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Wall to Wall to bring family history to ITV1

BY KATHERINE RUSHTON

Davina McCall and Nicky Campbell are to front an ITV1 series that goes beyond the family history of *Who Do You Think You Are?* to reunite estranged relatives.

Both series are produced by Wall to Wall, but while *WDYTYA?* focuses on the process of discovering family history, *Long Lost Families* is about dramatic reunions with living relatives.

The 6 x 60-minute series follows people who have spent years trying to track down a long-lost family member, usually as a result of adoption, but who have hit a brick wall.

They are interviewed about the circumstances of the separation, how it has affected their life and what it would mean to meet the missing person – before being reunited in stages.

Campbell will visit the 'found' relative to deliver the news that there is someone searching for them, and then offer them the chance to see a photo and read a letter. The same process will happen with the person who is searching, and the programme will culminate with a face-to-face reunion.

Each episode follows two stories, and those filmed so far include identical twins adopted into different families. Only one of the pair knew she was a twin, even though they live just three miles apart.

Executive producer Leanne Klein said: "There are moments of huge emotional learning and impact, and revelations which we know how to deal with from



Long Lost Families: Campbell and McCall will front the six-part ITV1 series

There are moments of huge emotional learning and revelations

Leanne Klein, executive producer

WDYTYA? It's not slavish to format points, but the key moments are all captured on camera and it is very emotionally charged."

Wall to Wall is working with adoption charity AAA-Norcap to help track down the lost relatives according to the correct protocol.

The format was developed as *Lost Without A Trace* by Dutch broadcaster KRO, and Wall to Wall acquired the rights from distributor Absolutely Independent. The show also airs as *Find My Family*

on Australia's Seven Network, where it is more heavily formatted and a major hit.

Wall to Wall has put together a high-profile presenting team in McCall and Campbell, who are more closely associated with other broadcasters – Channel 4 and the BBC respectively. Campbell was adopted and has written a book documenting his search for his birth mother.

The commission is a coup for parent company Shed Media Group, which has historically had stronger relationships with the BBC and Channel 4 than with ITV.

Director of factual and daytime Alison Sharman ordered the series with controller of popular factual Jo Clinton Davis. They are understood to have fought off interest from Channel 4, and the show is lined up for an autumn primetime slot.

Carnival in distribution debut deal

BY ALEX FARBER

NBC Universal-owned Carnival Films has launched a strategy to acquire distribution rights from rival indies with a deal to fund BBC2 drama *Worried About The Boy*.

Carnival has contributed more than 10% of the budget of the Red Production Company biopic of Boy George, in return for international TV and DVD distribution rights.

Red managing director Andrew Critchley said: "It's great – even with licence-fee money we were underfunded because it's an expensive period piece, with costs of authentic 80s wardrobe, make-up and music licensing."

Carnival plans to replicate the deal, and managing director Gareth Neame will approach broadcasters directly to identify commissions that have financial gaps.

He said: "There is an evolution in the way expensive drama is being financed. If we take the rights, we can drive good sales for the indie and generate commission for ourselves."

He said Carnival could be more flexible than a traditional distributor, and could invest as much as 45% into a production.



Worried About The Boy: 80s biopic