

SÉRIE SERIES 29th JUNE > 1st JULY 2016 > MINUTES

MINUTES



FONTAINEBLEAU 2016
29TH JUNE - 1ST JULY

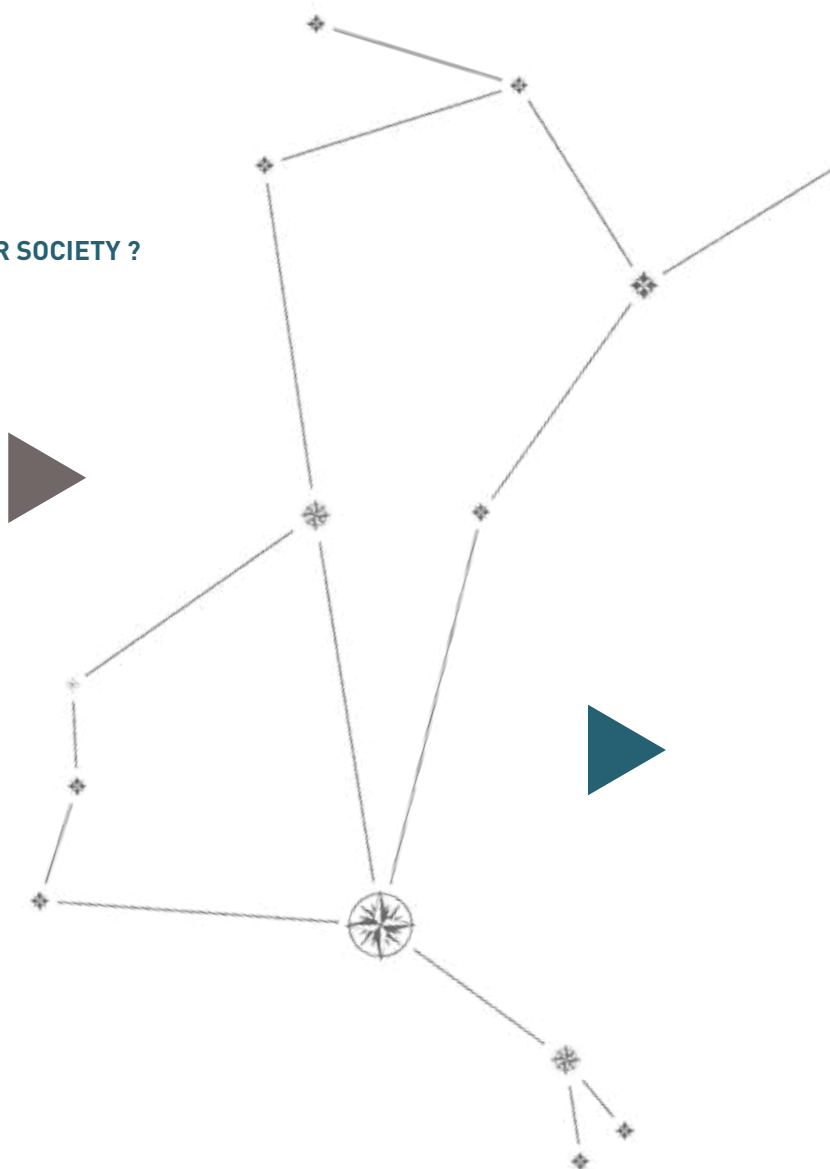
SÉRIE SERIES
THE EUROPEAN SERIES SUMMIT



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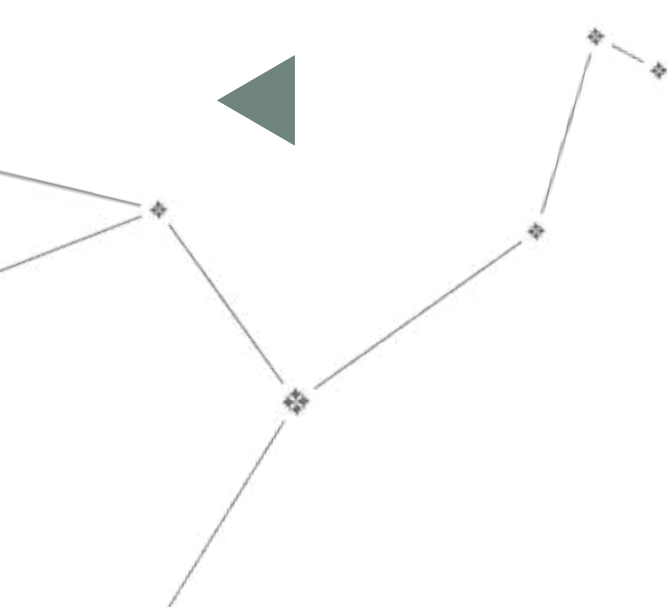
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TO HELP BUILD AND SUSTAIN A EUROPE OF SERIES

Série Series season 5 in numbers is: 3 days devoted to meetings and screenings, 28 series from 10 European countries presented by their teams, of which 12 still in the development stage and more than 600 professionals attending the festival. Above all, Série Series confirmed its desire to be different, with, in particular, an appetite for original projects still in development, new talent and new formats, because the series of tomorrow are being shaped today.

Today, TV series generate unprecedented interest and are now the type of drama that reaches the greatest number of individuals across the world. The ever-increasing number of series creates an ever-increasing need for singularity, for talent and for creativity, in order to ensure the emergence of new material, which will continue to attract viewers with constantly renewed formats.

With unflinching passion, Série Series defends its conviction that culture thrives on the multiplicity of viewpoints and is convinced that a European culture exists, with a DNA and richness stemming from creative diversity.



In order to build and sustain a Europe of series, Série Series gathers the very best participants in European creation in an extraordinary and convivial venue, away from any other preoccupations other than enriching their and the viewers' future. Our event is **an observatory of trends and a place for exchange, meetings and passion.** This is why it is renowned for the quality of reflection it provokes and the impact that this will have on future creations.

This year, Série Series proposed a common thread: the link between series and society. This editorial line endeavoured to go back to the source of creation and of the intentions of creators, in order to question the social and cultural accuracy of series in Europe.

New for this season were:

One Vision sessions during which authors, artists, personalities from the world of television, were given 15 minutes to give their viewpoint, their convictions and their vision of the world, through their experience with series.

A pioneer of trends, Série Series presented even more series in production, a dozen or so **works in progress** presented by their creative teams during ***In the Pipeline*** and ***What's next?*** sessions.

The increase in importance of the **European Series Summit** allowed for many more business meetings, ensuring efficiency and effectiveness and yet still in the same warm and friendly style of Série Series.

Série Series wants to continue in its role of head hunter, a rebellious free agent, discoverer of gems which illustrate the importance of the creators' points of view, cherishing its singularity and independence in today's world of series which is undergoing an unprecedented transformation.

In the context of this effervescence, Série Series is continuing on its path of innovation, always with the same spirit, the same ambition and the same pleasure as well!

So happy reading and we will be in touch soon with news of season 6!

THEY STEER SÉRIE SERIES

Série Series was thought up with the help of an editorial committee and a European steering group, whose mission is to advise the organisers of Série Series in order that this festival, designed by and for professionals, gains in efficiency and usefulness for one and all, now and in the years to come. With their help, we are developing an event which is evermore European and aware of this sector's issues.



THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

which has shaped the festival from the beginning, is made of 7 professionals who are both committed and enthusiastic, eager to support and present the very best in European creation in television series.

The members are:

Jean-François Boyer (producer, Tetra Media)
 Hervé Hadmar (screenwriter and director)
 Nicole Jamet (screenwriter)
 Nicolas Jorelle (composer)
 David Kodsí (producer, K'ien)
 Bénédicte Lesage (producer, Mascaret)
 Philippe Triboit (director)

THE EUROPEAN STEERING GROUP

made up of 8 professionals who have been assisting with the festival's development since 2014.

The members are:

Tasja Abel (producer, ZDFE Drama – Germany)
 Stefan Baron (producer, Nice Drama – Sweden)
 Harald Hamrell (director – Sweden)
 Lars Lundström (author and producer, Matador Film – Sweden)
 Jed Mercurio (author and screenwriter – United Kingdom)
 Luca Milano (vice-president, Rai Fiction – Italy)
 Tone C. Rønning (executive producer and commissioning editor NRK – Norway)



TV SERIES: A REFLECTION OF OUR SOCIETY?

PRESENTED BY:

Sahar BAGHERY (Head of Global Research and Contents Strategy - Eurodata TV Worldwide, France)



To begin this 2016 edition of *Série Series*, Sahar Baghery proposes to present an international overview of the audiences and trends in the television series market. This year, the general presentation of broad trends in TV series consumption throughout the world will be examined from two perspectives. The first concerns the handling of societal issues in the series, while the second will take a more prospective and strategic angle, as Sahar Baghery endeavours to reveal what the future of television will look like.

THE MAIN TRENDS IN TV SERIES CONSUMPTION THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

The reduction in the amount of time spent in front of a live television screen is confirmed throughout the world. In 2015, the global Duration of Individual Listening (DIL) dropped to 3 hours 14 minutes, compared with 3:17 in 2014 and 3:19 in 2013. This reduction is more pronounced if we include pre-recorded television (catch-up TV in particular). Viewers are increasingly watching television content on different screens, and in a non-linear way. These different types of use have not yet been measured, either in major European countries or in the U.S.A.

On demand television is becoming more and more popular. This is primarily the case in Canada, the U.S.A., Iceland and the U.K. On demand television consumption is lower in countries such as Italy and Germany. Fiction and entertainment are viewed similarly on catch-up. Contrary to what we might think, entertainment shows are viewed on catch-up to the same degree as fiction.

Fiction represents 40% of programmes featuring in the international (78 countries) Top 10 list of best viewership figures. In this category, 70% of the top scores were achieved by series, compared with 10% for films. Globally, private channels broadcast more prime-time series than public channels. The public channels that broadcast the most series are E4 in the United Kingdom and TRT in Turkey.

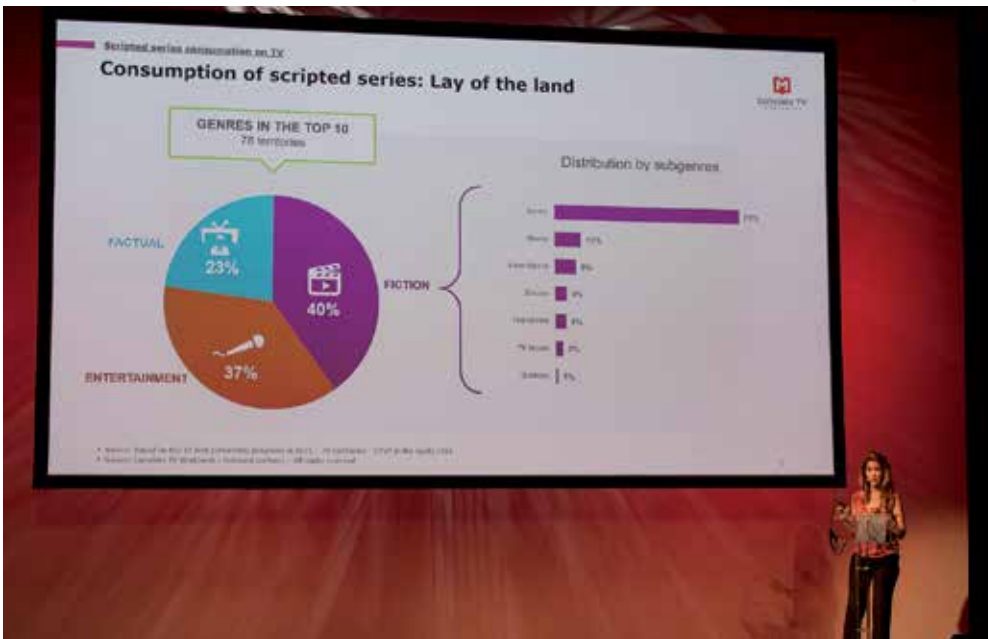
Several channels throughout the world now rely on series to fill their programming schedules. The Turkish channel Samayolu dedicates 98% of its prime time to broadcasting series. Sky

Atlantic in the U.K. and CW in the U.S.A. dedicate 82% and 75% respectively of their prime time to broadcasting series. More globally, 60% of channels have seen their audience shares increase as a result of scheduling series. This is particularly the case with AMC in the U.S.A., KBS1 in South Korea, and BBC Four in the U.K.

In terms of audience share, local series continue to occupy the foreground, representing 65% of prime-time series consumption. Their share is particularly high in countries such as South Korea and Turkey: two countries that produce a very large amount of fiction. Imported series represent 30% of series consumption throughout the world, with shares remaining high in many countries such as Venezuela (where viewers watch a great deal of Mexican shows) and in Sweden.

The most popular type of series are dramas. However, their audience share is trending down compared to sitcoms and soap operas. Crime series continue to dominate the small screen. They are especially popular in Scandinavian countries, Sweden in particular. Dramas are the second most-watched type of series (especially in Turkey). Comedy is most popular in Israel, while viewers in the U.S.A. and Canada watch more fantasy content (the range of science fiction series on offer is particularly developed in these two countries).

The television market is still very dynamic. In 2015, 34% of high-scoring programmes in the international rankings were new releases. The South African series *Uzalo* (the struggle between two important families, one at the head of a church and the other in organised crime) attracted an average of 11.2 million viewers. A *Unica Mulher*, broadcast on the Portuguese channel TVI, recorded audience shares of 33.6%. This series tells a love story between a young Portuguese man and an Angolan woman. *The Heavy Water War*, which featured heavily in the last edition of *Série Series*, broke every record for viewing figures in its native country of Norway. Finally, despite criticism from the press, the series *Rodina*, the Russian adaptation of *Homeland*, proved very popular with the public and even made last place in the global Top 10.



MAJOR EDITORIAL TRENDS

Historical series continue to draw a wide audience, particularly in Europe. European television viewers are fascinated by the great monarchs that have left a mark on their nations' histories. This is the case with *Carlos Rey Emperador*, for example. Produced by Diagonal TV for the Spanish public television channel TVE, the series is set in the 16th century, during the reign of Charles V. The first episode, which was broadcast during prime time in September 2015, amassed over 25% of audience share. Riding the wave of the undeniable success of costume dramas, Netflix has announced the upcoming release (from 4 November) of *The Crown*, a 10-episode series intended to retrace the 63 years of Elizabeth II's reign. Produced for British channel ITV and the American PBS, the series *Victoria* (release scheduled for 2017) goes back to the early years of the reign of this very young monarch, who became Queen of England at the age of 18. *Queen Charlotte*, an American-European co-production for Amazon, has been announced for this autumn.

The great historical sagas are experiencing a surge in popularity. In January 2016, Irish public network RTE broadcast *Rebellion*, an ambitious mini-series dealing with the Easter Rising of 1916, one of the most significant events in Irish history. The first episode drew more than 619,000 viewers, a 41% market share. Also broadcast in January on the BBC, the series *War and Peace* was an adaptation of Tolstoy's famous novel. The first episode was watched by more than 6 million viewers. Finally, the Italo-British co-production *Medici: Masters of Florence* is one of the most highly anticipated series of the moment. Featuring Dustin Hoffman and Richard Madden in the leading roles, it will be set in Florence during the Renaissance to retrace the inexorable rise of one of the most celebrated families in history.

Still in the historical domain, biopics have carved out a large market share for themselves (as has cinema). The successful Polish series *Bodo* retraces the steps of one of the country's best-

known actors. In Italy, the Rai is showing *Luisa Spagnoli*, about the great Italian fashion designer. Both series have been met with great success in their home countries.

Television series are of course concerned with more current issues as well. Many are centred around the family, a topic that is often explored in the world of television series. Several programmes have achieved great success in this way. One example of this is *800 Words*: an Australian series in which the main character, a young widower and father of two children, decides to leave Sydney to settle in a remote seaside town in New Zealand. The Italian series *Non dirlo al mio capo* (broadcast on the Rai) follows the misadventures of Luisa, widow and mother of two in search of a job. In the Finnish series *Ex-onnelliset*, five families move in together and share the same house. Finally, released on the channel OCS City, the series *Irresponsable* tells the story of Julien, an immature young man who returns home to live with his mother in a Parisian suburb and learns that he is a father to an adolescent son of his own. The series breathes new life into the cinematic work of Judd Appatow. The family is still an important theme in American series. The trailer for *This Is Us*, scheduled for September on the channel CBS, received 170 million online views in only ten days.



TV SERIES: REFLECTIONS OF THE PROBLEMS OF SOCIETY

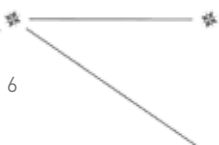
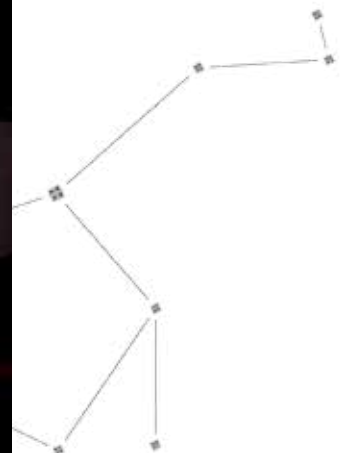
Societal problems are a major source of inspiration for writers. Today's dramas are tackling the most delicate topics. Combining drama with romance, the Gabonese series *Kiara* follows a 22-year-old woman raised in a ghetto by a violent and pitiless aunt. Left to fend for herself, the heroine gets mixed up in the world of prostitution. Broadcast by Gabon Télévision, the main public channel, the twelve episodes in the series broke viewing records.

Inspired by the "Instagram Riots" that were the talk of the town of Göteborg in Sweden, the series *#Hashtag* (broadcast on the channel SVT) tackles the issue of online bullying.

Many series address social issues from a comedic perspective. The Canadian series *Lâcher Prise* (anticipated 2017) takes a light-hearted view of the topic of burnout. The series *Boomerang*, highly successful in Quebec (achieving over 45% of audience share), deals with a very current societal issue: that of young adults who are forced to return home to live with their parents due to personal difficulties (e.g. job loss, divorce).

Another reflection of societal problems, the character of the renegade also has bright days ahead. Broadcast on Vanalplay, the Franco-Canadian web series *The Village Green* jumps on an especially hot topic in North America: the legalisation on cannabis. The action is focused on the character Tom, the only police officer in a small town in Canada stricken by the economic crisis who tries to dig himself out of a hole by growing marijuana. The Russian series *Adaptatsiya* follows a spy who infiltrates one of the country's biggest companies.

Science fiction is recognised as the genre par excellence for tackling current problems, particularly through dystopian storylines. Many writers use this means to look towards the future and project their stories into a particularly troubling future. Broadcast on Arte, *Trepalium* is a science fiction series that plunges us into a near future in which over 80% of the population is unemployed. Co-produced by Arte and the Norwegian channel TV2, the series *Occupied*, conceived by Jo Nesbø, is a futuristic political thriller that dives straight into the heart of the issue of petroleum in the Arctic Ocean. The first Brazilian production for Netflix is named 3%. In an apocalyptic world cruelly split between progress and desolation, individuals are entitled to only one opportunity to improve their lot. Only 3% will succeed. Finally, *Cleverman* (a co-production between Australia and New Zealand) takes place in the near future. Mutants struggle for survival in an Australia that ostracises them. Hunted down, exploited, even killed by humans, they have no other option than to live in hiding. Two warring brothers will join forces to fight oppression. The series, which has garnered great success (the first episode recorded over 39% of audience share in Australia), is an allegory for racism and tolerance.



FUTURE TRENDS FOR TELEVISION SERIES

Although American series are still present in the minds of audiences in several countries, there has been a noticeable decline in the number of American series in the rankings for best viewership, all genres considered. And this trend is set to grow stronger in the future, as some of the pioneering shows that have carried the American supremacy this far – such as *The Mentalist* and *CSI* – have ended. Of course, the next wave of American shows is already gathering itself, with new series – such as *The Flash*, to name only one – that are already being met with great success throughout the world.

Similarly, European procedural dramas continue to draw large audiences. The unbeatable *Tatort*, heavyweight of German television for the past 32 years, has seen a 400,000-viewer increase compared with its previous season. In the U.K., the series *Silent Witness* has increased its viewership by over 26% in four years. European co-productions are getting better and better at exporting, and series such as *The Team*, co-produced by seven European countries, are winning over large audiences throughout the world, particularly in Denmark.

But a series is still an expensive product that is difficult to make. What is more, the global market is saturated. This context explains the growing success of mini-series. The first advantage of this format is that it makes it possible to create a high-end product at a lower cost. 129 mini-series were launched in Russia in 2015. In France, this format has demonstrated strong growth over the past three years. The French series *Une Chance de Trop*, broadcast on the channel TF1, brought together an average of 8 million people every Thursday evening for three weeks, representing 33.1% of the audience. In the United Kingdom, the

three-episode mini-series *And Then There Were None* (inspired by the book “Ten Little Niggers” by Agatha Christie) was followed by 5.5 million viewers on average. Several ambitious projects have been announced, such as *His Dark Materials* (a trilogy of fantasy novels by British author Philip Pullman) and *Heute Ist Nicht Aller Tage / NSU German History X* (the series covers the radicalisation of Neo-Nazi movements in the '90s). These two series will be scheduled on the channels BBC and ARD respectively.

The second advantage of mini-series is that they attract film stars. Nicole Kidman will join the cast of the second season of *Top of the Lake*, a series by Jane Campion. Helena Bonham Carter also appears in *Love Nina* on BBC One, and Daniel Craig will have the starring role in *Purity*, a series to be released soon on Showtime. Finally, a significant increase can be noted in remakes in Europe. Representing only 5% of new releases in the 2012-13 season, this figure grew to 11% in the 2015-16 season. The countries inspiring European channels the most are the United States and Denmark, followed by Israel, South Korea and Spain.

To sum up, Europe is a hotbed for creative and original production, and in recent works it can be observed that creators and broadcasters are posing the question of responsibility, seeking through their series to offer a perspective on changing modern societies.





THE SERIES

Screenings and case studies: since creativity and creators are at the very heart of Série Series, each screening is followed by a case study with the creative team who explain their methods and creative process.

New formats, new platforms: Série Series chose a selection of projects which were particularly innovative in medium, format or content.

In the Pipeline: since 2014, Série Series has presented works in progress, a European tour of series still in production and that will soon be on your screens.

What's next: even more of a head start presenting a selection of series still in development.

Spotlight on Trailers: Série Series lets young talent have their say, giving them the opportunity to present their projects to professionals.

Children's sessions: a made-to-measure programme to help the young public understand series, which are now very much a part of their everyday lives.

FLOWERS

United Kingdom / Channel 4



© DR

SPEAKERS

Will Sharpe (creator & actor)
Naomi De Pear (producer, Kudos)
Daniel Rigby (actor)
Sophia Di Martino (actress)

CHAired BY

Jean-Marc Auclair (screenwriter & producer,
Alauda Films)

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

Flowers is perhaps the most unclassifiable series of *Série Series* 2016. It is an unusual comedy format (6 x 30 minutes), more of a tale or a fable, with very different narrative guidelines and a unique, very cinematographic visual universe, following the lives of this very dysfunctional family.

In the *Flowers*' household, the mother (Deborah, music teacher) and the father (Maurice, author of children's books) are in the throes of divorce. She does her utmost to save face and keep this chaotic, depressed household together, even though she suspects her tormented and disillusioned husband of having a homosexual

relationship with Shun, his Japanese illustrator. Then there are the 25-year-old, maladjusted twins – Amy, terrified of growing up, and Donald, a sort of failed inventor –, who are both competing for the affections of their neighbour Abigail.

These five characters share a house – a distinctive and pivotal element in the series –, their neuroses and, above all, their inability to be happy. « But what if giving up on happiness was in fact the best way to distance sorrow? »

ORIGIN OF THE SERIES

Flowers is the original creation of just one man, Will Sharpe. He was nominated for a BAFTA for his feature film *Black Pond* and has just finished another, *The Darkest Universe*. He is a rather surprising author who, far from blending in with the general trends or meeting market expectations, does exactly as he pleases and, as he lets on, deliberately writes « without thinking too much ». With his undeniable talent and appealing cheek, he managed to convince, first his agent, then Naomi De Pear and lastly Jay Hunt, chief creative officer at Channel 4. Everything went quite quickly. They all loved the project and barely a month passed between the first presentation and meeting with the channel, which was

just at the right moment (Jay Hunt had just taken up this new appointment, which was advantageous timewise).

Having secured the endorsement of his partners, Will Sharpe got down to the writing of the first episode, which took him around five months. This was validated, the pilot was filmed and then, Channel 4 commissioned the series.

Yet, it was not easy to explain and almost impossible to pitch; this is why Will Sharpe preferred to describe his vision for the series in a very visual manner, with the help of a mood book.



THE IMPORTANCE OF VISUALS

Naomi De Pear –who, in particular, worked on the script of *The Hour* season 2 and the miniseries, *River*– explains that the screenplay really stood out. The mood boards were like a picture album, each image more beautiful than the last. Naomi De Pear compares them to the work of Quentin Blake. The colours were particularly striking. The house, which is almost a character in its own right, really reminds one of an illustration from a children’s book (like an echo of Maurice’s profession).

“It is quite rare in our line of work to be given a mood book that is so well put together; more often than not, they are counter productive, or even disappointing. The high quality of this one is most definitely worthy of praise.” Naomi De Pear, who has worked mainly in drama up until now, points out that a comedy can have depth and this is undoubtedly the case with *Flowers*, which is both funny and tragic ; we are charmed as much by the aesthetics as by the narrative.

QUALITY THAT WE FIND IN THE WRITING

Will Sharpe wanted everything to be as authentic as possible and, as with the mood boards, this is carried through to the writing. There was absolutely no need to add any extra elements, nor to justify anything, he explains. The heart of this story – the family meandering through depression and the meaning of life – is largely sufficient. Although certain things may have been developed along the narrative arc, there were no departures from the original concept.

Sometimes, it is decided to start on the pre-production phase before the writing is completely finished. Naomi De Pear did not want this to happen for the sake of coherence for the whole team, including the cast.

WILL SHARPE, THE ONE-MAN BAND

There was never any question of other people being involved in the writing process, says Naomi De Pear. *Flowers* is an auteur series in the truest sense of the term and a very unique author at that. It could only be this way, taking into account the singularity of Will Sharpe’s universe. In this case, writing could not possibly have been shared.

Moreover, it is precisely because Will Sharpe wanted to direct the series himself and not just write it, that he worked so hard on all the visual aspects. Here, the mood book was not only the best way to make his voice heard, but also the model for his direction.

Lastly, he is also to be commended for his performance as an actor. Not only is he behind the camera, but he is brilliant in the role of Shun, the manga illustrator with a totally unbridled imagination, a very well-suited role it appears.

THE CHOICE OF BROADCASTER

For Naomi De Pear, it made more sense to work with Channel 4 than with anyone else. The channel was very attentive and really got involved artistically speaking. They watched the rushes and always gave very constructive criticism, taking their supportive role and share of risk very seriously, giving the author carte blanche, encouraging him to stay on course and keep up the pace. *Flowers* is a very well-understood adventure, carried out in a climate of trust and this needs to be pointed out.

AS FOR THE CASTING

The goal was simple: it was all about putting a family together.

The cast is a mix of well-known and lesser-known actors. The character of Deborah is portrayed by Olivia Colman, one of Britain's favourite leading actresses. Julian Barratt, who appeared in the cult series *The Mighty Boosh* between 2004 and 2007 (but who we have not seen so much of since), plays Maurice.

Daniel Rigby, playing one of the twins, was awarded a best actor BAFTA in 2011 for his role in *Eric and Ernie*. He was completely charmed by the screenplay, felt it was really out of the ordinary and struck by its emotional range throughout. As for Sophia Di Martino, she openly admits that she was determined to get the part. The auditions were not easy and she did three film tests in all. She loved her character's lines that are both quirky and very touching.

It should be noted that there was a break of an entire year between the filming of the first episode and the rest of the series, since Olivia Colman was pregnant. The whole cast was, nevertheless, present and still very motivated to pick up where they had left off a year before. There was just the problem of fitting things around everyone's commitments, points out Naomi De Pear.

FILMING

Filming was at a rate of six days per episode. Will Sharpe mentions the wonderful atmosphere on set, thanks to a small team without any complicated hierarchy; in other words much like the cast, in a « family atmosphere ».

He points out that whenever possible, he did not hesitate to ask the actors to go beyond the script, in particular during scenes involving arguments (an extract is screened to illustrate this). « Sometimes details are best found in improvisation », he claims; a statement which is readily confirmed by both actors present.

WHAT OF THE BUDGET AND PROMOTIONAL STRATEGY?

The average budget for a comedy would be about 300 000 € per episode, but this series was a little more costly. It must be said that very many scenes were filmed on location and exterior. Naomi De Pear insisted on allowing for 10 days of editing per episode, which many would say was a luxury, but she felt this was important.

As far as promotion was concerned, a quite different strategy was employed, she continues. Four to five weeks before airing, trailers and posters were distributed to create a buzz and this was accelerated during the week before the broadcast. The idea was that journalists see the whole of *Flowers* before writing any reviews. It worked and they all played along.

The « *Flowers*' week » that Jay Hunt had come up with at the very beginning, came about. The series was aired on Channel 4 between 25th and 29th April 2016, with two episodes on the Monday and then one a day for the rest of the week (all six episodes were available on Seeso from 5th May). It was a success and a second season has been announced.



VALKYRIEN

Norway / NRK



SPEAKERS

Erik Richter Strand (screenwriter and director)
 Eric Vogel & Nina B. Andersson (producers,
 Tordenfilm)
 Tone C. Rønning (executive producer & com-
 missioning editor, NRK)
 Sven Nordin (actor)

CHAired BY

Jean-Marc Auclair (author & producer,
 Alauda Films, France)

THE PITCH

Valkyrien, the first episode of which was screened during the opening ceremony of *Série Series*, is an invitation to revisit the world of Nordic Noir. The series is built around the main character, Ravn, a reputed doctor, who is desperately trying to save his wife, Vilma's, life. In order to do this, against all his profession's advice, defying science, up-to-date treatments and ethics, he sets up a clandestine underground clinic which can only be reached by the platforms and maze of Oslo's underground...

Ravn enlists the assistance of one of his ex-patients, Leif, who is entrusted with, amongst other things, obtaining the necessary supplies for the "Arena" (the name given to the facility). Leif is a member of the civil defence, corrupt, profoundly paranoid and feeling the end of the world is nigh. He believes everything is doomed to fail and is the antithesis of Ravn, who believes anything is possible. He rather represents the dark side, since this original series is certainly dark, doubling up as a romance (Vilma regains consciousness, having been given up as dead...).

ORIGIN AND WRITING

The initial idea – an incurable illness according to the current state of research, but for which a doctor wants to find a cure at any cost, even if this involves illegalities - was Thomas Seeberg Torjussen's and he signed the first draft of the script ; that was already five years ago. Eric Vogel, who has made feature films with Nina B. Andersson, but now produces more and more drama for television, explains that the project was abandoned for a time ; NRK slipped it into a drawer for a year to two...

Erik Richter Strand – known for the *Occupied* series which he co-wrote and of which directed episodes 3 and 4, left Oslo for Bergen for a time, where he directed three feature films, before returning to the capital – was contacted at the end of 2012 by Eric Vogel, who he already knew, as well as Thomas Seeberg Torjussen (they were at film school together).

The project gets back on track after this initial delay, with Thomas Seeberg Torjussen continuing to write and Erik Richter Strand designated head screenwriter and director. Other authors were then contacted and they came into play from episode 4 onwards. This way the writing process could continue, even though pre-production had begun.

So, we can say that this project took quite a while to get going and involved several writers. The concept evolved with time, characters were padded out and above all, the underground station element was added. This was to become an essential element of the series and give it its name: *Valkyrien*, an old station built in 1927 and closed down since 1985 (generally speaking, the writing went hand in hand with scouting for locations, to ensure that what was in the script was doable and could be filmed).

This more elaborate and more convincing project was then pitched to NRK. There was quite a bit of toing and froing with the channel before refining the editorial concept. It should be noted that NRK also had some screenwriters working on it and their new ideas were brought on board. Tone C. Rønning, who followed all the various stages, explains that, generally speaking, there are both internal and independent services working for NRK. But never mind the methodology – internal, external, a bit of both - what is important above all is « coming up with the best ideas ».

NRK'S GENERAL POLICY

Tone C. Rønning explains that as far as the channel's involvement in the drama that it produces and broadcasts is concerned, she always tries to intervene as little as possible once the decision to go with a project has been made. Of course, she does sometimes visit the set, but not for the purpose of monitoring. She feels that always being enthusiastic is important – very much needed for this type of adventure –, to calm things down sometimes, reinject belief in the case of doubt and keep everyone on course. In short, unless there is some major crisis during the production, Tone C. Rønning « trusts them ».

This attitude has a lot to do with her own experience in the field. She herself has written and directed in the past and has suffered from a lack of freedom. She has never wanted to be the sort of boss who wants overall control (even if her position at NRK, a key player in the Norwegian audiovisual landscape, could justify this).

When asked about the choice of number of episodes, Tone C. Rønning replies that NRK is flexible on this point and that there is no perfect length. Nevertheless, she feels that it is difficult to gain the viewers' loyalty with less than 8 episodes, but on the other hand, it is not always possible to produce more, due to budgetary issues.

Yet again, what she considers of prime importance is to think in terms of content quality, especially as a public service broadcaster: this is her main objective from which she will not deviate, her key mission as director of drama for NRK.

THE SYMBOLISM BEHIND THE ARENA

Beneath the lights of the city – one of the richest in Europe –, lie darkness, chaos... Down in the bowels of Oslo are the Arena and its evermore numerous clients, the poorly digested remains of society, come to seek refuge and others solutions for saving their lives (surgical procedures become more complex and much more technical as the series moves forward).

Times are changing, so are our lifestyles sustainable? For how long? Apocalypse theorists will find favour in *Valkyrien*, since it poses important ethical questions, above and beyond its thriller/drama

label. For example, to what extent can we defy, for love, the powers that be and the rules and regulations of our societies; or further still, to help those who are no longer « in the system »?

SHADOW AND LIGHT AND VICE VERSA

Erik Richter Strand underlines the duality of the series, with real life outside and above – or should we rather say illusory existence, like in *Matrix*? – and another secret, dissident reality below, in the arteries of the city, a metaphor for the entrails of humanity, which is perhaps in search of another, better way...

These two worlds coexist in a both complex and ambivalent way, which the director dealt with very well, visually speaking. There is a lot to be said for the cinematographic and lighting mindsets in *Valkyrien*. Everything was filmed on location (except the clinic on set); the exterior scenes of the outside world above are voluntarily overexposed, whereas those of the world below are much darker, with a chosen depth of field (a 17 mm anamorphic lens was used). Two quite separate camera crews were used.

As with Ravn, who goes from shadow to light and back, the viewer is also constantly taken from one universe to another. There is also another character in the series, Leiv's friend the policeman, who is more and more suspicious as time goes on and who will get very close to this other reality.

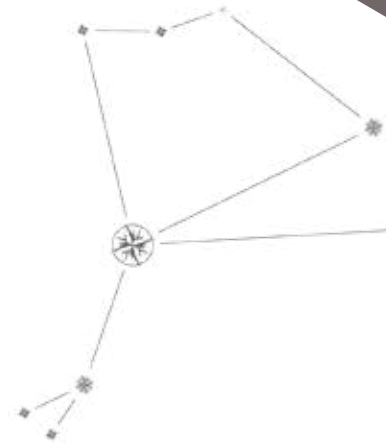
This series is not lacking in audacity nor in depth; Sven Nordin has completely understood this...

THE LEAD ROLE

Sven Nordin, alias Ravn, was in Stockholm working in the *Cage aux Folles* musical when he was given the 3rd draft of the script. He was instantly taken with the project, particularly convinced by the depth of his character, full of contrasts (his relationship with Vilma, the fact that he "operates" underground and yet resurfaces regularly into "normal life" where he has a stepdaughter, a stepfamily...).

Furthermore – something that is worth pointing out since it is uncommon –, Sven was specifically asked for his point of view on his character, around which the narrative arc was put together.





Tone C. Rønning insists that it is exceptional to involve an actor so early on. Ordinarily, screenplays are finished well before contacting the actors. But here, not only was Sven Nordin consulted, he was able to give his opinion and contribute to the creation of his role, not just in front of the camera. Indeed, who is better placed than an actor to have expertise on his character?

So, not only was exchange always possible during the development stage of the series, for better understanding, but also in the rehearsal process with the director. Erik Richter Strand explains that the most difficult scenes were rehearsed behind closed doors; then, on the day of the shoot, a one-hour session was programmed before going on set to go over things again.

SHOOTING

Shooting was at a rate of 14 to 15 days per episode (which Americans would consider outrageous, but shooting was prolonged because of the technical aspects of the surgical interventions); in total, 110 days divided into two parts : episodes 1 to 4 were filmed between August and mid November, then episodes 5 to 8 between mid January and April 2016. So there was a two-month break, which Erik Richter Strand says was largely beneficial, since they could use what they had already learnt for the following episodes, which were fine tuned in light of the finished ones.

There was only a small team for the shoot, adds Nina B. Andersson. This is generally the way in Scandinavia. People are more versatile (for example, make-up and hair are often one and same the person). There is a great spirit of solidarity which must be preserved, as this is the force and character of Scandinavian series.

FINANCIAL ASPECTS

It cost 50 000 euros to get the project going, which was the cost of writing the first episode. Nina B. Andersson tells us that about half a million euros were required for the writing and development of the eight 45-minute episodes, before pre-production. Eric Vogel says the global amount was 7 million euros for the series' 8 episodes, a little under 1 million per episode, which represents a comfortable budget (nevertheless lower than for period drama for example).

Tone C. Rønning does not hide the fact that it was not easy to gather the funds necessary to start development, particularly since other series were already in production (including *Lilyhammer* which, seeing its success, was prolonged for three seasons). She points out, that it is only once NRK has decided on an investment that the Norwegian Film Institute gets involved; the broadcaster

has to commission a series in order to set in motion the financial mechanism of the Institute.

In the end, the majority of development costs were handled by NRK who covered 60% of the budget; the Norwegian Film Institute contributed 20% (a decisive investment), as well as other investors, notably from the private sector.

WHAT OF REPLAY ON THE WEB

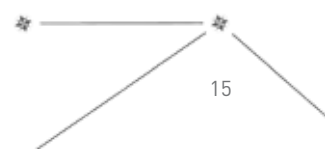
When asked what replay represents in terms of viewing numbers, Tone C. Rønning indicated that *The Heavy Water War* beat all audience ratings for NRK, for all series' genres, that is to say 1.8 million spectators, of which 1.3 million on television and 500 000 on replay via the web. Another example is the *Young & Promising* series, which was first aired on Player; then buzz was generated on television, with an audience split half and half between the two platforms. *Shame (Skam)*, a series aimed at 15-17 year olds, but ending up with a much wider audience, was watched 80% on the web and 20% on television. Sometimes, for certain programmes, all the episodes can be accessed on replay. So there is no real general rule.

Valkyrien will be aired in 2017 at a rate of one episode per week, first on television – the best window would be January, when the weather is at its coldest and viewers, tired out from end of year celebrations, are more than happy to sit in front of the TV -, then on iPlayer and catch-up.

PROSPECTS OF A FOLLOW-UP AND AS A CONCLUSION

Since season 1 ends on a major unanswered question, it is highly likely that there will be a season 2, says Erik Richter Strand, leaving us hopeful.

Nina B. Andersson has the last word and not without humour. She invites the audience to prepare themselves for a « catastrophe screenplay » for all humanity, but furthermore, even though the necessary medical research was carried out and experts were consulted so that all interventions were plausible, she advises us not to drop into the Arena for a consultation or surgery, on any account!



THE BONUS FAMILY

Sweden / SVT



© SVT - Ulrika Malm

SPEAKERS

Clara Hergren (co-creator)

Moa Hergren (co-creator)

Jesper Harrie (screenwriter)

Frida Asp (producer, FLX)

Christian Wikander (head of drama, SVT)

CHAired BY

Clémentine Dabadie (producer, Chabraque, France)

Blended families are very much a current phenomenon. *The Bonus Family* (*Bonusfamiljen*) is about a couple, Patrick and Lisa. They fall in love and decide to start a new family. Both of them have exes and children, thus stepchildren. So everyday life is not simple. How far are Patrick and Lisa prepared to go to make things work?

THE ORIGINS OF THE BONUS FAMILY: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SERIES

The Bonus Family was created by Felix Hergren, Clara Hergren and Moa Hergren and is based on their own experience. Clara Hergren had one child when she met her new partner, who already had three children of his own. Today, they have seven children between them. With the various difficulties that her new family was facing, she decided to consult a psychotherapist, but she never managed to find one that was able to give her the help she required (in the first episode of *The Bonus Family*, Patrick and Lisa visit a couple who are psychotherapists). After training, Clara Hergren became a psychologist specialising in therapy for blended families. As soon as she started consulting, she realised that these situations were a wonderful inspiration for a drama series. *The Bonus Family* project came into being. Discussions with her sister-in-law, Moa Hergren, who is also part of a blended family, also contributed. This shows what a very personal series this is.

It is this very autobiographical and therefore authentic aspect, that so attracted Frida Asp. « I immediately fell for the project », she explains. She was very taken with the simplicity and tone of

the narrative. Christian Wikander felt the same when he listened to Felix Hergren's pitch and the pilot (co-produced by SVT and FLX on a 30 000 € budget) only confirmed his choice. Not only does *The Bonus Family* deal with a very widespread, social phenomenon (in Sweden, 50 % of couples divorce after 7 years of marriage), but the series was exactly in line with the SVT group's editorial strategy.

The group devotes two evenings a week to drama. Every year, the channel broadcasts two crime series on Sundays at 9 p.m. and two drama series on Mondays in the same time slot. SVT, having abandoned comedy, decided to bring it back. A series like *The Bonus Family* was just what was needed in the channel's programming schedule. Christian Wikander is keen to point out that the channel had signed a get-out clause, enabling them to drop the project if the first scripts did not meet expectations.

This series has the benefit of having a showrunner. Frida Asp feels that a series needs a leader; someone who can ensure artistic continuity. Clara and Moa Hergren could have taken on this role, but Felix Hergren had the advantage of being a director (he did in fact direct the first 5 episodes).

LAUGHTER AND TEARS

The series changed a lot from the original pitch. Moa Hergren sees a blended family as an enormous network (children, stepchildren, parents, exes, grandparents, friends) and the first version of the project included over 50 characters! In addition, child characters were multiplying as the series advanced, some of them very young. Anticipating difficulties with the shoot (it is sometimes more difficult filming with children, particularly from a logistical point of view), the creators reduced the number to three (two ten-year-old boys and one adolescent).

The Bonus Family does not try to hide any problems resulting from blended families. It would have been very easy to create a purely dramatic series, points out Clara Hergren. « Certain subjects are really not easy, like not loving one's stepchildren, for example ». Jesper Harrie himself grew up in a blended family. « Some of my childhood memories are painful », he confides, and « we could have been tempted to reinforce the more dramatic aspects ».

The Bonus Family is a realistic but always a very positive series. The creators tried hard to inject humour into the majority of situations. Our aim was to « show that a blended family can be a good thing; a bonus », points out Moa Hergren. « Having watched the 10 episodes, I am not sure that we achieved our goal », adds Clara Hergren.

FREE REIN

The creators were given complete freedom to set the tone they wanted for their series. Clémentine Dabadie questions Moa Hergren on relationships with the channel and she replies that it was a real cooperation based on mutual respect. During the development period, the channel was very much involved, but their input was always positive. Even if certain comments or suggestions were the subject of numerous discussions, the creators always had the feeling that the final decision was theirs. Christian Wikander remembers that it was precisely this authenticity that appealed to him. His role was to ensure that the creators did not stray from the original concept and were as true to it as possible.

Christian Wikander says that in Sweden, relationships between broadcasters and screenwriters have evolved tremendously. Sweden has a great tradition of auteur cinema where the director has complete control of his work. Since the 80s, with the advent of the first long television series, authority has passed to the screenwriter.



A 5-STAR CAST

A series like *The Bonus Family* is carried by the characters and thus the actors who play them. FLX called in a casting agency. For the characters of Patrick and Lisa, actors were seen individually for the first round and then in couples, to be certain they were capable of portraying a real complicity and chemistry on screen.

Frida Asp specifies that a lot of effort, energy and money went into the casting and this was so for all the characters. As a result, the supporting roles are all exceptional, to such an extent that sometimes they have a tendency to steal the spotlight from the leads. This is the case in many series and Jesper Harrie agrees that in *The Bonus Family*, particularly in the first episode, Patrick and Lisa's exes are probably the funniest characters. Nevertheless, he is quite sure that these two leading characters gain in depth and, in the end, win over the public.

As regards more specifically the children, they had never had any acting experience. Filming with children is always a challenge,

not to say a risk. One of the youngest actors suffers from ADHD (those of you who have seen the first episode will know which child we are talking about) and so work hours had to be adapted. Generally speaking, the children were so gifted that scripts had to be modified during shooting, to pad out their characters and give them more lines.

There was a budget of 4.3 million euros for the ten episodes of the first season. Nine days were allowed for each episode and so timing was very tight. Yet, not only was filming very well prepared in advance, but the actors' talent and wholehearted commitment were of great benefit to the production. By the end of filming, the creators had the impression that they had succeeded in creating a real family.

To conclude, Christian Wikander says that *The Bonus Family* will air in 2017 on SVT. A second season has already been commissioned.

THE DAY WILL COME

Denmark / TV2



© Tordenfilm - Johan-Fredrik Bødtner

SPEAKERS

Sune Martin (composer)

Pernille Bech Christensen (producer, TV2)

CHAired BY

Claire Lemaréchal (screenwriter)

ORIGIN

The Day Will Come, produced by Zentropa, was originally a feature film directed by Jesper W. Nielsensur (*Borgen*, *Dicte*), based on an original idea by screenwriter Søren Sveistrup (*The Killing*), which was released on 21st April this year, with major press coverage. The screenplay was adapted into a miniseries of three 45-minute episodes, for a total budget of 4 million euros.

Taking place in Copenhagen, in 1967, two inseparable brothers, 13-year-old Elmer and 10-year-old Erik, who can no longer stay with their ailing mother, nor with their uncle, are placed in a home for boys, the Gudbjerg Institute. Just the name of this establishment sends a shiver down one's spine. From the day they arrive, director Heck begins to punish and humiliate them, when it is not the other boarders. With only their imagination to sustain them and very little hope, each passing day is a struggle for survival and freedom for Elmer and Erik. Dreams are not allowed at the Gudbjerg Institute...

The Day Will Come is based on a true story (but not autobiographical) and is incredibly violent both physically and psychologically. It is hard to believe that, at the beginning of the era of hippies and sexual liberation, this sort of tyrannical and sadistic authority still existed in certain places, in Denmark and other neighbouring European countries.

FROM FEATURE FILM TO SERIES

Pernille Bech Christensen explains that the necessary potential existed to produce two different formats and so to turn the film into a television series, or rather a miniseries. The subject matter is so sensitive and the atmosphere so heavy, that she could not imagine being able to retain viewers' interest for 6 to 8 episodes.

Taking a feature film and turning it into a series requires the lengthening of certain scenes and the padding out of characters of course. Søren Sveistrup tackled this task without actually rewriting the original screenplay, but rather adapting it with subtlety.

One of the guidelines was notably to lighten the dramatic side of the narrative, for example by making Heck, the director – wonderfully interpreted by Lars Mikkelsen (*House of Cards*, *The*

Killing) –, a more ambivalent character and perhaps not all bad. Heck believes his mission is to turn these young boys into good citizens, make them conform at whatever cost, with discipline. He embodies a certain ideology and is merely a product of his time.

In particular, the character of the inspector was added during the series. He is a sort of « saviour », embodying, to an extent, emerging modernity in this confined and backward place that this orphanage, frozen in time, is; he is perhaps the only one to escape this Dickensian universe.

THE VOICE OF THE COMPOSER

Sune Martin came on board with the film and his music already in existence. He worked on the score for the series over six months. For him too, it was not an ex nihilo creation, but more a question of transforming the existing music. Usually, he takes the time to read the screenplay and, based on this, starts composing. Here he tackled it differently, more with a sense of urgency, but no less exciting.

Through the music, he also helped to alleviate the intensity of the subject matter. In fact, by accentuating the images or plots that are already very powerful – not to say unbearable – with a pervading and dramatic score, is not always appropriate. So his mission also consisted of a subtle rearrangement of the acoustic universe.

For example, the passages where we see Erik dreaming of becoming an astronaut, in spite of his club foot, have a more jovial tone. The film score included a piece composed by the famous American composer Hans Zimmer, which was powerful and very orchestral; the intensity had to be diminished, whilst remaining faithful to the density of the narrative and retaining the general tone of great sadness.

A DELICATE SUBJECT, BUT ONE THAT SHOULD BE ASSUMED

In spite of aspiring to soften the narrative arc – which the feature film had already done in relation to the real facts that inspired *The Day Will Come* –, there was never any question of coming up with a watered-down version of this dark story. Other broadcasters might have been tempted to modify the content more broadly, coming up with a more acceptable and mainstream version, but TV2 fully assumes the risk of airing a series which will shake you up. Moreover, it will be aired during prime time, at 9 p.m., possibly on three days running, or in any case during the same week, in order to create an event.

This miniseries really is an event as far as it deals with a serious social issue, something which is certainly not a taboo in Denmark. Documentaries have been made on this subject. Those responsible have been asked to make a public apology and the case is still ongoing before the Danish courts.

The dormitory in the series is a faithful reproduction of what really existed, reminding us of a reality which really did exist and is still drawing attention. These were not bad boys; they were there simply because nobody else could look after them and that was enough to cast suspicion on them.

Education has certainly greatly evolved since then and the law does not now allow corporal punishment in schools. There is also now the « Rita style » of teaching – another Danish series presented during Série Series 2013, which Pernille Bech Christensen also worked on –, however, attitudes are changing perhaps slower than we would like or would care to believe... In any case, this is definitely a human rights issue and *The Day Will Come* is, as such, a really committed series.

COMMITMENT OF THE PRODUCER/BROADCASTER

When asked about her role as producer and broadcaster, Pernille Bech Christensen particularly underlines the idea of commitment. Once the decision is taken to go with a project and even though she is not involved in the creative side, her role, nonetheless, is to ensure that the most is made of the original idea. This is all in close collaboration with the screenwriter and the director, whose job it is to come up with solutions, of course. For this to work, she says that good communication is essential.

On a more general note, Pernille Bech Christensen speaks of the quality of series produced in Denmark, where « auteur vision » is well-known and yet the concept of showrunner does not really exist. The screenwriters and producers take on the responsibility of keeping the project on course and, as a result, there is a training course for this at one of the national schools which tackles all aspects of the profession (framing editing, sound...) and how to be versatile. She herself was an editor before moving on to production and she oversaw the final cut of *The Day Will Come*.

AS FOR THE CAST

Apart from Lars Mikkelsen who was mentioned earlier, Sofie Gråbøl (with him on the cast of *The Killing*) plays the role of the teacher, torn between her desire to protect these battered children and maintaining her position in the establishment and also Lars Ranthe (*The Hunt*), Sonja Richter (*The Homesman*) and David Dencik (*A Royal Affair*); a choice adult cast.

As for the children, Pernille Bech Christensen was not on set, but she does not hesitate to confirm that the director did a remarkable job with them. Auditions took a long time and the assistant director was quite hard on them in order to get the required intensity and it worked very well.

All the children are fine, she reassures us!



DOWNSHIFTERS

Finland / Elisa Viihde, Yle TV2



© Yellow Film - Pekka Mustonen

SPEAKERS

Teppo Airaksinen (director)
Anna Dahlman (screenwriter)
Olli Haikka (creator and executive producer,
Yellow Film & TV)

CHAired BY

Miryam van Lier (director of drama, youth
programmes and performing arts, Dutch Media-
fund, The Netherlands)

The Finnish series *Downshifters* focuses on a new social phenomenon: downshifting. A downshifter is somebody who chooses to stop working, to do away with stress and to live a simpler, less consumer-oriented, more basic lifestyle. A downshifter strives to return to more natural, community-based values.

LAUGHING THROUGH THE CRISIS

Tommi and Satu, the two lead characters in *Downshifters*, are giving up their life of luxury and their big designer apartment in Helsinki. They announce to their nearest and dearest that they are moving to the suburbs, to a council flat, and swear that they are going to cut back on consumerism and live more simply. What they have not said, is that Tommi's company has gone bankrupt and he is crippled with debt. Their « downshifting » is in fact something they are forced to do and not at all a desire to live a simpler life in tune with loftier aspirations.

Olli Haikka, the creator of the series, came up with the idea for *Downshifters* quite naturally. Everybody in Finland is talking about downshifting, but not many actually make the leap. There was real comic potential there. Of course, the financial crisis in itself is not funny, so the series could just as well have been a drama.

Anna Dahlman says that the choice of comedy was an easy one to make. The series is a sort of hybrid. Although the social context the series is based on is difficult, being the crisis and unemployment, its main objective is to make people laugh. *Downshifters* reflects the vision screenwriters have of life: « life is a dramedy».

Creating a comedy also meets economic aspirations. Comedies are hugely successful in Finland. They have the highest audience ratings on television, so it is much easier to convince a broadcaster with a project for a comedy than for a drama. Even more so since slots available for one-hour programmes on Finnish television are rare. Competition is very strong and there is a powerful competitive advantage in comedy.

The series had a second trump card in Jussi Vatanen, who plays the role of Tommi and is a real star in Finland (for example, he played the lead in the film *Very Cold Trip*, which won multiple awards, in particular at the Alpe d'Huez International Film Comedy Festival). The other main actors are all extremely popular in Finland.

Olli Haikka points out that *Downshifters* is also a romantic comedy, in that Tommi and Satu, whose whole life was entirely devoted to de luxe consumerism, are going to have to get to know each other, both as individuals and as a couple.

HUMOUR FINNISH STYLE

The humour in *Downshifters*, comes mainly from the dialogue and rarely from situations. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to translate the humour of the series in subtitles, but having heard the laughter during the screening, Teppo Airaksinen is confident that viewers understood the majority of the jokes, or at least the most important ones.

Miryam van Lier reminds us that what European audiences know of Finnish cinema is mainly works by Aki Kaurismäki (*The Man Without a Past*, *Leningrad Cowboys Go America*, *Le Havre*...). These films are deeply melancholic, calm and silent, in flagrant contrast with *Downshifters*. It is a very dynamic, sometimes even hysterical, comedy.

Teppo Airaksinen confirms that this was a conscious choice. The events that the heroes of this series have to face are very superficial. In episode 4, screened before this discussion, the characters face almost banal, everyday situations. Tommi is at war with one of his neighbours, since he feels he does not respect the reservation rules for the washing machines available to the residents of building he has moved into with his partner. Whereas a simple discussion between adults would have been enough to defuse the situation, Tommi shows great bad faith and stoops very low. In the same episode, Pia and Aaro, Tommi and Satu's best friends, have started renovating their new house. Everybody knows how renovations can be a source of tension, but here, the stress levels reach extraordinary heights. This is one of the traits of comedy: taking a very ordinary situation and bringing out the comic potential.

Teppo Airaksinen's favourite comedies

are those where the actors talk a lot and fast. In *Downshifters*, the dialogue is like a machine gun. Before beginning filming, he met the actors and invited them to a private screening of Woody Allen's film, *Husbands and Wives*. For him, comedy is all about the pace of dialogue. In *Downshifters*, the pace is frenetic, even violent on occasion, as it is in the aforementioned famous American director's comedy. When arguments break out, it is pushed to the limit.

All the actors in *Downshifters* are honed professionals. They all come from the world of theatre (a classic path in Finland, since there are not many opportunities for roles in cinema and television), but their range is extremely broad as they go from drama to comedy and back. For example, Jussi Vatanen is renowned for his roles in some of Finland's most successful comedies, as well as war films. Teppo Airaksinen worked hard with the actors in order for them to really assimilate the dialogue, for it to ring true and sound as natural as possible. Many scenes were filmed using handheld cameras in natural settings. Both the characters and the camera are in constant movement.

Downshifters is not a traditional sitcom. For this format –and here Teppo Airaksinen uses the example of *30 Rock* to illustrate his point–, the direction must tie up with the rhythm of the jokes and puns. In *Downshifters*, the camera is free to roam. There can be an exchange of dialogue and yet the two characters are not even in the same room; something which is unthinkable in a sitcom.

The direction and pace of dialogue sometimes give the impression that the actors are improvising. Teppo Airaksinen admits that he loathes improvisation. Every time actors start improvising, they disrupt the rhythm of the scene. The dialogue for

this series was meticulously written.

The dialogue was written by a team of scripwriters who Anna Dahlman joined along the way, with the project already well advanced. She feels that comedy is best written in a team. It is easier to come up with a joke when you have a public to hand. When nobody laughs, there is a very good chance that it's not funny.

A member of the audience points out another particularity of *Downshifters*: the tremendous amount of swear words and cursing used. Teppo Airaksinen pleads guilty. He loves verbal abuse and the Finnish language is knee deep in it. Unfortunately, this variety does not come over in the subtitles... A lot of swear words were added during the shoot. The dialogue, as it was in the script, was much less vulgar.

Olli Haikka points out that swear words are acceptable on Finnish television and are not censored by broadcasters, at least not anymore. About eight years ago, Olli Haikka remembers producing a cartoon series for adults. When the first season was aired, the channel bleeped out all the swear words, which ended up being the majority of the dialogue. An uncensored version was available on the web. For the second season, the channel decided not to intervene. The swear words were part of the series' attraction and even if it was for adults, it was hugely popular with the younger public.

In any event, the humour in *Downshifters* is very much universal. This is probably the reason why an American broadcaster has already acquired the remake rights. The first season will be aired on YLE, the Finnish public service channel. A second season has already been commissioned.



KOSMO

Czech Republic / Czech TV



© Czech Television / Mikulas Krepek

SPEAKERS

Tomáš Baldýnský (screenwriter)
Jan Bartek (director)
Jan Maxa (head of content development,
Czech Television)

CHAired BY

Jean-André Yerlès (screenwriter, France)

CONFESSIONS OF A SCREENWRITER

From the outset, Tomáš Baldýnský says he has a confession to make, or rather an apology to the audience, since he is fairly sure that they are not going to understand a thing or near enough, of what they are going to see on the screen. He also announces that this series is typically Czech humour, set in a completely crazy universe which he feels is not very easy to get into. As for the chair, he willingly confesses that this is the first Czech series for him...

ORIGIN OF THE SERIES

Tomáš Baldýnský was a film critic before deciding to become an author. Being rather a fan of the comedic genre, when he was asked to write a television series, an old idea for a sitcom set in space, came back to him: the story of the first Czech-manned – and imaginary – space flight to the moon. In other words: « And what if the Czechs were the first Slavs to send a man to the moon? Russians have never set foot there! »

His first comedy already had the public's vote, points out Jan Bartek (it was the first sitcom made in the past 40 years in the Czech Republic and broadcast during prime time). He had already shown that he had the ability to seduce a large audience.

So no point in searching for another editorial team, since Tomáš Baldýnský's experience was largely sufficient. He worked with his girlfriend, who writes excellent dialogue, he tells us. He has the ideas and she translates them into dialogue; it took two and a half years.

DRAMA IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Jan Maxa says that, in general, drama is what works best during prime time in the Czech Republic, so it is common. Whereas commercial channels broadcast soaps above all else, Czech Television broadcasts a lot of crime series, but also « tales », which are a very popular genre there. Sometimes, more wacky series are aired; bizarre comedies, which could probably include *Kosmo*, in as far as it can be classified.

In fact, it is neither a parody nor a work of science fiction – we will go into this more later –, almost a political satire on a national, but also international level (it attacks everyone from Russian diplomats who do the opposite of what they say, to Americans wanting to invade Polynesia due to its oil deposits, passing via militant feminists). In any event, Jan Bartek did not want an « identifiable » series and he has succeeded in this.

A NARRATIVE ON TWO LEVELS AND A POLITICALLY INCORRECT SERIES

There are two layers to this narrative. On one level there is the story of the four astronauts ready setting off for the moon of course, but simultaneously there is that of a corrupt political class. On this point, the protagonists agree that, in no uncertain terms, the series is a scathing spoof of internal political and social affairs, unafraid of targeting this or that politician, with acerbic jokes and damning portraits. Tomáš Baldýnský tells us that it is the most « nationalistic » work he has ever made: a really Czech affair!

It even seems preferable to him to wait for the elections before airing the series, such are the risks they have taken in being so explicit (particularly with the character of Mr. Rubbish, alias the actual prime minister), even though he knows his position is completely secure, at least technically speaking, and he reassures us that happily, television in the Czech Republic is very independent.

Apart from thumbing their nose at the Czech political establishment, Poland also takes a beating and in light of this, the *Kosmo* team would like to show us an extract of a subsequent episode, in space this time...

Once in space, the craft is overtaken by a Polish vessel – which, for the Czechs, is quite simply unthinkable, since they could at most accept to be beaten to the moon by Germany, but certainly not to be overtaken by Poland...! Wonderful self-criticism of an inferiority complex relating to neighbouring countries and the three associates add that it could just as well have been a French rocket, since they hate us just as much as they do their Polish friends... Hence, out of the question that they be overtaken by the enemy, so they quite simply put their foot on the gas and even think about off loading a few passengers to gain a bit of speed... A long way from *Gravity*, science fiction it really is, but much closer to a « *Borat à la Czech* ».

FILMING, BUDGET AND SPECIAL EFFECTS

Filming started even before the series was completely written, which sometimes complicated the task. As the author, final decisions were always Tomáš Baldýnský's, points out Jan Bartek, who has great confidence in him. He was involved in every stage

of the project, including the shoot. It was as if there were two directors: one preparing everything in advance, in particular the actors, and the other « TV director » coming into play afterwards. It should be noted that even if Tomáš Baldýnský was familiar with the sitcom genre, he was nevertheless exploring unknown territory, particularly in terms of special effects. They had to do the best they could with the means at their disposal. There was a limited global budget of 550 000 € for the 5 episodes, giving a total of 200 minutes; this requires a lot of creativity. Jan Maxa says, not without humour, that he is now an expert in weightlessness on a shoestring, even if they would have all liked to be creative on a bigger budget (the original budget forecast had already been exceeded).

PROSPECTS

Kosmo was filmed from November 2015 and May 2016, and was in post-production at the time of *Série Series* and until September. As for hoping to sell it abroad, Slovakia has shown interest, but there is little hope of Poland following suit... As was mentioned at the beginning of the session, this series is very much rooted in local context. Even if « comedy does not travel well generally speaking » says Tomáš Baldýnský, his miniseries defies classification. This is what is important for him and he is proud of it.



TOMORROW I QUIT

Germany / ZDF



© ZDF- Martin Valentin Menke

SPEAKERS

Martin Eigler (creator, screenwriter and director)

Sven Poser (screenwriter)

Nina Güde (producer)

Bettina Wente (producer)

Suzanne Wolff (actress)

CHAired BY

Jean-André Yerlès (screenwriter, France)

THE PITCH

The Lehmanns are an ordinary family with an ordinary problem: they don't have enough money. No orders are coming into Jochen's print shop, his marriage is on the rocks and his children are in bad shape. When Jochen is turned down for yet another loan, he starts printing his own 50 € notes. His daughter, not realising these are fakes, starts paying with them all over town. The notes are so good, that the Mafia shows interest and Jochen starts looking for a way out...

A GERMAN BREAKING BAD?

On seeing the first episode of *Tomorrow I Quit*, Jean-André Yerlès immediately thought of *Breaking Bad*, the now famous series produced by AMC (who also produced *The Walking Dead*). You may recall that in the American series, Walter White, a chemistry teacher diagnosed with terminal lung cancer, starts making crystal meth to ensure his family's financial future after his death. The drugs he produces, in his small makeshift laboratory, are of such quality that they attract the attention of the local mafia. At first sight, Walter White shares the same destiny as Jochen Lehmann; two men caught in a downward spiral.

Martin Eigler completely understands the comparison of these two series. How the characters are presented in the first episode is really fairly similar. Nevertheless, he is keen to point out that the writing of *Tomorrow I Quit* started before *Breaking Bad* was aired. So, any similarities between the two series are mere coincidence. It should be noted that both these series were written when the financial crisis of 2008 was in full swing. They both reflect the spirit of these troubled times and are inspired by the consequences of this crisis on the middle and working classes.

Sven Poser notes that, in the end, the two series are quite different. In *Breaking Bad*, like any good American series worthy of the name, the way in which the main themes of redemption and intrigue are utilised, is extremely pessimistic and dark. The general tone of *Tomorrow I Quit* is very different and much more upbeat. The broadcast of *Breaking Bad* gave the screenwriters of *Tomorrow I Quit* the opportunity to modify the very essence of the series and to bring out the more comic aspects. Jochen Lehmann's character is not as dark as Walter White's. In addition, Martin Eigler points out that production on the series was suspended after shooting of the second episode (there are five in all in *Tomorrow I Quit*). Screenwriters made the most of this break to pad out the characters and to reinforce the comical side of certain situations.

Martin Eigler admits that the broadcast of *Breaking Bad* « was like a death sentence » and that *Tomorrow I Quit* almost never saw the day. Without the producers' and the channel's (ZDF) unfailing support (on this point, Bettina Wente says she fell madly in love with the project on reading the very first pitch), the project would, quite simply, have been abandoned.

A REAL FAMILY

One of the key strengths of the series is its cast. Bastian Pastewka (who plays Jochen Lehmann) is a very popular actor in Germany. He accepted the role without second thought and the fact that he was behind the series, certainly worked in its favour, particularly as far as ZDF was concerned. Suzanne Wolff, who plays his wife, admits that she was not quite as excited after reading the script. « As an actress, I am much more used to playing drama and the resolutely lightweight tone of the series frightened me somewhat », she confides. After meeting with Bastian Pastewka, she ended up being convinced.

The Lehmann family is at the centre of the action. The actors got together weeks before filming to get to know each other and learn to interact, to make sure the family was as realistic as possible. Suzanne Wolff explains that they spent whole afternoons playing board games. « One day, we all went to the zoo. That day, I realised that we really were a family ».

The family in the series is so convincing that it is almost too typically German. This bothers Suzanne Wolff, since she feels *Tomorrow I Quit* might not appeal to other European audiences. She is reassured by the participants reminding her that the issues addressed in the series concern everyone in Europe. Whatever the audience, be they French or English, they will see themselves in the Lehmann family.



HEADING FOR A SECOND SEASON

The budget for the five episodes was 4 million euros. *Tomorrow I Quit* was aired on ZDF, at 9.45 p.m. during the month of January. The channel did not have a particular slot for this type of programme and, although successful, the series was affected by competition. In fact, another channel broadcast *The Jungle Camp*, one of Germany's most popular reality shows (German version of *I'm a Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here*), in the same time slot.

In any case, ZDF has commissioned a second season, which is already being written. Marin Eigler says that this will be quite different from the first...



THE SECRET

United Kingdom / ITV



© Hat Trick Productions

SPEAKER

Nick Murphy (director)

CHAired BY

Arnaud Malherbe (director)

Hazel Buchanan is a Sunday school teacher. Colin Howell is a respectable dentist. They met at the Baptist church in Coleraine, a small town in Northern Ireland. They are both religious and both married. They are pillars of the community and organise prayer evenings on a regular basis. Colin even plays the guitar during church services.

Hazel and Colin embark upon a passionate and destructive affair which progressively distances them from their faith. Comes the day, when they decide to kill their respective spouses and make it look like suicide. The bodies of the two victims were found on 19th May 1991.

They get away with it, but their relationship soon sours and they separate in acrimony and bitterness. Colin Howell unravels in a self-destructive frenzy, finally confessing his crimes to the horrified elders of his church. Nineteen years after the murders, Hazel Buchanan and Colin Howell are arrested by the police. They are both serving life imprisonment.

ANY RESEMBLANCE TO EXISTING PERSONS...

The Secret, broadcast on ITV, is a miniseries based on real events. « Based on » is probably not the right term. Nick Murphy wanted the series to be as realistic as possible; almost a documentary. He approached the subject almost like a journalist, and endeavoured to adopt the principals and ethics of this profession. For example, the crime scene, from a forensic point of view, is entirely faithful to the facts, down to the very last detail. The sequence is pared down and silent, with no music whatsoever. Nick Murphy feels the contrary would have been obscene. Devoid of any dramatic artifice as it is, this 20-minute-long sequence is all the more unbearable.

Arnaud Malherbe points out that some directors adopt a totally opposite approach. The Dardenne brothers, for example, consider that all cinema is a lie, even when it is based on real events. Nick Murphy understands but does not agree. « All directors may cheat, but they are not all liars ».

He refers to Kevin Macdonald's *Last King of Scotland*, [a film he enjoyed, incidentally] which deals with Idi Amin Dada's regime.

The film claims to be based on real events (the opening shot is of a card alleging that the events described in the film are based on real events). In effect, Idi Amin Dada (played by Forest Whitaker) really did exist. This profoundly megalomaniac dictator did indeed bestow a great number of honorary titles on himself, notably the King of Scotland. But Kevin Macdonald takes the liberty of introducing a second, totally fictive character in the dictator's personal doctor. This is a problem.

It all depends on the subject matter. Nick Murphy directed two episodes of the the period drama, *The Last Kingdom*, aired on BBC Two. The plot is set in the ninth century, a period when Anglo-Saxon lands were ruled by Viking Danes. The main characters—Uhtred, Alfred the Great, Guthrum – all existed. But we have very little information on the Vikings (how they mounted their horses, what they ate....) and screenwriters, like directors, can take any liberties they want with official story. *The Secret* is quite the opposite, being a contemporary series and the majority of the protagonists still alive. « Here, the director has a responsibility »:

to be as honest as possible and never to distort the facts. Yet again, it is all a question of ethics. *The Secret* is « a true story », in every sense of the term.

In *The Secret*, Nick Murphy tried « never to make the events more exciting than they actually were ». Actually, this was one of the instructions he gave the actors. « Their role was not to make the events more dramatic, but to be as believable as possible ». It is for this very reason that Nick Murphy favoured silent moments. Anyhow, dialogue is always dangerous. « In real life, nobody actually says what they are thinking and the best authors are those who get their characters to lie ».

Nick Murphy's direction of *The Secret* is never demonstrative. The series was shot using handheld cameras and music was used sparingly. He has not allowed any form of suspense. In many films, directors shoot totally useless scenes where, for example, we see a hand pushing back a curtain to give the impression of imminent danger. « Why not show who the hand belongs to? Is it not more judicious to let the viewer imagine that there is somebody behind the curtain? » According to Nick Murphy, this type of scene is of no interest. It is just like dream sequences, which he hates just as much, since they add nothing to the plot. A series like *The Secret* has no need of cumulating suspense sequences to frighten viewers. The very ordinariness of the events is the real horror.

Although Arnaud Malherbe understands Nick Murphy's approach, he notes that for a realistic series, *The Secret* is in fact very chaste. For example, there are no sex scenes in the first episode and yet it is all about a love affair. Colin is very sexually attracted to Hazel, but Nick Murphy could see no point in showing sex scenes in the first episode (however, these scenes are more crude in the second part of the series, after the murders, when the relationship between the two criminals is deteriorating and the sex is becoming more mundane). When an audience watches a love story, they expect to see the two protagonists making love, but Nick Murphy had fun misleading them. A director's role is to surprise the viewer.

A VERY BRITISH SERIES!

Arnaud Malherbe thinks that for many viewers, particularly the French, *The Secret* will be seen as a typically British series. Nick Murphy is unable to define what exactly a British series is. He understands that for the public, an English film is always rooted in social reality (Ken Loach being a very good example of English cinema). It is probably the same for series. *The Secret* is not afraid to probe the less appealing foibles of society. This said, Nick Murphy reminds us that British television has been producing and broadcasting series based on real events for over forty years.

Arnaud Malherbe mentions the originality of *The Secret*, which is not the sort of series we are used to seeing on commercial channels (ITV is the leading private channel in Great Britain, the equivalent of TF1 in France). Nick Murphy agrees that the project was atypical, to say the least. Nevertheless, British channels have been greatly influenced by the BBC which has shaped the audiovisual landscape in Britain, and are not afraid to take risks. Broadcasters are very much aware that more daring series like *The Secret*, even if they are likely to be less profitable, are essential for their corporate identity.

Furthermore, risk was relatively contained. Nick Murphy has already worked for ITV. He had directed three episodes of the miniseries *Prey's* first season, which in spite of a very aggressive style (much more so than *The Secret*), was very successful (over 8.9 million viewers). So the powers that be at ITV did not exactly launch blindly into the adventure and clearly knew what they were doing, since *The Secret* was also a great success. The audience rating in Northern Ireland was 60%, which is unheard of...

Arnaud Malherbe takes this opportunity to question Nick Murphy on his relationship with the channel, during both development and filming. The director replies that ITV gave him all the freedom he required. To illustrate this, he explains that the channel had commissioned – and financed – a three 50-minute-episode series. During filming, Nick Murphy improvised various long sequences with the actors, sometimes drifting away from the script. After editing, the series was four 52-minute episodes. Many channels would have turned down the series and insisted that the director stick to the original project, but ITV supported Nick and his vision.

The channel had confidence in the project all along. There was very little involvement, except to sort out a few legal problems, since as soon as the project was announced, the protagonists' families, notably Colin Howell's daughter, let the press know that they were totally against the series.

Arnaud Malherbe wonders if Hazel and Colin have seen the series. Nick Murphy has been informed that Hazel Buchanan has indeed seen it. Colin Howell let it be known that he was not interested in watching it. « Colin is a megalomaniac. I am sure he was lying and he saw the series ». What's more, when he was told about the project, his first reaction was disappointment that Brad Pitt had not been cast to play him...

THOU SHALT NOT KILL

Nick Murphy was involved in the project from the first stages of development. « It is a fascinating story. I love it when ordinary characters, do extraordinary things, in this case, the most sordid murder », he confides. « Ordinary? » That's easily said. The director admits that Colin Howell is a monster. « But a monster who doesn't realise he is ».



Colin Howell is a fascinating character, who seems to be totally unaware of all the wrong he has done. What is even more perturbing is that he is convinced that he has been given a holy mission. « We live in a world where certain people are convinced their God is asking them to do extraordinary things ». This religious aspect is what interested Nick Murphy the most. « If the main characters had been gangsters, I would probably not have directed it ».

Hazel Buchanan and Colin Howell are deeply religious. They belong to a discreet and closed Baptist community (big presence in Northern Ireland). The church elders were incapable of believing that Colin was guilty and protected him for years (just like the Catholic Church has never hesitated to protect paedophile priests). The trial and sentencing of the two lovers was deeply shocking and traumatising for the community. « It was only a very

small community and everyone knew Hazel Buchanan and Colin Howell ».

It would have been easy to turn *The Secret* into an anti-religious manifesto. Admittedly Nick Murphy is an atheist, but this was not the objective. The series is much more the study of a psychosis. « Many people », he stresses « create their God in their image and not the other way round ». Therefore, « homophobes have a homophobic God ». Colin Howell compared himself to King David. In the Old Testament, Nick Murphy reminds us, David is an adulterous king, guilty of murder. He has Uriah, his mistress Bathsheba's husband, murdered. If King David breaks divine laws, God will pardon him. Colin Howell is also convinced that God will pardon him, whatever he does. « Madness is a form of conviction ».



MARCELLA

United Kingdom / ITV



SPEAKERS

Nicola Larder (co-creator, producer, Buccaneer Media)

Charles Martin (director)

Ray Panthaki and Nicholas Pinnock (actors)

Max Gottlieb (production designer)

CHAired BY

Pierre Zéni (editor-in-chief, Ciné+, France)

For the closing ceremony, the team from the British series, *Marcella*, answered the journalist Pierre Zéni's questions, on the stage of the Fontainebleau theatre.

Set in contemporary London and centring on a female police officer, *Marcella* is a multi-stranded British crime drama. Told with Rosenfeldt's (creator of *The Tunnel*) unflinchingly clear Nordic style, full of hooks and action, *Marcella* plunges us into the psychological struggles of a police officer, returning to the homicide division of London's Metropolitan Police, after a twelve-year break.

A NORDIC NOIR BRITISH CRIME SERIES

Nicola Larder, who co-created and produced the series, admits that she had been wanting to collaborate with European and international talent and to give a new and original look to British crime series. Hans Rosenfeldt was an obvious choice since, as the creator of *Bron/The Bridge*, this Swedish author managed to win over 175 countries and, as a master of suspense, he was the ideal author for this new project about a strong, mysterious and complex female character; just the sort Hans appreciates. Nicola was also delighted to give him a wonderful opportunity to come up with a story set in the gigantic, colourful and vibrant city of London. A megapolis synonymous with tolerance and diversity, Max Gottlieb, the production designer, reminds us, even if recently this image has been tarnished by Brexit!

Hans brought real authenticity and a fresh point of view to this successful collaboration, whereas the other members of the team were able to contribute their British know-how and emotional baggage.

PREPARING THE ACTORS

Ray Panthaki, playing Marcella's colleague and a police officer for the first time, was lucky enough to meet a police inspector who was willing to answer all his questions on the profession. He gained total respect for these professionals. Furthermore, Hans Rosenfeldt's dialogue helped tremendously, thanks to its precision and clarity.

As for Nicholas Pinnock, he plays Jason, Marcella's soon to be ex-husband. Preparation for this role was facilitated by the quality of the script, which gave a clear understanding of the characters and their development over the episodes. Nicholas really appreciated the collaboration with the team, the discussions with the director and opportunity to rehearse before shooting. Lastly, playing the husband of a couple in the throes of separation, Nicholas relied on comments from close friends, who had gone through the same ordeal, on certain attitudes and tensions which are inherent in the context of couples who have loved each other and are now separating.

WHODUNNIT?

Charles Martin, the director, says he loves working with actors. He had many discussions with them both during the auditions and a week before filming began, to allow everyone to experiment and explore their respective characters.

In a very unexpected move which really surprised the whole team, the authors did not tell the actors who the killer was! As a result, during the investigation scenes, one can really feel that they are trying to solve the mystery and are wholeheartedly committed to finding the culprit. The team had many bets on who the guilty party actually was and were also always afraid of being killed off in the following episode! Only the actor playing the role of the murderer ended up knowing.

So who is the killer? Watch the series to find out who... But here's one little clue to help you : they were not alone.

SKAM & #HASHTAG

Norway / NRK Sweden / SVT



SPEAKERS

Skam / Shame

Marianne Furevold (producer, NRK)

#hashtag

Jessika Jankert (co-screenwriter)

Lavisa Löwhagen (co-screenwriter)

Christian Wikander (head of drama, SVT)

CHAired BY

Liselott Forsman (executive producer international drama, Yle, Finland)

Today, big public service television channels are facing a new challenge. These broadcasters are being abandoned by adolescents and young adults who no longer appear to be interested in the programmes on offer. The two series we are introducing today, *#hashtag* and *Skam*, – are the result of SVT's (Sweden's leading public channel) and NRK's (Norway's leading public channel) intention to renew creativity, to win back and retain the younger public and to open up to new technologies in communication.

SKAM/SHAME

Marianne Furevold explains the beginnings of *Skam*. In the spring of 2014, NRK gave her carte blanche to develop, produce and film an innovative series, in an effort to reconnect with a younger public who, attracted by commercial channels, feels that public television is of no interest to them. More specifically, the series' target was 16-to-18-year-old adolescents. The channels particularly ambitious aim was to help 16-year-old girls build their self esteem by freeing them from social taboos, facing their fears and understanding relationships and their underlying workings.

Marianne Furevold has worked as a screenwriter and producer for a number of years. « This was a very unique experience for me ». Such opportunities are rare. This is probably the most ambitious project she has been involved in up until now. It was also the craziest and most exciting.

Knowing the target audience is essential, before launching into such a challenge. In order to accomplish this, Marianne Furevold put together a research team to study the morals of Norwegian adolescents, over several months. One of the members of this team was a young 25-year-old woman. She scoured secondary schools in Norway, questioning teenagers after lessons. These months of research were really a luxury and yet absolutely necessary. In order

to address the young, one has to be aware of their problems, their hopes and their language. Adolescents are not fools. They know when a series is nothing but an empty shell, a formatted product with a semblance of being interested in their lives.

The research team also organised interviews with around thirty teenagers. These meetings fuelled the series, helped with sketching the outlines and even the main characters. During one of these interviews, the team met a young, practising Muslim woman. She complained about the way Muslims were represented on Norwegian television. One of the main problems NRK has at present, above and beyond reconnecting with the young, is a lack of representation of Norway's cultural diversity today in their programming. Norwegian media tends to represent Muslim women simply as victims of men's tyranny. *Skam* gives us a very atypical character in Sana, a young, beautiful, strong Muslim girl. She wears a headscarf, she believes in herself and in her religion.

Skam follows the daily lives of five adolescents: Eva, Noora, Vilde, Chris and Sana. The first season is set during « Russfeiring », a very special time and the most important ritual for young Norwegian teenagers. « Russfeiring » (often shortened to « Russ ») has no equivalent in other European countries. From 1st May (labour day)

to 17th May (national holiday), these school children are in permanent party mode, roaming the streets in enormous, rattling buses, having epic battles with water pistols and every excess possible and imaginable being the order of the day.

The first excerpt shown during the session perfectly sums up the spirit of *Skam*. Five young girls are filmed in slow motion as they walk towards the camera. They are holding bottles of alcohol and are walking in time to a song by the singer Peaches, with somewhat explicit lyrics. They are on their way to a party. They are striding along, with a confident step, ready for the evening to come. Instantly, one realises that *Skam* is a modern, open-minded series, full of daring and not afraid of broaching all the problems that adolescents have to deal with nowadays. The following excerpts only go to reinforce the first impression. In one scene, a group of girls is chatting quite freely and with great humour about STDs. In another scene, Eva confronts an adolescent who has posted nude photos of her online, taken when she was out cold, after drinking too much one evening.

Looking beyond the subjects covered and the head-on way they are approached, the series is particularly innovative, as much in its writing methods as in the direction and broadcast. Julie Andem, the screenwriter, set down the main narrative arcs. The weekly episodes are written a week before filming, so as to stick to real events as much as possible. Some stories are even inspired by events the actors have experienced. There are 11 episodes in the first season and 12 in the second. Each episode can be anything from 17 to 50 minutes. Shooting takes a day and a half on average and editing 5 days. These first two seasons cost 1 million euros.

What makes this series particularly innovative is the way it is broadcast. Before being aired at fixed times and dates on television, different scenes from episodes of *Skam* are posted on social networks in real time. So, during a whole week, sequences are posted at the exact moment they are supposed to be happening (time and day). If a scene takes place on Monday at 1.15 p.m. during lunch break, it will be posted on the web on Monday at 1.15 p.m. If a scene takes place on a Friday at midnight during a huge party, it will be posted on Friday evening at the same time. The web provides a particularly immersive experience, giving the public the possibility of following the trials and tribulations of the series' heroines. Scenes are posted every day and are then put together to form an episode, which can be watched either on the channel's website or, more traditionally, on television.

The series has been a huge success. Marianne Furevold points out that « 98% of Norwegians know *Skam* ». Yet the channel communicated no information on the series. NRK wanted adolescents to find out about the series themselves, share the experience with their friends and make it their own. Viewers increased from 25 000 the first week, to 1.2 million after two seasons and all this with no promotion other than word of mouth. In Norway, *Skam* has a higher audience rating with teenagers than *Game of Thrones*! Evidently, the series responds to a demand.

#HASHTAG: SEX, LIES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

As with *Skam*, the *#hashtag* series was commissioned by the Swedish channel SVT, with the same aim of reconnecting with younger viewers. Over the past six years, this public service channel has been developing a digital strategy, creating content exclusively for the web. Christian Wikander points out that, not only do these projects enable us to connect with the young directly, they also lead to the discovery of new talent, both in writing and in directing. « Nowadays, it is very difficult for a young screenwriter to integrate the writing team of a series like *Bron*. They can gain a first experience from web series and move on with this under their belts ».



#hashtag is based on a true story. On 18th December 2012, a riot broke out in the city of Gothenburg in Sweden. An Instagram account was at the root of these disturbances. Two girls had posted photos of other adolescents along with improper comments on their sexuality. These comments had already led to unrest and a real manhunt to try and find who was behind the Instagram account. A Facebook account called for a protest, following which 600 adolescents met in front of a school to punish the owner of the presumed account (proved innocent since). The police took the seventeen-year-old girl alleged to have started the account, to safety. The school concerned asked other establishments to come and fetch their pupils in order to restore order. But the situation quickly degenerated and some of the angry group moved on to a shopping mall. 27 children were arrested. It took several months of investigation to identify the guilty parties: two school children, aged 15 and 16.

Jessika Jankert and Lovisa Löwhagen, the screenwriters of *#hashtag*, admit that the story just « fell into their laps », since the riots took place right beneath their office windows. Such a story could not but inspire them, being such a reflection of the day-to-day problems of teenagers confronted with the tyranny of social media. The subject was all the more interesting because the adults seemed to be totally at a loss in the face of this bout of violence.

Jessika Jankert remembers the dual responsibility she felt she had during the writing of *#hashtag*. Firstly, she had a moral responsibility to the victims, particularly the young girl who had been wrongly accused. The riots in Gothenburg led to one of the most highly-publicised trials in Sweden. The two screenwriters tried to stick as closely as possible to the facts. However, the characters are all fictitious and, from a sociocultural point of view, very different from the real protagonists. Lovisa Löwhagen is keen to tell us that the victims' reactions to the series were positive. In the end, *#hashtag* is, above all, a series about friendship, loneliness and fully assuming the consequences of one's actions.

The second responsibility was artistic. *#hashtag* was specifically aimed at a young public. Jessika Jankert and Lovisa Löwhagen developed the main narrative arcs of the series. For the 8 episodes, the scripts were written, but the young actors were given the freedom to improvise and use their own words. They wanted it to be as realistic as possible; a series that understands and above all, respects its viewers.

SHIELD 5

United Kingdom



SPEAKERS

Anthony Wilcox (creator and director)

Adam Dewar (screenwriter)

CHAired BY

Ene Rasmussen (manager, MEDIA Desk, Denmark)

Shield 5 is a new series' genre; quite different, pioneering and in keeping with the times. *Shield 5* was aired entirely on Instagram, the well-known photo and video sharing platform. The series – for it really is a series – is made up of twenty-eight 15-second episodes, that were aired daily at 5 p.m. throughout the month of February. Each episode was accompanied by photos which play their part in the storyline. The mad gamble was to create a series made up solely of 15-second clips. Anthony Wilcox, the director and Adam Dewar, the screenwriter, took up the challenge.

SPEED IS THE ESSENCE

For 15 years, Anthony Wilcox has worked as an assistant director with the likes of Jane Campion, Terence Davies, Anthony Minghella and Lars von Trier. He also worked for a long time with Michael Winterbottom and Andrew Eaton as assistant director, producer and second unit director. His first feature-length film as a screenwriter and director was *Hello Carter*, which premiered at Dinard's British Film Festival in 2013.

The idea for *Shield 5* came to him while he was writing and developing what he is hoping will become his second feature film. This part of developing is particularly long and complicated, even frustrating at times, he reminds us. It was during this particularly difficult time, that he was contacted by the British Labour Party to direct a two-minute film for social media. This film was shot during the day, edited in the evening and posted the next morning. It was a very intense and invigorating experience. It showed him that it was possible to shoot, edit and air a product of quality in record time and to a very wide audience. He was convinced that he could direct a film, or at least a web series with the same efficiency and he was keen to replicate the feeling of intensity he had experienced.

Anthony Wilcox watched a great many web series and although the web seemed to give directors a great deal of creative freedom, the

artistic quality was not always good. Many of these series relied totally on the dialogue. They had a certain lo-fi side to them which was all very nice, but Anthony Wilcox remained convinced that it was possible to « direct a series with purely cinematographic ambitions ».

Anthony Wilcox uses Instagram on a regular basis. The platform has grown phenomenally, with over 200 million users and more than 80 million photos and videos being shared daily. So how does one explain that there is no drama or series on Instagram and yet it has a potentially huge worldwide audience? One of the main obstacles was the 15-second maximum length of videos. So Anthony Wilcox was aware that it was almost impossible to tell a story in such a short space of time, but he was not so sure that he might not be able to use this time constraint to his advantage for directing a real thriller with cliff-hangers, multiple plot twists, stunts and even special effects. « A cinematic thriller targeting the smallest screens imaginable ». To begin with, Anthony Wilcox thought along the lines of a 24-episode series (like a lot of traditional American series). Although he felt quite capable of directing and of picturing it, he knew he was not capable of writing it.

15 SECONDS ON THE CLOCK

Anthony Wilcox then contacted Adam Dewar. Adam has written several award-winning shorts films and works regularly on films and television series in both the United Kingdom and America. It was a completely mad project and it was precisely this and its complete originality that attracted Adam Dewar. « Nobody had ever written a series like this before », he points out. « We could make up the rules ».

Adam Dewar remembered a TV ad for *The Guardian*, aired during the 80s, in which a young skinhead runs towards a man standing in the road. The scene was shown from three different view points. The first sequence showed the skinhead running full tilt with a menacing look on his face. Then the same scene, filmed from a different angle, showed the skinhead running towards a businessman carrying a briefcase. The scene was rife with imminent violence and there was no doubt that the poor man was going to be attacked by the young hooligan and have the briefcase ripped from his grasp. The last sequence, filmed from yet another angle, shows a pallet of bricks hanging from a rope above the businessman's head. The rope was fraying and the pallet threatened to crush the old man who is totally unaware. The skinhead had no intention of attacking him; quite the contrary, he was trying to save him. Each sequence lasted about 6 seconds and was packed with action and suspense.

With this idea in mind, Dewar set about writing the 28 episodes of *Shield 5*. Anthony Wilcox encouraged him to give his imagination free rein. The characters, like the plot, needed to be surprising. In spite of – or rather thanks to – the time constraint, *Shield 5* had to include all the elements of a traditional series. Since the series was aired on Instagram, each shot had to be full of details, characters and clues. If the viewer had the impression that he had missed an essential piece of the story, he could always watch the episode again.

Adam Dewar came up with the story of John Swift, a security driver who goes on the run after being framed for both a diamond heist and the murder of a colleague. He has only 7 minutes to escape from the police, prove his innocence and find the real culprits. Since it is impossible to go into the characters in depth, each episode is accompanied by a photo linked to the series: administrative documents, evidence found at the crime scene by the police, arrest warrants. Adam Dewar reminds us that this has already been used in major films like *All the President's Men*. Alan J. Pakula, the director, interspersed the film with newspaper excerpts, close-ups of typewriters and journalists' news reports. For *Shield 5*, this allowed for the development of the plot, the introduction of characters and to highlight certain leads. This meant that for the actual episodes, everything was about the action and suspense.

DOWN TO THE MILLISECOND

Anthony Wilcox had a budget of £15 000. Having worked in the industry for many years, he was able to persuade actors and technicians to give up two of their weekends to take part in this

adventure. Most of the participants were happy to collaborate in a project that was likely to attract a considerable audience, much larger than any short film.

Shield 5 was filmed in London with a small hand-held camera, in 10 different locations and with 11 actors, which was totally absurd logistically speaking, Anthony Wilcox admits. He was able to rely on his experience as assistant director to Michael Winterbottom (director of *9 Songs*, *24 Hour Party People*, *The Killer Within Me*), who uses natural locations whenever possible. He also uses very small crews and likes to put his actors into real situations and get them to act somewhere where real life is carrying on around them.

Anthony Wilcox applauds Adam Dewar's meticulous work. He had each episode, each shot, and all dialogue down to the last millisecond. Anthony Wilcox hardly ever had to ask the actors to speak more quickly. The time constraints did not influence the shoot and, in his role as director, he was able to concentrate fully on the artistic and visual qualities of the project.

The music also played a very important part. Anthony Wilcox called in two composers, Joel Cadbury and Melissa Parmenter, who are more used to working in advertising. As with traditional series, the score sets the tone of *Shield 5* and emphasises the atmosphere.

FREE AND INDEPENDENT

Anthony Wilcox made *Shield 5* without informing Instagram. After the 3rd episode was posted, *Deadline Hollywood* announced that the platform was starting production of original web series, along the lines of Amazon and Netflix. As far as Anthony Wilcox was concerned, this was probably the greatest compliment that could be paid to his series. At the same time, *Radio Times* classed *Shield 5* in its top 10 web series. Although intrigued, the platform had no desire to be associated with the series and asked Anthony Wilcox to set the record straight and to make a public press announcement stating that *Shield 5* was an independent work.

It may be just pure coincidence – Anthony Wilcox doubts it –, but a month after the series was posted, Instagram announced that the maximum length of videos was going from 15 to 60 seconds, which opens up new perspectives. This decision could very well be taken as an invitation for directors to use the platform for posting their works. This said, Anthony Wilcox strongly doubts that Instagram wants to launch into the production or backing of web series. All new series need to be financed personally or by a brand.

Anthony Wilcox is very proud of the fact that *Shield 5* is an independent series and was not financed by a brand. « The series has no hidden agenda ». Actually, during the airing, a surfer wrote on the series' Instagram page that he was afraid that it was just a disguised ad for a Japanese car. *Shield 5* has no other intention than of being a series.

More generally speaking, Adam Dewar is convinced that series like *Shield 5* can draw a new public, who are more in the habit of watching short films on the web. New technology is giving creators the opportunity to tell stories in original, innovative ways. Since the risks are very limited, even inexistent in certain cases, they are free to invent new methods with no fear of making mistakes, the consequences of which, particularly financial ones, would be damaging to their careers. Platforms like Instagram are, therefore, great testing grounds.



STUDIO+ : AMNÊSIA & TANK

France



SPEAKERS

Gilles Galud (Chief Executive, Studio+)

Amnêsia

Jérôme Fansten (creator)

Antoine Szymalka (producer, Tetra Media Fiction)

Tank

Raphaël Rocher (creator and producer, Empreinte Digitale)

Samuel Bodin (screenwriter)

CHAired BY

Ronnie Fridthjof (producer, Fridthjof Films, Denmark)

Studio+ is a new application exclusively for viewing series on smartphones and tablets. It will be available from September onwards with 25 original series on offer (filmed in 12 countries), all in 10 episodes of 10 minutes. The cost per drama was 1 million euros (or three times less than for a television series).

This app is the brainchild of Vincent Bolloré (CEO of the Bolloré group), Rodolphe Belmer (former chairman of the CANAL+ group) and Manuel Alduy (former director of Canal OTT). They came to the same conclusion: the average age of a television viewer is 60 years old and the younger public has abandoned traditional television. The app is aimed, first and foremost, at millennials (born between 1980 and 2000) who favour foreign series, be they on HBO or Netflix and this, to the detriment of French drama.

The format – 10 episodes of 10 minutes – meets a new demand. Gilles Galud reminds us that « time has become a rare commodity ». The new « mobile generation » spends an average of 25 minutes per day watching videos on smartphones and Studio+ is able to offer drama according to the time available to viewers (during journeys on public transport for example). This format also has the advantage of offering more energetic drama, with no dead time, and accumulating cliffhangers. The action is like in a film, but the narrative does

not suffer from the drops in rhythm inherent to most feature films. Lastly, Gilles Galud notes that mobile screens are getting bigger and bigger and picture quality is impeccable. It is now possible to offer premium content for both smartphones and tablets. Studio+ is aiming at high-end creativity.

The Studio+ teams have been developing this app since June 2015. They have received over 650 projects. The criteria for selection were fairly simple: concept, relevance, art direction and quality of directing. Several themes are favoured, like sci-fi and thrillers, likely to attract and retain a younger public. The digital series mobile app will be launched in twenty countries (in Europe and in South America) and in six languages (French, Russian, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and English).

Série Series has chosen to present two of the series selected: *Tank* and *Amnêsia*.

TANK: ON THE ROAD

Tank follows the adventures of Alexandre Brown (played by Alban Lenoir, seen notably in the *Lazy Company* series). He has just escaped prison and steals a Mustang. Unfortunately it's full of cocaine and is the property of drug barons. For the next 100 minutes, Alexandre will try everything to get away from the Mafia as well as the police.

Raphaël Rocher had the idea for the series when he stopped at a motorway rest area with his children. He realised that he was probably in a sort of no man's land, frequented by drug dealers and all sorts of criminals. Raphaël Rocher set about writing a feature film; a pure action film, very similar to EuropaCorp productions. The project was shelved for several years, until Studio+ gave it a second chance.

Samuel Bodin (screenwriter on the *Lazy Company* series) became involved during the creative process. The series was much too serious, so it was decided to « give it a more comedic tone ». From then on, the Coen brothers film, *Arizona Junior*, became their main reference.

The ten 10-minute episode format, far from being a constraint, provides great creative freedom. As far as Samuel Bodin is concerned, this format « gives it a bouncy rhythm, much like cartoons ». « The series is made up of 10 little springs all pressed together », he adds. This format also gives the creators the opportunity to play with the pace and tone of the story. For example, the first episode is very slow, whereas the action in the second one is much more explosive.

This short format means that sudden twists in the narrative are possible, while maintaining a certain coherence. Thus, in the fifth episode, a new main character is introduced (the episode is entirely about him), which takes the plot in a completely new direction. Big series, Raphaël Rocher reminds us, have no hesitation in taking major liberties with the narrative. *The Shield* series included a whole episode made up of flashbacks, in the middle of its second season.

Ronnie Fridthjof notes that series produced by Studio+ target a specific audience. Raphaël Rocher admits to never having thought about the audience. « We just wanted to tell a story that gives us a buzz ».

AMNÉSIA: REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST

The pitch for *Amnésia* is as efficient as it is intriguing. One day, at 3.37 p.m., humanity loses its memory. All 7 billion inhabitants of our planet suffer from amnesia. They have not lost any motor skills (they still know how to drive and use a computer), they still master language, but they have lost all autobiographical memory; they have lost their identities.

Antoine Szymalka explains that *Amnésia* is probably the most exciting project he has ever been involved in. « The original concept was very strong and the main challenge was to maintain this concept over a long period; develop a rich universe and a coherent storyline over the 100 minutes ».

Jérôme Fansten is quite incapable of telling us where he got the idea for *Amnésia* from. However, he does admit to having a major weakness for science-fiction and this series is based on a desire to create a post-apocalyptic drama (actually more apocalyptic), but in a more introspective manner. « I love it when fantasy is attached to reality », he explains. The story is kept as realistic as possible and the series can, in certain ways, seem like a documentary. The first episode is set in a supermarket; a very ordinary context. *Amnésia*'s storyline takes on one of the major contemporary issues: that of identity.

Budgets are always a sensitive subject, as far as the sci-fi genre is concerned. Jérôme Fansten was very much aware that with a 1 million euro budget, he would not be filming a zombie series. In *Amnésia*, the main advantage in the concept is that it was set in an unchanged world. Special effects were therefore very limited. The series was shot at head height, which not only strengthened empathy for the characters, but also created a particularly anxiety-provoking atmosphere (none of the characters really understand what is happening to them). Jérôme Fansten confides that a limited budget gives the authors more freedom. « Far from being a constraint, restrictions meant we could work without a safety net, trying out things and coming up with ideas ».

To conclude, Gilles Galud specifies that a second season has already been commissioned.



TYTGAT CHOCOLAT

Belgium / VRT Eén

WORK
IN
PROGRESS



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SPEAKERS

Filip Lenaerts (screenwriter & director)

Marc Bryssinck (screenwriter & director)

Pieter Van Huyck (head of drama, deMENSEN)

CHAired BY

Dominic Schreiber (co-production consultant, United Kingdom)

INTRODUCTION

Dominic Schreiber says what a breath of fresh air this unreleased series is, with its incredible characters and no less striking actors, the like of which we see too rarely on screen. A series which shakes up our preconceived ideas, or at least what we are used to and really affects us.

THE PITCH

Jasper Vloemans, the main character, works in a chocolate factory that employs mentally handicapped personnel in their packaging department. Jasper falls in love with one of his colleagues, Tina from Kosovo, who is deported to her country of origin. Jasper is determined to find his sweetheart and sets off on an epic journey, making it almost a road movie, both romantic and full of surprises and assisted by a very unlikely band of accomplices.

ORIGIN OF THE PROJECT: LIKE A LONG LOVE STORY

Marc Bryssinck says he is fascinated by the mentally handicapped. He has been working with them for over 30 years, since 1985 to be exact. He has formed a theatre troupe and put on 40 plays, ballets, directed short and feature-length films and they have even ended up in Cannes.

Filip Lenaerts joined him in 2006 for a joint venture with these actors and then again in 2009, for a short film aired in Belgium. In 2013, the idea of making a trailer to introduce this troupe's work was extended and became something much more ambitious: a television series.

The initial idea was a sort of fictional documentary based on William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies*, written in 1954, i.e. shortly

after the horrors of the Second World War. This led to a first draft, but this was judged to be too dark (children isolated on an island try to recreate the model of society they knew in England, but their enterprise degenerates and rival clans battle it out with incredible violence, revealing all man's potential barbarity, even for the most civilised amongst them). In the end, it became something very different, between a love story and a road trip.

JASPER, LEADER OF THE SERIES

Apart from being the leader of the « find Tina at any cost » expedition, the lovesick Romeo off to find his Juliet, Jasper is, without any doubt, the emblematic character of the series. Having been wounded in past amorous experiences, he decides that music will now be his one true love and he is no longer going to think about girls. The problem is, girls are irresistibly attracted to him. He is a reluctant playboy, this « Brad Pitt of the mentally handicapped ».

Jelle Palmaerts – alias Jasper – takes the lead with these very special actors, real experienced professionals – some of them have been actors for more than 20 years and get regular film work –, but with very different reference points and affect. Jelle Palmaerts does not have the most talkative part, but he steals the limelight with the looks he gives and his silences.

IN PRAISE OF PURITY

Purity... this is what is so striking, having seen just the few excerpts shown. Tina's declaration of love for Jasper is so emotionally genuine, that it takes your breath away.

Purity of emotion, but also great integrity it should be said. The outcry against the boss of this chocolate factory, who uses his employees for his own purposes, is just as striking, in particular when Cédric, the employees' spokesperson, confronts him and looks him right in the eye before turning on his heel, revealing his baseness and gross dishonesty. Moron, one finds oneself thinking!

There is no doubt that in this series, the actors « shine ». Such was the intention of the people behind this project, to simply show them at their best and to endeavour to « bring out their natural presence ».

ON DIRECTING A DIFFERENT CAST

Firstly, it took about a year and a half to write the series. Marc Bryssinck explains that it was necessary to take the time to go back and forth with the actors, in order to get them involved and used to the project beforehand. This was a unique and rewarding experience. We had to find the right way of going about this, adds Pieter Van Huyck. Generally speaking, the rehearsals went very well, since everything had been so well prepared.

At the same time, nothing could be left to chance, nor could the specific nature of these actors be accentuated. Knowing how to communicate with the mentally handicapped is of course vital, but must not become an obsession. If you are too careful, you get bogged down and tend to bring out a childlike side, which is difficult to manage; yet it is important to remember that you are dealing with professional, adult actors. Incidentally, the script was never revised, nor were scenes cut because these actors could not play them. Expectations were high throughout filming.

As with all directing of actors, they were given scope to improvise, which was more necessary than ever in this case. Certain scenes were modified according to the actor's contribution, acting as they were, « in the instant ». It was all a question of measure and subtlety in particular for them and not too much abstraction, Filip Lenaerts tells us, referring to a particular line which one of the actors had difficulty understanding. Pieter Van Huyck confirms that some of the more intense scenes, which initially had a lot of dialogue, were voluntarily simplified, since these actors are quite simply attuned to their emotions and experiences and this is largely sufficient.

A FEW TECHNICAL ELEMENTS AND AS A CONCLUSION

The budget for the series was 3.5 million euros for seven 52-minute episodes. Filming took 80 days, from May to July 2015 and was challenging for the actors, but they enjoyed the experience. The experiment was a success and, be it for mentally handicapped actors or not, what is essential for a good drama is to have a good narrative arc, a love story and suspense. Editing is in progress and it just remains to be seen if the public follows. The contrary would be astonishing.

You can look forward to seeing *Tytgat Chocolat* on your screens, not only for the intrinsic quality of this series, but also because beyond the actual story, there is a whole other subject brought to the fore. *Tytgat Chocolat* asks questions on the mentally handicapped, people deprived of their fundamental freedom, migrants...

It is not so simple when they step outside certain boundaries or go beyond their « intended function ». What place in society are we really ready to make for them ?



THE COLLECTION

WORK
IN
PROGRESS

United Kingdom, France / Amazon Prime, France 3



SPEAKERS

Dearbhla Walsh (director)
Simon Vaughan (producer, Lookout Point)
Pascal Breton (co-producer, Federation Entertainment)
Médéric Albouy (director of international co-productions, France Télévisions)

CHAired BY

Dominic Schreiber
(co-production consultant, United Kingdom)

To introduce this session and taking into account the present political context of the vote for Brexit, Dominic Schreiber would like to commend a very good example of Franco-British collaboration and announces that fans of period dramas are going to like what they see. *Downton Abbey* may have forged the reputation of big period dramas, but *The Collection* will certainly be following suit.

THE PITCH

Simon Vaughan is delighted to introduce the series and recognises the very successful co-production with Amazon Prime Video, BBC Worldwide and France Télévisions. He intends to continue working in this way – no matter what political decisions are taken, they should not be an obstacle to international co-productions – and suggests we have a look at an 18-minute montage of excerpts to give us a real idea...

The Collection, a drama series of eight 52-minute episodes, exposes the grit behind the glamour of an illustrious Paris fashion house, emerging from the dark days of the Occupation and into a new golden age of design and business, providing wonderful narrative potential. But can the family survive the personal battles, internal rivalries and passionate love stories that threaten the fashion house's success?

A GREAT INTERNATIONAL CO-PRODUCTION

Pascal Breton, questioned on his role as co-producer, praises this series which is definitely about high fashion, but is above all high flying, with the ambition and budget to match. He was won over

by the project straight away, as much by the narrative – a drama reliving the nostalgic experience of France's rebirth after the war, with the legendary Christian Dior in mind – as by the financial package. Since « we must put together major international co-productions », for pragmatic and budgetary reasons, he declares. We cannot always rely on financial backing from only one channel and we need to learn from what is happening elsewhere.

A PERIOD OF CHOICE

Dearbhla Walsh (*Penny Dreadful*, *Les Tudors*...) was also immediately captivated by the script of the first episode, which she read 18 months ago. She has already directed numerous period dramas, but this one was set in a lesser-explored period. In fact, there have been many productions set during the Second World War, but few in the ensuing years, which gives *The Collection* a feeling of something never seen before. This choice of context is not insignificant.

Kate Croft (Lookout Point) wanted to produce a series in an « effervescent setting » Simon Vaughan tells us, hence Parisian fashion as the symbol of a France, ravaged by the Occupation, on the brink of civil war between communists and Gaullists.

THE SUB-TEXT UNDER THE GLOSS

There are two very different worlds co-existing in the *The Collection* and this is what gives the series its particular appeal. Behind the opulence of a Parisian fashion house, this very French bastion, the workings of which we would like to understand, the series questions, more broadly, France's identity, economy and the contradictions of a society dreaming of freedom and light and yet with poverty still such an issue. So, *The Collection* is also a socio-political series.

WITH REGARD TO LEGITIMACY AND AUTHENTICITY

Dearbhla Walsh threw herself into this adventure and what she brought to the project was essential. Simon Vaughan stresses that she was a great source of inspiration and full of conviction and passion. He adds that it is rare to have a director involved so early in a project in the world of British drama.

It seemed only normal to envisage a co-production with France, in order to legitimise the content. Médéric Albouy and Pascal Breton's influence was indeed important, points out the director. France Télévisions was very involved in the project artistically speaking. The French channel played a sort of « paternal » role, whereas Amazon Prime was more simply an international purchaser. In any case, Simon Vaughan hopes that the result is convincing, as much visually as politically and historically.

Médéric Albouy would like to emphasise that it is not necessary to be a « local » as far as authenticity in writing is concerned. France Télévisions receives some wonderful material from all sorts of different nationalities of screenwriters and on topics and periods from all over the world. So in the end, Oliver Goldstick (*Ugly Betty*, *Desperate Housewives*) wrote the screenplay and his preliminary draft was very promising from the start: great rhythm, very well documented (photos from the late 40s – by Doisneau in particular – helping to set the scene) as well as a strong emotional framework; « almost too rich » says the channel, who were focusing first and foremost on « authenticity ». This authenticity would not have been possible without significant resources, the period reproduction and the impressive costumes.

A UNIQUE RECONSTITUTION

After a fascinating search through iconography and documents and being very much aware of the responsibility they were taking on to reproduce everything faithfully, they literally recreated the

streets of Paris in Swansea in Wales. Sumptuous sets were built in an abandoned Ford factory. The costumes were designed by Chattoune – Françoise Bourrec –, the famous French creator who worked notably on *Coco Chanel & Igor Stravinsky*, with a Swiss cinematographer. Here again, an international crew and it must be said that relationships between the French crew and local technicians in Swansea were all very harmonious. Back in Paris, a real haute couture workshop was used, which was an absolutely unique experience. Although a certain link with the spirit of Dior was respected, of course, everything was intentionally restyled.

ALSO A VERY INTERNATIONAL CAST

The parts of the two brothers were given to the British actors Richard Coyle (*Life of Crime*) and Tom Riley (*Da Vinci's Demons*), a perfect tandem with great mutual understanding. The role of their mother, Yvette Sabine, went to Frances de La Tour (*Harry Potter*), but there is also Mamie Gummer (*The Good Wife*) playing Helen, Claude's wife, an American living in Paris.

On the French side, are Irène Jacob, Alix Poisson (*Les Revenants*, 3 x *Manon*), Jenna Thiam (*Les Revenants*) and Alexandre Brasseur (*Le Bureau des Légendes*) as Victor, a man of few words, but with a strong presence.

And not forgetting, James Cosmo (*Game of Thrones*), Michelle Gomez (*Doctor Who*), Stanley Townsend (*Galavant*), Max Deacon and Patrick Kennedy (*Downton Abbey*).

In other words, a choice cast transcending borders, which is a bold gamble since this can sometimes cause problems. As with the ever-present worry of consistency in reconstitutions, nothing was left to chance as far as artistic consistency and interaction between actors was concerned. Médéric Albouy would like to commend the wonderful cast on this point.

AS A CONCLUSION

In short, a really great cast and crew across the board, for an extremely promising series, which will be aired on Amazon Prime from September and then on France 3, once the onerous task of dubbing is completed (the series was shot in English), ideally before 2017.



MONSTER

Norway / NRK

WORK
IN
PROGRESS



© NRK Drama

SPEAKERS

Hans Christian Storrøsten (screenwriter)

Anne Sewitsky (director)

Lasse Greve Alsos (producer, NRK Drama)

CHAired BY

Dominic Schreiber (co-production consultant, United Kingdom)

Following in the footsteps of successful Norwegian series like *Lilyhammer*, Dominic Schreiber is delighted to welcome the *Monster* team.

Monster is a thriller with disturbing sets and striking psychological profiles, but is also a very emotional crime series and full of black humour.

PITCH

It is set in a part of Norway known to few people, not the green landscape of the South with its mountains and fjords, but the bleak plains and harshness of the far North, close to the border with Russia. In this rather hostile land with its main town fast turning into a ghost town – the population has dropped from 4 000 to 2 000 –, a police office is leading an investigation. This investigation will turn out to be dangerous, reviving dark stories from the past and a crime recalling others. Nothing is ideal in this world's end landscape, where the local police have little aptitude. The enquiry is not high flying, far from it. Then it gets out of control, little by little personal tragedies come to light...

A VERY CINEMATIC AND EMOTIVE SCRIPT

Hans Christian Storrøsten had just finished a documentary film when he started on this series. His original idea was based on the defining features of this location in the back of beyond, with its very harsh weather conditions; the underlying question being: how does a police investigation work in such an environment?

Anne Sewitsky says that from the start, from the script, she spotted a project with great cinematic qualities, with very strong visuals, aided by strong emotions. There is a great sense of solitude emanating from this series, in the image of this forsaken land. It appears that there is a real connection between the protagonists' stories and this land where they live, or rather survive.

As for Lasse Greve Alsos, he was more on the lookout for a family saga initially, but he was completely won over on reading the script and so gave his approval for the production of a new crime series. It must be said that the parameters have changed, since here we are not only witnessing the solving of a police investigation, but also the dissection of the life of the whole community which, in itself, is a huge enigma. From the 3rd episode on, NRK was very much involved, says Lasse Greve Alsos, remembering that a consultant has been called in before, to ensure notably that the characters all had powerful psychological outlines, portrayed by a wonderful cast.

THE PROTAGONISTS AND THE CAST

The main female character, Ingvild Holthe Bygdnes alias Hedda – this is her first lead role –, is a police officer returning to her home town after many years, a persona non grata within the local community. She has left her boyfriend and the city life of Oslo to return to the place where she grew up and which she hates above all else. She has extremely complicated relationships with everyone here and vice versa, except for the sheriff who is like a second father to her.

The town sheriff is disillusioned; he just wants to retire and barely manages to keep his head above water, when this case takes him by surprise... Much like his second in command who, in this hilarious and uplifting excerpt, comes to speak to him about work through the door of the toilet where he stays for a long time, desperately trying to have some alone time. But the sheriff is also the « shaman » of this lawless land and the one who senses things before they happen.

His great love, the head of the town's gangsters, comes knocking at his door, a female character who was supposed to be male at the start and is portrayed by Gørild Mauseth, a Norwegian star and female icon, here playing a role totally out of character. The part was not rewritten in the slightest, so she plays it « like a man ».

There is also the other detective, the « playboy » who is a reinforcement from Oslo and who assists Hedda with the investigation. He is sophisticated, arrogant, too sure of himself and, of course, makes mistakes of a socio-geographical nature, since he has no idea of the local codes of behaviour.

The characters are not lacking in depth and this also helps to confuse the issue and to increase the suspense. Casting was overseen mainly by Anne Sewitsky, but final decisions were always collective.



BETWEEN FACT AND FICTION

Monster is a fiction, but sometimes on location it seemed to become a reality, with the characters and the inhabitants becoming confused, which was often disconcerting for the crew. The real sheriff is essentially identical to the sheriff in the series! One can suppose that Hans Christian Storrøsten's original gamble of sticking to realistic sets succeeded. Anne Sewitsky actually speaks of « heightened realist drama ». In reply to a member of the audience who is surprised by the level of violence displayed, she explains that the Norwegian public is used to violence on television.

A FEW TECHNICAL ELEMENTS AND PROSPECTS

The budget for this series is 7.5 million euros for seven 50-minute episodes (8 planned at the beginning), which is a pretty standard budget for this type of drama. The series will be aired in 2017, at 9.30 p.m. on Monday evenings, which is NRK's usual slot for this sort of programme.

Lastly, if the first season should prove conclusive, Anne Sewitsky says that the characters all have the necessary psychological scope to evolve over a second season, which is also valid for the general dramaturgy. You have been warned...

ROCCO SCHIAVONE

Italy / Rai 2

WORK
IN
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© NRK Drama

SPEAKERS

Ludovico Bessegato (creative producer, Cross Productions)
Ferdinand Dohna (co-producer, Beta Films)
Luca Milano (executive deputy director, Rai Fiction)

CHAired BY

Dominic Schreiber (co-production consultant, United Kingdom)

INTRODUCTION AND PITCH

This series is based on Antonio Manzini's crime novels and his central and defining character, Rocco Schiavone, a 49-year-old detective who has nothing of an ordinary police officer. He is man with a strong character, born and bred in Rome and inordinately proud of his home town, who has been transferred to the Aosta Valley as a disciplinary measure, in other words, although still in Italy, deposited in snowy, unknown territory. He totally refuses to wear the right boots for the local climate, starts his day with a joint, his best friends are crooks and yet he defends the poor and hates bad guys....

A VERY TOUCHING BAD BOY

So Schiavone is politically incorrect but no less touching. He is definitely sarcastic, vulgar, violent and not only does he hate Aosta, but his job as well, and yet he is a man of extraordinary principle. He is also a man of ideals and is quite prepared to destroy evidence, if it means bringing justice to the right people, in his own way. Furthermore, his murky past gives him a certain air of mystery, but he is also romantic and melancholic. He is a ladies' man if we believe what we see, but in reality there is only one woman for him, sadly deceased and whose ghost pays him visits on occasion.

...AND BREATHTAKING VISUALS

Putting the hero to one side, the series stands out for its scenery, shot mainly in natural locations in this magnificent valley in the north-east of Italy, close to the border with France. This made the shoot all the more challenging. The rocky landscapes have a character of their own and are very much an echo of Schiavone's gravelly voice. The Aosta Valley is also a remote region of the Ancient Roman Empire and Schiavone sometimes appears like a

centurion facing the ruins of an illustrious past, laden with scars, his own past.

This series is closer to the atmosphere of a Scandinavian series in the manner of *Lilyhammer*, than to traditional Italian series, as much visually – the wonderful quality of design was palpable even at the storyboard stage, extremely well thought through and very saleable – as in terms of the dramaturgy. One could also compare it to *Fargo*, as far as the snowy thriller side is concerned. In short, is this a change in direction? With this series half way between Italian and black humour, is the Rai coming up with a new strategy?

A MORE DARING GAMBLE

It may be true that the Rai usually decides on its programming according to one main criterion – attaining a minimum 25% audience rating. The alternative is pay channels. Here, the challenge was a little different, Luca Milano admits. The choice of a collaboration with Beta Films and Cross Productions is not without significance either, since this brought a new dimension and more modernity.



Ferdinand Dohna confirms that both the visual style and the narrative changed in this case. A young but experienced creative team was chosen, an international, generational mix and crazier than what the Rai is used to. Michele Soavi, the director, had already directed episodes of the *Gomorra* series and he also called in a consultant to ensure authentic police action.

So, with *Rocco Schiavone*, there is no longer the question of the Rai « trying to please everyone ». Other projects along the same lines are being discussed and are in preparation, which only goes to prove an agreed change of strategy. This is completely different from *Montalbano*, for example, which was shown here in Fontainebleau last year.

SCHIAVONE VS MONTALBANO

The Aosta Valley really cannot be compared to Sicily, nor Inspector Schiavone to Commissioner Montalbano, but Luca Milano does acknowledge Dominic Schreiber's reference to this other Italian series, for they do have elements in common. Both series have been developed from successful crime novels, both have a strong male characters as a « driving force » and also, the fact that the original authors - Andrea Camilleri and Antonio Manzini respectively - know well and appreciate the world of television (Camilleri worked in television and Manzini was an actor). Moreover, it is not a coincidence that, in both cases, the writing and shooting sometimes overlapped, with a view to respecting the original works. So the writer did actually appear on set, to see and « check » how things were going.

ON THE WRITING PROCESS AND THE CHOICE OF GIALLINI ALIAS ROCCO

Six episodes in total were developed from Manzini's four books as well as a few novellas. The writing process was simple. Since the team already knew the publisher (Sellerio), there was no problem with rights and the books were adapted with great respect. Luca Milano's only regret is that Antonio Manzini and Maurizio Careddu could not be present to speak about their collaboration, adapting the books for screen with such intelligence and care.

It should be noted that the choice of Marco Giallini to play the lead was a joint decision of the Rai and Cross Productions. This actor is very famous in Italy, but rarely appears in television series. This was a golden opportunity to offer him a new activity in the audiovisual landscape.

100': AN UNUSUAL FORMAT?

On being questioned on the 100-minute format, normal for the Rai, but rather long for a series, Luca Milano confirms that, generally speaking, episodes are 50 minutes in length, but as with Montalbano, he feels doubling the length is justified. He believes that there is a demand on the series market, at any rate in Italy, for « longer stories » which, of course, take more time. One of the upsides of this is that a case is wound up in each episode, a new independent investigation every time, which is quite satisfying for the viewer. Episode after episode, the series expands, and Rocco's character takes on more depth. He explains how and why his wife died and his secret past is revealed, indeed he confronts it in the last two episodes, which are very different from the first four, in terms of narrative.

AS A CONCLUSION: ROCCO HOOD?

What we will remember from this eponymous series, is the fact that the hero, Rocco Schiavone, has all the necessary attributes to capture the public's hearts: a rough and excessive character who is above all a very good detective and the personification of a form of honesty. His sense of morality largely outweighs his arrogance. He resists all forms of hypocrisy and finds the imperfect world we live in difficult to bear and it shows. He behaves with elegance, courage and efficiency, rather like a modern-day Robin Hood, putting away villains, saving migrants and standing up to complaisant bureaucracy.

Rocco Schiavone is programmed either for the autumn of 2016, or January 2017, during prime time, at around 9 p.m. (the programming schedule is yet to be decided, so as not to inadvertently compete with other programmes on the Rai).



GUYANE / OURO

France / CANAL+

WORK
IN
PROGRESS



© Jody Amiet - Mascaret Films

SPEAKERS

Bénédicte Lesage (producer, Mascaret Films)
Olivier Rabourdin (actor)
Issaka Sawadogo (actor)
Mathieu Spinosi (actor)
Anne Suarez (actress)

CHAired BY

Olivier Sitruk (actor, France)

Guyane/Ouro is a new series produced by Mascaret Films for CANAL+. The title of this eight 52-minute-episodes series already sounds like an invitation to travel.

THE ORIGIN OF GUYANE/OURO: EN ROUTE FOR ADVENTURE

Bénédicte Lesage goes back over the beginnings of *Guyane/Ouro*. The series was put together in two stages. Mascaret Films produced a telefilm in 2010 (*Une Lubie de Monsieur Fortune*) which was set in Polynesia. On her return to Paris after the shoot, Bénédicte Lesage met the drama team at CANAL+. She tried to convince them to develop an adventure series set in and exploring the cultural wealth of French overseas territories. These fascinating lands are little known in or absent from drama. It was only two years after this first meeting, in 2012, that the channel gave Mascaret Films carte blanche to produce and develop a new series: *Guyane/Ouro* came into being.

Fabien Nury, known mainly for his work in the world of comics (he wrote, among others, the six volumes of the *W.E.S.T* series and also the historical series *Il Etait Une Fois en France*, awarded the prize for best series at the Angoulême International Comics Festival) wrote the screenplay. The choice did not come about by chance. Not only had his experience in the world of comics made him an expert in tales of adventure, a relatively unexplored genre in France, but he had already been involved in the writing of two feature films, as well as a series, for CANAL+ (the latter unfortunately abandoned). So, Fabien Nury had all the necessary competences to set off on this adventure.

Fabien Nury thought up a story around gold prospecting in French Guiana. Vincent Ogier is a twenty-year-old Parisian student of geology. He arrives in French Guiana for an internship at an operating company looking for gold deposits. Vincent believes he has found a legendary gold deposit; a goldmine named « Sarah Bernhardt », which has been abandoned for 120 years. In order to work the mine, he decides to join forces with Antoine Serra, the local « godfather of gold ». Serra accepts and takes Vincent deep into the Guianese jungle. In just a few weeks, Vincent the intern will become an adventurer.

DISCOVERING FRENCH GUIANA

In October 2014, the production team left for Guiana on a location scouting trip and to evaluate shooting conditions in this country which is 90% covered in dense equatorial forest. Guiana has very few means of transport and, in general, the country's infrastructure is fragile and accommodation is limited. Local film crews are more used to documentaries and there are few who have worked on drama, let alone a major production. Furthermore, local actors are thin on the ground. Over the 10-day visit, Bénédicte Lesage only met twenty or so. Filming in Guiana seemed to be sheer folly. The production did think about moving the shoot to Malaysia, where the landscapes and vegetation are very similar to those of French Guiana.

It was during a visit to Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni that Bénédicte Lesage realised, in spite of the difficulties the production would face, it had to be filmed in Guiana. This incredible place is one of the most vibrant, multicultural melting pots in Latin America, where one can meet Noirs-Marrons (direct descendants of slaves who escaped the plantations of what is now Suriname), Creoles, Brazilians, Amerindians, Haitians. « This incomparably rich and pulsating culture could only be found in French Guiana ».

DIRECTING GUYANE: A JOURNEY DEEP INTO THE JUNGLE

There were three different directors for the eight episodes of *Guyane/Ouro*. Bénédicte Lesage would like to explain that « if the production had engaged only one director, he would probably be dead by now ». To start with, the crew only had a few months to film the entire series, from August to November, during the dry season (filming during the rainy season was not even worth thinking about). What's more, the majority of the action was set in a village deep in the jungle, which could only be accessed by canoe. Bénédicte Lesage leaves to our imagination the difficulties the film crew were confronted with, even if only getting the gear there. Add to this, particularly difficult living conditions in the equatorial forest: heat, humidity, mud and mosquitoes.

Kim Chapiron, director of the feature films *Sheitan*, *Dog Pound* and *La Crème de la Crème*, directed the first 4 episodes. This choice was very much in line with the strategy of CANAL+, since this encrypted channel always calls upon cinema directors, to meet their subscribers' expectations. Nevertheless, Bénédicte Lesage was keen to have a television director for the following episodes. Philippe Triboit – who she had complete confidence in and had worked with before – was handed the baton and directed episodes 5 to 7. Philippe Triboit knows the world of series well enough to agree to follow in another director's steps whilst bringing his own experience and views to the project.

The last episode of the season was directed by Fabien Nury. He had always wanted to try his hand at directing and the production had no hesitation in giving him this opportunity.

THE CAST: GUIANESE ADVENTURERS

Bénédicte Lesage reminds us that casting is always a particularly

complex process. This was even more the case with a series like *Guyane/Ouro* since they had to convince actors to spend several months on the other side of the world.

Olivier Rabourdin, who plays the role of Antoine Serra, was considered very early on, during the writing of the screenplay. Kim Chapiron contacted him directly. He told him the story and asked him to do a few screen tests and eventually gave him this terrific role. Olivier Rabourdin fell for the plot – « a maelstrom of emotions » – and this collection of characters, each more ambiguous than the other.

On reading the script, Olivier Rabourdin noted that there was very little information on the characters' backgrounds. This was a deliberate choice by Fabien Nury. Personalities are revealed through the intrigues in the plot. Olivier Rabourdin reminds us that « when playing Molière's *Misanthrope*, we don't need to know Alceste's past ». The characters in *Guyane/Ouro*, are defined more by their actions than by their pasts. This is what makes them so fascinating. A case in point is the particularly disturbing character of Antoine Serra, which Olivier Rabourdin instantly understood in an almost intimate way: « he was like a damaged brother I carried inside me ».

Issaka Sawadogo was also cast fairly quickly. This actor, born in Ouagadougou, has built his career between Burkina Faso and Norway. While he was playing in the first African production of Henrik Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, he was discovered by the National Theatre of Norway. For 22 years, he has been cast in all the great roles of repertory in this country. Issaka Sawadogo has also played lead roles in half a dozen French feature films. The character he plays in *Guyane/Ouro* was not an African. Bénédicte Lesage stressed that during screen tests, his performance was so striking, that there was no doubt that he was the character.

Anne Suarez, who plays Antoine Serra's wife, joined the cast a few weeks before filming began. Her character was probably the least defined in the script. During screen tests, the actress proved that she could bring the necessary depth to the character. Being chosen at the last minute could well unsettle an actor. To the contrary, « I had no time at all », Anne Suarez tells us; « and that was all for the best, since I could throw myself into the adventure without thinking about it too much, particularly since I'm afraid of flying ».



The main challenge was finding an actor to play Vincent Ogier, the lead character in the series. They had to find a young actor capable of playing this character who evolves incredibly from the first episode to the last. Matthieu Spinosi did several screen tests. He was very convincing, but the production had difficulty coming to a decision. In the end, it was a detail in his curriculum vitae that ended up convincing Bénédicte Lesage. Matthieu Spinosi is a violinist. « I thought to myself, if a young man is capable of playing such a complex instrument as the violin, then he must have the necessary mettle to take on such a part », explains Bénédicte Lesage.

80 % of the cast was made up of local actors; some with experience, others who had never been filmed. There was no sense in bringing actors from France to play garimpeiros.

Guyane/Ouro is an adventure drama, but is above all realistic. « *Guyane* is not a new *Indiana Jones* ». Only local actors could have had this connection with the environment, their bodies and even the language. The Guianese cast were able to show the identity and multicultural wealth of this territory. What started as just a willingness to represent a culture, became a highlight, stresses Bénédicte Lesage, « with the exceptional quality of the actors and extras who proved to be extremely talented ».

Olivier Raboudin remembers that during the first days, he was watching the shooting of a scene with Yvan Téliémaque. « When I saw the quality of acting, I realised that the bar was set very high and that I was going to have to pull my finger out! ». For Matthieu Spinosi, he found the local actors were a great help. « They brought something very real to the series. They threw themselves into it heart and soul, like garimpeiros who give their lives for a few specks of gold. » Lastly, Anne Suarez says that all these actors imposed a certain rhythm and tone. « Subconsciously, everyone tuned in to the same frequency ».

The actors present all agree that the filming of *Guyane/Ouro* was a wonderful adventure. As for Matthieu Spinosi, the series gave him his best experience as an actor: « an experience which has changed my life », he confides.

AND THE ADVENTURE DOESN'T STOP THERE

Guyane/Ouro will be broadcast on CANAL+ from January 2017 and Fabien Nury is already working on the second season. The story continues...



FARANG

Sweden / TV4

WORK
IN
PROGRESS



© Frida Wallman

SPEAKERS

Malin Lagerlöf (creator)
Anna Wallmark Avelin (producer, Eyeworks)
Johanna Bergensträhle (producer, TV4)
Ola Rapace (actor)

CHAired BY

Dominic Schreiber
(co-production consultant, United Kingdom)

THE PITCH

We discovered another Swedish series at *Série Series* this year, built around a complicated mother-son relationship, called *Before We Die*; *Farang*, on the other hand, explores a no less intense father-daughter relationship.

The series focuses on the character of Rickard, a sexy, forty-year-old adventurer who fled to Thailand ten years earlier, due to a crime he committed and he was forced to abandon his country (Sweden), his name, his family... and they are still after him back home. So here he is, confined to South-East Asia, whether he likes it or not, living off petty crimes, when suddenly his 15-year-old daughter, Thyra appears, having decided to come and fetch him. And so his past catches up with him...

A series split between love and treachery, *Farang* is a real cocktail of action and emotion, which makes us think that although we cannot avoid either our past mistakes or our responsibilities, there is still hope.

A REAL SENSE OF TEAM WORK

Malin Lagerlöf wanted to make a risky, edgy series, set in an exotic location, hence the choice of Thailand. She started by writing just the first two episodes. Stefan Thunberg, her co-screenwriter, was unable to continue and so was replaced by Veronica Zacco. This partnership worked very well with, when necessary, each rereading and revising the work of the other.

Johanna Bergensträhle was not yet working for TV4 when the series was pitched to the channel, whose present strategy is increasing their market share as far as drama is concerned (i.e. 2 to 4 series a year and no longer one every two years), with the aim of becoming a strong competitor to SVT. (*Farang* is also its new major series, after *Modus* which was already a great success). The channel also wanted an edgy, noir genre series and these characteristics became more marked as the series developed.

As for Anna Wallmark Avelin, who arrived as producer with the edgy, noir side already entrenched, she wanted different levels of interpretation, a strong storyline and multi-faceted characters. She commends the close collaboration and efficiency of the team and the sharing of responsibilities. Veronica Zacco's presence during filming contributed to certain valid modifications; even if there is a main director (in this case Erik Leijonborg or Daniel di Grado),

it is sometimes important to have a safeguarder, for example somebody who has the whole narrative arc at their fingertips. On set, a feeling of confidence always reigned.

Ola Rapace, who had been identified for the role of Rickard from the beginning – the director had already worked with him –, says he had never before worked with such a feeling of freedom. « Anna is a very unique producer! », he tells us. Generally, actors who make suggestions are not really appreciated, but this was not the case here. As for his part, he says he was immediately attracted to the emotional relationship with his daughter, which is really at the heart of the series. They don't know each other, since he left when she was barely five years old and yet they are the same in many respects. He starts by denying that he is her father, despite everything screaming shared genes, as well as a mutual admiration.

A FEW TECHNICAL ELEMENTS AND AS A CONCLUSION

In spite of funding from Nordic funds, which support drama according to a presale policy, the budget was very tight, Anna Wallmark Avelin tells us. "We had to find some very inventive and low-cost solutions and add to this filming in not very easy weather conditions... Well, that is the challenge of filming in Thailand. One simply has to accept the local culture and environment."

Farang will be aired initially on the VOD service C more and then on TV4.

Lastly, although the storyline clearly comes to a conclusion at the end of the eight 44- minute episodes, a follow-up is still a possibility....



UNITÉ 42

Belgium / RTBF

WORK
IN
PROGRESS



SPEAKERS

Charlotte Joulia (screenwriter)
John Engel (producer, Left Field Ventures)
Martin Brossollet (drama series consultant, RTBF)

CHAired BY

Dominic Schreiber
(co-production consultant, United Kingdom)

THE PITCH

Unité 42 is a 10 x 52-minute crime series following a police cybercrime unit; an immersion into the world of cutting-edge technology used for the most heinous ends. It focuses on two investigators: Sam is a widow and father to four children, a cop who is not very at ease with so-called new technology and then there is Billie, his young and tech-savvy female counterpart. This unlikely pair is going to have to learn to work together, not without difficulty and, at the same time, learn from each other. Behind each case of cyber criminality, first and foremost, lies a human story to be told and spanning the entire season, even if the investigations are concluded on a case by case basis for each episode; a reading on two levels.

A FEMALE TRIO

It is based on an original story by Annie Carels, who is herself a computer whizz and married to someone high up in the world of cutting-edge technology. Her input was essential in terms of research and expertise. The other creator is Julie Bertrand and Charlotte Joulia makes up this trio of screenwriters.

Charlotte Joulia points out that this is the first time she has been involved in the writing process from A to Z. She participated fully in the bible as well. The three of them wrote the general framework of the 10 episodes together and then divided the more comprehensive treatments between them. Guy Goosens, the director and Martin Brossollet gave their comments and feedback during this process. At the moment, she is ensuring the final polish and notably the integration of the more serial-type storyline. She is making sure that everything is completely coherent.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A PILOT

Development began in September 2014. A pilot episode was filmed, in French with no subtitles, based on the screenplays written and we propose that the audience watch a montage of approximately 10 minutes...

The aim of this sort of pilot is of prime importance, John Engel, the producer, explains. In fact, it gives a really clear idea of the series, its « look », visuals and pace. It is also a valuable tool for reassuring partners.

BELGIAN DRAMA IS ON THE MOVE

Dominic Schreiber stresses that this is a very powerful series, with some violent images and John Engel confirms that it is a decidedly ambitious project. RTBF – Radio Télévision Belge Francophone – has launched a large-scale call for proposals to inspire, support and finance the creation of original series. In his role of drama series consultant, Martin Brossollet considers that it is of prime importance to develop such projects. For far too long, Belgium was just « a postal address for the French », notably for its favourable tax laws. He is delighted that Belgian audiovisual creation is now flourishing – more than 15 projects of all genres are in development at the moment –, since « stand by one's cultural heritage », particularly in a country with two very different regions. For information, Wallonia to the south and Flanders to the north both have their own minister of culture.

A FEW TECHNICAL ELEMENTS AND AS A CONCLUSION

John Engel tells us there is a budget of 300 000 € per episode, in other words, a total of 3 million € for all 10 episodes. With this relatively limited budget – however with support from the Brussels regional fund and also thanks to a pre-purchase strategy via Proximus –, the main preoccupation was being able to count on the cast and crew, since when salaries are lower than what is paid elsewhere, one really has to be able to count heavily on the team's motivation; « another form of commitment ».

So the *Unité 42* adventure is also all about a dedicated team and not just in the police station, but in the wings as well. Shooting will begin this autumn and will take 16 weeks. The broadcast is programmed for some time in 2017.

As for the prospect of an eventual second season, it should be pointed out that the development of the characters is at a point where the first season can be drawn to a close, whilst still keeping a good deal of suspense. In this both touching and complex series, the protagonists are still trying to find their bearings, there is a clashing of generations and competences, as well as a certain mutual attraction between Sam and Billie...

So, on your screens very soon! For fans of the internet maze and of serial killers hidden behind their computer screens, operating remotely, whilst you are quite happily just buying something online or reserving a Fontainebleau-Brussels train ticket...

FOREIGN BODIES

United Kingdom / E4, TNT

WORK
IN
PROGRESS



SPEAKERS

Jamie Campbell (producer, Eleven Film)

CHAired BY

Dominic Schreiber (co-production consultant, United Kingdom)

THE PITCH

Based on an original idea of Tom Basden's (*Plebs*, *Peep Show*, *Fresh Meat*), *Foreign Bodies* follows two British adolescents on their travels. Dylan and Sean, who have never travelled before, decide to go off and explore Asia for a few months, or more, maybe even make it a gap year... They fly to Beijing and meet two American girls there, Ashley and May; then four becomes five with Greg joining them. This little group, which came together by chance, bonds more and more over the episodes.

Foreign Bodies is a comedy-drama series which has been in the offing for the past five years. Jamie Campbell tells us that he too had a gap year and, in the beginning, the idea had been simply to film a series somewhere in the Far East, with a small crew and to relate the experience – but the series is not necessarily autobiographical.

TO EACH HIS OWN PERSONAL JOURNEY

Everyone in this motley group of travellers is there for a different reason: May wants to meet her extended family in China and reconnect with her roots, Ashley is hell-bent on cramming in a lifetime of exotic experiences before she starts her high-flying career back home, Dylan wants to track down and win back his ex-girlfriend, Sean wants to shed his innocence and forcibly grow up, and Greg, a 38-year-old divorcee, doesn't want to travel alone... and in the end, whether they achieve their goals or not, they all come to the same conclusion : « however far you go, you can't escape yourself ! »

ENTHUSIASTIC PARTNERS

Initially, Jamie Campbell wanted to keep to a small budget, in keeping with the gap year concept, in other words, more often than not, with rudimentary means.

As soon as they had the green light from E4 – relations with the channel have been excellent all along, both enthusiastic and confident and Piers Wenger, the head of drama at Channel 4, had himself taken a gap year and travelled the world, so he particularly liked the concept -, TNT became involved and the budget almost doubled. This did not really change the essence of the series, but did allow for a different approach to the shoot (for example, the

possibility of filming in artificial light).

Filming began in Malaysia, which was very simple and even good tax-wise (*Marco Polo* and *Indian Summers* were filmed there), will continue in China – a quite different challenge! –, Vietnam, Nepal...

A MULTITUDE OF WRITERS AND A CAST OF NEW FACES

Jamie Campbell would like to point out the really great dynamics of this project, from the very start. He has already mentioned the broadcaster's unwavering support and would like to add how well balanced the writing was : up to ten young screenwriters worked together in a wonderful atmosphere in a writers' room, supervised by Tom Basden, who acted as showrunner.

As for the actors, it seemed important to use little-known or new actors. Nevertheless Jamie Campbell promises, there are guest stars, since this is what TNT, who is always on the lookout for original series (like *Will*, a series about the young Shakespeare), likes, and they had their say as far as the cast was concerned.

The series' eight, 60-minute episodes will be aired early in 2017.

BEFORE WE DIE

Sweden / SVT, ZDF, DR, NRK

WORK
IN
PROGRESS



SPEAKERS

Maria Nordenberg (producer, SVT)

Christian Wikander (head of drama, SVT)

CHAired BY

Dominic Schreiber (co-production consultant, United Kingdom)

THE PITCH

Before We Die is a ten, 60-minute episode crime series about the confrontation between a mother and her son. Hanna is a 60-year-old « cop on the rebound », who has put her work before her family; worse still, she is the one who arrested her son for drug use which resulted in him being put away for two years. On his release from prison, he becomes an informer and, without realising it, is working for her...

Apart from being a crime series, *Before We Die* is a story of tough love, of a relationship which works better as a cop-informer than as mother-son. Everything runs smoothly, as long as they do not know each other's identities... but it only takes an SMS to let the cat out of the bag.

A GOOD BALANCE

The quality of balance between dramatic narrative and crime series is evident at first glance. But what attracted Christian Wikander to this series? He says that it was the hub of the story that convinced him, the mother and son's complex relationship and their conflictual and paradoxical love for each other. Having arrested him before, she now wants to protect him. He is looking for a form of redemption as well as a substitute family, which he finds in a group of petty criminals and their gay and sensitive leader. Naturally, his mother wants to get him away from them and for him to give up his risky position as an informer, for his own good, but perhaps also to be forgiven.

Here, Maria Nordenberg adds that « the characters don't exist if the crime doesn't ». Yet it is precisely this close interconnection and subtle interdependency, without ambiguity, between the worlds of crime series and family drama, that give the narrative arc such strength.

GOOD PARENTING

Before we die is a good example of a programme that SVT has found « the appropriate parent » for, adds Christian Wikander, namely the independent production company, Be Real. At the moment and in 90% of cases, SVT works with creators and independent producers, which results in much better quality.

Among the ambassadors of this work, is the well-known Swedish actress, Marie Richardson, who plays the role of Hanna and who also brings a reliable guarantee of quality.

As for the writing, for the 10 episodes of the first season, the first 7 were entrusted to the screenwriter, Niklas Rockström (*Thicker than Water*) and the last 3 to Wilhelm Behrman (*Four More Years*), who are not exactly beginners.

The broadcast is programmed for the spring of 2017.



WORK
IN
PROGRESS

EDEN

Germany, France / SWR, Arte France, Arte Deutschland

**SPEAKERS**

Jimmy Desmarais (producer, Atlantique productions)

Felix Van Boehm (producer, Lupa Films)

Adrienne Frejacques (commissioner, Arte)

CHAired BY

Tasja Abel (producer, Germany)

Eden is a six-episode miniseries, a new Franco-German co-production between Arte and SWR (Südwestrundfunk).

THE PITCH

The story begins in a garden, not so much the one in Eden, as the one belonging to an abandoned house in Greece. Two boys, refugees from Ethiopia, have taken refuge there for an afternoon. They get to know a young Austrian woman. That evening, a security guard accidentally kills one of the boys.

This death is going to shake up the shared destinies of a series of characters, each one facing the migrant crisis in Europe in their own way. To start with, Adama, one of the young Ethiopians, who we follow on his journey heading for Austria, where he hopes to find his friend. This event will also have an impact on Helen, a former Member of the European Parliament. Obviously, it will have an impact on Ioannis, the security guard, who will have to learn to live with his feeling of guilt. Lastly, this drama will also cause an upheaval in a German family (that of Silke and Jochen). The family is greatly affected by this event, and decides to welcome a refugee into their home.

BEGINNINGS OF THE SERIES

Eden is funded equally by French and German partners through TANDEM, created in 2013. For cinema, this Franco-German tandem has been at the forefront of creation for several years, thanks in particular to the adoption of a proactive policy, but co-production for television drama is still too marginal. Therefore,

the objective is to give a boost to and step up cooperation between Germany and France, with regard to drama, as part of a joint artistic action.

THE DEVELOPMENT

Eden was created by Edward Berger, who took on the role of showrunner for the series, as well as directing it. He is best known for the excellent *Deutschland 83* series. This series was written by a pool of Franco-German authors – two Germans (Nele Mueller-Stöfen and Marianne Wendt) and one Frenchman (Laurent Mercier) –, with a view to coming up with fresh perspectives. The series is highly topical, since *Eden* is a sort of post-Brexit series. Although it raises the question of the migrant crisis, as well as the financial crisis involving the European Community, it also targets more universal subjects.

Jimmy Desmarais informs us that the screenplays for the six episodes have been finalised. At present, the production is looking for new partners. Since the series is to be filmed in six different countries (Turkey, Greece, Germany, Austria, Belgium and France), it may well interest other national broadcasters.

GENERATION B

Belgium / VRT Canvas

WORK
IN
PROGRESS



SPEAKERS

Joost Vandecasteele (co-creator)

Pieter Van Hees (co-creator)

Pieter Van Huyck (head of drama, deMENSEN)

CHAired BY

Tasja Abel (producer, Germany)

Joost Vandecasteele and Pieter Van Hees are here to introduce their new project, *Generation B*, a series written by the two authors as a « both brutal and sensitive comedy ».

THE PITCH

The brutality in the series referred to earlier, is above all political and social. *Generation B* is set in a probably not so distant future. Belgium is going through an unprecedented crisis. The country has seen its long-term credit rating fall from AA+ to B (hence the title of the series).

The story is set in Brussels, a city which has become known as « the symbol of a failed state ». The first to fall victim to the crisis are the young. The series follows the trials and tribulations of six people in their twenties (the so-called best days of our lives), who are trying to survive in an environment which is now hostile. One of them is Jonas, a young man who has lost everything; his work, his girlfriend and his self-esteem.

BEGINNINGS OF THE SERIES

Generation B came about through a chance meeting. Pieter Van Hees attended a performance by Joost Vandecasteele, a satirical one-man show in the form of a conference announcing the end of the world for 2029, contradicting all those who, at the time, were predicting the apocalypse for 21st December, 2012. « I realised

immediately that this subject was a gold mine», he explains, and « we started writing a fake documentary on the future ».

For a long time, the future offered great hope. Joost Vandecasteele remembers when he was a child, the future was seen as a period of limitless growth, as much economically and technologically speaking. The European Community was going to be the answer to everything and protect its citizens from potential crises, which would be seen as a thing of the past. But today, however, reality has a somewhat bitter taste. « The future has been shattered ».

A pilot was made for this fake documentary, but it was rejected by all broadcasters. The project was said to be too « alternative », in other words, too risky. These two creators were not about to give up. Meanwhile Joost Vandecasteele had published a novel – *Hoe de wereld perfect functioneert zonder mij* (Why does the world function so well without me) – which was hugely successful, both with the critics and the public and winning several literary prizes. In this novel, he explores, with humour, a dystopian society governed by individualism and social violence. This was going to be the basis for a new project: a series.

Generation B was written by the two of them. « I imagined going off on holiday in the sun, to write the screenplay », Pieter Van Hees tells us. « But Joost doesn't like going on holiday. We stayed in Brussels ». The collaboration between these two authors resulted in a perfect chemistry, with each being able to add his own personal touch to the other's work. They wrote separately, two versions of each screenplay and then made it into one. « This collaboration was really natural for us », Joost Vandecasteele explains. « We like the same things. We both like sci-fi. We like the same series like *Louie* or *Girls* ».

A PUNK SERIES: NO FUTURE!

The themes addressed in *Generation B* are dark: the crisis, poverty and political violence. Yet the series is intended to be a comedy above all; a punk comedy! There is no room for political correctness here. In a Brussels of the future, depicted by Joost Vandecasteele and Pieter Van Hees, the young have become the new enemy. « Being young and white is no longer a good thing in Belgium ». All sectors of the economy are controlled by baby-boomers who are desperately hanging on to their power and are refusing to share what little is left with the younger generations, yet these are their children.

The young are being attacked by their elders, sometimes even physically, and are forced to leave the town centre and take refuge in the suburbs, in particular Molenbeek (sadly, a town now famous worldwide), one of the only areas to have survived the crisis, the new « Manhattan of Brussels ». The young end up rebelling and start the « Generation Liberation Army ». One of their key actions is to transform private pension funds into a development aid fund in Africa. The baby-boomers reaction will not be long in coming and it will be terrible.

Although seen through a comedic filter, the subjects covered are risky. Yet, the VRT (Vlaamse Radio- en Televisieomroeporganisatie), the public service channel, in Dutch, of the Flemish community in Belgium (the equivalent of the RTBF for the French-speaking community) green-lighted the project and gave the creators total freedom. From the beginning, the series has benefited from the support of the channels' different heads of drama from the past few years. Joost Vandecasteele feels the series has a great asset in its five-star cast, assembling some of the most prolific and popular actors in Belgium.

The second and far from the least important upside: reality has caught up with fiction. When the two authors started on the writing in 2012, some of the topics covered seemed to be off the wall, at the very least. But what could once have been considered as science-fiction, is now very much reality. « Nobody imagined that somebody close to the extreme right would be made Belgium's Minister of the Interior » (i.e. Jean Jambon, figurehead of Flemish nationalism). More recently, the Brexit has shone light on a real clash of generations, a central theme in *Generation B*.

AS A CONCLUSION

Pieter Van Huyck tells us that shooting of the six episodes of season one will begin on 15th August, in Brussels. The series will be aired on VRT in 2017. To conclude, Joost Vandecasteele says he is confident that the series will be as funny as it is brutal. « The cherry on the cake, is that I'm in it! » he adds amusingly. Then it is sure to be a success.



MAYDAY

Denmark / Viaplay, TV3



SPEAKERS

Miriam Nørgaard (producer, Fridthjof Film)

Christopher Grøndahl (screenwriter)

CHAired BY

Tasja Abel (producer, Germany)

ORIGIN OF THE SERIES

Mayday is set on an offshore oil platform; one of those steel and concrete monsters with its four legs anchored into the North Sea seabed, a few kilometres from the Norwegian coast. The series looks into the consequences of the region's dwindling oil resources. With the collapse in oil prices (oil companies need the price of a barrel to be at 50 dollars to operate in the North Sea, whereas today it is only at around 30 dollars), oil companies are taking drastic measures, the first of which is to close down some of their facilities. Many of the fields in the North Sea are now mature. Not only has production dropped significantly, but the platforms are ageing and obsolete.

Oil companies have started decommissioning certain platforms. Christopher Grøndahl projects some images of the Brent Spar platform which the Shell Group had decided to destroy by sinking it. Greenpeace activists, fearing an ecological catastrophe, occupied the platform and organised an international boycott of the petroleum company. Public criticism was such, that Shell withdrew their plan to sink the platform and proceeded to dismantling ashore.

While the Brent Spar was being dismantled, workmen were surprised to discover quantities of an endangered cold-water coral growing on the legs of the platform. The structure has become a refuge for a multitude of endangered marine species. Environmental associations tried, in vain, to prevent the dismantling.

THE PITCH

Christopher Grøndahl based the screenplay of *Mayday* on this story. There are three main characters in the series: Henriette Madsen is the mayoress of the town of Esbjerg. She signed an incredible contract with the Scandinavian Petroleum Group, a big oil company, to tow one of the huge oil platforms (the equivalent of an eight-story building) to land, with a view to dismantling the structure at the town docks. Apart from the economic benefits, this dismantling operation will create thousands of jobs.

Iben Berg is a business woman and owner of the company entrusted with towing the platform to ashore.

Bjørn Olaf Jaeger is director of the Scandinavian Petroleum Group. He strongly objects to the dismantling project and has sabotaged the platform's legs.

Economic and political issues are at loggerheads, while a storm is brewing in the region and this towing operation risks becoming a human and environmental catastrophe.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERIES

Mayday is currently in development. The budget for the series (two episodes) is estimated at 10 million euros for a broadcast during prime time. Miriam Nørgaard hopes that production can start in 2018.

SÉRIE SERIES FOR CHILDREN



Since 2014, Série Series has organised sessions for children. This programme is designed to help the young public understand series, which are now very much a part of their everyday lives and to generate interest in and understanding of the audiovisual sector. Authors and producers were happy to answer the children's questions during these special screenings.

This year, two cartoons were screened for our young public : *En sortant de l'école* season 3 is thirteen of Apollinaire's poems, illustrated by young directors; *Miraculous, Tales of Ladybug and Cat Noir*, is set in Paris and follows the adventures of two school children, who turn into superheroes to save their city.

MIRACULOUS, TALES OF LADYBUG AND CAT NOIR

TF1 - FRANCE

SPEAKERS

Thomas Astruc (creator)

Sébastien Thibaudeau (head writer)

Léonie de Rudder & Matthieu Choquet (screenwriters)

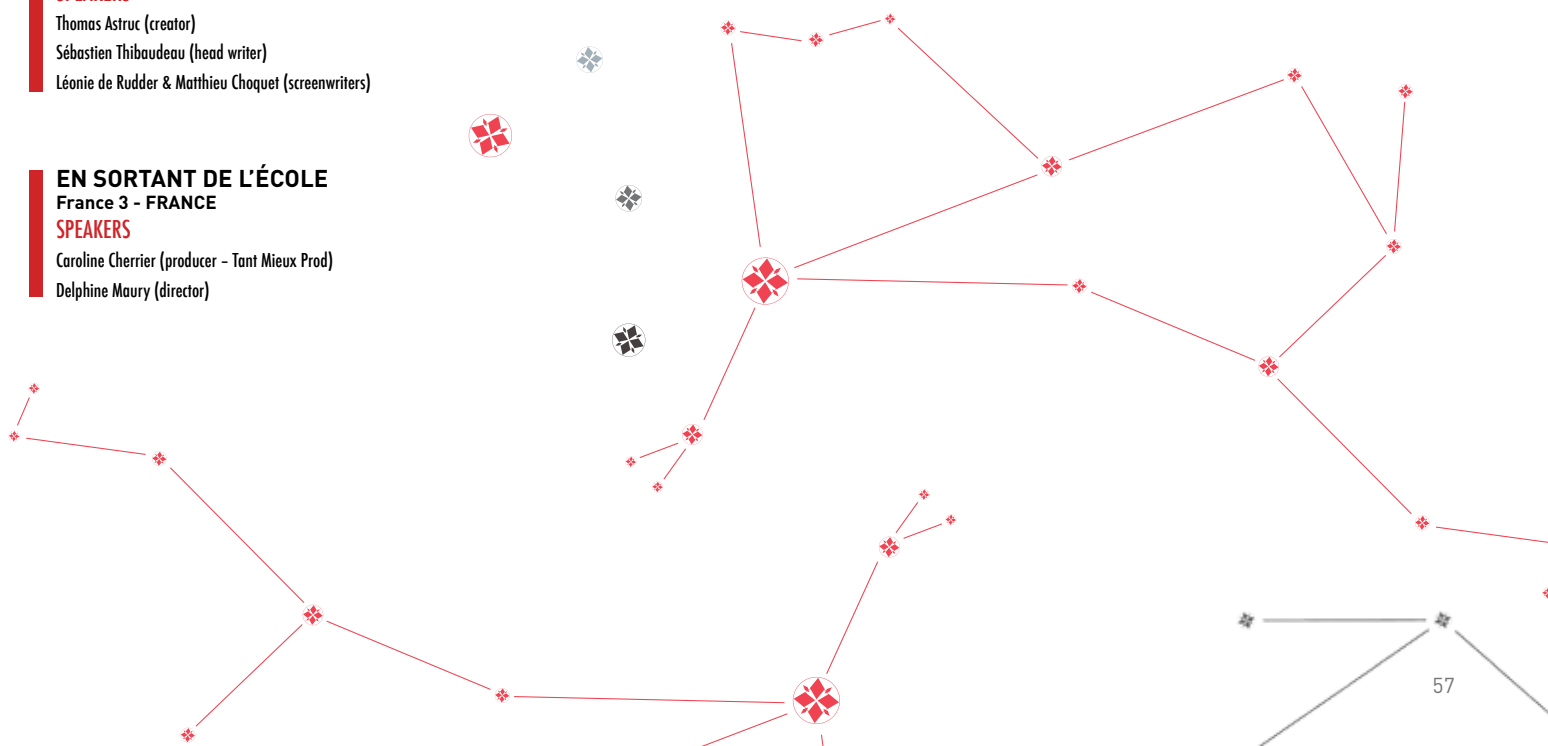
EN SORTANT DE L'ÉCOLE

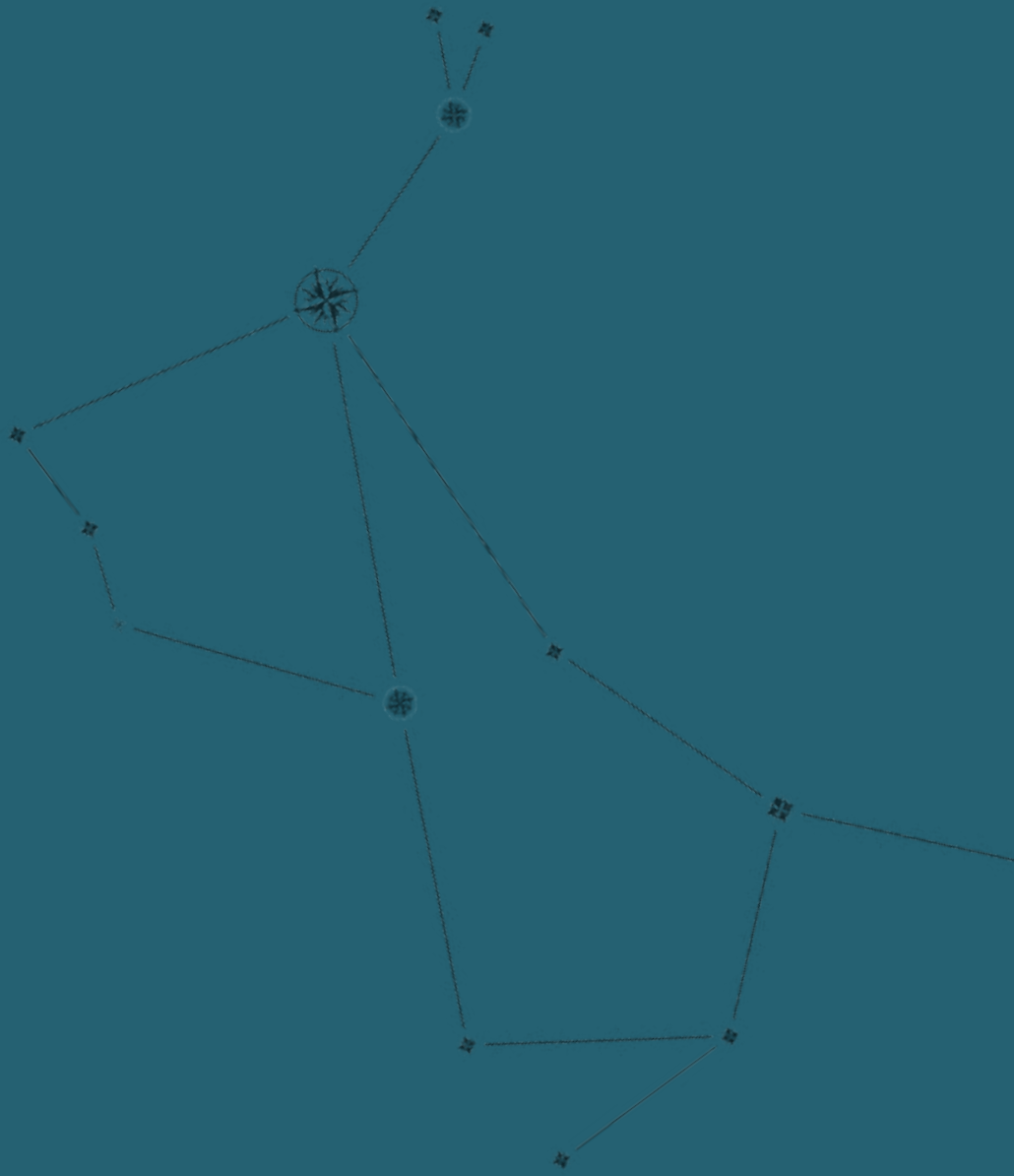
France 3 - FRANCE

SPEAKERS

Caroline Cherrier (producer - Tant Mieux Prod)

Delphine Maury (director)







DISCUSSIONS

« One Vision » : around the theme of accountability and the links between series and society, which was at the heart of this season, Série Series gave creators 15 minutes to expose a viewpoint, a conviction, a certain vision of the world, so as to give television professionals a certain insight, at a time when series are, more than ever, powerful message carriers.

Masterclasses : year after year, Série Series gives the floor to talent from Europe or elsewhere, who share their experiences and go back over their personal and professional journeys.

Discussions and debates : by analysing series' creation and the related industry, Série Series proposes discussions giving professionals a better understanding of the issues and prospects of their sector.

MASTERCLASS

LARS BLOMGREN



PARTICIPANT:

Lars Blomgren
(managing director, Filmlance International AB, Sweden)

CHAired BY:

Olivier Bibas (producer, Atlantique Productions, France)

Olivier Bibas is glad to welcome Lars Blomgren, one of the best-known producers in Scandinavia. Around 20 years ago, he and seven other producers co-founded the company Filmlance International AB (which has since been purchased by Endemol Shine Group). Originally specialising in the production and development of feature-length films, Filmlance grew to occupy a position of choice in the Scandinavian audiovisual landscape, working with all genres, from animation to drama via, of course, the "Nordic noir".

It was in the latter genre that Scandinavian series earned their stripes, as well as international renown. After decades of Anglo-Saxon hegemony, Nordic countries became the new benchmark for crime series. More sombre and realist, Nordic series travelled all over the world. One of the jewels in the crown of this great genre is the Swedish-Danish series *The Bridge* (*Bron/Broen*), produced by Lars Blomgren and his teams.

BRON : A BRIDGE BETWEEN TWO NATIONS

The series arose from Swedish public channel SVT1's desire to forge links with its Danish counterpart DR1. Swedish television has a long history of co-productions, whether with Norway or with Finland. Danish channels, on the other hand, tended to keep to themselves, only very rarely collaborating with their Scandinavian colleagues. What is more, Danish television viewers have always expressed a clear preference for domestic series (while Danish series are very successful in Sweden) and Danish broadcasters did not see how they could benefit from a co-production with their neighbours. SVT Group wanted to dip its toes into the Danish audiovisual landscape. But they still had to find the right series. Several projects were developed over the course of five years, all in vain. Until the day when Hans Rosenfeldt brought the offices of the Swedish channel a golden project: *Bron*.

Lars Blomgren offers to revisit the pitch for *Bron*. The plot begins on a bridge: the bridge that straddles the bay of Øresund, connecting the cities of Malmö and Copenhagen. The body of a woman is left precisely on the border separating the two states, the feet on one side and the head on the other. The enquiry is jointly entrusted to Saga Norén (Sofia Helin),

inspector for Malmö criminal justice, and Martin Rohde (Kim Bodnia), a Copenhagen city cop. The former is a dry, anti-social woman, approaching autism. The second is a bon vivant, as affable as he is care-free. Our two heroes are required to join forces despite themselves to solve this crime.

In the same way that the two protagonists of the series will use their antagonisms to solve a particularly complex inquiry, the groups SVT and DR had to overcome their differences, particularly cultural ones, to create a unique series. In a reflection of the series itself, two countries, Sweden and Denmark, must learn to work together, despite differences in creative methods.

Sweden has a longstanding tradition of art-house cinema, and is home to Ingmar Bergman. There, the producer is king. In Denmark, on the contrary, it is the scriptwriters who occupy the foreground. "The two countries had so much to learn from each other," Lars Blomgren explains. To shuffle the deck and ensure complete cooperation between the two broadcasters, the writing of the scenes was entrusted to a writers' room composed primarily of Swedish screenwriters, while the production was entrusted to a Danish director.

ANATOMY OF SUCCESS

The series encountered immense success, both in Denmark and in Sweden (where it even broke viewing records). Very quickly, its success expanded worldwide. A third season was broadcast in 2015, while the fourth is currently in the development stage.

Lars Blomgren has been asked many times why the series has been so successful. For him, one of the series' main strengths is the subject itself. But beyond the story, *Bron*'s strength lies in its characters. In *Bron*, everything rests upon the personalities of the two main characters. The political, social and economic context is secondary. This is also characteristic of Scandinavian works. Lars Blomgren notes that "Sweden is an unusual country: it has no enemies, and has known very little war". This lack of major geopolitical conflicts and tensions goes some way in explaining why the plot lines developed in Swedish fiction take place within the family or friend circle. "The Nordic crime drama is a family drama with testosterone."

The second reason is that, despite the difficulties encountered – during development, production and shooting – the series always remained faithful to the principles that were defined prior to the development stage. The project was never adulterated. After a month of writing, Lars Blomgren highlights, DR decided that the series was too violent and frightening, and that if the scenes were not toned down, it could not be broadcast during prime time. Despite the pressure, the creators and screenwriters held fast, refusing to bend to the desires of the Danish broadcaster. They always knew they could rely on the unfailing loyalty of SVT and NRK (another partner in the series). After ending up on the losing side of the debate, DR reduced its share of funding and the series was to be broadcast in Denmark at 10pm.

After a month of shooting, the series was more than 100,000 Euros over budget. But the first shots were nothing short of exceptional. "When we saw the first rushes, we were convinced that we had found the winning formula. If you change a project during shooting, you weaken it to the point that it could collapse." The producers decided to stay on course, changing nothing of the series concept. When

shooting ended, the budget had gone over by 800,000 Euros, which is far from negligible. But, as Lars Blomgren points out, "nobody has ever been fired for going over budget on a successful series."

ONE STORY, THREE SERIES

The first season of *Bron* ended up achieving international success. Distributed by ZDF, the series was broadcast in more than 150 countries! Lars Blomgren takes the opportunity to underline the influence of the ZDF's support, particularly financial, on Scandinavian audiovisual production. In fact, for the last thirty years, the German channel has been funding up to 30% of the budget of Swedish series. This involvement is evidence of the enthusiasm of the German public for Nordic noirs. "But it is a one-way enthusiasm," Lars Blomgren notes. "Swedes don't watch German series. *Deutschland 83* recently managed to capture the favour of the Swedish public, but that's a one-off case."

The theme developed in *Bron* is universal. "All countries have borders and have relationships with their neighbours, for better or worse." It is not surprising, therefore, that the series has been honoured with two re-makes: the first American (*The Bridge*) and the second Franco-British (*Tunnel*).

The initial plot is taken up in all three versions: a body, cut in half, is found on a border. Two countries must work together, despite differences in working methods and language difficulties. In *Bron*, the Swedish and Danish languages are close enough that the characters in the series understand each other. In the American version, English is imposed on the characters from the first episode (Spanish is almost never used). The story in *Tunnel* is completely "bilingual" and subtitles are used to help viewers on both sides of the Channel.

In the version produced by the American cable channel FX, an American police inspector (Diane Kruger) must join forces with a Mexican colleague (Demián Bichir) between El Paso, Texas and Juárez, Mexico. In the Franco-British version, a co-production between Sky Atlantic and CANAL+, the French inspector is played by Clémence Poésy (best known for her role in the *Harry Potter* saga), while the role of her counterpart went to Stephen Dillane (Stannis Baratheon from *Game of Thrones*).



Although the remakes are somewhat faithful to the original series, at least in spirit, Lars Blomgren notes certain differences, particularly in the method of dealing with the character of the female inspector. In the Swedish-Danish version, Saga Norén is anti-social and cold. The character played by Diane Kruger in the U.S. version is much more fragile. In the Franco-British re-make, Clémence Poésy plays a confident and determined investigator. It should also be noted that *The Tunnel* is much more humour-based. The adventure of *Bron* does not end with the Franco-British and American versions: another version is currently being developed in Russia and Estonia.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE TELEVISION SERIES MARKET

A series like *Bron* bears witness to the changes taking place in today's global audiovisual landscape, starting with the growing internationalisation of television series. "Series no longer have borders." The best of them are viewed the world over. "For series, it is now the idea that takes precedence: the location is completely secondary." Lars Blomgren observes that the public, particularly its youngest members, "are no longer afraid of subtitles". Language has also become secondary.

The major broadcasters are now global (Netflix considers itself "a global network") and co-productions have become the new paradigm of the audiovisual market. A market that offers immense opportunities for European productions. The competition is such that series budgets have skyrocketed. "Even a channel like HBO, unable to provide all of the funding for its series on its own, is getting involved in co-production," and Lars Blomgren believes we should be witnessing an increase in co-productions between the United States and Europe.

Among the changes shaking up the television series market of today, Olivier Bibas highlights the emergence of two new, shorter formats (episodes of between 10 and 20 minutes long). For his part, Lars Blomgren thinks that more classic formats (series lasting 6-10 hours) will always be the dominant model. At the same time, although we are witnessing the decline of the mini-series, TV movies are on the rise.

Despite the euphoria that comes with series creation, Lars Blomgren highlights the shortage of screenwriters, which threatens to paralyse the market. Because it must be noted that this market remains closed to the youngest writers. It is for this reason that he says he supports the creation of pools of screenwriters, writers' rooms that will allow those with the least experience to work hand-in-hand. More generally, Lars Blomgren remains convinced that the success of a series rests on its development, an essential phase in the creative process that must be completely separated from the following phases of production and shooting. It is partly for this reason that he is not in favour of the showrunner model.

In conclusion, Lars Blomgren gives two pieces of advice for young producers. The first: get to know the needs of the channel. There is no point in proposing a project to a broadcaster, no matter how good, if it doesn't respond to their editorial needs. The second: shoot pilot episodes!



MASTERCLASS

ANAÏS SCHAAFF



SPEAKER:

Anaïs Schaaff (screenwriter and producer, Cliffhanger TV Media, Spain)

CHAired BY:

Charline de Lépine (producer, Macondo, France)

With the support of: 

The series *El Ministerio del Tiempo* is a true cultural phenomenon. After only two seasons, it has become the best-known and most widely-discussed television programme in Spain. The series is even cited regularly by politicians. And yet, *El Ministerio del Tiempo* is a fantasy series, a genre that is almost completely absent from Spanish television programming schedules.

Produced by Cliffhanger TV Media, a company created by Anaïs Schaaff and Javier Olivares, the series tells the story of an autonomous governmental institution that holds the secret of time travel. The doors of time appeared during the reign of Isabella I of Castile, at the end of the 15th Century. They were handed over to the monarchy by a rabbi in exchange for protection. The Spanish government created a special unit – the ministry of time – charged with protecting and forbidding access to the doors. Its purpose is to prevent any intruders from disrupting the order of time and turning history to their advantage. To accomplish this task, patrols must travel through time and foil evil plans. The series has three main characters, all members of the patrols: a soldier from the 16th century, the first female student from the 19th century and a paramedic from the 21st century.

But before entering into more detail about the plot of the series, Anaïs Schaaff first presents a panoramic view of Spanish television.

A PANORAMA OF SPANISH TELEVISION

Spanish television today is dominated by two private groups – Atresmedia and Mediaset – who share the majority of audience share. Public television (Televisión Española) is currently going through a major crisis and has seen a dramatic drop in its audience shares. Anaïs Schaaff partly attributes this drop to the Spanish government's decision to remove all advertising on its public channels. Regrettably, this decision was not followed up by any kind of alternative funding plan. Unlike other European countries, Spain does not have cable channels like HBO or CANAL+. However, the future purchase of CANAL+ Spain by the operator Telefónica should, Anaïs Schaaff hopes, breathe new life into Spain's audiovisual landscape.

The stronghold that private channels have over audiovisual creation is not without its consequences for the quality of series broadcast in Spain. In fact, most television products are created according to purely commercial

considerations. It is very rare for them to take artistic risks, and most series, which are seen as rapid-consumption family products, resemble those that were on the air in the 1990s. Sadly, series are designed for the "Señora de Cuenca", an algorithmic target viewer or "average Jane" of sorts, and are reduced to preconceived formulas created by the channels: a series must include elderly characters, children, a love story, etc.

According to Anaïs Schaaff, the situation for scriptwriters in Spain is far from enviable. Very few people are working on projects they are truly interested in, that truly shine, at least from a creative point of view. So-called art-house work has no place in Spanish television. Grouped into teams, screenwriters are seen almost as civil servants, paid to produce lines of dialogue in record time. Furthermore, channels, particularly commercial ones, intervene heavily in the creation of the series. Very little room for manoeuvre

is accorded to the screenwriters who, in most cases, participate only from afar in the development or production of the series. This observation is what inspired Anaïs Schaaff and Javier Olivares to create Cliffhanger TV Media, with the aim of promoting a model similar to that of the American showrunner, which is practically unheard of in the Spanish audiovisual landscape.

The influence that channels have over creation explains in part why the number of international co-productions remains very small, practically non-existent, in Spain. The channels, both public and private, want to retain full mastery over the series they are broadcasting. They still take a very poor view of the fact that a foreign channel might interfere in their creative process. On this topic, the recent example of *Carlos Rey Emperador* is particularly noteworthy: the series was originally designed to be a co-production between Spain and Germany, but the demands of the Spanish channel eventually led to the German partner deciding to withdraw from the project.

OPENING THE DOORS OF TIME

And yet, despite this far from encouraging backdrop, a series as unusual as *El Ministerio del Tiempo* has come to light. Javier and Pablo Olivares had the idea for the series around fifteen years ago. The two brothers were passionate about history and science fiction, and imagined a story of doors of time guarded by a mysterious and secret government ministry. Their simple objective was to create a series they would want to watch.

The series was intended to be predominantly realist, as the plot essentially takes place within an office filled with civil servants who bear the crushing weight of bureaucracy (a phenomenon every Spaniard is familiar with). The time travel added an original fantasy dimension. Convinced that they would never manage to sell the project, the two brothers filed it away at the bottom of a drawer.

The years passed. Pablo Olivares learned that he was suffering from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. He was able to convince his brother to revisit this project, which he held so close to his heart, and they launched into the writing of the first two episodes of the series. They did it for themselves alone, with no pressure from outside, and without knowing if they would be able to sell the series.

Because unlike in cinema, in which Spanish fantasy films have experienced unprecedented growth in recent years, the fantasy genre does not interest Spanish channels, which consider it far too risky. Charline de Lépine points out that Teresa Fernández-Valdés and Ramón Campos attended *Série Series* the previous year to present *The Refugees*, a highly anticipated series co-produced with the BBC. It is clear to Anaïs Schaaff that this series would never have seen the light of day without the support (particularly financial) of the British channel.

Anaïs Schaaff and Javier Olivares then met with Fernando López Puig, the head of the fiction department of Televisión Española. They had requested this meeting to present a project for the re-make of the French series *Les Revenants*. They were unable to acquire the rights and the project never came about. Once the meeting was over, Javier Olivares had the presence of mind to leave a dossier including several other projects, including a complete version of the first episode of *El Ministerio del Tiempo*. It turns out that Fernando López Puig is a big fan of science fiction, and very knowledgeable about British and American series. The project piqued his interest and, against all odds, he was able to convince the TVE directors to undertake the adventure.

Anaïs Schaaff and Javier Olivares set about finding a production company to help them fund the series. But when they explained to their interlocutors that they also intended to play the role of executive producer (Javier Olivares would be the showrunner for the series), every door was closed in their faces, and in the end they couldn't find a single production company in all of Madrid that was willing to support them in this project, despite having the blessing of Televisión Española.

The showrunner model is still taking its first shaky steps in Spain, and although we are currently witnessing the emergence of a new class of creator-producers, broadcasters are still displaying distrust and struggling to understand what they will get out of collaborating with them. But for Anaïs Schaaff, the showrunner model is a quality gauge. Not only does it inject an extra dose of creativity into television fiction, but it also creates more acute awareness of the economic aspects at play in creation. Because the showrunner, as Anaïs Schaaff points out, can lose money. "That makes their role more dangerous, but also more exciting."

Six hands contributed to writing each scene from the eight episodes of *El Ministerio del Tiempo*'s first season, the task being shared between the Olivares brothers and Anaïs Schaaff. Pablo Olivares, she remembers sadly, dedicated his heart and soul to the writing despite his illness. Towards the end, he was unable to move a muscle, instead writing with the aid of innovative ocular writing technology. *El Ministerio del Tiempo* is in a way his last will and testament. He died in November 2014 without having the chance to see the series.



THE PAST IS UNCHANGEABLE, THE FUTURE IS UNCERTAIN

Broadcast during prime time, the first episode of the series recorded an audience share of 13%, 4 points higher than TVE1's average share. But this result, which is disappointing at first glance, does not allow us to measure the actual success of the series, because most viewers watched *El Ministerio del Tiempo* on catch-up television and online.

Overnight, the series became a veritable societal phenomenon. It received unanimous praise from critics and the support of a community of die-hard fans nicknamed the "Ministericos". It is in part thanks to this community that the series managed to obtain a second 13-episode season. Its success was such that the series was able to call upon internationally-renowned producers like Paco Plaza (producer of, among other things, the horror trilogy *REC*), who was a big fan of the first season.

From a purely cultural standpoint, *El Ministerio del Tiempo* awoke in its viewers a true passion for Spanish history. Of course, over the course of the episodes, we cross paths with great historical figures such as Napoleon or Isabela I of Castile. But the series is also committed to retracing the steps of history's forgotten heroes: the populace. It's important to note that Javier and Pablo Olivares both studied History at university. As for Anaïs Schaaff, she studied 'Humanidades' or Humanities: a combination of history and literature.

A series like *El Ministerio del Tiempo* is very difficult to export. In fact, the plot is closely linked to Spanish history and, for this reason alone, could be off-putting for viewers from

other countries. Anaïs Schaaff indicates that the format for the series has nonetheless been purchased by several channels, notably in the United States and China.

In spite of this success and the anticipation of its many fans, the future of the series remains uncertain and, as of now, there is nothing to confirm the shooting of a third season. Up to now, each episode in the series has enjoyed a budget of around €580,000. Anaïs Schaaff takes the opportunity to salute the impressive work of the special effects teams, who, despite the budget allocated to them, have succeeded in recreating magnificent scenes from pivotal points in Spanish history. The third season, if it does take place, would need a higher budget, and Cliffhanger TV Media is currently seeking additional funding. Discussions are underway with Netflix and Telefónica, but nothing has been signed yet. We can only hope that the doors to the past have not been closed for good...

MASTERCLASS

MATTHEW GRAHAM



SPEAKER :

Matthew Graham (screenwriter, United Kingdom)

CHAIRER BY :

Jed Mercurio
(screenwriter, author, producer, United Kingdom)

Matthew Graham began his career writing forty or so episodes of the cult British series *EastEnders*. He is also one of the co-writers of *Spooks*, *Hustle* and *Dr Who* and is the creator of both *Life On Mars* and *Ashes to Ashes*. He has worked in America and, amongst others, has worked with George Lucas developing the *Star Wars*' franchise into a series (but it was never made). More recently, he adapted Arthur C. Clarke's *Childhood's End*, for a miniseries for Syfy. Today, he is being questioned by a fellow screenwriter, Jed Mercurio, who suggests going back over his experiences, his methods, his recipe for success and in some cases, failures.

MATTHEW GRAHAM, IN THE BEGINNING

From the age of twelve, Matthew Graham knew he wanted to be a scriptwriter. One of his neighbours brought home some scripts and he read them. Soon after, he began writing dramas for children, after all he was still only a child himself, a very determined one at that. When he was 16, he had a life-changing encounter with Terry Gilliam, who had just finished directing *Brazil*, and he agreed to read one of his scripts, which he turned down, but he did tell Matthew that he had no doubt that he would become a professional writer... This vote of confidence from one of the greats in the world of cinema was what fueled him. He found an agent very quickly and then learnt his craft on *EastEnders*, with its many storylines, but also learnt how to deal with all the production problems.

MATTHEW GRAHAM IS NOT AN IDEALIST

If there is one thing to learn from Matthew, it is that there is no point in dreaming of the ideal project. He realised a long time ago that, as an author, one has to be pragmatic. Rather than arriving with one's own original idea, it is better to ask what the producers want. Once one has started working on a project, it very quickly becomes one's own anyway. An interesting and unexpected confession for someone who has been so successful...

CHILDHOOD'S END: BETWEEN RESPECT FOR THE BOOK AND A CONTEMPORARY ADAPTATION

In light of this, he visited Michael De Luca, the producer, to see what he had options on and he came up with Arthur C. Clarke's *Childhood's End*, a childhood favourite of Matthew's. He prepared and made a verbal pitch to about 35 executives from the Syfy channel over the phone and they liked what they heard.

He feels that the medium of cinema would not have been right for this book, because it is too philosophical and too bleak and it is a story which needs more time to be developed than a feature film of one and a half to two hours.

What is important is to respect the book and for this reason he chose the series format. Respecting the book is fundamental, no matter who the author is, but also altering it as one sees fit, to make it palatable for a modern audience.

BACK TO SCIENCE FICTION

« It's almost a miracle that we managed to make science fiction in the late 90s », Matthew Graham says and a marvel to him that he managed to get *The Last Train made*. This is a post-apocalyptic serialised drama first broadcast by ITV in 1999, then on ITV2 and followed by many repeats on the U.K.'s Sci Fi Channel, renamed SyFy in 2010 (it should be noted that the American version, *The Ark*, commissioned by Fox Network, never went further than the pilot). At the time, the sort of series being created were *Inspector Morse*, or *A Touch of Frost*, which were very grounded and middle-aged in their approach and delivery. Science fiction was considered, at best, eccentric. The question of genre is of prime importance.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GENRE

Science fiction is a very specific genre and it is not just a question of spaceships and flying cars, but needs to be more of a concept. « It must be set in our world », Matthew Graham mentions the success of *Humans*, the British remake of the famous Swedish series *Real Humans*. Channel 4 normally has a more niche audience, but this was a very popular programme, because it was a new take on science fiction.

More generally, it is essential for a television scriptwriter to understand the meaning of genre. It is not just a question of selling an idea, but of knowing how to express this in an adapted format and according to a well-defined genre that appeals to executives and are easier to imagine. When he came up with the idea for *Life On Mars*, (with Ashley Pharoah and Tony Jordan) Matthew Graham wanted to even « subvert genre », to push its limits. Undoubtedly, he will continue to do this as he is working on *Electric Dreams*, for Channel 4, at the moment, which is a series of ten stand alones based on an anthology of ten novels by the celebrated science fiction author, Philip K. Dick.

WRITING IS NOT SELLING

Unfortunately, success is not a question of quality of the writing. On this point, Matthew Graham does not hide his frustration, when he is not acting as showrunner, to see the broadcaster handing all the sales and marketing strategy over to people who have had nothing to do with the creative process. For *Childhood's End*, they had a very good team and he liked the way they promoted the show, but this is not always the case.

Jed Mercurio understands only too well how authors feel when faced with the corporate side of the business and to avoid a possible creator/broadcaster clash, he suggests always trying to have a seat at the table when marketing is being discussed. Here, the writer can shift them very subtly towards what his concept of the show is and away from the often very generic way of promoting series.

SELL WITH PASSION AND INFORMALITY

On the subject of selling ideas, Matthew insists on the importance of talking to people. He feels it is better to make a verbal pitch rather than a written one. « You can be sure that they will have already heard a version of your pitch », so it is personality and conviction that will make the difference, above and beyond the quality of the concept and the writing. « Don't write anything down, just go into the room as though you were going to the pub and telling a friend about something you've seen on the TV that you really liked », he advises and « engage and excite them with your passion ».

Matthew Graham illustrates this with an anecdote: Ashley Pharoah and he went to the States to pitch a show to a potential buyer, with everything scripted down to the last word and it didn't work. That evening they went to a bar, had too much to drink and came up with another idea that made them laugh. The next day, with hangovers, but also much more relaxed, they pitched the new idea to ABC, NBC and Fox... and sold it! Here's the secret: « Relax and be yourselves! »

VIVE EUROPE!

Matthew Graham points out that it is a very favourable time for European screenwriters. In America, they are bored with American authors, who are all pretty much the same, with the same somewhat limited cultural references, all wearing Converse and baseball caps! For the first time, European authors can be themselves, because it is exactly our difference that the Americans are looking for and are excited by. They pay a lot of attention to content, they are intelligent, always methodical and are always scanning the broadcasting landscape to spot that gem like *The Killing* or *The Bridge*. The best in American production is already excellent, but that really does not stop them from looking elsewhere for the reasons mentioned above. Now is the time to take advantage of this, as they are open to and very keen on European ideas.

Matthew Graham says he hopes his writing fits into the European landscape and wants to be a part of it. He has been particularly impressed by the quality and bravery of what is coming out of Europe at present. However, he feels that everything is much more global now, rather than American, or European, with the rise of subscription platforms like Netflix and streaming that have completely changed how people watch series. They can take their time, watching as and when they so choose. Jed Mercurio feels that the cross fertilisation of talent in Europe is only just gathering momentum and whatever happens in Europe politically, this will continue to be very productive and exciting on the world stage. Matthew mentions, in particular, a Franco-British co-production which is currently under way and also a project for a series between Barcelona and the United Kingdom with a very Hitchcock-like atmosphere, which he is discussing with the Americans, but for which he wants to use mainly European talent.

HONESTY IN THE FACE OF SUCCESS AND FAILURES

Recently, Jed Mercurio asked an author to talk about her failures and she replied that she had not had any, which, according to Jed, was definitely not the case. Of course it is always difficult to admit failure both to oneself and to others, Matthew Graham replies. Yet, with time, we realise that we can look back and analyse why they didn't work and often it is only a few small things which make a difference. Such was the case with *Eternal Law*, which was not a success.

As for his great successes with both the public and with critics, like *Ashes to Ashes* or *Life On Mars*, he is very modest, pointing out that success is always a surprise. Of course, a success like this is always very comfortable and gives one confidence, but one can never predict the market and social forces around when the show goes out. Just before *Life On Mars* was aired, *Lost* was a huge, but unlikely, success for Channel 4. However well thought out a project is, one can never predict the public's reaction.

A JOINT VENTURE

One should learn not to count on success, but to put together a really good creative team and work with people who you enjoy working with. Since this is something else which everyone should be reminded of – success is always a joint venture.

It is also important to know how to listen, to not want to have the answers to everything and to be able to listen to people's criticism. Knowing how to respond to notes constructively and interpreting what can sometimes be badly worded notes is essential.

Matthew Graham likes working with directors and wants them to be a part of the creative process. He has engaged somewhat robustly with directors on set at times, but says this is not the place for it and any differences should be ironed out beforehand. This is also why the visual reality must be well thought out way before shooting begins.

There are now more and more screenwriters present on set and this has been the way in America for a long time. This said, there is a time for everything, in other words all the different aspects of a series should be discussed as much as required and well in advance, but once on set, all this has to be put to one side.



IN THE WRITERS' ROOM

Matthew feels that when putting together a team of authors, there should not be too many and that you should know and like their work. A writers' room should be dynamic and egalitarian. Everyone should be allowed to speak, but somebody needs to direct them. He remembers the way in which George Lucas led the writing room on the project for a *Star Wars* series he worked on. Like him, he likes people who have energy and enthusiasm; writers who can work fast and share ideas and also be able to change their ideas if they are not right, without going off into a sulk. People who are quiet and solitary are not suited for this method of writing. It is also very useful to have a second in command, somebody in whom you have confidence, who can run the room when you are not able to be there.

When questioned on the inexistence of writers' rooms in other countries, Germany for example, Matthew Graham recognises that it can seem to be expensive, but he points out that one saves money on other posts if one puts together a team of writers who come up with good scripts rapidly. He would advise using economic arguments to convince the powers that be to use this model.

AN AUTHOR WITH RESPONSIBILITIES

Matthew Graham is no longer simply an author. « You have to decide what sort of author you want to be », he says. He has chosen to be a showrunner, which is becoming more and more common in the United Kingdom, even though there is no training available for this. It is wonderful to be able to oversee one's work from A to Z. Nevertheless, it is a position that you must want and be able to assume, as it must be said, « with great power comes great responsibility »

Being showrunner means setting down standards so that good scripts are ready in good time. It's all about managing the creative side under pressure, having a vision and believing in it. It is not about being able to do everything oneself, but having an image in one's head and communicating this to other people who can do it for you. One has to be coherent from end to end, particularly with changes in directors on long series. One has to work with the director to ensure uniformity and the choice of cast and crew. In the end, it is all about having a creative vision and seeing it through.

This should not stop you from taking on a role with much less responsibility, just the writing for example. When he went from *Life On Mars* to *Dr Who*, Matthew Graham says he had a lot of fun simply writing and comes up with this metaphor to explain the difference: « organising the whole party, or just going to a party ». Some people enjoy the frenetic position of showrunner and others simply writing scripts in their office and never setting foot on set.

MASTERCLASS

JEPPE GJERVIG GRAM



SPEAKER:

Jeppe Gjervig Gram (screenwriter, Denmark)

CHAIRIED BY:

Claire Lemaréchal (screenwriter, France)

Jeppe Gjervig Gram established a reputation for himself when he received the BAFTA for best international series in 2012 with *Borgen*, for which he is one of three screenwriters. More recently, he created a new series for the Danish public channel DR: *Follow the Money*, which has been broadcast since 1st January 2016.

Today, he answers questions from his colleague, Claire Lemaréchal, who offers to take a look back with him over his career path, his working methods, his successes, but also his failures. In particular, is there such a thing as a specific Danish recipe for producing so much quality, world-class fiction?

HOW DID YOU BECOME A SCREENWRITER?

Like many writers, Jeppe Gjervig Gram at first wanted to become a director, but was not admitted to his chosen school. After studying at university, and while working as a fiction consultant for the international programme purchasing service at TV2, he “fell in love with the genre” thanks to series such as *The West Wing* and *The Sopranos*. Most importantly, he discovered that what he enjoyed most about this audiovisual landscape was the writing process itself. He eventually trained as a screenwriter at the Danish National Film School from 2005 to 2007, and since then has had no desire to become a director.

It should be noted that televised fiction in the late '90s had not reached the momentous success it enjoys nowadays, nor had streaming yet been invented; and yet, there was already a great deal of quality involved. Jeppe Gjervig Gram explains that, at the time, the competing Danish channel used to send their teams to the U.S.A. to “learn to make series”, take inspiration from the methods used across the pond, and return home to improve upon their own recipe. Denmark does have notable expertise on this subject, undoubtedly closer to the American model than the European one, and while their teams may be smaller, their conviction and voice are no less strong.

HOW DO YOU SELL A SERIES?

Jeppe Gjervig Gram mentions the importance of a writer’s bible: the author may know by heart the universe that they have created, but they still need to be able to communicate this to others: not just potential partners like producers and broadcasters, but also future co-writers, directors, technicians, actors... This will be the reference document – he suggests a length of around 20 pages – that will ensure end-to-end coherence, and can be amended or added to as the episodes progress.

More generally, it is important to pay attention to every meeting: a series comes to fruition only at the end of a long process of dialogue and on-going exchanges, which must continue all through development. Launching a series is no mean feat, but Jeppe Gjervig Gram insists upon the importance of knowing how to pitch an idea properly. Sometimes, everything depends on a simple oral presentation, which needs to go into the necessary depth, explain the evolution of the characters and the plot, even the décor (and, why not, could even be accompanied by a mood book). He also recalls the producer’s very sincere emotional response to the *Borgen* pitch, which was his indication that the project was good – paying attention to emotional reactions is always a good gauge, and should not be neglected – even though he didn’t realise that the series would be a success until he saw the pilot episode.

BACK TO BORGEN

Jeppé Gjervig Gram was initially hired by the head of fiction at DR to write the script for the last three episodes of *Sommer*, with his friend from university, Tobias Lindholm. They were given very few instructions, two or three at the most. He would come across Tobias Lindholm again later, when he asked him to join him on the adventure of *Borgen*, alongside the series' third and last – but not least – scriptwriter, Adam Price. It was the springboard for their success!

They had a whole new, and much greater, responsibility this time around. The initial idea was to create an extremely audacious political series (Jeppé Gjervig Gram refers back to his previous mention of *The West Wing*, which greatly affected him). Moreover, they all knew that they wanted to end Season 1 with a major question left unanswered, so that the possibility of a follow-up was undeniable. The three co-writers also made a pact: each one would write alone. As a result, there was no real writers' room, although of course the issue of ensuring coordination and coherence was still there. Jeppé Gjervig Gram wrote 14 of the 30 episodes that comprised the series, as well as a few additional contributions to other episodes.

BEDRAG / FOLLOW THE MONEY

This time, the idea came from the major financial crisis that affected the West in 2008. There was the collapse of the banks in New York, and the crisis was palpable all over the world, like the end of an era. Jeppé Gjervig Gram thought then that the politics were not the only ingredient that could be used to denounce the limitations and the abuse of a collapsing system.

Tobias Lindholm was not part of the team this time, as he had agreed to shoot a feature-length film shortly beforehand. Jeppé Gjervig Gram, therefore, spent nearly five months developing the concept alone, before pitching the idea on his own. He wanted to create a series that would deliver a "global societal message", and would attack the cogs in the financial machine, based on speculation, fraud, crime and even renewable energy; and that would not only involve corrupt politicians and multinationals, but other layers of society – hence the mechanic character in particular – the "average person", for want of a better word.

To provide context for the plot and credibility for his proposal, Jeppé Gjervig Gram didn't hesitate to meet with the head of a large company who served time in prison for embezzlement and/or misappropriation of funds. This allowed him to better construct the profile of the character Sander. "Frauds are charismatic, fascinating, captivating, brilliant, and funny, too..." In short, a gold mine for a screenwriter. "All of these qualities are what make them such crooks!" declares Jeppé Gjervig Gram, not without humour.

THREE POINTS OF VIEW

In *Bedrag / Follow the money*, the narrative revolves around three points of view. This is almost a generic working method for Jeppé Gjervig Gram, or at least one that he finds relevant and effective.

Like *Borgen*, which followed the parallel storylines of:

1) journalist Katrine Fønsmark, 2) Prime Minister Birgitte Nyborg, and 3) her spin doctor Kasper Juul; in this case we are interested in the crossed paths of: 1) Claudia Maureno, the young, ambitious lawyer who wins the trust of her CEO Alexander Sødergren; 2) Mads Justesen, the cop investigating the death of a worker whose body is found on an off-shore wind farm, and who quickly suspects the involvement of the company Energreen; 3) Nicky, ex-delinquent and car thief in his spare time, currently going straight as a mechanic but who lets his colleague Bimse tempt him into making some easy money again... Even though "money can't buy you happiness" (this may also be one of the morals of the series).

As for Sander, the powerful bigwig, he is voluntarily shrouded in mystery. Although some scenes are focused slightly more on his character, he remains a pivotal figure around whom all of the previously mentioned characters seem to revolve, all caught up in a vicious spiral that has escaped their control.

ON THE WRITING PROCESS FOR BEDRAG

Jeppé Gjervig Gram worked with two screenwriters around his age (the team had been slightly more inter-generational in *Borgen*, he notes): Anders August and Jannik Tai Mosholt. Left out of the *1864* project – a period piece broadcast in Denmark in 2014 – due to differences of opinion with the director, the trio promised to reunite over a project in the future, and this turned out to be *Follow the Money*. The sharing of the writing task went well: the three colleagues would shut themselves in the writers' room for two weeks to form the basis of an episode, then one week later they would take on the "processing" itself. It generally took no fewer than five drafts to get to the definitive version: even more for the first episode (10 drafts in total for the pilot of the series: the 6th was the 'good one', so to speak, while versions 7-10 were just fine tuning).

The first season took over a year to write, then production took at least another year, so it was a good two-year journey in the end. As for the channel's involvement, Jeppé Gjervig Gram indicates that the head of fiction at DR, Piv Bernth, only began reading from the third draft on: that is, once the series was already underway, which was also a sign of her trust. But most of all, he underlines the fundamental role of the research carried out by the production team, in this case by the same person who carried out all the research necessary for *Borgen*.

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF INVOLVING THE DIRECTOR LONG BEFORE SHOOTING

Even though the scripts for the first four episodes of *Bedrag* were only just finalised, Jeppé Gjervig Gram wanted the director to be involved as early as possible in the creative process, so that he could take real ownership of the project. As this was an original idea, he had always envisaged recruiting the director as soon as possible. In this case, it was Per Fly who took on the first two episodes of the series and who would have liked to direct the next two, but he was called upon to shoot a feature-length film. He was succeeded by Jannik Johansen, Søren Balle and Søren Kragh-Jacobsen.



ON VISUAL AND SHOOTING ELEMENTS

Impressed by the quality and uniqueness of *Bedrag's* visual atmosphere, in addition to the suspense of the plot in itself, which notably includes lots of reflections and glass, Jeppe Gjervig Gram confirms that a decision was made to opt for transparency. This worked well with the icy side of this political and institutional crime series, but above all, from a technical standpoint, made it possible to have several different depths of field on the screen. Following the concept of mood boards mentioned earlier, he created a sort of visual bible and had long discussions with the artistic teams – the same ones used in *Borgen* – to find the best graphic recipe. It's also worth noting that the only credits used in the series, with their glassy, aquatic feel, are the most costly credits ever produced at DR.

More generally, the episodes – 10 x 60 minutes for Season 1, a duration that Jeppe Gjervig Gram considers most appropriate for a series of this genre, as 42 minutes seems to him to be too short for a drama – were shot two at a time, and shooting began when the writing team was still in the finalisation phase for Episodes 6 and 7, and the story lining phase for Episodes 8 and 9.

WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

Follow the money is now in its second season, and they had to be quick about it: the writing began only just four weeks ago. The first season was broadcast from last January, at prime time on Sunday evenings, and the second will begin in September of this year, which is rare enough to be worthy of note. In France, you should be able to watch *Bedrag* on France 2, the latest series in this genre that this channel is offering, after *Trapped*, another Nordic production.

When asked whether a third season will be made, Jeppe Gjervig Gram modestly declines to answer. In any event, it will be Piv Bernth who decides, and in this case she has already asked him to submit ideas for it, but things will be clearer by the end of summer. He wants to remain prudent, particularly since he believes, in any case, that Danish series should not exceed two or three seasons, at the risk of losing precisely the freshness and intensity that make them so powerful. In other words, although he clearly has all the narrative content necessary to write this season 3, he would rather say no to his boss than give her a pallid extension to the original series: a testament to his commitment and writer's ethics.

When asked about his ambitions for the future, Jeppe Gjervig Gram does not deny that he would like to return to feature-length films, but television series are time-consuming, and in this case, he likes that. We had already noticed and we're not going to complain! The pleasure he currently derives from working in Denmark, the quality of his personal contacts, the professionalism that surrounds him, but also the great freedom of expression and creation he enjoys, all mean that he doesn't imagine for one second that he will try out the Hollywood adventure. Never say never...

MASTERCLASS

NATHANIEL MÉCHALY



SPEAKER:

Nathaniel Méchaly (composer, France)

CHAired BY:

Nicolas Jorelle (composer, France)

With the support of:



Nicolas Jorelle is pleased to welcome to the stage Nathaniel Méchaly, who has composed the scores for several films, as well as sound design for television and for events organised by major fashion houses.

WRITING MUSIC THAT DOESN'T EXIST

Nathaniel Méchaly joined the Conservatoire National de Marseille, where he studied cello and chamber music for fifteen years; next, he joined the IRCAM musical research institute in Paris to study electro-acoustic composition. From 1993, he put his name to the sound design for several channels such as Paris Première, Ciné Cinéma and TF1 Jeunesse. "I was lucky enough, because I do believe it was luck, to be able to create and write music that doesn't exist." By "music that doesn't exist", Nathaniel Méchaly means a sound identity: "music that will not be heard in a series or a film". This experience was an incredible education, both from a creative and a musical perspective. Nathaniel Méchaly had no training in scoring. This first job gave him the opportunity to produce music. "I learned by doing."

After composing music for credits at France 3 (*Soir 3*), Nathaniel Méchaly was contacted by Jean-Marie Cavada to write the music for the credits to *La Marche du Siècle*. He composed a new set of credits every week for two years, each one adapted to the theme of the episode (70 in total).

During the same period, Gabriel Yared, Alexandre Desplat and Jean-Claude Petit, on the initiative of Jean-Pierre Arquié, created an association – the Academy Pléiade – in which young composers had a chance to present their work. Nathaniel Méchaly was chosen from a hundred candidates for his work on *La Marche du Siècle*. This led him to spend ten years working as an assistant to Gabriel Yared, who was "master of music" to him. In a way, it was he who, having taken him under his wing, opened the doors of cinema to him.

COMPOSING FOR CINEMA VS. COMPOSING FOR SERIES

In 2004, Nathaniel Méchaly made his big screen debut by composing the score for Raphaël Nadjari's film *Avanim*. He would go on to work with great directors such as Guy Ritchie and Richard Berry, and to work on several films produced and/or written by Luc Besson (*Revolver*, *The Black Box*, the *Taken* trilogy, *Colombiana*...).

Nicolas Jorelle asks Nathaniel Méchaly about the details of his musical compositions for series, and in his opinion, the creative space in a series is that of the moment, apart from the credits, which must be extremely distinctive. It is not like composing for cinema, where you can develop ideas in depth or use very complex themes. Music for series must be immediate and reactive. "Cinema allows a kind of poetry that series cannot fully achieve."

MIDNIGHT SUN

Nathaniel Méchaly composed the score for the series *Midnight Sun*, the new CANAL+ original series, a Franco-Swedish co-production. The plot of this thriller takes place within the confines of Lapland, in the land of the indigenous Sami people. Leïla Bekhti plays Kahina Zadi, captain of the Central Office for the Repression of Violence against Individuals, sent to Kiruna to investigate the violent murder of a French citizen. To find the mysterious killer, she joins forces with prosecutor Anders Harnesk, played by Gustaf Hammarsten (*The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*).

Nathaniel Méchaly notes that this series was a unique case that goes against all of the views he has held until now. *Midnight Sun* was created by Måns Mårilind and Björn Stein (creators of the series *Bron / The Bridge*) and therefore has the unique status of an “art-house series designed as though it were an eight-hour film”. The story is very powerful, and develops like a book in eight volumes.

SCREENING OF THE CREDITS OF MIDNIGHT SUN

The credits recall a traditional chant of the Sami people, indigenous to northern Sweden, whose oppression is denounced in the series. This song, incredibly pure with very mysterious sounds, is one of the main themes for the series. It has become distinctive feature of *Midnight Sun*.

SCREENING OF AN EXTRACT FROM THE FIRST EPISODE

A six-minute extract of the first episode of *Midnight Sun* is screened. The sound and dialogue have been removed: only the music remains. In this sequence, Leïla Bekhti, who plays the main character, is confronted by her son. The scene is filled with tension. Later in the extract, the actress wanders the streets of Paris, distraught. She breaks down into tears, then deliberately injures her own hand by scraping her palm on a nail. The pain seems to bring her comfort. In the last part of the extract, she is in a taxi. She receives a telephone call telling her that a murder has been committed in Sweden and the victim is French.

Nathaniel Méchaly particularly likes this extract. The music seems to be “belong”. In the first part, Kahina Zadi is reunited with her son. The music is discreet: it “creeps up on you”. During the long tracking shot through the streets of Paris, on the other hand, the music builds in intensity up to the point where the character self-harms, when the composition accompanies and expresses her profound pain. In the last part, the music is somewhat more modest. It is intended to accompany the dialogues, express a mood, provide an atmosphere.

Midnight Sun really marks the meeting of Nathaniel Méchaly and Leïla Bekhti, who, as far as he is concerned, carries the series from beginning to end. “She was so beautiful and powerful that I had no choice but to accompany her, to offer her support and to reflect the incredible energy she was developing.” Leïla Bekhti was Nathaniel Méchaly’s primary inspiration, and acts as the “conducting thread” of the music, which follows her through all her emotions. More generally, “you cannot produce good music without good actors”. The musician is the series’ first viewer: they react to what they see.

Creating the music in *Midnight Sun* was an incredible experience, notes Nathaniel Méchaly. He visited Sweden twenty-eight times over a six-month period to compose on-site (the production team had a studio set up for him). “The music was composed with complete interactivity”. Måns Mårilind and Björn Stein (also producers of the eight episodes) were present the whole time, reacting in real time. For six months, Nathaniel Méchaly dedicated himself entirely to this project. “The creative energy was so intense that I got caught up in this series.” “I was in a bubble,” he confesses. He remains haunted by the series to this day.

Composing the score for a television series is always a powerful and engaging experience. Nathaniel Méchaly indicates that it is sometimes necessary to compose up to 40 minutes of score in one week. It is always a challenge that demands a kind of “going beyond oneself”. For *Midnight Sun*, the music is constantly original and “nothing was repeated”. “I couldn’t allow myself to,” he adds, “the actress was so wonderful”.

In conclusion, Nathaniel Méchaly imparts some advice for composers. You must always be ready, which means you must never stop composing. Since “the day when you start a project, composing cannot be a problem”: the creation must flow instantly.



COMPOSING MUSIC FOR SERIES ROAR SKAU OLSEN & NIKLAS SCHAK



PARTICIPANTS :

Roar Skau Olsen (musical supervisor, Denmark)

Niklas Schak (composer, Denmark)

With the support of:



Roar Skau Olsen and Niklas Schak worked together for the first time on the Danish series *Splitting Up Together*, a comedy that is both dramatic and tender, about the inner workings of family life and romantic relationships, in a tragicomic tone. They offer to recount this experience, breaking down for us the musical composition processes in television shows: what are the different stages? What are the relationships like between writers, directors, producers, broadcasters, etc.? How can we create, sometimes within restrictions but still remaining free to suggest anything we like? In short, can we work well together in a Europe that is currently offering wonderful potential for collaborations, as borders are coming down, but while so many very different cultures still exist, creating unprecedented opportunities for them to meet and mingle...

PITCH

Splitting up together is the story of a couple in the midst of a full-blown midlife crisis. Line and Martin have good jobs and beautiful children but a bleak sex life; they decide to get divorced while still supporting each other and staying put, meaning that they continue to share the same space at home, and care for their children in alternating shifts... it's not that easy!

Before getting to the core of the subject – musical creation – and to give us a better idea of the atmosphere of the household – effectively the only set – and the universe in which the series is set, Roar Skau Olsen and Niklas Schak suggest that we watch the trailer.

THE FIRST STEPS

Initially, of course, Roar Skau Olsen and Niklas Schak saw a lot of each other, to set the foundations for their collaboration. It's worth noting that, from the beginning stages of their compositions, they invited the writer, director, producer, etc. and presented them with a few clips and other initial sound material for their consideration.

It is important, particularly as a musical supervisor, to dare to "speak up loudly and boldly" from the beginning, even going against the ideas of others, particularly the director and writer: this is simply part of the game. Because in music, anything should be allowed, including crazy ideas, so as not to risk killing the creative process in its infancy. Of course, it is still important to be able to unite the many stakeholders around your ideas and your enthusiasm.

The musical creation process is still an empirical and structured adventure, but above all it is highly instinctive, making it tough to put into words. To illustrate this point and this subtle journey, Roar Skau Olsen and Niklas Schak tell an anecdote that was clearly foundational for them...

BACK TO A LEGENDARY SERIES: TWIN PEAKS

Roar Skau Olsen and Niklas Schak speak glowingly and with admiration about the way in which David Lynch and Angelo Badalamenti, composer and arranger, created the acoustic universe for *Twin Peaks*, in a symbiosis that speaks volumes. They tell us about this encounter in the form of a dialogue between the two protagonists, barely fictional, which illustrates the intimacy of the experience, like the start of a love affair.

David Lynch describes to the composer the opening scene of the series: "We are in the woods, dark, but a light is shining, we hear the rustling of the leaves, the wind, an owl..." This prompts Angelo Badalamenti to start playing... "Keep going, it's good, but slower, keep going slower, that's it..." says David Lynch, gradually beginning to visualise what was originally his own description, but which hadn't really begun to take shape until the sound was added... "Now comes a change in rhythm and this young girl appears, Laura Palmer...", and Angelo Badalamenti adds a melody to the initial sound base... "She's moving forward, coming towards the camera, closer and closer, she falls, gets back up..." and Angelo Badalamenti adds a sharp note... "That's right, keep going, but go back to the woods just now, dark, falling, get up then go back into the woods, gently, calmly, mysteriously..." The two men finally embrace, emotional, and David Lynch declares: "I see Twin Peaks, don't change a single note".

In this way, as if by fusion, the musical theme that would become the signature of this legendary series took form. This is precisely how Roar Skau Olsen and Niklas Schak want to work together.

THE ORIGIN OF A COMPOSITION

Roar Skau Olsen and Niklas Schak originally had the idea to base their work on the model of silent film soundtracks, but replacing the traditional piano with percussion. So Niklas Schak played the drums for nearly eight weeks. Percussion creates chaos, he explains: it is like the expression of this "family circle", a circus with a clownish tone, both funny and sad at the same time.

Splitting Up Together is in fact a classic dramedy, confirms Roar Skau Olsen, who goes on to say that the percussion turned out to be a bit too rudimentary and restricted on its own. Since the idea was to broadcast the series widely, this meant that they had to adapt and enrich the music, making it less abstract.

Knowing how to backtrack can be a quality in itself, even a necessity, and so the "percussion only" objective was discarded – although a listener did congratulate the two for being bold enough to make this suggestion, which was

very concrete and very brave due to its controversy, even citing the music from *Birdman*, which was also created in an essentially percussion-based environment. In a manner of speaking, everything had to be reworked, but did this mean they had to invent a more contemporary, completely futuristic score, or rather set it even further back in time? At this stage, anything was still possible: the most important thing was that no musical possibilities were excluded.

Thinking of recent musical successes, particularly those of Pharrell Williams, the two remarked to each other that he had very cleverly put sounds to very seventies colours in a modern context, and they took inspiration from this idea. Next, they started thinking about funk. Niklas Schak composed five or six tracks in this genre without having the various partners listen to them, and as the creative process followed its course, he finally came to a revelation: this was a case of love turning sour, or "Tainted Love"... It occurred to them that the series literally acted out the words of this famous song, first performed by Gloria Jones in 1964, but whose popularity arose primarily from the 1981 cover by Soft Cell. "Everything fell into place" all at once, with this mixture of soul and '70s vibe. This is how the score came into being.

MUSIC, AN INVENTION BEYOND NARRATION

Composers, arrangers and supervisors can't afford to ration themselves: they have to put all their energy and love of music into the work, reinventing constantly. Most importantly, they must always go further than the narration in their music, not settling for commenting on the image and action.

Roar Skau Olsen and Niklas Schak give one last piece of advice: never start by composing the credits, which will no doubt become the signature of the series; instead, wait until the general soundtrack is complete so that the foundations are already set before tackling the credits.



CULTURAL IDENTITIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET



PARTICIPANTS:

Emmanuelle Bouilhaguet (director, Lagardère Studios Distribution)
 Vincent Leclercq (audiovisual director, CNC - National Film Centre)
 Bénédicte Lesage (producer, Mascaret Films)
 Luca Milano (deputy executive director, Rai Fiction)
 Pascal Rogard (general director of the SACD, Society of Drama Authors and Composers)
 Olivier Wotling (head of drama, Arte)

CHAired BY:

Anne Rambach (screenwriter, president of the French Screenwriters' Guild)

Anne Rambach opens the discussion with an observation: after a long period spent lagging behind, France made a comeback, reaching the top 5 countries for television series exports.

MY TAILOR IS RICH

In light of this observation, Anne Rambach puts her first question to the participants at the round table: does the exportation of French series represent an opportunity for French writers?

The response appears somewhat mixed. Normally, exportation should provide new opportunities. But for Pascal Rogard, the situation is far from idyllic. The issue of language persists when it comes to creating a series with a global reach. Some pieces, self-proclaimed as being designed for export, are written in English. This is the case with *Versailles*, a Franco-Canadian co-production of which the main character is Louis XIV himself. And yet, it was written by two reputable Anglo-Saxon authors and shot entirely in English. The series *The Collection*, co-produced by France 3, BBC Worldwide and Amazon Prime, was also shot in the English language. "These series actually exclude participation from French-speaking screenwriters," Pascal Rogard points out. "All this talk of exportation does not necessarily lead to more work for French writers." The situation is much easier for directors, however, who are more adaptable and can work in a language that is not their own.

Taking the series *The Transporter* as an example, Emmanuelle Bouilhaguet admits that the marketing of English-language productions is potentially more profitable. Series are shot in this language to increase their sales potential or encourage a distributor to spend more money on a project. Nonetheless, the market has changed in recent years, and the English language appears to be gradually losing its competitive advantage. Recently, for example, the United Kingdom has

started buying French and European series such as *The Returned* and *The Witnesses*. *Deutschland 83*, a German-language series, has encountered great success throughout Europe. The language barrier is much weaker than it may have been in the past.

Vincent Leclercq refers to the CNC's strategy in this regard. The amount of support provided for works of fiction destined for export is now smaller than for original creations in French destined primarily for the domestic market. In this way, the CNC is pursuing a policy that promotes French-language creation, and "although this does not hinder English-language production, neither does it promote it."

The current changes in the market can only be cause for celebration. Vincent Leclercq points out that French fiction production has been stagnating at 770 hours per year for the past several years. Exportation should breathe new life into this pursuit. Effectively, works of fiction are endowed with very few levers for growth. He points to channels, of course, but it is agreed that these will not have any extra financial resources in the future. The international market thus constitutes a new lever. When discussing exports, a distinction should be made between sales and co-productions: "Currently, French exports are massively represented by sales, while the number of co-productions can be counted on one hand." Of the five co-productions supported by the CNC, two (*Versailles* and *The Collection*) chose to use the English language. The others opted for realism, including *The Last Panthers* and *Midnight Sun*, both of which were shot in different languages: languages that "make sense".

CONTENT TRUMPS LANGUAGE

Olivier Wotling believes that the strength of a project resides primarily in its identity, not the language in which it is shot. To support this opinion, he uses the example of *Occupied*, a series created by Jo Nesbø and co-produced by Arte and the Norwegian channel NRK. The series was written and shot in Norwegian and fits Arte's strategy for co-production and purchasing, which aims to showcase the best of European production. As such, the channel refuses to "Frenchify" the projects it is involved in (by imposing French protagonists on the series, for example). In the case of *Occupied*, this would not have made sense. "Arte fully accepts the culture and languages involved in each project."

Yet, in its most recent creation, *Eden* (a series about migrants, co-produced alongside Germany and taking place in both Greece and Germany), Arte wanted a French writer to be allowed involvement in the script. The aim here was to diversify the perspectives expressed in the series. The view that French people have on migrants (Greece in particular) is very different from that of Germans. The series had to "bring out the various sensitivities so that national singularities could feed into the writing and become a strength". This type of project, Olivier Wotling adds, also allows French scriptwriters to come up against different writing methods. For a writer, this experience is necessarily fruitful because it allows them to expand their creative palette.

Anne Rambach observes that a festival like *Série Series* in itself illustrates European writers' need for exchange, if only of their practices and writing processes. On this topic, Pascal Rogard adds, festivals are important tools for

distributing and circulating their work. This has long been the case for cinema, and now it is true of series as well. Pascal Rogard takes this opportunity to call upon the CNC to demonstrate benevolent neutrality towards a festival like *Série Series*, which was created by writers, as opposed to "other enormous machines" which already benefit from a large amount of public support...

Bénédicte Lesage insists upon the need to produce pieces of work that are both powerful and unique. From the producer's point of view, the international market can be an economic opportunity. Of course, everyone in attendance wants French production to do well, and for French writers to make money from it. But the economics and profitability of a project are not ends in themselves. "The Europe of today needs meaning, exchanges, recognition of the diversities of which it is composed." A series must reflect what a writer wants to say to the world. This vision may be founded on a variety of perspectives. It is on this level that co-production can offer new creative perspectives, making it possible to unite many voices around a common desire.

But once again, the content of the piece, and the originality of the viewpoint of its author or authors, must take precedence. An outstanding series will always find its audience. Bénédicte Lesage uses the example of *En Immersion*, a three-episode series in black and white (created by Philippe Haïm) that she produced for Arte. The series was bought by Netflix to be shown in the U.S.A. and the U.K. Series that are different, original, and that make no attempt to copy what is already on the market, have a greater capacity for circulation.





TIME AND MONEY

All participants in the discussion agree that international co-productions require more resources and particularly more time. Olivier Wotling notes that co-production is a drawn-out process. Arte has succeeded in forging links with Scandinavian broadcasters thanks to its purchasing and pre-purchasing policy, and regular meetings with creators and broadcasters. A co-production can only see the light of day if the various partners trust each other, and if their different working methods are considered compatible. After broadcasting a series like *Borgen* (discovered through the festival *Scénaristes en série* in Aix-les-Bains, the predecessor of *Série Series*), five years later the channel was able to participate in the development of the new series by the same writer, Adam Price.

Bénédicte Lesage shares this point of view. However, she adds that, because of their experiences, new generations of writers have a more international vocation than their predecessors. Young people have travelled more, and some have studied in other countries. They adapt more easily to the co-production model, which is based primarily on establishing a “common knowledge”. All participants in a co-production must understand and learn to adapt to each other’s practices.

Vincent Leclercq considers co-production on an international scale to be a complex process, for two reasons. The first is that the cultural differences can run very deep. It can be very difficult to agree upon a common goal, so it follows that co-production must take up more time and more resources. The second reason is that funding has become more complex and requires a longer learning curve. Still, certain domains lead the way in this regard, such as animation, for example. As Vincent Leclercq points out, France has become Europe’s biggest exporter of animation films, and furthermore, 30% of investments in this sector come from abroad.

MEETING THE AUDIENCE’S EXPECTATIONS

Many people continue to wonder whether too local a series is, by its very nature, too difficult to export. Emmanuelle Bouilhaguet doesn’t think so. Contrary to what some studies

of market trends may lead us to believe, the genre or era in which a series is set (many co-productions are historical series) has only a very marginal impact on its scope for exportation. What matters most is that the needs of foreign broadcasters and the desires of their audiences are met.

Emmanuelle Bouilhaguet singles out two types of series in this regard: procedural dramas and soap operas. *Joséphine Ange Gardien* was able to sell in Italy and Spain because the broadcasters needed a popular family series (a “feel-good” show) that could be shown at noon. Other more dramatic shows such as *Cain* travel well because they correspond to broadcasters’ needs for certain daytime slots or prime time.

Luca Milano, for his part, makes a distinction between Scandinavian countries and countries like France or Italy. It seems quite normal that a country like Norway, with its 5 million inhabitants, would create its products with a view to exporting. In Italy’s case, particularly for the Rai, circulating its series internationally is not a priority. Like in France, the Italian public and the audience shares that can be generated nationally fully justify creating for the domestic market. The export market does offer new opportunities, but a major national channel cannot afford to neglect the audience they are addressing. According to Luca Milano, “for a channel like Rai 1, the biggest generalist television channel in Italy, the main role of fiction is to draw in an intergenerational audience.” Therefore, not all fiction can be designed with an international perspective.

Besides, highly localised series can also achieve great success on a global scale. Fiction series are often representative of the identity of their country of origin, or even a specific region. For example, more than just an Italian series, *Gomorra* is a Neapolitan series, but it has still been sold to more than 100 countries throughout the world. In this case, the show’s firm rooting in the Neapolitan world has turned out to be one of its strengths.

THE IMPACT OF NEW PLAYERS

In any case, and while noting that “we do not necessarily produce the same things for the biggest channel in the country as we do for the viewers of a subscription-based channel,” Luca Milano points out that the multiplication of channels does provide a new sense of dynamism for the market.

Emmanuelle Bouilhaguet wholeheartedly agrees. She adds that players like Netflix have torn up the rulebook for the market. This American platform is now buying series that are struggling to find an audience locally. Netflix is on the lookout for original pieces and has opened up the market for series addressed primarily at niche markets. That said, although the arrival of these new players offers new opportunities and facilitates growth in the television series market, Emmanuelle Bouilhaguet reveals that she is less optimistic about the future. In fact, there is a risk that we may be witnessing the weakening of national broadcasters in favour of transnational platforms. Netflix is increasingly requiring sale of all broadcasting rights for the series it acquires, which poses the risk of generating less favourable conditions for producers and creators, in terms of both resources and exposure.

For his part, Pascal Rogard is convinced that new platforms like Netflix and Hulu will eventually lead to the weakening of national broadcasters and eventually reduce competition on the European market.

Vincent Leclercq confirms that these platforms have profoundly disrupted the model of audiovisual creation. Their goal is to acquire exclusive content (generally for reasonably long periods) for which they own all rights. This new model therefore casts new doubt upon the role of the independent producer. Producers' attitudes, he notes, are currently somewhat ambiguous. Platforms like Netflix "offer new opportunities to produce and therefore to sell, opportunities that are very difficult to pass up under today's conditions". At the same time, these new operators cast serious doubt upon the established production model that has existed, in France for instance, for the past 25 years.

THE ROLE OF BRUSSELS

Pascal Rogard points the finger at Brussels for this problem. The European Community has shown itself to be incapable of implementing a development project for fiction that creators

can subscribe to. "Support for creativity is not seen in a positive light." Pascal Rogard notes that a French film shot in France will never be in competition with an English or Danish film. The quality is compounded, and "if viewers are going to see more Danish films, it's likely that they will also go to see more French films." This principle applies to series, too.

Bénédicte Lesage returns to the issue of financing, which was discussed earlier. These days, when a co-production is launched, the producer is confronted with an incalculable number of parameters: CNC regulations, the regulations of the countries involved, tax credit mechanisms, etc. The combined force of these sometimes incoherent and far-fetched regulations stifles creativity, as the producers are often more concerned with purely financial aspects than artistic ones. The compatibility of the innumerable rules in force on European territory remains an issue.

Vincent Leclercq cannot help but agree with this. An effort must be made to simplify the rules, particularly where tax credits are concerned. "On a European level, we have allowed an incredible and uncontrolled overlap to develop between the different tax credits." In other words, we have allowed "the finances to overtake the art".

Finally, only the issue of remuneration for writers remains. Pascal Rogard points out that there is no proportional remuneration mechanism in place either in Italy or in Germany. In these countries, writers do not enjoy the full proceeds of their creations' success in export. The French system for authors' rights is unique in Europe, in terms of both its protection mechanisms and its financial remuneration mechanisms. "It is more necessary now than ever that authors' rights be standardised on a European scale."

Unfortunately, it must be noted that there is no great public interest in this matter.



ONE VISION ISSAKA SAWADOGO

(ACTOR, DANCER, MUSICIAN AND DIRECTOR, BURKINA FASO)



SERIES IN AFRICA :
BETWEEN A NEW EL DORADO
AND CULTURAL COLONISATION

Actor, dancer, musician and director, Issaka Sawadogo is the very personification of multiculturalism. Born in Burkina Faso, he studied and has lived and worked in Norway for many years now – notably for the National Theatre (Nationaltheatret), the Norwegian Theatre (Det Norske Teatret) and the Torshov Theatre (Torshovteatret) – and he has a perfect command of this country's language. Incidentally, he was happy to be able to have a chat beforehand with Tone C. Rønning, who was also invited to speak during this *One Vision* session. Today, he spends his time between these two countries, but he also works in Belgium and France (he plays one of the leads in CANAL+'s original new series, *Guyane*).

Issaka Sawadogo warmly thanks *Série Series* for giving him this opportunity to talk about African-Occidental links in terms of audiovisual creation. He is very involved in the development of talent and series' creation in Africa and reminds us that the world was built on education. Yet education cannot be the same everywhere. In Africa, a territory which is in full growth, the notion of investment, for example, is not at all the same as in the Occident and the notion of human value is perceived quite differently as well.

Issaka Sawadogo does not mince his words: « All politicians are liars ». Of course international exchanges are beneficial, but we must not be fooled. Too many Africans are trained in Europe and then come home and make « pseudo-African films » or other « picture postcard cinema », which have nothing in common with the real African continent. Yet Africa really must defend its authenticity and cannot, in any way, accept a new form of colonisation through the prism of television. In its own time, Africa must ask the fundamental question on its identity. Who are we? Why are we the richest continent of the world where big summits on famine take place?

Once the process of identification has been covered, then comes the question of correct positioning. In order to accomplish this, priority must be given to knowledge and, therefore, education. An education that is both reasoned and reasonable. Since today, in Africa as well, influenced by images and models from the Occident, « people are bingeing, want more and more and are dying for it »; that is when they are not dying of hunger! There is no need to continue with conjectures and other calculations of the sort, when there is no doubt that Africa has the necessary resources and can access all the relevant technology. On the other hand, it definitely requires brain power, of the sort that can differentiate between different viewpoints and respect diversity and characteristics. Issaka Sawadogo illustrates this with an African tale which simply underlines the fact that we really do not see things in the same way according to where we are looking from.

We must put a stop to the threesome - Conspiracy, Looting, Destruction -, Issaka Sawadogo declares, since it is exactly this Europe/Africa relation that must be avoided at all costs. Of course, not everything can be condemned, as there have already been some good initiatives and some wonderful projects have come about, including in the audiovisual sector. We must continue to move forward, taking the necessary time and thinking carefully about our singularity. We must continue to be assertive in the development process and a well balanced cultural emancipation.

Issaka Sawadogo announces proudly that he dreams of setting up a *Série Series* in Burkina Faso, a similar platform for exchange, meetings and for the defence of creation. He concludes with a touch of political commitment and on a colourful note, calling once more for an end to attempts at colonisation by image and suggests that we think on the moral in this other African tale, like a warning against a form of concerted blindness, in his own words : « one never treads twice on a blind man's penis ».

ONE VISION ANNE LANDOIS & CAROLINE PROUST

(SCREENWRITER AND SHOWRUNNER, FRANCE) (ACTRESS, FRANCE)



A WOMAN'S VIEW OF FEMALE CHARACTERS

Spiral is not only one of the most exported French series (to more than 70 countries), but also emblematic in the renewal of quality French drama. And what if this international success were linked to the authenticity of its female characters, who are both powerful and realistic and not age-old clichés? The screenwriter, Anne Landois, accompanied by Caroline Proust, the actress, look back over the origins of this wonderful venture, which has been running for 10 years now and is already into its 6th season, the filming of which began in May and which will be aired in 2017.

The two heroines – police captain Laure Berthaud, played by Caroline Proust, and Joséphine Karlsson, the unscrupulous lawyer with a nefarious reputation, played by Audrey Fleurot – have without doubt become the keystones of the series, Anne Landois tells us. She wanted to develop the storyline and plot first and foremost as a female author and so every season gives pride of place to women.

Caroline Proust knew nothing of what she was getting into and has become one of the heroines as the story has progressed. She commends the freedom that CANAL+ has given them, trusting the team from the beginning and providing such a wonderful platform for women, in a society which she still finds much too misogynistic. It is true that television can provide a space for great freedom and creativity and Anne Landois says she identifies with and projects herself onto all the roles, both male and female, whatever their ages or walks of life. When authors, producers and broadcasters all agree, one can go beyond conventions, notably in the creation of characters.

Laure Berthaud's character has, of course, evolved over the seasons. Up to season 4 included, it was more a question of the career of a police officer who felt she « had to justify herself by being one of the boys ». From season 5 onwards, writing methods were changed. Although she does not really like the label of showrunner, Anne Landois confides that it was on her initiative that the detective angle took more of a back seat, whereas the « tailoring of the characters » became primordial; they have taken on more depth and their shortcomings and contradictions have been looked into in more detail. Season 4 came to a close with tragedy, as Laure mourned the love of her life, killed in an attack. Whereas season 5 starts with the counterpart of this

death, which is of course life, in the shape of her pregnancy, which results in her confronting her true self.

The advantage of a series is to be able to go into the characters in depth, more so than is possible in cinema. This can be done in close consultation with the actors, Proust is pleased to say. *Spiral* is also an adventure about « growing together », Anne Landois confirms. The series has lasted for so long that naturally everyone has changed. With each new season, she finds her actresses « in a different place ». Through this long process, a successful dialogue between the author and actors has been established. Laure Berthaud is a woman of her time, making the most out of her career, with a strong character, even more easily set off than usual, due to this unwanted pregnancy, to a point that she is very perturbed... Caroline Proust suggested to Anne Landois that Laure spend a short time in a psychiatric hospital (but this was not possible since a police officer can not then return to fieldwork). She often asked the screenwriters for more action and that's exactly what she got. She also asked that in season 5, her relationship with Lieutenant Gilou be developed. In short, Anne Landois may conceive and pitch the narrative arc, but they all discuss it round the table and from this essential exchange come new ideas and new challenges. Who knows a character any better than the actor playing it? With time, a symbiotic relationship was created: « working on a series becomes organic ».

Television reigns over intimacy. We watch it at any time of the day or night, even in bed. The craze for series has changed the situation for screenwriters, who take on a greater responsibility. With more freedom on the editorial policy front, one can swear and move the needle, notably the way in which women are represented. *Spiral* is a realistic series, rooted in the reality of the police and the political-judicial system maybe, but also in a world of active, multifaceted women; women who are reassuring and « not always chasing after » their image and their beauty. One must be wise and humble in the face of passing years, Caroline Proust concludes charmingly, « live well, so as to age well »; which is lucky as *Spiral* lives and ages rather well.

ONE VISION

TONE C. RØNNING

(EXECUTIVE PRODUCER FOR DRAMA AND INTERNATIONAL CO-PRODUCTIONS, NRK, NORWAY)

ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC
SERVICE BROADCASTING



Tone C. Rønning, would first like to thank the French for what they have brought Norwegians in terms of culture and starts with this amusing introduction : « I apologise again for the Vikings raping and robbing you a thousand years ago, but I also want to thank you for having contributed to our education. The first Norwegian student was at the Sorbonne in 1249 ». So it is only right that today, Norway produces quality drama that its European neighbours benefit from, including the people of Fontainebleau.

Tone C. Rønning is very conscious of the responsibility she has as a producer of drama and international co-productions at NRK. She has noticed that the gaps in society are increasing and statistics show this is the same across Europe. Every day, at work, she is aware that one of her most important roles is to empower and support democracy; since our democracies are fragile and nothing can be taken for granted. The fundamental task in public service media is to be of value to society.

Content should be for the common good and should address all levels of society, from all over the country, gathering the public around a generous common arena. Surveys show that 73 % of NRK's licence paying viewers feel they get good value for money and 81 % feel NRK is innovative. It's good, but that is not enough! Today our society is much more diverse and we need to bridge the gaps that separate us, be they class, generation, culture or religion. NRK has more success with the younger public when content is tailor-made, like with *Shame*, for example. Everyone should have a voice. Audiovisual productions are a good platform for this and should be developed in consequence. In order to encompass this diversity, directors and actors with multicultural expertise need to be used, but they are difficult to find, since there is a lack of education for this in media training. As a result, NRK has taken the decision to employ a greater number of employees with competence in diversity.

Tone C. Rønning summarises the main objectives of public service broadcasters' strategy:

- To better know and understand one's audience

- To increase engagement and diversity through new strategies and ways of communicating
- To have the correct priorities in the choice of portfolio
- To be the most relevant and trusted source of information
- To be more relevant for younger audiences
- To empower, curate and share
- To accelerate innovation and development
- To ensure prominence
- To transform organisational and leadership methods
- To adapt to emerging new content, as public services are subject to changing views on the relationships between governments, markets and society.

We cannot count solely on politicians and elections to create the Europe that we are all hoping for. Of course, government support is required in the audiovisual sector, but beyond that, the public must be capable of proclaiming their independence loud and strong, of asking questions and of destabilisation. Everyone living in a democracy must take part in it and a public is responsible for asking for and welcoming quality content. Tone C. Rønning talks of an upward spiral in which we must accept and defend the idea of shared responsibility. She invites everyone to take part in the debate and to create platforms for exchange along the lines of *Série Series*.

NRK wants to make a difference and does not hesitate to offer programmes that involve a clash of cultures like the *Lilyhammer* series which won over a wide audience. The public wants not only to be entertained, but also to have content that makes them think, to get them out of their comfort zones, to revise their viewpoints and beliefs. This is what working for the public service requires. This autumn, for example, we will be airing *Nobel*, a drama about a Norwegian soldier who returns from Afghanistan, bringing the war with him. As a peace loving nation, we do not want to deal with the fact that we are sending soldiers into conflict. This new series meets the need to make committed and responsible drama. It is close to journalism or a documentary, but is able to go deeper into the subject, precisely because it is drama. Yet too many broadcasters are afraid of this type of content.

In conclusion, Tone C. Rønning says the core values at NRK are to be open, brave and trustworthy. One must be open to difference, support authors and creators' original ideas and be brave enough to take risks. Heads of broadcasting networks like NRK need to be committed body and soul to bringing together and strengthening the national community around common and democratic values. Tone C. Rønning is not afraid to talk of the importance of creating a feeling of belonging, of national identity, but one that is open and diverse. A public service broadcaster is like a nation's glue and this must not be forgotten under any circumstances.

LET'S TALK ABOUT COMMISSIONING



PARTICIPANTS:

Katrine Vogelsang (head of fiction, TV2, Denmark)
 Tone C. Rønning (producer for drama and international co-productions, NRK, Norway)
 Sylvie Coquart (screenwriter, France)
 Jeppe Gjernig Gram (screenwriter, Denmark)
 Christian Wikander (head of fiction, SVT, Sweden)
 Will Sharpe (screenwriter, director and actor, United Kingdom)

CHAired BY:

Séverine Jacquet (head of drama, RTBF, Belgium)

This year, the session “Let’s talk about commissioning” takes the form of a discussion in which several guest channels, both public and private, exchange viewpoints with creators to better comprehend the different routes for collaboration in place in the Europe of today, and to examine the sometimes complex relationships between creation and broadcasting.

CHOOSING A SERIES PROJECT

To open the debate, Séverine Jacquet investigates the role of the broadcaster in the creative process, specifically the means used to choose a series project. She recently met with a head of fiction for the American channel Showtime, who explained that a broadcaster must never call upon an actor or producer directly to initiate a new series project. On the contrary, channels must wait for the projects to come to them.

Katrine Vogelsang doubts that Showtime is the most representative example. The American channel has access to the world’s best talent and its editorial profile allows it to take all kinds of risks. For her part, she doesn’t hesitate to receive creators so that they can present new series projects: heads of fiction must always be open to hearing new proposals. Nonetheless, they also play a role in safeguarding their channels’ editorial lines, and as such they have a responsibility to define a precise framework, either in terms of audience, tone or format (the episodes of series broadcast on TV2 have a maximum duration of 42 minutes, for example) within which creators can express themselves as freely as possible. Regardless of the project, and within the limits of the established framework, the creator must feel that they have ownership of the series. “I’m not going to write the series, that’s not my role; so I need to find someone, a creator or screenwriter, to be the guardian of the DNA of the series,” she explains.

As a screenwriter, Jeppe Gjernig Gram feels much more comfortable when a head of fiction has a clear vision of their editorial strategy. Of course, creators need freedom to express themselves, but “total freedom is not an end in itself”.

Television channels have rules to which creators are required to conform. As a writer, as well as formatting issues, Jeppe Gjernig Gram needs to know the broadcaster’s objectives. He has been working with DR, Denmark’s public radio and television group, for several years. All projects developed by the group’s channels must have a social content, reflecting Danish society as it exists today. “If I bring the head of fiction a project for a purely entertainment-based series, I know it will be rejected.” On the other hand, Jeppe Gjernig Gram knew instinctively that his most recent project, *Follow the Money* (a series that takes place in a financial setting), would find its place in the editorial line of a public channel.

For Tone C. Rønning, this social dimension is an integral part of a channel’s strategy. She admits that it would be very easy for her to sit in her office and wait patiently for creators to come to her and propose new projects. But the head of fiction for a public service channel has a responsibility to be proactive. One of the main difficulties facing NRK today is the lack of representation of the cultural diversity that makes up Norwegian society. A section of the population, including immigrants, is not represented on television. Yet, a televised piece must reflect society and, as such, must address all of the layers that comprise it. Tone C. Rønning has thus taken it upon herself to provide a voice for immigrant populations. “Of course, progress has been made in this area, but it’s not enough.”

Sylvie Coquart wholeheartedly agrees. In this regard, the needs of the channel and those of the creator can meet in the middle. She notes that the role of a screenwriter is to observe



and question society as they see it. But in order for those series broadcast on public or private channels to reflect society, there must be a way for all the stakeholders involved in the creation - screenwriters, producers and broadcasters - to engage in a dialogue. Unfortunately, in France, "broadcasters and screenwriters never meet". In fact, as Sylvie Coquart highlights, they are not allowed to meet, the reason being that "producers are scared that screenwriters will steal their jobs". In France, screenwriters are left out of the discussion.

Christian Wikander assures us that his door is always open. Writers come to him regularly to pitch their projects directly. Unlike DR, the series broadcast by SVT are not produced internally, so it always calls upon independent producers. A project might arise from discussions between the creator and head of fiction. But in all cases, the series is entrusted to a producer. Christian Wikander uses the term "adoption" because it is in fact a case of "finding new parents for the series". Often, the channel will even encourage the writer-creator to find for themselves the producer they wish to collaborate with.

DEVELOPING A SERIES

Once the series has been chosen, the project enters a new phase: that of development. Séverine Jacquet remarks that not every series that is developed will come to term. And Tone C. Rønning confirms this. She admits that she has been lucky, but as far as NRK is concerned, of every two series in development only one is actually produced. For his part, Christian Wikander notes that series that are abandoned during the development stage don't necessarily disappear completely as a result. They might be set aside for potential future broadcasting, or they could even start a new life on another channel.

For Katrine Vogelsang, the most difficult thing for a head of fiction is to say goodbye to a project they care about because it doesn't correspond to the channel's editorial line-up. But this is often the only solution. "There is no point in launching into development for a series that wouldn't meet the needs of the channel, because then you would be tempted to modify the creator's original vision at the risk of adulterating the project."

Séverine Jacquet turns next to the issue of pilots. Pilots are commonly used in the United States, much less so in Europe. Christian Wikander isn't a fan. Having said that, a pilot might be shot for a more complex project, if the concept is difficult to translate into a written scene. In some cases, the pilot makes it possible to respond to the major issues presented by the series, and define its tone.

Will Sharpe, on the other hand, is very much in favour of pilots. For *Flowers*, a 30-minute pilot was shot. This mechanism made it possible to define the universe in which the series would take place, as well as its visual signature. "The dream scenario," he points out, "would be to be able to shoot a pilot once the series has been commissioned, but unfortunately this is rarely the case." In any case, pilots provide some reassurance for broadcasters.

Séverine Jacquet suggests moving on to address the issue of development notes: these notes allow the broadcaster to communicate with the producer and scriptwriter during the development phase, and to express their point of view. Will Sharpe, creator of *Flowers*, received many notes during the development of his series. He makes a point of noting that the channel always supported his project. When he pitched the series, he immediately understood that Channel 4 was ready to take risks and that he was going to be allowed a great deal of freedom. Nonetheless, as a writer, he likes to have someone from outside keep watch over his work. But for the development notes to be useful, every partner in the project must give their opinion as honestly as possible, without censoring themselves in any way. During the development stage, all parties must be completely free to speak their minds, allowing all perspectives to be expressed. Next, it is up to the creator to take on board all the comments and find the necessary solutions.

Christian Wikander understands Will Sharpe's argument. However, in the case of co-productions, there can be a large number of partners, and the multiplication of voices or viewpoints can lead to a very muddled and chaotic situation for the writer. Of course, the discussion should be as open as possible, but he does suggest naming a main partner whose role is to gather together all the development notes with a view to drawing a kind of consensus that will allow all the partners to express themselves with a single voice.

Katerine Vogelsang believes that development notes should be as concise and well defined as possible. In her opinion, these notes must be limited to 5 or 6 precise points. These different points will be discussed with the producer, not directly with the writer or writers. "The producer and broadcaster must speak with a single, joint voice," she confirms.

Jeppe Gjervig Gram explains that at DR, the only development notes he receives are those written by the head of fiction. Once again, these notes are systematically filtered by the producer (who is considered a co-creator) before they are communicated to him. Any notes considered off-topic are disposed of. The producer also takes the liberty of softening some of the sharper remarks, which is greatly appreciated by the screenwriter.

Christian Wikander wholeheartedly agrees. When he drafts a development note, he refrains as far as possible from suggesting solutions for the writer, which would then be perceived as a form of interference in the creative process. "A development note is not an injunction." The comments must always link back to the premise of the project itself, and the original concept.

For Tone C. Rønning, the development note process must be tailored to each project. Young screenwriters, for example, are more "fragile", and the role of the head of fiction is often to provide encouragement. More experienced screenwriters can be somewhat arrogant and tend to be too sure of themselves. The broadcaster must, therefore, find a different way of communicating with them. The same model cannot be applied to every case. In addition, Tone C. Rønning insists upon the need to define the communication process between broadcaster, producer and writer ahead of the development process (and to continuously redefine this process throughout the development stage).

Sylvie Coquart has co-produced six series. She insists that she has never received a development note from a broadcaster. Unfortunately, at least in France, broadcasters and screenwriters do not collaborate and their interaction is more akin to a "master and slave" type of relationship. Paradoxically, screenwriters are often asked to take and assume all the risks! Nonetheless, Sylvie Coquart observes that the appearance of the system of showrunners in France has allowed relations to improve between writers and broadcasters. The relationships that can be forged between a channel and a showrunner can be much more balanced.



SHOOTING

During shooting, the series concept is handed over to the director, who is responsible for creating the image. Asked about the director's participation, Christian Wikander notes that if he is not the writer for the series, he must intervene only once the project is completely stabilised. Speaking specifically about Sweden, he points out that this country has a long tradition of art-house cinema (Sweden is home to Ingmar Bergman). For a long time, directors held all the power. The appearance of television series changed the game somewhat.

Will Sharpe observes that effectively, in cinema, "the director is placed on a pedestal". They are often considered to be the one and only creator of the film, while the screenwriter is relegated to a secondary role. Inversely, in series, the power is conferred upon screenwriters while the director is at the service of the writer and producer's vision. For Will Sharpe, both of these extremes are ridiculous.

In any case, the relationship between director and creator varies between projects. Some screenwriters need a strong relationship with the director, who in a way must act as co-creator of the project, Will Sharpe points out. The purely visual aspects of a series can have a powerful influence on the narration or dialogues. More generally, power relationships must be left to one side. A series is a joint effort and everyone involved (whether it be the broadcaster, screenwriters, producers, directors or film editors) must collaborate to work towards a unique vision.

Jeppe Gjervig Gram indicates that with *Follow the Money*, the channel offered him the option, as creator of the series, of choosing the producers who would be involved in the undertaking. Of course, all decisions had to be approved by the head of fiction.

Séverine Jacquet offers the suggestion that, during shooting, the role and involvement of the broadcaster should be reduced in comparison to the development phase. Although the broadcaster is in fact monitoring the shooting less closely, Jeppe Gjervig Gram notes that it can still keep track of the day-by-day evolution of the project by watching the rushes, particularly during the early days of shooting. The producer, on the other hand, must be present at the shooting and follow it from day to day.

Finally, regarding the shooting of *Flowers*, Will Sharpe confirms that the broadcaster was hardly present, although he does remember, for example, receiving a note about one of the shooting locations. Still, he imagines that the broadcaster regularly watches the rushes and that they would not hesitate to intervene if the project was not developing as desired.

THE BROADCASTERS' CONCLAVES

This was the 4th season of this exclusive club for European broadcasters. Started in 2013, the Conclaves gather broadcasters around a friendly meeting and lunch, behind closed doors, to discuss the key issues of their sector and profession. This year, more than twenty broadcasters from 16 countries were able to discuss their experiences freely. Since 2015, there have been two types of conclave. This year, the first format was to discuss and reflect on the issue of accountability: how do broadcasters see their roles and responsibilities in their rapidly changing sector, faced with the arrival of new players and financial pressures? The second, in smaller groups and based on real cases, tackled work methods and best practices in each of the countries represented around the table.



- SPEAKERS :**
- Johanna Bergenstråhle (Sweden/ TV4 & C More)
 - Marina Blok (The Netherlands / NTR)
 - Liselott Forsman (Finland / Yle)
 - Jane Gogan (Ireland / RTÉ)
 - Lasse Greve Alsos (Norway / NRK)
 - Marie Guillaumond (France / TF1)
 - Séverine Jacquet (Belgium / RTBF)
 - Klaus Lintschinger (Austria / ORF)
 - Jan Maxa (Czech Republic / Czech TV)
 - Luca Milano (Italy / Rai Fiction)
 - Susanne Müller (Germany / ZDF)
 - Bernhard Natschläger (Austria / ORF)
 - Teresa Paixão (Portugal / RTP2)
 - Izabela Rieben (Switzerland / RTS)
 - Tone C. Rønning (Norway / NRK)
 - Sevda Shishmanova (Bulgaria / BNT)
 - Philipp Steffens (Germany / RTL)
 - Mylene Verdurmen (The Netherlands / Avrotros)
 - Katrine Vogelsang (Denmark / TV2)
 - Christian Wikander (Sweden/ SVT)
 - Olivier Wolting (France / Arte)

SPOTLIGHT ON TRAILERS BY SÉRIE SERIES

MAKE WAY FOR NEW TALENT!

Launched in 2015, Spotlight on Trailers focuses on budding European talent. Série Series proposed that European creators, with ideas for series, create a trailer of less than 2 minutes, presenting their projects. Ten of these trailers were selected by the Série Series editorial committee and were screened before every session during the festival and also during a special Spotlight on Trailers session, during which the creators pitch their projects in front of professionals. This is a great opportunity for these creators to find funding and show their projects to the 600 professionals present at the festival.



BPO, Brigade de Police Ordinaire - France

Presented by: Philippe Wolczek, Bruno Nazarko (creators)
Contact: philwolczek@yahoo.fr

Dr. Illegal - Germany

Contact: martin.rohe@filmakademie.de

En Voiture Simone - France

Presented by: Nicolas Fogliarini (director), Geoffroy Fighiera (producer), Lionel Abeillon-Kaplan (producer)
Contact: nicolas@rr3films.com

Hipster Jesus - Germany, Australia

Presented by: Korbinian Hamberger (creator)
Contact: korbinian@hamberger.tv

Nuova Era - Italy

Presented by: Manuele Trullu (creator), Massimo Casula (producer, Zena Film)
Contact: zenafilmsc@gmail.com

Les Princes - France

Presented by: Sélim Doulain, Marine Ruimi (creators)
Contact: s.doulain@gmail.com

Quadras - France

Presented by: Khourban Cassam Chenai, Stanislas Grassian (creators)
Contact: khourban@hotmail.fr

Rallye, le dernier Raid - France

Presented by: Hervé Renoh (creator), Monique Bernard-Beaumont, Guillaume Bernard, Charles Bernard (producers, Adrenaline)
Contact : guillaume.bernard@adrenalineprod.fr

RAPT - France

Presented by: Julien Bresson, Maora Lecoanet (creators)
Contact: bresson.julien@gmail.com

Yes No Maybe - Denmark

Presented by: Mads Rosenkrantz Grage (creator), Claudia Saginario (producer, Good Company Films)
Contact: claudia@goodcompanyfilms.com





EVENING EVENTS

Evenings at Série Series provide the ideal opportunity to discover remarkable series, presented by their creative teams and to meet professionals from all across Europe, at the elegant but relaxed dinners followed by parties, all in the unforgettable and magical setting of the Château de Fontainebleau, or to experience an enchanting moment listening to a symphony orchestra...

OPENING CEREMONY

ON WEDNESDAY 29th JUNE



Pierre Zéni, the master of ceremonies, was delighted to welcome all those present in the Fontainebleau theatre for this 5th season of Série Series and, in particular, its editorial committee.

Last year, they proudly announced that the festival, which had become « The European Series Summit », contributed in creating a « Europe of series ». Yet this year, current events are somewhat unusual, with the vote for Brexit. There is no need to remind you that the United Kingdom is one of the greats as far as drama is concerned. Brexit or no Brexit, let's not allow politics to slow this dynamic momentum.

This year, there are 26 series from all across Europe to be discovered, either just released or still in production. Yet again, the public will be treated to the best in European series, as well as discussions with professionals from the world of television who have come to share their experiences. As a concert of nations, actors, authors, composers, distributors, producers, directors, screenwriters are all back in Fontainebleau to share their views on the current challenges and other social issues and to defend creativity.

Northern Europe is once more well represented with, in particular, *Valkyrien*, the new series from Norway, to be aired on NRK, which has been chosen for that evening's screening, before heading off for the usual festivities at the Château.



OLIVIER RABOURDIN, ACTOR

In reference to the aforementioned political upheaval, Olivier Rabourdin, who stars in CANAL+'s new original creation *Guyane*, read « *I am Europe* », a text by the German director, author and translator, Falk Richter.

FRÉDÉRIC VALLETOUX, MAYOR OF FONTAINEBLEAU

« I am only the Mayor of Fontainebleau, but a very happy mayor », Frédéric Valletoux declared, welcoming with the greatest of pleasure the Série Series' festival for the 5th year running. He thanked all the organisers, starting with the Kandimari agency, of course, but also more generally all those who put the heart and soul into this great festival, of which all the volunteers from Fontainebleau. There are always wonderful things happening here in this small historic town on the edge of the Ile-de-France region, nestling in the heart of the forest and which now, every year, is the rendez-vous for European television creation. Lastly, he announced that he is counting on another brilliant 6th season next year.

ISABELLE DE GOURCUFF, GENERAL MANAGER OF THE CHATEAU DE FONTAINEBLEAU

The town of Fontainebleau is, of course, proud to be the home of Série Series and no less its Château, which will also be welcoming all the festival-goers again this year: « the true home of kings, the house of ages », declared Napoleon in Saint Helena in 1816. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the quintessence of French savoir-faire. Kings and queens, emperors and empresses have all striven to make their own improvements to the Château stretching over seven centuries: François I, Louis XIV, etc.



Isabelle de Gourcuff invited all pass holders to come and visit this gem of French and world cultural heritage and more particularly television professionals who may wish to organise shoots here, as was the case very recently with the Versailles series.

THERESE WAGLE BAZARD, CULTURAL ATTACHÉE AT THE EMBASSY OF NORWAY IN PARIS

Therese Wagle Bazard sincerely thanked the organisers of Série Series for featuring Norway in their festival programme yet again this year and notably for choosing to screen *Valkyrien* that evening.

Norwegian series are more and more in demand across the world: *Lilyhammer*, *Occupied*, *Eyewitness*... In Norway, there was an audience of 1.7 million out of a population of 5 million, for every episode of *The Heavy Water War*. This shows the ever higher quality of production and even programmes for the younger public are exported more and more. Thérèse Wagle Bazard would very much like to see some Franco-Norwegian co-productions, seeing the tremendous popularity of Nordic Noir and a certain form of original narrative. She is sure that this mix of cultures could only be fruitful.

For this opening evening, Série Series welcomed the team from the Valkyrien series onto the stage of the Fontainebleau theatre for the screening of the 1st episode. The corresponding case study was programmed for the following morning.

The festival-goers are invited to the Château for dinner.



EVENING EVENT

THURSDAY 30th JUNE



A SPECIAL MUSICAL EVENING!

Valérie Pécresse, President of the Région Île-de-France, opened the evening by reiterating the Region's support for Série Series and underlining the crucial importance of culture for a territory and for its inhabitants.

The team from the German series *Tomorrow I Quit* then stepped onto the stage to introduce the screening of the first episode. The corresponding case study took place the following morning.

The National Orchestra of the Île-de-France, Série Series' guest of honour, moved onto the stage for a special concert, performing the theme music of the most iconic cult series for a musical quiz, putting the series' addicts in the public to the test.

By developing a partnership with this National Orchestra, Série Series has again underlined the vital role of sound tracks, through a festive event uniting professionals and the general public.

For professionals, the evening continued with a gala dinner at the Château de Fontainebleau.



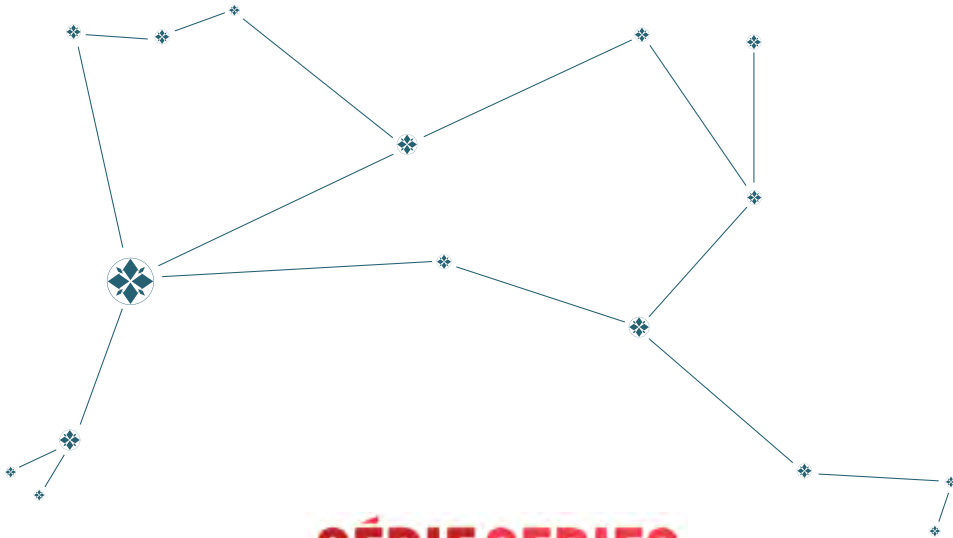
CLOSING CEREMONY

ON FRIDAY 1ST JULY



To bring this 5th season to a close, Série Series is delighted to welcome the team from the British series, *Marcella*. The public watched the first episode of the series on the big screen. The series was aired on ITV and Netflix. Nicola Larder (co-creator and producer), Charles Martin (director), Ray Panthaki and Nicholas Pinnock (actors), as well as Max Gottlieb (production designer) then answered Pierre Zéni's questions on this wonderful, dark and intriguing series. The cocktail party and dancing that followed, brought this season of Série Series to a very festive end!





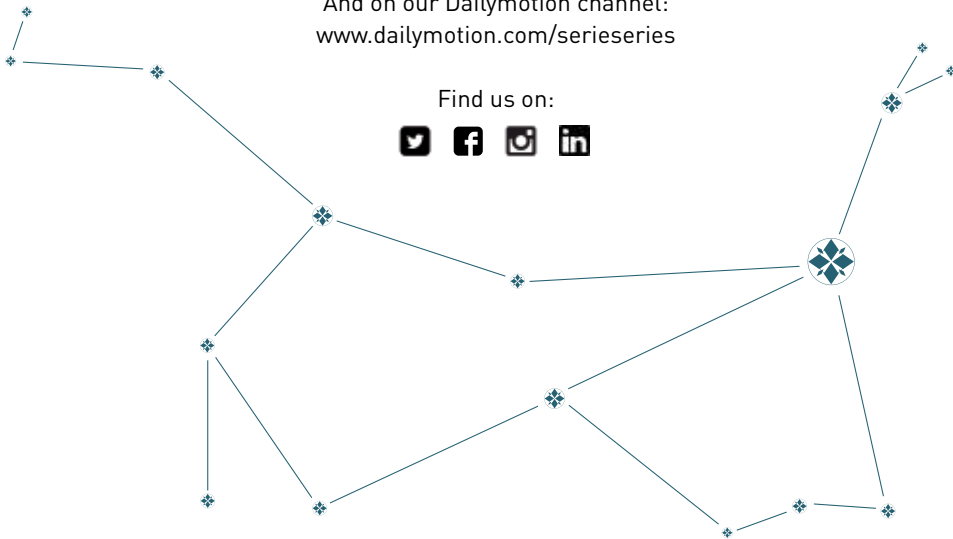
SÉRIE SERIES

REPLAY SÉRIE SERIES

All the case studies can be seen on
www.serieseries.fr
(Gallery / Video gallery)

And on our Dailymotion channel:
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Onciale

Editing, writing, multimedia

5 rue Barbette
75003 Paris

T : +33 (0)1 44 54 55 11
onciale@onciale.fr

Guillaume Neel & Xavier Durand

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Série Series sincerely thanks all the speakers, chairs, participants, volunteers,
teams from series and all its partners.





Kandimari
61 rue Danton
92300 Levallois-Perret
France

T : +33 9 52 10 56 08
contact@kandimari.com
www.kandimari.com

Contact :
Marie Barraco, director – marie@kandimari.com

www.serieseries.fr