

TURNING A PAGE...

BRISTOW GLOBAL MEDIA

BASED IN TORONTO



JULIE BRISTOW

Twenty-year CBC veteran Bristow announced her departure from the pubcaster at the end of May, and in August launched her own production shingle, Bristow Global Media. "There is an extraordinary time to be in the business of making great content," she said of the move to open up her

own shop. First up on BGM's slate are the Canadian format rights to factuals *Hidden Talent*, a series to be coproduced by American Express and featuring ordinary people attempting life-changing challenges, and *Miss Country Girl*, which features celebrities transforming young women from the countryside. The company has also secured North American rights to *Letters to the President*, a project jointly developed with the American White House and featuring real letters to the U.S. president and the people who have written them.

You've inked a number of formats as your first deals with BGM. Why formats?

A great idea is a great idea. The best ideas come from anywhere in the world. If the DNA of a TV show is well developed, well executed and has a proven track record of delivering an audience, that's valuable R&D.

Canadian producers have imported and successfully produced formats in the last few years, but haven't as often had the same success exporting original formats. Why do you think that is?

I don't think that's true. There are great examples of Canadian formats that have sold as international formats. *The Next Great Leader*, *Make The Politician Work* and *Cover Me Canada* – just to name a few. There is no question that international format franchises like *Idol* dominate the global marketplace, but that doesn't mean we're not creating good shows with solid formats.

In forming BMG, you partnered with GroupM Entertainment, a division of media agency holding company GroupM Worldwide, and London-based prodco Fresh One Productions (founded by food celebrity Jamie Oliver). What made them good partners?

They are non-exclusive strategic partnerships that provide different strengths to BGM. Fresh One Productions creates and produces transformational TV and that's what we're working on together. It's a creative partnership with a company that understands the power of brands. The partnership with Group M Entertainment gives BGM the opportunity to leverage the WPP network of relationships and global reach to support great content.

What's your competitive edge?

Creating movements around compelling content by developing the best ideas and executions for engaging audiences on all screens.

What are some other productions in your pipeline?

Live and live event programming, including sports, will be an immediate focus of BGM. [Editor's note: On Nov. 18, BGM announced its first commission, *NHL Revealed: A Season Like No Other*, a seven-part doc series to be broadcast on CBC in Canada and NBC in the U.S.]

– Danielle Ng-See-Quan

OUR STORIES,
OUR PEOPLE,
OUR LOCATIONS,
OUR PERSPECTIVES,
OUR CULTURE,
THIS IS OUR ALBERTA.

Congratulations, Paul, and your entire team, on celebrating 50 years of dedicated service to Canada's production sector. Even before your expansion into Calgary in 1990, you have played an intrinsic role in the growth and sustainability of Alberta's dynamic film, television and digitalmedia industry. Thank you for the support and commitment you and William F White continue to have to Alberta and the people who make up this important sector. Through you and your company, Albertans are able to create, celebrate and share their stories with the world. We are glad to have you as part of our Alberta. Here's to the next 50 years.

