

The Garden hires Fiona Freed as Chief Operating Officer

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Fiona joins the multi-award-winning indie ahead of Joint CEO Nicola Hill stepping down next month. She has held a number of key executive positions at some of the leading production companies in the UK and at The Discovery Channel. She has also run her own consultancy, working with clients including BBC Studios, Expectation, Big Deal Films, Raw, Netflix, the UK Government and – in a previous

stint - The Garden. Most recently she has advised and worked as interim Managing Director at both Story Films and Chimp Television.

Fiona's first collaboration with The Garden was on Channel 4's BAFTA-winning *Bedlam*, and she went on to be Acting Head of Production at the company, with Channel 4's *24 Hours in A&E* and BBC Two's *Midwives* among the shows she worked across. From there she became Head of Production for Factual, Features & Factual Entertainment at Tiger Aspect. Fiona co-founded The Public Square, as an indie consultancy and multiplatform producer, in 2002.

John Hay, Joint CEO of The Garden, said: "Fee brings a huge breadth of experience to this role – she's a superb creative manager with an enviable reputation for ensuring teams are looked after and supported, and for combining consistent success with a strong sense of decency and purpose. The creative partnership between production management and editorial has always been at the heart of the way The Garden operates and Fee is the perfect person to continue it: as Nicola moves on she leaves a legacy to be very proud of – and in Fee I feel I have a brilliant ally for The Garden's next chapter."

Fiona Freed said: *"The Garden has always been held in a special place for me, not just because of the heart and innovation that runs through its output, but because of the values it aims to work by in a changing era. Embarking on this new challenge is both exciting and a great privilege."*

Fiona's appointment follows on from Executive Producers Helen Bart and Jo Harcourt-Smith joining The Garden as the company expands its slate across genres, broadcasters and territories. Recent months have seen reality and constructed factual commissions including Netflix's *Squid Game: The Challenge* (a co-pro with Studio Lambert) and *Alone* for Channel 4, plus brand-new four-part series *Dark Phone* for Channel 4, the recommissions of the stripped medical box-set *Emergency* for two more series, the successful move of *24 Hours in A&E* to be shot in Nottingham and produced out of The Garden's Manchester office, and returning hit *24 Hours in Police Custody* delivering a series of powerful single films and two-part specials.

Other recent critical and ratings successes for the company include the RTS-nominated and Broadcast Awards Highly Commended *Our Falklands War: A Frontline Story* and Simon Reeve's *South America*, both for BBC Two, and new police format *Real PD* for Discovery+ in the US.

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