 x 60 reality/fact ent. Series 8 of this hugely successful format, where contributors attempt to complete a condensed version of the famous SAS selection course. <a href="#">Key responsibilities:</a> Developing the editorial direction and task detail for the Vietnam jungle based 'civilian' series.
Edit Producer Jan - Feb 2022	<b>GHISLAINE - PARTNER IN CRIME</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>FREMANTLE for Apple TV / Paramount +</b></span> 1 x 60. The final, and most revelatory film in a series of 4 in-depth docs about Ghislaine Maxwell's early life, her relationship with Jeffrey Epstein, and the court case that found her guilty of sex trafficking. <a href="#">Key responsibilities:</a> Scripting, sourcing archive footage, and supervising the edit.
Series Producer Oct - Dec 2021	<b>THE PLANES THAT BUILT BRITAIN</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>OCTOBER FILMS for CH 5</b></span> 4 x 60 history docs about Britain's most iconic war planes: The Sopwith Camel, Spitfire, Lancaster, and Harrier. (Reversions with presenter: Rob Bell.) <a href="#">Key responsibilities:</a> Scripting and shooting presenter PTCs. Editing the films. Liaising with execs and commissioning editor.
Series Producer 2021	<b>PLAYGROUNDS OF THE RICH &amp; FAMOUS</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>CRACKIT PRODS for CH 5</b></span> 6 x 60 docs about the most luxurious destinations on the planet. <a href="#">Key responsibilities:</a> All aspects of prep and production, including hiring a large team, generating stories, overseeing shoots and edits, liaising with execs and com ed.
Producer / Director 2020	<b>RICHARD HAMMOND'S BIG</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>CHIMP PRODUCTIONS for DISCOVERY</b></span> 9 x 60 fact ent / science films where Richard Hammond uses his inimitable personality and passion for engineering to investigate the biggest machines on the planet. <a href="#">Key responsibilities:</a> Script development, directing crews, liaising with exec producer and commissioning editor, overseeing edits. I made 2 episodes of the 9 part series.
Senior Producer 2020 - 2021	<b>V2030</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>OR MEDIA</b></span> A large landmark doc series about the Middle East. <a href="#">Key responsibilities:</a> I developed films about the environment and natural history, including the re-introduction of the Arabian leopard and oryx, the plight of the houbara bustard, and an international research expedition that uses gene splicing to rescue Red Sea coral.
Founder 2020	<b>FREELANCERS' IDEAS FACTORY</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>N/A</b></span> In response to Covid-19, I set up a group of freelance TV development specialists to work up new ideas for UK and US broadcasters. The group has more than 600 members, making it the largest development resource in Britain. As founder of the group, I arranged briefing and pitching sessions with commissioning editors.
Series Producer 2019	<b>SUPERSTRUCTURES...</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>PIONEER PRODUCTIONS for NAT GEO</b></span> 6 x 60 factual. A super glossy, blue chip science series that looks at the most spectacular structures ever built and uses breath taking photo-real CGI to reveal the extraordinary feats of engineering hidden inside them. <a href="#">Key responsibilities:</a> Script development, managing crews, devising and overseeing CGI, liaising with exec producer and com ed, overseeing several edit suites.

SP and Director 2018	<p><b>EAMONN &amp; RUTH - HOW THE OTHER HALF LIVES</b> SPUN GOLD for CH 5 3 x 60 fact ent shows where Britain's favourite married couple venture around the world to explore the outrageously decadent lifestyles of the rich and famous. <b>Key responsibilities:</b> Directing all episodes. Story development (Las Vegas, Milan &amp; Lake Como) script writing, managing crews and talent, liaising with exec producer and commissioning editor, overseeing several edit suites.</p>
SP and Director 2017-2018	<p><b>DONAL MACINTYRE'S MURDER FILES</b> EMPORIUM PRODS for CBS REALITY 10 x 60 factual shows in which Donal MacIntyre meets the UK's leading detectives and uncovers how they solved some of the darkest, most baffling, and complex murders. <b>Key responsibilities:</b> Story development, format development, script writing, managing production, directing multi-camera studio shoots, directing numerous dramatic reconstructions, supervising edits, liaising with the commissioning editor.</p>
Series Producer 2016-2017	<p><b>WHAT ON EARTH ?</b> WAG TV for DISCOVERY SCIENCE 10 x 60 fact ent shows about mysteries that unfold via satellite imagery. <b>Key responsibilities:</b> Managing a large team, liaising with the commissioning editor, overseeing content, devising dramatic reconstruction, and running multiple edits. What On Earth became the channel's highest rating show.</p>
Producer / Director 2017	<p><b>ROBSON CRUSOE</b> IWC MEDIA for ITV 1 1 x 60 fact ent film in which Robson Green is marooned on a deserted island in an homage to Daniel Defoe's famous novel. <b>Key responsibilities:</b> Concept development, script writing, directing talent and crew, editing, liaising with exec producer and commissioning editor.</p>
Exec Producer 2014-2017	<p><b>DEVELOPMENT</b> IWC MEDIA for ITV 1, NAT GEO, C+I, CH 5 <b>Key responsibilities:</b> Spearheading development on a raft of prime time factual and fact ent projects, managing high profile talent, negotiating sensitive access, developing formats, directing numerous taster tapes and pilots, liaising with commissioning editors, and managing production. In addition to Robson Crusoe, commissions I was involved in include: <b>ROBBIE COLTRANE'S CRITICAL EVIDENCE</b>, for C+I, <b>HOW TO WIN AT EVERYTHING</b> for Nat Geo, <b>BRITAIN'S MOST HISTORIC TOWNS</b> for CH 4.</p>
Exec Producer 2013	<p><b>SCIENCE OF STUPID</b> IWC MEDIA for NAT GEO 14 x 30 fact ent series that uses science to explain why things go wrong. A mix of UGC blunders and lavish reconstructions presented by Richard Hammond. <b>Key responsibilities:</b> Part of the team that developed the concept, liaising with commissioning editor, devising content, building the production team, developing GFX, overseeing edit suites and writing scripts. The series has been re-commissioned several times, and became the channel's highest rating show.</p>
Exec Producer 2012-13	<p><b>STEPHEN HAWKING'S BRAVE NEW WORLD</b> IWC MEDIA for DISCOVERY 6 x 60 prime time factual series about game changing science innovations. Introduced by Stephen Hawking and presented by leading lights such as Jim Al-Khalili. <b>Key responsibilities:</b> Developing the format, liaising with the commissioning editor, managing talent, overseeing editorial content, developing GFX, supervising a large team, overseeing edits, scripts, and delivery.</p>

Series Producer 2012	<b>SUPERHUMAN SHOWDOWN</b> 5 x 60 prime time science / fact ent featuring a search for extraordinary people whose physiological and mental talents appear to defy science. <b>MAVERICK for DISCOVERY</b> <b>Key responsibilities:</b> Liaising with the commissioning editor, developing the new format, managing editorial content, guiding talent, running a large team, developing GFX, overseeing edit suites and writing scripts.
Producer / Director 2011	<b>RONALDO - TESTED TO THE LIMIT</b> 1 x 60 film about Cristiano Ronaldo that investigates why he is the best footballer of his generation from a sport science point of view. This lavish high-profile film uses state of the art super slo-mo photography and CGI to illustrate a series of specially designed tests. <b>PLUM PICTURES for SKY</b> <b>Key responsibilities:</b> Devising the sport science tests, setting up celebrity interviews, directing the multi camera shoot and VFX, running the edit and writing the script.
SP and Director 2009-10	<b>SURVIVAL WITH RAY MEARS</b> 3 x 60 natural history films. Ray Mears tracks down the world's most elusive predators using nothing but the clues they leave behind them. <b>ITV 1</b> <b>Key responsibilities:</b> Liaising with the commissioning editors, developing the format, directing the first film, overseeing all aspects of the rest of the series.
Series Producer 2008	<b>RORY AND PADDY'S GREAT BRITISH ADVENTURE</b> 4 x 60 prime time fact ent. Rory McGrath and Paddy McGuinness travel across the UK, competing in the country's most unusual alternative sports. <b>IWC for CH 5</b> <b>Key responsibilities:</b> Developing the format, liaising with the commissioning editor, generating content, guiding a large team, and overseeing multiple edits.
Exec Producer 2008	<b>GREATEST CITIES OF THE WORLD WITH GRIFF RHYS JONES</b> 3 x 60 prime time landmark films. Griff Rhys Jones defines the unique identities of Paris, New York and London. <b>MODERN TV for ITV 1</b> <b>Key responsibilities:</b> Liaising between Griff, Modern TV and ITV, developing the series format, overseeing content and schedule, managing 3 teams, and steering the edits.
Series Producer 2007	<b>ROBBIE COLTRANE: B-ROAD BRITAIN</b> 3 x 60 prime time fact ent films where Robbie Coltrane drives off the beaten track round Britain on a quest to rediscover the eccentric heart and soul of the country. <b>IWC for ITV 1</b> <b>Key responsibilities:</b> Liaising with the com ed, guiding 3 teams, devising content, commissioning GFX and music, managing aerial shoots, and overseeing multiple edits.

## PREVIOUS WORK

Series Producer	<b>GREAT ANIMAL ESCAPES</b> for Animal Planet, <b>LIVING WITH THE KOMBAI TRIBE</b> for Discovery, <b>THE WORLD'S MOST STUPID CRIMINALS</b> for Channel 5, <b>ULTIMATE HELLRAISERS</b> for Channel 4, <b>MECHANNIBALS</b> for BBC 2, <b>WIMPS TO WARRIORS</b> for SKY, <b>THE ART OF SEDUCTION</b> for SKY, <b>SHOCK MOVIE MASSACRE</b> for Bravo, <b>HELLRAISERS HANDBOOK</b> for Bravo.
Series Director	<b>EUROTRASH</b> for Channel 4 Series 14 of the cult show.
Director or Avid Editor	<b>THE RACE</b> for ITV, <b>HOLIDAY</b> for BBC 1, <b>LONELY PLANET</b> and <b>LONELY PLANET TREKS</b> for Discovery, <b>EUROTRASH</b> , <b>BIG BREAKFAST</b> , <b>BIG CITY</b> , <b>ROUGH GUIDES</b> , <b>DISPATCHES</b> , <b>CONSPIRACIES</b> , <b>DARK HORSES</b> , and <b>THE WORD</b> all for Channel 4.

## EDUCATION

**Industry training** Shooting HD on Alexa, Amira, FX9 and FS7 cameras. Avid editing. First aid in hostile and remote areas. BBC health and safety and compliance courses. 1 yr evening course in documentary filmmaking. Robert McKee story structure course for drama.

**Sheffield Uni** BA (hons) in Communication Arts, Film, TV & photography. **First class honours.**  
**Cranleigh School** 3 A Levels: A,A,D. 12 O Levels: 10 As, 2 Bs.

## PASSIONS

Television. Cinema. Photography. People. Script writing. Extreme Travel.  
Skiing. Literature. Recording music. Drawing naked bodies. Diving (PADI qualified).  
Sailing (DAYSKIPPER qualified). Running marathons.

## AMBITIONS

To produce more ground-breaking, landmark factual TV. And a longsighted aim to break into drama.