

How Chorus helps BAFTA tell their stories

When one of the best-known arts organizations needed support for a colossal image archive and fast-paced event photography workflows, here's how our digital asset management solution rose to the occasion.

Founded in 1947 by a roster of pre-eminent British directors, the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) has evolved into a non-profit organization that champions film, TV and games with staff in London, Glasgow, Cardiff, Los Angeles and New York.

It fulfils its mission of “promoting the art form of the moving image” through education and support programs, preserving the organization’s rich history and recognizing industry achievements with a year-round calendar of awards ceremonies.

Images of each ceremony generate precious assets and revenue for the photographic unit – so, while it’s critical to BAFTA’s brand that the last 70-plus years of material is both protected and accessible to users, the ability to put the latest batch to work as

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soon as it’s created is just as important. They needed a digital asset management tool that could help them centralize a huge volume of scattered assets – while powering the production and distribution of future ones.

“We use Chorus for three things,” explains BAFTA’s Photography Director, Claire Rees. “Firstly, It’s archival: we’ve uploaded around 20,000 retouched digitised assets over the last couple of years, preserving them for the future. Then we document all our events, uploading around 4000 images on a big awards night – roughly 20,000 images per year in total.

“Secondly, it’s public relations: using images to push stories to social media, press, our website and digital platforms, showcasing our activities to stakeholders or sharing with talent and their managers, who want to post red carpet images on their own social media.

“And finally, it’s for commercial use, as a proportion of our photography gets syndicated. We need to be able to deliver to our agencies efficiently on the night - with attached metadata - so we need Chorus to give us a fast turnaround.”



Photo: BAFTA/Sarah M. Lee





*On awards nights, the red carpet is a hub of activity.
Photo: BAFTA/Thomas Alexander*

The power to produce on the night

"I use Chorus every day," says Photography Co-ordinator Jordan Anderson. "It's the first thing I log into in the morning because if anything comes through, I'll have to be on it quickly. But on awards night, we're dealing with thousands and thousands of images. This forms part of a wider workflow stream, so we're always trying to slim it down and make sure too much doesn't have to happen on the night itself."

The team's playbook for lightning-fast event photography starts well before the ceremony itself, with Chorus pre-configured to drive each stage. It takes place in a dedicated space with access and metadata configured to fit this specific workflow, meaning Jordan can prepare a set of smooth and secure paths that take files from photographer to client to syndication. "I can do a lot of the work in advance, which is quite useful - particularly when it comes to archiving everything afterwards," he says.

"Before an awards ceremony starts, I'll set up all our folders beforehand and add all the relevant metadata to each one." This means any image added to that folder is automatically assigned that information, too – a smart trick that minimizes the time it takes to make sure files are searchable further down the line. "We'll know exactly who's covering which area, so I'm able to add the credit and the source. And I can add some of the key wording – for example, if there's a partner brand involved."

He sets up user accounts for any photographers who don't have them yet – a simple process, as Chorus comes with unlimited user accounts – and gives each contributor permission to access the folder into which he needs them to upload. "I'll also drag that folder into their 'Favorites' list so they can see exactly where everything needs to go. Whoever we bring in to picture edit at an event, we know it'll be really quite simple for them to use."

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Jordan Anderson, Photography Co-ordinator

Effective, speedy content prep

Once the images are safely in the hands of BAFTA's partner agencies, the next step is making sure colleagues have images to share with external partners. With a simple click and drag, Claire and Jordan move these finished assets from their secure workspace into another Chorus space – the organization-wide image library, configured with stricter controls because it's accessible to all employees.

This means that these assets can appear in other teams' spaces – for social media, press, partner relations – but only as versions of an original that can't be changed or accidentally deleted. We call them 'derivatives', and Chorus can make them with near-infinite combinations of crop, file format and color space. This is most used by the Social Media team as they publish a stream of live updates for arrivals and awards, but Claire and Jordan also use it to make different versions to share with other teams.

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Claire Rees, Photography Director



BAFTA uses Chorus published links to share assets with partners

Wider – but secure – distribution

BAFTA uses Chorus's 'published link' tool – a branded asset bank with control options that make content safely accessible to the wider world. "We often share images directly with talent and their agents," says Claire, "so it's important that whatever we use to do this this looks professional and isn't confusing to use. Published links look a little slicker, we can brand the page – and people have to agree to our terms and conditions before

downloading anything. I wouldn't be able to do my job without Chorus, not at all."

This feature works brilliantly for the Partnership team, who include content in each contract with a brand. "They'll quickly drag the chosen images over to their partners' folders," says Jordan. "And because those folders are already connected to vanity URLs sent out in advance, the links update with that content instantly. Being able to do so much in advance makes everything so much easier."

Specialist tools in a simple setting

As the point of contact for new users throughout BAFTA, Jordan is a fan of Chorus's user interface, which was designed to be easy to understand and operate right away. "The one thing that I show people all the time is the dual pane view; you can clearly see what you're doing as you move files from one place to another. I've been doing little bits of remote training with people in regional offices, and everyone's picking it up quite easily – but now we're all working from home and I need to troubleshoot, I also find the 'impersonate user' tool useful. I'll go into that, have a look and figure out what the issue is."

"A lot of people like the private space that each user gets," he adds. "It means when they have anything that's confidential, like press releases, they don't have to worry about putting it all together two minutes before it's due to go live - they can work on it there then just move it into a shared space when it's needed."

"I like Chorus's simplicity and how easy it is to navigate," says Claire. "Spaces are very useful; we have various ones for different needs, with people given just the access they require – and then our main image library is where we hold the bulk of the archive." This configurability gives her peace of mind that the most valuable assets are under virtual lock and key, while colleagues have the autonomy to work with minimal intervention from her side. "The Social team bring in other images," she explains, "so storing them in a different space means they can do whatever they want in safety – even delete when the time comes – and I don't need to think about them."

As someone whose role centres on the visual, Claire appreciates how Chorus has been built with the needs of media specialists in mind. "Being able to see the images first and foremost is a really important thing for me. I really love seeing them all displayed – and the more I see, the happier I am, because, you know, we do try to make such good images!"



Meet the team who make 4,000 images a night, with Claire (front row with hands folded) and Jordan (white shirt) at its centre. Photo: BAFTA

Chorus doesn't just control and centralize your valuable media – it also gives teams the smart tools to turn it into a steady flow of content, too. The digital asset management of choice for many Arts & Heritage bodies, it has the power to help any organization capture their stories and share them with the world.

To book a demo, call us on 01223 475674 or [click here](#)

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