

Zena Marks

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A science-trained PD with 16 years' experience across primetime international production & development. Able to shoot, edit & create decks. Bursting with ideas & full of initiative. Extremely strong cultural awareness & editorial skills.

RECENT WORK

January 2024 - Present **Whizzbang Productions** Producer Scriptwriting & vis dev of short, accessible social media films. Latest are on countering disinformation – using media literacy, cognitive biases & formal logic.

June – November 2023 **Makematic** for **Oxford University Press (OUP)** Digital Producer Incl. conceptualising, scriptwriting, visual development, edit-producing & managing VO for 24 teen-level animated films (approx. 3 mins each) on complex science - such as the greenhouse effect or the nature of light. Managing teams.

March 2022 – June 2022 **Econ Films** Producer/Director Developing, scripting & directing ~30 short online & broadcast films for international justice & academic organisations (various lengths). Incl. a film on international law enforcement, covering smuggling at sea & Balkan drug cartels, shot on location using REDs – for Balkan television. Shooting on location in rural Egypt, Slovenia, Montenegro & Albania. Broadcast development advisor.

January – February 2022 **Makematic** for **OUP** Science Scriptwriter Writing around 50 short-film scripts comprehensively explaining in-depth GCSE-level science in two minutes – from climate change to how electric motors work.

October - December 2021 **Windfall Films** for **BBC4** Assistant Producer **Royal Institution Christmas Lectures: Going Viral** 3 x 1 hr filmed 'as live' in studio, on science of viruses, transmission & vaccines, presented by DCMO Prof. Jonathan Van-Tam. Generated fun experiments/games – dogs sniff out COVID in stockings; different species of dogs as analogies for mutated strains of virus, recognised or otherwise by 'cell' camera; UV powder disease transmission demo; disease transmission via phones demo...Also working w. llamas & bats. (Step-down credit as no producer role, only SP & AP.)

August 2021 – October 2021 **Collective Media** Development Producer – Science, sport & politics for UK & int'l broadcasters & SVODs. Incl. Blair v Brown & Elon Musk concepts; managing slate & brainstorming.

March 2021 – June 2021 **RHS** Digital Media Producer and Presenter – Scripting, shooting (or presenting) & editing various social media films. Incl. 'Citrus Britain' (about global warming); doc on retired Jamaican nurse prevented from studying gardening due to race; feature on the RHS 'tree lab', & large screen film for RHS Hilltop flagship at Wisley. Per week, 1-3 original films & 2-20 re-edits/re-versions for different platforms. Often working solo as one-person crew.

March 2020 – February 2021 **Whizzbang Productions** Shooting Producer and Journalist – Ad hoc data journalism on COVID in London; development of 'Wild Society' series, which treats COVID as a natural social experiment exploring multiple social issues; freelance development of TV series & shooting tasters for Alaska TV.

December 2018 – March 2020 **WebsEdge** TV Presenter at European medical & health conferences; interviewing top medics. High-level science & medical contacts across Europe.

2019 **Edinburgh TV Festival** Producer of the Al Jazeera session, feat. Carole Cadwalladr: 'Who Gets a Voice?' – on the role of media platforming choices in political turmoil. Reported in Private Eye & triggered spate of discussion re: 'Question Time'. (Also, 2020 Awards Judge.)

Late 2018/Early 2019 **Furnace TV** for **BBC4** Assistant Producer **Eugenics, Genetics and the Dream of Perfection** (broadcast as ['Eugenics: Science's Greatest Scandal'](#)), looking at genetic technology, its future & its historical origins, along with ethical issues around equality, race, justice & society.

2018 **Wellcome Trust** (Charity) Digital Producer & Voiceover Actor Developing, scripting, creating visuals & editing short comprehensive YouTube films explaining pandemics, vaccines, virology & healthcare logistics.

BRITLAB Shooting Producer 20 x ~5mins for **BBC Worldwide Digital Studios [for BBC YouTube & international broadcast inserts]** Developing, pitching, winning commissions, casting, scriptwriting, lighting, directing, shooting, sound-recording & editing 20 short innovative science films. Briefed to deliver simple, 'bloke-ish' tone. Topics incl. ['Why be Nice?'](#) (covering cooperation & game theory). Also AI & tech. Incl. greenscreen & After Effects, plus scripting & ideas for BBC Earth. Presenters: Hannah Fry & Greg Foot.

Fountain Digital Labs - Digital Producer Developing & producing innovative digital natural history, incl. live roaming; 360° & video hotspot digital platforms.

Breakthrough Media (Multiple broadcast networks) – Digital Producer Fast-turnaround current affairs

production & development. Highly politically-sensitive environment. Under strict NDA.

Little Dot Studios for **BBC & C5** – Digital Producer – **Operation Ouch & Formula E** Generating fun games for the van Tulleken brothers for live broadcasts within NHS. Also car science & Elon Musk tech e.g. Neuralink.

Horizon: Video Games (BBC) – Assistant Producer – Generating games; interviewing gaming experts.

OLDER TV DEVELOPMENT WORK

2017/2018 – Primetime pop factual & fact ent for UK & int'l markets: **What Larks** Development AP; **Boundless** Development AP; **Wall to Wall** Development AP 'Becoming You' for Apple TV; **Outline** Development AP Health, diet & child development series; **Betty** Development AP Managing slate; leading brainstorming; strong BBC, ITV & C4 commissioning contacts. Commissions incl. returnable C4 food science series; **Remarkable** Development AP Neuroscience games series; **Dartmouth** Development AP Global genetics series; **Renegade Pictures** Development AP Blank-slate development of BBC2 series on how maths shapes lives & its limits, for Dr Hannah Fry; covers AI & tech – e.g. a 'robot judge' demonstrating limitations of AI.

2010 to 2014 - Lots of flexible, international hours & deadlines:

General development **Swan Films** 'Testosterone on trading floor' sequence for Grayson Perry's 'All Man';

Development Researcher **BBC Features** 'Whale Watch Live'; **BBC Worldwide** 'Big Cats' precursor;

Oxford Scientific Films - achieved BBC1 commission 'Animal Odd Couples'; **Special Edition Films**; **BBC Scotland** 'Britain's Favourite Supermarket Foods'.

Older Production credits (2010 to 2015 – lots of flexible, international hours & deadlines):

Inside the Animal Mind (BBC); **NASA's Unexplained Files (WagTV for Discovery Science)**;

Inside My Mind (Pioneer Productions for BBC3); **Mammoth Ice Mountain (CB Films for Nat Geo)**;

Superhuman Showdown (Maverick TV for Discovery DNI) Incl. generating base-jumping & 3D maze stunts; **Beneath the Lab Coat (Angel Eye Media for BBC)**; **Deadly 60 (BBC)**;

Attenborough's Wonderful World (BBC); **A Year in the Wild – Snowdonia (BBC)**; **Origins of Us (BBC)**; **Bang Goes the Theory (BBC)** Incl. film on social norms; filming with Richard Dawkins.

Stargazing Live (BBC); **Wonders of the Universe (BBC)**; **The Nature Project (Green Lions for cinema release)**; **The Volcano That Stopped The World (Pioneer Productions for C4)**

Print Journalism

Edinburgh Festivals Magazine (2008) – Reviewer; **The Northern Echo** (2005) – News reporter, plus some features; **The Whitby Gazette** (2005) – News reporter

AWARDS: December 2013 **Wellcome Trust Mentoring Program for Emerging Talent**
[Casual jobs 2004-2010 incl. writing reports for **Department for Education**]

EDUCATION

2009 **BSc Biological Sciences (Hons) 2:1** University of Edinburgh

Dissertation (captive zoo study): *Communication by gesture in chimpanzees*

Incl. Brain & Behaviour (1st); Developmental Biology (1st); Evolutionary Biology (1st); Evolution & the Brain; Evolutionary & Ecological Genetics; History & Philosophy of Science; Human Physiology; Human Origins; Mechanisms of Brain Development (1st); Neuroscience with Pharmacology (1st); Origins & Evolution of Language (1st); Psychology; Social Evolution (1st)

2020 **Digital Investigative Journalism Training** Knight School of Journalism Plus shorthand with distinction at 100wpm

A-Level: Eng Lit (A, parts 100%); Eng Lang (A); Biology (A); Geology (B); Chemistry (B); Philosophy (Distinction)

TECHNICAL SKILLS (BBC-trained 2011/2012):

- Shooting (FS5/FS7/C300/5D/Go-pros)
- Sound recording (radio/Zoom mics, booms, 3-channel mixing)
- Rough-cut editing: Premiere Pro, After Effects, Audition; basic grading

OTHER RELEVANT EXPERIENCE:

- Generating social experiment scientific funfair event for Guerilla Science
- Out of Eden Walk (Nat Geo online – small contributions)

LICENSES:

- BCAP Canopy Access Rigging
- DBS-checked
- Full clean UK driving licence

LANGUAGES:

Spanish & French (plus very basic Japanese, Greek, German & Russian)