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The stories behind the news.



Making connections at Conecta Fiction



Ed Waller
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Continuing the theme of this summer's conferences, international coproduction was much discussed during panels and sessions at Conecta Fiction.

Conecta Fiction, which kicked off in Pamplona, Spain on Monday, put the spotlight on key trends and issues for the international scripted production community.

Here we offer a selection of the best comments from panellists, keynotes and news soundbites that were of interest to those in the drama sector.



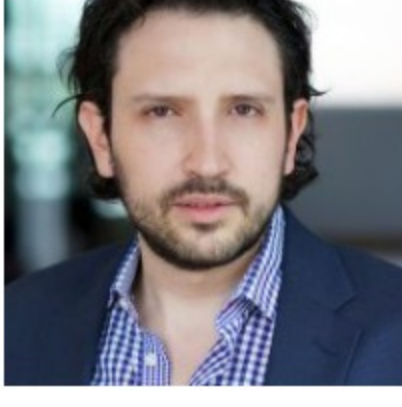
Amalia Martinez de Velasco, director of content, RTVE
We're all very convinced that we need to unite forces, unite finance and also unite the talent to create big European productions. It's a very interesting initiative. We'll be [making new] contacts with the idea of trying to join The Alliance. There is a lot of talent in Europe that we're starting to recognise and bring to the table. There's a growing number of alliances between production companies as well as a general appetite for European fiction among viewers in different parts of the region.

The fact we're a pubcaster gives us access to partnerships on the one hand, because we're facing the same problems and can be part of the solution, but also access to different cultural movements and talent from different regions of each one of our countries.



Peter Tortorici, senior strategic advisor and executive producer, StarzPlay
We are in a fast-moving and rapidly expanding space because we're seeing tremendous movement and the disruption to what had been the traditional linear television model has really accelerated since the pandemic. What I've seen over the course of my career is how big players, in those days the linear TV networks, were disrupted by cable technology. And they weren't disrupted by big competitors but by smaller players that had identified niche audiences that would crave content about their interests.

StarzPlay is one of those players but in the modern universe. We're more of a niche service rather than a general audience vehicle. Our US success is built on targeting underserved audiences, such as minorities and women. Our international business is a bit broader, as we have more work to do in terms of awareness, but we're still focused on edgy adult drama.

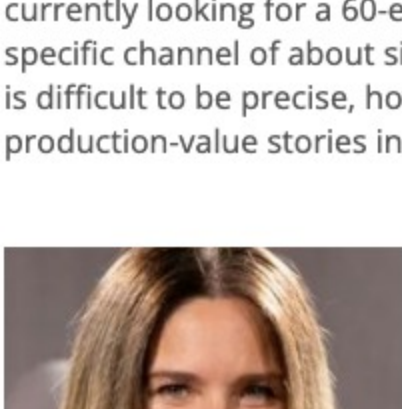


Carlos Quintanilla, senior director of future original development, NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises
We are very happy with our new Telemundo Streaming Studios. The idea behind this studio is to generate fiction for all the different platforms – internally, such as Peacock, but we also have a number of agreements with other players in the market. The new studio is different from television studios at Telemundo but one that is aimed at other streaming platforms. It's like the Disneyland of content right now. Everything is possible, and we're looking for new possibilities.

It's great for the consumers as we're always looking for the best partnerships to create the best content, new ideas, for Latin America. Now we speak about locally global programmes that are aimed at local markets but can travel around the globe. Our show Control Z, for Netflix, is very Mexican, dealing with local conflicts there, but conflict is universal, so that makes it travel to other markets we never thought it would. It would be a mistake to try to create a global success but we need to concentrate on a more local level.



Ana Bond, VP and exec director for Latin American and Hispanic markets, Sony Pictures TV
Sony wants to focus more on content and creators, to become the place where creative people want to work. This means that we are free to work with anyone in the market, which means being independent. We work in all markets with all platforms, channels, pay TV, streamers, free TV and we have no restrictions other than finding the best possible content for the screen. In my territories, there is a thirst for new content. We are currently looking for a 60-episode super series, as well as for a robust series for a specific channel of about six to 10 episodes, and a procedural for a pay TV channel. It is difficult to be precise, however, but we want to continue to focus on high-production-value stories in all global windows.



María José Rodríguez, head of Spanish originals, Amazon Studios
We've just arrived in Spain and are getting settled. However, we're starting to focus on local production in the region as well as Latin America, so this will change. The number of locally produced originals from all over the world has doubled year on year since 2017, so we're just getting started. We're open to producing in Spain. We're always looking for the best for our customers. We want shows that are unique and diverse with great key talent as well as new voices, so Spanish producers should get in touch.



Maria Pia Ammirati, director of fiction, Rai TV
We have many projects because we believe in [European fiction coproduction partnership] The Alliance, because it's the centre of European creativity for series, for stories and for movies and we believe in its future. The Alliance is a flexible way of committing to projects and we don't necessarily have an obligation. We believe in this creative partnership. We are conscious that the past and also the future are based on partnerships. And we know that to make the best use of our resources and work within a European vision we must share the aspirations and also the problems of the European community.

RECENT DEPARTMENTS



Lux Vide's Bernabei on making history



Linear channels evicted from Mouse House



Leopard returns to the attic for HGTV reboot



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LATEST FROM DEPARTMENTS



Lux Vide's Bernabei on making history



Linear channels evicted from Mouse House



Leopard returns to the attic for HGTV reboot

THE LATEST C21PODCAST

Content Ukraine On Demand highlights: part 2
The president of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, a former actor, writer and executive producer, talks about the future of the nation's TV industry and its role in an ever-changing political and media landscape; and leading producers from StarLightMedia, FILM.UA Group and Ukraine TV Channel discuss the country's rapidly evolving TV drama business.

Content Ukraine On Demand highlights: part 1
Execs from FILM.UA Group, Echo Rights, Media Group Ukraine, APC Studios, the Ukrainian Motion Picture Association, Forecast Pictures, 1+1 Rental and Radioactivefilm discuss opportunities for coproducing with Ukraine and filming in the country, as part of C21's Content Ukraine On Demand.

Johnny Webb, Leena Minifie and Mark Procter
HiddenLight's Johnny Webb on plans for the Hillary and Chelsea Clinton prodco, launched together with Sir Richard Branson's son Sam; Stories First Productions' Leena Minifie on the changing fortunes of Indigenous-owned indies; and Big Little Fish's Mark Procter on the challenges of debuting a new UK factual venture amidst the pandemic.

THE LATEST C21TV

Keynote interview: President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky
Moderated by David Jackson, editor-in-chief and managing director, C21Media

Animation in Ukraine
Moderated by Nina Frank, editor, Channel51 International and senior reporter, C21Media

New technologies from Ukraine
Moderated by Nina Frank, editor, Channel51 International and senior reporter, C21Media

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