

THE CURATED TV EXPERIENCE WITH ‘VALUE ADDED’

WALTER PRESENTS, CANNED TV, CURATION, AND POST-PRODUCTION CULTURE

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Abstract: Canned TV has been a television industry practice almost from the start of television itself and was a way in which local/nationally-produced television programmes gained extra revenue by travelling, under licence, around the world. As well as providing extra revenue, this process also provided, often unintentionally, various opportunities for branding – both at the broadcaster level and at the national level. However, using Channel 4’s OD platform, Walter Presents, this essay will consider the state of canned TV in more contemporary terms related to global and transnational ideas where television in general, and canned TV in particular, describe a transformed media culture.

Keywords: Walter Presents, curation, postproduction culture, value

1 Introduction

Canned TV has been a television industry practice almost from the start of television itself, and a way in which local/nationally-produced television programmes gained extra revenue by travelling, under licence, around the world. In these respects, we can think of canned TV in terms of post-production practices, practices that have evolved along with new technologies, new commercial opportunities, and new strategies aimed at audiences, production, and consumption in television. For some, these processes of post-production have become more significant in recent years. For both Verevis¹ and Bourriaud² significant changes in the production and consumption of TV can be described in terms of a ‘Postproduction Culture’ – a culture where ready-made, or existing media products, texts, and concepts are given new life, or ‘added value’ through their re-appearance and consumption elsewhere, often experienced in a different context from their original conception, or in some cases, experienced as remakes or reboots. The aim of this paper is to show how the concept of Postproduction Culture can be applied to Channel 4’s AVoD platform Walter Presents, and to an understanding of contemporary canned TV, its evolution and development, and its relationship to contemporary practices in the television industry.



Figure 1. Walter Presents: "Want More World Drama?"

Using Channel 4's OD platform, Walter Presents, this essay will consider the state of canned TV in more contemporary terms related to global and transnational ideas where television in general, and canned TV in particular, can be used to examine and describe a transformed media culture.

This paper, therefore, will examine how Walter Presents not only describes change in contemporary TV, but changes in the concept of contemporary canned TV. It will examine how Walter Presents highlights acts of curation in contemporary TV, with particular reference to Amanda Lotz's *Portals*³ and new industrial practices related to streaming services, SVoD, TVoD, and AVoD. In these respects, we can examine how the concept of canned TV can be understood in this new television landscape. It will also examine how Walter Presents and the concept of canned TV can be understood as part of a pervasive Postproduction Culture, and therefore subject to new technologies that have manifested into contemporary practices of streaming and internet-distributed television. It is worth pointing out that for both Bourriaud and Verevis the concept of Postproduction Culture specifically refers to phenomena and practices arising out of digital change, and therefore refers to a specific critical-historical period in the media landscape. Using the UK's Channel 4 online AVoD platform Walter Presents as an example, it will examine the complexities of contemporary canned TV in the contemporary television and media landscape, and its potential relationship to a Postproduction culture.

2 Canned TV

Historically, canned TV was largely a commercial opportunity, an opportunity which took advantage of new technological developments that allowed TV to be recorded, stored, and re-transmitted. As well as providing extra revenue, the practice of canned TV also provided, often unintentionally, various opportunities for branding – both at the broadcaster level and at the national level. As Werbach⁴ observes, when we talk about canned TV, historically we talk about business models and syndication, and the main driver of syndication and canned TV, in the early days of television, was American television. Werbach notes, "without syndication the American mass media as we know it would not exist".⁵ Werbach's description of syndication is in essence a description not only of the historical development of canned TV, but also the practices of Walter Presents. For Werbach syndication "involves the sale of the same good to many customers, who then integrate it with other offerings and redistribute it. The practice is routine in the world of entertainment". Significantly, Werbach sees syndication as "the ideal way to conduct business in a networked, information-intensive economy".⁶

However, as Bielby and Harrington observe, the global market for canned TV started with the export of syndicated American TV shows, launched in the mid-1950s.⁷ In fact, such was the ubiquity of American TV programmes on TV channels around the world, canned TV arguably became a form of cultural imperialism, although it is worth noting that in the era of the 'Big 3' US networks – ABC, NBC, and CBS, from 1950s to late 1970s – transnational concepts of canned TV in particular, and of TV in general were not a focus. Instead, canned TV was just another form of the international trade of goods. As Bielby and Harrington further observe, it was only with the introduction of global technologies such as cable and satellite TV, the subsequent increase in competition, and the erosion of the domestic network dominance of TV, that canned TV and syndication became a more significant transnational element of the TV industry and market with global dynamics.⁸

These changes and developments continue apace today, revitalised mostly by streaming services in need of a substantial catalogue of popular and diverse TV programmes, that are often curated by media professionals to meet the demands of a competitive and diverse TV market.

Historically, canned TV highlighted the production and consumption of domestic network TV, and the dynamics of network TV syndication, a dynamic that is particularly important to the unique selling point of Walter Presents. However, it is worth noting that Walter Presents is not a Broadcaster, but a content provider, and therefore historical concepts of syndication in TV go only so far in explaining Walter Present's business model. Canned TV still plays a large part in network TV schedules, and perhaps even more so in a diverse and competitive TV market. But this dynamic has arguably changed as a result of competitive transnational flows in television, and as a result of technological change. The British public service channel, Channel 4, itself born out of big changes in the TV industry in 1982, has become synonymous in Britain with diversity in programming, diversity of audiences, and syndicated, canned TV programming, sold on the back of the quality TV phenomenon. In fact, Channel 4 has not only embraced digital, technological, and market force change in ways that other public service channels have not, it has arguably recontextualised the canned TV experience through its adoption of Walter Presents who provide viewers with the local/domestic TV experience as experienced elsewhere around the world, and arguably as part of a Postproduction culture.

3 UK's Channel 4



Figure 2. The Channel 4 Logo.

Channel 4 is a commercially funded public service broadcaster in the UK with a remit to provide innovative programming not found on other UK public service channels. Its past success has largely been attributed to its practice of showcasing unusual and 'challenging' original programming, but it has also gained a reputation for broadcasting

imported (mainly US) 'canned' quality TV dramas. In this last respect, its long-standing association with HBO has been significant to its brand allowing it to showcase exclusive content such as *The Sopranos* (HBO, 1997-2007), and *Sex and the City* (HBO, 1998-2004), amongst others. Channel 4 also boosted its brand and reputation by broadcasting, under licence, ABC's *Lost* (2004-2010), which subsequently became a flagship show for the channel.

However, as Catherine Johnson has observed, this practice of showcasing imported canned TV dramas from America has tended to clash with "Channel 4's remit to represent the diversity of British society, and to support the independent production sector in Britain".⁹ Consequently, Channel 4 launched a series of digital partner channels, most notably E4 and More 4, as a means of fulfilling its remit, whilst at the same time still providing an outlet for imported, canned foreign programming. One result of this has been Channel 4's adoption of Walter Iuzzolino's curated international AVoD platform Walter Presents, made available on Channel 4's All 4 online platform.

As a case study, Channel 4's Walter Presents provides an unusual example of contemporary canned television – the transnational circulation of ready-made, and typically national/local television content for global consumption – whilst at the same time mirroring similar practices of other content providers in the TV industry who have made use of new digital, streaming technology. As Lotz, Lobato and Thomas¹⁰ have observed, among others, in regard to change in TV as a whole, the key to the development of canned television in recent years has been the advent of internet-distributed television services worldwide. In this and other respects we can consider both Walter Presents and canned TV in relation to wider industry developments in television, and more visibly prominent examples of internet-distributed television. If we are to understand Walter Presents, and canned TV in terms of a postproduction culture, then this does not only describe change at the textual or programme level, but also at the economic and industrial level. The most obvious example of dynamic change in television is the disruption of what Raymond Williams described as television "flow",¹¹ by new technologies, in this case TiVo, streaming services, and various VoD, SVoD, and AVoD services, the most prominent contemporary example being Netflix. As Lobato explains, "Schedules are obviously different from catalogues in that the former are linear sequences of programmed content and the latter are interactive, curated databases".¹²

4 Canned TV and Portals

Whilst the practice of canned television has been around from the earliest years of television, more recent practices describe a contemporary television landscape that has taken full advantage of emerging digital technologies, and potentially serves to describe the dynamics of transnational flows in the contemporary media landscape. As Lotz, Lobato and Thomas observe, "The rapid growth of internet-distributed television services worldwide" has not only changed consumption and production practices in television, but also "presents an array of research opportunities, challenges, and possibilities of transnational comparison".¹³ Although Lotz only tacitly refers to Netflix in her study *Portals*, any discussion of Walter Presents in relation to new industrial and commercial models impacting on canned TV, requires some reference to Netflix. However, as Lobato observes, "It should be emphasized that Netflix is not a typical case".¹⁴ He argues that "it is no longer feasible to speak of 'a' single Netflix, understood as a service offering the same content and the same experience everywhere; it is now more accurate to describe Netflix as a series of national services linked through a common platform architecture".¹⁵ This is different to Walter Presents as its reach

was never designed for world domination. Despite Walter Presents moving beyond Channel 4's All 4 platform, striking deals elsewhere – launching as a SVoD platform in America, with pay-TV service Foxtel in Australia, and more recently in Italy with Discovery's Nove, Giallo, and Dplay channels – the same choice of content and the same type of content (foreign domestic TV dramas) is provided. This is different to Netflix. Both Walter Presents and Netflix are alike in that they offer a body of licensed or owned content distributed by their respective platforms at a given time. As Lobato observes, "In the case of SVoD services such as Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime, catalogues are essentially revolving collections of licensing agreements".¹⁶



Figure 3. The Walter Presents Selection.

As such, contemporary ideas of canned television have potentially come to describe certain new technological innovations and production practices, new expectations and practices in TV viewing, and new academic approaches to understanding the complex dynamics and veracities of the transnational in the contemporary media landscape. As Bielby and Harrington observe in their study of *Global TV: Exporting Television Culture in the World Market* (2008), and of the big 3 (ABC, NBC, CBS) in American network TV in particular, although canned TV originally described the selling and distribution of national programmes in international markets, it is only since the 1990s, with "transformative developments" in television such as the "proliferation of cable, satellite, internet, and mobile systems of distribution"¹⁷ that canned TV has come to be described in global and transnational terms.

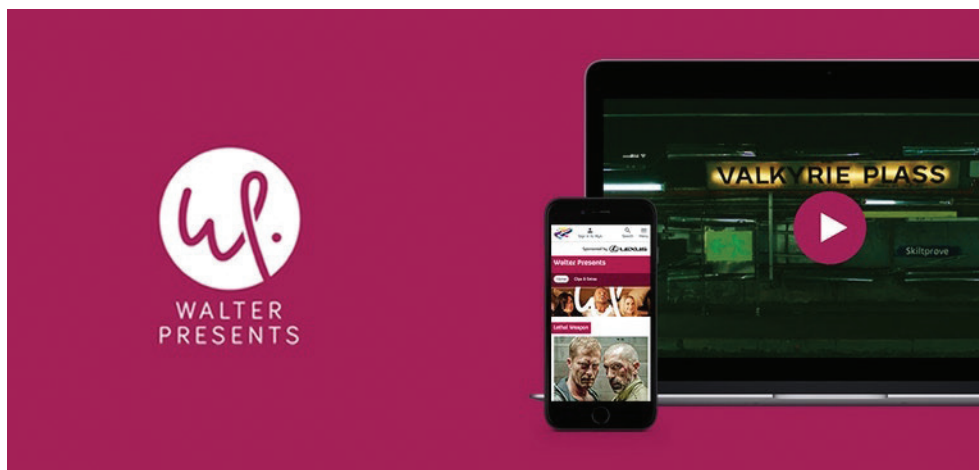


Figure 4. The 'Walter Presents' Portals.

As just one example, Channel 4's Walter Presents epitomises how new technologies have introduced global and transnational dimensions to the television experience. Interestingly, however, it places a lot of emphasis on the national television experience. In this respect, Walter Presents draws attention to practices usually associated with canned TV. Walter Presents has become successful in securing the rights of shows that were either not valuable or appealing for other players on the market, or just simply ignored due to their local/national, or even parochial flavour. With traditional industry practices concerning canned TV changing, largely due to digital technology and the advent of internet-distributed television, it is important to identify the nature of that change. Walter Presents, for example, highlights contemporary acts of curation in internet-distributed television in ways that other similar services do not. In this respect Amanda Lotz's work on *Portals* (2017) is significant. For Lotz, "Portals accomplish the central function of collecting – or curating – cultural goods"¹⁸ and with the rise of internet-distributed television, SVoD, TVoD, and other similar television platforms, television has seen the rise of new creative professionals able to curate and identify 'valuable licenses' suited to curatorial aims.

Walter Presents exemplifies these new practices and, unlike other similar platforms and services, Walter Presents deliberately draws attention to the creative professionals and processes behind them via the eponymous Walter Iuzzolino. If Lotz's work on *Portals* aims to describe a changing television landscape, this examination of Walter Presents aims to highlight how these changes have re-articulated the concept of canned TV through acts of media curation. Similarly, these acts of curation introduce the potential of examining canned TV and Walter Presents through the concept of a Postproduction Culture. For both Bourriaud and Verevis, Post-Production Culture describes and promotes the idea of 'value added'¹⁹ as part of new production/consumption strategies, strategies that have become evident in curation strategies and part of the new creative professional tool kit. It is important, therefore, not only to identify the significance of curation in certain areas of contemporary television, and in relation to canned television, but also to identify the nature of this concept of 'value added'.



Figure 5. The 'Walter Presents' Logo.

5 Walter Presents

Walter Presents is Channel 4's online streaming platform which offers viewers "the best in world drama" (Channel 4, 2019) through the curation and streaming of a variety of foreign/national TV dramas from around the world.

One of its selling points is that the platform both curates and presents the national for transnational consumption. In other words, it acquires nationally broadcast TV dramas from various countries, curates them into a library of TV content, then provides access to these dramas via the Walter Presents platform. However, in terms of the national and the transnational this dynamic is complex. For example, it provides something similar, yet very different to Valaskivi's concept of 'Cool Nation Branding' (2015). As Valaskivi observes, the aim of cool-nation branding for national Broadcasters is to construct "a national identity for consumption by transnational, if not global, markets".²⁰ It can be argued that Walter Presents does promote the pleasure of watching national/local TV dramas and does so for global and transnational consumption, but because their library of content is canned TV the concept of cool-nation branding is done by proxy, if at all.

Walter Presents is not the original national broadcaster for these various TV dramas, it is merely a content provider, but it does promote the pleasures and cultural kudos of watching Swiss crime dramas (*10*, TSR1, 2010), or Israeli comedy romance (*Beauty and the Baker/Lehiyot Ita*, Keshet Broadcasting, 2013-) over more globally constructed products as seen on HBO or Netflix.



Figure 6. *Beauty and the Baker/Lehiyot Ita* (2013-).

Further, and perhaps more significantly, none of the TV programmes available on Walter Presents were created with global distribution in mind, or at least, not originally with a global audience in mind. Walter Present's showcasing of Belgium TV dramas is a case in point. As Mark Lawson of *The Guardian* points out, "When Iuzzolino first made inquiries about the foreign rights to Belgian shows, he met surprise from the distributors: "Until Walter Presents, they had no real foreign interest at all".²¹



Figure 7. *Code 37* (2009-2012).

Again, this is different to the Scandi-noir television phenomenon, where Scandinavian television producers have recognised the global market for their product, and have responded accordingly. It is this particular feature that Walter Presents promotes as a USP – that these TV dramas are usually restricted for local/national audiences.

It is perhaps with this example where contemporary ideas concerning 'canned' or 'finished' TV becomes significant to understanding global flows in television. As Bielby and Harrington observe, although "the television industry is now global in scope, it is, first and foremost, a domestic industry born out of local concerns"²² and produced with distinctive national broadcast remits and systems. Walter Presents, therefore, provides something different in the current global TV landscape by shunning global trends of producing TV that is globally exportable, and focusing instead on these distinctive local and national idiosyncrasies that are less well-known or well-travelled.

That these national/local TV dramas have not been made for global consumption and not usually viewed, except by indigenous/local audiences, tells us something about Walter Presents, television production, and canned TV in the contemporary media landscape. Local and national products and concerns still exist, and local culture still thrives in TV. Local culture, as provided for by local/national TV has become attractive to the global TV market and Walter Presents recognises that. Walter Presents draws attention to the local/national, and viewers are promised and provided with an 'authentic' local experience and not one created/branded originally for a global audience. In this last respect, Walter Presents also draws attention to previous incarnations of national TV consumption for global audiences, in particular the scandi-noir experience, a genre and aesthetic that has become all too globally familiar and pervasive. Walter Iuzzolino has recognised the scandi-noir phenomenon, recognised its global dimensions, and has decided to offer something different. These features of Walter Presents alone could form part of a post-production promise of 'value added'.

Walter Presents therefore does brand these national TV programmes, as indicative of national tastes, culture, etc., but in doing so the platform also makes a point of their potential exoticism. Walter Presents changes the original context of these dramas – a key feature of Post Production Culture - by branding these nationally produced dramas as part of an exclusive, cultural, transnational television viewing experience. This change of context is facilitated by digital technology and new industrial practices that have embraced transnational and global dynamics. Walter Presents offers to provide national TV dramas that are indicative of 'normal', local scheduled TV. It provides access to content and a viewing experience usually reserved for local audiences but changes the context in which they were first produced and first experienced by local audiences. In all of these respects, we can consider Walter Presents in terms of a post-production culture.

Walter Presents, therefore, represents and constructs the national, transnationally, by proxy and in a variety of interesting and highly symbolic ways. Not least, Walter Presents offers an opportunity to consider transnational flows and canned TV in terms of a Post-production culture that Verevis describes as suggesting 'value added'. This idea of 'value added' is significant to the curated, 'canned' television experience.

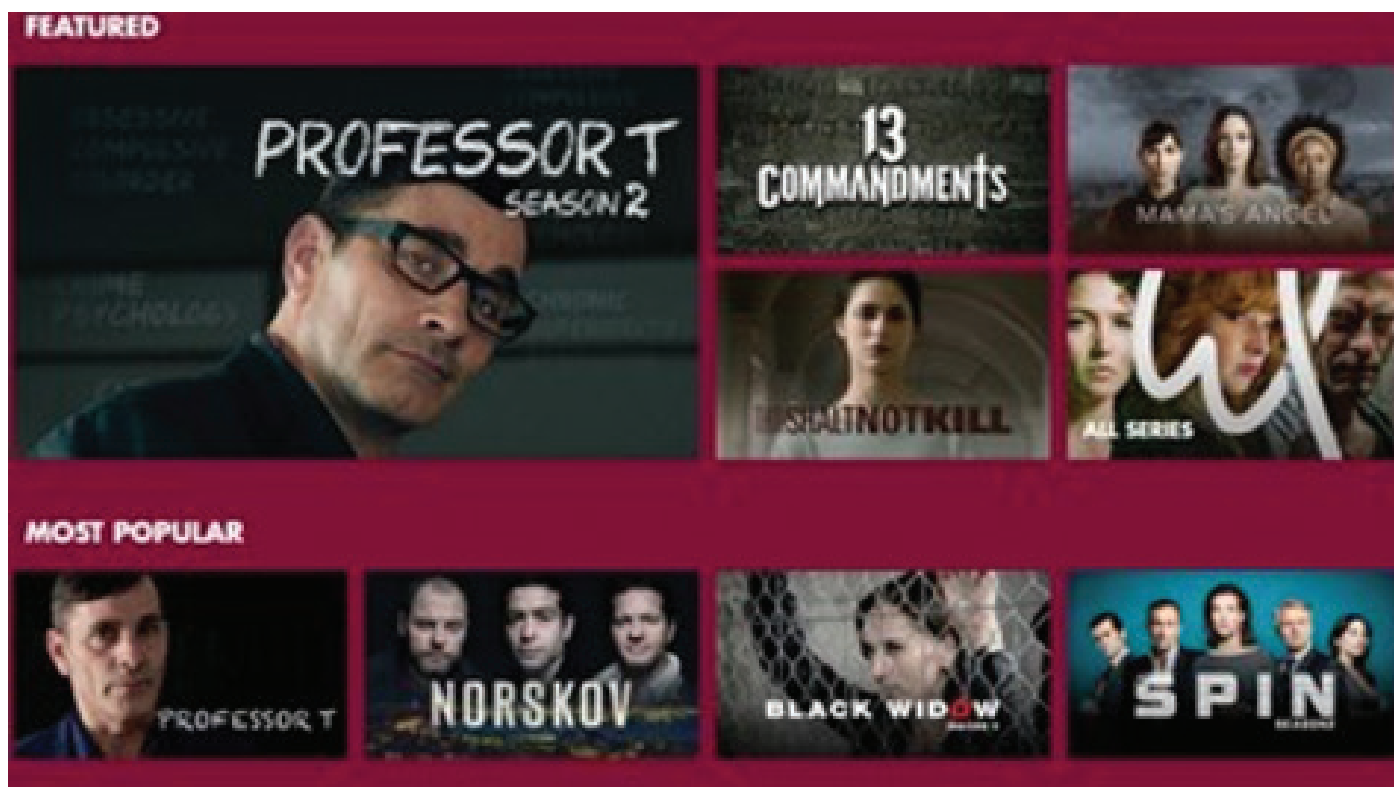


Figure 8. The 'Walter Presents' Catalogue.

6 Post-Production Culture

Serving as just one example, Channel 4's Walter Presents not only represents and constructs the concept and practice of contemporary canned television, but how this practice can also be understood in terms of what Bourriaud (2002), and Verevis (2016) describe as a 'Post-production culture'.

As both Bourriaud and Verevis observe, Post-production culture describes "a combination of forces – conglomeration, globalization, and digitization"²³ – that has contributed to a new critical-historical period in the media landscape. Whilst this concept of a Post-production culture has been used to describe the pervasiveness of remakes, reboots, and spin-offs, both in film and TV, it can also serve to describe the practice of contemporary 'canned' TV, but only where existing TV texts are re-situated or re-purposed in new markets and geographies for new audiences; the prime example being curated content libraries for streaming services. These post-production practices have been described as "intermedial, transnational, post-authorial, and characterised by proliferation and simultaneity".²⁴ Whilst television streaming services/SVoDs such as Netflix and HBO have been the go-to examples for studies of internet-distributed television, and could arguably be considered for an examination of contemporary canned TV, Walter Presents offers an example where Moran's observation of the canned TV programme being a "product of the national level of television"²⁵ is not only more visible and apparent, but forms a key part of the strategy employed by Walter Presents. This national/local dynamic of canned TV has, if anything, become even more significant to an understanding of global flows of television, and it also serves to highlight how Walter Presents has identified a Post-production culture whereby canned TV has arguably been shaped by intermedial, transnational, and post-authorial concepts in a media landscape characterised by proliferation and simultaneity.

As indicative of a Post-production culture, therefore, Walter Presents arguably describes a transformed media culture where existing television texts are reproduced (translation/subtitles), recontextualised, repurposed and resituated to

meet the commercial and cultural pressures of contemporary media consumers and producers. If we examine each of these claims in more detail, we not only highlight the commercial and cultural development of canned TV, but the dynamics of a Post-production culture as envisioned by Verevis, Bourriaud, and Constandinides.²⁶

If we consider how the drama series' showcased on Walter Presents could be described as being re-produced in accordance with a ideas of a Post-production culture concept, then we need to see how these dramas may have changed in the transition from their original broadcast space, to the space of the Walter Presents platform. One detail concerns the act of translation and the use of subtitles.

7 Translation, Subtitles, and Post-Production Culture

Re-titles, subtitles, translations and new publicity (paratexts, etc.) not only show a re-modelled and re-produced product, but describe “a digitized, globalized... [TV landscape] in which multiple versions proliferate and co-exist”.²⁷ Translation and subtitled content, whilst more common in contemporary TV (think of Scand-Noir), has traditionally been a barrier to exporting TV due to language barriers as well as cultural content. This has been especially true of America, where the tendency has been to remake TV content rather than import the original version. As Moran has observed, despite large amounts of imported programming, frequently requiring dubbing or subtitling, “television programs in vernacular languages continue to anchor a sense of cultural belonging and function as a privileged site for the reproduction of nations”.²⁸ This has not always been viewed as a good thing where canned TV has been concerned. However, Walter Presents makes the most of this, indeed, making it a selling point emphasising what Moran (2009), quoting Waisbord, sees as television “keeping nationhood alive by flagging spoken languages and drawing and sustaining linguistic boundaries”. Translation and subtitles involve acts of cultural negotiation. Whilst cultural negotiation has always been part of the processes behind canned TV, it has not always been as visible or as promoted as it is through Walter Presents.

This concept of a Post-production Culture can act partly as an analytical framework, to explain the dynamics of Walter Presents, its significance to understanding change in the contemporary television landscape, and how it may offer insights into the evolution of canned TV.



Figure 9. Walter Iuzzolino.

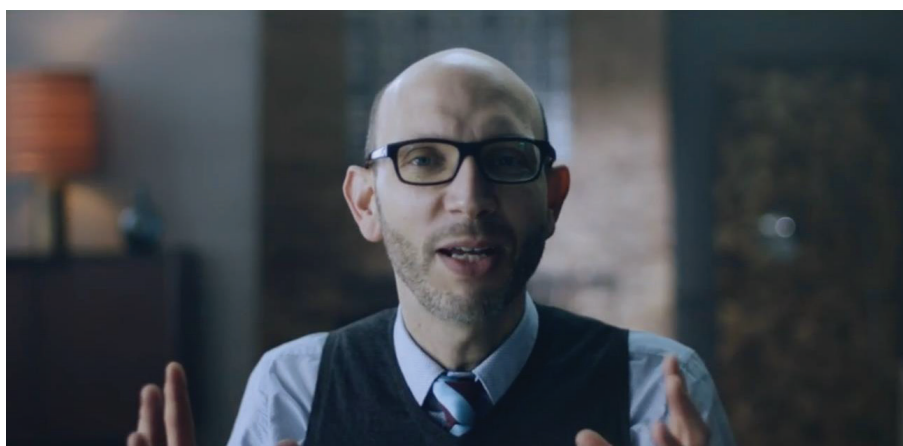
8 The Curated Experience

As with many other streaming services, Walter Presents provides a curated library of content, according to Lotz who describes it as a “particular curation tactic”,²⁹ and it is at the curation level where Walter Presents argues to be different to other streaming services. As Wendy Mitchell observes, in her interview with Walter Presents’ Walter Iuzzolino, “concerns about how the streaming giants like Netflix and Amazon are flooding the market” are not just about the amounts of money they spend, but a lack of distinctive programming.³⁰ Walter Presents aims to deliver distinctive programming by typically avoiding “globally-conceived titles that are actually culturally non-distinctive”. This is a tactic designed to avoid copying the Scandi-Noir look-alike boom of a few years ago, and the television streaming tactic of trying to emulate the HBO ‘quality TV’ recipe.

Instead, the curated experience of Walter Presents has gone back to local/national terrestrial TV in its search for distinctive programming. Whilst it can be considered a niche market curation tactic, it is interesting to note that the curated content on offer via Walter Presents was never intended to be as such; rather it was produced locally as typical, standard (if high quality) scheduled TV programming.

For streaming services, producers, and for audiences, the concept and practice of curation, has become more significant to contemporary TV production and the viewing experience, but it has also become a key feature of the contemporary media landscape in general. For Rosenbaum, “Curation is the act of individuals with a passion for a content area to find, contextualize, and organize information”.³¹ The “act of individuals” is particularly significant where Walter Presents is concerned as the platform is promoted and fronted as the selection of choice titles by Walter Iuzzolino. We can therefore consider Walter Iuzzolino and Walter Presents as an example of television imitating the success of the pro-am fan that has come to prominence in media circles due to the rise of platforms such as YouTube.

The example provided here is typical of how Walter Iuzzolino introduces new dramas to the audience. We can see the passion Iuzzolino invests in his introduction to the series, but significantly he also provides a context for a Swiss crime drama, the sort of national TV drama we would not expect to see outside Switzerland. It is niche, obscure, exotic, and suggests exclusive viewing, but the programme is also sold as typical scheduled Swiss television fare.



Video 1. Walter presents: 10.

Iuzzolino’s introduction is important. It acts as a guarantee of quality as well as fan viewing. As Rosenbaum observes, the “emergence of the curation economy creates a greater need” not only for “trusted sources”, but trusted curators.

Curation is “the new role for media professionals”,³² therefore although the eponymous Walter Iuzzolino attempts to replicate the personal endeavour of the average YouTuber, his professional background as a TV producer ensures he has the experience of what Diana Crane observes in terms of her “Television’s Culture World”, a professional ‘gatekeeper’ – “cultural authorities who designate a programme of sufficient quality or innovation that is worthy of the viewers’ time”.³³ In their study of TV historians and archivists, McKee and Dore identify the ‘Pro-am’ curator and describe them in terms of:

“The freedom to curate only programmes and genres that interest them”³⁴

“That ‘weird child’ who was obsessed with gathering information and objects related to television”.

“Pro-am curators are not passive consumers, but active and participatory”.

Further, Kate Abbot of *The Guardian* describes Walter Presents and Walter Iuzzolino in similar terms:

“This project is British TV’s highest-profile case of the currently fashionable concept of ‘curated programming’. The sell to viewers is that Walter Iuzzolino...has made a personal selection of his favourites from 3,500 hours of foreign-language box sets”.³⁵

For Kaplan, “Curation, in media circles, has come to mean the thoughtful gathering of information produced by others for presentation to (yet) others”.³⁶ Examples abound, and not just in television. Citing the example of Pinterest, Rosenbaum describes a contemporary culture of the “noisy web”, where “a variety of seemingly disparate texts are taken out of their original context, to be curated and rebroadcast in dedicated sites that suggest a connection”. This description may well serve to describe Walter Presents and the state of curated canned TV.

It is here that we might be able to see not only how curation has become significant to the contemporary internet distributed television, but also how post-production culture and practices have provided a sense of ‘value added’ to these examples of local/nationally-produced programmes.

9 Value Added

When talking about Walter Presents as an example of new media practices that can go towards a description of a Post-Production Culture, we should also discern how Walter Presents offers the idea of ‘value added’. Walter Presents is a streaming service that encapsulates the dynamics of contemporary television practices in all its complexities, complexities that have impacted upon contemporary canned TV. As Moran has observed, “thanks to new technology, deregulation and privatization”, plus the increase in broadcast channel capacity, “the world picture of canned program production and export had become more complicated”³⁷. This has led to a more competitive market and as such greater competition in the TV market has therefore led to what Moran has described as “innovative forms of financing, fresh ways of imagining the audience, novel forms of content, and new constructions of the television commodity”³⁸. All of these factors have not only influenced the creation of Walter Presents, but draw attention to a small but significant aspect of Post-production culture. For Verevis, Post-production practices and products are often described or promoted as having ‘value added’. As Hanson, Waade and Jensen observe in their research on *What Makes Danish TV Drama Series Travel*, value creations happen at all stages of TV production, but a ‘value added’ element in relation to a post-production culture and post-production practices could involve elements such as “cultural branding, economic and societal values... hype... [and] paratexts”³⁹. This aspect of ‘value added’ has also been discussed in relation to subtitles and translations, and whilst there are some who would view these as problematic or elements that deter audiences, the USP of Walter Presents suggests they could be indeed be key elements in offering a different sort of TV viewing experience.

But there are other elements, some discussed already, where we can identify and consider aspects of value added. The individual local/national TV dramas that Walter Presents provide, have changed in ways that were not imagined in their original creation and production, and certainly not anticipated or experienced by their original target audience. These dramas have become niche, potentially exotic, and almost certainly deemed rare in the sense they have not been previously available to British/global audiences. Whilst we could argue that in the early days of canned TV, American TV dramas had a certain allure for largely the same reasons, they were chosen or bought by local broadcasters because they were deemed suitable for normal scheduled TV, both because they shared a common language, but also a largely common ideological message and familiar culture. This is not always the case with Walter Presents. In fact, the value-added concept largely revolves around ideas of difference, the unusual, and exotic.

10 Conclusion

This concept of 'value-added', as indicative of a Post-Production culture can also be considered in relation to contemporary curated TV, and in relation to canned TV as a whole. By using Walter Presents as an example, contemporary canned TV needs to be discerned through a transformed media landscape where contemporary television has not become less local or national, but where these elements have become lucrative and appealing. Through a transformed media landscape, local and national TV, as evinced by Walter Presents, has become the object of the transnational circulation of ready-made, and typically national/local television content for global consumption.

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Biography

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