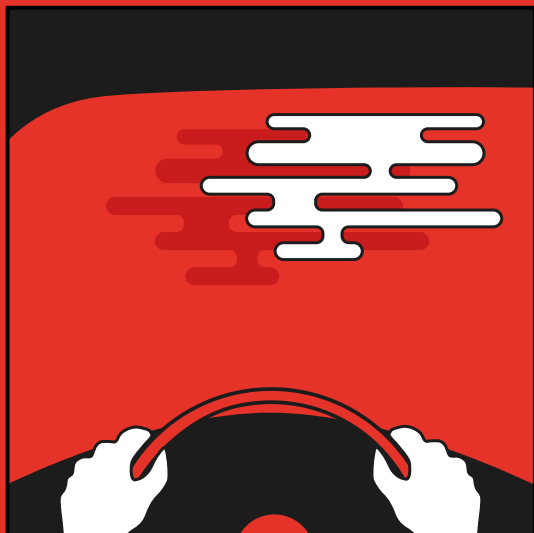
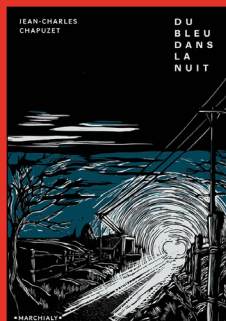




QUAIS  
DU POLAR  
FESTIVAL  
INTERNATIONAL  
LYON

# PRIZE POLAR EN SÉRIES 2021



# POLAR EN SÉRIES

Since 2014, Polar Connection, Quais du Polar's professional label, has at heart to build and develop gateways between different disciplines that give life to crime fiction. It is from this ambition and thanks to the support of the SCELf that the *Polar en Séries Prize* was born seven years ago.

*Polar en Séries* is a prize rewarding a literary work for its own qualities and its adaptation potential into a TV series. It highlights the multifaceted relationship between police literature and TV series. A couple whose bond has grown stronger over the years, thereby blurring borders in the process. Indeed, along with the expansion of series production, crime fiction adaptations for the small screen have met an ever-growing success. This popular phenomenon has changed creative principles with, at the same time, more and more adaptations of novels, and novelists who are solicited to become scriptwriters and vice versa. This even sometimes modifies the influence games with literary creations which now draw on the contemporary creation of series.

Quais du Polar, through its professional label, Polar Connection, ensures that these exchanges between publishers, authors, scriptwriters, producers and broadcasters will continue and be encouraged. Despite a particularly difficult year for the cultural sector, over 60 applications were proposed, publishers always answering positively to the SCELf's call. The diversity of the submitted works (thriller, police comedy, historical crime fiction, fiction anchored in real life...) shows the great potential of the genre.

Due to the health situation, the award ceremony will this year retain its initial rhythm, but through an original and adapted virtual format. The festival, which will take place in Lyon from July 2<sup>nd</sup> to July 4<sup>th</sup> 2021, will be the opportunity to meet the winners, to highlight again the selection and discuss, among professionals, issues related to these sectors.

*We would like to thank the publishers who have entrusted us with their applications and all our partners who support this project and build it with us: the SCELf, Initiative Film, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Cinéma, Écran Total, the Lyon CinéFabrique and the members of the jury who have agreed to share this experience.*

SCELf,

AUVERGNE  
RHÔNE-ALPES  
CINÉMA

INITIATIVEFILM

BIEF  
Bureau  
International  
de l'Édition  
Française

Écran  
total

CINÉ-  
FABRIQUE  
LYON

QUAIS  
DU POLAR  
FESTIVAL  
INTERNATIONAL  
LYON

# THE SCELf

## PARTNER OF QUAIS DU POLAR

Quais du Polar's partner since 2014, the SCELf is a collective management organisation, which is in charge of dealing audiovisual adaptations rights of the publishers it represents.

Throughout the years, alongside its original mission, the SCELf developed events whose purpose is to create or strengthen relationships between publishers and producers, between literary and audiovisual writing.

Thus, in addition to the Rencontres de l'Audiovisuel (Audiovisual Encounters) created in Paris in 2009, the SCELf also initiated the international gathering of audiovisual adaptation at the Cannes Festival: Shoot the Book! These two rights markets have demonstrated the ever-growing interest of producers of all horizons for literature in all its forms. The SCELf also naturally partnered with numerous film and literature festivals to organise encounters between publishers and producers.

It is in this context that, seven years ago, Quais du Polar and the SCELf teamed up to create the *Polar en Séries Prize* which rewards the crime fiction work, short story, novel or comic book, which presents the highest adaptation potential.

Seven years, seven prizes, which proved their relevance as several winners have been or are about to be adapted.

As a gateway between genres, the *Polar en Séries* event is more than ever in tune with the times, at the heart of a constantly growing audiovisual adaptation market. The SCELf wishes once again good luck to this prize which, this year, reaches its age of reason.

SCELf,

# THE INITIATIVE

The *Polar en Séries Prize* was born in Lyon in 2015 at the heart of the iconic European event of crime literature, Quais du Polar. The idea was to set up a selection of recent books with a high adaptation potential to suit a series format.

Crime fiction has been, for a long time, a fertile ground for adaptations from books to screens. The attraction to crime is obvious, worldwide. The police genre or the « noir » literature in general, allow the development of well-crafted intrigues, recurring characters who evolve in incarnated places, as well as exhilarating atmospheres. It is also a genre in which stories are always unpredictable and suspense often offers efficient cliff-hangers, very much appreciated by readers and audiences.

With our recent change of habits, accentuated by the pandemic, series have emerged as an audiovisual medium both accessible and « necessary ». If series already have shown a significant evolution through the past few years, series are watched on any screens and on different types of platform that proliferate. The book also adapts, sometimes, to the digital format and becomes hybrid, which reflects this selection.

Indeed, for the first time, a webtoon is one of the short-listed works. These digital comic books are suitable for vertical reading on a tablet or a smart phone and, just like series, adopt an episodic format. At a time when filiations between books and series are no longer to be proved, it is therefore natural to see them associated within the selection for our prize.

The conception of this booklet was entrusted to Initiative Film as the extension of our advisory role to the implementation of the Quais du Polar adventure, in the line of gateways weaved between literature and audiovisual. Its purpose is to present this initiative, introduce the jury and the short-listed works with a special highlight on this year's winners.

This booklet also aims to recall the works that were short listed or rewarded on the previous editions and the update of their rights status. Are they still free of rights, optioned or already purchased and on their way towards a series or film adaptation? All these questions are answered here.

Concerning *Polar en Séries* behind the scenes, the short-list is established thanks to specific criteria that evaluate the adaptation potential of all works into a series format. Every year, the SCELf sends out a call for application to a wide range of French publishers. This year, over 60 works were submitted to constitute a pre-selection. This year's short-list, deliberately eclectic, opens up various paths in terms of style and formats.

It was made by Quais du Polar, Initiative Film and Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Cinéma teams, but also with the support of screenwriters, who have graduated from the CinéFabrique of Lyon, whose work must be acknowledged. And this is how 6 works were short-listed and sent to the members of a jury of professionals. This jury, composed of audiovisual professionals, has delivered its verdict on March 30<sup>th</sup>.



Consulting firm created by Isabelle Fauvel and today co-directed by Hakim Mao, Initiative Film is dedicated to support talents through the development of audiovisual projects, before its production, from the birth of the story to the actual implementation of the project. Literary adaptation is at the heart of the activity which also includes an international training component and scouting.

# THE JURY

Members of the jury, in alphabetical order.

**MICHEL ABOUCHAHLA**

Écran Total president

•

**EMMANUEL DAUCÉ**

Screenwriter, producer, Tétra Média

•

**CAROLE LE BERRE**

Programme counsellor, Fiction Unit, France Télévision

•

**VÉRA PELTEKIAN**

Fiction project supervisor,  
talents' relationships manager, Canal Plus

•

**PERRINE QUENNESSON**

Journalist, Cinema and Series critic

•

**NICOLAS SAADA**

Director and screenwriter

•

**THOMAS SAIGNES**

Producer, International manager for CinéTévé

•

**SÉVERINE WERBA**

Screenwriter

# SHORT LIST

List of the selected works in alphabetical order.

**AU BAL DES ABSENTS**

Catherine Dufour  
(Seuil, 2020)

•

**CLOWN À TUER**

Eldiablo (script) et Niro (drawing)  
(Dupuis, 2020)

•

**DU BLEU DANS LA NUIT**

Jean-Charles Chapuzet  
(Marchialy, 2020)

•

**L'ANGE ROUGE**

François Médéline  
(La Manufacture de livres, 2020)

•

**LE SILENCE DE CLARA WIGHT**

Valérie Saubade  
(Anne Carrière, 2018)

•

**LEUR ÂME AU DIABLE**

Marin Ledun  
(Gallimard, 2021)

# THE JURY'S OPINION

## 2021 WINNERS

Two winners, rather than a tie, a one-two to honour this double crush for two works illustrating two sides of the « polar » genre, while at the same time very different, they carry out the same high standards, both resulting from documented, journalistic work very well anchored in the fertile grounds of true crimes.

Two different crime novels for two different adaptation challenges: the story of a rural drama with a deeply humane treatment which dares to look at the victim as well as the executioner, just like investigating policemen / and a dashing ambitious fresco which unfolds over 20 years.

Both authors represent the vitality of the French publishing industry, with a well established publisher and a more recent publishing house, « businesses » that prove to be oh how dearly essential.

Both novels which, after a quite chaotic year, testify more than ever to our need for stories to exorcise our fears and traumas with a frantic faith in the cathartic purpose of the narrative.



# AWARDS CEREMONY

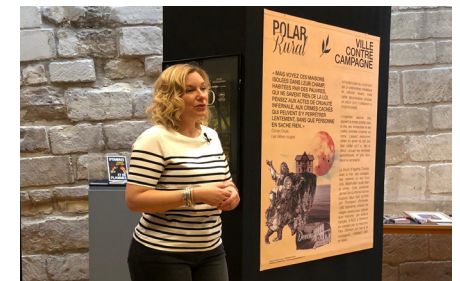
On this very special year, the jury's deliberations took place on line and the awards ceremony was also held on line.

As a first step, publishers were called upon to present the selected works in short videos that are still available on [Youtube](#).

The shooting of the awards ceremony was carried out with members of the jury and our partners. On this occasion, we were welcomed by the BiLiPo, Bibliothèque des Littératures Policières de la Ville de Paris (The City of Paris Crime Literature Library), mainly on the site of the exhibition Polar rural conceived by Fondu au Noir.

*The video is also still available on Youtube.*

We warmly thank the BiLiPo and its team, as well as the Fondu au Noir association.



Videos' direction: Sarah Vettes for Have Me Productions. [www.have-me.com](http://www.have-me.com)



## DU BLEU DANS LA NUIT - « A BIT OF BLUE IN THE NIGHT »

Jean-Charles Chapuzet (Marchialy Éditions, 2020)

### If it were a film:

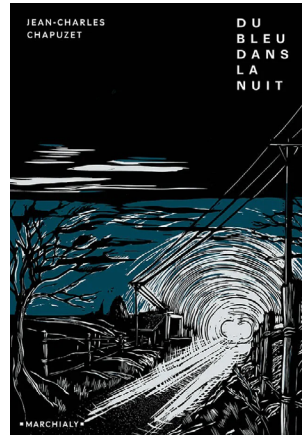
- SK1, Frédéric Tellier
- *Three days and a life*, Nicolas Boukhrief
- *The Outsider*, Christophe Barratier
- *High and Low*, Akira Kurosawa
- *Memories of murder*, Bong Joon Ho

### If it were a series:

- *Laëtitia*, Jean-Xavier de Lestrade
- *La Promesse*, Anne Landois et Gaëlle Bellan
- *The Missing*, Jack Williams et Harry Williams
- *True detective*, Nic Pizzolatto

### Format:

Miniseries, documentary or fiction



Back to 2004 and a true crime: the kidnapping of « Mona Lisa » in Jarnac, Gironde. February 10<sup>th</sup>, it is cold and each hour counts to find the little girl alive as she might not survive through the night. The investigation will go on for precisely 25 hours. Jean-Charles Chapuzet reconstructs this investigation down to the smallest detail, as closely as possible to the investigators, who agreed to testify fourteen years later. Inhabitants, policemen, the Bordeaux tracking team are all involved to track down the missing child as quickly as possible. The countdown starts. Thanks to an unexpected presence in front of the Town Hall, almost by pure chance, the perpetrator will be identified and the little girl will be saved in extremis.

From the offender's psychological profile to the invitation of policemen in Paris, organised by the Interior Minister, including a detailed description of all steps of the investigation, this non-fictional work relates facts with acute precision. Facts that would indelibly scar a French village where you could never have guessed that such a tragedy could happen.

On the sidelines of the investigation, the novel draws a portrait of the kidnapper, both victim and executioner, himself being crushed by the sexual crimes he suffered and by a life of disrespect.

## A TRUE CRIME WITH A HAPPY ENDING

Here, we are not exactly in a cold case because the case was actually solved in its time. We rather approach a true crime story, a journalistic investigation aiming at the documentation of a tragic event in every detail, even though the ending is positive, in that case.

Written like a crime novel, the book offers a sort of double investigation in which the author stages himself in his research work, in 2008, alongside a very detailed review of the 2004 investigation.

The book describes the journalist's investigations on the location of the case, his encounters with policemen and different witnesses, thus exploring their memories of the events. The reader goes behind the scene of a true crime, at the side of the ones trying to solve the case and avoid a tragic outcome.

## AN INVESTIGATION UNDER HEAT AND ITS TRACKS

The author's investigation work, in retrospect, begins when he meets the Boss and reveals how each person implied in such a true crime keep in mind the 25 hours of extreme tension preceding the discovery of the missing child. With a close to fifteen year hindsight, memory is still clear. The book also explores, with thoroughness, the consequences of all decisions that are taken by the brigade in charge of the investigation. We realise that every move counts and that each intuition has its importance. The actors of this true crime relive the events from the little girl's kidnapping, in front of witnesses, to the perpetrator's trial.

The political system is also highlighted. Once the child has been found and returned to her parents, things get heated: Nicolas Sarkozy's visit (he was the Interior Minister at the time), and the invitation of the heroes to Disneyland, ease the tension and even shifts gears, as situations are on the verge of comedy.

## BEHIND A PEACEFUL FACADE, SOCIAL DECAY

The gallery of characters that we come across offers a rich and deployed narrative thread. It is not so much the man hunt that keeps us in suspense, as the case is solved rather quickly. It is rather the angle from which the true crime is depicted: it reveals the rural popular class, underrepresented, that somehow survives behind the fake peaceful facade of small towns.

The young criminal's background is thoroughly detailed. Victim of an already convicted incestuous father, he led a wandering life full of petty crimes, heavy drinking and violence. His disordered everyday life and his family history have paved the way to the irretrievable. For this boy who sought limits without ever finding them, this slippage, which takes place after a first failed kidnapping attempt, ultimately leads to his arrest and conviction.





## A JOURNALISTIC ACCURACY

Here, the true crime is dissected by a journalist, and we can feel it. The author is involved in the story while erasing himself behind his encounters: the writing is subtle, precise, nuanced, close to Truman Capote's in its intensity and chiselling, although never sliding into the fascination for the crime and its perpetrator; because in the end it is a failed crime, solved quickly. The writing also accurately depicts the region, in which the story takes place: the Cognac vineyards of Charente, well known to Jean-Charles Chapuzet.

### A FEW LINES OF THE BOOK:

*« Still waiting. A lead weight stifles the small town. [...] Information has more or less flowed, but one thing is sure, a kid might be dead and a monster is on the loose. For a petty crime, we would willingly accuse the neighbour we hate. But here, we are talking about the abduction of a child. Nobody would take this opportunity to settle scores. »*

### THE AUTHOR:

Jean-Charles Chapuzet is a historian, journalist and writer with a taste for the vine world which he describes in numerous works. Here, Jean Charles Chapuzet produces a piece on the backstage of an investigation and depicts a striking portrait of the region where the kidnapping took place.

### CONTACT:

Marchialy - Laurence Leclercq : [lleclercq@groupeledcourt.com](mailto:lleclercq@groupeledcourt.com)

## LEUR ÂME AU DIABLE - « THEIR SOULS TO THE DEVIL »

Marin Ledun (Gallimard, 2021)

### If it were a film:

- *El Reino*, Rodrigo Sorogoyen
- *The Insider*, Michael Mann
- *Thank you for smoking*, Jason Reitman

### If it were a series:

- *Baron Noir*, Eric Benzekri et Jean-Baptiste Delafon
- 1992, Alessandro Fabbri, Ludovica Rampoldi et Stefano Sardo
- *The Inside Game*, Jean-Xavier de Lestrade et Antoine Lacomblez
- *Traffic*, Simon Moore
- *Narcos*, Carlo Bernard, Chris Brancato, Doug Miro

### Format:

Series on several seasons



1986, two tank trucks carrying twelve thousand litres of ammonia each to a cigarette factory, are found burnt down in the middle of nowhere. It is another of a series of identical heists, but this time it causes 7 deaths and it does not go unnoticed. Anton Muller, the brains behind the operation, erases any traces that could lead to the sponsors.

Simon Nora is the young Lieutenant in charge of the investigation, and he has yet no idea that it will keep him busy for 20 years of his life and send him in all parts of the world. For all those years, he will obstinately try to understand, identify, track down and arrest those whose job is to corrupt, manipulate, embezzle and bypass anyone who would interfere with the cash machinery of cigarette manufacturers. The very ones who try to avoid, and bypass the Evin law...

Dirty money flows and floods all circles that lobbyists may need, corruption is in full swing. David Bartels, brilliant and unscrupulous technocrat, head of a communications agency, sells his talents to European G. Tobacco. He is at the centre of a complex spider web. Rojas, his crime partner, embodies another aspect of the criminal megalomania of these white-collars. Valentina and Hélène run a very « feminine » event company, particularly on motor-vehicle circuits, which provides prostitutes for big fish, chosen by Bartels, to collect some pillow talk. Meanwhile, Anton Muller, Bartels' henchman, goes into exile to set up networks with local mafias through Serbia and Montenegro...



*Against them : an Italian prosecutor who intends to bring this massive fraud to trial on a European level; the stubborn Nora, who is after « Goliath »'s blood; and Patrick Brun, the junior lieutenant who swore to bring back to her parents a young woman gone missing since the bloody heist of the ammonia convoy at the origin of Nora's investigation...*

*And in the back, Christelle Szabo, who fights against smoking. She is Bartels' ex lover and when she discovers that she is pregnant with his child, she is forced to flee to protect the baby. But soon Bartels will find her.*

*Beyond these crazy human stories, all reflecting the 80s era and its evolution through twenty years, this highly documented novel shows the striking power of the lobbies.*

### **NO SMOKE WITHOUT CIGARETTES: DEEP DIVE IN TROUBLED WATERS**

*Leur âme au diable's* bullring is the world of lobbies and the tobacco industry. From the 80s onwards, it has to face revelations related to the health issues caused by tobacco use. This documented story describes the political undersides, dealing with lobby pressure, but also with the destiny of lawless men galvanised by our times.

Power struggles between French « men of influence » take on an international dimension when it is no longer just simply putting pressure on elected officials but on all representatives within Europe, which has been liberalised since the fall of the Berlin Wall. We find a Europe in which free circulation has just been applied, thanks to the Schengen Agreement and Convention, and which prepares itself for the introduction of its single currency.

It is in the shadow of a triumphant economic liberalism that lobbies will use marketing and advertisement to ensure their sustainability, while covering up numerous crimes and offences.

### **AN INDUSTRY IN TUNE WITH ITS TIMES**

The novel is a dark and political portrait. From the “money years” to the current crises, it very well captures the atmosphere of the 80s, and the following decades. References are insightful: Bernard Rapp's news flashes, the attack on the Rue de Rennes, Chernobyl and the Klaus Barbie trial are at the heart of conversations.

The intrigue crosses decades and ends in 2007, after the ellipse on the 90s. Times have changed but the story line perfectly describes how the tobacco industry got up to date.

Strategies used by the tobacco lobby to deal with changes in society and laws do not lack sharpness: the organised crime is never far. Companies always find a way to prosper despite new tobacco laws. Marin Ledun skilfully depicts the methods used by cigarette manufacturers to bypass the Evin Law, while pretending to respect it.

### **« SMOKED »: A CHRONICLE OF A BEAT DOWN**

The story is dry and powerful; it shows a violent world in which beating up, intimidation, murders and mysterious disappearances are the law. Lieutenant Nora from the financial squad, a stubborn and upright man, has to investigate in this hostile universe. He will soon team up with the Italian Scleci, whose methods are radically different from the usual techniques of the French authorities. Scleci's confidence in the politics and judicial system is of relative value. He does not hesitate to hire private mercenaries for public inquiries, while an army of legal experts works behind the scenes for the Big Tobacco. These two will offer a dynamic duo for a police series, in which all means are good to achieve one's goal.

The gallery of characters, mostly men, evolving in an uninhibited macho climate, allows us to imagine a series deployed on several seasons and the complex struggle between a few idealists and corrupted men, who gave in to the lure of gain, can be developed. Destinies collide, creating a complex spider web.

### **A STORY OF EUROPEAN / INTERNATIONAL SCOPE**

The spatial and temporal scale of the novel is impressive, thus offering the opportunity for an international deployment. The action might be anchored in France most of the time, apart from the trendy motor-circuits on which Valentina's agency “officiates” and the traffics in former Yugoslavia, but not all characters are French – far from it.

Anton Muller the henchman, Rojas the associate but also an Italian judge or Bartels' Chinese mistress, are as many roles that would open up, by essence, the adaptation to an international cast. Not to mention the world-wide issue of trying to limit tobacco consumption by revealing what has been kept secret for so many years: Smoking kills!

The fertile imagination of (m)ad men, in charge of thwarting the traps of the prohibitions, has no limits. Advertisers won't hesitate to invoke the necessity to support the Brazilian fair-trade tobacco and these statements are not waved to by-pass the French legislation only, these ideas are meant to be exported through Europe and elsewhere. Wouldn't the lobbies' latest prank, which the novel didn't have time to seize, be the assumption that smoking could prevent from catching Covid?





#### A FEW LINES OF THE NOVEL:

« Of course, money is not the problem. Neither are the seven dead. The problem is the shortfall in the short term and the loss of market share. Because smokers cannot wait. They act like impatient junkies, in need of their daily dose. If their Virginia tobacco cigarettes are unavailable, they fall back on another brand. For every burnt down tank truck, you will have millions of cigarettes that won't be smoked by the French today, and they will buy from the competition. »

#### THE AUTHOR:

Marin Ledun was born in 1975, and has already written over 30 books. Committed citizen and Doctor in Political Communications, he doesn't hesitate to tackle current issues in the most impactful way. His novels, generally in the noir genre, are translated in numerous countries and discuss, without filter, the limits of progress, the contemporary crisis and its social consequences. He also writes radio plays for France Culture.

#### CONTACT :

Gallimard - Frédérique MASSART : [frederique.massart@gallimard.fr](mailto:frederique.massart@gallimard.fr)

## AU BAL DES ABSENTS - « AT THE ABSENTEES' BALL »

Catherine Dufour (Seuil, 2020)

#### If it were a film:

- Ghostland, Pascal Laugier
- Mister Babadook, Jennifer Kent

#### If it were a series:

- Marianne, Samuel Bodin
- The Haunting of Bly Manor, Mike Flanagan
- American Horror Story : haunted house (saison 1), Ryan Murphy et Brad Falchuk

#### Format:

Miniséries



Claude is forty years old and her life is a complete desert on all aspects, from her love life to her professional life. Cornered, fired, on the brink of bankruptcy, despite her low income benefit, soon she will be evicted from her flat in the Paris suburbs since she cannot afford her rent anymore. So when a mysterious American lawyer gets in touch with her through LinkedIn (on a misunderstanding) to ask her to investigate on the missing Grues (an American family that has vanished into thin air during a holiday in Burgundy) in exchange for a huge pay check, Claude will not hesitate for long.

Her only mission is to rent the « Aunt Colline » house, an old manor in the Yonne region, hidden under Virginia creeper, where the missing family has been spotted a year before, and to keep her eyes and ears wide open. An accommodation for a few weeks for free? What a bargain! But she seems to be forgetting that a man and his five children have vanished from this place overnight...

But this spooky mansion, abandoned for years, seems to be in a perfect condition. Just like if it was still occupied the day before... Why? Why do surrounding neighbours - terrified at the mere mention of the house - all seem to have different theories on the horrors that took place there? And above all, why do every witness interrogated by Claude and the shops she visits, end up disappearing overnight?

It seems obvious: the « presence » occupying the manor doesn't want Claude around. Or at least, not alive... But that would be underestimating the resilience and determination clinging to this snarling forty year old woman already harassed by life and society who has decided not to let herself be trampled on ever again.



## CINEMA-LOVER GHOSTBUSTER VS GHOSTS

What if offence was the best defence?

Once the shock has passed – you can feel rather rattled when ghosts try to kill you – Claude's first move is to calmly deal with the issue and gather material. And there is no better place than the local library to ransack all works, films and websites tackling in one way or the other, occult forces and Poltergeist beings: from Ghostbusters to Blair Witch Project, including House of Usher, Claude takes notes, makes lists and gathers common features (sometimes she has to hide her eyes) between all these stories: who survives, why and how?

She soon becomes an expert on the matter – even if she comes to the conclusion that young virgins are often the ones surviving – and comes up with a battle plan.

If it hadn't been for the manor's creature... it will feed itself on her imagination – now filled with nightmarish visions – and Claude will also have to confront the demons of her own past to get out of this.

## THE SPECTRE OF HARDSHIP

Through Claude's downward infernal (literally speaking) spiral, the purpose of *Au bal des absents* is also to describe the reality of a very current social issue: the fall of the poor, the have-nots, the unemployed who have lost everything and cannot bounce back, sidelined by a society and a work world always more « competitive » - a too polite word that actually means « cruel ». In the end, they are the true ghosts of the French society.

While never forgetting her humour and her common sense, Claude allows us have a glimpse at the everyday life of a woman who literally has nothing left besides her strong will to live.

So she might be chased by cut off legs, faceless little girls or even buried alive... whatever! She has been through so much already!

## FRONTIERS BETWEEN WORLDS... AND GENRES

It's like stepping through the looking glass when Claude pushes the « Aunt Colline » gate. The novel skilfully slaloms between genres: from the investigation tale to the horror thriller, including the social chronicle and the cynical comedy. No one will be able to predict the change of tone that might come up next through the chapters.

If there certainly is fantasy in this novel, there is also humour through Claude's spirited and heartfelt observations – she uses humour as an ultimate defence against despair – and offers a fair, although never pathetic picture of a woman who is determined to remain upright despite the hardship and events she is confronted with.

Imagine a shooting of a Dardenne Brothers' film crossing one of the Duffer Brothers!

## A FEW LINES FROM THE NOVEL:

*« In the bathroom, on the cupboard's shelves, she found huge piles of monogrammed linen bed sheets, and, in the bathtub, a pregnant woman, drowning. Oh yuck! She definitely has to keep schedule of this one's apparitions, so that she'll be able to take her shower without disturbing her. »*

## THE BOOK, THE AUTHOR:

Computer engineer, Catherine Dufour is also columnist for the *Monde Diplomatique* and a political science teacher. She won the Grand Prix de l'imaginaire (Grand Prize of the imaginary) twice and published fantasy and science fiction works. She founded the Collectif Zanzibar with other science-fiction authors, among which Norbert Merjagnan and Alain Damasio, to have a common reflection in order to “disembody the future”.

## CONTACT :

Seuil - Kim Beci : [Kim.Beci@mediatoon.com](mailto:Kim.Beci@mediatoon.com)

## CLOWN À TUER - « A CLOWN TO KILL »

Eldiablo (scénario) et Niro (dessin) (Dupuis – 2020)

### If it were a film:

- *Barton Fink*, Joel et Ethan Coen
- *The King of comedy*, Martin Scorsese

### If it were a series:

- *Fargo*, Noah Hawley
- *Spotless*, Ed McCardie et Corinne Marrinan
- *Mad Dogs*, Cris Cole

### Format:

Miniseries



*Jérémy is in his thirties and has two children. He is having a difficult time to make ends meet: as a trained actor, his career never really took off. To earn a living, he is forced to dress up as a clown for birthday parties in front of horrible young audiences.*

*When he is about to give up on this life he had never planned to be living, his agent asks him to play the clown one more time for a rich client in an isolated nursing home in the mountains. He grudgingly agrees. One last time cannot hurt. Perhaps he should have trusted his instinct...*

*After a sloppy performance, he is ready to head back home. But an unfortunate accident that kills one of the residents, will force him to stay. Jérémy is not responsible in any way but the landlord, Etienne, needs a scapegoat. In order to keep him to stay, the residence employees encourage Jérémy to get drunk, but he manages to escape. Unfortunately for him, not a single neighbour will believe the crazy story of a drunken clown and as he finally convinces the police force to visit the nursing home, the body has disappeared...*

### A RED NOSE ON A NOIR NOVEL

Jérémy is one of those protagonists who, despite themselves, get trapped in the most dangerous and incongruous situations. His clown costume does not go unnoticed and it certainly does not help. This man, who goes from one failure to the other and who is on the verge of losing his mind, inspires sympathy. We can easily imagine how hard it must be for an aspiring actor to be stuck inside a clown costume in front of an audience of careless kids.

Here, Jérémy reverses the archetype of the evil clown, a recurring character of many horror stories. Obviously, he might be a bit edgy but the trap that has been set for him makes him appear as the mischievous one. This tragi-comic hero promises to be a delightful role of a very touching clown, a victim despite himself.

### A CAUSTIC INTRIGUE

The intrigue's strength is to constantly surprise the reader with twists and turns or unexpected changes of direction. To witness Jérémy sink down his own misfortune offers a toxic joy, a *Schadenfreude*. The intrigue is both stressful, as the character's situation seems hopeless, and cheerful, as we bounce from one surprise to the next.

Finally, despite a growing concern, the desire to see how far the situation can go prevails over the pity which inspires the character and we are fully rejoiced.

A series adaptation of *Clown à tuer* is an opportunity for many twists, blending both dark humour and cruel irony.

### SHORTER IS BETTER

*Clown à tuer* is a webtoon, a comic book published in short episodes – like chapters – on the web. Webtoons are conceived to be read on smart phones or tablets, thanks to their vertical format. From the start, this story has been imagined as a series, with episodes. This is why it is punctuated by many cliff-hangers, marking the end of each episode. This webtoon also distinguishes itself through its visual choices. The illustrator uses cold and desaturated colours, except for the red colour that we find on Jérémy's costume and when blood is pictured. It gives the webtoon a distinctive aesthetic which skilfully embodies the feverish atmosphere of the story and reflects the author's street art influences.

### A FEW LINES FROM THE WEBTOON:

« Hey what do you think? That I'm here for pleasure? Do you really think that it's easy to play the dork disguised as a clown, in the ass-end of nowhere; just to distract a bunch of old farts? Do you really think that I'm having the time of my life? Do you? »

### THE BOOK, THE AUTHOR:

Coming from hip hop and graffiti culture, Eldiablo is a hybrid artist between the worlds of cinema, comic books and painting. He has written many comic books, and created the animated TV series *Lascars*, broadcasted from 2000 to 2008 and adapted for the big screen in 2009. He also participated in the writing of the animated web series *Les Kassos*, coproduced by Canal +. *Clown à tuer* is a webtoon, a comic book published on the web.

### CONTACT :

Dupuis - Laurent Duvault : [Laurent.duvault@mediatoon.com](mailto:Laurent.duvault@mediatoon.com)

## L'ANGE ROUGE - « THE RED ANGEL »

François Médéline (La Manufacture de livres, 2020)

### Film references:

- *The Crimson rivers*, Mathieu Kassovitz
- *Seven*, David Fincher

### If it were a series:

- *Luther*, Neil Cross
- *True Detective*, Nic Pizzolatto
- *Moloch*, Arnaud Malherbe

### Format:

Serial series, several seasons potential



*We are at the end of the 90s; a makeshift raft floats along the Saone River and crosses Lyon with a crucified corpse on board. The river is not peaceful anymore and this skilfully staged murder, signed with an orchid painted on the body, exposed to all, will stir up the police and the media. The criminal police intercept the raft and experts start analysing the corpse under the astonishing eyes of passersby and a hoard of journalists rattling around.*

*Finding the murderer will be a race against time for six investigators under pressure: the entire team of Lieutenant Alain Dubak is requisitioned. They are all lining up with Dubak, especially Captain Nicole Piroli, aka « Granny », a loyal friend, a little gruff and overflowing with affection, as well as Véronique, the procedure queen, touching mother of a sick child who stands straight in her boots despite the mud surrounding her. What was meant to be the case of a lifetime will shake up their existence because at all costs, they must prevent another murder from happening.*

*Thanks to its DNA, the identification of the body leads the investigators to look into his family, living in great poverty. One problem though: his mother and his half-sister haven't heard of him for more than ten years... As the investigation begins, other murders take place, like a scavenger hunt across Lyon, and puzzle pieces are revealed. Dubak also has to fight his inner demons that cannot stand still in the turmoil he must face.*

### AN UNEXPECTED TRIO FOR A HECTIC SERIES

Dubak is a tormented soul. In addition of being a hot-blooded neurotic affected by his divorce, he is addicted to cocaine. This addiction is more than a simple detail giving a feature to the character as his use of drugs triggers highly visual hallucinations.

His assistant, Granny (who also has her own addictions: sweets and nightsticks) and

the very procedural Véronique, form with Dubak a trio of high-profile investigators.

These characters, however proactive, are confounded when facing a serial killer taunting them with a new stunt just as the police think that they have reached a decisive milestone. The investigation is made of constant upheavals, giving François Médéline's writing the rhythm of a hectic and nervous series, a rhythm infusing in all characters, caught up in a frantic race, like on drugs, at the risk of going insane.

### A TACKY ATMOSPHERE

The novel offers a striking imagery giving momentum to the story as early as the opening scene and the crucified corpse. The murder is macabre, especially as the staging is disturbing. Why is there a delicate painting of an orchid on a corpse exposed to all? The situation is intriguing and immediately sets the story's morbid atmosphere. However, the rhythm will slow down in order to notify the reader that the police are at a standstill despite their gesticulations. To watch them getting bogged down when the pressure rises is part of the mechanism which suddenly switches.

In this world of criminal police, by being confronted with these atrocities, investigators are physically and psychologically marked. They no longer hesitate to break the rules to save time, to overcome the frustration. Violence is everywhere.

This initial crime, steeped in mystery, adds an occult dimension to this psychedelic intrigue.

### A VISCERAL ANCHORAGE IN LYON

The anchorage in the Lyon bullring is assumed: the city is both a character and a fiction setting. Its geographical location and its architecture are thoroughly developed. The suburbs, the Presqu'île and shady nightclubs become a stage for the worst vicissitudes. The most sordid corners of Lyon are sublimed, and the city also becomes a place of comfort, in the « bouchons » restaurants and bars, during gatherings with friends to relax or, simply to have a bite to eat.

The capital of the Gauls becomes the setting of a both disturbing and efficient intrigue, in the line of James Ellroy's thrillers, to which François Médéline claims lineage. Since *L'Ange Rouge* is the first volume of a series of novels, Lyon is not likely to deliver its secrets just yet.



#### A FEW LINES FROM THE NOVEL:

« A corpse makes you believe in ghosts. I don't know why I became a cop. Perhaps just to annoy my mother. »

#### L'AUTEUR :

Born in 1977 near Lyon, François Médéline has a doctorate in political sociology and in linguistics. He worked in politics for ten years, as a counsellor, writer, chief of staff and communications director for several elected representatives, before devoting himself to writing. Besides being a novelist, François Médéline is also a screenwriter. Furthermore, he sailed across the Northern Atlantic Ocean and coaches children in a rugby school.

#### CONTACT :

La manufacture de livres - Kinga Wyrzykowska : [kinga@trames.pro](mailto:kinga@trames.pro)

## LE SILENCE DE CLARA WIGHT - « CLARA WIGHT'S SILENCE »

Valérie Saubade (Anne Carrière, 2020)

#### If it were a film:

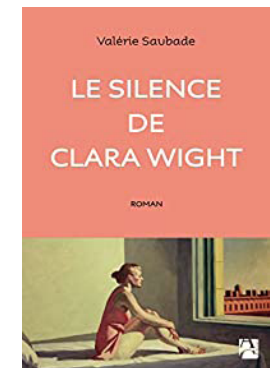
- *The Girl on the Train*, Tate Taylor
- *Gloria*, John Cassavetes

#### If it were a series:

- *Sharp Objects*, Marti Noxon
- *I know this much is true*, Derek Cianfrance
- *Big Little Lies*, Liane Moriarty, David E. Kelley
- *Eyewitness*, Jarl Emsell Larsen

#### Format:

Stand-alone miniseries or serial series with several seasons



After a more than difficult childhood, Cassandra Fletcher is on her way towards the beautiful situation she has always dreamt of: a loving husband, with whom she invests in a dental practice, which ensures them a secure future, a pretty house, and her own practice in which she can achieve success in her perfectly organised professional life as a child psychiatrist.

But everything collapses when one of her little patients with a school phobia jumps out of a window right after delivering her diagnosis stating that he was ready to go back to school.

Broke, Cassandra returns to Leeds alone, in her hometown, and she decides to stop taking risks: to work only with boring patients and never to cross her father, the shady Doctor Fletcher, a demanding and cruel man, who has psychologically destroyed his children after sending their mother to the asylum.

One day, Meredith Wight, a local political figure running for the elections, offers her the opportunity to make a great deal of money and the assurance to have more patients, in exchange for her promise to treat her stepdaughter. Clara is a mute teenager, traumatised since Charlotte, the family's au pair, was found dead in the pond of their huge propriety.

Cassandra, consumed by guilt, swore herself never to treat teenagers in distress ever again. But when she understands that this tragedy was actually a murder, she can't help but dive body and soul into this investigation in order to make Clara speak again and solve the mystery, at the cost of her own mental health.



### COMEDY NOVEL... OR NOIR?

With a dysfunctional family legacy, Cassandra Fletcher represents an original gateway to this investigation: with baggage in her past but organised like clockwork, she schedules her day by the minute, fascinated by hours « on the dot ».

Will she heal her childhood wounds and find happiness? Will she solve Clara Wight's mystery? Will she find love, that she so richly deserves?

Alongside the course of the investigation (or should we say the investigations?), Cassandra follows her own path towards her reconstruction. She will come back to life, her social, family, woman life.

Thriller? Sentimental novel? Why choose...

### A WEB OF SECONDARY CHARACTERS

This novel is definitely character driven because beyond Cassandra, numerous delightful characters are sketched: Grace, her obese and romantic best friend, her brother George and his wife who try to ward off the family curse and offer their children a loving home, her cousin who dreams of a West-End acting career through local productions, or even Lieutenant Al Saoud also in the grip of a painful past.

These are some of the many threads that will make the novel a dense and fertile ground for multi-level intrigues that can be rolled out in several seasons. Then again, Cassandra Fletcher and Assad Al Saoud, respectively a psychiatrist and a police Lieutenant, already form a very dynamic duo.

### FROM LEEDS TO THE NORTH OF FRANCE?

Although carrying an exquisite British charm, the novel can definitely be transposed. We clearly imagine Leeds, presented as a desolated city as a mirror of old areas of the East or the North of France, locations bearing the scars of their industrial decay.

The novel also highlights interiors as the reflection of the characters' moods. Cassandra's shabby flat reflects her inner sadness just like the Wights' massive mansion and its outbuildings, full of maze-like corners, reflect the hidden secrets of an undoubtedly toxic family.

### A FEW LINES FROM THE NOVEL:

*« I killed one of my patients. He was only ten, she heard herself answer. Bennet Stanley. He was suffering from school phobia. Just one case among others. I also treated bed wetters or kids touching their testicles. Its' amazing what kids can come up with just to piss off their parents. [...] He threw himself out of the window, from his bedroom on the first floor. »*

### THE AUTHOR:

Valérie Saubade, 49 years old, lives in Bordeaux where she teaches French for foreign students from the Alliance française, after 6 years as a journalist. She already published five novels for Anne Carrière Publishing: *Happy birthday grand-mère*, *Les Petites Sœurs*, *Marche arrière*, *Miss Sweetie*, *Un bref moment d'égarement*.

### CONTACT :

Anne Carrière - Nolwenn Guillemot : [Nolwenn.Guillemot@mediatoon.com](mailto:Nolwenn.Guillemot@mediatoon.com)

# WINNERS AND SELECTIONS OF PREVIOUS EDITIONS

	free of rights	under negotia- tion	sold / optioned
<b>2020 SELECTION</b>			
<i>Barbarie 2.0</i> d'Andrea H. Japp (Flammarion, 2014)	X		
<i>Celle qui pleurerait sous l'eau</i> de Niko Tackian (Calmann Lévy, 2020)	X		
<i>Félines</i> de Stéphane Servant (Le Rouergue, 2019)			X
<i>Le Guide mondial des records</i> de Tonino Benacquista et Nicolas Barral (Dargaud, 2017)	X		
<i>Sång</i> de Johana Gustawsson, (Bragelonne, 2019)	X		
<i>Troadec et moi</i> d'Anaïs Denet, (Denoël, 2020)			X
<b>2019 SELECTION</b>			
<i>Irons</i> de Tristan Roulot et Luc Brahy (Le Lombard, 2019)	X		
<i>Le Parfum d'Adam</i> de Jean-Christophe Rufin (Flammarion, 2007)	X		
<i>Le Signal</i> de Maxime Chattam (Albin Michel, 2018)			X
<i>Les Mafieuses</i> de Pascale Dietrich (Liana Levi, 2019)			X
<i>Parfois c'est le diable qui vous sauve de l'enfer</i> de Jean-Paul Chaumeil (Le Rouergue, 2018)	X		
<i>Racket*</i> de Dominique Manotti (Les Arènes, 2018)			X
<b>2018 SELECTION</b>			
<i>Justice soit-elle</i> de Marie Vindy (Plon, 2017)			X
<i>La chance du perdant</i> de Christophe Guillaumot (Liana Lévi, 2017)	X		
<i>L'Avocat*</i> de Laurent Galandon, Frank Giroud, Frédéric Volante (Le Lombard, 2015)	X		
<i>Le suivant sur la liste</i> de Manon Fargetton (Rageot, 2014)	X		
<i>Plus jamais seul</i> de Caryl Ferey (Gallimard, 2018)			X
<i>Que la guerre est jolie</i> de Christian Roux (Rivages, 2018)	X		

\* winner of the selection

	free of rights	under negotia- tion	sold / optioned
<b>2017 SELECTION</b>			
<i>En Pays Conquis</i> de Thomas Bronnec (Gallimard, 2017)	X		
<i>Hedge Fund</i> de Tristan Roulot, Patrick Hénaff, Philippe Sabbah (Le Lombard, 2014, 2015)	X		
<i>Jeu d'ombres</i> de Loulou Dedola, Merwan (Glénat, 2016)			X
<i>Kabukicho</i> de Dominique Sylvain (Viviane Hamy, 2016)	X		
<i>Quand la neige danse</i> de Sonja Delzongle (Denoël, 2016)	X		
<i>Seules les bêtes*</i> de Colin Niel (Le Rouergue, 2017)			X
<i>Zanzara</i> de Paul Colize (Univers Poche, 2017)	X		
<b>2016 SELECTION</b>			
<i>L'alignement des équinoxes</i> de Sébastien Raizer (Gallimard, 2015)	X		
<i>Au fer rouge</i> de Marin Ledun (Flammarion, 2015)	X		
<i>Infiltrés</i> de Sylvain Runberg, Olivier Truc, Olivier Thomas (Soleil, 2015)	X		
<i>Les loups à leur porte*</i> de Jérémy Fel (Rivages, 2015)			X
<i>Tout le monde te haïra</i> d'Alexis Aubenque (Robert Laffont, 2015)	X		
<i>Ubac</i> d'Elisa Vix (Le Rouergue, 2016)			
<b>2015 SELECTION</b>			
<i>Après la guerre*</i> de Hervé Le Corre (Payot & Rivages, 2014)	X		
<i>Bunker Parano</i> de Georges-Jean Arnaud (French Pulp Editions, 2014)		X	
<i>Commandant Achab</i> de Stéphane Piatzsek et Stéphane Douay (Casterman, 2013)	X		
<i>Et qu'advienne le chaos</i> de Hadrien Klent (Le Tripode, 2010)	X		
<i>Le partage des terres</i> de Bernard Besson (Odile Jacob, 2013)	X		
<i>Poulets grillés*</i> de Sophie Henaff (Albin Michel, 2015)	X		X

\* winner of the selection

# LET'S MEET IN LYON

During the Quais du Polar Festival, you will once again have the opportunity to join Polar Connection, the event's professional label, which invites you in Lyon from July 2<sup>nd</sup> to July 4<sup>th</sup> 2021 !

It will be a chance for all cinema, audiovisual, book and digital professionals to meet and exchange during round-tables and convivial moments.

These 3 days will also be the opportunity to talk about the 2021 Polar en Séries Prize, to highlight the short listed authors and the winners, to have a chat with their publishers and rights managers.

Polar Connection offers:

- Polar Connection's cases: round-tables about key trends and hot topics.
- Polar Connection's parlour : meetings and work sessions in a dedicated space
- Specialists' briefings: theme-based presentations by professionals from specific fields (Non-fiction, international, mediation, innovation, translation...)
- The Digital Hub: a dedicated area for digital innovations in both content and use.
- Polar Connection's Ops: various proposals blended in the festival's high points, with a professional outlook and specific arrangements in the form of a cultural tour.

To get accreditation or to learn more about how to register, go to the [following adress](#).

# CRIME FICTION NOVELS, SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

## CRIME NOVELS HAVING GENERATED SERIES

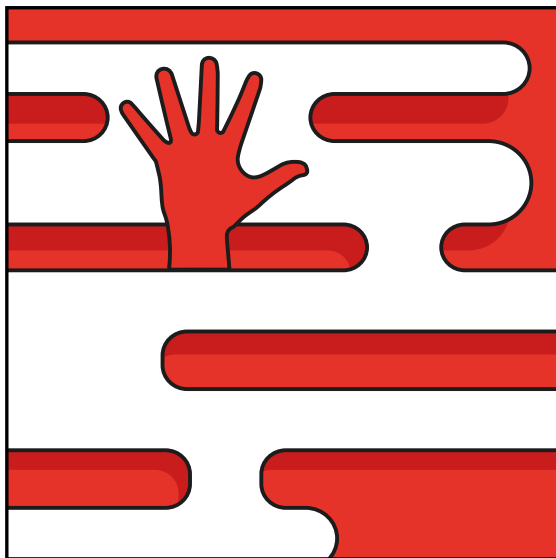
*Wire in the blood* Val McDermid *Wallander* Henning Mankell *Ikebukuro* West Gate Park Ishida Ira *Inspector Morse* Colin Dexter *Smiley's People* John Le Carré *XIII* Jean Van Hamme William Vance Banks Peter Robinson *Il commissario Montalbano* Andrea Camilleri *Murdoch mysteries* Maureen Jennings *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 *Dérappages* Pierre Lemaître *Perry Mason* Erle Stanley Gardner *Les Sept Morts d'Evelyn* Hardcastle Stuart Turton *I Know This Much Is True* Wally Lamb *Devils* Guido Maria Brera *The Undoing* Jean Hanff Korelitz *Alice in Borderland* Kento Yamazaki *Tokyo Vice* Jake Adelstein

## CRIME NOVELS HAVING GENERATED SERIES AS WELL AS LONG FEATURES

*Incorruptibles* Elliot Ness *Arsène Lupin* Maurice Leblanc *Millenium* Stieg Larsson *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries* Kerry Greenwood *The Case of The Cheminal 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

French American British Scandinavian Others



# QUAIS DU POLAR

2 > 4 JUILLET

FESTIVAL  
INTERNATIONAL  
2021

17<sup>e</sup> ÉDITION  
LYON

LITTÉRATURE,  
CINÉMA, SÉRIES TV,  
ENQUÊTE URBAINE



QUAIS  
DU POLAR  
FESTIVAL  
INTERNATIONAL  
LYON

## POLAR CONNECTION

EN FILIGRANE DE QUAIS DU POLAR,  
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