



PRESS REVIEW
May 2025

KNUT

THE VIKING EMPEROR

Directed by Fabrice Buysschaert
Produced by ZED

sky **H** HISTORY

2DF

HISTOIRE TV

svt

ZED

INTERNATIONAL PRESS

Sky History buys AI-infused Viking docuseries

By John Elmes | 2 May 2025



Four-part doc on Knut employs 'most advanced' generative AI to reconstruct historical sequences, producer ZED says

Sky History is among the buyers to have picked up a docuseries about the Vikings which makes extensive use of AI for historical reconstructions.

Four-part Knut, the Viking Emperor, produced by Paris-based factual indie ZED (The Sound and the Fury), traces the remarkable rise of the Viking warrior who united Denmark, Sweden, Norway and England under a single crown through his conquests.

Each episode (The Birth of a Viking Warrior, The Revenge of a Landless King, The Last Duel for England, Knut The Great, Master of Northern Europe) will chart how Knut's actions led to the creation of a powerful and far-reaching Nordic empire, the foundations of which still impact Europe today.

The series will be narrated by a group of international experts for historical accuracy on the content but, notably, the historical sequences will be reconstructed and recreated using advanced generative artificial intelligence software.



Source: ©ZED copyright

V-AI-king warrior: Knut, the Viking Emperor makes use of generative technology to recreate historical scenes

In general, visual effects or dramatic reconstruction has been used in documentary making for the purposes of illustrating historical narratives, but ZED says AI has been used to “achieve a striking level of realism”.

Knut, the Viking Emperor was commissioned by Histoire TV in France, with Sweden’s SVT and Germany’s ZDF Studios joining Sky History in pre-buying the documentary.

ZED president and founder Manuel Catteau said: “Knut is a great European epic, brought to life by an outstanding team of European partners.

“This means a lot to ZED, and I hope the series will travel across all continents, allowing us to share our rich history and creative expertise with a global audience.”

Kelly Hornsby, head of acquisitions for Hearst Networks UK & EMEA, described the doc as an “innovative visual approach to the life and career of one of medieval Europe’s most iconic figures”.

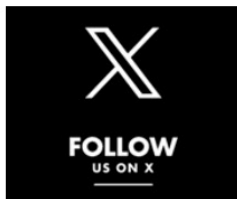
“Knut was a Viking warrior who, through cunning, guile and not a little ruthlessness conquered not only England but united her with Denmark and Norway in the great North Sea Empire,” she added. “ZED are becoming a great partner of Hearst Networks EMEA and we look forward to working more with them.”

Mikael Osterby, head of factual at SVT International: “Working with ZED is always a pleasure. Knut is the most thrilling of all Viking stories and almost too good to be true. We will work closely on developing the AI drama reconstructions and I feel that my Viking genes will once again explore new grounds finding new ways of telling factual stories.

“Our business is changing rapidly and ZED is discovering ways of modernising and developing how to make the audience keep watching our content.”

ZED Lines Up AI-Produced Viking Docuseries

● 33 mins ago ● Jamie Stalcup



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ZED has begun production on *Knut, the Viking Emperor*, a docuseries narrated by a group of international historical experts on the time period and produced with artificial intelligence.

Across four episodes, the series will trace the rise of a Viking warrior who, through a series of conquests, unites Denmark, Norway, Sweden and England under a single crown. The series is being produced for Histoire TV in France and has already been prebought by SVT in Sweden, ZDF Studios in Germany and Sky HISTORY in the U.K.

International experts will narrate the series, ensuring the historical accuracy of the content. All historical sequences are being reconstructed and re-created using generative AI software.

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[More info on ZDF Studios' Ancient Apocalypse.](#)

The first images will be unveiled at Sunny Side of the Doc in June. Delivery is scheduled for spring 2026.

"*Knut* is a great European epic, brought to life by an outstanding team of European partners," said Manuel Catteau, president and founder of ZED. "This means a lot to ZED, and I hope the series will travel across all continents, allowing us to share our rich history and creative expertise with a global audience."

Christophe Sommet, CEO of Histoire TV, commented, "As always, we strive to bring Histoire TV viewers the highest-quality entertainment and information series. Working with ZED on series of exceptional quality such as *Knut* affords us a competitive advantage in a crowded French TV landscape."

"We are delighted to continue our successful relationship with ZED with this exceptionally high-quality production," said Nikolas Huelbusch, Director Unscripted at ZDF Studios. "Following on from such great high-end factual programs as *Ancient Mega-Cities* and *D-Day—100 Days for Freedom*, we are excited to be able to add this outstanding production to our German-speaking catalog, in close collaboration with ZDFinfo's history department."

Kelly Hornsby, head of acquisitions for Hearst Networks UK, noted, "We're excited to be a part of this innovative visual approach to the life and career of one of medieval Europe's most iconic figures; a Viking warrior who, through cunning, guile and not a little ruthlessness conquered not only England but united her with Denmark and Norway in the great North Sea Empire. ZED are becoming a great partner of Hearst Networks EMEA, and we look forward to working more with them."

Mikael Osterby, head of factual at SVT International, added, "Working with ZED is always a pleasure. *Knut* is the most thrilling of all Viking stories and almost too good to be true. We will work closely on developing the AI drama reconstructions, and I feel that my Viking genes will once again explore new grounds, finding new ways of telling factual stories. Our business is changing rapidly, and ZED is discovering ways of modernizing and developing how to make the audience keep watching our content."

Extra: BPM PitchBLACK Awards winners; Zed history docuseries “Knut” to use generative AI

By Justin Anderson

May 5, 2025

Zed launching AI-led historical doc *Knut, the Viking Emperor*

Paris-based producer and distributor ZED has announced the production of a new historical documentary series, *Knut, the Viking Emperor*, which will utilize generative AI technology (gen AI).

Commissioned for France's Histoire TV and directed by Fabrice Buysschaert, the four-part series will trace the rise of the Viking warrior who united Denmark, Norway, Sweden and England under a single crown following a series of conquests. All of the project's historical sequences will be reconstructed or recreated using advanced gen AI software, with the aim of achieving a striking new level of realism.

The series will be narrated by a group of international experts, who will also be on hand to ensure the historical accuracy of the film's AI-generated content.

Knut, the Viking Emperor is scheduled for delivery in spring 2026, and has already been pre-bought by SVT (Sweden), ZDF Studios (Germany) and Sky History (UK). The first images from the project will be unveiled at the upcoming Sunny Side of the Doc conference, which takes place June 23 to 26 in La Rochelle, France.

ZED LAUNCHED "KNUT, THE VIKING EMPEROR," FIRST SERIES PRODUCED WITH AI

THE FOUR-EPIISODES DOCUMENTARY SERIES IS DEDICATED TO THE STORY OF THE GREATEST CONQUEROR OF THE VIKING ERA AND IS PRODUCED FOR HISTOIRE TV IN FRANCE.

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ZED announces the production of "Knut, the Viking Emperor", a documentary series dedicated to the story of the greatest conqueror of the Viking era, produced for Histoire TV in France using the most advanced generative artificial intelligence software.

Manuel Catteau, President - Founder at ZED: "Knut is a great European epic, brought to life by an outstanding team of European partners. This means a lot to ZED, and I hope the series will travel across all continents, allowing us to share our rich history and creative expertise with a global audience".

Directed by Fabrice Buysschaert, the series has already been pre-bought by SVT in Sweden, ZDF Studios in Germany, and Sky HISTORY in the UK and the first images will be unveiled at the upcoming Sunny Side of the Doc, and delivery is scheduled for spring 2026.

Christophe Sommet, CEO Histoire TV: "As always, we strive to bring Histoire TV viewers the highest-quality entertainment and information series. Working with ZED on series of exceptional quality such as KNUT affords us a competitive advantage in a crowded French TV landscape".

In four episodes, the series traces the astonishing rise of a Viking warrior who, through a series of conquests, unites Denmark, Norway, Sweden and England under a single crown. A true epic that recounts the creation of a Nordic empire of unparalleled size and power, the vestiges of which still shape Europe today.

Nikolas Huelbusch, Director Unscripted at ZDF Studios: "We are delighted to continue our successful relationship with ZED with this exceptionally high-quality production. Following on from such great high-end factual programmes as 'Ancient Mega-Cities' and 'D-Day - 100 Days for Freedom', we are excited to be able to add this outstanding production to our German-speaking catalogue, in close collaboration with ZDFinfo's history department".

Kelly Hornsby, Head of Acquisitions for Hearst Networks UK, said: "We're excited to be a part of this innovative visual approach to the life and career of one of medieval Europe's most iconic figures; a Viking warrior who, through cunning, guile and not a little ruthlessness conquered not only England but united her with Denmark and Norway in the great North Sea Empire. ZED are becoming a great partner of Hearst Networks EMEA and we look forward to working more with them".

Mikael Osterby, head of Factual SVT International: "Working with ZED is always a pleasure. KNUT is the most thrilling of all viking stories and almost too good to be true. We will work closely on developing the A.I. drama reconstructions and I feel that my viking genes will once again explore new grounds finding new ways of telling Factual stories. Our business is changing rapidly and ZED is discovering ways of modernizing and developing how to make the audience keep watching our content".

ZED UNVEILS KNUT, THE VIKING EMPEROR- A BOLD NEW DOCUSERIES BROUGHT TO LIFE WITH AI

📅 2025-05-02 / 📁 Factual / 👤 Paris



ZED has officially launched production on **Knut, the Viking Emperor**, an ambitious four-part documentary series that explores the extraordinary life and legacy of one of the most powerful rulers of the Viking Age. What sets this project apart is its use of advanced generative artificial intelligence to recreate all historical scenes, promising a visually striking and immersive experience unlike anything seen before in historical documentaries.

Directed by Fabrice Buyschaert, the series follows Knut's rise from a young warrior to the architect of a vast northern empire, uniting Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and England under one crown. Each episode will delve into a key chapter of his story: *The Birth of a Viking Warrior*, *The Revenge of a Landless King*, *The Last Duel for England* and *Knut the Great, Master of Northern Europe*.

The project is being produced for Histoire TV in France and has already been pre-bought by major international broadcasters, including SVT in Sweden, ZDF Studios in Germany, and Sky HISTORY in the UK. The first images will be revealed at the upcoming Sunny Side of the Doc, with the series scheduled for delivery in spring 2026.

Manuel Catteau, President and Founder of ZED, describes the series as “a great European epic, brought to life by an outstanding team of partners,” expressing hope that Knut will resonate with audiences across the globe. Broadcast partners have echoed their enthusiasm. Christophe Sommet of Histoire TV calls the series “an exceptional production” that strengthens their position in a competitive market. Nikolas Huelbusch of ZDF Studios praised the collaboration and the continuation of a successful relationship with ZED, while Kelly Hornsby of Hearst Networks UK highlighted the innovative visual storytelling and Knut's enduring historical significance.

Mikael Osterby of SVT International perhaps put it best, noting that Knut is “the most thrilling of all Viking stories—almost too good to be true”—and sees the series as a step forward in how factual storytelling can evolve through new technologies like AI.

ZED Presents AI-Generated Viking Doc Series



France-based ZED has launched the production of “Knut, the Viking Emperor”, a documentary series dedicated to the story of the greatest conqueror of the Viking era.

Narrated by a group of international experts who will ensure the historical accuracy of the content, all historical sequences will be reconstructed/recreated using the most advanced generative artificial intelligence software, to achieve a striking level of realism.

In four episodes, the series traces the rise of a Viking warrior who, through a series of conquests, unites Denmark, Norway, Sweden and England under a single crown. A true epic that recounts the creation of a Nordic empire of unparalleled size and power, the vestiges of which still shape Europe today.

Directed by Fabrice Buysschaert, the series is produced for Histoire TV in France, and has already been pre-bought by SVT in Sweden, ZDF Studios in Germany, and Sky HISTORY in the U.K.

The first images will be unveiled at the upcoming Sunny Side of the Doc, and delivery is scheduled for spring 2026.

ZED LANZA NUEVA SERIE PRODUCIDA CON IA

ZED anuncia la producción de Knut, el Emperador Vikingo, una serie documental dedicada a la historia del mayor conquistador de la era vikinga.

...



Manuel Catteau, presidente y fundador de ZED & Christophe Sommet, CEO de Histoire TV

En cuatro episodios, la serie narra el asombroso ascenso de un guerrero vikingo que, a través de una serie de conquistas, unificó Dinamarca, Noruega, Suecia e Inglaterra bajo una sola corona. Una verdadera epopeya que relata la creación de un imperio nórdico de tamaño y poder sin precedentes, cuyos vestigios aún dan forma a Europa hoy en día.

Episodio 1: El nacimiento de un guerrero vikingo

Episodio 2: La venganza de un rey sin tierras

Episodio 3: El último duelo por Inglaterra

Episodio 4: Knut el Grande, amo del norte de Europa

Dirigida por Fabrice Buysschaert, la serie está producida para Histoire TV en Francia y ya ha sido preadquirida por SVT en Suecia, ZDF Studios en Alemania y Sky HISTORY en el Reino Unido.

Las primeras imágenes se revelarán en el próximo Sunny Side of the Doc, y su estreno está previsto para la primavera de 2026.



Manuel Catteau, presidente y fundador de ZED, comentó:

"Knut es una gran epopeya europea, llevada a la vida por un equipo sobresaliente de socios europeos. Esto significa mucho para ZED, y espero que la serie viaje por todos los continentes, permitiéndonos compartir nuestra rica historia y experiencia creativa con una audiencia global".

Christophe Sommet, CEO de Histoire TV, señaló:

"Como siempre, nos esforzamos por ofrecer a los espectadores de Histoire TV la mejores series de entretenimiento e información. Trabajar con ZED en series de calidad excepcional como Knut nos brinda una ventaja competitiva en el saturado panorama televisivo francés".

Nikolas Huelbusch, director de no ficción en ZDF Studios, declaró:

"Nos complace continuar nuestra exitosa relación con ZED con esta producción de calidad excepcional. Tras programas de alto nivel como Ciudades Mega Antiguas y Día D - 100 días por la libertad, estamos emocionados de poder sumar esta producción destacada a nuestro catálogo en alemán, en estrecha colaboración con el departamento de historia de ZDFinfo".

Por su parte, Kelly Hornsby, directora de adquisiciones de Hearst Networks UK, dijo:

"Estamos emocionados de ser parte de este enfoque visual innovador sobre la vida y carrera de una de las figuras más icónicas de la Europa medieval; un guerrero vikingo que, mediante astucia, ingenio y no poca crueldad, conquistó no solo Inglaterra sino que la unió con Dinamarca y Noruega en el gran Imperio del Mar del Norte. ZED se está convirtiendo en un gran socio para Hearst Networks EMEA y esperamos seguir colaborando con ellos".

Además, Mikael Osterby, jefe de contenidos de no ficción de SVT International, comentó:

"Trabajar con ZED siempre es un placer. Knut es la más apasionante de todas las historias vikingas y casi demasiado buena para ser cierta. Trabajaremos estrechamente en el desarrollo de las reconstrucciones dramáticas con IA, y siento que mis genes vikingos volverán a explorar nuevos caminos para encontrar nuevas formas de contar historias reales. Nuestro negocio está cambiando rápidamente y ZED está descubriendo formas de modernizar y desarrollar cómo lograr que el público siga viendo nuestro contenido".



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Télévision

Il y a 3 jours

ZED produit la série documentaire "Knut, le Viking Empereur"

Toutes les séquences historiques seront reconstituées grâce à des logiciels d'intelligence artificielle générative.

intelligence artificielle



ZED annonce la production de la série documentaire *Knut, le Viking Empereur*. La série a pour particularité de proposer des reconstitutions historiques créées grâce à des logiciels d'intelligence artificielle générative .

En quatre épisodes, la série retrace via les voix de différents experts internationaux l'ascension fulgurante d'un guerrier viking qui, à force de conquêtes, a unifié le Danemark, la Norvège, la Suède et l'Angleterre sous une seule couronne.

Réalisée par Fabrice Buysschaert, la série est produite pour Histoire TV en France et a déjà fait l'objet de pré-achats de la SVT en Suède, de ZDF Studios en Allemagne, et de Sky History au Royaume-Uni. Les premières images seront dévoilées lors du [prochain Sunny Side of the Doc](#) et la livraison est prévue au printemps 2026.

ZED / Histoire TV : la série documentaire « Knut, le Viking empereur » en production, avec de l'IA

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ZED a débuté la production de la série documentaire *Knut, le Viking empereur*, a annoncé la société fondée et présidée par Manuel Catteau vendredi 2 mai. Cette série en quatre épisodes est produite pour Histoire TV (groupe TF1) et raconte « l'ascension fulgurante d'un guerrier viking qui, à force de conquêtes, unifie le Danemark, la Norvège, la Suède et l'Angleterre sous une seule couronne », décrit le communiqué.

La série, réalisée par Fabrice Buysschaert, est racontée par un « groupe d'experts internationaux » et toutes les séquences historiques seront reconstituées grâce des logiciels d'intelligence artificielle générative.

Knut, le Viking empereur a été préachetée par la SVT en Suède, ZDF Studios en Allemagne, et Sky History au Royaume-Uni. Les premières images seront dévoilées lors du prochain Sunny Side of the Doc (23 au 26 juin) et la livraison est prévue au printemps 2026.

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TV_PROGRAMMES

ZED lance la série «Knut, le Viking Empereur», produite avec IA

Par Ioan Nicolai - 06/05/2025



ZED annonce la production de «Knut, le Viking Empereur», une série documentaire consacrée à l'histoire du plus grand conquérant de l'ère Viking. Dans cette série-événement racontée par un groupe d'experts internationaux en charge de l'exactitude historique du contenu, toutes les séquences historiques seront reconstituées grâce aux logiciels d'IA générative les plus élaborés,...



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