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On location

Specializing in documentaries, a media content production studio finds inspiration from near and far



THE GREAT DEPRESSION was a time of desperation. Country-wide, tens of thousands of able-bodied workers stood outside the few places that might hire them for one day's wage. But in London, hope was unveiled in the form of The Dominion Public Building. The iconic Richmond Street building was financed under the Public Works Act of 1934, which aimed to generate employment during the Depression, and the Canadian heritage landmark stands as a testament to hope in times of adversity.

"I think it was a message for the community that the future was going to be better, and in some way that building was like a promise," says Juan Andrés Bello, founder and general manager of London-based Triana Media, a media content development firm that created a web-based documentary film series about the building's history.

Originally from Caracas, Venezuela, Bello says one of the things he appreciates about this project is that it made historical documents accessible to everyone. Originally from Venezuela, Juan Andrés Bello moved to London in 2010 and founded Tiana Media last year

"The drawings of the building are like a work of art," he says. "Those aren't the type of records you [normally] have the opportunity to see. We were able to scan them in high resolution and now people can see them online."

Bello launched Triana Media in 2015. Named after a district in Seville, Spain, where he and his wife met, the company creates and produces media content, documentaries and television programming.

"We work the entire process, from idea to screen," says Bello. This includes content creation, editorial and visual research, archives and copyright work, pre- and post-production, web development, social impact campaign development, experiential learning and civic engagement.

As a student in Venezuela, Bello worked at a TV network in programming and acquisition, focusing on forecasting trends. He was hired full-time, and later moved to production. Before moving to Canada in 2010, he started his own business, working for Latin American television-A&E and the Biography Channel—on projects for the Latin-American television audience.

Bello and his Argentina-born wife, Constanza Burucua, were looking to move to a family friendly city to raise their two daughters. She was offered a position as a film studies professor at Western University and they decided London was the ideal place to set down roots. Bello has also worked at Western University as a film studies assistant professor, developing a series of film production courses.

The couple works together at Triana Media, assembling a team of experts on a per-project basis.

The firm's current work includes a series of short documentaries for HBO Latin America promoting the accomplishments of NGOs working on educational projects in various countries in the region.

Bello says London is proving to be a good base for Triana Media, with easy access for business travel and a growing technology sector.

"I have plans for growing, and now I know that here in London there are professionals who are capable of working on projects I plan to develop."

Bello says he believes there are also many potential projects close by. "I think in London and Southwestern Ontario there are many stories waiting to be told. I have a long list of things I would like to work on, and I have quite a few requests from people who want me to help them tell their stories. For me, it's a very exciting time." Ω SUZANNE BOLES

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