



News Release

## BBC THREE COMMISSIONS TOPICAL SHOW PILOT FROM MOCK THE WEEK STAR

It was announced today (08 May 2009) that BBC Three has commissioned Avalon Television to make a new pilot with one of the country's fastest rising comedians, RUSSELL HOWARD. The exciting new show for the if.comedy and Barry Award nominee will be the first topical comedy show for BBC Three.

Set to record this summer, the currently untitled pilot will be produced by MARK IDDON (Mouth To Mouth), series produced by ROBYN O'BRIEN (Al Murray's Happy Hour and Big Brother's Big Mouth) and directed by PETER ORTON (Harry Hill's TV Burp and Al Murray's Happy Hour). Executive producers are JON THODAY, RICHARD ALLEN-TURNER, JAMES TAYLOR and KARL WARNER for the BBC.

In the last 12 months RUSSELL HOWARD has become one of the UK's most successful live comedians having just added a further 20 major theatre dates to his Dingledodies tour in summer 2009. The nationwide tour has already sold more than 110,000 tickets, including three gigs at London's Hammersmith Apollo and one at Wembley Arena. His debut live stand-up DVD, Russell Howard Live, was the fifth highest selling stand-up release of Christmas 2008 and has now sold in excess of 140,000 copies since its late November release.

JON THODAY, Joint Managing Director of the Avalon Group said: *"We are absolutely delighted to be producing a new show for BBC Three with this truly exciting comedian."*

DANNY COHEN, Controller of BBC THREE added: *"I'm thrilled that Russell Howard is going to be working with BBC Three. He's a huge talent, who already has a great following with young people."*

In addition to being a regular on Mock The Week (BBC Two's highest rating comedy show, which has seen viewing figures of over 5 million per week), RUSSELL has twice appeared on Live At The Apollo (BBC ONE) alongside some of the biggest names in comedy - including JACK DEE, JIMMY CARR and JOAN RIVERS; and succeed AL MURRAY - THE PUB LANDLORD as host of Comedy Central's Edinburgh & Beyond.

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*"As sparkling as a tree's-worth of Christmas lights... a robust antidote to the depressive, recessionary mood of the moment ... Right now, he's flying."*

Dominic Cavendish, The Daily Telegraph

*"Dazzling stuff from a comedian positively bursting with thoughts."*

Bruce Dessau, Evening Standard

*"Probably the best of the new generation of comics. His mind is as sharp as a witch's nose and gags flow from him with the ease and majesty of the river Nile."*

Tim Arthur, Time Out

*"The Mock the Week star has joined the big league."*

Julian Hall, The Independent

**For more information on the new commission, Russell Howard, or Avalon Television please contact: Dan Lloyd at Avalon on 020 7598 7222 / [DanL@avalonuk.com](mailto:DanL@avalonuk.com)**

**For BBC Three contact: Kate Toft on 020 8576 7786 / [Kate.Toft@bbc.co.uk](mailto:Kate.Toft@bbc.co.uk)**

# -AVALON®-

**Notes to editors:**

Avalon Television's recent programmes include: four time *BAFTA Award* winner, Harry Hill's TV Burp (ITV1); *Royal Television Society Award* and *Rose d'Or Award* winner, Not Going Out (BBC ONE); double *Rose d'Or Award* winner Kombat Opera Presents... (BBC TWO); *Austin Film Festival* award winner and *Broadcast Award* nominee, Dave Gorman in America Unchained (More4); and *British Comedy Award* winner, Al Murray's Happy Hour (ITV1).