

The Garden hires executive producers to supercharge expanded slate

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The Garden Productions, part of ITV Studios, has appointed Helen Bart and Jo Harcourt-Smith as Executive Producers, as the award-winning indie expands its slate across genres, broadcasters and territories.

The past few months have seen The Garden land reality and constructed factual commissions including Netflix's Squid Game: The Challenge (a co-pro with Studio Lambert) and Alone for Channel 4, plus recommissions of the stripped medical box-set Emergency for two more series, the new Nottingham-shot series of 24 Hours in A&E, and returning hit 24 Hours in Police Custody. Other recent critical and ratings successes for the company include Our Falklands War: A Frontline Story and Simon Reeve's South America, both for BBC Two, and Real PD for Discovery+ in the US. It has also opened a new office in Manchester, led by 24 Hours in A&E Executive Producer Rachael Smith.

John Hay, Joint CEO of The Garden, said: *"Helen and Jo exemplify the breadth of a slate that now stretches from formats to box-sets via a renewed docs heartland and that sees us making premium shows of scale both in the UK and internationally. They're both super-talented creatives and team-leaders whose work we've admired for many years, and who care passionately about making the kind of quality, popular, purposeful television we all believe in too. Their arrival will help us extend our ambitions still further, and we're very lucky to have them as part of The Garden family."*

Bart, who took up her role earlier this month, has just series-produced the recently-announced *Fight the Power* for the BBC and PBS. Before that she collaborated with Sir Steve McQueen as Associate Producer of the multi-award-winning *Small Axe* drama series and series produced its factual counterpart: the BAFTA- and RTS-winning series *Uprising*. Other credits include single docs *Subnormal* and *Black Power: A British Story of Resistance*, and the ground-breaking series *Stephen: The Murder That Changed a Nation*. Prior to becoming a producer, Bart had a career as a news journalist, specialising in politics, global and community affairs.

"I consider myself incredibly blessed with all the talented people I've been able to work with throughout my career, so joining The Garden feels like a natural progression," said Bart. "I've long admired their incredible slate of programmes and I'm impressed by their imaginative and creative approach to new ideas - so am looking forward to joining forces and hoping to make more ground-breaking and award-winning documentaries in the years to come."

Harcourt-Smith, meanwhile, will join at the start of the new year. She is currently executive producing *Celebrity Race Across the World* for BBC One. Among her other recent credits are the first series of hit format *Snowflake Mountain* and the US, Brazilian and French series of *The Circle* for Netflix. She worked on the first series of *Gogglebox* before returning to series produce three later series as the format grew into one of the pillars of Channel 4's schedule, and was Series Editor of *The Apprentice* for the BBC. More recently she was part of the Senior Team for Channel 4's *Make Me Prime Minister*.

"I've always been impressed by the high quality of The Garden's shows and the talent for deft, brilliant storytelling that runs through everything they make, so it's a privilege to join their fantastic team," said Harcourt-Smith. "I can't wait to get my feet under the table and bring my own experience into the mix at this key moment for the company."

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