



Directors UK Board Elections 2021

Candidate Statements

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Zah Ahmad

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I'm interested in being on the board because I want to be able to play my part in seeing real and lasting change in our industry for working Directors, particularly from underrepresented groups.

There's a great window of opportunity at the moment for Directors from under-represented groups to make a real difference in our industry for ourselves, our colleagues and future generations.

I have 10 years experience at board level as a company director and appreciate the needs as well as the demands of such a role in order to be able to make a difference.

Biography:

I had to work for several years in IT recruitment before saving up enough money to put myself through film school. I've been directing professionally in the industry since I graduated in 2004.

I've worked across film, corporates and commercials. Last year I completed a feature film called Pinky which is currently being distributed by a US sales agency.

Aside from directing I love painting in oils, although I don't get so much time for that now as I have a two year old daughter at home.

I hadn't originally thought about joining the board until Andy Harrower suggested it, but I hope I have a lot to contribute at this key moment of transformation in our industry.

Priorities:

A lot of great work has been done to start changing the make-up of the industry at a senior level in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement.

I'm passionate about seeing lasting change and building on this work to help increase access for all under-represented groups and to broaden the conversation with broadcasters and production companies so that we see diversity across the board in directing.

I hope in 5 years time, if not sooner, Directors UK will be at the forefront of changing the makeup of directors in the UK, so all groups are more fully represented.

My concern is that at the moment a lot of under-represented sections of our industry are still largely being ignored both on screen and behind the camera and this is true of Directors as well as other HOD.

Proposer - Christine Lalla

Secunder - Steve Smith

Mo Ali

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I'm a man of action and few words, and I'll make it as straightforward as possible:

- Many talented directors have left the industry because of the more sinister tactics at play in this industry. I want to bring them back home and create a support network for them & all directors so that nobody feels they are taken advantage of.
- Push for accountability from distribution companies & get a clear understanding of when and where our work has been shown and how we could get our earnings back.
- Provide directors with training on what kind of contracts they are getting into with producers & production companies.

I was badly burnt by corrupt producers, distributors and sale agents. I lost my faith and left the industry for six years. I'm back now working & doing what I love. I never want to see another creative director go through what I did- ever!. That's my goal!

Biography:

Mo started out as an award-winning music video director, working with some of the most innovative artists in the UK's urban music scene, including Skepta, Tinchy Stryder, Chipmunk and Lethal B.

His feature debut, the post-apocalyptic action-thriller "Shank", was released theatrically in 2010, entering the UK Charts at number 4 and has now been released in more than 15 territories worldwide.

His second feature, "Montana" (2014), was a searing look at life in the underbelly of London. After appearing at the Sitges Film Festival, the most prestigious genre festival in the world, it sold to 30 territories, and it went on to be nominated for Best Independent Feature at the NFAs and both Best Picture and Best Director at the Screen National Awards.

Mo is currently signed to Independent Talent and is developing a wide range of feature films and television series.

Priorities:

I'd love to see DUK:

- Set up more offices around the UK so that every member around has a creative base/home.
- Have our own yearly festival and awards so we can celebrate our own work!
- Have our own streaming platform to showcase our won IP that we have made independently and maybe distribute to other platforms as well.

These are my crazy/out of the box ideas. I just us to value our own craft and let them come to us.

Mo x

Proposer - Darcia Martin

Seconder - Steve Smith

Liz Biggs

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I want to join DUK's board to do my part in making directing a space open to everyone, regardless of ethnicity, socioeconomic background or age.

During my early years making specialist factual (science) programmes, I worked with many creative, inspiring directors - but only one of them was female. The casual nature of the industry and lack of clear professional development pathways makes becoming a director tricky, especially against discrimination and dismissal; I heard repeatedly that 'women can't direct science'. The shocking BECTU/DUK stats echo my experience, showing female directors are woefully underrepresented in factual TV.

Additionally, the struggles faced by freelancers during the pandemic have highlighted how tricky it is sustaining such a precarious career without a familial safety net, let alone when you have caring responsibilities. I believe that with some thought and adjustments, directing needn't exclude those with young families - we can find a work/life balance.

Biography:

I am a bit of a mix...I have dual heritage, I grew up in the north but have lived almost as long in the south, and now I split my time between making specialist factual (science) shows and observational documentaries.

I have a love/hate relationship for self-shooting - I love the technical and creative aspects of shooting, but hate the erosion of the roles of director / DOP / sound recordist.

I'm also a mum, and find it hard to balance the passion I have for my job with the love I have for my family. I was brought up to believe women can have it all, but I've come to realise that if that is to happen, we need the industry to adapt and evolve to be more supportive of its talented freelancers.

I want to help DUK instigate that change by representing people like me on the board.

Priorities:

The last 18 months have brought into sharp focus how precarious our industry is, and how little protection us freelancers have; I think much of this stems from the casual nature of TV. DUK has an opportunity to lead in changing things for the better - clearly defining and protecting the role of director, and making the industry more professional, more accountable and kinder to its valuable workforce.

By leading the charge to professionalise, I hope that in 5 years, the organisation has helped to make directing a more inclusive, accessible space. If we can stand together to demand better hours, fairer pay and more realistic schedules, women, parents and minority voices needn't give up their creative ambitions to balance work and home. If DUK can engage the broadcasters and production companies to help achieve this, everyone will benefit - and the output will be richer and more diverse, too.

Proposer - Brian Hill

Secunder - Jimmy Dallas

Keith Boak

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

UK Directors are undervalued and under-compensated!

I will fight for:-

1/ REWARDS - Many Producers/Production companies are making huge profits off the back of Directors creative work.

UK Directors deserve fair compensation for their immense contribution to the success of these shows.

2/ PROTECTIONS - Directing is highly pressurized. We are asked to deliver (on time) despite late scripts, inadequate prep, failures elsewhere in the process. UK Directors deserve stronger protections against production failings that impede our ability to do our job.

3/ EDUCATION & TRAINING - Work is unpredictable. ALL Directors need opportunities to learn new skills/enhance existing ones - I'm supportive of Inclusion/ diversity initiatives but we must ensure ALL members interests (not just young/new Directors) are represented. Directors need access to workshops/classes in cinematography, editing, pitching, producing, self-shooting etc. and opportunities for retraining in new fields/genres of directing.

If elected I will make these happen.

Biography:

I belong to Directors UK and the DGA, have directed in both UK and USA. I'm also a Licensed US Attorney with a Masters in Law from UCLA - so I know how to challenge injustice.

Right now that's what we need because UK Directors are being treated as second class citizens within this industry. UK Directors should be valued as highly as they are in USA.

Under DGA - you have authorial rights, are flown business class and paid properly - you work hard and you're expected to deliver - but that's the deal as a Director - that's what we signed up for, not to be poorly treated and underpaid after giving our best work.

My experience of working in both countries will aid me in fighting for the rights of UK Directors.

That's what's important. Not my CV - google me at keithboak.com

Priorities:

1/ Stronger - Directors UK must strengthen, and in 2 years not 5!

The contribution Directors make to the prosperity of the industry cannot be undervalued. We MUST be accorded authorial rights for original productions.

2/ Bigger - Our membership must embrace ALL Directors. With numbers comes strength and bargaining power.

3/ More Representative - A DirectorsUK with fair and powerful representation of women and Directors from diverse backgrounds is a stronger organization.

3/ A Powerful force - a force for positive change that protects the creative contribution made by Directors.

I love being a Director. I'm sure you do. I'm standing to protect us against anyone that seeks to obstruct, reduce or take away that love for the craft we all have.

Time we woke up and pushed back. In 5 years time (better 2 years), Directors UK must become a formidable driving force in this industry.

Proposer - Jon Sen

Secunder - Susan Tully

Dominic Brigstocke

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I have served on the distribution committee for about 8 years and have gained there a good understanding of the issues facing us.

I have long been concerned that the rights of directors to ownership of their work has been consistently eroded by broadcasters and have passionately supported Directors UK since first alerted to its existence (as the DRPS) in 2001. It is iniquitous that writers and actors have undisputed contractual rights to residual and repeat fees, when directors do not. Directors UK has been successful in restoring some of our rights, but the fragmentation of the industry means these are again under threat.

Meanwhile, the points system under which our payments are allocated is now twenty years old and was conceived in a very different broadcasting world. Its priorities now seem outdated. I would like to see a substantial review of the system to ensure that it's still appropriate.

Biography:

Fascinated by photography and film at an early age, I have been fortunate enough to work professionally in television and film for over 35 years. I started in the videotape library at Channel 4 before getting a trainee position at the BBC, where I was taught to direct single and multi-camera shows and worked across a wide range of genres; documentary, current affairs, features and entertainment, both recorded and live. I went freelance in 1990 and, except for a brief foray into making dramas for ITV1 and BBC1, graduated towards comedy where I have been lucky enough to work with many of the funniest, most creative people in the business. Career highlights have been the first series of "I'm Alan Partridge", "Green Wing", and the co-creation of the television and movie versions of "Horrible Histories". When I'm not working, I like to read a book or potter in the garden.

Priorities:

MORE TRANSPARENCY. Broadcasters are obscuring the amount of catch-up and streamed viewing even as they use it increasingly as their principal outlet. Some BBC programmes are distributed exclusively on iPlayer, by passing the normal repeats/residuals process. The distinction between 'digital' and conventional broadcasting needs to be abandoned in favour of a measure of total reach and value.

MORE ACTIVE in defending directors' rights. If multi-national broadcasters (eg. Netflix/Viacom) are to insist on 'buy-out' contracts, they must take into account the substantial value of the underlying rights when agreeing payments.

MORE DIVERSITY. In my experience, film crews are still alarmingly white and male, and Directors UK should be actively finding ways to enable more women and more people from diverse backgrounds to take on directing and other senior technical roles. I would like to see a much better balance of ethnicities both in front of and behind the camera.

Proposer - Delyth Thomas

Seconder - David Tucker

Edward Bye

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I am currently a member of the DUK board, originally Chair of the Ents and Multi-Camera Committee, now more recently on the Pay and Working Conditions Committee.

I would like to continue on the board of DUK to help improve the working lives of Directors, particularly in the area of pay, the recognition of their work and the opportunity to maximise their creative talent.

The role of the Director is in an ever changing environment and I would like to think that I could use my alarmingly long experience to help others to lead fulfilling careers.

Biography:

Director Highlights:

Girls on Top

Red Dwarf
The Full Wax
Bottom
Eddie Izzard: Definite Article
Kevin and Perry Go Large
French & Saunders
Absolutely Fabulous
After You've Gone
The Vicar of Dibley
My Family
Coming Of Age
Not Going Out
Vicious
Harry and Paul's Story of the 2s
An Evening with Harry Enfield and Paul Whitehouse
Dawn French Live 30 Million Minutes
Catherine Tate live show
Children In Need: Fantastic Beasts Special
French & Saunders Christmas Special
Death on the Tyne
Dial M for Middlesbrough
Murder, They Hope

I have considerable experience with multi-camera and single camera directing, almost exclusively in comedy.

I am slightly obsessed with motorbikes and MotoGP.

Four of the 5 members of my family are in this business we call "show", thus, outside of my own directing work, I'm staying very much within its chaotic orbit .

Priorities:

A wise man once said to me, "Don't try and look into the future" - he ran a betting shop.

It's difficult to predict where Directors UK will be in 5 years, it all depends on what happens to Directors. Some alarmists believe the role won't even exist as the creative power of the Director is being rapidly eroded away. But I believe there is a point where the Director's innate skills are irreplaceable, whether it's their relationship with actors, writers, crew, the ability to create pictorial elegance, to tell the story, to create instant multi-camera programmes and even guiding those in authority above them how to discover the most efficient and creative way to make a television programme or film.

I would hope that in 5 years time DUK will be promoting and protecting all of the above... oh, and also paying out masses of residuals to their deserving members.

Proposer - Nic Guttridge

Seconder - Geoff Posner

Benjamin Caron

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I would like to represent YOU on the DUK board. The media landscape is rapidly evolving and I want directors to continue to be the best communicators of the cultural moment.

DUK is a powerful collective that celebrates the brilliance of its members while offering protection against bad practice and unfair remuneration.

I would like to work to see better representation for female directors and people of colour in our industry, higher pay, better working conditions, an increase in our residuals, and the setting up of a DUK pension scheme.

In the last year I have worked on dramas and feature films for Netflix, Disney, and Apple. With streaming services becoming ever more crucial to our members, I would pursue the question of how can we bring these companies on board to share our vision of the future and better artistic and financial outcomes for directors.

Biography:

I started my TV career directing documentaries, light entertainment, multi-camera shows, commercials, and music videos.

Ten years later I made the transition into drama. Since then I've been lucky to direct *Skins*, *My Mad Fat Diary*, *Wallander*, *Sherlock*, and *The Crown*, which I also executive produced.

Recently I finished a new *Star Wars* series for Disney+ and I'm about to go and make my first feature film for Apple/A24.

I am committed to promoting excellence in the craft of directing and champion change within the current industry to create equal opportunities for all.

Priorities:

- Better representation of drama and films directed by women and people of colour.
- Residual payments paid across all media platforms.
- A formal DUK pension scheme - one that requires pension contributions from employees as well as personal contributions.
- A minimum rate card for directors working across all film and television.
- A financial agreement from streamers and broadcasters to contribute towards the training and development of future directors.
- More members!

Proposer - Steve Smith

Seconder - Jessica Hobbs

Kate Cheesman

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

As a director, I feel our rights and working conditions need to be constantly evaluated and protected. The industry is continually changing and the vulnerability of our members was highlighted with the pandemic, not to mention changes caused by Brexit and the rise of streaming platforms. DUK, has done lots to protect us, campaigned for equality and helped make sure we received payments for the use of our work. However, talking to directors who are members of the DGA, I also know our own UK contracts can be woefully inadequate. I'd like to help continue the great work previous board members have done, help make sure we continue with DUK's work on equality and finally make sure we don't loose-out as our business evolves. As a female director who's worked in factual, continuing drama, shorts and high-end, I've a great overview of our industry, so am well placed to help.

Biography:

My career began in editing at the BBC before gaining placements around the many BBC Departments. I worked as a researcher in factual, then as a director and producer in many different areas, before directing and producing in scripted television. I worked for C4 in investigative TV, amongst other programmes I directed; *the Bill*, *Grange Hill*, *London Bridge*, *Bramwell*, *Pig Heart Boy* and *Casualty*. On the way, I won a BAFTA, an RTS and many other nominations. I then suffered a huge set-back to my career when I took maternity leave and really had to fight my way back to directing, making 5 short films and winning quite a few more awards in the process. I also directed some *Family Affairs* as well as lecturing in film. I have recently directed *Call the Midwife* and *Outlander*, and have a couple of films in development.

Priorities:

Whilst the DUK has had a huge impact on equality and artistic rights, we still have some way to go in many areas and need to keep up the pressure to make sure absolutely none of our members suffer from prejudice. We also need to continue as well as find new opportunities to develop members' talents. I've never felt directors have ever had the sort of representation or power that many other creatives have enjoyed through their unions and associations, and as all creatives' rights and roles are now being undermined/challenged, we need to make sure we grow in strength so we can properly protect directors. In five years, I would like to see the DUK as the sort of organisation that could can get

both the government and employers to listen during a pandemic and be able to make sure our rights are built on, not eroded.

Proposer - Shelagh McLeod

Secunder - Carolyn Saunders

Bill Clark

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

My reason for standing in this election is that I feel there is a need for more protection to Directors rights in the independent arena. My career as producer and a writer and director has given me much experience on both sides of negotiating and administering deals - and a personal understanding of the abuse of the weak position Directors find themselves in when asked to juggle their creative ambitions with the financial ones of their producers. I am also worried about the lack of opportunities independent Directors have to enforce the back end reporting of UK and overseas distribution and revenue receivables of their work and would like to explore ways of making that process more transparent. At this stage of my career I find I have the time to put towards these wider ambitions of improving the position of independent Directors and would welcome your vote of support.

Biography:

I began directing began in 1976 after a record company asked me to make a switch from being a stills photographer and art director and create a film that would promote their artistes internationally. Since then I have shot promos, industrials, commercials and two feature films. I have run several production companies including the commercials division of VTR plc. My work as a writer and director of some 600 commercials fuelled ambitions in feature films and in 1998 I pitched for and acquired the film rights to the award winning American children's book "The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey". In 2006 I directed a \$10m film version from my own adaptation. The film won best picture at the 2007 Salt Lake City Film Festival. My second film "Starfish" was nominated in Edinburgh and Busan and screened at the Houses of Parliament. I am currently in development on two more films.

Priorities:

Personally, I would like to see DUK more focussed on the realities and difficulties of our lives working as directors, achieving our creative goals without having to compromise our personal ones. I would like to see greater facilities for contractual and reporting support and closer working relationships with producers, encouraging them to look at the opportunities of the wider membership by providing easier access and advice and opportunities to advise us of what it is they are looking for. I believe that the wider the conversation the more successful the debate will be.

Proposer - Steve Smith

Secunder - Beryl Richards

Steven Clarke

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat, Nations and Regions Committee Chair

Personal Statement:

As a documentary director for over 20 years, I've always been delighted when a payment came from Directors UK. Now, I'd like to be on the Board (and Chair the Nations and Regions Committee). I feel I could do a good job. I know the industry well, speak my mind and have ideas, but I'm a good listener too, a team player, objective and honest. I also have several years management experience as an Exec/showrunner to bring to the role.

I'd be proud to represent the interests of fellow members in rights collecting, campaigning and finding new ways to support each other. Freelance life is tough, and lock-down has been isolating. I recently made a film remotely, from home, which was good but sometimes lonely, and I think for younger directors especially that's an issue. Overall, I understand the pressures directors face and am keen to help find solutions.

Biography:

I've been directing TV documentaries since the late 1990's, mainly history and science, but also ob-docs and some natural history, on budgets ranging from big drama-docs to arts projects on a shoestring. I started directing at BBC Bristol, after an English degree and time as a theatre director. I'm Bristol-based, but have also worked in Belfast, Glasgow, and London.

I've made shows for many broadcasters, from 'First Brit: Secrets of the 10,000-Year-Old-Man' and 'Six Wives of Henry VIII' for Channel 4; to 'Beauty of Maps' and 'Empire of the Seas' for the BBC and, recently, 'John Bishop's Great Whale Rescue' for ITV1. I've also taught in film schools, and had several years in management too, as an Exec/showrunner at a couple of Bristol indies, most recently Plimsoll Productions. Now, I'm back to freelancing. I have two sons and a partner, and like making them all visit old castles.

Priorities:

I think Directors UK does a great job. But in 5 years' time I'd like to see a larger, more diverse membership, representing directors of every background, in every genre, across the UK. Second, as the film/TV industry becomes increasingly global, in 5 years I'd like to see even more robust deals for UK directors' rights, pay and conditions, rewarding directors well for work on terrestrial channels, SVOD's and other markets. I'd also like to see an increase in the organisation's work with the membership community, with more help/support available, and more events, especially outside London, where I think UK production will grow. Lastly, I'd like to see increased Directors UK involvement in negotiations with government/trade bodies, and in wider public campaigns too, doing everything it can to make the sector more accessible, and continuing to fight for the role, financial rights and future of UK directors.

Proposer - Alex Parkinson

Second - James Reed

Paul Copeland

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I want to stand for a Board seat to work for a better deal for directors across the industry. Many of us have seen a significant cut to our distribution income under the latest rights deal - so as DUK begins to negotiate the next deal, I want to get in there and fight for more money. I've worked as a Director for 20 years across non-scripted and scripted TV and worry about a decline in the status of directors across all genres - in comparison to writers and producers, we earn less money and have less power than we used to. For factual directors in particular, this can sometimes be accompanied by demands for over-work, a disregarding or minimising of a director's creative input, and even bullying. We need to fight this, find ways of reasserting the centrality of our authorship, build up our status, and so leverage better rewards.

Biography:

I began my career in current affairs and moved into directing documentaries for 15 years, notably science and history. I then moved into Continuing Drama - Emmerdale, Corrie, and Hollyoaks - which gives me an understanding of both factual and scripted genres, and how the same issues affect directors across all genres, but with different emphases and urgencies.

Separately, I work for NGOs and think tanks analysing TV's role in the spread of global disinformation and fake news, with a particular focus on how TV and other media can work better to build resilience and trust in vulnerable audiences. I have published papers on the importance of Media Literacy in the smartphone era.

I am a trustee of a school for disabled children in India, and a primary school governor.

Priorities:

Directors UK has come a long way in the last decade but it is still a smaller and a weaker organisation than some of its peers. We need to use the upcoming rights renegotiation not only to fight for more money for ourselves, but also to work out what we can do to assert the centrality of a director's authorship and to halt the slide in our status and earnings. In 5 years' time I'd like to see a new rights deal in place - one that's making us all more money - and also an organisation able to punch its weight, with more members, and commanding increasing respect across the industry

for the quality of its negotiation and its effectiveness in sticking up for every director, on every project, all of the time.

Proposer - Neil Alderton

Seconder - Ian Bevitt

Ian Oliver Curtis

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I grafted for years to become a director. Like many of your experiences it was a lonely journey with no mentor, no sense of community, busting a gut as a newbie to get that first gig. I needed someone to say keep going. Keep emailing. Keep writing. Keep directing. IT WILL HAPPEN! Four years ago I instigated a mentoring scheme with D.UK where three directors each joined me for a week on set with follow on mentoring advice. As a now, middle-aged, working class white man, I felt and still feel a duty to give my time to those seeking advice and most of all encouragement. If elected I'd focus my energy on diversity in our field, I'd scrutinise the company and explore how it can do better for you, how we can continue to keep creative power in our hands, to make us feel valued.

Biography:

Born in Stockport I studied A levels at Oldham College then attended The Drama Centre London where I trained as an actor. As an actor I had a regular role both in Soldier Soldier and Holby City as well as appearing in theatre, film and other tv productions. My experience on set led me to believe I wanted to direct so I stopped acting and learnt how to direct by working in corporate films and trying to write 'that' script. I co-wrote and directed a comedy called 'FM' which became a CH4 Comedy Lab and went on to become an ITV2 series. This opened the door to directing sketch comedy and comedy dramas for CBBC (Sorry I've Got No Head, Horrible Histories, So Awkward) and latterly Hollyoaks, Emmerdale and Coronation St.

Before having kids (13, 6 & 4) I enjoyed scuba diving, travelling, live music, theatre, food and carpentry.

Priorities:

I honestly have no concrete answer to this question. If I'm elected to the board I'll study the model of the organisation to date, look at the objectives it has set itself and how they have fared and I'll ask questions of my fellow directors as to what the board should be doing. I would like to explore how it could partner up with other organisations such as Autism UK so see how we can advise some of their members - creatives like us, who see no opportunities for them in the tv and films industries. I'd like to hope it continues to be the recognised body for Directors with strong influence and empathy to its members.

Proposer - Steve Smith

Seconder - Paul Riordan

Abigail Dankwa

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I have been a member of DUK since 2015 and I currently sit on the Distribution committee, after being co-opted in 2020. It's been interesting learning about how this side of DUK and the industry operates.

Whilst at the NFTS I sat on the board as Student Union President, I was on the WPD Committee at BECTU and I have been a trustee of Polka Children's Theatre. What I learnt from those experiences is that thinking outside of the box is imperative. When Polka was fundraising I made them pursue a property developer who was donating to local "good causes" even though Polka sat outside the proposed catchment. It resulted in Polka being granted £20,000.

The role of board member for me, is to challenge and support the management team on behalf of its members and I will do this knowing I haven't chosen a "traditional" route into directing.

Biography:

I started as a House Director on 2015 on Big Brother and Celebrity Big Brother, then moved over to 24 Hours in A&E, (now in my eighth year). I was trained at the National Film and Television, graduating with an MA in Producing and Directing Television Entertainment, initially thinking I would work towards becoming an Entertainment Producer. And then I sat in the director's chair...

I have been a grateful recipient of the DUK Multi Camera Directing Television Entertainment course and the Inspire mentoring programme, which have helped immensely in my being able to direct Quiz, Fixed Rig and Entertainment shows, from Tipping Point, Grayson Perry's Art Club to It's Clarkson on TV as well as Life and Rhymes, a spoken word show, which has been nominated for this year's BAFTA Entertainment show category. I enjoy cooking, long walks and trying to guess who the Masked Singer is.

Priorities:

I may not have years of directing experience, however, I come with a curious and inquisitive mind. I want to know why the standing of the director seems, to have fallen, so we can work out how we can rectify it. I'm more than happy to ask the awkward questions, on your behalf.

I want our directing community to be strong in front of the likes of PACT, the DCMS etc. To enjoy the same rights as other departments with overtime, challenge why we being brought in later in production, receive late scripts impeding our work, leading to an effect on our mental health.

My being on the board will be about ensuring that in five years time the recognition of being the "Head of the Heads of" is reflected in our pay, conditions and rights, that we have better access to mid CPD and that onerous contracts become outlawed.

Proposer - Darcia Martin

Seconder - Dan Zeff

Rubia Dar

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I am interested in the barriers facing female directors and particularly female directors of colour. Too often in Factual TV female Director's find their careers cut short due to glass ceilings. They are often overlooked for high profile projects. Directors of colour find themselves side-lined, often unable secure those projects that would give them a firmer setting in the industry. Particularly in Factual TV as outlined in DUK's own report on female Directors, it showed a 9.8 per cent decline in Female Directors working in Factual. Women are too often seen as being more suitable for supporting roles, and indeed female researchers and APs find it harder to get in to Directing, and positions of leadership than their male counterparts. I want to work on tackling the barriers women face. How DUK can work towards improving opportunities and greater inclusivity for women and women of colour.

Biography:

I am an award-winning freelance producer/director, specialising in documentaries, factual programmes, current affairs and news. I have worked for all the main UK TV channels, Al Jazeera English, and American Networks including National Geographic and Discovery Channel. I have a particular interest in telling personal stories with a global or human interest perspective.

Priorities:

Black Lives Matter and Coronavirus has affected the TV and Film industries, highlighting decades of inequality and precarious working lives of those working in the sectors. I would like to see Directors UK draw up a plan over the next 5 years that commits to a vision for tackling the issues facing the working lives of so many Directors. Issues like fairer rates and conditions and tackling bullying and harassment - addressing the lack of diversity that goes beyond hosting networking events. I would like to see DUK mobilise a strategy around these issues and set goals over the next 5 years to achieve these aims.

Proposer - Ruhi Hamid

Seconder - Avril Evans

John Paul Davidson

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I've been a member of Directors UK from inception. I believe it has a crucial role to play in protecting our rights, both artistic and financial, our working practices, and in providing opportunities and training for everyone. Unions are a powerful and usually beneficial force, and have over my working life been steadily eroded. If things go pear shaped, for any number of reasons, it's vitally important that employers know there is a powerful and vocal body that will act for the benefit of its members. United we are so much stronger. The entertainment landscape is changing so fast, money being ever increasingly concentrated, that we directors need all the help and muscle that we can find. Directors UK is so much more than a collecting agency - brilliant though this is - and it's the campaigning that inspires me to want help strengthen its voice, whilst providing a forum for discussion.

Biography:

I studied theatre in Bristol and Poland, and joined the BBC after two years anthropological fieldwork in Malaysia. For a decade I made predominantly ethnographic films for The World About Us, Natural World, Everyman, Under the Sun, with forays into Arena and Omnibus. I left the BBC after 15 years to direct a film with Alan Bates, Sting and Lena Headey and have been freelance ever since combining documentaries and some fiction. The excitement and challenges of filmmaking have never diminished. I love to explore. Sometimes it's very physical like climbing Everest with Brian Blessed or travelling with Michael Palin or Stephen Fry across the Sahara Himalaya Europe and the Americas. Sometimes it's the joy of exploring new technologies and ways of making films, and always meeting new people.

For 30 years I've been on the board of the Rainforest Fund charity and enjoy the responsibility and focus it brings.

Priorities:

Stronger, and larger with more varied voices and people from all sorts of backgrounds involved in its activities and programs. It should be the natural point of contact for all directors who have to deal with issues about bullying, racism, sexism, health, safety, bad contracts and dodgy work practices. And carrying on from the excellent previous work we need to continually engage the broadcasters, streamers and production companies so that directors have a fairer share of the profits of their work. The collection and rights side will become more complex as more players are involved so we will need clout and respect. The more we are involved the better. Legal help should be available as much as fiscally possible and focused campaigns to raise issues. If there's a problem DirectorsUK should be top of the list to call, and if you've expertise, knowledge, and great experiences share them at DirectorsUK.

Proposer - Jamie Stone

Seconder - Nick London

Martin Denham

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

Not everyone works as a director in TV or movies, but that doesn't mean we're not capable if given a chance. I'm one of those on the fringes and I know what's needed to smash the barriers to entry.

I've spent two years as the secretary of the Writer Producer Director's branch at BECTU. I've been instrumental in supporting branch members on industrial issues and campaigning for better industry practice.

I'm the voice in the room for working-class directors, like myself, and want to help DirectorsUK gain a better understanding of working-class barriers to entry from a working-class perspective.

We're living in a time of unprecedented demand for new content, but opportunities to contribute to the diverse range of storytelling modern audiences crave are still not open to everyone. I understand this because this is the situation I'm in too, and I want to help change this.

Biography:

I'm from Darlington, a working-class market town in the North East. I graduated from Cumbria Institute of the Arts in 1997 with a degree in Media Production.

My career began as an AD on commercials, short films and corporate videos before cutting my directorial teeth on broadcast promos. Over the years I've produced a lot of commercial content for a wide variety of high street brands and worked with many television personalities, music acts and Hollywood stars.

I was 1st AD & 2nd Unit Director on the feature film 'DARK SIGNAL' for Executive Producer Neil Marshall and have made several narrative short films including 'CLOSE TO HEAVEN' for Challenge Alexa in 2012.

I'm represented by 1 Artists' Agency, work as a private script consultant and am currently developing a business strategy to allow working-class stories & working-class talent to be heard.

Priorities:

I would like to see DirectorsUK be even more of a dominant voice tackling industrial issues, especially barriers to entry or opportunities to get Directors in front of commissioners, producers or agents. I would like to see it help the industry evolve and align with the changes that are happening in this new decade and beyond. I would like to see DirectorsUK help the UK continue to be competitive in the marketplace and be a sustainable employer for a positive future.

Proposer - Resul Keech

Seconder - Avril Evans

Georgina Yukiko Donovan

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

Reflecting on all that has been laid bare over the last couple of years, I increasingly feel the need to take an active role in helping shape the future of our industry. Since joining Directors UK, I have strived to be an active member of the Directors of Colour committee, witnessing first hand the incredible gains we have made but also the barriers we have come up against. I believe that when looking at the state of the industry, there is a need to ensure we are not just addressing issues in individual vacuums but recognising the intersectionality of them. My hope is that taking on a role on the board will allow me the opportunity to identify those holistic solutions that will benefit all but champion the underrepresented. Advocating for these standards across the industry whilst also looking inwards and pushing for Directors UK to lead by example.

Biography:

A British-Japanese factual director driven to explore and share human stories, captured with sweeping cinematics and intimate portraits. Passionate about bridging intersections and re-centering marginalised voices into their own stories, especially within the East Asian community.

Bringing an unbridled multi-disciplinary approach inspired by a diverse background in theatre, television and film.

Heading up her own production company, Geeks In Motion, and a recipient of the Female Film Force grant, an initiative created to actively address the gender imbalance within the film industry, to produce her documentary short 'AMA'.

Recent credits include Deciphering Japan, a four-part documentary series exploring the social and political state of Japan today, commissioned by CNA and producer for the Netflix Documentary Talent Fund.

Crazy about travel, true crime, documentary and dogs. Made in Japan.

Priorities:

Increasingly demanding working hours and conditions, stagnated rates, coupled with the fracture of the directors role (esp. in factual) is making it harder for directors to forge a meaningful career and a sustainable living in the industry.

The knock on effect is that this adds to the challenges for already under-represented directors, resulting in a less diverse industry which has a direct impact on the kinds of stories being made. We need to advocate for fair pay and protection of creative rights. To continue to push for better hiring practices that encourage broadcasters and production companies to hire from a wider pool of diverse talent. I would also like to see Directors UK, on an organisational level, continue to become more diverse and reflective of the membership it represents. Without real

meaningful change, the industry will continue to lose talent, both new and established, diversity in skills and original storytelling.

Proposer - Jan Genesis

Seconder - Roxy Rezvany

Avril Evans

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

Directing across promos and commercial campaigns has made me a succinct communicator who cuts through waffle and says it like it is.

An active member of BECTU, I've contributed to policies addressing systemic changes such as The New Deal for Freelancers and the recent Race To Be Heard report. Identifying where we can rebuild parts of the industry to better support freelancers and those who are marginalised.

Over the past year with the impact on working hours, mental health and the need for inclusion, there's a marked difference between the rhetoric and the reality of directors' working lives. We are being gaslit, silenced or worse, ignored. Now more than ever, as a collective of directors, we have the opportunity to do much better in gaining tangible outcomes while collaborating with unions like BECTU and other guilds. I'm keen to create a safer, equitable and better work-life balance for all directors.

Biography:

Avril is an award-winning writer/director who gravitates towards audacious, global stories with an unflinching point of view and a dose of Afro Noir.

Avril carries her love of complex stories and unconventional characters into her work in narrative and advertising films and has written and directed short films commissioned by The Arts Council/Barbican and Eastenders: E20. Others screened at national and international film festivals, including the Film London supported PLAYGROUND (London Film Festival) and FAMOUS LAST WORDS (Berlinale) funded by ZDF/Arte.

Selected for BAFTA/BFI Crew, Avril participated in BAFTA's steering group for inclusion. Named Emerging Black British Filmmaker to Watch (by Shadow and Act), Avril was chosen for the Rare with Google Leadership Accelerator and was runner up in the annual M&C Saatchi Open House Pitch

Avril is attached as a director on TV projects while focusing on her slate of film and TV ideas.

Priorities:

Using DUK's proximity to the industry and other spheres of influence, we need urgent collective action not just rhetoric. If there are other pandemics in the future, to guarantee ALL directors have a financial safety net. We need to ensure more equitable working environments and safe sets. A DUK manifesto with a clear procedure so that freelancers know how to report grievances. We've got to be a voice for all and importantly make space for the marginalised to sit at the table too.

In five years time, I want the DUK to have a shared vision where we don't need separate committees such as Directors of Colour or the Regions Committee. Where directors are paid for their interview prep and penalties enforced for late scripts. Expand networks with BECTU, PACT and between DGA so it's easier for directors to work on both sides of the Atlantic if they choose.

Proposer - Afia Nkrumah

Seconder - Christine Lalla

Matthew Evans

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

Directors work is demanding and stressful. For years I assumed that any difficulties I experienced were of my own making. When the shit hit my fan, the solid support of other directors was invaluable. Knowing I was not alone meant I found out how to keep working.

DUK's overriding mission is to push for gender and racial equalities, further creative rights, fairer remuneration and the fundamental recognition of what we do. Add the feeding-frenzy created by the pandemic, and there's a working environment to be excited by, and also, to be open-eyed about. Magnificently directors are being offered work they had no hope of even being considered for a short time ago. Careers are being built fast - I believe DUK can and should be able to provide individual support and practical feedback. And I want to be there.

A longer statement:

<https://matthewevans.pictures/blog/2021/6/2/longer-application-statement-directors-uk-board-of-governors-june-2021>

Biography:

I have made 300-odd hours of UK tv drama. From 'EastEnders' through 'Band Of Gold', '...Braithwaites', launching Ken Stott's 'Rebus', 'William & Mary', 'Robin Hood', CBBC's 'Wolfblood', bed-loads of 'Casualty' and back to 'EastEnders'. Acquiring skills is an addiction, I have been a film, tv and theatre actor, sound recordist, rostrum cameraman, photographer, AD, university lecturer and now I am a potter.

In 2000 I directed & mentored a 'soap' in Nairobi, 'Heart & Soul' (UN funded) to teach about AIDS. We reached 31 million viewers and established cast and crew in still on-going careers.

For the last 3 years I have been part of Open Screen, putting local film makers work into the annual Borderlines Film Festival.

This year, through the BBC, I will be heading up a diverse access mentoring scheme for new directors, using EastEnders as boot camp.

Having got the skills, handing them back fascinates and engages me.

Priorities:

The gains DUK has made in protecting our rights and re-establishing the authority of directors, across all media, have been ambitious and effective.

The pandemic has created an employment bonanza now, in our industry. Exciting as it is, the new wild west will bring with it dangers and exploitation which we must be in position to foresee and understand.

The future has to be shaped by the defence of gender and racial equalities, the creation of safe working environments, the ability to react to change with insight.

In 5 year's time I want DUK to represent the respect and authority held by UK directors nationally and internationally. That we are an essential part of negotiations between directors, broadcasters, distributors and managements worldwide. That our training initiatives have a broad based social outreach. And crucially, we are the go-to for individual directors when shit happens.

Proposer - Roger Mitchell

Seconder - John Greening

Jeanie Finlay

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I am an artist from Teesside who by accident found the thing that brings me most joy — making films.

All of my films are made with compassion and openness and I believe in shy people telling small stories quietly — my camera can act a loudhailer.

As a director I need to be able to make promises I can keep and keep the promises I make. To do that, I need tough infrastructure and protection in the industry - for me and my peers, which is where Directors UK plays a vital role.

If elected, my priorities are:

Directors are paid fairly for their work

Cutting rights are protected contractually

Mental health support for directors is taken seriously and budgeted for

Parental and caring responsibilities of directors are not a barrier to making ambitious films

Crew and production teams reflect the diversity of the UK

More: <https://emptyshop.medium.com/fear-and-hope-for-documentary-in-the-wake-of-covid-126b2e719dee>

Biography:

I create award-winning work for cinema and broadcast, telling intimate stories to international audiences, currently in production on my ninth feature documentary. I've made films for HBO, IFC, BBC as well as four commissions for the acclaimed BBC Storyville strand. Titles include Emmy nominated Game of Thrones: The Last Watch, BIFA & Grierson nominated Seahorse, The Great Hip Hop Hoax, SOUND IT OUT and BIFA Award-winning Orion: The Man Who Would Be King.

Originally from Teesside, now based in Nottingham, I went to art instead of film school and I have never lived in London. My first film - Teenland - was commissioned when I was six months pregnant so I have always been a parent/filmmaker. I served on the board of flagship media centre Broadway Cinema for ten years and I am an advocate and champion for Raising Films - making the film industry better for parents and carers.

www.jeaniefinlay.com

Priorities:

I am applying to be on the board of Directors UK as I am optimistic enough to believe that change is possible but pragmatic enough to understand that nothing can be achieved by standing alone. In five years I would love to see some cultural shifts in the way that films are made in this country, for change to have been effected and for Directors UK to be at the forefront of that change.

I would like to see:

A board that reflects the diversity of the UK

Contractual changes so that cutting rights and residuals are protected

A policy for mental health and welfare of directors to be adopted and enacted industry wide

Greater industry support for parents and carers in film

More women making films

More production in the regions, by filmmakers from the regions

Crew photos that truly reflect the diversity of the UK

Proposer - Rajesh Thind

Seconder - Paul Sng

Kenny Glenaan

Position(s) standing for: Nations and Regions Committee Chair

Personal Statement:

If you believe that directors (of all genres) resident in the Nations & Regions face a unique set of issues determined by geography, history, lack of cultural representation and a centralised system of administration which feels as like it 'just doesn't get it', then please read on.

Now, more than ever, we have to ensure representation which properly reflects our experience.

If we do not take part, we should not be surprised if others appropriate our experience.

I want to reform the way the N&R operates by harnessing the collective energy (and numbers) of the N&R into a unified voice. Making it more transparent and putting the N&R at the centre of, and on a more equal basis within the rest of DUK.

To find out how, (I only get 150 words here) please click the (2 min) video link below for full statement.

Biography:

Grew up in Argyll. Worked as a Joiner before taking an interest in drama. Worked as an actor for 10 years, then directed several plays in the theatre. Did the BBC drama directors course (when it was free). Have directed television

drama for past 25 years: series, serials, two and three parters, six parters, soap opera, single TV films, low budget feature films. Won the Michael Powell Award at the EIFF and several BAFTAs. In process of making first feature length documentary, about Booker prize winning Scottish novelist James Kelman, and a film about the first Saudi Arabian woman to climb Mount Everest. My fav filmmaker is Krzysztof Kieslowski. I like Bob Dylan's music and Andrew Wyeth is my favourite painter.

Priorities:

In five years time I would like to see more members becoming full members - as opposed to just being an associate member or, using it only as a collections agency - actively engaged in DUK activities and campaigns.

Renegotiating the current PACT contracts for directors to properly reflect and respect what the director brings to the table.

Find a way to reimplement the European working time directive for directors which disappeared unnoticed because of Brexit.

To be able to respond more nimbly to a fast changing landscape on behalf of directors.

A Nations and regions or Four Nations system which is equal, vibrant, interconnected, which we can all be proud of.

A strong and vibrant Guild alongside the collections side of DUK.

Proposer - Derek Livesy

Second - Stewart Svassand

Samantha Harrie

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

As a working director I've been supported at different times in my career by Directors UK and realise what a crucial organisation it is to directors at every stage of their journey. I'd like to actively involved in changing working environments for the better, for all directors at every career stage: from new entrants, mid-career shifts and established talent. I'm especially interested in working towards better policies around anti-bullying and healthier working environments, creating better representation of people of colour, LGBTQ+ and women in the industry and child care for working directors. I'm one of the co-founders of Cinesisters, the female directors collective. This has given me hands on experience of campaigning and lobbying that. I believe working with DUK board to lobby commissioners, broadcasters and production companies to address unconscious bias and improve working practices in the industry, is the way forward for all of us.

Biography:

Originally from the West Midlands, Samantha's career began as a fine-artist until a passion for storytelling led her to filmmaking. She has made numerous award winning short films and her TV credits include Coming Up, C4, Doctors, Holby City and Call The Midwife, BBC1, through the prestigious DUK / HETV placement. Samantha is developing two authored TV series and her first feature. She is a graduate of the NFTS and an alumni of Guiding Lights, Microwave, NETWORK EIFF and BFI NETWORK X BAFTA CREW and is currently being mentored by Philippa Lowthorpe through the DUK INSPIRE mentoring programme. Samantha is a founding member of Cinesisters the female director's collective.

Priorities:

In five years, time I'd really like to see Directors UK working more closely with commissioners, broadcasters and production companies on strategies to redress the balance in problem areas and accountability, within the industry for directors. Some programmes like this exist already, but they are few and far between and greater connection between members actual experience through collaboration with Directors UK, could be a great way to define new strategies. Areas I'd like work with DUK to focus on would be :

- anti-bullying policies and healthier working environments
- creating better representation of people of colour, LGBTQ+ and women in the industry
- the balance of new talent and mid-career directors, (it's hard to break into the industry and easy to get stuck mid-career)
- Child-care as an industry standard for working directors

Proposer - Christine Lalla
Secunder - Ashtar Alkhirsan

James Hawes

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

It's an extraordinary time to be a director.

Our working environment is changing seismically: the rise of the SVODs, Brexit, Covid, demand for self-shooting directors, the future of the BBC... directors have some very real concerns. But I think this is a moment of huge opportunity. There has never been such a demand for our skills. The profusion of platforms, the growing global nature of our industry and the prominence of the creative industries within the UK economy, all these give us leverage. I have been a board member before - involved in negotiating the first royalties deal and co-drafting the Creative Rights Agreement. Now I feel is the time to return. I hope I can offer a depth and breadth of experience, and a determination to build on all that has been achieved. DUK needs to be passionate and loud. I'll do my best to make sure that we are.

Biography:

I wasn't supposed to be a director. I was supposed to be a lawyer and follow a 'sensible' profession. I am very glad I didn't.

From a background in theatre, an early TV career in current affairs at the BBC, I began a freelance career directing shows like THE BILL and HOLBY CITY, along with historical documentaries. I made a bit of a speciality directing fact-based dramas and, more recently, 'near future fiction' – BLACK MIRROR and the like. I now work internationally for Netflix, HBOMax, C4, BBC, Showtime and AppleTV+, for whom I am currently launching a new series starring Gary Oldman and Kristin Scott-Thomas.

Like most directors, I turned my passion into a career, so if there's a hobby, it's that time between contracts, worrying about what the next job will be.

I and my family are based in London, with strong links to Cornwall where I grew up.

Priorities:

Directors UK has achieved so much in its 20 years, and become a truly respected organisation. That respect gives us a platform from which to build. And we can.

- Mentoring and Training – I've led initiatives within DUK and want to develop what we offer and who we reach, to promote ever better levels of inclusion and diversity
- Rights Deals - to negotiate a directors' deal with the SVODs, including residuals, like those US directors enjoy
- International - build on links with European directors and rights bodies, to ensure we remain creatively and economically connected
- DGA - establish closer links with the Directors Guild of America, learning from their example and ensuring that UK directors to not get second class deals
- Lobbying - really important for me, to build DUK's presence at a governmental level, through industry bodies, making the director's voice recognised as that of the 'key creative' – being champions of the broader industry

Proposer - Charles Sturridge
Secunder - SJ Clarkson

John Henderson

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

Directors UK has done, and still does, an amazing job fighting for Director's rights to recognition and remuneration for their past work.

Now I believe that, whilst that struggle continues, it is time to source the enormous pool of individual knowledge held by so many of our veteran directors who have 'seen it all' but have no opportunity or platform to pass on their practical experience.

This way, by tapping into that vast database of information, the young up and coming talent can avoid the inevitable pitfalls that will face them when attempting to achieve their creative vision.

I would like to help co-ordinate and run this venture.

Biography:

I started my professional life as an advertising copywriter at Saatchi, moved on to directing ads, took the horrendous drop in income to make TV and then, over the last four decades, mixed that with making feature films.

Since leaving the easy money behind, I have registered over 250 screen credits include Spitting Image, The Borrowers, Loch Ness, Leprechauns, Benidorm, Shameless, How Do You Want Me?, Greyfriars Bobby, Spy, Saxondale and many more. The work has won over thirty international awards.

Although I have done a fair amount of multi-camera studio work, the field I've worked in the most is single camera comedy or fantasy. Sherry Lansing at Paramount once said, 'There are plenty of fantasy directors out there, the difference with Henderson is that he believes it's all true.'

I also have a Law degree which has come in handy on many occasions.

Priorities:

This concept of supplying a databank of accessible advice and personnel is not just a simple matter of mentoring. It is all about providing a service whereby any member director can call a particular number, or contact a special email address and receive advice and tips about how to deal with the real problems they face, such as having to complete the day when running out of time or money, how to handle difficult actors, impossible producers, less than honest production companies, how to tap into the secret art of the 'objective breakdown', how to make screen characters instantly likeable or unlikeable ...and the list goes on and on.

There's no such thing as a new problem. You need no longer be alone.

In five years time or sooner, Directors UK should be the font of knowledge for all directors.

Proposer - Sandy Johnson

Secunder - Simon Gibney

Zoe Hines

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

As a self-shooting Director and an administrator of the grassroots collective Viva La PD, I witnessed first-hand the strain this past year put on TV freelancers. Many of my friends and colleagues were left stranded: out of work and entirely unsupported by the government. But the spotlight Covid threw on our sector didn't highlight anything new. Rather, the pandemic served to exacerbate all too familiar problems. Financial and professional instability, broadcaster accountability, issues of representation and mental and physical health remain risks to our community. And yet, despite the recent trials, Directors are still being asked to do more, with fewer resources, in a shorter period of time. And that's why, for me, there's never been a more pressing moment to organise for positive change. I want to channel my energies into fighting for constructive reform; making our industry a kinder, safer, fairer place to work in as a Director.

Biography:

I am a BAFTA, Grierson and RTS award-winning Self-Shooting PD (Muslims Like Us BBC2, Race Across the World BBC2, Bear Grylls Survival School ITV), with experience filming in over 20 countries worldwide. Since 2019, I've been working as a Series Producer on the Netflix series I Am A Killer, interviewing inmates on death row – and, more recently, presenting the podcast Letters From A Killer. I've been a member of the Directors UK Work and Pay Conditions Committee since 2017 and participated in DUK's Future Rights campaign. I also volunteer as one of the administrators for the group of 1200+ Producer/Directors known as Viva La PD. Since the pandemic, I've assisted with industry surveys and co-represented Viva's community in meetings with the DCMS, a Q&A with MP Tracy Brabin and at the Treasury submission of a freelancers' petition. I'm also part of the newly established team at Transistor Films.

Priorities:

I'd like to see Directors UK play a major role in pushing for systemic industry reform. I'd like to see us spearhead campaigns that demand real, tangible commitments in terms of health and safety. And I'd like to build on the work being done to promote industry access and inclusivity, advocating on behalf of minority voices. I'd like to use my personal experience to confront and challenge the hurdles still facing female Directors. And I'd like to see Directors UK broker difficult conversations between broadcasters and the workforce; highlighting the issues that commissioning structures raise for our community. As online platforms continue to transform the traditional models of terrestrial TV and cinema release, Directors UK will need to stand firm in its defence of Directorial rights. And I would like to use my recent experience producing content for SVODs to bring some first-hand experience to this fight.

Proposer - Steve Smith

Seconder - Nic Gutteridge

Jessica Hobbs

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

It has been my privilege to be on the board of Directors UK for the past three years. In that time I have learnt a huge amount about our organisations structures, its duties and the care it has for its members. The turbulence and immense challenges of this past year have made it even more apparent how much support our members need. I believe the strength of our organisation lies in the ongoing work being done to highlight Directors roles and their rights. I would love to continue my work on the board helping to push forward the need for far greater diversity, for recognition of the role of the director as key creative collaborator and to work towards protection and guidance for our membership. I would love to continue to build on the work we have done to shine a light on our directing community.

Biography:

I have been working as a Director in drama for 30 years. My work has taken me from New Zealand, where I grew up, to Australia, the US and now Europe. I moved with my family to London in 2014 and have loved getting to know the vast talent in the UK film and TV community. My background is in television drama and my credits include The Crown, The Split, Apple Tree Yard, River, Broadchurch and The Slap. I have experience as an EP and as a commissioning editor for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and served on the board of the Australian Directors Guild.

Priorities:

Directors UK has done incredible work shining a light on the issue of gender disparity in our workforce and now we need to progress much further in terms of diversity across all directorial roles. Our engagement in negotiating with Netflix and the other major streamers is a priority for recognition of what Directors truly contribute creatively and this needs to be properly recognised through residual payments. Helping to build our profile as an organisation and to ensure that the role of the director across all disciplines is respected and acknowledged both financially and in working conditions is a priority.

Proposer - Steve Smith

Seconder - Bill Anderson

Alexander James Jacob

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat, Nations and Regions Committee Chair

Personal Statement:

I started in the broadcast industry as a work experience runner on a BBC film in 1993. I decided then that I wanted to become a director. I love this business. I love storytelling and I love working with like-minded creative people. The problem solving and creative challenges that we face day to day are part of what makes the job enjoyable. There are, however, challenges that make the role of director more difficult than it needs to be. Our industry needs to become more professional at every level. We need equity, not just of race and gender but also of region; we need to address

disparity in pay, and we need to address working conditions. By leading from the front, as directors, we are in a position to improve working standards and conditions not just for ourselves but for all those who work in our industry.

Biography:

Starting as a runner in 1993 I have worked at all levels of Assistant Director, Location Manager and Floor Manager. My directing career began in 2007 with my first short film 'Ruby'. Since then, I have directed both Continuing and Children's drama and more recently produced and directed a brand-new show for Channel 5 Milkshake called 'The World According to Grandpa'.

I live in South Manchester, with my cat, dog, wife and 2 children and when I'm not working, I bake, (mainly bread but also some cake) I make stuff with wood and watch TV which I justify to my family as "working".

I wished I had worked on 'Battlestar Galactica', 'Grange Hill' and 'Game of Thrones' but am ever hopeful that an opportunity might arise on any remakes.

Priorities:

Directors UK is an organisation fighting for and supporting its membership and I believe it does this very well, however, it lives and operates in London. It is imperative that we ensure equitable access to events, enabling those outside of the South East the same opportunities for networking, training and career advancement. This is reinforced by major broadcasters making commitments to more programming

Whilst DUK offers a large number of opportunities to advance our creative talents, it is important to also develop our leadership skills. Managing a team of people requires more than sharing a creative vision. We need to know how to get the best from a diverse group of people with a range of different skills and experience. Providing the training that will lead to the skills in management and leadership that complement our creative talent is a must.

Proposer - Darcia Martin

Seconder - Christine Lalla

Jon Jones

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

We belong to an industry where we can be expressive, collaborative and highly creative. We bring narrative in all its forms, enriching and bringing meaning to our audiences. At our best we can fly with our team supported by them alone. But it's not always so. We may find ourselves with a writer who doesn't 'do' directors, an actor we're directing who is an executive producer and a DOP who can't meet because they're busy shooting another block. This can be hard to navigate and as directors we need to acknowledge how far things have slipped. As a body we need to find ways of making things better for those who find themselves in these situations. Beyond this I would like to find ways of promoting the welfare of members, supporting them in and out of work, both at the beginning of our careers and at the end of them.

Biography:

I joined the industry through the art department, beginning my career as a prop maker in a regional theatre. I have seen our industry from many perspectives and I am also a member of the DGA. I have directed numerous dramas for British and American Television including the award winning 'When I'm 64' (Prix Europa - Best TV Film), the BBC's 'The Diary of Anne Frank', 'The Alan Clark Diaries' (DGGB Best Director), 'A very Social Secretary' (Broadcast Press Award - Best Film), 'Northanger Abbey', 'Zen', 'Mr Selfridge' and 'Terry Pratchett's 'Going Postal'. Recent projects are 'Hanna' for Amazon Studios and 'We Hunt Together' for Showtime. My film 'Last Summer' won the BAFTA Cymru 2019 for best feature film. Despite working constantly for the last twenty years, I still worry my present job will be my last and I am always grateful for the work.

Priorities:

It was during the pandemic that I realised how much I relied on the crews that I work with for my mental welfare and how insular I had become after years of working away from home. We all face isolation as our careers ebb and flow and indeed end - be it for health, age or prejudice related reasons - or for simply no longer being 'relevant'. I would like DUK to be right at the heart of supporting members through those times of isolation. Our industry is booming and

for now these concerns may be less to the fore as we find ourselves in demand during the post pandemic rush for content. But we should also be planning for the future. Booms do not last. There may yet be a Lehman Brothers moment that the new TV platforms have to navigate and we should be ready.

Proposer - Bill Anderson

Seconder - Jamie Payne

Alex Kalymnios

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

After working in the US over the last seven years, I recently directed in the UK and feel compelled to help directors here in the UK achieve better working conditions. Protecting our creative rights is a priority, as is increasing our pay, ensuring pay protection for production shutdowns and creating a more inclusive industry for working parents. I feel passionately that we need to fight for all these areas, especially as I see US models of working (short edits, lack of creative control) seeping through. Many US streamers are now using UK directors for their UK/European shooting US shows, however they are not paying them the equivalent of what our DGA peers earn, both in pay and in residuals. This is a huge concern and needs to be addressed quickly to ensure we are not exploited and our craft and rights are protected.

Biography:

I am an established director working both in UK and US. I recently directed THREE FAMILIES for BBC1 which is based on the true stories of families affected by the anti-abortion laws in Northern Ireland.

Previous to that I directed and exec produced the US pilot CLOSE UP for Freeform. Over the last seven years, I have directed in the US episodes of TITANS, IMPULSE, THE 100, QUANTICO, SWAT, ONCE UPON A TIME and TIMELESS.

In 2019, I directed the TV film LOVE YOU TO DEATH starring Oscar winner Marcia Gay Harden, and in 2015 film CLEVELAND ABDUCTION.

In the UK, I directed the final series – a three part special of SCOTT & BAILEY and THE WHITE PRINCESS starring Jodie Comer.

I started my drama career directing HOLLYOAKS, EASTENDERS and WATERLOO ROAD. I also directed BBC3 critically acclaimed hit BECOMING HUMAN and was nominated for a BAFTA Cymru in 2012.

Priorities:

PAY PROTECTION - Against production shutdowns, ensuring any “holding” periods are paid.

CREATIVE RIGHTS - As the US model is increasing seeping through, I want to ensure we maintain creative rights and involvement in the whole post production process. If this will not be the case, then we fight to have wages and residuals in line with DGA rates.

CREDITS - Ensure it's mandatory for organisation such as BBC, ITV, SKY etc to endorse and promote the name all the directors attached on all press releases and any other related PR of the shows.

WORKING PARENTS - Ensure 5 days is the standard shooting/working week. Any 6th day should be min. double rate and only allowed in exceptional circumstances with the director's prior written approval. Directors with young children should have the support and ability to bring their children on location with them with production providing additional accommodation and on set creche/childcare.

Proposer - Georgi Banks-Davies

Seconder - Sarah Walker

Karen Kelly

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat, Nations and Regions Committee Chair

Personal Statement:

Having previously held a seat on the board of DUK, I'm aware of the issues directors face at a time when production spend has never been greater but conversely, directors have never had less power to determine how that money is spent.

With an uplift in broadcasters commitment to the N&R, DUK must build influence with decision makers. I'm committed to advancing opportunity for directors OOL through my relationship with Screen Scotland; my seat on the Scottish TV Working Group; CMI board position (Edinburgh Film Festival); and relationship with OFCOM.

As the prominence of drama and high-end feature docs grows, I'd ensure that DUK prioritises UK rights deals with the new and emerging SVODs. I'd press DUK to play a more prominent role in ensuring a zero tolerance policy to bullying and push for more mid career support through mentoring, tailored networking, targeted support for showreels, pitching and showcasing.

Biography:

Over 30yr experience in broadcasting across scripted and non scripted.

After a successful, award winning 20yr career in London, I moved to Scotland and had my children. From that moment, I struggled to maintain my network profile. Through that frustration, I became determined to challenge the systemic bias against directors outside London and assumptions made about mothers within the industry.

Since then, I've committed to advancing opportunities for my fellow directors in the N&R through formal and informal mentoring, lobbying as a N&R rep on the board of DUK, producing the WFTV mentoring programme and advocating for directors within my previous role as Exec at Channel Four.

I believe in the value of respect and extending a personal commitment to my colleagues. The value of family and friends is fundamental to me as well as bringing our real selves and what matters to us, to the work place.

Priorities:

Huge change is afoot and DUK drives that change. Through building a stronger, more active, more prominent voice within the sphere of influence, DUK actively shapes strategies, policies and production priorities in a broader context. With the seismic shift in favour of production spend outside London, DUK enables directors based in the N&R to capitalise on that and establish greater parity with their counterparts in London.

Producers wield increasing power and profit has become the driving force within the industry. Directors need to rethink how they position themselves. DUK is instrumental in equipping directors to grow as policy influencers, idea generators and show runners as well as maintaining and redefining their role as the key creative voice in any production.

DUK continues to be a leading light in promoting best practice in a world where subconscious bias, bullying and harassment, nepotism and lack of diversity are no longer tolerable.

Proposer - Steve Smith

Seconder - Beryl Richards

Martin Kemp

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

What is a director really worth?

The chance to truly author a piece of work grows ever rarer and young directors especially are being denied the chance to go into edits. That must change or the role of the director as storyteller will disappear for good.

Because that's what we are, we see the essence of a story and the direction we must take to captivate, inform and entertain audiences.

So, we need to prevent the casualisation of our industry, ensure that those living in the nations and regions have a level playing field, create opportunity for all and continue to promote the role of the storyteller.

I've served on DUK's factual committee and as the South West region rep. I'm standing for the board because it offers the best chance to further a conversation with broadcasters about what a director's role should be and save the jobs we love.

Biography:

I've been a factual director for more than 30 years, at the BBC and Channel Four, and since 2005, as a freelancer making programmes for all the main UK and US channels. I work mainly for production companies, but I've also had a few commissions of my own.

It's a job that has taken me to some amazing places around the world, given me some incredible experiences and the chance to work with some wonderful people both behind and in front of the camera. Despite the often precarious nature of freelance work I've never been tempted to give up directing and take a more secure job higher up a career ladder. Directing is why I got into the business and it's what I love doing.

I live in North Devon, so must often work away from home, but when back here I enjoy walking and sea kayaking.

www.martinkemp.tv

Priorities:

In the next five years I'd like to see Director's UK become a driving force in our industry. An organisation that can successfully champion directors from all genres, that can challenge the gradual undermining of the role and that can show broadcasters and production companies the true value a good director brings.

In recent years, DUK has made fantastic progress in confronting the growing injustices in the industry. It needs to become an even stronger voice for change and one that is prepared to expose wrong doing - particularly in the area of health and safety. It should continue to promote training for young directors from all backgrounds and help widen opportunities for all.

In the next few years especially, DUK needs to be nimble and savvy enough to react quickly to any new challenges that evolve if working practices change and budgets tighten in our, hopefully, post-Covid world.

Proposer - Nic Guttridge

Secunder - Anna Thomson

Akinola Kongi

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I have been a member of Directors UK for about 2 years and since becoming a member I have served and still serving on the inaugural Access and Inclusion Committee and also serve in the Directors of Colour committee as well. I am passionate about equality for everyone which includes race, gender, age, and disability.

My objective for wanting to be on the board is to bring fresher ideas at tackling the various issues where a status quo at the moment seems to suffice even though not tackling the issues. I feel we have reached the stage to move away from seeing one win at a time as achievements and find long lasting permanent solutions to the inequitable distributions and access that people face because of Gender, Race, Age, and or Disability.

www.akinssquared.com

Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/akinolaakinpelu>

Biography:

I have a background in business and finance as well as insurance. I have worked in Insurance, Finance, Travel, and now Entertainment. I am a filmmaker and a Photographer, and done work for companies like Bacardi Martini, MTN communications, West African Power Pool, Custodian and Allied Assurance plc. I also have a couple of short films as well as feature films that I made. I have had several photography exhibitions over the last decade my last was at the former book and kitchen London.

Priorities:

I would like to see Directors UK in five years as the Guild for all. I would like to see the organisation lead by example and have a workable and equitable system that works within and can be emulated and replicated by any organisation

that is looking for fairness, balance , and equitability. I will like to see an organisation that reflects always and consistent in everything in does with ratios of race, gender, age, and disability. We should make it essential to represent our members equitably and they always come first. I will like to see us as the number one guild for a director regardless of gender, race, or creed.

Proposer - Obi Emelonye

Seconder - Tim Partridge

Tinge Krishnan

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I am a female director of colour with ADHD, who works on floors and locations across the globe, I am passionate about our craft.

As a director who has experienced micro-aggressions and bullying on set: I bring my commitment for urgent change to the table.

I wish to tackle cultural bias, racism, ableism, gender, LGBTQI bias and create concrete structures and protocols to deal with these.

My commitment is to better working conditions, fair pay and tackling accessibility to our craft for non-privileged groups.

I believe we can learn from the successes of the DGA : their strong safeguarding of the role of directors, our conditions and pay.

It's time to create accountability structures to deal with bullying and bias.

It's time to ensure that the well-being of crew becomes a priority for financiers.

It's time to enshrine director protections and fair pay and secure our futures with residuals and pensions.

Biography:

Pre-film career: Hospital doctor in Sheffield (Bachelor of Medicine and surgery)

Film studies: Four corners Bethnal Green/NYU SCE (NY NY)

Credits include:

Shadowscan 2001 - BAFTA for Best Short Film

Junkhearts 2011 - Best Film Moscow

The Exorcist 2016 - TV series

Been So Long 2018 (Netflix)

Soon Gone: A Windrush Chronicle 2018 - BAFTA nominated

Industry 2019 (BBC/HBO)

Mosquito Coast 2020 (Apple TV)

Temple 2020 (Sky)

July 2021: To shoot WeCrashed (Apple; Anne Hathaway/Jared Leto)

Jury panel experience:

BAFTA and BIFA jury panels

Board membership:

Childline Thailand (2014 to present)

Safe Child Thailand (2017 to 2020)

Priorities:

In 5 years time I would like to see the DUK as an organisation with enhanced strength and muscle comparable to the DGA.

DUK would be an organisation that is swiftly heeded by broadcasters.

It will have improved protections for directors pay and conditions. In 5 years time DUK should be a pivotal lynchpin in a multi-organisational alliance in film and TV that has real power. the current disparity between DGA and UK pay and conditions would be resolved.

Priorities would be:

1) Monthly data like the DGA on inclusion

- 2) An anonymised system for crew to raise flags from a production
- 3) Create protocols for raised flags.
- 4) An alliance of unions/guilds/bodies to create inclusion, healthy sets and craft/pay protections
- 5) Improve inclusion

Proposer - Menhaj Huda

Secunder - Steve Smith

Anke Lueddecke

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

As your board member, I would focus on fighting for a diverse workforce.

Representation matters, in the stories we tell and behind the camera. I am passionate about recognising that no one has just one single identity and we must therefore push for diversity beyond simple labels.

We need to defend our craft and our rights in a world going digital; grow our membership; and 'green' our organisation / industry.

Why me?

I'm one of those people who actually download and read industry reports.

I love working in a team to set strategy and get things done.

I bring ideas to the table and listen to others, but speak up when needed.

I excel at getting multiple stakeholders to pull in the same direction.

I've been a member of the Factual and DoC committees. My background: Factual, Live OBs, Corporate, but I will fight for all genres.

Vote for me!

Biography:

I dreamed of being a director from the age of 15, so I'm proud to have made it this far. Without any connections in the industry, I got a couple of degrees under my belt, worked in publishing and then applied to join the BBC as a production trainee.

Having worked my way up, over the past 20 years I have produced and directed history, arts and current affairs documentaries for BBC, Channel 4, Discovery, PBS, and Arte; made corporate films; collaborated on an interactive training programme about unconscious bias; worked at National Theatre Live, and directed and vision-mixed theatre broadcasts during lockdown.

As a mentor, I want to ensure new generations from all backgrounds continue to make high-calibre programmes.

Striving to lead by example, I champion diversity behind, as well as in front, of the camera.

Priorities:

Who still makes five-year plans?

At this point I don't have a complete picture of everything the board is involved in, so I would fix my 'blind spots' first. Then I would tackle strategic priorities.

In five years it should be possible to make significant progress in getting 'diverse' directors and crew into the end credits. Hugely important: intersectionality. Diversity must embrace race, age, class, gender, LGBTQ+, and all aspects of identity/ perspective.

DUK should be fighting for our rights with a bigger membership. Our offering should include more online events, an improved 'Find a Director' facility, and a buddy system to open up access.

Greening our industry starts with not handing out single-use pens at DUK conferences but doesn't end there. Our films impact the environment in every way, from crew meals to data storage. Identifying good practice and sharing solutions would be my goal, plus setting realistic targets.

Proposer - Christine Lalla

Secunder - Jan Genesis

Lowri Malinowski

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat, Nations and Regions Committee Chair

Personal Statement:

"Nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition!".....and me, it seems.

Over the years "Oh. You're not what I expected" is a line that's been said to me in a number of different ways upon first meeting other people in the industry and it's baffled me. Perhaps this is why it's taken me so long to become a member of Directors UK, because I didn't see myself represented. It's not FOR ME. I'm not experienced enough, not old enough, not city dwelling enough, not BAFTA nominated enough.

If this was my own view of what Directors UK was about then how many more of us are out there thinking they aren't enough, too.

I'm here to rally the troops, the other UK directors, all the others who are enough and the ones they didn't expect. Our power is in our numbers and I want to reach out and find us all.

Biography:

I grew up in a small village in South Wales and got my foot in the door as a 15 year old model on S4C. Working my way up through the industry I've been on reception, logged timecodes, worked as a production assistant and script supervisor before training as a multi-camera director where I have spent over 8000 hours in the gallery vision mixing and directing a variety of live programmes.

When I'm not working I can be found spending time with my three year old son, which in itself is a full time job. I am also a qualified yoga teacher and I enjoy training in the gym. When time allows it I try and fit in some sleep.

I love working with people and thrive on having a team pull together and see people exceed their own expectations to create an end result that will entertain and inform.

Priorities:

I want the organisation to continue to find people from all backgrounds and to let people know that Directors UK is for everyone. That we all have a right to be a member and that we all have a voice no matter how big or small our corner may be. We don't need the big budget productions and accolades to our name to be a part of this growing family.

Proposer - Steve Smith

Seconder - Emyr Penlan

Richard Max

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

As an award-winning Producer/Director in factual for over 15 years, I experience the same highs and lows as many of you: my rate beaten down, taking holiday can be a struggle and fighting for safe working practices.

Directors' careers have flashes of excitement but more often slow burn.

As a core member of the Factual Committee, and the Distribution Committee I already try to effect positive change – but can DirectorsUK do more?

It has flashes of brilliance like "Working Under COVID: Advice for Factual Directors" document which as part of the Industry Recovery group I helped produce.

And slow burn – like Campaigns for better pay and conditions, or against bullying, harassment and discrimination.

I am passionate about bringing real positive change and want the opportunity to amplify the voice of DirectorsUK's largest membership category - factual directors.

Biography:

Richard writes and directs complex films on history, science, and archaeology. His single films include The Plane Crash - Channel 4/Discovery (nominated BAFTA Best Specialist Factual, nominated RTS Best Science and Natural History, winner of the Televisual Awards Best Single Documentary and winner of the CINE Special Jury Award Best Science and Technology Production); Curiosity: How Will the World End? – Discovery (winner of the CINE Golden Eagle Award 2013 Special Recognition for televised series); and Helicopter Wars – NatGeo/ Smithsonian/Channel 5 (winner of the

Special Jury Prize, Houston International Film Festival). He recently directed a 6-part Art History series China's Greatest Treasures for the BBC. Richard trained as a Producer at the BBC and is a graduate of the European Documentary Campus Masterschool.

During lockdown he's spent more time with his wife and two children. And less time on his interests of travel and martial arts.

Priorities:

In 5 years' time I want DirectorsUK to be a vibrant physical and virtual hub for professional development for film and tv directors at all stages of their careers. A safe space for problem solving and encouragement. I want it to be the strong voice on a national level maintaining the best standards of practice suitable for a modern creative industry.

Proposer - Nic Gutteridge

Secunder - Toral Dixit

Paul Romero Mendez

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat, Nations and Regions Committee Chair

Personal Statement:

It has been an unimaginably difficult year, one which has hit members hard, especially those who were on a certain development path and have suddenly found themselves back at square one, having to find alternative forms of income to make ends meet.

I would love the opportunity to represent you as the 'Associate Member Representative', with my aim being to help push for further career development, training and apprenticeships to give members a better chance of reaching their goals at whatever stage of their career they may be. It's also important to look at better ways of promoting our members to broadcasters and producers, to better utilise the 'Find a director' feature and make it the 'go to' resource for anyone searching for a director.

Having the DUK team and members to turn to for support has been invaluable for me and I would like to support others where possible.

Biography:

Paul is a London-based director-producer with years of experience working in the film industry. He's a graduate of Met Film School's Directing MA, an Associate Member of Directors UK, as well as a member of BAFTA Crew 2021. To date, Paul has worked within music and commercials, and has directed and produced various BAFTA and Oscar festival qualifying short films. His latest short "Ruth" was released in association with ARRI and Directors UK to great acclaim. Paul has notably directed commercials for Philips and The Distillery (Hilton) in London.

A regular producer and director working with Sony Music UK, he has created over 30 promos for artists like Little Mix, Alexis Ffrench, George Ezra and Tom Grennan to name a few.

Priorities:

I would like to see the organisation reaching and bringing on board more directors especially those at the start of their careers. I feel that there is a younger generation of directors who are unaware of DUK and its benefits and the importance of directors banding together in numbers to negotiate better working standards. We should continue to push for higher standards in the industry at all levels as well as continue the fight for equality of opportunity.

As I mentioned in my personal statement, I would like to see more emphasis on career development for members at any level, as well as a push to help promote our members better on the DUK website, so it can be the top resource for the industry to find Directors for their projects.

Proposer - Andy Mihov

Secunder - Arturo M. Antolin

Jill Nicholls

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I have been a producer and director of documentaries for a long time now - since the late 1980s - and over that time have seen the role losing status and respect. With that of course goes lower pay and worse working conditions: unreasonable, often dangerous, expectations of working hours; tighter schedules, shorter edits, bigger workloads, less support and perhaps most important to me, less autonomy, with more surveillance and pressure from 'above'. The Covid crisis has of course made all these things worse for directors, with far more 'red tape' from which it may be hard to disentangle when the world opens up again.

I have been a strong supporter of DUK since it started, enjoyed our events and screenings, and have served on both the women's and the factual committees in the past. I would now like to do more to help the organisation and its members.

Biography:

After working on Spare Rib magazine and freelancing as a journalist for the Guardian and other publications, I started in television as a researcher for First Tuesday, ITV's main documentary series. Despite breaks to have two children, and being a single parent, I managed to become a producer/director there, making observational films, often about women's working lives. I am still very concerned about the difficulties of raising children and getting on in film and television. It seems to be as hard as it ever was.

After First Tuesday, I went freelance, making several big documentary series for BBC Bristol, and history and current affairs films for Channel 4. I now specialise in music and arts documentaries, for which I have won Grierson and RTS awards. I value the opportunities I have had and want to help make it possible for others to make the films they want to make.

Priorities:

I would like far more people who are already directors to join DUK - I can't believe how many directors I meet who haven't even heard of it, or if they have, haven't thought of joining. I'd also like to see far more diversity amongst the membership: this would mean not just encouraging already existing directors to get involved, but working to increase opportunities and broaden access to work as a director so that directors become a more diverse group.

In the factual committee we had long discussions about edit producers, with fears that fragmentation would lead to the further erosion of the director's 'three stage' role (prep, shoot, edit). Now that we have decided to welcome edit directors into DUK, we need to spread the word - again, I meet many edit producers who have no idea of this debate or of the advantages to them of being classed as directors.

Proposer - Beryl Richards

Seconder - Nic Guttridge

Alex Sanjiv Pillai

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

Directors UK can have a role in turning its members' first job into a career, and could offer advice on extending the career of those whose big break was a while ago.

Our members should expect a lifelong practise of the profession of directing. As a board member I want to undertake a wisdom-gathering initiative from those who have managed a long presence in the industry. The results could make the basis for a consultation or self-help service.

Our professional standards need to be recognised by employers, who should know that directors are not interchangeable. We bring our individual experience to each task.

DUK must campaign for the sustainability of its members' careers, and I will champion those minorities who are often the first to lose out. I am a British Asian directing for over 25 years. I want our members to flourish and join that quarter century club.

Biography:

My earliest film-making reflected the tensions of my Tamil and British heritage. I graduated from the NFTS in 1992, with Lenny Henry giving me my first drama job for his BBC2 'Funky Black Shorts' season. FLIGHT, a BBC feature film written by Tanika Gupta, followed two years later, won several awards and launched my career. I have since directed single dramas, serials, series and commercials for television, including THE WYVERN MYSTERY (2000) with Naomi Watts, THE BEST MAN (2005) and the first season of BEING HUMAN (2008). My ultra-low budget thriller VICTIM (2011) with Letitia Wright won a cinema release and Screen Nation award. As a member of the DGA I work in the USA on shows such as RIVERDALE and SABRINA. I married a fellow director, and we have one daughter and live near Cambridge. I am currently working on the 2nd season of BRIDGERTON.

Priorities:

I want to see DIRECTORS UK in closer alignment to the Directors Guild of America as a respected standard bearer within the industry. Whilst pursuing a strong rights protection and collection role, DUK should become the go-to representative for professional standards.

Our members should be helped by DIRECTORS UK to attain the highest quality. In return, we should expect fair pay and working conditions, and a policy of recruitment that reflects our genders, abilities, orientations and ethnicities. Above all, I want to see our members enjoy more security in their careers, which can only come about when the industry respects the experience and skill we bring to each project.

Proposer - Menhaj Huda

Secunder - Ian Aryeh

Mark Radice

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I'm a factual director with over 15 years' experience making documentaries. I also know Directors UK well, having been a member of the Distribution Committee for the last 14 years.

Directors UK has done some fantastic work championing the rights of screen directors, but I also think the organisation can play a role in bringing more directors together.

The director's role in the film-making process is increasingly being carved up. One way to counter this fragmentation is to forge greater connectivity between directors. If elected, I would seek to drive the creation of more and better links between members, and look to enhance networking and mentoring programmes to boost diversity and individual career development.

Directors UK's motto is "One of you, many of us." Today, more than ever, I think we need to bring the "many of us" together and find ways of playing to that strength.

Biography:

I'm an award-winning factual director. I've made acclaimed films for all the major channels across genres including specialist factual, current affairs and drama-documentary.

I started out in indies and although I have made films at the BBC, I have always known life as a freelancer. So I have experienced many of the challenges and difficulties that can face a freelance producer/director – writing up and pitching my own ideas; seeking work in an ever-evolving industry; negotiating rates; and taking on challenging productions for unfamiliar producers or commissioning editors.

I've been fortunate to have worked on some incredibly rewarding productions with a number of extremely talented people.

More information about my films and clips can be seen at www.markradice.net

Priorities:

Directors UK must remain dynamic in a rapidly changing industry. The upcoming negotiations with the PSB broadcasters are vital, and the organisation must also reach agreements with other cable channels and – crucially – SVOD platforms like Netflix, Amazon and Apple TV. So in five years' time I would like Directors UK to have completed these negotiations and to have secured new creative, economic and contractual rights for directors.

Directors UK must also continue to champion the role of the director. I believe that films are better if they're guided by someone with a single vision and can suffer when they're victim of "programme making by committee." And with schedules and budgets slashed because of Covid, there is even more need for creative screen directors. Our film and TV industry is renowned globally and British films will only continue to be held in such high regard if they're helmed by skilled directors.

Proposer - Dan Zeff

Seconder - Paul Wilmhurst

Emma Reynolds

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I would like to see Directors UK at the forefront of changes in the Television Industry. I don't feel, as Directors, are heard, seen or listened to as much as we should be. We are pigeon-holed as neither technical or creative....or both, when it suits that production. We are alone. We need to be a force to be reckoned with. Our experience is invaluable, so why then are we ignored?

As a white, over 50, middle-class mum, I don't exist in society....let alone in TV anymore. I have 33 years of experience that I want to share. When the industry is making important changes, I want the voice of Directors UK to be at the forefront with our opinions being acknowledged. I want to be that person roaring in defiance.....creating positive change, helping and supporting other Directors, making execs listen to us. We are Directors....We matter.

Biography:

I am a multi-camera studio / location TV Director. I direct a wide range of programmes including; sport, music, current affairs, kids TV, cookery, lifestyle, archaeology, chat shows, wildlife, premieres, commercials, formatted fact ent etc. I also produce and vision mix.

My raison d'etre is to make beautiful pictures, so working on a variety of different food shows has been fantastic yet calorific! To film Great Whites from a fishing boat in the middle of the Pacific (Killer Shark Live) and to unearth an undiscovered complete 2000 year old pot (Big Roman Dig) were amazing highlights!

In my non telly life, I have a Ninja Warrior son and a Ninja wee-er Basset Hound. I play the piano, love to read, walk the mutt, cook canapés professionally, am a shopaholic (shoes and jewellery), love all things motorised and am into the supernatural – particularly mad on shows about ghosts, witches and vampires!

Priorities:

As Directors, we are the ones who have creativity, the passion, the forethought to create beautiful TV shows, documentaries, films etc. We run teams, we inspire, and we work extremely hard to achieve this. I would like Directors UK to be perceived as a worthwhile well-known body of people and be recognised by the Media industry as a group of motivational individuals. I want to expand our mentoring programme and take it to another level. I feel that the TV side of the industry needs more representation to further its needs. I want Directors UK to be immersed into places that need revolution. A voice to be heard amongst the many. We need to be as loud as Pact/Bectu and stand up for our rights....and for those rights to be listened to and acted upon. The industry drastically needs change and I want to be running that change.

Proposer - Ita Fitzgerald

Seconder - James Abadi

Lisi Russell

Position(s) standing for: Successor Member Representative

Personal Statement:

I ask to be considered for Successor Member Representative this year. I served on the DirectorsUK board as a co-opted successor member since 2020 and find the work the Board does to be thorough, exciting, perceptive, articulate

and visionary. It leads the way to protect and extend U.K. directors' rights, secure fair practices, foster diversity, distribute royalties and open up opportunities, bringing together the community of working film and TV Directors throughout the U.K. As the wife and working partner of late film director Ken Russell, I've done camerawork, scripting, interviewing, development, producing, education and acting since 2000 with Ken's and my film company and for the BBC, ITV and Sky. I have taken part in voting for the board for 20 years. I offer my personal experience in the legal and emotionally delicate process of securing legacies and transfer of rights for families and inheritors.

Biography:

Born in the US, I was an exchange scholar age 15, chosen to live on the far side of the globe with a Filipino family, so learned early to appreciate the cross-pollination of cultures, the value of dialogue and the exchange of the arts across all borders. My University degrees are in Playwrighting and Theatre Arts, with a minor in British and European films. As part of the ACT UP (LGBTQ rights) and Civil Rights movement in America in my youth, I have a keen instinct for social justice, inherited from my journalist dad. I have worked at CBS New York in the Lighting Dept, have sung and recorded on music albums, have been in 9 "garagiste" films for Ken, have lectured on Russell films, helped write for The Times, developed film proposals from London to Southampton to Scotland to Wales to Canada to Serbia to the Philippines to Italy.

Priorities:

I would like to see the organisation continue to grow in reputation and influence. It is quite the most impressive coalition of clear-minded, responsive and capable people I've met in my 20 years living in Southwest England and London, with proven power to navigate and direct change and to effect real benefits to the TV, Film and Radio broadcasting communities and Directors therein. I hope to contribute to what is so clearly more than a collection agency. I would like to see continued cooperation of Directors U.K. with representatives from BFI and BAFTA, and informal alliances and mutual support with Los Angeles Directors Guild personnel (whom I have worked with) and the Academy, if that is appropriate. British broadcasting and films and talent are our most valuable asset and export. As the landscape changes, DirectorsUK is best placed to assess what supports the directors' continued livelihood.

Proposer - Bill Anderson

Seconder - Steve Smith

Suzie Samant

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

"You're only as good as your last gig". As freelancers, we're instilled with this mantra. Yes we want to shine every time. But should we only be as valued, as secure, as our last project? I am committed to changing our industry's disposable culture.

The past year has seen great will to change how TV treats its workforce. But these ethics are up against economic pressures. On the road out of Covid, many of us face: reduced rates, no-notice contracts, safety fears. It'll be a challenge to turn principles into genuine change.

I have experience standing up for what's right. Over the past year, I extensively lobbied government over gaps in Covid support that left many of us vulnerable. On the strength of my lobbying, Directors UK invited me to consult for select committee briefings. I hope to use all I've learned to now fight for fairness for us all.

Biography:

For 8 years I worked as a self-shooting Director, making access and presenter-led documentaries and current affairs films for the BBC, Channel 4, ITV1 and Discovery.

When a camera-related nerve injury cut short my filming days, I had to rebuild my role. This is when I first felt the dangers of such an unstructured industry. I know many Directors reach turning points in their careers - whether injury or life changes - and feel left on the scrapheap.

I was fortunate and rebuilt as a Creative Consultant, able to make use of all my Directing experience and rediscover my creative purpose. I'm now hired by channels and indies to find creative solutions for storytelling, structure, narrative identity and scriptwriting.

I've also served as an RTS Awards Judge, BAFTA Guru Panellist, and I regularly speak at universities to students considering a TV career, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds.

Priorities:

Our freelance lives feature many individual tugs-of-war to secure fair pay and treatment. We've had 20 years of data collection proving shortcomings on inclusion, yet seen limited action. Excellent schemes illuminate better ways, but these can only lift a few of us at a time.

As long as our industry's disposable, short-termist culture prevails, business needs will trump worker welfare. We need structural change: a fairer exchange of time, skills and experience for pay, recognition and opportunity, built - with real investment and consequences - into the everyday structures of our industry - for everyone.

Alongside firefighting individual issues, I would like Directors UK to lead the agenda with a broad vision of basic minimum standards across all aspects of our freelance life, and work to identify how to build these into the systems and budgets of both broadcasters and super-indies, for meaningful and lasting change from the top down.

Proposer - Steve Smith

Secunder - Trevor Docksey

Carolyn Saunders

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat, Associate Member Representative

Personal Statement:

I have uploaded a video. Please watch - I am passionate about the change I'd like to help bring about, and it's all in the video.

Biography:

I'm Canadian, but grew up nomadic, traipsing around air force bases all over the world, where my dad flew Starfighters. My grandad was Romany Gypsy, displaced in a British-Canadian child migration scheme that tore him away from his family and culture. Issues around identity and home shaped my upbringing and inform my storytelling. As a single mother, I postponed directing for years so I could work from home, writing documentary TV as a former journalist. Greatest hits include Amazon's feminist-skewed Ted Bundy series, Falling for a Killer. When my boys were grown, I shot a micro-budget horror in the UK, and stayed. My next feature just did the Meryl Streep Writers Lab, and winning Challenge Alexa in 2020 helped me shoot a proof-of-concept. Fingers are crossed! I'm also pursuing HETV directing, mentored by Kate Cheeseman.

I am stupidly in love with storytelling, my boys, troublemaking and my black lab Waggo.

Priorities:

In five years, I'd like to see DUK wielding more influence than it does now, with the weight to power real change in legislation surrounding our industry and what we do. I'd like our collective voices to be louder than they are now. At the same time, it's critical that we retain and even grow the things that make us special – the wonderful member skills training initiatives and the networking events such as screenings with director Q&A's. I'd like to see us, post-Covid, to get back to in-person events, while still using Zoom anytime it's possible. We should embrace hybrid, but never let go of the personal touch. For me, the personal connections are what make DUK amazing.

Proposer - Kate Cheeseman

Secunder - Shelagh McLeod

Tim Searle

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I've been working in Animation for over 30 years and I care deeply about our craft and the future of the creative industries in the UK.

I appreciate what Directors UK do for directors and our industry in general. I think that now is the time to pull together and look out for one another and the vulnerable freelancers working in our industry. There are areas that we need to work in with the SVODs, (Netflix and the other similar organisations). It's a very important time for us at Directors UK to push for our creative rights. I care deeply about working with happy, productive teams in decent conditions and being fairly remunerated for it. I'd love to be part of the Directors UK board, helping the fight for you and our crews.

Biography:

I've been working in animation for over 30 years.

I set up and ran Triffic Films for 20 years, making animation for comedy shows including: 'Absolutely', 'Have I Got News For You', 'Horrible Histories' and many others. I helped create and directed '2DTV' for ITV (and the promo for George Michael's 'Shoot the Dog'). At Baby Cow Animation credits included: 'I am not an Animal' and 'Warren United'.

I was a core member of the group which successfully lobbied government for the UK tax break. I was Series Director of 'Mr Bean' at Tiger Aspect. In 2016 I moved to CBBC to Executive Produce 'Danger Mouse', in 2018 at Beano Studios, I was Head of Animation and Executive Producer of the second series of 'Dennis & Gnasher Unleashed'. I'm currently a creative consultant for Aardman Animations.

Priorities:

Viewing habits are changing and with the ever increasing demand for streaming and video on demand, I think there is much work to do in order to push for new, fair rights deals.

I think that Directors UK can push to help establish better working conditions and a more secure future for the freelance industry.

Directing is an excellent privileged career, but by definition it can also be a tough one. I'd hope that Directors UK can continue to help protect directors through the challenging times.

I think that as with most organisations, we can do better with regards to diversity and inclusion.

I think that the Board could play a key role in shaping how we work with Government, Ofcom and other agencies to move Directors UK and our industry forward. I'd love to be part of it.

Proposer - Matt Lipsey

Seconder - Stuart Evans

Allan Esler Smith

Position(s) standing for: Successor Member Representative

Personal Statement:

I look after the Estate of my Uncle, Brian Desmond Hurst, who directed over 30 films over four decades in three continents. His career covered the silents in Hollywood to the technicolour 60s. Films include Scrooge (1951). Brian died intestate in 1986 after a lavish lifestyle. As a chartered accountant I knew how to resolve Brian's affairs which had been scattered to the wind. I started with zero in 2009 and collaborated to re-establish his name and film legacy. Successes including blue plaques (the 4th DGGB blue plaque after Lean, Powell and MacKendrick) and a Titanic Studio was named after Brian. I've initiated film screenings and major books, and this ignited my passion for film and legacy and ensuring directors are remembered and remunerated. I would follow these same principals as a Board Director: passion for the art of film, legacy and ensuring directors receive income from their art.

Biography:

I have a chartered accountancy practice helping people start up small businesses and I advise on accounts and tax. I run highly successful courses on retirement planning. I have edited/authored the Good Retirement Guide series 2012 to 2019 and recently launched a new book Retirement Planning Expert 2020/21. But I think I am much more than a numbers person as I've a keen sense of fighting for fairness from work in the past in investor protection as a City financial regulator. I think this may be key in raising and advancing issues that impact directors. My work in establishing Hurst as a recognised voice in film presented challenges but a love of film, super team working and great collaborations brought great outcomes. I pride myself in thinking straight - it helps isolate out priorities and coupled with active listening paves the way for longer term and better outcomes.

Priorities:

I suspect my background is very different to other Board members but I hope this is a positive. As a chartered accountant, tax advisor and author I am passionate about film and even more passionate about director rights. Personally my priority would be to listen to understand the current challenges and potential opportunities for successor members and membership as a whole.

Importantly, in order to ensure directors and their successors are fairly rewarded for past, present and future work I would focus my attention on:

1. Protecting a director's copyright and other rights in their creative work.
2. Seeking to ensure this applies to newer technologies of streaming, video on demand and other novel uses.
3. Helping with collaboration externally and working as a team internally.
4. Last but not least I would do anything I can to assist the Board manage its finances and assets effectively and prudently.

Proposer - Brian Henry Martin

Seconder - Jonathan Golden

Peter Speyer

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

The qualities I bring to the board are my ability to listen to and act on directors' needs, be they collection and distribution issues, changes in conditions of work, the impact of Brexit on directors' rights, or confronting cultural biases and systemic prejudice.

The understanding I have of DUK committees' issues and supporting staff will be informed by skills gleaned from 20 years of consulting and training in film development with directors, writers and producers.

The board is more effective and richer with voices from culturally diverse and experientially different backgrounds. My non-film professional experience will offer perspectives on prioritising issues, effective decision-making and forming negotiating strategy through understanding individual and group process and leadership styles.

I will work to widen the collecting pool so the organisation can grow, innovate and lead in the industry, increasing even further DUK's profile, following in the admirable slipstream of the existing board.

Biography:

An Associate DUK member, I sit on the Access and Inclusion and Directors of Colour Committees.

Most recent short played nationally/internationally. A feature I wrote won the Crystal Bear, Berlin Film Festival. A newly penned feature is in post. I am seeking finance for my first self-directed film. The RSC produced my stage plays. As Associate Director of MEDIA-funded Arista, I co-ran film/tv development workshops across UK, Europe, Australia, New Zealand.

A former social worker with a psychology degree, I co-directed a centre for people suffering psychotic conditions, co-managing a team of 15, later working therapeutically with Holocaust survivors and Bosnian refugees fleeing war. Before my Jewish parents escaped Nazi Germany, my mother was MGM Berlin's sub-titler/lip-syncher. I was a human rights campaigner in Apartheid South Africa.

Filmmakers/films: Jane Campion. Almodovar. Agnieszka Holland. Coppola, both. Brokeback Mountain. Sugar Man. Shoah. Barry Jenkins. Raoul Peck. Sharon Horgan.

Priorities:

Through its actions and engagement within all areas of British and international film and television industries, DUK will be and be seen to be the preeminent agency for all directors, making a compelling case for those who are not yet members to join. This will enable the organisation to grow further.

Innovative research and policy development on behalf of members will lead to incremental improvements for directors' work conditions and help develop more opportunities for directors to train and work.

DUK will lead in working co-operatively with peer organisations on evolving further thinking and action on arising issues like equality of opportunity, bullying and harassment and intimacy-filming protocols.

Directors of Colour, women directors and directors with disabilities will have moved the industry much closer to achieving equal opportunities, and Age as a career issue will be a live debate led by DUK in changing practices.

Proposer - Hope Dickson Leach

Secunder - Neil Ben

Mark Stokes

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I very much value belonging to an organisation that champions the director's creative voice, protects our rights, and campaigns on issues such as diversity, and bullying and harassment.

Campaigning isn't an add-on – it's central to Directors UK's values.

Equally, as a member of the Distributions Committee, and Vice Chair for over 5 years, I've seen how this committee's work is fundamental to the organisation – both overseeing payments to members, but also finding a strategic response to any issues that impact on directors' rights and conditions in an ever-changing industry. It's an extremely effective collaboration, with members supported by highly professional DUK staff.

A strong connection between the work of the Distributions Committee and the Board can help shape and support Directors UK's priorities in the future. I'd be excited to play a role in helping to ensure that we both protect directors' rights - and campaign on the issues that matter.

Biography:

I'm a self-taught documentary director with a background in music videos; bilingual English/German.

My personal interests (aside from swimming etc.) are intrinsically linked with my work – most projects are inspired by artists who've challenged our way of thinking and made an indelible impact in the world.

CINDY SHERMAN transformed the way we think about gender and representation.

HENRY DARGER challenged our preconceptions about art and artists, capturing the amazing story of the Chicago hospital worker who secretly created large-scale artworks in his one-room apartment. Darger's work went on to sell for millions, but the art world marginalised him as the "crazy janitor".

Through dogged research, and collaboration with Darger's Estate and galleries worldwide, I marshalled a vast amount of material to reconstruct Darger's life, unlocked a century-old mystery of eugenics and abuse, and helped Darger gain posthumous recognition as one of the most creative minds of the 20th Century.

Priorities:

In 5 years' time, Directors UK should have:

- built on and promoted our independent legal and economic analysis that quantifies the value of directors' copyright
- built on creative rights agreements with the major broadcasters and secured agreements with streaming platforms
- established an increasingly powerful campaigning voice
- made our online or hybrid events and screenings as open and transparent as possible, encouraging members to share messages and comments - building a sense of community
- run regular introductory events to promote participation in committees
- raised our profile with further collaboration with organisations such as the BFI, to champion pivotal past films by Directors UK members; or Birds Eye View, which has been an oasis of outstanding programming and campaigning in the past year, resulting in ground-breaking films and vital issues gaining more attention
- been outward-looking and international, liaising with other countries
- ended all-male, non-diverse panels for Q&As; same applies to tech demonstrations

Proposer - Dan Zeff

Secunder - Jill Nicholls

AJ Sykes

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat, Nations and Regions Committee Chair

Personal Statement:

Coming out of Covid we're at a crossroads, do we go back to the old norm or create a new one? During my time as part of the Scottish Working Group within the DUK it is apparent how much that landscape needs to change. At the moment DUK has a very white male centric top down relationship, I would seek to redress that balance putting women and minorities at the centre of DUK, not in the peripheries. I would harness the collective energy & numbers of females and minority groups, strategically advocating on their behalf and unique circumstances. Look to building a network of support & harnessing that collective energy as a force for change. Putting women and minorities at the table in discussions first and foremost, in order to redress that balance, is more necessary now than ever before. We have a unique opportunity lets grab it now with both hands.

Biography:

Brought up by a single dad, he introduced me to some of my favourite movies but film directing wasn't a career I saw women doing so I went into theatre. It was only after writing my first feature script that I saw film directing as a possibility. So I retrained as a filmmaker gaining an MA & an MFA in Advanced Film Practice. Since then I've made several award winning films, shadowed numerous directors on major BBC/ITV & Amazon productions, written two award winning feature scripts, & am currently in discussion on a 5 seasons production having just finished filming the first series during lockdown. I've always been an active union member. First with Equity, then for 2 years on BECTU's Scottish Committee. I'm a core member of the Association of Film & Television Practitioners who advised the Scottish Parliaments cross party of MSP during their 3 year examination on the Screen Industry.

Priorities:

I would like to see Directors UK brought up to date having embraced the changing landscape unique to female and minority directors. To see the Nations and Regions strengthened and on an equal paring with London. To see DUK at the front of the table guaranteeing directors own their IP. To see a system of mentorship and training for directors put in place on all productions wherever possible and the balance in inclusion and diversity having been sorted and not even a question anymore. To see the vast untapped resource of age and experience creatively exploited in terms of mentorship, cultural representation and growth. To see DUK lead by passion that inspires and to have a coordinated, united system of support among all members.

Proposer - Don Coutts

Seconder - Louise Pirie

James Taylor

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

The freelance model is broken. Not many people say that out loud, but it needs repeating again and again. Over recent years I've been working on ways to highlight the realities we all face as freelancers. Whether that be through my work as Chair of the Committee for the Bectu Unscripted Branch, or as a co-administrator of Viva La PD and the Television Freelancers Taskforce groups.

We are only scratching the surface on major issues such as representation and treatment of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups, disabled people, and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Then there's rate stagnation, apparent disregard for physical and mental health and wellbeing, and the fact that bullying and harassment is still way too common. Only by coming together will we achieve real progress, and I believe that as a Directors UK Board Member, I would continue to push for positive change for all directors.

Biography:

I am a Series Director and Series Producer with 20 years experience in the industry. I started directing on a youth documentary strand for the BBC in 2010, and since then have worked across factual entertainment, entertainment and lightly formatted obs doc shows.

My experience is exclusively in the Unscripted genres, which I believe face the most pressure, especially if you're a self-shooting PD, which can be a difficult, lonely and yet ultimately rewarding job.

I've purposefully varied my experience as I believe that each type of show has something to offer and learn from. So I've gone from those youth documentaries to big Saturday night Ents formats via music, art and gardening. More recently I've found myself in competition formats, which somehow seems apt, putting myself forward to face a vote. Will I make it through to the final few? You decide!

Priorities:

As a member of the Factual, and then the Pay and Working Conditions committees at Directors UK, I've seen up-close the fantastic work it already does as an organisation.

I believe DUK needs to use the experience it has, and indeed where success has already been made in drama and film – and apply it to the Unscripted / Factual genres. I know from hearing stories first-hand that things need to change for directors in this area. We are over-worked (sometimes there are literally not enough hours in the day) and under-paid, which sounds like a cliché, but is too often true. DUK should make sure that the momentum for change, which really picked up since the pandemic hit, does not slow down. There's real chance for change right now, and Directors UK must be an integral part of that.

Proposer - Zoe Hines

Seconded - Jan Genesis

Meera Thavasothy

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I've worked for the BBC for over 30 years, starting on the studio floor and working my way through the production process to directing. As a staff director for BBC News I'm lucky enough to work with a team of supportive and collaborative directors and crew. I recognise the importance of connecting with a supportive network of colleagues who understand the challenges within the industry and in a creative role.

Directors UK has helped me understand the issues freelance directors face, something I wasn't really aware of in my staff position. I joined in 2015 after reading the Adjusting the Colour Balance report and recognised that, despite the area where I work having moved forward somewhat, there are continued issues within the industry. The stability a staff job gave me allowed me to take on some issues in the past so I'm interested in how freelance directors can be supported.

Biography:

I love the challenge and excitement of live multi-camera directing and am fortunate that I direct an interesting range of programmes, from the Andrew Marr show to Newsnight and The News at Ten.

I've been a rep for Bectu on and off for most of my career, so have been involved at a local level with pay disputes as well as supporting members and colleagues with individual grievances and group issues.

As a short film writer/producer I've produced a number of award winning short films including most recently a BFI funded short and was mentored by Women in Film and Television as a film director.

I am currently part of a mentoring programme and am mentoring and supporting a mid level career producer getting back to work after a period away from the industry after starting a family.

Priorities:

When I joined the BBC in the 90s there was a diversity push and I'm saddened to see that diversity within the workplace hasn't moved on significantly. I feel we can learn from the past initiatives to create a more inclusive industry, possibly working with other organisations and industry partners to develop a best-practice model.

I'm impressed with how Directors UK and PACT work together to build diversity across the sector and would be interested in how we can jointly support those that have taken a break from the industry in re-establishing themselves when they decide to rejoin the workplace. I also think support for those that are taking a break is important so they are able to keep in touch with the industry and industry professionals.

I'm pleased that Directors UK will continue to use virtual meeting options in the future to engage with directors all around the country.

Proposer - Christine Lalla
Seconder - Emma Edwards

Rajesh Thind

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I have recently become a father and I would like to make sure that by the time my daughter is joining the industry - any industry - that the world is in a better state for her than it can sometimes feel like it is right now. That's honestly my main motivation in standing for the Board. That and trying to ensure that when she asks me what I did to try to address the challenges of my times, in the work I so love, that I can say I did what I could.

Please see:

www.rajeshthind.com/DUKstatement

Biography:

Hello,

Since 1998, when I started my career as a runner for a Soho based Car Ads Producer (who everyone agreed was the James Bond of Commercials), I have worked across a wide range of screen forms.

I've mainly Directed documentaries for TV & Cinema in Europe, North America & Asia, including BBC, ITV, C4, C5, PBS, HBO, STAR Asia, AMAZON, France24. My specialist area is long form, feature length, creative documentary.

I've also worked on Ads, Corporates, Pop Promos, Feature Films, TV Drama series, & Indie Cinema distributed across TV, SVOD, Online & Theatrical.

Education:

BA(Econ)(Hons) in Economics & Finance

University of Manchester 1993-96

MA in Communication, Culture & Society

Thesis on "Non-Fictional Tendencies: Documentary Realism in the Age of Reflexive Modernity"

Goldsmiths College, London 1997-98

Other Roles;

- Advisory Board, Sheffield DocFest, 2006 - Ongoing
- Non-Exec Board Member, Live Cinema U.K. Ltd - Ongoing
- Founder & Managing Director of Pindu Productions Ltd. Ongoing

Priorities:

I would like to see Directors U.K. consolidate the excellent reputation the organisation has earned for being effective representatives & advocates for the interests of all current Members, while also leaning in to expand the scope of the membership.

Specifically, I'd like to see DUK taking a leading role in negotiating improved Rights Contracts for Directors, most especially with SVODs. Directors need to protect their long term income streams, and this is the time to fight that battle in a concerted, focussed way.

I also like to see DUK expanding its engagement with and advocacy for a wider range of Directors. We should be championing our peers and making sure that everyone is getting a fair crack at things, whoever they are.

These two issues are, I believe, firmly intertwined - the strength of the argument for our Rights fundamentally depends on our degree of Representativeness.

Proposer - Jeanie Finlay

Seconder - Jan Genesis

Anna Thomson

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

I've served on the board for three years supporting factual directors, pushing for greater diversity in the industry, speaking about female representation at conferences, representing DUK abroad, and chairing industry panels. It's been particularly gratifying to chair the Access and Inclusion committee. This year we produced a groundbreaking piece of work to improve hiring practices. I also launched a Disability working group. Our first event helped demystify working with and hiring disabled talent, and coming up, a more focused roundtable for directors and disabled actors to discuss each other's needs. I'm currently devising plans for a women's working group to increase opportunities for female focused networking events. We're losing half of the board this year and whilst very much looking forward to a new board, a vote for me will ensure some continuity and that the interests of disabled, factual and female directors continue to be represented at DUK.

Biography:

I have directed more than 30 films, including 'Long Lost Family: The Unknown Soldier' ITV, 'Portillo's Hidden History of Britain' C5, 'A Great British Air Disaster' C4, 'Portrait Artist of the Year' Sky Arts, 'Al Murray's German Adventure' BBC, 'Patisserie with Michel Roux' BBC, 'World War 2: The Last Heroes' C4 and 'Objects of Desire' Sky Arts. I also directed a Sundance backed feature documentary 'Yoghurt Utopia' short fiction and branded content.

I recently stepped up to Executive Producing "Tea with Bettany Hughes" for Google Arts & Culture and two one hour films, "Treasures of Malta" and "Treasures of Greece" for BBC Worldwide and Channel 4.

As Vice Chair for Directors UK I've regularly spoken and hosted their events. As a former Trustee of the Directors Charitable Foundation I ran directing workshops in schools. I'm a graduate of Skillset's prestigious Series Producer training scheme.

<https://annathomson.dunked.com>

Priorities:

Renegotiating our current licensing deal with terrestrial broadcasters and establishing a new licensing deal with the SVODS will increase distribution payments for members and grow the organization.

We need to continue to lobby the government to address the gaps in SEISS support for directors. The fallout from Brexit means that we must fight for the implementation of the EU copyright directive, freedom of movement for creatives, and co-production and funding opportunities with our European partners. Collaborating with the Directors Guild of America in the US will strengthen the DUK internationally. At home, DUK will continue to improve the status of the director as a creative rights holder, with better pay, health and safety and working conditions, keep broadcasters honest on their diversity commitments, defend the need for a strong, independent and stably funded PSB system and further opportunities for directors in the nations and regions.

Proposer - Susanna White

Secunder - Dan Zeff

Larry Walford

Position(s) standing for: General Board Seat

Personal Statement:

Please see uploaded video.

Biography:

I am Creative Director at Double Act. We make TV programs for UK and US broadcasters and are currently producing over 50 hrs of TV for Channel 4, ITV, Netflix, Discovery, Nat Geo and Animal Planet. I first trained as an editor and then moved into freelance directing and producing. I then set up my own production company (From Films) and we won a number of commissions and an RTS award. I then became Head of Development at Tiger Aspect and oversaw the merger of the factual department with DSP and became Head of Documentaries at DSP. My programs have been described by critics as revealing, sensitive and fascinating. I moved to Double Act in 2018 and I am a shareholder in

the company. I am married and have three children and live in Hampshire. I am a classically trained pianist and I'm also a bit of a sports nut.

Priorities:

I think Directors UK has already established itself as the UK's leading rights distributor for its members - but we now need to turn our attention to making sure that those people in a positions of power are educated, informed and empowered to support our directors. I believe more work is needed to make sure that safe and supportive working conditions are in place, fair and effective contractual arrangements are mandatory and that entry points into the industry and progressive career paths for directors (especially from diverse backgrounds) are clearly defined. In 5 years' time I believe Directors UK can be the leading organisation in this space.

Proposer - Jonah Weston

Seconder - Rob Davis