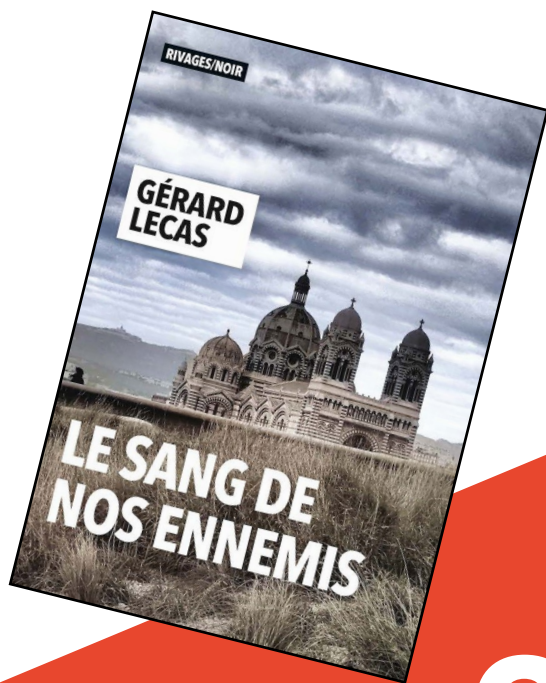
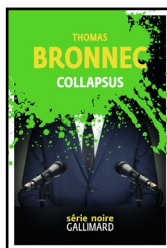
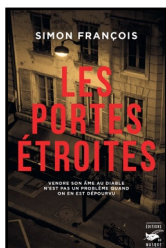
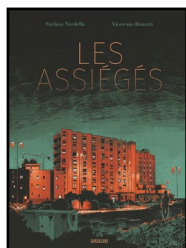


POLAR EN SÉRIES PRIZE



QUAIS
DU POLAR
FESTIVAL
INTERNATIONAL
LYON

2023

POLAR EN SÉRIES

Polar Connection, Quais du Polar's professional programme, is committed to building and expanding platforms between the various stakeholders of the noir genre. From this determination, and with the support of SCELf, was born the Polar en series award in 2015.

The Polar en series award was created as a way to highlight and reward works of literature for their inherent quality and their potential for being adapted to a TV series. In line with the ever growing success and incredible creativity that underpins the production of series, this award aims to promote the French noir genre, which is also growing in popularity and is constantly reinventing itself. Quais du polar wishes to perpetuate and nurture these exchanges between publishers, authors, screenwriters, producers, and broadcasters to give birth to new adaptation projects and thus continue in its role as a platform between books and the small screen.

The diversity of books put forward by publishers is testament to the creative potential of this genre, which provides an endless source of narratives and plots for screenwriters.

We are grateful to the publishers for their submissions and to all of our partners who support this project and help it grow alongside us: SCELf, Initiative Film, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Cinéma, BIEF, Écran Total, and the members of the jury who chose to share this experience.

SCELf,

 **La Région**
Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes
CINÉMA

 INITIATIVEFILM

BIEF
Bureau
International
de l'Édition
Française

**Écran
total**

 **QUAIS
DU POLAR**
FESTIVAL
INTERNATIONAL
LYON

THE SCELf

PARTNER OF QUAIS DU POLAR

Partner of Quais du polar since 2014, the SCELf (Civil Society of French Language Publishers) is an intermediary organisation for the collection and distribution of copyrights generated by the various forms of adaptation of French-language literary works.

The SCELf is behind three professional events: Audiovisual Meetings at the BNF, Shoot the Book! at the Cannes Festival, and Performing Arts Meetings at the Théâtre du Rond-Point, events that attract many French and international producers looking for subjects every year.

The SCELf has naturally partnered with numerous film and literature festivals to set up meetings between publishers and producers. It notably supports the international versions of Shoot the Book! in Los Angeles, Mumbai, FIPADOC in Biarritz, FIBD in Angoulême, SLPJ in Montreuil, as well as other events such as Marseille Séries Stories or Séries Mania. It is in this context that the SCELf and the Quais du polar festival together created a unique event dedicated to the adaptation of detective novels into television series.

For the 9th edition of Polar en séries, the SCELf is pleased to support this award, which shines a spotlight on a literary work written or translated in French with strong audiovisual potential. Thanks to this exposure and the involvement of Quais du polar, as well as the renewed jury every year, the selected works have been the subject of numerous options since the beginning. The SCELf is delighted with this traditional meeting between detective fiction and series, responding to the growing demand for series content.

SCELf,

THE APPROACH

Polar en séries was born in 2015 from a meeting organised by Marie Le Gac from Rhône-Alpes Cinéma (which has since become Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Cinéma) between the team at Quais du polar, who have turned Lyon into the symbolic capital of the crime genre, and Initiative Film, an organisation responsible for several events and programmes focusing on adaptation to the small screen. The idea of creating a professional event, shining a spotlight on a selection of recent works with a high potential for being adapted into a TV series, seduced the SCELf who immediately jumped on board and became a partner of the adventure. Since the creation of this yearly event, the stakes involved in the production of all formats of series are such that we feel comforted in the importance of our approach, all the more so with the proliferation of streaming platforms contributing to the creation of TV shows.

The know-how of French-speaking professionals has shone through, with their finger constantly on the genre's pulse, with an evolution towards true-crime that is reflected in the titles now regularly put forward by publishers for Polar en séries.

The conception of this booklet was entrusted to us as an extension of our initial commitment. Its purpose is to present the approach, introduce the jury (renewed each year) and the nominated books, with a particular focus on the prize-winning book of the year.

The booklet also takes stock of nominated works and previous winners of the prize, looking at their current situation in terms of their copyright status. Are they still available, reserved, already been bought, close to becoming a movie or show? All these questions will be answered here.

Behind the scenes of the Polar en séries prize, the SCELf launches an annual appeal for candidates to be put forward by French language publishers. The finalists are selected based on specific criteria designed to evaluate the book's adaptability into a TV show format.

This year, more than 60 books were put forward for preselection, which is intentionally eclectic to offer various avenues in terms of style and format. The pre-selection was made by the teams from Quais du polar, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Cinéma, Initiative Film, students from Sorbonne University, and former students of CinéFabrique. These 6 works were read by the jury members who rendered their verdict last March during a deliberation dinner, which was, as always, lively and passionate. The winner will be revealed during the now not-to-be-missed pitch session.



Initiative Film is a consulting company founded by Isabelle Fauvel and now co-managed by Hakim Mao. Its aim is to support talents during the development of audio-visual projects, from the birth of the story to the implementation of the project, prior to production. Literary adaptation is at the heart of the company's activities, which include, in addition to project consultations, international training programmes and talent scouting.

THE JURY

Jury members in alphabetical order



Michel ABOUCHAHLA
President of Écran Total

Pierre Jacques BENICHO
Casting Director

Emma CASCALES
Screenwriter

Carole LE BERRE
Programme Advisor, Fiction Unit, France Télévision

Xavier LEHERPEUR
Journalist, film and series critic, France Inter

Pierre MONNARD
Film Director

Véra PELTEKIAN
Vice President in charge of French Original Productions
for HBO Max at WarnerMedia International

Ivan SADIK
Director of Fiction and Producer, StudioFact Stories

SELECTED WORKS

List of works in alphabetical order of authors

LES ASSIÉGÉS (*THE BESIEGED*)

Vincenzo Bizzarri (scenario) and Stefano Nardella (drawings) (Sarbacane, 2022)

COLLAPSUS (*COLLAPSE*)

Thomas Bronnec (Gallimard, 2022)

POLAR VERT – LES ALGUES ASSASSINES (*GREEN CRIME – KILLER ALGAE*)

Thierry Colombié (Milan, 2021)

LES PORTES ÉTROITES (*THE NARROW GATES*)

Simon François (Éditions du Masque, 2022)

LE SANG DE NOS ENNEMIS (*THE BLOOD OF OUR ENEMIES*)

Gérard Lecas (Rivages, 2023)

QUI VOIT SON SANG (*WHO SEES HIS BLOOD*)

Élisa Vix (Éditions du Rouergue, 2022)

THE JURY'S VERDICT

THE JURY'S VERDICT ON THE WINNER

If crime fiction often provides an x-ray of the present, this year's Polar en séries prize goes to a book turned towards the past, but which sheds precious light on contemporary times.

This year's jury distinguished a dense, controlled, and highly political novel that trusts its readers to navigate the political subtleties of its plot and follow its complex protagonists, haunted by a loaded past and facing extreme situations. This is a prize awarded unanimously that rewards not only a quality writing style, but also a necessary national novel that unravels the threads of a period - between the purge and the Algerian War - still largely unexplored in fiction, from both an intimate and political angle.

LE SANG DE NOS ENNEMIS

Gérard Lecas (Rivages, 2023)



» IF IT WERE A FILM :

LA FRENCH by Cédric Jimenez

DE NOS FRÈRES BLESSÉS by Héliel Cisterne

» IF IT WERE A SERIES :

TRUE DETECTIVE by Nic Pizzolatto

PARIS POLICE 1900 by Frédéric Balekdjian et Fabien Nury

BABYLON BERLIN by Tom Tykwer, Achim von Borries, Hendrik Handloegten

FORMAT **MULTIPLE SEASON SERIES**

Marseille, 1962. As the Algerian War painfully draws to a close in blood and tears, the body of a man is found in the middle of the salt marshes of Camargue. Next to the body, a full jerry can.

Two cops from «L'Evêché», as the police headquarters is nicknamed, Anthureau and Molinari, are dispatched to the scene. They find that the body is that of an Arab man, and that he is exsanguinated. His blood is in the can beside him.

The modus operandi is gruesome, and the murder is only the first in a series in a context where Marseille is already in the grip of extreme violence: murders, shootings, open conflicts between the OAS and the FLN, while pieds-noirs and harkis refugees are flocking in large numbers... The politicians, overwhelmed, are operating in very murky waters while local mafias are tearing each other apart to control the future French Connection.

In this context, Marcel Azzara, one of their most ambitious bosses, has just had a very large shipment of morphine base stolen. However, he has files on Molinari's sulphurous past and will therefore blackmail him to locate his drugs as quickly as possible. Over the course of these cases, in which the two investigators with opposing methods and tense relationships will discover that they are much more connected than they could have imagined, Anthureau and Molinari will each have to face their past.

THAT THEIR IMPURE BLOOD... AN UNORTHODOX SERIAL KILLER

While the Marseille sun and the Camargue ponds invite to southern sweetness, the time is not for carelessness.

The bodies soon pile up, all murdered using the same method: these young men are bled like halal lambs and visibly victims of torture, beatings, and cigarette burns. The detectives try to decode the mystery. If it's only revenge, a racist hate crime, why such a macabre staging? Louis Anthureau concludes that it can only be a message, a warning, but to whom, and to say what? The method is violent, visual, chilling: it's up to Louis to decode the complex psychology of the perpetrator.

SHOCKING DUO

In the midst of a group of pieds-noirs, undercover agents, turncoat politicians, and all kinds of traffickers, at the head of this investigation unlike any other are inspectors Louis Anthureau and Jacques Molinari, a duo of antagonistic protagonists: a young man, Louis Anthureau, son of communist resistance fighters whose father was denounced and mother disappeared, and an «old-timer», Jacques Molinari, former resistance fighter, member of the SAC, the Civic Action Service in service of De Gaulle, now more anchored in the extremes.

The two heroes are at opposite ends of the political spectrum, and perhaps even at opposite ends of the investigation, when Louis witnesses an event that clearly makes him doubt Molinari's real loyalties. In parallel with the investigation into the soon-to-be serial murders and the events that rattle the city of Marseille every day, Louis traces the tracks of his family's past. From the Vieux-Port to the harkis camps, he searches to uncover his roots and family secrets to reveal the truth.

THE POST-WAR(S) PERIOD, IN PLURAL

«No, Marseille will not be Chicago!» the leaflets proclaim in the face of the surge in violence, and the story plunges the reader into the heart of a veritable powder keg as an arena.

As the pages unfold, the captivating thriller becomes a lesson in history, as the investigation intertwines with the detailed and documented portrait of a pivotal period, where the remnants of the dirty wars that marked the minds and the beginnings of a painful decolonization process redistribute the cards of a new world order.

While connecting the periods together, the pages manage to unravel a set of varied but interconnected historical themes: resistance, maquis, French Algeria, gangs, trafficking, torture. Twenty years of war, propaganda and ignominy are intertwined until they lay the foundations of what will become the Cold War...

The era, like the city, is ambivalent, just like the heroes and criminals of the story: former collaborators decorated with resistance medals. It is difficult to understand who is playing for whom. The Great History becomes a backdrop full of romantic breath, ideal for action scenes portrayed in an already (audio)visual way.

A CITY-CHARACTER IMPACTED BY THE GREAT HISTORY

1962. The date is not chosen at random. While Paris struggles to come to terms the Maghrebis thrown into the Seine a few months earlier, Marseille is agitated with a feverishness whose convulsions cause victims every day: the landing of bewildered Pieds-Noirs, shootings, robberies, demonstrations for French Algeria...

From the very first pages, the novel plunges the reader into Marseille of the time and projects them into the scenery, the oppressive heat, the smells... Marseille as if you were there! Through already vivid and visual scenes, whether at the camp where the Pieds-Noirs are parked or the lively debates at the Communist Party, which also reminds us of its role as a cultural actor, among other forgotten histories.

Though reconstructing the Marseille of the time will definitely be a challenge, there are still streets and neighbourhoods that have not changed so much since the 60s, but there is also the possibility of tightening the narrative towards the intimate since the book stirs up history but also develops in the backstory of its characters in depth.

A NOVEL TURNED TOWARDS THE SCREEN

If the novel is not afraid of the convolutions of history, even if it sometimes risks giving the reader a headache, it solidly and precisely recontextualizes a period, without being afraid to name the political protagonists of the time, summoning a past whose traces are still perceived in the present.

Short, dense and tense, the chapters intertwine a rich, multi-layered plot, anchored in solid and documented historical soil.

The material is there, rich and teeming. The writing and screenwriting talent of Gérard Lecas brings implacable structure and mechanics that closely weave together the past and present of the characters, and unfolds plotlines that have the potential to feed other seasons.

THE AUTHOR IN A FEW LINES

Gérard Lecas himself is the son of Resistance fighters. Initially a sound engineer, he worked in music and audiovisual before dedicating himself to writing and screenwriting for French crime series. His first novel, *L'Ennemi Public n° 2 (Public Enemy n°2)*, written at the age of thirty in 1981, was published by Série noire and adapted for television by Jacques Audiard. Despite a preference for crime fiction, Gérard Lecas has published nearly twenty varied works, including a collection of short stories on the film industry and novels for young adults. He is also a translator of Italian novels into French.

THE NOVEL IN A FEW WORDS

"You talk as if you've already killed a man."

Molinari turned to him, fixing his gaze on his.

"That's a question you should never ask, kid, never, remember that..."

Louis thought it was a ridiculous answer, like a bad dialogue from a Pagnol movie. He said nothing and finished his drink. "

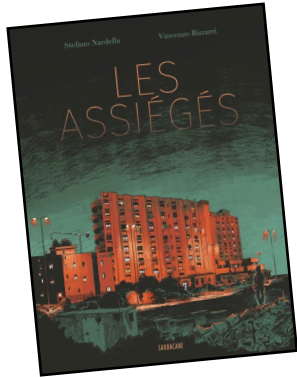
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LES ASSIÉGÉS

Vincenzo Bizzarri (scenário)
et Stefano Nardella (drawings) (Sarbacane, 2022)



» IF IT WERE A FILM :

MA 6-T VA CRACK-ER
by Jean-François Richet

» IF IT WERE A SERIES :

SUBURRA by Daniele Cesarano
and Barbara Petronio
GOMORRA by Roberto Saviano

FORMAT MINI-SERIES

In a suburb, 15-year-old Cirù is a small-time thug, a budding gangster, much to the dismay of his mother who has already lost a son to a bullet in the head a few years ago. But this mother has no power over him, worn out herself by years of prostitution and downward mobility. When she sends him to buy cigarettes, she has no idea of the repercussions on his life.

Chased by kids from the neighbourhood, Cirù arrives at the ONPI building, a squat where marginalized people and activists are crammed together amidst the garbage.

Across from the apartment where the old lady sells smuggled cigarette lives Fausto, a mad painter. An emblematic figure in the neighbourhood, Fausto is a charismatic and unsettling hermit. When the police surround the building to evict the residents, giving them 24 hours to leave, Cirù has no choice but to stay with Fausto. By revealing his secret to him, Fausto will provide Cirù with the missing piece of the family puzzle, triggering an unexpected series of spectacular events...

THE BUILDING: A WOULD-BE CHARACTER THAT SYMBOLISES RESISTANCE

Although this highly social and political crime novel takes place in Italy, it is easily transposable. Faced with police threats demanding that they evacuate the premises, its residents unite and resist as they have done for years. They do not want to abandon their apartments, no matter the demands of the authorities. Downgraded members of society, wounded or rebellious characters, like the ancient chorus of the narrative, the inhabitants of the ONPI building are not ready to be pushed around. The siege begins. They know that the night will be long and that it will be their last, but abandoning their desperate fight is not an option. They will not give in, nor will the police.

AN UNEXPECTED CONFRONTATION

As tension mounts and Cirù cannot leave the building, an unexpected confrontation takes place between him and Fausto, amidst the piles of Fausto's paintings in the apartment-turned-studio. At first glance, these two men have nothing in common. Yet, Cirù will understand just how linked they are. The atmosphere is heavy, twilight-like. The assault on the building by the police will be both fatal and liberating at the same time.

A MULTITUDE OF PLOT LINES

Through a system of embedded narratives, a chaptered story takes shape, anchored in different temporalities. In the prologue and epilogue of the book, 15 years after the evacuation of the ONPI building, three criminals hide in a cellar. There, their leader, Cannemo, finds an old painting by Fausto, the mad painter. To pass the time while waiting for their accomplice, Cannemo tells the story of the painting, which is also Cirù's story. These two connected links allow several aspects of the same story to form. Cannemo's story takes the form of a long flashback, which sheds new light on the decisive night of the building's evacuation... until a stunning conclusion, where the past meets the present.

THE AUTHORS IN A FEW LINES

Born in 1982, Stefano Nardella studied journalism in Florence, after which he moved to Rome to pursue a career as a screenwriter. He has several short and medium-length films to his credit, as well as short stories and comic books. Vincenzo Bizzarri, on the other hand, was born in 1987. He studied at the Fine Arts Academy of Bologna, where he still lives, and is a comic book author, illustrator, and caricaturist. He is also a storyboard artist for short film projects. *Les Assiégés* is their second collaboration. Their first work together, the comic book *La Cité des Trois Saints* (*The City of Three Saints*) was selected for the SNCF Polar Prize at the Angoulême festival in 2018.

THE COMIC BOOK IN A FEW WORDS

"Destiny sometimes takes the scenic route, but always ends up where it has to..."

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COLLAPSUS



Thomas Bronnec (Gallimard, 2022)

of the clinic to escape the irruption of protesters against surging birth rates, led by a close associate of the regime. This close associate, Fanny Roussel, a disabled former alcoholic, and ex-mistress of the President, quickly identified as the culprit, shakes the regime itself to its core. From then on, everything moves very fast. The president takes even more unpopular measures and seizes full power. Moreover, he puts himself in danger by falling in love with an intern at the Elysee... While the revolt is brewing, the detractors of power find their leader in the person of Olivier Fleurance, now a martyred widower, a reluctant leader who will soon take a liking to this role.

A GALLERY OF AMBIVALENT CHARACTERS

As if trapped by their convictions or their positions, multiple characters confront each other. At their head, the founder of a small Breton association who became President of the Republic without seeking the position, and the head of an agribusiness group who unwittingly became the spokesperson for the opposition. Behind them, a gallery of characters so close to our contemporaries that some could be recognized, and citizens who helplessly witness the drift of a regime under maximum pressure. Each plays their part in the face of the threat of a major environmental collapse. It seems to be already too late to listen to the grievances of part

of society, as the former Minister for the Environment tries to do, as he tried to uphold what remains of democracy...

COLLAPSOLOGY IN QUESTION

While the novel pushes the limits of dystopia, environmental questions similar to those already being asked today are carefully dissected - questions that our contemporaries still struggle to accept, namely: How far can we go to prevent the predicted environmental disaster? Because clearly, just a few years from now, this ecological catastrophe has already shaken the foundations of society. Some are trying to forcefully implement the last measures to prevent the inevitable, while others resist as if they still want to ignore the threat. Drastic sobriety is experienced as a hindrance to freedom, a freedom itself threatened by the authoritarian excesses of the regime... everything is inevitably collapsing.

AN ADDICTIVE AND CHILLING THRILLER

With its vivid writing and fast-paced rhythm that gives no respite to the reader, this dystopian thriller is chilling, as the world it portrays is almost already ours: political manoeuvring, rising violence, the state of nature, and a palpable climate of hate are the daily lives of politicians stuck in their rivalries and certainties. In this game of deception that mixes manipulation, lies, and betrayals, the reader is drawn into a spiral and is constantly faced with the question: Should we let humanity disappear while remaining free, or sacrifice half of it and our liberties to save a part of it?

THE AUTHOR IN A FEW LINES

Born in 1976 in Brest, Thomas Bronnec is a journalist. He has worked for L'Express and France Info, and he is now the head of the digital desk at Ouest France. He lived in Vietnam for a year, where he drew inspiration for the writing of numerous reports for the French press, as well as for the co-writing of a documentary entitled *Les Fantômes de My Lai* (*The Ghosts of My Lai*). He is also a novelist and essayist, and the political world is at the heart of his work.

THE NOVEL IN A FEW WORDS

" Who can believe in these fables that have forcefully entered the law since Savidan's election, where ecocide is made to rhyme with genocide to claim that nature has the same rights as humans? We give legal status to rivers and forests, but we let young women and babies die. "

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» IF IT WERE A FILM :

FRANCE by Bruno Dumont

LE MONDE D'HER by Diastème

» IF IT WERE A SERIES :

YEARS AND YEARS by Russell T. Davies

BARON NOIR by Eric Benzekri and Jean-Baptiste Delafon

FORMAT MINI-SERIES

Pierre Savidan, an ultra-environmentalist president, was elected following a series of circumstances, and his radical measures to curb or delay environmental collapse are causing much unrest. France is divided. On one side, the ultras do not hesitate to scare the population that is not won over to the cause, with re-education centres for major polluters SEI (Individual Environmental Scoring), limited travel, and measured carbon footprint. On the other hand, the refractory, the big industrialists, and the meat-eaters are the primary targets of government measures. The story opens with a tragic accident: Anaïs Fleurance, the wife of a major milk industrialist, an unrepentant polluter, throws herself and her baby out of the window

POLAR VERT

- LES ALGUES ASSASSINES



Thierry Colombié (Milan, 2021)

a clandestine environmentalist movement, the FLOU (Front for the Liberation of the Ocean and Uchrony) which fights for biodiversity and the environment. Klervi finds herself caught between her brother and her childhood friends who are FLOU activists, and her boyfriend and his family involved in illicit trafficking that endangers nature. If she wants to find out who tried to kill her brother, who is in an artificial coma for his survival, and avoid being implicated in the crimes, she will have to cooperate undercover with the police.

EVERYONE'S VERY
SERIOUS AT 17

At the age when Klervi tries to break free from her family, whom she has distanced herself from to live a «woman's life» her brother's tragic accident will force her to definitively leave her teenage years behind. Torn between her despair at seeing her twin brother in a coma and not knowing what happened, and the fear of discovering the truth that would call into question her unconditional love for the man she is supposed to marry, Klervi cannot count on her mother and despairs of not hearing from her father. Alone facing the police who use her, distant from her friends who are suspicious of her, Klervi has no choice but to become an adult. Is Klervi herself a victim (since her brother is in danger and her horse is dead), or guilty? Manipulator or manipulated? Klervi will have to lift the veil on her ambiguities.

DOUBLE ENVIRONMENTAL
SCANDAL

As the title of the novel suggests, the first and best-known scandal to the general public is that of green tides caused by toxic algae whose proliferation is linked to intensive agriculture. The second scandal is the trafficking of elvers, baby eels whose fishing is regulated because the species is endangered. Although limited in Europe, their fishing is banned elsewhere in the world, hence the creation of a traffic, which is certainly unknown, but well organized and profitable. The mafia around the trafficking of these small fish may seem harmless, but it is not. If Klervi does not know exactly what she is getting into, the police, who ask her to spy on her future in-laws, do.

A NOVEL BETWEEN
TWO WATERS

If the novel begins as a first love romance, the narrative reveals stories of families that are very distant from each other. Klervi's family of fishmongers is destabilised by the father's mission on the other side of the world and the tragedy that occurred; Lucas's family is composed of several shady personalities gathered around a charismatic grandmother and united by highly lucrative trafficking, of which Lucas is a part. An environmental thriller denouncing little-known trafficking affecting Brittany (a genuine character in the story) and a spy story: the mixing of genres allows for different approaches in terms of adaptation, with the sliders being moved depending on whether it is aimed at younger or older audiences. Klervi's adventures continue over several volumes in the collection, allowing

the threads of the story to be deployed over multiple episodes.

AUTHOR IN A FEW LINES

Thierry Colombié is a doctor of economics and an expert in the study of organized crime and high-level gangsterism. He has been a special envoy for the Geopolitical Observatory of Drugs, and through his numerous writings, he is dedicated to research and raising awareness on these topics. *Les algues assassines (The Killer Algae)* is the first of four volumes in the *POLAR VERT* series aimed at young readers, in which Thierry Colombié addresses issues of environmental criminality.

THE NOVEL IN A FEW WORDS

" - You're getting out of the hospital tomorrow, right? [...] We're going to make a moral agreement, you and me. We'll see each other again on Monday. Until then, not a word about our conversation to anyone, okay?

- Or else?

- You won't see your brother for seven years. If he's come out of the coma by then. P54 "

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» IF IT WERE A FILM :

LES COMBATTANTS by Thomas Cailley

LA PETITE BANDE by Pierre Salvadori

» IF IT WERE A SERIES :

FOUDRE by Stéphane Meunier,
Bertrand Cohen and Laurent Daufès

JEUX D'INFLUENCE - SAISON 2 :

LES COMBATTANTES by Xavier de Lestrade

FORMAT MINI-SERIES

Klervi is 17 years old and in love with Lucas, the heir of a wealthy and borderline family from Guérande where they both grew up. Despite their young age, they have decided to get married, and perhaps this is why Klervi did not realize that her twin brother Jez is not doing well. Their mother is too busy running the fish shop since their father, a volunteer firefighter, went to put out fires in French Guyana. Klervi's life is turned upside down when she finds her brother unconscious on the beach, on his dead horse. When Klervi wakes up in the hospital, poisoned by green algae, the cops want to question her. She then discovers that her brother was part of

LES PORTES ÉTROITES



Simon François (Éditions du Masque, 2022)

» IF IT WERE A FILM :

LE NOUVEAU PROTOCOLE
by Thomas Vincent

» IF IT WERE A SERIES :

TUNNEL by Ben Richards
and Hans Rosenfeldt

MILLENNIUM by Niels Arden Oplev
and Daniel Alfredson

FORMAT COMPLETE SERIES, POTENTIAL FOR SEVERAL SEASONS

Didier, also known as Gibson, works in the film industry. But his job, mostly at night, is far from glamorous: he's a «ventouseur» (sucker). His job is to spend the night in his truck, waiting for parking spots to open up, to reserve them so that film production trucks can park.

He spends long hours thinking about his somewhat messed-up life: his failed career as a rocker, his sick wife, and his son who ran away.

Maybe that's why he takes a liking to Ted, a young and sticky but harmless production assistant with a promising future.

At least before being accused of the murder of an actor who was thrown out of a window during filming – something Didier refuses to believe. So, somewhat reluctantly, he agrees to cooperate with a journalist to get the kid out of jail. But things get complicated when the young woman discovers alarming links between the murder and Delattre laboratory, a pharmaceutical giant that has taken some liberties with the law. And if the duo is ready to do anything to help Ted, they will learn at their own expense that attacking the giants of the high spheres is not without consequences...

A CINEMA HERO, LITERALLY

In *Les Portes Étroites* (*The Narrow Gates*), there is no alcoholic cop, even if Didier the protagonist has had his share of substances to burn the candle at both ends: half failed rocker, half seasoned veteran of movie sets, Didier, who practices his job as a «ventouseur» (someone who reserves parking spots for film shoots) in a disillusioned manner, presents both an archetypal character of crime novels but who takes pleasure in diverting (or even subverting) the genre's codes. Didier has seen some tough times, but his sharp irony is served by a slang at the service of biting dialogues, as Didier is an adept of biting punchlines. The language is flowery and the metaphors often graphic, which helps to characterize the character. A hero, even a duo that one can easily imagine following in other investigations on the border of legality.

BEHIND THE SCENES: THE HELL OF THE SET

Around Didier, a constellation of characters, whom he encounters, or not, the novel offering a narrative that is both fragmented and very coherent, the chapters enjoying following different characters, sometimes losing the reader to better make them find their way once the puzzle pieces are assembled.

Thus, in the course of these wanderings, one can come across Inès Favriani, a journalist, alcoholic, and lesbian, soon to become a strong ally for Didier/Gibson, but also Brice, a former small-time criminal from the suburbs who has become the man at the head of the most prominent private driver company for politicians (any resemblance to existing characters does not seem entirely coincidental), or a young man without history consumed by his desire for revenge...

Distant destinies that nevertheless all inexorably converge towards an ending that shows that happy endings are only for the movies... but here, a series could easily extend the story and continue to unravel the taut threads.

NOIR: THE DARK LIGHT THAT REVEALS SOCIETY

Didier's almost blue-collar job, both nocturnal and laborious, also allows him to encounter a lot of broken faces with diverse and varied pasts: gypsies who specialize in disguising stolen cars, waiter-spies, and other white-collar criminals...

And the investigation thus expands to other equally dark networks: the more Didier and Inès conduct their investigation and cross-reference their sources to try to solve the death of the defenestrated actor and get young Ted out of prison, the more they realize that the trafficking is numerous and the networks intersect, from suburban mafias to the political power of ministries, passing through pharmaceutical labs and their lobbies...

Politicians often cross the path of criminals, and (surprise!) sometimes they are the same people...

Beneath its traditional investigation appearance, the novel breaks down narrow gates, but very current ones, by questioning the guilt of the powerful without falling into demagoguery or sparing violence, which ultimately lies not so much in blood as in impunity.

THE AUTHOR IN A FEW LINES

Born in 1982, Simon François first devoted himself to music before turning to cinema. Now a professional film editor, he has also directed two short films, *Les notes bleues* (*The Blue Notes*) and *Le Pêcheur et l'homme d'affaires* (*The Fisherman and the Businessman*). It is actually the backstage of film sets that inspired his first novel, *Les Portes Étroites*.

THE NOVEL IN A FEW WORDS

" – And what does the Bible say about narrow gates?

– It's the narrow gate, for a start. For Jesus, there is only one, unlike your stories about lobbies. It's a metaphor that often comes up among Catholics, the narrow gate symbolizes the path of the believer, the most difficult one. Those who don't bother and choose to go through the wide gate end up lost forever. "

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QUI VOIT SON SANG



Élisa Vix (Éditions du Rouergue, 2022)

With the truth uncovered, Lancelot sets out to find Rose's biological father – more for himself than for Rose, who seems to have already accepted her impending death. A true epic begins for Lancelot, as he leaves Martinique behind to travel to Brittany. In Ouessant, he must dig deep to find a lead. Through patience, encounters, maritime escapades, and a lucky dose of chance, Lancelot traces the roots of Rose's heritage. Gradually, light is shed on decades-old tragedies and secrets. Lancelot discovers a family legacy that is more insane than anything he could have imagined.

GENESIS OF A COLLECTIVE
DRAMA: BOOKS WITHIN
THE BOOK

In his attempt to save Rose, Lancelot begins to unravel Ariadne's thread. Thus, the plot relies on a plural narration, divided into four major books, like gospels: the books of Rose, Christine, Hannah, and Gwenola. Four women's destinies intertwine, told from their perspective and from the viewpoint of those around them, in short chapters. Through each character's eyes, the reader discovers a new slice of life to add to the previous ones, so that the complete picture of a great drama finally emerges. Ages, professions,

origins, social backgrounds... the destinies are varied, but each has played a role in this almost biblical story, of which Rose is only the final point.

FROM SECRET TO SECRET:
WHEN THE PAST
MAKES WAVES

The atmosphere of secrecy and unspoken words permeates the plot. Secrets secretly haunt the characters; they unsettle and sometimes break them when they discover their existence. Rose's parents, Christine and David (who is only her adoptive father), kept the circumstances of her birth silent, choosing a life of nomadic sailors. But it's not just about family secrets and the identity issues that arise from them. Secrets are everywhere and involve births and deaths, but also the dramatic events that are the key to the story: illness, abduction, trial, Stockholm syndrome, rape, murder. Those privy to the secrets inevitably end up being caught up in the past and having to face it one day.

THE OCEAN AS PRISON:
AN INSULAR INVESTIGATION

In his quest, Lancelot travels from island to island, from the vast Martinique to the inhospitable Ouessant, finally arriving at the rocky islet, an old haunt of wreckers, where his investigation takes off. In *Qui voit son sang*, the ocean is an entity that is both benevolent and threatening. The sea offers an escape, as it did for Christine and David, who sailed the seas for years, but it also has the capacity to engulf – quite literally. The ocean becomes a land to

explore and tame. The Breton microcosm sublimates an atmosphere born of dark events. As in a gothic novel, the sea and its moods reflect the characters' states of mind and the relationships they have with each other.

THE AUTHOR IN A FEW LINES

Elisa Vix was born in 1967. A trained veterinarian, Elisa Vix also devotes herself to writing. She published her first novel in 2005, the first of a long line of crime novels – some of which are intended for young adults. *Qui voit son sang* was selected for the Grand Prix de Littérature Policière in 2022, and her novel *Ubac* was part of the selection for the 2016 Polar en Séries prize.

THE NOVEL IN A FEW WORDS

"What shameful secret did Rose's parents hide to have kept their daughter in the dark about her roots?"

Should he fail, he would have to sail to Ouessant, and what he had read online about the most western of the French territories did not bode well.

"Who sees Ouessant, sees his blood" the proverb said... "

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WINNERS AND SHORT LISTED NOVELS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS

★: Winner of the selection

EDITOR	WORK	AUTHOR	YEAR	RIGHTS		
				Free	In Nego	Solded under option
ALBIN MICHEL	<i>Poulets grillés</i> ★	Sophie HENAFF	2015			X
CASTERMAN	<i>Commandant achab</i>	Stéphane PIATZSEK Stéphane DOUAY	2015	X		
FRENCH PULP	<i>Bunker Parano</i>	Georges-Jean ARNAUD	2015		Editor bankrupt since January, 7 th	
LE TRIPODE	<i>Et qu'advienne le chaos</i>	Hadrien KLENT	2015	X		
ODILE JACOB	<i>Le partage des terres</i>	Bernard BESSON	2015	X		
PAYOT & RIVAGES	<i>Après la guerre</i> ★	Hervé LE CORRE	2015	X		
FLAMMARION	<i>Au fer rouge</i>	Marin LEDUN	2016	X		
GALLIMARD	<i>L'alignement des équinoxes</i>	Sébastien RAIZER	2016	X		
LE ROUERGUE	<i>Ubac</i>	Elisa VIX	2016	X		
RIVAGES	<i>Les loups à leur porte</i> ★	Jeremy FEL	2016	X		
ROBERT LAFFONT	<i>Tout le monde te haïra</i>	Alexis AUBENQUE	2016		Rights gave back to the autor in March 2020	
SOLEIL	<i>Infiltrés</i>	Sylvain RUNBERG	2016	X		
DENOEL	<i>Quand la neige danse</i>	Sonia DELZONGLE	2017	X		
GALLIMARD	<i>En pays conquis</i>	Thomas BRONNEC	2017	X		
GLENAT	<i>Jeu d'ombres</i>	Loulou DEDOLA	2017	X		
LE LOMBARD	<i>Hedge fund</i>	Tristan ROULOT Patrick HENAFF / Philippe SABBHAH	2017	X		
LE ROUERGUE	<i>Seules les bêtes</i> ★	Colin NIEL	2017			X
UNIVERS POCHE	<i>Zanrara</i>	Paul COLIZE	2017	X		
VIVIANE HAMY	<i>Kabukicho</i>	Dominique SYLVAIN	2017	X		
GALLIMARD	<i>Plus jamais seul</i>	Caryl FERREY	2018			X
LE LOMBARD	<i>L'avocat</i> ★	Laurent GALANDON Frank GIROUD / Frédéric VOLANTE	2018	X		
LIANA LEVI	<i>La chance du perdant</i>	Christophe GUILLAUMOT	2018	X		
PLON	<i>Justice soit-elle</i>	Marie VINDY	2018	X		

Free
In Nego
under option
Solded

EDITOR	WORK	AUTHOR	YEAR	RIGHTS		
				Free	In Nego	Solded under option
RAGEOT	<i>Le suivant sur la liste</i>	Manon FARGETTON	2018	X		
RIVAGES	<i>Que la guerre est jolie</i>	Christian ROUX	2018			X
ALBIN MICHEL	<i>Le Signal</i>	Maxime CHATTAM	2019			X
FLAMMARION	<i>Le Parfum d'Adam</i>	Jean-Christophe RUFIN	2019	X		
LE LOMBARD	<i>Irons</i>	Tristan ROULOT et Luc BRAHY	2019	X		
LE ROUERGUE	<i>Parfois c'est le diable qui vous sauve de l'enfer</i>	Jean-Paul CHAUMEIL	2019	X		
LES ARENES	<i>Racket</i> ★	Dominique MANOTTI	2019	X		
LIANA LEVI	<i>Les Mafieuses</i>	Pascale DIETRICH	2019			X
BRAGELONNE	<i>Sang</i>	Johanna GUSTAWSSON	2020	X		
CALMANN LEVY	<i>Celle qui pleurerait sous l'eau</i>	Niko TACKIAN	2020	X		
DARGAUD	<i>Le guide mondial des records</i>	Tonino BENACQUISTA et Nicolas BARRAL	2020		X	
DENOEL	<i>Trodec et moi</i>	Anaïs DENET	2020			X
FLAMMARION	<i>Barbarie 2.0</i>	Andea H. JAPP	2020	X		
LE ROUERGUE	<i>Félines</i> ★	Stéphane SERVANT	2020			X
ANNE CARRIERE	<i>Le silence de Clara Wight</i>	Valérie SAUBADE	2021	X		
DUPUIS	<i>Clown à tuer</i>	El Diablo	2021			X
GALLIMARD	<i>Leur âme au diable</i> ★	Marin LEDUN	2021			X
LA MANUFACTURE DE LIVRES	<i>L'ange rouge</i>	François MEDELINÉ	2021	X		
MARCHIALY	<i>Du bleu dans la nuit</i> ★	J.C. CHAPUZET	2021			X
SEUIL	<i>Au bal des absents</i>	Catherine DUFOUR	2021			X
FAYARD	<i>Et puis mourir</i>	Jean-Luc BIZIEN	2022	X		
GALLIMARD	<i>Semia</i>	Audrey GLOAGUEN	2022	X		
LA MANUFACTURE DE LIVRES	<i>Tuer le fils</i>	Benoît SEVERAC	2022	X		
LE LOMBARD	<i>Hypnos (tomes 1 et 2)</i>	Laurent GALANDON et Attila FUTAKI	2022			
LE ROUERGUE	<i>Marchands de mort subite</i>	Max IZAMBARD	2022			X
ROBERT LAFFONT	<i>Le loup des Ardents</i> ★	Noémie ADENIS	2022			X

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under option
Solded



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