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Conecta Fiction & Entertainment: balance between growth and closeness

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The El Greco Conference Center in Toledo (Castilla-la Mancha) will host the eighth edition of Conecta Fiction & Entertainment, an international event that will be held from June 18 to 21, 2024. It is the third time that Toledo has hosted this event, after the experiences in Santiago de Compostela and Pamplona. To find out more details about this edition, we have spoken with its director, Géraldine Gonard.



Awards ceremony at the 2023 Conecta Fiction & Entertainment

Conecta Fiction & Entertainment is a benchmark annual meeting that facilitates, among other things, the co-production of series and TV content between Europe and America. It is worth remembering that in last year's edition, Conecta registered 1,031 accredited people from 41 countries.

"It is an event that was conceived as a *boutique* and started with 400 people but has grown and last year we had **1,000 people**, although maintaining the **philosophy of a large family** where projects, talents, ideas and businesses are exchanged between people and entities. The challenge is to go further but maintain this spirit. Furthermore, we continue to be an event held in a single space and within an environment that is historical and cultural heritage," says Géraldine Gonard, director of Conecta Fiction & Entertainment.

Gonard also emphasizes that it has grown in its **business focus**: "Initially, it was more for organic co-productions of content but it is no longer limited only to co-productions, but rather to exchanges between countries and international agreements. "You come to look for a partner for your content, but also to look for a partner, a service company, a filming space or a fiscal mechanism."

The event is not only for fiction but has also been incorporating **entertainment formats**. "It was a request from the industry. Non-fiction surely takes up more hours and has a larger audience (...) We wanted to include entertainment earlier but with the pandemic we had to stop it and it also coincided with the appetite of the platforms, which began to produce a lot of original non-fiction. It was the perfect moment and we are happy to be able to accompany this growth," explains Gonard.

The **five calls for International Projects in 2024** are: **Pitch Copro Series**, for fiction projects in the development phase that have or are seeking partners for their production; **Pitch High-End Series**, fiction series projects with high budgets and elements that guarantee success and quality; **Pitch Music Series**, for those fiction series projects in which music has a special relevance; **Pitch Docu-drama**, focused on documentary series projects with fictional elements; and **Pitch Feelgood Formats**, for television entertainment program formats in development.



Géraldine Gonard, director of Conecta

BRAZIL AND PORTUGAL, FOCUS COUNTRIES

The professionals who attend this year will be able to strengthen ties especially with **Brazil and Portugal**, as Gonard tells us: "They are two very powerful countries that also share a language. Portugal is very active right now towards co-productions and international agreements, and Brazil has reappeared on the international stage because it spent four years with a government that did not support the audiovisual sector and has now changed its strategy. Brazil

is going to come with a very powerful delegation of chains, producers and representatives of its institutions who are going to present the structure of the country, its laws, public support and associative environment. And the same from Portugal"

The commitment to Brazil is especially relevant, a country with enormous potential yet to be exploited. With a domestic market that exceeds 217 million inhabitants and an extensive history of content production, Brazil stands out not only for the number of hours produced, but also for the outstanding technical and artistic talent it possesses.

ALLIANCES WITH EURIMAGES AND CONTENT AMERICAS

One of the big news in 2024 is a **collaboration with Eurimages**. This year, during the event, the **Series Co-production Development Award** will be presented, valued at **50,000 euros**.

This award aims to encourage creative collaborations in the co-production of series and strengthen independent producers. It involves a non-refundable grant dedicated to covering expenses during the development phase of the project. The name of the winning project will be revealed during the awards ceremony.

"The good thing about this award is that it must come from an independent European production company, to which non-European international partners can later be added. I think it is a very nice bet on the part of the **Council of Europe**. It is an award that gives an important push for the project to come to fruition but it is also a **seal of quality**," explains Gonard.

They have also established a new strategic alliance with **Content Americas** through which one of the finalist projects of Conecta 2024 will have a prominent presence before, during and after Content Americas, offering the production company, and its project, special visibility within the meeting. of Miami in its 2025 edition.

ARGUMENTS TO ATTRACT THE INDUSTRY

According to what the director of Conecta reveals to us, the **axes of the new edition** will be four: **business models in terms of content production, technology** (virtual production, AI, metaverse), **transmedia and IP** (how to go from one format to another), to another) and **marketing** (how to sell your product from the first line of the script).

There are many events on the calendar. **Why go to Conecta Fiction & Entertainment?** "Because our focus is to bring together many countries in a space and a country that is natural for everyone. Spain is a connecting country between America and Europe," says Gonard, who also highlights that although their flag is close treatment, they have a "brutal" offer with more than 80 activities.

One of those activities is the **Think Tank**, a *networking* space that will be held this year in the **Don An Em park**, which will be closed to **Conecta Europe**. It is an award that gives an important push for the project to come to fruition but it is also a **seal of quality**," explains Gonard.

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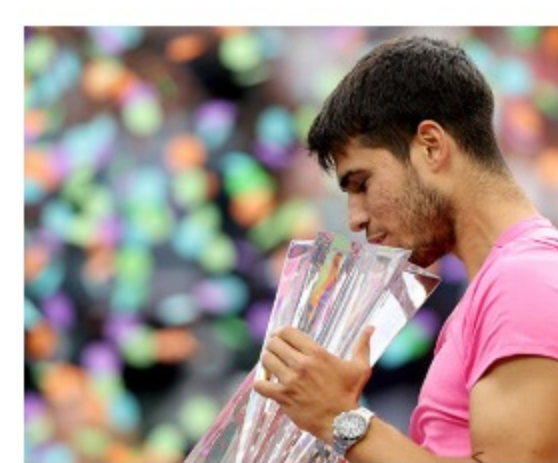
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