

Science in Storytelling Programme

Tuesday 12th March • Bristol Beacon



Tuesday 12th March 2024

Time	Event	Location
08.45 - 09.30	Registration	The Lantern Hall
08.45 - 09.45	Arrival Networking, Tea and Coffee	Simon's Bar
09.45 - 10.00	Welcome Talk	The Lantern Hall
10.00 - 11.00	Striving for Symbiosis	The Lantern Hall
11.15 - 12.15	Comissioning Science	The Lantern Hall
12.15 - 13:45	Networking Lunch	Simon's Bar
13.45 - 14:45	All Hail! The Science of Queens	The Lantern Hall
15:00 - 16:00	Crafting the Truth	The Lantern Hall
16:15 - 17:15 P	rehistoric Planet: Where Science Drives the Story	The Lantern Hall
17.15 - 17.30	Closing Remarks	The Lantern Hall
17.30	Day Ends	The Lantern Hall

Tuesday 12th March 2024

09.45 - 10.00

Welcome Address

Speakers: Dan O'Neill



HOST Dan O'Neill

Field Biologist, Wildlife Filmmaker and TV Presenter

Dan O'Neill is an experienced field biologist, wildlife filmmaker, explorer, and presenter, who specialises in remote and challenging environments, and camera trap technology.

10.00 - 11.00

Striving for Symbiosis

An honest and candid conversation, between a Scientist and a Series Producer. Touching on how working relationships between productions and scientists have been in the past, how they are now, and how we can move forward, striving for truly symbiotic relationships.

Speaker: Professor Andy Radford

Moderater: Sharmila Choudhury



Professor Andy Radford

Professor of Behavioural Ecology • University of Bristol

Andy studies animal behaviour, particularly social conflict, cooperation, vocal communication and the impact of human activities on wildlife. He has been involved in various TV series from the filming of his research for individual sequences to acting as Series Consultant.



Sharmila Choudhury Series Producer • Humblebee Films

Sharmila started her career at the BBC and has been making natural history programmes for over 25 years. She has worked on many projects with David Attenborough, including Life of Birds, Life ofMammals, Charles Darwin and the Tree of Life, Attenborough and the Giant Elephant, Attenborough's Life in Colour.

11.15 - 12.15

Commissioning Science

Commissioning factual television involves navigating the delicate balance between engaging storytelling and scientific credibility. We'll lift the lid on how science gets on TV and the role of a commissioner in making sure science holds up on the global screen.

Speakers: Lucy Stone, Jonah Weston, Tom Coveney

Moderater: Kate Beetham



Lucy StoneFounder and Executive Director • Climate Spring

Lucy Stone is the Founder and Executive Director of Climate Spring; a global organisation supporting the power of storytelling to change the way society sees climate change. Lucy is a leading climate innovator and narrative change expert, setting up many initiatives with civil society, the UN and business.



Jonah Weston Commissioning Editor • Channel 4

Jonah Weston is Channel 4's Commissioning Editor for Science and Adventure – managing projects including SAS: Who Dares Wins; Guy Martin's Power Trip; Super Surgeons: A Chance at Life; The Year From Space; and the upcoming Virgin Island. Before Channel 4 Jonah was an award-winning producer, who ran Form Films.



Tom CoveneyHead of Science Commissioning • BBC

Tom joined BBC Specialist Factual commissioning in 2018, becoming Head of Science in 2022. Recent projects include Earth with Chris Packham, Attenborough & The Giant Sea Monster, The Secret Genius Of Modern Life and Wilderness with Simon Reeve.



Kate BeethamHead of Specialist Factual • Plimsoll Productions

Kate leads Specialist Factual for Plimsoll and also acts as Executive Producer. Prior to this role Kate ran the Development department at Plimsoll, and was an Executive Producer in the BBC Features Department. She has also worked as a Commissioning Executive for Documentaries and, while working for the BBC's Science Department, ran the flagship series Horizon for BBC2.

13.45 - 14.45

All Hail! The Science of Queens

Queens is the first series to focus on the natural world from a female perspective. Join the queens of production and filmmaking behind the new female-led docuseries as they share the ins and outs of creating this new, powerful series whilst championing relationships with scientists and field specialists alike.

Speakers: Tania Escobar, Ilaira Mallalieu, Anna Findlay

Moderater: Chloe Sarosh



Tania Escobar Cinematographer

Tania Escobar is a Mexican cinematographer working predominantly on natural history and wildlife documentary programs. Specializing in animal behavior, long lens, night, and filming from height. Her work and career have been known for working with rarely film and challenging species, such as Bonobos and Drill Monkeys. Frequently filming in extreme natural environments for productions such as National Geographic 'Queens', BBC 'Primates' among others.



Ilaira Mallalieu Producer / Director • Wildstar Films

llaira is a Producer/Director with I3 years' experience in the industry. She began her television career in London, working in factual entertainment and specialist factual, before making the jump to natural history and moving to Bristol II years ago. She has primarily worked on landmark blue-chip series for the BBC, Netflix and National Geographic. She particularly enjoys the creative challenge of bringing stories of the natural world to life with innovative visuals.



Anna Findlay

Producer / Director • Wildstar Films

Producer/Director with 14 years of experience in the industry, having worked on acclaimed natural history blue-chip series for the BBC, National Geographic, and Netflix. My passion for the natural world started at a young and grew through out university studies in Zoology and later a masters in Primatology and Anthropology.



Chloe Sarosh Executive Producer • Wildstar Films

Chloe is an Executive Producer and writer with 15 years of experience specialising in natural history and science. Chloe is Co-Executive Producer, Showrunner and Writer for 'Queens'. Vice Chair of the Wildstar Academy Chloe champions the growth of female talent in all areas of production in wildlife television.

15.00 - 16.00

Crafting the Truth

How can we effectively communicate science and push the boundaries of Natural History storytelling? This panel comes together to share their expertise in production, education, science communication and indigenous connection, shifting the narrative to create exciting and compelling stories, whilst keeping science and facts at heart.

Speakers: Dr Rosa Vasquez Espinoza,
Dr Reyhaneh Maktoufi & Dr Alex Bowmer

Moderater: Lizzie Daly



Dr Rosa Vasquez Espinoza

PhD Chemical Biologist, Founder • Amazon Research International

A Peruvian chemical biologist, Rosa merges her Andean-Amazonian heritage with science, safeguarding Amazonian ecosystems. She's the first to explore the Amazonian Boiling River'smicrobes and Peru's stingless bee medicinal honey. Her work, blending indigenous wisdom with modern science, has earned her prestigious accolades and media features.



Dr Reyhaneh Maktoufi

Science Communication and Outreach Fellow • HHMI Tangled Bank Studios

Dr. Reyhaneh (Rey) Maktoufi is a DC-based, Iranian researcher and science communicator. She is the co-producer, host and illustrator of PBS| NOVA's series Sciencing Out, a mini-series on women in history who used different strategies to communicate science. Rey received her Ph.D. in Media, Technology, and Society at Northwestern University.



Dr Alex Bowmer

Director of Natural History • On the Edge

Alex is Director of Natural History at On the Edge, the conservation charity & non-profit media organisation that reconnects people with nature through storytelling and works to protect lesser-known, globally endangered species. Alex's expertise helps to bridge the gap between science and communications, making the natural world accessible to all.



Lizzie Daly Wildlife Biologist, Explorer and Presenter

Lizzie Daly is a Welsh adventurer, host and animal movement scientist. She has worked with BBC, Nat Geo, Animal Planet & many more broadcasting channels. Her fierce passion for the natural world has led her to conduct research and make wildlife films all over the world.

16.15-17.15 Prehistoric Planet: Where Science Drives the Story

Dr Darren Naish & PP team discuss their style of working together to create the Apple TV+ seires, Prehistoric Planet. The success of this innovative Natural History series was solely reliant on water-tight scientific backing - without the science there was no story to tell!

Speakers: Dr Darren Naish, Prof. Bob Spicer,
Dr Liz Martin-Silverstone & Dr Simon Bell

Moderater: Dr Tori Herridge



Dr Darren Naish Senior Scientific Advisor

Darren Naish is a palaeozoologist who works on dinosaurs, ancient sea reptiles and the flying pterosaurs. He received his PhD in palaeontology from the University of Portsmouth in 2006. He currently works for the BBC Natural History Unit and is chief scientific consultant for the Apple TV series Prehistoric Planet.



Prof. Bob Spicer Professor Emeritus • The Open University

Professor Bob Spicer specialises in plant fossils and ancient climates. His research interests span the Cretaceous environments, particularly the Arctic, how we can measure past land surface heightsusing plant fossils, applying this to the development of the Tibetan Plateau and its influences on the Asian monsoon and biodiversity.



Dr Liz Martin-Silverstone Technical Specialist • University of Bristol

Dr Martin-Silverstone is a palaeobiologist at the University of Bristol. Her research interests lie in the evolution of flight, particularly looking at understanding how pterosaurs took to the skies, and using CT scans in paleontology. She is now a technical specialist and runs the tomography facility in EarthSciences.



Dr Simon Bell
Producer • BBC Studios, Natural History Unit

Dr Simon Bell is a staff producer, award-winning director and sometime film editor at BBC Studios' Natural History Unit in Bristol, UK - the world's leading producer of Natural History content. He produced three of the episodes in the Prehistoric Planet series.



Dr Tori HerridgeSenior Lecturer • University of Sheffield

Evolutionary Biologist at the University of Sheffield. Lover of all things Ice Age, but especiallymammoths and dwarf elephants. Spare-time presenter of telly, radio and award-winning podcasts. Proud mama of TrowelBlazers.com, celebrating trowel-wielding women past and present. Contra IMDb, not a stand up comedian. Just funny

17.15 - 17.30

Closing Remarks

Speaker: Dan O'Neill

Wildscreen Science in Storytelling