

Men must raise a voice to help the fight against domestic abuse, says Duchess of Cornwall

Lucy Campbell

The “taboo” subject of domestic abuse should be brought out into the open and discussed, the Duchess of Cornwall has said before International Women’s Day.

Speaking at the launch of the 10th annual Women of the World (WOW) festival at the Southbank Centre in London, the duchess said domestic abuse was everyone’s problem and the solution must be, too.

“I find it almost impossible to think that any friend of mine might be living under that horrific threat, without my knowing it, but that is the power of coercive control and violence in the home.

“It is characterised by silence – silence from those that suffer – silence from those around them, and silence from those who perpetrate abuse. This silence is corrosive; it leaves women, children and men carrying the burden of shame. It prevents them from speaking about the abuse and it prevents them from getting help. And at its worst it can be fatal.”

Camilla, who has been president of WOW since 2015, said that as well as changing the law, talking about the issue was vital in shifting attitudes away from a culture of silence and shame to one where “survivors should no longer feel any shame or any blame” and felt they could get help.

She said: “The campaign to end domestic violence needs voices of men as well as women, challenging



▲ Camilla, the Duchess of Cornwall, addressed yesterday’s festival

the cultural, economic and political context in which we all experience the world.

“We will all benefit from building a society which will simply not tolerate this heinous crime any longer.”

Camilla also said that domestic violence is a complicated issue that affects men as well as women and that society has a fundamental part to play in changing behaviour. “We all welcome the new laws on coercive control, but laws alone cannot change behaviour,” she said. “The dial is moving forward, but last year, two women a week were

killed by a current or former partner in England and Wales alone.”

Young people, she added, “don’t set out to become abusers. We need to teach our young men and women what healthy and loving relationships are, and that it is never OK to treat anyone with less than respect.”

In the UK, one in four women will suffer domestic violence and at least two women are killed each week by current or former partners.

It is hoped that the domestic violence bill will finally pass during this parliament, covering a range of issues including banning the cross-examination of victims by their abusers in family courts and requiring tier one local authorities to provide support and ensure safe accommodation for survivors and their children.

Last month, the duchess said domestic abuse can affect anybody, regardless of social standing or wealth and implored those suffering to seek help. “Nothing makes you immune to domestic abuse happening,” she said. “It affects everybody. It doesn’t matter who you are.

“That would be my message to people: whoever you are, wherever you are from, there are organisations that can help you. Go and get help. Talk to them, just get up and talk about your experiences. They will help.”

After four years, BBC Three could return to TV

Jim Waterson
Media editor

BBC Three could return to broadcast television in some form, four years after the youth-focused channel became online-only in an effort to save costs.

BBC insiders confirmed that discussions had taken place on whether the brand should once again have a presence on traditional television but said no final decision had been taken.

A spokesperson said a report in the Daily Mail that suggested a return was on the cards was “speculation”, but did not rule it out.

Any move to return BBC Three to screens or boost the resources of its commissioning team would likely mean savings being sought elsewhere at the BBC, with the arts and history channel BBC Four considered a potential candidate for cuts.

BBC Three was taken off air in March 2016. The corporation said the move would save tens of millions of pounds a year, helping it to reduce its spending in line with cuts imposed by the government after 2010.

Much of the channel’s budget was reallocated to fund drama on BBC One, while BBC Three became an online-only commissioning strand in the belief that younger audiences were better reached online.

However, it is struggling among its supposed target market and its audience has flatlined, reaching 8% of 16-to-34-year-old viewers each week.

Sharon White, the ex-boss of the media regulator Ofcom, previously said the broadcast channel was closed “probably a number of years too early”, suggesting the corporation jumped the gun in terms of where younger audiences watch their content.

The view inside the corporation is that BBC Three has produced far more interesting and innovative programmes since it was taken off traditional free-to-air television, where its broadcast audience was often propped up by reruns of EastEnders and the US import Family Guy.

It is now seen as a key incubator of new talent at the BBC, while the growing use of co-productions – where a foreign company, often a US streaming service, shares some of the upfront production outlay – has reduced the cost of making dramas.

In the BBC’s battle with government over its future, it needs to show it can remain relevant to younger audiences.



▲ Family Guy was a staple of BBC Three before the channel went online



In pole position

The snowy slopes of Helvellyn above Red Tarn in the Lake District challenge a mountaineer skier who scaled the steepest face then descended on skis



PHOTO: TOM MCNALLY/
TRIANGLE NEWS

Green, green grass of Tom Jones hits harvested for new musical

Chris Wiegand

Delilah, Sex Bomb and other Tom Jones hits are to be brought together in a new jukebox musical. It’s not unusual, you might think. But the production, which premieres at Leeds Playhouse this autumn, uses some of the Welsh singer’s best-known tracks to tell the story of that other Tom Jones, the hero of Henry Fielding’s epic comic novel, published in 1749.

The show, entitled What’s New Pussycat?, is written by the Tony-award

winner Joe DiPietro, whose credits include the musical Memphis, which was a West End hit in 2014.

The adaptation is set in London and updated from the mid-18th century to the 1960s. The production will also include the chart toppers Green, Green Grass of Home and It’s Not Unusual, as well as You Can Leave Your Hat On and Mama Told Me Not to Come.

Arlene Phillips is the choreographer and the director is Luke Sheppard, whose current smash hit & Juliet rewrites Shakespeare’s tragedy with songs by the Swedish pop producer Max Martin. It leads the nominations

at this year’s Olivier awards, where it will compete for nine prizes including best new musical.

Sheppard said that the first staged reading for What’s New Pussycat? “left me flying high”. Jones’s music, said the director, “has such range it can break your heart one moment and have you on the dance floor the next”.

The show opens on 23 September. Leeds Playhouse celebrates its 50th anniversary in the autumn. The theatre recently underwent a £16m redevelopment and has reverted to its original name after a 28-year spell as the West Yorkshire Playhouse.