



Anamaria Marinca and Ben Cotton are on a mission; inset: Becher



## Meet the crew...

### Sophie Becher, Production Designer, *Mars*

**THE FUTURE IS** being brought to you by Sophie Becher, production designer behind the sets of *Mars* (Mondays, 9/8c, National Geographic Channel). The lavishly produced six-episode series tells the story of the first crewed mission to the Red Planet in 2033—which goes horribly wrong—and how a human settlement rises from the ashes. “When *Mars* director Everardo Gout asked me to do the show, I felt it was out of my comfort zone,” says Becher, who has worked on period dramas like Agatha Christie’s *And Then There Were None*. “But he quoted Kennedy’s speech: ‘We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy but because they are hard!’ And when you hear that, what can you say?”

**What research did you do to create the *Daedalus* spacecraft that takes the astronauts to Mars?** The main directive from producer Ron Howard was that the show has to be grounded in reality. So I studied what really works in space travel, like the space stations. The film has a lot of retro technical things, such as push buttons. I also looked at the prototype of Elon Musk’s SpaceX DragonRider capsule, and I went to an exhibition about cosmonauts.

What struck me was the incredibly cramped environment astronauts endure. **The landing on Mars goes wrong and the astronauts have to quickly build emergency housing. What was your inspiration for those structures?** I looked at disaster-relief shelters built after floods or at refugee camps. I thought of the astronauts as being in the same situation as refugees.

**What sci-fi-esque production design clichés did you want to avoid?** In sci-fi you see a lot of white, but white is very harsh on the eyes. I’ve gone for blues and greens; they reflect peace and calmness. With all these people living together indefinitely, it’s a volatile environment. You want spaces to feel calm and nurturing. **How did you get your start?** I studied art and sculpture in college, then worked with the Edinburgh Festival Fringe designing theater sets. I started in film as a runner [helping in all departments] and worked my way up.

**What’s next for you?** Another project out of my comfort zone. It’s a movie [*Lost in London*, directed by Woody Harrelson] that will be done all in one take, like the long tracking shots of Hitchcock’s *Notorious*. It’s going to be another massive technical challenge, but I quite like that! —Kate Hahn

## TOP 20 SHOWS

WATCHED LIVE

1	Sunday Night Football: Green Bay vs. Washington	18.7
2	60 Minutes	14.9
3	NCIS	14.7
4	The Big Bang Theory	14.3
5	Thursday Night Football: New Orleans vs. Carolina	13.3
6	Bull	11.9



**Bull** doesn’t place in the Top 20 with viewers age 18–49 (it’s tied for No. 25), but it’s the top new drama with total viewers.

7	Dancing With the Stars	11.3
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The semifinals two-stepped over the Monday Night Football matchup, a close Giants victory against the Bengals.



8	The Walking Dead	11.0
9	Monday Night Football: Cincinnati vs. New York Giants	10.7
10	Football Night in America Part 3	10.4
	NCIS: Los Angeles	10.4
	Blue Bloods	10.4
13	Hawaii Five-0	10.1
14	The Voice (Monday)	10.0
15	The Voice (Tuesday)	9.7
16	This Is Us	9.5
17	NCIS: New Orleans	9.2
18	Madam Secretary	8.5
	Survivor	8.5
20	Empire	8.4

The Lyon family saga is the No. 1 drama among viewers age 18–49 (4 million).



Source: Nielsen Media Research, week of November 14–20, 2016, in millions.