

# Jeremy Humphries.com

## Camera Craft Workshops & Consultancy

### e-Newsletter 4 - Africa Special

Welcome to our [Africa Special](#) newsletter and as promised we have some information about the exciting project that Jeremy is currently filming.

Think of Africa and you think of hot sun, high photographic contrasts and mosquito bites! At this time of year it might be summer in Africa but it's also the rainy season; torrential rain that gets the camera trucks stuck and thunder claps that make your teeth rattle. One minute the camera is so hot that we use white pillow cases to reflect the sun, the next it gets drenched in a downpour. Waterproof covers are quickly put on the cameras but then the humidity warnings click in! There are metres



and metres of BNC video cable which we bury underground linking a small gallery tent, complete with monitors, with a much larger communal hub tent, like a marquee, where the contributors meet for meals and where we frequently have six or more cameras fed back to the director.



We are here in Africa to film the biggest show that BBC Entertainment is doing right now, '[To the Ends of the Earth](#)'. Eight episodes and nine very enthusiastic amateur naturalists all keen to get one available job with the BBC Natural History Unit at the end of the eight weeks. They are transported across Africa, undergoing numerous planned tasks to prove their enthusiasm and show their technical competence in tracking and filming animals. They have to show downright toughness in coping with being under canvas, dealing with the sun when it comes out and of course the rain and frequent bolts of lightning.

And as for me? Well I am the [Director of Photography](#) on the show, with three top documentary cameramen shooting with me, part of a production team made up of thirty or so people moving around Africa in a vast logistical operation involving convoys of trucks and small fleets of planes. We have over fifty cases of camera and sound equipment and are travelling all over the continent.





The challenges are enormous; on a day to day basis we have over 17 cameras with us (HDX 900's, Z7's and A1's) and that covers just the basic documentary shooting of walking across deserts, climbing cliffs and following the contributors as they track animals over many kilometres. On top of that we have specialist equipment flown in for filming underwater or in caves and for infrared filming at night. There is also a helicopter mount available for air to air filming and for capturing the extraordinary scenery that I was lucky enough to film from a helicopter whilst flying through mountain ranges.

We are unable to have generators in the camp as they are too noisy, so we have to balance vast contrast ranges in and out of the hub tent with lights powered by battery. Each night we have to charge dozens of camera batteries back at the lodges where the crews stay, however frequently there are only a couple of mains sockets available so the camera and sound departments bargain between themselves for use of them! We often end up packing all the equipment for transit when it is still wet and mould soon grows on the camera bags as they never get a chance to dry out.

But we all know that we are very lucky too; a lion just yards away yawning in the sun whilst we sit rather apprehensively in the truck is a sight to behold or a giraffe just wandering nonchalantly in front of the hub tent. The crew are a close knit team and get on extremely well even when digging the cables out at night and the mud is swimming around your feet. We know that we are on to something good as well; a series with all its challenges that we think will be rather special.



'[To the Ends of the Earth](#)' is due to be transmitted on BBC 1 this Autumn.

If you would like to find out more about Jeremy's workshops and future plans please visit our website [www.jeremyhumphries.com](http://www.jeremyhumphries.com).

To send us your comments and suggestions or to register your interest for any of the workshops, please contact Angela [angela@jeremyhumphries.com](mailto:angela@jeremyhumphries.com)

If you would like to receive our regular newsletter please let us know [info@jeremyhumphries.com](mailto:info@jeremyhumphries.com)

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Registered office - Charter House, The Square, Lower Bristol Road, Bath, BA2 3BH