



TOBY WARD JOINS AVALON AS HEAD OF UK PRODUCTION

LONDON – May 29 2020 – It was announced today that Toby Ward joins Avalon as Head of UK Production (Comedy, Entertainment & Scripted).

Ward spent eight years at Burning Bright Productions as Director of Production, overseeing shows including *Joanna Lumley's Silk Road Adventure* (ITV), *50 Ways to Kill Your Mammy* (Sky), *Almost Royal* (BBC America), and *Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets* (Sky). This followed a 15-year role as Head of Production (Comedy & Entertainment) for Tiger Aspect, working across shows including *Benidorm* (ITV), *Harry & Paul* (BBC), *The Catherine Tate Show* (BBC), *The Vicar of Dibley* (BBC), *Ross Kemp on Gangs / in Afghanistan* (Sky), and *Joanna Lumley's Nile* (ITV). With this newly created position, Ward will report to Avalon's global Director of Production, Joanna Beresford, with whom he also worked at *Spitting Image* in the 1990s, and will work alongside Lydia Arding, Head of UK Production (Factual & Documentaries) and Kathy Welch, US Senior VP Production.

Joanna Beresford, Director of Production at Avalon, said: *"We're incredibly pleased to welcome Toby to Avalon. At a time when the entire industry has to navigate one of the most complex moments in production history, his first-rate expertise and experience are invaluable as we work to meet our current and future production commitments."*

Toby Ward said: *"I'm thrilled to be joining the team at Avalon. I've been a long time admirer of their shows and I'm delighted to be working with Joanna again and to be joining the company at such an exciting time."*

Avalon series currently in production include: *Not Going Out* (BBC), *Taskmaster* (Channel 4), *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (HBO), *Starstruck* (HBO Max/BBC), *Everything's Gonna Be Okay* (Freeform), *Spitting Image* (BritBox), *Breeders* (FX/Sky), *The Russell Howard Hour* (Sky), *The Iliza Shlesinger Sketch Show* (Netflix), and multiple comedy specials for Amazon Prime Video, HBO Max and Netflix.

Ward will be based at the company's London headquarters.

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For more information, please contact:

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About Avalon

Avalon is a multi-award-winning talent management, television production and live promotion group with offices in London, Los Angeles and New York.

The company represents a prolific roster of artists including comedians, actors, presenters, writers and directors and produces numerous ground-breaking television shows. Series currently in production include: *Not Going Out* (BBC), the UK's longest running sitcom on air; *Taskmaster* (Channel 4), the hit entertainment format showing in 100 countries; multi Emmy-winner, *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (HBO); *The Russell Howard Hour* (Sky), the network's most successful entertainment show launch since 2010; *Starstruck*, a new sitcom from the 2018 Edinburgh Comedy Award winner Rose Matafeo (HBO Max/BBC); *Everything's Gonna Be Okay*, from creator Josh Thomas (Freeform); *Breeders*, a new sitcom starring Martin Freeman and Daisy Haggard (FX/Sky); *The Iliza Shlesinger Sketch Show* (Netflix); new series of the iconic British satirical puppet show, *Spitting Image* (BritBox UK); and multiple comedy specials for Amazon Prime Video, HBO Max and Netflix. Other landmark Avalon shows include BAFTA winning and multi Emmy nominated, *Catastrophe* (Amazon Prime Video/Channel 4), *Fantasy Football League* (BBC/ITV), multi BAFTA-winning *TV Burp* (ITV), and seven seasons of *Workaholics* (Comedy Central USA). Avalon also distributes its catalogue of programmes to over 150 countries worldwide.

As a leading promoter of live comedy, 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 and promote 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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