ICON FILMS

HUSTLING AMERICA: The country that loves to bet vs the man who hates to lose.

Series synopsis

TV conman Alexis Conran travels across America following in the footsteps of history's greatest hustlers. He wants to see if his skills in deception and magic will allow him to pull off the hardest cons of all: the so-called Proposition Bets – outlandish sounding wagers that are almost impossible to win unless you know the cunning secret behind them. These bets were originally used to con people out of their money – but for Alexis it's not about the cash. He's on a personal mission to measure himself against the greatest hustlers in the country where these ideas were invented.

He starts out by tracing the roots of the man thought to have the most skilled and devious hustler of all: Titanic Thompson. Alexis visits Titanic's home states of Arkansas and Missouri to track down Titanic's son Thommy Thomas – himself a former card cheat, turned preacher. He tries to recreate some of Titanic's famous bets: throwing 52 playing cards into a hat; getting a dog to fetch a marked stone thrown into a river. Along the way he finds that not everything seems to be possible in the way the legends suggest.

Alexis travels to Las Vegas, home of the modern day proposition gambler to meet the people who have made a living from their outrageous bets – including Brian Zembic, a man who was prepared to have breast implants to win a $100,000 wager.

And Alexis ends up testing his skills in the most street-smart city of all: New York, where he tries to beat a professional ping pong player at her home game with an age-old hustler's trick and attempts to rig an all-American eating contest in his favour.

Episode 1 Texas

Alexis traces Titanic Thompson –the most devious hustler of all. He meets Titanic's son Tommy: a former card cheat turned preacher; races an 11 storey elevator on foot and recreates Titanic's first ever bets to test himself against his hero.

Episode 2 Las Vegas

Alexis in on the road to Las Vegas, home of the modern gambler. Along the way he bets on flies landing on sugar cubes, outruns a horse on foot and meets the man who had breast implants to win $100,000.

Episode 3 New York

Alexis tests himself against the most street savvy city in the world: New York. He beats a ping pong pro using an old hustler's trick and rigs a 7 pound seafood eating contest in his favour with a devious trick.

ALEXISIS CONRAN BIOGRAPHY

As one of the original members and star of the BBC's *The Real Hustle* Alexis Conran turned the world of scamming into insightful entertainment, and has proven himself to be a unique performer, albeit one you do not want to be playing cards with!

Born in Paris and raised in Greece, Alexis was introduced to the world of scams, frauds and magic at a young age by his father. He went on to study at LAMDA, whilst also returning to the art of magic along with his training. He re-acquainted himself with the pack of cards and began working as a professional magician specialising in card cheating; performing at exotic, celebrity-fuelled private parties worldwide.

In 2003, the BBC recognised his extensive knowledge of hustling, pickpockets and con artists and made him an advisor for the series *Hustle* for the BBC. Following this, Alexis was asked to star in the flagship series, *The Real Hustle.*

Alexis's hard-hitting documentary and deeply personal documentary, *Gambling Addiction and Me: The Real Hustler* broadcast to critical acclaim on BBC3 in 2012.

In recent years Alexis has become a popular key note speaker using his knowledge on security and the psychology of conmen to entertain and educate at various public speaking events. Alexis has also worked as an advocate of the Scam Busters campaign for the Office of Fair Trading.