

# PLAYBACK

## Vision goes with Sudz series

by: Marise Strauss

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Sudz Sutherland is in the market for a female actress "of a certain age" to lead his new series *She's the Mayor*.

The project was this week chosen from 280 submissions by VisionTV, following a call for comedy/drama proposals that would appeal to the channel's female-skewing 50+ audience. The channel has ordered 13 half-hours from Sutherland's Hungry Eyes Film & Television in Toronto.

"What we offered was [a show with] intelligent humor as well as heart," explains Sutherland (*Love, Sex and Eating the Bones, Guns*), who pitched the project alongside his partner Jennifer Holness (*Guns*) and documentary filmmaker Min Sook Lee (*Hogtown: The Politics of Policing, My Toxic Baby*). All three will serve as creators/exec producers.



The story is about a sixtysomething political rookie who unexpectedly wins a local election and must rely on a combination of instinct, guts and dumb luck to navigate the harsh world of city politics.

Sutherland notes there are not many lead parts written for women over 50 -- other than grandmother roles.

"I know just from working on shows that [these] women are our biggest talent pool... they're our most experienced actors, so we wanted to do something that would access that talent pool," he says, on a break from directing two episodes of Shaftesbury Film's *Murdoch Mysteries*. "Hopefully that will help make us unique on the dial."

He says he has a few people in mind for the part, though it's too early to say for sure. Hungry Eyes is putting the creative team together for an early winter shoot.

Sutherland notes that the writers will be able to capture true city politics through the experiences of Sook Lee, who spent two years inside Toronto's City Hall for her award-winning documentary *Hogtown*.

Vision plans to air *Mayor* in fall 2010. It beat out other finalists including *Local 68*, *Saint Michael*, *Taking on Water*, and late addition *Flatearth E.R.* -- the latter was announced as a contender just last week, though Vision says it had been in the running for some time. The creators are said to be shopping them to other broadcasters.

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