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SÉRIE SERIES #6 - 28th > 30th June 2017 - MINUTES

MINUTES



SEASON 6
SÉRIE SERIES
THE EUROPEAN SERIES SUMMIT
28th > 30th JUNE 2017
FONTAINEBLEAU

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SÉRIE SERIES...

A unique event, created with sincerity and passion; a rendezvous that brings together all those whose dedication is the most complete and steadfast, because it deals with the issue closest to their hearts: the *raison d'être* of these professions. Série Series is about creation: a source deep down inside the people who imagine, dream up and conceive these series. This unique identity and force is what will bring these cultural "products" into being, be they universal or not. Either way, they will touch the hearts of hundreds of thousands of viewers. Série Series is all about these creators, these entertainers, these artists, who make it possible for this industry to function, to exist and to thrive. Série Series is about sharing, generosity, a different vision and commitment; believing that there is still a place in our society, and in our economy, for reflection, for taking time out to gather and meet, for constructive exchange.

Série Series is about the future of television series, a space for research and analysis of trends and impact, an understanding of new methods, a philosophy, an inspiration, a link with society and its development; it is a series of meetings that lead to collaborations and exchanges, free from competition.

It is neither an international television series festival, nor a marketplace; it is not a competition or a comparison; it is not an unassailable Goliath. It is fertile ground, something to allow works of art to germinate, enthusiasm to grow, identities to be expressed, dreams to exist. This is what makes a series a work of art; one that thrills you, that moves you, whether you are French, British, Danish, Czech, Spanish... It is about diversity and universality.

It is the crucible of the series of tomorrow; something that exists nowhere else.

THEY STEER SÉRIE SERIES

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

The editorial committee, which has shaped the beginning, is chaired by:

Bénédicte Lesage (producer, Shine Films)
Hervé Hadmar (screenwriter and director)

With :

Jean-François Boyer (producer, Tetra Media)
Nicole Jamet (screenwriter)
Nicolas Jorelle (composer)
David Koadi (producer, K'ien)
Anne Landois (screenwriter and showrunner)
Philippe Triboit (director)

The members of the European steering group are:

Tasja Abel (VP acquisitions, sales and co-productions, Dynamic TV - Germany)
Stefan Baron (producer, Nice Drama - Sweden)
Harald Hamrell (director - Sweden)
Lars Lündström (screenwriter and producer, Matador - Sweden)
Jed Mercurio (screenwriter - United Kingdom)
Luca Milano (Vice-President, Rai Fiction - Italy)
Tone C. Rønning (Executive Producer drama and international co-productions, NRK - Norway)



EDITORIAL

The 6th season of Série Series took place from 28th to 30th June 2017 and brought together more than 650 European professionals. This year, because creating is also about taking risks and making choices, Série Series gave participants the opportunity to reflect on the idea of courage.

Europe is currently facing a number of economic, political, societal and cultural challenges. These issues and changes affect everyone's lives, shaking things up, leaving citizens, politicians and the media with a decision to make. Either give in to fear, inaction, inward-looking attitudes, or choose openness and desire for change, in order to create a new future in which everyone has a part to play. In this context, the media has a responsibility and every creator has a powerful voice. How can they embrace this?

The idea of courage was a common thread of the event. This common thread steered the selection of the series as well as the debates, via the editorial line and choice of speakers. The "One Vision" gave a voice to guests from various different backgrounds. They shared their own personal vision of courage, which led to inspirational new ideas.

This 6th season was also an opportunity to reaffirm the identity of Série Series. A unique gathering, which is both profoundly European and very open to the rest of the world, with an increasingly firm commitment to creativity, and a focus on the cultural aspect of television series. Série Series' commitment to creators led to the creation of a new initiative, which was supported by the Région Île-de-France: "Series Stories", a day-long event that mixes inspiring round tables and workshops. It was specifically designed for European writers and producers.

Through this new initiative, Série Series also worked towards its vocation of being the event where the creative teams and projects of the future are born, all with the aim to constantly develop more fascinating series in Europe.

Finally, this edition was the perfect opportunity to announce a new Série Series expansion into Africa with the creation of a festival dedicated to TV series in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. Just like its older European sibling, this event will aim to stimulate series creation but also the African audiovisual sector as a whole.



OPENING CEREMONY

PRESENTED BY PIERRE ZÉNI

Journalist, Canal+

The master of ceremonies, Pierre Zéni, opens the sixth edition of Série Series, the festival for the European series of today and tomorrow. It is here, a stone's throw from the Château de Fontainebleau, that the European vanguard of series creators and producers gathers each year. By opening with a presentation of *Guerrilla*, Série Series reaffirms that the United Kingdom, Brexit or no Brexit, is particularly fertile land for creation. *Guerrilla* perfectly illustrates the recurring theme of this edition: courage. Because, in Britain, courage consists of creating series with a difference. "The opposite of courage is not cowardice, but conformity." Pierre Zéni invites Marie Barraco and the members of the editorial committee of Série Series to take the stage.



FRÉDÉRIC VALLETOUX, Mayor of Fontainebleau

"Courage," Frédéric Valletoux declares, "is having established an ambitious gathering like Série Series, here in Fontainebleau, 40 miles from Paris, in the jewel of Île-de-France's crown." So he is very happy to see the return of the festivalgoers for this sixth edition, perhaps its coming-of-age year as evidenced by the density of the programme offered and the calibre of the participants. The event is not just a fleeting three-day moment: it is rooted in Fontainebleau, and it works throughout the year to organise various initiatives, particularly with academic audiences to introduce young audiences to the making of television series. It also stands as proof that large national and European events can be organised in a town that, although well-known, is still modest in size.

Frédéric Valletoux also mentions the international television series festival in Hauts-de-France, which will take place next April in Lille. He greets Xavier Bertrand, who travelled to Fontainebleau today to attend this opening ceremony. Frédéric Valletoux has no doubt that he will

have had the chance to note the passion that drives those who have been behind Série Series since its origin. Because this festival has its own unique DNA: it was created, conceived, devised, and implemented by the professionals themselves, by all of those who work within the world of television series. This event belongs to them. Frédéric Valletoux is therefore convinced of the complementarity between Série Series and the upcoming festival in Lille.



JEAN-FRANÇOIS HEBERT, President of the Château de Fontainebleau

Jean-François Hebert reminds us that "Fontainebleau is also a castle", a UNESCO world heritage site. "So we can't speak of the town without mentioning its castle, and vice versa." For this reason, for the past six years the Château de Fontainebleau has been supporting Série Series, as well as opening its doors to the festival.

Jean-François Hebert invites all festivalgoers to visit and enjoy this jewel in the crown of French and global heritage, also reminding us that the castle regularly welcomes film crews within its walls, as it did recently for the series *Versailles*.



VALÉRIE PÉCRESSE, President of the Île-de-France district council

The Ile-de-France region has always had the ambition of becoming a land of great culture. Valérie Pécresse reminds us on this note that she has made a commitment to increasing regional credits dedicated to culture by 20%. The region has also supported nine television series in 2016. Audiovisual projects will be able to benefit from 500,000 euros in assistance, and bonuses will be granted to those who make use of creative talent within Île-de-France (special effects, costume, set design). Valérie Pécresse also gives a reminder that, while culture is an essential element of the attractiveness of the land, it also stimulates the economy. As such, one euro invested in cinema or television generates 16 euros of return on investment for the region. For Valérie Pécresse, the danger facing Île-de-France is not that of losing their status as a land of great culture (the region houses nearly half of all French artists and cultural professionals), but rather that of the deepening of cultural



inequalities. "The real risk is that of cultural segregation." It is vital to avoid closing off access to culture for a segment of the population – millions of Île-de-France inhabitants living in the outskirts of cities, or in rural or "working-class" areas. This is why the creation of a festival like Série Series in Fontainebleau is an important event. It contributes to making Île-de-France a land of creation, inclusion, and equality in terms of access to culture. Valérie Pécresse next announces the creation of a regional fund for emerging talents (FoRTE) totalling one million euros, aimed at helping young talents to carry out their projects, be they in music, the performing arts, plastic arts, cinema or television. A competition will be organised to select 10 young creators, who will have to commit to remaining in Île-de-France for a minimum of 10 months to create their first work there. They will benefit from a 25,000-euro grant so that they can dedicate themselves exclusively to the creative process. Valérie Pécresse hopes that this approach will lead to the creation of new series... which may even be previewed in a future edition of Série Series!

ISSAKA SAWADOGO, Actor OUMAR DAGNON, Director

Marie Barraco invites Issaka Sawadogo and Oumar Dagnon to the stage. Issaka Sawadogo appeared in last year's Série Series to introduce the series *Guyane / Ouro*. He immediately fell in love with the festival. At the time, he made a kind of prophecy: that a similar type of festival would be organised in Africa. This is now happening, and Issaka Sawadogo is proud to officially announce the creation of Série Series in Burkina Faso. The festival will be held in Ouagadougou, the capital of African cinema, from 27 February to 4 March 2018. While the European festival lasts three days, the African event will go on for six, because, as Issaka Sawadogo points out: "Africa is the largest continent in the world."



*For this opening ceremony, Série Series next welcomes to the stage of Fontainebleau theatre the entire team from the series *Guerrilla* for the screening of its first episode. The corresponding case study is scheduled for the following morning.*

The attendees are then invited to dinner at the Château.

THE CHANGING WORLD OF SERIES: IN SEARCH OF MEANING AND REALITY

As tradition dictates, the 2017 edition of *Série Series* opens with a presentation of the worldwide panorama of audiences and market trends of television series. This year, Abed Laraqui's presentation revolves around the major editorial trends in the world of series.



CHAired BY :
Abed Laraqui, research manager
Eurodata TV Worldwide

SERIES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD: THE KEY FIGURES OF A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

Although entertainment is consumed primarily on the continent of North America, as well as in Russia and Australia, fiction is king in Europe and Asia. Fiction represents 43% of programmes featuring in the global top 10 of highest ratings (while entertainment and news represent only 38% and 21% respectively). In this category, series feature heavily, representing 83% of the highest scores recorded, compared with 12% for films and 2% for animations.

Drama series continue to be highly successful in drawing viewers, dominating the small screen, far ahead of sitcoms and comedies. This success is led by crime series, which represent 47% of the top 10 most-watched drama series.

Local series continue to occupy the centre stage. They reach particularly high proportions in countries such as Spain, the United Kingdom and Israel, where they represented over 70% of prime-time series in 2016. This phenomenon can also be observed in France, although in much less significant proportions

since 50% of series broadcast during primetime are French. In terms of audience share, 70% of the national top 10 are locally-produced series.

This means that imported series represent only 30% of the most-watched series in the world. One could think that the majority of these would come from the United States or the United Kingdom. However, in fact, big American franchises like *House* and *The Mentalist* have disappeared from national top 10s, and have not been replaced to this day. Instead, they have given way to series imported from Turkey, Russia and India: for example, the most popular series in Armenia is *Uttaran*, a soap opera produced in India. Much less surprisingly, the series *Al Oustoura*, produced in the United Arab Emirates, has been hugely successful in Arab countries, particularly Jordan and Egypt. The Turkish series *Broken Pieces* is breaking records in Bulgaria, Croatia and Macedonia. The Spanish series *El Tiempo Entre Costuras* is in the top 10 most-watched programmes in Bulgaria. The series *Stairway to Heaven*, the Russian adaptation of a Korean soap opera, is being broadcast with great success in a very large number of extremely diverse countries, including Argentina, Ukraine and Japan.

THE MAJOR EDITORIAL TRENDS

One of the topics most often dealt with in today's series is that of cultural diversity. The series *Eden* (the first co-production between Arte Germany and Arte France), directed by Edward Berger, to whom we also owe the excellent spy series *Deutschland 83*, will evoke the European refugee crisis through the progression of an investigation into the murder of a child in Greece. On the same theme, *I Fantasma Di Portopalo*, a mini-series broadcast on Rai in February 2017, tells the true story of the sinking of a boat filled with refugees on Christmas Day in 1996. The series was hugely successful, and allowed the channel to increase its market share by 30% when it was broadcast. The Israeli series *Nesbo* also deals with the topic of cultural diversity, but in a lighter tone, following the adventures of an Ethiopian Jew. The series *Seven Seconds*, soon to be released on Netflix, fits perfectly with the current situation in the United States, telling of the murder of a young African American by a white police officer, and all of the ensuing tensions. Finally, *Ackley Bridge*, currently being broadcast on Channel 4, follows the day-to-day life of the teachers and students of a new school in Yorkshire, created with the goal of bringing together the cultures of Asian and European communities. This series, which chose to denounce prejudice and inequality through humour, has been extremely successful, particularly with female viewers above the age of 16.

Another of the themes often chosen for series is that of women's liberation. The sitcom *Best For*, broadcast in Norway in March 2017, narrates the emancipation of a woman who, on her 40th birthday, loses her husband and her job, and decides to turn her failures into a new beginning. The channel gained an additional 31% of audience share among young people aged 16-25. Coming soon to HBO, *Brown Girls* (the adaptation of a successful web-series of the same name) tells of a friendship between a Pakistani Muslim writer and an African American singer. These two black heroines from completely different origins and worlds try to juggle their love lives and careers, always aware of the colour of their skin. *American Woman*, expected to air on Spike TV in August, is one of the most hotly-anticipated series of the moment. This one takes place in the U.S. women's rights movement of the 1970s. The plot revolves around the character of Bonnie (played by Alicia Silverstone), a 40-year-old woman with a nice house and

two beautiful daughters who finds herself single after the end of a disastrous marriage.

Some series deal with women's liberation, but with a more political angle. The Mexican series *Ingobernable*, produced by Netflix (which is pursuing its strategy of conquering the Spanish-speaking market) features the First Lady of Mexico, caught in the trap of a corrupt government. Broadcast on Finland's largest public channel, Yle TV1, the series *Presidentti* follows the tribulations of a male president surrounded by women, each more influential than the last. The first episode allowed the channel to increase its market share by 74% among viewers aged 15-44.

New series stick closer and closer to reality, and tackle every topic facing society. *Fiertés*, a series created for Arte by Philippe Faucon (who received the César Award in 2016 for his film *Fatima*), focuses on the trials faced by LGBT people in France from 1981 until the adoption of the Taubira law on same-sex marriage in 2013. Shooting began in May, and the series should be broadcast in autumn. The series *Mary Kills People* deals with a rather difficult subject, as it tells the story of a single mother and A & E doctor by day, who helps her terminal patients die with dignity at night. Broadcast in Canada on the channel Global, the series has been incredibly successful. Another series on an equally problematic topic, *Three Girls*, was inspired by a terrible true story: that of a series of gang rapes committed in the United Kingdom between 2008 and 2012. With this series, the channel BBC 1 doubled its audience share among young adults, the most difficult target market to reach.

Some other more positive, even optimistic, series instead address the theme of solidarity. The French remake of a successful Catalan series, *Les Bracelets Rouges*, soon to be released on TF1, will feature a group of adolescents with severe illnesses, who keep fighting to overcome obstacles and lead normal lives just like other youths their age. The Belgian comedy series *Amigo's*, produced by the channel VTM, follows the somewhat turbulent release from prison of five inmates who try to open a restaurant to set themselves back on the straight and narrow. The channel saw its audience share increase by 50% when the first episode aired.





several channels offer the first episode of a series as a preview on other screens. For example, the first episode of *Just One Look*, a series adapted from Harlan Coben's novel, appeared online on TF1 Replay one week before the linear broadcast on television. This in no way cannibalises TV broadcasting, which remains very strong. Broadcasters and broadcasting platforms use these different distribution channels in conjunction. They are also used by producers who invest in these new players and co-produce with traditional broadcasters. The Swedish series *Hassel* is produced for the SVOD platform Viaplay, and will be broadcast six months later on TV3. Similarly, the Dutch series *De 12 Van Oldenhelm* will be presented on the premium platform Videoland before being broadcast several months later on the channel RTL4.

Finally, it is worth noting that other screens are being used increasingly frequently to complement TV broadcasting. As such, spin-offs of some series are broadcast only on channels' online platforms. This is the case, for example, with *Sam Stress: Les Journées de Merde*, a 3-minute spin-off from the series *Sam* released online on TF1 Replay. This broadcasting method makes it possible to both attract new viewers to online platforms and keep series alive between episodes and between seasons. In a more classic style, channels are using social networks to promote their series. When the second season of *Versailles* was released, Canal+ launched a new Snapchat filter, allowing the channel to reach a much younger target group. Netflix decided to promote its Spanish series *Las Chicas del Cable* by broadcasting a dedicated several-second video on Eurovision night named *Las Chicas del Televoto*.

All of these strategies show the necessity for broadcasters to adapt to diverse audiences, and in particular to reach younger viewers who watch their series differently. They also show how dynamic newcomers are when it comes to multiply screens and develop their online audience, thus creating new "niches" for creators.

MULTI-SCREEN STRATEGIES


Europeans are watching more and more television, spending an average of 3 hours and 53 minutes per day in front of the small screen. On the other hand, the reduction in the time spent watching live television is confirmed worldwide. The individual viewing time (IVT) worldwide fell to 3:00 in 2016, compared with 3:03 in 2014. This reduction should be qualified to take into account different types of broadcast (catch-up tv in particular), as the public is increasingly watching television content on different screens in a non-linear way.

Several countries (European countries, the United States and some Asian countries) have already begun measuring viewing figures on computers, mobile phones and tablets (we refer to this as the "4-screen" audience). The first figures obtained speak volumes. In France in December 2016, one in five people watched at least one programme on other screens. For the most part, these new viewing methods involve young people. In the Netherlands, in 2016, while young people aged 15-24 represented 17% of the traditional television audience, they represented 50% of the audience of TV programmes on other screens.

The statistics also display a higher consumption of fiction on on-line platforms compared with other types of programme (news and entertainment). These series are favoured more strongly. They are primarily viewed on computer screens, and much more rarely on mobile phones, which are poorly adapted to this type of content.

In Sweden in 2016, a number of series benefited from being broadcast on different screens. The series *Homeland* gained an additional 20% audience share on other screens. The thriller *Rebecka Martinsson*, a Swedish production on the channel TV4, received around 90,000 viewers thanks to other screens. Finally, more than 200,000 viewers watched the series *Bonusfamiljen* on computer, mobile and tablet.

The audience share on other screens continues to grow. Channels have noticed this, and many of them are unrolling new strategies to maximise their programmes over a variety of broadcasting tools. The different screens are not pitted against each other, but are used as complements to each other. Today,

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THE SERIES

In order to give the best possible snapshot of European series creation, its current state of affairs and its future, *Série Series* presents series in every different stage of development: screening of completed series, either unreleased or recently released; presentation of series in production during the « In the Pipeline » sessions; presentation of projects in early stages of development with the « What's Next ? » discussions. Moreover, *Série Series* has created in 2015 « Spotlight on Trailers »: a call for project allowing creators to present their project for a series through a trailer.

Since creators and creativity are right at the heart of *Série Series*, each screening is followed by a case study with the creative team (screenwriters, directors, producers, composers, broadcasters...), who explain their methods and creative process.

Série Series also showcases the inner workings of creation for children via sessions based on animated series. The creators present them and unveil the secrets to how they were made.



ALL WRONG

USA/France

Venice, Los Angeles. Carlos is broke and depressed. When he finally brings a girl back to his apartment for a one night stand, things don't happen as they were supposed to...

Presented by the Marseille Web Fest, *All Wrong* is a production for the new platform Blackpills.

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF SÉRIE SERIES

Curro Serrano, the creator of the series, talks about the beginnings of *All Wrong*. In 2014, whilst still a screenwriter for Spanish television, he decided to develop his own project and quickly filmed a pilot. He presented his work at the 2015 'Spotlight on Trailers by Série Series'. French producer Jacques Kluger (Darklight Production) decided to develop his project.

Jacques Kluger explains that he immediately saw this series' potential: the delicate subject of the 'bad smell of a penis' was approached with great humour without ever being vulgar and with a deep empathy for different characters. The series was originally written for a 26 minute format, but the producer felt that a web series would work better, which helped when approaching online platforms that wanted to develop drama. Jacques Kluger presented the project to Blackpills. Seduced by the idea of appealing to a 'millennial' audience, they decided to join the adventure.

SMALL BUT STURDY

Curro Serrano explains that the series, originally written in Spanish, had to be rewritten in English, as Blackpills was aiming mostly at a North-American audience. The two Spanish screenwriters, Curro Serrano and Pablo Aramendi, respectively lived in Madrid and Mexico. They worked closely - via Skype - with the director Kyle Marvin, who lived in Los Angeles, to give the dialogue and stories a more American sound. For Curro Serrano, a screenwriter should be able to adapt to any format, but he admits that going to a 10x12 minute format was very complicated. Jacques Kluger played a very important role monitoring the writing.

SPEAKERS :
CURRO SERRANO, CREATOR, CO-SCREENWRITER
JACQUES KLUGER, PRODUCER, DARKLIGHT PRODUCTION

CHAIRD BY :
SYLVIE COQUART-MOREL, HEAD OF DRAMA, RTBF

CREDITS
 Original idea: Curro Serrano
 Screenwriters: Curro Serrano, Pablo Aramendi, Kyle Marvin
 Directors: Kyle Marvin
 Production: Darklight Production
 Producer: Jacques Kluger
 Broadcaster: Blackpills
 Distributor: Blackpills
 Casting: Chris Marquette, Angie Simms, Brittany Furlan
 Format: 10 x 12'
 Date of broadcast: May 2017

For Jacques Kluger, the writing techniques for such a short episode are very different to the ones used in series with a more classical television format. Thus, when working on a prime time series - like the ones Curro Serrano was working on before *All Wrong* -, one must develop many plots and characters. A 12 minute format means less chat. Here, they concentrated on one character (Carlos, in this case). They had to search for the essence of the subject matter without compromising the viewer's understanding. In *All Wrong*, all the episodes are constructed around the same model: opening on a strong catalytic event, the situation unfolds and then an opening to the next episode is set up. This construction creates addiction for the viewer. This series isn't supposed to be a long story cut into ten episodes, the writing is truly serial.

Curro Serrano did not aim the series at any given audience, but Blackpills was aiming for 18-25 year olds, so adjustments had to be made (notably the casting, with actors younger than in the pilot). Although the series seems much centred on male problems, the female characters have a very central place in the story. It was very important to the creative team not to develop a series aimed exclusively at a male audience.

FROM WEB SERIES TO DIGITAL SERIES

Jacques Kluger recalls that Blackpills set very strict conditions for the development of the series: the team had 10 days to write a storyline, then - after the 'green light' - 10 weeks to write the dialogues, a week for the platform to give feedback to the writers, 6 weeks of pre-production, 20 to 30 days of filming for the 120 minutes of the series and finally 3 months of post-production. The series had to be made in 5 months.

In the team's eyes, it was nevertheless very important not to let that affect the quality of the work and to have the same quality requirements as one sees in cinema or traditional television. Jacques Kluger acted as artistic director for the duration of the project (Curro Serrano was not present for filming) and tried to give the project aesthetic coherence despite a tight budget of about 800,000 euros. For the producer, this is what makes *All Wrong* a real digital series. This is in the sense that it represents the web: cosmopolitan. This is thanks to the team but also down to a mix of very European and resolutely *American Pie*-esque American humour. This should allow for universal approval.

A BUSINESS MODEL IN THE MAKING

The budget of the series was 800,000 euros, which is the average cost of a web series at the moment (when web series started, platforms used to invest closer to 1 million euros).

The series was first available on Vice in the USA and is now available for free in the USA, France and Spain on the mobile Blackpills application. Audience numbers are encouraging so far. Blackpills measures its member's satisfaction with a lot of

different data: viewing, repeated viewing, time spent watching the series... Hence, the writing of the second series has already started. Filming is set to start before the end of 2017.

However, Blackpills is still thinking about their business model. Like on Netflix, monthly memberships could be set up in order to enable access to the platform's entire library. Or the content could remain free, but with limited viewing time and interrupted by adverts, like Spotify. Jacques Kluger concludes by saying that a synergy with telecommunication company Free could be set up following entrepreneur Xavier Niel's investment in Blackpills in France.

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 MARSEILLE WEB FEST





5VOR12 / FIVE2TWELVE

Germany

Up until a few days ago, the crew was still shooting. Bénédicte Lesage therefore expresses her sincere gratitude to Marcus Roth and Niklas Weise for their presence in Fontainebleau. She highlights how much the editorial committee enjoyed this series, which is an original and highly meaningful manifesto on a powerful theme: integration.

HYMN TO REALITY

When asked about the genesis of the series, Marcus Roth notes that it all began with the editor of the German channel Bayerische Rundfunk, which was looking to produce a series for young people, particularly boys. On Kika (the channel dedicated to a younger audience), there is no shortage of material for girls (with the colour pink, sparkles and fairy tales), but what about capturing the interest of young men?

The idea of a “boot camp” for young offenders came up.

According to Niklas Weise and Marcus Roth, they have known each other for a long time, having crossed paths during their first television production projects, but they had never truly worked together.

Niklas Weise points out that they wanted to insist above all on the realist side of the story and the images. They were pressed for time, but in-depth research was carried out all the same. In the end, it appears that it was also the involvement of “specialists” that anchored the series in reality. As such, the educator in the series, Monika, is a real educator and, beyond her role as an actor, she also acted as a consultant, helped guide the casting effort and ensured that the appropriate tone was struck. The casting was “mixed” as well: as well as professional actors, they incorporated young people who were truly experiencing situations very similar to those of the characters they play in the series. One of the actors was recruited from a theatre group in a prison. Their performances are impressive.

PARTICIPANTS :
MARCUS ROTH, CREATOR, SCREENWRITER, PRODUCER
NIKLAS WEISE, DIRECTOR

CHAired BY :
BÉNÉDICTE LESAGE, PRODUCER, SHINE FILMS

CREDITS

Original idea: Marcus Roth, Tillmann Roth
 Screenwriters: Marcus Roth, Tillmann Roth
 Directors: Niklas Weise, Christof Pils
 Composers: Martin Brugger, Carlos Cipa
 Production: Bayerischer Rundfunk, TV60Filmproduktion
 Producers: Marcus Roth, Sven Burgermeister, Andreas M. Reinhard
 Broadcaster: KiKA
 Distributor: Beta Film GmbH
 Casting: Yusuf Celik, Junis Marlon, Philipp von Schade, Klaus Bobach Rios, Arton Novobrdaljija, Janne Drücker, Andreas Leopold Schadt
 Format: 24 x 25'
 Date of broadcast: Sept. 2017 (unreleased)

PREPARING FOR FREEDOM

Niklas Weise notes that a great deal of preparation went into this aspect of the series. Under great pressure there again, the budget did not allow the coach to work with the actors throughout the duration of shooting: therefore, one week was dedicated entirely to rehearsal, working in particular on improvisation based on the script, but also on several different exercises so that the actors – novices or otherwise – could take ownership of these unusual characters and learn to incorporate elements of their own lives into their performances. As such, the actors played their characters in the accent of their own region, with their own style of speech: seriously, simply, and without “putting it on”. As soon as they began shooting, they all got to know each other and had already forged powerful links with their characters, which meant that they could be given great freedom. It wasn’t a case of making “reality television”; this strategy for helping actors adjust to the world of television series paid off, giving the project a sense of freshness and truth.

GROWING UP IN TODAY’S WORLD

Marcus Roth souligne la participation d’un autre auteur Marcus Roth drew particular attention to the involvement of another writer, Tillman Roth, who is no relation despite sharing his surname. The team received the order in early 2016 with a few guidelines, and then the writing process began. The casting took place in February, with the aim of finding young people to represent all parts of Germany and the diversity within it. He says it seems that they had been somewhat naive, but that they were very lucky in the end.

One participant in the debate highlights the extraordinary success of this demand for realism, and asks whether the team struggled to impose this aesthetic, and apparently equally political, stance.

Marcus Roth replies that there is an advantage to producing something for young people: it allows you to pass under the radar of the usual monitoring carried out by broadcasters, who are generally more anxious and critical when aiming at other target audiences. In this case, once the subject had been established, the broadcaster read the script and gave its approval, choosing to trust rather than monitor the team.

Bénédicte Lesage asks whether the broadcaster was immediately convinced by this rather sombre series, with its distinct lack of a happy ending.

Marcus Roth replies that he is the father of two boys, 14 and 17 years old, and he thinks it goes without saying that growing up in today’s world is not easy. The stages we go through can be tough.

The broadcaster made this excellent work possible by making an investment (even though the budget was not very high) and by having faith in the project. The vision was revealed to be extensive, since they envisaged a radically different tone from what was offered by other projects. Once the topic was chosen, it also appeared difficult not to go into the gritty truth of the relationships of young people, both with each other and with the outside world. It was a conversation about transformation, the strength of the unit... It can’t work for everyone, but it seems to him that the theme is profoundly heartening.

IMMERSION

The budget of 2.5 million euros for 24 episodes of 25 minutes each allowed for 29 days of shooting. They had to shoot all day long to capture the video and sound for editing. Shooting was organised into chronological order – this also allowed the young actors to improvise in some aspects, since they knew not only their part but also the direction the story was to take. For shooting, a dedicated space was set up so that they could film continuously, and obviously they had to improvise according to the weather. With three dedicated rooms, one week of editing was allocated per episode. Some of those involved were anxious about these conditions and the cramped planning meetings, displaying reluctance toward this organisation, which required great commitment from all those involved; eventually, with the help of a little enthusiasm and without any concerns from Niklas Weise about his teams, the adventure ended in success!

Having spoken about the lack of means, Niklas Weise points out that although it was a very interesting experience and the constraints often led them to be creative, he still feels it is judicious to allocate more funding, and particularly the presence of a producer to provide critical input, because otherwise it will always feel like someone is missing.

ISOLATED IN THE MOUNTAINS

Bénédicte Lesage is interested more specifically in the experience of those who were just starting out as actors; Niklas Weise notes that at the shooting location (in the mountains), there was no telephone reception and no internet. This created a terrible parallel with the isolation that the characters in the series are experiencing, but in the end, this definitely contributed to the realism of the series and the intensity of everyone’s work. In fact, after the initial shock of disconnection, the freedom it provided made it possible to achieve a very concentrated quality.

“Unplugging” also forged stronger bonds between members of the little motley crew, cobbled together on the mountainside for the project. They lived together and shared a group experience, which in many ways had a bonding and liberating effect. He also suggests that anyone who has the chance to try this experience should do so: off-grid, communal living does the power of good!



BACK IN GERMANY

On a lighter note, Bénédicte Lesage highlights a kind of renewal of the series and creative products in Germany, to which Marcus Roth replies that it is time to move on from iconic series like *Tatort*, which have always constituted Germany's reputation. Feeding off the developments taking place in France, the United Kingdom and the United States, creators are revolutionising the landscape of television. He is also particularly glad to be able to witness this revolution here at Série Series in Fontainebleau.

Niklas Weise is not certain that it is yet time to speak of a true "movement" or "renewal", but a number of interesting experiences are emerging in Germany, often propelled by the energy of Berlin, a city at the crossroads of so many different influences. However, it is always important to find that delicate balance in creation, by interacting with the modern world and finding the right audience.

Bénédicte Lesage asks if the shooting itself was also filmed, to which Marcus Roth replies that yes, the experience was documented in a "making-of" production. The broadcasting of the series will also be accompanied by additional materials to be published on Instagram in particular. None of this was planned, though: faced with the intensity and originality of the experience, the idea of filming and photographing what was happening behind the scenes came naturally.

Niklas Weise confirms that although social media campaigns are usually planned, in this case, there had been no time to anticipate this. There is little video material, the photos are minimalist, but what they do have nonetheless tells a beautiful story.

A POTENTIALLY LARGER TARGET AUDIENCE THAN ANTICIPATED

With regards to whether or not the series is expected to be aired on television only, Marcus Roth responds that the first broadcast will be televised, but that re-broadcasts will follow on streaming platforms. Given that young people seldom watch traditional television, this choice seems inevitable.

Marcus Roth adds that the broadcast is currently expected to take place after 8pm to reach a slightly more mature target than Kika's usual 11-12-year audience. It also appears that young people tend to be interested in what happens to those who are slightly older than them; this means that the series could actually reach a very wide audience.

The first broadcast will take place in September 2017.



© Fifty Fathoms / ABC Signature / Sky Atlantic / Showtime

GUERRILLA

United Kingdom

Two idealistic and politically engaged lovers set out to fight injustice and colonialism in the early 1970s.

Inspired by a radical movement in Great Britain parallel to America's Black Power, this drama is about freedom and resonates with current events.

TOUGH BEGINNINGS

Katie Swinden - who has previously worked on *Peaky Blinders* - explains that John Ridley, the creator of *Guerrilla*, had been toying with the idea of creating a series around the American *Black Power* movement for almost a decade. However, at the time (before having won an Oscar for his screenplay for *Twelve Years a Slave*) he was turned down by every film and series producer. The subject (the fight for equality between white and black communities) was considered too political and controversial. No investor wanted to take a risk by trusting the young writer. Discouraged, John Ridley decided to put away this project that meant so much to him.

It was during the filming of the Jimi Hendrix biopic *Jimi: All Is By My Side*, in England, that John Ridley and Katie Swinden met. The writer brought up the old project. Katie Swinden explains that she instantly loved the idea. The fact that the story was set in the USA, however, was a small problem for the British series producer.

A MASKED STORY

Developing a series around the *Black Power* movement was very attractive to the producers at Fifty Fathoms. Specialists of this period in history at the University of Cambridge were consulted in order to find a British equivalent. The historians told the production team about the 'Black Power Desk' which existed in 1970s England. Katie Swinden had never heard of this movement.

As a black woman who arrived in England as a child, Misan Sagay,

SPEAKERS :

KATIE SWINDEN, PRODUCER, FIFTY FATHOMS
MISAN SAGAY, SCREENWRITER
SAM MILLER, DIRECTOR

CHAired BY :

JEAN-MARC AUCLAIR, PRODUCER, ALAUDA

CREDITS

Original idea: John Ridley
Screenwriters: John Ridley, Misan Sagay
Directors: John Ridley, Sam Miller
Composer: Max Richter
Production: Fifty Fathoms, ABC Signature
Producers: John Ridley, Idris Elba, Patrick Spence, Katie Swinden, Yvonne Ibazabo (Fifty Fathoms), Tracy Underwood (ABC Signature), Michael McDonald (Stearns Castle)
Broadcasters: Sky Atlantic, Showtime
Distributors: Sky Vision, Endemol Shine International
Casting: Freida Pinto, Babou Ceesay, Rory Kinnear, Nathaniel Martello-White, Daniel Mays, Denise Gough, Zawe Ashton, Idris Elba
Format: 10 x 60'
Date of broadcast: Apr. 2017

the writer of the series, was a bit more *au fait* about these movements. However, it was only after working closely with the historical referents on the series and consulting archives of the period that she really understood the importance and violence of this revolutionary movement. Misan Sagay was then fascinated by the official masking of this relatively recent story.

Katie Swinden adds and confirms that that was the reason Fifty Fathoms made the decision to produce the series.

Guerrilla was broadcast in April on Sky Atlantic. Misan Sagay points out that the black community in Britain was particularly surprised at the size of this movement. For the screenwriter, the strength of this project is in its resonance with the current era: in 40 years, interethnic tensions have only slightly calmed. Sam Miller, who directed episodes 3,4 and 5 of *Guerrilla*, adds that, along with the chief decorator of the series, they worked extensively to make the series timeless so as not to anchor it in a specific time. This allowed the resonance with our modern reality. This was relatively easy, as the streets of London have hardly changed since the 70s.



A BRITISH-AMERICAN BRAIN TEASER

Katie Swinden explains that 5 years ago, when her production company decided to develop the project, she looked for American broadcasters, even though John Ridley had contacted them all 6 years earlier. The project really started when the script commission of the British channel Sky Atlantic signed an agreement with Fifty Fathoms. Everything sped up and got a lot more complex from a legal point of view. The royalties systems are very different in Great Britain and the USA, so specialised lawyers in both countries had to write up an *ad hoc* contract in order to pay John Ridley, a member of the Writers Guild of America (WGA). In the USA, production companies buy the writer out of his royalties at the start of the project, which requires big funds. In England, the system is completely different: the writer gets half their royalties at the beginning and then another amount if the series is successful. These negotiations took two years and considerably delayed the start of production. That's why English channels didn't call on American writers in the past; today, Katie Swinden says, in the constantly evolving world of television, an agreement would soon be drafted.

Once the project was green lit, the budget was the concern: Katie Swinden went to Los Angeles to meet with the biggest broadcasters and platforms. Showtime agreed to come on board. Working with American broadcaster Showtime meant that the budget was far higher than what is usually seen on British series.

In parallel, to ensure that the drama would be successful enough to warrant such a budget, the marketing meetings started before the production meetings and the promotion of the series represented 40% of Katie Swinden's work on the series (usually it takes up only about 15% of producer's time).

The producer specifies that despite the large budget, which makes every decision more analysed and therefore more complicated, there was a very familial atmosphere in the team.

A TEAM EFFORT

Misan Sagay talks about the start of her collaboration with John Ridley. Both screenwriters met in 2014 during the Oscars where *Twelve Years a Slave* won Best Picture. They spoke about the difficulties of writing a screenplay with black protagonists without falling into clichés or Manichaeism. A year later, the writer of *Guerrilla* called her to ask her to write two of the episodes.

Katie Swinden explains that at the beginning of the production, a four person writers' room was supposed to be created. However, John Ridley wrote the first four episodes in only 6 weeks, so the team was not needed. John Ridley chooses his collaborators on instinct, so only Misan Sagay was called on in order to bring British legitimacy to the writing of the screenplay.



Misan Sagay is used to writing alone, so it was with a certain nervousness that she joined a project where the writing had already been started. John Ridley has a reputation for being hard to please. He knew the beginning and the end of the story but, Misan Sagay recalls, he needed help with developing the plot. For three weeks, the writers locked themselves in a room to write, with the help of their consultants. They called to mind the cultural aspects of the British movement - less 'monolithic' than the American one -, they elaborated a clear vision of the characters and went over the language of John Ridley's writing.

SHAKING UP CODES AND BRITISH DECORUM

According to Sam Miller, John Ridley knew how to shake up the codes of British decorum by bringing unedited energy to the plot. Katie Swinden agrees: John Ridley's decidedly American energy meant they could work without any unnecessary procrastination, focusing on intentions.

The actors also helped with the development of the script. Many work sessions were set up with them in order to test the dialogue and scenes and determine the tone. This switchover from '2D' to '3D' is actually very moving for a screenwriter, Misan Sagay confesses.

The collaboration between John Ridley and Sam Miller (who directed three episodes) was also a good example of team work. While John Ridley was working in the USA, Sam Miller was location scouting for him. They were always in communication. Katie Swinden mentions that when watching the three episodes that Sam Miller filmed, John Ridley said 'He's better than me!'. It's only after watching the whole series that the continuity of their respective tones seems perfect, even though they've never been on set together.



A 5 STAR CONTROVERSIAL CAST

It was John Ridley's name on the project that convinced leading actors like Idris Elba - star of the British series *Luther* - and Freida Pinto (*Slumdog Millionaire*). Choosing the Indian-born actress was criticised by the American 'Black Lives Matter' movement, points out Jean-Marc Auclair.

Misan Sagay explains that this controversy highlights a systemic problem, which is the underrepresentation of black women in the media. Here, however, the choice was justified. Unlike *Black Power*, which was set up by a community of people descended from black slaves, the English anti colonialist movement was more diverse. *Jazz*, played by Freida Pinto, was inspired by a real-life militant of the movement who was from the south of Asia.

The producer points out that this quickly dismissed controversy was good publicity for the programme. Nevertheless, audience shares were not as good in the USA as they were in Britain, which, according to specialists, can be explained by the current situation there. Americans are more inclined to comedic programmes than to programmes that cause social debate. Misan Sagay concludes by saying that this will certainly change.





© Nice Drama



HASSEL

Sweden

After discovering the lifeless corpse of his mentor, police officer Roland Hassel, formerly active in organised crime, leaves in search of the killer in the wings of power between the towns of Stockholm and Brussels.

A world premiere of the pilot episode of *Hassel* is screened at *Série Series*.

THE WINDS OF CHANGE ARE BLOWING IN NORDIC NOIRS

To begin the discussion, Arnaud Malherbe notes that the pilot shown presents an ambiance, but does not shed any light on the direction of the storyline. The producer of the series, Stefan Baron, explains this production decision as the desire not to underestimate the viewer, to consider them an adult who can choose whether or not to trust the story as soon as they have seen the first episode of the series. For Amir Chamdin, the construction of the characters has always been the main axis of the script: particularly that of the main character and his relationships with the members of his family. The first episodes thus progress at a slow pace, making it possible to introduce the different personalities and family mechanisms. The crime plot will eventually begin to accelerate from episodes 3 and 4 on.

For actor Ola Rapace, this unusual division of episodes can also be explained by the general desire in Scandinavia to be rid of the genre of the “Nordic Noir” and series whose plots are resolved at the end of each episode. The team behind the series *Hassel* wants to re-write the codes for the genre: this original approach is a way of setting themselves apart.

German distributor Justus Riesenkampff cannot help but agree. If Beta Film took a risk in distributing “yet another Scandinavian crime drama”, it was because of Nice Drama’s ability to provide a breath of fresh air in the landscape of Scandinavian fiction. In light of his international notoriety, the choice of actor Ola Rapace ended up reassuring the distributor (Ola Rapace appeared in the James Bond film *Skyfall*, but he also played a downtrodden police officer in the series *Section Zéro* by Olivier Marchal).

PARTICIPANTS :
AMIR CHAMDIN, DIRECTOR
STEFAN BARON, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, NICE DRAMA
OLA RAPACE, ACTOR
JUSTUS RIESENKAMPFF, DISTRIBUTOR, BETA FILM

CHAired BY :
ARNAUD MALHERBE, DIRECTOR AND SCREENWRITER

CREDITS
Original idea: Henrik Jansson-Schweizer, Morgan Jensen, Björn Paqualin, based on characters by Olov Svedelid
Screenwriters: Björn Paqualin, Morgan Jensen, Charlotte Lesche, Oliver Dixon
Directors: Amir Chamdin, Erik Eger, Eshref Reybrouck
Composer: Nicke Andersson
Production: Nice Drama
Producers: Malte Forsell, Stefan Baron, Henrik Jansson-Schweizer
Broadcaster: Viaplay
Distributor: Beta Film
Casting: Ola Rapace, Aliette Opheim, Shanti Rooney
Format: 10 x 45'
Date of broadcast: 2017 (unreleased)

It was to avoid falling back into the aesthetic clichés of the genre that Amir Chamdin chose to film only the lesser-known parts of the town of Stockholm. This daring gamble was also repeated by the director of the episodes shot in Brussels. The objective was to evoke a kind of similarity between the two towns, not to highlight their typical characteristics. Thus, Stockholm and Brussels were not filmed as the respective capitals of Sweden and Belgium, but as towns that are each an integral part of Europe.

MUSIC: A GAMECHANGER IN A NEW AESTHETIC

The soundtrack also played an important role in the construction of a new aesthetic of the town. For the director, Stockholm is an intrinsically quiet city, so the soundtrack had to be very carefully considered. Only music that flowed organically from the script found a place in the edit (the background music in a bar serving as an illegal gambling house in episode 1, for example); background or “mood” music was vetoed by the director.



A CHILDHOOD DREAM

Drawn from the novels of Olov Svedelid, written in the 1970s, the character of Roland Hassel gained popular success in the 80s and early 90s thanks to a number of television adaptations. Having grown up with this legendary character in Swedish culture, it was only natural for producer Stefan Baron to have the idea of purchasing the rights to the series to modernise this character, who was unfamiliar to the younger generations.

When the production of this series was pitched to Amir Chamdin, he immediately wanted to recreate the unique atmosphere of the American detective films he had grown up with. Born in the mid-70s, it was a fantasy world inspired by spaghetti Westerns and revenge movies that fed into his thoughts and ideas while creating the *Hassel* universe. Actor Ola Rapace grew up in the same atmosphere and shared the same references, which only helped them to work together on constructing the character of Roland Hassel.

This somewhat antiquated ambiance can also be seen in the method of filming. The forward and backward zooms, as well as the close-ups, were voted in by the director, who says he prefers a certain “old-fashioned” filming style. Amir Chamdin denies nostalgia, comparing his approach to his camerawork to a musician listening to rock and roll (Amir Chamdin is an important figure in Swedish hip-hop culture). Convinced that mastering references to the past makes it possible to find one’s own modernity, Amir Chamdin confesses that he was inspired by the cinematography of Jean Renoir’s crime films.

But although the character of Hassel originated in the 1970s, his most recent reincarnation is different from the original, Stefan Baron reassures us. The decision to retain the name owes more to marketing – to reassure certain Swedish investors – than to a desire to mark any real heritage. The scenes have been completely rewritten. At the time when Olov Svedelid’s novels were written, police officers were an integral part of the city’s lower-middle class; it was a career to which people still aspired. Nowadays, the street environment has become harsher, and poorly-paid police officers live in the same neighbourhoods as the “thugs” they are pitted against, notes Amir Chamdin. Purchasing the rights to *Hassel* was a pretext for evoking the difficulties of this profession, but more than anything, for highlighting the porosity that exists between two environments that should be poles apart.

PRODUCTION IN SWEDEN: LOCAL COURAGE

The series *Hassel* will start on 8th September on a paid streaming platform, and will then be broadcast on Swedish public television. The production was financed by the Swedish film institute fund, by Belgian investors, and by Beta Film, for a total budget of 7 million euros (for ten 35-minute episodes and 100 days of shooting).

Despite the relatively small budgets allocated to Scandinavian series, these series are widely exported internationally and have been for many years. For Justus Riesenkampff, who says that Scandinavian series are always two years ahead of German series, their avant-garde nature can be explained by the teams’ desire to produce “the best series possible”, regardless of budget. Another explanation is related to the fact that few foreign fiction pieces are broadcast in Scandinavia (unlike in Germany and France). This could explain the desire to produce quality local fiction, but also the high level of curiosity from the public. Justus Riesenkampff concludes by pointing out that Scandinavian broadcasters implement the same development policies as premium European channels: producing daring content to capture the attention of a younger audience.

For Stefan Baron, the health of Scandinavian fiction can be explained more than anything by the atmosphere of trust that prevails within production teams. Swedish society is founded on mutual trust and respect, and the production of television series is no exception to this rule: the writers trust the director and the producers trust the team.

Amir Chamdin believes that the very broad freedom given to each person involved is possible because of the development of a common vision within the team. For him, the director is not there to impose one point of view on the actors or the team: everything is discussed early on to allow greater fluidity during shooting. This explains the respect for the budget in Swedish productions. This collective working method extends to the point of actors being involved in writing the dialogue, something that is “extremely rare in France”, as director and screenwriter Arnaud Malherbe points out.





WORLDWIDE
PREMIERE

MATCH

Norway

Norwegian screenwriter, actor and director Martin Lund has been working around the same idea since 2004: watching - from different points of view - how the small things in daily life can become huge problems. It all started with a short film about a student trying to wake up, 'will he, or will he not, manage to get up?'. The idea was then made into a series for children called *The Games*, which was very successful. It has now been made into a series for adults called *Match*.

The series' stand out point is the changing points of view (not staying in the protagonist's head), commenting on what is seen, interpreting, explaining, hypothesising. The viewer goes through a seemingly simple moment of daily life with the protagonist. It's then up to the two sport-like commentators to highlight the potential and actual strategies going through the protagonist's head. They walk on to the screen and, just like any sports commentators, go through the scene whilst loudly commentating.

COMMENTATING LIKE A FOOTBALL MATCH

When asked about the project's origins, the writer confesses that while he was writing *The Games*, which is aimed at children, he often found himself having to avoid more racy topics. They weren't appropriate for a younger audience but they were important, funny and inspiring: love and sex, men and women, hesitations and mistakes, drugs and alcohol... The idea then finally came to create something aimed at young adults.

Fredrik Støbakk specifies that the idea was offered to the channel NRK, which then commissioned the series. The broadcaster was a part of the writing process and the creation of the series and backed it with 2.3 million euros.

Martin Lund adds that although the original idea is simple, it was important for him not to be writing sketches, but episodes rich in some form of drama. Indeed, to make a 20 episode series, one needs to dig a little further than the simple, yet amusing, idea of two commentators bringing to life a mundane piece of

SPEAKERS :
MARTIN LUND, CREATOR, SCREENWRITER, DIRECTOR, ACTOR
FREDRIK STØBAKK, PRODUCER, APE&BJØRN

CHAired BY :
ALEXANDRE BOYER, PRODUCER, TETRA MEDIA

CREDITS

Original idea: Martin Lund
Screenwriters: Martin Lund, Thorkild Schrupf
Directors: Martin Lund, Liv Karin Dahlstrøm
Composer: Stein Johan Grieg Halvorsen
Production: Ape&Bjørn
Producers: Fredrik Støbakk, Ruben Thorkildsen
Broadcaster: NRK
Distributor: Red Arrow International
Casting: Herbert Nordrum, Fredrik Steen, Martin Lund, Eline Grødal
Format: 20 x 14'
Date of broadcast: 2017 (unreleased)

daily routine. Therefore, every episode has a theme with a short story and even though it's possible to see the evolution of the characters throughout the series, every episode is a stand-alone. The children's version was filled with a succession of jokes. In this case, the narration is a little more classical. In the opening minutes, the situation is briefly described (getting up or not, remembering the name of the girl you've just woken up next to after a night of drinking, meeting your lover's sister, trying to make a good impression...). Now we have a theme, we can move on to the tactics and strategies the characters decide to use.

IT'S ALL IN THE TONE

Martin Lund adds how important the tone was for him. Despite not being a big sports fan himself, he has often found that there is a background track in life of loud televisions sets blaring out football matches. Hence, he knows to what extent football commentators are representations of the community. It was very important, therefore, to respect the tone and codes of a Norwegian commentator. Even though he first tried to find an actor to fill the role he ended up playing, he chose to take the part so that the tone, which is primordial to the authenticity, was respected. In the end, this voice over becomes the main character of the series.

The importance of this voice over actually holds advantages as it enables the modification of certain commentaries once the scenes have been shot. This allows for a lot of flexibility and ability to respond, despite the slight risk of excess and constantly reworking every episode because it's easy to re-record a voice over. The creative choice made here is a 'blessing and a curse'.

Fredrik Støbakk confirms the constant temptation to do 'better than good', but the series is good and the episodes are more and more effective and well constructed.

He adds that a composer (Stein Johan Grieg Halvorsen) – who had also worked on the children's series - joined the team.

Alexandre Boyer asks about the organisation of the shoot. Martin Lund explains that the scenes with the actors are filmed first, then the commentators kiosk that appears in the middle of the scenes, then finally the voice overs.

Fredrik Støbakk recalls that there were about 4 days of filming per episode: 2 with the actors and no commentators, 1 with the whole team and 1 with only the commentators.

RESISTING THE FLAIR FOR THE DRAMATIC

When asked about a potential writing room, Martin Lund explains that he did attempt it, but then ended up writing alone. He explains that this series is one of the hardest pieces of writing he has undertaken due to a few things: being attentive to small details, staying true to writing as close to daily life as possible and making small events very important without falling into the trap of over dramatising.

In order to show how faithful they tried to stay to the world of sports commentary, a few extracts are screened. An expert comes on to the screen, paperboard at hand, to explain how an erection works; the use of close ups and slow motion to better capture the sense of an action, a facial expression, an emotion. Martin Lund then recalls the importance of the language and the sound track.

CREATING A LIKEABLE CHARACTER

Alexandre Boyer underlines the general correctness of tone which always keeps the viewer on the protagonist's side.

Martin Lund confirms that the idea of sympathy and empathy were very important. He learnt a lot from the children's series and put it to good use here. Also, having made the protagonist an underdog - an unconfident man, used to failure more than success - was a strong choice and a very different one in the world of television where things tend to be aimed more at glory and



success. There are certain episodes where the hero's behaviour is not quite glorious, which can affect the sympathy factor. Martin Lund also underlines how lucky he feels to have such a talented actor who is able to naturally express these moments of awkwardness, hesitation and mostly humanity.



BROADCASTING ON TELEVISION AND ON A DIGITAL PLATFORM

The channel plans to broadcast the series in autumn. Two 15 minute episodes will be screened during each broadcast. NRK also has a brilliant and very successful internet platform where the episodes will also be available. Following an audience member's question, Martin Lund adds that the episodes broadcast on the channel and those on the internet platform are exactly the same.

Alexandre Boyer asks if there will be a second series of *Match*. Fredrik Støbakk tells him that there most probably will, with a story of a man and woman living together. There certainly won't be a lack of subject matter.

When asked about the international future of the series, Martin Lund points out that the world of sports commentary is very particular so, except possibly in neighbouring Scandinavian countries, it's not certain the series would work when being adapted to other cultures and ways of talking. However, this was done with the series for children. It was sold to 40 countries, including Canada, while the original series is broadcast in Scandinavian countries.



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OUR TIME IS NOW

Sweden

Our Time Is Now, to everyone's delight, combines two fashionable things: cooking and period drama.

The plot is set in the aftermath of the Second World War. As a new era is dawning in Sweden, it seems like time has stood still in Djurgårdskällaren, a prestigious Stockholm restaurant. The owner, Gustaf Lowander, has done everything he could to try and keep the family business afloat. When his brother Peter comes back from fighting the war with Suzanne, a woman who was saved from a Nazi concentration camp, he finds out the business is going under. The dawn of a new more democratic Swedish society, the rise of a welfare state and liberalism are all changes that affect the restaurant, the owner's values and the way they interact with the world and their employees.

The team behind *Our Time Is Now* screens two extracts from the series. These scenes introduce Suzanne, a French Jew played by Hedda Rehnberg. After spending several years in a concentration camp she finds herself alone in Sweden. She met Peter in a refugee camp in the south of the country. In Stockholm, she starts working for the family business. In one scene, she is accused of stealing vegetables and reveals what life was like in the concentration camp to her accusers.

DINNER IS SERVED!

Johan Rosenlind originated the series. He thought of the concept without having written anything before, novel or screenplay. However, having a lot of experience as a maître d' in a great Swedish restaurant, he knew a lot about the world of gastronomy. When he presented the project to Malin Nevander, she immediately fell in love with the charm of this incredible story. To that day, she had never read such a well written project, no less from a beginner. The pitch was only 10 pages, but she already saw the prospect of a great series in it.

Malin Nevander presented the project to the public Swedish

SPEAKERS :
ULF KVENSLE, CO-CREATOR, HEAD WRITER
MALIN NEVANDER, CO-CREATOR, SCREENWRITER
HARALD HAMRELL, DIRECTOR
SUSANN BILLBERG RYDHOLM, PRODUCER, JAROWSKIJ
GÖRAN DANASTEN, PRODUCER, SVT
HEDDA REHNBERG, ACTOR
MATTIAS NORDKVIST, ACTOR

CHAired BY :
CLÉMENTINE DABADIE, PRODUCER

CREDITS
 Original idea: Ulf Kvensler, Malin Nevander, Johan Rosenlind
 Screenwriters: Ulf Kvensler, Malin Nevander, Johan Rosenlind
 Directors: Harald Hamrell, Molly Hartleb
 Composer: Adam Nardén
 Production: Jarowski Sverige AB
 Producer: Susann Billberg Rydholm
 Broadcaster: SVT
 Distributor: Zodiak Rights
 Casting: Hedda Stiernstedt, Charlie Gustafsson, Suzanne Reuter, Adam Lundgren, Mattias Nordkvist, Josefin Nelden, Hedda Rehnberg
 Format: 10 x 60'
 Date of broadcast: Oct. 2017 (unreleased)

broadcaster SVT. As luck would have it, it happened to be when Christian Wikander, Head of drama, was looking to produce a series set in a restaurant. As soon as he read Johan Rosenlind's story, he gave the project the green light. The development of *Our Time Is Now* started in 2012 and the channel automatically commissioned 2 series of 10 episodes, which is quite rare.

Malin Nevander joined Johan Rosenlind on the project. As the work advanced, a few important changes were made to the original pitch. For example, the first version was set nowadays. Then the decision was made to set the story in 1945, just after the Second World War. *Our Time Is Now* was going to be a period drama.

THE ANTI-SCANDINOIR

The project became instantly more ambitious. Malin Nevander decided to ask the help of an experience screenwriter to oversee the project. She presented a first synopsis to Ulf Kvensler, who had worked on several series, namely *Welcome*

to Sweden, which was presented at the 2014 edition of Série Series.

Ulf Kvensler was intrigued. Indeed, this project seemed very ambitious, almost too much so. Besides, he had never worked on a period drama. Nevertheless, the concept of telling the story of the evolution of Swedish society through the eyes of a restaurant seduced him. A series like this offers the opportunity to tell the story over several decades (the first two series cover 17 years of Swedish history). This is a common occurrence in literature, but a rare one in television.

One thing he liked a lot was that the series was not set as a thriller. Admittedly, the Scandinavian thriller has become a reference and has conquered the world, but the appeal of the Scandinoir has started fading slightly and the ability to be able to express oneself in a different landscape is refreshing. Ulf Kvensler was convinced that viewers were getting bored of thrillers and wanted something new.

Our Time Is Now is the answer. It offers a rarely seen genre in Swedish television, focusing more on human relations and love stories. The strength of Scandinavian thrillers - often labelled as 'social realism' - is that they take a critical look at modern society. However, Ulf Kvensler is persuaded that a love story is equally able to cover social issues. The post-war boom is an essential part of history, which shaped Swedish society and made the country what it is today.

Clémentine Dabadie feels there is a strong influence from *Downton Abbey*. Ulf Kvensler started working on *Our Time Is Now* over four years ago. That was when the British series was incredibly successful. Nevertheless, he claims his major influence was a Danish series called *Krøniken* - which has become, since it was broadcast in 2004, a reference for Scandinavian period drama. That series broke all the records in matters of audience numbers, with over 2.8 million viewers per episode, in a country with a population of only 5.1 million!

UNITY IS STRENGTH

Clémentine Dabadie recalls that Swedish television is renowned for the freedom they give creators and screenwriters. At least that's how SVT is perceived in France.

Göran Danasten explains that it's more about communication. As a producer, he strives to create an atmosphere that favours communication. Debates are therefore quite frequent. That being said, he still feels more like he supports the creative process rather than actually intervening.

Ulf Kvensler confirms that Göran Danasten gave the screenwriting team a lot of freedom. However, *Our Time Is Now* was an expensive production (about 900,000 euros per episode), so it needed to appeal to a very large audience. The development of a third series depends on viewing figures. Ulf Kvensler and his team therefore incorporated the producer's objectives into their writing process. It was clear from the start that the channel wanted to attract a broader audience with this series, especially female viewers. Malin Nevander admits that she was keeping count of the number of female characters in the series. She realised that in one of Ulf Kvensler's first drafts, over 70% of dialogue was given to male characters. She had, on the other hand, favoured the female roles. In the final version a good balance was struck.

Malin Nevander notes that the producers were consulted throughout the writing process. Susan Billberg Rydholm had access to the very first drafts of the project, enabling her to make notes from the start of development. Once the process had advanced enough, the director was added into the mix. When Harald Harrell joined the team, the first and tenth episodes were written. The screenplay was so good and the story so moving the he didn't hesitate to be a part of the project.

The idea was to set up as collaborative and transparent an organisation as possible. A series like *Our Time Is Now* would not see the light of day without a well-oiled team of screenwriters, directors, producers, broadcasters and actors.

Indeed, Ulf Kvensler points out that, once chosen, the actors were regularly consulted. Actors would often call him to ask to change a word or a line. On that note, he remembers that Mattias Nordkvist once wrote to him to tell him that the last three episodes of the second series were three of the worst he'd ever read. The actor admits that he didn't understand why his character was treated so badly...



PERIOD, YET MODERN

Clémentine Dabadie asks the team about the main difficulties encountered while developing the series. For Susan Billberg Rydholm, it's the financial side that often dominates, especially on a series like this. Period dramas are expensive.

For Ulf Kvensler, the dialogue was the real challenge. The series was set to start in 1945, so the characters couldn't be talking in too modern a way. Then again, the danger was to dip in to 'old fashioned' dialogue. A phrase in the first episode ended up causing a debate. Talking about sexual relations, one of the characters uses an expression equivalent to 'getting fucked', which many judged to be too modern. Some people were dubious that someone would use such a word in 1945. Ulf Kvensler proved that the word in question has been used, although rarely, since 1919.

Although the series is a period piece, it remains modern. One of the main things that won Hedda Rehnberg was the very modern humour. Malin Nevander points out that Ulf Kvensler specialises in comedy. He's responsible for most of the 'jokes'.

The two series of *Our Time Is Now* will be broadcast in Sweden in October. The series has already been sold in all the Scandinavian countries.



© Bernd Schuller

THE SAME SKY

Germany

TWIN WORLDS

Claire Lemaréchal starts off by asking how the team behind *The Same Sky* was formed. Paula Milne explains that she is English, that in the 90s she wrote the political thriller *Die Kinder* and that the ZDF remembered her. Olivier Hirschbiegel was working on a project for the BBC. When he was told about the project, he was instantly grabbed by it - maybe because of the idea of the twinning of two worlds, of two Germanys.

Paula Milne informs us that the initial pitch was two pages long and spoke mainly of espionage. Having written political dramas before, she knew that an emotional dimension was vital. The idea of separated twins seemed strong and would allow for a more contemporary way of telling the story. The producers wanted the series to be set in the middle of the 70s, right in the heart of the Cold War.

Paula Milne answers a few questions from audience members about her creative process and indicates that writing an episode takes her a month. She always imagines that the audience will react the same way as her and uses that intuition to judge what weight to give each part of the plot. Before writing, she spent 6 to 8 months researching to dive into the world of the series. Today, the second series is written and there are already a few episodes planned for series 3.

LAST ON THE TO-DO LIST: FILMING

Olivier Hirschbiegel explains that he joined a project that already had a perfect screenplay. He read the script, asked a few questions and then simply filmed what was so brilliantly written. Could it be any simpler?

Paula Milne confirms that she always writes alone, especially this time as she had to learn about an entire period of German history. The screenplay was originally written in English so it had to be translated into German. Olivier Hirschbiegel took on the task. He says he stayed as faithful as possible to the

SPEAKERS :
PAULA MILNE, CRÉATRICE, SCÉNARISTE
OLIVIER HIRSCHBIEGEL, RÉALISATEUR

CHAIRÉ BY :
CLAIRE LEMARÉCHAL, SCÉNARISTE

CREDITS

Original idea: Paula Milne
Screenwriter: Paula Milne
Director: Oliver Hirschbiegel
Composer: Walter Mair, Vassilina Tchakarova
Production: UFA Fiction, Beta Film, in coproduction with Mia Film in association with Rainmark Films
Producers: Friedemann Goetz, Michal Pokorný (Co-producer), Benjamin Benedict, Ferdinand Dohna, Nico Hofmann, Paula Milne, Dirk Schürhoff, Tracey Scofield, Sebastian Werninger (Executive Producers)
Broadcaster: ZDF
Distributor: Beta Film GmbH
Casting: Tom Schilling, Sofia Helin, Friederike Becht, Ben Becker, Jörg Schüttauf, Hannes Wegener, Stephanie Amarell, Godehard Giese
Format: 6 x 60'
Date of broadcast: Mar. 2017

original, but Paula Milne insists he worked a lot on the dialogue. They were frequently in contact during this period.

Olivier Hirschbiegel points out how fond he is of being in touch with the screenwriters. Decisions can be discussed and weighed up; he doesn't like working alone. Paula Milne nevertheless specifies that she only came on set three half days in over 6 months. She wants the director to be - and to feel - completely free.

Olivier Hirschbiegel adds that the casting was a joint effort. Paula Milne points out that she didn't have any specific actors in mind while she wrote, so the choice of actors was a fascinating adventure.



Talking about the relationship with the broadcaster, Paula Milne was overjoyed to find how welcoming everyone was with this English woman who didn't really speak their language and was writing about them. She assumed that having received awards in the past must have helped, but in her opinion, it was the story that sold them. The story and these characters who, with equally dramatic weight, push the plot forward. Maybe it was also emotional to imagine a story that still would have ramifications today.

A CLOSE ENEMY

Oliver Hirschbiegel explains that he has a strong link with Berlin and was always fascinated by this period of the Cold War - a frequently filmed theme, in fact -, a period of confrontation between two worlds, a stagnant showdown. He lived through it when he was young as he was a member of the communist youth in the East and did an 'exchange trip' in the West. He is fascinated by the idea of being faced with an enemy that might not exactly be one as they're from the same country.

An audience member asks why this hasn't been written about before. Oliver Hirschbiegel explains that it's due to the shyness of Germans, who are a tad reticent when it comes to approaching these themes. A city and a country split in two for decades leaves wounds and scars that can take a long time to heal. Even today, talking about the two Germanys, their individual spirit and their differing evolution, is a sensitive subject. Hirschbiegel then specifies that although he is German, he spends most of his time abroad living between Austria and Italy. It was this distance that gave him the ability to stand back and completely engage with the story. He has the feeling that by mixing this very personal aspect of his experience and the vivacity often afforded by an outside eye, he has created true to life drama.

Paula Milne indicates that, for her, this series was finally the opportunity to write a very German story - some are concerned

it's almost 'too German' - that speaks to everyone. Above all, it's a story about ordinary people having to make extraordinary choices in an environment that, by its own nature, puts a palpable pressure on the protagonists' personal lives. Doesn't this resonate with all of us?

THE POWER OF IMAGES

Filming took place in Prague, where there are excellent teams and where low prices allow for more time to shoot. Also, Berlin has changed so much recently that Prague actually looks more like it did back then. Very few scenes were actually filmed in Berlin.

When asked about the budget, which is always a hot topic, especially for period drama, Oliver Hirschbiegel indicates that they had between 800,000 and 1 million euros per 45 to 50 minute episode. The budget was therefore far higher than what is current in Germany, while still being inferior to American standards. Oliver Hirschbiegel noticed that money is sometimes lacking, but if one is capable of justifying the spending, the production company will understand the artistic need.

There were 69 days of filming. Paula Milne explains that a few travel scenes were deleted and rearranged so that they could be filmed locally.

Oliver Hirschbiegel underlines that he put a lot of emphasis on the images. In particular, he tried to show - with the use of photography - how different the landscapes were in the 70s and 80s. The 70s were suffocating. Contrarily, the 80s were more open.

Oliver Hirschbiegel indicates that whatever the series he is working on, he does a huge amount of research in order to be true to life, mostly by using photography. They say so much! In this case, a lot of memories came back when he saw the pictures and he even went into his personal photos. He hopes that this will make *The Same Sky* a particularly genuine series.

STORYTELLING FOR THE SMALL SCREEN

He recalls that he started in the world of series and then moved on to cinema. He is used to the world of series. He actually thinks there is no difference in content for someone who is 'telling stories by filming them'. While editing, he obviously took into account the different rhythms and adapted the camera's point of view. What works on a big screen can end up being far too slow on a small screen.

Paula Milne adds that, to her, the main difference is that in cinema, when viewers start the film, they finish it; with a series, giving them the desire to come back for the next episode is an art in itself. Then again, the narration time can be stretched a lot more.

FURTHERMORE...

Questions are asked by audience members about Paula Milne's next project. Will she write a series about current politics? About Brexit maybe?

Paula Milne answers that she is currently working on a project about fake news and the consequences of this new form of disinformation on democracy...





SHADOW OF THE FERNS

The Czech Republic

SERIES ARE GATHERING MOMENTUM IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC
Last year, Série Series regaled festivalgoers with *Kosmo*, a totally off-the-wall series that follows the tribulations of the first, fictitious Czech space mission. This year, we are going to a completely different world with *Shadow of the Ferns*, a crime series with a hint of fantasy, as suggested by its intriguing pitch.

After a car accident, a young cop, Filip Marvan, wakes up in the early 80s in a town in the North of Czechoslovakia, where he is a member of a local team of detectives. Why has he leapt thirty years into the past? How will he return to his time?

The creators of the series decided to screen the fifth episode of the season, probably the soberest (they assure the audience that the other episodes are lighter and funnier). In this chapter, Filip finds his mother, who is pregnant with him, and his father, a young, unemployed anarchist.

ADAPTING IS NOT COPYING

If the story provokes a sense of déjà-vu, there's a good reason for it. *Shadow of the Ferns* is the Czech remake of *Life on Mars*, the once-cult series from the BBC. The English version tells the story of Sam Tyler, a police officer accidentally thrown back in time by a car accident in 2006. When he regains consciousness, he finds himself in 1973 working for the Manchester police. In the Czech version, Filip Marvan wakes up in 1982, in communist Czechoslovakia.

Life on Mars never aired on Czech television. Vratislav Šlajer, however, was able to catch several episodes of it. He immediately fell in love with the series and acquired the rights. He showed a few episodes to Ondřej Štindl, who also fell for its charms. They instinctively knew that if they launched into writing a remake, they would have to completely rework the plot. The initial premise of *Life on Mars* is retained, but the similarities end there. The two versions are very different.

PARTICIPANTS :

ONDŘEJ ŠTINDL, CO-CREATOR, SCREENWRITER
MAREK NAJBRT, CO-CREATOR, DIRECTOR
VRATISLAV ŠLAJER, PRODUCER, BIONAUT
MICHAL REITLER, PRODUCER, CZECH TELEVISION

CHAired BY :

JEAN-ANDRÉ YERLÈS, SCREENWRITER

CREDITS

Original idea: Ondřej Štindl, inspired by the BBC series *Life on Mars*
Screenwriters: Ondřej Štindl, Robert Geisler, Benjamin Tuček
Directors: Marek Najbrt, Radim Špaček
Composer: Hynek Schneider
Production: Bionaut, Czech Television, JOJ TV
Producers: Vratislav Šlajer (Bionaut), Michal Reitler (Czech Television)
Broadcasters: Czech Television, JOJ TV
Distributor: BBC Worldwide
Casting: Václav Neuzil, Ivan Trojan, Judit Bárdos, Jan Budař, Václav Kopta, Tomáš Jeřábek, Michal Dalecký, Marie Doležalová
Format: 10 x 57'
Date of broadcast: Jan. 2017

When Ondřej Štindl began writing the script, he quickly abandoned the idea of doing a remake of the English series. *Life on Mars* is very British at heart, bathed in the pop culture of the 70s. Even the title is a reference to a David Bowie song. The characters of *Life on Mars* are pure products of British culture. Ondřej Štindl was conscious of the fact that such characters, their psychology, and their humour, could not be transposed as-is into a series in which the plot takes place in Czechoslovakia, far less a nation under communist rule.

Vratislav Šlajer is convinced that a good remake can't content itself with being a mere copy-paste of the original. In his view, a remake must provide a new perspective on the established theme, without betraying the principles on which the original series is based. Either way, authors and screenwriters must feel free to express themselves when working on a remake. Fantasy series, Ondřej Štindl adds, are much easier to adapt, as the genre offers more freedom.

HEALING THE WOUNDS OF THE PAST

From the very beginning of the writing process, Ondřej Štindl had the idea of setting the plot of *Shadow of the Ferns* in 1982, when he was 16 years old: the age when, he says, "we start to understand the world around us". Marek Najbrt, the director, had no choice but to approve this decision, as the 80s were also the years of his own adolescence. The series also offered him the chance to look back on that time, and exorcise a difficult period: the end of communism.

Vratislav Šlajer was conscious that the choice to set the plot in the 1980s was risky, to say the least. 1982 was a year that many Czechs would rather forget. It was a very strange year for the nation, as the communist regime gradually reverted to its period of decadence. "Little by little, the country slid into chaos. Everything seemed so hopeless. Many people fled the country that year," Ondřej Štindl recalls.

Ondřej Štindl had to avoid any kind of sentimentalism, and, *unlike Life on Mars*, *Shadow of the Ferns* is not a nostalgic series. The view taken of the Czechoslovak past is neither black nor white. The series doesn't take sides. It doesn't rest on any kind of political statement. Vratislav Šlajer had no wish to create controversy. He has never said or suggested that the 1980s were fantastic, nor that they were terrible. The historic reality is seen through the eyes of the main character.

More than a journey through time, the primary theme of the series is forgiveness. For example, in the episode screened, Filip has the unbelievable luck of crossing paths with his father at a time when the latter was nothing but a young, futureless hoodlum, and of forgiving him for all of the mistakes he has not yet made.

Michal Reitler notes that this was the theme that was presented to the channel to get the green light for the project. They were not particularly excited by the prospect of producing a fantasy series, and the project was sold to them more as a thriller than as a science-fiction series as such. For this reason, the first episode is very classic: it was a way of attracting viewers, says Michal Reitler. Over the course of the episodes, *Shadow of the Ferns* transforms into a family drama, but one with fantasy elements.

A FAUX CRIME DRAMA

The 10 episodes of *Shadow of the Ferns* were broadcast on Česká Televize, the Czech public television group, beginning in February 2017 on Monday nights at 8pm, the slot dedicated to crime series.

The first episode reached over 1.6 million viewers, out of a population of only 10 million. The audience ratings improved so much that the series was met with fierce competition from private channels. The following episodes lost a few viewers, but the audience share never dipped below 1.2 million.

The creators had been confident, but the results vastly exceeded their expectations, as well as the channel's. True, Česká Televize's primary goal is not to reach record-breaking audience ratings, but to create original works. That doesn't negate the fact that *Shadow of the Ferns* is not a light-hearted series, and the channel took a risk.

The risk was all the higher since the series was expensive to create. Each episode was given a budget of 450,000 euros, while the average budget for a Czech series is closer to 300,000 euros per episode. Czech television funded 75% of *Shadow of the Ferns*. The series was co-developed with a private Slovakian channel. The latter wanted to take a risk and break with its regular programming by producing a more original, less commercial series. The risk paid off, because *Shadow of the Ferns* was also immensely successful in Slovakia.

When asked in conclusion about the likelihood of a second season, Vratislav Šlajer says that *Shadow of the Ferns* was designed to be a mini-series and so no follow-up is being pursued. However, the concept is so solid that it could be used again, for a completely different story taking place in a different period, with different characters.

Vratislav Šlajer adds that he is very proud of what the team achieved, particularly the last episode in the series. The quality of a series is often measured based on its finale. Not only did *Shadow of the Ferns* succeed in keeping viewers on the edge of their seats for ten episodes, but it ended on a high note.





TABULA RASA

Belgium

Mie, a young woman with amnesia is a patient at a psychiatric hospital and was the last person seen with Thomas Spectre before he mysteriously vanished. She is the police's main suspect and she alone has the key to finding Spectre. But how can you solve a case without a memory?

A new era of Flemish television dawns with *Tabula Rasa*, a psychological thriller with a fantasy twist.

THE BIRTH OF A SHOWRUNNER

Producer Frank Van Passel explains that Malin-Sarah Gozin got the idea for *Tabula Rasa* from a desire to deal with loss and amnesia in a series. As she had already been a producer at Caviar for some years, the company was all too happy to back her with developing this project. The screenwriting process started by focusing on the central character, Mie; a storyboard was written, followed by a pilot and a bible. The team then decided to involve experienced screenwriter Christophe Dirickx to help Malin-Sarah Gozin build the plot. The development of *Tabula Rasa* was a perfect opportunity for the production company to try out new work methods. So, Veerle Baetens, the famous Flemish actress who would play Mie, was asked to join the screenwriting. The sometimes heated clash of her's and Malin-Sarah Gozin's visions is what created a character as complex as Mie.

Frank Van Passel explains that Malin-Sarah Gozin wanted the status of showrunner of the series. This status does not exist in the world of Flemish television, so it needed to be outlined. A balance was soon struck between her perfectionism and the expressive freedom needed by the other members of the team.

Jonas Govaerts maintains that this showrunner position was justified because there were two directors, which meant Malin-Sarah Gozin's final say was needed. Then again, the creator only intervened on set when the plot was being affected.

SPEAKERS :

JONAS GOVAERTS, DIRECTOR
LACHLAN ANDERSON, COMPOSER
FRANK VAN PASSEL, PRODUCER, CAVIAR
WIM JANSSEN, CONTENT MANAGER, VRT ÉÉN

CHAired BY :

HERVÉ HADMAR, SCREENWRITER AND DIRECTOR

CREDITS

Showrunner: Malin-Sarah Gozin
Screenwriters: Malin-Sarah Gozin, Veerle Baetens, Christophe Dirickx
Directors: Kaat Beels, Jonas Govaerts
Composer: Lachlan Anderson
Production: Caviar
Producers: Helen Perquy, Frank Van Passel, Bo De Group
Broadcasters: VRT één, ZDFneo
Distributor: ZDFe
Casting: Veerle Baetens, Stijn Van Opstal, Jeroen Perceval, Gene Bervoets, Natali Broods, Cécile Enthoven, Hilde Van Mieghem, Peter Van Den Begin, François Beukelaers, Lynn Van Royen, Tom Audenaert
Format: 9 x 50'
Date of broadcast: autumn 2017

A BREATH OF FRESH AIR FOR CRIME SERIES

Frank Van Passel explains that in order to differentiate *Tabula Rasa* from other crime series, the series was peppered with 'horror' elements. This daring aesthetic bias was actually the source of a disagreement with the private channel that was initially supposed to broadcast the series. The channel wanted to change the plot to make the screenplay more family orientated, so the producer decided to end the contract rather than distort the series. VRT, the Flemish public broadcaster, then came on board.

Once this aesthetic track was embraced, building a team with a penchant towards 'horror films' was not easy. The two directors chosen were Kaat Beels and Jonas Govaerts, one for her ability to create strong visual landscapes and the other for his ability to direct actors. One was to film the past and the other the present.

Jonas Govaerts recalls that he and Malin-Sarah Gozin talked extensively about the atmosphere they wanted in the series. The development of a modern Hitchcockian landscape was finally decided upon.

Lachlan Anderson points out that the score accentuates the disturbing effect of the images and also helps the viewer with timelines, despite incessant flashbacks. Above all, this allowed the series to stand out from other Flemish crime series (they've all been scored by the same composers for years so their soundtracks sound similar).

Wim Janssen confesses that the production team intentionally withheld important plot points, making him an 'average viewer'. The very strong choice of a slow crescendo in the plot put the audience concerned broadcaster on edge. It was only when he saw the final edit that he understood the strength and modernity of Malin-Sarah Gozin's writing.

PUBLIC TELEVISION AND SUPPORTING YOUNG FLEMISH TALENT

Frank Van Passel confirms that creating a series like *Tabula Rasa* a few years earlier would not have been possible. However, a political desire to develop locally produced drama stemmed the creation of a fund five years ago. The 'tax shelter' (tax break designed to support audiovisual and cinematographic productions) also plays an important role. Now, several series are produced within the country each year.

Wim Janssen, whose job is to support locally produced drama, thought about VRT's editorial line when he was presented with *Tabula Rasa*. Confirming that a public broadcaster's duty is to offer viewers innovative programmes (despite not being a fan of horror films), he decided to support the project.

Frank Van Passel points out that near the end of production, ZDF, the German public channel, joined the adventure. Their only demand: that the end product be 'brilliant'. The extra budget allowed for, among other things, better special effects, making it an easier international sell. In the end, for a series of nine episodes, each 50 minutes long (12 days of filming per episode), the budget came to 6.5 million euros.

Hervé Hadmar asks if the series will be broadcast in France.

The series will be broadcast in Flanders in autumn 2017, the objective then being to sell it in the Francophone side of Belgium. Frank Van Passel concludes that an international sale could follow.





WORLDWIDE
PREMIERE

THE SIMPLE HEIST

Sweden

What better way to close this sixth edition of Série Series than with an original Swedish comedy? The team behind *The Simple Heist*, who have come in large numbers, are interviewed by Pierre Zeni before the screening.

A MATTER OF ETHICS

Pierre Zeni asks Erik Hultkvist about the origin of the series. He explains that *The Simple Heist* was originally a successful novel written by Tomas Arvidsson at the end of the 70s. It had already been adapted for television in the 80s. The book tells the story of two older men close to retirement, a doctor and a mathematics professor, who decide to rob a bank. They decide to rob the bank in protest of the Swedish income tax, which was very high at the time. Both heroes believe that they have worked hard their whole lives and been good citizens. Not only is society ungrateful for the service they've provided, but it treats them in the most unfair way possible, by getting rich off their earnings.

To them, in this situation, robbing a bank is not immoral. In fact it's a way of re-establishing justice. Both of these men are middle class, they're not at the bottom of the social and economic ladder, but they don't hesitate to resort to broad stroke moral values in order to justify their crime. Essentially, their objectives are selfish.

This dichotomy between strong principles and purely materialistic needs is the perfect setting for a comedy. In addition, the feelings evoked by the author are universal. The hypocrisy of these two men is very human. It's therefore very easy to relate to these budding bank robbers.

A FEMININE ROBBERY

Erik Hultkvist always loved the story and decided to remake it by modernising the novel's themes without changing the premise. The two heroes' main objective - getting revenge on society for such high taxes - is no longer really relevant. However, the main change to the storyline was the gender of the heroes. They are

SPEAKERS :

ERIK HULTKVIST, SCREENWRITER
FRIDA ASP, PRODUCER, FLX
SISSELA KYLE, ACTRESS
LOTTA TEJLE, ACTRESS
JOHANNA BERGENSTRÄHLE, ACTING HEAD OF DRAMA, TV4

CHAired BY :

PIERRE ZENI, JOURNALIST, CANAL+

CREDITS

Original idea: based on a book by Tomas Arvidsson
Screenwriters: Erik Hultkvist, Linn Gottfridsson, Rikard Ulvshammar
Directors: Felix Herngren, Emma Bucht
Composers: Matti Bye, Joel Danell
Production: FLX
Producers: Frida Asp, Pontus Edgren, Jessica Ericstam, Joshua Mehr
Broadcasters: TV4 / C More, Yle, TV2 Norway
Distributor: FremantleMedia International
Casting: Lotta Tejle, Sissela Kyle
Format: 6 x 44'
Date of broadcast: autumn 2017

now women. It was this change that won the channel over when Erik Hultkvist presented the project.

In the new version of *The Simple Heist*, the heroines are Jenny Bengtsson and Cecilia Stensson, two women in their late fifties working in the public sector. Although they started their career with what was an enviable social status, it slowly degraded over the years. They worked their whole lives, believing in public service. But, closing in on retirement, they realise that their personal and financial situations have considerably worsened. They can see only one solution: robbing a bank. Just like in the novel, these characters are upper middle class. Their motivations for committing this crime are far less noble than they would lead us to believe.

WOMEN ON THE EDGE OF BANKRUPTCY

This duality is what completely won Lotta Tejle when she read the screenplay. How do you explain how two nearly sixty, 'respectable' women with clean police records can one day rob a

bank? As an actor, she was faced with a challenge: how to make this extravagant story believable?

Lotta Tejle nevertheless found it easy to find justifications for her character. In the series, Jenny is a mathematics teacher but, like many women, she has had two jobs: professional life and family life. When we meet Jenny at the start of the series, she's



going through a divorce. Her financial situation is getting more and more critical. She has every reason to be angry. Sissela Kyle reminds us that women, at least in Sweden, are more affected by poverty during retirement.

Cecilia, the character played by Sissela Kyle, is a doctor. She should feel comfortable about retiring. Unfortunately, she has made bad investments and has squandered all of her family's money (her husband has no idea). Cecilia's motives are even more selfish than Jenny's.

SWEDISH GIRL POWER

Pierre Zeni asks if *The Simple Heist* is a feminist series. For Frida Asp, it's about two women who refuse to conform to the image society imposes on them. After fifty, women are supposed to disappear and be satisfied with what life has offered them. Cecilia and Jenny refuse to be beaten. They would rather rob a bank; a job for which they show a certain 'savoir-faire', in fact. For Frida Asp, these women are as inspiring as they are funny.

Cecilia and Jenny are rather exceptional characters, even in Sweden, one of the least sexist societies on earth. Women past their fifties, unlike men of the same age, are practically absent from the media. Sissela Kyle points out that series like *The Simple Heist* are very rare. Admittedly, several series, some Swedish, have female main characters. The plot in *The Simple Heist*, however, is entirely carried by the two women. They really are the heart and soul of the series.





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THE SWELL

The Netherlands & Belgium

A STORM IS COMING

The disaster movie is a very well developed genre, especially in America. Disaster series, however, are rarely, if ever, seen on television. That is the reason why *The Swell*, a new Belgian and Dutch co-production, brings something different onto the European audiovisual scene. The series is on par with certain big Hollywood productions and portrays a disaster that is both terrifying and entirely plausible.

In *The Swell*, a hurricane of unprecedented strength is heading straight for the Belgian and Dutch coasts and might break the sea walls. Authorities hesitated for too long and now it's too late to evacuate the areas that are below sea level. A sea wall breaks and half of The Netherlands, its economic capital included, end up under water. Five million people are trapped.

BELOW SEA LEVEL

The Swell was a huge success when it was broadcast. The disaster genre has always been very popular, but in a country like Holland, the subject matter echoes real fears shared by many people. The idea that the country might one day end up under water is not a fantasy.

Many Dutch people remember the storm that hit the Dutch coasts on the 31st January 1953. The disaster took 1836 lives, 200,000 cattle died and over 70,000 people were evacuated. Over 150,000 hectares of land were submerged. The population was traumatised and realised that in times of strong current and high waters, the safety of the nation is not guaranteed. A few weeks later, the public authorities set up a defence and protection from floods and storms plan called Plan Delta. It was the world's biggest water defence system. But no system is infallible...

A DISASTER WAITING TO HAPPEN

Johan Nijenhuis, the creator of *The Swell*, had presented a

SPEAKERS :

KARIN VAN DER MEER, SCREENWRITER
HANS HERBOTS, DIRECTOR
ARNOUD BRUINIER, DRAMA EDITOR IN CHIEF, EO
JACOMIEN NIJHOF, HEAD OF DRAMA AND INNOVATION, EO
WIM JANSSEN, CONTENT MANAGER, VRT ÉÉN
CHAired BY :
JEAN-MARC AUCLAIR, SCREENWRITER AND PRODUCER, ALAUDA

CREDITS

Original idea: Johan Nijenhuis, EO
 Screenwriters: Karin van der Meer, Maarten Lebens, Wout Thielemans
 Director: Hans Herbots
 Composer: Steve Willaert
 Production: JOCO Media
 Producers: Ingmar Menning, Dirk Immens, Johan Nijenhuis
 Broadcaster: Evangelische Omroep (EO), VRT één
 Distributor: Dutch Features
 Casting: Ane Dahl Torp, John Carew, Emma Bones, Axel Bøyum, Morten Svartveit
 Format: 6 X 50'
 Date of broadcast: Nov. 2016

short pitch (only 2 pages) of the series to Jacomien Nijhof. She immediately fell in love. She was convinced the channel would love it too. Karin van der Meer recalls that the Dutch have always been confronted by the attacks of the sea. In The Netherlands, water is everywhere and half the country is below sea level; something the series points out in a harrowing way all through the first episode.

Karin van der Meer spent three years writing the screenplay. Her work was based on extensive research. In the first writing phase, the story was set in the South-Eastern part of the country. After talking with specialists, however, Karin van der Meer learnt that two weak points had been identified on dike number 14. The original title, *Als de Dijken Breken*, means 'When the Dikes Break'. What would actually happen if one of the dikes, built to protect the country from floods, was to break? An accident like that would have dire consequences.

Water being a sensitive topic with the Dutch, Jean-Marc Auclair is surprised that a series like *The Swell* hasn't been made sooner. Jacomien Nijhof explains that although the country has been fighting with the water for decades, centuries even, it is facing new challenges today. Due to global warming, the sea level could rise by over 1 metre by 2100. The Netherlands is the most vulnerable country in Europe in these terms and the infrastructures built during Plan Delta are no longer adapted. The dikes will need to be reinforced and made higher. Also, the weak points mentioned in the series have only recently been found. The events depicted in the series are entirely plausible. The Dutch Minister of flood control actually commended the series on its realism and used the broadcast as an opportunity to ask the government to increase his budget.

THE DUTCH PUBLIC AUDIOVISUAL LANDSCAPE

The six episodes of *The Swell* were developed by EO, one of the eight public broadcasters in The Netherlands. On that note, it's important to go into some detail about the Dutch public audiovisual landscape, of which little is known in France and which is very different to that of other European countries (except for Belgium which has some similarities). Jacomien Nijhof explains that the public radio and television service is built on a system of pillars. Historically, there were four pillars in Dutch society: Protestant, Catholic, Liberal and Socialist. Today, The Netherlands has 8 autonomous public broadcasting companies that represent the different pillars of Dutch society. Therefore, EO (Evangelische Omroep) is in charge of radio and television aimed at the protestant community. Max, another company, is in charge of the media aimed at seniors.

All eight companies are all grouped under one public company - the NPO (Nederlandse Publiek Omroep) - which acts as a coordination platform for all these different companies. The broadcasting companies have total freedom over the content of their programmes. The aim of this system is so that the voice of each component of Dutch society can be heard via their own broadcaster. NPO's role is to decide the air time of each broadcasting company on the three public television channels (NPO 1, NPO 2, NPO 3). The number of hours of broadcasting each company is allocated depends on the number of members they have and the number of members they recruit each year. The broadcasting companies are funded by advertising, taxes and membership fees.

A CO-PRODUCTION IN EVERY SENSE OF THE WORD

A disaster series is expensive. Jacomien Nijhof was aware that public television alone was not going to be able to fund all 6 episodes of *The Swell*. So naturally, the idea of a co-production came.

The Swell is a co-production in every sense of the word. Wilm Janssen points out that the Belgian channel VRT joined very early on in the project. Jacomien Nijhof contacted them during the very first stages of development and the channel was a part of every step of the creation of the series, from the writing to the marketing. Thanks to VRT, the budget for the series was covered and they didn't need to call for any other partners.

The aim was not only to increase the budget, but also to be able to benefit from the Belgian tax shelter. Furthermore, Jacomien Nijhof was adamant on hiring a Flemish director. Not only is Flemish cinema one of the most singular of its kind in Europe, but she was also convinced that selecting a Belgian director would greatly aide negotiations with VRT.

SHOOTING THE DISASTER

The Swell was going to be a tough series to direct, with a lot of

special effects. The producers therefore wanted the director to be on board as early as possible. VRT had chosen a director, but he dropped the project three months before filming started. The producers then called on Hans Herbots who gladly replaced him. Jacomien Nijhof takes the opportunity to thank the director and to publicly commend him for the quality of his direction.

Hans Herbots admits that he would have liked to be a part of the project earlier on. A series like *The Swell* requires a lot of preparation and he ended up only having three months to work with the actors and special effects team.

Of the 3.9 million euro budget, about 600,000 euros was spent on special effects. Jean-Marc Auclair can't help but point out how low a budget that is for a series like *The Swell*, and he adds that the series is all the more impressive for that fact as the special effects are very well done. Hans Herbots couldn't agree more. Indeed, the budget was very limited. Nevertheless, he underlines that he is used to working with small budgets. Lack of funding is not always a hindrance. It often forces directors to be more creative and make bold choices. Many decisions need to be taken in advance, before filming, to save as much money as possible. Helicopter shots (which American blockbuster directors are such big fans of) of areas covered in water were scrapped from the start.

Hans Herbots screens a few shots from the series on the cinema screen, before and after special effects.

FAVOURING EMOTION

Jacomien Nijhof recalls that in the first versions of the screenplay, the sea wall gave way because of a terrorist attack. The idea was binned. It added a thriller element to the series, which was not what they were after. A large part of the plot was the investigation into finding the people responsible for the terrorist attack. Jacomien Nijhof wanted the accident to be caused by global warming and the thriller element was taken out. This change meant that changes needed to be made in the writers' room. Indeed, it was made up of four writers, one of them a thriller specialist. The latter left the team and was replaced by a screenwriter more specialised in drama.

This decision enabled the writers to focus on the human side of the series. They could favour the characters and their future without sacrificing the more dramatic aspects. Although *The Swell* is undoubtedly a disaster series, a large emphasis is put on the characters.

The Swell was broadcast on NPO 1. In large part, the programmes broadcast by the channel are aimed at the general public, so the series was designed as family entertainment.



RECORD AUDIENCES

This desire to make the plot revolve around the characters explains the series' immense success. *The Swell* was broadcast on Saturdays. The series gave the channel 30% of audience shares despite strong competition from private channels. The first episode was watched by over 2.2 million viewers. The other episodes were mainly watched on catch up television, usually on Sunday afternoons.

Jacomien Nijhof admits a certain amount of surprise. She didn't believe in the channel's idea of broadcasting on Saturday evening, thinking that despite its quality, *The Swell* couldn't compete with what was being broadcast on RTL. The channel took a risk. It paid off.

Wim Janssen points out that the series was also very successful in Belgium. The Belgian public is far less concerned by the topic, but the series was broadcast not long after a heavy storm had hit the country. *The Swell* re-started the debate on climate change.

Jacomien Nijhof informs us that negotiations are ongoing with American broadcasters to remake the series. The story could be set in New Orleans...



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WORK IN
PROGRESS

AUX ANIMAUX LA GUERRE

France

A COP-LESS CRIME DRAMA!

A fan of this "sociology with guns", Alain Tasma, the director, fell in love with Nicolas Mathieu's novel (*Aux Animaux la guerre*) and immediately sent it to Thomas Anargyros to read, with the intention of adapting it for television.

At its heart, the initial concept is social demotion. A factory is about to close, and the plot follows the range of characters who have to move on in life, encountering various struggles before it all descends into a kind of "cop-less crime drama". The characters talk not only about what they are experiencing, but also what they are feeling (love, friendship, hatred...) and their whole world is depicted in miniature.

In line with his previous work on *Fractures*, Alain Tasma's sensitivity sheds light on the subject, representing the world "as is". It is not a social portrait, which might have become seedy: rather, it exposes reality, and speaks of love. Based on documented history (the closure of the GM&S factory in La Souterraine), the world in which French people have been living for fifteen years serves as the backdrop and foundation for Alain Tasma, who films the anger, tenderness and concerns of those involved. The crew hopes that it will reach a wide audience.

Some clips are screened to give an idea of the atmosphere. The series is currently being shot.

A SOCIAL FRESCO AND A LOVE STORY

Marie Barraco knows that many people devoured the book. Did they faithfully reproduce the unique tone and the texture of the characters? How did they go about the casting?

Pierre Merle confirms that the depth of the characters is one of the primary reasons behind the choice to adapt a novel like this one. In fact, the circumstances are like a kind of shipwreck, and yet the people remain whole. They lead a life that still resembles our own. The factory (the arena of their daily life) is collapsing around them, and yet the main characters lose neither their desire to love, nor their capacity to make mistakes, to fight or try to make up.

The high-calibre casting was also made possible by the strength of the plot and the characters, which made a lasting impression, generating inclination and enthusiasm in all those involved.

PARTICIPANTS:

THOMAS ANARGYROS, PRODUCER, EUROPACORP
PIERRE MERLE, DEPUTY HEAD OF DRAMA, FRANCE 3

CHAired BY :

SOPHIE DESCAMPS, SCREENWRITER
MARIE BARRACO, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SÉRIE SERIES

CREDITS

Original idea: based on a book by Nicolas Mathieu
Screenwriters: Nicolas Mathieu, Alain Tasma
Director: Alain Tasma
Production: Europacorp Television
Producer: Thomas Anargyros
Broadcaster: France 3
Distributor: France Télévisions
Casting: Roshdy Zem, Olivia Bonamy, Tchéky Karyo, Rod Paradot, Florent Dorizon, Michel Subor, Olivier Chantreau, Dani, Eric Caravaca
Format: 6 x 52'
Date of broadcast: 2018

A VERY VISUAL WRITING STYLE

Thomas Anargyros indicates that the plot was a two-person job. Alain Tasma actually decided to write alongside Nicolas Mathieu; *Aux Animaux la guerre* was the latter's first novel, and he had no experience in writing for television. Marie Barraco then asks whether the author had already given any thought to the idea of an adaptation of his novel, to which Thomas Anargyros responds that Actes Sud (the editor) had proposed the novel for cinema. The idea could have been anyone's, given how cinematographic Nicolas Mathieu's writing is. It feels like "reading a film". And yet, he thinks that they were surprised that the proposition they received was for an adaptation in the form of a series, and even more so that the author was invited to be involved in the writing of the script. But this was also the best guarantee that the lifeblood and the originality of the project would be left intact.

Thomas Anargyros is also content with this collaboration between a new author and a highly experienced screenwriter. It went perfectly, and showcased the talent that they each possess. He also points to the fact that their mutual understanding was excellent and that, all throughout the preparation for shooting, none of their meetings ran longer than 45 minutes. Quickly – almost instinctively – everyone was always on the same page. Thomas Anargyros adds that shooting will be concluded in mid-August; six episodes have been shot within six weeks in the Vosges mountains and in Alsace. There, too, everything happened naturally, because the way in which the plot was written imposed this powerful rooting in one region.



WORK IN
PROGRESS

BACK TO CORSICA

France

Before starting the discussion, Hervé Hadmar suggests screening the pilot episode of *Back to Corsica*, in which we meet all the main characters. Two young Corsican women meet a young documentary maker in a supermarket and they invite her to come spend some of the Christmas holidays with them and their friends. The story is told from the point of view and the eyes - the camera - of the journalist which gives the series a 'mockumentary' aspect.

TALKING ABOUT 'HER HOME' TO TALK ABOUT THE WORLD

Félicia Viti admits that *Back to Corsica* is largely autobiographical. Originally, her ambition was to develop a series based on her vision of Corsica (an island still bathing in tradition), but mostly of her youth in the middle of nowhere. In short, the series is about a bunch of young losers. Some have just returned to Corsica, others have never even left. With *Back to Corsica*, Félicia Viti wanted to talk, in a light and funny way, about the contradictions and the identity crisis of a generation that is trapped with no future, whose only concern is the next party.

Her objective was also to show a more realistic and less stereotypical vision of the beautiful island. It is also a very feminine vision. Indeed, the main characters of the series are women. Félicia Viti was adamant that the series be carried by strong, funny and independent women. The series was very clearly influenced by HBO's *Girls*, created by Lena Dunham.

Back to Corsica, although rooted in Corsica, is universal. Michèle Casalta reminds us that 'when talking about our home, we can be talking about the world'. Félicia Viti talks about the crisis that is currently affecting people in their thirties. *Back to Corsica* draws the portrait of a generation, of its desires, its loves, its aspirations and its fears.

When Michèle Casalta met Félicia Viti, two years ago, the writing was already well underway. She was charmed, but nevertheless called upon experienced writer Cécile Vargaftig to mentor the

SPEAKERS :
FÉLICIA VITI, CREATOR, SCREENWRITER, DIRECTOR
CÉCILE VARGAFTIG, SCREENWRITER
MICHÈLE CASALTA, PRODUCER, MOUVEMENT

CHAired BY :
HERVÉ HADMAR, SCREENWRITER, DIRECTOR
MARIE BARRACO, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SÉRIE SERIES

CREDITS
Original idea: Félicia Viti
Screenwriters: Félicia Viti, Cécile Vargaftig
Directors: Félicia Viti, Philippe Raffalli
Production: Mouvement
Producer: Michèle Casalta
Broadcaster: France 3 Corse ViaStella
Distributor: Mouvement
Casting: Oceane Court-Mallaroni, Anna-Marie Filippi, Camille Tissot, Antoine Albertini, Jeremy Alberti, Charlotte Deniel
Format: 8 x 26'
Date of broadcast: Mar. 2018

young creator. On that note, Félicia Viti specifies that she had already worked on a series, but as assistant director. *Back to Corsica* was her first screenplay. Cécile Vargaftig adds that her role was more like that of an accompanist. The series and its vision are entirely carried by Félicia Viti. She acts as a consultant and offers her experience to help with certain elements of the narrative arc.

CONSTRAINTS STIMULATE CREATIVITY

Michèle Casalta and Félicia Viti then got in touch with the Head of France 3 Corse ViaStella to present the project. He loved the writing and validated the project. He commissioned a pilot in order to green light the casting. In that space of time, the director quit the company. The new director green lit the project and shooting is set for this summer (with editing being done in the end of September).

Not only does the channel support the project, they give Félicia Viti and her team complete freedom. However, as always, freedom comes at a price. The series ended up having a very small budget (about 600,000 euros, post-production included, for 8 x 26 minutes). The series is therefore much closer to the

financial model of a short film. Michèle Casalta was willing to pay the price, freedom of creation being fundamental. Lack of money can be a real problem, despite the fact that constraints do stimulate creativity.

Cécile Vargaftig specifies that she mainly helped with adapting the narrative arc for budget constraints. Therefore, her first job was to reduce the number of filming locations and concentrate all the scenes - and the set - in a smaller geographical space, over one region. Félicia Viti went scouting with her director of photography. Scenes were re-written to fit the sets chosen. Michèle Casalta adds that the documentary effect they were going for really helped the location choices. They're used as they are in real life. For one specific scene, they filmed during an actual village party.

A 'company' in the service of the project

Félicia Viti wanted to build a company, in the theatrical sense of the term. She wanted the series to become a collective experience. Today, the team is made up of young technicians and actors, most of them rookies, but all very motivated. They all share the same desire to create something new in Corsica

and changing the vision that many have of the island and its inhabitants. The channel shares that desire; this is also their first series.

Michèle Casalta adds that everyone is paid the same salary. The technical teams and the actors are all housed in the same place. The conditions are draconian, but they were established from the start. Everyone had the opportunity to accept or decline them.

Félicia Viti admits that having a tight budget actually ended up being a very positive thing. With less money than she had originally planned, it enabled her, alongside Cécile Vargaftig, to concentrate more intensely on the dramaturgy. The financial constraints enabled her to reinforce her writing. 'It was ideal for a first experience'.





WORK IN PROGRESS

CHAMPION

Belgium

Gilles Morin starts by telling us that from the moment he met 'this lot', he couldn't resist their amazing energy. Indeed, *Champion* is a collective creation which offers a story that is intrinsically linked to the feelings people have towards football: a world that we both love and find disgusting. Here, the hero is a footballer (our modern day version of gladiators) who is past his prime. He's in decline and he's taking it very badly.

A FISH OUT OF WATER

For Sophie Deschamps, this is the story of a misfit; someone who, even though it might seem at first glance that he's succeeded, doesn't know how to live in the real world.

Gilles Morin confirms that it is indeed one of the main dramatic impulses of the series. Off the pitch, the footballer is like a fish out of water, incapable of autonomy, calm, dignity and hindsight.

Mustapha Abatane specifies that this project was born from a love of series, but also from a passion for the antihero. The whole team has grown up around football and have all followed the big personalities of the sport.

It was also the perfect opportunity to introduce a simple idea, Hicham El Ghazi notes: for some, real life doesn't start until 35!

THERE'S NO SUCH WORD AS CAN'T IN BELGIUM

The screenplay was written with several voices, a bit like a rap song. However, the RTBF asked that the grammar was specified at the start, in order to keep the screenplay coherent.

Monir Aït Hamou confirms that the writing was a real team effort. They all knew each other and especially their respective limitations. It seemed, though, that together their writing mixed perfectly. As a team, the dialogue, laughter and energy were endless.

SPEAKERS :

THOMAS FRANÇOIS, SCREENWRITER, DIRECTOR
 MUSTAPHA ABATANE, SCREENWRITER, DIRECTOR
 MONIR AÏT HAMOU, SCREENWRITER, DIRECTOR
 HICHAM EL GHAZI, SCREENWRITER, DIRECTOR
 GILLES MORIN, PRODUCER, KINGS OF COMEDY
 MARTIN BROSSOLLET, DRAMA SERIES CONSULTANT, RTBF

CHAired BY :

SOPHIE DESCHAMPS, SCREENWRITER
 MARIE BARRACO, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SÉRIE SERIES

CREDITS

Original idea: Monir Aït Hamou, Mustapha Abatane
 Screenwriters: Monir Aït Hamou, Mustapha Abatane, Thomas François, Julie Bertrand, Omar Semati, Icham El Ghazi, Gaëtan Delferrière, Simon Bertrand
 Directors: Thomas François, Monir Aït Hamou, Mustapha Abatane
 Production: Kings Entertainment, Media Group
 Producer: Gilles Morin
 Broadcaster: RTBF
 Distributor: Federation Entertainment
 Casting: Mourade Zeguendi, Pilly Poyne, Ella-June Henrard, Erico Salomone, Zidani
 Format: 10 x 52'
 Date of broadcast: 2018

Hicham El Ghazi specifies that Martin Brossollet was essential in working methodically.

Sophie Deschamps asks how far along the project is. Thomas François explains that 70% to 80% of the 10 x 52 minute episodes are written. Shooting starts in September and should last around 60 days.

Martin Brossollet explains that the hardest thing was probably to stop laughing, as almost all their ideas were good. Gifted with a folly that they had to channel slightly, they wrote a truthful and emotional piece. Although Belgian television took a real risk working with such young talent, he commends the great talent of the writer-directors and their courage. He also recommends that anyone who meets a group like this should jump at the chance to work with them.

Marie Barraco points out that Belgian television is a hub for new talent with a knack for new formats.

Martin Brossollet explains that each year the RTBF organises a call out for three new projects in order to discover the talent of tomorrow. However, project leaders will always find the door open all year round if they want to present their work. Everything is aimed at promoting originality and audacity, which is very easily achieved in Belgium, a country where people love to be shaken up, shocked and surprised.

The project is nevertheless a bit crazy: the writing is not finished, shooting starts in two months and their ambition is to broadcast before the next World Cup. But, in Belgium, anything is possible!

PLAYING WHAT WE LIVE AND LIVING WHAT WE PLAY

Sophie Deschamps points out that the writers also act in the series.

Monir Aït Hamou specifies that he makes a short appearance, but the characters they play are very close to their real lives. He adds that the hero had to be moving, that was everyone's wish, so the acting was at the heart of the project. 'He plays what he lives and lives what he plays'.

Pour Sophie Deschamps, the subject matter is surprisingly moving. Indeed, starting from the life of a 'hero' footballer, creating that feeling of humour and sadness, hitting that universal feeling of impermanence, was not an easy task.

Thomas François thinks that the 'nice jerk' character should please the public. They will 'love to hate him'!





WORK IN
PROGRESS

CLASH OF FUTURES - 18

Germany, France, Luxembourg, Belgium

Marie Barraco opens the session by announcing a project that is particularly well-suited to Série Series' selection this year: "it comments on our world!"

Sophie Deschamps points out that it is a series comprising eight 52-minute episodes. A very European series that combines the perspectives of characters from different European countries over a carnal age: the Années Folles or Roaring Twenties.

A BABYLON IN THE ANNÉES FOLLES

To explain how the crazy idea for this series, written and filmed in several languages, took shape, Gunnar Dedio says that he is married to a Polish woman and one day, while they were talking about the First World War, he was very surprised to see the extent to which their views and understandings of the age differed. How could she have such a different point of view on a conflict that, as a German, he thought he knew well? Rather than trying to reconcile their points of view, he decided to shed light on history through the stories of several different countries at once, with different horizons and different perspectives.

This is how this project was constructed, in which actors, each from the same country as the character they play, express themselves in their own language. The Russian is Russian, and the English woman is English; they are experiencing the same historic event at the same time. And, through the 13 main characters from seven countries, Gunnar Dedio hopes that this project will make it possible to "see and understand Europe".

Why choose this period? Perhaps because in 1918, Europeans had very different ideas on what the future held for them... and on what they wanted to build from it. Headed towards an unprecedented conflict, these futures shatter and clash... Hence the name of the series, Clash of Futures.

As the shooting ended one week before, some clips are unveiled for the first time.

PARTICIPANTS :
GUNNAR DEDIO, PRODUCER, LOOKS FILM & TV
THOMAS SAIGNES, PRODUCER, IRIS GROUP
CHAIRÉ BY :
SOPHIE DESCHAMPS, SCREENWRITER
MARIE BARRACO, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SÉRIE SERIES

CREDITS

Original idea: Jan Peter, Gunnar Dedio
 Screenwriters: Jan Peter, Frederic Goupil
 Co-Authors: Camilla Ahlgren, Jean-Louis Schlesler
 Directors: Jan Peter, Frederic Goupil
 Composer: Laurent Eyquem
 Production: LOOKSfilm, IRIS Group, Les Films D'Ici
 Producers: Gunnar Dedio, Nicolas Steil, Serge Lalou
 Broadcasters: ARTE, ARD
 Distributor: LOOKS International
 Casting: Joel Basman, Michalina Olszanska, Jan Krauter, Solène Rigot, Roxane Duran, Robinson Stevenin, Rebecka Hemse, Pyotr Skvortsov, Natalia Witmer, Charlotte Merriam, Gennaro Cannavaciolo, Alexandre Nguyen, David Acton
 Format: 8 x 52'
 Date of broadcast: 2018

HISTORY TOLD FOR MY DAUGHTER

Gunnar Dedio insists on the importance of the research carried out, and of the team of historians who surrounded this creation. They were French, German, and Swedish: this was essential from the beginning in order to anchor the different perspectives of each of the communities and characters. To be closer still to their experience of reality, all of the stories that are juxtaposed in this series were drawn from written texts (found letters, personal diaries) from the time, by characters who really existed.

The set and costumes are the most exact replicas possible of the products of the time, and a third of the images came from archives. This adds a breath of truth and a great deal of authenticity. In terms of production, this clearly also avoided the recreation of fantastic scenes (rallies, battles, etc.), which the budget would have forbidden them to shoot.

The writing, both complex and very direct, was carefully considered to capture the interest of young European citizens, like Gunnar Dedio's own daughter, who is 20 years old.

MANY VOICES, MANY MEDIA

Tout ce travail de recherche, cette plongée dans les archives, se All that research work and forays into the archives translated into not only a spectacular series, but also a well-illustrated book. The series broadcast will be accompanied by parallel radio series in different countries, and by a major exhibition of the same name, presented in eight European museums.



Gunnar Dedio hopes that with a restricted budget of 10 million euros (notwithstanding the three co-producers), they can maximise the buzz and the project will reach as many people as possible.

As for a follow-up, Gunnar Dedio says that the first season will end in 1939 at the moment when Chamberlain is convinced that everything will be okay. "Peace for our time." Won't this whet appetites for a second season? For Gunnar Dedio, the writing has already begun, because, after this period from 1918 to 1939, there is more intensity and cruelty to follow!

A STRICTLY DOCUMENTARY FICTION

Marie Barraco would like to understand the role of Iris Group better, and wonders about the great originality of the format. Thomas Saignes notes that Nicolas Steil created Iris in Luxembourg with the desire to co-produce and to bring talents together. He is glad that Gunnar Dedio chose to put his faith in Iris, which has also been fortunate enough to choose the projects it believes to be among the best.

Gunnar Dedio notes that the project offers a highly innovative format, since, although it is a purely fictional series, paradoxically, the content is strictly documentary. National Geographic had opened the way with *Mars*, its scripted/unscripted series, but this seems to him to go one step further towards a "documentary fiction".

Besides, the issue of the "label" for the broadcast inevitably arises. Will the series be offered as a documentary or as a fiction piece? In his heart, he is leaning towards the former, but the economics of the project would probably benefit more if it were treated as fiction.

Either way, we can deduce that *Clash of Futures* will be an unmissable series, as it has already sold to 19 broadcasters...





WORK IN
PROGRESS

HOME GROUND

Norway

Johan Fasting is convinced that France is probably the worst country in which to introduce his series. In fact, *Home Ground* tells the story of a woman – Helena Mikkelsen – who is handed the reins of the local football club and becomes the first woman to coach a first-division male team. In Norway, the pitch is original, even surprising. In France, it loses its novelty because the male team Clermont-Ferrand has been coached by a woman, Corinne Diacre, since 2014.

FOOTBALL: WHERE ARE ALL THE WOMEN?

The extracts shown allow us to get to know the main characters in the series, as well as the challenges with which they are faced. Helena Mikkelsen is placed at the head of a struggling football team. While fighting for the club's survival, she has to keep her distance from the hateful players, violent fans, and invasive media, placing her under a microscope in the hope of making a news story out of her. Nobody respects her and everyone dreams of her leaving, particularly Michael, the aging star of the club. He will stop at nothing to rid himself of Helena. The only remaining hope of success that she can cling to resides in the character Adrian, a young prodigy with a wild spirit, who has already flown too close to the sun in the world of professional football.

MARRY THE SCREENWRITER

Home Ground is Johan Fasting's first series. When asked about the origins of the project, he says right off the bat that he had no trouble finding a production company willing to go along with it. He has known Vilje Kathrine Hagen for seven years now. He knows her so well that he married her, a few years ago. In fact, if Vilje Kathrine Hagen had one piece of advice to give to young producers, it would be this: "Find a screenwriter and marry him."

Johan Fasting is the creator of *Home Ground* as well as its head writer. He wrote the first two episodes alone, which were then presented to the channel NRK. Vilje Kathrine Hagen notes that, every year, the Norwegian public television service organises a

PARTICIPANTS :
JOHAN FASTING, CREATOR AND SCREENWRITER
VILJE KATHRINE HAGEN, PRODUCER, MOTLYS

CHAired BY :
HERVÉ HADMAR, SCREENWRITER AND DIRECTOR
MARIE BARRACO, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SÉRIE SERIES

CREDITS

Original idea: Johan Fasting
Screenwriters: Johan Fasting, Christian Almerud Owe, Linn-Jeanethe Kyed, Erlend Loe
Directors: Arild Andresen, Cecilie Moslie, Yngvild Flikke, Stian Kristiansen, Eirik Svensson
Composer: Aslak Hartberg
Production: NRK, Motlys
Producer: Vilje Kathrine Hagen
Executive Producers: Yngve Sæther, Vegard Stenberg Eriksen
Broadcasters: NRK
Distributor: DR Sales
Casting: Ane Dahl Torp, John Carew, Emma Bones, Axel Bøyum, Morten Svartveit
Format: 10 x 45'
Date of broadcast: Mar. 2018

sort of call to tender, asking producers to present their series projects. She presented five different projects, and *Home Ground* was one of them. It was also the one that the channel decided to take on.

WRITING A SERIES: A TEAM SPORT

Once the development has been launched, the decision was made to form a writers' room composed of three authors/screenwriters: Christian Almerud Owe, Linn-Jeanethe Kyed and Erlend Loe. Johan Fasting had no trouble finding new writing partners to join him in the project. The community of screenwriters in Oslo is very small and all he had to do was ensure that they would be willing to work closely together. In fact, as it was his first television series project, Johan Fasting wanted to surround himself with young screenwriters. "I wanted to work with people who were on my level," he says. Only Erlend Loe had more experience in the field.

The organisation of the writers' room was very democratic. Johan Fasting had to inspire a true team spirit and facilitate the

free exchange of ideas. "This collaborative approach was to allow me to discover and manifest my tastes in terms of writing."

A WRITERS' ROOM TO FREE THE IMAGINATION

The series, particularly its initial concept, has changed a lot. Originally, the plot that Johan Fasting conceived was very focused around the world of football, which he saw as a metaphor for the modern world. He knew from the beginning that he wanted to create a series that was funny and a little strange. The exchanges that took place in the writers' room with his writing companions made him realise that he wanted *Home Ground* to be even stranger than he had imagined at first. Now, although the way that the series was eventually written is still supported by the premises established in the very early stages of development, it dares to follow surprising and unexpected routes.

In the same vein, each episode corresponds to a specific genre. The fourth episode, for example, borrows from musical comedy. The fifth episode is more like a farce, while the sixth is satirical. *Home Ground* is constantly changing tone over the course of its episodes.

Vilje Kathrine Hagen believes that, above all, the use of a writers' room set Johan Fasting's creativity free. It gave him the courage to express himself, to dare to pursue all his crazy ideas. The first versions of the script were, in her opinion, very focused on the world of football (a sport in which she has no interest whatsoever!). Without the support of the other screenwriters, Vilje Kathrine Hagen is not certain that Johan Fasting would have found the courage to dare to write one of the episodes in the form of a musical comedy.

IN THE LOCKER ROOMS...

When asked about the casting of the series, Vilje Kathrine Hagen replies that the process was quite long and involved. The starring role was offered to Ane Dahl Torp, a very well-known and popular Norwegian actress (France got to see her in the series *Occupied*, which aired on Arte in 2015, or at the cinema in the gore comedy *Dead Snow*). This decision was approved very early on, in the first stages of writing. In a way, Ane Dahl Torp greatly influenced the series. Johan Fasting notes that when he sent her the first versions of the scenes, her reaction was always unassailable: "But it's complete sh**." At that moment, he knew she was perfect for the role. The scenes were reworked as a result and adapted to the actor's strong personality.

Johan Fasting notes that the biggest difficulty in casting a series that takes place in the sporting world is finding actors who can play football or, vice versa, footballers who can act. Michael, for example, was one of the main characters in the series, and was played by John Carew, a former professional footballer who retired from the pitch in 2012. He always wanted to become an actor, and the series offered him that chance. Johan Fasting admits that he was initially very sceptical. But John Carew knew the football environment so well that he ended up being perfect for the role.

Shooting for the series is still underway. *Home Ground* will air in March 2018 on the channel NRK, on Sunday evenings during prime time.





WORK IN
PROGRESS

FENIX

The Netherlands

Produced by Lemming Film and broadcast by the platform KPN, the series *Fenix* explores the grey area connecting the world of organised crime to the more muted world of the ruling class in the small south-eastern Dutch province of Brabant.

BETWEEN ORGANISED CRIME AND EASY LIVING

Fleur Winters says that the series takes place in Brabant because this province in the southern Netherlands is known both for the quality of life of its inhabitants and, unofficially, for being one of Europe's major drug trafficking hotspots.

The first episode of the series begins with a police raid and a drug seizure following the dismantling of a network coming from the town of Antwerp in Belgium. This triggering event will have an impact on several inhabitants of the town with very different fates. The stories of Rens and Jara, who grew up in the town and are returning to the region they were born in after many years away, will develop side by side. Jara, the daughter of a well-known local prosecutor, returns to Brabant to prove her father's innocence after he is accused of corruption. The relationship between the man of the court and the local mafia will be revealed to be much more porous than she could have imagined. As for Rens, he is the son of the godfather of organised crime in the town. Having long tried to flee the environment, he accepts his heritage and must deal with the consequences of the drug shortage since the raid. A third character also develops over the course of the series: Seff. A modest and unassuming watch repairer by day, this Orthodox Jewish family man also imports drugs from Antwerp in the hope of one day buying a home in the Promised Land. No longer able to make his deliveries, he quickly finds himself in trouble with the mafia. A Belgian prosecutor, sent after an operation led jointly by the police forces in the two countries fails, decides to make him sing in revenge.

CINEMA FOR TELEVISION

Linda Kramer explains that the platform KPN decided to fund the series after just reading the pitch, because the broadcaster had been considering the production of a high-quality Dutch police fiction piece. Linda Kramer had already worked with Fleur Winters, and the story of *Fenix* seemed to respond to their criteria, so the agreement was signed quickly.

PARTICIPANTS :

SHARIFF KORVER, CO-CREATOR, DIRECTOR
FLEUR WINTERS, CO-CREATOR AND PRODUCER, LEMMING FILM
LINDA KRAMER, CONTENT MANAGER, KPN

CHAired BY :

TASJA ABEL, VICE PRESIDENT, ACQUISITIONS,
SALES AND CO-PRODUCTIONS, DYNAMIC TELEVISION

CREDITS

Original idea: Shariff Korver, Marco van Geffen
Main screenwriter: Marco van Geffen
Director: Shariff Korver
Production: Lemming Film
Producers: Fleur Winters, Leontine Petit
Broadcaster: KPN
Casting: Rifka Loodeizen, Teun Luyck, Jack Wouterse, Jan Bijvoet, Chris Nietvelt, Hans Dagelet
Format: 8 x 50'
Date of broadcast: end 2017

Shariff Korver and Fleur Winters had also worked together before, and it was clear to them that they should do so again with *Fenix*. The director, who is also the co-creator of the series, says that he chose to surround himself with young writers, who would each be assigned the writing for one character. The aim was to create cinema for television: this young team, as well as the guarantee that it would be shot upon completion of the writing phase, made it possible to go beyond the limitations of the world of television. The aesthetic was also very carefully considered. A variety of visual ambiances will be incorporated into the final series, particularly as a result of shooting some scenes on a ranch in Spain.

EN ROUTE TO SEASON 2

The series comprises eight 50-minute episodes for a total budget of 4 million euros.

Fleur Winters notes that the development phase cost twice as much as estimated, because of the small amount of time left to the team for editing, but also so as not to neglect the stylistic elements that are essential in a crime drama. So the team contacted investors in Belgium to increase the budget.

The series will air in late 2017. Linda Kramer concludes that the production of a second series is foreseeable, given that the requirements set by the platform KPN were largely met over the first season.



WORK IN
PROGRESS

BANKING DISTRICT

Switzerland / Belgium

When we think of Switzerland, 'chocolate' and 'banks' tend to come to mind. Famous the world over, Swiss banks are a pillar of the political and economic evolution of the country. Yet, *Banking District* is the first Swiss series about banking and is set in the secretive world of the Geneva Banking district.

SWISS BANKS, 'YOUR RUTHLESS WORLD...'

Stéphane Mitchell unveils the pitch of the series. The story is set in Geneva, in 2012. Panic sets in on the banking centre when bank secrecy is challenged. Paul Grangier, director of a private bank named after him, is found in his home in a coma. Was it an accident or a suicide attempt? His brother Alexander is next in line to run the bank. Their sister Elizabeth takes his place on the board of directors and runs the bank, despite her hatred for the financial world and everyone being against her. Thrown into the heart of an institution fighting for its survival where she is unwelcome, Elizabeth fights to shed light on what happened to her brother. The answer could lie in the secrets of the bank, but also those of her family.

A PERFECT SETTING FOR DRAMA

Jean-Marc Fröhle, producer and screenwriter, had the original idea for this series, which he came up with in 2012. Switzerland had already fully felt the effects of the 2008 subprime crisis, which caused a first wave of panic in the financial centre. A second wave came in 2011, when the Americans, followed by France, decided once and for all to end bank secrecy, which had enabled Swiss banks to prosper for over 80 years. In another life, Jean-Marc Fröhle was an economics student and was able to observe his banker friends' reaction to an event that some thought was a genuine trauma. All he sees is the 'perfect setting for drama'. He found a topic that could appeal not only to the Radio Télévision suisse (RTS) channels but also to an international market. In addition, Swiss banks are often family businesses, so the series could easily overlap a political and financial thriller with family drama.

Jean-Marc Fröhle started by writing a 4 page synopsis from a frame and a character list. He hired Flore Vasseur, a French novelist whose

SPEAKERS :

TÉPHANE MITCHELL, SCREENWRITER
FULVIO BERNASCONI, DIRECTOR
JEAN-MARC FRÖHLE, PRODUCER, POINT PROD
FRANÇOISE MAYOR, HEAD OF DRAMA, PRODUCER, RTS
ANDRÉ LOGIE, PRODUCER, PANACHE PRODUCTIONS

CHAired BY :

MARIE BARRACO, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SÉRIE SERIES / HERVÉ HADMAR, SCREENWRITER AND DIRECTOR

CREDITS

Original idea: Jean-Marc Fröhle
Screenwriters: Stéphane Mitchell, Fulvio Bernasconi, Flore Vasseur, Axel du Bus, Vincent Lavachery, Brigitte Leclef
Director: Fulvio Bernasconi
Composer: Hans Mullens
Production: Point Prod', RTS, Panache Productions, RTBF
Producers: Jean-Marc Fröhle, Françoise Mayor, André Logie, Gaëtan David
Broadcasters: RTS, RTBF
Distributor: About Premium Content
Casting: Laura Sepul, Féodor Atkine, Brigitte Fossey, Arnaud Binard, Lubna Azabal, Stéphane Metzger, Lauriane Gillieron, Vincent Kucholl, François Florey
Format: 6 x 52'
Date of broadcast: autumn 2017

books are often set in French and international financial landscapes. He then called Fulvio Bernasconi (also a director) and Stéphane Mitchell.

A writers' room is soon set up, welcoming two Belgian writers: Axel du Bus and Vincent Lavachery. It was decided before the writing started to set up a Swiss and Belgian co-production. Jean-Marc Fröhle wanted to find funding easily and flexibly. The writers were suggested by Belgian producer André Logie.

Jean-Marc Fröhle had already established the main plot points. The writers' main role was therefore to dramatise it. Stéphane Mitchell explains that the hardest part was writing the 'investigation' part of the story. Indeed, Elizabeth, the protagonist, is not a police officer. The writers would meet on the weekend in Geneva and would return with homework. Each took on a specific character. This method enabled them to set up the main blocks of the plot. Stéphane



Mitchell and Vincent Lavachery created storyboards, which they sent to new writers, who would be in charge of the dialogue. The scripts were then edited under the supervision of Jean-Marc Fröhle and a first draft of the six episodes of the series was finalised.

THRILLING AND CREDIBLE

The writers realised that the police plot was not gripping enough, so the screenplay was changed accordingly. Jean-Marc Fröhle specifies that the financial thriller aspect of it was too technical and that it needed to be made more lively by adding plot twists. The main difficulty was in the fact that it was both a financial and familial investigation. The series was created to be a mix of a thriller and a Shakespearean drama. The issue was to link these two aspects, the family investigation affecting the financial one and vice versa.

On that note, Jean-Marc Fröhle underlines the essential contribution of the two Belgian screenwriters. He had flooded them with information and newspaper articles about the Genevan financial world. He is convinced that if the series had been written only by Swiss screenwriters, the financial plot would have been too subtle and therefore boring. The financial flows described in the series (at the heart of the plot) are very complex. However, too much complexity would have made viewers run. For Fulvio Bernasconi, the danger was ending up with shots of technical screens only traders would understand. It needed to be more physical. The Belgian writers had a different vision, as they were discovering this world, and they managed to bring a certain darkness to the plot, making it

more thrilling. They helped find a middle ground between the technical elements (the banking aspect could not be pushed aside) and the drama and suspense. In the end, the series only has five shots of banking screens. Even though a lot of the action is in a bank (purpose built in a museum for the shoot), there are a multitude of outdoor shots. Jean-Marc Fröhle didn't want *Banking District* to become an 'indoor series'.

Stéphane Mitchell admits that she loves researching while she's working on a screenplay. In this case, it was easy. She gladly dove into thousands of newspaper articles, court case summaries and bankers testimonies. The financial universe is fascinating. She wanted to put all of it in. But 'too much research kills the research'. *Banking District* is a drama first and foremost, not a documentary.

Françoise Mayor has a slightly different point of view. She was always convinced that the series was carried by the best creative team it could have and she trusted them entirely. Jean-Marc Fröhle, as well as Fulvio Bernasconi and Flore Vasseur, all know what they're doing. Therefore, she had no doubt as to their ability to make a series that would be both thrilling and completely believable. Approaching a subject like banking, the channel was watched with scrutiny. RTS produces only two series per year. They cannot afford to make mistakes. Despite *Banking District* not being a documentary, Françoise Mayor wanted it to be very well researched and thorough. On that note, Fulvio Bernasconi informs us that a lot of the events in the series, including some of the most incredible ones, are based on real events.

GOOD THINGS COME TO THOSE WHO WAIT

In the end, Jean-Marc Fröhle is happy with the result. He does admit that the writing process was long and laborious (a year and a half!) and he was often worried the broadcaster (RTS funded all of the writing) would get tired of waiting and abandon the project.

Françoise Mayor confirms that the process was very long. RTS has a yearly call for projects and *Banking District* had been presented and taken on a few years ago already. The channel was getting impatient. They actually nearly abandoned the project and found themselves forced to pressure the writers and producers, telling them that if they did not shoot in 2017, the series wouldn't see the light of day. 'If they waited too long, *Banking District* would have become a historical series'. Then again, French-speaking Switzerland is a small world. Writers are few and far between and all very busy. Stéphane Mitchell, for example, is working on multiple projects, both television and cinema. Fulvio Bernasconi, as a director, and Jean-Marc Fröhle, as a producer, are in high demand. It is therefore not unusual for projects to be delayed.

Banking District will be broadcast from November onwards, on prime time on Thursday evenings; a space generally kept for international series. With viewers often watching series on catch up, each episode will be online for 30 days after it is aired. Jean-Marc Fröhle is already working on the second series!





WORK IN
PROGRESS

MERMAIDS

Italy

Having presented *La Mamma Imperfetta* during the second season of *Série Series*, Ivan Cotroneo knows the festival well. For this 6th season, he's come with a new project, very different both in shape and content: *Mermaids*.

La Mamma Imperfetta was conceived as a diary. Ivan Cotroneo told us the story of the daily, professional and family life of an ordinary, 'imperfect' mother. The series managed to keep its strong sociological overtones without sacrificing any of the comedy and fantasy of it. *Mermaids* is set in a very different landscape. The series' title is not a metaphor. These are the very same half woman, half fish, mythical creatures that nearly caused Ulysses' demise.

PARTHENOPE'S KINGDOM

When he started writing the series, Ivan Cotroneo's main objective was to set the story around conflicts between men and women. The challenge was finding an original way of approaching this eternal, yet slightly hackneyed, theme. Firstly, he came up with the story of a love affair between a man and an extraterrestrial. A native of Naples, he quickly dropped the alien idea for a better one: a mermaid, the symbol of his native city.

The legend goes that Naples was created by the mermaid Parthenope. In *The Odyssey*, Homer tells the story of the mermaid falling desperately in love with Ulysses, who was unfortunately completely immune to the mermaid's wooing, despite her bewitching song. Heartbroken that she could not woo him, she died of sadness. Her body washed up on a beach upon which the Greeks built the city of Parthenope, which was then changed to Neapolis, and then Naples.

LIKE A FISH OUT OF WATER

In Ivan Cotroneo's story, four mermaids are sent on a mission to earth to find the dashing god of the seas, Triton. Rumour has it he's been kidnapped. Four centuries earlier, their aunt

SPEAKERS :
IVAN COTRONEO, CREATOR, SCREENWRITER
DAVIDE MARENGO, DIRECTOR
MICHELE ZATTA, PRODUCER, RAI

CHAired BY :
TASJA ABEL, VP ACQUISITIONS, SALES AND CO-PRODUCTIONS, DYNAMIC TELEVISION

CREDITS

Original idea: Ivan Cotroneo
Screenwriters: Ivan Cotroneo, Monica Rametta
Director: Davide Marengo
Composer: Massimo Nunzi
Production: co-production Cross Productions, Beta Film, Associate Production Company «21 Srl» in collaboration with Rai Fiction
Producer: Rosario Rinaldo
Broadcaster: Rai 1
Distributor: Beta Film
Casting: Valentina Bellè, Maria Pia Calzone, Ornella Muti, Luca Argentero, Denise Tantucci, Massimiliano Gallo, Michele Morrone
Format: 12 x 50'
Date of broadcast: 2017

had been caught in a fisher's net and was sold to a circus to become its star attraction. Since that day, mermaids have feared humans.

The mermaid population is composed of only women. Triton is the only man and the only genitor. The four mermaids soon come to realise that Triton has, in fact, run away. On earth, he has become a swimming superstar and the face of a swimming trunk brand. Overjoyed with his recent glory, Triton has no intention of returning to the sea. He's going to stay in Naples, where real men are appreciated. The mermaids never appreciated his masculinity.

Ivan Cotroneo explores the man/woman conflict in all its facets. Mermaids come from a matriarchal society. They are the perfect symbol of 'girl power'. The land is the territory of men. To mermaids, it's the least civilised place on earth. Upon discovering Naples, they find out they were right all along. The place is driven by testosterone.

Disoriented and unable to convince Triton to leave, the mermaids try and live, for better or worse, with the Neapolitans. That's when Cupid gets involved and despite her loathing for the male species, one of the mermaids falls in love with a man.

A FISHTAILED ROM COM

Despite the very obvious fantastical and mythological themes, *Mermaids* is what Ivan Cotroneo would describe as a 'fishtailed rom-com'. Everyone knows the rules of a romantic comedy. Adding the fantasy makes it stand out from the norm.

Even though the plot revolves around a millennial battle between men and mermaids, the series is very contemporary. Ivan Cotroneo wanted to bring up serious topics like violence towards women, without stepping away from the rom-com genre. In that sense, *Mermaids* is resolutely feminist.

Writers know that even though fantasy, just like science fiction, allows for a lot of nonsense, it is still a reflection of our present society. *Mermaids* obeys that rule. Under a veil of levity, the series tackles serious obstacles that we are faced with in our society, particularly in Europe. The separation of earth and sea - and the conflict that it causes - gave Ivan Cotroneo the perfect platform to talk about issues like borders and integration.

David Marengo, who is all too happy to be a part of this adventure, was seduced by this genre mix. Upon reading the script, the director (currently working on a series about the Mafia), who isn't used to fantasy, was captivated by the realistic aspects of the plot. 'The protagonists are mermaids, but they are written like real people'.

CAPTURING THE CREATIVITY

Fantasy is not a popular on the Rai. Nevertheless, Ivan Cotroneo had no problem convincing the broadcasters. The reason is simple: he is one of the channel's favourite writers. Michele Zatta confirms this and adds that, for him, Ivan Cotroneo is one of the finest screenwriters in Italy. 'He always tries to introduce new and original elements into the series he writes'. The fantastical aspects could very easily have put the channel off. The Rai, however, saw it as a chance to 'push the boundaries of television drama'.

The Rai gets an incalculable number of projects submitted to them. The channel has developed a very simple strategy to select projects. They use two tactics. The first, Michael Zatta explains, is to dig up new talents and then keep them, thereby 'capturing creativity'. Ivan Cotroneo is the perfect example of this strategy. Discovered by the channel around a decade ago, he is now one of their major writers. In order to build a pool of new writers, the Rai created a masterclass in Perugia to train writers for future series. Ivan Cotroneo teaches there.

The second tactic is to be 'open to new ideas'. Michele Zatta invites any writer to send their projects to the channel. They all receive an answer in less than 30 days.





WORK IN
PROGRESS

STELLA BLÓMKVIST

Iceland

THIS TIME IT'S PERSONAL

Stella Blómkvist, a lawyer with her own set of morals, accepts only cases that can make her money. This crafty and ruthless femme fatale only learns the rules the better to break them, involving herself in obscure stories of murders that will quickly lead her to the mystery of a corrupt power.

Played by the famous actress Heida Reed, this Icelandic series is reinventing the genre of the Nordic noir.

A HEROINE WITHOUT BORDERS

Kjartan Thor Thordarson, producteur pour Sagafilm, explique Kjartan Þór Þórðarson, producer for Sagafilm, explains that this series is the first ever from the Scandinavian streaming platform Island Telecom (Síminn), in an effort to develop original content.

Screenwriter Jóhann Ævar Grímsson says that since the 2008 financial crisis, the average budget for Icelandic series has stood at 1 million euros. If a team wished to produce quality content, a more significant budget would be needed. For this reason, they purchased the rights to the Stella Blómkvist book series – bestsellers in Iceland for 20 years - from which the plot was drawn. The story was also very popular in Germany, so the German public could also be targeted and partnerships with the country anticipated. The German distributor Red Arrow International also agreed to join in with the adventure. This co-production tripled the budget to 3 million euros, and the three stories from the series were divided into episodes that could not only be broadcast before the Icelandic public, but could also appear in a more modern format in Germany, either 6x45' or 3x90'.

The writers' room was composed of three of the series' writers and the director, Óskar Þór Axelsson, was present throughout the entire writing phase.

The team has just finished shooting and has begun post production.

PARTICIPANTS :
KJARTAN THOR THORDARSON, PRODUCER, SAGAFILM
JÓHANN ÆVAR GRÍMSSON, SCREENWRITER

CHAired BY :
TASJA ABEL, VICE PRESIDENT, ACQUISITIONS, SALES AND CO-PRODUCTIONS, DYNAMIC TELEVISION

CREDITS

Original idea: Stella Blómkvist
Screenwriters: Jóhann Ævar Grímsson, Andri Óttarsson, Nanna Kristín Magnúsdóttir
Director: Óskar Þór Axelsson
Composer: Helgi Sæmundur Guðmundsson
Production: Sagafilm
Producers: Þórhallur Gunnarsson, Anna Vigdís Gísladóttir, Kjartan Þór Þórðarson, Hilmar Sigurdsson
Broadcaster: Síminn, Viaplay
Distributor: Red Arrow International
Casting: Heida Reed, Steinunn Ólína Þorsteinsdóttir, Jóhannes Haukur Jóhannesson, Kristín Þóra Haraldsdóttir, Þorsteinn Guðmundsson, Sara Dögg Ásgeirsdóttir
Format: 6 x 45 ' or 3 x 90 '
Date of broadcast: Dec. 2017

The series will be made available in its entirety on the streaming platform in November 2017 for subscribers, and will then be broadcast week-by-week on Iceland's free television service.



WHAT'S
NEXT

LIFE IN THE BOX

Finland

GENESIS

Canada, USA, Germany

During this new 'What's Next?' session, we'll discover two futuristic series. The first - *Life in the Box* - is from Finland. The second - *Genesis* - is an international co-production between North America and Europe. The two series have common ground: they both belong to the science fiction genre and they offer us two very different, but not conflicting, visions of our future.

LIFE IN THE BOX: OPENING PANDORA'S BOX

Life in the Box is set in a near future; a future that is far closer than we imagine, almost at hand. The creator of the series, Mikko Pöllä, actually places it 5 years from now. 'Monkey Box', a startup company, has created a new virtual reality project. Their new creation offers players an unheard of physical, almost spiritual, experience. Immersed body and soul in a completely virtual world, users can live out their dreams, even their wildest ones. One day, a player can be a knight in the Middle Ages. The next day, they can be piloting a spaceship. Everything is possible. All they have to do is buy new options in order to discover a whole new universe.

The 'Monkey Box' also offers an exciting option. Thanks to a special bodysuit, the virtual reality experience can be physically felt. The player can physically feel all the same things his character does: the heat of the sun on a paradise island or the impact of a bullet. Immersion is total: mental and physical.

For Mikko Pöllä, the box meets a very profound need: to be someone else, even for just a moment. This profoundly human ability and desire to relate to fictitious characters is something that the video game industry has clearly understood, to player's great delight. The 'Monkey Box' also meets other needs: discovering new worlds. Mikko Pöllä knows the video game world very well. As the creative director of Rovio Entertainment, he is one of the creators of *Angry Birds*, the game that won the world over and made Helsinki the world capital of gaming.

SPEAKERS :

LIFE IN THE BOX
MIKKO PÖLLÄ, SCREENWRITER
LISELOTT FORSMAN, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS, YLE
GENESIS
NARINA JABARI, CREATOR, SCREENWRITER
SEBASTIAN KREKELER, PRODUCER, ZDF ENTERPRISES

CHAired BY :
NICOLA LUSUARDI, CONSULTANT

CREDITS

Life in the Box
Original idea & screenwriter: Mikko Pöllä
Producer: Liselott Forsman
Production: Yle
Format: 10 x 50'
Genesis
Original idea & screenwriter: Narina Jabari
Producers: René Bastian, Robert Franke, Sebastian Krekeler
Production: Belladonna Productions, ZDF Enterprises
Format: 12 x 60'

Life in the Box therefore poses very important questions about our society and its evolution towards a sort of 'point of no return' where humans will choose to live in the far more attractive virtual world. Who doesn't dream of being free of physical hindrances, forgetting social standards and reversing the boring and restrictive laws of physics? What would be the consequences of such a choice on our individual and collective lives?

Mikko Pöllä also adds thriller-like elements to his plot. *Life in the Box* follows Rami, an ambitious young engineer, hired to run the 'Monkey Box' project. He slowly starts to fear that his director, the eccentric and powerful Sandy, is plotting his murder. His predecessor did indeed die under very suspicious circumstances after arguing with her. Rami is the hero of the series, although other characters will be focused on, especially the engineers behind this visionary start-up.

GENESIS: BECOMING SOMETHING ELSE

Genesis isn't so much about virtual reality as it is about augmented or improved reality. The series follows the parallel lives of two characters: Asphodel, nicknamed El, and Jadus. El is a science student who is impulsive and rebellious but also idealistic

and naive. She becomes part of an alternative research group of trans-humanists, a movement of people who believe in the use of science to improve the human race's physical and mental characteristics. She volunteers to be a guinea-pig. Her body becomes a petri dish of all possible and imaginable scientific experiments: organ robotisation, DNA mutation and other suspicious genetic mutations. El becomes the first post-human, capable, for example, of breathing underwater. Her skin can absorb radiation and transform it into energy (like certain mushrooms can).

Is El still human or has she become something entirely different? Just like the players in *Life in the Box*, El is trying to escape reality and wants to outdo her mortal coil. For the creator of *Genesis*, Narina Jabari, the series doesn't explore the desire to be someone else so much as the desire to become something else. 'How far are we willing to go to no longer be what we are?'

In parallel, there's the story of Jadus, an animator on underground websites. Completely disconnected with reality, he's a firm believer in the biotechnological regeneration of the human race, which he thinks is the next step in human evolution. His aim is simple: save the human race from itself. In order to do this, he intends to create a new species and becomes the head of a new cult. As El hands her body and soul over to group experiments, Jadus' ideas start being called a new 'movement' that defines the 21st century. Their destinies are irrevocably intertwined.

Narina Jabari mentions a third character: Rudy, Asphodel's boyfriend. *Genesis* is, firstly at least, a love story. Rudy will do anything to try and save El from this group of strange researchers. Little by little, he no longer recognises the woman he fell in love with and the love story disintegrates as El keeps changing her body. At the end of the first season, Rudy becomes one of Jadus' main opponents.

Like Mikko Pöllä, Narina Jabari knows her subject matter well as she studied genetics. The experiments she saw in university

research labs were as beautiful and marvellous as they were crazy and terrifying. For example, researchers had fun cloning bacteria with synthetic genes. It was almost like a game. No one was teaching the students to question or to think of the consequences of their experiments. Gene therapy will soon be available and will change the world. Let's not forget that a big part of the world still doesn't have access to antibiotics. Therefore, gene therapy will only be for the privileged. *Genesis* was born out of Narina Jabari's fears of seeing a two-speed, depraved science, whose objective is no longer to unite humans but to separate them.

SCIENCE FICTION: A POPULAR AND STILL RARELY TELEVISED GENRE Science fiction, like fantasy and horror, has always been a popular genre, especially with young people. Although Anglo-Saxon countries have made these genres respected, European broadcasters have been far more overcautious and favoured the thriller, an easier sell. The science fiction series is still considered the realistic series' poorer relative. Sebastian Krekeler points out that even though Germany produces over 2000 series episodes per year, the genre is completely absent from the main channel's programme. The last science fiction series broadcast on ZDF was *Star Trek*. That was over 40 years ago!

Liselott Forsman then explains that there are two types of futuristic series. Indeed, when we think of science fiction, we imagine spaceships, intergalactic wars and aliens. Then, a series like *Real Humans*, proved that we can create another type of science fiction, anchored in our own reality. Despite being futuristic, the world that Mikko Pöllä creates is no less recognisable. It echoes our era. In fact, he underlines that over 80% of the plot of *Life in the Box* happens in real life. The series is carried by the characters. He wanted to create a science fiction series where technology serves the plot but doesn't take any screen time from human relations and the characters' psychology.

The 'Monkey Box' will mostly have a therapeutic effect on the characters. Rami, the hero, is one of the box's first users. He's a confident, intelligent man. He's engaged and soon to be

married. He believes he's got control of his life. The first time he enters the 'Monkey Box', it's an epiphany for him. He feels deep and unsuspected emotions that force him to question all of his life choices. First and foremost, the 'Monkey Box' reveals human nature, so the effects are positive. Mikko Pöllä reminds us that progress is never, in itself, a bad thing. Nevertheless, the engineers who conceived this dream box did not consider all the consequences of their creation. The 'Monkey Box' becomes a societal phenomenon and, just like Frankenstein's creature, slips out of its creator's hands.

Narina Jabari also wanted *Genesis* to be very close to reality. All of the modifications that the hero's body goes through are realistic, or at least plausible. On that note, she underlines the influence of *Black Mirror*, a fantastic British science fiction series that offers a nightmarish, yet sadly realistic, view of our future.

FREEING CREATIVITY

Life in the Box is the result of a close collaboration between a writer and a broadcaster. *Genesis* was born more from the collaboration between a writer and a producer. Although the models are different, Liselott Forsman and Sebastian Krekeler share the same vision and believe that their role is not to influence the writer, but to ensure that they are in the best possible environment for creativity to run wild.

Genesis is still in the very early stages of development. The project is carried by Narina Jabari who, alone, wrote the bible of five seasons of the series. Sebastian Krekeler had very little to do with the writing process. He doesn't believe that to be his mission. However, further down the line, his job will be to find a showrunner, a director, partners, broadcasters and mostly funding.

Liselott Forsman is more involved in the creative process. She and Mikko Pöllä regularly exchange short notes. She specifies that the writer is entirely free to take into, or not to take into, account the comments she makes. She would never dream of

forcing a writer to change something in the plot. For Mikko Pöllä, the most important thing is to share a common vision with the broadcaster. He's not against comments, as they often help the writer. Nevertheless, in the early stages, while he is writing the pilot episode for example, he prefers it is only read by people he knows and trusts. Once the pilot is written, the reading committee can be broadened. Liselott Forsman shares that opinion. Like all Nordic series, *Life in the Box* will be a co-production. Yet, she doesn't want broadcasters involved at this stage. Indeed, each broadcaster can try and impose their own ideas (choice of actors, for example, or even adding characters) and the writer, often tempted to meet these often conflicting requirements, risks 'selling their soul' and with it the project's.





WHAT'S NEXT

HAMILTON

Sweden

Although the book is not well-known outside of Scandinavia, the story of Carl Hamilton, a sort of Swedish James Bond, is in fact the best-selling Scandinavian novel of all time. Almost 10 million copies have been sold since Jan Guillou's first novel appeared in 1985. There have been a number of adaptations, but the idea here is to completely revitalise the story and the Hamilton "brand".

HAMILTON GETS A MAKEOVER

Patrick Nebout confesses that after reading the books, he felt that none of the adaptations he had seen was able to fully render the complexity of the character and the subtlety of the plots. The current international political situation also seemed ripe for renewing interest in a new kind of cold war. The project was ready to launch.

Marie Barraco asks him how he articulated the security (and the constraints) provided by affiliation with a tradition, and the risk (arising from freedom) being taken by completely reworking the context and the characters.

Patrick Nebout replies that the story was irresistible, but at the same time, it was essential that they find a new angle... The cocktail essentially mixed itself.

Johanna Bergensträhle indicates that the "Hamilton" brand is so well-known in Scandinavia that the pressure was intense. If they wanted to take on this beast, they had to do it well, and with a resolutely new angle of attack. All of its adaptations have been very successful, and everything seemed to have already been said, but they took the risk based on new and very refreshing ideas from this fresh set of eyes that was Patrick Nebout.

Petter Rosenlund adds that this was not without its difficulties. One of the major challenges was the transposition of the action into the cold war of today's world. Yes, some resemblances do

PARTICIPANTS :
PETTER S. ROSENLUND, HEAD WRITER
PATRICK NEBOUT, PRODUCER, DRAMACORP
JOHANNA BERGENSTRÄHLE, ACTING HEAD OF DRAMA, TV4

CHAired BY :
SOPHIE DESCHAMPS, SCRIPTWRITER
MARIE BARRACO, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SÉRIE SERIES

CREDITS
 Original idea: based on the characters and novels by Jan Guillou
 Head writer: Petter S. Rosenlund
 Productions: IRLC, Dramacorp
 Producers: Mia Sohlman, Patrick Nebout, Zoula Pitsiava
 Distributor: CMore, TV4
 Format: 10 X 45'
 Date of broadcast: 2019

show through in the ambivalences between the nations, but the context is clearly less straightforward, less well characterised. And then there are the societal and technological developments, which are not negligible. Being able to communicate with anyone, anywhere, was a more impressive notion before we were all in possession of mobile phones. Getting around quickly was also much more spectacular just after the Second World War than it is today. On reflection, every one of us is now almost more and better equipped than the spies of the past... And yet, it seems to him that the new Hamilton rose to the challenge.

A BIRD IN THE HAND IS WORTH TWO IN THE BUSH

Two series were envisaged from the beginning. Marie Barraco asks if that changed the way in which the series was conceived and written.

Petter Rosenlund does not think that it changed things fundamentally, except perhaps that they had more time to reveal the context. In any case, he essentially wrote alone, although he had been allocated an assistant this summer due to the pressure.

Patrick Nebout notes that the planning stage is pressed for time. Funding has now ended for a shooting project that is expected to take place in 2018. He adds that there are two executive producers, and that although TV4 is the primary broadcaster, a presale has already been agreed with Canada.

Johanna Bergensträhle notes nonetheless that the decision to invest in two seasons from the get-go was simply the consequence of Patrick Nebout's formidable negotiating skill, although it is also of course a sign of a profound commitment to the creation. In any case, the series is TV4's biggest investment.

MANIPULATING THE MANIPULATOR

Patrick Nebout adds that the series was constructed with a season-by-season story. Some elements are inspired by the books, but for the most part, the plot is new.

Petter Rosenlund points out that in the first season, everything is new. The political context is revealed and, although the character that stands out against this political backdrop retains left-leaning sensibilities, he is no longer directly in service to the secret services.

Hamilton is a young man returning from the United States to Sweden, convinced that he is working for "the right side" in this new cold war that is taking hold in northern Europe. However, the clash is less ideological than before, while business still interferes in the action. Finally, the story reveals how this young man discovers that he is being manipulated. In such a situation, how can he remain loyal to an ideal that he once held but that has been shaken?

Marie Barraco asks if TV4 deliberately chose to portray the world we live in in this way.

Johanna Bergensträhle confirms this. The channel is a stakeholder in the modern world, and owes it to itself to illuminate it; however, above all, this is a television series, and the story it tells is interesting and even gripping!





WHAT'S NEXT

ONCE THE DUST SETTLES

Denmark

When asked about the situation in Denmark, Dorthe Riis explains that the competition is getting stiffer. There are now many broadcasters (there used to only be 2) and everyone wants their own drama. Producers are now looking for talented screenwriters which, according to Dorthe Riis, are few and far between.

BEFORE-AFTER IMPACT

Ida Maria Rydén briefly tells the story of *Once the Dust Settles*. The first scene is set in a restaurant, people sit down for dinner. A brother and sister wait for a father they haven't seen in 10 years. A young girl is there with her mother, a birthday is being celebrated, the cake arrives... then, three men come in and shoot at the diners. After the explosion, silence. And the 'dust settles'.

After this opening, the series shows each character three weeks before the shooting, then follows them up until the fateful moment that changed their lives. The series then follows them another three weeks.

No time is spent on the terrorists or the ensuing investigation. All that matters is human life, the protagonists' destinies, these men and women who by coincidence witness this supreme act of violence.

A SIMPLE IDEA, A COMPLEX NARRATIVE CANVAS

Dorte W. Høgh underlines that the series follows multiple characters' lives and it seemed like an interesting concept, a bit like *Love Actually*, where a patchwork of characters meet and then are separated. They live very active lives, which, at certain points, cross intertwine.

It's also a way of putting our beliefs into perspective. Who doesn't assume that life is long? How do we continue living and rebuild our lives after such an event? One character loses

SPEAKERS :
DORTE W. HØGH, SCREENWRITER
IDA MARIA RYDÉN, SCREENWRITER
DORTHE RIIS LAURIDSEN, PRODUCER, DR DRAMA

CHAired BY :
LARS LUNDSTRÖM, SCREENWRITER, PRODUCER - MATADOR

CREDITS
Original idea & screenwriters: Dorte W. Høgh, Ida Maria Rydén
Production: DR Drama
Producer: Dorthe Riis
Broadcaster: DR
Distributor: DR SALE
Format: 10 X 60'
Date of broadcast: Sept. 2019

his wife, the plumber chooses to save a child, the chef loses his restaurant, a little girl is wounded on her eighth birthday, 84 year old Holgar is given a second chance... and a young Palestinian is suddenly accused of terrorism. How can they all bounce back? Throughout the series, we follow eight stories all linked by that one moment. This angle enables us to show the poetic, violent and strange, tragic and sometimes funny, sides of life.

Dorte W. Høgh specifies that violence is political; that's a fact of life. But terrorism is not at the centre of this drama. It was necessary to be careful, however, because the subject is rarely approached in Denmark. This is not a natural catastrophe, it shows us what humans are capable of doing to each other.

Ida Maria Rydén suggests that in a society that seems hell bent on disconnecting everyone, human connection will happen nevertheless.

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

Lars Lundström thinks that the series' theme could well be how one deals with such attacks and how we 'make society'. Dorte W. Høgh confirms this thought. The eight stories are as many mirrors to show the different ways in which people react, considering that humans are interdependent and what is done to someone else is never without consequence.

Lars Lundström asks if there were any difficulties writing this complex story and Ida Maria Rydén explains that chronologically, the attack happens in the 5th episode, although the viewer knows the event within the first few minutes of the series. Therefore, it could not be written in a linear way, as one would normally do when writing around an event. It was also important to show the various influences, conscious or unconscious, that actions have on the lives of others.

She adds to that by informing us that there are 10 episodes in the first season. When asked about a possible second series, Dorthe Riis Lauridsen points out that the end of this season ends this story, but it is perfect possible to work around a different event with the same narrative style. 'We are all connected', 'the butterfly effect is in full effect', so any explosive event can lead to a large number of stories.

Dorte Riis Lauridsen adds that viewers might like shorter series with less than 25 episodes per series.

WHAT DOES THE BROADCASTER THINK?

Lars Lundström asks if having a broadcaster from the start of the project is an asset or a disadvantage. Dorte W. Høgh says she cannot answer that as the series is still in production. It seems

to her, though, that there is no better place for this series and everyone is very happy about that. Dorthe Riis Lauridsen confirms this by saying that DR is the only broadcaster that can pull off such a serious, different and contemporary series.

Lars Lundström asks if the broadcaster feels a certain responsibility, as a public broadcaster, to tell certain types of story.

Dorte W. Høgh hopes that it can bring about more freedom and Dorthe Riis Lauridsen notes that the series will be broadcast in September 2019.

Lars Lundström concludes by saying that there is talk, here and there, of the end of the 'Scandi Noir'. What do they think? Dorte W. Høgh answers by saying they should start doing colour Scandi's!





WHAT'S NEXT

THE LYNCHING

Czech Republic

When Lars Lundström asks about the state of play of series in the Czech Republic, Jan Maxa explains that this is a country with a love of TV drama. Every night, every channel broadcasts a series. More often than not fantasy and fairy tales lead the field. The audiovisual landscape in the Czech Republic is shared by three main broadcasters. As of yet, nothing quite as shocking as *The Lynching* has been broadcast yet.

THE HEART OF MEN

Klára Jůzová starts off by saying that the intention was to make *The Lynching* a thriller but without a specific detective. The story unfolds in a Roma community where a young director has just filmed a documentary about a crime that seems very odd. In doing this, he discovers there are many mysteries here.

Harold Apter adds that the story unfolds in a small town where everyone knows each other, everything seems to be going well, where lives are intertwined and communities live together peacefully. We soon discover, however, that shame is an important factor here and the drama is, as it very often is, human.

The plot is seen through the eyes of the documentary director, who was a friend of the victim as a child. Jan Maxa adds that as this central character starts digging for the truth, he slowly comes to realise the complexity of what happened. The series' title gives a strong clue as to what will be discovered.

Harold Apter specifies that he is from the United States and wasn't previously familiar with the trans-European Roma community. The essence of the drama, however, is universal. He was looking to shed light on the forces that drive humanity, what we all have in common. Klára Jůzová points out how much effort was put in to be fair with both communities and to show both points of view.

When Lars Lundström asks what the hardest editorial decision

SPEAKERS :
HAROLD APTER, SHOWRUNNER
KLÁRA JŮZOVÁ, SCREENWRITER, DIRECTOR
JAN MAXA, HEAD OF PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT, CZECH TELEVISION
CHAired BY :
LARS LUNDSTRÖM, SCREENWRITER, PRODUCER, MATADOR

CREDITS
 Original idea: Klára Jůzová, Klára Vlasáková, Radek Hosenseidl
 Showrunner: Harold Apter
 Screenwriters: Klára Vlasáková, Radek Hosenseidl, Klára Jůzová, Barbora Nevolníková, Petr Koubek, Jakub Votýpka
 Directors: Klára Jůzová, Jan Bártek
 Production: Czech Television
 Producer: Jan Maxa
 Broadcaster: Czech Television
 Distributor: Czech Television
 Format: 8 x 57'
 Date of broadcast: autumn 2018

was, Harold Apter answers that more than just a strong need to be honest and authentic, there was one very simple but crucial question: how far can we go? This led to many discussions. The search for this point of equilibrium, where we find the truth without going too far, was very difficult.

Jan Maxa adds that there are many stereotypes and clichés surrounding the Roma community. It is thought that they are excluded and feel victimised. One of the main objectives was to avoid these stereotypes and simply make them 'normal people'. For Harold Apter, people are all very similar and what affects them is never very different (fear of the dark, of death; we're all waiting for love, we have hope). The whole story revolves around this heartbeat that is common to all humans.

A WRITERS' ROOM AT SCHOOL

The origin of the project? It started three years ago, in a film school. The director decided to film the pilot episode after a masterclass. There were 15 contestants at the start and in the end all 7 episodes of the winning project were developed and filmed. The three writers took on an enormous load of work along with three youngsters who joined them in the adhoc writing room, run by Harold Apter. This is one of Harold Apter's first experiences of developing for someone who has spent a lot of time teaching.

When an audience member asks about how they dealt with language difference, Harold Apter tells them that the power of the story surpasses language barriers. However, they did write and develop in English and then translate into Czech.

Lars Lundström asks Klára Jůzová if having multiple roles (director and writer) complicated the process.

Klára Jůzová explains that the experience was unforgettable. Writing was an intense experience and shooting was a wonderful extension of that learning curve. She took a huge amount of pleasure in giving life to these characters who were invented two years earlier.

A BIT OF A GAMBLE

Lars Lundström moves on to ask about the budget. Jan Maxa indicates that Czech budgets are usually smaller than in other countries. Shooting one episode costs about half of what it would in Germany or Scandinavia.

The first series is 8 episodes strong. Jana Maxa explains that he had to hold Harold Apter back from trying to add a cliffhanger which would announce a second series. For a public broadcaster, it's important to test a first series before thinking about starting a possible second. The broadcast date is set for end of 2018 or early 2019.

Jan Maxa also specifies that as a broadcaster, his model is very similar to that of the BBC where the viewers are not the only thing to consider. A public broadcaster has to take into consideration expectations of current society without being elitist but also without forgetting what is important. Therefore, the channel broadcasts mainly fairytales, but also promotes more risky and current projects like this.

When asked about the brutality of the show's potentially shocking title and the fact that it could be subject to change, Harold Apter explains that the title is a sort of metaphor. Klára Jůzová adds that talks over the title are not over. Jan Maxa then admits that the title is provocative and for a people like the Czech, who feel quite friendly, this could put them on edge. The options are therefore still open.





WHAT'S NEXT

WEST OF LIBERTY

Germany/Sweden

Based on the first book in the crime trilogy *West of Liberty* by Swedish novelist Thomas Engström (first prize from the Swedish Crime Academy in 2014), this Swedo-German production is currently under development.

BENEATH THE MARRAKESH SKY...

German producer Bettina Wenté begins with the series pitch. The season commences beneath the Marrakesh sky: Fay, an American lawyer working for an online platform for whistle-blowers, helplessly witnesses the murder of three of her colleagues at a barbershop. In possession of compromising information and fearing for her life, she tries to contact the United States ambassador to fund her immediate repatriation. The diplomat remains uncontactable, so she takes refuge at a friend's house in the countryside near Berlin.

The paunchy sexagenarian agent heading up the CIA office in Germany decides to put her under surveillance in the hope that she will lead him to a successful arrest of the head of the whistle-blowers' network. Convinced that this crucial blow will make it possible to delay the scheduled closure of the Berlin office, he persuades the owner of his favourite bar in Kreuzberg, a former spy for the SSD, to join him in his adventure. But their plan fails spectacularly...

AROUND THE WORLD IN THREE SEASONS

Gunnar Carlsson tells us that his production house, Anagram Väst AB, began by purchasing the rights for the trilogy, which were best-sellers in Sweden. The first book of the series took place in Berlin (the others in the United States and Cuba), so they immediately began looking for a German co-producer. Having already worked with Network Movie in the past, they reached an agreement quickly. For the Swedish producer, this Swedo-German cooperation was textbook.

The surprise was that, although it was written by a Swede, the plot was to take place exclusively abroad. For Gunnar

PARTICIPANTS :
BETTINA WENTE, PRODUCER, NETWORK MOVIE
GUNNAR CARLSSON, PRODUCER, ANAGRAM

CHAired BY :
TASJA ABEL, VICE PRESIDENT ACQUISITIONS, SALES AND CO-PRODUCTIONS, DYNAMIC TELEVISION

CREDITS

Original idea: Gunnar Carlsson, Sara Heldt.
Based on a novel by Thomas Engström
Screenwriter: Sara Heldt, Donna Sharpe
Director: Barbara Eder
Production: Anagram Väst AB, Network Movie
Producers: Gunnar Carlsson, Bettina Wenté
Broadcaster: ZDF, SVT
Distributor: ZDF Enterprises
Casting: Wotan Wilke Möhring
Format: 4 x 60' or 6 X 45'
Date of broadcast: 2019

Carlsson, this series was part of a new dynamic in fiction creation that is increasingly European in nature: *West of Liberty* has already been sold to other Scandinavian countries and English screenwriter Donna Sharpe worked on the plot editing alongside Sarah Helde.

West of Liberty will be broadcast by ZDF in Germany and by SVT in Sweden. Foreign broadcasters are still being sought.

The team would like to begin filming in late 2017. The total budget currently stands at 5.4 million for four 60-minute episodes or six 45-minute episodes.

U.S. casting is not yet complete.

Two more seasons, based on the other two books in the trilogy, are anticipated.

SPOTLIGHT ON TRAILERS BY SÉRIE SERIES

CHAired BY MIRYAM VAN LIER

consultant

Created in order to shine a light on the new talent of the world of series, as well as reflecting the diversity of it, this competition is open to European creators who are seeking visibility as well as partners to make it happen. Eleven projects have been selected by the festival's editorial committee; the idea being to present it through a trailer of less than 2 minutes. The trailers are shown before the screenings and are also presented during a special session, during which the creators are invited to pitch their project.

Two projects are to be chosen to receive funding from the Fabrique des Formats. Fiona Bélier, general secretary of the Fabrique des Formats, explains that the company has two main missions: firstly, offering services to help producers and writers with the development of new types of format and secondly, developing an investment fund to support the production of pilots.

To start off the session, Myriam Van Lier calls Curro Serrano to the stage. He is the young Spanish writer and director who brought the project *All Wrong* to the 2015 *Spotlight on Trailers*.

Curro Serrano recalls his chaotic search for funding and his loss of confidence before the Série Series adventure started. After presenting his project at the festival, a new platform called Blackpills was won over by his idea for a web series and decided

to fund it. Having become a Franco-American production, the content had to be adapted to the American market (cf. case study p.10). Curro Serrano finishes by acknowledging the tenacity of the people presenting their projects today and reminds them to 'never lose faith'.

YOUR FUTURE (Germany – 12x25')

Speakers: Jan Galli (co-creator and director), Martin Rohé (co-creator and producer, Paxfilm)

Sami is an athletic and handsome refugee. For eight months, he's been living in a council flat with people from the world over. Sami is doing work experience with a local administrator, Henry. However, he's soon going to discover that his job description includes a lot more than changing lightbulbs.

Your Future is a German series aimed at a younger audience (15/20 years). This drama tells the story of a refugee's daily struggle for freedom. An unwelcoming Western society, the threat of smugglers asking for money and first love; the series delicately approaches migration in all its shades of grey, while respecting all the rules of a teen series.

The series' two creators, whose previous pilot project was funded by CBS in the US, are looking for foreign producers and broadcasters to continue their adventure.



LOOS-EN-GOHELLE (France – 10x10' or 10x20')

Speaker: Mike Zonnenberg (creator, writer, director)

Loos-en-Gohelle is a small mining village where everything seems to be going just fine. However, when a motor racing competition is on its way into town, tensions start building. Rivalries between pilots are getting bitter and the biggest body shop's owner decides to end his competition. Something far worse is about to hit the small community though: a serial pyromaniac starts burning the inhabitant's cars. Tony Walrop, a young prodigy driver, has only one thing on his mind: winning the competition so he can land a sponsor. The path to a better life, however, is strewn with obstacles that will make for a perilous journey...

Loos-en-Gohelle is a project with strong autobiographical resonance. The series' creator, Mike Zonnenberg, comes from a small town in the North of France with a fascination for Hollywood (the town Loos-En-Gohelle was chosen for its phonetic resemblance to Los Angeles), where the automotive world is a central part of social life.

A pop culture fan and ex advertiser, Zonnenberg chose to make short and rhythmical episodes for this digital series, almost like a cartoon. This strong visual world was influenced by films like *Drive*, but also by the video game *GTA* and the Belgian actors from the film *Bullhead*.

Mike Zonnenberg is backed by two TV producers who are interested in developing digital series. He is looking for a broadcaster.

EL GRAND DIA DE LOS FEOS (Spain – 24x50')

Speaker: Holy Fatma, co-screenwriter.

Set in a distant future, a strict dictatorship establishes beauty standards which every citizen must fit. Anyone who is not up to the beauty standard will be hunted and exterminated. It's a perfect world for those who live in luxury and without care.



But the 'ugly' people are tired of living in fear and hide up in the mountains. They are preparing an attack that could end this 'perfect' society for ever.

This very dark humoured Spanish comedy holds a mirror up to our modern society and its constant search for beauty. The director, Nabil Chabaan, throws the viewer into an outrageous visual world filled with Orwellian references and monster films, all inspired by the 80s.

It was originally set to be a web series with 8 episodes, each 10 minutes long. Following critical success, Nabil Chabaan and his team want to elaborate and deepen the story with a longer format. They are looking for broadcasters and producers to develop a 24x50 minute TV series.

EN ÉQUILIBRE (France – 6x52')

Speakers: Sonia Gozlan and Françoise Ruscak (creators and screenwriters)

In 1974, the winds of freedom have been blowing in France for a few years now. The Opera Garnier, a national treasure of ballet, is going through a revolution of its own: contemporary dance has arrived. Pulled between their search for freedom, their ambition and the iron discipline demanded by their job, six young dancers will have their destinies upturned by political, social and cultural reforms.

Through the eyes of two completely opposite dancers (Laetitia, French dancer trained by the Opera to be a prima ballerina and Gladys, a character freely inspired by the famous dancer and choreographer Carolyn Carlson), Sonia Gozlan and Françoise Ruscak invite the viewer to see the start of a fight that is still going on: the liberation of the woman's body.

This project was given the 'aide a la creation' by the CNC and was pitched at the FIPA, which enabled them to develop a bible. They are now looking for producers.

RUN (The Netherlands – 10x12')

Speakers: Ben Ryan (creator), Naftalie Vader (co-screenwriter)

A young woman's uneventful life is shaken by a robbery led by a drug dealer. Desperate for adventure, she helps the robber and sets off on a road trip to a better life. However, she has a lot to learn about herself and her new friends. The life she left behind will eventually catch up with her.

The series is set in very short episodes (12 minutes), the aim of which is to exacerbate the explosive nature of this crazy race and its characters. The visual universe was developed to be very similar to graphic novels, with rich colours and lots of shadows.

Ben Ryan points out that the format of this series can be reviewed to fit broadcasting needs. The team is looking for producers and is currently developing the first episode.

THE TIME TRAVELER (France – 10x10')

Speaker: Mikis Fernandez (creator, screenwriter and director)

In 2009, the Obama administration decided to declassify a number of the C.I.A.'s files. Some were divulged by mistake. Two journalists managed to make copies of them before they were removed by the agency. One of them, called 'The Time Traveller', got their attention.

Bruce Byrne, a computer science student passionate about urban legends, is convinced he's discovered the existence of a 'time traveller'. He discovers the mystery man's identity and decides to contact him. From that moment on, his behaviour changes completely and a month later, he vanishes. What happened to him? What did he find?

For the first time, these documents will be leaked to the public and will change the world as we know it.

Using this very fast paced web series (10x10'), Mikis Fernandez wants to question our relationship with modern myths and how conspiracy theories spread.

The director has international ambitions, which is why the series is in English, is set in the US and the visual universe is heavily inspired by American cinema.

FATHER'S DAY (Bulgaria – 6x54')

Speakers: Martichka Bozhilova (co-creator, producer, AGITPROD), Sevda Shishmanova (producer, BNT)

At first, the separation of scandal journalist Ivo and his wife Kalina seems friendly and calm. Ivo starts a new life, free of responsibilities. All he wants is to still be able to see his son, Bobby. Kalina, secretly hurt by the split, turns Bobby against him and the boy develops Parental Alienation Syndrome and starts hating his father. Ivo throws himself into a desperate battle for his son.

This is the first series of its kind in Bulgaria, created by the talented Pavel Kesnakov (Grand prize winner of the 36th Clermont-Ferrand short film festival) and developed by a public television channel with a budget of 100,000 euros per episode. This drama, which depicts a side of society that is still taboo, has international ambitions.

The script has just been finished, casting is underway and locations have been chosen. The team is looking for co-producers, broadcasters and European broadcasters. Shooting should start end of 2017.



GREEN (The Netherlands – 8x40')

Speaker: Jasper Klimbie (co-creator and screenwriter)

Green is a dark comedy set in Amsterdam. Ex crime boss Jack Groen runs a coffee shop called 'Green'. Underneath his grumpy exterior hides a man who cares deeply about his regulars and is in love with his American waitress Marcy. However, he owes a lot of money to his cannabis supplier, the famous Kviatkovski drug syndicate. His past comes back to haunt him. Will he escape it? Does he even want to?

Dave Damon came up with the original idea for this project because he wanted to shine a light on the strange way that coffee shops work in The Netherlands. Selling cannabis is legal and restricted but bulk buying is illegal so coffee shop owners have to get their stock from the criminal world.

The team is looking for co-producers and broadcasters. Ideally, the series would be 8 episodes, each 45 minutes, over 3 series with an average budget of 150,000 euros per episode shot in Amsterdam, but they are open to change.

BOYS IN A BAND (France – 10x26')

Speakers: Rodrigue Huart, Thomas Kielemoes (creators), David Freymond, Lucie Vigier (producers, MUSCLE).

It's 2005 in the French Ardennes. A group of high school students decide to form a rock band.

Boys in a Band is a musical series about all the 'first times' of adolescents in a small town in the early 00's. Having grown up in Sedan with a passion for teen movies, the creators want to shed light on adolescence in France before the rise of social networks in a town with an industry in decline.

Rodrigue Huart and Thomas Kielemoes want to develop a strong visual landscape and a soundtrack filled with tracks from artists from the Ardennes (*Fishbach*, *The Shoes*, etc...) to really show the ups and downs of adolescence.

The writing of the first series has just finished.

The two creators are working with production company MUSCLE and are currently looking for broadcasters.

BLANKENBERGE BLUES (Belgium – 8x26')

Speaker: Serge Bierset (co-creator and producer, ZODIAK Belgium).

Blankenberge Blues (Blankenberge is a famous coastal tourist attraction in Belgium) is an 8-episode series which starts with seven people meeting after one of them has discovered a beached sperm whale. As they all come to the conclusion that the animal's ambergris is of some value, they decide to gut it in the middle of the night.

They find kilos of ambergris, worth over a million euros. They've found their treasure, but they've also become consumed with a hunger for money which will lead them astray. The result is an oftentimes comical adventure, but mostly an exciting one as tensions rise within the group.

The producer assures us that the particular atmosphere in the trailer will run through all of this decidedly Flemish Belgian series' aesthetic. The team has not yet finished the writing and is looking for financial partners, notably broadcasters and co-producers. A director has been found for the shoot and a writers' room has been established.

BLOOM IN PEACE (Germany – 10x23')

Speaker: Amadeus Erlemann (creator, screenwriter and producer).

Egon pours his heart into botany. For over twenty years, he's been the head gardener at Klein-Pargau cemetery, where everyday he sees restless ghosts. They left unfinished business when they died and are waiting for redemption. No plants will grow while the ghosts are here, which is giving the meticulous gardener a hard time. In order to revive his plants, Egon takes matters into his own hands and tries to help these lost souls. However, this means interacting with the living. By helping the ghosts, he ends up helping himself.

The series' creator, Amadeus Erlemann, explains that a few episodes have already been shot. The team is currently looking for broadcasters.

CHILDREN SESSIONS

Every year, Série Series organises special sessions for children. A tailor-made programme to help them understand the programmes which are very much part of their daily life and understand how they are made. Authors and producers take part in a Q&A with the children, on the series screened.

This year, over 500 children were invited to follow the story of Max, the young hero from *Max & Maestro*, who discovers an unexpected passion for classical music; and to rediscover the universe of *Ernest & Célestine*, the lonely bear and the naughty mouse, in the form of a series.

MAX & MAESTRO

PRESENTED BY Anna Fregonese (head writer), Christophe Pinto (director) et Giorgio Welter (producer, Monello)



ERNEST & CÉLESTINE, LA COLLECTION

PRESENTED BY Agnès Bidaud (head writer), Jean Regnaud (screenwriter), Jean-Christophe Roger (screenwriter and director), Julien Cheng (director), Pauline Brunner (actress).



DISCUSSIONS

Série Series is a unique safe space for exchanging ideas, sharing experiences and breaking down work methods and content. Professionals are given the opportunity to share their experiences in several different settings.

In the masterclasses, leading professionals share their experience and their daily decisions. The 'One Vision' sessions offer several points of view on a universal theme that has a particular place in the broadcasting world. This year, courage was the theme.

During the debates, studies and round tables, professionals can study and decrypt trends as well as assess the issues and angles of a sector in perpetual movement. For this edition, the 'Café séries' of Série Series was created. This new more open and informal type of talk, conducive to heated discussion, will allow professionals and the general public to meet and discuss diverse series related themes.

Finally, Série Series is developing small group workshops, allowing professionals to speak to their peers in a setting perfect for honest and constructive discussions. Each year, European broadcasters are invited to take part in the Broadcaster's Conclave. This year, Série Series has extended the invitation to writers and producers by developing Series Stories, a day of round tables and themed workshops in small, select groups.

SACD DISCUSSION: PUBLIC DECISION-MAKERS, PUBLIC-BROADCASTERS: HOW CAN WE DEVELOP THE CREATION OF DRAMA?



Before commencing the debate, Pascal Rogard gives a reminder: the Canal+ group, managed by Vincent Bolloré, is no longer paying royalties to writers' societies as of several weeks ago, and ongoing contracts are not being respected. The SACD will guarantee payments to authors until 15 September, and legal proceedings have begun. Other action may be taken after 15 September. Pascal Rogard highlights the fact that this is the first time that the management of one of France's large audiovisual groups has behaved in this way.

PARTICIPANTS :
XAVIER BERTRAND, CHAIR OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF HAUTS-DE-FRANCE
DELPHINE ERNOTTE, PRESIDENT OF FRANCE TÉLÉVISIONS
BÉNÉDICTE LESAGE, PRODUCER, SHINE FRANCE
ARNAUD MALHERBE, DIRECTOR
VALÉRIE PÉCRESSE, CHAIR OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF ILE-DE-FRANCE
TONE C. RØNNING, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER AND COMMISSIONING EDITOR, NRK
CHAIRIED BY :
PASCAL ROGARD, GENERAL DIRECTOR OF THE SACD

SERVING AND STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY

Pascal Rogard opens the debate by addressing Tone C. Rønning, executive producer for Norwegian public television (NRK), asking about her view of the function and role of public television in terms of audiovisual creation, fiction in particular.

Tone C. Rønning replies that the situation is very positive, as eight out of ten people in Norway watch NRK daily. NRK's average market share is between 30 and 40%, and rises to 62-65% for quality drama series. NRK has not always been ahead in the ratings, and is preparing for the future by investing in innovation and continuous development.

Pascal Rogard asks for more on the creative policy for Norwegian public television, and Tone C. Rønning explains that the primary objective of a broadcaster or public service provider is to serve the public and strengthen democracy by uniting the nation around the concept of diversity.

EDITORIAL FREEDOM AND FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

Pascal Rogard then asks Bénédicte Lesage about the conciliation between her work as a producer and her entry into a large audiovisual group, Shine France. The producer replies that she finds it essential to retain her editorial freedom and her freedom of thought. The advantage of being in this group is that she can work with fiction producers throughout the world, which is a clearly enriching development. She considers it vital to welcome other points of view.

Bénédicte Lesage believes that creators and broadcasters should reflect on the role of creation and their responsibility in terms of acceptance of others and ways of conceiving a future together. This is especially true in public service television, whose responsibility is to respond to the issue of living alongside one another.

Within Norwegian public television, working processes have been implemented to allow beautiful stories to emerge that involve everyone, all without losing sight of the things that need to be shared.

Arnaud Malherbe believes that the necessary conditions have not yet all fallen into place to give rise to the public service broadcasting that creators dream of. Still, a movement has begun within France Télévisions, and this movement should be broadened, perhaps undergoing a redesign of the conditions of creation and production. Specifically, it seems to him that, to be able to continue to serve as many individuals as possible, they must reinvent themselves and stop targeting only one strong, short-term audience composed of an ageing population. Will the same people who are currently 30 to 40 years old still be sitting in front of their television sets when they are elderly?

SUPPORTING CREATION... DIFFERENTLY

Pascal Rogard stresses that investments in public service have increased since the arrival of Delphine Ernotte, who has increased support for creation (both fiction and documentary). However, some concerns persist regarding the use of this money.

Delphine Ernotte replies that support for creation is a very high priority for France Télévisions. This can be translated into data in the form of sums of investment and precise objectives. For her, supporting creation means first increasing the volumes produced. As a minimum, she wishes to reach the same level as the majority of European countries in terms of creation, particularly of fiction. This increased volume will make it possible to do things differently, try out new formats, produce more comedies, and broadcast drama at more times of day. Creation in France and Europe should be defended, providing more means to do things differently. At the same time, it is apt to improve exposure before all audiences.

THERE IS MORE TO LIFE THAN MONEY

Pascal Rogard addresses financing, giving a reminder that council tax is expected to be abolished, while contributions to public audiovisual production depend upon it. Has public service television considered how to conserve its resources, which seem to be of vital importance in a context in which some premium channels are declining?

Delphine Ernotte explains that TV licence reform has been a concern for several years now, since its obsolescence is unanimously acknowledged. She says that public audiovisual bosses are not requesting additional budgets, but they would like to be able to finance projects, invest in digital, and cope with reduced TV licensing. This is a pertinent issue for all European public service broadcasters, many of which have already made the change to a so called "German-style" reform by including TV licensing fees in taxation.

Pascal Rogard points out that in the German model, resources are fixed for 5 years. He asks Xavier Bertrand and Valérie Pécresse about their view of the evolution of public service television and its financing.

Xavier Bertrand notes that, regardless of the government and its political stance, money will no longer flow freely. Visibility and predictability are necessary, so he suggests making commitments to last the length of a presidential or legislative mandate, even if the budgets are voted in for one year. This would lead to the political willingness to define a framework. At the same time, the audiovisual world has a duty to itself to demonstrate the contributions of the industry for the country, and not only from an economic standpoint. In fact, the primary aspect is creation, and viewing all of that through the prism of economics is dangerous. He adds that a number of people believe that the audiovisual and cinematic world has "VIP access" to politicians, and many of them object to this. It is thus especially important to show that the world of cinema works in favour of the country as a whole.

For Valérie Pécresse, ideally public service television should be the spearhead in a highly audacious creative policy, since it is financed with public money and not supported by ratings or immediate repercussions. The power of public service is societal: it is the society at large that pays for it, and the creations must therefore be numerous, audacious, and lead us to reflect on ourselves and question things more.

For her, culture and economy are not at odds with each other, especially in Île-de-France where 50% of French artists live and work, and where the sector of cultural industries, studios, decorators, artisans, etc. are based. A "sector-wide" reflection is required.



In any case, beyond the economy, culture is vital for social adhesion. While watching French drama is not an obvious choice for young French people, who no longer watch television, the arrival of VOD platforms is crucial to ensure the adaptation of usage methods and the continued widespread broadcasting of the messages. Valérie Péresse evokes soft power, and is convinced that culture is a form of power. For large nations, it is a case of spreading a cultural model, instincts, and codes of ethics. Thus, culture allows us to defend French pride and uniqueness. Valérie Péresse mentions on this topic that, while she was Minister for Higher Education, she was struck by the observation that a large number of American blockbusters take place within universities or feature researchers, from *Indiana Jones* to *Avatar*. This encourages young people to come to study and work in the United States! France also owes it to itself to be a country of original creation, and made-in-France series, with their particular, intimate, long-term means of consumption, can be used to transmit new messages. It is important that these should be broadcast over public service networks.

PUBLIC SERVICE CONFRONTED WITH NEW PLAYERS

Xavier Bertrand returns to what is expected of public service television. Some are tempted to take the attitude of sterile opposition to the strategy of new platforms; there appears to be a more measured position in which public service has a role to play.

Bénédicte Lesage stresses that creators often think that platforms will give them freedom to create and the opportunity to deal with a wider variety of topics than they believe they can develop and produce in France. Is this true?

Arnaud Malherbe laments the existence of a sort of vicious cycle, which is that creators are adapting to an older audience only to find themselves trapped. He wants public service television to accelerate the creative dynamic by finding new balances. It remains to be seen how they will achieve this, through which methods.

Delphine Ernotte notes that for public service, it is not a question of choosing between a crime drama for a wider audience and an ambitious fiction piece; but rather of finding a balance and speaking to the largest number of people. It is important to be able to make beautiful dramas for wider audiences while also offering other options. For this reason, a digital platform will be launched for young adults, with dedicated budgets.

Delphine Ernotte returns to Arnaud Malherbe's suggestion and the creative space that can be attained on American platforms: she is in favour of this, but gives a reminder that the economic model is one of making one production for 180 countries. She warns against this honey trap.

Bénédicte Lesage takes the view that constructive dialogue is lacking around the responsibility of creators before the population and its diversity.

Tone C. Rønning states that public service television must prepare itself for the rapid change to be induced by technology in modern societies. If public service television were to be invented today, it would be very different. To begin with, it would not be called television! It is important to follow alongside technological advancements, because the general public now receives its information through social media, in an environment to which it adheres.

Public service should "serve the public", and not the power that it should in fact be standing up to; whether this be an economic, political, or other kind of power. And in this context, series must connect hearts and minds, as they have a powerful impact on those watching.

TERRITORY IN ACTION

When asked about the regions, Bénédicte Lesage says that they are ripe with opportunities for creation, as each one provides new landscapes, and new stories. They are a bounty that we should dare to make use of. Professionals should work consistently to improve themselves, and not allow their expertise to fade. They cannot afford to fall behind, so they must work and specialise in experimentation. The Île-de-France region has an exceptional pool of talents at all levels. For the other regions, there are ways that decentralisation, which has not been carried out for years now, can be used by the audiovisual and cinema sectors. Based on her experience in French Guiana, Bénédicte Lesage believes that an adventure such as a production creates a fundamental link. The creation is in fact a communal object that can unite people of all origins, from different cultures, to work together to create a single object that will contain and broadcast this multicultural exchange. In this, the regions have a supporting role to play to aid creation, and this is indispensable in France. Each serial production creates emulation. This is especially true in the home environment that the regions can contribute to creating. Bénédicte Lesage thinks that this may also be a vector for development, for social and economic links, and the regions themselves need this support.

Xavier Bertrand says that over the budget year, his goal was not to reduce the budgets for culture, but to keep them at a healthy level. However, there may be a decline in the cultural offering due to insufficient budget. With a cultural offensive, viewpoints and trust could change. Throughout his term in Hauts-de-France, the culture budget will rise by 60%, to the tune of some €10M per year. This is in addition to the cultural co-construction approach to disrupt politico-administrative prejudices. A cultural entrepreneur will take over management of the Culture service to contribute to breaking with the norm. Xavier Bertrand notes that this is possible, thanks to procedures which have already been set in motion by his predecessors, particularly through Pictanovo. As regards audiovisual policy, Xavier Bertrand is aiming for first place among provincial regions. If the tax credits are upheld at the current level and if regions or communities decide to invest, he is convinced that there will be increasing success in the years to come, as well as more creations and shifts in shooting locations. All of this must be anticipated in a coherent, global policy. The CNC's policy, aimed at regions, constitutes a wonderful opportunity. Xavier Bertrand repeats that the cinema and audiovisual budget of Hauts-de-France will be the proof of his willingness, and will make it possible to produce many audiovisual pieces. In turn, he evokes an immaterial consequence for audiovisual creation that is rooted in its region: pride.

When asked about the international television series festival, Xavier Bertrand states that the team, philosophy, and general directions of the festival will be announced in the coming days.

Regarding the work of public service television in the regions, Delphine Ernotte gives a reminder that an agreement was signed with the production sector in 2015 in an attempt to better distribute what is produced. Public service is not designed to involve producers, but should continue to support independent production and the diversity of talent. Nonetheless, it is necessary to master some trademarks of the channels: this is the case, for example, for the new daily soap opera, for which internal creation and production has been chosen.

France Télévisions has two major generic channels (France 3 and France 2), and Delphine Ernotte considers this to be one too many. In fact, generic channels are encountering some problems and their audience shares are dwindling. They perform less well

than specialised channels. The reworking of the organisation will make France 3 a more regional channel. In her means and objectives agreement with the State, Delphine Ernotte has committed to double the regional share. The general public expects this national channel with a regional approach to be anchored within the reality of the territories, because viewers need to see themselves represented on screen, and recognise themselves in all their diversity.

CULTURE TO PACIFY A LAND OF CONTRASTS

In conclusion, Valérie Péresse reminds us that she has said since the beginning of her term that she would increase the budget for culture by 20%. Île-de-France is a region of contrasts and inequalities, and contains some of France's poorest neighbourhoods. What this region truly needs is inclusion. It is therefore vital that a bridge be formed between the cultures of the nobility, the middle class and families that do not have access to this culture. For Valérie Péresse, the danger in Île-de-France is that of cultural segregation.

The creation of the Série Series festival in Fontainebleau, an event that has provoked massive and original support for creation, is evidence of her commitment. She also announces the launch of an "emerging talents fund" this summer. The aim is to allow all young creators, upon completion of their training, to compete for the opportunity to create their first work in Île-de-France, with a subsidy of €2,500 per month. Around 40 graduates per year, throughout various sectors within the arts including cinema and audiovisual production, could reignite among young people the desire to create, and to come to Île-de-France to do it.

For audiovisual in particular, the Region's goal is to encourage the creation of series by subsidising them up to three seasons. Web series will also receive assistance. Aid for the audiovisual sector has also been hugely increased, as they will now be aligned with those provided for cinema, to the tune of some €500,000, with an additional bonus if equipment and talent from Île-de-France is used.

Finally, Valérie Péresse says that Île-de-France of course has no desire to stifle the other regions, and encourages bi-regional collaborations.

The region's ambition is also international, and Valérie Péresse wants the regional film commission to begin focusing on foreign series from now on. It would be in France's interests for episodes of foreign series to be filmed there: this would be beneficial for job creation and returning tourism, and would demonstrate the true nature of French society.

Pascal Rogard thanks the participants for this rich debate, before giving the floor to the festival's official opening ceremony.

In partnership with



LONG-RUNNING SERIES: A STORY OF BOTH PASSION AND DEVOTION



SPEAKERS :
ANNE LANDOIS, SCREENWRITER AND SHOWRUNNER
FRÉDÉRIC KRIVINE, SCREENWRITER
CHAired BY :
PHILIPPE TRIBOIT, SCREENWRITER AND DIRECTOR

In this discussion, which will be more of an intimate confidence, Anne Landois (screenwriter, *Spiral* – 48 episodes) and Frédéric Krivine (screenwriter, *The Line* – 72 episodes) talk about the intimate relationship they have with their job and its inevitable interweaving with their personal life.

FINDING YOUR PROJECT

To start the discussion, Anne Landois - who has been working on nothing but *Spiral* for 10 years - talks about her journey from a simple writer during the third series to her quick move to being the main writer of the series by the 5th and 6th series (when she not only took charge of the writing but also became artistic director).

Anne Landois had very little experience in the world of series before starting on *Spiral*. She recalls starting on an M6 series called *Duel*, which was not a huge success. It was on the 2004 RTBF series *Septième Ciel* (12 episodes) that she really got some experience under her belt. In fact, it was just after the start of this series that she was asked by the *Spiral* team if she would be willing to work in immersion in a police station for a year. Despite her refusal due to her previous commitment to the Belgian series, they called her again after she had finished her work on *Septième Ciel*.

Frédéric Krivine, on the other hand, was part of the creation of *The Line* (alongside director Philippe Triboit and producer Emmanuel Daucé) and has been working on it exclusively since 2008. The first episodes were broadcast in 2009 and the last few have been filmed and are ready to be broadcast in autumn. Unlike the police series *C.I.D* where he deliberately

stopped writing after the third series, Frédéric Krivine wanted to write the entirety of *The Line*, which was possible as he is one of the co-producers.

Philippe Triboit notes that the difference between Frédéric Krivine and Anne Landois is that when she started on *Spiral*, she had no idea it would run for so long. The broadcasting channel, Canal+, being a paying channel, the series had to keep being successful to be commissioned from series to series. *Spiral*, unlike many series, only grew in viewers and notoriety over time. A seventh and last series is currently being written (without Anne Landois).

For Frédéric Krivine, it was a very different experience. Even though there was no certainty of being able to, they had to cover the whole period of the Second World War over a large number of episodes. Not being able to 'stop the war in 1942' was something that occasionally delayed production, but mostly allowed the series to survive a moment when the public channel was questioning its continuation. For Frédéric Krivine, screenwriters working with public channels are under the pressure of critics rather than audience numbers.

A 'GILDED SLAVERY'

The Line was filmed during the same period every year, so Frédéric Krivine explains that the writing had to be finished by a precise date. However, due to the 'traditional' side of this production, the 12 or 13 months of production of the first few series turned into 14 or 16 months. Any important event in the screenwriter's life - weddings, births... - could delay the entire team's work. Despite pressure from the channel to accelerate the work, Frédéric Krivine's work was always protected by the producer Emmanuel Daucé.

For Anne Landois, the pressure was different, as the channel and the production team gave themselves all the time they needed to producer the most successful series possible. It was only from the fifth series onwards that some retro planning was set up and time constraints were mentioned. Anne Landois doesn't see this as a downside, she sees it as a way of motivating teams and allow the writer to connect the screenplay to society's rapid evolution.

Anne Landois struggled with her role as a writer in a series she did not create. Indeed, she found herself having to earn her place among very charismatic and omnipresent consultants like a police captain or the literary director of *Son et Lumière*. So, Anne Landois decided to make the police captain her co-writer and deepen the characters in the series seeing as the number of episodes was going to be increased from the third series onwards.

Frédéric Krivine explains that the writing process has an impact on daily life. The writing invades the writer's life - both literally and psychologically - to the point where there is no respite. American screenwriters call it a 'gilded slavery'. It is a demanding, time-consuming and addictive job that is not always compatible with life as a couple.

Anne Landois feels very similar but for her the invasion is 'progressive'. Unlike *The Line*, where the storyline carries on through the series, a new crime plot must be created for each season of *Spiral*. At the start of the writing phase, it feels emptier than an abyss for the writer. Then, after a phase of listening closely to the consultants, things start falling into place.

Then, the gears, shifts and game of shadows are thought up, which takes up a lot of time and energy. The screenwriter confesses that the police plots she comes up with become a very intense part of her life. The violence manifests itself in the form of recurring nightmares.

LEARNING TO LOVE YOUR CHARACTERS

Anne Landois explains that the appropriation of characters she did not create was progressive; first she had to learn to love them. She soon found herself wanting to give one of the characters more depth: Captain Berthaud. The writer and the actor playing the role, Caroline Proust, met to talk about the character's relationship to her femininity (in the fifth series, the Captain is both pregnant and in mourning). In the first few series, this aspect of her personality had been completely ignored.

Frédéric Krivine points out that, for him, during the character writing phase, it is important to take into account the allocation of the work between the actors. He adds that, of course, it is easier to write some characters than others, but that has more to do with his own personal obsessions. When he was building the psychological profiles of the characters in *The Line*, a lot of work was done with a psychologist in order to create parallels between his writing and his own personal emotional landscape.

WORK ORGANISATION AND DAILY LIFE

Anne Landois specifies that she started working on *Spiral* 10 years ago, when her eldest daughter was only 6 months old. She then gave birth to her second child during a very intense period of writing for the series. Her family life and moreover her lifestyle organisation have evolved around the series. The writing work has also gradually improved thanks to the creation of writing planners.

Frédéric Krivine indicates that, unlike Anne Landois' experience on *Spiral*, the team organisation on *The Line* has only got worse over time as the set-up of each series has taken longer every year.





The screenwriter adds that the management of his lifestyle varies widely depending on the different phases of the writing process, although he always allocates set hours for family time. Frédéric Krivine usually works from home, unless he is writing dialogue, in which case he will be in one of the cafes in his neighbourhood he has been going to for over four years for extra concentration (music plays a very important part). One episode is written in 3 weeks, which includes a week of 'recovery' from the previous episode, a week of average writing speed at 2 or 3 pages a day and then a third very intense week.

ALL GOOD THINGS COME TO AN END!

For Frédéric Krivine, the end of *The Line* was not a bereavement or a loss, probably because he spent very little time on set. In addition, the series will most probably keep being broadcast for another 15 years, so it'll be a 'soft' extinguishing. What is more troubling for the writer is, as he's been working on nothing but this series for years, the end of this constant 'impregnation'. But this gap will most certainly be filled by a new writing project very soon!

Anne Landois felt like she got to the end of her writing journey during the sixth series of *Spiral*. Therefore, it's with a heavy heart for her characters that she passes on the writing of the last series to other screenwriters. For her also, the period of 'mourning' is short lived and the desire for new projects to work on is very present.

INHERITANCE AND LOCAL ANCHORING

Frédéric Krivine doesn't know if *The Line* will influence other historical series screenwriters, because in television 'the viewer makes the rules' and the series was not successful enough to 'revolution' the genre in that way. Also, the series was very expensive and the trend at the moment in France is not to spend as much money on series.

Anne Landois points out that despite *Spiral* being sold in 70 countries, it's still a series like many others. What was interesting for her is that a typically French series, that stages the French penal procedure, found success outside the country without copying the rules of a pre-existing series (even if *The Wire* was an undeniable source of inspiration). The screenwriter hopes that this will give other French channels the desire to create and develop realistic detective series. She concludes by affirming that local series have a bright future ahead of them.



FEDERICO LLANO,

INTERNATIONAL CO-PRODUCTIONS MANAGER, RTVE



CHAired BY :
CHARLINE DE LÉPINE, PRODUCER, MACONDO

Federico Llano invites us to view a short video comprising extracts of RTVE's most popular series.

HISTORIC DRAMAS IN RTVE'S DNA

Cuéntame Cómo Pasó (tell me how it happened) is the major flagship series on Spanish public television. For 17 seasons now – the first episode aired in 2001! – it has told the story of the daily life of a family in Madrid from the end of the Franco era (from April 1968 on) until the reinstatement of democracy. Through its various characters, the series offers a look at the socio-economic and political changes that have defined Spanish history since the fall of the dictatorship. 329 episodes of *Cuéntame Cómo Pasó* have aired to date, and the series continues to be one of the most popular on the small screen, allowing the channel to double its audience share during its slot. To follow the eighteenth season, the nineteenth is currently under development and will air next year.

Historic dramas are part of RTVE's DNA. *Isabel* has been one of Spain's most-watched series. Over four series, it retraces the steps of one of the greatest figures in Spanish history – Isabella I of Castile – from her accession to the throne until her death. The action in *Águila Roja* (The Red Eagle), another successful period piece, is set in 17th-Century Spain, during the reign of Philip IV. The plot takes a few liberties with historical facts as it follows the adventures of Gonzalo de Montalvo (nicknamed the Red Eagle), who has taken a solemn oath to avenge the death of his wife. The series will enter its eighth and final season this year.

This panorama would not be complete without mentioning *El Ministerio del Tiempo* (The Ministry of Time), which has also

achieved great popularity and success. The unique aspect of this series is that it combines historical plots with science fiction. The series produced by RTVE often mix genres.

Charline de Lépine points out that all of these series are broadcast at high-viewership times (i.e. between 10:30pm and midnight). More generally, prime time in Spain, for both public and premium channels, is dedicated exclusively to national series, and American series are broadcast at other times.

PROMOTING CULTURE AND CIVIC VALUES

TVE is the television branch of RTVE, the Spanish public audiovisual corporation. It remains strongly attached to the values of public service broadcasting: information and culture. Of course, entertainment is also an integral part of its mission. However, fiction must still follow the guidelines established by RTVE and, as such, follows strict objectives in terms of excellence and promotion of culture and civic values. The landscape of Spanish television is now dominated by two private channels: Telecinco and Antena 3, which together account for around 60% of audience share. RTVE occupies third place in the market. Series are the new engines of television consumption, and they now define the identity of TVE itself.

AN UNUSUAL FORMAT: "HOME-GROWN" PRODUCTIONS

Spanish series have several characteristics that set them apart from other series produced throughout the rest of the world. First of all, the average duration of episodes broadcast during

prime time is around 70 minutes. This format, which Federico Llano considers excessive to say the least, was intended primarily to allow broadcasters to intersperse the episodes with as many commercial breaks as possible during the broadcast. But now that advertising has been removed from public channels in 2012 (which has not been without its consequences, particularly financial, for the production of TV fiction), this is no longer necessary. RTVE entered into negotiations with the public authorities to revisit this model, arguing primarily that a 70-minute run-time represented a real barrier for exports and co-productions. Unfortunately, the talks did not end positively.

The second and equally important characteristic is that RTVE fully funds the series it airs on its channels, which is not without its consequences for production policy. This explains why the number of international co-productions remains very low in Spain. Public television networks often tend to maintain complete control over the series they broadcast. They still take a very negative view to the fact that a foreign channel might encroach upon their creative process. *El Ministerio del Tiempo* is an unusual case in this regard, as the third season was co-produced with Netflix.

THE TIME IS RIPE FOR RISK-TAKING

To support his argument, Federico Llano wishes to focus on *El Ministerio del Tiempo*, one of the jewels in the crown of Spanish public television. Anaïs Schaaff, producer and screenwriter, introduced the series during her masterclass in last year's *Série Series*. It was created and devised by Javier and Pablo Olivares, two brothers who were passionate about science fiction and history.

As a reminder, the series tells the story of an independent governmental institution that holds the secret to time travel. The "doors of time" appeared during the time of Isabella I of Castile, in the late 15th Century. They were offered to the monarch by a rabbi in exchange for protection. The Spanish

government created a special unit – the ministry of time – charged with protecting the doors and preventing any intrusions. Its objective is to stop anyone with harmful intentions from using the doors to travel through time and disrupt the course of history to turn it to their advantage. To accomplish this mission, patrols are sent into the past to foil any such attempts. The series has three main characters, all members of one patrol: a soldier from the 15th Century, a student from the 19th (the first woman in Spain to attend university) and a paramedic from the 21st.

The first few minutes of episode one of season two are shown.

Each episode in the series is set in a particular period of history. Over the course of the story, the patrol has also crossed paths with well-known historic figures such as Napoleon and Hitler. In one of the episodes of the third season (currently airing in Spain), they meet Goya. The patrol, alongside Velazquez, who has joined the ministry as a consultant, must go back to 1810 to convince the painter not to destroy one of his most famous paintings: *La Maja Desnuda*. They also meet Hitchcock, this time with the mission of preventing the director from changing the ending of *Psycho*.

El Ministerio del Tiempo is a very unusual series for public television. It is not directed at the latter's target market (primarily composed of those aged 65 and over), but was created for a younger audience. Each episode is also saturated with references to pop or "geek" culture, and is teeming with nods to cult films such as *Terminator*, *The Matrix*, *Harry Potter* and *Star Wars*.

The first two seasons were broadcast during prime time and recorded an average audience share of 12% (i.e. approximately 2 million viewers): an impressive result, but still far below that of series like *Cuéntame Cómo Pasó*, whose audience share is approaching 25%.

SAVED BY A COMMUNITY OF FANS

The creators of *El Ministerio del Tiempo* found it very difficult to convince RTVE to produce their series. The public television provider considered the project too risky (and the necessary investment too high). RTVE was disappointed in the results from the first season and the series was almost cancelled. But the audience share only took into account the linear broadcast, and they were unable to measure the series' true success. In fact, a large portion of viewers, particularly the youngest ones, watched *El Ministerio del Tiempo* on catch-up and online. The series was supported by a community of fans and it was because of them that a second season was eventually approved.

In the end, RTVE does not regret its decision. The series allowed it to broaden its viewership and attract a younger and more female audience. The channel cannot imagine cancelling the series now: quite the opposite. Its success has even led RTVE to take more risks, particularly artistic ones. The public television provider is more open than ever to projects with a difference.

Still, Federico Llano notes that truly innovative projects are rare. The unusual thing about the third season of *El Ministerio del Tiempo* is that it was co-produced with Netflix. Despite its reservations, the channel understood that a co-production of this nature would allow it to increase the budget for the series, particularly the section dedicated to special effects, which are essential in a series like *El Ministerio del Tiempo*. Having said this, Federico Llano points out that this co-production did not change the fundamental aspects of the series in any way, least of all the things that have made it so successful until now. *El Ministerio del Tiempo* did not sell its soul by joining forces with Netflix.

Federico Llano has no doubt that a fourth season will be aired (even though the decision has not yet been made). The doors of time are not ready to be closed just yet.

A discussion organised with support from 



MOVISTAR+ : A METEORIC RISE IN THE SPANISH DRAMA LANDSCAPE

DOMINGO CORRAL, ORIGINAL CONTENT MANAGER, MOVISTAR+/TELEFONICA STUDIOS



Domingo Corral, original content manager at Movistar+/Telefonica Studios, presents the fruits of this new platform as well as his very ambitious development program for the Spanish series landscape.

PRESENTATION OF MOVISTAR+

Developed by Telefonica, Movistar+ is the top series broadcasting pay platform with over 70% of market shares (4 million subscribers). This top place is in part explained by the fact that 2 years ago, Telefonica bought out the Spanish branch of Canal+. They chose to invest in developing new drama, although traditionally, pay channels in Spain focus on broadcasting sporting events or American programmes. The development of a first flagship series started almost instantly and the first broadcast of a Movistar+ series will take place in September. Ten other series will follow suit in 2018.

The creative studio's objective is to develop 'premium' shows, bringing together the best of television and cinema. Hence, a lot of importance is put on the choice of *showrunner*, as this individual is responsible for the vision of the series, which needs to make its mark in a landscape of multiplying drama. Movistar+ is attempting to attract the best of contemporary Spanish talent, like Alberto Rodríguez and Jorge Sánchez-Cabezudo.

AUTHENTIC AND LOCAL

Movistar+ series are locally produced with a heavy emphasis on authenticity: filming in Spain with many exterior scenes, local actors and directors, all this in order to better represent the country's social reality. According to the producers, it's good writing and good storytelling that make a drama universal.

CHAired BY :
CHARLINE DE LÉPINE, PRODUCER, MACONDO

Domingo Corral thinks that one of the traps is applying the same rules used in 'free to air' programmes and paying channels. Indeed, Movistar+'s only client is the subscriber so only their satisfaction matters.

Most of the Movistar+ series have been written to have multiple seasons, even though this is not the preference of directors who've come from cinema (Alberto Rodríguez's original intention was to kill off all the characters at the end of *The Plague*).

A HANDS-ON PRODUCTION TEAM

The Movistar+ production team is very involved in both the direction and the writing of the series (there is no such thing as a writers' room in Spain). It can be a difficult balance between giving the director or writer artistic freedom and staying true to the producer's vision of the project. Their job is to convince, without imposing decisions. In Spain, writers and directors are very used to working for prime time, so they sometimes need to be nudged into taking more risks. The creation of a series being such a team effort, a lot of effort is put into the 'talent' being happy working with Movistar+ and wanting to keep working for them.

Domingo Corral explains that Spanish producers own all the rights to the series they produce. They can develop international cooperation to increase funding and they can make deals with

foreign broadcasters. Movistar+'s main rule is to only work with broadcasters who believe in the project and support it (the Italian channel Sky, for example, will be broadcasting *The Plague*).

Movistar+ series are 100% funded in Spain. The budget for *The Plague* is the only one to have been revealed so far: 10 million euros for six 50-minute episodes.

The development of international co-productions could be a solution to share production costs, but it would need to come organically from the screenplay (scenes filmed abroad for example). The risk would be to artificially manipulate the original storyline and end up increasing production delays and miscommunication between different teams. For Domingo Corral, the only way a co-production is possible is if the production company in charge is clear.

A FIERCE BELIEF IN PROJECTS

Charline de Lépine points out that Spanish series have an advantage over French series: the Spanish language, which enables exportation to Latin America.

Domingo Corral doesn't think that a common language is enough to export series to South America. Series produced there are only rarely successful in Spain (with the exception of some Argentinian series). For Domingo Corral, it is the 'premium' character of these series that will enable its exportation; one that will extend further than just Spanish speaking countries. In fact, it's why the episodes of Movistar+ series are produced in the international 50 minute format (the Spanish format is usually 70 minutes).

It's important to note that Spanish drama productions have a very big broadcasting advantage when it comes to the main national channels. Indeed, these channels don't broadcast any American series on prime time, only Spanish series can be shown at these peak times. Faced with multinational giants like Netflix and HBO, the 'local' players like Movistar+ or Canal+ in France have an ace up their sleeves.

AN ANTHOLOGY OF MADE IN MOVISTAR+ EXAMPLES

A few clips from La Zona, Vergüenza, The Plague and Felix are screened as a preview and before any post-production work.

Domingo Corral explains that *La Zona* - a series directed by Jorge Sánchez-Cabezudo that is being broadcast in October 2017 - tells the story of a disaster area after a nuclear explosion. The entire pitch is based on one question: "what if this happened to us?".

Vergüenza is a comedy series about a Sunday photographer who is convinced of his immense talent (played by the famous actor Alberto Gutierrez).

The Plague is a historical thriller set in 16th century Seville. Following a number of strange deaths, an honest man searches for the truth in this plague ridden city.

Felix - which could serve as a good example of a co-production, as two episodes were filmed in Toulouse, France - tells the story of a 'normal' man who falls in love with a magnificent Chinese woman. After her sudden disappearance, he tries to find her; his search leads him into the heart of the Chinese mafia.

A few clips from Giants are shown, as well as the making of.

Domingo Corral explains that filming only finished two weeks ago and the broadcast is planned for April 2018. Enrique Urbizu's dark series tells the story of a family with a stronghold on the Spanish cocaine market. The central character has no morals or limits and has raised three sons with the mindset that the end justifies the means. The family establishes this stronghold by taking the market from the Madrid gypsies.

The series starts with the long awaited return to the family from prison of the eldest brother. During his absence, the second brother, Tomás, took over the family business and made it flourish thanks to many investments in real estate and modern art. The third son is a nice boy, mainly involved because he has no choice. The series follows the fraternal fight for the head of the gangster empire created by their father and, in parallel, the latent threat of retaliation from the gypsies...



COMPOSING FOR THE YOUNG POPE: METHODS AND CHALLENGES LELE MARCHITELLI,

COMPOSER (ITALY)



SPEAKER :
LELE MARCHITELLI, COMPOSER
CHAIRD BY :
NICOLAS JORELLE, COMPOSER

A MUSICIAN...

Nicolas Jorelle reminds us that Lele Marchitelli is an Italian musician - he plays bass - and composer. He has worked in cinema, notably alongside Paolo Sorrentino for the score of *La Grande Bellezza*, which won the Oscar for best foreign language film in 2014. Lele Marchitelli composed the soundtrack for the first series of *The Young Pope*, also directed by Paolo Sorrentino. He is currently working on the score for the next series.

Lele Marchitelli points out that 'like everyone', he started expressing himself musically in a band. He then went on to work in the advertising industry, which gave him good grounding in synthesising. He then worked on his first film, over thirty years ago.

COMPOSING BLINDLY

The work on the music for *The Young Pope* started from a piece of music originally intended for *La Grande Bellezza* which never found its place in the film.

The musical extract is played and Lele Marchitelli points out that it was remixed for its use in the series, with two or three guitars, a violin for the first version and a cello for the second version.

Nicolas Jorelle asks if his work methods are different when working on a series and on a film. Lele Marchitelli explains that there is around 10 hours of music to create for *The Young Pope*. He doesn't treat each hour long episode as though it were a film, not only because there are recurring themes, but also because his approach - possibly a slightly odd one - is always the same.

The composer reads the script, meets the director before filming - at length, to really understand what they want - and writes the music before seeing the series or film. For *The Young Pope*, 80% of the music was written before Lele Marchitelli had seen any of the images of the series. It's necessary in order to have the right freedom of creation and to find the right 'direction'.

Nicolas Jorelle is surprised that he takes that amount of time. What would happen if he had got it wrong and the music didn't fit?

Lele Marchitelli tells him that if the music is good, if it works with the atmosphere of the film and matches what was 'in the director's head', then there can't be any problems.

This is facilitated when there is a strong relationship between the director and the composer. In this case, Paolo Sorrentino and Lele Marchitelli were friends before they worked together. He's proud of that, as the director is notoriously not chatty. One needs to know how to catch on to his thoughts quickly.

Paolo Sorrentino also loves music. He listens to a lot of it and knows many different pieces, sometimes even very obscure ones. Lele Marchitelli admits that even he doesn't always know what the director is referencing.

Nicolas Jorelle confirms that directors who really know how to express what they want musically are relatively rare.

He then points out that in *The Young Pope*, a lot of the songs are included in the screenplay itself. Did he have to compose according to these songs?

Lele Marchitelli goes back over what he said about the director knowing exactly what music he wants to hear and where. It's quite rare in that profession and a real challenge. He therefore has to write a lot of music so that the director can choose. However, this abundance (which is often not used straight away) means that for his next film, he is 20 pieces ahead of schedule!

FROM STUDIO TO ORCHESTRA

Nicolas Jorelle asks about orchestration, which is often richer in films than in television.

Lele Marchitelli agrees and suggests listening to an extract with an orchestra. He adds that usually he makes a layout of the principal themes in his own studio with software and samples that he has. Then, he brings the tracks to the studio and they are recorded on real instruments.

If he needs an orchestra, he goes to Prague where, according to him, the value for money is unparalleled. He points out how agreeable it is to work with an orchestra full of musicians who know one another and therefore easily create coherent music. With them, in four hours he records 20 minutes; in two sessions, he leaves with 50 minutes worth of music. More often than not, he keeps the first take. Sometimes he changes things up and the orchestra, in Prague, is playing alongside a piano recorded in Rome.

MUSIC TO SERVE THE DRAMA

Nicolas Jorelle brings up the Italian tradition and phenomenal culture of film music. Did that feed Lele Marchitelli?

Lele Marchitelli is weary of those that are more arrangers than composers. The rest leave him humbled. He tries to best serve films and series with his music. It's a real passion.

An extract is screened, where we see how an initially improvised jazz piece is used in a scene of intense emotion.

Nicolas Jorelle wants to know if Lele Marchitelli writes themes for characters with different colours for each. Lele Marchitelli explains that he doesn't know. He composes, then leaves complete freedom to the director during the edit. The edit is a part of the process he is never present for. The director is in charge and does what he wants with the music.

LELE IS A FREE MAN

Nicolas Jorelle is surprised that in a landscape like the one in *The Young Pope*, the music isn't more obviously religiously inspired. Lele Marchitelli answers that composing without seeing the images helps him stay free and that anyway, he always goes with what feels counterintuitive by nature. If a scene calls for a certain type of music, it's vital for him not to choose that option. He suggests trying to avoid being redundant. For him, music needs to be saying something that can't be seen on the screen. 'Let's try something other than violin for a romantic scene!'. Hence, in the scene of the boat crash in *The Wolf of Wall Street*, isn't the dramaturgy particularly well served by a pop song (*Ti Amo*), which acts as a complete counterpoint?

AFTER THE YOUNG POPE... THE NEW POPE

Lele Marchitelli notes that for *The Young Pope*, 12 episodes were shot instead of 8 and 10 were used for the first series. He then points out that a second series called *The New Pope* is being prepared. Everything will be new.

He also adds that *The Young Pope* is a series entirely initiated by the director, who therefore has a say in everything. In general, that's his way of working.

Nicolas Jorelle asks if the production gets involved with his music or, on the other hand, defends it.

Lele Marchitelli says that he's not exactly sure how that happens. In any case, no one asked him anything...

Finally, he answers a question from a young composer in the audience by telling him that after such a series, he's received offers to compose music in films, notably in the USA, but for now he is still in talks.

With the support of  Sacem
Société des Auteurs,
Compositeurs et
Éditeurs de Musique



CAFÉ SERIES: “FEMININE” SERIES



PARTICIPANTS :
ANNE LANDOIS, SCREENWRITER AND SHOWRUNNER
CONSTANCE DOLLÉ, ACTOR
SOPHIE DESCHAMPS, SCREENWRITER

CHAIRD BY :
CAROLINE VEUNAC, JOURNALIST

This year, Série Series is opening a new, open, informal discussion space, in the form of a “café series” dedicated to the role of women in series.

Caroline Veunac begins the debate with some examples of recent series such as *Happy Valley* and *Fleabag* in the United Kingdom, and *Spiral*, *Profilage*, *Sam and Louis(e)* in France: all very different series both in format and in genre. Nonetheless, what they do have in common is that they place complex heroines at the forefront who go against feminine clichés. Outside of Europe’s borders are more examples, such as *Top of the Lake* and *I Love Dick*, created and written (or co-written) by women.

The discussions will allow us to address several questions, including: Where is “girl power” in the series of today? What impact do women have on series as authors, directors or producers? Does assigning the task of writing to women ensure the creation of deeper, more interesting, more authentic female characters? What is the role of men in the changing representations of what is feminine and masculine? Is Europe, and France specifically, ready to welcome more complex, nuanced female characters?

WHERE ARE WOMEN IN CULTURE? AN ALARMING INITIAL OBSERVATION

Five years ago, the SACD (Authors’ Society) published the report “Où sont les femmes?” (Where Are the Women?) on the place of women in French cultural environments. Sophie Deschamps reminds us that the motivation for this study was the anger of women, particularly those working in live performance. The paper counts up the number of works by women scheduled in live performance, television and cinema, and observes the

changes in the number of women in management positions in cultural and audiovisual establishments. The results are damning, much worse than we could have imagined.

The first report, published in 2012, found that 84% of subsidies were granted to men. It also made it possible to highlight the fact that, in the audiovisual domain, female directors had been simply eradicated: only 7% of works of fiction broadcast were directed by women. Sophie Deschamps considers these results particularly troubling. Based on this observation, the SACD was able to make some progress. For example, 40% of members of CNC (National Film Centre) commissions - responsible for granting financial support - are now women. But there is still a long way to go.

Gender equality is a major issue affecting society. Cultural environments must set an example in this regard. Culture should reflect society at its best. The image that is presented nowadays is still one of a masculine, patriarchal society. The fight for equality, and particularly equal opportunities, must absolutely be taken very seriously from this point on. We cannot, Sophie Deschamps insists, “leave behind such an unequal society for future generations.”

TELEVISION SERIES, OR A TRIBUTE TO DIVERSITY

The SACD’s report observes the position of women in creative roles. But what about the representation of female characters in French or European drama? Is there a direct cause-and-effect relationship between the lack of female authors and directors, and the underrepresentation of women in fiction?

On this point, Anne Landois feels that female heroines have always existed in television. The reason for this is that female members of the public are often those who determine which programmes will get watched, even though the kinds of productions that would truly interest them are rarely on offer. The television heroines that Anne Landois was able to compile from the 1990s were monolithic and perfect, flawless. The representation of women left no room for blemishes, and ambiguity was exiled from the series. It should be noted that, after a decade, series are beginning to show new kinds of heroines. They represent the diversity of women and, even more importantly, their “normalcy”. The series of today are showing “the aspects of women that we have always kept hidden”.

50-YEAR-OLD WOMEN: INVISIBLE WOMEN

Sophie Deschamps concedes that the representation of women is better these days. Still, she notes that female actors are disappearing from screens once they reach the age of 50. As though “a woman beyond menopause is no longer a woman”. Actresses reappear at the age of 65 as grandmothers. This is particularly true in France; less so in the UK where series like *Happy Valley* are not afraid to offer excellent roles to mature women.

Constance Dollé notes that, although series have effectively opened a door for more interesting female characters, this is only because of their specific format. The series makes it possible to develop the psychology of the characters over time, and the roles offered to actresses are more interesting than in the past. However, she agrees with Sophie Deschamps in that, in fiction, women play a “biological function”. Above all, they are the mothers of children.

At the same time, the representation of an aging body, particularly a female one, is troubling. The age of a woman’s body reminds us of the image of physical decline, a degeneration, while that of a man’s body does not prompt the same discomfort. More generally, Constance Dollé notes that women’s bodies have always been problematic.

CHANGING THE VIEW OF WOMEN

The camera view is traditionally identified as a masculine view. Since the majority of directors are men, women have most often been filmed as objects of their desire. As such, even today, women must be seductive. The women we see on screen are not real: they don’t look like anyone.

Sophie Deschamps recalls an episode from the series *Candice Renoir*: charming for sure, and primarily dedicated to the heroine’s weight problems and her difficulties in fastening her skirt. Would we ever see a man unable to zip up his flies? Sophie Deschamps doubts it. Why do male characters never have weight problems? Women always have weight problems or romantic problems, and never stop talking about their children. Screenwriters, both men and women, always feel obliged to speak of “girl problems”.

One participant then brings up the American series *This Is Us*, which “broke down all the doors” by portraying the family in all of its dimensions. When weight problems are addressed, they affect men as much as women. The series adopts a very contemporary view of its characters.

Constance Dollé notes that, in the vast majority of the scenes she has had the opportunity to read, women talk about nothing but love and their families. These are their two topics of choice. Their conversations never touch on their thoughts: politics, for example, or commitment. Television never shows women reflecting together. Anne Landois thinks the problem is more general and goes beyond the breach between men and women. Right now, at least in France, there are no series in which men talk to each other about politics. French series are “lighter”.



A FEMALE PERSPECTIVE?

Caroline Veunac imagines that if the number of female writers and directors were to increase, the perspective shown on women would change. This brings us back to the SACD's observation. How can we increase the number of female directors at present? For Sophie Deschamps, it could only take place in the form of a requirement. "Equal opportunities need to be forced." An invisibility threshold has been established at around 33%. This means that if less than 33% of a trade are made up of women, they are invisible. Today, between 35% and 40% of screenwriters are women; for directors, the figures are much less satisfactory.

A female director enters into the discussion to point out that the image still held today of a director is that of John Ford. A man in a hat, with a deep voice, smoking a cigar. This image of the virile director is not only expected by casts and crews, but it reassures producers. She recalls that for her first directing job, without female role models, she treated the film crew with some degree of harshness, primarily seeking to establish her authority. Later, with 25 years of experience behind her, she learned to approach her craft in a different way, with more softness, in a more collaborative spirit. In any case, the difficulties faced by female directors are reminiscent of those encountered by all women in professional circles, regardless of their sector.

Caroline Veunac mentions the idea of a female perspective. Is there such a thing as a specifically feminine way of writing, acting, directing or composing? She does not believe in this concept. A composer in the room remembers that she was denied a film on the pretext that it was a war film: thus, the idea was that a woman could not compose music for a war film! Sophie Deschamps observes that this kind of denial never happens to men. We would never ask a male director if he feels up to shooting female characters. But women are always asked

to justify themselves. It is not up to artists, male or female, to justify themselves. Why ask a woman if she has a female perspective? A female artist expresses herself with her gut, her heart and her sexuality, just like male artists do. The question of a so-called feminine sensibility should never even be raised. Anne Landois recalls a time when women were called in in the second instance to re-write and "feminise" scenes, to "paint the series pink".

One participant, an aficionado of television series, feels that female screenwriters provide a very precious and useful perspective. The recent appearance of female showrunners – such as Lena Dunham, for example – makes it possible for more interesting and ambiguous characters to emerge. Anne Landois can't help but agree wholeheartedly. She adds that, if female creators are now effectively able to offer more complex female characters, they are revealing something that men dare not reveal. In fact, many male screenwriters censor themselves and do not feel qualified to talk about women.

GOING BEYOND THE CONCEPT OF GENDER

Constance Dollé observes that many roles appearing in scripts are allocated to a man or a woman, despite the fact that the sex of the character is entirely inconsequential. Many roles could be filled by either a man or a woman.

Actress Geena Davis, for her part, is leading an active rebellion against sexism in cinema. In a move towards equality, for film projects under development she suggests transforming certain male characters into female characters. Caroline Veunac notes that this trend wishes to see some actresses being cast in Hollywood roles originally designed for women. Sandra Bullock was recently cast in the main role in a film – *Our Brand Is Crisis* – despite the fact that the character had originally been written for George Clooney. The modifications that had to be made to the script were actually very slight.

Caroline Veunac asks if it is possible to write a character without having decided from the beginning if they are male or female. Anne Landois says she would not be able. She needs to know the sex of a character before writing. Philippe Niang, for his part, insists on the concept of otherness, which he considers essential in fiction.

BROADCASTERS WITH COLD FEET

Many participants agree that the lack of diversity in French television is linked, in particular, to the hesitation of broadcasters, who have a responsibility to meet in this regard, particularly for those in public service. Sophie Deschamps notes that France, unlike other countries, does not have small channels capable of creating different, "niche" fiction projects. French audiovisual policy has always favoured digital television channels, which, in reality, are nothing but re-broadcasting tools for the main broadcasters.

For Sophie Deschamps, one of the main difficulties in France today is that 80% of fiction pieces are crime dramas. Anne Landois, for her part, feels that the prevalence of the crime drama on the small screen is not an obstacle in itself, and that it is possible to change the view of women throughout all genres. The crime drama has also made it possible to have new female figures emerge. A member of the audience still feels that diversifying the genres shown on television would make it possible to multiply the types of characters shown. A lover of fantasy cinema (a genre that is completely absent from French television), she is certain that this specific genre could open up a path for other types of female roles.

Anne Landois feels that diversity will come from new producers like Netflix. The American platform takes an unusual approach that none of France's major broadcasters currently has. Netflix relies only on authors and originality. The programmes available on its platform are often local and targeted at a young audience.

Sophie Deschamps nonetheless remains unconvinced that a platform like Netflix France (which, to date, has produced only *Marseille*, a series that does little to advance the cause of women) works in favour of diversity or gender equality. Rather, it serves as competition, thus obliging broadcasters to revisit their fiction strategies little by little.

As far as series are concerned, local has become global. A series like *Borgen* is very Scandinavian by design, but has found worldwide success. Caroline Veunac's takeaway from this is that it is in French broadcasters' interest to produce more original series, in which representations of women in particular are more challenging. The need to challenge and provoke is shared by many creators.

It should be noted that the quality of dramas offered on French television is increasing continuously. For Anne Landois, the reason is simple: "We learn by doing, and the more authors write, the better they get at it." To create good series, you have to produce a high quantity of them. The sector needs more professionalism – and more women!

In partnership with ACS (the French association for series critics).



DOING DRAMA - DANGEROUSLY RUTH CALEB, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER



SPEAKER :
MARIE-ÉLISABETH DEROCHE-MILES, PROGRAMME CONSULTANT

This sixth edition of Série Series has focused on courage, a word often used when talking about Ruth Caleb's career. A producer at the BBC for over 50 years, she influenced not only the audiovisual landscape, but the world!

After a few wrong turns, discovering she was meant to be neither an actress, nor a politician or a director, she found her way in producing and her act of courage was done via the medium of drama.

Nevertheless, when asked directly, she is not sure that producing a series like *Care* (a TV film, based on real events, about rape in juvenile homes) is really an act of courage. To her, it was a necessity. She does, however, admit to having shown patience and probably downright stubbornness. It took her over 5 years to convince the BBC to invest in this project. Without that stubbornness, the film would never have been made.

One could also argue that Ruth Caleb isn't afraid of anything. During the production of *England Expects* (a series about the far-right movement in England), she received serious threats. Yet, she still won't claim to have been courageous. In her opinion, it's more of a form of carelessness. She didn't realise she was putting her family in danger.

Be that as it may, she is certain that creating a drama, when its mission is to denounce social dysfunction, always has consequences...

PUSHING BOUNDARIES FOR DIFFERENT STORIES BARBARA EMILE, PRODUCER, DOUGLAS ROAD PRODUCTIONS



Barbara Emile starts by expressing what a pleasure it's been discovering Série Series and taking part in such an original event. She apologises on behalf of Sir Lenny Henry who was supposed to speak alongside her but could not make it due to filming commitments.

Overall, she is surprised to be asked to speak about courage, when it seems to her like everyone else here is courageous, especially independent producers who, on a daily basis, fight for the same thing: telling stories that have never been told before.

AN IRRESISTIBLE NEED TO TELL STORIES...

Sometimes, after long months of development with no funding, a beautiful adventure comes to life. But why so much effort? Barbara Emile is convinced, as are many others here (actors, producers, writers), that there are some stories that simply must be told and there is an audience waiting for them. Although the journey is often long and strewn with obstacles, and can never be undertaken without commitment, investment and courage, it is a path worth taking.

The industry today is very competitive. It's run by audience numbers and finance. Broadcasters want great audience numbers whilst simultaneously respecting financial requirements and avoiding risk at all cost. The independent producer's job is therefore particularly rough. Even if your pitch is perfect and your project is well set up, factors other than the heart of the story are what make broadcasters lose faith in a project.

Therefore, we question everything: the writer, their fame, the format (will it be understood? Is it in line with what works nowadays?)... In London, there is a 'A-list' of writers. Often, working with one of them can get an otherwise run-of-the-mill project picked up by a channel. She adds - all the while apologising for her frankness and directness - that she even tested this by presenting a particularly average project to a broadcaster. After promising the participation of one these writers, she got a commission!

... AND TO TELL THEM DIFFERENTLY!

Nevertheless - and maybe above all - in this risk-opposed world, it's vital to tell stories and especially to always work to find a different way of telling them. Genres can then be constantly reinvented. Barbara Emile notes the importance, now more than ever, of understanding the diversity of audiences in order for television to remain a topical form of media. Nowadays, television is far from the only thing that youngsters use to inform or amuse themselves. We must therefore work with diverse people, especially youngsters. It seems necessary to find new and adapted ways of working. She recently welcomed three young, talented, smart and respectful 'content creators' who really wanted to work with her production company. However, they all told her that brands and social media give them much more leeway, buy the stories that they want to tell and pay them a lot better. She adds that Snapchat invests a lot in drama and she is very worried about the moment when they will have found the right economic model that will fundamentally change the media world.

THE POWER OF 'EXILED' VOICES

Without these innovative content creators, how does one shake the world? How can television remain a media of the future?

She has always known that 'exiled' voices are harder to hear, but once heard and shaped, they can change the world.

This is why she is committed - along with her associate - on working with diverse new talents. It's not just about working with women or ethnic minorities. It's about working with talent from social spheres where they might not have the luxury of going to film school. It's about giving a voice to other age groups. They are the ones with the exciting, new and unexplored stories!

These new talents must be brought in to all the different stages of creation in every genre, from writing to filming, from production to direction and even broadcasting. She has experienced this even with period drama.

Lastly, on this now globalised stage, broadcasters no longer

hide their desire to reach everyone, young or old, Indian, African, Chinese or European diaspora. Henceforth, funding and audiences are global and one must be boldly prepared for that.

COLLABORATING AND CO-PRODUCING TO PUSH BOUNDARIES

On this topic, it seems that co-production is the way forwards. It's not always easy. One must adapt to collaborate. Here Emile speaks from experience. It requires really questioning what you can bring to a collaboration. When partners don't know what they bring to the table, the work becomes harder to do, the collaboration is less fluid. We then risk losing the richness we get from this melting pot of diversity that allows us to not only tell new stories to a global audience, but also to find the funding to match. There's a lot of potential there and even though she has not been very successful in the matter, she wants to keep working towards it.

It's by focusing on talent and her fierce determination to look for it, find it and support it that she hopes to push boundaries.

THE LOVE OF RISK

But all of this doesn't go without risk. In fact, that's her vision for her production company: backing talent regardless of where it originates. It provides work for everyone and roles for on-screen talent.

Despite the fact that Barbara Emile claims she has not been particularly courageous in her career, she hopes that by putting her own journey into context, she can illustrate how it's not just about being courageous, it's about taking risks.

At the start of her career, she interviewed at the BBC as a script editor. As she was waiting in a security office to go into her interview, an employee thought that this young black lady was here to take the post. He gave her a pile of files and told her what bus to take. After trying to explain that she was here to apply for a very different job, she is told not to be lazy and to just get on with it. Just as she is thinking that at least if she doesn't get the job as script editor she can do the post, she is asked to come in for her interview. She then ends up sitting opposite three people, all sounding like they are from Oxford or Cambridge, talking about television as if it were theatre and hardly understanding what they were talking about. Luckily for her, they were looking for a fresh eye on *EastEnders* so she spoke of her experience working small jobs in the market and her brother coming out of jail. This was exactly what they were looking for and that's where her career started.

She learnt fast. She would often come in before everyone else, in order to learn the job. She would always sit in meetings in a 'group of one' and would take lots of notes. That's when she promised herself that if she was ever in a position where she could influence recruitment in this closed world, she would do everything in order for it to be open to other profiles.

Within a year, she became an executive and her new position meant she could work to increase the place of women on television. She used the budget to introduce women into the production discreetly, by getting them to shadow directors and writers. These women who were starting in the shadows also learnt very fast whilst being in direct contact with the production process of *EastEnders*. Taught 'on the job', a lot of these women became excellent and decision making elements at the BBC. Therefore, by the time Barbara Emile left the BBC, 50% of the teams of writers, producers, directors and actors were women, 30% of which had ethnic minority backgrounds.

She concludes by giving an example to highlight that sometimes you have to take risks. She reads the pitch of a 'period police procedural drama', set in the North of England in 1837. Once you've had a taste of pushing boundaries, you can't stop...



THE COURAGE TO LOOK AHEAD THIERRY KELLER,

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF - USBEK & RICA



Usbek & Rica is a magazine concerned with tomorrow, resolutely optimistic within a society that nonetheless prefers a dystopian view of the future. In this context, producing optimistic content is not always an easy thing to do, particularly since popular culture has a profound influence on collective mentalities, and, in general, producers of fiction do not always help us to have a positive outlook on the future. Thierry Keller suggests that if there is any courage in his role, it is the courage to resist the sense of discouragement, and to continue providing a constantly benevolent and optimistic point of view of what is to come and what will constitute tomorrow's world.

USBK & RICA: THE PERSIANS OF THE FUTURE

The publication began as a mini-book sold in bookshops, then became a magazine sold in magazine kiosks. It has already been reinvented several times, and it experiences journalism differently. Taking advantage of a variety of digital formats, while also organising public forums on the major issues of tomorrow, taking the reader to spend a day in a fab lab working on maker boxes that will allow them to make prototypes for their own projects... The palette is varied, which is just another form of optimism.

So why the name? Usbek and Rica are two characters in Montesquieu's *The Persian Letters*. Born in Persia, they travel to Paris, where they marvel at the customs of the era, and describe them in the many letters they send to their friends back home. It is this look of surprise, this philosophical presupposition that is echoed in *Usbek & Rica*: the idea is to write articles as if from the future – what Paris was for Montesquieu's Persians – as though they were to be read by people who knew nothing

about our time. The journalists are the Usbeks and Ricars of tomorrow; what they see is not quite what we see and, with distance and a slight delay, they always instil a positive vision of what they discover.

In any case, here, "things are much better than they used to be". We can be here in Fontainebleau discussing narration and fiction instead of being holed up in trenches...

ONE FUTURE, SEVERAL FUTURES...

WEAK SIGNALS AND BROAD TRENDS

To recount the future, *Usbek & Rica* dedicates itself to detecting weak signals and to always updating its perspective. Once, we feared that we would see a two-tier humanity emerge; today, the possibility of being replaced by an "augmented" humanity, a techno-scientific civilisation that would make today's humans obsolete, could lead to us being more fearful of the emergence of a world with literally two humanities!

Usbek & Rica has been around for seven years now, and Thierry Keller highlights the development of two broad trends. First, "anything is possible". Who knows whether, in 2050, humans might have merged with machines? This no longer appears to be out of the question. In terms of fiction, simply taking up these emerging codes could lead to dizzying possibilities!

Second, as far as information is concerned, "its core is fraying at the edges". Many individual universes now coexist, and are incarnated, for example, in personalised news feeds (Facebook, Instagram, etc.). We are witnessing the shattering of one single reality into a multitude of "bubbles", of different communities.

This core of information is now being "disrupted" at the edges, revealing realities that are different for each person.

Even truth itself is in crisis. And that's actually good news! For content producers in particular, the disappearance of the "gurus" who were once able to impose this truth upon passive receivers opens up a wide range of possibilities. The time has come to rebuild society, become more active and creative, animating perspectives and communities. In reality, it is no longer very useful to rely on an already-formed world that can broadcast your ideas. Building the future is a collaborative effort.

NO, THOSE WEREN'T THE GOOD OLD DAYS!

More than ever, in this context, it is imperative not to give in to fascination with dystopia. Faced with those who insist that "those were the good old days," courage appears to lie in simply remaining optimistic, all while assuming the inevitably pessimistic side of our personalities. Thierry Keller recommends getting used to this kind of schizophrenia. In the world to come, opposites will often coexist!

Besides, the news is good – some of it, at least! The advent of this digital civilisation is weakening a sort of retrograde patriarchy that aspires to an immobile society, built on flagrant inequality. Isn't that a movement worth encouraging? Plus, failures and fractures are opportunities to be seized. As a writer (he has also been a screenwriter), he suggests rejoicing over the appearance of an – almost – blank slate; we need one, to fill it with the stories to come.

THE MORALS OF ACTION

To support this optimism in action, Thierry Keller recommends taking a critical view of a digital civilisation that tends to make decisions based on algorithms and data. Taking time to understand the foundations on which digital formats are based is leverage for liberation. And for content producers, he suggests trusting their editorial chain. The tool is powerful and transferable to any industry. Rather than chasing form, we must consistently look after the deeper meaning and state of mind.

The editorial chain also makes it possible to move resolutely towards a content policy. The format matters little, since it is eventually overtaken by the editorial chain. A look at *Usbek & Rica*'s interactions with its community demonstrates this. Good articles draw readers, even if they are long. Pouring authenticity into the work produced is an alternative route to the traditional race to the reader. This also allows expression on all types of media and in all formats.

In conclusion, it seems to him that the courage to look ahead, in the end, means holding out a hand to those who don't have the privilege of writing, with them and with optimism, upon the blank slate of the future. By integrating our contemporary hybrid identity conditions, we can bet that tomorrow will be another, brighter day, and one that we can build together.

In partnership with **Usbek & Rica**



REPRESENTING CONFLICTS ON SCREEN: AN ACT OF COURAGE? OLIVIER BROCHE,

ACTOR AND CURATOR FOR WAR ON SCREEN



Olivier Broche is an actor as well as an organiser for the War on Screen festival, which is almost five years old. This festival for war films was created primarily because, until its creation, there was no other event dedicated exclusively to the representation of conflicts on screen; but also because the region of La Marne, where the festival site of Châlons-en-Champagne is located, is a place that has been exposed to war several times over the course of history, making it particularly apt for the topic. The festival is a competition between 10 films, fictional or documentary, that have not yet been released in theatres. Short-film competitions have also been organised, as well as specific features and retrospectives.

War films can be considered a genre in themselves, but they have an added complexity given that they span all other genres. War is present in burlesque films, musical comedies, suspense films, Westerns... War is a transversal theme that offers a multitude of creative possibilities.

COURAGE IN AMERICAN CINEMA: COURAGE IN ACTION

Regarding courage, Olivier Broche suggests comparing perspectives from either side of the Atlantic: more specifically, looking at courage in French and American cinema. It can be noted that American cinema focuses on action, while French cinema prioritises characters.

In American cinema, courage is revealed when the characters are confronted with danger. It is necessarily individual in nature. This refers to characters like Gary Cooper's in *Sergeant York*, a pacifist character pushed to fight for the greater good. He becomes a hero of the American ideal, at least in classic cinema.

Kirk Douglas' character in *Paths of Glory* represents physical and moral courage: physical, because he does not hesitate to engage in combat; and moral, because he dares to confront his superiors. He, too, represents the essence of the American hero because he stands up for his beliefs, demonstrating his courage, and more so when he is reprimanded.

A clear change in the representation of courage is visible from the 50s on, beginning with major directors like Aldrich. The courage shown in *The Dirty Dozen* and *Vera Cruz* is now that of a mercenary, for no greater good. This representation is also found in Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch* through William Holden and Ernest Borgnine's characters, who go in search of danger and overcome it for purely personal ends. Their deaths come once they can no longer rely on this motive. In *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*, Clint Eastwood's 'The Good' kills in cold blood and clears the way for Peckinpah and Aldrich's characters in the '70s. American cinema begins sliding into a sort of critical approach to courage, insofar as the end goals evolve alongside the American ideal. Courage is thus a vehicle for addressing the issue of community, and the implication of the wider group.

The '90s suspense film *Starship Troopers*, in which courage no longer features, represents another break from the norm. This film, which has been interpreted as fascist, in fact reveals a possible fascist future in America...

As for French cinema, although all of the characters in *Army of Shadows* sacrifice themselves – which is a form of courage – heroisation is absent from the film. The ghost-like characters appear to be responding to a duty. But the film is not truly

representative of the view of courage at the time, because in the 1930s, the deserter and the fugitive were at the forefront: the character thus became more important than the action. In French cinema, the traitor and the coward are almost as important as the heroic figure. There is a desire to return to these characters, and courage in films becomes almost that of the filmmaker rather than that of the hero. Another iconic film, *Lacombe Lucien*, criticised the idea of placing the two sides of wartime France back-to-back: involvement in Nazi collaboration on the one hand, and involvement in the resistance on the other.

ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE: THE COURAGE OF WOMEN

Olivier Broche turns to *La Grande Vadrouille* to evoke the heroisation of female characters, through Marie Dubois and Catherine Deneuve in *The Last Metro*. Joan of Arc is another example of a character with not only physical courage but also moral and spiritual courage. In Bresson and Dreyer's films, her fear of God and of death makes her a spiritual character. She shows courage by never backing down. A spotlight on the character of Joan of Arc will also be organised for the next edition of *War on Screen*.

In partnership with



SYDNEY GALLONDE, CODE OF CONDUCT: COURAGE



SPEAKER :
SYDNEY GALLONDE, CEO AND EXECUTIVE PRODUCER,
MAKE IT HAPPEN STUDIO

Sydney Gallonde is very familiar with *Série Series* because he came to Fontainebleau to present the series *No Second Chance*. This year, Marie Barraco invited him to come and speak about his journey, and share with festivalgoers his idea of courage. But when he received the invitation, the first question he asked himself was: “Am I really a courageous person?”

THE COURAGE TO DIVE IN

Before asking this question, or at least before being able to answer it, we must first define the notion of courage itself. To do this, Sydney Gallonde uses a metaphor: “When we dive into the water, it is not until we find out that the water is cold that we realise that we were being brave.” So Sydney Gallonde does not know if he was brave: he simply “dived in”.

Sydney Gallonde grew up in Toulouse, raised alongside three brothers and sisters by his Haitian mother, the very picture of courage. He was lucky enough to have a television in his room, and spent his childhood with his eyes glued to the small screen. “It was my window onto the world”, he says. After all those square-eyed years, he realised that he “spoke fluent tv” and decided to work in the industry.

He dived in and moved to Paris in 2003 without knowing exactly what he wanted to do. He initially thought of becoming an actor, then a television animator or a screenwriter. His ambitions were still blurry. There was only one thing he knew for sure: he wanted to tell stories, if only because he loved listening to them himself. But how could he gain a foothold in a domain as exclusive as television without any experience, contacts or training?

A JOURNEY PEPPERED WITH CHANCE ENCOUNTERS

Sydney Gallonde’s journey was peppered with chance encounters. Emmanuel Chain was the first person who gave him the confidence he needed to “find his foothold” in the world of television. Sydney Gallonde simply had the courage to approach him and tell him: “I want to make television”. “No,” the journalist replied, “you say ‘I want to make something in television’. Come and find me with a proper professional project and I’ll make time to listen.” Sydney Gallonde knew that his main asset was the “gift of the gab”. He decided to find work as a receptionist.

So, Sydney Gallonde started out on the telephone switchboard and reception desk at a television channel, as well as serving coffee to the guests. But the role he played was actually one of a “control tower”, and for one year he had the fortune of accessing an accelerated training programme in the trade. But he had no intention of stopping here. To feel alive, Sydney Gallonde needs to have goals. He sums up this ambition: “If the hen house is opened for me, I’m not going in to eat the chickens: I’m going to raise them, have them lay eggs, sell the eggs at the market and become a farmer.”

OTHER DREAMS, OTHER AMBITIONS

Sydney Gallonde knew he couldn’t stay at the reception desk his whole life. He had other dreams, other ambitions, but everything was still in flux. So, he decided to reassess himself, which, he says, requires a certain dose of courage. Without knowing what he wanted – or could – do in television, he became “a sponge” and frequented people who were “in the know”.

One encounter led to another. Sydney Gallonde hit it off with Dominique Delpont, executive producer for Emmanuel Chain. He rose through the ranks in a production company under Jean-Pierre Dusséaux’s wing, who put his foot on the ladder. He produced his first series for M6 – *Victoire Bonnot* – with Valérie Damidot (another very fortunate encounter) playing the lead role.

It would take him only five years to go from his position as a receptionist to that of a producer. Sydney Gallonde admits that he was very lucky, but more than anything, he had the courage to seize it. Many people believed in him: all he had to do was prove to them that they had been right about him.

When Sydney Gallonde launched head first into creating his first series, he realised that the industry is actually full of courageous people. First, the screenwriters who dare to put down on paper a story that a producer, a broadcaster, a director or an actor might eventually call into question. Screenwriters have the double courage of laying themselves bare and accepting that their work might be questioned, or modified.

Anyone who takes on the creation of an artistic endeavour must have the courage to accept the comments and wishes of others, and to be adaptable. Sydney Gallonde reminds us that “like in life, we can’t do it all ourselves” and that all human or artistic adventures are above all collaborative adventures.

YOU HAVE TO BE MAD...

Victoire Bonnot was quite successful, but Sydney Gallonde didn’t have the luxury of being able to rest on his laurels. He had to find the courage to start again, which is even more difficult to do when you have been confronted with all the sets of problems surrounding the creation of a television series. Getting back into the saddle, “launching yourself into a new adventure when you know all the difficulties that await you requires more than courage. You have to be mad!” To stop himself from giving up, Sydney Gallonde never let himself forget how lucky he was “to get paid to dream and to inspire dreams”.

Not long after *Victoire Bonnot*, Sydney Gallonde succeeded in what many have called a “beautiful bluff”. He won and, in a way, had the courage to convince Harlan Coben – author of several best-sellers available in translation all over the world and nicknamed “the master of sleepless nights” – to have faith in him... All without speaking a word of English! The writer

agreed to meet this young producer who came out of nowhere. “Everything I touch turns to gold,” Harlan Coben reminds him. “I don’t just want you to make me a series, I want it to be *THE* series, for it to be wildly successful.” Sydney Gallonde realised that he would have to carry his bluff through to the end. He took his courage with both hands and launched into the production of the series *Une Chance de trop* (*No Second Chance*). Success was on the cards. The series was a hit.

This dream collaboration was followed by a second series, *Juste un regard*, an adaptation of another Harlan Coben novel, *Just One Look*, which aired on TF1 in June. Sydney Gallonde realised that this second adventure was even more difficult than the first. “I realised that everyone was waiting for me to fail.”

NOT EVERYTHING TURNS TO GOLD

The first episode of *Juste un regard* aired on a Thursday evening. On Friday morning, the results arrived: the ratings were good, but less good than *Une Chance de trop*. The second episode aired. The ratings decreased slightly. *Juste un regard* didn’t seem to have the same impact on audiences as *Une Chance de trop*. Why could this be?

Sydney Gallonde still has no answer. All he knows is that he is proud of the series: proud that Harlan Coben and TF1 trusted him a second time. He also knows that he must once again find the courage to “get back in the saddle”, because although he knows the recipe for making a series, he does not yet know the recipe for success. Harlan Coben was wrong: *not everything turns to gold*.

He must find the courage to hold on. Now, the CEO of a production company, he is aware that he has many people counting on him, trusting him. He must do everything he can to respect this trust. “And that’s where you need courage, because there are a million good reasons to pack it all in.” Sydney Gallonde draws his courage from others, from the people who support him in his projects. Many people think they were born under a lucky star, when in fact, their luck lies in being surrounded by kind and wonderful people.

SERIES STORIES

A DAY DEDICATED TO AUTHORS AND PRODUCERS

This year, Série Series launched a new initiative with the backing of the Île-de-France region, for promoting research and development in series creation. During a whole day dedicated to the creator-producer collaboration, on Friday 30th June, running parallel to the festival programme, "Series Stories" brought together fifty or so European authors and producers, providing a made-to-measure programme of meetings, workshops and talks. The aim is to create a privileged space to facilitate exchanges and meetings between creators and producers, to bring about new projects for European series, and to foster new collaborations.

In the morning, participants were invited for an inspiring masterclass by British producer Ruth Caleb and for a discussion on « the series experience » by Nicola Lusuardi, who encouraged several authors to share their experience.

In the afternoon, three « Creative Vision workshops » were organised for smaller groups of participants with our creative partner MediaXchange:

- Writers' opportunities – what options are available for writers in the International tier of the Drama industry?
- Efficient development – comparative European/North American approaches.
- The expanding role of the Director within the creative team.

With the support of



MEDIA XCHANGE

THE SERIAL EXPERIENCE



SPEAKERS :

NICOLA LUSUARDI, CONSULTANT, SCRIPT DOCTOR
ANNA FREGONESE, SCREENWRITER
FRIDA HALLBERG, PRODUCER, CASTING DIRECTOR
MICHAŁ KWIECIŃSKI, PRODUCER
IGOR BREJDYGANT, SCREENWRITER

The 'serial experience' is a vast and hard to define topic. Nicola Lusuardi offers us her point of view on this experience, which is built on a specific paradigm, very different from other types of storytelling.

THE NARRATIVE CONTINUUM AND THE ART OF TIME

The new contemporary TV series are very different to their ancestors from the 70s and 80s. They show a new narrative complexity and they now use time as a creative opportunity. Old models were set around a principle of repetition whereas now, variation is favoured, episode to episode or season to season.

The series experience is based on a sort of narrative continuum. They are now seen as very long films rather than the accumulation of independent episodes. Nicola Lusuardi notes that the most successful series evolve continuously, from season to season. Each new season challenges the previous season's concept, changes the point of view. Series favour unpredictability, to viewer's delight.

Reflecting the reality of time, serial temporality is infinite. The satisfaction felt by a viewer when following a series from season to season is such that the mere idea of it ending is unbearable. Nicola Lusuardi brings up the debates that followed the ends of series like *Lost* or *How I Met Your Mother*, which were necessarily anticlimactic. That is why a writer developing a series, with the hope that it will run over several seasons, should never think about the end of the story. Their main objective is to make each episode more interesting and sexy than the last, exploring the infinite possibilities stemming from the original concept. For the viewer, the serial experience unfolds over a few years. The series grows alongside them. The experience felt when

religiously following a series for years is so deep that no end will be acceptable. That might be the reason that David Chase decided to end his series *The Sopranos* with an ambiguous last episode (we don't know if the hero is dead or alive). He simply refused to close the series.

THE THREE MAIN STEPS TO DEVELOPING A SERIES

Nicola Lusuardi sees three main steps in developing a series. It is far more complex than what is demanded to create a film for the big screen. For some, this development can become a traumatic experience that Nicola Lusuardi goes as far as comparing to an ordeal. The process can be long... very long. It can also be peppered with conflicts, traps and sometimes difficulties that seem impossible to overcome.

1. DEVELOPING THE CONCEPT

The first step is developing the concept. Any new series creation starts with the development of the concept, which will have to be presented to potential broadcasters. This first step is vital; it's what allows the writer/creator to sell its idea. Yet, the European broadcasting landscape is very diverse and an idea cannot be sold the same way to each broadcaster. Hence, many channels (notably Netflix) ask for a short pitch, five pages or less; a tough achievement. Other broadcasters ask for a pilot and a bible.

Last year, Nicola Lusuardi was selected during a call for projects by HBO. The channel's representatives asked the participants to summarise their concept in two or three sentences. The text could not be any longer than three lines! That was the most extreme experience Nicola Lusuardi faced in this domain.

A lot of writers neglect this first step. To be able to present a concept in so few words, one needs to have complete, in-depth, almost intimate knowledge of the concept. Most creators forget that every idea is a world in itself. So even if quickly introduced, a concept must open up to a multitude of possibilities.

2. WRITING THE FIRST SEASON

If a writer is lucky, a broadcaster will take on their project, so now they have to write the first season. That's the second step in development, the hardest step, where the creator will face the most challenges. From experience, Nicola Lusuardi has identified two main obstacles. The first is purely 'technical'. The writer must find a common language with their partners, especially the producer and broadcaster. More often than not, they don't share the same definition of what constitutes good drama. The second obstacle, harder to overcome, is related to the identity of series as it is perceived by the different stakeholders. For example, for the broadcaster, this identity must reflect the channel's. Television channels have become brands. Therefore, when writing the series, the writer must imperatively take the channel's brand image into account.

3. AFTER BROADCASTING

The third step comes after broadcasting the first season. Then, the author has to develop a new season. This is where the series experience gets its meaning. Writers have to live with the characters they've created for several years.

Nicola Lusuardi asks the other speakers to share their point of view and methods. From the solitary experience to the writing room, from showrunner to head writer, from regular intervention to writing a series from start to finish... there are many different experiences in a writer's career.

IT'LL NEVER BE PERFECT

Anna Fregonese admits that for a long time, she strived to find the perfect creative process, one that she could use regardless of the project. She was naive and has since understood that each experience was different and there is no magic process. A screenwriter's only option is to challenge himself with every new project.

Anna Fregonese recalls one of the first series she worked on. The plot followed the trials and tribulations of a large family (7 children). As tradition would have it, she and her co-writer starting writing a bible. The exercise proved to be fastidious, not to say extremely tedious. Anna Fregonese decided to change tactics and started writing a diary (the mother's personal one), about a hundred pages in length, which illustrated the narrative arc of the first season. This is the document she presented to broadcasters, although she was convinced no one would read a 100 page project. Broadcasters usually ask to read a synopsis of 5 pages or less. Luckily, she was wrong. The project got a broadcaster, very quickly in fact. The originality of her approach had paid off. The development process therefore had to be adapted to the nature of the project.

Anna Fregonese then brings up the animated series *Max & Maestro*, presented at Série Series during a screening session for children. She didn't originate the series, but worked on it as head writer. Very early on in the writing process, she realised she wouldn't be able to write the 52 x 13 minute episodes alone. So, she created a writers' room made up of 10 screenwriters. The writing took 9 months.

THE SCRIPT FACTORY

Frida Hallberg talks about a new experiment recently set up in Gothenburg, Sweden. In her experience, most series projects never get past the first step of development. Created in October 2016, Manusfabriken (The Script Factory), is a meeting spot and workplace dedicated to screenwriters. The main objective is to break the isolation that many writers feel and to enable them to come together in a convivial and unique location.

The association is now frequented by eight of the most successful writers in Sweden. The initiative is first and foremost about collaboration. Through Manusfabriken, screenwriters can share their experiences and know-how. Writers can collaborate on existing projects or start new ones. The projects developed belong entirely to the writers who are free to work with the producers they want.

Frida Hallberg is convinced that the writing of a good screenplay is based on a collaborative process. Thus, the association enables a writer to share the project they are working on with their peers, to get their advice and their help. Who better than a screenwriter to judge the quality of a series? Manusfabriken meant that a 'community of screenwriters' was created in Sweden.



CREATION IS NOT DEMOCRATIC

Michał Kwieciński commends the initiative in Sweden. Collaboration between screenwriters seems interesting to him. However, he points out that creation is not a democratic process. A producer in Poland for 27 years (he was the country's first independent producer), he saw his job evolve over the years. Today, he thinks that his role is mainly to protect the writers.

Indeed, when a project is sold to a channel, the writer is faced with an army of deciders who are all paid to give their opinion on the screenplay throughout development. Broadcasters are always tempted to intervene in the writing process and rarely stop themselves doing so. Michał Kwieciński's role is the defence against the frenzied interventionism of the channels. Most of the time, screenwriters don't need help. A producer's job, then, is to defend their writer's talent and to create a protective environment where they feel free to express themselves.

Nicola Lusuardi couldn't agree more. Art isn't democratic. That's why the role of showrunner was created. The development of a series needs to rely on a sole creator, capable of supervising the entire creative process and standing up to the broadcasters.

THE STRANGE DICTATORSHIP OF AUDIENCES

Igor Brejdygant wants to come back to subject of identity, approached earlier. Unlike Netflix, Polish channels don't have an identity and if they do, it changes daily. The biggest obstacle he is faced with today is the so-called 'taste of the audience', what viewers expect. Audience numbers have become an absolute priority and channels are incessantly measuring viewer satisfaction. Today, most projects are developed with a specific target in mind, which will only squash creativity.

Nicola Lusuardi concludes this masterclass on a positive note. The European broadcasting landscape has evolved. Today, new broadcasters bring a new trend into the world of series. The system is now able to absorb new ideas, new more adventurous and more unpredictable series concepts.



PRODUCING DRAMA AT THE BBC AND TRYING TO CHANGE THE WORLD

RUTH CALEB,

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER (ROYAUME-UNI)



SPEAKER :
RUTH CALEB, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

CHAIRD BY :
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This year, Ruth Caleb, one of the most influential British producers, did *Série Series* the honour of giving a masterclass during Series Stories. The discussion led to a better understanding of one of the great voices of the BBC, a courageous woman attracted to risk. Over the span of her career, Ruth Caleb has proved that no one scares her and that drama is a precious tool used to try and change our society, in all its complexities and dimensions.

FULL MARKS

Originally, Ruth Caleb wanted to be an actress. The idea of becoming a producer had never crossed her mind. Her father tried to steer her away from acting and told her that if she didn't go to university, she would regret it her entire life. If her father hadn't tried so hard to convince her, she probably would have gone to university to study politics or economics. But Ruth Caleb has such a contradictory nature that at the age of 18, she applied to drama schools.

She realised quite quickly that she probably wasn't talented enough to make it on the London stage or in films. But despite dropping out of drama school, what she learnt there showed her another path. Ruth Caleb decided that if she wasn't going to be an actress, she would become a politician. Both jobs seemed quite similar.

After giving up politics, she decided to become a director, or at least a screenwriter. In 1965, TV drama, especially series, was still very young. The BBC had no competition and reigned tall, producing over 400 hours of drama every year. By chance, Ruth Caleb heard that they were looking for summer work experience. She started at the BBC three weeks after her interview at the very bottom of the ladder, in the production

department, knowing that this job was just a step in her future directing career.

Ruth Caleb specifies that at the time, no one wanted to work in the series department as they were deemed too 'working-class'. That's where she started, as an assistant floor manager. She joined a small team of three: a director, his assistant and an executive producer. She gradually climbed the rungs of the ladder, going from assistant to associate producer, then executive producer, then Head of Drama of BBC Wales and finally on to the head office in London. Today, she is back doing what she loves: producing.

BREAD OR BLOOD

The first series Ruth Caleb produced for the BBC was called *Bread or Blood*. Originally, the channel had given her the job of developing a project based on William Henry Hudson's 1910 novel *A Shepherd's Life*. The plot is set in the 19th century and depicts the daily life of shepherds in Wiltshire. Ruth Caleb wasn't overjoyed. She was convinced the project did not suit her. She was about to give up when she read two short paragraphs in the novel about the 'swing riots', the farmers' uprising in the South and East of England in 1830. Driven to poverty by land owners, farmers burnt down the fields. They carried around banners that said: 'Bread or Blood'. Ruth Caleb realised that that was the sort of thing she wanted to talk about. This little known episode in English history was told in a short five episode long series.

Ruth Caleb has always been attracted to risky and dangerous projects. The second example that comes to her mind when she is asked about her career is *Care*, which she produced for BBC Wales in 2000. The story is based on real events. She read in a newspaper that a police officer had sued the local paper for slander after being accused of raping a minor. The courts proved him right and £500,000 was to be paid to the police officer. Six months after the verdict, one of the young men who testified against him committed suicide. Instinctively, Ruth Caleb knew this story had to be told. The negotiations with the BBC were long and tough. The channel was refusing to produce the series from fear of themselves being sued, but after several years of constant debating, they accepted for this terrible event to be adapted as a drama. They made it imperative that the names of the people and places in question be changed.

Care was broadcast in 2000 and won multiple awards. The TV film was watched by over 6 million viewers, which the BBC was certainly not expecting. After the broadcast, Ruth Caleb received many moving testimonials of people who had been victims of rape in their childhood. *Care* proved that drama was as efficient as a documentary in transmitting ideas about our society and provoking thought. Ruth Caleb points out that in 2016, the police officer was brought to justice for the acts he had committed 40 years earlier. The court found him guilty of rape on a minor and he was sent to prison, where he committed suicide.

The majority of the dramas that Ruth Caleb produced for the BBC were based on real events (she calls them 'factual dramas'). No subject is taboo. In 2009, she produced *A Short Stay in Switzerland*, a TV film about euthanasia. The development was very long and took several years. The BBC rejected several versions of the screenplay as they deemed it too biased. Indeed,

the story told by the screenwriter Frank McGuinness was very 'pro-euthanasia'. Ruth Caleb tried to convince the channel that the story reflected the writer's point of view, but to no avail. The BBC forced the screenwriter to add scenes so that both sides of the argument on euthanasia were evenly shown. When the TV film was broadcast on BBC One, it beat audience number records and opened the debate in England.

PANIC ROOM

To say that Ruth Caleb isn't afraid of anything is a euphemism. In 2004, she produced a two-part TV film called *England Expects*, about hooligans and the far-right movement in England. The film is a strong and uncompromising attack on racism and Alan Clarke's feature films of the 80s come to mind.

The far-right's reaction was particularly hostile. The screenwriter and lead actor were publicly threatened. Ruth Caleb was subject to anti-Semitic attacks in the ultra-nationalist press. The threats got so serious that she had to have a panic room built in her flat. The BBC went so far as to remove her photo to ensure her safety.

DARING TO IMPROVISE

Ruth Caleb admits she has a penchant for low budget improvised drama. She got a taste for them when she was working at BBC Wales. She was trying her best to promote Welsh actors and directors but most of the drama projects she presented to BBC London were turned down, usually for ridiculous reasons (Welsh actors' accents, the lack of 'great directors'). Ruth Caleb blames an insidious form of cultural racism towards the Welsh. Yet, she recalls that Wales has given Great Britain some of its finest actors: Richard Burton, Michael Sheen and Anthony Hopkins to name only a few.



One day, Ruth Caleb met Ceri Sherlock, a young director, at the Scottish National Opera. He had never worked in film or television. He had come up with the story of *Dafydd*, a young 16 year old prostitute from South Wales. The story is set in Amsterdam and he wanted all the dialogue to be in Welsh. The subject was very risqué, far from traditional Welsh drama, so naturally, Ruth Caleb was charmed. She struggled, in vain, to find funding. Refusing to give up, she asked Ceri Sherlock to write a short synopsis with no dialogue. She went to Amsterdam with a small team of 7 people. The TV film was completely improvised in Welsh in a few days.

Shooting *Dafydd* was one of Ruth Caleb's most treasured experiences. She realised that one can make great drama with almost no budget. She is fully aware that today she is speaking to a room full of screenwriters. Nevertheless, since that shoot, she has been a big fan of improvisation. After *Dafydd*, she produced a string of improvised dramas, most of them directed by documentary directors, all with minute budgets.

In 2000, Ruth Caleb produced *Nice Girl*, a first drama direction for Dominic Savage, a young documentary maker. The film was shot in two weeks with, once again, a very small budget and mostly improvised dialogue. Broadcast on BBC Two, *Nice Girl* was met with huge success and was awarded by the BAFTA.

Not long after that, Ruth Caleb produced *Last Resort* by Paweł Aleksander Pawlikowski, a young Polish documentary director. The story was partly improvised during the shoot. Originally, the story he presented to Ruth Caleb follows Tanya, a young Russian woman who came to London to marry an Englishman. When she arrives, she realises the address her future husband had given her did not exist. Abandoned, alone and penniless, she becomes a taxi driver's cleaning lady. Paweł Aleksander Pawlikowski wasn't satisfied with the story and a few weeks before the shoot, he decided to change the story. Now, the protagonist had a son and she came to England for political asylum. A week later, he came back with another version where

the young Russian girl ends up in pornography. Filming started and Paweł Aleksander Pawlikowski stopped it after two weeks. He spent a few days in the editing room and came out saying he now wanted to make a thriller. Filming resumed. Another week later, he stopped it again. Paweł Aleksander Pawlikowski decided that *Last Resort* would no longer be a thriller, but a love story. Filming resumed for two weeks. In the end, the film, originally produced for television, did the rounds at film festivals and won many awards.

Ruth Caleb is convinced that improvisation is a prodigious tool. It gives the actor an essential place in the artistic process. It allows them to let their imagination and personal qualities run wild. Furthermore, improvisation can be used for all types of drama, even the ones that don't seem to suit it. The screenplay for *The Other Boleyn Girl* (2003) - a period reconstruction of the lives of Mary and Ann Boleyn, two sisters in Henry VIII's court who fight for the King's affections - was entirely improvised by the actors during a four week workshop, overseen by director Philippa Lowthorpe.

THE MENTOR SCREENWRITER

However, Ruth Caleb knows that whatever the extent of improvisation or the size of the budget, the BBC will only accept to fund projects if they were supported and backed by a known screenwriter. She then developed a habit of calling on famous creators that she hired not as screenwriters, but more as mentors.

This was the case, for example, with *Tomorrow La Scala*, which she produced in 2002. Ruth Caleb met Francesca Joseph, who presented eight drama projects. None of them won her over. However, during the conversation, Francesca Joseph told her that she had previously directed an opera - Stephen Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* - in a high security prison. Professional singers played the main parts and the chorus parts were played by prisoners, most of them serving life sentences. After the show, the singers cooked each of the chorus prisoners' favourite meals.



This story immediately got Ruth Caleb's attention. She saw in it a great topic for a drama. She also saw an opportunity to improvise a musical, which had never been done before. The decision was made to film in an actual prison and to give some prisoners small roles. She presented the project to the BBC, who refused the whole project, judging it too risky, despite a minute £150,000 budget.

Ruth Caleb then contacted Paul Abbott, one of the countries most respected screenwriters. She was aware she did not have a sufficient budget to pay him what he was worth. She nevertheless managed to convince him to be a part of the project. Paul Abbott didn't work as a screenwriter per se (most of the dialogue was improvised), but as more of a mentor. Ruth Caleb presented the same pitch to the BBC. This time, with Paul Abbott at the helm, the channel green lighted the project.

Ruth Caleb worked for the BBC for over 50 years. She learnt to love the organisation and to share its values. Mainly attracted to controversy and difficult topics, she is very aware that she would never have been able to produce the type of fiction she wanted without the support of the BBC. She would also not have been able to do it without the support of exceptional screenwriters.

Ruth Caleb is convinced that projects, especially series, that have the privilege of being backed by a writer, have more chance of being made. This is still the case nowadays; public television has always favoured writers. A successful writer will always be able to sell their project, regardless of the topic.

Nevertheless, the relationship between screenwriter and producer can be difficult (although a lot less difficult than between screenwriter and director). Ruth Caleb has always

done her utmost to create the best conditions for a writer to best express themselves. Producers can be tempted to change a screenplay or to steer the writer. Some requests are perfectly legitimate. Be that as it may, Ruth Caleb is still convinced that a producer should intervene as little as possible. Their role is to ensure that the screenwriter speaks from their heart and guts.

HAS THE TASTE FOR RISK DISAPPEARED?

Ruth Caleb talks about her career with a certain nostalgia. She doesn't see herself being able to produce pieces like *Care*, *England Expects* or *Last Resort* anymore. Broadcasters nowadays are far more reticent to take risks. TV channels, the BBC included, are concerned only with audience numbers and so favour easy genres, like thrillers. These last two years, the BBC has been working on the development of a series that denounces the sexual abuse of minors within the Catholic Church. The press got wind of the project and a newspaper published an article entitled: 'The BBC attacks the Pope'. That was all it took for the BBC to pull its support. The series will probably never be made now.

Although we have to admit that nowadays there is a new taste for risk with new players like Netflix, Hulu and Amazon. The most courageous dramas recently have been series. To conclude, if Ruth Caleb had one piece of advice to give to creators (screenwriters, directors, composers and producers) it would be to always stay true to their own values.



THE BROADCASTERS' CONCLAVE

Introduced in 2013, the Conclave brings together the heads of drama of European channels for a convivial meeting behind closed doors, giving them the freedom to discuss key issues of the sector and their profession with their peers.

This year, broadcasters were encouraged to think about the notion of courage and whether it is an essential parameter in their daily professional lives, in their trajectory and in their choices. This year, two types of talk were offered in order to better answer each participants needs: a general discussion in a group on the subject of courage; or a smaller group discussion based on concrete case studies.

Year after year, the Conclave allows professionals to share their work methods, it enables the best practices of each country represented around the table to be shared and it creates strong relationships between European broadcasters.

In 2017, for the third consecutive year, the success of the Broadcaster's Conclave has spurred the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) into organising their annual drama meeting at Fontainebleau the day before Série Series, with a very similar format.



PARTICIPANTS 2017 :
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 JOHANNA BERGENSTRÄHLE, SWEDEN, TV4
 MARINA BLOK, THE NETHERLANDS, NTR
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 SEVDA SHISHMANOVA, BULGARIA, BNT
 MICHELE ZATTA, ITALY, RAI

MUSIC IN SERIES

Every year, Série Series gives TV series music the attention it deserves by giving composers the opportunity to speak. We bring the works of these invaluable creative partners to life, notably by organising a big concert of music from series. This year, the concert evening was organised with the participation of the Sinfonia Pop Orchestra. Under the musical direction of Constantin Roult, they energetically played theme tunes from TV series. They played a varied score, from cult hits like *The Persuaders!* to more contemporary music with hommages to the composers of *The Young Pope* and *Tabula Rasa*, both of whom were sitting in the audience. An uplifting orchestration

and interpretation wooed the public and professionals who had come in great numbers to the Fontainebleau theatre and once again showed how important music is in the process of creating a series.

With the support of  Société des Auteurs, Compositeurs et Éditeurs de Musique



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Photos Série Series 2017 : © Sylvain Bardin and Philippe Cabaret

Série Series warmly thanks the speakers, the moderators, the participants, the teams from the series, the volunteers and all the partners without whom nothing would be possible.

REPLAY SÉRIE SERIES

Replay the sessions and watch exclusive interviews from the speakers on Série Series' web TV:

www.vimeo.com/serieseries

All the photos from this edition are also available on www.serieseries.fr. Keep following us every day on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

