

INITIATIVE FILM for



QUAIS  
DU POLAR  
FESTIVAL  
INTERNATIONAL  
LYON

# PRIZE POLAR EN SÉRIES 2019



# POLAR EN SÉRIES

This year, Quais du Polar once more welcomes you to its professional encounters, *Polar Connection*, and on this occasion awards the *Polar en Séries* Prize, with the support of the SCELf. Initiated in 2015, this one of a kind prize yearly rewards a work for its own qualities and its adaptation potential as a TV series. This year, the call for proposals generated much interest among publishers with over 70 book applications.

Crime fiction literature and Francophone noir novel are indeed an inexhaustible resource of stories and intrigues for small screen creators. Even if cinema has always nurtured a privileged dialogue with noir literature, these past years definitely saw series invest in this universe: they are distinguished by scriptwriting inventiveness and an astonishing creativity.

*Quais du Polar* therefore wishes to play an active role linking books and the small screen, to stimulate exchanges between all actors of this cultural and creative industry that crime fiction clearly is, and to become THE place for privileged exchanges around the genre : authors, producers, scriptwriters, publishers and broadcasters have the opportunity to spotlight their work and think about common projects. This novel selection will thereby be highlighted during professional encounters, *Polar Connection*, as well as throughout the year, on the occasion of different projects in which Quais du polar is invited to participate.

*We would like to warmly acknowledge publishers who entrusted us with their applications and all partners supporting and building this project with us: the SCELf, Initiative Film, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Cinéma, the Institut français, Ecran Total, the ACS, the CEEA and the members of the jury who accepted to share this experience.*



SCELf,

INSTITUT  
FRANÇAIS



AUVERGNE  
RHÔNE-ALPES  
CINÉMA

Écran  
total

A.C.S.  
Association des  
Cinéma

ceea  
conservatoire européen  
d'écriture audiovisuelle

# LA SCELf

## PARTNER OF QUAIS DU POLAR

The SCELf (Société Civile des Editeurs de Langue Française – Civil Company of French Language Publishers) is an authors' rights company, managed by publishers licensed by contract, dealing the derived exploitation rights of the works they publish. Therefore, when their works are adapted to cinema, TV, radio or theatre, the SCELf collects and allocates rights coming from these adaptations.

For ten years, the SCELf has been organizing, during the *Salon du Livre* (Book Fair), professional audiovisual encounters between publishers and cinema and TV producers; it has been an undeniable success throughout the years.

Fortified by this experience, the SCELf seeks to develop other schemes of professional encounters, such as the one organized, for the sixth time, during the 2019 *Cannes Film Festival*, on May 21<sup>st</sup>, intended for foreign producers. It is in this promotional context of audiovisual adaptation, and to valorize diverse writing processes, that a partnership was legitimately built between our structure and the crime fiction festival *Quais du Polar*.

The SCELf is delighted with these Professional Encounters organized by *Quais du Polar* during the *Polar Connection* day, which allow ties and links between image and writing functions, and foster professional collaboration in the sector of audiovisual adaptation.

Furthermore, for the fifth time in France, and within a SCELf and *Quais du Polar* partnership, a Prize will be rewarding crime fiction novels most likely to be adapted as a series: *Polar en Séries*. The SCELf wishes a beautiful success to these professional encounters and wishes that this exclusive Prize will once again highlight the French crime fiction's tremendous potential for television adaptation.

SCELf,

# INITIATIVE

Series production continues to grow and crime fiction, a very rich literary genre, remains a major source of inspiration, regarding adaptation, offering intrigues, recurring characters, diversities of locations, miscellaneous *cliffhangers*. Attraction for crime is universal and the chase for murderers, their motivation, the world of investigators, as well as the victims' drama, appeal the attention of a borderless public. Contemporary and heritage authors achieve a perfect radiography of our society and therefore inspire both small and big screens, offering recurring heroes or standalone episodes series, to be declined on one or several seasons.

It is in Lyon, in 2015, at the heart of *Quais du Polar*, the emblematic European event in terms of crime fiction literature, that the *Polar en Séries* Prize was born. It focuses on the potential of works to be adapted in series.

Here are a few words about the backstage of this prize : Once the specific criteria were defined, allowing the evaluation of the potential of written works to be adapted into series, the SCELf put out a large call to a wide scope of French publishers. This year, almost seventy submissions were received and considered.

A first reading committee selects a short list and hands it out to a jury of professionals, renewed each year. On the short-list: recent titles, and even sometimes not yet published works.

The development and selection of this prize is performed by by *Quais du Polar*, *Initiative Film* and *Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Cinéma* teams, with support of scriptwriters from the *European Broadcast Writing Conservatory* (*Conservatoire Européen d'Écritures*

*Audiovisuelles*), whose work we strongly acknowledge, and members of the *Series Critics Association*. This is how the short-list of 6 works, including a graphic novel, was established and handed in to the jury members.

The jury, composed of book and broadcasting professionals, gave its verdict on March 12<sup>th</sup> in the *Petit Riche* in Paris.

This booklet, which conception was entrusted to *Initiative Film*, as the extension of our counseling role during the implementation of this recent adventure – as part of bridge building between literature and broadcasting – has for means to present this initiative, describe the selection and introduce the jury and short-listed works with a special focus dedicated to the award winner of this year's edition.

This booklet also offers a reminder of the previous nominated or rewarded works, by updating their situation regarding their rights: are they still free of rights? Optioned? Or already bought and ready to become a film or a series, knowing that if some works are free of rights, there is still an opportunity to acquire the rights.



Consulting company created in 1993 by Isabelle Fauvel, and today co-directed by Hakim Mao, *Initiative Film* has the vocation to support talents through the development of audiovisual projects, before the production phase of a work, from the birth of the story to the actual implementation of its preparation.

# THE JURY

Members of the jury in alphabetical order.

## MICHEL ABOUCHAHLA

President of Ecran Total

•

## MARINE FRANCOU

Scriptwriter, Writing Director of the series *Engrenages* Seasons 7 and 8

•

## CAROLE LE BERRE

Programme Councillor, Fiction Unit, France Télévision

•

## JUDITH LOUIS

Producer, Councillor, L'Ile Clavel

•

## VÉRA PELTEKIAN

Manager of the Fiction Project Department,  
responsible of relationships with talents, Canal Plus

•

## FRANCK PHILIPPON

Scriptwriter and producer

•

## PIERRE SÉRISIER

Journalist, author of essays on TV series and member of the A.C.S  
(Association des Critiques de Séries/ Series Critics Associaton)

•

## STÉPHANE STRANO

Producer at De Caelis Production  
and President of La Rochelle Film Festival

# SHORT LIST

List of the selected works in alphabetical order:

## IRONS

Tristan Roulot and Luc Brahy  
(Éditions Le Lombard, 2019)

•

## LE PARFUM D'ADAM

Jean-Christophe Rufin  
(Éditions Flammarion, 2007)

•

## LE SIGNAL

Maxime Chattam  
(Éditions Albin Michel, 2018)

•

## LES MAFIEUSES

Pascale Dietrich  
(Éditions Liana Levi, 2019)

•

## PARFOIS C'EST LE DIABLE QUI VOUS SAUVE DE L'ENFER

Jean-Paul Chaumeil  
(Éditions Le Rouergue, 2018)

•

## RACKET

Dominique Manotti  
(Éditions Les Arènes, 2018)

AU  
PETIT  
RICHE

Jury deliberations took place on March 12th in a private lounge  
of the Parisian restaurant AU PETIT RICHE

# THE JURY'S OPINION

## THE 2019 SHORT LIST

« Tell the way the world goes round, and the way it doesn't. »

This « profession of faith », which arose during the animated deliberation of March 12<sup>th</sup> as the 6 works were being discussed, clearly sets the tone of the 2019 short-list : diverse forms of crime fiction are honoured, from comedy to horror, from white-collar crime to near-dystopia.

Novels at the crossroads of genres, with varied literary forms and narrative structures, showing that if a well-documented story offers a certain material, a very short novel can also contain a concept creating the spark, and that confused characters open up on a beautiful projection space for scriptwriters to come.

The novels, most of them being recent, portrait concerns and anxieties of our societies (crime at the highest level of states, saving our planet, fear of terrorism...) and prove that even older novels may also be subject to transpositions and updates.

*This year, the jury awarded the prize by a majority and will be in Lyon to reward the winner.*

## THE WINNER



The novel, freely inspired by the case of Alstom's buyout by General Electrics, offers an immersion into the reality of a large French company.

While tackling white-collar crime, never easy to deal with, Dominique

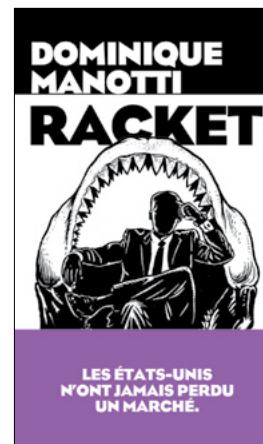
Manotti achieves to uncover a remarkable frame thanks to a meticulous documentation work.

The novel is rich, full of details and offers several entrance doors into his vast arena with the opportunity to dig in one and only point of view or several, to open up new possibilities.

As she crosses perspectives, Dominique Manotti also raises the major question of powerlessness in front of these forms of crime. And the characters' disenchantment is poignant.

# RACKET

## DOMINIQUE MANOTTI



### LES ARÈNES (2018)

#### IF IT WERE A FILM

- *Capital*, Costa-Gavras
- *Team Spirit*, Christophe Barratier
- *The Clearstream affair*, Vincent Garenq

#### IF IT WERE A SERIES

- *Billions*, Andrew Ross Sorkin, Brian Koppelman, David Levien
- *Follow the money*, Jeppe Gjervig Gram, Per Fly
- *Borgen*, Adam Price

#### FORMAT

Mini series or Recurring series (recurring character, with different cases)

#### CONTACT

Éditions Les Arènes  
Geoffroy Fauchier  
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Jérôme Lamblin, arrogant senior executive for the company Orstam, jewel of French industry, is impatiently heading for the United States on a business trip... As he steps out of the plane, the American police are waiting for him and imprison him for a drug using case dating back fifteen years at least... It is the trigger event of a huge racketeering operation to allow PE, an American rival, to take over Orstam. Kidnapping, blackmail, bribery, murder. The holdup is moving on and there are no obstacles ahead apparently. American justice, American intelligence and great industrialists work together with perfect coordination. The French government sees nothing. Neither does Orstam. Everything can be bought and no one resists to the threat. Except two cops. Noria Ghozali is an intelligence commander. Her name is tough to bear in times of Islamist attacks and it is an even tougher position for a 45 year old woman questioning herself on her life choices. And commissioner Daquin, whose career is now behind him. They are left alone to take care of this racketeering, but giving up is not part of their vocabulary.

## FICTION AND REALITY

Like always with Dominique Manotti, the story of *Racket* is very well-documented. It is directly and openly inspired, although very freely, by the « Alstom Case ». Dominique Manotti offers inside information and the possibility to understand what we are having a hard time imagining, as this industrial espionage orchestrated by states seems extreme. Caught back by more recent realities, which continue to headline the news, the story keeps its up-to-dateness and acuity.

## A HEROINE RIDDLED BY DOUBT

Noria Ghozali, general information cop, appears in other novels by Dominique Manotti, and here she makes her grand comeback. Throughout this investigation, she is coming to a turning point in her life: a crucial moment during which she questions herself on her past career, the distance she took

with her family, which she reconsiders after her father's death, but most of all on her future after her 25 year career and notching up 45 years on the calendar.

Even if she has never made things easy for herself, she has the feeling that everything is a fraud and she is sceptic about disclosing the truth. To get politicians to open their eyes, although they barely understand what is happening, she has to struggle on all sides. She comes across a beautiful gallery of characters and manages to uncover the truth, by taking her team on quite unmarked paths.

### **MURDERS, BRIBERY, HACKING, FAKE NEWS...WHEN THE END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS**

The story never stops for a minute. Between crimes, kidnappings, blackmail and more, numerous actions play out fast, narrated in Dominique Monatti's own minimalist style, in an economic crime fiction implying the United States, setting foot on the French territory to act.

Noria Ghazali will have to fight to make politicians understand but also to compose with the CIA, the NSA and a long list of dirty people who clearly don't appreciate having her around, interfering with their business, which could have been, without her, the most perfect hold-up.

### **THE CRUEL ADMISSION OF POWERLESSNESS**

The dismantling of French industry should, seemingly, be a priority concern for the government. However, Noria Ghazali and her team will have to fight alone to unveil an unbelievable reality and thwart plans which only seem to stir people on the surface...And to realize that, although serving the State, they have to fight against this State unwilling to take advantage of the forwarded infor-

mation? What if, ultimately, the whole team had to accept that the success of their mission ends with a failure, a cruel admission of powerlessness?

### **THE AUTHOR IS A FEW LINES**

Dominique Manotti is one of the major voices of French political crime fiction, rewarded with the Duncan Lawrie International Dagger and the noir novel Grand Prix, among others. Her books are translated in more than ten languages. Her speciality is to unravel a particular environment and her works are therefore highly documented. Her character, Noria Ghazali, Racket's woman cop, appears in several novels by Dominique Manotti.

*Racket* is her twelfth novel.

### **THE NOVEL IN A FEW WORDS**

*« François Lamblin is in a very good mood when he lands at JFK Airport on late afternoon, he arrives from Paris, after an eight hour flight, three whiskies and an excellent crime fiction novel. As he sets foot outside the aircraft, the air is fresh, stimulating. Tonight, a beautiful girl picked up at the luxury hotel bar and a well deserved rest. He will then be in good shape to meet big clients, which he will seduce with the presentation of the performances of Orstam's new generation boilers.*

(...)

*He is heading for the Border Police offices, hands in his passport. Two police officers in uniform show up, frame him, grab him by the shoulders, a third one grasps his bag, a fourth one handcuffs him. A strobe light flashes.*

– *Mister Lamblin?*

(...)

– *You are under arrest, follow us.*

*At last, he objects.*

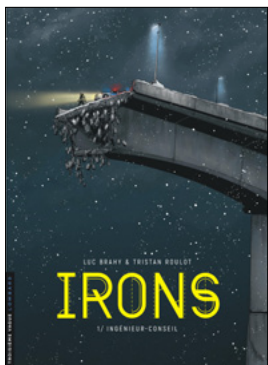
– *What is this sham? Where are you taking me?*

– *Chiefs will tell you, we just execute orders.*

*Around him, people spread, rush, unconcerned. He is shoved into a small blind room, near the Customs service. Two men dressed in suit and tie, in their nice forties and friendly looking, seating behind a table, are obviously waiting for him and motion him to sit down. An agent takes his handcuffs off. Lamblin finds himself mechanically rubbing his wrists, just like in a TV series.»*

# IRONS

TRISTAN ROULOT, LUC BRAHY



LE LOMBARD (2018)

T1 L'ingénieur-conseil

## IF IT WERE A FILM

Sully, Clint Eastwood

## IF IT WERE A SERIES

- *Tunnel*, Anders Engström, Gilles Bannier
- *Megastructures* (documentary series), Chuck O'Farrell, Phil Frank, Jessica Bassett, Jayashree Panjabi, Jo Locke
- *House*, David Shore

## FORMAT

Recurring Series

Potentiality for several seasons

## CONTACT

Éditions Le Lombard

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Jack Irons is about to leave the Prince Edward Island, off the Canadian coast, right in the middle of a snow storm. In the taxi driving him to the airport, just as they cross the Confederation bridge, strange vibrations terrorize the driver. Instinctively, Jack yells at him to stop dead, which will save them from the bridge partly collapsing, while another vehicle plunges into the abyss lying ahead. Chance or mere coincidence? Jack Irons happens to be an outstanding engineer, specialized in superstructures, including bridges...

Now that the island is cut from the world and that the local police struggle with the investigation, Jack offers to collaborate and tries to understand the reasons for such an unusual collapse, in return for a boat trip back to the continent.

Between the depletion of the bay's fish stocks, small-time crooks conducting illegal underwater research, shellfish poachers, Jack will have to find out if the collapse was an accident or a negligent act...or even an attack?

## BIRTH...AND DEMOLITION OF A BRIDGE

The arena of this graphic novel is original and promising, as it focuses on superstructures, especially bridges which became superstructures inducing vertigo, here set in a freezing ocean and wild nature, far from being sensitive to small human torments.

Action, rain and snow storm scenes promise impressive sequences and the investigation - made of clues, false leads and chases - keeps pace with the thriller while deconstructing bridge engineering for beginners (the way *Hedge Fund* did with the sphere of finance).

Fiction meets reality since the collapse of the Morandi Bridge of Genoa, and the story grasps the - excessive? - greatness of these giants with feet of clay.

## JACK IRONS, ENGINEER, WORLD TRAVELLER... SOCIOPATH?

This first opus lays the groundwork of Jack Iron's character, lead role of the graphic novel, a personality at the crossroads between Sherlock Holmes, for the meticulous investigator side, and Dr. House for the brilliant but unfriendly side, a personality which asociality can hardly cover-up still opened wounds.

The fact that the story unfolds through an opening flashback the decisive past of its character, gives us the opportunity to discover the origin of this will of iron nature.

As Iron investigates on the accident, the reader investigates on Jack and sometimes wonders, and asks questions which will not (yet) get answered in volume 1. What is really Jack Irons looking for? Inner peace? Revenge? Redemption? Answers will come up in the following volumes...

## A POLICE INTRIGUE FROM THE ENGINEERING PERSPECTIVE

It is a police intrigue that Tristan Roulot screws onto a rarely explored topic in crime fiction: architecture, especially concerning the construction (and demolition) of what we call « superstructures ».

The story is an opportunity to escape - for a change - from the paths usually stridden by crime fiction. Thoroughly documented on civil engineering, inspired by anecdotes and real events, this specific angle allows the crossing of economic and environmental issues through influence-peddling and other conflicts of interest hanging from these structures.

## THE AUTHORS IN A FEW LINES:

Tristan Roulot is a regular of crime fiction graphic novels as he co-signed, among others, *Le testament du capitaine Crown* (Soleil

Prod) and *Hedge Fund* (Le Lombard), both short listed for the *Polar en Série* Prize of 2017.

Influenced by Hergé or Hugo Pratt lines and by thrillers and great classical adventure novels (Conan Doyle, Kessel, Hemingway), Luc Brahy's academic realism is here at the service of an original pitch.

## THE GRAPHIC NOVEL IN A FEW WORDS:

« *Water will rush through very fast but I will help you get out of here. Then you will have to swim with all your strength to the surface, got it?* »



# LE PARFUM D'ADAM

JEAN-CHRISTOPHE RUFIN



FLAMMARION (2007)

## IF IT WERE A FILM

- *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, Thomas Alfredson
- *The Good Shepherd*, Robert De Niro
- *Mission: Impossible*, Brian De Palma
- *Spy Game*, Tony Scott

## IF IT WERE A SERIES

- *The Bureau*, Éric Rochant
- *The Night Manager*, Susanne Bier
- *Covert Affairs*, Matt Corman

## FORMAT

Recurring series

## CONTACT

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A Polish experimentation lab has been ransacked; apparently by animal advocates. However, this simple act of vandalism seems to hide something more serious: the theft of a flask containing a sample of cholera bacillus.

Paul and Kerry, two former CIA agents, are recruited by Providence, a new private intelligence agency, to investigate on the case.

From Poland to Brazil, from the United States to Switzerland, they catch up with the adrenaline from being on the field, and pull the strings of a major terrorist conspiracy. At the heart of this conspiracy is Juliette, a rather fragile environmental idealist. While being convinced that she is taking part in an important humanistic operation, she becomes an integral part of the forthcoming attack.

This attack will imply radical environmental groups, the CIA, and even some governments. Through their investigation, Paul and Kerry will discover a terrifying thought, an ideology behind the acts: what if, for our planet's sake, a part of the population had to be eradicated?

## A THRILLING POLITICAL FICTION

United States, France, Switzerland, Poland, South Africa, Austria, Mexico and Brazil: a long list of countries is crossed by this worldwide investigation. Every location offers a new thrilling situation, and always with an increasing remarkable suspense. An ambition meeting the heights of a great spy series! It is the strength of this international intrigue, even if the number of the countries may be reviewed. To each disentangled thread, a new knot is unveiled! Get ready for a dizzying plunge into the unknown. But an investigation would be nothing without its action and suspense scenes, sometimes quiet and buried into silence, sometimes explosive. A narrative which doubles ingenuity to vary your pleasures!

## A CONTEMPORARY TOPIC: THE ENVIRONMENT

There is no irony in this plot. Here the danger is palpable and the stakes are to be taken seriously.

The ideology of this terrorist network is documented and the author takes the time to unravel and analyze this thought. This can be rich for the intrigue but can also raise terrifying issues. How can we stop the planet's population from growing? How can man become (or just go back to being) a species among others? Through these terrorists' extremism, the investigators will go up different environmental streams, from the most moderate to the most radical. It will be a highly interesting immersion among the activist universe, reflecting our times.

Beyond the simple environmental statement, this narrative questions the relationship between powerful nations and less-developed countries, in terms of medicine and international policy. A strong and serious challenge for a complex intrigue.

## THE PROVIDENCE AGENCY: FROM ONE STORY TO THE NEXT

In *Le parfum d'Adam*, the agents Paul and Kerry form a well-characterized duo. Both have turned their backs on spying but will plunge back into an investigation. They come back for the adrenaline shot and for the pleasure of working together once again. For both of them, this passion will imply high risk situations.

But behind these agents, is Providence which provides the foundation for a multiple season series, since we also find the agency in *Katiba* by the same author. Field agents have changed in this new adventure, but Providence is here all the same. There would be a potentiality of recurring characters giving the series its overall coherence.

For the agency, all obstacles have a solution: undercover, improvised actions, strategic meetings. An intrigue that reveals in a thrilling way how international intelligence works!

## THE AUTHOR IN A FEW LINES

Jean-Christophe Rufin, a lifetime great traveller, diplomat, pioneer doctor of humanitarian aid and writer, is used to achieve great frescos between thriller and adventure novels, always highly documented and extensive. Rewarded with the Gongourt Prize in 2001, he enters the Académie Française. We will meet again several heroes from the selected novel, through the Providence Agency, in his other novel *Katiba* (Flammarion, 2010).

## THE NOVEL IN A FEW WORDS

*«In this desert, Juliette intensely felt that the violence, the contempt she had experienced during her childhood, had the same origin than the one nature endured.»*



# LE SIGNAL

## MAXIME CHATTAM



ALBIN MICHEL (2018)

### IF IT WERE A FILM

- *The Others*, Alejandro Amenabar
- *It Follows*, David Robert Mitchell

### IF IT WERE A SERIES

- *American Horror Story: Murder House*, Bradley Buecker
- *The Haunting of Hill House*, Mike Flanagan
- *Stranger Things*, Matt Duffer et Ross Duffer

### FORMAT

Series with standalone episodes

### CONTACT

Éditions Albin Michel  
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Stressed by their life in New York, Olivia, a successful TV host, and her husband Tom, a playwright, decide to offer a more peaceful environment to their children, Chad and baby Zoey, and Olivia's nephew, Owen, who is living with the family since his parents' death.

Mahigan Falls is a small town of New England, overlooked by a giant communication antenna, without which the city would be cut from the rest of the world. The place seems to be the ideal scenery for a new start, especially since they have found this charming, huge, bright house bordering the forest, which will welcome them just in time for the beginning of summer...

A charming house, yes obviously, but it keeps on distilling weird warnings: at night, Olivia feels cold drafts, presences. Baby Zoey wakes up terrified by nocturnal fears, their son bears bite marks and even Smaug, their dog, which barely dared to explore the garden, ends up in the flames of the barbecue during the welcome party, as if he had deliberately jumped into it...

While Lieutenant Ethan Cobb investigates on a sequence of disturbing deaths and disappearances, Tom discovers, in the houses' attic, a locked room enclosing the works of the previous owner who was here to do research on the occult...

And as no one makes the link between the absence of fish in the bay, the silence of the birds or the strange behaviour of dogs at dusk, the shadow is growing over Mahigan Falls, in the summer dampness.

Will it be too late when they will understand the link?

### CROSSING THE MIRROR...AND THE GENRES

Le Signal is in between crime fiction and horror, and undeniably on the dark side! Convening both well-identified literary and visual universe, this novel plays with the references, quotes them and diverts them to surprise the reader, manip-

ulating codes of both genres the novel actually belongs to.

And for a total immersion, Maxime Chattam even provides, in the introduction of the book, the ideal original soundtrack of the novel, music from horror films of course...

### HORROR ON NETWORKS

Maxime Chattam is not afraid to explore the intimacy of his characters. Each chapter unveils one of them; and the narrative then alternates, without us ever knowing if the character is living his last lines... Some of them will meet a cruel death just around a page.

This network linking the characters echoes - thus establishing the main theme of the Signal - the hidden horror that could use the numerous surrounding antennas to reach us (through our phones, radios...). What are these inhuman howls, jamming signals, trying to tell us?

### FROM NEW ENGLAND... TO FRANCE

Although the plot is set in an American universe, in a small town of New England, we can easily imagine transposing it in France or in Europe, in a small landlocked village, between forests and mountains.

Although New England - only a few kilometres away from Salem, a town which has been the scenery of witch trials and executions, which is also rich in a historic and cultural Native American breeding ground - offers the perfect setting, there is nothing preventing us from adapting the intrigue in a French context, gathering the same characteristics.

### THE AUTHOR IN A FEW WORDS

Maxime Chattam is a French author nourished by American culture since his child-

hood, through his readings and his many travels. He studied Modern Literature and criminology for a year at the Saint-Denis University to acquire basics of criminal psychology, forensic medicine and technical and scientific police.

He has written numerous successful novels, exploring noir literature with, in most cases, a fantastic twist.

### THE NOVEL IN A FEW WORDS

*« In the astounding silence that followed, came the worst. The smell of meat being cooked. Like the one they had just swallowed. Almost tasty. »*

# LES MAFIEUSES

PASCALE DIETRICH



LIANA LEVI (2019)

## IF IT WERE A FILM

- *Woman at war*, Benedikt Erlingsson
- *The World is yours*, Romain Gavras
- *The nice guys*, Shane Black

## IF IT WERE A SERIES

- *The good wife*, Robert King, Michelle King
- *The Sopranos*, David Chase

## FORMAT

Serial series  
Several seasons potential

## CONTACT

Éditions Liana Lévi  
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Michèle spent 45 years of her quite happy life with Leone Acampora, a.k.a « the mountaineer », an Italian mafioso settled in Grenoble. One of her daughters, Dina, is into humanitarian activities, without any conviction, whereas the other, Alessia, has taken up the business.

When Leone - who started to lose it some time ago, Alzheimer having contributed to several slip-ups - falls into a coma, Michèle receives a letter. A strange letter written by Leone in case something ever happened to him, in which he explains to her that she has been a wonderful wife, but, if he dies, she will not survive him as he has paid a killer to get rid of her.

Dina cannot believe that his father could have gone this far and dooms herself once again for never denouncing her family's illegal activities ; on her side, Alessia plans to exile her mother immediately and starts her own investigation to find the person in charge of the contract weighing in on Michèle's head.

Although Dina knows that denunciation is definitely not in her family's DNA, she starts by denouncing two colleagues working in her NGO: their African trips are opportunities to have sex with minors. Disenchanted, she even thinks about handing in her resignation; especially since love finally came into her life: his name is Marcus, a restaurant owner looking for a new place.

This charming man, filled with humour is also the European Champion of frozen desserts!

But her lover of Providence is not here by chance and the family equilibrium wavers. And the context is even tenser in Grenoble, as the African Mafia tries to take over the Italian Mafia.

What if Alessia could succeed, wouldn't she be thumbing a nose at the lingering male domination?

## THE WORLD OF MEN, THE WORLD OF WOMEN

With Leone gone and the strange contract he has set on his beloved wife's head, the whole men's world wavers. Alessia, deprived of the support of the old Mafiosi from the Grenoble mob to solve this unusual situation, will have to get things done on her own, reinforce her position in the business and challenge the aging machismo world. Here the women's world, their role, assumed or not, in the obscure crime environment, will reveal itself for better or for worse.

## NOTHING MUSHY IN THE NOIR NOVEL

Although an unexpected romance leads Alessia to her mother's future killer, although the man bears all the characteristics of the too perfect lover and that we might wonder if he really falls in love with the bait, there is nothing mushy around bloodsheds. Woe to those attacking the family!

But in the family, there are also black sheep which do not accept being unloved. Like Dina, who, dedicating her life to humanitarian activities, had completely left aside her love life.

## WHAT ABOUT HUMOUR?

Despite the suspense around the contract set on Michèle's head, the tone is light, corrosive and joyful thanks to humour distilled during the most tense situations : Michèle's exile, secondary characters, Alessia and her model husband, dialogues and more generally the spirit of the novel itself.

The novel is full of off-beat ideas and colourful characters which could be developed and used to set the tone of a series.

## THE AUTHOR IN A FEW LINES

Pascale Dietrich is a research director at the INED (Institut National d'Études Démographiques/ National Institute of Demographic Studies) and research associate at the Maurice Halbwachs Centre. Her research focuses on housing inequalities, residential precariousness and life conditions of popular categories. She worked on the subject of poor housing occupants, social housing applicants, and homeless people and is currently interested in the housing issues of the young population. Up until now, she has written 6 works, short stories and short novels flirting with crime fiction, among which : *Le Homard* (In8, 2013), *Une île bien tranquille* (Liana Lévi, 2016) and *Les mafieuses* (Liana Lévi, February 2019).

## THE NOVEL IN A FEW WORDS

« *Start by graduating with distinction. Today, the Mafia recruits graduates from major schools only. Go through HEC, or ES-SEC, and maybe you will get a chance. »*

# PARFOIS C'EST LE DIABLE QUI VOUS SAUVE DE L'ENFER

JEAN-PAUL CHAUMEIL



LE ROUERGUE (2018)

## IF IT WERE A FILM

- *Les Cowboys*, Thomas Bidegain
- *This is our land*, Lucas Belvaux

## IF IT WERE A SERIES

24, Joel Surnow, Robert Cochran

## FORMAT

Serial series

## CONTACT

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Boris is a private detective in Bordeaux where he drags his old body full of alcohol and drugs from the trendiest to the shadiest neighbourhoods of the town. But Boris is above all haunted by his heavy past: his wife, Bérénice, died under his eyes on 9/11 during the World Trade Center attack. He fled to fight against Taliban in Afghanistan; he was searching a way to forget his misery through the violence of the war... at the expenses of his daughter's education, Julia, from whom he hasn't heard for so long.

While France is still mourning the Charlie and the 13th of November attacks, Boris' past will resurface and Bordeaux will become a scene of violent confrontations. It all begins with the murder of an undercover agent who had infiltrated an extreme-right group.

Despite his will, Boris is implied in the case and with his friend Manu, a Colombian, former FARC soldier, they will collaborate with the police and the SID. But both men are free agents, city animals refusing to follow the rules of a society they deliberately escaped from. They become friends will Carole, a journalist for Rue 89, who is investigating on the ultra-right movements.

Under their eyes, unveil a huge violent network, racist and anti-Semitic. From the Balkan weapon dealer to the Chief of Génération Identitaire, the investigation will soon reveal the horrible fate of these extremists: an attack is planned. When Boris discovers that his own daughter, Julia, is a member of the group, he dives headlong in a familial and intimate hell.

## A CONTEXT OF WAR IN A HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

First of all, there is a noir film atmosphere to the novel. The scenery is a rainy and gray hell, perfectly reflecting the characters' inner darkness on their environment.

Bordeaux is described like a maze of concrete and sordid streets, whereas the vast forest of the Landes and the Bay of Arcachon offer a dark and hostile nature. This decorum is set to host a context of war.

The oppressing background is here because of the numerous political issues: a swarming of tensions and movements in a context of attacks - WTC, Charlie Hebdo, 13 November - and with the Nuit Debout movement, demonstrations, extreme-right groups and former activists of Ras l'Front, everything is ready to explode, or rather implode: society is a pressure cooker in permanent tension.

## AN EXPLOSIVE CHARACTER

Boris is consumed by his past. And if the explosive environment he lives in is the reflection of his own interiority - a complex man, a lone wolf, haunted by his wife's death - Boris is de facto a great anti-hero, an unusual character: not only is he late on the progress of the investigation, which makes the plot move forward without him, but most of all his burning personality makes him an ambivalent being. He hits, he drinks, he insults, and he is an animal, a knot of tensions and paradox. His complexity can nourish serial episodes.

The movements of the narrative and his personal course converge to the same point: the final climax which will see the extreme-right network being dismantled and Julia saved by her father. Boris will finally find a meaning to his existence. Just like if he had wiped the slate clean with this act of bravery. This is the end of his hell, and the beginning of a new life.

## A CONTEMPORARY FRESCO

If you add the mourning for his wife, the war in Afghanistan and the main matrix of the novel, there will be many subjects to develop in a story with multiple narrative lines,

issues and twists and turns. Furthermore, around him, a wide web of intrigues and topics is weaved: Julia's life, between school of journalism and extreme-right temptation, Carole, the committed reporter, Manu the former FARC soldier, the commissioner believer and his family, the SID commander and his troubled past in the Middle-East, and the former extreme-left activists... Numerous perspectives that, tied together, form a huge contemporary fresco, a vitriolic portrait of a sick society.

And most of all, the end of the novel opens other horizons, through Julia's story, who is leaving to fight against Daesh in Syria.

## THE AUTHOR IN A FEW WORDS

9/11 events are a recurring theme in Jean-Paul Chaumeil's works, since in his first novel, *Ground Zero* (Rouergue Noir), he already explored the background of the ultra liberal economy, before delving into radicalization in this novel set in Bordeaux, where he lives.

## THE NOVEL IN A FEW WORDS

*"On these nights I am at a loss for words; and my jaw is so clamped that even the lightest and most tender words I used to whisper to her ear, just before our mutual pleasure, are snatched up into the black hole of my suffering."*

# WINNERS AND SELECTED WORKS OF PREVIOUS EDITIONS

	Free of rights	Ongoing negotiation	Optioned or sold
THE 2015 SHORT LIST			
<i>Après la guerre*</i> , Hervé Le Corre (Payot & Rivages, 2014)	X		
<i>Bunker Parano</i> , Georges-Jean Arnaud (French Pulp Editions, 2014)		X	
<i>Commandant Achab</i> , Stéphane Piatzsek et Stéphane Douay (Casterman, 2013)	X		
<i>Et qu'advienne le chaos</i> , Hadrien Klent (Le Tripode, 2010)	X		
<i>Le partage des terres</i> , Bernard Besson (Odile Jacob, 2013)	X		
<i>Poulets grillés*</i> , Sophie Henaff (Albin Michel, 2015)			X
THE 2016 SHORT LIST			
<i>L'alignement des équinoxes</i> , Sébastien Raizer (Gallimard, 2015)	X		
<i>Au fer rouge</i> , Marin Ledun (Flammarion, 2015)	X		
<i>Infiltrés</i> , Sylvain Runberg, Olivier Truc, Olivier Thomas (Soleil, 2015)	X		
<i>Les loups à leur porte*</i> , Jérémy Fel (Rivages, 2015)			X
<i>Tout le monde te haïra</i> , Alexis Aubenque (Robert Laffont, 2015)	X		
<i>Ubac</i> , Elisa Vix (Le Rouergue, 2016)			X
THE 2017 SHORT LIST			
<i>En Pays Conquis</i> , Thomas Bronnec (Gallimard, 2017)	X		
<i>Hedge Fund</i> , Tristan Roulot, Patrick Hénaff, Philippe Sabbah (Le Lombard, 2014, 2015)	X		
<i>Jeu d'ombres</i> , Loulou Dedola, Merwan (Glénat, 2016)			X
<i>Kabukicho</i> , Dominique Sylvain (Viviane Hamy, 2016)	X		
<i>Quand la neige danse</i> , Sonja Delzongle (Denoël, 2016)	X		
<i>Seules les bêtes*</i> , Colin Niel (Le Rouergue, 2017)			X
<i>Zanzara</i> , Paul Colize (Univers Poche, 2017)	X		
THE 2018 SHORT LIST			
<i>Justice soit-elle</i> , Marie Vindy (Plon, 2017)			X
<i>La chance du perdant</i> , Christophe Guillaumot (Liana Lévi, 2017)	X		
<i>L'Avocat*</i> , Laurent Galandon, Frank Giroud, Frédéric Volante (Le Lombard, 2015)	X		
<i>Le suivant sur la liste</i> , Manon Fargetton (Rageot, 2014)	X		
<i>Plus jamais seul</i> , Caryl Ferey (Gallimard, 2018)			X
<i>Que la guerre est jolie</i> , Christian Roux (Rivages, 2018)	X		

\* the winner

# CRIME FICTION, A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION

## CRIME FICTIONS HAVING GENERATED SERIES

*Wire in the blood* Val McDermid *Wallander* Henning Mankell *Ikebukuro* West Gate Park Ishida Ira *Inspector Morse* Colin Dexter *Women's murder club* James Patterson *Smiley's People* John Le Carré *XIII* Jean Van Hamme *William Vance* Banks Peter Robinson *Il commissario Montalbano* Andrea Camilleri *Murdoch mysteries* Maureen Jennings *Tyskungen* Camilla Läckberg *Pronto* Elmore Leonard *Intruders* Michael Marshall Smith *Under the dome* Stephen King *Case Histories* Kate Atkinson *Les enquêtes du Commissaire Maigret* Georges Simenon *Modus* Anne Holt *Il giudice meschino* Mimmo Gangemi *Inspector Barnaby* Martina Cole *Bones* Kathy Reichs *Le sang de la vigne* Jean-Pierre Alaux *Dexter* Jeff Lindsay *Thorne* Mark Billingham *The red riding trilogy* David Peace *Boulevard du palais* Thierry Jonquet *Miss Marple Mysteries* Agatha Christie *The Night Manager* John Le Carré *Messiah* Boris Starling *Gone* Michael Cain *Boardwalk Empire* Nelson Johnson *The Firm* John Grisham *Commissaire Winter Ake* Edwardson *Justified* Elmore Leonard *The Ruth Rendell Mysteries* Ruth Rendell *Backstrom* Leif G. W. Persson *Glacé* Bernard Minier *Longmire* Craig Johnson *Cadfael* Ellis Peters *Wayward Pines* Blake Crouch *Legends* Robert Littell *Raja Riikka Pulkkinen* Sharp Objects Gilliam Flynn *The runaway* Martina Cole *Women Murder Club* James Patterson *The Cuckoo's Calling* Robert Galbraith *L'accident* Linwood Barclay *Big Little Lies* Liane Moriarty *In the Dark* Mark Billingham *Quicksand* Malin Persson Giolito *Pretty Little Liars* Sara Shepard *Juste un regard* Harlan Coben *Mr. Mercedes* Stephen King *The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency* Alexander McCall Smith *Polar* Victor Santos

## CRIME FICTIONS HAVING GENERATED SERIES AND FEATURE FILMS

*Incorruptibles* Elliot Ness *Arsène Lupin* Maurice Leblanc *Millenium* Stieg Larsson *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries* Kerry Greenwood *The Case of The Chemical Syndicate* Bob Kane Bill Finger *Sherlock Holmes* Arthur Conan Doyle *Cidade dos homens* Paulo Lins *Vidocq* Eugène-François Vidocq *Moōryōō no Hako* Natsuhiko Kyoōgoku *Romanzo Criminale* Giancarlo de Cataldo *Sin City* Franck Miller *Das Parfum, die Geschichte eines Mörders* Patrick Süskind *Gomorra* Roberto Saviano *The Frankenstein Chronicles* Mary Shelley *Hannibal* Thomas Harris

## LEGEND

American Scandinavian British French Others



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