

## CSAs '20: TV's new contenders on their paths to nomination

The producers of six of Canada's newest Canadian Screen Awards-nominated series share the journey from development and production to the Academy ballot.

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Canadian Screen Award veterans such as *Schitt's Creek*, *Cardinal*, *Anne with an E* and *Letterkenny* dominated headlines when the nominations were first announced on Feb. 18. Coming in under the radar were some of the new TV voices that broke through to land multiple nominations. *Playback Daily* heard from the producers and creative minds behind six new series in the categories for best comedy, drama, sketch, reality/competition and lifestyle to see their journey from development to the Canadian Academy ballot.

### Coroner

(Muse Entertainment, Back Alley Films, Cineflix Studios)

Series premiered Monday, Jan. 7, 2019, on CBC

**Number of nominations:** 5 (Best Drama Series; Best Achievement in Make-Up; Best Original Music, Fiction; Best Lead Actor, Drama Series; Best Lead Actress, Drama Series)

**How long did it take to bring the series from development to the small screen?**



**Morwyn Brebner, creator, EP and showrunner, and**

**Adrienne Mitchell, lead director and EP, Back Alley Films:** Two years. Back Alley Film Productions and Muse Entertainment optioned a series of U.K. novels written by M.R. Hall called *The Coroner* and then Morwyn came on to transform the premise, characters and world and set it in Toronto. After developing the series with a first round of broadcasters who eventually fell out, we finally landed with CBC who totally bought into our hybrid procedural where the main characters' personal stories had as strong screen time and significance as the case stories.

**How does the original pitch compare to what's on screen?**

**MB and AM:** *Coroner* really came into focus during the first season of production. We kind of honed our off-kilter tone and cinematic look. Adrienne block shot the first four episodes, which gave the whole season an energy.

**What was a difficult or unexpected challenge during production?**

**MB and AM:** Everything. Our series is very location-based and the cost of shooting out of studio in Toronto due to the onslaught of American productions is skyrocketing. So it was beg, borrow and steal and it turned out that a lot of people really wanted to support a Canadian show and were thrilled we were shooting Toronto for Toronto.

**Where were you when you heard the nomination news and what was your reaction?**

**MB and AM:** We were both at home, I think, texting each other. We were really blown away and honoured. Thrilled for Serinda [Swan] and Roger [Cross] and really excited to see Tom Third nominated for his gorgeous music and Dorota Mitoraj and Traci Loader for their incredible makeup. It takes a lot of talented artists to make our show.