

Poison Pen Studios announces new hires for London team

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Poison Pen Studios, Ben Stephenson's new ITV Studios-backed transatlantic scripted label, has announced new hires for its London-based team, including the appointments of Luke Woellhaf, Fern McCauley and Oluchi Ezeh.

Luke Woellhaf joins Poison Pen Studios as Director of Development, working alongside Creative Director Preethi Mavahalli and President Ben Stephenson to build the international premium drama slate.

In his previous role at Left Bank Pictures, Luke developed several projects to greenlight, including the ITVX thriller *Without Sin*, which he also assistant produced, before becoming Head of Development. Luke began his career at *Holby City*, working his way up from story researcher to story producer before script editing the hit Netflix series *Behind Her Eyes* and the BAFTA award-winning *Sitting In Limbo*.

Fern McCauley joins the team as Head of IP Acquisitions, leading the strategy for sourcing IP across publishing, podcasts and gaming. Most recently, Fern was Head

of Media Development at Hachette where she oversaw book, film and TV rights deals as well as IP development across publishing houses Hodder & Stoughton, Headline, John Murray Press, Orion Publishing Group, Little Brown, Quercus, Headline Publishing Group and Octopus Publishing Group.

Meanwhile, Oluchi Ezeh has been appointed Development Coordinator. Oluchi joins from Heyday TV where she was Development Assistant. Prior to this, she worked in talent at B-Side Management as well as the former talent agency, Troika.

Preethi Mavahalli, Creative Director of Poison Pen, said: *"It's so great to have Luke, Fern and Oluchi join us at Poison Pen. Ben and I feel very lucky to have built such a talented, young and inspiring team. We can't wait to get started and look forward to this adventure together."*

Fern McCauley: *"I'm absolutely delighted to be joining Ben and Preethi at Poison Pen Studios. I feel especially lucky to be joining at this early stage and am super excited to add my IP experience to such an incredibly talented and creative team. It's a dream job and I can't wait to see what we will create together."*

Oluchi Ezeh: *"It's such a dream to be joining Poison Pen; Ben and Preethi have put together such a wonderful, talented team and I'm so excited by their vision for the company. I can't wait to help them bring some incredible ideas to the screen."*

Luke Woellhaf: *"I'm so excited and honoured to be joining Poison Pen under Ben and Preethi. Their experience on both sides of the Atlantic speaks for itself, and I can't wait to make fantastic, thrilling and envelope-pushing shows under their exemplary leadership."*

Poison Pen Studios launched earlier this month and will focus on high-end premium drama. It is based in London and Los Angeles, with hires in its US office to be announced soon.

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Press Contacts

tanya.nyenwa@itv.com

Viewer enquiries

<https://www.itv.com/contact/how-to-get-in-touch>