

**MINUTES**

**FONTAINEBLEAU 1<sup>st</sup> > 3<sup>rd</sup> JULY 2015** SEASON **4**

**SÉRIE SERIES**

**THE EUROPEAN SERIES SUMMIT**

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# TALENTS AND CREATIVITY!



Courtesy of Carnival Films / Masterpiece

**SÉRIE SERIES** has closed the doors on its 4th season, this 3rd July 2015.

For four years now, Série Series has been scouring Europe for extraordinary and original series that have that extra something, common to all enduring works.

For four years now, Série Series has been putting European Creativity in the limelight, convinced that it is still an area that needs exploiting; an area rich in talent and brimming with creativity.

**Talents and creativity are the key words of this 4<sup>th</sup> season**, which has once again provided an eclectic and original panorama of series from the 4 corners of Europe. Original works that are brimming with universality and vision. A unique and singular editorial line created by the organisers: the Kandimari Agency along with the Editorial Committee and the Série Series' European Steering Group.

A new 2015 opus which is enthusiastic, rich in surprises, with original and unique meetings and dinners on the grass in the shadow of the Chateau de Fontainebleau. A warm atmosphere, a convivial and yet studious bubble, where over a dozen European series have been unveiled and a selection of 8 "works in progress". Let's not forget the Spotlight on trailers by Série Series that gives up-and-coming talent a platform to showcase their work.

In short, a unique event, thought up and created by and for series professionals. All this in a convivial, professional, open and easy-going atmosphere. Authentic. Small is beautiful!



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## THEY STEER SÉRIE SERIES

*Série Series is the first European event exclusively dedicated to series, by and for those who make them. Série Series is created with two committees of influential European TV professionals.*

*Their missions: advise the organisers of Série Series so that the event gains in efficiency and usefulness for European professionals, today and in the years to come. With the help of the steering group, we are developing an event which is evermore European and aware of this sector's issues.*

**THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE** who has shaped the festival from the beginning is made up of 7 French professionals who are both committed and enthusiastic, eager to support and show the very best in European creation in television series.

**THE COMMITTEE IS CHAIRED BY** Nicole Jamet (screenwriter), Philippe Triboit (director) and Jean-François Boyer (producer, Tetramedia)

**WITH** Hervé Hadmar (screenwriter and director), Bénédicte Lesage (producer, Mascaret), Nicolas Jorelle (composer) and David Kodsí (producer, K'ien).

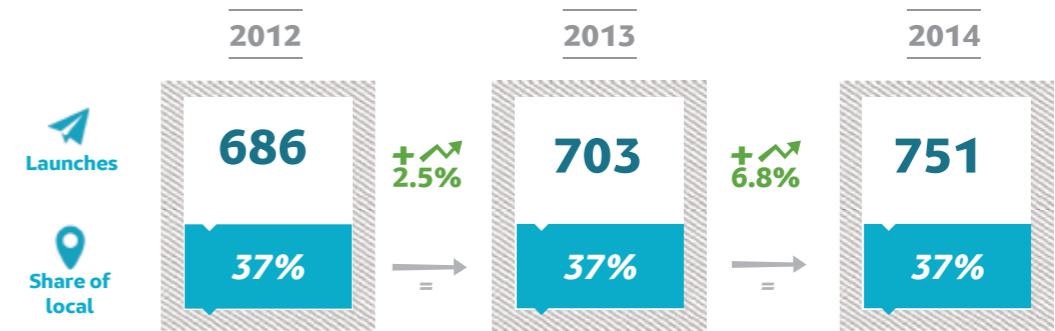
**AN EUROPEAN STEERING GROUP** made up of 8 professionals is now assisting with the development of the festival.

**ITS MEMBERS ARE**

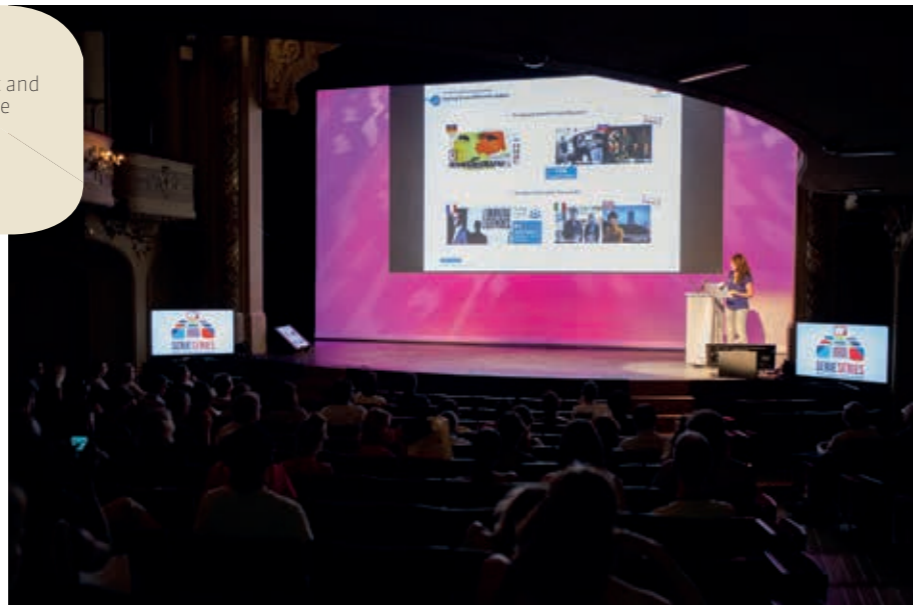
Tasja Abel (ZDF Entreprise – Germany)  
 Stefan Baron (executive producer – Nice drama – Sweden)  
 Harald Hamrell (director – Sweden)  
 Lars Lundström (author and producer, Matador Film – Sweden)  
 Jed Mercurio (author, screenwriter and showrunner – United Kingdom)  
 Luca Milano (Rai Fiction – Italy)  
 David O'Donoghue (Carnival Films – United Kingdom)  
 Tone C. Rønning (NRK – Norway)

# THE WORLD OF SERIES, SERIES IN THE WORLD

Amount of series launched by year and their share of local production  
10 European countries (85 channels)



PRESENTED BY  
Sahar BAGHERY, head of content and strategy – Eurodata TV Worldwide



## EUROPE: A PILLAR OF CREATIVITY

In 2014, the average daily viewing time per individual remained high worldwide and was 3h52mn in 46 territories. However, a few disparities are noted in Europe. TV viewing remained stable in Germany and increased in Poland, Norway and the Netherlands. Viewing time in the United Kingdom fell back (3h40mn in 2014, against 3h52mn in 2013), with audiences fragmented by transfers to other screens and the arrival of newcomers.

Television series are very much in demand and in 2014, represented 24% of programmes in the TOP 10 of 41 European countries. Drama series are centre stage (in front of soaps and sitcoms). In certain countries, notably Turkey and Macedonia, drama reigns, as 9 out of the 10 of the most successful programmes in terms of market share, are series (all local). Some of the series that have the highest audience ratings in their country of origin are the invincible *Tatort* in Germany, which appealed to 13.2 million viewers and *Sherlock* and *Call the Midwife* in the United Kingdom, which had 12.7 and 11.4 million viewers respectively. More than ever, creation is at the heart of the international grid's renewal, thanks to several new programmes with immediate success. Over 751 new series were launched in 2014

(compared to 703 in 2013) in ten or so European countries. One third of these were local productions.

European countries with the best reputations for series are, of course, producing new hits. The British thriller, *Fortitude*, produced by Sky Atlantic, was hugely successful in its country of origin, but also in Scandinavian countries. It will be aired on CANAL+ in France soon. The European co-production, *The Team* (a new creation from Peter Thorsboe) climbed onto the list of top ratings in Scandinavia. In Denmark, the series doubled the market share of DR1 during prime time. *The Heavy Water War* has given NRK, the Norwegian channel, its best ever audience rating. *Witnesses* registered 44% of the market share on France 2. It has also been aired in Norway, Australia and Belgium and will soon be on British screens. ITV Studios' new production, the Nordic thriller *Jordskott*, although very dark, met with immediate success in Sweden with the 15 to 34 year-old age group.

European creativity is present in all countries, including those we are not used to mentioning. New quality series have come to light in these countries, attracting wide audiences. So, in Iceland, *The Lava Field* series (which tells the story of a detective from Reykjavik assigned to a suicide case in Ireland) obtained an impressive market share of 90%. This has already been aired in Sweden and Norway, and

will be on Arte shortly, for the French public. *Kato Partali*, a Greek comedy, and the Flemish period drama, *Flanderichs Field*, had the best market shares, in any genre, in the countries of origin. Lastly, the miniseries *Charlie* (based on the very controversial life of the politician and former Prime Minister, Charles Haughey), was quite an event in Ireland.

## THE LATEST TRENDS IN THE WORLD OF SERIES

Several trends emerged clearly in 2014 and certain themes were favoured. Crime series may still be broadly successful, but a new craze for spy series was noted. This genre provides the opportunity to cover historical events from a different point of view. The German series, *Deutschland 83*, takes place in the 80s, right in the middle of the Cold War. It narrates the adventures of a young East German spy, who has infiltrated the American army in the West. Other series give a more intimate perspective on the world of spies. This is the case for *The Bureau* which gave CANAL+ its best audience rating since *The Tunnel*. *London Spy* is a BBC2 series set to broadcast this summer; a romance between two men from two different worlds, one working for the British Secret Intelligence Service and the other from the world of clubbing and youthful excess. Several European series are treating a

«return to roots». For various different reasons, the characters return to their home towns. In *Virage Nord*, broadcast on Arte, the heroine returns to the North of France to investigate the murder of a football fan during a match. In the Turkish series, *Ask Yeniden*, a man and woman come home from the United States and lead their respective families to believe that they are a couple. In the Russian series, *Love Blooms in Spring*, a young woman returns home after two years in a coma. To her great surprise, her husband and her best friend pretend not to know who she is. Lastly, in *Frikjent*, which was a huge success in Norway, a businessman returns to his home town after 20 years, having been acquitted of the murder of his girlfriend.

The war continues to inspire series' creators and several mini series cover these horrors. All wars and conflicts are tackled. *Los Nuestrros*, a Spanish series, treats the kidnapping of a child by Jihadists. As with spy series, they enable the exploration of several points of view: that of an Italian journalist in *L'Angelo di Sarajevo*, of a family in *Die Himmelsleiter* and even scientists in *The Heavy Water War*. War has even gone interactive in *Our World War*, produced by BBC Three. This mini series is based on the writings of First World War veterans. The first episode was put online on the BBC website and allows viewers to influence the main characters'

decisions (take a soldier prisoner or kill him, for example).

Creators try to imagine tomorrow's world and series are based on our actual fears and the questions we ask ourselves about the future. *Trepalium*, which will be aired on Arte soon, is a sci-fi series which takes us to the near future, where over 80% of the population is unemployed. Co-produced by Arte and the Norwegian channel TV2, *Occupied*, is a series imagined by the master of the Scandinavian crime novel, Jo Nesbø, and is a political cliffhanger of a thriller, focusing on oil issues in the Arctic Ocean. *Humans*, a British remake of a Swedish series, started airing on Channel 4 two weeks ago. It amassed an audience of 4 million, which was the channel's highest rating for an original creation in over 13 years. On a much lighter note is *Mission Earth*, the Dutch comedy series, telling the story of a spaceship on a mission to find a new planet to accommodate humans after the ice melts.

Comedy still reigns in the series' sector, but local successes have difficulty in crossing frontiers. In Sweden, the *Ack Warmland* series (featuring a mother who opens a beauty salon) had up to two million viewers, the best audience for an episode of a series for three years. The Netherlands' *Family Kruis*, doubled the prime time market share of RTL4. Sitcoms imported to Europe are,

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more often than not, American. Some regional exchanges can be seen in Scandinavia and in Eastern Europe, but the main supplier of comedy in Europe, is still the United Kingdom. *Cuckoo* and *Hebburn* have just been released in Germany and Portugal respectively. Series provide the opportunity to invent and test new modes, be it in terms of storytelling or direction. There is a strong comeback of

anthology series (*Accusé* on France 2, *Banana* on Channel 4). The Spanish series *Cuentame Un Cuento*, puts a quirky slant on tales, with one tale per episode. *De Biker Boys*, the Belgian series, is a sort of 'making of' documentary on a motorcycle gang's trip. Beyond concepts, direction and style, there is one ingredient which can alone be considered the very essence of a series: the soundtrack. The theme

music for *Frikjent*, was composed by Highasakite. The music and the soundtrack play an essential role in all remakes of the Italian series, *Braccialetti Rossi* - American, Spanish, Peruvian. The clip of the song for the Italian version, sung by Niccolò Agliardi, has had 4 million views on YouTube.

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TRENDS

In order to deal with the competition, producers and broadcasters adapt to new consumption trends. Catch-up viewing is developing fast. In this domain, the United Kingdom is the undisputed leader. *Sherlock* was the most-watched programme on BBC iPlayer last year and the first episode exceeded 4 million views. In France, *Broadchurch* and *The Blacklist* were the two series watched the most on catch-up in 2014. Channels no longer hesitate in distributing their programmes before they have been aired. The British channel, ITV, made all the episodes of *Cockroaches* (a post-apocalyptic comedy) available on their player, before the linear broadcast. In France, to adapt to binge watching, all 10 episodes of *The Bureau* were available on Canalplay Infinity, the day the first two episodes went on the air. In Germany, MyVideo offered free unreleased seasons of the American series *Spartacus* and *Vikings*, almost a month before their airing on ProSieben. RTL (The Netherlands) also offers viewing of series 7 days before airing, but this is a pay service. Finally, there was an exclusive offer on SVOD HBO Nordic to watch *100 code* (a Swedish-American co-production) in March, when airing in Sweden is not planned on Canal 5 until this summer. New trends are changing our relationship with time and encouraging immediacy and simultaneous broadcasting. The Spanish group, Atresmedia, launched *The Refugees* simultaneously on La Sexta, Nova, Antena 3 and Neox. CANAL+ gave non-subscribers the opportunity to watch one episode of *Spotless* on YouTube. Digital strategies are being developed to encourage social and creative

interaction. In Great Britain, the three interlinked shows *Cucumber*, *Banana*, *Tofu* were aired simultaneously; *Cucumber* on Channel 4, *Banana* on E4 and *Tofu* on the channel's digital platform. In France, TF1 introduced a competition linked to the *Persons of Interest* series. For the broadcast of the last episode of season 3, the channel set up an interactive competition, the winner of which is invited to appear in the next episode of the series.

### THE WORLDWIDE EXPANSION OF NEWCOMERS

The development of Hulu, Netflix and Amazon provides new creative opportunities. Although these international online platforms have huge catalogues of TV series, they are investing more and more in original creation. The third season of *Orange Is the New Black* has been launched by Netflix, who has also added the *Sense 8* series (created by Andy and Lana Wachowski) to their original drama catalogue. Amazon Instant Video have made available original series produced via a system of pilots. In this way, 10 series secured a full season, amongst which *Mozart in the Jungle* and *Transparent*. Taking up series that have been dropped by traditional broadcasters is another of these platforms' strategies. Netflix partnered TV2 in Denmark to co-produce *Rita*, of which, thanks to the platform, a third season was made. The third season of *Ripper Street* was co-produced by Amazon and the BBC. All eight episodes were put online last November, before their broadcast on BBC One. Amazon has just recently announced that they will be producing another two seasons. Local SVOD platforms are also starting to create original content. *Zwarte Tulp* is the Dutch platform Videoland Unlimited's first original creation. *Der Lack Ist Ab* was developed on the German platform My Video. In France, *FRAT*, a series set in the near future, was produced by Canalplay. The Italian SVOD service Infinity, created the Bob Torrent series. Lastly, the Swedish comedy *Taxi*, was entirely financed

by SVT Flow, which is devoted to new talent. Some unexpected new players have also embarked on content creation. Yahoo Screen (financed through advertising) has produced the futuristic comedy *Other Space* (developed by Paul Feig, the creator of *Freaks & Geeks* and director of the next *Ghostbusters*). Sony Pictures has launched the *Powers* series on PlayStation, based on a comic book (a second season has already been commissioned). Bit Torrent (known mainly for illegal downloading) is keen to improve its image and will be financing a sci-fi series entitled *The Children of the Machine* (the story is set in 2031 in a futuristic society where android robots have

taken power). Those interested in downloading the series will be able to do so free of charge, but will have to pay a set price to avoid advertising and have access to exclusive content. Lastly, social networks can also be a medium for series. In this way, Snapchat has launched two series: *Snapper Hero* (with numerous web stars) and *Literally Can't Even*. To conclude, Europe is a fast-developing hotbed of original creation. The success of series locally is a first step towards international recognition. There are still two development lines to look into: prolonging the experience beyond linear broadcasting (adapting to the new trends) and developing partnerships with the newcomers. ■

## A TALK WITH SIR KEN ROBINSON

**SPEAKER**  
Sir Ken Robinson, author, (United Kingdom)

**INTRODUCED BY**  
Stefan Baron, producer, Nice Drama and Nice Entertainment Group (Sweden)



*Sir Ken Robinson is a British author and speaker who is internationally renowned for talks on developing creativity and innovation, particularly in education. His TED talks are the most popular of all time, watched by 300 million people across 150 countries. Sir Ken Robinson has been invited today to talk about creativity and talent, two subjects which are very close to his heart. He does not work in the world of television, but he is convinced that talent is essential to this sector, as it is to many other industrial sectors.*

### VIVA LAS VEGAS

Sir Ken Robinson lives in California, not far from one of the most fascinating cities in the United States. «There is no reason for Las Vegas to have been built where it is, right in the middle of a desert». The vast majority of towns are built for a reason. There is an advantage to their location, on a river, near a port or a natural harbour or on a hill, for purposes of defence. Paris was built on the Seine. Las Vegas, on the other hand, is in the middle of nowhere. There is no reason for it to be there and yet it is one of the fastest-growing cities in America over the last thirty years. For Sir Ken, Las Vegas is a fantastic example of one the most distinctive powers that humans possess.

Not much separates human life from the rest of life on earth. But there is a reason why we live in great cities and invented television. There is a reason why we create great works of art. There is a reason why the Château de Fontainebleau is such an ornate and extraordinary building. Unlike other animals, we have very powerful imaginations. It is the source of a whole other series of more practical powers which we call creativity. Yet our creativity has caused many problems. It is at the origin of the two main challenges that humans face today: the population explosion and the impact of technology on our planet.

### CREATIVITY: THE ULTIMATE WEAPON AGAINST PRESENT AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

Although it is difficult to prove, since nobody has been counting, it is estimated that over 100 billion human beings have lived on Earth over the past 150 000 years, since the appearance of homo sapiens, people like us, with our abilities for language, our abilities to create, our abilities to plan a future, our sensibilities. Of these 100 billion individuals, almost 10% of them are living on Earth today. When the Château de Fontainebleau was built, there were less than a billion people on this planet and now there are more than 7 billion of us (and probably 15 billion by 2050), every one of them unique.

Sir Ken recently saw a documentary on the BBC entitled: «how many people can live on Earth». The conclusion was that if everybody who lived on this Earth consumed at the same rate as average North Americans, by the middle of the century, we will need four more planets for our needs. Creativity is also the source of much of the technology that surrounds us. The iPhone, for example, has transformed the world that we live in. Digital technology has changed our expectations and opened up a whole new range of possibilities.



They illustrate a fundamental point in human creativity: people feed off other people's ideas. One idea, if it's transformative, can cross-pollinate with all sorts of other ideas and create completely unexpected consequences. Bridget Driscoll has an unfortunate place in human history, as the first death in a motor accident. In 1896, Bridget Driscoll was walking in London, when she was knocked over by a Roger-Benz car. Apparently it was just going too fast and she could not get out of the way. The car was going at 7 miles per hour. There was an inquest and the jury returned a verdict of accidental death. On hearing the verdict, the coroner said «he hoped such a thing would never happen again». Since then, over 20 million people have been killed in motor accidents in the world. Of course, this was not the intention of Henry Ford nor of Mr Benz. These accidents are the unintentional consequences of technology. When John Logie Baird invented television in the 1920s, he did not anticipate Fox News. When the iPhone was first marketed in 2007, there were 800 apps available for download. Eight years later, there are 3 million apps, most of which were never anticipated by or planned for by Apple. There is now even an app which will convert your iPhone into a harmonica. But why?

Many of the technologies that we have evolved in the past three hundred years are having unintended consequences. People who have discovered their creative talents have a historic responsibility to help everybody face the challenges that we are creating. Unfortunately, many people never discover their real talent. A few years ago, Sir Ken Robinson published a book entitled: «The Element: how finding your passion changes everything». This book is based on the perception that most people go through life without identifying their particular talent and get through their lives without really enjoying them.

### REVOLUTIONISING EDUCATION

Sir Ken Robinson calls for the creation of a new education system favouring creativity, instead of dragging it down. Most children come through education depressed, having not discovered their talents or believing they do not have any. Each child has unique possibilities. School is supposed to be somewhere for personal flourishing. According to the World Health Organisation, by 2020, depression will be the second largest cause of disability among humanity. In the States, sales of anti-psychotic drugs have overtaken that of drugs for acid reflux, «which is extraordinary when

you consider how well Americans encourage acid reflux».

When Sir Ken was writing his book *The Element*, he met several well-known personalities. He asked Paul McCartney if he had enjoyed music at school. He replied that he had not and that his teacher felt he had no talent. Two years later, this same teacher had George Harrison in his class. The teacher thought George had no particular talent for music either. So this teacher had half of The Beatles in his class and yet was incapable of spotting their talent. In the United States, Elvis Presley was not allowed in the Glee Club at his school, as they said he would «ruin their sound». Our education systems are based on conformity, whereas each child is different, unique and unpredictable. This formatted education is oblivious to this and that children have their own particular talents, even when it is these talents and particular interests that enable them to find an activity in which they can excel. If they all do a certain type of academic study, they can all get degrees and become lawyers, for example and it will be wonderful. But this is not the case, in fact it is a catastrophe. «I want schools to be personalised to the talents that children have got. There are some things we need to learn in common, but there are some things that we need to learn about ourselves that schools

should help us learn». When Bart Conner was eight years old, he discovered he could walk on his hands. This was not a very useful talent, but at least it was amusing and Bart quickly understood that he was able to entertain people, especially when he learnt to walk downstairs on his hands. A few years later, his mother organised for him to go to a gymnastics centre. Bart remembers when he walked through the door of the gymnasium. It was like Disneyland and Santa's Grotto. There were wall bars, trampolines, ropes, vaulting horses... it was intoxicating! For the next ten years, he trained every day. At the 1984 Olympic Games, he won the gold medal for parallel bars (with a score of 10). In 1996, he married Nadia Comaneci (the first female gymnast to be awarded a perfect score of 10 in an Olympic gymnastics event) and they have a son, Dylan Paul. None, absolutely none of all this would have happened if his mother had not encouraged him. She could have asked him to stop walking on his hands, but instead she decided to encourage this singular talent. Even if she did encourage him, she could never have foreseen the life that he was about to live. The reason is, life is not linear and every single life is different. Unfortunately, our education systems are based on conformity not diversity. The other principle on which our education systems and many of our business plans are based is linearity, the idea that you can look ahead with confidence at what's going to happen next and predict it. It turns out that most of life is unpredictable. It is what John Kenneth Galbraith, the economist, had in mind when he said that, «the main function of economic forecasting is to make astrology look respectable». We create the worlds we live in, we create our own paths, we create our own futures, according to whether or not we discover the talents that lie within us and where they meet our passions.

## DEVELOPING A SENSE OF POSSIBILITY

To end his talk on a positive note, Sir Ken presents a video he discovered recently on the Internet. «The world sends us garbage, we send back music». This is the motto of the orchestra from Cateura, a slum of a few metres from the biggest landfill in Asunción, the capital of Paraguay. Favio Chavez, founder of the Landfill Harmonic, was convinced that music could change the world, but particularly the lives of the children of Cateura. The idea of forming an orchestra in one of the poorest cities in the world was a both daring and crazy gamble. To start with, buying new instruments was out of the question. «A violin costs more than a house here», explains Favio Chavez. So he made them from bits and pieces found on these rubbish heaps. Juan Manuel Chavez, nicknamed Bebi, plays a cello made from an oil can, some recycled wood and some old cooking utensils, including a meat tenderiser. He plays the prelude to Bach's cello suite n° 1, for the camera. This orchestra has completely changed the lives of the children from Cateura. Over the past few years, this orchestra has been touring the world. The tours finance social projects, with the profits several families have been rehoused and several children have been able

to pursue higher education. Thanks to music, these children have been able to find their way and discover their creativity.

This atypical project illustrates the inexhaustible power of our creativity and our talent. It also illustrates the fact that technology, be it a plough, an iPad or a harmonica, extends our reach and opens our minds to a whole world of possibilities. A symphony orchestra is a tool kit. Music is not in the instruments, it is in the musicians. Sir Ken reminds us that, as with rubbish, human resources are often buried very deeply in people. We have to create the conditions for it to emerge. Las Vegas, built in one of the most inhospitable places on Earth, is a symbol of our «sense of possibility», of our ability to imagine what could be. Humans have always lived in a virtual worlds. We create the worlds we live in through the ideas we have, languages, art forms and values we hold to. The challenge we have now as a species, is to dig more deeply for these talents and create conditions where they can flourish. Challenging the way we educate, run our businesses and run our communities and creating a climate of possibility. If we get it right, we will still not be able to predict the future, but collectively we will have a future that we and are children will want to live in. ■

## CONTRASTING PERSPECTIVES... BETWEEN ACTORS

### SPEAKERS

Shima Niavarani, actress (Sweden)  
Geoffroy Thiebaut, actor (France)  
Jean-François Vlérick, actor (France)  
Patrick Renault, screenwriter (France)

### CHAired BY

Marie Kremer, actress (Belgium)  
Matthieu Rozé, actor, director and screenwriter (France)



### INTRODUCTION

This discussion brings together actors from varied generations and backgrounds. Some work mainly in the theatre and others mainly in film. What they do have in common, is that they all have or are currently working in TV series and have come here to discuss their experience in this field of work. What relationships do they have, in this specific context, with the other professions involved? What is the level of their involvement, as an actor, in the creation of the character? What are the implications of taking on a recurring character, sometimes for years on end? These are some of the questions that the participants of this "contrasting perspectives" session will attempt to answer.

### THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ACTORS AND SCREENWRITERS: IMPROVISATION, FREEDOM FOR AN ACTOR, RESPECTING THE SCRIPT... COMPLEX QUESTIONS AT THE HEART OF THIS DISCUSSION...

Shima Niavarani worked at the Royal Dramatic Theatre for 10 years before her career turned towards film and television. She thinks that the relationship with the screenwriter

depends mainly on what "kind of actor one is" and more bluntly speaking one's financial clout. She brings up her experience on *30 Degrees in February*: she loved the script, the role was written specifically for her, but this didn't stop her often using improvisation. Actually, in general, at least in Sweden, she has noticed an increasing tendency towards the use of improvisation; something that is asked of actors more and more, especially in the world of comedy. The use of the script will certainly be very different in the context of a drama series. It is more restricted and remaining faithful to the script is certainly an important factor. Nevertheless, she has come up with a lot material herself, for scenes of a very serious nature and with the showrunner present, has given the writer a significant quantity of material going beyond the script; up to 50% of the dramatic content. Geoffroy Thiebaut also came from a heavily theatre-based background, until he was seduced by television. He took part in some 60 television films and for 9 years has been in *Braquo*, a very successful series that has just signed a 4th season. He never imagined that improvisation could become so important; he was always of the belief that the script was paramount. However, nowadays he likes "losing himself as a person" in the ins and outs of the script and his different characters' psychology, when he is given that kind of freedom.

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Marie Kremer learnt her craft in Belgian fairground theatre. She then did a couple of television films before moving from films to TV series and for the past seven years has been playing one of the main parts in *Un Village Français*. She questions Patrick Renault, in his capacity as a screenwriter, on how he sees the place of the actor in relation to the script. And the subject turns out to be a sensitive one...

Patrick Renault, a screenwriter on various long-running series, as well as famous cartoons, would like to see a balance between a certain freedom given to actors and never losing the "fundamentals" of the series and the characters. His concern is not to let actors invent the characters themselves (and he reminds us that the writer is not present on set, whereas the director is).

It is exactly this sort of mistrust that Marie Kremer criticises screenwriters for having. It seems to her, and wrongly so, that we are "scared of actors" in France; we don't trust them enough and this blocks a part of the creative process. In other words, we prefer to use them as simple runners who are technically competent, but no more than that. She's not asking to be part of the writing process, but would like actors to be involved earlier in the projects they are cast in. Too often they are left on the sidelines and this lack of dialogue is not only demotivating, but also frustrating in an actor's daily life.

### THE UTILITY OF CONSIDERING PRELIMINARY READINGS WITH ACTORS AS STIMULATION

Nicole Jamet intervenes from the audience on this subject. As a screenwriter herself, in 20 years she has managed only once to get a preliminary reading with the potential actors she wanted to meet. She brings up power struggles and notes that this can often embarrass the director and that the work on the script is usually done only in contact with the producer. In France, there is still a lack of this notion of a "showrunner", except maybe for Éric Rochant. Added to that, the screenwriter is not involved in the casting process. She expresses her

frustration at not knowing what actors you are writing for, as one cannot usually help writing with someone in mind.

Patrick Renault isn't convinced of the necessity of moving to a showrunner system, but he concedes that it is a shame to not be able to get all parties involved around the same table from the start more often. Something which would not change each individual's prerogatives.

Matthieu Rozé started in cinema 20 years ago, then moved on to television, playing a lead part in *Central Nuit* for five seasons, and for the past two or three years has worked mainly in theatre. He notes the importance of having a common "Bible" from the start. A script is something precious: it's the starting block of an adventure that will be turned into pictures.

This bible gets richer as the series goes on, thanks to the actors as well. He believes that he has sometimes managed to develop a successful complicity with the person writing for him, but would have liked that to have started sooner in the process. Marie Kremer bounces back with the importance of relationships with writers. It's all a question of wanting to. One needs to awaken a desire within an actor to perform their best, stimulate them, especially when it concerns creating a long-lasting role, as is required in series.

Jean-François Vlérick started his career at the age of three. He worked a lot as a child, in theatre and in TV and film. He returned to the industry two years ago and approaches this new landscape with a certain naivety and almost childlike wonder. He admits that he is very eager, doesn't understand a thing about the industry around him. It fascinates and it

excites him at the same time. In his experience as the villain in *Braquo*, he confesses never having altered a single one of Olivier Marchal's lines during the first season. The second season, however, was a very different story and the process of embodying the characters had changed. The actors were a bit lost with the arrival of the new screenwriter, Abdel Raouf Dafri. But he proved to be very vigilant, giving subtle guidance to them all. This included a reading being organised around a table, where the script was revised.

Shima Niavarani confirms that it is rare to be invited to a reading. It's rarely possible, often due to financial constraints, to get the entire script before accepting a project, even though she systematically asks for it.

### THE SEARCH FOR MORE MUTUAL RESPECT

Listening to the debate, Shima Niavarani notes that everyone feels powerless in their particular position. She therefore brings up the issue of structure, with roles being too compartmentalised, and an industry that is too heavy and pressing, putting the individual to one side. Fighting this system as an actor isn't easy, but she will often resort to social media or ask her agent if such and such screenwriter will agree to meet with her. Through the human condition, with a touch of spontaneity and maybe even a bit of coincidence, one can hopefully come up with more success stories.

Nicole Jamet would like to see a greater respect of each other's jobs and competence in general. Every feature film, every series, is its own and specific project, but the constant

should be the understanding of common goals and the affirmation of a shared ideal for every part of the audiovisual sector. No one can deny this ambition and this desire are the cornerstones of the greatest adventures.

### DISCUSSION WITH THE AUDIENCE

*Does the live aspect of theatre offer more freedom to actors?*

This clearly isn't the opinion of the actors present here today as they feel unanimously that it is easier to "try things" in television or cinema, in front of a camera, rather than theatre, which requires the strict respect of the script and thus is more restrictive. One can improvise in rehearsals, but not once the curtain rises. One can, however, "intellectualise" less in film and television.

It is undoubtedly very lucky for any actor to work in all three genres and live off that variety, as they all have their own magic. Television enables actors to have very stable working rhythms: it's a very singular schooling that allows for techniques and a way of operating that cannot be learnt elsewhere.

*What of the relationships between actors, especially on long-running series that regularly incorporate new protagonists?*

Jean-François Vlérick salutes the work carried out between actors on a series, the complicities they create over time and before shooting. It is not a mystery as to the quality of series.

When one plays a recurring part in a series for a long time, adds Matthieu Rozé, it is an actor's job to "welcome the newcomers". They have a particular responsibility as "elders".

*What about the danger of acting in a series for too long and being type-cast?*

One usually has the freedom to disappear, but as a main protagonist, it isn't always easy. Matthieu Rozé brings up, for example, his tragic death in *Central Nuit*, a disappearance that upset so many people, including other actors, that he reappears as a ghost in the last episode of the season. Marie Kremer thinks that it isn't easy to have such freedom in France as an actor. When employed by a

certain channel, it's not easy to move to another. It can be very easy to be niched into a certain type of part, if one is not careful. That's the reality actors must face, sometimes taking a courageous stand, sometimes having to make difficult choices, even if that means not working for a year, after turning down a "restricting" contract. Shima Niavarani also knows the pitfalls of type-casting in Sweden. Although Meryl Streep can pride herself in her many transformations for each part she plays, finding and obtaining such a diverse palette of parts as she does, but to go after such diversity and managing to attain it during one's career, is not easy. Yet, it is an actor's duty to push further and break the clichés they can fall into. They need to show polyvalence, and never be predictable. Refusing stereotypes also means that writers have to write with more nuance and it's a way of raising standards. Everyone benefits from it: actors, screenwriters, directors and of course the public, who are not easily fooled and know quality when they see it.

*A member of the audience thinks that marketing requirements can sometimes ruin everything. Screenwriters should be protected so as not to deviate from their original work for financial or other reasons...*

Patrick Renault has noticed that actors generally embody their characters correctly, but not always with the right timing, as planned for the series and its development. Beyond any financial contingencies, this respect of timing in narration needs «protecting». In answer to this remark, Marie Kremer goes back to the initial debate

and insists that in France, actors are all too often suspected of deforming the original idea or even getting ahead of the storyline. This gives actors very little credit and actually puts their intelligence in doubt, when all they want to do is give the best of themselves, with all the discernment they are capable of!

Matthieu Rozé agrees that it can sometimes be tempting for an actor to run faster than the music, but as this is not desirable, it is necessary to understand the work of approaching a character as a mix between its composition from the screenwriter and its embodiment by the actor.

Shima Niavarani adds that it is the director's responsibility to keep an eye on the speed of the narrative and the evolution of the characters, whereas it is the actor's responsibility to keep researching, trying out and taking risks, as that is their job and what they are trained for. Being an actor is artistic creation. Even though relationships are clearer when there is a showrunner who takes all the decisions, hearing of the obstacles, conflicts and frustrations that some complain about today, when this isn't actually the case, she suggests that there should be discussion between actors and producers regarding artistic licence.

### TO CONCLUDE

Shima Niavarani takes it upon herself to conclude the discussion: when it boils down to it, the main objective is to touch and move an audience. There are a multitude of ways of creating art and it's this diversity of approach that needs to be respected and preserved. ■





## CONTRASTING PERSPECTIVES ON... SCORING FOR SERIES

### SPEAKERS

John Lunn, composer (United Kingdom)  
Éric Neveux, composer (France)

### CHAired BY

Nicolas Jorelle, composer (France)



### BY WAY OF AN INTRODUCTION

Nicolas Jorelle is delighted to welcome two of the biggest names in music, for films and series, but not exclusively. He briefly presents their respective paths. The Scotsman John Lunn, has composed operas and has made a name for himself in more than 50 series. Notably, he composed the original music to *Downton Abbey* for which he has been awarded two Emmy Awards, in 2012 and 2013 respectively, and which will be a major talking point during this discussion. Eric Neveux, an autodidact, decided at the age of 15 to devote himself to music. He has worked with François Ozon, Patrice Chéreau as well as Emmanuelle Bercot, and has, for example, composed the original music for renowned series such as *Borgia* or *Un Village Français*.

### COMPOSING FOR A SERIES VS A ONE-OFF: IS THERE A REAL DIFFERENCE IN THE APPROACH?

John Lunn often asks himself that question. He initially started working in cinema, before ending up in television, slightly by chance. The possibilities of exploring the musical field through this media are immense. Series bring a breath of fresh air. The narrative pathways

allow for exploration, with each episode bringing plenty of novelties. It is a “constant discovery”, and at the same time a constant challenge. The approach, however, is not fundamentally different to that of cinema; the frame of mind is the same. Sometimes the method differs, however this is not always the case: at the BBC, for example, the use of optimal recording conditions means that there is no cause to envy cinema: the quality of the musicians, grand orchestras when necessary, a seamless recording... All the ad hoc resources are there. Éric Neveux agrees with him on the fact that the process is hardly different. However, he does point out the important factor of length. Indeed, conceiving the original music for a series means composing the musical identity, which will change episode after episode, season after season. This requires a certain flexibility and coherence and, at the same time, a need for adaptability (for example, certain of his initial compositions for *Un Village Français* turned out to be difficult to use because of continuity, so he had to make changes). Here it is really a question of thinking in terms of a common core, with various adjustments all through the narrative.

### WHAT OF THE PRODUCTION PROCESS? SHOULD ONE COMPOSE IN ADVANCE TO ESTABLISH A RESERVE? THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATING TO THE DIALOGUE AND PARTICULARLY THE IMAGES

Éric Neveux points out that the method of production is not always the same. For *Borgia*, there were two recording sessions in London, firstly for the first 6 episodes, and then a second session destined to “fill in the gaps”, whilst respecting the tightening up of the narration and the intensity of the end of season, all the while staying “true” in terms of musical colours and codes. For *Un Village Français*, the music was composed very quickly, completely disconnected from the images, it was necessary to create a considerable “musical reservoir”, before editing.

As for John Lunn, he confirms that each experience is unique. For *Downton Abbey*, he describes a made-to-measure production, the music having been “choreographed” according to the dialogues. Consequently, any possibility of using something from a communal reserve was excluded. Moreover, John Lunn begins by trying to imagine the music without being constrained by the image; he starts with the script and sees how that inspires him. However, it is important to note that certain things and/or scenes are difficult to imagine without visual cues. The image therefore becomes, very logically, an essential support in the composition process. It is even the most precious ally.

### MUSIC: A CHARACTER IN ITS OWN RIGHT?

More than a character, John Lunn considers music as an emotional concentrate which explains the relationships between the characters; particularly so with *Downton Abbey*. His work as a composer consists more and more of understanding the emotions and consequently writing the music that illustrates the protagonist's psychological profile and their evolution throughout the series. All in all, the use of music has changed a lot over the past 25 years. Its role has become of capital importance, even the Americans are starting to realise this; they are catching up, understanding that the quality of the “sound track” is not solely the prerogative of cinema.

### THE RELEVANCE OF COMPOSING FOR TWO SERIES SIMULTANEOUSLY

At the same time as *Downton Abbey*, John Lunn is working on another BBC production, *Lost Kingdoms*, which is completely different. He recognises that the exercise is sometimes risky, as he has to jump from one universe to another, which is not always easy. Éric Neveux feels the same way, at least in the initial stages of the composing process. Inventing a musical identity warrants full commitment. He likes to think in terms of colours, whereas to begin, it is clear that one must find the correct palette, without mixing everything. At the same time, because he is so passionate about his work, he thrives on challenges and manages to “compartmentalise”, disconnecting from the various musics and universes. He even admits to enjoying this processes and the necessary to and fro.

As a musician, he enjoys wandering from one style to another, from a period film to a contemporary series, be it for television or cinema. John Lunn admits that it is a great delight for a composer to be able to tackle very different projects, especially considering that the director is often unable to say what he is expecting as the end product. It is actually important to know and to let others know that a composer is versatile, as he will be very much in demand, with the knowledge that he will always be able to create the element of surprise. And if not, it would actually be quite boring! Éric Neveux adds that this versatility does not prohibit the development of personal musical style in the long run. Deep down, it is not so much for their musical style that a composer is solicited, but more for his capacity to understand the world of tv series in question and to merge musically throughout the narrative arc.

### WHO IS THE ARTISTIC / MUSICAL DIRECTOR?

Here again, the recipe can vary depending on the projects. For *Downton Abbey*, John Lunn never consults with the various directors (anyway, there are too many of them), but he does take part in a three-way conversation, with the producer and executive producer. He emphasizes that in terms of tv series, the musical composition must be completely detached from the direction—this is different for cinema. He then illustrates his point with an anecdote: he recently worked on a series with four directors, one of whom said that he did not like the voice, both in the generic and instrumental sense of the word, even though four hours of vocal

In partnership with



music had been pre-recorded, with a carefully selected singer. Without thanking him, the production team made it clear that he had no say in the matter.

Éric Neveux backs this up with his experience on *Un Village Français*. The directors attended the meetings about music, simply for consistency's sake, without this ever creating the need to recompose anything. It must be said that unlike *Downton Abbey*, the entire musical package was ready beforehand. For *Borgia*, the showrunner Tom Fontana, was the only one who had a part in the music, since he was the "brain of the series". An episode of *Borgia* is mixed during a 2-to-5-day period at most, after consultation with him. Éric Neveux never crossed paths with any of the directors for a work session, and specifies that the editor also has a part to play in that he might have to relay important information.

### STEM MIXING AND MASTERING

Éric Neveux suggests listening to two musical extracts, of the 3<sup>rd</sup> season of *Borgia* and the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of season 6 of *Un Village Français* respectively. This will enable him to explain another

approach to composing, seeing that he sometimes composes around patterns that were written previously, which he remodels and recomposes over the top when required, rather like a DJ mixing. This is called stem mixing and mastering, which the Americans are quite keen on, points out Éric Neveux. John Lunn expresses his reluctance on this point: he always tries to avoid providing stems, as you do not know what they will become. It is actually an approach that can end up being quite expensive, which could be a deterrent. Once again, his job consists of working mainly with real musicians. Again, he insists upon the fact that he never silences the dialogues, he always has them in mind; if by any chance his music was to suppress the dialogues, this would mean that he had not done his job properly, despite the fact that it is possible to find acoustic balances during mastering. Éric Neveux, who had no choice but to use stems for *Borgia*, as that is what the series required, concludes that different processes exist. The important thing is to always properly define the work method for both artistic and composition purposes.

### DISCUSSION WITH THE AUDIENCE

*An audience member, himself a composer, discusses the place of music within the French broadcasting landscape. He feels there is a certain lack of consideration, when it seems to him that in the United Kingdom in particular, there is a greater respect for the composer's work earlier in the process. He also asks John Lunn if, outside of his work for Downton Abbey or the Vikings film, music is indeed better taken into account in Britain and by the British.*

John Lunn answers by mentioning his recent work on *The Last Kingdom*. For this series, he was indeed integrated into the project early on, due to the fact that he had to create something "totally new"; a music inspired by the 9th century and yet reinvented. It was on this project that he called upon a woman with a raspy, almost guttural voice, mentioned previously, discovered on YouTube, who he invited to London to record, and this was a unanimous success... However this was a very specific experience, with an experimental dimension, where he was completely backed-up. This is not always the case. It is not

uncommon that the question of music only comes up at the very end in Britain, and it is important not to idealise the situation when comparing it to France... The subject might be worthy of a debate.

Be that as it may, it is important to let yourself test the water, he adds, whilst still being able to define what one would call a musical editorial line. In the case mentioned earlier, the choice was made to create the familiarity of the series with a singular vocal signature. So, from the second episode when the musical universe started to be properly defined, everything fell into place and was always consistent with the image.

Éric Neveux points out that in the tv series' sector, music is started at an earlier stage than in films, which allows for more detail in terms of variations and musical references. This is probably due to the fact that a series is, more than anything, a concept which is more prone to evolving. John Lunn confirms: music is a key part of the DNA of a series.

*How can one be confident in creating an acoustic identity for a series, which becomes a key ingredient in the branding of that series? Is there a fool-proof recipe? Back to the importance of the image...*

John Lunn replies very humbly, that one must also take luck into account; in each recipe, there is a share of unforeseeable success. For the music of the opening credits of *Downton Abbey*, internationally renowned and a major support in promoting the series worldwide, he was mainly inspired by images: the train, the telegram announcing the sinking of the Titanic, and then the beautiful shot of the lavish manor that gives its name to the series... It is these initial elements that inspired his composition, of which he proposed a variation even for the 2nd episode. He cannot come up with a miracle recipe, but willingly states that the downfall would be to fully disconnect from the image. Without the visuals of the first two episodes, if it had just been him and his piano, he would never have created what he did.

*In general, the visual identity is one of the great qualities of Scandinavian series, points out one of the audience members. How does one find the*

*hidden meaning behind the images, their musical subtext?*

John Lunn does not work with the writers. At most, he will sometimes have a discussion with the producer, or even the head of photography, very rarely with the director, as mentioned earlier. As highlighted by Éric Neveux earlier, this discovery is both subtle and fragile, it mainly depends on the composers' full understanding of the series' universe, above and beyond his own talent.

*An audience member goes back to the idea of a composer's style: should they always affirm their own style or melt into a series and disappear?*

John Lunn is too modest to say that he has his own style and he feels it is not for him to say. One is certainly recognisable, but it is important not to try to be. The ability to adapt seems to him essential, as well as for Éric Neveux who reiterates that he is not sought out based on his musical style, but more on his "chameleon" aspect, his ability to blend into a drama and everything that surrounds it. More than the sound itself, it is the dramatic impact which is important. Easy to say, probably, when you already have a name...

*An audience member asks to know more about the inspiration process of a composer... John Lunn likes to see the images, Éric Neveux likes the electronic side...*

Éric Neveux obviously also composes with the images. He does not always create the music beforehand, out of nothing, but often composes facing the screen. It is true that he enjoys using keyboards and electronics, but this is his universe, it is where he comes from. He has a very relaxed rapport with all these tools and "machines", and experimentation in general. This does not stop him being influenced by the visuals. His relationship with the image is practically physical. John Lunn does not reject the idea of using computers, with which he creates small montages bringing him closer to the intended goal and which are, more often than not, embodied in the orchestral recording. He likes to compose his score as he goes along, on the piano as well as with these more modern means and he feels these two methods are not incompatible,

but even complementary. In passing, he points out that variations on an initial motif can become very time-consuming and somewhat sterile. Although he mentioned that Americans are making progress in original and orchestrated composition for series, he has noticed that they are still using « soundbanks » frequently and that this makes their series very recognisable. This is, of course, very efficient in this economically restricted world, but rather impoverished artistically speaking.

*Finally, an audience member questions both composers on preliminary research in their field of work.*

John Lunn listened to a lot of English music from the *Downton Abbey* era and he decided that the key was not to replicate the era, but to look for harmony, for the internal peace of the musical structure which is inspired from the classic repertoire as well as having a hint of jazz, whilst flirting with Philip Glass...

Éric Neveux says that for *Borgia*, it was not a question of adding to the historical aspect. He latched onto a hybrid format, between classic and abstract, using percussion, without leaning too much on Renaissance music. Nevertheless, for the 3rd season, Tom Fontana had discovered an instrument designed by Leonardo da Vinci, a sort of viola sounding rather like a harpsichord, which never existed but was made especially for the series. A special effort to connect with the historical context was made here, relating directly to Leonardo da Vinci who makes an appearance in the series. It is also important to stay connected to the characters. Lastly, for *Oz*, his idea was from the start, simply to begin with metallic sounds, in keeping with the prison world. ■



# MASTERCLASS ÉRIC ROCHANT

## SPEAKER

Éric Rochant, creator, screenwriter, director, producer (France)

## CHAired BY

Tone C. Rønning, commissioning editor drama and arts, NRK (Norway)



Éric Rochant is, primarily, known and renowned for directing feature films, amongst which *Un Monde sans Pitié*, *Les Patriotes* and, more recently, *Möbius*. Cinema was his first love. Ten years or so ago, he met Alex Berger, with whom he shares a passion for series, particularly American ones. They had the feeling that the time had come to produce a new type of series in France. The market was then almost untapped. Anything was possible. Anything could be tried.

## SERIES, A REVOLUTION

Series by American authors like *The West Wing* or *The Sopranos* gave the genre credibility and hope of new creative momentum. *The Wire*, created by David Simmons, proved the point, if there were any need, that a series could be as, if not more, daring and innovative as a feature film. Éric Rochant realised that writing series

offered a new freedom.

So, he started writing a new series for CANAL+, in collaboration with Alex Berger, on the arrival of Russian oligarchs after the fall of communism. This never saw the light of day, but it did lead to the creation of the production company, TOP (The Oligarchs Productions). Éric Rochant had the feeling that he still had much to learn about the world of series. It is essentially for this reason that he agreed to work on seasons 2 and 3 of *Mafiosa*.

This experience was particularly enlightening. «I learnt so much that I changed my way of directing. I wasn't the same director». *Möbius*, which he directed after *Mafiosa*, proves the point. The film is very different from, for example, *Les Patriotes*, be it in the writing or the direction. Éric Rochant feels that his work on *Mafiosa*, taught him how to direct a feature film.

For a long time, television series were modelled on cinema. Today, it is quite the contrary. Yet, Éric Rochant remembers that when he finished his studies at the IDHEC, television series were considered the underdog of cinema. It was, therefore, out of the question for a director to compromise himself by working for television. Television was not only cinema's poor relation, but was also

much less demanding on an artistic level. Nowadays, there is no shame in a director working for television, quite the contrary. He has every reason to be proud. Furthermore, Éric Rochant feels there is no daring in today's cinema. Over the past ten years, series are where the real creative narrative is to be found.

Éric Rochant admits to having made several errors on *Mafiosa*. But everyone knows that one learns more from one's mistakes than successes. He feels he approached this series much too lightly. At this stage, he still thought that a series was much easier to direct than a film. This nonchalant manner, even the sense of superiority he felt, were basic errors. Series have, as he was to learn, their own character and their own particular constraints. «Just because you're good at directing feature films, does not mean you'll be good at directing series».

With his experience on *Mafiosa* under his belt, Éric Rochant started on the writing of *The Bureau* with much more confidence. He went to New York where he met Todd Kessler, the showrunner of *Damages* and *Bloodline*. He attended several work sessions with the aim of drawing inspiration from American writing and production methods.

## ANOTHER WAY OF TELLING STORIES

Éric Rochant points out the two main differences between cinema and series. The first is the narrative format. In a film there are only two hours to develop the intrigue, whereas with a series, there is much more time to build over the episodes or even, better still, seasons. Series give screenwriters the invaluable luxury of taking their time, be it for creating a universe or for developing characters. In fact, Éric Rochant was criticised for taking too much time during the first two episodes of *The Bureau*. He reassures the audience that the pace does accelerate and the series gathers momentum.

What is even more important in series is that the screenwriter has time for subtlety. He can build a story on very tenuous issues, which is almost impossible in cinema. Moreover, in series, one can avoid a character's functionality. Each character has a particular function in an intrigue, but also its particular psychology. This can be detailed and elaborate. A screenwriter has the absolute luxury of being contradictory. Over time, a character can change, can be contradictory.

In a film, the viewer must know everything about a character straight away and in a figurative or poetic way. One cannot afford to be literal in cinema as this is a sure sign of a certain artistic deficit. One can get away with it in a series, on the condition that the extra time available is used to develop a more subtle intrigue. Éric Rochant was very surprised by this, by the quality and mind set in a series like *Mad Men*. The Americans have often been accused of producing cumbersome works which sacrifice narrative subtlety for easy entertainment. Yet, in *Mad Men*, from a writing point of view, certain episodes have very little content: nothing is really said and nothing happens. Unfortunately, nobody in France is yet willing to take the risk of producing such an atypical series.

## MANAGING BROADCASTING CONSTRAINTS

The second great difference between series and feature films is broadcasting constraints, imported from the United States, which require the production of a season every year for all series. As yet, this is rarely respected in France, so it is essential to manage viewers' frustration and withdrawal symptoms with care. It may be good to wait a year for the next season, but two years is much too long. As everyone knows, «out of sight, out of mind». In two years, viewers are no longer interested in going back to a series and frequenting characters that, more often than not, they have forgotten.

*Mafiosa* was only aired – Éric Rochant is keen to remind us – every two years. At the time, nobody believed that this type of series could be produced at the rate of a season per year. As far as broadcasters were concerned (including CANAL+), this seemed to be an impossible equation to resolve. This broadcasting constraint – to deliver ten 52-minute episodes every year – generates a feeling of urgency that is not without consequence, be it on the writing or the direction. In order to maintain the schedule, the second season of *The Bureau* was written during the filming of the first one. The creator has, therefore, to delegate, to spread the work load and to adopt a more collaborative approach, for example by setting up a team of screenwriters and directors. A new relationship is established between the creator and his work. He must keep control of his work and ensure uniformity, whilst taking into account everyone's creative input. He must invent a new way of managing his position as author.

This feeling of urgency also has an effect on filming. On series, a director does not have the luxury of mulling over shots on set. In point of fact, he has to film quickly, very quickly, four times quicker than for a feature film. In cinema, a director has the time to try out a scene with the actors or the director of photography. He even has time for rewrites. There is no place for improvisation in series. Everything must be controlled and there is no place for doubt in a director's mind. If he hesitates over a scene, the chances are that he will be forced to abandon vital parts of the storyline.

## SHOWRUNNER: A DIFFICULT PROFESSION

A series' creator has to face two major difficulties. The fact of having to delegate the creative process of a series and yet still guarantee its unity, means the creator risks losing the concept and philosophy he had at the start of the project at any time. In the end, keeping to the true sense of a work is what is most difficult. It is a constant battle, since every day brings its quota of incidents upsetting all the production departments of a series. This is also true for cinema, but to a lesser degree. Neither can be considered as spontaneous art. The second difficulty is having enough energy. A showrunner takes on all the roles, be it that of producer, screenwriter or director (Éric Rochant directed the first episode of *The Bureau* and will probably direct the first two episodes of the second season). With the obligation of creating 10 hours of drama per season, a showrunner «simply has no life». The director of a feature film has to perform physically and mentally for the duration of the shoot, but this rarely exceeds three months. It is the same for the creator of a series, except this goes on from start to finish: during the writing, the filming and the editing, so he has to manage his stamina, similarly to an athlete. In any event, he is always at risk of a burn out and can consider himself lucky if this only happens after the filming; it often happens when the series goes on air.

## THE BUREAU'S ORIGINS

Éric Rochant is questioned by Tone C. Rønning on the origins of *The Bureau*. He tells us that he pitched CANAL+ shortly after the release of his film *Möbius* in March 2013. He knew he could have directed another film, but he was dead set on trying a series. It was very clear as far as he was concerned. So, he presented a project for a spy series taking place in the heart of the DGSE (MI6/CIA); a subject which he had already touched upon in *Les Patriotes* (*The Bureau* is, in many ways, a prolongation of this film). Éric Rochant succeeded in convincing the channel that he was the ideal person to put together a project such as this. The pitch he presented was actually quite different from the series. This is often the case. The pitch is generally a gamble, since writing has not yet

begun. Once writing work had started, the project moved progressively away from the original idea that had been presented to the broadcaster. For this pitch, the series was already known as *The Bureau*. Éric Rochant had the idea of creating a department within the DGSE with the mission to train and monitor the most important assets in the French intelligence service: covert agents. Deep undercover in hostile countries, their mission consists of spotting people who could be recruited as informants. Operating in the shadows, "under a legend", meaning with a fabricated identity, these agents live in constant duplicity for many years at a time. Éric Rochant was aiming to show the day-to-day workings of a department devoted to inventing backgrounds. In fact, this ended up looking like a screenwriter's writing room, which is really quite poetic! As soon as he started writing, Éric Rochant realised that the initial idea was not strong enough. He also realised that what he really wanted to do, was to create a realistic series. In the end, is *The Bureau* realistic? It does not matter. The most important thing, as Éric Rochant points out, is to lead the viewer into believing the universe he is shown. This is exactly the strength of series like *The Wire* or *The West Wing*. They give television viewers the opportunity to discover a new universe that they can believe in. In order for it to be believable, the screenwriter must try to curb his imagination, so as to be as rational as possible. This is even more important on a spy series. The DGSE is nothing if not rational and logical.

## DISCUSSION WITH THE AUDIENCE

*Why were voice-overs used in The Bureau?*

Éric Rochant admits that it is a rather easy option and it provoked numerous debates amongst the screenwriters. Many felt that voice-overs were not necessary and that there were more subtle means of portraying the main character's feelings. But in a world like the one described in *The Bureau*, all the characters are hiding the truth. The main character is a compulsive liar. He lies to everyone, including himself. A voice-over does, in fact, enable real feelings or intentions to be shown. In most series, this role is given to the best friend. He's the one who pushes the hero to confide in him. In *The Bureau*, the hero, because of his position, has no friends. A voice-over is often an easy solution and, as such, should be justified. Éric Rochant is convinced that it was in this series.

*Did you set down specifications for the making of The Bureau?*

Éric Rochant thinks about it. Once he had directed and edited the first episode, this was used instead of written specifications. He allowed two weeks before the start of filming on all the other episodes, so that the other directors could use it for inspiration. He then outlined the key principals of direction and, in particular, what must be avoided at all costs. Lastly, on a day-to-day basis, throughout filming, Éric Rochant made sure that directors stayed within the guidelines that he had established. This said, he did give them a certain degree of freedom. The episodes do vary according to who directed them: Jean-Marc Moutout (episodes 2 and 3), Héliel Cisterne (episodes 4, 5 and 10) or Matthieu Demy (episodes 6 and 7). These differences, although noticeable, never interfere with the unity of the series.

*What was the relationship with CANAL+, the broadcaster, like?*

Éric Rochant points out that the main difference between *The Bureau* and *Mafiosa* is that with the latter, he was accountable to a producer and in some ways, the producer was a buffer between the broadcaster and himself. Although this had the advantage of protecting him from the channel's ruthlessness, it was still an intermediary too many. He had to convince the production who, in turn, set about convincing the channel and the people at the channel are the ones who make all the decisions. With *The Bureau*, Éric Rochant did away with an intermediary by taking on the role of producer himself. Nevertheless, he

reminds us that he was not alone, since he had the support of Alex Berger, his associate. Alex is his partner, not his producer. Occasionally, he had to take on the role of «bodyguard», dealing with «the broadcaster's sometimes hefty attacks».

Lastly, Éric Rochant is keen to point out that the showrunner does not replace the broadcaster, who continues to take all decisions. However, he did manage to impose a new way of producing a series with CANAL+. He forced the channel to change a certain number of practices. For example, he explained to the decision makers that once he had delivered a script, they had only three days to get back to him with their notes or comments. Any more than this and it would have been impossible to keep to the deadlines. ■



## MASTERCLASS TODD A. KESSLER

**SPEAKER**  
Todd A. Kessler, showrunner and creator (USA)

**CHAired BY**  
Jed Mercurio, writer and screenwriter (United Kingdom)



*Todd A. Kessler is one of the most influential writers of the moment. Having received his training working on The Sopranos, he made a name for himself by producing and directing Damages with his brother Glenn and their friend Daniel Zelman (together they form the trio called KZK). With Bloodline, aired on Netflix since March, they have redefined family drama.*

### BLOODLINE: A FAMILY STORY OF LOVE AND HATE...

Todd A. Kessler and his partners' main objective was to create a series about family. Todd A. Kessler is the youngest of three brothers (Glenn is the oldest). Danny Zelman also has two brothers, so their families are very similar. Family is a heavily debated topic amongst them, especially whilst they were working on their last series, *Damages*. This series was set in the world of lawyers, a world none of them have any knowledge of, other than the fact that in a lot of ways, especially the bad ones, it is very similar to the world of film and television. The story revolved around

the relationship between an egocentric and ruthless mentor - Patty Hewes, played by Glenn Close and her young protégé, Ellen Parsons, played by Rose Byrne. Todd A. Kessler realised very early on that he would not be able to delve into the world of families in this series (the theme is present, but is not developed).

So, after the fifth and last season of *Damages* had been aired, the trio started coming up with a family drama. Although the subject matter is very easily treated in a classical, emotional way, they refused to go down that road. They needed to find their own angle and original tone. The idea was to portray a family in a new way. That's where they got the idea to combine thriller and family drama.

This said, *Bloodlines* is not so much a series about family per se, it's more about family dynamics. It explores the roles that brothers and sisters can unknowingly be made to take on within a family. In *Bloodline*, all the family members - three brothers and a sister - have taken on roles without any say in the matter and without ever questioning them. What happens the day one of the family members refuses to play their assigned part? What happens when the reasonable one stops being reasonable? What happens when the black sheep of the family decides to follow another path? These are the questions the series attempts to answer.

### WORKING WITH NETFLIX

Once they had defined the concept for *Bloodline*, Todd A. Kessler, his brother and Danny Zelman, went to Los Angeles to pitch the series. They met with 9 different channels, including HBO, FX, AMC, Showtime and Netflix. They all, without exception, wanted to produce the series, which, strange as this might seem, is not always a good sign. Todd A. Kessler points out that this general approval doesn't say anything about the quality of the concept. In fact, concepts that are unanimously liked, are rarely the most interesting ones.

The decision makers at Netflix seemed the most enthusiastic. They offered to commission all 13 of the series' pilots, without even having seen a single one, which is quite rare. Not only did they love the concept, but they broadcast all five seasons of *Damages*, which was very successful with their subscribers. Traditionally, this is a very different process. In most cases, creators present a first version of the script. Then, if the broadcaster decides to endorse it, they film a first pilot episode. It is very common for channels to show these pilots during test screenings, to measure viewers' reactions before commissioning a whole series. This process can take 6 to 12 months, which gives creators time to develop the plot and think about casting. *Damages* followed a

very similar path. The only difference was that the pilot was presented in February and a month later FX had commissioned all 10 episodes (the screening results were very positive) with a view to airing in July. The state of panic that Todd A. Kessler and his partners were in, heavily influenced the nature of the first season which is slightly chaotic when it comes to the plot.

However, when it came to *Bloodline*, with Netflix having commissioned the entire series off the original pitch, Todd A. Kessler didn't have that "incubation period" to further develop the series. It was broadcast less than a year after they first pitched it.

### A THREE-HEADED SHOWRUNNER

Todd A. Kessler has been working with his brother and their friend David Zelman for 10 years. Of course, working as a trio is a challenge. He tells us that every decision has to be put to a vote. However, this sort of partnership has its advantages. Indeed, either one of the three can take on any role, whether it's screenwriting or even directing and editing. They are able to make all decisions independently, from sets, to costumes or artistic direction.

Considering the little amount of time they are given to make a series, working as a trio is a great comfort. Some days, filming can last up to 17 hours! Todd A. Kessler could not take on all of a showrunner's responsibilities alone. He simply cannot be everywhere at once (on set, in the editing room, with the screenwriters). Yet every step of the creative process is primordial: developing the concept, writing the pilot and the other episodes, directing, editing... In the United States, most series have a single showrunner, but in most cases, they have assistants who are given various responsibilities. Jed Mercurio asks about the writing process. Todd A. Kessler explains that the trio gets together - physically or via videoconference - to go over and agree on the narrative arc of the series. They define what he calls the "tentpoles", i.e. the main events that will guide the plot. The process has to be flexible enough for them to be able to drop certain "tentpoles" if necessary. For example, the story can evolve according to the actor's interpretation or the work done by the directors. Todd A. Kessler sees

the script as a blueprint and is open to being surprised and changing his mind. A creator should never limit himself to a single idea. In any case, the writing process needs to be organic to enable creativity.

This applies even more so to a series like *Bloodline*, the first season of which was written like a 13-hour film. The 13 episodes were composed of 3 Acts (as are most feature films). So the first 4 episodes are this thriller's First Act. Todd A. Kessler thinks that the series works best if the viewer watches a few episodes in a row (which is made possible by Netflix, as the platform makes every episode available from the first day of broadcast).

### BODY HEAT...

Todd A. Kessler wanted *Bloodline* to be set in a location that was very rarely used in television and cinema. He therefore decided to set the series in The Florida Keys, located at the southern tip of the United States, in the Florida Straits that link the Atlantic Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico (145 km from Cuba). This location has a touch of the mythological attached to it in the United States and is home to many legends.

Surrounded by turquoise water, the archipelago stretches across a long barrier reef. With the ocean being very shallow in this area, it's not unusual to see sharks moving just below the surface of the water. The area was a perfect metaphor for the Rayburn

family. At first glance it seems idyllic, just like the beautiful landscapes of The Keys. But it's also filled with secrets which, just like the sharks in the barrier reef, can surface at any moment. A paradise like that is undoubtedly the perfect place to set the hell of family relationships.

To add to that, the atmosphere in The Keys is hot and humid. Bodies glow with sweat. The series therefore finds that muggy and testing atmosphere made famous by great thrillers like *Cape Fear* (directed by Martin Scorsese in 1991) or *Body Heat* (directed by Lawrence Kasdan in 1981). The Keys take on a character of their own and give the story a very visceral aspect which Todd A. Kessler points out is quite new for television (except maybe for a series like *True Detective*). Jed Mercurio congratulates him. The magnificently filmed landscapes give off a feeling of oddness and danger.

Todd A. Kessler quickly understood that the reason very few shoots are organised in The Keys is that the working conditions are very difficult. The archipelago has very few infrastructures necessary for filming a series. Aside from the heat and humidity, the place is crawling with mosquitoes.

### BROTHERS UP IN ARMS

Todd A. Kessler and his partners imagined a family made up of three brothers and a sister. They first started with the character of Danny Rayburn

(played by Ben Mendelsohn), the black sheep of the family. He is screwed up; the one everyone thinks will amount to nothing; the one who committed the ultimate crime, i.e. disappointing his parents; the one who is always held at arm's-length from the family. The black sheep is no accident or anomaly within a family. It is a product, even a reflection of that family. It is the result of the family dynamics. Based on his experience and that of his friends, Todd A. Kessler noticed that the black sheep is often the eldest son.

Once that character had been defined, the creators drew up the other family members. John (Kyle Chandler) is the second brother. He is the good kid. He is the one who never rebelled. He always seemed to compensate and make up for his older brother's mistakes, making him the responsible son. He even became a sheriff. Kevin (Norbert Leo Butz), the youngest of the brothers, had an easier life. He is quite angry and fond of a drink. He never felt the need to take on any responsibility (his brother did that for him). Also, he knows that whatever he does, he will never be as much of a disappointment to his parents as his older brother. In fact, he never really found his place in the family dynamics. Finally, Meg (Linda Cardellini), the younger sister, is the family's good girl. She became a lawyer and always did what was expected of her. In doing everything to please her parents, she struggles to know who she is and who she wants to be.

When he sold the concept to television channels, Todd A. Kessler explained that these four brothers and sisters

were like the legs of a chair. The "black sheep" is the shorter leg that makes the chair wobble. In the first season, Danny decides to come back to the family nest. His return will set off a series of dramatic events that will lead the respectable facade that the family hides behind to crumble. His brothers and sister will therefore try and remove the shorter leg to regain some sort of balance. In the second season, the chair only has three legs.

### PLAYING WITH TIME

*Damages* was one of the most influential series of the last few years. Todd A. Kessler played around with the timeline, using a number of flashbacks and flash forwards. In the series, time was used as a plot tool, but also as a dramatic tool. When he created *Damages*, he wanted to tell a story that started with a flash forward and gradually untangled what we had seen. It was a murder that was going to happen in the future and we were going to find out the cause and the murderer. He then had fun changing the process in each series by changing the form of the flashbacks and flash forwards in order to keep the viewers on the edge of their seats. In *Bloodline*, the flash forward is used again. In the very first episode, we see John Rayburn dragging the unconscious body of his brother Danny through a swamp. What the viewers see in the future gives them elements of what the characters are feeling in the present. Everything that is happening in the present is changed by what the viewers know of

the past and future. However, unlike *Damages*, the question here isn't "who committed the crime?", it's "why was the crime committed?".

To further play with the timeline, *Bloodline* uses another, often criticised, tool: the voice-over. In his masterclass, Eric Rochant admitted that it's a bit of an easy process, a "script crutch". His use of it in *The Bureau*, was the cause of much debate between screenwriters. The voice-over in *Bloodline* is used as a temporal tool because the person commenting the story - John Rayburn in this instance - has already lived it and has his own vision of how it all happened. But can we trust him?

### BRINGING TOGETHER THE PERFECT CAST

From his extensive experience, Todd A. Kessler knows that getting the perfect cast is, in large part, luck. For the character of Danny Rayburn, he met only one actor: Ben Mendelsohn. Originally Australian, he was living in Los Angeles. Todd A. Kessler was impressed by his performance in *Animal Kingdom*, so he organised a lunch meeting. As luck would have it, at the time, he wasn't working on any feature films. To add to that, his agent loved *Damages*. Ben Mendelsohn accepted the part and moved to The Keys with his family. Today, Todd A. Kessler is convinced that if the part of Danny had gone to another actor, the series would have been vastly different.

Kyle Chandler (who plays John Rayburn) played the main part in



© Netflix - Amanda Boury



*Friday Night Lights*, a series Todd A. Kessler is a big fan of. He played Coach Taylor, a magnificent character, full of kindness and much liked by viewers. By offering him the part of John in *Bloodline*, Todd A. Kessler knew that viewers would see the character with a lot of empathy. They would instantly sympathise with him. Viewers' expectations always seem to be subverted in this series. From the 12th episode, it becomes very clear that Kyle Chandlers is no Coach Taylor from *Friday Night Lights*.

## DISCUSSION WITH THE AUDIENCE

*Did working on The Sopranos change your perception of a TV series?*

Todd A. Kessler confirms that yes, it did. When David Chase was starting work on *The Sopranos*, he explained that the series was conceived as the third chapter of a trilogy, the first two being *The Godfather* (Francis Ford Coppola) and *Goodfellas* (Martin Scorsese). Todd A. Kessler had never heard of a TV series being talked about with such ambition. David Chase had invented a very filmic language (visually and narratively) that had never been seen on television, at least not in the United States. He also brought a certain ambiguity to the plot by refusing, for example, to tie up all loose ends. David Chase did not invent the anti-hero, but he certainly gave him his place in television. Moreover, Todd A. Kessler points out HBO's influence. The New York pay-per-view channel definitely changed the game and revolutionized series for writers. Before meeting the heads of HBO, David Chase tried to sell *The Sopranos* to Fox. It is easy to imagine that his series would have been cancelled after three episodes. Also, no one could have ever imagined a series like *The Wire* before HBO. *Damages* would probably never have seen the light of day.

*How did you present the series to Netflix? Bloodline is a complex series and must be hard to sum up in a single pitch...*

Todd A. Kessler answers that the series he creates with his brother and David Zelman are very personal. The pitch for *Bloodline* was based on his and his friends' families. He was exploring the roles that each individual must take on within a family. *Bloodline* is a series about blood ties, that permanent attachment that can imprison us. The themes are therefore universal. Unfortunately, most of the series that revolve around family tend to become quite sentimental. Conflicts are resolved at the end of each episode and have very little effect on the characters. These series are very reassuring. They enable viewers to go to sleep with a light heart. *Bloodline's* objective is very different.

*For Damages and Bloodline, did you take inspiration from the creative process set up by David Chase?*

Todd A. Kessler answers that David Chase had set up a specific system for each season of *The Sopranos*. He had,

of course, set up a writers' room. First, he defined the various "tentpoles" that would guide the season. For every episode, he would discuss with the screenwriters which events could best lead the plot from one tentpole to the next. In parallel, David Chase defined a narrative arc for each of the characters.

Before HBO and *The Sopranos*, every TV series had the same formula. Every episode had to be composed of 4 segments or acts (to allow for ad breaks) and had to have at least 3 plot lines and 24 scenes. The main plot had to be made up of 12 scenes and 6 scenes were allocated to each of the two sub plots. An episode of *The Sopranos* was an hour long (with no breaks), so David Chase could bring in a fourth act. The number of scenes went from 24 to 34.

*Alcoholism seems to play a big part in the series. How would you explain that?*

Todd A. Kessler explains that alcoholism is one of the main afflictions in *The Keys*. In the series, it is part of the family's DNA. ■

## CONTRASTING PERSPECTIVES... TODD A. KESSLER & ÉRIC ROCHANT

### SPEAKERS

Todd A. Kessler, writer, director, producer, (United States)  
Éric Rochant, director, screenwriter, producer, (France)

### CHAired BY

Stefan Baron, producer (Sweden)



*They both have very different career paths. One, Todd A. Kessler, is American, a writer, director and producer, and one of the biggest names of the small screen with several prestigious series under his belt, such as The Sopranos, Damages or more recently, Bloodline, broadcast on Netflix. The other, Éric Rochant, is French. After making a name for himself in cinema with his feature films such as Un Monde sans Pitié, Les Patriotes and Möbius, he moved onto successful series' writing: starting with Mafiosa, then The Bureau, which was recently broadcast on CANAL+.*

### THE BUREAU: A FRENCH SERIES WITH THE AMERICAN TOUCH

The two men met in New York. Well before *The Bureau*, Éric Rochant went to the United States, to discover American methods and therefore to learn from a writer that he highly respects and that he even considers a mentor, Todd A. Kessler. He learnt a lot, but mostly discovered new perspectives on how to create series in France. Éric Rochant has not necessarily abandoned cinema. However, the universe of series has given him a new creative field. He has already worked in the world of series while working on *Mafiosa*. But, as he reminds us, *Mafiosa* was not his series, he was not at the origin of the concept. "I thoroughly enjoyed working on *Mafiosa*, and I did my best to make it my project". He was ready to create his own series.

It is with this variety of experience that Éric Rochant embarks on the adventure that is *The Bureau*, a series that he created, produced and partially directed, following a method close to that of a showrunner. There was still the need to convince CANAL+ of the coherence of a creative process that can end up being more costly than the more traditional systems. To convince CANAL+, Éric Rochant explained to the heads of the channel that this was the only way to produce a season a year, which, as surprising as it may

seem, is a new practice in France. Too often, the audience must wait for 2 years, maybe more, to watch the second season of a series, with the risk of losing interest.

Yet, to deliver ten scripts (which is one season) per year, one must write fast, very fast. Éric Rochant delved into the Writers' Guild of America's recommendations on how to set up an Anglo-Saxon writers' room, essentially a communal writing room used by several screenwriters. Éric Rochant remains the mastermind of the series and supervises the script writing to ensure the uniformity of vision and point of view. He nominated several senior writers and handed over the writing of one episode in its entirety each. They had 15 days to send him an initial version. He then set up a team of junior writers, in charge of writing specific scenes. Nicknamed "the slaves", Éric Rochant admits giving them the more tedious scenes to write, the ones that the senior writers were glad to hand over. The juniors are not so much expected to show talent, as they are to be able to write in the tone of the series, adopt its language, and be able to develop it in the interest of the writing. "They listen a lot and speak very little". Of course, talent always shines through and juniors can gain 'senior' status.

Todd A. Kessler knows this system all too well, as this is what he uses in the United States. The Americans have put

an entire system into place to enable screenwriters to evolve. He began at the bottom of the scale as a staff writer and then progressively climbed the ranks and gained more and more responsibility (which was particularly the case with *The Sopranos*). Without this learning process, he would never have been able to create *Damages* or *Bloodline*.

With *The Bureau*, Éric Rochant was able to impose a new way of working on CANAL+. For example, for the first season, he called upon three directors of photography and five directors. There were moments when three sets were being used simultaneously. In many ways, *The Bureau* is effectively an American-style series.

### BLOODLINE: AN AMERICAN SERIES WITH THE EUROPEAN TOUCH

Similarly, *Bloodline*, if one looks carefully, is a European-style series. Todd A. Kessler considers to have learnt a lot from Éric Rochant, during his stay in New York. Indeed, he only knew one system, the one that was put in place during the 80s in the United States.

After having watched the series, Stefan Barron sensed the influence of several European writers, and particularly Ingmar Bergman. Éric Rochant is not surprised. When a family drama is written in Europe, there are very long dialogue scenes between a father and his daughter, a mother and her son. There are indeed many of this type of scene in *Bloodline*, very long one-on-one scenes, which is quite unusual for an American series. These scenes, according to Éric Rochant, are the most violent and outstanding ones of the series. Perhaps the only difference with Europe, is that the American series place great importance on what they call “primitive scenes”. In France, a family drama would essentially be based on the way the various family members behave with one another. In the United States, a family drama would most often be based on an initial trauma. The primitive scenes are a way of exposing the events that happened in the past and enable a better understanding of what makes the characters behave the way they do, of the relationships between the characters and their evolution. The European works feel less the need to explain, to shed light on their characters and justify their actions. Todd A. Kessler agrees that the Americans might feel more the

need to expose and clarify. Putting everything on show is very American. American series have a tendency to want to test their characters as soon as possible, often in a scene that revolves solely around action (even if the scene ends up seeming unrealistic). With *Bloodline*, he wanted to “take his time”, meticulously construct a family drama and explore the roles that each person can play within the family dynamics. The family here is overwhelmed with secrets, neuroses and regrets. In the series, each sibling (three brothers and a sister) epitomises the role that has been inflicted upon them and conforms to it without questioning it. What happens when one of the family members refuses to play the part that was assigned to them? What happens when the one who is meant to be responsible, decides to no longer behave that way? It is these questions that the series explores. They give a certain rhythm to the narration. Todd A. Kessler took great joy (alongside his brother, Glenn, and Daniel Zelman) in writing long dialogue sequences, often between two characters. These scenes, more so than the action, enable the tension and violence between the characters to gradually build. When it comes specifically to influences, Todd A. Kessler does not deny that of Ingmar Bergman. The great Swedish director must have been in everyone’s mind, but was never mentioned during the work sessions. There are, however, clear influences in *Bloodline* from major literary works such as *Crime and Punishment*, as well as news items (OJ Simpson’s trial, for example). To finish, Todd A. Kessler mentions Thomas Vinterberg’s film *Festen*. The scene where the son stands up and reveals a terrible secret to his family, will stay with him forever. It is one of cinema’s greatest moments.

According to Todd A. Kessler, both series – *The Bureau* and *Bloodline* – are genre series despite the fact that they do not follow all the rules. If *The Bureau* is a spy series, Éric Rochant was mainly interested in the spies’ lives, feelings, psychology. *Bloodline* is a thriller, but this aspect only comes into play later on in the series. The boundaries between styles and genres have become very porous. The American and European models influence each other mutually, and this particularly today, since it is possible to have access, practically instantaneously, to the creations of writers all over the world.

### THE SHOWRUNNER: A UNIVERSAL MODEL?

Todd A. Kessler points out that this model has evolved a lot in the United States. It owes a lot to the appearance of cable channels in the universe of broadcasting creation. Before the appearance of new players like HBO, showrunners would sign two-year contracts (whereas actors would sign for 6 seasons). If the series was a brilliant success and the decision was taken to prolong the series past the two seasons, the showrunners would train a writer to take on the project, and go off to create a new series (most often for the same channel). The cable channels have changed the game. Today, the creators of series like *The Sopranos*, *Mad Men* or even *Damages* stay on board until the very end, and this, regardless of the season. Cable channels have brought a massive amount of support to the creators who now have total freedom to develop their vision. However, today a player like Netflix brings in a new model as it broadcasts the entire season in one go. “Netflix is not changing the game, it is simply a new game”. Such a model obviously affects the storytelling. We cannot write series the same way we used to. On this point, *Bloodline* was written as a 13-hour feature film. This does not mean that all the series produced by Netflix are the same. They do not have a true creative identity, because they want to appeal to the entire world. Which is the total opposite of channels like HBO or Showtime which have a clear and easily recognisable signature.

According to Éric Rochant, the showrunner model was born in the United States because the system is very competitive. France does not have



channels like HBO, Showtime or Starz. A series like *The Bureau* could only be sold to CANAL+ (possibly Arte). If the channel had refused the project, it would have been abandoned. This lack of competition is, according to Éric Rochant, problematic. Without any contenders, CANAL+ does not feel the need to outdo themselves, to offer better quality programmes.

### SELLING A SERIES: THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FIRST EPISODE

Stefan Baron questions Todd A. Kessler and Éric Rochant on the method they used to sell their series. Éric Rochant explains that he quickly pitched the concept of the series to CANAL+ (a concept that was quite far from the end product, although it does talk about the same universe, that of the French Secret Service). The channel launched the initial stage of development: writing the pilot and the plots of the ten episodes. On this basis, they commissioned the writing of the other nine scripts. It is only after having read the second version of the first 4 episodes (and after agreeing on the main actor, Mathieu Kassovitz) that they green light production on the series.

For *Bloodline*, Todd A. Kessler mentions that Netflix greatly appreciated *Damages*, which made the selling process much easier. He presented a short pitch, with his partners. The channel was excited and bought the entire season based on the simple pitch, without having read even the beginnings of the script beforehand. Which is extremely rare. Stefan Baron then wants to know if the channels had a part in the development stage. Éric Rochant explains that for a channel like CANAL+, the first episode is fundamental, particularly the first 15 minutes of this episode. So when he sent the script of the pilot, the channel sent back more than 15 pages of comments (including 10 pages for the first 15 minutes). Éric Rochant decided, to reassure the channel, by directing the first two episodes of the season himself, a decision he sometimes regrets due to how painful the experience was. The first episode – meant to hook the audience and create a certain loyalty – is always the most difficult to make, and can sometimes be the worst. For a feature film, the first three days of filming are often binned. In the first episode of *The Bureau*, he feels he made every possible mistake,

resulting in provoking the channel’s wrath. He does not blame CANAL+. He understood their concern. The first episode of a series is highly strategic. Todd A. Kessler understands Éric Rochant. The first episode – the pilot in most cases – is a major challenge since it is meant to set the tone for the series. In the United States, it is common for the channels to show the pilots during trial screenings to measure the audience’s reaction. Some episodes are screened in shopping centres, a place where the audience is particularly difficult. This process can be quite long, some pilots can be tested for over a year. Todd A. Kessler is not against the idea. The audience’s comments can help the creator perfect their work. That being said, if the reactions are overly negative, channels might want to modify the project significantly, taking it far away from the writer’s initial idea.

For *Damages*, the channel showed the pilot in several towns. The reactions were so good that the channel gave the green light only three weeks after the screening tests. The pilot was actually not modified at all and was broadcast as was. For *Bloodline*, Netflix commissioned all the episodes, without asking to see a pilot. Todd A. Kessler and his acolytes took advantage of this, took their time and refined the first episode, notably in terms of editing. They probably took too much time, as the pilot was only finalised once the last episode was filmed. Todd A. Kessler considers now that that this was a mistake. Although the pilot was filmed in March, he was only able to show it to the actors in November. Whereas he considers it primordial for the actors of a series to see the first episode as soon as



possible in order for them to have an idea of the universe in which they are evolving. On the contrary, Éric Rochant would tend to show the first episode to the actors as late on as possible. “We are not used to showing the work to the actors in France. Most of them even refuse to watch the rushes”. There are few actors who can watch themselves and use what they see. Éric Rochant usually asks the actors to trust his vision. He asks them to feel the scene from the inside and not to watch themselves act. That being said, they soon saw the first three episodes that were edited during the filming. Did this comfort or help them in the work? Éric Rochant cannot say. However, he was quick to show the first episode to the directors for them to use as inspiration.

### BY WAY OF CONCLUSION

This encounter has been the confrontation of two specific paths: American adventure and French know-how; the opinion of two writers on the same profession. In addition, it has given Todd A. Kessler and Éric Rochant the opportunity to set up a meeting in the near future to collaborate on a joint project... ■

## MASTERCLASS

# ANNA & JOEG WINGER, CREATORS OF DEUTSCHLAND 83 – GERMANY

### SPEAKERS

Anna Winger, screenwriter and co-creator of *Deutschland 83*  
Joerg Winger, producer and co-creator of *Deutschland 83*

### CHAired BY

Jean-André Yerlès, screenwriter (France)



### THE IDEA

The first question which comes to Jean-André Yerlès is to know if it is easy, as a couple, to carry out a project such as this. Well, of course it does mean that we can work 24 hours a day if we want, points out Anna Winger! She and Joerg had often imagined working on a project together, in Berlin, where they live. Anna has been living there for more than ten years. They have two children and as they grew up, they started asking questions about “that wall that used to be there”.... Then one day, their seven-year-old daughter said, «they knocked it down and hugged each other!». This fresh and naïve remark, a childish and wonderful vision of the reunification, that day in 1989 when not a drop of blood was spilt, got them thinking. A drama on this divided Germany would no doubt be a good idea, particularly for educational purposes, but seen from a quite different angle. Quite the opposite of a film like *The Lives of Others*, here the action takes place mainly in West Germany. More often than not, it is all about the former GDR, but this time it's the old FRG.

### THE RELUCTANT MOLE

Another important factor of *Deutschland 83*, is that there is no question of the good in the West and the bad to the East. The series is not Manichean and does well not to be.

The main character, Martin Rauch, a young 24-year-old German – the actor playing this character, born in 1990, is phenomenal – is torn from his native East Germany by the Stasi and sent to the West ... a reluctant mole. Anna Winger is keen to point out that in the former GDR, most people lived «normal» lives and did not want any changes. So, the hero who has never asked for anything, who has a girlfriend, his friends, his family, is made to leave all the same. This is who tells us the story, this mole who infiltrates the American army and switches to a completely different world where he has no bearings. Joerg explains that, at the time of the Cold War, one never knew if «one was friends with a spy or not» in Germany. *Deutschland 83* brings new and sensitive insights into the complex political reality of Germany in the 80s.

### AN INTERNATIONAL SERIES

*Deutschland 83* is «an international experience», much more so than any other German series and multilingual as well. The Americans, in particular, were quite right to welcome this historical drama with such a light touch. The 3rd episode was actually on Sundance yesterday and Anna has been keeping an eye on tweets and initial reactions. During this 3rd episode, which is set in Brussels, the

viewer really gets to know the main character. Anna is delighted that it is a success with the American public, since barely ten years ago, it would have been unimaginable for this sort of show to be successful on the other side of the Atlantic.

### FROM WRITING TO DIRECTING/PRODUCING/MARKETING

Anna wrote the whole pilot in English, since although she speaks German fluently now, she would not claim to be able to write in this language with the precision she would like. They put together a team of four writers, each responsible for an episode and Anna was in charge of uniformity as the main screenwriter. As in France, in Germany there are groups of authors who are paid per script and not by the hour, and this is how they proceeded, choosing the participants in this adventure with the greatest of care ; the same with directors who were very involved, he points out. If it were to do again, Anna would do it exactly the same. With hindsight, even if she had doubts in the beginning, she found overseeing the writing group to be a very productive and enriching experience. Should there be a second season, she will definitely apply the same technique. The script was only translated into German later by Joerg who, as

executive producer, made the pitch himself.

So if Anna sees herself as the main author, then Joerg is the showrunner. He is the one who managed all the financial and commercial aspects of the project. It must be said that he had a lot of experience in production, with some 320 episodes in Germany under his belt.

Anna and Joerg have, above all, “invented their own way of doing things” in a country which has only just started making this sort of drama, which has been more common in Scandinavia, the United Kingdom and France up until now. So why not in Germany? The Berlin Festival, where the series was first shown (two episodes and not even the final versions), is only just starting to show this sort of programme.

The broadcaster himself has invested them with the title of «creators». Relationships with the aforementioned were excellent. Joerg says he was given the support he needed from the beginning. The broadcaster was immediately won over and was very encouraging, even for what was a very new type of project. «A broadcaster's courage never lasts long» declares Joerg with humour, so we had to strike while the iron was hot, which they did. Everything was filmed in natural settings and not in studio, in Bonn, Cologne and above all, in Berlin, due to budget issues. Filming was organised set by set, here again for reasons of efficiency and economy. Reconstituting Germany in the 80s does not come cheaply. Each episode cost nearly one million euros.

In short, Anna and Joerg were given great artistic freedom and were able to work in a climate of confidence which is very precious. The pace of work was intense since, having received the order for the pilot and having delivered three scenarios, the broadcaster green-lighted the whole project (that is, a series of 9 episodes in 3 chapters, 3 episodes per chapter, in 1983, 1986 and the happy ending in 1989 respectively). The first script was delivered in December 2013 and filming begun in December 2014.



### DISCUSSION WITH THE AUDIENCE

*Deutschland 83* is backed by New Wave hits from the time and in connection with this, a member of the audience who was born in Romania in 1963, talks about his vivid memory of wandering through a supermarket in London in 1984 for the first time. He wonders if, contrary to what he has just seen on the screen, there should not be music in supermarkets in West Germany in 1983....

Anna says that firstly she is touched by this authentic testimony. It's quite true, she says, but faithfulness to a specific context does not mean that reality can't sometimes be amplified or even deformed, sometimes even to consolidate the plot or the subject. We are talking about a drama fiction series here, so we can take liberties.

*A question for Anna Winger on the historical context: was it difficult for you to be afforded legitimacy on this project, since you come from another country?*

Anna Winger did not let herself be intimidated in the slightest by the fact that she was taking on a period in history of a country that was not hers to start with, even if she has been living there for a long time. Anyway, she reminds us that an author's strength lies in the capacity to appropriate a story and to invent, be it inspired by reality or not. We can write

about the future, about a civilisation from another planet; it is the power of imagination that counts at the same time as discipline, necessary of course when you aspire to adhere faithfully to a given period in time. We had to be sure that the difference between the two Germanys was immediately perceptible visually; something to which they obviously paid a lot of attention in terms of decor and/or accessories.

*Was historical research necessary beforehand?*

Anna and Joerg Winger confirm that it was. They met with diplomats from that time, the American ambassador and others, but also ex-Stasi agents. All of this to consolidate and legitimize their series in respect of a particular period in time.

### AS A CONCLUSION

Anna and Joerg Winger are waiting to know the audience ratings for the first season before deciding on whether there may be a second season. The broadcaster is already happy with the success encountered on the series' release in the States, but they still need to see the viewing figures for Germany particularly. Joerg prefers not to comment on the sale of the series to Russia at the present time. *Deutschland 83* will be aired on CANAL+ in France. ■



## MASTERCLASS

# METTE M. BØLSTAD

Introduction to *The Heavy Water War* screening

**SPEAKER**  
Mette M. Bølstad, screenwriter  
(Norway)

**CHAired BY**  
Nicole Jamet, screenwriter (France)



*Nicole Jamet is happy to welcome the successful Norwegian screenwriter, Mette M. Bølstad, who has come to share her work experience and the keys and struggles to her success with festival goers. She first asks her to lay out her journey for us.*

Mette M. Bølstad starts writing prose at an early age and is at that point self-taught. She then graduates from the Central School of Speech and Drama of London and at the age of 20, decides that she wants to write, not only for the theatre, but also for film, radio, why not even television... The medium doesn't matter to her, she's interested in them all. She is passionate about writing and that's what she wants to do.

Mette M. Bølstad has co-written many films and series, notably *King of Devil's Island* (which received six nominations over various festivals), *Happy Happy* (four awards and twelve nominations), *The Half Brother* and finally *The Heavy Water War*, Norwegian television's biggest success to date and the main topic of today's masterclass.

### THE HEAVY WATER WAR: THE ORIGIN

Mette M. Bølstad was contacted barely a month before filming started! Whereas for *The Half Brother*, amongst others, she wrote the entire script, here she had to take on an existing script, which was originally created as a documentary, she explains. So from that starting point, she had to make a 6-episode-long miniseries in record time. The story

was there, but the original document lacked "inner vision", enabling viewers to understand the characters and really bring them to life. Since it was to be billed as a drama, this emotional aspect of it could not be left out and was the basis of her work. Without it, the director would have no "way in".

### THE CHARACTERS: THE CORNERSTONE OF THIS SERIES, ESPECIALLY THE WOMEN

The series pivots around very well-defined main characters, some of them real, some of them intentionally fictitious. Their psychological profiles are very subtle, many of them holding onto secrets they cannot divulge. The first and foremost is Professor Werner Heisenberg, the German scientist who is in the throes of inventing the atomic bomb. Then Leif Tronstad, the Norwegian leader of the resistance, who goes to the United Kingdom to recruit those who will lead the salutary sabotage mission; another extraordinary character. He actually deals mostly with young men who have no idea what they're involved in, who are simply happy to be going abroad. The emotional transition these young men go through, as they gradually realise what they are involved in, is very subtle. Then there is his female

British counterpart, a highly qualified troop leader who tells us the story of the war from her point of view. There is also the manager of the factory that produces the heavy water and especially his wife (whose candour and strength we see in a fantastic extract where the couple is at table and with barely a word spoken, just a look, an edifyingly moral compass shines through)...the women who surround these men are very important to the plot...

Mette M. Bølstad started by working on the female characters, even the supporting characters, so that the women would be more intelligent than they so clearly appeared in the original concept. They were not women "waiting", they were real women, with real character, passion, who take action. These are not women who want to go and live in this remote part of Norway; they want a social life worthy of the name and one of them doesn't even care if her husband comes back. These are women who aren't subjected to events and who we don't simply pity. These female characters are created as intermediaries between the male protagonists and the viewer. They are bridges of emotional understanding for the viewer. Illustrating her point through various extracts from the first episode, Mette M. Bølstad shows us very clearly how she often used

"economy of words" to really plunge us into the emotional side of this story.

### THE 7-MINUTE THEORY, HOPE, EMOTION OVER ACTION

This theory dictates that every 7 minutes, something needs to happen to keep the viewer's full attention during the episode and therefore come back for the next one. Again, this isn't obviously measured in terms of action, it can be done by the sole use of emotion: a new emotion every 7 minutes, that's 6 new emotions in 45 minutes and the viewer is won over. Wrath, despair, joy, love...We are first and foremost receptors and vectors of emotion; it's what we are always looking for.

The characters were, therefore, constructed one at a time, subtly, delicately and singularly. However, if a common emotional base was established between them all, Mette M. Bølstad would say it's hope. Hope is an uplifting emotion, whereas melancholy, for example, vehicles an idea of "restraint". Hope is a "motor", useful for a series, for the viewer. An essential motor that very simply taps into our humanity.

As a historical drama, this series could have easily fallen into the trap

of constant action, as underlined by Nicole Jamet. This, in an attempt to remain faithful to reality. But Mette M. Bølstad was careful not to go down that road. It was obviously important to her to stay faithful to the facts, but she didn't just "fill the gaps" in between these very real events. Her main concern was the characters' emotional journeys, which is the main ingredient of her recipe. Overall, she reminds us that what we find in historical facts, doesn't always tell us the real story...

### CAN ONE MAKE AN UNSYMPATHETIC CHARACTER WELL LOVED? A WIFE TO THE RESCUE...

Is it possible to create attachment to a "bad" character? Indeed, on paper, the man who is inventing the nuclear bomb, and by so doing, threatening the entire world, should therefore be bad. Mette M. Bølstad explains that although Werner Heisenberg, the young German genius who won the Nobel Prize for physics in Stockholm in 1932, is a pre Second World War German. He's not really a Nazi, but is increasingly being labelled as such. He is an important professor, passionate about his work, but also an overgrown teenager who ends up hitched with



a sublime woman, rather by chance. Like most people, he is riddled with contradictions and is, overall, a nice character. It would be unfair to simply go for a black and white version of things. Any given situation is always more complex than it appears and there are all sorts of conflicts going on here, intimate as well as political. Mette M. Bølstad takes a second to congratulate the actor Christoph Bach on his performance, which she deems absolutely remarkable, as well as the performance of the actress who plays his wife and who is an essential intermediary for the viewer. She is the one who helps us to like her husband, who enables us to understand that he is crossing the thin red line, which helps us understand him better. In fact, she becomes that story's narrator, the one who "spreads the word".

### WHAT OF THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DIRECTOR?

Mette M. Bølstad had already collaborated with Per-Olav Sørensen (they worked together on *The Half Brother* and are working together again, at the moment, on *Nobel*) and is very happy with the work they do together in general. Indeed, it's not just about delivering a script, as together, they insure that the narrative is correct, the plot is fascinating and the intentions are understood all the way through the process. They are in daily contact with each other and the director asked that she be on set to have her point of view. When one finds a director with whom it is so easy to work, where the understanding is emotional as well as professional, then one must continue working with that person. It's a guarantee of continued growth and quality. She offers to illustrate this point with another video extract, this one from the 6th episode of *The Half Brother*. Here we understand how they decided to deal with the emotional journey around a boxing match in a very elaborate manner, both visually and in terms of dialogue.

### CHOICES MADE FOR BUDGETARY REASONS

Obviously, certain choices needed to be made for budgetary reasons, but once again those were all made in close consultation with the director. Through another extract from *The Heavy Water War*, Mette M. Bølstad explains how a crazy chase scene on nordic skis, in James Bond style, was taken down from 20 minutes to just a few minutes and transformed into a story told post-event by the protagonist - the hunted - in a bar, drink in hand. It was a question of financial means. The scene, however, is no less emotionally convincing for it. In general, when she arrived on the project, all the sets had been

confirmed and the margin for change was limited. So certain decisions had to be made as to what it was useful to keep or not.

### TO CONCLUDE

Finally, Nicole Jamet is happy to salute such a tight collaboration between a director and a screenwriter, which so clearly works. She broadens the focus by bringing up what undoubtedly is involved in a successful audiovisual adventure, which is confronting different points of view with intelligence and above all bringing together all the talent - screenwriters, producers, directors - in a trusting and harmonious climate. It is beneficial for everyone involved. ■

## CREATING SERIES IN SPAIN MASTERCLASS TERESA FERNÁNDEZ-VALDÉS AND RAMÓN CAMPOS

**SPEAKERS**  
Teresa Fernández-Valdés and Ramón Campos, Bambú Producciones (Spain)

**CHAired BY**  
Charline de Lépine, producer, Macondo (France)



*Teresa Fernández-Valdés and Ramón Campos decided to create Bambú Producciones in 2008, following the success of Desaparecida, their first series. Creating their own company enabled them to use a work model similar to that of American showrunners, in order to have full control over their works.*

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF SHOWRUNNERS IN SPAIN

According to Ramón Campos, the history of Spanish TV drama can be divided into three distinct eras. During the 80s, channels started production on ambitious and costly drama that was more a cinematographic work than a proper television series. During the 90s, television became industrialised and produced many family series for "fast watching", that were less expensive and aimed at a broad audience. During the 00s, a new generation of producers took it upon themselves to mix the two approaches and created works that were ambitious, as well as being profitable. This new system was governed by directors, who had all the power. Therefore the works produced had no specific point of view and no identity. Through Bambú Producciones, Teresa Fernández-Valdés and Ramón Campos aim to put creator-screenwriters back in their rightful place, which is at the top of the creative pyramid. The works produced by showrunners have a soul. As a kind of one man-band, they have control of the entire production process: in the writing room, on the set, right through to the final edit. Their approach was, as they would admit today, somewhat naïve. They probably had not imagined the difficulties that they would be faced with, particularly when it came

to raising the financial resources. Despite this, success has followed success since the company's creation, producing series such as *Velvet*, *Gran Hotel*, *Gran Reserva* as well as *Hispania*. The American showrunner model, which was practically unheard of a few years ago, started somewhat of a craze in Spain. The broadcasters understood the importance for them to collaborate with writer-producers. A showrunner has a certain competitive edge. Not only are they aware of the financial challenges of production, but they have their own creative vision. Channels are more and more open to this model. Ramón Campos explains that Bambú Producciones was founded as a family company. He only works alongside people who know him inside out, know his preferences, be it for decor, costumes, or even staging. The directors with whom he works know, for example, that he hates Steadicams. He gives great importance to the depth of the visual field. Ramón Campos also works consistently with the same teams of editors, screenwriters and composers.

In partnership with



## A PANORAMA OF TV DRAMA IN SPAIN

Three leading networks share the Spanish tv drama market: Televisión Española (public-service television), Atresmedia and Mediaset. Spanish series today are produced and financed by the major general-interest channels. The upcoming take-over of CANAL+ Spain by Telefónica (already a presence in pay television with Movistar TV) should revolutionise the audiovisual field in Spain, since this big new group intends to differentiate itself from its competitors with a better content offer, particularly with drama and new consumption trends (based on a model similar to that of Netflix). Expectations are high, says Teresa Fernández-Valdés, and many hope that the arrival of a new player will give a creative boost to the broadcasting market. The Spanish broadcasting market sets itself apart from the ones in other European countries, because, unlike their neighbours, local series are the most successful ones with the Spanish audience. American series are never broadcast during prime time and audience shares for major international successes are modest. Each week, eight Spanish series are broadcast during prime time, to around 12 million viewers. Series are also broadcast in the afternoon and some have even managed to dethrone the Latin American Telenovelas. Unlike Spanish cinema, which is not coping with the competition from big American blockbusters, television programmes' main audience is the general public, who remains highly attached to national works. Regional identities are very strong in Spain and the audience wants to be able to identify with the characters that are presented on the small screen. Art cinema, which represents a vast amount of films, does not have its place in television. Series in Spain – and this is another characteristic of the market – are entirely financed by the broadcasters. Ramón Campos is very much in favour of this system, as the channels know best what their audiences' preferences are.

## THE AUDIENCE IS ALWAYS RIGHT

Spanish television series are created according to the preferences of the audience. This can create a certain frustration with the writers. Teresa Fernández-Valdés thinks the opposite. Writers can easily limit themselves to broaching themes that are close to the audiences' hearts while still flourishing from a creative point of view. She is indeed very proud of the series that she has produced. *Velvet* or *Gran Hotel* are certainly aimed at the general public, particularly a female one. But quality was never sacrificed on the altar of market shares. Ramón Campos compares audience shares to a mushroom tart. The women are the tart's pastry, men are the cream and the younger audience are the mushrooms. One cannot make a tart without pastry and likewise, one cannot create a series without thinking about the female audience in priority. Even when he is delving into the creation of a thriller (a more male-orientated genre), Ramón Campos never forgets the female viewers. He aims to create a thriller that his mother would equally enjoy. For a long time, Teresa Fernández-Valdés thought that the best way of winning over the international market, was to offer works that were more risqué. She found that the series that were the most successful abroad, were the ones that were highly successful in Spain. *Gran Hotel*, an albeit very classic and 'mainstream' series, was sold all over the world, including to

China. It was remade in Mexico and in Italy (Spanish works are extremely successful in Italy, the audiences' preferences are very similar in both countries). *Velvet* (which follows the daily lives of the owner and staff of a ready-to-wear shop in the 60s) has also been a great success in numerous countries.

It is completely natural that creators always want to win over the younger audience. Although, Ramón Campos reminds us that the young are, by nature, unloyal. Constantly on the hunt for something new, they can abandon a series in a flash. Women, however, are much more loyal. They never betray a series that they love.

Is the audience always right? Ramón Campos indicates that the series that was the most successful in Spain (before *Velvet*) was *Hispania*. Some episodes of the first season reached 5 million viewers. The series follows the adventures of Viriato, a humble Lusitanian shepherd who, after the destruction of his village, fights against the Roman invasion. It was conceived as kind of Spanish Asterix and Obelix. During each episode, a small troop of forty Spaniards were able to defeat an army of more than 1000 Romans. *Hispania* was, more than anything else, a family comedy series. It was of course highly criticised by historians. Ramón Campos never claimed to be making a historical series, however the critics influenced him so much, that he decided to entirely modify the plot for the second season. The episodes became much more dramatic and



the horror of the Roman invasion was fully represented. The audience ratings plummeted and the series was cancelled. Ramón Campos learnt that if the audience enjoys a series, you should not change it.

## THE REFUGEES, A SERIES WITH INTERNATIONAL APPEAL

With *The Refugees*, Teresa Fernández-Valdés and Ramón Campos wanted to prove that they were capable of creating a different series, for a different sort of audience. The aim was not so much about beating audience records as it was about creating a "brand". The sci-fi genre is rarely taken on in Spain, and from the start, the project was a co-production between Antena 3 and BBC Worldwide. The two channels agreed to finance the series based on the first script, which took 6 months to write. Teresa Fernández-Valdés and Ramón Campos also presented a trailer made up of scenes and images taken from different films and series to the broadcasters. The main references were Michael Haneke, Sam Peckinpah (particularly *Straw Dogs*) and several works of science fiction.

*The Refugees* is set in a dystopian Spain. In the series, mankind is faced with the biggest exodus of its history. Three million people from the future, running away from an imminent global catastrophe, arrive in the present. Because the series was created for the international market, all the actors are British and speak English. Ramón Campos worked alongside a BBC screenwriter on the dialogue. On the subject of language, Teresa Fernández-Valdés points out that a series does not need to be filmed in English to be a success abroad. The majority of series are dubbed or sub-titled for their broadcast. As for the American market, it is already saturated and anyway, Americans prefer to remake foreign series. If Bambú Producciones were to start a similar new project, it would be filmed in Spanish. In addition, Teresa Fernández-Valdés reminds us that international broadcasters only buy series that are a great success on their own national market.

Yet again, we must not forget the audience in Spain prefers national series. Yet for Spanish viewers, *The Refugees* was very much an English series, despite the channel's efforts to sell it as a Spanish work. The various trailers aired insisted upon the fact that *The Refugees* was the new series by the creators of *Gran Hotel* and *Velvet*. This did not pass muster with the Spanish. Ramón Campos is



adamant that had the series been filmed in Spanish, it would have been a bigger success. Moreover, the channel made the error of comparing the series and its universe to Stephen King's *The Dome*. *The Refugees* was promoted as a mainstream series when, in fact, it was not aimed at the general public. It was created, from the start, for a niche audience. It was not at all aimed towards a female audience. Ramón Campos wanted *The Refugees* to be a deep reflection on the theme of immigration and, because of this, wanted it to be more writer oriented. He admits that he wanted to enjoy himself. "I was never thinking about the viewers", he says. The series certainly did not beat any audience records, but nevertheless, there were more than 1 million viewers. He is very proud of that.

*The Refugees* was, in some ways, an experimental work. Now, Bambú Producciones is working on an ambitious new project called *The Embassy*. This new series is political and focuses on corruption (one of Spain's biggest problems, according to Teresa Fernández-Valdés). The story takes place in a Spanish embassy in an Asian country, designed as a Spanish microcosm. The series is also a broader reflection on power, the search for it and how to keep it. Teresa Fernández-Valdés and Ramón Campos agree that their previous series were very "polite". This one will be "dirtier", less politically correct.

## DISCUSSION WITH THE AUDIENCE

Questioned on the production of *The Refugees*, Ramón Campos explains that the series was financed to the tune of 350k € per episode. The fact that the budget was so limited, allowed Teresa Fernández-Valdés and Ramón Campos to take more risks, but they quickly realised that it was too low. In the end, *The Refugees* is the least expensive Spanish prime-time series of the past three years (the usual budget is 550k € per episode). There were seven to eight days of filming for each episode and David Pinillos and Elías León directed. ■

# HUMANS

(Channel 4 – United Kingdom / AMC - United States)

## SPEAKERS

Sam Vincent, screenwriter  
Jonathan Brackley, screenwriter  
Derek Wax, producer, Kudos  
Chris Fry, producer, Kudos  
Kristin Jones, AMC  
Simon Maxwell, Channel 4  
Katherine Parkinson, actress  
Gemma Chan, actress

## CHAired BY

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



The new British-American co-production, *Humans*, describes a world very similar to our own, except for the fact that robots (Synths) help humans, not only with their domestic tasks, but also manage to replace them in various aspects of their daily lives. These robots are strange: occasionally they will do something inexplicable, something... almost human. This story will most probably remind you of something. This is to be expected. *Humans* is a remake of the Swedish series *Real Humans*.

## THE ORIGIN OF HUMANS

Derek Wax discovered the *Real Humans* series in 2010, while it was still in the production stage (it had not yet been broadcast in its country of origin). The SVT channel had shown a few extracts to one of his colleagues. They were only disparate scenes, but the plot was so promising that Kudos was quick to put an option on the series, with the possibility of a remake. The following year, Derek Wax, who had come to present *The Hour* at *Série Series*, went to see the screening of the first episode of *Real Humans* at the Fontainebleau theatre. The project for creating the British version was falling into place.

Kudos absolutely wanted to put an option on the series before it was broadcast in the United Kingdom. Derek Wax was aware that it would be far more difficult to sell *Humans* to a broadcaster if the Swedish version was already known to the public. The independent sector had boomed over the past few years and the British market had become extremely competitive. Broadcasters were overwhelmed with projects and looking for the freshest, most original and creative ideas. When Kudos created *The Tunnel*, the remake of the *Broen* series, the broadcaster ran the risk of losing a share of the audience (the viewers that had already seen the Swedish-Danish version when

it was broadcast in Great Britain). *The Tunnel* was, in the end, a great success. But Derek Wax knew that few broadcasters would be ready to take such a risk with *Humans*. Jean-Marc Auclair therefore asks Derek Wax why he felt the need to produce a remake of *Real Humans*. It wasn't so much a need as it was a necessity. Good ideas are rare nowadays. *Real Humans* was one of the most original series at the time. It touched upon so many genres: thriller, sci-fi, drama. Unlike many science-fiction series, the series is not set in a strange and distant future. It talks about our current society, our fears, our desires.

## WRITING A REMAKE

Before presenting the project to a broadcaster, Derek Wax added two screenwriters to the project – Sam Vincent and Jonathan Brackley – to write a first version of the script. He did not want to sell the series by simply presenting a DVD of the original version. The two writers did not read the original scripts. However, they did watch the entire first season of *Real Humans* twice over, on DVD. They fell in love with the series. The original concept was so strong that it enabled them to develop a multitude of themes and characters. A remake could, whilst staying true to the concept, take new paths, develop

new characters. The creation of a new version, like the writing, seemed completely natural. Jonathan Brackley points out that the first episode of *Humans* is very similar to the one in the original version. The key events are reiterated. For example, just like in *Real Humans*, a family (the Hawkins in the British version, the Engmans in the Swedish version) purchase a robot ('Synths' in the British version, 'Hubots' in the Swedish version) named Anita (played by Gemma Chan). Rapidly, the series takes different directions. New narrative arcs were built for each character, of which the emotional trajectory distanced itself slightly from that of their Swedish counterparts. The finale of the first season is, in that respect, different. The dynamics within the Hawkins family are more complex. The mother, Laura (played by Katherine Parkinson) has a much more difficult relationship with her daughter than in the Swedish version. Sam Vincent admits that the first script was probably too similar to the original. In the second version, they took things a lot further. Unlike the writers, Katherine Parkinson decided not to watch the Swedish version of the series. Similarly, Gemma Chan settled with watching a trailer. The aim, in *Humans*, was to be based on the original series, at least its concept, but also to let the narrative go towards other horizons. The two actresses were afraid of being too influenced by *Real Humans*, although it was clear that the British version could not be a simple copy of the original. Sam Vincent and Jonathan Brackley went to Sweden to meet Lars Lundström, the creator of *Real Humans*, before starting the production of the series. They wanted to get his opinion, as well as his advice. He advised, for example, that the Synths be present from the first episode. What is important is not so much to explain where they come from, but more to use their existence to develop storylines. Like other series, such as *True Blood*, the universe must stand out on its own. Lars Lundström had understood that it was possible to impose a universe – however strange it may be – without any prior explanation. Sam Vincent and Jonathan Brackley followed his advice. In *Humans*, they made sure to create a believable universe, without having to explain where the robots came from.



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## SELLING AND DEVELOPING HUMANS

Once the script was finalised internally (within Kudos), Derek Wax presented the project to Channel 4, the ideal channel, according to him, to broadcast this kind of series. Jean-Marc Auclair is keen to point out that Kudos took a considerable financial risk. They had no guarantee that the channel (this one or another) would accept the project. The risk paid off. Simon Maxwell says that Channel 4 appreciated the fact that Kudos presented a concrete project, with a solid base (in this case, a script). The channel had all the information necessary to make a decision, with all the facts to hand. Be that as it may, there are no specific rules nowadays in Great Britain. For example, certain projects are accepted, based on a simple pitch. Most European producers incorporate visuals in their presentations when presenting their projects to a channel. Derek Wax does not see the point. Broadcasters are looking above all to work with the best actors and writers, more than being concerned with the visual aspect of a series. Their decisions are based solely on the quality of the scripts. *Humans* was very much what the channel was looking for. Although it takes place in a very specific genre of science-fiction, the series is nonetheless based in a kind of social reality to which Channel 4 is very attached. Moreover, the series tackles purely philosophical questions. *Humans* questions our relationship with technology intelligently, a theme which is very difficult to adapt to television. It also explores a

great contemporary fear, that of the obsolescence of human beings. The success that the series had during broadcasting, shows that its topics are with the times. The American channel AMC was introduced to the project quite late on. When Kristin Jones met with the representatives of Kudos, *Humans* was co-produced by Channel 4 and Xbox Entertainment Studios. Thankfully for AMC, Microsoft decided to close down that branch. Derek Wax explains that once the closing of Xbox was confirmed, he was flooded with calls from other broadcasters interested in the series. But Kudos did not want to miss out on collaborating with such a prestigious channel as AMC. With smash hits like *Mad Men*, *Breaking Bad* and *The Walking Dead*, AMC has seen an incredible growth within the last few years. Since the channel intends to continue producing genre series (their speciality), with strong drama content, they could not let a series like *Humans* slip through their fingers. Particularly since British series (*Downton Abbey*, to cite one of many) are so successful in the United States. The American audience, Kristin Jones points out, is not afraid of the British accent. *Humans* is AMC's first co-production. In the end, the budget (approximately £1.2 million per episode) was split equally between Channel 4 and AMC. Chris Fry points out that a co-production can only function if the stakeholders (here, AMC, Channel 4 and Kudos) share the same vision and the same ambition for the series. The development process of *Humans*, he recalls, was particularly easy. Channel 4 gave the go-ahead after having read the script of the first

two episodes, as well as the general storylines of the season. Sam Vincent and Jonathan Brackley were given 8 weeks to finish the remaining 6 episodes. Having run out of time, they entrusted the writing of episodes 4 and 5 to two other screenwriters. Derek Wax is aware that it would have been more comfortable to finalise the 8 episodes before starting pre-production. It's a luxury that the screenwriters did not have. This said, he believes a certain amount of flexibility should be maintained. Indeed, a script can evolve during filming, depending on the input of the actors or the directors. In this way, the screenwriters can decide, if an actor turns out to be particularly tremendous, to develop a character (or even keep them alive when it had been decided they would die). On this point, Kristin Jones recalls that the creators of *Breaking Bad* had imagined killing off the character of Jesse (played by Aaron Paul) but eventually, and thankfully, decided that he was key to the series. Production and filming influence the writing process. As Derek Wax recalls, "writing is re-writing". The writing process only truly ends after the final edit.

### PLAYING HUMANS

To help the actors (including the extras) to play 'Synths', workshops were set up with a choreographer three weeks before the start of filming, with the aim of mastering movements. Gemma Chan considers this extensive preparation to have been an absolute necessity. The choreographer created a physical language generic to all the robots in the series. All the movements, even the simplest ones, had to be learnt all over again (getting up, walking, sitting down, cooking, hovering). The trouble was finding movements that were neither too human nor too robotic. The 'Synths' function thanks to batteries and are therefore very frugal with their actions or movements. There is also no reason a 'Synth' should be right or left-handed, so the actors had to learn to be ambidextrous. The choreographer was present everyday on set to help the actors.

We can only imagine how difficult it must have been for Katherine Parkinson, who plays a much more

traditional being, to act facing an actress who not only had minimalistic movements, but who was also incapable of expressing the emotional range of a human being. Nevertheless, Gemma Chan's acting is so realistic that Katherine Parkinson just had to react to what was basically a robot, but strangely human.

### PROMOTING HUMANS: SYNTHS FOR SALE

To promote the series, Channel 4 and AMC used a particularly original marketing campaign. The British channel initially broadcast an advert during prime time (without ever mentioning the series), asking viewers to visit [www.peronasynthetics.com](http://www.peronasynthetics.com) to purchase a Synth! Simultaneously, Channel 4 set up a pop-up store (in an abandoned building) on Regent Street in London (the equivalent to an Apple Store, but for robots). In the window display, passers-by could see the latest products from the Persona Synthetics brand, which were two Synth models, Sally and Charlie. The humanoids (digital replicas of the 'Synths') interacted with the passers-by thanks to the Kinect technology developed by Microsoft. Gemma Chan went to the store to observe the crowd's reaction. Many people fell for the trick, believing that a store would soon open where you could purchase real robots.



Within a few hours, posts mentioning the Persona Synthetics brand exploded on Twitter, as well as searches on Google UK (more than 100 000). In the United States, the AMC channel set up a similar store to the one on Regent Street, in Atlanta airport. Actors played the Synths. Their reactions were once again unbelievable.

The two Synths displayed in the store were finally sold on eBay for the symbolic sum of £20 000. Simon Maxwell reminds everyone that the world described in *Humans* could be closer than we think. Technological advances are so fast. This campaign was a rogue way of making viewers question their relationship with Artificial Intelligence, as well as their loved ones. Derek Wax points out that the series started a true debate in England about our love-hate relationship with technology. Are we not all slaves to our mobile phones? More generally, *Humans* asks a fundamental question: what makes humans human?

As a conclusion, Simon Maxwell mentions that in Great Britain, the series is both a critical and audience success. In terms of audience, there were over 4 million viewers for the first episode on the evening of its broadcast, largely exceeding the channel's expectations (a show is generally considered a hit on Channel 4 when it exceeds 2 million). ■

## TORPEDERNA / CLEAN SLATE

(TV4, Sweden)

### SPEAKERS

Per Gavatin, head writer, FLX  
Pontus Edgren, producer, FLX  
Leo Razzak, actor  
Liv Mjones, actress

### CHAired BY

Jean-André Yerlès, screenwriter (France)



*Torpederna* was financed totally by TV4, at a cost of approximately 450 000 euros per episode. Pontus Edgren agrees that the series would probably have benefited from a larger budget if it had been commissioned by SVT, the Swedish public service channel which is part of the Sveriges Television Group. TV4, a private network, has much fewer resources. *Torpederna* was a real risk for TV4. Over the past few years, the channel has specialised in pure entertainment and broadcasts huge hits like *X Factor* or *Let's Dance* (Strictly Come Dancing). Pontus Edgren points out that *Torpederna* is more the type of series aired by a channel like AMC in the United States (*Breaking Bad* or *Mad Men*).

When Liv Mjones read the first three episodes, she was very surprised. Taking into account the subject matter of the series, she was not expecting it to be so funny at all. The series is indeed comical, but there are also some very dark sides to it. The humour is very black. It is very much at the crossroads of comedy, drama and thriller.

The network was very worried that their public would not take to the series. Fortunately, *Torpederna* has been a tremendous success with both critics and public. Some critics even went so far as to say it was probably the most original series of 2014. As for audience ratings, there was an average of 1.5 million viewers, which largely exceeded TV4's expectations. Jean-André Yerlès asks the actors how they felt, particularly during filming. Liv Mjones considers herself very lucky to have been part of such a good series. As for Leo Razzak, this is his first role as an actor. He met Felix Herngren, showrunner and director of *Topederna*, at a party. He was quick to tell him how much he admired his work and the two men exchanged email addresses. A few days later, Leo Razzak received an email from Felix Herngren telling him that he should become an actor and that he would be perfect for the part of the 27-year-old gangster, who sees himself as a cross between Steve Jobs and Scarface. Leo Razzak had just been given his first part as Nima in *Torpederna*! In view of this success, a second

season is being looked into. The network has not yet green-lighted it, but discussions are taking place. Per Gavatin will not be taking part in this second season. FLX will be using a team of seven screenwriters within the company. It is the company's strategy to move their screenwriters forward from one project to another. Having been the main screenwriter for the first season of *Torpederna*, Per Gavatin is moving on to showrunner for *Boy Machine*, FLX's new creation. ■

# TRAPPED

(RUV – Iceland / Zdf – Germany)

## SPEAKERS

Sigurjón Kjartansson, showrunner and screenwriter  
Clive Bradley, screenwriter  
Magnus Sigurdsson, producer, RVK Studios  
Klaus Zimmermann, producer, Dynamic Television

## CHAired BY

Philippe Niang, director (France)



*Iceland is probably the country that has the lowest crime rate in the world (one murder a year officially). Nevertheless, there is indeed a murder at the centre of the intrigue in the Trapped series. An unidentified torso washes up on the banks of the peaceful village of Seydisfjörður. A storm closes all the roads leading to the town, isolating it from the rest of the world. The inhabitants realize that they are all potentially suspects, but also, they are all potentially in danger.*

## DEVELOPING THE PROJECT

This series was created by Baltasar Kormákur, who also produced and directed the first episode. Nevertheless, *Trapped* is above all a joint collaboration, with talent from six different countries, since it was co-produced by ZDF (Germany), SVT (Sweden), RUV (Iceland), YLE (Finland), DR1 (Denmark) and France Télévisions.

Klaus Zimmermann tells us that once the pilot was completed, the writing of the series' ten episodes carried on over the period of a year, which he considers to be a real luxury. It is very unusual not to have the broadcaster breathing down one's neck to start filming as soon as possible, once the project has been green-lighted. The creators were lucky because this series could only be filmed during the winter months. There are three key elements to *Trapped*: the criminal intrigue, the main character and nature.

In terms of the broadcasters' involvement, the screenwriters were allowed a lot of freedom. The channel that was the most involved in the writing process was ZDF (the Sunday evening slot of which is devoted to Scandinavian drama). In the end, no specific broadcaster had absolute control of the creative side. Clive Bradley explains that Klaus

Zimmermann set up a particularly efficient system by which the four main screenwriters involved in the project, spent a week together every two months to discuss in detail the next two episodes. Clive Bradley had never come across this way of doing things before and since then, has been encouraging British producers to do the same. Although costly – the budget allocated for development of the series was estimated at around 450 000 € –, in the long run, this method turned out to be particularly productive.

## FILMING

Filming took place in particularly difficult conditions. As it happened, Iceland had a very harsh winter that year : great for the series since it was supposed to take place during a storm ; not so great for the team as conditions were particularly hard (half the scenes were filmed on location) ; even more so, since filming took 97 days, with 12 hours per day. Apart from the adverse weather conditions, Sigurjón Kjartansson reminds us that during winter, the sunrises at about 11 o'clock and sets at 4 o'clock at the latest. So the team had, at best, four hours to shoot the daytime scenes. He applauds the actors' as well as the technical team's performances, all of whom were exceptionally motivated and involved in making what is Iceland's largest

production to date, a success. Magnus Sigurdsson tells us that Iceland is a very popular country, with its splendid and singular landscapes attracting a great number of producers of both films and series every year. As a result, the technical teams are very experienced.

As regards more specifically the actors, Sigurjón Kjartansson points out that, generally speaking, all Icelandic actors come from theatre. So of course, there were some rather acrimonious negotiations with theatre directors, who were not exactly thrilled to have their actors otherwise engaged for over three months. Sigurjón Kjartansson completely understands that the filming of *Trapped* created some problems in Iceland's theatrical milieu. Klaus Zimmermann adds that Iceland is a very small country where everybody knows everybody, so it is always possible to find a solution. Magnus Sigurdsson points out that the three main actors in the series, apart from treading the boards, also have a lot of experience in films. Ólafur Darri Ólafsson will be playing a giant in Steven Spielberg's next film (*The Big Fat Giant*). Ingvar E. Sigurdsson is playing opposite Jake Gyllenhaal and Keira Knightley in *Everest* (directed by Baltasar Kormákur). As for Ilmur Kristjánsdóttir, she has one of the main roles in the film *Virgin Mountain* (winner of three prizes at the recent Tribeca film festival in New York).

## AN INTERNATIONAL CO-PRODUCTION

Klaus Zimmermann tells us that the creators' objective was to create a typically Icelandic series, but with appeal for an international public. The idea of approaching several European broadcasters was actually an integral part of the project as such. In addition, since the cost of producing the series was slightly costly (7.3 M€), and although Icelandic funds are substantial, they were largely insufficient.

From a narrative point of view, not just universal themes are broached in the series, but it is also set against the background of the crisis, which the public can easily relate to, particularly Europeans. While it is true that Iceland was particularly affected by the 2008 crisis, Clive Bradley reminds us, it was unthinkable not to touch on this subject in the series, every European country having been affected. Klaus Zimmermann adds that the first events described in the series take place precisely in 2008. A member of the audience asks



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the various participants how they managed to convince France Télévisions to join them, since they are not generally involved in co-productions. In this respect, Klaus Zimmermann considers the concept of the series to be particularly original, from both a narrative and an artistic point of view. Moreover, the series benefited from the huge success of *Broadchurch*, but also the notoriety of Baltasar Kormákur. More specifically on the subject of France Télévisions, the fact that three of the big European

broadcasters had already given their approval certainly facilitated negotiations. Lastly, Klaus Zimmermann adds that the budget for the series was quite reasonable. Philippe Niang would like to know if the Americans have shown any interest in remaking *Trapped*. Klaus Zimmermann confirms that they have. He cannot go into any detail as negotiations are still underway. *Trapped* will be aired in December in Iceland and March 2016 in the other European countries. ■

# THE ENFIELD HAUNTING

(Sky, United Kingdom)

## SPEAKERS

Joshua St Johnston, screenwriter  
Krystoffer Nyholm, director  
Joel Wilson, producer, Eleven Films  
Jamie Campbell, producer, Eleven Films

## CHAired BY

Lars Lundström, writer and producer,  
Matador Films (Sweden)



## THIS HOUSE IS HAUNTED

The British mini-series *The Enfield Haunting* (made up of three episodes), is based on the most famous and well-documented Poltergeist case in the world. The events generated major interest at the time. The story takes place in 1977, in a suburb in England. For several months, Peggy Hodgson, a single mother, and her four children are the witnesses and victims of bizarre phenomena (unknown noises, objects inexplicably moving). A malicious ghost seems to have taken control of their house. The poltergeist targets young Janet (11 years old), going as far as taking control of her body, and is even violent towards her. Distraught, the family call in Maurice Grosse, an investigator for the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) who attempts to understand and neutralise the danger. The task is made even more difficult as it brings back painful memories. A few years previously, his own daughter, also named Janet, was murdered, and he is convinced that it is possible to communicate with her through the spirit that inhabits the Hodgson's household. Throughout his mission, Maurice Grosse is assisted by Guy Lyon Playfair. Although Guy is initially quite sceptical, he is quickly convinced that the events happening at Enfield are not the result of some clever prank by the children, but that it is in fact a Poltergeist.

## WRITING A HORROR STORY

The project for the series came to light six years ago. Joel Wilson wanted to adapt the book written by Guy Lyon Playfair, an author who has written approximately a dozen works on the field of parapsychology. It took several years to convince him that his story could be adapted for television. The author feared, probably with reason, that his book would be betrayed and transformed into a Hollywood show relying largely on horrific special effects. Actually, Steven Spielberg contacted him at the beginning of the 80s, before writing and producing *Poltergeist*. Guy Lyon Playfair had, in fact, refused his offer. Joshua St Johnston joined the project early on. He had read Guy Lyon Playfair's book (who he only met twice). In his view, the book was more a metaphor about bereavement than a ghost story. The initial version of the screenplay focused on the relationship between Maurice Grosse and Janet Hodgson. The ghost was the manifestation of their despair. On one side, the young girl suffered from the absence of her father and, on the other, the investigator was haunted by the death of his daughter. Joshua St Johnston's screenplay used the extraordinary circumstances to develop a reflection on separation

and loss. This vision definitely helped in reassuring Guy Lyon Playfair. However, the creators stood by the fact that the series should be frightening. The horrific effects were added to the second version of the screenplay. The challenge was therefore to find the balance between an intimate drama and a horror. Krystoffer Nyholm was involved much later on in the process. He received the first version of the screenplay while he was working in Sweden. He admits that when reading the first two pages, he was slightly disappointed. The first scene was set in a graveyard and he had the feeling he had read this story a hundred times before. Luckily, he kept on reading. The screenplay and the story were much more subtle than he had initially thought. He fell in love with the project. It is rare to find a project which, while remaining true to the horror genre, is fully focused on the characters. The majority of horror films have accustomed us to clichéd and bland characters; archetypes without any depth. *The Enfield Haunting* brings a new dimension to the genre. Joshua St Johnston thoroughly enjoyed working with Krystoffer Nyholm. He grasped the nature of the project and their collaboration was particularly productive. Especially as Krystoffer Nyholm's comments on the script were not only expressed in a subtle and

always constructive manner, which is rarely the case, but also allowed for the story's development whilst staying true to the intentions. Lars Lundström points out that the poltergeist is very much one of the characters in the series, which is as complex as it is terrifying. On this subject, Joshua St Johnston reminds us that "in order to write a good horror story, you need to start with a good monster". His first version of the script was not frightening enough. The ghost was too ambiguous, too vague. So, the decision was taken to give it a body. In the final version of the script, the spirit has a name, a personality. His intentions, particularly those towards Janet, are explicit.

## BOO, SCARE ME!

Horror may be in at the moment, but not many broadcasters venture into this genre. Nevertheless, it has been attracting a greater audience. It is, however, mainly on the big screen where horror films boom at the box-office. As of today, the market for horror on television is mainly un-tapped. *The Enfield Haunting* was greeted with huge success on its broadcast on Sky Living, bringing in an audience that would not typically go for this genre. This success is proof of the opportunities in the field, and Jamie Campbell is convinced that the series is opening doors in Great Britain. Actually, there are similar new projects in development. During the broadcasting of *The Enfield Haunting*, Joshua St Johnston enjoyed following the reactions on Twitter. In the comments, many people mentioned the fact that the series was too frightening and they could not watch it. That was the proof, if ever it was needed, that the balance wanted between drama and horror had been found. Joel Wilson previewed the series to several of his friends. Two of them stopped watching after 10 minutes. Horror is the only genre that provokes this kind of instant, jerk reaction. Some people just cannot handle it. As is highlighted by Jamie Campbell, series that are solely horror-based venture into other territories that have nothing to do with the genre. It is impossible to maintain a constant level of fear throughout 10 episodes. The audience would probably get bored. In its first season, the *American Horror Story* series progressively transforms into a sort of soap – which is one of its main qualities – where the main characters are ghosts. *The Walking Dead* and its swarm of zombies are a metaphor for the dark side that



lives within us; the fear that we feel can transform us into what we fear the most. These series, just like *The Enfield Haunting*, cross over several genres.

## A «TRUE» STORY

The creators always had in mind the fact that *The Enfield Haunting* was a "true story". In order to stay true to the story, a high importance was placed on the sets and costumes and very little computer-generated imagery was used. In one particular scene, one of the main characters is propelled into a wall. The actor was attached by several strings which violently launched him against the surface of the wall. The use of "old school" effects adds extra credibility to the series. An audience does not watch a film or a series in the same way when they know that the story being told is inspired by real life. Joel Wilson reminds us that in horror films, it is traditional to say, regardless of whether it is true or not, that the events described are 'based on a true story'. This creates a strong connection with the audience. After having seen James Wan's *The Conjuring* at the cinema, Joel Wilson went straight to the internet to learn more on this dark story. Indeed, the film is meant to be based on the experience of Ed and Lorraine Warrens, the famous paranormal investigators. The web is filled with anecdotes on their investigations and their exploits. Similarly, the creators of *The Blair Witch Project* (Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sánchez) were able to create an entire mythology around their film, inviting the spectators to

prolong the experience on various other media.

Jamie Campbell took the opportunity to point out that *The Conjuring 2* will be based on the events that happened at Enfield. The Warren did indeed go to the Hodgson's family house to investigate. They did, however, only stay all of 25 minutes. The question on everyone's mind is: did the events described in *The Enfield Haunting* actually happen? On this point, Jamie Campbell is categorical; he does not believe it for a second. It is true that all the people involved in this matter – including the police officer whose career was affected by the events – never went back on their testimonies. They have confirmed that the objects moved on their own, without any human intervention. All of which is quite troubling. However, the only object that the ghost was unable to move or break was the television, which was the most precious and expensive object in the house. Jamie Campbell feels that this simple fact alone is particularly telling. Likewise, neither Krystoffer Nyholm nor Joshua St Johnston believe in poltergeists. The series actually plays on this ambiguity. The Hodgson family suffers from the fact that no-one believes them. Krystoffer Nyholm is convinced that terrifying events did take place in the house. Was it really a poltergeist? He doubts it. But the human spirit is capable of creating a ghost in order to fill a hole, just like in the series. Timothy Spall, the actor who plays Maurice Grosse, has himself been witness to several inexplicable manifestations. He almost turned down the project, as he was scared that the

poltergeist would take revenge and attack him while he was filming the series. A meeting was subsequently organised between the actor and Guy Lyon Playfair, in order to reassure him. Joel Wilson attended this meeting, which did not go as planned. Indeed, Guy Lyon Playfair had the (bad) idea of letting Timothy Spall listen to the audio recordings of the real Janet Hodgson while she was possessed by the evil spirit. Joel Wilson remembers the look of panic on the actor's face while he listened to this distressing evidence. Guy Lyon Playfair suddenly got up from his chair, grabbed his cane (today, he is over 80 years old) and started violently thumping the floor. The scene was absolutely terrifying. In fact, Guy Lyon Playfair was simply trying to kill a spider, but the damage was done. Joel Wilson was convinced that after this disastrous meeting, he had definitely lost Timothy Spall. Even more so, as he had just won the award for Best Male Performance at the 2014 Cannes Film Festival for his performance in Mike Leigh's *Mr. Turner*. Surprisingly, he rang a few days later to confirm that he was accepting the part. To this day, he does not know what could have possibly made him change his mind.

## DISCUSSION WITH THE AUDIENCE

*What has happened to the Hodgson family?*

Joel Wilson answers that the Hodgson family try, as much as possible, to stay away from the media. They have given very few interviews since and did not want to be implicated in the series. As mentioned previously, the family (be

it the mother or the daughter) never went back on their testimonies. Joshua St Johnston learnt that Janet Hodgson is married and has three children. She no longer speaks to her mother since the death of her father. The house is now lived in. It is evidently no longer haunted. The new owners have actually complained that since the broadcasting of the series, numerous people have come to take pictures of the house.

*The Enfield Haunting was also offered to the BBC. Would the series have been different if the channel had taken up the project?*

Joel Wilson is unsure. He thinks the series would have been very similar. Joshua St Johnston supposes that the episodes would have been longer (by at least 15 minutes).

*How did the filming of the series go? What was the budget for the series?*

Joel Wilson tells us that the filming (which lasted 9 weeks) started the day his daughter was born. The budget for each episode was about £1.1 million.

*How did you work with the actors?*

Krystoffer Nyholm says that Timothy

Spall worked a lot before filming. He watched many videos in which the real Maurice Grosse was speaking, to use as inspiration. On the first day of filming, "he was Maurice Grosse". He had completely mastered the way he spoke, his tics. Unfortunately, he was not the character. Krystoffer Nyholm was much more interested by what Timothy Spall could bring personally to the character. His work had not helped him, but had actually been a hindrance. He then asked him to completely change his acting. In the end, his performance might be far from reality, but it is much more authentic.

*What was the channel's involvement in the creative process?*

Joshua St Johnston felt very free in terms of the writing. Several meetings were set up with the channel, who made very few comments. Everyone shared the same vision for the series. However, the casting turned out to be more difficult. Joel Wilson confirms that Sky Channel, compared to other channels, is much more meticulous in this area. The process was therefore quite long. Thankfully, the script was so good that numerous actors wanted to take part in the project. ■

## NO SECOND CHANCE

(TF1, France)

### SPEAKERS

Sydney Gallonde, producer  
Marie Guillaumond, head of drama, TF1  
Patrick Renault, screenwriter  
Charlotte Des Georges, actress  
Jean-François Vlérick, actor  
Geoffroy Thiebaut, actor

### CHAired BY

Eva Roque, journalist, Télé7 Jours, Europe 1 (France)



## ORIGINS OF THE PROJECT

Eva Roque is delighted to welcome the *No Second Chance* team, the series adaptation of Harlan Coben's bestseller of the same title. She starts by giving the floor to Sydney Gallonde, the producer who started this adventure and has brought it to fruition with touching enthusiasm and naturalness, as well as great energy, efficiency and, above all, immense generosity. He explains the origins of the series.

Geneva...Sydney Gallonde, who doesn't speak English, meets Harlan Coben, who doesn't speak French, for the first time. He has read *No Second Chance* and the thriller instantly bowled him over. As a young father of a 6-month-old daughter, he knew then that he had to adapt the novel, whatever the cost. He does everything to obtain the unobtainable rights. He approaches editors and lawyers who refer him to the agent's representative in France, who agree to talk to the man in question.

A phone call...Sydney is slightly taken aback as he is talking to Harlan Coben himself, but he has prepared notes and presents his project. At the end

of the conversation, Harlan's closing comment is: "not bad!"

Paris...Sydney goes in search of Marie Guillaumond at TF1, convinced she'll say no. To his surprise, as it happens she is in New York the following week and suggests organising a meeting with Harlan Coben.

New York... Harlan is in Cuba, back on the Saturday. The meeting with Marie Guillaumond takes place over a successful dinner, but Sydney has already had a meeting face-to-face with Coben beforehand at his home, in the legendary Dakota Building. Sydney, who has started learning English, explains his idea. Seduced by the character and the idea, Harlan invites Sydney to spend the weekend in the country with him and Sydney, who practises a combat sport, invites Harlan to watch him fight. Sydney explains that he wants to adapt the novel into a series. Although Harlan is surprised at first, Sydney assures him he knows where he's coming from and where he's going with it....Guts, genius, Harlan is won over.

Astonishing phone call....Harlan releases the rights to Sydney. It's mid November 2013 and shooting will start 11 months later.

## TF1, DRAMA AND QUALITY ADAPTATIONS

Marie Guillaumond reminds us that an introductory meeting had taken place with Delinda Jacobs, co-screenwriter of the series. A certain vision had therefore already been established. Only recently appointed as artistic director, she notes that *Ce soir j'ai tué l'assassin de mon fils* had just been filmed, when Sydney came to her with his project. She also reminds us that she started working in drama for TF1 in 2009 and oversaw all crime series before taking on this new position. It is a subject she knows very well and Sydney's project was perfectly in line with her editorial policy and came just at the right time. What's more, is it really necessary to point out that Harlan Coben is a giant in the world of international literature, a gold standard, very compatible with TF1's policy and a tremendous asset. Now head of drama for TF1, Marie Guillaumond intends to offer diversity and a certain eclectism. «TF1 prohibits nothing». When asked by Eva Roque the reason why we are seeing more and more adaptations of best sellers –more often than not foreign –rather than original creation on television, Marie Guillaumond replies that there are both in the panorama of French television. She considers that it is not so much channels which are reluctant to accept creations, as authors who





are often too overcautious. Yet all she wants is to receive quality projects, no matter what their origin.

In any event, she considers adaptations to be an exercise in original creation. The successful adaptation of a foreign novel like *No Second Chance*, requires the daring to go in search of an intimacy with the French public; this is also a guarantee of quality, other than the undeniable quality of the source work.

Patrick Renault adds that there have always been adaptations, including in the United States. He also does not consider them to be second rate, quite the contrary. He welcomes a broadcaster who, as has just been underlined, is prepared to play the quality card.

A member of the audience further underlines this point later on. After a certain unwillingness, even years of self-censorship, he takes his hat off to a channel who now takes risks and takes responsibility seriously, as would the public service channels.

### PITCHING, VARIANTS, FAITHFUL AND INVENTIVE ADAPTING

Patrick Renault goes back to the plot. Marc, a surgeon, is completely in love with his wife. In the book, the wife is murdered and their daughter is kidnapped. With the help of an old girlfriend now working for the FBI, he sets out to find his daughter. How did the reversal of roles come about? Sydney Gallonde explains that it was due to a lack of emotion that, along with the director, he decided to change the main character's gender. Marie Guillaumond immediately welcomed the decision, but Harlan Coben still had to be convinced, since the version for which he had given the go-ahead did not allow for any major changes. Phone call...Harlan asks Sydney to write down all the advantages and disadvantages of this change before another meeting; back to New York with the director, François Velle, this time. There is only one point in the «against» column, so the change is confirmed.

Eva Roque is surprised by how closely

the adaptation sticks to the original dialogue and certain tiny details in the book. Sydney explains that Patrick, Harlan, François and himself worked very thoroughly on the details, regularly referring to the book and using it for renewed inspiration. When adapting, one should not hesitate to go back to the source from time to time. A telefilm was envisaged, as there was concern that a series would not be followed. However, Sydney Gallonde really wanted this format and Marie Guillaumond preferred the idea of a mini series; 6 x 52'. She wanted neither a prestigious telefilm, nor 4 x 52' which would have been a hybrid solution. She gave him her full support.

### FINANCIAL SUPPORT

When support is mentioned, it obviously involves money and on this point, Sydney Gallonde can confirm that he received total support from TF1, not only at the beginning of the project, but also as and when required. The channel considered that it was out of the question to adapt a Harlan Coben on a limited budget. A low cost production was never on the cards. This mini series did cost a little more than other equivalent projects, but justifiably so, declares Marie Guillaumond who reminds us, in passing, that she was essentially involved only on the artistic front and that she was not holding the purse strings.



### CASTING, OVER TO THE ACTORS

Casting took very little time. Alexandra Lamy was on the short list to begin with, but when Harlan Coben saw her photo, he knew she was the one who should play the heroine. Two of her colleagues and friends were also considered, Mélanie Doutey and Anne Marivin, with a thought for them, she took her time in accepting the role. Marie Guillaumond has always thought she was an exceptional actress and she has not been disappointed; her performance is astonishing. On the subject of casting in general, she adds that supporting roles must not be neglected. Having a great lead is simply not enough. Besides, a lot of progress has been made in French drama since greater importance has been given to casting as a whole. For example, on the *Profilage* series no role is left to chance from season to season. All the supporting roles are tried out and tested. There also has to be a diversity of facial types on screen. The time when one always saw the same actors on screen is gone; television is now a great opportunity for cinema actors. The boundaries are blurred and it is a very good thing. Charlotte Des Georges is very much aware of the wonderful opportunity she has been given, especially coming from the comedy sector. In France, casting against type does not happen that often. Actors are often stuck playing the same type of roles. Also,

playing a policeman is really only repertory. In the end, her duo with Hyppolite Girardot is a pleasure to act, as well as very demanding. She also welcomes the readings that were organised before filming. With all the actors around a table, each scene was analysed and everyone came up with suggestions or improvisations. This preliminary work was rare and precious.

As for Jean-François Vlérick, who feels literally reborn as an actor, he threw himself at the script. He is the old man of the series, playing the heroine's father. Beyond the quality of the best seller and its adaptation, he says he was blown away by the way in which Sydney led the team, the group spirit he developed and all this accomplished with great humility.

Geoffroy Thiebaut also found it irresistible when Sydney rang him to tell him all about it and invite him to "come and have some fun with us". He was then filming the 4th season of *Braquo* and he was being offered a supporting role which interested him, but no more than that; it was the contact with Sydney that left him no other choice than to accept.

### A PRODUCER NOBODY CAN SAY NO TO

What emerges from this case study is the sincere admiration everyone has for Sydney Gallonde, which is lovely to hear and worthy of mentioning. Guillaumond confirms that it is rare and refreshing to come across someone who is as motivated and motivating as he is. Beyond his qualities as a human being, she wants to highlight his very great professional dedication. He really is a very good producer and she was particularly impressed by the pertinence of his comments the day the first two episodes were screened which was a critical stage.



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### DISCUSSION WITH THE AUDIENCE

*Was there ever question of filming in the States, in New York?*

Sydney Gallonde says not. This was never considered and Marie Guillaumond adds that anyway, one of the main aims of the project was to find the «Harlan Coben touch» in Paris.

*And on the quality of lighting pointed out by a member of the audience...*

Both Marie Guillaumond and Sydney Gallonde pay tribute to Jean-Max Bernard, the director of photography, whose excellent work of course contributed to the quality and visual identity of the series.

*When filming began, had all the episodes been written and had they been cross-boarded?*

Sydney Gallonde replies in the affirmative. All six episodes had been cross-boarded and not by obligation or default, but a decision that we made for quality reasons. We had to find an author who would agree to work in this way.

Charlotte Des Georges points out,

however, that since the investigation was particularly complex, crossboarding required the actors to be very vigilant in respect of their characters' development and the intrigue.

A member of the audience confirms that, as far as he is concerned, crossboarding is a guarantee of coherent production. He then congratulates the whole team. *No Second Chance* is much more than a miniseries for him; more like a «film in episodes», a 6 x 52' feature film that has just broken down the barriers between cinema and television. He pays tribute to the strong teamwork, the masterful adaptation, the direction, the actors' talent and lastly, the beautiful visual identity that shines through.

### TO CONCLUDE...

Sydney Gallonde, this genuinely self-effacing 32 year old, already has a large feather in his cap, but he has no intention of stopping here. He intends to be a producer for as long as possible, with the same passion and momentum whilst keeping within a reasonable budget. ■

Introduction to the screening :

## NAPAMIEHET / NORTHERN MISHAPS

(Nelonen, Finland)

**SPEAKERS**

John Lundsten, screenwriter  
 Janne Reinikainen, director  
 Mark Lwoff, producer  
 Elina Mustelin, channel manager,  
 Nelonen

**CHAired BY**

Jean-André Yerlès, screenwriter  
 (France)

**JAY:** could you pitch the series for us?

**Janne Reinikainen:** it's about the everyday life of two friends, two superficial actors, two losers, both suffering from mid-life crises, obsessed by death and who decide to confront fate by setting off on an expedition to the North Pole. This is the journey of a lifetime, a marathon they have to prepare for and which should give meaning to their lives; a journey to find themselves as much the Pole.

**JAY:** are you all depressed like this in Finland?

**Janne Reinikainen:** yes! (laughter). In the beginning, the idea was to make of parody of myself, a caricature of blokes in mid-life crisis, not basically very amiable, but likeable nevertheless.

**JAY:** you are a well-known actor in Finland...

**Janne Reinikainen:** yes, and this is my first series as showrunner, director and actor. Above all, I am a director, but I have also written other programmes for television.

**JAY:** is it an odd series for Finland?

**Elina Mustelin:** it's a very unique series, aimed at a rather niche public. You can't really say that it's the typical sort of programme that you see on Finnish television.

**JAY:** if we take a look at the cast, we keep seeing the same names.... It really is a family affair...

**Janne Reinikainen:** indeed, it really is and the characters are all variations of ourselves.

**JAY:** what about the writing process?

**John Lundsten:** there are 9 20-minute episodes in all, with scenes of the two protagonists' mundane daily lives alternating with preparations for their expedition, as well as extracts of the series in which they portray two cops.



**Elina Mustelin:** it is important to point out that there was great confidence in both the writing process and the production. The channel read it and liked what it read and effectively never interfered in the creative process. It is fundamental, particularly with comedy, even dramedy, for confidence to reign on all sides.

**JAY:** what were relationships with the producer like?

**Mark Lwoff:** we've known each other for a long time, since school, our studies at the Theatre Academy in 1991 notably. Everyone in the team is very close and there really is a great feeling of confidence and complicity.

**JAY:** so it's a very unique series, but is it such a good image of the country?

**Janne Reinikainen:** I am indeed the official portrait of a Finn! (laughter)  
**Elina Mustelin:** this series is indeed very unique- the rhythm, the narrative, the intrigue -, but it is, nonetheless, very accurate socially speaking and very well «located» providing a very true image of Finland in many respects.

**JAY:** what were the ratings like for this unique but still fairly typical series?

**Elina Mustelin:** on the grounds that it was aimed at a niche audience,

the channel was not expecting too much in terms of ratings and yet the series reached viewers who don't usually watch the channel; from this perspective, it's a real success. This programme also gives us the opportunity to exploit other formats and broadcasting platforms (VOD, etc.)

**JAY:** and what about filming?

**Mark Lwoff:** we laughed a lot.  
**Janne Reinikainen:** All in all there were about 30 days of filming, including the arctic part, which required a larger budget to get a good result.

**JAY:** what about the budget?

**Mark Lwoff:** the 9 episodes cost just under half a million euros.

**JAY:** it is said that comedies are difficult to sell... Is this one marketable abroad?

**Mark Lwoff:** It's difficult to say. With these two nutters, anything makes us laugh. This form of humour is universal and yet it is still very Scandinavian.... to be followed. Perhaps the format is a bit too marked culturally speaking.

**JAY:** is there a 2<sup>nd</sup> season in view?

**Janne Reinikainen:** not yet, we'll see; what I can say is that we have plenty of ideas if need be. ■

Introduction to the screening :

## THE YOUNG MONTALBANO

(RAI, Italy)

**SPEAKERS**

Luca Milano, deputy director, RAI  
 Fiction  
 Max Gusberti, producer, Palomar

**PRESENTED BY**

Marie-Anne Le Pézenec, author and  
 screenwriter (France)

Marie-Anne Le Pézenec is pleased to welcome Max Gusberti and Luca Milano, who have come to present *The Young Montalbano*, prequel of the Inspector Montalbano series. This prequel shows us another side of the famous Sicilian inspector, so well known to Italians and many others, as an older man and a respected inspector. However, nobody knew him during his early years, when he was just young Salvo, a thirty year old who has just returned to his home town of Vigata, where he has been named chief of police and is carrying out his first investigations. So why did you want to make this prequel ?, asks Marie-Anne Le Pézenec.

Max Gusberti reminds us that there are twenty or so films based on the novels by Camilleri, which have become classics of the genre in Italy and have always been very successful. In fact, Camilleri has become a real star in Italy by creating Inspector Montalbano, a sort of Italian Maigret of the 90s. Incidentally, Camilleri has also been a director, working both in theatre and television and even radio and previously, he produced an adaptation of Inspector Maigret's investigations by Simenon.

The success of these films – around 9 to 10 million admissions for the first 4 novels adapted for the screen -is due notably to the complexity of the world Camilleri describes, the intricacy of the plots and a wealth of detail that cannot be taken in in one go. This is why these films have become classics that one watches again and again, to soak up the atmosphere, to better understand the subtleties, the narrative, the characters, but also to delight more thoroughly in the beauty of the setting. «Repetition can be good», points out Max Gusberti, paying tribute to the sublime island of Sicily, to its wonderful light and landscapes, a unique panorama that one never tires of seeing.

Like all successful authors, Camilleri



had thought to abandon Montalbano after his first four bestsellers. He had underestimated the expectations of both his public and RAI who wanted him to release at least two films per year. In the end, Camilleri allowed his famous character to live on. When it was proposed that he create *The young Montalbano*, he was hooked. Max Gusberti and the screenwriter, Francesco Bruni, interviewed him on many occasions to bring out what already existed between the lines in his works, but of course had to be filled out in order to bring to life this character from 20 years earlier: what is his relationship with his father? Why won't he speak when he is eating? So by taking indications from the novels, along with the discussions and work sessions with Camilleri, who always agreed to ensuring the consistency of the subject and character, by taking ideas from various novels which had been put together and maintaining the fundamentals of directing for which the illustrious Inspector Montalbano is known, *The Young Montalbano* was born. The magic worked, since these two characters, which are really only one, now coexist very well. This is precisely because of a certain continuity, guaranteed both by Camilleri's involvement as custodian and consultant on the project, but also by maintaining fidelity in the directing of the series: even if there are two teams working in parallel, the common

denominator is well and truly there in terms of the team of screenwriters, the director of photography, the main set (the same main location) while introducing new elements necessary to show the passing of time. The public can never be fooled. Although Max Gusberti confesses that he was filled with fear when the series was released, the results are convincing and viewers, not only Italians, enjoy seeing their hero as a younger man. Luca Milano concludes by how delighted he is with this little miracle of the old Inspector Montalbano, twenty year older than the younger, still gathering fans with, simultaneously, the young Salvo Montalbano being just as popular. He is now pleased to present the world avant-première screening of episode I of season 2. ■

## IN THE PIPELINE

For the second year running, *Série Series* gives you the opportunity to step into the future and discover works in progress, keeping you au fait with current trends and emerging talent! (Re)discover the 8 selected and not yet completed projects which, for confidentiality reasons, are only briefly introduced in this document. Watch them very soon on screens around Europe and appreciate the end product!

In the first session presented by Dominic Schreiber (consultant and producer)

### PANTHERS

(Canal+, Sky Atlantic /France - United Kingdom)

A jewellery heist in Marseille puts the Pink Panthers, the infamous gang of thieves from the Balkans, back on the map. Between London and Belgrade, the gangsters and the banksters join forces, heads roll and violence ensues. One of the eagerly awaited series of the end of 2015 from CANAL +.

#### SPEAKERS

Caroline Benjo and Jimmy Desmarais, producers, Haut et Court (France)  
Peter Carlton, producer, Warp Films (United Kingdom)



### LABYRINTH

(Czech TV, Czech Republic)

The body of a well-known politician is found strangely staged, deep in the woods and killed by medieval torture instruments. The key to solving the case is the famous painting by Hieronymus Bosch, *The Last Judgement*, which clearly serves as an inspiration for each of the crimes.

#### SPEAKER

Jan Maxa, director of content development, Czech TV



### NOBEL

(NRK, Norway)

Lieutenant Erling Riiser finally returns home to his family after a special mission in Afghanistan. He looks forward to putting the war behind him, but becomes a pawn in a major political game without knowing who is behind it.

#### SPEAKERS

Mette M. Bølstad, creator and screenwriter  
Stephen Uhlander, screenwriter  
Tone C. Rønning, commissioning editor, NRK  
Håkon Briseid, producer, Miscellaneous crew



### ANOMALIA

(RTS, Switzerland)

Valérie is unaware of her family's long line of healers, when she takes on the position of head of neurosurgery in a prestigious private clinic in Switzerland. In spite of herself, Valérie's supernatural powers lead her to conduct investigations and solve mysteries involving her patients' ancestors.

#### SPEAKERS

Pilar Angita-Mackay, creator and screenwriter  
Pierre Monnard, director  
Jean-Marc Fröhle, producer, Point Prod



In the second session presented by Jean-Marc Auclair (screenwriter and producer, Alauda Films)

### BOY MACHINE

(TV4, Sweden)

After a break of decades, Boy Machine, Sweden's first boy band, attempts a comeback. *Boy Machine* is a fairly crazy TV comedy inspired by *Arrested Development*, *30 Rock* and *Anchorman*.

#### SPEAKERS

Per Gavatin, showrunner  
Pontus Edgren, producer, FLX  
Shima Niavarani, actress



### RUNNERS

(Sweden)

A fake British documentary team travels to Sweden to follow Michelle Duva, a likeable and disarming man in his early 30's who has just been released after spending a year in prison, where he found his new goal in life : to complete the New York City Marathon. In spite of a physique not built for sport, he joins the Team 100 Club to train and that's where the adventures start. An uproarious comedy !

#### SPEAKER

Robert Lillhonga, creator and director



### BEAU SÉJOUR

(VRT, Belgium)

Hotel Beau Séjour. Kato wakes up, covered in blood, without any recollection of what happened the night before. Moreover, nobody seems to see or hear her. Slowly it sinks in: she's dead. Kato starts investigating her own murder and discovers that her seemingly peaceful village is crawling with dirty secrets. *Beau Séjour* is a raw whodunnit series with a surreal twist.

#### SPEAKERS

Bert Van Dael, Sanne Nuyens, Benjamin Sprengers, screenwriters  
Nathalie Basteyns and Kaat Beels, directors



### THE FRANKENSTEIN

#### CHRONICLES

(ITV, United Kingdom)

Set in 1827 London, the drama begins when Home Secretary Sir Robert Peel recruits Marlott, following a successful operation by Thames River Police to apprehend a gang of opium smugglers. As Marlott stands on the water's edge contemplating the arrests, he makes a shocking discovery: a corpse washed up on the shore is not what it first seems...

#### SPEAKER:

David Tanner, producer, Rainmark



# Sessions for children

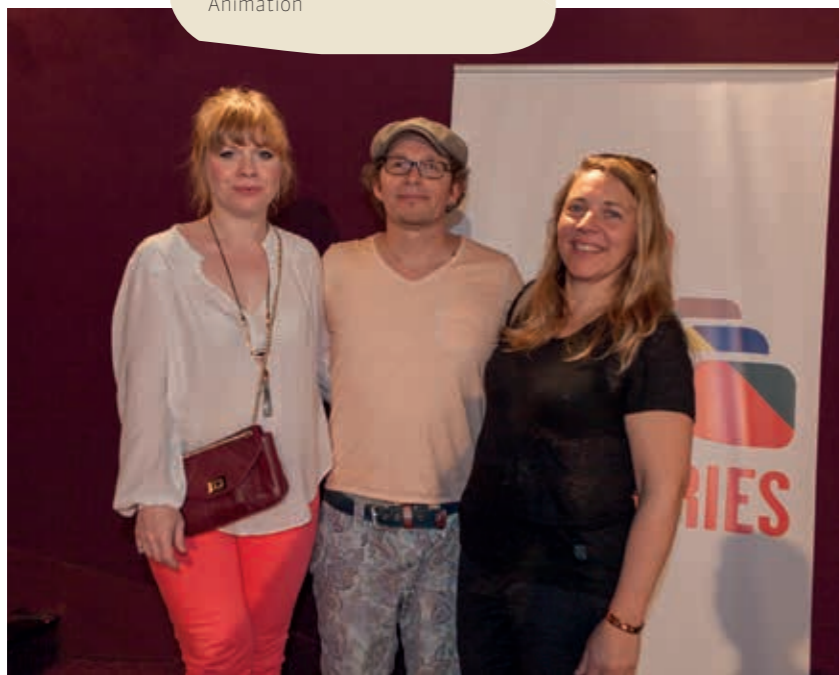


## THE LONG LONG HOLIDAYS

Guillaume Mautalent, screenwriter  
Sébastien Ourse, screenwriter  
Paul Leluc, director  
Delphine Nicolini, producer, Les Armateurs

## THE LITTLE PRINCE

Christel Gonnard, screenwriter  
Pierre-Alain Chartier, director  
Caroline Guillot, producer, Method Animation



Once again this year, Série Series gave the children of Fontainebleau the opportunity to discover the professions involved in the making of series: screenwriters, directors, producers...

Two animation series were screened for children: *The Long Long Holidays* is a series which both moving and exciting, evoking rural life during the Second World War, as seen through the eyes of two children and *The Little Prince* is a high-quality remake of Saint-Exupéry's well-known work. For both series, the creative team were on hand to give explanations and answer the children's questions during these sessions organised especially for them. ■

## INDUSTRY MEETINGS

Professionals attending the event could take part in this creators' summit, with topics discussed in small groups (15 to 30 participants), allowing for quality exchanges and open conversations. All discussions were centred around examples of series, lead by their respective creators.

### THE THEMES WERE:

#### A series of series

Because the challenge of a series is also the following season, with all that this entails as far as creation, production, delays and seasonality is concerned. How to keep up the rhythm long term, avoid disappointment or make adjustments if necessary? How to deal with actors leaving? To changes of teams/authors?

The challenges of 2nd seasons and the following ones, will be tackled by creators based on their experiences.

#### SPEAKERS

Hanne Palmquist (SVT, Sweden),  
Martin Persson (producer, Anagram, Sweden),  
Marina Blok (NTR, Netherlands) and Camille de Castelnau (screenwriter, France).



#### Do you speak European?

With European collaborations and co-productions increasing, the question of language of production is more topical than ever. Is English obligatory for a series with "international" ambition with the fragile balance that exists between local and global and between local and universal issues? A question which is likely to provoke a lively debate.

#### SPEAKERS

Tasja Abel (ZDFE, Germany),  
Lars Lundström (writer and producer, Matador, Sweden),  
Sylvie Coquart (screenwriter, France),  
Ramón Campos (writer and producer, Bambù Producciones, Spain), and Teresa Fernández-Valdès (screenwriter and producer, Bambù Producciones).

#### CHAIRD BY

Liselott Forsman (Yle, Finland)



## International co-productions

Creator, executive producer and media entrepreneur, between France, Great Britain and United States, Alex Berger talked about his experience and vision on international co-productions and television during a dedicated session that was moderated by Nice Drama producer and director of co-productions for the Nice Entertainment Group, Stefan Baron.



## A better understanding of audience ratings

by Sahar Baghery, director of international TV format and content, Eurodata TV Worldwide. With the increase of digital and the multiplication of screens, this small committee presentation was on understanding audience ratings based on the study One Television Year in the World carried out by Eurodata.



## The hero

Traditional heroes, anti-heroes, superheroes.... How does one recognise a good hero? How does one develop a likeable recurring character in a series, with depth, humanity or derision and still avoid clichés and caricatures, a hero who is neither over the top nor under? A hero who will be able to win us over long term and surprise us as well, keep us interested throughout all the episodes and seasons. What are the challenges of these roles for actors?

### SPEAKERS

Leo Razzak, actor, (Sweden)  
Per Gavatin, showrunner, screenwriter, actor, (Sweden)  
John Lundsten, screenwriter, (Finland)  
Janne Reinikainen, director, screenwriter, actor, (Finland)  
Clive Bradley, director, (United Kingdom)  
Liv Mjones, actor, (Sweden)

### CHAired BY

Derek Wax, executive producer, Kudos, (United Kingdom)

## THE HERO

### SPEAKERS

Leo Razzak, actor, (Sweden)  
Per Gavatin, showrunner, screenwriter, actor, (Sweden)  
John Lundsten, screenwriter, (Finland)  
Janne Reinikainen, director, screenwriter, actor, (Finland)  
Clive Bradley, director, (United Kingdom)  
Liv Mjones, actor, (Sweden)

### CHAired BY

Derek Wax, executive producer, Kudos, (United Kingdom)



*The traditional hero is out of fashion. He who defends widows and orphans is becoming a rarity on the small screen. TV series have put a new type of hero on the front line. Today, we summon Dexter or Walter White. Serial killers or drug dealers. They are the new spokespeople for adult series who take pleasure in blurring the lines between heroes, anti-heroes and superheroes.*

## THE CONTINUED ADVENTURES OF THE ANTI-HERO

The anti-hero is not a new figure. It wasn't even invented by television. Janne Reinikainen brings up Dostoevski novels that are filled with perplex characters. Raskolnikov (*Crime and Punishment*) and Stavrogine (*The Devils*) are perfect examples of anti-heroes who push the boundary between good and evil. It even dates back to Shakespeare, who made us shudder and empathise with Macbeth or Othello, two tortured and complex heroes.

In cinema, Derek Wax reminds us of film noirs in the 40's and 50's, which are brimming with broken and imperfect heroes. American cinema in the 70's went one step further by putting a whole plethora of fascinating anti-heroes on the silver screen. In *The Deer Hunter* by Michael Cimino, Michael Vronsky (played by Robert De Niro) is technically a hero and acts in a completely heroic way in the second half of the film. However, in the first half, he is a difficult, arrogant and unsympathetic man.

In *The Godfather*, Francis Ford Coppola created one of the meanest and most emblematic villains in the history of cinema in the form of Michael Corleone (played by Al Pacino). He is the ultimate anti-hero. Throughout the saga's three chapters, we see him progressively lose all his

ideals and morals as he takes up the head of the organised crime family after his father's death. In many aspects, Michael Corleone can be considered Walter White's ancestor. Series from the last 15 years are rooted in the cinema of the 70's.

## PRAISING THE COMPLEXITY

Derek Wax notes that these different heroes are, above all, three-dimensional characters. It's their complexity which entertains viewers. Liv Mjones admits having a weak spot for Suzanne "Crazy Eyes" Warren in *Orange Is the New Black*. She is a completely unpredictable character. As a viewer, one cannot help but like her and then, without warning, she'll do something atrocious. And yet, we still forgive her.

Writing for series allows for the opportunity to create more complex characters. Above all, characters can evolve from one episode to another. One can delve deeper in the character's psychology. They go from good to bad; they're nice and then detestable. It takes 5 seasons for Walter White to become a villain. A traditional hero like James Bond doesn't change. He is a flat character. In Derek Wax's opinion, the screenwriters tried to give him more of a soul in *Casino Royale*, but he found it unconvincing.

However, the reason *Sherlock* is so

In partnership with



successful today, is that the series managed to make the character evolve without betraying the author, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's intentions. The famous detective has been reinvented many times. In the new series, the screenwriter's objective wasn't to modernise him, but to accentuate the more ambiguous traits of his personality. The new Sherlock Holmes is very clearly a sociopath, a trait that had already been presented in the original novels but had been watered down in previous versions imagined for cinema or television. Leo Razzak thinks that the reason heroes are more complex is that society itself has become more complex. These series and their heroes are just a reflection of our society. A society that is increasingly more violent. Viewers understand anti-hero characters better since they can even identify with them.

### DOES A HERO NEED TO BE LIKEABLE?

Many of the anti-heroes that we see are not fundamentally evil. They are not archetypal villains. From the first episode, Walter White is diagnosed with lung cancer and we find out he only has a few months left to live. The reason he starts cooking methamphetamine is to not leave his family in financial difficulty after his death. When we meet Tony Soprano, he is tormented by a severe anxiety

attack. He's just a simple father who is anxious about his children flying the nest. Dexter is a "good serial killer" as he only murders criminals. All of these anti-heroes remain good despite their actions.

The viewer needs to be able to identify with, understand and even like the heroes they see. Derek Wax is very aware that as the episodes go on, Walter White's acts are more and more atrocious. Yet, despite certain moments where we cannot help but hate him, Bryan Cranston plays the character with such talent and humanity that we never cease to feel sympathy for him. We understand his fears and his anxieties. That is the strength of a series like *Breaking Bad*. However, if a hero is too evil or negative, there is the risk of the viewer losing interest. When Per Gavatin saw the pilot episode of *The Shield*, the character Vic Mackey (a Los Angeles police inspector with debatable ethics and methods) was so awful that he didn't want to watch the rest of the series. He didn't feel the need to understand such a character. He had no desire to identify with a fascist cop. He has changed his mind since seeing all 7 seasons and *The Shield* is now one of his favourite series. But the fact remains that his first impression was so strong, he nearly didn't watch it. Then again, a hero who is too nice can, on the contrary, inspire antipathy. On this subject, Janne Reinikainen brings up Derek in Ricky Gervais' new series.

The actor, and also writer, specialises in odious characters. Here, he plays a character who is so confusingly kind, he becomes unbearable. Janne Reinikainen admits that, to her, such a character only inspires hate and makes the series unwatchable. John Lundsten has watched a lot of Silicon Valley, yet he admits that the hero, Richard Hendricks, is much too normal and almost insipid. The series is actually saved by all the supporting characters who he feels are much more interesting. Finally, there are the characters we love to hate. For Janne Reinikainen, that's very much the case with David Brent, the hero of *The Office*, played by Ricky Gervais. He is probably one of the most selfish and stupidest characters you'll see on television. Yet, although his behaviour is often abysmal, we all understand that he suffers from a deep insecurity, which we can all relate to. So as detestable and pathetic as he seems, we can't help but pity, and therefore sympathise with him. New heroes like David Brent and Walter White are human characters that are, in fact, too human. The anti-hero is ambiguous, which is what we all are. The viewer, feeling empathy for a hero they identify with or who inspires in them a feeling of benevolence, will not want to betray them and will see the series through to its end.

### DOES THE END JUSTIFY THE MEANS?

Leo Razzak explains that in the series *Torpederna*, in which he plays an everyday thief, the main character has to murder a priest. This scene caused many debates with the broadcaster who was afraid that viewers would stop watching the series. So the screenwriters came up with a few alternatives to enable the hero to assassinate the priest without totally losing the public's sympathy. Per Gavatin points out that today it is still very hard to convince channels to produce a series in which the hero is solely antipathetic or has no moral compass. His actions would then be unforgivable.

A spectator in the audience then notes that many current series go by the principle that the actions of their heroes are justifiable no matter how reprehensible they are. He names series like *The Walking Dead* and *24*. Characters like Jack Bauer and Rick Grimes remain very popular despite difficult or even unethical choices. Viewers seem to forgive their highly reprehensible actions on the pretext that they are fighting for good. Per Gavatin reminds us that the question of whether the end justifies the means is at the heart of a series like *The Walking Dead*. It's a question that inhabits a hero like Rick Grimes. It's actually the theme of the series: how far can one go to assure the security or survival of a group? In the case of *24*, it's a bit more problematic. For Jack Bauer the answer is easy. The end always justifies the means. Clive Bradley thinks that the series brings up a number of ethical questions. There is a certain way in which torture is made commonplace. The series never challenges its hero's choices.



The fact that he uses torture is never condemned. It has often been said that *24* legitimised the Bush administration's politics in the aftermath of the 11th September attacks. Clive Bradley says that creators and screenwriters must always ask themselves about the moral messages they are putting across with their series.

### DISCUSSION WITH THE AUDIENCE

*Can you define a hero in Scandinavian series'?*

Liv Mjones reminds us that Swedish series have presented one very recognisable hero: the fifty year old, fan of opera, alcoholic policeman who has relationship issues with his daughter. Today, that figure has become a cliché and the Swedes don't hesitate to turn it into a joke.

*Could the new anti-hero be a woman?*

For Clive Bradley, one of the cop characters that is the furthest from all the clichés of today, is police commissioner Laure Berthaud in the series *Spiral*. He had never seen a character like that before. Also, Derek Wax brings up the wonderful

character Marge Gunderson in the Coen Brother's film *Fargo* (Molly Solverson in the series adaptation). This character is the polar opposite of the depressive alcoholic cop that we are used to seeing in series nowadays. Series are now offering up very good female characters, but heroines still have a way to go. Often more stereotyped, they are still less complex than their male counterparts. Screenwriters have created "strong woman" type characters over the past few years. But, as Per Gavatin points out, that doesn't mean anything. We would never think of creating "strong man" type characters. Clive Bradley notes that the anti-hero is rarely, if ever, a woman. That characteristic is reserved for men. In fact, most of the male anti-hero characters of the last few years were created by men. Patty Hewes, played by Glenn Close, in the series *Damages* is very close to the given definition of an anti-hero, but she is not the leading role. Liv Mjones dreams of seeing ugly women who we can hate on the screen. Female characters capable of expressing the same spectrum of emotions we would expect from a male character. ■



## THE BROADCASTERS' CONCLAVES



Contrasting perspectives of European broadcasters on their jobs, experiences and work methods. The broadcasters' conclave was started in 2013 and has been increasingly successful since then. The idea behind this exclusive club for European broadcasters is simple and effective: about twenty broadcasters meet in small groups, behind closed doors, around a friendly lunch, to discuss the key issues of their sector and profession, using concrete examples. With no outside witnesses, but with someone chairing the discussion, these conclaves offer a unique opportunity for European broadcasters to discuss their points of view and their work methods in complete freedom. For this 3rd opus, 22 broadcasters, both private and public, from 13 different countries, were able to reflect on the following theme: Do you speak "glocal"? – or how to interpret the concept of "think local/ act global" as far as series are concerned. This gave them the opportunity to discuss what they have most recently learnt and their best practice methods, using concrete case studies.

### SPEAKERS

Tasja Abel (Germany/ZDF)  
 Marina Blok (The Netherlands/NTR)  
 Urse Fitze (Switzerland/SRF)  
 Liselott Forsman (Finland/Yle)  
 Jane Gogan (Ireland/RTÉ)  
 Marie Guillaumont (France/TF1)  
 Thomas Von Hennet (Germany/Prosieben Sat1)  
 Ivar Kohn (Norway/NRK)  
 Klaus Lintschinger (Austria/ORF)  
 Jan Maxa (Czech Republic/Czech TV)  
 Françoise Mayor (Switzerland/RTS)  
 Luca Milano (Italy/RAI)  
 Susanne Mueller (Germany/ZDF)  
 Elina Mustelin (Finland/Nelonen)  
 Hanne Palmquist (Sweden/SVT)  
 Tone C. Rønning (Norway/NRK)  
 Katarina Schenk (Austria/ORF)  
 Sevda Shishmanova (Bulgaria/BNT)  
 Philipp Steffens (Germany/RTL)  
 Mylene Verdurmen (The Netherlands/Avrotos)  
 Katrine Vogelsang (Denmark/TV2)

In 2015, for the first time ever, Série Series was proud to partner with the Eurovision Fiction Experts' Group from the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), the world's leading alliance of public service media. Seduced by the Broadcasters' Conclave, the Fiction Experts' Group from EBU had proposed holding their plenary meeting the day before Série Series kick off, on 30th June 2015. On this occasion, 40 representatives from European broadcasters debated and exchanged on dilemmas and solutions in the fast evolving TV industry.

**EUROVISION**  
THE ALLIANCE

## LET'S TALK ABOUT COMMISSIONING

### SPEAKERS

Ivar Kohn, NRK, Norway  
 Françoise Mayor, RTS, Switzerland  
 Jan Maxa, Czech TV, Czech Republic  
 Hanne Palmquist, SVT, Sweden  
 Katrine Vogelsang, TV2, Denmark  
 Sevda Shishmanova, BNT, Bulgaria

### CHAIRD BY

Sahar Bagheri, Eurodata TV /  
 Dominic Schreiber, producer



*This year, Série Series welcomes a handful of the most creative and daring broadcasters in Europe. The format of this talk is novel and short. Speakers have 15 minutes to talk about their editorial policies, their long term vision of their profession, the challenges that need undertaking, new work methods, their successes and their failures...*

### IVAR KØHN / NRK / NORWAY

With 28% of market shares, NRK is the main public broadcasting group in Norway. LNRK produces three drama series a year. Over the last two years, three series have been produced in-house and three have been produced for the channel by independent producers. The channel also produces comedies and children's programmes. Drama series are usually broadcast in January, when there is the least competition and when viewers want to stay in the warmth of their own homes. Nordic drama, notably Norwegian drama, has gained its spurs and series like *Lilyhammer* and *Mammon* have conquered the hearts of viewers the world over. Norway is a small country, but NRK places its bets on internationally competitive productions, meaning ones that are original, brave and of high quality (both narratively and visually). The channel isn't afraid of taking risks. Also, NRK cannot afford to work only in a niche market. Their often anti-conformist series appeal to a wide public but try and meet the demands of viewers that are eager for inventive content. Norwegian viewers are now used to high quality series and want something new: new stories told in an innovative way. NRK has always had the desire to walk the road less travelled, so they created a new series called *Sommerbaten*.

This series follows a ship cruising along the Norwegian coast whilst a police officer is investigating the murder of the ship's chef. The series (made up of 41 fifteen-minute-long episodes) is broadcast every night at 10.30 pm. Every episode is shot and edited over two days. NRK is planning on broadcasting the last episode live. *Sommerbaten's* budget is about 200 000 €. The series is a real success with the public (it is being broadcast at present) and the market shares are over 40%. NRK often co-produces series with their Scandinavian neighbours (Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Iceland), but fearing the loss of their Norwegian identity, they very rarely, if ever, work with other European or International partners. .

## FRANÇOISE MAYOR / RTS / SWITZERLAND

RTS (Radio Télévision Suisse) was created in 2010 from the fusion of Television Suisse Romande (TSR) and Radio Suisse Romande (RSR). It currently has three channels: RTS Un, RTS Deux and RTS Info. RTS Un is the top television channel in terms of market share (around 20%). International drama is very present on RTS 1, as well as on RTS 2. Swiss television has a long history of co-productions - especially sitcoms - with France. Nevertheless, 10 years ago, RTS decided to revise its strategy, so as to produce original series. Their ambition is to revitalise local creation and bet on up-and-coming Swiss writers. In fact, RTS organises a pitching session once every year, where they welcome young screenwriters and producers. Despite the change in alignment, RTS is not against co-productions, if the subject matter is right. At present, the channel produces two series per year. The budgets average out at around 600,000 € per episode. They are broadcast on a Saturday night on prime time. Although the series they produce seem to be aimed at a very wide audience, RTS is no stranger to innovation when it comes to drama. The proof is a series like *Station Horizon* (a Swiss western set in the Alps) which, despite its originality, was a huge success with viewers and critics alike. In 2016, the channel will broadcast a paranormal series called *Anomalia*.

## JAN MAXA / CZECH TV / CZECH REPUBLIC

Ceská televize (Czech TV) is the Czech Republic's public broadcaster. The channel produces up to 80 hours of drama a year with an average budget of 300,000 €, a little more if it is a period drama. The Czech public loves drama. To meet viewers' demands, CT1 provides them with drama three nights a week. Crime series are broadcast on a Monday night on prime time with comedy series taking the latter part of the evening programming. So called family series are broadcast on Friday night on prime time. TV films and period mini-series are broadcast early on Sunday evenings. Children's series remain the most popular and Christmas dramas systematically beat viewing records (taking over 60% of market shares). That being said, last year, Czech TV decided to innovate slightly by offering a slightly different version of a Christmas tale. Despite very good critics, viewing numbers dropped slightly. Crime dramas still attract huge audiences and it is with this type of series that Czech TV is the most innovative. *The Case of The First Department* is an extremely realistic series - almost documentary like - inspired by real events. The series was created and written by four ex-police officers. Next autumn, the channel will take another risk by broadcasting *Labyrinth*. Here's the pitch: a politician's body mutilated by Middle Age torture instruments is found in the forest in an extremely odd setting. This starts the investigation into a serial killer, who sets up scenes from *The Last Judgement*. As surprising as this may seem, considering the horrifying side of the subject matter, the series will be broadcast on Monday nights on prime time. Jan Maxa is confident: audiences need innovative, different series. Although Czech viewers are big fans of local drama (with actors they know), Czech TV is going to increase the number of international co-productions. For the 600th Anniversary of Jan Hus' death by burning at the stake, the channel co-produced a mini-series with Arte about the Czech national hero.

## HANNE PALMQUIST / SVT / SWEDEN

There are two groups that dominate the Swedish broadcasting market: the Swedish public television group, Sveriges Television (SVT) and the private group TV4. In terms of series, SVT has a history of huge international successes like *Real Humans* and *Broen*. The rights of the latter have been sold for both Franco-British and American remakes. A British version of *Real Humans* is currently being broadcast on Channel 4 (United Kingdom) and AMC (United States). SVT has a budget of 13 million euros for drama. The group sets aside two evenings a week for drama; Mondays and Sundays. Every year, the channel broadcasts two 10-episode-long crime series on Sundays at 9 pm and two 10-episode-long drama series on Mondays at 9 pm. They also produce 3 miniseries (3 x 60') and 2 web series (8 x 20'). Although SVT had given up on comedy over the last few years, they are going back to it in 2016. The group's strategy is to capitalise on their "hits", whilst continuing to produce new and ambitious series. The third season of *Broen* (the Dano-Swedish co-production) will be broadcast next autumn. Kim Bodnia (who played Martin Rohde) did not want to take part in the latest series, so the screenwriters had to show courage and talent to replace him. SVT also decided to follow up on *30 grader i februari* (*30 Degrees in February*) four years after its first broadcast. Although the first series was filmed entirely in Thailand, the second was partly filmed in Sweden. The story now revolves around the children's characters, who have obviously grown up since the first series. *Jordskott* is proof enough that SVT is still not afraid of taking risks. Created by Henrik Björn, the series centres on the disappearance of children in a peaceful community in the middle of the forest. All 10 episodes have been broadcast and have been a big success, which is surprising considering how dark and terrifying the content is.

## KATRINE VOLGELSANG / TV2 / DENMARK

The Danish broadcasting landscape has long been dominated by DR, the public television group. Now, they share the market with TV2, a generalist semi-public national channel. Created on 1st October 1988, it ended DR's monopoly. Both groups, who compete fiercely, have 50% of audience shares on prime time. The reason DR has been dominating Sunday nights with their series (*Borgen*, *Forbrydelsen*, *Arvingerne*) is that TV2 have been accused of a lack of original creations. Katrine Volgelsang blames the channel's old management, who very rarely listened to creators. In fact, no one - whether it was screenwriters or producers - wanted to work with TV2, and every project was systematically offered to DR. The channels new management has brought a fresh wind of change and TV2 has since produced and broadcast a few successful series, including *Rita* and *Badehotellet*. Usually specialising in light-weight series destined for wide audiences, TV2 surprised everyone this year by announcing an autumn broadcast of *Norskov* (ten 60-minute episodes). The story follows Tom Noack, a police investigator who returns to his home town (Norskov) to fight drug trafficking. His return to this little town of Northern Denmark will lead to him questioning old friendships and will radically change some of his close friends' lives. The series will be broadcast on NRK (Norway), TV4 (Sweden) and Arte (France) in 2016. TV2 would now like to find new international partners, so as to work towards more co-production. For example, the third season of *Rita* was co-financed by Netflix. In fact, it might not have even seen the light of day were it not for the American platform.

## SVEDA SHISHMANOVA / BNT BULGARIA

BNT, the national public Bulgarian channel, which for so many years was the sole broadcaster, is having to compete with new private channels that have appeared over the last 5 years. The public group has a new programming policy in order to win back a part of its audience. This policy comes in the form of TV series. The channel worked with investigative journalists, an independent producer and various well-established Bulgarian broadcasting professionals in order to create *Undercover* (*Pod Prikitie*), which has now been broadcast for 4 years. This series, which is full of action, submerges the viewer into the world of the Bulgarian mafia. It has been extremely successful in Bulgaria and has been sold in over 142 territories, notably in Latin America. BNT is looking to produce a new series with the team behind *Undercover*. Despite such a big success, BNT still cannot afford to increase the budget

for original creation. The channel only has 3 million euros a year to finance all of their drama (series and films) as well as documentaries. Nevertheless, the group has the competitive edge of size. They run the biggest studios in Eastern Europe and are therefore host to the biggest international productions, especially American ones. Bulgarian technical teams are used to working regularly on very big budget productions so they are more inclined to work for television (for a smaller salary, of course). Recently, BNT caused an uproar by broadcasting *The Fourth Estate*. This political thriller explores the relationship between journalists and the Bulgarian government. The series is almost a documentary and is entirely based on true events that are easily recognisable for audiences. It has opened the floodgates of the debate on the position of journalism and more generally on democracy in Bulgaria. The government's response was quick and concise: to punish BNT, they reduced their budget. Success clearly has a cost! ■





## SPOTLIGHT ON TRAILERS BY SÉRIE SERIES



Spotlight on trailers by Serie Series  
Following on from “Pilots in Series”, the first European market for series’ pilots which was launched in 2010 by Scénaristes en Séries and continued in Fontainebleau, “Les B.A. de Série Series” focuses on budding European talent.

Série Series has asked European creators – with a project for a series – to create a trailer of less than 2 minutes, presenting their project. Ten or so trailers were then selected by the editorial committee and these were screened before every session during the festival. This is an opportunity to find funding and to reach the 700 European professionals present at the festival. The trailers were also be put onto the festival’s social networks, on the viewing stations in our videotheque, and also in a dedicated session where all the selected projects were presented by their respective creators. The students from the **International Filmschule (IFS) of Cologne** participated.

### AMAZONES

(France)  
Created by : Manus Guarrigue, Betty Lamane, Killian Soeprapto  
amazones.la.serie@gmail.com

### L'ENFANT ROUGE

(France)  
Created by : Collectif Tribudom  
coordination.technique@tribudom.net

### CATHERINE

(Finland/Poland)  
Created by : Annalisa Schmuckli  
annalisa@empirepictures.fi

### TODO MAL

(Spain)  
Created by : Curro Serrano  
curroserrano@hotmail.com

### DEFLAGRATIONS

(France)  
Created by : Vanya Peirani-Vignes  
christophe@vitascofilms.com

### BUNKER

(France)  
Created by : Denis Grispan  
production@slot-b.fr

### MEGALOMAN(E)

(France)  
Created by : Pol White  
pol@magofilm.com

### LES MYSTÈRES DE PARIS

(France)  
Created by : Véronique Puybaret,  
Matthieu Dubois  
la.curieuse@free.fr

### GUTS AND GLORY

(France)  
Created by : Philippe de Lyon, Jeremy Wegmann  
mariedours@hotmail.fr

### JEZEBEL

(France)  
Created by : Eric Pellegrin  
eric@bridges.fr

## DINNERS AND PARTIES

## OPENING CEREMONY WEDNESDAY 1<sup>st</sup> JULY



Pierre Zéni, the master of ceremonies for the opening of this 4th season of Série Series, walks onto the Fontainebleau Theatre stage to the theme music of the famous British series *The Avengers*, in tribute to the legendary Patrick Macnee – alias John Steed –, who died a few days earlier, at the age of 93.

The festival, which has become the European Series Summit, continues to contribute to the creation of a «Europe of series» – 13 countries invited and 23 series presented –, giving us the opportunity to discover the best in European series and to discuss themes and other fascinating issues in the world of television.

All this in the presence of actors, producers, directors, screenwriters, distributors, composers and broadcasters, here to exchange ideas, share experiences and defend creativity.

The editorial committee, representing all these professions, is invited on stage, welcomes and thanks the audience, before handing over to the Mayor of Fontainebleau, the town being once again home to the event.

### SPEECH BY FRÉDÉRIC VALLETOUX, MAYOR OF FONTAINEBLEAU

Frédéric Valletoux is pleased to welcome Série Series for the fourth year running. He thanks Marie Barraco and Laetitia Duguet of the Kandimari Agency, for their professional dedication and continued trust and the festivalgoers for their loyalty. He also takes this opportunity to thank all the partners who give their support to this festival, which has become a major cultural event on Fontainebleau's calendar; a small town, «worth a detour», he declares, since it is not on the major transport axes.



He underlines the importance of «not everything taking place in the cities!» Frédéric Valletoux is delighted that Série Series is back again this year, to enliven the everyday lives of the Fontainebleau residents with its screenings and discussions and reminds us that the festival is not just reserved for television professionals, but is well and truly an event which has won over and engaged the general public whose enthusiasm continues to grow.

### SPEECH BY JEAN-FRANÇOIS HÉBERT, PRESIDENT OF THE CHÂTEAU OF FONTAINEBLEAU

This is also Jean-François Hébert's fourth appearance running on this stage for the opening of the Série Series festival. He is here, as always, to show his support as a partner, which he says is «quite normal». He strongly urges the festivalgoers to make the most of Fontainebleau's rich cultural heritage and, in particular, the Château, this extraordinary UNESCO World Heritage Site, which has been occupied by some 34 kings and 2 emperors. All the Kings of France resided here back to the 12th Century, before Versailles. He invites us to visit not only the interior, but also the



grounds, take a stroll in the Jardin de Diane, a perfect remedy for televisual cabin fever. He reminds us that sometimes reality surpasses fiction and to go back in history, can often be a source of inspiration.

### SPEECH BY ROSELINE SARKISSIAN, ILE-DE-FRANCE REGIONAL COUNCIL

On behalf of Mr. Julien Dray, vice-president of the Ile-de-France Region, responsible for culture, Roseline Sarkissian reiterates the regional representatives' great pride in having supported this festival since its creation. By so doing, they are

contributing to the promotion of a state of mind, of creativity in Europe, which is oh so important, above all now. The Region's mission is to promote creativity. The quality and variety of series presented here, shows that it is right to support this event and cultural activities in general, when budgets are not easy to maintain. The Region may be a faithful partner and financier, but it plays only a small part in comparison with the huge amount of work carried out firstly by the organisers, but above all the series' creators themselves. We are most grateful to them all. On this humble note, Roseline Sarkissian concludes her address by wishing everyone,



professionals and non-professionals alike, fruitful discussions and wonderful moments over these three days celebrating European culture. For this opening ceremony, Série Series welcomes the team from the British series *Humans* (screenwriters/showrunners, producers, distributors, actors...). Some of them say they are happy to be invited to take part in the festival again. Indeed, some came for *The Hour*, screened three years ago during the 1st season of the festival, and discovered the Swedish series *Real Humans* which really impressed them. So we are not surprised to see them back here with the English remake of this series, for the French avant première and with the announcement that it has the highest audience ratings ever recorded for Channel 4 over 23 years.

The case study corresponding to this screening is programmed for the following morning.

Festivalgoers are invited to dinner at the château. ■

## EVENING EVENT THURSDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> JULY



### SÉRIE SERIES AND THE APA'S 12<sup>TH</sup> TV CREATIVITY DAY

Harlan Coben, the worldwide reference for thrillers, chose France, and more specifically TF1 and a great team, to adapt one of his best-sellers: *No Second Chance*. The Série Series and TV Creativity Day participants were given the opportunity to watch the world premiere preview of the series' pilot episode, with the creative team. The respective case study took place the next day.



## CLOSING CEREMONY FRIDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> JULY

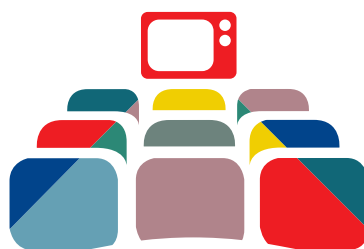


Courtesy of Carnival Films / Masterpiece



For its closing ceremony, Série Series wanted to pay homage to *Downton Abbey*, an iconic British series and an extraordinary worldwide success story, of which the 6<sup>th</sup> and final season is currently being filmed. On the programme for that special evening presented by Alex Taylor: the screening of one of the series' episodes followed by an exceptional concert arranged around the original score, with a backdrop of *Downton Abbey* stills. During the concert, acclaimed composer and creator of the music for the series, John Lunn, orchestrated and interpreted this now iconic score. He was accompanied by 37 musicians from the Symphonifilm orchestra. A truly emotional moment that was exclusive to Série Series! The event was then followed by a cocktail dinner and party where the guests played the game by dressing up *Downton* style. Memorable!

REPLAY



SÉRIE SERIES

ALL THE CASE STUDIES CAN BE SEEN ON

[www.serieseries.fr](http://www.serieseries.fr)  
(Galeries/Vidéos)

AND ON OUR DAILYMOTION CHANNEL

[www.dailymotion.com/serieseries](http://www.dailymotion.com/serieseries)

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SÉRIE SERIES WARMLY THANKS ALL THE SPEAKERS, CHAIRPERSONS, PARTICIPANTS, VOLUNTEERS, TEAMS  
FROM THE SERIES AND ALL THE PARTNERS



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