

MARKETPLACE

# C'est What? French TV in English

## Rising Cost of Flashy Programs Means Shows Have to Cater First to International Audiences

By SAM SCHECHNER

PARIS—In an episode of the forthcoming French television series “Jo,” a Parisian police detective heads to the Eiffel Tower to solve a murder. The biggest twist in the drama isn’t who pushed a supermodel from the monument’s edge. It is the language coming out of the hard-boiled French cop’s mouth: English.

As the television business becomes increasingly global, television producers world-wide are facing a new challenge. In order to compete with big-budget American TV shows like “The Mentalist” that are popular in many countries, non-U.S. producers increasingly have to look overseas for more money. That means making TV shows that sell abroad, in the image—and language—of Hollywood.

The result is that in France, a country fiercely proud of its linguistic heritage, several new TV shows are being shot in English, and will be dubbed later into French when they air at home.

In addition to “Jo,” which will air on France’s TF1 network, French television channels are planning new English-language shows such as an edgy, sometimes raunchy, retelling of the story of the court of Louis XIV, dubbed “Versailles,” a new show based on the 1960s film “Barbarella,” and “Crossing Lines,” a show about a crack team of European investigators who track criminals across the continent on special assignment for the International Criminal Court.

Behind the shift is the increased global competition among TV shows and the rising cost of producing the flashy programs that international audiences want. Local shows in France, for instance, have trouble competing on their own airwaves with big-budget Hollywood shows that are funded by the lucrative U.S. TV market.

So far this year, according to measurement firm Médiamétrie, four of the five most-watched TV dramas on French television are French-language versions of American programs like “CSI: New York,” whose ti-



EXT. SIDEWALK—CONCORDE—DAY  
JO: Good morning, gorgeous. What's that on his hand?

A scene from French television show 'Jo,' which is filmed in English, to make it easier to sell internationally.

tle translates as “Les Experts: Manhattan.”

While U.S. companies typically can afford to spend between \$3 million and \$4 million to make an hourlong TV episode, channels in France usually can afford to spend an average of €700,000 to €800,000 (or around \$890,000 to \$1 million) for an original local show, producers say.

Local producers hope international, English-language shows, which can be sold overseas, will let them split the difference: providing a somewhat local show with a budget approaching those of U.S. programs.

“On one hand, viewers have a growing appetite for more and more spectacular shows and, on the other hand, competition is

making it so that TV channels have less and less to spend. That is going to push everyone toward international production,” said Rodolphe Belmer, the No. 2 executive at Vivendi SA’s pay-TV company Groupe Canal Plus.

Canal Plus, for its French pay channel, is increasingly turning to international partners to make what it calls “mega-productions,” a type of bigger-budget program that aims to match what Hollywood puts out. Emblematic of this approach was the action-packed TV adaptation of “XIII,” a Belgian comic book, shot in English, with an Irishman in the lead role. Overall, Canal Plus plans to air 12 hours of such shows this year, out of about 50 hours of original series overall. But the company

aims to double that number to 24 hours, Mr. Belmer says.

Similar logic led the TV-production arm of French media company Lagardère SCA to launch Atlantique Productions 3½ years ago, with the goal of making English-language series that could reach an international audience—and tap their dollars, too.

The company’s first production was “Borgia,” set in Renaissance Rome, shot in English, and dubbed in French for Canal Plus. In the U.S., it aired on Netflix, though it is unclear how popular it has been on that platform.

“The big commissioners of TV shows are getting weaker, and that tends to shrink the money they have available to buy shows,” said Klaus Zimmermann,

co-head of Atlantique Productions. “I’ll bring you a show that’s a little national, and a little international that you couldn’t afford otherwise.”

But the international model also faces challenges. It is hard to predict how popular any show will be, either at home or overseas. It is also difficult to land foreign deals, given the multiple channels in multiple countries with the same desires for a TV series. Atlantique, for instance, claimed it had lined up a \$4 million deal with small TV broadcaster Ion Media Networks Inc. to air the first season of “Jo” in the U.S., according to a lawsuit Atlantique filed last month in California. But now it alleges that Ion has backed out and refuses to pay, claiming that there never was an agreement.

Atlantique’s Mr. Zimmermann declined to comment on the lawsuit. Ion said its policy is to not comment on pending litigation.

While “Jo” stars French actor Jean Reno, the cast includes mostly veterans of American TV and film, like “Law & Order” actor Jill Hennessy. The show is being written and run by longtime “Law & Order” writer-producer René Balcer, who says he brings American pacing to the show, as well as a grittier vibe.

“It ain’t going to be National Geographic Paris,” Mr. Balcer said, on set for a scene that takes place in the sculpture garden of Paris’s Musée Rodin. “We’re not looking for pretty pictures.”

The show goes to great lengths to make it appear natural that everyone in Paris is speaking English. Street signs are changed to be in English, and characters—apart from Mr. Reno—generally speak with a standard mid-Atlantic accent common on American television.

To maintain the illusion, the show never raises the question of what language characters are speaking, despite roles for people who hail from France, Canada and the U.S.

“I believe the normal American audience won’t even notice,” Mr. Zimmermann said. “They’ll just say ‘OK, I guess they all speak English in France.’”

# For Swiss, Fine Time For Watches

By JOHN REVILL

ZURICH—The Swiss watch industry said Tuesday that exports increased in October, confounding expectations that the business could become the latest sector to catch a chill from the cooling global economy.

The resilience of the highest end of the luxury industry, where watch brands such as Patek Philippe SA and Vacheron Constantin sell for more than \$12,000, was illustrated in the latest data from Switzerland’s customs office.

The value of watch exports rose 13% from a year earlier in October to 2.12 billion Swiss francs, or \$2.25 billion, after a revised fall of 1.5% in September.

October’s gain was led by top-end brands, including Cie. Financière Richemont SA’s Vacheron Constantin, Swatch Group’s Breguet and the closely held Patek Philippe and Audemars Piguet.

The steepest rise in exports in terms of value was in watches selling for more than 7,000 Swiss francs, with that measure rising 17%, compared with a gain of 2% for watches retailing at as much as 600 Swiss francs.

Claudia D’Arpizio, a partner at advisory firm Bain, said the high end is performing better across the luxury sector.

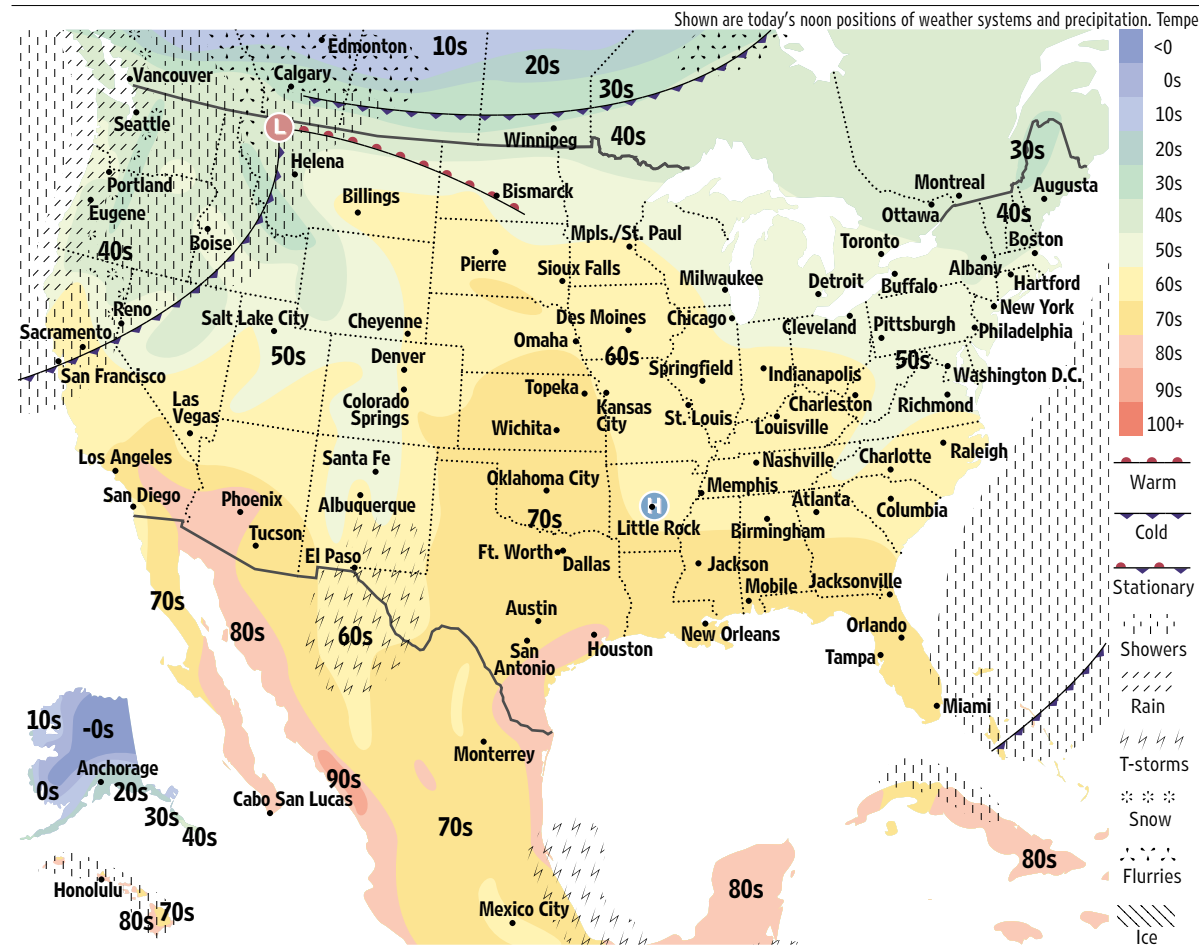
“This segment is more for personal consumption or for connoisseurs, and is not impacted by the slowdown in economies or the slowdown in gift-giving in China,” she said.

The appetite for the top brands underscores the growing split in the luxury segment, with resilience at the very high end contrasting with the mid- and entry-level luxury segments, which are feeling the pain of the economic slowdown. At the top end, Hermès International SCA of France and Richemont of Switzerland have been unaffected while Burberry Group PLC and LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton SA have said sales growth is slowing.

The figures also showed the resilience of the Swiss watch industry to weakness in China.

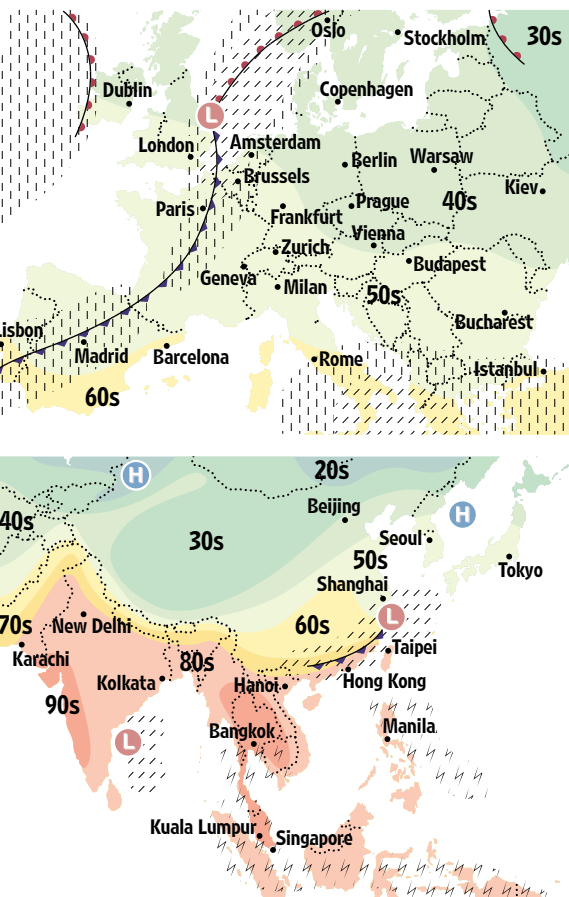
# WEATHER WATCH

AccuWeather.com



## International Forecasts

City	Today	Tomorrow
Amsterdam	50 40 c	49 37 s
Athens	65 59 sh	64 55 pc
Barcelona	63 52 c	59 47 sh
Belgrade	54 39 pc	50 39 pc
Berlin	47 39 pc	44 34 pc
Brussels	54 39 c	50 38 s
Bucharest	53 31 c	43 30 c
Budapest	50 40 pc	48 42 c
Copenhagen	45 40 c	48 41 r
Dublin	48 43 pc	48 39 r
Edinburgh	46 43 c	50 41 r
Frankfurt	50 40 c	45 37 c
Geneva	54 39 c	51 39 c
Helsinki	43 36 c	43 36 pc
Istanbul	61 50 pc	60 53 pc
Kiev	43 30 c	39 27 c
Lisbon	61 48 pc	63 50 s
London	54 45 r	54 45 pc
Madrid	55 43 pc	57 43 c
Milan	57 43 pc	54 42 c
Moscow	37 27 c	34 25 c
Munich	47 36 c	45 32 c
Nice	59 48 pc	64 47 sh
Oslo	43 37 r	41 34 c
Paris	54 37 c	49 37 pc
Prague	46 33 c	43 32 c
Rome	63 46 s	63 48 pc
St. Petersburg	38 32 c	36 29 r
Stockholm	45 39 pc	45 36 sh
Vienna	46 39 c	48 39 c
Warsaw	43 33 c	43 37 r
Zagreb	53 41 c	50 40 c
Zurich	52 36 c	48 34 c



## U.S. Forecasts

High-low forecasts and general weather conditions. s...sunny; pc...partly cloudy; c...cloudy; sh...showers; t...thunderstorms; r...rain; sf...snow flurries; sn...snow; i...ice

City	Today	Tomorrow
Albany	49 30 pc	47 33 s
Albuquerque	62 41 c	63 33 s
Anchorage	19 14 pc	22 10 s
Atlanta	68 45 s	68 47 s
Augusta, GA	68 39 s	68 35 s
Austin	79 48 pc	77 55 pc
Baltimore	56 40 pc	58 36 s
Billings	62 35 pc	63 25 pc
Birmingham	69 44 s	69 47 s
Bismarck	52 32 pc	37 13 r
Boise	52 29 c	46 32 pc
Boston	50 41 c	52 38 s
Buffalo	52 38 pc	55 41 c
Burlington	47 30 pc	49 35 s
Charleston, WV	62 32 s	60 36 s
Charlotte	66 39 s	64 35 s
Cheyenne	63 35 pc	47 20 s

City	Today	Tomorrow
Chicago	58 44 s	61 38 pc
Cincinnati	62 40 pc	63 46 s
Cleveland	58 39 pc	58 43 s
Colorado Spgs.	68 38 pc	52 22 s
Columbia, SC	67 40 s	67 34 s
Dallas	79 56 pc	77 53 t
Denver	68 37 pc	56 25 s
Des Moines	64 49 s	61 30 c
Detroit	57 39 pc	59 46 pc
Duluth	50 38 pc	51 21 c
El Paso	67 49 r	71 43 s
Eugene	48 40 r	46 40 c
Fairbanks	-20 -27 s	-17 -26 s
Grand Rapids	56 42 s	59 43 pc
Hartford	50 35 pc	52 33 s
Helena	52 29 pc	36 20 pc
Honolulu	80 68 pc	83 68 sh
Houston	80 54 pc	78 57 pc
Indianapolis	60 41 s	63 44 pc
Jackson, MS	70 42 s	71 46 pc
Jacksonville	71 46 pc	69 40 s
Kansas City	68 52 s	67 32 pc

City	Today	Tomorrow
Las Vegas	69 50 s	70 50 s
Little Rock	68 45 s	70 52 pc
Los Angeles	70 54 pc	74 56 pc
Louisville	64 42 s	66 49 s
Manchester	48 34 pc	52 31 s
Memphis	65 47 s	69 52 pc
Miami	76 58 pc	73 58 s
Milwaukee	56 42 s	58 37 pc
Mpls./St. Paul	63 42 pc	55 24 c
Mobile	72 46 s	71 48 s
Nashville	66 40 s	68 48 s
New Orleans	73 52 s	72 53 s
New York	52 42 pc	55 44 s
Oklahoma City	75 56 pc	73 39 c
Omaha	68 45 s	60 26 pc
Orlando	74 52 pc	72 49 s
Philadelphia	55 40 pc	55 42 s
Phoenix	80 55 s	79 56 s
Pierre	66 38 pc	49 19 c
Pittsburgh	58 36 pc	58 40 s
Portland, ME	47 33 pc	50 32 s
Portland, OR	50 41 r	50 41 c

City	Today	Tomorrow
Providence	53 41 pc	53 37 s
Raleigh	62 40 pc	60 35 s
Reno	57 30 c	52 28 s
Richmond	58 39 pc	58 33 s
Sacramento	64 44 c	63 39 s
St. Louis	64 47 s	68 42 pc
Salt Lake City	59 35 pc	66 29 s
San Antonio	77 56 pc	76 59 pc
San Diego	65 55 pc	67 54 pc
San Francisco	62 47 c	62 47 s
San Jose	63 46 c	64 43 s
Santa Fe	59 33 c	59 26 s
Seattle	47 39 r	48 40 c
Shreveport	75 49 s	75 54 c
Sioux Falls	66 38 s	52 20 c
Spokane	46 31 sh	41 28 c
Springfield, IL	62 44 s	64 38 pc
Tampa	75 53 s	72 50 s
Topeka	72 52 s	68 32 pc
Tucson	80 51 s	78 51 s
Washington, DC	57 42 pc	59 40 s
Wichita	73 53 pc	70 35 pc

City	Today	Tomorrow
Auckland	68 56 pc	69 53 s
Bangkok	92 80 t	92 80 s
Beijing	48 32 pc	46 26 pc
Chengdu	58 54 pc	55 44 sh
Dhaka	84 65 s	83 64 s
Hanoi	89 77 pc	93 77 s
Hong Kong	81 75 sh	82 76 pc
Jakarta	89 76 t	88 76 t
Kabul	61 30 c	51 35 sh
Karachi	88 63 s	87 63 s
Kolkata	86 68 pc	87 68 s
Kuala Lumpur	90 76 t	90 76 t
Manila	88 77 t	91 76 s
Melbourne	70 48 pc	71 48 pc
Mumbai	90 73 s	90 73 s
New Delhi	80 52 s	80 53 s
Perth	95 65 s	90 58 pc
Seoul	50 36 pc	52 28 sh
Shanghai	59 55 s	67 52 sh
Singapore	88 78 t	89 77 t
Sydney	82 58 t	72 55 pc
Taipei	82 68 r	81 68 r
Tashkent	46 26 s	46 24 s
Tokyo	57 48 s	57 49 sh

City	Today	Tomorrow
Calgary	38 8 sn	24 19 pc
Edmonton	11 1 sf	7 1 pc
Halifax	47 33 c	49 35 s
Montreal	46 30 pc	46 36 pc
Ottawa	45 28 pc	47 35 pc
Toronto	50 37 pc	52 42 pc
Vancouver	47 42 r	49 44 sh
Winnipeg	42 32 pc	34 19 sn

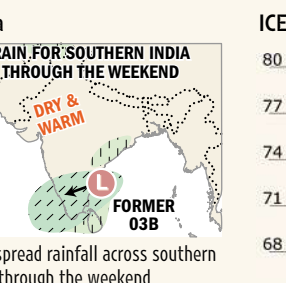
City	Today	Tomorrow
Barbados	87 78 sh	88 79 sh
Havana	78 57 c	77 55 s
Kingston	85 74 c	84 75 pc
Nassau	80 68 pc	78 69 pc
Port-au-Prince	87 69 pc	80 70 r
San Juan	87 72 sh	86 71 sh
Santo Domingo	86 71 sh	85 71 t
Trinidad	91 76 sh	91 76 sh

U.S.	Weather	Delay
Atlanta	s	none
Chicago	s	AM
Dallas/Ft. Worth	pc	none
Denver	pc	none
Detroit	pc	AM
Houston	pc	none
Las Vegas	s	none
Los Angeles	pc	none
Miami	pc	none

U.S.	Weather	Delay
Mpls./St. Paul	pc	AD
New York	pc	none
Orlando	pc	none
Philadelphia	pc	none
Phoenix	s	none
San Francisco	c	none
Salt Lake City	pc	none
Seattle	r	AD
Washington	pc	none

International	Weather	Delay
Hong Kong	sh	none
Johannesburg	s	none
London	r	AM
Paris	c	none
Rio de Janeiro	s	none
Singapore	t	AD
Sydney	pc	none
Tokyo	s	none
Vancouver	r	AD

**Weather to Buy or Sell**  
Cotton harvest in southern India will be disrupted later this week and weekend as the remnants of T.C. 03B produce moderate to locally heavy rain from Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka on south.



**ICE US Cotton**  
Closing price in cents per lb. Source: Thomson Datastream