

The Suburban

# magazine

MARCH 6, 2015

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From left: Warren Christie, Brendan Penny, Kristin Lehman, Louis Ferreira and Lauren Holly.

# Season three of CTV's unique crime drama *Motive* promises lots of twists

By Mike Cohen  
The Suburban

CTV's hit original drama series *Motive* returns for a third season, Sundays at 10 p.m., beginning March 8. For viewers like me, it's the unique format and my affinity for Vancouver which serves as a significant draw.

*Motive* gets your attention before the opening musical interlude even begins with its signature "whydunit," reveal. What is "whydunit?" Almost immediately you are shown the killer and the victim. That is when detectives Angie Flynn (Kristin Lehman), Oscar Vega (Louis Ferreira) and Brian Lucas (Brendan Penny) step in, working alongside medical examiner Dr. Betty Rogers (Lauren Holly) and Sergeant Mark Cross (Warren Christie). They proceed to look for someone with a "motive"

Set and shot in Vancouver, *Motive* was a 2014 Canadian Screen Award nominee for Best Dramatic Series. Its second season saw an average audience of 1.3 million viewers, a 19 percent increase over Season 1. CTV received the ultimate compliment for this drama when ABC picked up the series for summer runs. No decision has been made yet by the American network for this new line of 13 episodes.

Season 3 of *Motive* begins with Detective Flynn returning to the homicide team after a six-month, self-imposed absence. The dramatic Season 2 finale saw Flynn's past and present fatally collide when her involvement in a new trial about an old case called everything she stood for as a detective into question. It was a great episode, with flashbacks to 10 years in the past. The twist here is they showed the killer, a



member of the police force, which made you wonder how he would be caught a decade later. The identity of the victim was a shocker, killing off one of the season's newest cast members. In fact, for the entire season viewers were teased about Flynn's past relationship with Cross and why it was so strained. It all came together in the finale, with Flynn signalling her departure.

Given the fact that Flynn is the character who drives this show, it was obvious they would not write her off. In the six months since she left, Detective Lucas has begun giving orders, and is now the primary on key cases; Detective Vega has made a genuine effort to fill in the gaps Flynn left behind; and he and Cross are getting along. But as the CTV press release tells us, this season Vega will have more to focus on than just his work, facing a crisis that threatens not only his career, but his personal life as well. Flynn is lured back to help investigate a case involving his father and the death of a beautiful young socialite. A recovering addict, the victim's past points to a potential overdose as a cause of death. But as



Lauren Holly

details emerge, it becomes clear her death was no accident.

Viewers will also see a new side of the always confident and charming Dr. Rogers, when she comes up against a dangerous and threatening adversary. As Flynn adjusts to the changes, she finds herself fixated on her first case back, and on one intriguing character in particular who will draw the team - and viewers - in from the very first episode of the season.

"Viewers are in for quite a season," Penny promised *The Suburban* in a telephone interview from his B.C. home. "There will be some episodes which will be real heartbreakers."

Penny said he loves the format of the show. "Unlike many other cop shows, where you have to wait until the end to find out who the killer is, we tell you right from the start. I do think it would be kind of cool if we did not catch the killer on every episode. But the feeling is, I guess, that the viewers do not want to see

the bad guy get away.

Motive has an impressive list of guest stars lined up for this season. They include Dylan Walsh, Alexis Bledel, Chris Klein, C. Thomas Howell, Ally Sheedy, Billy Boyd, Charles Martin Smith, Jessica Lowndes and Luisa D'Oliveira. Acclaimed six-time Emmy Award-nominee Victor Garber, noted for his roles in the movie *Argo* and the TV show *Alias*, will appear in a recurring guest role as a victim's father.

"We have a veteran police officer on hand as a consultant and I speak to him a lot," said Penny. "We do get a feel for the people who do this job in real life. A lot of what you see on the screen are taken from real life cases."

Viewers can catch up on the entire first two seasons of *Motive* on CraveTV before catching the Season 3 premiere on March 7 - one day before its broadcast premiere - with the CraveTV First-Look for original Canadian scripted series. Season 3 episodes will also be available on demand following each broadcast at CTV.ca, CTV GO, and on CraveTV.

## Actor Brendan Penny happy to see maturity of his *Motive* character Lucas

Brendan Penny would love to get an opportunity to shoot a film or TV project in Montreal. He just completed the taping of season three of CTV's *Motive*, where he stars as Detective Brian Lucas, and returned to be with his family on the west coast of Vancouver Island.

"I am from Ottawa, so I spent a lot of time in Montreal over the years," Penny said. "It would be amazing to shoot something there one day."

On *Motive*, Penny's character Lucas was portrayed as a young Detective Trainee on the force for most of the first two seasons - an eager beaver gentleman, with a few quirks. His open naiveté and natural innocence made him the butt of good-natured ribbing from the rest of his colleagues. His character had previously spent a few years in the Financial Crimes Division and recently graduated to detective. Where most rookies would recoil in disgust or discomfort at an autopsy, Lucas is fascinated and curious about the grisly procedures.

Lucas was a newlywed in season one and seemed to have a troubled marriage in the second season. In fact it looked like he was going to have an affair with Officer Wendy Sung (Valerie Tian). "My wife on the show, Mary, was never seen on screen," Penny notes, "nor will she. My character is now split up from Mary. There won't be anything between me and Officer Sung either as she is not part of the cast. This season my character will be all work. I will also be more of a take charge guy."

Viewers of the CTV series *Whistler* may recognize Penny from playing A.J. Varland, a role which won him a Leo nomination for Best Actor

in a Dramatic Series. He also played a lead role in *The Assistants*, a comedy series aimed at the teen audience.

Penny has also been seen in *World on Fire*, a miniseries for Sonar Entertainment, *The Runner*, a web series for Leaping Lizards Productions, and *The True Heroines*, a series for Big Rig Productions. He has guest starred on numerous series, including *Flashpoint* for CTV, *Supernatural*, *Smallville*, *Kyle XY*, *Blaze* and *The L Word*.

Penny made the move from Ottawa to Vancouver at age 23 after completing a degree in accounting at Fanshawe College in London, Ontario -- and realizing that he didn't really want to be an accountant. He has always loved comedy, having written and performed sketch comedy during his high school years, and encouraged by his father, he decided to move to Vancouver to pursue an acting career. He studied with Frank Cassini at the Lyric School of Acting, followed by two years of private coaching with Vancouver-based acting coach Ty Olsson. Four years after arriving in Vancouver, Penny began booking his first film and television roles, and he hasn't looked back.

Penny is married. His wife is a marine biologist and they have a young daughter. They live in Tofino, on the west coast of Vancouver Island, where he continues to pursue his love of surfing and fly fishing. It is quite distance from the city of Vancouver, where *Motive* is taped. "And that's the way I like it," he said.

— Mike Cohen

