

Timetable

Friday 15th June



08.30

Registration

09.30

Welcome from Sarah Ecob, Conference Director and Steve Doherty, Conference Artistic Director

09.40

SESSION 1

Dead Ringers: The Who and the How

We're delighted to welcome Dead Ringers to this year's conference, following the recording of the show on the Festival Fringe on Thursday night. In this session, Kate Haldane talks to members of the cast, its script editor and executive producer about what it's like to make and star in one of BBC Radio 4's most popular shows.

10.20

SESSION 2

2a. The Sitcom Family

From The Simpsons and The Young Ones to The Good Place, all sitcoms are about a kind of family - Sarah Morgan unpacks the secret paradigm of successful sitcom writing, creating a cast of memorable characters who work as a team.

2b. Meet Neil Innes

Rutle, Bonzo, Python (almost) and all round comedy hero; we're delighted Neil can be with us for this year's event. David Quantick will lead the conversation exploring music, comedy and everything in between.

2c. Everybody's Funny Nowadays: What do we understand about comedy podcasting?

Ed Morrish chairs a panel of podcasters – what do we know about who's downloading what and why?

11.10

Refreshments

11.30

SESSION 3

3a. Crafting Effective Dialogue

The Crafting Effective Dialogue session will use a mix of examples, exercise and discussion to explore different techniques you can use to give your Characters a distinctive voice, consider some traps to avoid and help you get the most out of your dialogue when writing a

scene. Either bring along a Character of your own or 'adopt' a well-known one for the duration of the session!

3b. Script Surgery

What are the secret ingredients that go into formulating a hit TV show? Join BBC Writersroom as we perform a live autopsy on an episode of Lisa McGee's stand out comedy Derry Girls, to uncover the nuts and bolts of great sitcom writing.

3c. The Sitcom Geeks

From the people who bring you The Sitcom Geeks podcast, Dave Cohen and James Cary, a session on the 'chaos' of sitcom writing - the constant battle between the will of the writer and the characters he or she has created.

3d. The New Way To Pilot Your Comedy Show

Wouldn't it be a waste if thousands of great comedy ideas never got developed because the timing wasn't right or one person decided it wasn't for them? Jon Jayson and Peter Wright from The Comedy Crowd explain a new way to pilot a comedy idea. How to engage your true fans and work with them to launch your show. How to know if you've got something special. And how everyone can do this regardless of contacts, background, accent, posture or foot size.

12.25

SESSION 4

4a. Release You Inner Cartoonist

Learn the secrets of the cartoonists art with Harry Venning, the award-winning creator of Clare in the Community (BBC Radio 4 and the Guardian) and Hamlet (the stage and in and around The Pleasance). Then grab a pencil and produce your own strip cartoon. Turn a blank page into an explosion of noise and hilarity! There will be laughs, there will be live drawing, and there will be bad ventriloquism.

4b. 9 Kinds of Funny

Comedy is full of subjectivity and opinion, but what do we actually know about what makes us laugh? Pauline McGowan and Kate Benson from market research firm, The Nursery present the nine types of comedy they found in their fascinating survey – which involved making people watch Mrs Brown's Boys...

4c. NeckFace

This is the excellent new comedy-horror short film from Llanbobl Vision and Rustle Up Productions, starring Isy Suttie, Nick Helm and writer/performer Sian Harries. Sian, along with producer Barry Castagnola will screen the film, followed by a Q&A hosted by Kate Haldane.

4d. Navigating the Industry

Lucy Lumsden knows her way around the comedy industry. This session offers a 'blank page to screen' guide for people new to the sitcom industry. Agents, producers, deadlines, commissioners ...

what do they do and where, exactly, does the writer fit in? Lucy will be in conversation with Sarah Morgan about the pitfalls of the game and how to avoid them.

13.05

Lunch

14.05

SESSION 5

Keynote Speech: Dave Cohen

The inaugural Craft of Comedy UK keynote speech, introduced by conference Artistic Director, Steve Doherty and delivered by writer, Dave Cohen (Not Going Out, Horrible Histories and many more.)

14.45

SESSION 6

6a. Funny Stories: Structure In Narrative Comedy

Hayley McKenzie is best known as founder of screenwriting coaching and talent development company, Script Angel. In this special session she sets out her useful notes on structure in narrative comedy – what’s the best way to tell your story?

6b. Comedy Competitions

With a plethora of comedy competitions around (including The BBC New Comedy Award, The Chortle Student, Funny Women, So You Think You’re Funny, The Amused Moose and many, many others) we discuss the pros and cons of honing that tight five minutes or first ten pages. The panel includes Marcus Brigstocke (winner BBC New Comedy Award 1996) Steve Bennett from comedy website, Chortle, Steve Doherty (Secretary of the David Nobbs Memorial Trust), Lyndsay Fenner (BBC Radio producer running this years BBC New Comedy Award) and Chair Kate Haldene of comedy agency, PBJ Management.

6c. ITV

Jason Hazeley quizzes ITV’s comedy commissioner, Saskia Schuster on the networks upcoming highlights – including a sneak preview of the Keith and Paddy Pictureshow Christmas Special, in the company of writer/director, Dan Johnston.

6d. How To Write Everything

A session based on David Quantick’s book of the same name – so we thought it best that David Quantick (NME, Harry Hill, Veep, The Beano) present it. A guide to making progress as a writer, across various genres.

15.35

Refreshments

16.00

SESSION 7

7a. Writing Satire for the Web

From successful comedy site, Succubus, Kat Sadler and Sara Gibbs offer a practical, hands-on session on how to write a satirical story for the web. They’ll cover things like generating ideas, writing one-liner headlines, learning publications’ respective tones of voice and editorial guidelines and making a piece line-for-line funny. End the session by having a bash at your own Succubus piece.

7b. S4C

Sian Harries talks to Elen Rhys (Commissioning Editor, Comedy

and Entertainment at S4C) about the last 12 months on the channel and what plans and opportunities the network has in store. This session will be offered in the medium of Welsh, with simultaneous translation.

7c. Women of the Silent Era

Gender equality in the film industry has become a hot topic in recent years. In the early part of the 20th Century, things were rather different and women featured more heavily and more directly in all areas of the industry – not least comedy. Two Craft of Comedy UK stalwarts, Ged Parsons and Kay Stonham, present a short session on a topic, coincidentally of interest to both of them ... and hopefully to many others.

7d. A Fireside* Chat with Mark Watson

First coming to prominence as “Death” (portrayed as a Cardiff taxi driver in the Cambridge Footlights show in 2001) Watson’s career has spread in many different directions – as a stand up, screen writer and novelist. He reflects on his career, so far, with Rachel Parris. *no actual fireplace.

16.55

SESSION 8

Al Murray One-to-One

Al Murray is one of the UK’s favourite and most successful stand ups – usually performing in the guise of The Pub Landlord. In this extended interview with Jonn Elledge of The News Statesman, he looks back on a successful career ... and standing for election against Nigel Farage.

18:00

QUIZ ‘n’ CHIPS

Buddy up with fellow conference delegates to form a team and join our fun comedy quiz. This year’s quiz will have a special guest host(s) – so secret even the person writing this doesn’t know who it is. Food included.

20.00

FESTIVAL FRINGE

TABERNACLE

Mark Watson and Neil Innes

Delegate ticket £10 (£12 on the door)

Tickets can be bought during Quiz ‘n’ Chips or in advance from www.venuecymru.co.uk / theatre box office. Quote ‘**Delegate**’ on purchase.

The Fringe is at The Tabernacle, 6 Tudno Street, Llandudno, LL30 2HB and not Venue Cymru!

Timetable

Saturday 16th June



09.30

SESSION 1

1a. Topical Comedy Workshop

Three of the UK's leading topical comedy writers, Ged Parsons (HIGNFY), Gareth Gwynn (News Quiz) and Lawrence Howarth (Dead Ringers) present a hands-on workshop writing topical gags and sketches based on that week's news.

1b. Show Running

In the American TV comedy writing model, 'show runners' run the writers room. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this way of working? Is it worth the money? Does it mean writing by committee? Is the standard actually higher? Are there more funny lines? What happens to the consistency of the characters/comic voices? How does it actually work and what do we mean by the US model? What's it like for a writer to go in to an office and actually get paid a salary and how do the actors respond? Sioned Wiliam leads the conversation with writing duo Ian Brown and James Hendrie.

1c. The Writers Guild of Great Britain

WGGB is a trade union representing professional writers in TV, film, theatre, radio, books, comedy, poetry, animation and videogames, whose members also include emerging and aspiring writers. They lobby and campaign on behalf of writers, to ensure their voices are heard in a rapidly changing digital landscape. Guild Chair, Gail Renard, in conversation with WGGB Comedy Committee member, Dave Cohen.

1d. UKTV

One of the executives behind Taskmaster, Alan Davies: As Yet Untitled and the Red Dwarf re-boot, Iain Coyle is Senior Commissioning Editor at UKTV (home to Dave, Gold, W and others) In this session he'll be in conversation with executive producer, Jon Rolph, about their current successes and plans for the future.

10.25

SESSION 2

2a. This Country

We're West Country-bound with a screening of the double BAFTA-winning hit from BBC Three, in the company of

writer/producer Simon Mayhew-Archer and director, Tom George. Hosted by Sarah Morgan.

2b. Eric, Ernie and Me

The 'me' is Eddie Braben, writer of some of the most well-known and popular sketches on British TV – performed by Eric (Morcambe) and Ernie (Wise). You may have heard of them. This superb film was shown on BBC Four over Christmas and we're delighted to be able to partially screen the film, followed by an interview about its creation with writer, Neil Forsyth. Your host is Joel Morris.

11.25

Refreshments

11.35

SESSION 3

3a. A Different Class: Social Diversity in UK Comedy

A panel discussion, hosted by PBJ Management's Kate Haldane on class representation in UK comedy – is it still just a middle class plaything? She is joined by comedian and writer Kiri Pritchard-McLean and actor, Geoff McGivern.

3b. Writing Comedy from Social to Cinema

David Schneider is a comedy polymath, writing and performing live and across all media since the 1990s. As Tony Hayers in *KMKYWAP* (look it up) he sat opposite Steve Coogan as Alan Partridge pitched him *Monkey Tennis*. He co-runs online content creators, That Lot and also co-wrote *The Death of Stalin*. In conversation with Rhian Roberts he examines his methods of writing comedy.

3c. Understanding Channel 4 Comedy

Jon Rolph talks to Channel 4 Commissioning Executive, Laura Riseam about the successes the channel has brought to the screen in the past 12 months and explores their on-going commissioning needs and desires.

3d. BBC Radio 4

In terms of hours output, they're still the UK's biggest comedy commissioner, by far. This panel discussion, hosted by comedy producer Ed Morrish looks at radio in general (and Radio 4 in particular). He's joined by writer/performer Jon Holmes, veteran producer, Dirk Maggs and comedy commissioner for BBC Radio 4, Sioned Wiliam.

12.35

SESSION 4

4a. Talking Cunk

Philomena Cunk was the joint creation of the *Newswipe* writing team and performer, Diane Morgan. Two of the writers from that team, Jason Hazeley and Joel Morris have just written a new book, *Cunk on Everything*, and discuss the making of the recent series with *The New Statesman's* Jonn Elledge.

4b. Getting on the Same Page: The Writer/Producer Relationship.

BBC Writersroom host a chat with BBC Studios producer Lyndsay Fenner about how the chemistry between a writer and his or her producer is vital for the creative process. How do you choose – and what if it all goes wrong?

4c. Hitchhikers Guide To The Galaxy – Happy 40th Birthday!

We are absolutely delighted to welcome Dirk Maggs (writer and producer of HHGG series 3, 4, 5 & 6) and the one and only Geoff McGivern (Ford Prefect) – two froods who know where their towels are – to celebrate the 40th anniversary of this deeply influential programme. Six radio series, a TV series, a film, a computer game, oh and some books... the cultural impact of Douglas Adams' creation has been (and continues to be) extraordinary. Jon Holmes hosts the conversation.

4d. BBC Wales: The Tourist Trap

Due for transmission this autumn, The Tourist Trap is the new comedy project for BBC Wales – starring Sally Philips and a cast yet to be announced. It's the latest project from Glasgow's The Comedy Unit whose executive producer Rab Christie joins BBC Wales comedy commissioner, Paul Forde, to discuss the creation of the new show, alongside director Keri Collins and writers Tudur Owen and Gareth Gwynn.

13.10

Lunch

14.15

SESSION 5

5a. How NOT to Write a Sitcom

It's fair to say we can all learn from the mistakes of others, but it takes a lot to talk about your own disasters. Cue Harry Venning, who went on to greater success with Radio 4's long running comedy *Clare In The Community* – but who talks to his producer colleague, Alison Vernon Smith about an earlier project, *Sneakipeeks* and where it all went wrong.

5b. SMERSHpod: Chitty Chitty Bang Bang

Hit podcast, SMERSHpod usually takes as its theme the James Bond movies, asking writers and comedians to talk about their favourite examples from the franchise. Occasionally it takes a side step into tangentially related projects, hence, today, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (the classic film musical, based on a story by Bond creator, Ian Fleming). Writer David Quantick chats about the movie with podcast host, Jon Rain.

5c. The Mash Report

This series for BBC Two was one of the first successful web-to-TV transfers. This session, hosted by writer/presenter Jon Holmes explores the origins of the brand online and how a successful website became a hit TV show. He's joined by the show's chief

writer, Tim Telling, its exec producer Chris Stott and co-host Rachel Parris. Piers Morgan was unavailable for comment.

15.10

SESSION 6

Film Screening: The Death of Stalin

Banned in Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan – but proudly screened in full, here in Llandudno. This magnificent satire was received with near universal acclaim, with a screenplay by Armando Iannucci, Peter Fellows and our two special guests: David Schneider and Ian Martin, with whom we'll chat after the screening. What a way to spend a Saturday afternoon.

17.30

SESSION 7

Closing Session

Craft of Comedy UK's Artistic Director, Steve Doherty, wraps up the 2018 conference – including the announcement of the winner of the second David Nobbs Memorial Trust comedy writing competition. Almost certainly delayed by twenty-two minutes by black ice at Norbiton.

19.30

FRINGE FESTIVAL

TABERNACLE

Stand up at the Seaside

Host – Marcus Brigstocke with Kiri Pritchard-McLean, Ignacio Lopez and Noel James

Delegate ticket £10 (£12 on the door)

Tickets can be bought in advance from Quiz 'n' Chips, online from www.venuecymru.co.uk / theatre box office. Quote 'Delegate' on purchase

The Fringe is at The Tabernacle, 6 Tudno Street, Llandudno, LL30 2HB and not Venue Cymru!



Please note this schedule and presenters are subject to change

