

AGE OF OUTRAGE

This is a call for sketches for the TV series **Age of Outrage** which has just been commissioned by Paul Forde at BBC Wales. We've been asked to make 6x20' episodes.

The brief of the series is to be funny. And to give opportunities to upcoming writers and performers who are from Wales or who are based in Wales.

Hopefully this will be of interest to you – a chance to get some funny ideas out there on TV. The short-form sketch format opens up lots of creative avenues to go down.

You can see the **Age of Outrage** pilot on iPlayer, and it would be worth watching that to see the sort of territory we're in. It's reflections on modern life and popular culture – advertising, TV and films, social trends and so on, but also we're in the market for stuff that just makes us laugh without necessarily fitting into a particular category. So, sight gags and surreal stuff may well find their way into the series alongside skits on Netflix shows, or observations on the way Deliveroo couriers ride their bikes, or why duvet covers are so difficult to put on.



We're not looking for material that is only going to resonate with a Welsh audience – the sketches should be able to run as well in South Shields as in South Wales. Nor are we looking for 'You know you're Welsh when...' sketches, or sketches that perpetuate stereotypes about life in the Valleys or rugby clubs etc. However, through casting and locations, people should be able to see that the series is made in Wales.

We will reflect on Covid in the series, but it won't be all about Zoom meetings and wearing masks. Don't worry if your characters should be social distancing, we'll cross that bridge if we take the sketch on and talk things through with you. Don't worry either about locations – if you want to set a sketch in a space ship or down a mine, we can get that to work on TV.

We're asking for submissions on a 'No win no fee' basis – so send us your pretty complete sketches of no more than two and a half minutes duration and if we want to use them, we'll get back to you to talk further. If we do use them on air, then we pay the Writers' Guild rates for sketch shows on BBC TV. If it's just a bare idea, then we're unlikely to make a decision based on that, but conversely, don't spend days polishing and redrafting a script which might not get picked up, as that's not fair on you.

From making the pilot, we learned that there should really be gags in the sketch all the way through – it doesn't work so well when there's a long wait for a punchline without anything in between. Often too, the end of a sketch is the hardest thing to come up with, so if we've been laughing all the way up to the punchline, we can forgive a weaker ending.



Also, try to work a couple of different angles into a script – so for instance in the pilot, an idea came up about 'Gunge', that great staple of kids TV in the 90s. We wondered what had happened to it. The idea really came to life when we thought about how a serious current affairs show might tackle the subject. So – funny premise, and lampooning a TV show and we have two things going on at the same time, which gives us more layers to have fun with.

Finally, just a word about format. It's easy to write sketches which are in two parts – in other words, when we come back to a sketch, the characters are still listening to someone drone on, or still waiting to cross the road or similar. We don't want sketches in that form please. We may well do a series of visits to the same scenario if the idea is strong enough, but we've set ourselves a rule not to just do the same gag again, so it has to have a new thought or something different about it to warrant a second outing.

So, I hope this is of interest, and I look forward to seeing your material.

Phillip Moss, Producer, Age of Outrage