

John Hay and Nicola Hill to become joint CEOs of The Garden

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THE GARDEN

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John Hay and Nicola Hill to become joint CEOs of The Garden as Magnus Temple steps down after more than a decade.

- Temple to pass baton to fellow Company Directors in June
- Nicola Brown promoted to Creative Director
- The Garden set to have busiest production year ever

27th April, 2021 – The Garden, the multi-award winning production company behind hit shows such as *24 Hours in A&E* and *24 Hours in Police Custody*, has announced that Chief Executive and Co-Founder Magnus Temple is stepping down after 11 years. Nicola Hill and John Hay become joint CEOs – the pair have worked closely alongside Temple in the past three years as Managing Director and Chief Creative Officer respectively. Temple will remain with the company for several months in a consultancy role, and to see through ongoing projects.

Meanwhile, Nicola Brown, who joined the ITV Studios company as Director of Programmes just over a year ago, has been promoted to Creative Director. Her new, expanded role encompasses both development and delivery across The Garden's growing output.

2021 will see the company deliver its biggest-ever production slate. It is producing two series with Simon Reeve for BBC Two, is currently in the edit on a series of *24 Hours in A&E* shot during the pandemic, and later this year will deliver new episodes of *24 Hours in Police Custody*, which has been enjoying record ratings. It has also been commissioned to make a major new medical format for Channel 4, shooting this summer.

From the autumn, The Garden's Leeds office will become the new home of *24 Hours in A&E* and another new popular factual format, which will be announced at a later date. And this year will also see the launch of its first US series, a Kansas-based version of *Police Custody* for Discovery and Channel 4. The slate also includes a box-set true crime series, two further series for the BBC, and three factual drama script developments for Sky.

Temple hired Hay and promoted Hill after he took sole charge of the company following co-founder Nick Curwin's departure in 2017. Together the trio have overseen a broadening of the company's slate, expanding internationally with the US version of *Police Custody* and Nat Geo feature doc *Mars: One Day on the Red Planet*, securing back-to-back BAFTA nominations for Channel 5's *Operation Live*, working with Simon Reeve, and winning the single documentary BAFTA for BBC Two feature doc, *Gun No 6*.

They have also established The Garden's Yorkshire base, and set up a company talent fund to give people from under-represented backgrounds their first insight into directing, edit producing, line producing and SP-ing.

Temple founded The Garden with Nick Curwin in 2010. During his eleven years at the helm, the company made its mark by creating the iconic *24 Hours* brands, as well as innovative factual entertainment formats like *The Audience* and *10 000 BC*, and critically-acclaimed documentary series like the BAFTA-winning *Bedlam*. It is also known for other ground-breaking projects of scale such as *Keeping Britain Alive*, 'luxury access' including *Inside Claridge's*, for pioneering slow TV in the UK and for making the multi award-winning ad campaigns for Cancer Research UK.

Temple said: “I love this company. The Garden is like family to me. But it’s been 11 years, in which time my own family have almost grown up and I’d like to spend more time with them before they disappear. It’s going to be a wrench, but I’m so pleased to be able to leave the company in the brilliant hands of Nicola and John, who’ve been instrumental in the success of the last few years. 2021 is set to be our busiest year ever and I know together with Nic Brown and the exceptionally talented Garden team what great things they can achieve in 2022 and beyond, so I look forward to being the proud parent cheering from the sidelines.”

John Hay and Nicola Hill said: “We’ll miss Magnus hugely – he’s been a mentor and a friend as well as a great leader - but the unique spirit he’s nurtured at The Garden will remain long after he’s left. It’s a special place. Running it as joint CEOs will further cement the close partnership between editorial and production that has enabled us to ‘do scale beautifully’ as a commissioning editor once said. This is a great time to be a company specializing in premium factual, and with our expanding slate and the new energy and expertise Nicola Brown has brought, we’ve really opened up new pathways. So we’re excited to see where we can go next.”

Nicola Brown, Creative Director, added: “I’ve enjoyed my first year at The Garden under Magnus’ leadership immensely and will miss his wise words and kind support.

“It’s a real privilege to be working with John, Nicola and our brilliantly talented team as we enter the next chapter and I’m delighted to be taking on this newly expanded role at such an exciting time for the company.”

Julian Bellamy, Managing Director, ITV Studios added: “I’ve worked with Magnus for over 20 years, both as a commissioner and in my time here at ITV Studios. Quite simply, he’s one of the best in the business. He’s not only built two indies from scratch, including co-founding The Garden with Nick Curwin in 2010, but his fingerprints are on some of the most innovative and memorable factual programmes of recent years including, of course, *24 Hours in A&E* and *24 Hours in Police Custody*. That’s quite a set of achievements and I’m hugely grateful for his hard work, creativity and wise counsel over the years. I’ll miss him!

“It’s typical of Magnus’s leadership that he’s not only lined up a seamless succession plan in Nicola and John, but also leaves The Garden in such good shape with an incredibly strong team and a really exciting creative pipeline”.

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