TV's hottest talent

RadioTimes.com asked top television industry experts who's had an outstanding year. And here's what they said...

Who are the hottest talents on television today? Which stars do the broadcasters scramble to sign knowing that harnessing their talents to a show will make it fly?

RadioTimes.com asked some of the most powerful TV executives and broadcasting bigwigs in Britain to name the stars they believe have had an exceptional 12 months. The Radio Times TV 100 panel included channel controllers, commissioners, production executives, writers and producers - from Doctor Who's Steven Moffat to actor Lenny Henry. A panel of Radio Times editors - including TV editor Alison Graham - then ranked the final 100. The top 20 are listed here, and you can see all 100 at RadioTimes.com.

20 Prince William and Harry
Prince William and Prince Harry have won heartfelt praise for the way they are using their privileged position to make a difference. Both have chosen to speak publicly about how their mother's death has affected them throughout their lives. The Princes have revealed a vulnerability which royalty rarely acknowledges; Harry admitted that he was driven to the brink of a breakdown and sought professional help. They have tried to help others by spearheading the Heads Together campaign to make mental wellbeing every bit as important as physical health. Both have become admirable role models. Diana would have been proud.

18 Ed Balls
What I liked about Ed was that he fully embraced the show. He didn't just come on to lark about - he really gave it his all.
LEN GOODMAN
Former Head Judge on Strictly Come Dancing

17 Richard Ayodee
Richard is a talented comic, writer and director and it's really no surprise that his wits have lent themselves so tremendously to the role of presenter. We have loved him in Travel Man and he has put his own stamp on The Crystal Maze for a new generation of fans.
KELLY WEBB-LAMB
Head of Factual Entertainment, Channel 4

19 Noel Fielding
Along with the magnificent Sandi Toksvig, Noel is an utter delight to work with on Bake Off and one of the kindest, gentlest and wittiest individuals I've worked with. I'm convinced the nation's love affair with Noel Fielding is only just beginning.

16 Heidi Thomas
Heidi has an extraordinary ability to connect with a wide audience and make them care about the characters and scenarios she creates. As brilliantly demonstrated in Call the Midwife, her meticulous research and heartfelt emotion mark her out as one of the UK's finest screenwriters.
PIPPA HARRIS
Executive Producer, Call the Midwife

Our Panel of Experts

SIR LENNY HENRY actor and writer • MICHAELA COEL actor and creator, Chewing Gum • STEVEN MOFFAT Executive Producer, Doctor Who and Co-creator, Sherlock • KATE OATES Producer, Coronation Street • VINAY PATEL writer, Murdered By My Father • DOMINIC TREADWELL-COLLINS Head of TV, Blueprint Television • CHARLOTTE MOORE Director of Content, BBC • MARK LINSEY Director, BBC Studios • PATRICK HOLLAND Controller, BBC2 • JAY HUNT Former Chief Creative Officer, Channel 4 • ZAI BENNETT Director of Programmes, Sky UK • ADAM MacDONALD Director, Sky • JAY MARINE Vice-president, Prime Video, Europe • SHANE ALLEN Controller, BBC Comedy Commissioning • BETH WILLIS Head of Drama, Channel 4 • ANNE MENSAAH Head of Drama, Sky • JON MOUNTAGUE Head of Comedy, Sky • PETER SALMON Chief Creative Officer, Endemol Shine Group • DAMIEN TIMMER Managing Director, Mammoth Screen • NIRA PARK Founder, Big Talk Productions • JAMIE ISAACS CEO Avalon Television Factual • PIPPA HARRIS Executive Producer, Call the Midwife, and Co-founder, Neal Street Productions • DIEDERICK SANTER CEO Rudess • NICOLA SHINDLER Founder RED Production Company • KATE HARNWOOD Managing Director, Eonson Films • LIAM HUMPHREYS CEO Frensham UK Unscripted
13 Charlie Brooker
Charlie is a funny, prolific visionary, whose work strikes a chord with millennials from Singapore to San Francisco. His provocative, dystopian Black Mirror began life on Channel 4 and has now picked up three Emmy nominations on Netflix.

PETER SALMON Chief Creative Officer, Endemol Shine

9 Laura Kuenssberg
Recognition of Laura's exceptional journalism couldn't be more deserved. From the EU Referendum to the General Election, and from morning until night, Laura has taken BBC viewers and listeners through historic political times with her expert insight and flair for asking the right questions.

FRANCESCA UNSWORTH Deputy Director, BBC News and Current Affairs

11 Kit Harington
With his performance as Jon Snow in Game of Thrones, Kit has become a huge star and a significant player in TV and film. This year he'll play Robert Catesby in BBC1 drama Gunpowder, which he co-produced.

DIEDERICK SANTER CEO, Kudos

10 Pearl Mackie
She put her name firmly on the television map, broke down barriers and won rave reviews as the Doctor's first openly gay companion. No doubt more great things await.

TIM GLANFIELD Editor, RadioTimes.com

8 Adam Hills
Difficult times are a gift for satire and the often horrific nature of the past 12 months has seen Adam Hills transcend Last Leg's original disability and Paralympic brief to become an edgy topical comedy with a Strand of political satire running through it.

LIAM HUMPHREYS CEO, Fremantlemedia UK Unscripted

7 Sharon Horgan
Sharon Horgan is quite simply an exceptional talent. A razor-sharp comic writer and actress. With Catastrophe, she's finally won the global critical acclaim she's deserved for years. She has an unerring ability to see humour in the darkness and to go where others wouldn't dare.

JAY HUNT Former Chief Creative Officer Channel 4

6 Claire Foy
Claire Foy has always had regal credentials, but the last 12 months have seen her crowned queen of Netflix. Since cutting her teeth in Wolf Hall as Anne Boleyn, she has made her mark as Queen Elizabeth II in The Crown. May her reign continue for years to come.

SUSANNA LAZARUS News Editor, RadioTimes.com

15 James Corden
James has become a global superstar following his move to the US to present The Late Late Show. But he still returns to the UK each year to present the Brit-winning A League of Their Own on Sky 1 – and this June he enjoyed a successful homecoming by presenting The Late Late Show live from London.

ADAM MacDONALD Director, Sky 1

12 Nadiya Hussain
Nadiya is one of the most natural, engaging and effervescent talents to have emerged in factual television for years. She is not just a passionate and skilled cook, she has an exceptional gift with people, whatever their background. Her ebullience, warmth and enthusiasm bursts out from the screen whenever she appears.

PATRICK HOLLAND Channel Editor BBC2

Jenna Coleman
Jenna is as talented as she is mesmerising on screen. As Victoria she's required to do some heavy lifting as the central character and she never misses a beat. Whatever I write for her, she turns into gold. Long live Queen Jenna!

DAISY GOODWIN Screenwriter, Victoria

THE TOP 5 ➤
5 Peter Kay
Peter Kay can do no wrong. After starting out on C4 with That Peter Kay Thing and Peter Kay’s Phoenix Nights, he well and truly broke into the mainstream with the sometimes caustic, but always gentle and surprisingly sentimental BBCiPlayer/BBC1 smash Car Share. Its finale earlier this year left viewers baying for more. But they are unlikely to get the ending they so badly want, Kay is adamant Car Share is over.
ALISON GRAHAM
TV Editor, Radio Times

4 Thandie Newton
Thandie Newton was not only magnificent this year in Line of Duty, but also the Sky Atlantic smash hit Westworld. She effortlessly took us on a journey of awakening from machine to supposed consciousness in a powerful, witty and occasionally chilling performance. An actress at the top of her game.
ZAI BENNETT Director of Programmes, Sky UK

3 Phoebe Waller-Bridge
Phoebe’s career shot up like a fireworks display in the last year: Fleabag signalled the arrival of a hugely distinctive writer with the mesmerising performing talent to match. The show won nearly every award going, including a Bafta. It’s led to a Star Wars film role as well as becoming a household name in the UK and industry sensation in the USA.
SHANE ALLEN
Controller of Comedy Commissioning, BBC2

2 David Attenborough
Into his tenth decade David Attenborough is still digging up giant fossils, still crawling along the jungle floor with ferocious ants, still winning Baftas – in other words, just a normal year for him. Still curious, still innovating, still excited to share the wonders of the natural world, still the greatest storyteller there is.
MIKE GUNTON
Creative Director, BBC Studios Natural History Unit

'T've had a brilliant year. Thank you to Radio Times for this award!
JODIE WHITTAKER

AND THE NUMBER ONE IS...

1 Jodie Whittaker
Jodie is not just a talented actor but she has a bold and brilliant vision for her Doctor. She aced it in her audition both technically and with the powerful female life force she brings to the role. She is destined to be an iconic Doctor.
P I E R S W E N G E R
Controller, BBC Drama

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