

TASKMASTER CONTINUES ITS AWARD-WINNING GROWTH ACROSS SCANDINAVIA

London – 13th August 2019— Following Sweden's original version of *Taskmaster*, '*Bäst i Test!*' ("Best in Test!") winning Programme of the Year at the Kristallen 2019 (Sweden's TV Academy Awards) yet more countries are creating local versions of **Alex Horne's** comedy game show. Finland's MTV and Discovery in Norway have picked up the rights from Avalon, adding to *Taskmaster's* growing presence in the Nordic region with Denmark continuing production on its third series with TV2, and Sweden producing its fourth series of the award-winning show for SVT 1.

Finland's commercial broadcaster MTV has ordered a series of 10x60' episodes of "*Suurmestari*" (the big master) produced by Rabbit Films, while Norway's commercial broadcaster Discovery (N) has commissioned a series of 10x60' episodes titled "Kongen befaler" (the Norwegian name for the child's play "Simon Says") from Nordisk Film TV which will be co-produced with Concorde TV.

The news arrives as Danish commercial broadcaster TV 2 has commissioned Metronome to produce a third series of the local version *Stormester*, and Sweden's public broadcaster, SVT is set to make a fourth series of local version, *Bäst i Test!* ("Best in Test!"). Produced by Baluba, the show recently won the award for Programme of the Year at the Kristallen 2019, Sweden's TV Academy Awards.

Isobel Hughes, Director of Distribution, Avalon, said: *"It's fantastic to see how Taskmaster has continued to go from strength to strength, not only in its home market in the UK, but also internationally. The format is so highly original and fun, and it's been wonderful to see the talent drawn in to take the all powerful position of the Taskmaster by other broadcasters."*

Eivind Landsverk, SVP Content and Programming, Discovery Networks Norway said *"We are so happy to get our host Atle Antonsen back on the screen again. He's a terrific comedian and "Taskmaster" is the perfect format for him. "Taskmaster" is also a great show for launching new talents. It's good to see the Ylvis brothers and Calle back together, but it's even better to welcome the new talents – such as Olli Wermskog – the taskmaster's assistant"*

Jani Hartikainen, Head of Drama and Development MTV said: *"We are super excited about the Task Master/Suurmestari. The show is lots of fun and very entertaining and has a strong potential in the prime time. We see it as perfect match for our main channel MTV3 and for our VOD services mtv.fi and Cmore. We are convinced that Task Master will skew towards both the family audiences and our core target audience of 10-54 year old. Also the strong track record of the show in Sweden and Denmark was essential when picking up the show for the main channel"*

Taskmaster, originally created by Alex Horne and produced and distributed by Avalon, is a BAFTA and Emmy Award nominated entertainment show that originated as a live show from the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. The all-powerful "Taskmaster", with the help of his loyal assistant, sets out to test the wiles, wit and wisdom of five hyper competitive comedians through a series of strange and surreal challenges. With the chance to be crowned show champion, rivalry is encouraged, dodgy tactics rewarded and bribes accepted in what is the most hard-fought and ridiculous comedy entertainment formats on TV.

The original *Taskmaster* programme and format combined has been sold into 106 countries including local versions of the show which have been produced for Comedy Central in the U.S. (starring Reggie Watts as the Taskmaster), VTM in Belgium, and TVE in Spain.

Taskmaster was crowned Best Entertainment Programme at the Broadcast Awards 2018. The series has been nominated for an International Emmy for Best Non-Scripted Entertainment, two BAFTA nominations for Best Comedy Entertainment Programme plus nominations at the RTS Awards, Broadcasting Press Guild Awards consecutively for the past four years. 2019 has seen nominations for Broadcast Digital Awards for Best Entertainment Programme and Best Gamechanger

Programme, and two further nominations earlier this year at the Broadcast Awards 2019 for Best Entertainment Programme and Best Multichannel Programme.

Executive producers for the original UK series are Alex Horne, Richard Allen-Turner, Rob Aslett, James Taylor, Jon Thoday, and Andy Devonshire (The Apprentice and The Great British Bake Off), who also acts as series director, and Hilary Rosen for UKTV. Andy Cartwright is series producer.

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Notes to Editors

About Avalon

Avalon is a multi-award-winning talent management, television production and live promotion group with offices in London, New York and Los Angeles. Avalon and ARG, the talent management arm, has discovered and represents many artists that are household names, both in the UK, the USA, and around the world.

Avalon Television is the number one true independent television production company in the UK and produces numerous ground-breaking television shows including: multi-E Emmy and Peabody award winner *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (HBO); multi-award winning and Emmy-nominated *Catastrophe* (Channel 4/Amazon Prime Video); RTS and Rose d'Or winning *Not Going Out* (the BBC's longest running sitcom currently on air); BAFTA and RTS-nominated *Taskmaster* (DAVE/UKTV); Sky's most successful new entertainment launch since 2010, *The Russell Howard Hour* (Sky); the forthcoming *Breeders*, co-created by Martin Freeman, Chris Addison and Simon Blackwell (Sky/FX); and two seasons of *Wyatt Cenac's Problem Areas* (HBO). As well as iconic shows including: *Fantasy Football League* (BBC/ITV); the multi-BAFTA award-winning *TV Burp* (ITV); and seven seasons of *Workaholics* (Comedy Central USA).

Live, Avalon produced *Newman and Baddiel: Live at Wembley*, the UK's first arena comedy show; *Jerry Springer: The Opera*, the first West End show to win all four UK 'Best New Musical' awards; and has continued to produce live shows globally, as well as promoting more winners and nominees of the prestigious Edinburgh Comedy Award than any other company.

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