



## Brand/Rebrand: UKTV Originals

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In 2016, British broadcasting powerhouse UKTV poured more than Â£150 million into original programming across its many channels, which include Gold, Dave, W, Really and Alibi. That's the kind of investment that warrants a brand unto itself, and the network has happily obliged. The recently launched UKTV Originals is a crisp, satisfying bit of branding that uses a pair of elegantly designed spots built around a hand-drawn logo to celebrate the process of television production itself.

For UKTV's in-house design team, executing the spots involved nothing less than relating the start-to-finish pipeline of TV show creation in 10 seconds.

"The sequence literally starts on a blank page with a notebook opening," said Peter Allinson, who directed the spots and is head of design at UKTV. "It then continues through the creative development and pre-production, [including] scriptwriting, storyboarding, casting and set design. Next up is the production process, that involves camera operators, lighting technicians and, of course, the director. Finally, the process moves into post-production, focusing on editors, graphic artists and composers."

The spots even incorporate some of the "unsung heroes behind the scenes," Allinson said, such as electricians, set designers and caterers.

To depict its many production-oriented touchpoints with maximum speed and efficiency, UKTV Creative established a birds-eye view motif, utilizing a jib arm to let the camera look down from above on a rapid-fire sequence of its meticulous set pieces. The constant overhead position served as a "a helpful and clever technique to visualize the creative process and the people that are involved, while keeping them all anonymous," Allinson said. The first-person perspective also "creates a familiar viewpoint," he added, "that puts the viewer in their shoes and gives them a unique look into the creative process of TV production."

Objects tell the story here, which meant that props became the "heroes of the piece and our main focal point to help drive the narrative," Allinson said. Slowing the spots down to hone in on their offerings reveals an item list that ranges from casting sheets to sandwiches to scribbled notebook pages with phrases such as "marcel breuer first steel chair" on them. "Our art department were fantastic and we all had a lot of fun over the two-day in-house shoot," Allinson said. "Our studio floors were literally covered with props and stationary as we rummaged through multiple items to create the best compositions to communicate the process in the most visually engaging way possible."

Tying the images together into an unforgettable imprint, the actual drawing of the official UKTV Originals logo unfolds throughout the spots, an act of creation that offers a pleasing touch of meta-commentary within a brand devoted to celebrating the act of creation.

"After a few rounds of development, exploring various ways of scribing the word 'original,' we quickly settled on a single-stroke handwritten word mark," Allinson said. "It felt effortless and elegant and very different to any of our competitors in this field. An honest and relatable brand that is as much for the TV makers as it is for the TV viewers."

UKTV Creative brought in Alison Carmichael to craft the mark, a hand-lettering artist whose work designed with brushes and ink, markers and Fineliner pens, have graced brands such as Madame Tussauds, Glenfiddich Whiskey and Bloomingdale's. Her ability to dash off a fluid, intricate bit of calligraphy with style and grace is rather astonishing, and it's immensely satisfying to watch her hand do it within the spots themselves.

"Once we had decided on a handwritten logo and established the birds eye view perspective, it just made logical sense to actually film Alison draw the logo during our film shoot," Allinson said. "We did consider animating the logo in

post-production during the very early stages of development, but it wouldn't have the same character and charm as a logo being physically drawn and crafted before your very eyes. The result is a confident wordmark that feels crafted and authentic, like a stamp of approval or a signature."

The choice to present the logo as it is happening also benefits from a sharply orchestrated sound design by Dave Connolly, whose Molecular Sound company turned up on set during shooting to, according to its Vimeo page, "record the authentic sounds of the props to really bring the sounds to life." The resulting scratchy drag of the Sharpie against the paper, as well as the tapping of typewriter keys, the clack of the clapperboard and other audio effects, adds a tactile quality to the spots that makes them feel as if they could almost leap off the screen.

"Branding our content in this way will make it clear that UKTV Originals are made exclusively for our network," said Zoë Clapp, UKTV Creative's chief marketing and communications officer. "It signifies an important next step for the business and highlights our support for British creativity and our passion for creating high quality, engaging shows for viewers."

Credits:

UKTV Original Production

Director: Peter Allinson

Design Producer: Sophie Yeoman

Marketing Manager: Emily Latham

Hand Lettering Artist: Alison Carmichael

Producers: Sophie Fox / Deane McDonald

DOP: Steve Weiser

Art Dept: Chris Williams

Camera Assit: Poe Panayioyou

Sound Design: Dave Connolly

Runner: Bettie Cooper

Behind The Scenes with Alison Carmichael: Shot and edited by Kai Lau