

# ITV commissions landmark Covid doc from Oscar-winning director

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## ITV commissions landmark Covid doc from Oscar-winning director

Kevin Macdonald to direct The Year That Changed Britain [WT]

Set against increasing alarm about a second wave of COVID-19, ITV has commissioned a landmark feature-length documentary from Oscar-winning director Kevin Macdonald that tells the story of of Coronavirus in Britain through the experience of people immersed in its impact, both personally and professionally.

The Year That Changed Britain [WT], has secured unprecedented access to intensive care units [ICUs] across the country - from the Whittington Hospital in London to The Royal Preston Hospital in Lancashire. The film begins before the pandemic became a worldwide medical emergency and stretches through full

lockdown into the peak of the crisis and beyond.

This co-production between Lawrence Elman and Nick Fraser's Docsville Studios, Altitude Factual and Expanded Media will offer a vivid insight into the working lives of ICU staff and the patients they treat during a crisis which proves both challenging, life-changing and often tragic for those caught in it.

Through powerful personal testimony as well as observational footage the programme documents their individual stories as the Coronavirus surge hits and they reach their lowest ebb.

Cameras are also present at moments of extraordinary breakthrough, where the fightback against a deadly virus brings stories of hope, optimism and the promise of a better future.

The film will be released in UK and Irish cinemas by Altitude Film Distribution in 2021.

Kevin Macdonald's film credits include *One Day In September* (1999) which won the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature, along with *Touching The Void* (2003), *The Last King of Scotland* (2006) and 2018's *Whitney*.

Produced by Lawrence Elman and Katie Buchanan, the film is executive produced by Nick Fraser with Will Clarke and Paul Sowerbutts of Altitude Media Group, Francis Hopkinson and Liz Thorburn of Expanded Media. The film marks the first project for the newly formed Altitude Factual.

The film's director Kevin Macdonald says: "As we are living with the unfolding pandemic we are enduring and adapting to how this affects us all, this film is crucial to our comprehension of what our future will look like. We are able to watch first hand how the landscape of our lives changes. It is a pleasure to be working with Jo at ITV as well as the team from Docsville Studios."

*The Year That Changed Britain [WT]* is commissioned for ITV by ITV Controller of Factual Jo Clinton Davis and Sue Murphy, ITV Head of Factual Entertainment.

Jo says: "This ambitious film promises to provide a remarkable perspective on the pandemic - especially through the unique lens of Kevin Macdonald. This will be a truly in-depth and deeply human portrait of both medics and patients in real time as events unfolded. A landmark documentary to mark the year that changed us all."

Lawrence Elman says: "Working with Kevin has always been an inspiration and he has an incredible instinct for story and clarity of narrative. ITV and Jo Clinton-Davis have a vision for the future of feature documentary films and we are so excited to be involved with them to share this vision."

Paul Sowerbutts, MD of Altitude Factual says: "We are proud to launch Altitude Factual with this Kevin Macdonald feature documentary - providing his unique insight into the defining issue of our time."

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## Altitude Media Group

Altitude Media Group is the independent UK based studio led by Will Clarke chairman and joint-CEO with Andy Mayson, comprising of Altitude Film Production, Altitude Film Sales with Managing Director Mike Runagall, Altitude Film Distribution with Managing Director Hamish Moseley and Altitude Factual with Managing Director Paul Sowerbutts. In February 2020 US based investment group 30WEST took a significant minority stake in the group.

Launched in 2020, Altitude Factual creates long-running television series and feature-length programming focusing on the natural and human worlds. Continuing on from Altitude's successes including Amy, Diego Maradona, Eric Clapton: Life In 12 Bars and Liam Gallagher: As It Was, Altitude Factual is also exploring compelling stories about cultural icons.

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