Do nine kinds of journalism

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He wrote to the New Musical Express, “then a famous music paper”. He had no contacts and no CV except for a short story published in London listings weekly City Limits. But at the time music journalism “was like writing the whole internet every week – you had 60 pages to fill, so sometimes we filled them with random stuff…” I started writing music reviews in the form of comedy sketches.”

From that he got work on hit satirical puppet show Spitting Image. Back at the NME David’s column with Stephen Wells led to fortuitous networking which in turn led to his current gig as head writer on BBC children’s cartoon Dangeroomse.

Diversification helps: “There’s no reason why you can’t do nine kinds of journalism… if you have a talent for financial journalism, should you not ever do a crossword?” And: keep trying things. “I didn’t know I had an aptitude for Twitter until I went on it.” He now uses Twitter “as a showcase for jokes”.

Remona Aly is a journalist, commentator and broadcaster with a focus on faith, lifestyle and identity. She presents BBC Radio 4’s Something Understood.

“I had a dream,” she announced – “to become a pharmacist.” But she did work experience, dropped sciences and did literature. She wrote her first piece while a student, then “entered niche media” – freelancing for the British Muslim lifestyle glossy emel launched after 9/11 with a mission to “articulate the achievements of the British Muslim community”. For over three years Remona was its deputy editor on a shoestring budget: “I had to do everything – commissioning to proofreading.”

Then Remona had a bereavement and left. “Two days later I had a call from a company that wanted me to head a faith-based PR campaign”. She “had not done PR before but took it, because it was promoting univer-

A win for Irish freelances

Following a long campaign by the NUJ in Ireland the Competition Amendment Act has been passed in that country. It provides that collective bargaining and agreements covering independent freelance workers – with particular mention of journalists – shall be legal. Congratulations, especially to Irish Secretary Séamus Dooley.

Making Tax Awful scheme postponed

TAX WAS the theme of July’s LFB meeting. Our speakers were financial journalist and NUJ trainer Louise Bolotin and Alex Redmond, a partner in Artisan Accounts, accountants to the creative self-employed. Louise noted “stuff in the last budget” including changes to National Insurance (NI) contributions, “a raid on our income”. Chancellor Philip Hammond announced that Class 4 NI charge on the self-employed would rise from 9 per cent to 10 per cent from April 2018, with a further rise to 11 per cent the following tax year.

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Remona Aly and David Quantick; Photo: © Hazel Dunlop

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Insurance from page 1

for material published, for example, in newspapers, magazines, business publications, books, on websites (both yours and other people’s), blogs, and social media including Twitter and Facebook.

As an NUJ member you get cover for all the material you have had published since the first day of your current continuous NUJ Membership and also free Public Liability Insurance with a limit of liability of £1 million.

Public Liability and Products Liability Insurance: Public Liability Insurance is offered with a choice of limits of liability of £1 million, £2 million, £5 million or £10 million. PL Insurance covers you if you accidentally injure someone or damage someone else’s property, and is essential for any self-employed person or business.

“Image-makers” Professional Indemnity Insurance covers you for claims resulting from photo, video or film images if, for example, you fail to produce work to a professional standard for a client, or breach someone else’s copyright, confidentiality or privacy.

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