

PRESS RELEASE

JAMES MAY LIFTS THE BONNET ON THE ULTIMATE MACHINE – THE HUMAN BODY IN NEW 5 SERIES

[London, Monday 18th August 2025] – 5 today announces the commission of a brand-new factual entertainment series **James May: The Human Machine w/t (4x60")** from Plum Pictures. Following his successful and well received debut series with the channel **James May's Great Explorers** that aired earlier this year, this new outing will see James May delving deep into the most extraordinary machine on Earth – the human body.

In this ambitious new four-part series, James will examine and explain the 30 trillion cells working together to keep us alive. From the engine-room stomach to the wiring of the nerves, the air-pump lungs, and the fuel-pump heart – right down to the humble nostril hair and hard-working eyelashes (nature's windscreen wipers) James will explore the ingenious systems that nature has perfected over millions of years.

But for all its brilliance, the human body is also frustratingly fragile. Bits break, ache, and droop. A cold, a scratch, or a dodgy lunch can derail the whole system. James will investigate how humans have spent millennia fixing ourselves – from ancient potions and grisly amputations to the latest in robot surgeons, 3D-printed organs, and microscopic medical marvels.

Best known for tinkering with the inner workings of cars and bikes, James will now turn his attention to our “marvellous meat-sacks” – visiting cutting-edge labs, grisly medical museums, and even scrub up for some hands-on procedures. Along the way, he'll break down how the body works, how it can go wrong, and the ingenious ways we've learned to repair and improve it – while also exploring what engineering can learn from biology. And he's planning to start the series hanging upside down...

The series was ordered by **Guy Davies, Consultant Editor for Commissioning '5'**

Will Daws, Managing Director, Plum Pictures will serve as Executive Producer with Catrina Lear on board as Series Producer.

James May said: *“It's the most remarkable machine we have, and it's us. The human body; billions of components working together to keep us upright, thinking, and moving around without falling over. But it also goes wrong - leaking, aching, and disintegrating. As someone interested in how things work, I'll be taking it apart to see how it ticks. It's a miracle any of us makes it beyond breakfast.”*

Guy Davies, Consultant Editor for Commissioning added: *“James has a unique knack for making complex subjects both entertaining and enlightening – and the human body will be no exception. Though our discussions about farting's place in the series have yet to be resolved.”*

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For further information, please contact:

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About 5:

5 is the home of award-winning content from the UK's third largest commercial PSB, a culmination of the creative transformation of Channel 5 over more than a decade. 5 is part of the Paramount Global family of brands.

Through a mix of live TV channels and bingeable boxsets, the free-to-air service allows UK audiences to watch or stream the breadth of programming from Channel 5 – including Milkshake!, its dedicated preschool brand – and a wide selection from the wider Paramount family of brands, including BET, CBS, Comedy Central, MTV, Paramount+ and more.

In keeping with its PSB remit, 5 tells the story of modern Britain by reflecting the lives of people across the UK, featuring well-known faces and fresh new talent. Its programme roster spans original UK drama, premium factual, true crime, science, news & current affairs and kids' content, which continue to attract critical acclaim.

Recent wins include BAFTA Television and RTS Awards for the documentary *White Nanny*, *Black Child* in 2024, along with a BAFTA nomination for *Endurance Race to the Pole*. Factual hit *The Yorkshire Vet* and the broadcaster's series on air fryers also won RTS Yorkshire awards, while Michael Palin received the Radio Times Special Judges Award for his Channel 5 documentaries.

About Plum Pictures:

Plum Pictures has been producing innovative, popular and critically acclaimed programming for the major networks in the UK and US since 2007.

We make returning formats including *Amazing Spaces* (Channel 4) and *Serial Killer with Piers Morgan* (ITV); talent-led epics like *James May: Our Man in Japan* (Amazon Prime) and *The Mafia with Sir Trevor McDonald* (ITV); access series including *Girls Incarcerated* (Netflix) and *Last Chance Lawyer* (BBC Two); as well as series that defy characterisation, including *Trainspotting Live* (BBC) and *Shed of the Year* (Channel 4).

Our shows are broadcast on BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Sky, Amazon Prime, Netflix, Nat Geo, Discovery ID, Oxygen and are sold to over 160 countries.

Plum has offices in London and Bristol.