



**SERIES MANIA ANNOUNCES CREATION OF ANNUAL
“SERIES MANIA ÉTOILE AWARD”
HONORING AN INTERNATIONAL TALENT WITHIN THE TELEVISION INDUSTRY**

**First Étoile Award to be presented to Tony, Grammy and Emmy Award winner
Audra McDonald who will be in Lille with her new series *The Bite* from
ViacomCBS Global Distribution Group**

PARIS & LILLE, FRANCE – July 13, 2021 – Laurence Herszberg, founder and general director of Series Mania, (August 26-September 2) announced today the creation of the “Series Mania Étoile Award”, an annual award which will be given each year at Series Mania honoring an international talent within the television industry. The first “Series Mania Étoile Award” will be presented to Tony, Grammy and Emmy Award-winning singer and actor Audra McDonald on August 26, opening night of Series Mania. In addition to the award, McDonald will be in Lille on behalf of her new television series *The Bite* from ViacomCBS Global Distribution Group. She will be hosting a masterclass celebrating her career and a Q&A with her husband and fellow cast member, Will Swenson, after the French Premiere of *The Bite*.

“We created the ‘Series Mania Étoile Award’ to put the spotlight on an outstanding actress or actor for an extraordinary career in television. As our first award winner, Audra McDonald is everything I would have dreamed of,” commented Herszberg. “A beautiful voice, an amazing career in music and television, and a strong woman who fights for others. Gifted with so many talents, Audra is the Étoile.”

Audra McDonald is best known by worldwide audiences as the TV screen star of *The Good Fight* (Paramount+) and *Private Practice* (ABC). She also appeared in Disney’s feature *Beauty and the Beast*, and she will appear in MGM’s upcoming feature *Respect*, the biographical musical drama based on the life of Aretha Franklin. She is the recipient of a record-breaking six Tony Awards, two Grammy Awards and one Emmy Award. In 2015, she received the National Medal of Arts bestowed on her by President Barack Obama. Blessed with a luminous soprano voice and an incomparable gift for dramatic truth-telling, she is as much at home on Broadway and concert stages as she is on film and television.

SERIES MANIA ETOILE AWARD – AUDRA MCDONALD

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McDonald is also a fierce activist. She is a founding member of Black Theatre United, board member of Covenant House International, and prominent advocate for LGBTQAI+ rights.

ABOUT THE BITE

From creators Robert and Michelle King (*The Good Fight*, *The Good Wife*, *Evil*), *The Bite* follows the lives of two neighbors Rachel (Audra McDonald) and Lily (Taylor Schilling, *Orange Is the New Black*) as they embark on unprecedented times when a deadly new strain of a virus arrives. The six-episode series is co-produced by Spectrum Originals and CBS Studios and distributed internationally by ViacomCBS Global Distribution Group. The series is created and written by Robert and Michelle King and also produced by their production company King Size Productions with Liz Glotzer and Brooke Kennedy also serving as executive producers. *The Bite* is part of Series Mania 2021 International Panorama selection, competing for Grand Prize, Special Jury Prize, Best Actress and Best Actor.

ABOUT SERIES MANIA

Based in Lille since 2018, Series Mania - Lille / Hauts-de-France has become the biggest event dedicated uniquely to television series in Europe. Its festival offers exclusive world premieres of the greatest international series on the big screen, giving its audience - up to 72,000 spectators - 9 days of discoveries, parties, and masterclasses with some of the most renowned personalities in the series world.

At the same time, Series Mania welcomes 3,000 international professionals from the television industry at Series Mania Forum and Lille Dialogues summit. Two key events for networking and business are now extended online with the creation in 2020 of Series Mania Digital Forum.

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