



Leading Lights

Imagination and Creativity
in Television and Beyond

Essays from:

Martha Lane Fox

Roly Keating

Iain Morris

Michel Roux Jnr

Ed Vaizey

Introduction from Darren Childs

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UKTV's Leading Lights: Imagination and creativity in television and beyond

Darren Childs

Once, a new idea faced a daunting obstacle course before it could be let loose on the world. It would confront a series of gatekeepers, usually senior executives behind big desks, each of whom was armed with his own prejudices and equipped with the power to say no. As a result, many potentially transformative innovations were batted away by a decision-maker too short-sighted to appreciate the prospects they held out, or too nervous to take on the risks they entailed. Other ideas were diluted to death by committees of the nervous. As a result, people who might have unleashed groundbreaking proposals were less likely to bother.

The world has lost out, but the communications revolution has swept aside this cosy way of doing things.

Today, new ideas cannot be kept down. The internet has provided them with an instant barrier-free marketplace and wherever they come from, if they have value, this value will be realised. If companies fail to have ideas in the first place, others will have them instead. Innovation has become friction-free and is proliferating as never before. Nowadays, a teenager in his bedroom can be the one to come up with a notion capable of transforming a whole sector.

In this world, those who generate and foster ideas will prevail and those who do not will go to the wall. Nowhere is this more true than in the creative industries, for obvious reasons.

UKTV's Leading Lights tries to get to grips with the transformed creative universe that now confronts us and its authors are all uniquely placed to provide the insights that we need.

Roly Keating CEO of the British Library, and former UKTV executive, starts off our debate by discussing how digital technology has melted the boundaries between institutions as varied as the British Library and the BBC. He describes the creativity of his teams and the opportunity that digital provides to enable new users to delight in the library's rich collection. At UKTV we also have created multiple places where you can consume our brands and our content in a digital format – apps, websites and Video On Demand which

are non linear and consumer-friendly. While our TV industry is known to overanalyse what's actually going on, at UKTV some of our best insights come from the back of the no.39 bus – seeing what fellow commuters are watching on their Android phones. Our content is liberated from traditional television schedule – for example, UKTV developed theDave On Demand iOS app – it's now a brand you can enjoy anywhere, not just sitting in your living room; and the Hairy Bikers app allowed the user to buy brilliant music from their Mississippi Adventure programme on Good Food, as well as finding their recipes.

If you're not innovating then you'll be going backwards, quickly

I firmly believe that innovation is the only true competitive advantage any company has. If you're not innovating then you'll be going backwards, quickly. You have to innovate at every stage: your processes, your people, your products, your offices, everything. I strongly support **Martha Lane Fox**, who succinctly argues the case for digital engagement of all citizens. She identifies the fundamental problem in our education system that prevents progressing and innovating. We're never going to create a generation of entrepreneurial thought-leaders unless we allow individuals to be individuals – not homogenised into a set way of thinking. The technology we have in schools is, quite frankly, a joke. It's an embarrassment in comparison to what goes on around the world and the way that other education systems are using technology in everything that they do.

Martha points out that broadcasting is now a data-driven business and she is right. Television's always been about buying mass reach efficiently and quickly and digital advertising has enabled hitherto unreachable niches so that brands can super-target their audiences like never before. The two disciplines have come together and digital TV is the bridge.

We believe that there is as much insight from real life situations as there is from data

At UKTV, instead of just interpreting analytics and data, we go out into people's homes. We spend time with a family watching television and discussing what they like. We believe that there is as much insight from real life situations as there is from data. Data on its own can be as dangerous as gut feeling alone can be dangerous.

In his description of the path to becoming a creative writer, **Iain Morris** reveals some of the difficulties of commissioning new ideas and describes desperately searching for a glimmer of an idea that might turn into something good. At UKTV we commission 700 hours and

spend over £100m a year or so on programmes. Like Iain we do not have a cupboardful of brilliant ideas that we are wilfully refusing to make, in fact we will crawl over broken glass to make a brilliant idea happen. If your idea is creatively driven then I want UKTV to be the place to bring it. The bold, risky, slightly dangerous, noisy idea that wouldn't get made by a terrestrial TV company, is what UKTV wants to hear about. We've got an innovative slate that is creatively pushing boundaries in order to offer viewers another reason to spend time with us. We don't want wallpaper television. We want to broadcast the passion project that the programme maker feels their life won't be complete until it's made. The Roux Scholarship is an example on air in June. In his essay, **Michel Roux Jr** describes creativity as 'a blend of understanding and adventurousness': in cookery he thinks it is about understanding tastes and flavours and textures and then adding your own take on that. TV creativity is the same.

Working in television is not dissimilar to a political career – TV is the ultimate democracy

The Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries, **Ed Vaizey**, describes the conundrum of planning for change, when no one knows when change will happen. I agree with him that over-regulation can be as damaging as under-regulation. Getting that balance right is tough, but in the UK we need to deal with competitive issues without running to Government for help. As long as we've got a robust protection around intellectual property so that the people that are investing in content and creative work can ensure that they reap the economic benefits, I am happy with regulation. Working in television is not dissimilar to a political career – TV is the ultimate democracy. If you make bad television people don't watch it. Today the UK audience watches more digital broadcasting than terrestrial television – there are more players in the game and we're competing for eyeballs through great content not regulation. Let the viewer decide where they want to spend their time.

At UKTV we have an 'innovation pot' – a scheme to help new ideas

The big challenge for established companies is their culture rather than their product. We're competing for talent not just with broadcasters but with digital companies.

Broadcasting tends to be old-fashioned, regimented, hierarchical, and process-driven. For media companies to survive they need to have a culture that encourages creation of

new ideas and new thinking. At UKTV we have an 'innovation pot' – a scheme to help new ideas to get company funding, to develop and create and take into market.

True entrepreneurs stand for change and come to work because they want to change something. They fundamentally feel frustrated with the way things are done and they're searching for change. So it's important to create a culture that does not hold any of them back.

Here are the five things on which I believe we all need to focus to develop a creative company culture:

- Aligning and engaging staff about purposes
- Permitting innovation and creative experiment
- Training for a converged world
- Setting up an 'innovation pot'
- Embracing change-makers

Ours is a world in which those who fail to foster creativity will flounder. Yet if you keep these five maxims in mind I am sure you will hold your own. With a bit of luck you will prosper as well. I hope this book will help you.

Darren Childs's television career began as Head of Programming for BSkyB's The Power Station in 1989. He then spent several years in Asia, working for MTV Asia and the STAR TV platform, before joining Sony Pictures Television International.

Darren was Managing Director of BBC Worldwide Global Channels for four years. Under his leadership, the channels achieved dramatic expansion and enjoyed their most successful year in 2009/2010, with record sales and profits. During this time, he was a member of BBC Worldwide's Board and Executive Committee Team, and also sat on the UKTV Board.

*In September 2010 Darren joined UKTV – a joint venture between BBC Worldwide and Scripps Networks Interactive. His achievements for the network include the positioning of UKTV as the nation's fastest growing commercial television network of 2012; committing to investment of over £100m a year in content; launching five new HD channels; creating the number one programme in Pay TV with *Dynamo: Magician Impossible*; and running the UK's number one channels in both the Lifestyle and Factual genres.*

Darren is also at the forefront of UKTV's Video On Demand (VOD) strategy. UKTV's channels were the first to join BT Vision's television service, and are now a part of TalkTalk on YouView.

Risking a Digital Britain

Martha Lane Fox

Martha Lane Fox, co-founder of Lastminute.com, argues that there are structural problems within the UK that work against digital business start-ups – Victorian education, pessimism, the role of the BBC, and American imports that use the UK as a testing ground. She thinks that a cultural shift is needed, not just to create more individual entrepreneurs but to improve the teams working for entrepreneurs. Together with a board of eight top CEOs she is putting her energies into Go On UK – a charity that will build Britain's digital skills so we are all equipped for the future.

I don't think you can be a proper citizen of our society in the future if you are not engaged online. Over the last four years I have been working on how to encourage more people into digital engagement. Last year I started a campaign called *Race Online 2012*. This year I raised money from the corporate sector to continue a legacy organisation, *Go On UK*. It moved from public to private sector funding and we have eight chief executives round our boardroom table who have committed their organisations to help build digital skills – the basic skills you need to get the maximum benefit from being online.

In the UK we have a problem. The big digital movers and shakers – Google, Twitter, LinkedIn, Amazon and many others – were founded in America. We are stuck in a cultural cul-de-sac. There are no easy answers as to why the UK does not have the digital confidence of the US, but we must do our best to tackle our low digital self esteem. One reason is location. The UK is a test-bed for American companies before they go into other markets in Europe. Innovation from US companies is tried out in the UK at the earliest stage. When Google tests a game here before it goes international, it stamps out home grown innovation. My second concern is the dominance of the BBC. Although the BBC is a phenomenal organisation, digital innovation in the UK has happened inside the corporation. It is impressive that the BBC develops something as good as the iPlayer, but it remains inside the organisation and that restricts market factors.

There are basic structural difficulties with digital development. In the UK we are not especially entrepreneurial and we're not entrepreneurial in the digital world. Cultures

have characteristics and we are a naturally a scathing, and somewhat cynical, country. This can be useful, but unlike the US we haven't had a go-get-it attitude – we haven't had to go and get anything because we've been here! In our education system we haven't put risk-taking at the heart of what we teach people. We're very structured, with a hugely impressive, long legacy of Victorian-led syllabuses, so at every point our risk-averse culture is reinforced rather than broken.

The UK needs more people that think it would be fun to go and work in a start-up

Context is fundamental to change. There are people who are lucky enough to be presented with different ways of working. I came from a family that would have been more shocked if I had gone into banking or accounting than been an entrepreneur. My entire family backdrop was chaotic and extraordinary. I think that made me more likely to take risks. My father, Robin Lane Fox, is an academic and a gardening writer. He wrote a weekly column in the *Financial Times* and decided to self-publish a book. So we, as children, would spend most Saturdays sending out books that were piled high in our sitting room. Any small business would understand working on a small budget in a slightly unusual way – two small children were jam-packing Jiffy bags with gardening books.

The mission of the company entrepreneur is not an easy one, and teamwork is the solution. It is not just me that's created *Go On UK*, it's a team. Of course you might need somebody to take the punt, get an idea off the ground, but that's not why businesses are successful. It's as important to encourage the people that work with the entrepreneurs as it is to encourage the initial idea. The UK needs more people that think it would be fun to go and work in a start-up. It's as much part of the cultural shift as creating entrepreneurs itself.

Great quality content still flies, because people want to have incredible visual experiences

That is not to say there are no new cutting-edge digital businesses in the UK. The revolution around manufacturing and 3D printing is astonishing. If only it had been developed earlier! When I had my car accident I could have been 3D-printed, because they print out bits of bone and jaw and nerve tissue now. The UK is beginning to put digital technology at the heart of how we think about health, both learning from data and using it to enable better decisions in hospitals. NHS Unlocked already runs patient groups online. If you're

a diabetes sufferer you can talk to others like you and the analysis of the log-in data provides an overall picture of diabetes sufferers in the UK. Analysing the 'big data' that comes out of the group helps provide excellent patient-centric care.

When technology is at the heart of how we make decisions, a revolution begins. Television is changing in this new digital age. People *love* content (actual viewing figures remain constant) but distribution has changed with compression technologies. Television is now a business in retail and data collection as much as broadcasting. It's about platforms, access to audiences and relationships with the audiences, as opposed to the actual need or want for people to consume. Great quality content still flies, because people want to have incredible visual experiences. But the economics of television have changed with the way that programmes are consumed. The terrestrial television stations know that they have to approach the audience in a different way but need to keep making great content and to keep their brand relevant. I'm on the board of Marks & Spencer's, which has a TV channel on its website. There is convergence in the market place – you can't just be a retailer; you've got to have a media business. All businesses need to be interested in content and understand how it can push their brand out more deeply.

The digital world offers us a phenomenal revolution. Health, education, television and retail are on the cusp of convergence and change. That is why *Go On UK* is determined to make sure that we all have the skills to be full citizens of the brave new digital world around us.

Martha's top tips for entrepreneurs:

- Get experience – go to work for a small start-up to see what it's like
- Get more experience – minimise the risks to yourself by learning with someone else
- Make contacts – just get out there and start meeting people
- Make more contacts – follow people on Twitter, look at the Facebook groups, use all the incredible resources on the web
- Join webinars online, as well as trying to build real-world contacts
- Go to conferences where you think you might meet people who can invest in your idea
- Search for information and technology that you can get free online
- Find someone brilliant to start your idea with because two is definitely better than one.

- Entrepreneurs depend on their team – it's as important to encourage the people who work with the entrepreneurs as it is to encourage the initial entrepreneurs
- Be obsessive about your product
- Don't start a website which you never check (you'd be amazed at how many people say 'Oh really? You look at your website every ten minutes?' Yes. It is essential.)
- Recognise that you do need great technologists around you – hire the best technical people.
- Technology is fundamental to success – spend a lot of time with the technical team
- You may have to pay the technology guys more than you get!

Top five TV shows

The last five episodes of Borgen (watching the set)

Martha Lane Fox, CBE, soon to be the UK's youngest woman peer, is best known for co-founding Lastminute.com. An online travel and gift business, it generated great publicity, floating at the peak of the dot-com bubble. The company survived the dot-com crash and was sold in 2005 in a deal that valued it at £577million. She is a board member of Channel 4, mydeco.com, and Marks & Spencer. She is also chair of Go On UK, having been engaged as a public servant chairperson on various e-commerce projects and investigations. Go On UK is a charity committed to building digital skills in Britain.

Merger in the Library

Roly Keating

The CEO of the British Library argues that digital has melted the boundaries between institutions and that great creative opportunities lie in the converging digital environment. Just as the British Library faces the question 'Is the printed book dead?', TV faces the challenge of creative channel-building and scheduling when audiences have real-time, curated, selected and creative choices via the internet. In this essay Roly Keating outlines the challenges but enthusiastically embraces the opportunities.

Why should an institution like the British Library be run by someone with a background in media? Could it be a sign of how far digital has melted the boundaries between institutions? The BBC is a great repository of national memory and content and in that sense there's a direct read-across to the aspirations of an institution like the British Library. The Library exists to collect, preserve and give access to the combined accumulated national memory of published content, recorded sound and the whole creative and intellectual heritage of the UK. It aims to serve multiple audiences at once: the research community, education, and higher education; it's there to serve business, to allow people to have new ideas, and to find a spark that conjures something new. It's there, of course, for you and me as citizen researchers or writers, to find out that crucial piece of information we need or to do some historical research to stimulate a screenplay or a novel. The British Library has a public programme of exhibitions, events, talks and web exhibitions that, not unlike the best TV, aim to be about inspiration, enjoyment and stimulation.

The digital environment has changed the boundaries within broadcasting. Television has faced an exploding opportunity around expanded multichannel linear broadcasting. The great first wave of multichannel innovation was driven by broadcasters seeing a chance to move broadcasting from something deeply landlocked by analogue broadcasting to something that could offer multiple streams. For UKTV in particular the aim was to make more of the core creativity of the industry and BBC programme-making talent. UKTV offered a chance to make new things, whether they were brand new formats or extended versions of current shows. The spirit of using a digital opportunity to provide a burst of

channelled creativity was at the heart of the venture and we're seeing it today, with a new tranche of originated programmes.

What has changed recently for digital television is the growth of the internet. Instead of the web being something profoundly separate to television with different sets of consumption habits, it's moving with the grain of broadcasting. TV faces the challenge of a new kind of creative channel-building and scheduling happening in front of our eyes. The live viewing experience is beginning to offer audiences real-time, curated, selected and creative choices via the internet.

We need to understand what collecting, storage and preservation mean in the digital age.

The British Library has similar challenges. We have to manage the transition from a largely physical institution concerned with interaction with real objects, and become a great digital institution looking forward to this century and the next. We need to understand what collecting, storage and preservation mean in the digital age. We are reinterpreting the task of being a curator for an audience who rely almost entirely on digital material in the form of eJournals or datasets. We have a growing curatorial team with digital scholarship who work with collections which have a natural relationship to digital, such as our audio collection. There are many other opportunities. The British Library has historic map collections and we collect the very latest maps, many of which are digital. Our latest geo-referencing project published historic maps onto the web and invited people to geo-reference them against modern maps. So we can identify the data hidden in these historic maps against the digital map record. It has been a great contribution to research and an exciting collaborative project for people in the UK and around the world.

There are huge challenges in rethinking the roles of an institution like the British Library, but also many opportunities. The digital age is full of creative potential – people can find what they want quickly, which frees up energies to go even deeper with their research. The library is one of those very old words that is turning out to have valuable new meanings. Creative curatorial library skills like indexing, cataloguing, giving access, and helping people find the material they need at the right time, turn out to be exactly the disciplines that are driving the global information economy. These skills underpin the business model of Amazon or Apple or Google. This is why great memory institutions are partnering with digital organisations. Google is the British Library's partner in the digitisation of a quarter of a million of our 18th and 19th century books. We are increasing

access but we're also enabling new forms of research. People can now explore a whole corpus of work as a dataset as well as atomise bits of literature.

The British Library holds the national newspapers collection. We have a partnership with *brightsolid*, the digital company behind *Find My Past*. They have expertise in high-volume digitisation of material that interests family historians. They have become the British Library's partner in digitising out-of-copyright or pre-1900 newspaper holdings of the British Library, and hence of the nation. The material becomes a resource for study in the reading rooms here, but also is available on the open web as a paid for service delivered by *brightsolid* for a ten-year period. *brightsolid* have a creative business model that funds the project and the public gets benefit in the form of a digitised collection. Once historic newspapers become digital then you can turn them into text and the text can be searched. You or I can now go into that body of material and hunt out our village, our family, or whatever our obsession might be. And who knows what other connections grow from this? It is not an accident that we're working with a partner which has also worked with UKTV because increasingly the edges between media or sector are reshaping and dissolving. Audiences may be inspired by a television programme to go on a journey of research or discovery and rapidly find they are moving into the domain of what was historically called a library.

It is not an accident that we're working with a partner which has also worked with UKTV

The British Library sits at the intersection of many different industries. New ways of thinking are sparked by different industries coming together; by people from a broadcast background seeing the opportunity in digitised historic artefacts or people from a business background finding deep sources of information. I think that this is creativity in its purist form – it is a visible spark of innovation happening because people have been exposed to something new.

Print is not dead. In sheer volume, both newspapers and print books seem to be riding high, but audience habits are changing in front of our eyes. My daughter flits effortlessly between buying books on her Kindle and working her way through a paperback and likes both in different moods. In our lifetime we will undoubtedly enjoy a sea of print materials but it'll also be our privilege to live through some form of revolution of blended media, with people being amphibious, switching back and forth between print and digital. There's an analogy with television here. Linear scheduling hasn't disappeared under pressure of on-demand services. It has just had to raise its game. And we may even see the same

for print and paper: rather than disappearing, the specialness and quality and power of print will be proving itself in new way. But where print existed purely to deliver bald prose or information, digital does a better job. We will see digital as the best medium for learned journals or scientific research where the need to disseminate and discuss and explore research quickly is important.

When I first joined the British Library I was struck by what an irrepressibly creative organisation it is. The curators here are working day-in, day-out with the collections to find new creative opportunities. Often that appears in the form of an exhibition such as *Murder in the Library* – our A-Z of Crime Fiction – or our major exhibition of *Mughal India* through manuscripts and paintings. If you look at the users of the Library, you can palpably feel the creativity rising up out of the reading rooms and the cafes. It is a public space where people come in order to have new ideas, to test a theory, to research a new story or novel, and so we're here not just to be creative but to serve creativity. In the digital age the characteristic scene is someone with their laptop using the Library's digital resources and wanting the environment of concentrated creativity that a great national library can provide.

Top Tips for Creativity from the British Library

- Re-interpret your tasks from physical to digital
- Be amphibious: switch back and forth between print and digital
- Collaborate with others in the digital search for data
- If you find what you want quickly, spend time searching in more depth
- Look for a spark to conjure something new

Roly Keating, Chief Executive of the British Library, began his career in television, where he was described as one of the BBC's 'greatest cultural heavyweights'. His career began as a producer and director in Music and Arts programming, before moving on to run BBC Four and BBC Two. In 1997 Roly was Head of Programming for UKTV, overseeing the launch of the BBC's joint venture channels. He went on to become BBC Controller of Digital Channels and run the Digital Archive, where he was overall editorial leader for the BBC's online services, including BBC iPlayer.

Saying Yes to Everything

Iain Morris

Iain Morris, creator of The Inbetweeners, says a decision to say 'yes' to any kind of social event or offer was the defining factor in his creative career – though most of the time it led to disaster! But out of disaster came The Inbetweeners TV series and movie, and a writing career in the UK and LA.

Some years ago, not long after I first started working as a television producer, someone sitting next to me at a wedding asked me what I did for a living. I launched into explaining the nuts and bolts of the job. My companion looked more and more puzzled. "OK, I get it," he said eventually. "You have to come up with ideas, which you show to your boss and he or she probably won't like them. If you finally come up with something they do like, it gets taken to someone else – the commissioner – who probably won't like it." I agreed. "So your job is essentially about how you deal with rejection, isn't it?" he said "Um, yes"

Creativity in television comedy is a difficult business. When I eventually became a commissioner myself, covering the maternity leave of Caroline Leddy, I started to understand how very difficult it could be, not only to be creative yourself but also to nurture creativity in other people. There's a sustaining myth, if you like, among people that there are cupboardfuls of brilliant ideas that the BBC and Channel 4 have wilfully refused to make. That really isn't the case. As a producer, dealing with almost constant rejection, I'd assumed commissioners spent every day musing over irresistible proposals and choosing between them. The reality is that whilst there are some people coming up with brilliant ideas, in general the commissioner desperately searches for something he or she might be able to help someone develop both into something good and also something that works for the network, given the right script and cast.

I was a commissioning editor for about four years, just long enough to take a sitcom – *Peep Show* – through the whole process from pilot to transmission. Then, around the time iTunes launched, all the talk was of how channels and commissioners would become irrelevant as creators turned to distributing content directly via the Internet. I wasn't

entirely sure how that would happen – I'm still not – but I decided to go back to what's seen as the creative side of the fence. My motivation was that I wanted to live or die by my own talents rather than getting credit – or blame – off the back of other people's efforts, and also I wanted to work with Damon Beesley, who's an inspiration to me, infinitely more talented and funny than I am.

You might say Damon and I have never really grown up, and we still love that world we portrayed in *The Inbetweeners*. When I was that age, 18 or so, I made a decision that I'd pretty much say yes to any kind of social event or offer; and most of the time it's been disastrous but it's always been a defining factor in my life, and I'm now grateful for it as it's led to enough anecdotes to fill the three *Inbetweeners* series. We wanted the show to be almost a survival guide, a kind of self-help manual for teenage boys, so that they could look at it and say, "My life sucks but it's not actually as bad as it is for Will and Simon and Jay and Neil." and also to be helpful for teenage girls. We liked the idea that maybe girls suffering abuse from boys on the bus, or wherever, could devastate them by calling them 'inbetweeners'.

Damon and I have never really grown up

Our work always starts with a germination period, in which Damon and I might talk or email back and forth, telling each other stories about our own lives, and eventually out of that might come an idea. Then we'd chat with friends, then more formally meet our script editor, Robert Popper, and the main actors – Greg Davies, Simon Bird, Joe Thomas, James Buckley and Blake Harrison – to talk to them about ideas; but the creative process which gave birth to *The Inbetweeners* was definitely refined over the three series. We all got to know the characters so well that by the time we reached the second and third series, and the film, we had to think much less about what and how they'd say things, than about what they'd do. Story became more important to work on, I suppose.

Right from the start though, we would find ourselves a small office, the sort of cheap place with leaky radiators and a sporadic broadband connection that you'd rent for eight weeks if you were running a telemarketing scam, and we'd cover one of the walls with all the ideas we'd come up with, scribbled on yellow Post-it notes. We'd stare at the wall until patterns formed – "If Jay does that, then maybe Simon can do that, and Will would... " – and the plotlines began to fall into place and form themselves roughly into six episodes. We'd write those up, show them to Caroline Leddy, our executive producer, and then sit opposite each other in the same room for weeks on end typing these up into scripts

and then writing and rewriting. We aim to do at least fifteen drafts of each episode, and for the film we did many more.

Caroline is essential to our creative process. She is positively inspirational with scripts and casting – but also she is brutal in her note-giving, and tenacious when it comes to sticking to her point. She's the opposite of a yes-man (a 'no-woman?'), and that is exactly what you want, especially as a show starts to take off. Somebody has to tell you why a scene's not working or why some jokes aren't funny, and remind you that you can do better than that. The trust between us is so strong that when we are killing ourselves to finish the final mix before editing time runs out, and Caroline says the voiceover's not good enough, we go back and do it again. We don't have to do what she says, but we know she's saying it because she believes it. Her instincts about comedy are usually spot-on, so it's in our interests to push ourselves and make it better.

We'd stare at the wall until patterns formed

The American comedy process of corralling a team of writers to sit around a table can work wonderfully but it's not for us. After we'd mapped out the first series, we asked someone else in to write a script. They did it very well, but those characters had become so personal to us that we decided we had to write it ourselves. The joy of writing in a partnership is having someone opposite to ask for instant feedback, and bat jokes to and fro. The other main reason for working together is to make sure that the other person is actually writing when they say they are, and not surfing the Web. Jonathan Frantzen has said he's fairly confident no great work of art has ever been created by anyone with excellent Internet access.

We're also great believers in the notion that you should focus on one thing at a time and be utterly single-minded. It took Damon and I a year to make the first series of *The Inbetweeners*, and we did nothing else for that whole period. When we're writing we're in the office every day from 10 till 6, or later as we get closer to deadline, with an hour for lunch. We don't think about other projects, or what else is happening in the company. I think about the script from when I wake up to when I go to bed. My sharpest ideas and best lines might come to me in the shower in the morning, or walking to work, because I'm so totally immersed in it.

I'm working in the US at the moment, and I think that creative single-mindedness is often missing in the American television industry. A lot of people are always looking towards the next deal. It's almost expected in America that you should have at least three things

on the go at once, doing each to a 'good enough' degree and hoping it hits, rather than spending time on one thing and making it excellent. And then judging it on its merits, rather than whether it was a ratings success or not.

I miss working with Damon, and I miss the boys. They are four of the most talented comedic actors of their generation, and it would be wonderful to get another project going with them. I can hardly believe it's been two years since we filmed *The Inbetweeners* movie. Damon and I would like to do a sequel but if it doesn't happen, we might try to write a film, perhaps something about families, since most of the anecdotes we tell each other these days are about our families. We were working together recently, locked away in a hotel room. People kept asking us what we were doing: "Are you working?" We'd say, "Yes, we're working". And then there'd be a beat and we'd admit that actually, we sit in a room and try to make each other laugh. Every job I've ever done in TV has meant incredibly long hours, has been difficult and very stressful, but fundamentally it should always be fun. Trying to come up with jokes with people you like has to be a fun job. If it's not fun, then you're not doing it right.

Creative Top Tips

- Say yes to everything
- Write with a friend so you know you are both working – not surfing the Web.
- Write all your ideas on yellow stickies and put them up on a wall so you can see how they fit together
- Be single minded – only work on one project at a time.
- Have someone brutal to tell you why some jokes aren't funny, and remind you that you can do better
- If it's not fun, then you're not doing it right.

Iain Morris got his first break in comedy by pestering a producer to give him a job as a runner on his favourite television programme, Fantasy Football League. After a stint as a commissioning editor for Comedy at Channel 4, he started his own production company, Bwark, with long-time friend Damon Beesley. The show they wrote together, The Inbetweeners, ran for three series, won numerous awards, and spawned a massively successful film.

Creativity in the Kitchen

Michel Roux Jr

Creativity comes naturally to chefs and to people who love food. One of my very first memories is the smell of cooking sugar and caramel, probably the most evocative scent of my childhood. Food was in the air that I breathed growing up, with a father and an uncle who were professional chefs. My father had trained as a patissier, a pastry chef, and before he and my uncle opened Le Gavroche, he worked for some of the most distinguished people in England. When I was a child we lived in the Kent countryside, and my father would rear chickens and rabbits and pigeons for the table, as well as growing his own vegetables in the garden. So food was in my genes, and as children everything in our lives was food-orientated.

The raw materials and the inspiration for our creativity are the ingredients, and the way that what's available changes with the seasons. A fresh egg and succulent spears of asparagus, during those brief weeks when English asparagus is harvested. Berries, thick golden cream. Cheese and ham – a marriage made in heaven. You don't have to make it complicated. But if you understand what works perfectly together, that is the springboard for creativity. I take much of my inspiration from visiting smallholdings and farms, and seeing the commitment and the passion that these people have in producing the goods. In Devon, there's a lady called Denise Bell who runs a biodynamic farm called Foxholes with her husband; we use her eggs and pork, which taste absolutely marvellous. Their animals are free to roam, they are weaned later and live longer. They are never given pharmaceutical drugs, but instead are treated with homeopathic remedies. Those creatures are reared with respect, and so it's only natural that the chef in his turn should have equal passion and respect for the ingredients.

I come from the classic tradition of French cookery. For me creativity is a blend of understanding and adventurousness: understanding tastes and flavours and textures and then adding your own take on that. From knowing cheese and ham work together, you can experiment with different combinations of different hams, different cheeses, different cooking methods and so forth. But the core of that, the building blocks of your creativity, is the fact that we know that cheese and ham work together. In cookery, as in everything else artistic, it is necessary to serve your apprenticeship before you can be truly creative.

But I like to encourage creativity in my kitchen, and I ask the head chef and the sous-chefs at Le Gavroche to look at my repertoire and to see what they can bring creatively to the table. We trial the dishes together and see how they can evolve. And I pay for them to go out to eat elsewhere, to do our 'research and development' and be inspired by other people's creativity!

You don't have to make it complicated

With any kind of cooking that I do on the television I showcase wonderful ingredients, but I try to keep the recipes and techniques themselves relatively simple, so then it becomes achievable and can inspire ordinary people to give it a go and try the same techniques and combinations at home. It's a well-known fact that the majority of cookery books are never used. I find it quite sad that there are people who don't cook at all, who just consume fast food or ready meals. They're missing out on a load of fun and some great experiences. Cookery on television is all about expanding the knowledge base about food and flavour. There are so many cookery programmes on TV today, and that can only be a good thing, because it makes people interested and curious about their food and where it comes from. I was horrified by the burger scandal recently, where it was discovered that some supermarket burgers contained horse meat and pork, as well as beef. That should teach us many lessons, not least about the labelling of food: if a burger or a sausage is labelled as containing so much 'meat', what does that mean? What kind of meat? I'm French and in France we eat horsemeat, so that does not bother me so much, though I understand that many English people find eating horse more contentious. But what does appal me is the fact that people were not being given the information to make an informed choice about what they were eating. Even worse, people whose religion does not allow them to eat pork were being duped into eating it unawares, and that is outrageous. So the more television cookery programmes can help people think about where their food comes from, the better.

It's sad that some people don't cook

At the heart of all creativity lies passion, and I'm a very passionate person when it comes to food. I am fascinated by the fact that other people's creativity, in the digital field, can work alongside my own more traditional creativity to inspire more people to cook. As well as the television programmes, my cookery books can be available on devices like Kindle, so that the person at home not only flicks through the pages but has the benefit of little step-by-step videos showing them what to do. There is even an app of my cooking

that can be downloaded to a phone or a tablet, with six or seven short videos and about 60 recipes. It makes cooking so spontaneous. You can say to yourself, what can I do with those fresh eggs I bought this afternoon? Let's try a soufflé. That kind of creative technology applied to the kitchen is absolutely brilliant. Cookery and apps: perhaps they could be the cheese and ham of the future.

Creative Top tips:

- Your ingredients are the inspiration for creativity in the kitchen. Make sure you know where they come from.
- Some things like cheese and ham go together naturally, but you can still be creative with the type of cheese or how you cook them
- Make sure your experiments are tried and tested before you let them loose on your friends and family
- Try other people's food – eat out and be inspired by other people's ideas
- Be passionate

Michel Roux Jr, who was born on 23 May 1960, is a graduate of Le Gavroche. He received his schooling in its kitchens and is imbued with its unique atmosphere and style. Michel has a deep respect for the classical foundations of French cooking. The name Roux is synonymous in Britain with the qualities of French haute cuisine.

Looking to the future

Ed Vaizey

The digital revolution is upon us. But the profound and permanent changes it will bring are not yet entirely clear. It's as if we are caught in a holding pattern, where we can see the future, but where traditional patterns continue to hold sway.

We can be pretty certain where things are going. We know that people are going to be consuming content in different ways: on tablets and smartphones in particular; with more interaction and in a more bespoke fashion. We can predict, for example, that tablets and smart TVs will become more important for watching television than linear delivery. But at the same time our statistics show that people's viewing patterns remain fairly traditional. Public service broadcasting and watching television live is still the predominant means of consuming content; indeed live viewing is increasing. Netflix and Lovefilm offer new ways of watching movies, but the cinema in the UK continues to break box-office records in terms of attendance.

I can see exactly why television and filmed drama remains predominant. I am proud of the UK's TV drama, with *Downton Abbey* leading the way but many other dramas including Stephen Poliakoff's *Dancing on the Edge* representing the best of UK talent. Meanwhile our television channels also showcase the best of overseas talent: I'm addicted to Scandinavian drama whether it's *Borgen* or *The Killing*. Perfectly shot with excellent scripts, they acknowledge their debt to American drama. In the cinema, I particularly enjoyed *Argo* and *Lincoln*, and I couldn't be more delighted that we've had a British-produced hit in *Les Misérables*. And of course one of the UK's great strengths is creating format shows for family viewing on television: *Strictly Come Dancing*, *X Factor*, *I'm a Celebrity* and the like are even better watched on television at home than as part of the studio audience.

We only have to look at the music business to see what the future holds

So looking forward, we have a conundrum. It's difficult to know *when* things are going to change so significantly that we will need to shake up regulation. For example, YouTube is

not yet seen as a mainstream broadcast channel, but who's to know what it will be like in five years' time? We only have to look at the music business to see what the future holds in terms of downloading creative material. Even people like me, in middle age and stuck in traditional patterns, are now digital downloaders rather than CD buyers.

Sky continues to push ahead and innovation is part of its DNA.

On the one hand, the creative industries have to continue creating high quality content, but on the other they must also start to look at how they invest in distribution. The BBC has put a lot of money into iPlayer; as have the other broadcasters with their on-demand systems. Sky continues to push ahead and innovation is part of its DNA. Publishers are grappling with eBooks, and newspapers are concerned with their tablet applications. Considerable investment goes into experimenting with different distribution models and yet the creative industries are navigating in a fog, unclear about the speed of change.

This makes my role both difficult, and easy. There's something to be said for not doing too much. For example, on Internet issues our approach is as much as possible one of self-regulation. We bring Internet service providers together to sign up to a Code of Conduct. We do not want knee-jerk top-down regulation, while people are struggling to establish what the future is going to look like; instead Government needs to ensure that regulation doesn't stifle innovation. So with the ePrivacy Directive, or the Data Protection Directive, our premise is to maintain a light touch while the industry evolves.

We pushed hard for tax reliefs on film, TV, games and animation

The Government also has a role in supporting the creative industries through training initiatives, and via tax reliefs and increased funding. It's clear that in a competitive global environment, if you want to attract capital to invest in content, the UK must have an attractive tax regime. We pushed hard for tax reliefs on film, TV, games and animation. To a certain extent, there's something similar to an 'arms race', where countries like Canada are aggressive in trying to attract investment, and this has made the Treasury wary of tax breaks. But tax breaks are vital, because if you want companies to come and invest here you have to put something on the table that's attractive. We convinced the the Treasury of the need for them as it was clear that there are a number of major international companies that wanted to make content in the UK because of our fantastic skills base, but couldn't justify the cost because it was cheaper to look to other enticing tax regimes around the world.

At the same time we will continue to support Skillset, and we are creating a skills fund on the back of the tax credits. We've persuaded the Department of Education to make Computer Science prominent in the curriculum, so more young people will have experience of coding and programming that is so important in the creative industries.

Our creative industries attract people to come here, while creative spending also boosts spending in other sectors.

It's hard to measure an individual industry's economic contribution, but there's no doubt that film and television provides a lot of skilled employment. The games industry has been hit by competition from Canada but we're still one of the leading nations of games producers and I'm confident that it will grow. 'Screen' industries are important employers and, together with the wider creative industries such as architecture or fashion, there is a significant creative sector. What is more, they provide a superb marketing opportunity for the UK as a whole. Our creative industries attract people to come here, while creative spending also boosts spending in other sectors. The BBC's new base in Salford will impact on the economy in the North West. Where you get clusters of creative industries and concentrations of talent, there will be a great deal of knock-on investment in ancillary services, from set technicians to make up artists.

Five years ago, broadcasting analysts were confidently saying that the licence fee would be soon removed, but they were wrong. The BBC remains one of the most trusted brands both here in the UK and around the world, and by and large, the public accept the BBC licence fee, and from all the evidence I've seen, it is straightforward and simple to collect. Of course we want to make sure the licence fee remains affordable, and we want the BBC to be more efficient. There will be a chance for negotiation and debate about the level of the licence fee as we approach 2017, but there is no great clarion call for change.

It's important that companies recognise their core strengths

The other great conundrum that we face is the speed of convergence within the creative industries. For example, BT is moving into content, Sky is moving into infrastructure, and there is bundling to encourage the consumer to buy mobile, landline, TV and broadband from one company. This presents regulatory challenges – firstly, to make sure consumers are not unnecessarily locked into one supplier; and then to grapple with different regimes for regulating telecoms and regulating content. Convergence can be overplayed. Eric Schmidt speaking at the MacTaggart Lecture pointed out that Google is in the search

business, rather than the content production business. This resonates with my views: it's important that companies recognise their core strengths. You are not going to see the BBC providing broadband services, because it is a content business.

The creative industries have an incredibly important role to play in generating economic growth, and I want to make sure Government is helping create the right environment for this potential to be realised. The last few years has seen an abundance of wonderful films, albums and theatrical triumphs for the UK – I look forward to seeing what 2014 and beyond has in store for us.

Ed Vaizey (born 5 June 1968) is the UK Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries, a Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State post with responsibilities in both the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).

Ed was elected Conservative Member of Parliament for the constituency of Wantage at the 2005 General Election, and was re-elected in the 2010 General Election.

A qualified barrister, he is a regular media columnist and commentator.