

Crossing over

Medium drama 'The InBetween' premieres on NBC

By Sarah Passingham
TV Media

The formula of the police procedural gets a spiritual new twist when "The InBetween" premieres on NBC on Wednesday, May 29. The drama series follows Cassie Bedford, portrayed by Australian actress and comedian Harriet Dyer ("Love Child"), who experiences uncontrollable visions of the future and the past and visits from spirits desperately seeking her help. To make use of her unique talents, she assists her father, Det. Tom Hackett, and his former FBI partner as they tackle the most complicated crimes in their city. Together they follow her visions and seek justice for those who have contacted Bedford through the "inbetween."

The reason behind Bedford's involvement in criminal investigations is her father's belief that her psychic gift can be used for good. Det. Hackett is portrayed by British actor Paul Blackthorne, best known for his role of Quentin Lance in "Arrow." Of the cast, Blackthorne is the most experienced with TV clairvoyants as he guested in an episode of psychic drama "Medium" in 2005.

As for Dyer, she may be a new face to North American audiences, but she has a long list of acting credits, including dramatic and comedic roles in her home country of Australia. She is best known for portraying Patricia Saunders in the hospital drama "Love Child" and April in the cop comedy series "No Activity," which was adapted for North American audiences by CBS All Access in 2017. Dyer's comedic experience has served her well, particularly in series that strongly rely on the authenticity of its characters to work, such as "The Other Guy," on Australian streaming service Stan. This same authenticity will no doubt help ground a performance as abstract as a medium for "The InBetween,"



Paul Blackthorne in "The InBetween"

which could certainly become over-the-top in less capable hands.

The lone American in the main cast is Justin Cornwell, who recently starred in TNT's "I Am the Night." As Hackett's partner, former FBI agent Damien Asante in "The InBetween," Cornwell portrays an outsider who's new to the father-daughter supernatural crime-fighting team of Hackett and Bedford. This isn't Cornwell's first time channelling a cop character; he starred as Det. Kyle Craig in the "Training Day" series inspired by the 2001 film of the same name.

Everything old really is new again. There was a heyday for psychic, clairvoyant and medium-centred television in the mid-2000s, with shows

like "Medium" and "Ghost Whisperer," that ended soon after we entered the 2010s. Though that was the end of mediums on scripted network television for that decade, the craze was kept alive with reality TV. "Long Island Medium" almost immediately filled the gap for avid fans of the genre when it premiered in 2011 and, perhaps as a signal that mediums are back yet again, "Hollywood Medium" began on E! in 2016. Since we live in an era of reboots, it's notable that a fan favourite on the spookier side of the supernatural was brought back from the dead earlier this year on CW with the reincarnation of "Charmed." Three makes it a trend, so the CBS All Access reboot of the supernatural classic "The Twilight

Zone" must also be counted here.

Judging from the trailer for "The InBetween" released by NBC, the series seems to be leaning into the horror genre to set itself apart from other procedurals and to give a fresh twist to the psychic drama. In the trailer, Bedford is visited by spirits that appear not only as they lived, but also as grotesque versions of themselves, presumably as they died. With a string of recent horror hits, such as "It Follows," "Get Out" and "Hereditary," performing incredibly well at the box office, there is undoubtedly an audience for supernatural horror on the small screen.

The series brings many popular genres together, from

the police procedural to the supernatural drama to some hints of horror influence. "The InBetween" brings a new perspective to the evergreen procedural, but it's not just a gimmick. The twist of the supernatural makes the realistic plots of investigating crimes feel even more real by showing what a detective would be imagining, psychic or not, while working a case. Bedford is directly visited by desperate spirits, but any detective can be haunted by what they experience during investigations. Despite its supernatural elements, "The InBetween" seems to be a reaction to the recent popularity of true crime content, both on screen in shows like the HBO drama "True Detective" and the Netflix documen-

tary series "Conversations with a Killer: The Ted Bundy Tapes," and more widely in podcasts such as "Serial."

Veteran executive producer Moira Kirkland created "The InBetween," wrote its pilot episode and serves as executive producer for the series. She is known not only for producing network television hits such as "Madam Secretary" and "Arrow," but she also produced the series "Medium" and three episodes of the 2003 reboot of "The Twilight Zone." From behind the scenes to those on the screen, the people involved in bringing "The InBetween" to life couldn't be more suited to the task.

Don't miss the series premiere of "The InBetween" on Wednesday, May 29, on NBC.