[FR] CSA Takes up the Issue of Scripted Reality

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The audiovisual regulatory authority (*Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel* - CSA) has announced that, starting on 19 November 2012, it will hold hearings of the professionals concerned (producers, TV channels, scriptwriters, authors' societies) regarding "scripted reality" programmes. The first broadcast of this type, "Le jour où tout a bascule", which reconstructs stories based on true events, was broadcast on the public-sector channel France 2 in July 2011. Since then this inexpensive format, combining fiction, news and reality television, is presented on a daily basis on a large majority of channels, in both the private and public sectors, giving rise to some concern among professionals. The question currently facing the CSA is in fact whether these programmes should be considered as fiction, and be counted as such in the channels' broadcasting quotas and receive aid from the national cinema centre (*Centre National du Cinéma* - CNC). There is no agreement. On one hand, fiction professionals plead in favour of scripted reality not being recognised as fiction, as this would result in a drop in orders for stock programmes (fiction programmes, documentaries and animated films) from the channels. Some channels, including TF1, declare their scripted reality broadcasts to the CSA as fiction. Whereas one of the CSA's members has in fact declared in favour of these programmes being included in the channels' quotas for fiction, the chair of the CSA's committee on audiovisual production has recalled that the CSA considers each programme individually when deciding what may be classed as a fiction work, i.e. a work with writers, directors and actors. The committee also disregards the quality of the works. The Minister for Culture and Communication has for her part pointed to another issue by affirming that scripted reality has no place on public-service television. The position of the CSA on the matter is awaited more eagerly than ever.

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