



Major ITV Commission for 7 Wonder

7 Wonder to produce new Billy Connolly series for ITV

The Seven Network – Australia’s most-watched broadcast television platform - today announced a major commission for its new joint venture television production company: 7Wonder.

The commission from ITV in the United Kingdom confirms Seven’s strengthening presence in the production of programming for international markets.

In a major new ITV Factual commission, Billy Connolly will travel all the way across mainland USA by train. Billy Connolly's *Tracks Across America* is a three part series in which the iconic comedian and actor aims to circumnavigate all four corners of the United States on the magic carpet made of steel that is America’s rail network.

In 2011 Billy Connolly covered the two and half thousand miles that make up the famous Route 66 for the hit ITV series *Billy Connolly’s Route 66*. Now he has set his sights on 28 states and 8,000 miles of cities, coast, mountains, desert and swamp. Rich in the romance of the American dream, this is a travelogue in the tracks of the pioneers who built a nation.

Starting and finishing in New York this three part series will see Billy head into the vast and astonishing landscapes that make up America’s backyard. Here Billy will meet a truly remarkable cast of people who capture the irresistible spirit of America and he will regale us with tales of his favourite kinds of people: outlaws, singers, fighters, and dreamers. From the Bad Lands of North Dakota, into the arid beauty of the Arizona desert, past the peaks of the Smokey Mountains, skirting the lazy swamplands of Louisiana – this is a big sky country full of places and people we rarely see but Billy can’t wait to visit.

The series is commissioned for ITV by Jo Clinton-Davis, Controller of Factual and Richard Klein, Director of Factual.

Jo Clinton-Davis said: Billy's infectious joy at discovering new experiences and meeting new people makes every journey he does with us an exceptional ride. And his passion for seeking out the spirit of the US in all its richly varied forms makes him the perfect guide to take us on this iconic trip."

The series will team Billy once again with Series Director Mike Reilly who worked with Billy on ITV series Billy Connolly's Route 66 and the RTS winning Billy Connolly's Big Send Off. Series Producer is Michelle Crowther who recently made the Sky One hit Micky Flanagan's Detour De France.

Mike Reilly said: "I can't think of anyone better qualified to undertake this journey than Billy, his love of America, its people and music combined with his one of a kind wit and skewered powers of observation will make this show a joy to be part of and more importantly watch."

Executive Producer for 7 Wonder Steve Condie said: "The comic brilliance and infectious curiosity of Billy Connolly plus the drama and glory of heartland America - what's not to love? 7 Wonder are thrilled to be making this series for ITV."

About 7 Wonder:

Launched in the Spring of 2014 7 Wonder is committed to collaborating with the best talent, on and off-screen, to deliver quality, bespoke and beautifully executed content across all non-scripted genres. The joint venture underlines Seven's commitment to increasing its international presence in the production of television programmes and new formats.

7Wonder focuses on the creation of new television programmes and formats, initially for the United Kingdom television market, and is a joint venture between Seven, Alex Fraser, Liza Abbott and Simon Ellse. The formation of 7Wonder builds on Seven's leadership in the creation and production of highly successful programming, including Home and Away, My Kitchen Rules, Border Security, A Place To Call Home, House Rules, Packed to the Rafters.

It also follows the company's formation of the new 7Beyond joint venture with Beyond International which focuses on the creation and development of new programmes and formats for the United States television market. Seven's original formats and produced programmes are sold into more than 130 markets around the world.

About Seven Network

Seven is Australia's most-watched broadcast television platform. Seven – with three broadcast channels, Seven, 7TWO and 7mate - continues to lead in primetime, building on its market-leading performance over the past eight years. The network also dominates across breakfast and morning television.

The network is expanding its presence in media, driving its leadership in the creation of content and delivering that content anywhere, anytime to the biggest audiences.

The company is expanding its presence in the further delivery of its video and publishing content beyond its three digital broadcast channels and across an array of platforms, including Hybrid Broadband Broadcast Television. Seven is also expanding into SVOD with Presto, a joint venture with Foxtel in Australia.

Seven is now creating more content than at any time in its history and is expanding its presence in international content production with the formation of two new international production companies: 7Wonder and 7Beyond. These two new businesses underline a key part of its strategy for today and in the future: the expansion of our leadership in the production of content.

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