

Cracking the code! Emerald Code, a new series about girls and STEM, gets the green light

Shaw Rocket Fund onboard for 20-part digital series from Shaftesbury/Smokebomb and shift2 aimed at raising awareness of STEM among girls 8 – 12

MIPTV: CANNES, France, April 3, 2017 — Leading production company **Shaftesbury**, along with its digital studio **Smokebomb Entertainment** and branded entertainment agency **shift2**, welcome **Shaw Rocket Fund** as a partner on multi-platform digital series ***Emerald Code*** (20 x 3 mins), going into production this Spring. Shaw Rocket Fund joins an exciting roster of previously announced partners including Ubisoft and Let's Talk Science. The series, aimed at inspiring and empowering girls 8-12 to pursue their interests in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) subjects in school and in life, will star newcomers, and real-life best friends, **Anwen O'Driscoll** and **Star Slade**, and will be directed by **Michael Seater** (*Life with Derek, Murdoch Mysteries*). A companion docu-series is also in the works (10 x 3 mins) that will celebrate real-life kid heroes of coding.

“As content creators, we know the power of storytelling to change lives. We believe that *Emerald Code* can do just that – by empowering girls and young women to pursue interests and careers in a field that has been predominantly male-dominated. We are thrilled that Shaw Rocket Fund shares our vision and will be joining us as a strategic partner in this effort. We look forward to making a series for girls, about girls, that will be entertaining, inspiring, and impactful,” said **Christina Jennings, Chairman and CEO, Shaftesbury/Smokebomb**.

“***Emerald Code*** is a unique, creative concept that has the potential to inspire girls around the world to explore STEM. We are excited to support the teams at Shaftesbury and shift2 in fuelling the minds of our children with quality programming. This program exemplifies the calibre of content in the Canadian kids and youth television industry and we're proud to be part of it,” said **Agnes Augustin, President & CEO, Shaw Rocket Fund**.

“When we set out to create ***Emerald Code***, we wondered why the computer genius in TV shows and movies always had to be the unpopular kid. This stereotype is detrimental to the future of STEM so a large part of our effort is to change that perception,” said **Kaaren Whitney-Vernon, CEO, shift2**. “This isn’t just a one-off project; this as a long-term commitment to encourage more girls and women to get involved, and ultimately, to aspire to careers in STEM industries. We look forward to working together and welcoming additional forward-thinking organizations to get involved with us in this movement.”

Emerald Code follows 15-year-old Simone Lang who, after discovering web design and programming at summer camp, is amazed at everything she can create by herself with science and technology. Inspiring her friends to do the same, Simone and her pals soon realize that they have tons of ideas and inventions that can make their lives easier, more connected, and more fun. They navigate the complicated and confusing world of high school by learning new skills and exchanging ideas in order to create unique and useful tools. Soon, Simone and friends are solving problems, coming up with wild schemes, and most importantly, cracking the code to living an awesome high school life!

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About Shaftesbury/Smokebomb

Shaftesbury is an award-winning creator and producer of original content for television and digital platforms. Shaftesbury’s slate includes 11 seasons of *Murdoch Mysteries* for CBC, UKTV, and ITV STUDIOS Global Entertainment; *Houdini & Doyle* for Sony Pictures Television, Corus Entertainment, ITV, and Fox; thriller series *Slasher* for NBCUniversal’s Chiller; and Kids’ CBC series *The Moblees*. Shaftesbury’s digital arm, **Smokebomb Entertainment**, produces original digital, convergent, and branded entertainment projects including the hit YouTube series *Carmilla*, funded by U by Kotex®; mystery series *V Morgan Is Dead*, brought to life by RBC; fashion comedy series *MsLabelled*, produced in partnership with Shaw Media and Tetley Tea; supernatural drama *Inhuman Condition*; and the *Slasher VR* app for iOS, Android, and Oculus Rift. In June 2014, Shaftesbury partnered with Youth Culture to create **shift2**, a branded entertainment agency that drives profitable engagement with millennials using scripted series, turning brands into executive producers.

About Shaw Rocket Fund

The **Shaw Rocket Fund** is a forward-thinking, not-for-profit corporation that focuses on stimulating excellence in the Canadian children's production industry in Canada through equity investment and industry initiatives such as the Shaw Rocket Prize and Startoon, an online development program for animators. The Rocket Fund is an advocate of the Canadian children's production sector maintaining an active role with regulators and governments. Contributors to the Fund are Shaw Communications and Shaw Direct.

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