

= Sanctuary (season 1) =

The first season of the Canadian science fiction ? fantasy television series Sanctuary premiered on the Sci Fi Channel in the United States on October 3 , 2008 , and concluded on ITV4 in the United Kingdom on January 5 , 2009 , after 13 episodes . It follows the actions of a secret organization known as the Sanctuary , who track down a series of creatures known as abnormals , and then bring them to the Sanctuary for refuge . The main story arc of the season involves the Sanctuary working against the Cabal , an organization who seek to control all abnormals for their own gain . Amanda Tapping , Robin Dunne , Emilie Ullerup , and Christopher Heyerdahl are billed in the opening credits as the main cast .

Initially an eight @-@ part web series , Sanctuary was successful enough for Sci Fi to commission a television series . Series creator and head writer Damian Kindler hired Sam Egan , and the two wrote all the episodes and composed the season @-@ long storyline . Many episodes had been written throughout the 2007 Christmas season before the season was green @-@ lit . Principal photography started in May 2008 . It was the first instance in North American television where RED cameras were used . Most of the season was filmed using green screen in a warehouse in Burnaby , British Columbia , though there are instances throughout that were filmed on location , including the Riverview Hospital in Coquitlam and the North Shore Mountains outside Vancouver . Anthem Visual Effects produced the season 's visual effects . The virtual sets meant that they produced around 400 visual effects per episode . Other forms of special effects , including prosthetics , were used to present the abnormals . The first season was budgeted at an estimated \$ 21 million .

Sanctuary 's first season aired in over 50 countries worldwide . The season premiere drew the largest audience with 2 @.@ 7 million viewers , the highest rated Sci Fi premiere since Eureka in July 2006 . Including time @-@ shifted viewing , the season was seen by an average of 2 @.@ 35 million viewers per episode ; the ratings success allowed Sci Fi to renew Sanctuary for a second season . Critical reactions of the season were mixed . Some reviewers noted that , although the first six episodes were " hit and miss " , they liked the later episodes . In total , it won five awards : one Gemini and four Leos . The first season was released on a four @-@ disc set on DVD and Blu @-@ ray Disc on September 9 , 2009 , in Region 4 , September 15 in Region 1 , and October 15 in Region 2 .

= = Episodes = =

In this table , the number in the first column refers to the episode 's number within the entire series , whereas the number in the second column indicates the episode 's number within this particular season . " U.S. viewers in millions " refers to how many Americans watched the episode live or on the day of broadcast .

= = Cast = =

= = = Regular cast = = =

The first season consists of four principal cast members . Amanda Tapping plays series protagonist Helen Magnus , a 157 @-@ year @-@ old English scientist who runs the Sanctuary network . Tapping darkened her hair color for the role . Robin Dunne plays Will Zimmerman , a former forensic psychiatrist and then Magnus ' protégé since the pilot . Damian Kindler noted that Dunne 's portrayal as Zimmerman differed vastly between the webisodes and the first season , often joking that Zimmerman was played by two different Dunnes . Emilie Ullerup plays Ashley , Magnus ' daughter . Ullerup enjoyed working with the cast during the first season . She felt that Tapping was " such a teacher " to her , and that it had been " such a treat " working with Tapping as a young and new actress .

Christopher Heyerdahl plays two characters : Bigfoot , an abnormal who works in the Sanctuary ,

and John Druitt , Magnus ' former fiancé and father to Ashley . As Bigfoot , Heyerdahl had to wear prosthetics . Tapping believed that Heyerdahl " has this incredible gift wearing prosthetics and acting through them and creating real humanity , and he does it with Bigfoot . " Ullerup also felt nervous , yet excited playing every scene with Heyerdahl when he plays Druitt .

= = = Recurring cast and guest appearances = = =

Ryan Robbins plays Henry Foss , who runs the Sanctuary 's computer and security systems . The producers wanted Henry to set a lighter tone to the series and add " goofy and fun " humor , including in somewhat dire situations . The producers cast Robbins , and were pleased with his performance . Chuck Campbell plays " two @-@ faced guy " , a character with another face at the back of his head . The back face was accomplished using visual effects . Panou plays Sylvio , an associate of Ashley 's . The character was originally named Ernie and was played by director Peter DeLuise in the webisodes , but he was unavailable to reshoot his scenes for the season premiere . Jonathon Young stars as Nikola Tesla . Heyerdahl suggested Young to the producers , who ended up being highly impressed by his performance . Young also played Tesla in a one @-@ man show before appearing in the series . Whilst filming the second part of " Revelations " , Young 's scenes in the underground city were filmed first , as he was scheduled for another play while the episode was shot .

At the time of filming " The Five " , the actors who played Watson and Griffin had not been cast yet . The producers would later cast Peter Wingfield as Watson . According to Amanda Tapping , casting Wingfield was " so easy " as " he has this sensibility about him , much like [Christopher Heyerdahl] does . " While filming his scenes , Wingfield did not want his exoskeleton prop to be removed between takes , as he wanted to stay in character . When the producers conceived Clara Griffin , the granddaughter of Nigel Griffin , they were looking for a young local actress to play the part who would look like a potential love interest to Will Zimmerman . Christine Chatelain would later play the part after she was recommended by Dunne , as they had worked together before .

When Adrien Dorval auditioned for his part on " Kush " , Kindler did not like his performance , but Wood did , as he believed the actor 's performance was perfect for a character who was stranded on a plane . For the same episode , Sarah Strange and Thai @-@ Hoa Lee had to learn how to speak Standard Tibetan phonetically a week in advance of filming . Katharine Isabelle guest starred in " Nubbins " as Sophie . While filming her scenes , Isabelle complained of a dry eye problem , which kept making her almost tear up . However , it ended up being beneficial for her portrayal of her character . Canadian actor Daryl Shuttleworth guest stars as a fight promoter in " Warriors " . During a readthrough of the script , Shuttleworth decided his character should speak with a British accent like in the film Lock , Stock and Two Smoking Barrels . The producers wanted to cast Rekha Sharma in " Instinct " as she appeared in several other Vancouver @-@ based productions , including Battlestar Galactica . The producers felt she " rocked " her audition , as she brought a lot of energy to her character .

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

Series creator Damian Kindler conceived the pilot in 2001 . When he became a Stargate SG @-@ 1 writer , he later asked Martin Wood , a director from the same show , if there was potential for a series , which Wood believed there was . A few years later , Kindler asked Amanda Tapping to take part in the project , and she accepted . Sanctuary originally started as an eight @-@ part bi @-@ weekly web series in 2007 , produced by Vancouver @-@ based Stage 3 Media . The producers of the series were looking to expand the series on other mediums , including television . Due to the success of the web series , in January 2008 , the Sci Fi Channel announced the commissioning of a first season of 13 episodes . The move to television has allowed the producers to widen the scope

for the season . According to actress and executive producer Amanda Tapping , the season " is very different from what you 've seen on the Web " . However , her character , Helen Magnus , would still be a " crazy character ; [...] very eccentric and very sexy and very unapologetic " . The season was given an estimated budget of \$ 21 million .

= = = Writing = = =

All episodes of the first season were written by Sam Egan and Kindler ; Kindler hired Egan to assist in writing the first season , as he believed Egan to be creative , passionate , and talented . Several episodes of the first season were written throughout the Christmas season in 2007 . After the series was given the green @-@ light , they were rewritten to establish a season @-@ long storyline . Some of the episodes finished their writing stage as little as two and a half weeks before filming commenced . At times after the scripts were written , Sci Fi executive Mark Stern fed back to the writers , asking for certain elements to be explained so the audience could understand .

Kindler wrote both parts of " Sanctuary for All " , as well " Fata Morgana " , " Kush " , " The Five " , " Requiem " , " Instinct " , and the second part of " Revelations " . He penned his scripts quickly , with " Kush " being written in three and a half days . Wood contributed to the story of " Fata Morgana " by bringing up the idea of incorporating the Morrigan from Irish mythology , which would start giving the season an ancient and mythological feel . " Kush " introduces a series of episodes involving the working relationship between Will and Magnus . " The Five " became a significant part of the series mythology , revealing the Five , which Magnus is a part of , how Magnus got her longevity , and that Henry Foss is actually part werewolf . Tapping believed that introducing the Five was a " cool concept " . Kindler introduced vampires in the episode , and felt it would be best to introduce them as a dead species . He also felt that including real @-@ life historic figures such as Tesla was a " very ballsy thing " . In " Requiem " , Kindler wanted a scenario in which Will has to make a difficult decision to deal with Magnus when she becomes the threat of the episode . Though Kindler at first believed it was not a good episode , it ended up as a highlight of the season according to the producers . In writing " Instinct " , Kindler , inspired by Cloverfield , wanted to show the audience the protagonists hunting an abnormal in real @-@ time , where it does not always go according to plan .

Egan meanwhile , wrote " Folding Man " , " Nubbins " , " Edward " , " Warriors " , and the first part of " Revelations " . He also co @-@ wrote " Sanctuary for All " with Kindler . Egan liked to include the Rashomon effect in some of his scripts , a plot device which interprets scenes from different points of view . After writing " Folding Man " , Egan realized that he inadvertently based it on an episode of The X @-@ Files . " Nubbins " was inspired by the Star Trek original series episode " The Trouble With Tribbles " . " Edward " was inspired by Egan hearing of a young English man with savant syndrome , who flew over a city he had not visited before , and was able to accurately draw the city on a mural some 20 feet wide . Because the episode involved an abnormal , Egan wanted the boy to draw much faster . In writing " Warriors " , Egan wanted to reintroduce Magnus ' father Gregory Magnus from the webisodes ; there were plans to introduce him in " Fata Morgana " , but the idea did not make it to the final episode . Gregory was written not to have the longevity of his daughter . Egan decided not to include a full explanation of how he survived a hundred years without aging , but wanted to hint to the audience that he was in fact cryogenically frozen by the Cabal . The intention behind " Revelations " was to tie some of the previous episodes together , particularly involving the Cabal , and then set them up for the second season . The main issue with writing the finale was showing Ashley being interrogated , where in fact she was experimented on to turn her to the Cabal . Because Kindler wrote his script quickly , he believed that the misdirect did not turn out the way he hoped .

= = = Differences from the webisodes = = =

Differences were made between the original webisodes and the first episodes of the season . One example is the introduction of Druiitt . In the webisodes , Druiitt murders a prostitute after arriving in

Old City , but in the pilot , writer Damian Kindler included dialogue between the two characters before Druitt murders her , as a way of proving to the audience how evil he is . Another is the ending of " Fata Morgana " , where the Morrigan leave the Sanctuary with the Cabal mercenaries ; in the webisodes , the sisters escape . Druitt directly tells Ashley in one of the first webisodes that he is her father . In the first season , the producers decided that she would not be aware of this until midway through , and even then , they did not want Druitt to tell her directly , but rather hint it to her , so that Ashley can pick up the pieces herself .

= = = Filming = = =

Initial photography started in May 2008 , and took place mostly in a warehouse in Burnaby , British Columbia . Each episode took around seven days to film , though some were completed in as little as five and a half . The first three episodes of the season were reshot from the original eight webisodes ; the two @-@ part premiere " Sanctuary for All " was reshot from the first four webisodes , while the third episode , " Fata Morgana " , was reshot from the final four . Eighteen months passed between shooting the web series and the first three episodes . Difficulties with this included the fact that Cainan Wiebe , who portrays Alexi , grew taller , and the actors consciously played the characters to be more open to each other . It was filmed using Red One cameras , the first series in North America to use them . The Red camera system does away with tape and film and records straight to a hard drive , allowing Anthem Visual Effects and the series ' post production team immediate access to the day 's footage , and is capable of recording at 4K resolution ? four times the resolution of current high @-@ definition .

The season was filmed using five directors . Wood directed eight of the thirteen episodes ; he spent 17 days preparing to film the premiere . He found that " Requiem " was his favorite episode to direct , while " The Five " was his least favorite , as he had to keep reorganizing six styrofoam sets . Among the remaining five episodes , James Head directed " Folding Man " , Peter DeLuise directed " Nubbins " , Brenton Spencer directed " Edward " and " Warriors " , and Steven A. Adelson directed " Instinct " ; Adelson filmed the episode with 40 long takes to accomplish a real @-@ time perspective . DeLuise was approached by Wood to direct " Nubbins " as it was considered a lighter episode , which DeLuise preferred over a dramatic episode . In the past DeLuise would make cameo appearances in his works , but broke tradition in directing this episode .

According to Head , about 70 % of the season was filmed using green screen in the Burnaby warehouse . Unlike many other shows , elaborate sets were not built for the scenes to be filmed ; instead , they are created using CGI technology . Because of the virtual sets , the actors had to visualise what the rooms they were in looked like . To aid them , practical props were placed . The production crew also used rain and wind machines to film scenes set outdoors . However , practical sets were also used throughout the season . The first 20 minutes of " Sanctuary for All " was filmed at the partially decommissioned Riverview Hospital , described by Kindler as a " Swiss Army knife of locations " . Elsewhere , the studio parking lot and alleyways of The Bridge Studios provided a surrogate for several different types of locations , like city streets . A Volvo warehouse provided the filming location for " Instinct " . The final filming days were spent on the North Shore Mountains outside Vancouver .

The fifth episode , " Kush " , was filmed on a damaged fuselage set , which was built by production designer Bridget McGuire . The episode 's cast disliked the episode the most because they had to act as if they were in freezing temperatures , where in fact it was around 40 degrees Celsius . Because it was an expensive set , the producers wanted to reuse it . It was later redesigned to look like the inside of a submarine for " Requiem " . It was redressed again for " Revelations " . Although released third , " Fata Morgana " was filmed as the fourth episode , and was considered to be aired after " Folding Man " . However , Tapping felt strongly that it would make a great stand alone episode after " Sanctuary for All " , and the characters appeared more comfortable with each other in " Folding Man " . Swapping the episodes caused a major continuity issue , in which Ashley appears to show scratches on her neck from " Sanctuary for All " in " Folding Man " , but not in between .

== Effects ==

The season 's visual effects were produced by Anthem Visual Effects , with the company 's Lee Wilson serving as co @-@ producer and visual effects supervisor . Because it was filmed in green screen , each episode contains an estimated 400 visual effect shots . In contrast , an average episode of Stargate SG @-@ 1 , which Tapping starred in , contained only 12 . One of the larger visual effects sequences was the opening sequence of the premiere , which took three months to produce . Each visual effect produced in the original webisodes was remastered . Among the characters , the movement of two @-@ faced guy 's rear face were made with Computer @-@ generated imagery (CGI) , though it was a difficult effect to produce . A prosthetic application was added to the back of Campbell 's head when the second face is not talking . The mermaid character , Sally , was entirely a visual effect , with the face of Mandy May , wife of director Steven A. Adelson , rendered onto it . Creating the eponymous abnormals in " Nubbins " and their predator was what Sam Egan described as " a proper budget @-@ driven issue " because rendering several CGI creatures at once and having them move would be difficult . It was decided to have them camouflaged in an attempt to make work easier for the visual effects team , but it did not work out as well as the producers hoped . To achieve Nubbin interaction with the cast , guide versions , nicknamed Oompa @-@ Loompas , were made for them to carry . In designing Tesla 's transition to a vampire , the producers , realizing vampires were included in several other works in the past , wanted to make them look unique . Wilson based the vampire look to the 2007 film 30 Days of Night .

Because of the hard work by Anthem , the producers made " Kush " and " Requiem " into bottle episodes , to give the visual effects team a break . Instead , other forms of special effects were used . To create the Himalayan feel of " Kush " , the production crew used wind machines and paper snow . However , the fake snow became a problem for the cast , as they suffered from bloodshot eyes and scratchy throats when exposed to it . Aquariums were placed outside each port hole of the set in " Requiem " . To complete the effects where Druitt teleports , Heyerdahl would walk out of the shot while every other cast member has to stay still , until the directors signal them to react ; the shot of Heyerdahl walking out of frame would later be cut . Another effect involving Heyerdahl is a scene between both his characters , Bigfoot and Druitt , in " Revelations " . To complete the shot , Heyerdahl had to film two different shots : one with him as Druitt talking to nothing , and another with him as Bigfoot talking to nothing . When both characters can be seen walking together , a stand @-@ in would replace Heyerdahl as Bigfoot .

Another form of special effects are prosthetics used to create abnormals . They were composed by a team of make @-@ up artists . Todd Masters stated that his team tried to make them interesting and unique every week . The abnormal shown at the end of " Kush " was a stand @-@ in who wore a full prosthetic suit ; the costume took a long time to apply . Among the prosthetics used in " Warriors " , Dunne wore a muscle suit that was previously worn by Vinnie Jones during the 2006 film X @-@ Men : The Last Stand .

The corpses used in the beginning of " Sanctuary for All " were mannequins the props department had in their possession , with holes added in the foreheads . Using mannequins was easier than using actors . The drawings in " Edward " were produced by Sanctuary 's art department . The season 's stunts were coordinated by Marshall Virtue . To develop the Fight Club scenes in " Warriors " , fight coordinator Rob Hader helped with choreographing the stunts . While filming the scenes , Hader played one of the fighters . He replaced an actor who broke a knee after filming for six seconds .

== Broadcast and reception ==

== Broadcast ==

Originally airing on the Sci Fi Channel in the United States , the first season was broadcast in over 50 countries worldwide . Tapping believed the channel was a " good home base " , because she had worked with the network for several years before , adding " they understand the genre . They understand the fans . " The season commenced with both parts of " Sanctuary for All " on October 3 , 2008 . The following episodes aired almost every Friday during the 10 to 11 pm time slot from October 10 , 2008 , until January 9 , 2009 . In Canada , it aired on Movie Channel One of The Movie Network . In the United Kingdom , the season was picked up for broadcast by ITV4 . The first episode was broadcast on October 6 , 2008 , only three days after the release on the Sci Fi Channel . In Australia , the season debuted on ABC2 on March 1 , 2010 .

== Ratings ==

" Sanctuary for All " started off the season with over 2 @. @ 7 million viewers and a household rating of 2 @. @ 2 after its original broadcast . It became Sci Fi Channel 's highest rated series premiere since the pilot episode of Eureka in July 2006 . It was the number one prime time cable entertainment program among adults aged 25 through 54 years , and fourth among adults aged 18 through 49 years . Because of the high ratings , views of Sci Fi 's Sanctuary page rose to 1 @. @ 2 million , as well as 287 @, @ 000 video streams the day it was broadcast . Viewing figures for the following episodes were somewhat under 2 million , but the finale drew its biggest audience since the premiere ; " Revelations (Part 2) " was seen by 2 million viewers and received a 1 @. @ 6 household rating . Including timeshifted viewings , the first season averaged 2 @. @ 35 million viewers , and a 1 @. @ 8 rating . The first season of Sanctuary beat the fifth season of its lead in Stargate Atlantis by two tenths of a point . Because of the success , Sci Fi ordered a second season on November 2008 . In the United Kingdom , the first part of " Sanctuary for All " was seen by 565 @, @ 000 viewers . The second part received 608 @, @ 000 viewers the following week . Since then , ratings have steadily declined to 398 @, @ 000 by the season finale . The penultimate episode received the lowest ratings of the season , with only 279 @, @ 000 viewers .

== Critical reception ==

The season received generally mixed reviews from critics . Metacritic gave the season a normalized rating of 56 out of 100 based on seven reviews , indicating " mixed or average reviews " . Linda Stasi of the New York Post stated " the monsters are first rate , the virtual sets are very cool , the acting is excellent . Why I was fighting fatigue while watching , I can 't say . It was either the martinis from Steve Dunleavy 's farewell party ? or the plot . " Maureen Ryan of the Chicago Tribune felt the pace was " a little on the stately side " , and was unclear why Tapping " speaks with an iffy English accent " , but believed the " low @- @ key , low @- @ budget but well @- @ intentioned sci @- @ fi / action hybrid might be of interest to fans of Tapping 's earlier work as Samantha Carter on Stargate SG @- @ 1 " . Robert Lloyd of the Los Angeles Times felt that " much of it feels dreadfully slow , not so much moody as stretched for time . Hard @- @ to @- @ sell dialogue such as ' Such imperfect children are often adopted by well @- @ meaning immigrant families ' doesn 't make it flow any faster " , but still stated " it looks great " .

Brian Lowry of Variety called the first two episodes " competent but uninspiring " , and said it " suffers by comparison with any number of similarly themed dramas , most recently BBC America 's fun @- @ loving Torchwood " . Lowry also believes that " it 's hard to imagine this series doing much more than satisfying some of the odd humanoids still pining for (and emailing on behalf of) Stargate " . Mike Hale of The New York Times felt that Sanctuary " sits at about the same level of writing and performance as the Stargate shows , which means it doesn 't have the narrative force of Battlestar Galactica or the wit and creativity of Sci Fi 's best original series , Eureka " , adding that " it 's not an embarrassment for the channel , but it doesn 't raise the stakes either " . Hale also noted that there is a connection with Stargate , which is " in its 12th year and still going strong " .

David Blackwell of Enterline Media thought that Sanctuary was an " interesting concept " , but felt the first six episodes were " hit @- @ or @- @ miss " . Of the series ' use of green screen for sets ,

Blackwell stated " sometimes it really works and sometimes the CGI sets could use improvement " . He also felt that Amanda Tapping was convincing as a British scientist . In conclusion , Blackwell stated " Sanctuary does take a while to kick in , but it is a very good series once the writers actually write something with depth . " Alex Walker of Den of Geek rated the first season three stars out of five , stating " the acting and scripting is good , but Sanctuary lacks the wit and charm of the genre 's top shows like Doctor Who and Battlestar Galactica . Also , the way some episodes alternate between fighting and exposition gives the impression of watching someone else play a videogame . " Walker also dubbed it a " poor man 's Buffy The Vampire Slayer , but said that it " makes for " agreeable early @-@ evening viewing " . Walker also believed that the DVD of the first season should really be for " die @-@ hard fans only " .

Paul Simpson of Total Sci @-@ Fi rated the season 7 out of 10 , and summed it up as " although frequently predictable , Sanctuary usually provides an entertaining hour . " John Sinnott of DVD Talk , being a fan of Tapping 's earlier work of Stargate SG @-@ 1 , believes the first season is " highly recommended " . Sinnott also noticed that while " the first six shows are so @-@ so [...] the last seven are great " .

= = = Awards and nominations = = =

The season won a total of five awards . The pilot episode " Sanctuary for All " won a 2009 Gemini Award for Best Visual Effects . The other four were Leo Awards . " Warriors " won " Best Make @-@ Up in a Dramatic Series " . Actor Ryan Robbins won " Best Guest Performance by a Male in a Dramatic Series " for his role as Henry Foss in " Edward " , beating co @-@ star Jonathan Young . Gabrielle Rose won " Best Guest Performance by a Female in a Dramatic Series " for the same episode . Amanda Tapping won " Best Lead Performance by a Female in a Dramatic Series " for her role as Helen Magnus in " Requiem " . The most prestigious nomination for the season was for a Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Special Visual Effects for " Sanctuary for All " , but it lost the award to Heroes .

= = Home video releases = =

A DVD box set of the first season , published by E1 Entertainment , was first released in Region 1 on September 15 , 2009 , in Region 2 on October 12 , 2009 , and in Region 4 on September 9 , 2009 . The season was later released on Blu @-@ ray Disc in the United States on June 15 , 2010 , and in Australia on June 9 , 2010 . The four @-@ disc set consists of all 13 episodes , each with audio commentaries from cast and crew , as well as the original webisodes in two installments . The set also includes three behind the scenes featurettes : Welcome to the Sanctuary , The Sanctuary Residents , and Sanctuary Visual Effects , as well as a blooper reel , photo gallery , and sneak preview of season two . John Sinnott of DVD Talk reacted positively to the number of extras , rating it four and a half stars out of five ; Sinnott was also " very pleased " to see the original webisodes included in the set .