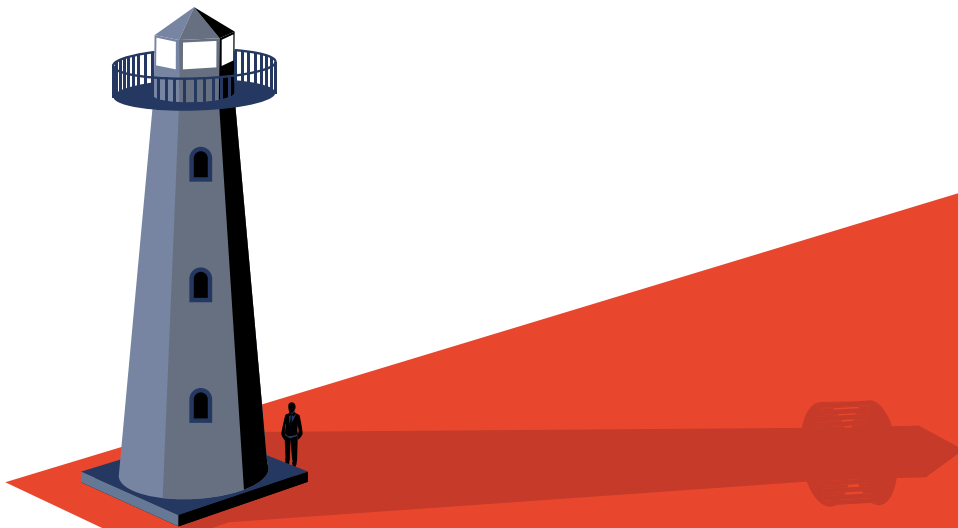


QUAIS DU POLAR

FRENCH-SPEAKING
AUTHORS AND POLARS
TO DISCOVER



INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL LYON

19th edition

March 31st — April 2nd 2023

LITERATURE – CINEMA –
URBAN INVESTIGATION –
CULTURAL EVENTS

VOLUME 2 — APRIL 2023

PRESENTATION OF THE FESTIVAL

The Quais du Polar international festival is THE unmissable event for aficionados of the noir genre. Having become part of the French, European, and international cultural landscape, it is recognised by professionals from the literary, publishing, and audiovisual industries and by the general public, who turn out in droves to the festival's various events. Since 2005, authors from 60 different countries have been invited.

For the 19th edition of the festival, which was held from March 31st to April 2nd 2023, more than 120 authors from all over the world gathered in Lyon to meet their readers during conferences, round tables, book signings, concerts, movie screenings and many other literary events in the city. Polar Connection, the festival's professional program, which was held for the 10th time in 2023, provides international and French professionals time for discussions, inspiring exchanges and to share their experiences, drawing on the effervescence that the festival creates around the crime fiction genre.

In addition, through its international collaborations and projects, Quais du Polar works throughout the year to shine a spotlight on francophone crime fiction and its authors all across the world.

In doing so, Quais du Polar underlines its commitment to promoting, on a local and international scale, crime and noir literature, a genre that is undeniably alive and growing.

This booklet reflects this approach. It has been elaborated with the support of the French Institute Convention – City and Metropolis of Lyon and distributed in partnership with the international cultural network of the French Institute and the BIEF – Bureau International de l'Édition Française.



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION AND PRESENTATION OF THE FESTIVAL	
DETECTIVE STORY ①	PAGE 2
HISTORICAL CRIME FICTION ②	PAGE 6
RURAL NOIR ③	PAGE 10
THRILLER ④	PAGE 12
TRUE CRIME ⑤	PAGE 14
GEOPOLITICS & ESPIONAGE ⑥	PAGE 16
ON THE EDGE OF REALITY ⑦	PAGE 19
DARK COMEDY & COSY CRIME ⑧	PAGE 22
CONTACTS	PAGE 25
	PAGE 27

As a specific term abroad, the “polar” encompasses all the diversity of a genre.

Detective novels, thrillers, historical investigations, noir novels, and cosy crime are all works of fiction that are more commonly referred to as “polar” in French. With, more than 1,300 titles in bookstores in France in 2021, some twenty specialized collections and some 24 million books sold each year (1 in 5 novels), the detective novel remains the favorite literary genre of the French. French-speaking authors, buoyed by this strong success in France, are not, however, systematically translated around the world. While some of these authors are exporting well and in various territories, many authors, testifying to the vitality of French language crime fiction, have yet to be discovered beyond French borders.

This booklet has been conceived as a tool to be put in the hands of book professionals who wish to be in line with the current state of the French-speaking polar genre, in all its diversity. The booklet offers a selection of the latest publications by authors that Quais du Polar has identified and considers to be important contributors to the polar genre. Its purpose is to facilitate access to information regarding the assignment of rights abroad, for translation, and to allow French-speaking authors to be translated and therefore known internationally, in a context of worldwide interest for the genre.

In France, the publication of polar has a predominant place in literary publishing, and as previously explained, it includes many types of novels. Faced with such density, classifying it into genres and sub-genres is a necessary step, which we have attempted to take in this booklet – divided into two volumes – which highlights the major trends in current French-language polars. Each volume will highlight key themes of the genre and will present “focuses” on categories that revitalize the polar genre.

Here are the leads we have followed to better understand the “Francophone crime novel” in this 2nd volume of the booklet “French-speaking authors and polars to discover”. You can find the 1st volume [here](#).

The detective novel is a classic of the genre, which has never ceased to attract readers by constantly bringing the figure of the detective back to the forefront.

The historical crime fiction is also a timeless trend, managing to analyze our contemporary society through a crime taking place in a past period.

The rural noir, inspired by the American nature writing, is often written far from the city, in the harshness of nature, where men are put to the test and their darkest sides are revealed.

The thriller has been thriving thanks to a simple recipe: suspense, twists and plots with many variations.

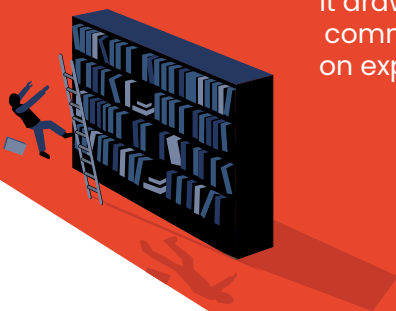
Polars are written using real life as a source of inspiration, and it is surely this element of truth that makes them so appealing. The resurgence in recent years of tales of true crime which attempt to reconstruct an event that has made its mark on our society, bears witness to this. Geopolitics and espionage have also become a major trend, with breathtaking investigations in the various corners of the world to reveal international conspiracies. But far from focusing only on verisimilitude, the polar also allows itself forays into the realms of the fantastic, in investigations on the edge of reality where anything is possible. Finally, it is humor that accompanies detective writing, with dark comedy and cosy crime. Whether caustic or straightforward, the aficionados of mischief will be served.

INTRO

THEMES

① DETECTIVE FICTION — P.6

The detective story is a staple of the genre. Following a young detective on their first investigation or a corrupt cop, each story offers an insight into the daily life of the police. It draws its inspiration from the professionals themselves. May they be police officers, commissioners, trained squad leaders or in contact with experts, these authors draw on experiences and impressions straight from the field. A profession that is born from passion and which comes with a wealth of unexpected source material.



② HISTORICAL CRIME FICTION — P.10

The historical crime fiction introduces a police investigation set in a specific historical period, with a plot that usually mixes real events and fiction. This genre does not hesitate to take on difficult subjects, such as the Occupation or the Algerian War. However, although the authors use history as their playground, the themes that they tackle are no less current. Each novel is a mirror of our contemporary society, providing keys to understanding it.

④ THRILLER — P.14

The thriller genre, very popular with the general public, places action at the forefront, with plots full of twists and turns that often find an unexpected resolution. Be it psychological, political, fantastic, or judicial, the thriller makes it a point of honor to keep the reader on the edge of his seat until the last page. It is also a place of experimentation for authors who make suspense the raw material of their writing.

③ RURAL NOIR — P.12

Under the impulse of nature writing, the French noir novel has also taken over the great outdoors and the peripheral communities, thus giving a voice to the invisible and forgotten. Rural noir departs from the traditional blueprint where evil is embodied by a killer on the loose and casts nature as an antagonist in its own right, bringing out the darker sides of man in society.

⑤ TRUE CRIME — P.16

From the Ranucci case to that of *Le Grêlé*, not forgetting the story of Alice Crimmins, our writers look back at the major cases that have made headlines over the last 70 years. Halfway between a documentary and an investigation report, true crime meticulously retraces the major events of our century, using the narrative tools of the detective story, and often bearing witness to a time period that it seeks to analyze in depth.

⑥ GEOPOLITICS & ESPIONAGE — P.19

Initiated by John Le Carré's *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*, the espionage and geopolitical novel has continued to attract the attention of readers ever since. Discover a very secret and international universe, with its shadowy agents and intelligence services, its codes, its intrigues and its plots.

⑦ ON THE EDGE OF REALITY — P.22

If the polar has often been linked to the art of verisimilitude, there are texts that break away from this tradition to explore crime from the perspective of the fantastic. Mysterious disappearances, crimes without rational explanations and supernatural murders: our authors take pleasure in sowing doubt by writing stories on the borders of reality, where everything becomes possible.

⑧ ON THE EDGE OF REALITY — P.25

Although historically a British genre, cosy crime has made a place for itself in French detective literature over the last ten years. Laughter has become a part of crime writing practices, offering a lighter reading, with colorful characters who defuse tension and violence with humour. At the opposite end of the spectrum is the dark comedy, which dissects crime with sarcasm, always eliciting a half-hearted laugh from the reader.

DETECTIVE FICTION

①



PETITE RITOURNELLE DE L'HORREUR

LITTLE HORROR RITORNELLO ————— By Cécile Cabanac

Fleuve | 2022 | FRANCE **QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2022**

When Police Captain Virginie Sevrin receives a call at almost two in the morning, she knows she must expect the worst. Nothing, however, can prepare her for what is in store for her in the old building where the forensic identification technicians are already at work. The unbearable. The darkness of the human soul. The corpse of a young girl discovered by chance behind a partition that the new owner was trying to break down. At that moment, the rest of the world ceases to exist. The flashing lights swirl in the night. The silence is oppressive. Anxiety rises. And, soon, the walls provide the police with two more bodies. Two other children... Stupefaction soon gives way to a trying investigation, the most sordid the captain and her partner, Pierre Biolet, have ever been faced with during their careers.

What really happened in the Mesnuls' house, immediately nicknamed the house of horror by the media? The question is on everyone's lips. But one thing is for sure, no one will come out of this case unscathed. Nothing will ever be the same again...

Cécile Cabanac

Patricia Delahaie has a degree in cinema and in social sciences. She was a journalist specializing in parent-child and couple relationships, as well as a television columnist for the program «Les Maternelles» on France 5. She is a keen researcher on self-knowledge and the other, and has written numerous books on personal development; she is now embarking on a fictional project centered on the news. *La Faussaire* is her first novel.



FLEUVE | Julie Buffaud | julie.buffaud@universpoche.com





LÉONIE

Calmann-Lévy | 2022 | Suisse **QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2022**

By Marlène Charine

Every morning, behind the heavy red door and its series of locks, Léonie waits for Raymond. And she has been doing so for 5 years, 11 months and 30 days.

Raymond kidnapped the young girl as she was leaving a party, shortly before her high school graduation. Since then, Léonie has been living on the top floor of his house, a metal shackle around her ankle.

But this morning, Raymond collapses. A heart attack. For Léonie, it is panic. Still under Raymond's mental control, she is unable to leave. What if nobody believed her? What if everyone had forgotten her? Here she is in an isolated house, alone with a corpse. Free, but not free.

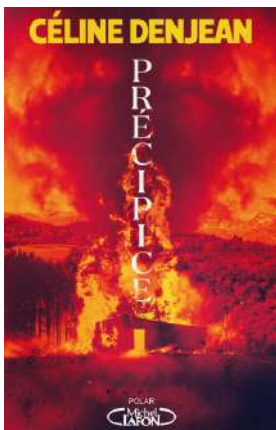
In a nearby clinic, Diane reads to her brother, a fantastic cop left broken by a paragliding accident, the cases he wishes he had solved, especially Léonie's disappearance. At that moment, a body is found in the forest...

Marlène Charine

Winner of the Prix du Polar Romand, the Prix Sang pour Sang Polar, and the Prix Découverte du journal L'Alsace, Marlène Charine made a sensational entry into the world of crime fiction in 2020 with *Tombent les anges*. Born in 1976 in Lausanne, chemical engineer, this lover of words from the beginning tried her hand at many imaginary genres through short stories before finding her favorite field in thrillers..



CALMANN-LÉVY | Patricia Roussel | proussel@calmann-levy.fr



PRÉCIPICE

PRECIPICE

Michel Lafon | 2023 | FRANCE **QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2023**

By Céline Denjean

Sarrouilles, a small village in the Pyrenees. Valériane Ducuing regains consciousness, gagged and bound in her bathtub. The water is rising. In her ear, a voice whispers: «You are going to die, Valeriane». As she witnesses her imminent drowning, terrorized and powerless, the young woman is saved in extremis by the unexpected irruption of a third party. Before fleeing, her attacker scrawled three letters on the floor: MPC.

Louise Caumont, sergeant major at the investigation brigade of Tarbes, is dispatched to the scene. The staging of the crime leads her to believe that the killer will not leave it at that. Her fears are confirmed when the killer strikes again.

As the murders continue, a common thread emerges: the victims attended the same elite high school twenty years ago. Are they linked by a hidden event?

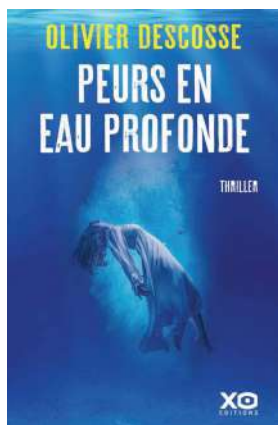
Céline Denjean

Céline Denjean is from Toulouse. Her grandparents, former booksellers, gave her a taste for books. After having worked in the social field, she now devotes herself to writing. She is the author of several novels published by Marabout including *La Fille de Kali* (2016) and *Le Cheptel* (2018), which won the prestigious Prix Polar du meilleur roman francophone de Cognac and the Prix de l'Embouchure in 2018.

Precipice is her 7th novel.



MICHEL LAFON | Honorine Dupuy d'Angeac | honorine@michel-lafon.com



PEURS EN EAU PROFONDE DEEP SEA TERROR

XO | 2022 | FRANCE

By Olivier Descosse

Off the coast of Marseille, the body of a young woman is found in the nets of a trawler. She is completely naked, covered with bites and her left foot has been severed. For Chloé Latour, head of the Crime unit, it is the beginning of a relentless chase that will take her into the shadowy world of professional divers and shipwreck hunters – specialists who dive to the bottomless depths and confront the worst dangers. Jean Sardi is one of the best among these divers: a technical diving whizz. He knew the victim intimately and could well have a motive linked to the terrible secret that has made him seek refuge in the silence of the sea depths. Domestic murder or crazed ritual? The presence in the victim's lungs of plankton unknown in Mediterranean waters intrigues the Crime unit detectives.

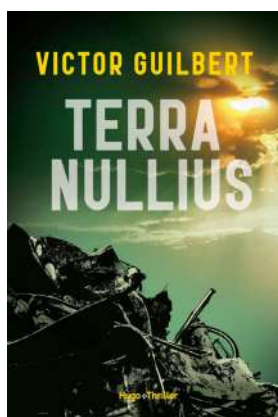
As the mystery thickens, other bodies float to the surface, sewing terror among the deep-sea divers.

Olivier Descosse

Olivier Descosse is a lawyer in Marseille. When he is not writing thrillers or fantasy novels, he devotes himself to his passion: deep-sea diving. He is the author of 14 novels.



XO | Roxana Cristina Zaharia | rzaharia@xoeditions.com



TERRA NULLIUS

Hugo Thriller | 2022 | FRANCE LAUREATE PRIZE LE POINT DU POLAR EUROPÉEN 2022

By Victor Guilbert

"The problem in this case is not the number of pieces in the puzzle, it's the number of puzzles."

Hugo Boloren has lost his mojo. The one that accompanies him in his investigations and that dings to put him on the right track. So he wanders around the police station, neurasthenic, to the great displeasure of Lulu the intern. Even his pieces of chocolate fail to put him back on track. It's time for a change of scenery. Commissioner Grosset has managed to get an appointment for Hugo's mother in the Alzheimer's disease specialist's clinic in Lille. The day before leaving, Boloren learns that a boy of about ten years old, Jimcaale, has just been assaulted in a huge garbage dump on the French-Belgian border, next to an astonishing camp for dispossessed people. Hugo's instinct tells him to go and take a look at this

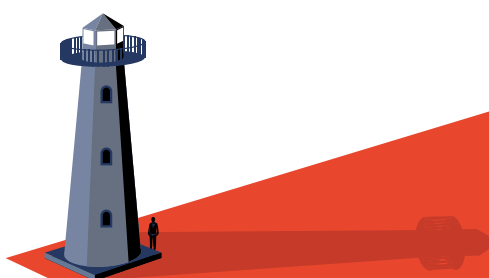
intriguing Terra Nullius, a territory without a ruler; without suspecting that the most sordid criminal case of his career is waiting for him there.

Victor Guilbert

Victor Guilbert is a playwright and novelist. After living in Shanghai for several years, he now lives in Paris where he works as an editor and blogger in parallel to his literary activities. His latest show, *Chroniques d'un débridé*, toured China and France for two years. Having received many positive reviews for his first novel, *Douve*, he returns with his second investigation of Hugo Boloren in *Terra Nullius*, published by Hugo Thriller.



HUGO THRILLER | Marie Lannurien | marie@bamlitagency.com





SOMB

Seuil | 2022 | FRANCE

By Max Monnehay

Victor Carrane is a prison psychologist. Every day he rides his motorcycle over the long bridge that connects the mainland to the Île Ré to reach the Citadelle, a fortification converted into a prison. Every day he listens to inmates confide in him their most despicable crimes – but his own personal jail is called professional secrecy. One day, Julia, a young journalist who is also his secret lover, is found dead, her face smashed, on a beach near his villa. Appearances are against him: Julia is the wife of Jonas Somb, his best childhood friend. The scandal of their affair is brought to light following the tragedy and both men are suspected. Victor must now race against the clock to discover the truth and clear both of them... But the investigation reopens old wounds: 25 years earlier, Victor committed the irreparable by accidentally causing the death of his nephew. It seems that death is chasing him... The unconditional

support of Marcus, a newly released ex-convict patient, pure of heart but bestial in appearance, and Maddie, the pretty teenager from Jonas' first marriage whom he loves like his own daughter, give Victor the strength to move heaven and earth to find Julia's killer. The suspects are numerous: the sexual predator that Julia wanted to bring down, Jonas, a loving husband who may have discovered the infidelity, Selene, a former lover and colleague who is jealous of their affair... The police, for their part, track down Jonas who has suddenly fled, a gesture immediately taken for a confession. When Jonas finally turns himself in to Victor, he confesses to him that he caused the accident 25 years earlier, out of jealousy. Right after his confession, he throws himself under the wheels of a truck, taking his secrets with him forever. But sometimes the truth is not quite where you think it is and jealousy turns out to be hereditary... Maddie, who knows more than she lets on about her affair with Julia, looks at Victor with a fierce look of love...

Max Monnehay

Max Monnehay, born Amélie Monnehay, is a French novelist. She grew up in Beauvais, which she left at the age of 18. She successfully completed a preparatory course in hypokhâgne and then the faculty of modern literature, from which she graduated. She then joined the Cours Florent and the Method Acting Center, where, in addition to learning acting, she took screenwriting courses. In 2006, she published her first novel, *Corpus Christine*, with Albin Michel, which won the First Novel Prize the same year. She returned to the literary scene in 2012 with her second novel, *Géographie de la bêtise*, published by Seuil. In 2020, she won the Transfuge Prize for the best new thriller for *Somb*. She lives in Paris with her partner and daughter.



SEUIL | Kim Beci | Kim.Beci@mediatoon.com



S'ILS N' ÉTAIENT PAS SI FOUS

IF THEY WERE NOT SO MAD

Le Rouergue | 2022 | FRANCE QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2023

By Claire Raphaël

What do the police do when a woman is shot dead in the night and her only daughter, who suffers from schizophrenia, accuses herself of the crime but describes a scene that is incompatible with the evidence gathered by the investigators?

In a grim but rather quiet Parisian suburb, an experienced cop, Ludovic Marchand-Thierry, conducts an investigation based on tenuous but stubborn facts where objectivity and professionalism lead to the truth. Where people cross paths without knowing each other, he will enter people's lives and trace the thread of their stories to the point where an assassin pulls the trigger. In this complex score, where it sometimes takes all the skill and expertise of a policeman to obtain decisive clues, Alice Yekavian,

a forensic engineer, will know how to make weapons and destiny speak for themselves.

In this 3rd and fascinating novel by Claire Raphaël, as close as possible to the reality of police work, the reader enters this particular time when madness shatters all appearances, when death shatters all evidence.

Claire Raphaël

Claire Raphaël is a forensic engineer working in the Paris region. Her novels feature a recurring character, Alice Yekavian, a ballistics specialist. After *Les Militantes* (2020) and *Les Gagneuses* (2021), both about violence against women, she published *S'ils n'étaient pas si fous* in the fall of 2022. Claire Raphaël also publishes poetry...



LE ROUERGUE | Fabien Meffre | f.meffre@actes-sud.fr

HISTORICAL CRIME FICTION



LE CHÂTEAU DES TROMPE-L'ŒIL

THE CASTLE OF TROMPE-L'OEIL ——— By *Christophe Bigot*

La Martinière | 2022 | FRANCE

1837, Mont Saint-Michel bay. The young Baptiste Rivière is summoned to the castle of Escreuil to make an inventory of the premises. But as soon as he arrives, the staff of the castle shows a real hostility towards him, and formally forbids him to meet the owner of the place, the Baroness of Escreuil. Whether it is Langlois, the diabolical steward of the estate, old Simon, the gruff gardener, or Séverine, the splendid but vicious chambermaid, everyone seems to hide a secret. As he immerses himself in the study of the library, Baptiste feels more and more in danger as the days go by: advice that sounds like threats, the handle of his locked door turning in the night, assaults disguised as accidents... He has only one desire: to leave this frightening prison and return to his dear and tender fiancée.

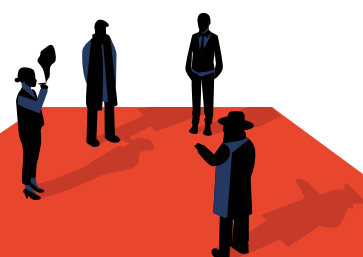
When he realizes that no one has seen the baroness for 20 years, Baptiste decides to run away, when a terrible illness forces him to stay in bed. Is the baroness even alive? Immobilized and vulnerable, Baptiste finally succeeds in gaining the confidence of Séverine, who tells him night after night about the crazy life of her mistress, whose incredible destiny took her out of her misery to propel her on the stages of all the theatres in Paris, before fleeing the revolution to London and marrying an aristocrat who will die under the guillotine out of love for her. Little by little, Baptiste's environment becomes clearer: the initial hostility of the castle's staff fades, especially with the steward Langlois... until it turns into a torrid passion. This relationship, unheard of for Baptiste, leaves him perplexed. It is at this moment that the baroness finally invites him to meet her in her room, she exists, and she is delighted with her relationship with Langlois, for whom she feels a maternal tenderness. The Baroness dies peacefully, knowing that her affairs are in order thanks to Baptiste's work. As for him, he is ready to start his new life and live.

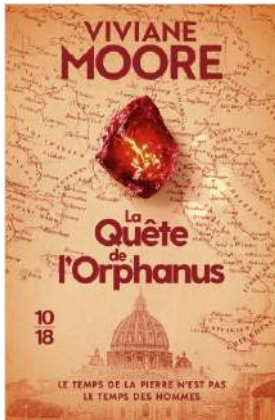
Christophe Bigot

Christophe Bigot was born in 1976. He lives in Paris and teaches literature at the Lycée Louis le Grand. He has published two novels with Gallimard: *L'Archange et Le procureur* (winner of five prizes including the Prix Mottart of the Académie française and the Prix Océanes for history and adventure novels, 2008) and *L'Hystéricon* (2010).



LA MARTINIÈRE | Kim Beci | Kim.Beci@mediatoon.com





LA QUÊTE DE L'ORPHANUS THE ORPHANUS' QUEST

10-18 | 2022 | FRANCE

By Viviane Moore

From the Middle Ages to the 21st century, the time of stone is not the time of men.

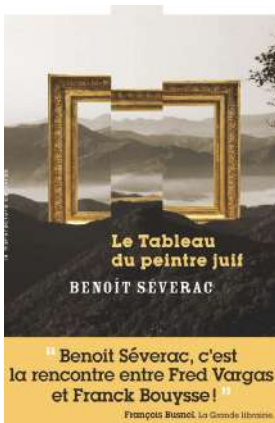
This story begins a long time ago... at a time when legend and reality were so closely intertwined that they could not be separated. We are in 960 in the bowels of the earth. In the darkness, something glitters... A wine-coloured gemstone, of a clear red wine as if impregnated by the glow of the snow: the Orphanus. This «Orphanus» will be the gatekeeper of royal honour, since it will adorn the crown of the Holy Germanic Empire. Then it will disappear, playing with men, their desires and the vanity of the world. Its sinuous destiny will, in present times, cross that of Sixtine Dangeli, gemmologist and crystal maker, in the heart of the Mont Blanc range, passing through Italy, Germany, Bohemia and France.

Viviane Moore

Viviane Moore is French, as her name does not indicate. She published her first novels in 1997 and was an instant success.



10-18 | Julie Buffaud | julie.buffaud@universpoche.com



LE TABLEAU DU PEINTRE JUIF THE JEWISH PAINTER'S CANVAS

LA MANUFACTURE DE LIVRES | 2022 | FRANCE

By Benoît Séverac

Stéphane's aunt and uncle are emptying their apartment and as he offers to pick up some boxes, this sentence:

- Very well. You can take the painting of the Jewish painter.
- What is this story? What Jewish painter?
- The one that your grandparents hid in their attic during the war.

This is how Stéphane discovers a piece of family history that was completely ignored. Eli Trudel, a famous painter, was hidden during the Occupation by his grandparents. The painting is a token of his gratitude and Stéphane inherits it today. The sale of this masterpiece could be a new beginning for him and his couple, but Stéphane has only one obsession: to give his grandparents the recognition they deserve... However, when the painting is presented to experts in Jerusalem, Stéphane is placed in custody, almost treated as a criminal: the work was allegedly stolen from its author. What secret does this painting conceal? What really happened in the Cévennes, in the winter of 1943, during the desperate flight of Eli Trudel and his wife?

Benoît Séverac

Benoît Séverac, born in 1966, grew up at the foot of the Pyrenees and became a Toulouse resident at the age of 18. He was in turn a guitarist-singer, an actor, a seasonal farm worker, a sheep herder, a funeral monument restorer, a salesman of luxury regional products and «furnished» rooms for wealthy Japanese clients, a judo teacher, a photographer in the air force, a waiter, a clarinet player in a jazz big band and then co-founder of a rock-latin-jazz band. He now teaches English. He publishes both novels for adults and children's literature.



LA MANUFACTURE DE LIVRES | Violaine Faucon | violaine@trames.procom

RURAL NOIR



ANTOINE

Belfond | 2022 | FRANCE

By Christian Blanchard

Antoine is twelve years old when he commits the fatal act. A thoughtless act, like an impulsive response to unprecedented terror. The blade of a knife that sinks into his father's enraged body to try to protect his mother, in vain. The first step of an infernal ladder.

In a detention centre for minors, Antoine finds himself tossed around in a judicial system that does not distinguish between victims and perpetrators. Antoine endures, clinging to the tender memory of his mother. To a light that gradually escapes him.

How long will he be able to keep at bay the beast that rumbles within him? Will he be able to grasp the outstretched hands of those who want to protect him? What does he have to save, he who has already lost everything?

Christian Blanchard

Christian Blanchard lives in Brittany. He worked for twenty-five years in a public institution before devoting himself to writing. He is notably the author of *iboga* (Belfond, 2018), Readers' Choice Award for Best Thriller Points 2020, of *Seul avec la nuit* (Belfond, 2019), of *Angkar* (Belfond, 2019), *Angkar* (Belfond, 2020), Prix du roman noir 2020 des bibliothèques et médiathèques de Grand Cognac, and *Tu ne seras plus mon frère* (Belfond, 2021), Prix du roman de la ville de Carhaix 2021. His novels are published by Points.



BELFOND | Gregory Messina | gregory@linwoodmessina.com



DE SI BONNES MÈRES

SUCH GOOD MOTHERS

Presses de la Cité | 2022 | FRANCE **QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2022**

By Céline de Roany

Céleste Ibarbengoetxea, captain at the Nantes Criminal Investigation Department. An unpronounceable name. A scarred face. A terrible past: kidnapped and tortured, she survived by showing inhumane violence. Since then, in some people's eyes and in her own, Céleste Ibar is a monster. Yet it is because she is a loving wife, a doting mother and a devoted colleague that she will solve one of those tragic criminal cases that mark a cop forever. In the Briere Natural Park, near Guérande, a criminal mutilates and kills women. However, these two islands are home to a small, seemingly friendly community, where long-time residents and newcomers are united around a restaurant and a pub. Dispatched to the scene, Celeste and her faithful lieutenant, Ithri Maksen, must decipher the sign

left by the killer. But how to unmask a monster who looks like everyone else?

Céline de Roany

Doctor of international law, born in Nantes, Céline de Roany lives in Australia. After *Les Beaux Mensonges*, published in 2021 by Presses de la Cité, *De si bonnes mères* is the second investigation of her character Céleste Ibar, captain of the Nantes police force.



PRESSES DE LA CITÉ | Sophie Thiebaut | sophie.thiebaut@pressesdelacite.com



PETITE SALE SLATTERN

By Louise Mey

Le Masque | 2023 | FRANCE **QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2023**

The land is rich. Sometimes she thinks about it – the earth is rich. The mud is rich. She is not. Everyone is richer than her, even the mud.

Catherine is poor. Catherine is dirty. Catherine speaks little. She does not like to be looked at – girls who are looked at have problems. At the estate where she works, she is one of those invisible people who keep the farm running. Monsieur, on the other hand, is rich. He doesn't talk either – he spits or thunders. And he owns everything. But when his four-year-old granddaughter disappears on that cold February day in 1969, he loses something priceless. In this valley of beet fields, where every man and woman is employed in some way by Monsieur, two Parisian cops arrive to investigate with the gendarmes. Because a ransom

demand is made. But the whole village seems to be stuck in silence and unspoken words. No one wants to get into trouble with Monsieur. Starting with Catherine. Catherine, who becomes even more discreet and invisible. Catherine who was the last to see the girl.

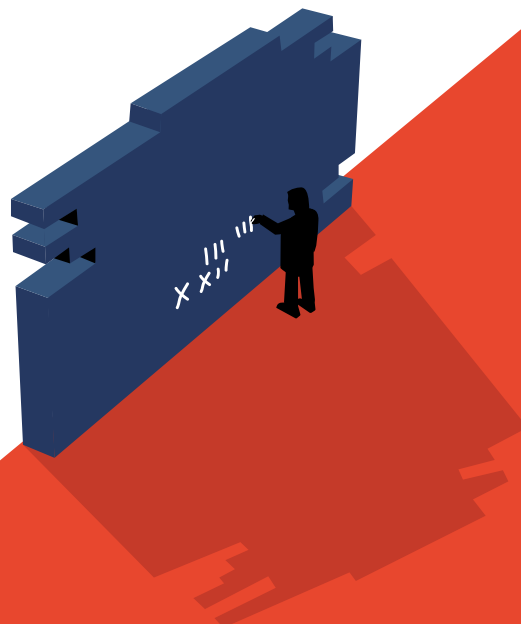
After the success of *La Deuxième Femme*, Louise Mey returns with a dazzling dark novel that tells how a disappearance can reveal the worst power struggles, between class violence and gender violence.

Louise Mey

Louise Mey lives in Paris. She is an author of noir and thriller novels, and has also written for the theater and for young people. *La Deuxième Femme*, published in 2020 by Editions du Masque, was a finalist for the Maison de la presse prize and the Landerneau prize and received the Robin Cook prize.



LE MASQUE | Eva Bredin | ebredin@jclattes.fr



THRILLER

4



DE FEMME EN FEMME

FROM ONE WOMAN TO THE NEXT — By Hélène Couturier

Rivages | 2023 | FRANCE **QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2023**

At forty, Ilyas is not looking for the woman of his life. He is looking for the woman he likes, for one night. He likes to go out, he likes to dance, he likes women, and above all his mother whom he would like to «save». In one night, his destiny changes.

Ilyas, 40 years old, is a Kabyle that everyone takes for an Arab because he has «the face of an Arab». He teaches an Israeli combat sport, krav maga, during the week and on weekends, he goes out clubbing. Because he likes women. He likes to seduce them, but he respects them and is convinced that they are infinitely better than men. Especially since his image of men is degraded by the one he calls his «father». He adores his mother whom he would like to «save». When he goes out, he dances and sings in his head, snippets of songs keep coming to his mind, he is an encyclopaedia of French popular music. One night, in one of his usual haunts, Ilyas meets Elodie. Elodie has a wonderful butt. She happens to be a cop in the Paris narcotics department. She brings Ilyas to her place. She rolls joints and they drink a lot. The adventure turns short. Ilyas finds himself in his icy car in the early morning, he doesn't remember anything. But his story is not over...

Hélène Couturier

Hélène Couturier has been passionate about all forms of art since high school. After working as a music journalist for the magazine *Paris Capitale*, she began making documentaries for France 3 and Canal +. Her first novel *Fils de femme* was published in Rivages/noir in 1996, making her the first French woman published in the collection. Other novels followed, both noir and less noir, including some for young people, such as *Bye bye Bollywood* published by Syros. Hélène Couturier is also a scriptwriter for television and a visual artist. She is working on a series of paintings dedicated to cows, in a spirit that combines pop art, urban art and writing. She lives and works in Montpellier.



RIVAGES | Marie-Martine Serrano | mm.serrano@payorivages.com





LES GENTILS

THE GOOD GUYS

By Michaël Mention

Belfond | 2023 | FRANCE **QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2023**

1978, from Paris to Jonestown.

A wonderful wife, a mischievous little girl and a record store in Pigalle, Franck had everything. Then one day in June 1977, the unspeakable happened: a man held up a bakery in Belleville, robbed the cash register, fatally wounded the kid who was waiting for her candy at the counter and ran off with the loot. Six months later, Franck, who has become a shadow of his former self, is still waiting for the cops to give him the answer that never comes: the identity of the bastard who killed his daughter. But nothing, no leads. So Franck sets out, clinging to the slightest scrap of information, the smallest cluster of clues, and becomes an investigator

with (sometimes) violent methods. A track towards the South, Toulouse, Marseille, in search of a junkie tattooed with an Anarchy symbol on his shoulder. To find him, Franck has loaded everything he has left in his Renault 5. Records, stuffed animals, audio cassettes. The ghost of his daughter on the backseat. Franck doesn't have much to hold him in the world anymore. But his vengeful race will not stop there. The blue waters of the Mediterranean will not be the scene of vengeful retaliations. Because Yannick is gone. Far away, in Guyana, among the hippies who will redeem his conscience and make him be reborn in the world, innocent. But the former Parisian drug addict has no idea that a man has been chasing him, nor that he would be ready to cross Hell to find him. And that Hell will only be the beginning.

Michaël Mention

Michaël Mention was born in 1979. As a child, he had a passion for drawing. As a teenager, he produced several comic strips. As a student, he joined a writing workshop and wrote satirical columns, before writing his first novel. Passionate about rock and history, he gained recognition with his detective novel dedicated to England, awarded the Grand Prix du roman noir at the Beaune International Festival in 2013 and the Prix Transfuge meilleur espoir polar in 2015. He is the author of twelve novels, including *La Voix secrète*, *Power* (winner of the Grand Prix at the Festival Sans Nom de Mulhouse and of the Prix Polar Pourpre), and *Dehors les chiens*.



BELFOND | Gregory Messina | gregory@linwoodmessina.com



LA FEMME QUI RIT

THE WOMAN WHO LAUGHS

By Brigitte Pilote

SEUIL | 2022 | FRANCE

Since the death of Alma Sever, her widower and their son have led a reclusive existence on the family farm, in an unnamed countryside. Until one day, when, believing that a female presence would relieve them of their daily tasks, the father decides to hire an employee. At least that is the reason he gives. The woman who shows up has a mysterious past, a cross around her neck that she never leaves, a fierce desire to be anchored somewhere. Florian looks at her with hostility. Soon, her austere silhouette blends into the sober world of these rustic-mannered men, which seduces the overprotective father, who is obsessed with transmitting his agricultural heritage to his descendants; but his son is not really attractive, he thinks, because of a slight handicap. This is why he imagines a

marriage with the young woman. Florian gets used to the idea. All the better because he continues to live his secret romance in the next village. And the child comes. Happiness, without the torture of remorse and secrets, could have been in the meadow. A novel of atmosphere, poignant to its radical denouement, as much as a portrait of an earthly world where beings struggle with themselves, *The Woman Who Laughs* confirms the singular voice of this Quebec author.

Brigitte Pilote

Born near Montreal in 1966, Brigitte Pilote has worked as an editor and scriptwriter for television. She published a first novel, *Mémoires d'une enfant manquée*, with Stanké in 2012. *Motel Lorraine*, published by Michel Lafon in 2017 and Points in 2018, received unanimous critical acclaim. *La Femme qui rit* is her third novel.



SEUIL | Kim Beci | Kim.Beci@mediatoon.com

5 TRUE CRIME



LES NUITS QUE L'ON CHOISIT

THE NIGHTS WE CHOOSE

By *Élise Costa*

MARCHIALY | 2023 | FRANCE **QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2023 – SELECTION PRIZE POLAR AND JUSTICE**

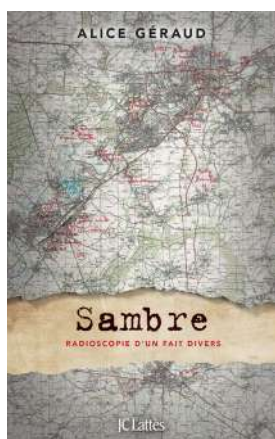
When you're a court reporter, there's the excitement of the opening of a trial, the hours spent on the hard benches of the courts, the notebooks blackened with ink, but there's also doubt. And if Elise Costa has learned one thing during her career, it's that when it creeps up on her, it never goes away. Judging the actions of a human being is a science as elusive as human nature can be. So she opted for the long format and wrote judicial chronicles in the form of short stories. She recounts the drop of sweat that runs down the forehead of the public prosecutor, the indifference of a defendant, the chilling cry of a victim. Through major cases – Eva Bourseau, Troadec, the Boulloc jogger, Nordahl Lelandais – Élise Costa takes us behind the scenes of courts and describes from the inside the workings of a judicial machine that is as implacable as it is fascinating.

Élise Costa

Élise Costa was born in 1982. After studying law, she became a pop culture journalist and wrote a book on the Britney phenomenon. In 2015, she successfully launched her career as a court reporter for the webzine Slate.fr. She is the author of the podcasts Fenêtre sur cour (ARTE Radio), in which she recounts her daily life as a court reporter, and Le Système, which explores the prison through its various actors (Slate.fr)



MARCHIALY | Laurence Leclercq | lleclercq@groupepedelcourt.com



SAMBRE

By *Alice Géraud*

JC LATTÈS | 2023 | FRANCE **QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2023 – LAUREATE PRIZE POLAR AND JUSTICE 2023**

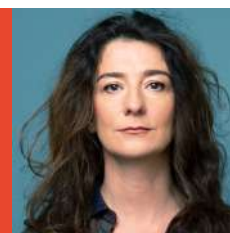
Over 27 kilometres along the Sambre River, a man assaulted and raped dozens of women very early in the morning on his way to work. He was arrested in February 2018 and brought to trial in 2022. How could he commit these crimes for thirty years? When discovering this case, this is the first question that Alice Géraud asked herself.

To answer it, to understand it, she had to dive into the hundreds of files and complaints filed since the 80s in the police stations of the region, meet the victims, the families, the police officers, the magistrates. It is a fascinating and upsetting investigation, a dive into time and archives, an immersion in this isolated and devastated industrial region. Some of these women were not believed, not heard, their complaints lost or closed, and they were so often told that « it was no big

deal ». This is the story of police and judicial failure, it is also the story of the courage of some police officers and magistrates who did not give up, and it is above all the story of these women, their stories, the aftermath..

Alice Géraud

Alice Géraud is a journalist, author and scriptwriter. She worked for Libération for a long time, before co-founding the website Les Jours. She is now a freelance writer. She published *Toni 11.6*, adapted to the cinema in 2013 by Philippe Godeau with François Cluzel. She is a member of «Toute Ressemblance...», a new collective working on the narration of reality.



JC LATTÈS | Eva Bredin | ebredin@jclattes.fr



L'AFFAIRE RAMBLA OU LE FANTÔME DE RANUCCI THE RAMBLA CASE OR RANUCCI'S GHOST

By Agnès Grossmann

PRESSES DE LA CITÉ | 2022 | FRANCE

June 3, 1974, Marseille. Marie-Dolorès Rambla, eight years old, was abducted in front of her little brother and found dead two days later, her body covered in knife wounds and her skull smashed. No trace of sexual assault, no motive. A senseless murder for which the young Christian Ranucci was tried, convicted and then guillotined in 1976. Behind the meticulous account of the «red sweater» affair and the heated debates on the miscarriage of justice and the death penalty, there is the fate of Marie-Dolorès' brother: Jean-Baptiste Rambla, who

will kill twice; two women, thirteen years apart, his boss in 2004 and a young unknown woman in 2017. Agnès Grossmann perfectly reconstructs one of the most marking criminal cases in French society and the tragic journey of a man and a family, dislocated by loss and grief, swept up in the judicial and political turmoil and the media machine. Concise, human, and fascinating, *L'Affaire Rambla ou le Fantôme de Ranucci* tells the story of a destiny and retraces an entire era: the 1970s, the France of Giscard in a period of great change, and the crucial debate on the death penalty, which aroused passions until its abolition.

Agnès Grossmann

Agnès Grossmann is a journalist. She has directed documentaries and reports, and has written more than fifteen portraits of criminals for the France 2 program *Faites entrer l'accusé*, and has investigated many major legal cases such as those of Omar Raddad, Francis Heaulme, Patrick Dils, Roberto Succo. She is also the author of several books, including *Les Salopes de l'histoire* and *L'Enfance des criminels*.



PRESSES DE LA CITÉ | Sophie Thiebaut | sophie.thiebaut@pressesdelacite.com



L'AFFAIRE ALICE CRIMMINS THE ALICE CRIMMINS CASE

By Anaïs Renevier

10-18 | 2023 | FRANCE **QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2023**

One hot summer in 1965, in the large housing projects of Queens, two young children disappear. They are found murdered a few days later, a few days apart, in a vacant lot. No clues, no evidence. However, the investigators, mostly Catholics and Irish, quickly focus their investigations on the children's mother, Alice Crimmins, recently separated from their father. Why her? Her main faults seem to lie in the fact that she is divorced, that she multiplies lovers and does not appear sad enough. A Scorsese New York, a story of morals and patriarchal justice but also a family affair with multiple ramifications. The very complex nature of Alice Crimmins leads us as much to the side of the American political figures of the 1960s as to the New York mafia.

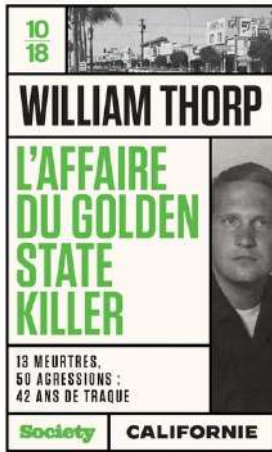
Journalist Anaïs Renevier follows her footsteps and tells the story of an era, a family and a woman who escape all archetypes. To understand this case is to avoid Manichaeism while bordering on it. It is also to read the story of an intense witch hunt that tore the whole country apart in its time.

Anaïs Renevier

Journalist since 2011, Anaïs Renevier started her career as a correspondent in Beirut for several international media. She then worked in the editorial office of TV5 Monde for several years. As a freelance reporter, she regularly travels around the United States for long term stories. She likes to report on American outsiders, from the Proud Boys of Miami to the illegal cannabis workers in California's Murder Mountain. She has been a contributor to *Society* magazine since 2020.



10-18 | Julie Buffaud | julie.buffaud@universpoche.com



L'AFFAIRE DU GOLDEN STATE KILLER

THE GOLDEN STATE KILLER CASE

By William Thorp

10-18 | 2023 | FRANCE **QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2023**

In 2018, the American police announced the arrest of the «Golden State Killer». William Thorp, a journalist, is going to retrace more than forty years of tracking down the killer in a totally new and sprawling investigation. In this idyllic setting of California, a whole era takes shape, that of the hippies, the suburbs and most importantly that of small, rather harmless crimes with no apparent link. Burglaries, numerous, and always in the same geographical area of Sacramento County. And soon, rapes, repeatedly, an identical scenario every time. It will take years for the investigators to link the cases together. And many more years to link them to a series of bloody murders. It is thanks to the determination of the police and to the determination of police officers, and in particular of an extraordinary duo, Carol Daly and Richard Shelby, combined with scientific progress (DNA by parentage) that the Golden State Killer will be arrested. In this investigation where everything is true, it is the portrait of a man, of an era, and the story of an investigation that allow us to understand how the savagery of this criminal could be unleashed with impunity.

William Thorp

William Thorp is a reporter for Winter Productions and a former Society reporter, where he spent five years reporting from North America, Europe and Africa. He began by investigating French news stories, before writing long-form international pieces for the magazine.



10-18 | Julie Buffaud | julie.buffaud@universpoche.com



LE GRÊLÉ

THE POCKETMARKED KILLER

By Patricia Tourancheau

SEUIL | 2022 | FRANCE

Patricia Tourancheau, who has been following the great mystery of Le Grêlé for a third of a century and is an expert in various events, retraces its multiple facets with unpublished documents and first-hand accounts. Direct or collateral victims, brothers and relatives, investigators of two generations, detectives, citizens, who suffered or tracked down this XXL criminal, colleagues and relatives who were close to him, they agreed to talk to her. The result is a breathtaking and terrifying account of one of the greatest mysteries of recent decades, finally solved with the identification of this extraordinary serial killer.

Her thorough knowledge of the official reports and of the course of the investigations allows her to come back on the mistakes of the case and to reveal all the steps of its resolution. She details, for the first time, the entirety of the hunt for Le Grêlé, the serial killer and rapist of girls and adults, who was active in Paris from 1986 to 1997 without ever being arrested... And for good reason, this aggressor who presented himself to his victims as a cop, was indeed a cop. This gendarme of the Republican Guard in Paris in the 80's, who became a motorcycle policeman, had finally settled down in the South. But caught up in his past, François Vérove committed suicide on September 27, 2021, at the age of 59. This book also tells of the dual personality of this northern military man, a good family man, but a fearsome pervert, an unsuspected notable, never registered, undetectable by his colleagues in the Criminal brigade...

Patricia Tourancheau

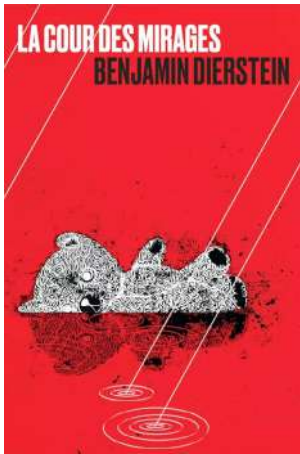
Patricia Tourancheau was the head of the police, crime and miscellaneous section at Libération for twenty-nine years. She was the first journalist to be allowed to spend twelve days immersed in the Crim'. Since then, she has continued to pursue her obsession with the 36 for Les Jours. She has made a dozen documentaries on the police for France Télévisions and the INA and published several books, the last of which was adapted for the cinema under the title *L'Affaire SK1*.



SEUIL | Maria Vlachou | maria.vlachou@seuil.com

GEOPOLITICS & ESPIONAGE

6



LA COUR DES MIRAGES

THE COURT OF ILLUSIONS ————— By Benjamin Dierstein

Les Arènes | 2022 | FRANCE

In the tradition of David Peace or James Ellroy, Benjamin Dierstein delivers a dark and desperate lament in the form of a descent into hell. For fans of political and explosive thrillers.

On their return to the office, the two cops Laurence Verhaeghen and Gabriel Prigent, haunted by the disappearance of his daughter six years earlier, are confronted with a particularly savage crime scene: a former political bigwig has killed his wife and son before committing suicide. The investigation leads to the discovery of powerful networks, halfway between pedo-criminal networks, luxury prostitution and tax evasion. Disillusioned by their mistakes and doubts, tormented by their obsessions, Verhaeghen and Prigent plunge into a journey of

no return towards modern barbarism.

Benjamin Dierstein

A child of the Breton low-income housing projects, Benjamin Dierstein was lulled in his youth by techno parties, mountain hiking and critical philosophy, torn between hippie idealism and punk disenchantment. Successively film student, worker on a car assembly line, radio trainer, nightclub PR, tour manager, label artistic director, he has recently been publishing fast-paced stories in which pessimism is a necessary step towards wisdom. His first novel, *La Sirène qui fume* (Nouveau Monde), the first part of a trilogy that takes place in France between 2011 and 2013, shows a duel of obsessive cops who sink into madness. The second volume, *La Défaite des idoles*, was published in February 2020. *Un dernier ballon pour la route* was published by EquinoX – les Arènes in 2021.



LES ARÈNES | Sophie Langlais | sophie@bamlitagency.com





LE GRAND EFFONDREMENT THE GREAT COLLAPSE

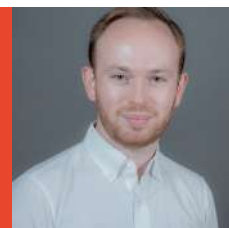
By Sébastien Le Jean

Liana Levi | 2022 | FRANCE

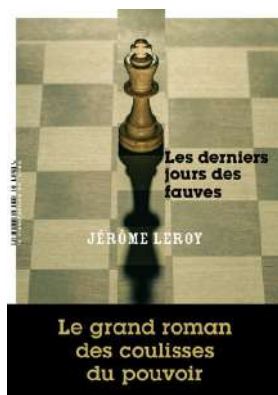
On the day of his son's birth in Paris, Commander Ronan Sénéchal of the crime squad receives an urgent call. François Dampierre, the CEO of a major automotive conglomerate, is murdered in a bunker reserved for millionaires on the day of the Collapse. The killer leaves a message on the body of his victim: «The end is nigh, the guilty will pay.» At the same time, in Lyon, Captain Irina Kowalski is investigating the murder of a young, nineteen-year old YouTuber, Nicolas Marlot. On the fringes of radicalized survivalist circles, he'd read the manual by the firebrand guru Viktor Kieffer, and then joined a secret militia, the Sentinels. Soon, the leads of the two investigators converge on the same suspect: Ludovic Hoffman, formerly of the SWAT team, now working privately. He proves elusive. When he resurfaces, it's as a hostage-taker and whistleblower: his victims, whom he films, can't survive the conditions which tomorrow await humanity. Incapable of stopping his rogue experimentation, Kowalski and Sénéchal realize he's a pawn in the game of a company specialized in geo-engineering that promises the sale of a «climate shield. »

Sébastien Le Jean

Sébastien Le Jean, at thirty-eight, today lives and works in Paris. From his youth, an avid reader of «noir» literature and crime fiction, he particularly values works that hold a mirror up to the society we live in. The threat of the rising power of survivalist sects—a theme until now unexplored—has not escaped him.



LIANA LEVI | Amandine Labansat | a.labansat@lianalevi.fr



LES DERNIERS JOURS DES FAUVES THE LAST DAYS OF THE BEASTS

By Jérôme Leroy

La Manufacture de livres | 2022 | FRANCE

Nathalie Séchard, who embodied the hope of renewal at the head of the State, has decided to throw in the towel and not to run for a second term. The presidential succession is open. Within the government, a merciless game begins. Set in France, where two years of fighting against the pandemic has left the country exhausted, anti-vaxers are demonstrating, police forces are enforcing a drastic lockdown, and riots are on the rise. Chaos sets in. And Clio, twenty years old, an ENS graduate of the ultra-left, daughter of a presidential candidate, becomes a target... As an undisputed master of the genre, Jérôme Leroy offers us the most brilliant and powerful political fiction in this dark novel. From secrets to assassinations, he reveals the inner workings of the implacable machine of power

Jérôme Leroy

Born in 1964 in Rouen, Jérôme Leroy has been a French teacher in a disadvantaged area of Roubaix for nearly 20 years. Since 1990, he has written novels, essays, books for young people and collections of poetry. He is also the co-writer of Lucas Belvaux's film *Chez nous*, released in theaters in 2017. His work has been awarded various literary prizes.



LA MANUFACTURE DE LIVRES | Violaine Faucon | violaine@trames.pro



L'OR VERT DU SANGHA

THE GREEN GOLD OF SANGHA — By Pierre Pouchairet

Alibi - Filatures | 2022 | FRANCE

The elections for the new president are coming in Sangha, a country in central Africa. The old president Atangana is getting ready to start his sixth term... But his opponent, the ex-football star Luc Ostiemi, who came back home from France, is starting to be a real threat. In this tense atmosphere, Claire Dorval, a journalist, arrives from Paris to cover the campaign. While she is looking for backup information on Ostiemi's financial supports, a French journalist is found beheaded near a huge forestry. Pierre Pouchairet takes us in a bloody investigation that reveals an illegal traffic of precious wood in Africa. An uncompromising story on a backdrop of exploitation, political and mafia-like collusions, general corruption,

conflicts of interest and struggle for geopolitical influence. If the setting chosen is country Pierre Pouchairet imagined, the traffic in this investigation is however real.

Pierre Pouchairet

Pierre Pouchairet, a former policer officer and an organised crime specialist, won the Prix Quai des orfèvres in 2017 with his novel *Mortels Trafics*. After he served in the criminal police in Versailles, Nice and Grenoble, he went on with his career abroad, in Afghanistan, in Turkey or in Lebanon, and just spent four years in Cameroon.

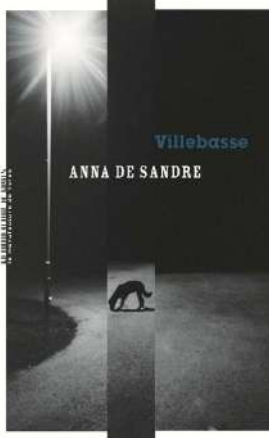
He published several crime novels at Jigal like *La Filière afghane*, *Une terre pas si sainte*, *La Prophétie de Langley* (Michel-Lebrun crime novel price), and *Tuez-les tous mais pas ici* (Points, 2019), and the series *Les Trois Brestoises* at Palémon publisher. His two last novels *Larmes de fond* (2020) and *La Consule assassinée* (2021) were pulished at Editions Filature(s) publishers.



ALIBI - FILATURES | Alice Monéger | A.MONEGER@dargaud.fr

ON THE EDGE OF REALITY

⑦



VILLEBASSE

LOWERTOWN

By Anna de Sandre

La Manufacture de Livres | 2021 | FRANCE **QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2022**

In the heart of a valley rises Villebasse, an interlacing of centuries-old streets where shacks and buildings are piled up, like everywhere else. For a few years now, without anyone bothering to notice, a strange blue moon has been lighting up the sky. Those who come here rarely leave, restricting their lives to the city walls. Villebasse is their horizon and their curse. It is at the beginning of winter that Le Chien arrives in town. He prowls from park to alley, sharing in the lives of others, sometimes protector, sometimes vigilante.

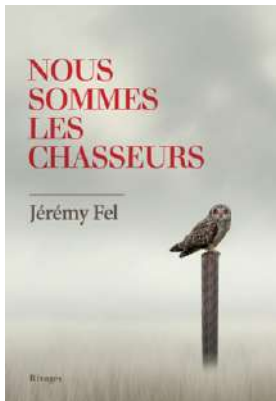
With this poetic and dreamlike first novel, Anna de Sandre gives us a contemporary mythology of a world plagued by our ordinary ills.

Anna de Sandre

Anna de Sandre lives in the South West of France where she writes short stories and poetry that have been published by In8 and Des carnets du dessert de lune. She is also the author of children's books published under the pseudonym of Anne Pym by Gallimard and L'École des loisirs. She regularly leads writing workshops while working as a bookseller on and off. *Villebasse* is her first novel.



LA MANUFACTURE DE LIVRES | Violaine Faucon | violaine@trames.pro



NOUS SOMMES LES CHASSEURS

WE ARE HUNTERS

By Jérémy Fel

Rivages | 2021 | FRANCE

A barbaric fable, a cruel story that superimposes times and places, weaving links between visible and invisible worlds, reality and fiction.

A woman, terrorized by the violence of the dictatorial regime that grips her country, chooses to remain silent, a choice that will have serious consequences...

In Germany, just after the First World War, the Grubers are found massacred with a pickaxe in their barn; some time before, the manifestations of a malevolent spirit panicked the patriarch... On December 24th, on a freezing night, Santa Claus enters a little boy's house to make his most terrible wish come true... In the heart of the Ardèche, under the shelter of the willows, the angel Gabriel delights

in the spectacle of a collective tragedy... In Paris, a teenager wakes up in an attic room and discovers with amazement a silent city with dead bodies in the streets... At the end of the 19th century, Ambre Valdenaire has made her manor house the refuge of a handful of survivors at the end of days. And what if the red thread that linked all these lives, all these destinies, was a Hollywood star?

Jeremy Fel takes his reader into the darkest and most transgressive imagination: violence, power, betrayal and cruelty are the ingredients of an explosive cocktail.

Jérémy Fel

Novelist and screenwriter, Jérémy Fel is the author of two previous novels published by Rivages: *Les loups à leur porte* (2015) and *Helena* (2018).



RIVAGES | Marie-Martine Serrano | mm.serrano@payorivages.com



DANS LA NEIGE ARDENTE

IN THE BURNING SNOW

By Olivier Gallien

Robert Laffont | 2022 | FRANCE **QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2022**

In a world of fire and brimstone, two beings are trying to survive. Hugo lives behind an armored door, observing the collapsing world outside from the security of his hideout until the day he has to go outside, to the other side of the city, right through its pandemoniac heart. Pauline has joined a group of rebels, young people who hide out in the cellars and sewers of the city, seeking shelter from exploding bombs. But someday, they will have to come out of hiding and to prepare for the future....

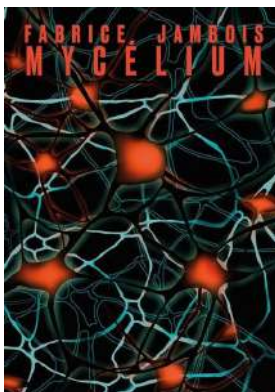
In a dying world, everyone struggles to find sanctuary. Will they be able to tip the scales in their favor and to get away from the massacre?

Olivier Gallien

Born in the Paris region in 1986, Olivier Gallien experiences a chaotic childhood. After years of truancy, he starts travelling the world, accepting all sorts of odd jobs: toll booth worker at night, usher in a movie theater, waiter in New York... All these multiple experiences inspire him to write and to explore different modes of literary expression. Although he likes experimenting with other languages of art like photography, music and film, his first and foremost passion is and stays writing. *In the Burning Snow* is his first novel and his first publication in the "Bête Noire" imprint by Robert Laffont.



ROBERT LAFFONT | Benita Edzard | benita.edzard@robert-laffont.com



MYCELIUM

De Fabrice Jambois

Les Arènes | 2022 | FRANCE **QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2022**

As the author's first noir novel, on the edge between reality and science fiction, *Mycelium* plunges the reader into a parallel and surreal universe surrounded by violence and paranoia.

Paris, Porte de la Chapelle. Migrants are dropping like flies, struck down by a strange disease. Suspicions spontaneously fall on the Vicars, an ultra-right wing group led by the charismatic Stéphane Zenner. For Ravard, an investigator in the anti-terrorist section, this is the beginning of an intense hunt. It will lead him into the depths of an occult side of Paris and will make his path cross with a specialist of the paranormal and a student fascinated by the networks of secret meetings. But while he pursues the shadow of the Angel, a doctor researcher who has taken to Zenner's ideas, reality begins to tremble.

Fabrice Jambois

Fabrice Jambois was born in Paris, where he lives. He is an associate professor of philosophy and a specialist in the work of Gilles Deleuze.



LES ARÈNES | Sophie Langlais | sophie@bamlitagency.com



DANS LES OISEAUX INSIDE THE BIRDS

By Xavier Lapeyroux

Anne Carrière | 2021 | FRANCE

Since the tragic death of his wife Suzanne, Milan is devastated. The screenwriting professor at Femis film school wanders the streets of Paris until he is exhausted, trying to forget the disturbing bird attacks that cost Suzanne her life. But the months have passed and his trouble only grows; and this term, he must speak about Hitchcock, of which he is a recognized specialist, and all the students particularly expect him to discuss the script of *The Birds*, given the current situation. Milan thinks he's going crazy, as strange events multiply in his daily life: a raven watching him in the lecture hall, the appearance of a Hitchcock «cameo» while a street act attracts onlookers... Too many signs concur and push Milan to build a crazy theory. Hitchcock's *Birds* are breaking

into reality, so it must be possible to influence *The Birds'* scenario in reality! For this, Milan does everything in his power. He modifies his appearance and his outfit to match the hero of the film; he looks for a birdhouse in Paris that would resemble the one in the beginning of the film; and he waits... Soon, his patience is rewarded, and Milan re-enacts the scenario of *The Birds* as faithfully as possible, luring Catherine, the aspiring heroine of the film, to his family home in Brittany – whose appearance has altered itself to match that of the film... Milan managed to get into the film! His plan goes perfectly, to the point of finding Suzanne returned to life, in the role of the teacher in the film. She is disturbed because the memories of her real life are superimposed on those of her fictional role... But Milan, thanks to his knowledge of Hitchcock, knows how to bypass the traps of the master to escape from the film and take Suzanne alive!

Xavier Lapeyroux

Xavier Lapeyroux is 46 years old. He is a contributor to *Le Monde diplomatique*, in the «Littératures du monde» section. *Dans les oiseaux* is his fourth novel.



ANNE CARRIÈRE | Kim Beci | Kim.Beci@mediatoon.com



LA LIGNE THE LINE

By Jean-Christophe Tixier

Albin Michel | 2023 | FRANCE **QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2023**

When there's an invisible wall dividing a village, the madness of men will soon awaken...

One morning, the inhabitants of a village discover a white line painted on the ground, dividing the locality in two. The State has decided the partition; hence farmers see their lands divided, neighbours became less close than before, lovers find themselves on opposite sides of the line... This stripe of paint becomes the focus of everyone's concerns. Very soon, the atmosphere becomes toxic and the first quarrels take place, then a disappearance, a murder...

Jean-Christophe Tixier

Jean-Christophe Tixier's authored *Les mal-aimés*, a first novel hailed by the press that won the Transfuge Prize for the best French detective novel in 2019, and *Effacer les hommes* (Albin Michel, 2021).



ALBIN MICHEL | Pauline Cholous-Florenville | Pauline.FLORENVILLE@albin-michel.fr

DARK COMEDY & COSY CRIME

8



LA TRAGÉDIE DU CHAT THE CAT'S TRAGEDY

By Sophie Chabanel

Seuil | 2022 | FRANCE

In the middle of a performance of a tragedy by Aeschylus, Mathieu Vêran, a magnetic actor and brilliant Hellenist, dies crushed under the set. Should we see it as a revenge of the activists who had spoken out against the actors' black face make-up? Or a sordid settlement of a passionate account? Flanked by her ever-sensitive deputy, the pragmatic Inspector Romano finds herself embroiled in a hectic investigation across Lille, in the midst of all kinds of excitements. Meanwhile, she tries to control the devastating rivalry between her cat Ruru and her new lover.

Sophie Chabanel

Daughter of teachers, Sophie Chabanel ended up at HEC by chance. She then worked for several years in finance before branching out into the non-profit world. *Le Principe de réalité* (Plein Jour, 2015) is an essay based on her experience with social workers. Sensitive to the issue of suffering at work, Sophie Chabanel is now a trainer-consultant in companies. *La Griffe du chat* is her third novel and first detective story.



SEUIL | Kim Beci | Kim.Beci@mediatoon.com



PETIOTE LITTLE ONE

By Benoît Philippon

Les Arènes | 2022 | FRANCE

This is the story of a loser with nothing left to lose.

To regain custody of his daughter, a father at the end of his tether engages in a hostage situation. Where is it? In the hotel where he lives. His demand? A Boeing to escape with his little girl to Venezuela. For this plan, Gus joins forces with Cerise, a prostitute with a purple wig. Between them, they kidnap a bunch of crazy and folkloric inhabitants: Boudou, a homeless man rescued from the water, George, a black guardian angel and the manager of this ramshackle hotel, Fatou, a young pregnant migrant, Gwen and Dany, an illegitimate couple registered incognito, Hubert, a Jamaican Uber delivery man, but also Sergueï, a Serbian arms dealer in charge of a mafia-like drug transit system. And of course, Emily, his rebellious fourteen-year-old daughter. The police

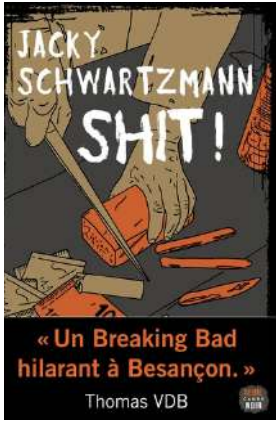
captain, Mia Balcerzak, is in charge of negotiating this crisis cell. Family crisis, midlife crisis, social crisis, nervous breakdowns... and no matter what, an explosive crisis!

Benoît Philippon

Born in 1976, Benoît Philippon grew up in the Ivory Coast, the West Indies, and then between France and Canada. He became a screenwriter and director for the cinema. After *Cabossé* (La Série Noire, Gallimard), *Mamie Luger* (translated into Korean and Italian) and *Joueuse*, also translated into Korean, (Equinox - Les Arènes), *Petiotte* is the new dark and crazy novel of a talented thriller writer.



LES ARÈNES | Sophie Langlais | sophie@bamlitagency.com



SHIT !

Seuil | 2023 | FRANCE **QUAIS DU POLAR'S GEMS 2023**

By Jacky Schwartzmann

When Thibault arrives in Planoise, a sensitive neighbourhood of Besançon, he is far from suspecting that life has a lot of hashish in store for him. As a school counsellor, he leads a very ordinary life. Except that outside his house is a drug dealing area held by the Mehmeti brothers, Albanian traffickers who are particularly slap-happy. When the Mehmeti brothers are killed in a shoot-out, Thibault and his neighbour, the very pragmatic Mrs. Ramla, come across a stash of drugs.

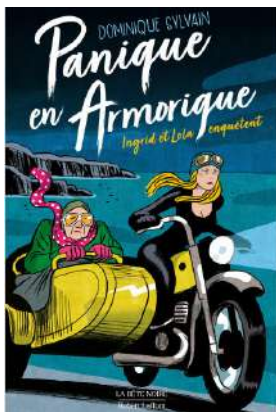
What to do with all this dope? When our improvised duo compares their pay checks with the price of a bar of hash, they quickly make a decision. A choice that may very well affect all of Planoise.

Jacky Schwartzmann

For twenty-five years Jacky Schwartzmann has been working at various jobs, both to make a living and to observe his contemporaries. He is now an author and screenwriter of comics and feature films. His schizophrenic and formative career has given him an incomparable pen. He is back at the top of his game with *SHIT!*



SEUIL | Maria Vlachou | maria.vlachou@seuil.com



PANIQUE EN ARMORIQUE

PANIC IN ARMORIQUE

Robert Laffont | 2023 | FRANCE

By Dominique Sylvain

South of the Finistère region. On a dark November night, a fire ravages an industrial chicken coop. When the attack is claimed by the "Red Tribe", a militant animal rights defense group, charming inspector Chauvigny is put in charge of the investigation. In the vicinity, retired inspector Lola Jost and her best friend, the American Ingrid Diesel, are enjoying their vacation, trying to recuperate – the former from a

COVID-infection, the latter from her hectic season as a female burlesque stripper at Pigalle – and to enjoy the countryside while having their fill of local delicacies. But soon, Lola's curiosity puts them on the trail of Chauvigny's investigation.

Tensions run high when the CEO of the chicken coop "Golden Chickens" is found dead, electrocuted and hanging from his feet. Have the animal lovers struck again? Or is big money behind the affair? What if this murder were only the first in a whole series to come? Ingrid and Lola are determined to get to the bottom of the affair in this all but tranquil corner of Brittany...

Dominique Sylvain

Born in 1957, Dominique Sylvain is the author of some twenty novels and the winner of numerous awards, including the Grand Prix des lectrices de Elle 2005 for *Passage du Désir*, the Prix Claude Chabrol 2020 for *Une femme de rêve* and the Prix France Canada 2022 for *Mousson froide*.



ROBERT LAFFONT | Benita Edzard | benita.edzard@robert-laffont.com



CONTACTS

FOLLOW QUAIS DU POLAR
ON SOCIAL MEDIA :



quaisdupolar



@quais_polar



QuaisPolar



@quaisdupolarofficiel4637



quais-du-polar



CONTACTS

Cécile DUMAS | cdumas@quaisdupolar.com

Laura BAUDIN | polarconnection@quaisdupolar.com

POLAR CONNECTION | POLAR EN SÉRIES PRIZE | INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS