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'Coroner' helps lead new charge of foreign series to American TV



Serinda Swan

What do you do if you're a broadcast-network executive with a schedule to fill, but few series are being made? One answer: Go shopping for shows that already are ready. The shutdown of production by the coronavirus pandemic was bound to impact television schedules as this year progressed, forcing many decision-makers to look elsewhere for somewhat fresh content. Some are coming from other countries and some from streaming and On Demand services, with the majority of American viewers not having seen the programs before. One example is the Canadian drama "Coroner," which The CW gives its U.S. debut Wednesday, Aug. 5. Serinda Swan ("Ballers") has the title role of a widow whose occupation draws her into medical investigations of strange deaths in the Toronto area, where she's partnered with a homicide detective (Roger Cross). A teenage son (Ehren Kassam) and a new love interest (Eric Bruneau) also factor into her efforts to keep her mind on her job when necessary. Of course, such pickups from across the border aren't new for The CW. Kristin Kreuk's drama "Burden of Truth" recently ended the third season of its American run, but that round first was seen last winter on its originating network, Canada's CBC (also the initial home of "Coroner"). Meanwhile, England has supplied The CW with "Bulletproof" lately and also will yield "Dead Pixels," a mix of live action and computer animation that starts Tuesday, Aug. 18. In terms of sharing a show with a streaming source, The CW has been running episodes of "DC'S Stargirl" night after they premiere on DC Universe – which also is providing The CW with "Swamp Thing" for fall. (The CW will have "Stargirl" exclusively for Season 2.) And sister operation CBS All Access has furnished The CW with the two existing seasons of the anthology "Tell Me a Story." Acquisitions by U.S. broadcasters don't stop there. NBC is importing the Canadian drama "Transplant," a big hit in its native country earlier in 2020, with Hamza Haq as an emergency-skilled doctor who flees Syria with his sister and restarts his career in (logically enough) Canada.