



**11<sup>th</sup> August, 2009**

**HARTSWOOD FILMS OPENS CARDIFF OFFICE IN AUTUMN 2009**

Hartswood Films have announced that they are setting up an office in Cardiff, Hartswood Films West, to be headed up by Welsh-born Film and Television Executive Philippa Collie Cousins.

The first production to be shot in Wales will be the recently announced modern day ***Sherlock***, co-created by Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss. Starring Benedict Cumberbatch as Sherlock Holmes and Martin Freeman as Dr John Watson, the 3 x 90' productions for BBC1 will be produced by Sue Vertue.

Philippa joins Hartswood Films from the BBC where she was Head of Production for *Robin Hood 2 and 3*, *Spooks 7*, the BAFTA award winning *White Girl* and the highly anticipated *Small Island*. Before that she was Business Affairs Manager for Drama on BBC4 on productions such as *Fanny Hill* and *Crooked House* and BBC1 Comedy Playhouse. She joined the BBC after ten years as a Producer and award-winning Director in Drama, Animation, Commercials and Factual Entertainment. Her first Drama, *The Deadness of Dad* starring Rhys Ifans won a BAFTA, and she received the Variety Critics Choice award for Best Film Director for *Happy Now?* an off-beat black comedy set in a remote Welsh town and starring Ioan Gruffudd and Jonathan Rhys Meyers.

Philippa's brief will be to focus on the needs of the broadcasters and to develop ideas particularly in Drama, Comedy and Factual Entertainment. Beryl Vertue, CEO of Hartswood Films, says: "I am delighted Philippa is joining the Hartswood team. She brings a wealth of production and business experience with her, and is already working closely with Hartswood's key creative talent, Sue Vertue and Elaine Cameron.

Philippa says: "I am really looking forward to finding writers and directors to create the outstanding new series of tomorrow. Hartswood has always had good working relationships with writers and it is our intention to find and nurture more Welsh writing talent. There is already a strong talented production workforce in Wales, and hopefully if we can play a part in bringing more production to Wales, the talent pool will increase. We may also do some co-production deals with Welsh producers if they feel our expertise would be helpful. Backed by Hartswood's already outstanding reputation and my own network of relationships with key players across the television and film industry, I believe Hartswood Films West has a lot to offer established and new talent".



Hartswood Films' General Manager, Debbie Vertue, adds: "We aim for Hartswood Films West to become a valuable asset in the expansion of television production in Wales, and we are grateful for the development support received so far from the BBC and the financial grant from the Welsh Assembly Government through the Single Investment Fund."

Deputy First Minister Ieuan Wyn Jones added: "I am delighted that Hartswood Films has decided to open an office in Wales and has recognised the outstanding talent our nation has to offer in the Creative Industries sector. The company has enjoyed great success over the years and has an award-winning portfolio of drama, comedy and documentary films. The company's new office in Cardiff will be a very important addition to the television production sector in Wales - particularly now that broadcasters, especially the BBC, are committed to devolving more commissioning power and establishing more production in the Nations and Regions."

"Welsh Assembly Government support has helped secure an investment which will open up huge opportunities for the growth of the creative industries in Wales."

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