

Bring Back Nashville

By Paula Tudor

By now I am sure most of you have heard about ABC's cancellation of Nashville. While not necessarily surprising, it has come as a major disappointment to many, including Lionsgate, the company behind Nashville. Along with fans and the show's stars, Lionsgate has been working tirelessly to find a new home for Nashville in time for season 5.

There has been talk of Nashville's cancellation practically since the show began, so I think many people assumed it would skate by another season. ABC, however, had other plans. They even cancelled their long-running hit, Castle, after eight seasons. This was, perhaps, the more shocking cancellation; but Castle seems to have accepted their fate, wrapping up their season by giving the fans closure. Confident in the possibility that Nashville might be picked up by another network or streaming service, Lionsgate and the show's writers went a different route. Two endings of Nashville were filmed, one that tied up all the loose ends and one with a cliffhanger. In a strategic move, undoubtedly designed to inspire fans to continue to fight for Nashville, the cliffhanger ending was aired. In fact Lionsgate and the show's stars have asked their fans to use the hash tag "Bring Back Nashville" across social media to generate interest in the show. Lionsgate TV even changed their twitter banner to a promotional poster of Nashville, which includes this hash tag. The same hash tag can now be found in their twitter bio. Immediately following Nashville's finale, Lionsgate TV also sent out the following tweet, "#Nashies What a cliffhanger! But we won't leave you hanging. There's more story to be told. #BringBackNashville."

According to the entertainment website, Deadline, Hulu may be a promising new home for Nashville. Hulu is a streaming service similar to Netflix that has been airing episodes of Nashville. They are also responsible for bringing back The Mindy Project after it was cancelled by Fox last year. In fact Hulu just gave it the green light for another season. Other rumored possible networks for Nashville include CMT, Lifetime, or Pop, among others. Of course only time will tell which network, if any, will pick up Nashville; but an online petition aimed at getting someone to air it has received more than 100,000 signatures.

While Nashville is not without its share of problems, which include ridiculous plot points and the occasional nonsensical storyline, I do hope it can make a comeback. I never really felt like ABC was behind this particular show. Perhaps if they had given it splashy promotionals like the "Can't Wait for Tonight" campaign featuring their Thursday night lineup of Shonda Rhimes dramas, Nashville would have brought in bigger ratings. It certainly has a stellar cast, who have helped to create characters worth watching and caring about. In addition, talented songwriters have given Nashville a soundtrack unlike anything else on television, rivaling even the most prominent country stars. My one fear about a deal involving Nashville's resurrection is that it will include a move out of Music City. This was something that was talked

about in previous seasons, which fortunately never came to pass. I think it is important for the authenticity of the show to stay in Nashville. To that end, if the show continues, and *if* it continues to be filmed in Nashville I hope it will include more of the city, preferably outdoor shots of notable Nashville locations. In order to truly 'bring back Nashville' the city needs to be more of a character in the show; otherwise there really is no point in filming there. Landmark locations like The Bluebird Café and The Ryman can be re-created almost anywhere.

To read more about Nashville the series and the campaign to bring it back visit deadline.com

To view and sign the petition to bring Nashville back, go to <https://www.change.org/p/abc-renew-nashville-for-season-5>

Paula Tudor is a freelance writer, and a distinguished blogger/online correspondent, with more than two thousand followers on twitter. The bulk of her work can be found at <http://www.paulas-soapbox.blogspot.com>