

MultiStory Media secures ITVX commission

Waco Untold: The British Stories

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UPDATED: Waco Untold: The British Stories

MultiStory Media, the award-winning ITV Studios label, has secured its first commission for brand new streaming service ITVX, which will shed new light on the infamous siege of Waco.

Using unseen archive and exclusive interviews, **Waco Untold: The British Stories**, is a 2x60 premium documentary series which will explore the untold story of the sizeable British contingent of David Koresh's Branch Davidian cult, and their experiences during the 51 day ordeal at Waco and its storming by the FBI in 1993. Commissioned by ITV's Controller of Current Affairs Tom Giles, it is directed by Stuart Bernard (The Man Who Bought Cricket, The Mighty Redcar, Our

War), and exec produced by Mike Blair.

The new commission comes as the label has established a new documentary unit which will be headed up by Blair following his recent appointment as Head of Documentaries and Current Affairs. It will focus on creating premium documentary series that tell compelling British and international stories. The unit will also include director Iwan Roberts and producer Claire Savage, both of whose credits include *The Real 'Des': The Dennis Nilsen Story*, *The Real Anne: Unfinished Business* and *Manhunt: The Raoul Moat Story* among others, as well as development executive Jack Browne (*Return to Belsen*).

The new unit will also build on the success of *The Real...* strand with ITV ordering two drama companion documentaries, *The Real Nolly* and *The Real Stonehouse* to accompany the network's forthcoming dramas of the same names. Both are commissioned for ITV by Jo Clinton-Davis, Controller of Factual. The former tells the story of legendary *Crossroads* star Noelle Gordon, accompanying Russell T Davies' three-part *Nolly*, starring Helena Bonham-Carter, while *The Real Stonehouse* looks back at the life of disgraced Labour MP John Stonehouse, which will sit alongside the three-part drama starring Matthew Macfadyen and Keeley Hawes, directed by John S Baird. The commissions follow on from the ratings success of *The Real 'Des': The Dennis Nilsen Story*, which explored the story of Nilsen, one of history's most notorious serial killers, alongside the drama *Des*, starring David Tennant in the lead-role.

Mike Blair said: *"MultiStory Media's rich heritage of documentary making, not least with the ground-breaking 7 Up series, provides an incredible foundation for our new unit. Along with these exciting new commissions, we are also in discussion on four other projects for next year as we look to build on an already healthy slate, from award-winning premium documentaries to fascinating drama companion shows and insightful investigative programmes."*

Waco Untold: The British Stories will look at how in 1993, US law enforcement in Waco, Texas, came up against an extreme religious sect known as the Branch Davidians. What should have been a standard raid to execute an arrest warrant, became the longest running non-military siege in US history. The heavily armed cult, led by a self-proclaimed Messiah, David Koresh, killed four federal agents and, 51 days later, an apocalyptic fire would take the lives of all but nine of the

86 strong group.

Within this well-known tragedy, one fact is rarely acknowledged - one third of these Branch Davidians were British. Thirty years on, this two-part feature documentary will shed new light on the experiences of the survivors of the fire, as well as the victims and their families, who feel that their voices have been forgotten in history.

Tom Giles, ITV Controller of Current Affairs, said: *“The Waco siege - and the disaster that ended it - remains one of the most extraordinary and shocking tragedies of recent American history. Though many of the dreadful events were captured live on rolling news, there is much we still don’t know about what happened - not least to the many British people who died on that day as well to those few who survived. Through this powerful series, I’m glad that ITVX and MultiStory Media will be able to shed new light on those stories, too many of which have been largely forgotten or ignored, and to give full context to an event that still haunts America.”*

Jo Clinton-Davis, ITV Controller of Factual, said: *“Working with MultiStory Media, we have established a valuable thread of companion documentaries to our high-end Drama series. MultiStory’s skill in weaving the real-life narrative of individuals and events is the perfect complement to our Drama and offers a revealing, enriching and compelling insight for viewers. In The Real... Nolly and The Real... Stonehouse, we look forward to two new films for ITVX that will continue in this vein.”*

The Real... Nolly and The Real... Stonehouse are produced and directed by Iwan Roberts and Claire Savage.

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