

PLAYBACK

Seven original dramas on Canwest slate

by: **Marise Strauss**

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Canwest has unveiled a robust slate of original scripted programs for Global and Showcase for the 2010-11 broadcast season, tapping no less than seven dramas and four half-hour sitcoms including APTN's *Blackstone* and the Canada/U.K. copro *Combat Hospital*.

"We've done a lot of original programming in reality and documentary genres, but this is the biggest on the scripted side," **Canwest** SVP of drama and factual content Christine Shipton tells *Playback Daily*, calling the announcement "good news" for the industry.

New series *Blackstone*, about power and politics on a fictional Indian reserve, will air on Showcase next spring after the pilot debuted on APTN last November. It is produced by Prairie Dog Film + Television. Also new are the Canada/France copro *XIII* (Prodigy Pictures), about a lethal secret agent; the cop drama *King* (Indian Grove Productions); and the Afghanistan-set medical drama *Combat Hospital* (Sienna Films), which is a copro with the U.K.

Combat will air fall 2010, while *XIII* and *King* are set for next spring, though the broadcaster is yet to be confirmed.

"We'll decide when we see them in production. Our strategy has been if the shows become big and need a big platform, they'll go to Global," Shipton explains.

Previously announced new one-hour titles include cop drama *Shattered*, from **E1 Entertainment** and Force Four Entertainment; *Lost Girl*, from Prodigy Pictures; and *Endgame*, about a crime-solving chess champion, from **Thunderbird Films** and **Front Street Pictures**. *Shattered* will premiere this fall on Global, while Showcase will air *Lost Girl* and *Endgame* in fall and spring respectively.

Over in comedy, the network has tapped two new shows from the guys behind *Kenny vs. Spenny*, including *The Kenny Hotz Television Program* (E1) and *Single White Spenny* (Breakthrough Films and Television). Both will air on Showcase in 2011, alongside the *Untitled Belleville Brothers Project*, also from E1, and previously announced *The Drunk and on Drugs Happy Funtime Hour*.

"We know that the comedies will work on Showcase because we have very limited [half-hour] timeslots on Global for comedies," Shipton says.

