



BLACKSTONE, FEATURED

APTН'S BLACKSTONE ENDING AFTER FIVE SEASONS

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It's the end of the road for Blackstone: APTN's gritty, award-winning drama will conclude with a final eight episodes next month.

"It's been quite a run and when I say 'No. 5,' I'm a little shocked," says Ron E. Scott, Blackstone's writer, executive producer and director. "The show still has a lot of momentum, people aren't saying, 'Oh, they're doing that again?'" After five seasons I think it's time."

Critically-acclaimed by critics, beloved by fans and winner of numerous Leo, Gemini and Alberta Media Production Industries Association Awards, Scott's series hasn't shied away from hard-hitting First Nations stories. Instead, he's shone a bright light on such topics as alcoholism, sexual abuse, corruption and violence, societal issues faced on reservations and across the country.

Season 4 was particularly harrowing: former Blackstone chief Andy Fraser (Eric Schweig) was in prison and missed his wife Debbie's (Andrea Menard) funeral; his son, Alan (Justin Rain), was injured during a blockade against Shale Industries' plans to drill for oil on Blackstone; and Leona (Carmen Moore) and Gail Stoney (Michelle Thrush) suffered anguish when Wendy (Miika Bryce Whiskeyjack) was kidnapped by Darrien (Julian Black Antelope). Child welfare will be a big focus in the final eight episodes, as will violence against native women, a topic top of mind in Canada because of real-life events surrounding the death of Tina Fontaine and assault on Rinelle Harper.

Season 5 picks up right after the events of last season's cliffhanger, with Andy still reeling from Debbie's demise, who he described as the only one who truly knew him. Scott teases Andy comes to the realization he can never go back to being the guy used to having luck and good fortune fall his way. Alan's injuries affect Andy, as does his relationship with brother Daryl (Steven Cree Molison), who appear to be on the verge of a cash windfall after allowing Shale to conduct test drilling on their private land. Scott describes Gail's journey this year as "wonderful"; after years of being knocked down, she is going to enjoy a lot of wins thanks to improved health and a renewed focus on life.

Scott, meanwhile, has got several projects in development with networks but has left the door open to more Blackstone stories, including a TV movie if the opportunity came along.

“In this TV market, I don’t know if anyone knows it it’s truly over,” Scott says with a chuckle. “It’s exciting, as a content creator, because there are so many platforms. I would love to do a Blackstone movie, I think that would be really interesting.”

Blackstone airs Tuesdays at 10 p.m. ET on APTN beginning Nov. 3.

The past four seasons of Blackstone can be watched on APTN’s website.