



221B

THE EPICENTER OF CRIME FICTION

MIPCOM 2025

EXCLUSIVE

ALAN BRADLEY
ANDREW JARECKI
ASENA BAŞAK
BRAD INGELSBY
DOMINIQUE MOLONEY
JOSHUA ROFÉ
MARGARET BROWN
VALENTINA ALFERJ

FROM DOUBT TO TRUTH

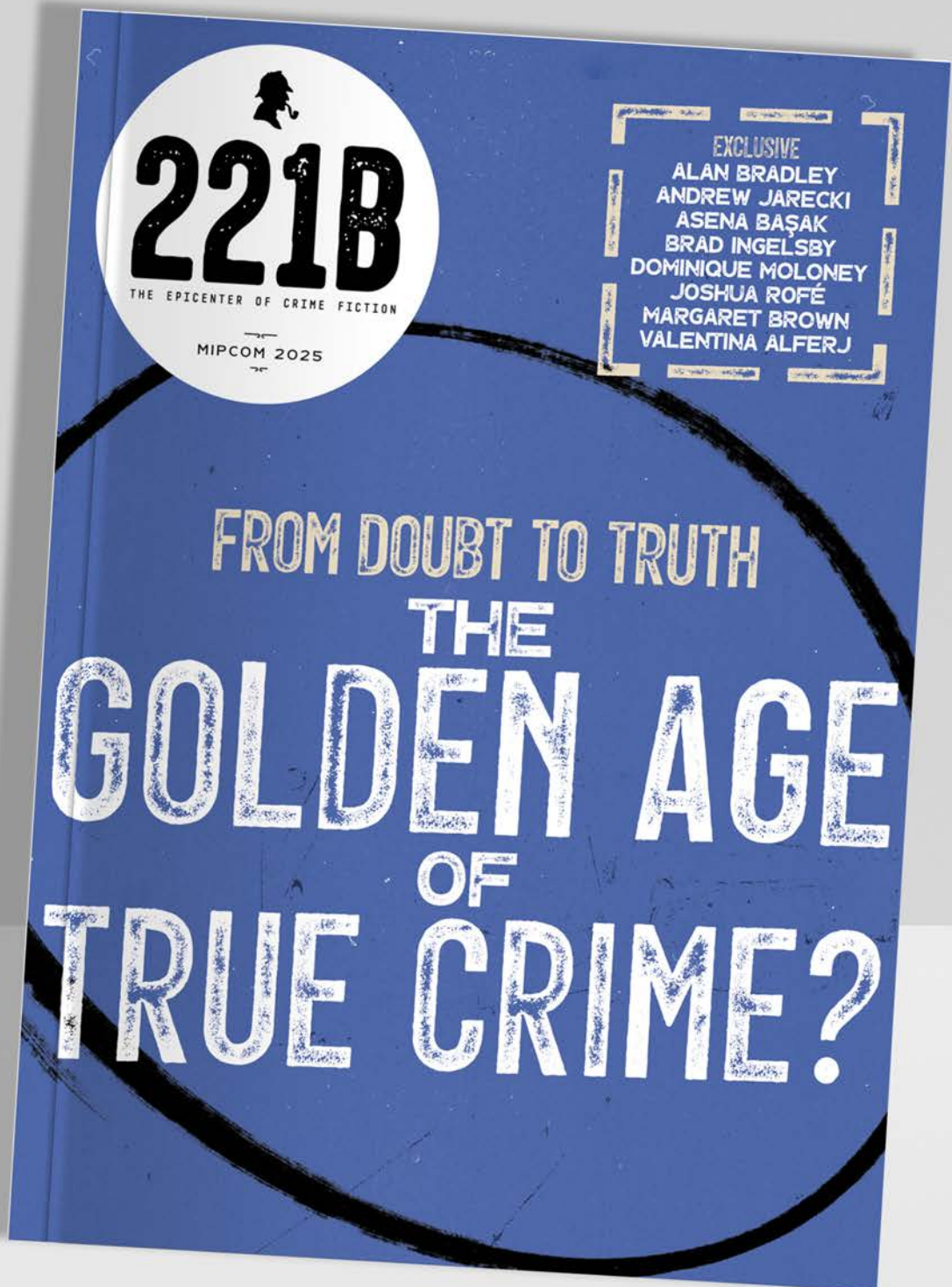
THE

GOLDEN AGE

OF

TRUE CRIME?

THE EPICENTER OF CRIME FICTION



Subscribe to our newsletter: 221bmag.com

www.221bmag.com



FOUNDER & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
ÖZLEM ÖZDEMİR
ozlem@221bmag.com

CO-FOUNDER
FAHRIYE ŞENTÜRK
fabriye@221bmag.com

MANAGING EDITOR
YOLDAŞ ÖZDEMİR
yoldas@221bmag.com

EDITOR
YAĞMUR ÇÖL
editor@221bmag.com

ART&DESIGN
CANSU ÖZCÖMERT

SALES&MARKETING
editor@221bmag.com

Website: 221bmag.com

FOLLOW US
@221bdergi

HEADQUARTERS
CAFERAĞA MAH. DR SAKIR
PASA
SOK. NO 3-A, KADIKÖY-
İSTANBUL,
TÜRKİYE +90 0543 345 46 00

221B and 221bmag.com are operated by Mylos Publishing by Mylos Publishing Group-Publishing Consultancy Services Limited Company. All text, content, photographs, video, audio, and graphics are owned by or licensed by 221B or other third parties and are protected from any unauthorized use, copying and dissemination by copyrights, trademarks, and/or other proprietary rights and laws of the Türkiye and other countries.



Özlem Özdemir

221B: THE EPICENTER OF CRIME FICTION

From legendary literary detectives and ever-popular Nordic noirs to period mysteries, contemporary crime dramas, political thrillers, psychological dramas, and the revived charm of cosy crimes, alongside a post-pandemic boom in true-crime documentaries produced and watched in growing numbers each year...

Crime fiction, across all its subgenres, is living through one of its most remarkable revivals.

Named after the most famous address in crime literature, Sherlock Holmes' home, 221B Magazine has been publishing for a decade. Dedicated exclusively to crime storytelling, the magazine features crime novels and short stories, graphic novels, academic research, crime dramas, films, and documentaries.

With this issue 221B steps onto the global stage, becoming an international hub for crime and true-crime storytelling. From now on, you'll see leading creators and researchers from across the world, whose work continues to shape and redefine the genre, featured in our pages.

For our MIPCOM 2025 edition, we ask a question many of us have been asking in recent months: Are we living in the golden age of true crime? To explore this, we spoke with some of the most influential voices behind today's most acclaimed true-crime documentaries, Andrew Jarecki, Joshua Rofé, Margaret Brown, and Asena Başak.

Also featured in this issue are Brad Ingelsby, creator of HBO Max's acclaimed crime drama *Task*; Dominique Moloney, writer of *The Puzzle Lady*; Alan Bradley, bestselling author of the *Flavia* series; and Valentina Alferj, screenwriter of *Kostas* and long-time collaborator with leading Mediterranean crime authors.

In this issue, you'll also find in-depth coverage of series and documentaries adapted from podcasts, the titles expected to be adapted in the coming year, and the recently renewed shows returning for new seasons.

We also invite you to explore the titles making their international debut at MIPCOM 2025, stories that excite us most this season.

221B will continue its journey with weekly newsletters. Visit 221bmag.com to subscribe to the 221B Newsletter and stay up to date with the latest in crime and true crime storytelling.

See you in the next crime story...

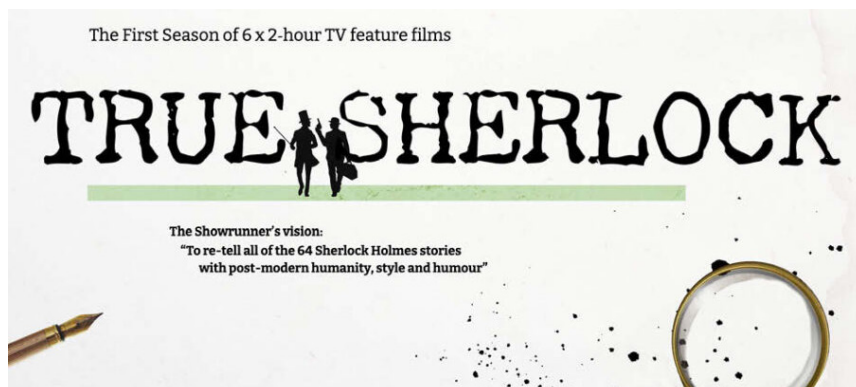
Subscribe to our newsletter: www.221bmag.com



JOHN LE CARRÉ'S 'A MOST WANTED MAN' SET FOR KOREAN TV ADAPTATION BY THE INK FACTORY AND VO MEDIA

The Ink Factory is partnering with Korean production company VO Media to develop a series based on John le Carré's espionage thriller *A Most Wanted Man*. The announcement came during the Busan International Film Festival's Asian Contents & Film Market.

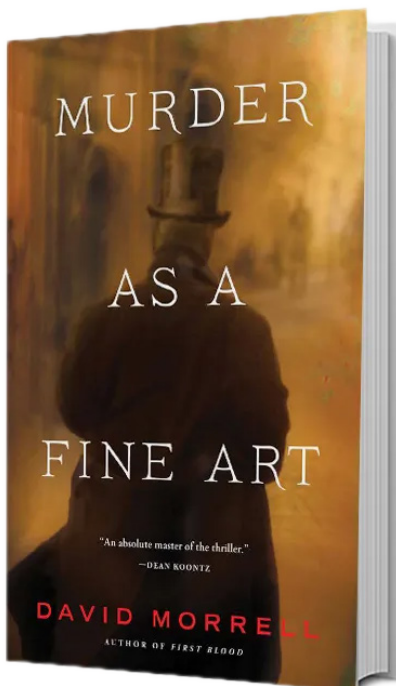
First published in 2008, the novel follows Issa, a Muslim immigrant who arrives in Hamburg from Russia and becomes entangled with intelligence services in the post-9/11 world.



HARRY KING TELEVISION ANNOUNCES 'TRUE SHERLOCK' ANIMATED SERIES

Harry King Television is developing an animated series, *Animated Sherlock* (WT), part of its *True Sherlock* Franchise. David Lipman, producer of the first two *Shrek* films, is attached to the project.

The series is based on Nicholas Sercombe's *The Unexpurgated Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* and will differ from the traditional live-action adaptations, aiming at adult viewers. It will also explore the backgrounds of Holmes, Watson, Mrs. Hudson, and Moriarty, bringing a modern perspective to the classic characters.



DAVID MORRELL'S 'MURDER AS A FINE ART' TO BE ADAPTED AS TV SERIES

Murder as a Fine Art by David Morrell, best known as the creator of the legendary character John Rambo and writer of *First Blood*, is being adapted for TV by A Higher Standard and Harris Films, with Zack Stentz as showrunner.

The series follows Thomas De Quincey and his daughter Emily as they investigate murders in 1850s London, crimes seemingly inspired by De Quincey's own essay *On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts*.



DOUGRAY SCOTT TO LEAD 'FAIRYTALE DETECTIVE' AS HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

Dougray Scott will star as Hans Christian Andersen in *Fairytale Detective*, a new drama from Brendan Foley and Omega Global Media.

Each hour-long episode follows Andersen as he solves crimes in 1850s Copenhagen with the help of characters from his own stories, who come to life to guide him toward justice. At the same time, he hopes to win the heart of Jenny Lind, the love of his life.



LARS KEPLER'S BOOKS TO BE ADAPTED BY APPLE TV+

Apple TV+ will adapt Lars Kepler's Joona Linna novels into a series starring Liev Schreiber, Zazie Beetz, and Stephen Graham. The story centers on Jonah Lynn (Schreiber), an ex-soldier turned homicide detective who faces off with serial killer Jurek Walter.

When the hunt for Jurek's last missing victim pushes Jonah's adoptive daughter, FBI agent Saga Bauer (Beetz), into danger, the detective must risk everything to protect his family and the town.



CHANNING TATUM, OSCAR ISAAC, AND ZAZIE BEETZ TO STAR IN CRIME DRAMA 'KOCKROACH'

Channing Tatum, Oscar Isaac, and Zazie Beetz will star in *Kockroach*, the story of a mysterious stranger who rises to become a crime boss. The film is based on the novel by William Lashner, written under the pen name Tyler Knox.

Matt Ross will direct from a script by Jonathan Ames, with Andrew Lazar producing through Mad Chance. Filming begins in January in Australia.



SHERLOCK HOLMES REALITY COMPETITION IN DEVELOPMENT BY REMARKABLE ENTERTAINMENT

Remarkable Entertainment has secured rights from the Arthur Conan Doyle estate to create a Sherlock Holmes-inspired reality competition.

Titled *Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock: The Detective Academy*, the series will test contestants' deductive reasoning and problem-solving.



MARTIN FREEMAN STARS IN 'FLAVIA': EVERYTHING WE KNOW SO FAR

Flavia, based on Alan Bradley's *The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie*, stars Martin Freeman, Toby Jones, and Jonathan Pryce. It follows 11-year-old Flavia de Luce, who discovers a corpse and begins her detective journey.

Set in 1951, Flavia works to prove her father innocent of the crime, uncovering dark family secrets along the way. The film wrapped last November and will premiere on Sky Cinema.



ELIZABETH BANKS TO LEAD AMAZON SERIES ABOUT KAREN READ TRIAL

Elizabeth Banks will star as *Karen Read* in a limited Prime Video series based on the podcast Karen, which chronicled the high-profile case. The story follows Read, accused of murdering her boyfriend, a Boston police officer, before being acquitted of murder and manslaughter.

Justin Noble will serve as showrunner, with David E. Kelley executive producing alongside him. The series is in development with Warner Bros. Television.



'THE KILLINGS: PARRISH STATION': NEW STAN AND ITV STUDIOS DRAMA

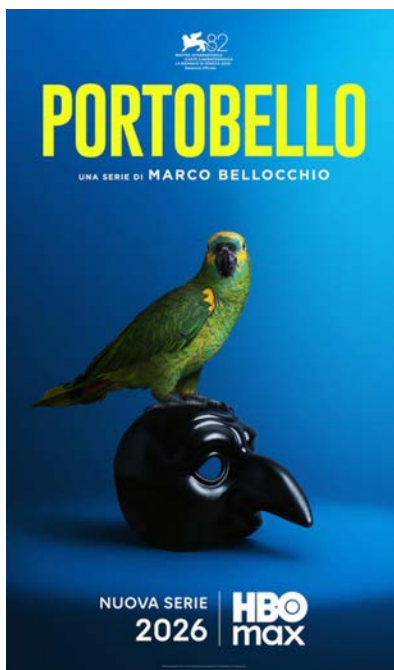
Mia Wasikowska, Heather Mitchell, and Xavier Samuel will star in *The Killings: Parrish Station*, produced by Helium Pictures for Stan and distributed by ITV Studios. The series is a “cosmic mystery intertwines with horror as a gruesome massacre at a remote research station plunges a detective into an inexplicable, decades-long mystery.”



PARAMOUNT+ ORDERS 'NOLA KING', A 'TULSA KING' SPINOFF STARRING SAMUEL L. JACKSON

Paramount+ has ordered *NOLA King*, with Samuel L. Jackson, a spinoff of *Tulsa King* starring Sylvester Stallone.

The story will follow Russell Lee Washington Jr. (Jackson), who befriends Dwight Manfredi (Stallone) in prison and is later tasked with eliminating him.



'PORTOBELLO': BETA FILM AND MEDIAWAN RIGHTS PARTNER ON ITALIAN HBO ORIGINAL SERIES

Beta Film and Mediawan Rights have partnered on *Portobello*, HBO's first Italian original. Directed by Marco Bellocchio, it stars Fabrizio Gifuni as TV presenter Enzo Tortora, the “king” of Italian television in the 1980s. The six-hour drama will debut on HBO Max in 2026 and depicts Tortora's downfall with the false accusations that destroyed his career.

'TRUE DETECTIVE' CREATOR NIC PIZZOLATTO AND MATTHEW MCCONAUGHEY REUNITE IN THE NEW NETFLIX SERIES

Nic Pizzolatto is developing a new Netflix series, currently titled *The Brothers Project*, starring Matthew McConaughey and Cole Hauser as two brothers.

Plot details remain under wraps, but the project marks a reunion between McConaughey and Pizzolatto after *True Detective*.





LUCY LIU TO HEADLINE PEACOCK DRAMA 'SUPERFAKES'

Lucy Liu is set to star in *Superfakes*, a Peacock series about a Chinatown counterfeit dealer who enters a dangerous black-market world to support her family.

The show comes from creator Alice Ju, with the Safdie brothers and A24 attached as executive producers. Liu will also executive produce the project.



'BLACK MIRROR' CREATOR CHARLIE BROOKER DEVELOPING NETFLIX CRIME SERIES

Black Mirror creator Charlie Brooker is working on a four-part crime thriller for Netflix, starring Paddy Considine, Georgina Campbell, and Lena Headey. The untitled series follows a detective from Bleakford who travels to London to stop a ritualistic killer. Now in production, the show is described as a dark, original story filled with suspense. Georgina Campbell, known from *Black Mirror*'s "Hang the DJ," returns to collaborate with Brooker.



MATT DAMON AND BEN AFFLECK REUNITE IN NETFLIX THRILLER 'THE RIP'

Matt Damon and Ben Affleck will star in the new Netflix cop drama *The Rip*, as Miami cops whose loyalty unravels after they find millions in cash. The film explores greed and trust as outside forces close in.

Joe Carnahan wrote and directed the film, with Affleck and Damon producing through Artists Equity. *The Rip* premieres on Netflix on January 16, 2026.



'GOMORRAH - THE ORIGINS' PREMIERES JANUARY 2026

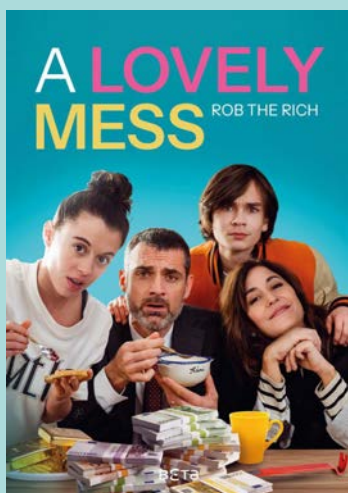
Sky Italy has announced *Gomorrah - The Origins* will debut in January 2026. The prequel explores Pietro Savastano's teenage years in 1977 Naples as he's drawn into organized crime.

The series traces his rise under mob boss Angelo "A Sirena" and depicts the violent betrayals that shaped his future. First announced during *Gomorrah*'s 10th anniversary, the release date has not been confirmed yet.

SAWYER SPIELBERG TO STAR IN CRIME DRAMA 'ONCE UPON A TIME IN HELL'S KITCHEN'

Sawyer Spielberg, recently seen in *Materialists* and *Masters of the Air*, has landed his first lead role in *Once Upon a Time in Hell's Kitchen*. Directed by Colin Broderick and based on his novel, the film will also see Spielberg executive produce. Set in 1970s New York, the story follows local boxer Danny "Boy" McCoy, who dreams of escaping Hell's Kitchen during a bloody turf war between The Westies and the Mob.





BETA FILM BOARDS FRENCH CRIME DRAMEDY 'A LOVELY MESS - ROB THE RICH'

Beta Film has picked up *A Lovely Mess - Rob the Rich*, a six-part French social dramedy about a couple who turn to burglary to maintain appearances. Produced by Redstone for France Télévisions, the series blends romantic comedy, family drama, and crime satire. Beta Film will handle international sales at MIPCOM.



FOUR CHINESE STREAMERS PICK UP 'MY BRILLIANT FRIEND: THE STORY OF THE LOST CHILD'

China's iQIYI, Tencent Video, Youku, and Bilibili have acquired the final season of *My Brilliant Friend: The Story of the Lost Child*. This marks Fremantle's biggest distribution deal in China, with all four platforms premiering the series at the same time.

The first three seasons of *My Brilliant Friend*, adapted from Elena Ferrante's bestselling quadrilogy, streamed on iQIYI, Tencent, and Youku, and also aired on China's CCTV. The fourth and final season, directed by Laura Bispuri, is set in 1970s Italy and stars Alba Rohrwacher as Elena and Irene Maierino as Lila.



'SIGHT UNSEEN' LANDS MAJOR GLOBAL SALES

Fifth Season has secured new international deals for crime drama *Sight Unseen*, starring Dolly Lewis and Daniel Gillies. Buyers include Channel 5 and Paramount+ (UK & Ireland), Nine Network (Australia), and AXN Asia, among others.

The series follows Tess Avery, a blind former detective who works with remote partner Sunny Patel to solve crimes. Created by Karen and Nikolijne Troubetzkoy, the show airs on CTV in Canada and The CW in the U.S.



RÚV AND ZDF BOARD ICELANDIC CRIME DRAMA 'DEATH OF A HORSE'

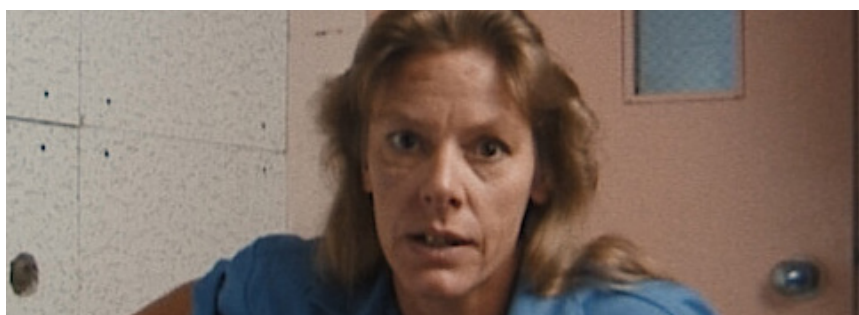
RÚV and ZDF have greenlit *Death of a Horse*, produced by ACT4 and Windlight Pictures. It is RÚV's first project under the European alliance New8.

The story follows a horse rider investigating the mysterious death of her prized stallion, uncovering secrets within elite Icelandic horse breeding.



ÓLAFUR DARRI ÓLAFSSON STARS IN 'REYKJAVÍK FUSION'

Severance actor Ólafur Darri Ólafsson leads crime drama *Reykjavik Fusion*, which premiered at Canneseries. Produced by ACT4, the show mixes culinary ambition with criminal underworld drama. Ólafsson plays Jónas, a chef released from prison who opens a restaurant financed by a crime boss. Torn between haute cuisine and mob entanglements, he risks everything for survival. The second season of the series has not been confirmed yet.



NETFLIX SETS TRUE-CRIME DOC 'AILEEN: QUEEN OF THE SERIAL KILLERS'

Netflix will release *Aileen: Queen of the Serial Killers* on October 30, a feature documentary about Aileen Wuornos, who murdered seven men in Florida between 1989 and 1990.

Directed by Emily Turner, the film revisits her life through interviews, archival footage, and never-before-seen death row tapes, offering new insight into her crimes and background. Produced by BBC Studios Documentary Unit and NBC News Studios, the project re-examines Wuornos's story through a modern lens.



BBC, RTÉ, AND SKY NZ ACQUIRE 'SCRUBLANDS: SILVER'

Australian crime drama *Scrublands: Silver* has been picked up by the BBC (UK), RTÉ (Ireland), and Sky (New Zealand), alongside AMC Networks in Spain and Portugal and several other global buyers.

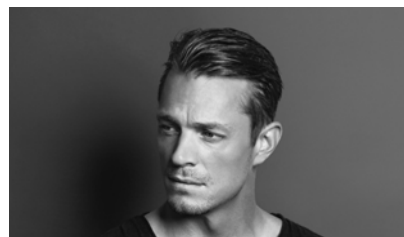
Produced for Stan, the sequel to *Scrublands* follows a journalist returning to his hometown, only to find his friend murdered and his partner accused. The series is produced by Easy Tiger Productions, and Sphere Abacus handles distribution.



NOMINATIONS REVEALED FOR 2025 BRITISH DOCUMENTARY AWARDS

The Grierson Trust has announced the nominees for the 2025 British Documentary Awards, celebrating outstanding documentary work across 14 categories, including singles, series, theatrical releases, and streamers.

In the Best Crime and Justice Documentary category, nominees include *Bibaa & Nicole: Murder in the Park* (Sky), *Shoot to Kill: Terror on the Tube* (Channel 4), *The Wrong Man* (Channel 5), and *Zurawski v Texas* (Jolt. Film). The awards ceremony will take place on 18th November at the Roundhouse in Camden, London.



PRIME VIDEO ORDERS DETECTIVE DRAMA 'BISHOP' STARRING JOEL KINNAMAN

Prime Video has greenlit *Bishop*, a new detective series starring Joel Kinnaman (*The Killing*). Kinnaman will play San Francisco homicide detective Bishop Graves, hunting a killer who targets wealthy elites.

Produced by Vertigo and Amazon MGM Studios, the series is executive produced by Roy Lee, Miri Yoon, Tony Salzman, and Little Marvin, who also serves as showrunner.



FROM MARE OF EASTTOWN TO TASK: BRAD INGELSBY TALKS CRIME, FAMILY, AND FAITH

BY YAĞMUR ÇÖL





Crime narratives has gone through many phases over the decades, from “who-dunits” and golden-age detective tales to noir, neo-noir, and beyond. Yet the most enduring works in the genre have always shared a common thread: a layered, deeply human approach to narrative. That’s exactly what Brad Ingelsby’s writing achieves.

With *Mare of Easttown*, Ingelsby once again proved how powerful crime drama can be when it shines a light on ordinary, working-class people, the characters he has said he cares very deeply about. Now, with his new HBO series *Task*, he deepens that commitment, crafting a profound narrative that blends crime, family, and faith while giving overlooked lives the empathy and complexity they deserve.

How did the story of *Task* begin, and what kind of writing and creative process did you go through?

It really started with this idea about a character who was an ex-priest whose faith has been tested in some way, in this case, through a family crisis. That idea interested me: someone who, everything he held as truth in his life, comes crumbling down. And it’s through this, it’s through the gauntlet of this investigation, that he has to arrive at some level of a belief again. So that character interested me.

And then, on the other side of the coin, I had spoken to a chief of police. This was another story we were talking about, and he mentioned mailmen and trash collectors. He said those are people that are, in some way, in your life all the time. They’re passing through your neighborhoods, your streets. They’re going through your mail and your trash. They know a lot about you and your family, but they’re invisible to you. And that, to me, was a very striking statement.

And so those two characters were interesting to me. Then I had to figure out a plot around them, what’s the connective tissue around these characters? And then I started on that journey and just got deeper and deeper with Tom Brandis and Robbie, fleshed out their lives and their families’ lives. That was really the genesis of it.



Screenwriters usually try not to imagine a specific actor while creating characters. Did you have Mark Ruffalo in mind when writing Tom?

I really don’t write with a specific actor. But once I got the first episode done and I started to read the character back to myself, I thought, okay, who’s believable as a guy from this area of the United States? Who’s believable as a theologian, a guy who went into the seminary, a guy who’s a father, who can play an FBI agent? Once I started writing down those traits, the list narrowed quite a bit. Mark was at the top of that list. He’s such a versatile actor, he was the perfect choice. And thankfully, he said yes.

“I think what’s interesting about Tom as a character is that he was a parish priest. He counseled people when they were in need. He listened to confessions. He was compassionate. That was his superpower as a detective. Not that he could shoot well or see clues, but that he would approach people and situations with a level of empathy we don’t often see. That was more interesting to me than someone being just a super detective.”



"I feel a real responsibility to write characters like this: working-class people whose lives often get overlooked. I want to give them as much complexity, honesty, heart, sadness, triumph, and failure as any other characters."

The other actors are also very successful, but especially since Tom and Robbie are the main characters, the casting of the two actors is really outstanding. Could you tell us about the casting process and the preparation work you did with the actors?

Thank you. It was a very extensive casting process. Tom Pelphrey auditioned, and as soon as we saw him on tape, I heard him laugh. He has a very iconic laugh. There is such a wonderful exuberance about Tom that I felt was very close to Robbie. I always saw Robbie as a kind of misguided dreamer, and Tom has a wonderful childlike quality as a person. He's just so joyful all the time, and I loved that about him.

In addition, he has the physicality that's really believable. You believe him going into these houses, doing the pistol whipping, robbing all the dealers. I needed a guy who could be believable both as a father and also as a thief.

With all the other parts, it was just such a wonderful group of young actors, and Martha Plimpton is fantastic in the show. We just got really lucky. It was a long casting process, but I think everyone really brought their A-game. Their performances are, I think, the best part of the show. Everyone is really stellar.

I think you are a very special writer and creator when it comes to crime narratives. While watching *Task*, as many viewers probably will, I found myself thinking about *Mare of Easttown*, so I'd like to ask some questions about Mare as well. There are so many crime narratives coming out, and they have gone through many phases; from "whodunits" to golden-age detective stories, noir, neo-noir, political crime dramas, historical crime dramas, and more. But in the crime stories you create, the detectives are deeply layered yet also ordinary people. How do you create them?

That's a really good question. That's a

hard one, but it's a great question. I can say what I'm less interested in as a writer. I'm not interested in great detectives. I'm not particularly interested in writing about detectives who can come into a room and see the clues other people have missed, or who are really good with a gun, or who charge through the door. That interests me a lot less. What interested me in the case of Mare was a mother. We often see dads who see themselves as failures; "I worked too much, I wasn't home enough." But what really interested me with Mare was a mother who felt like a failure. A mother who was also a solid detective, but there wasn't any single trait about Mare that made her a special detective.

For Tom Brandis in *Task*, I think it's a similar story. He's not a great FBI agent. In fact, he says it in the show to Robbie: "I'm a resident agent, not even close. I'm not that good." But I think what's interesting about Tom as a character is that he was a parish priest. He counseled people when they were in need. He listened to confessions. He was compassionate. That, to me, made him interesting. That was his superpower as a detective. Not that he could shoot well or see clues, but that he would approach people and situations with a level of empathy we don't often see. That was more interesting to me than someone being just a super detective.

I wanted to ask: what does that character look like? What does it look like for a priest to be an FBI agent? It's a different level of service. And my uncle was a priest. He left the priesthood. So a lot of that character was born from my uncle. He is now married and has been out of the priesthood for many years, but I really liked asking him questions about what it was like to be a priest, and what his relationship with God is like now. Some aspects



of Tom Brandis's character came from my uncle, who was an Augustinian for a long time.

That's really interesting. I also think billions of people around the world are constantly working to build a better life for themselves and their children, but they are not getting much in return. And you tell the stories of these people, people who may seem small but face vital problems, people from the working class. For example, in *Mare*, we see a young woman trying to earn money so she can pay for her baby's ear surgery. And in *Task*, we see Robbie resort to illegal means to secure a better future for his children. This makes me think that you care deeply about telling the stories of real people from the real world. Would you agree?

That's the nicest thing anyone has said to me today. That, to me, is why I tell these stories, it's about these people. Because I feel like we don't get to see them on screen a lot, and when we do, they're not given the care, complexity, and honesty they deserve. I feel a real responsibility to write characters like this: working-class people whose lives often get overlooked. I want to give them as much complexity, honesty, heart, sadness, triumph, and failure as any other characters.

I'm glad you said that, because that's really what I try to do when I start something: how do I take this group of people that I care deeply about, who aren't often seen on screen, and give them an inner life and make people connect with them? So I really appreciate you saying that.

Thank you so much. In *Task*, while we mainly follow the lives of Tom, Robbie, and the people around them, we also follow a cops-and-robbers storyline. As we want Tom to hold onto life and succeed, we also come to understand why Robbie commits crimes and even begin to empathize with him, we don't want him to be caught either. In both *Mare* and *Task*, I think your writing provokes ethical discussions. Would you agree with that too?

Yeah, I think what I'm always trying to do is approach each character without judgment, and have the audience approach them the same way. I don't necessarily agree with what Robbie is doing, or what any character is doing, but I understand them. I think that's where you're able to create a deeper connection with people, when you don't approach them with judgment.

No one is quite what they seem. It's possible that Robbie



is a great dad and also a thief. It's possible that Robbie is a burden on Maeve, and it's also possible that Maeve loves him. And I think that's my experience with people in general, is that they can be a lot of things at once. It's not always, "He's a thief, he's a bad guy." It's, "He's a thief, and he's also a great father, he's missing his wife, and he feels like he's never going to get a leg up in life."

That's my experience with people: they're many different things. Some of those qualities drive us crazy, and some are qualities we love. I think as a writer, I'm always looking at both sides of the fence. There are qualities that aren't particularly likable, but he also has qualities that are likable. Again, my experience with people in general is that they're very complex. Everyone's really complex, and I try to get at that when I'm writing all the characters in the show.

Normally, in crime narratives, we tend to binge-watch the episodes to reach the conclusion quickly. But I can't do that with your works, and I notice my friends can't either, because they are so heavy and emotional. I feel like I have to take some time to think after each episode. It seems as if you don't write your stories to be consumed quickly, but rather to leave us with something to reflect on. Is that true?

I think this is a dense show. I don't think it's the worst thing to take a beat after an episode and go, "Wow, I have to process that. There was a lot going on, emotionally and also in terms of the plot." And I like that. Sometimes when I watch shows, it gets a bit thin. You finish 60 minutes of an episode and think, "One thing happened, and that was it." I like shows that have a density to them, that make you



"If we found the right story and Kate had the availability, I would, of course, do Mare again. And I would do Task again. I love the world of these characters. We'll see what the audience thinks, and if there's a demand, I'll be here to meet it."

feel, "Wow, that was worth my hour." You look back at all the things that happened, this scene, that scene, the clue and it feels full. We really tried to load the episodes.

So I'm not surprised to hear you say, "This was a meal, I have to take a minute after to process it." For me, I think that's a good thing. I hope people do take a minute after each episode to process it, because there is a lot going on.

There seems to be global anticipation for a second season of *Mare of Easttown*. Could it happen? And since both *Task* and *Mare* take place in the same region, I was also wondering, could these two stories possibly align and merge in a future season?

Everything is on the table. I think with Mare, time is helpful, because Mare is about a very, very specific community, whereas *Task* is a broader story that spans counties and families. What was so appealing about Mare was a cop who has to investigate crimes in the town where she was raised, where she has deep relationships with the people involved. For another crime like that to happen in the same town right away, I've always felt that would be a bit much. But if it's five years later, okay, I could believe another crime has happened and Mare is called into duty. I love writing that character. Mare is so fun, and Kate is amazing. But what's so enjoyable about writing Mare is that she's capable of anything. What a luxury as a writer! She can hide drugs on her daughter-in-law and the audience still loves her. She can get Zabel killed because she yanked him into this case, and the audience still loves her. She's a live wire in a way that's really enjoyable to write.

So if we found the right story and Kate had the availability, I would, of course, do Mare again. And I would do *Task* again. I love *Task*. I love the world of these characters. I love Tom Brandis. So we'll see what the audience thinks, and if there's a demand, I'll be here to meet it.

I understand that your upcoming projects, 29U and *Hold on to Me* are also in the crime gen-

re. How did your interest in crime stories begin? Do you read crime novels?

I really don't. I think I just watched a lot of crime shows as a kid, *Broadchurch*, *The Wire*. I think what the crime genre gives you is high stakes. You can do the character work, but the stakes are really high. That's what I like about the crime genre, it gives you both the ability to write characters and the ability to have really high stakes. I think the visuals and the overall atmosphere of *Task* are just as powerful as the story itself. How did you collaborate with the director on the show's visual aesthetic?

I met Jeremiah really early in the process. I loved his films *Hustle* and *We the Animals*, and I felt he was someone who would understand the human side of the story in a really meaningful way. And he did. He developed the look of the show, with a lot of nature and water.

Then we brought on Sally, our other director, who was a great complement. We just had a lot of meetings and talked about what the show would look and feel like. Most importantly, we kept our eyes on the emotion of the piece. It needed to have a thriller engine to keep the audience guessing and around but we never lost sight of what the story was really about, which was the human side, the human relationships: Tom and his family, Robbie and his family, Maeve and the kids. I think that was key: making it feel

like a bigger story, in a way, than Mare, while also never losing sight of the emotion of the piece.

And my last question, what do you think makes *Task* or *Mare of Easttown* resonate with viewers across such different countries and regions?

I think it's the emotional side of it. Hopefully people will be able to see something of their own life in this, whether they're a father, a sister, or a brother. In the specific is the universal, and I hope that's the case, that people can find something of their own life in this. As I said, it could be a connection with a father, a meaningful relationship with a child. I think there's an emotional way in for lots of people. At least, that's my hope.

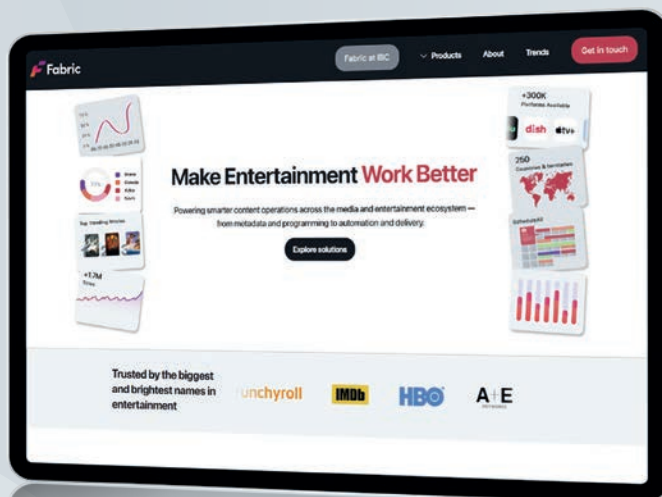




Empowering Media Operations, Data & Insights

Fabric empowers the entertainment industry to connect people with the content they love by delivering **best-in-class data** and **operations solutions**.

Market-leading expertise in scheduling, metadata management, and content data. Integrations and partnerships across the entire media and entertainment ecosystem.



Focused Products



Studio centralizes **metadata management**, enabling organizations to work from a unified, **accurate source of truth**.



Market leading **resource/media workflow** and **order management** tool for Broadcast, Media, Sports and Live Events.



An **entertainment database** with deep metadata, images, and promotional videos to enhance **user engagement and discovery**.



The most comprehensive, **real-time view** of **global streaming supply and demand**. From catalogs and prices to audiences, ratings, piracy, and social buzz.





CRIME ON SCREEN: A GLOBAL ANALYSIS OF STORIES AND FRANCHISES



For our MIPCOM 2025 issue, we collaborated with Fabric Data, one of the industry's leading companies, to deliver an in-depth analysis of the crime and true crime landscape. The report shows how the genre continues to hold a strong place in the global audiovisual ecosystem, with more than 69,000 films and 22,000 series, representing about 3% of all distributed titles worldwide. It highlights the steady growth of crime content and shines a light on today's most popular titles, as well as the growing role of adaptations, franchises, sequels, prequels, and spin-offs in shaping global audience engagement.

GLOBAL LANDSCAPE

Crime continues to hold a significant place within the global audiovisual ecosystem. Today, there are more than 69K films and 22K series in the genre, representing about 3% of all titles distributed worldwide - a smaller share compared to domi-

inant genres such as Drama (19%) or Documentary (14%). Production and viewership have both grown steadily over the last decade. The United States leads production with more than 13K titles, followed by the United Kingdom (3K) and France (2K). Annual premieres of unique crime titles increased from 4K+ in 2020 to 6K+ in 2024, with 5K+ releases already recorded through Q3 2025.

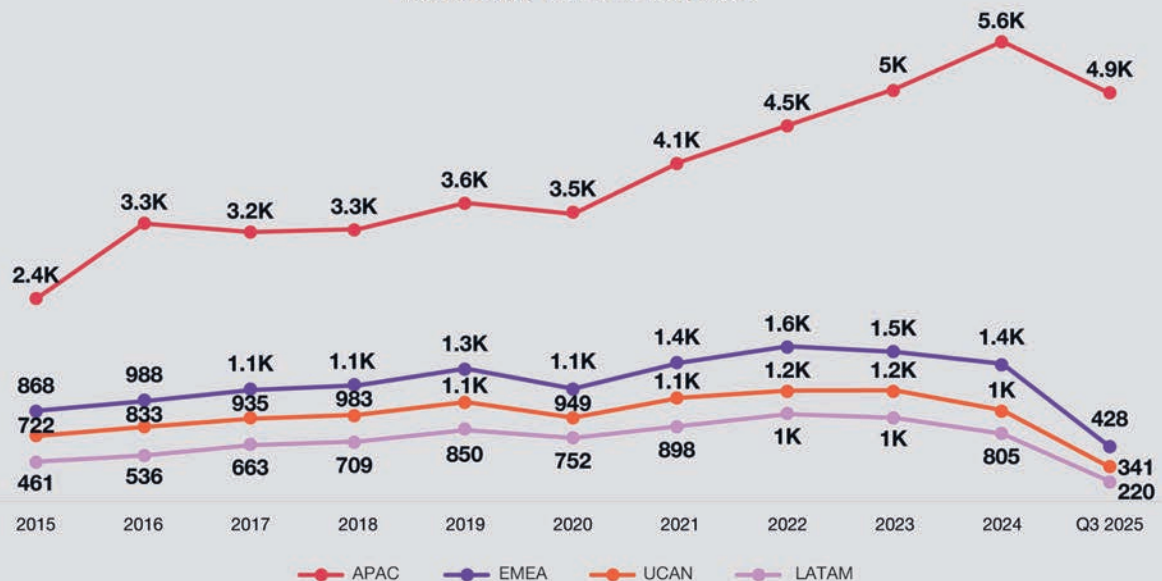
From a regional perspective, APAC hosts the largest catalog share, with crime titles accounting for 12% of the region's total library, while EMEA shows the highest audience preference, reaching 47%.

PLATFORMS AND DISTRIBUTION DYNAMICS

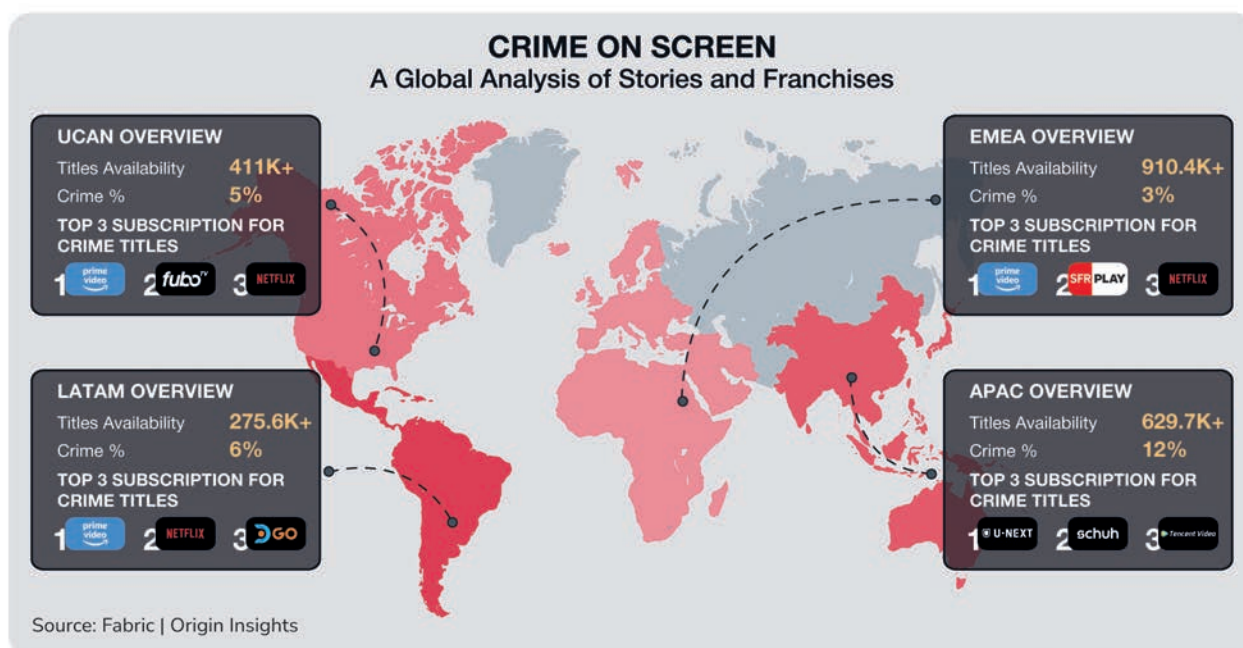
Subscription platforms are central to crime distribution. Prime Video and Netflix dominate across all regions, though their relative weight varies:

- In UCAN, Prime Video leads with nearly 3K titles, while Fubo TV and Netflix range between 1.5K–2.3K each.

CRIME TITLES RELEASE EVOLUTION
ACROSS THE REGIONS



Source: Fabric | Origin Insights



• In EMEA, the landscape is more fragmented, with strong catalogs also on SFR Play, Freenet, and Okko. When it comes to original productions, Netflix is the clear leader with 1K+ crime originals, far ahead of HBO Max (204) and Prime Video (201).

NARRATIVES, AUDIENCES, AND THEMATIC EVOLUTION

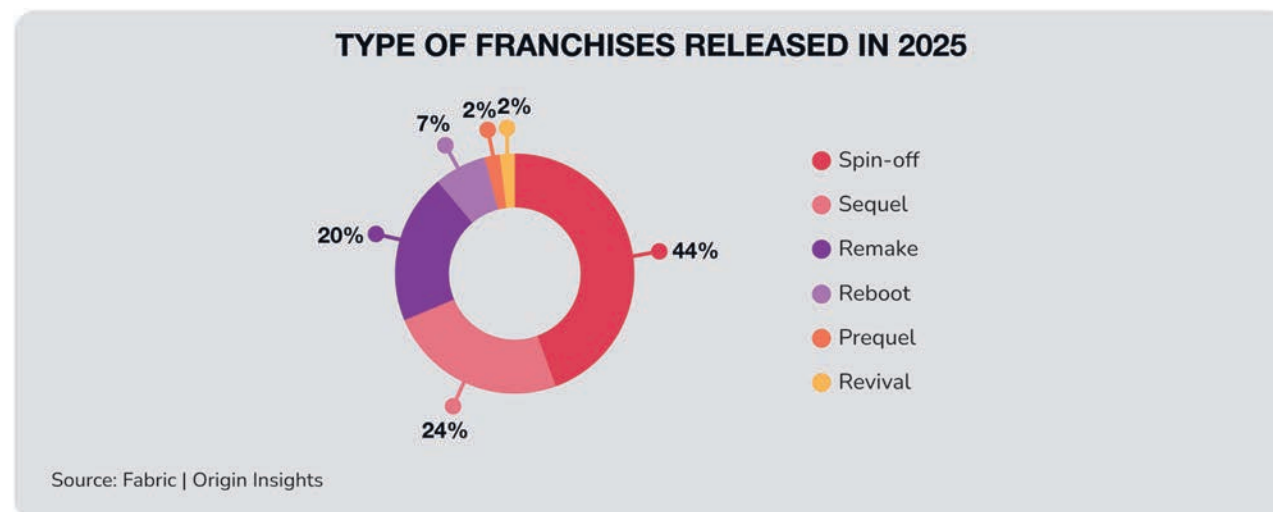
2025 has already delivered high-profile crime releases such as *Dexter: Resurrection* (2025), starring Michael C. Hall, marking the actor's return to his iconic role from the original series, and *The Hand and the Cult of the Blood Sapphire* (2025). Both titles ranked among the most popular globally in Q3 2025.

Adaptations remain a strong driver of new content. So far this year, over 50 crime adaptations have been launched, including +20 literary adaptations such as *Bosch: Legacy* (season 3), *Reacher* (season 3) and *The Åre Murders*.

SHARED UNIVERSES AND CRIME FRANCHISES

Beyond growth in sheer volume, crime also expands through franchises, sequels, prequels, and spin-offs.

• Netflix leads with global sagas like *Money Heist* (La Casa de Papel, 2017), which expanded into *Money Heist: Korea* and *Berlin* (2022), and more recently with the launch of the first season of *In the Mud* (Spin-Off, 2025).





- Prime Video leveraged the success of *Bosch* (2015) into *Bosch: Legacy* (3rd season).

The case of *Dexter* illustrates how IPs evolve across formats:

- Spin-off: *Dexter* (2006)
- Revival: *Dexter: New Blood* (2021)
- Prequel: *Dexter: Original Sin* (2024)
- Sequel: *Dexter: Resurrection* (2025)

Other notable examples include:

- Revival: *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* (2024), *NCIS: Origins* (2024)
- Spin-off: *Criminal Minds: Evolution* (2022), *CSI: Vegas* (2021)
- Canned series with lasting impact: *Bosch* (2015), *Criminal Minds* (2017)

Together, these dynamics confirm that franchising is central

to the genre's sustainability, helping platforms maintain engagement in an increasingly fragmented market.

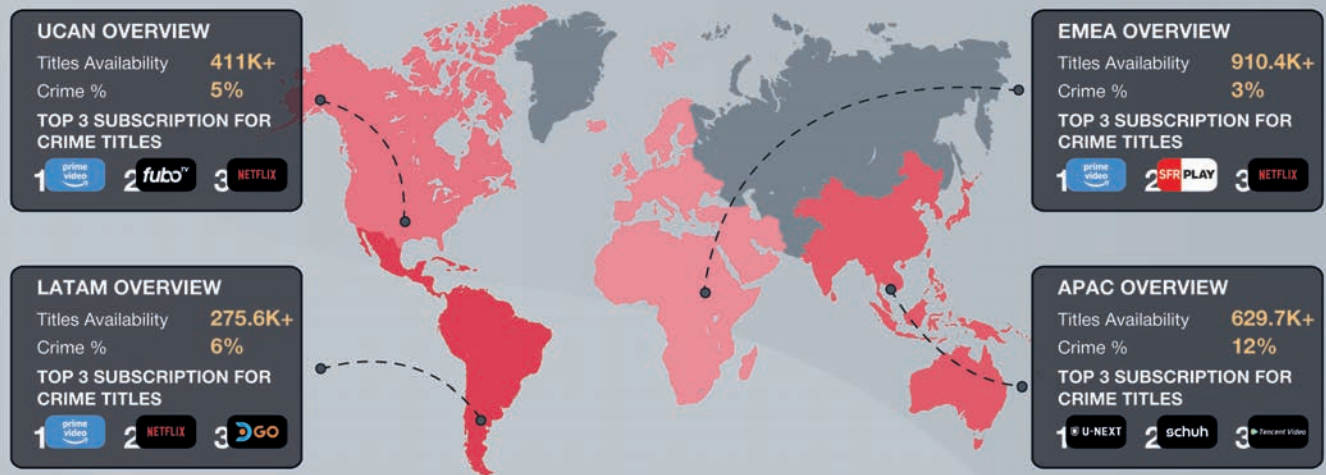
PERSPECTIVES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The global crime market is entering a phase of consolidation and diversification. Key growth vectors include:

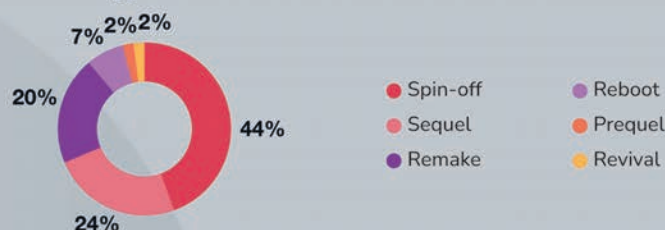
- Franchise expansion (spin-offs, shared universes) enabling scalability and long-term audience loyalty.
 - Revivals, reboots, and adaptations blending nostalgia with novelty to target both existing fans and new viewers.
- The main challenges ahead lie in catalog saturation and the need for differentiation in an intensely competitive genre. Platforms that balance global IP extensions with locally resonant narratives are well positioned to capture sustained audience attention.



Crime on Screen A Global Analysis of Stories and Franchises



Type Of Franchises Released in 2025



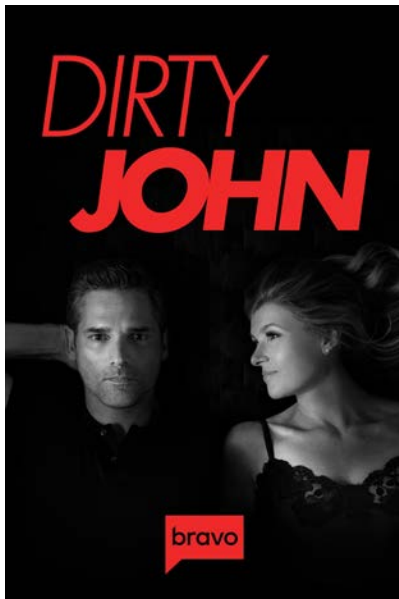


FROM PODCASTS TO SCREEN: THE MOST TALKED-ABOUT TRUE CRIME ADAPTATIONS

YAĞMUR ÇÖL



True crime podcasts are now some of the most popular shows across nearly every platform. With millions of listeners around the world, they've become essential for fans of the genre. In recent years, some of these stories have also been brought to the screen. Here, we've picked out the most striking true crime adaptations that went from podcasts to TV and streaming.



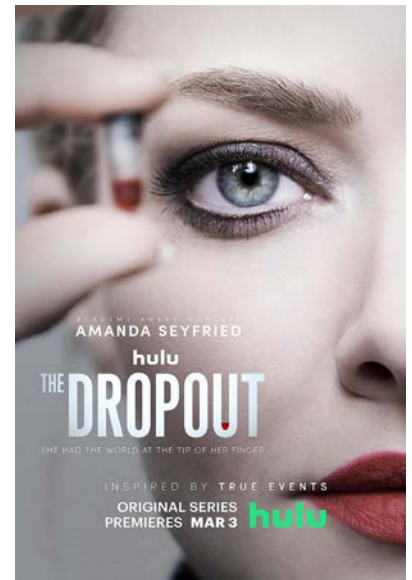
DIRTY JOHN

Based on Christopher Goffard's podcast of the same name, *Dirty John* became one of the most talked-about podcast adaptations. Downloaded over 10 million times in its first few weeks, it was adapted for television by Alexandra Cunningham in 2018. Airing on Bravo in the U.S. and later on Netflix worldwide, the series tells the unsettling story of charismatic yet dangerous John Meehan and his whirlwind relationship with a woman named Debra Newell, a romance built on lies, manipulation, and violence.



DR. DEATH

Based on Wondery's popular podcast, *Dr. Death* was brought to the screen by Patrick Macmanus and made its ambitious debut on Peacock in 2021. Season one follows Dr. Christopher Duntzsch, a Dallas neurosurgeon whose surgeries left patients maimed or dead, while season two shifts focus to Swiss surgeon Paolo Macchiarini, infamous for his experimental, and ultimately deadly, operations.



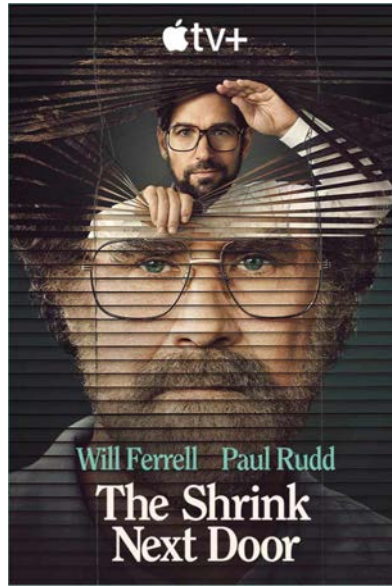
THE DROPOUT

Adapted for the screen from Rebecca Jarvis's ABC Audio podcast, *The Dropout* tells the story of the meteoric rise and dramatic fall of Theranos founder Elizabeth Holmes. Created by Elizabeth Meriwether, the miniseries premiered on Hulu in 2022. It received six nominations at the 74th Primetime Emmy Awards, including Outstanding Limited Series, and Amanda Seyfried won both an Emmy and a Golden Globe for her portrayal of Holmes.



THE THING ABOUT PAM

Starring Renée Zellweger, *The Thing About Pam* tells the story of the 2011 murder of Betsy Faria in Troy, Missouri, a case that soon exposed shocking secrets about her friend Pam Hupp. Based on Dateline NBC's reporting and its podcast of the same name, the series premiered on NBC in 2022. And a spin-off, *The Thing About Tommy*, is currently in development.



THE SHRINK NEXT DOOR

Based on Joe Nocera's podcast of the same name, *The Shrink Next Door* brings together Will Ferrell and Paul Rudd in the lead roles. Inspired by a true story, it follows psychiatrist Dr. Ike Herschkopf as he gradually inserts himself into the life of his patient, Marty Markowitz, crossing personal and professional boundaries. Premiering on Apple TV+ in 2021, the series explores how the trust between therapist and patient can be manipulated.



SWEET BOBBY: MY CATFISH NIGHTMARE

Sweet Bobby: My Catfish Nightmare explores one of the most shocking catfishing scandals in recent memory. Adapted from Tortoise Media's podcast of the same name, the series follows radio presenter Kirat Assi, who was deceived for nearly a decade by her own cousin Simran Bhogal posing as "Bobby." The series premiered on Netflix in 2024.



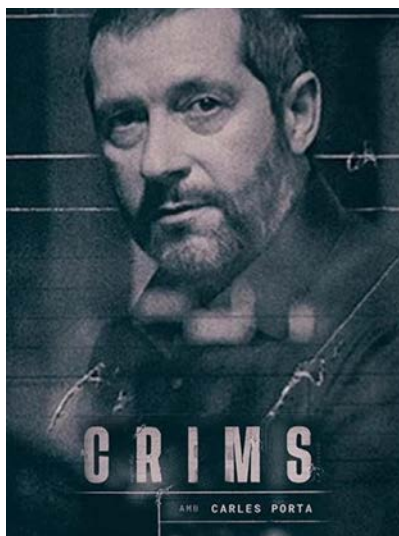
SERIAL

Launched in 2014, *Serial* became a global phenomenon and helped define the true crime podcast genre. Created by Sarah Koenig, the first season investigated the 1999 murder of Hae Min Lee and the conviction of her ex-boyfriend, Adnan Syed. The story was later adapted as *The Case of Adnan Syed*, an HBO docuseries that revisited the trial and reignited debate over Syed's guilt and the justice system itself.



BETRAYAL: THE PERFECT HUSBAND

Jen Faison thought she had the perfect marriage with her husband, Spencer Herron, until a devastating secret turned her world upside down. Based on iHeartPodcast's podcast of the same name, the three-part documentary series released on Hulu in 2023.



CRIMS (CRIMES)

Crimis began as a radio program on Catalunya Ràdio in 2018 before expanding to television on TV3 in 2020. Co-produced by the Catalan Audiovisual Media Corporation and Goroka, and presented by Carles Porta, the series explores real crime cases from Catalonia. Each episode is guided by Porta and features voices from victims' families, friends, police, forensic experts, judges, lawyers, journalists, and even some of the accused.



VELENO

In 1997, a small community in northern Italy was shaken by allegations of pedophilia and satanic rituals. An investigation pointed to an alleged sect led by a local priest, resulting in 16 children being taken from their families and 14 adults, including parents and relatives, sent to prison. Two decades later, journalist Pablo Trincia revisited the case and uncovered evidence that cast serious doubt on the original investigation. Adapted from his *La Repubblica* podcast, *Veleno* premiered on Prime Video in 2021.



AFFAIRES SENSIBLES

Launched in 2014, *Affaires Sensibles* is a France Inter radio program hosted by Fabrice Drouelle. The show looks back at major political, economic, social, and cultural events of the 20th and 21st centuries, and has become one of France's most listened-to and most-podcasted programs, attracting an average of 667,000 daily listeners in 2021. Its success led to several adaptations: a 2020 book collecting 25 standout episodes, a stage play in 2021, and a television version on France 2 the same year, co-produced by France Télévisions, France Inter, and INA.

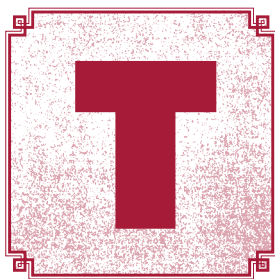


FROM DOUBT TO TRUTH: THE GOLDEN AGE OF TRUE CRIME?

For collective memory and the pursuit of justice, perhaps what we need most are true crime stories that interrogate events and tell them with accuracy and depth in the form of documentary series. One reason these stories draw such global audiences is clear: no matter where people live, they are confronted with inequality and injustice. True crime, then, should not be consumed as mere entertainment, but embraced as content that helps us remember, and compels us to question.

ÖZLEM ÖZDEMİR & YOLDAŞ ÖZDEMİR.





together, we share our experiences and what we've witnessed. With the invention of writing, these oral accounts naturally found new and richer forms.

Turning to true crime, we know that in the 16th century, executions had become almost a public spectacle. Crowds gathered around the gallows, waiting for the executioner to finish his work. Afterward, the criminal's story, the crime, and sometimes even a confession, would appear in single-sheet pamphlets. These reached both the literate and the illiterate, the latter through songs and illustrations.

Even in the 16th century, people showed the same tendency to “watch crime from a safe distance”, though the mediums were different. By the 17th century, pamphlets were no longer just single sheets but extended into several pages. And just as today, those who told these stories took different approaches: some pamphlets dwelled on the most brutal crimes, with detailed drawings of murder, torture, and dismemberment; others leaned toward moral debates, portraying criminals as deviants who had defied divine justice.

In the 18th century, priests at London's Newgate Prison wrote accounts of prisoners' lives, the crimes they committed, and their executions. These texts were published as collections under the title *The Newgate Calendar*. Research suggests that these collections were the most widely owned books after the Bible.

Daniel Defoe's books *The History of the Remarkable Life of John Sheppard* (1724) and *The True and Genuine Account of the Life and Actions of the Late Jonathan Wild* (1725) changed the nature of true crime storytelling. The Industrial Revolution brought sweeping changes across Europe over the years. As populations grew and cities began to take shape, countries started to form police forces, some as early as the 17th century, others in the 18th or

throughout history, we've been drawn to true crime, and this fascination didn't begin with books or films. One of the things that sets humans apart from other species is the urge to tell stories... From hunter-gatherer societies to the present, whenever we come

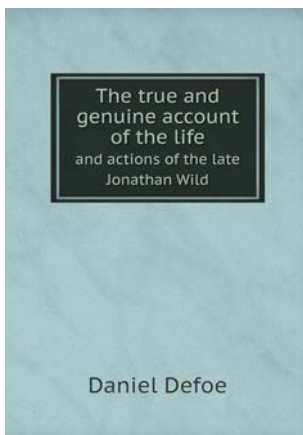
19th. From then on, crime was tracked by official state institutions.

A brief look at the 19th century tells us a lot: the rise of urban crime led to the creation of police forces, the novel emerged as a literary form, and the social sciences (especially psychology) began to develop. During this period, detailed accounts of crimes quickly became commercialized. The assassination of James A. Garfield, the murders of Jack the Ripper, and the Lizzie Borden case frequently found their way into literature. Another striking work of the 19th century appeared in 1827 in *Blackwood's Magazine*: an essay by Thomas De Quincey, who described himself as an opium addict, with the ironic title *Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts*.

De Quincey's essay is often seen as an early forerunner to Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*, widely regarded as the starting point of modern true crime. Like Capote's work, De Quincey also used murder as a way to critique the voyeurism of cheap newspapers. His essay also reshaped the way true crime was discussed. He asked readers to move past their fascination with the criminal's mind or the bloody details, and instead to rethink how we, as a society, interpret crime.

FROM THE 20TH CENTURY TO TODAY

The 20th century was the age when newspapers and magazines began reaching mass audiences. What later came to be known as tabloid-style crime stories found a wide readership during this time. With photographs of crime scenes and suspects, newspapers opened the door to faster storytelling, and faster consumption, than ever before. Both detective fiction and true crime narratives found an eager audience. In the U.S., *True Detective Mysteries Magazine* launched in 1924, publishing an almost equal mix of fiction and true crime in its first six years. But by 1930, its founder noticed that readers were far more drawn to the real cases than to fiction. Gradually, the fiction was phased out, and the magazine focused more on true crime. By 1941, its name was shortened to *True Detective*. At its peak in the 1930s and 1940s, *True Detective* sold around two million copies a month. Dozens of other true crime magazines emerged in the U.S. before 1940, pushing monthly sales above six million. *True Detective* itself remained in print until 1995.





The 20th century was not only the era of newspapers and magazines but also of radio. One of the most powerful news mediums of its time, radio brought true crime stories into people's homes both as news and as dramatizations. In the U.S., between 1935 and 1957, the program *Gangbusters* presented real cases in the form of a radio play, with the involvement of the FBI director of the period. The show became so popular that it was later adapted into a successful film series. Other crime-solving programs such as *Mr. District Attorney* and *Calling All Cars* were also on the air at the time. With its ability to deliver news instantly, radio sped up police announcements and emergency alerts, and therefore shaped public opinion in real time.

The true crime programs people once heard on the radio entered a new era with the rise of television. On screen, crimes were reenacted, and viewers were shown images of the crime scene, the victim, and the perpetrator.

From the second half of the 20th century onward, as investigative journalism developed, reporters and TV producers gained access to police and court records, interviewed people connected to the cases, and conducted on-the-ground research. As a result, true crime shows became some of the most popular news programs on television. In the U.S., first *60 Minutes*, and later *48 Hours* and *Dateline*, examined cases over multiple episodes, presenting witnesses and evidence to audiences. In the 1980s, major advances in DNA and forensic science also found wide coverage in these programs. Viewers not only saw how these tools helped solve crimes but also became familiar with the rapidly growing fields of forensic science.

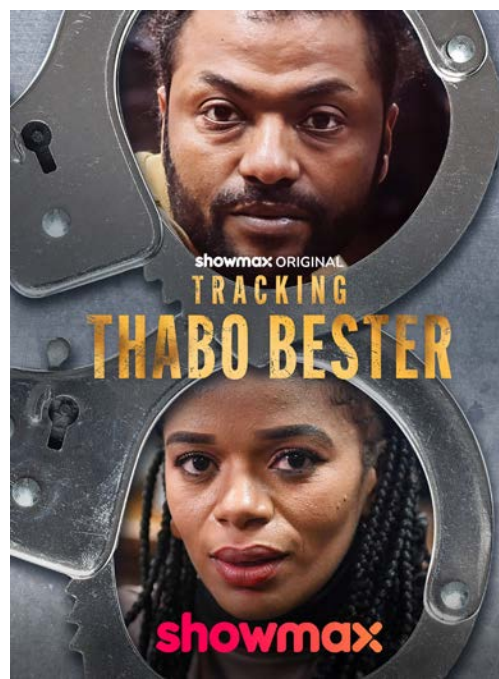
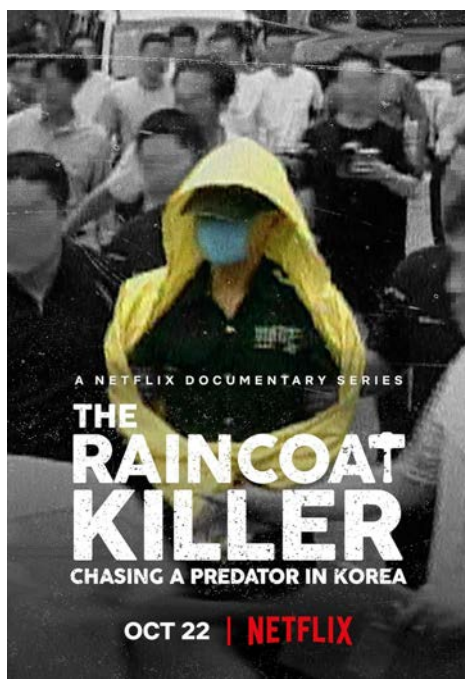
It's fair to say that the biggest shift in true crime storytelling came with the rise of streaming platforms such as Netflix, HBO Max, and Prime Video. Netflix turned the



spotlight on America's well-known serial killers, portraying their crimes through documentaries, scripted dramas, and films. When the world went into lockdown during the 2020 pandemic, true crime quickly became some of the most-watched content. As demand grew, streamers rushed to produce wave after wave of true crime documentaries, series, and films. But this rapid output, driven by platforms eager to keep audiences bingeing episode after episode, sparked growing debate over the quality of the content. Some Netflix productions began to portray serial killers in a way that bordered on glorification, casting them as charismatic figures, even as brilliant minds capable of outsmarting law enforcement and the courts—while reducing victims to little more than narrative devices. In certain documentaries, murdered women were even described as having died because of their own “poor choices.” Families of victims began filing lawsuits against production companies and broadcasters. Ethical debates over how true crime is told quickly spread across the public sphere, the media, academia, and within the television industry itself, and those debates are still ongoing.

RECENT TRENDS

Today, more and more true crime documentaries are being produced around the world. Thanks to streaming platforms, you can watch a case that happened in Brazil or Serbia from almost anywhere in the world. It's fair to say we are living through a golden age of true crime, and





industry research suggests this surge in production will continue in the years ahead. When it comes to true crime programs and documentaries, different countries focus on different topics, themes, and formats.

The United States has historically been one of the leading countries in true crime storytelling. Programs such as *Unsolved Mysteries* (on air since 1987) and *48 Hours* (since 1988) are still among the nation's most watched. *Forensic Files* (1996-2011) and *The First 48* (running since 2004) brought forensic science and crime scene investigation into the mainstream. More recent hits like *Making a Murderer* and *The Jinx* showed just how powerful the media can be in exposing the truth. Crimes connected to religious cults have also become a defining theme in the U.S. Productions about the Waco siege, for instance, laid bare both the inner workings of cults and the failures of law enforcement.

Europe's tradition of true crime storytelling began with formats that encouraged active public participation in investigations. In Germany, *Aktenzeichen XY... ungelöst* (1967) shared unsolved cases with viewers, directly aiding the police and helping to solve many ongoing investigations. This style of narrative later inspired series in the UK, most notably the BBC's *Crimewatch* (1984). Dramas like *The Pembrokeshire Murders* gave audiences an inside look at police work on cold cases. In Scandinavia, attention has focused on one of the most significant recent cases: the murder of journalist Kim Wall. Meanwhile, Swedish productions such as *The Breakthrough* have explored cases solved through genetic genealogy, highlighting the impact of these new methods.

In Asia, true crime productions often serve as critiques of institutional neglect, political corruption, and deep social inequality. In South Korea, *Memories of Murder* underscored the shortcomings of the state and showed how inequality created the conditions for crime. Series like *The Raincoat Killer: Chasing a Predator in Korea* served as a form of collective memory, forcing the police to confront their mistakes.

Indian productions often focus on gender-based violence, caste and social conflict, and the ways religious beliefs can distort justice. *Indian Predator: Murder in a Courtroom* captured both the deep mistrust of the legal system and the pursuit of justice by victims' families.

Meanwhile, South American true crime productions generally highlight the failures of state institutions, a culture of impunity, and femicides. In Brazil, the program *Linha Direta* focused on unsolved cases. Mexican documentary *Las tres muertes de Marisela Escobedo* exposed the tragic consequences of impunity through the story of femicides and government neglect. From Argentina, *Carmel* showed how even a murder case involving the upper classes could reveal the justice system's deep shortcomings.

In Africa, true crime productions often explore the local development of forensic science and criminal profiling. *The Tracking Thabo Bester* case, about "Facebook Rapist", exposed digital manipulation and major lapses in cybersecurity. Series like *The Apartheid Killer* examined murders driven by racism.

Australian true crime content often focuses on unsolved cases. Incidents like the Wanda Beach murders of 1965 received constant media coverage. Stories about crimes committed within cults, especially those that emerged after the 1980s, have also become a recurring theme.

For collective memory and the pursuit of justice, perhaps what we need most are true crime stories that interrogate events and tell them with accuracy and depth in the form of documentary series. One reason these stories draw such global audiences is clear: no matter where people live, they are confronted with inequality and injustice. True crime, then, should not be consumed as mere entertainment, but embraced as content that helps us remember, and compels us to question.

As a part of this feature, we sat down with the creators behind some of the most influential true crime documentaries of recent years: Andrew Jarecki, director and producer of *The Jinx*, which revealed a killer who avoided justice for years because of his wealth and power; Joshua Rofé, director and producer of *The Mortician*, which shows how even death and funeral practices can be turned into a marketplace, giving rise to profound injustices; Margaret Brown, director of *The Yogurt Shop Murders*, which examines killings that went unsolved for decades, wearing down not only the victims' families but an entire city; and Asena Başak, a producer on CBS's *48 Hours*, a true crime program that has been on air for 37 years and has become a classic in the U.S.



“HOW DO YOU KILL THREE PEOPLE OVER 30 YEARS AND GET AWAY WITH IT?”

ANDREW JARECKI ON MAKING *THE JINX*

BY ÖZLEM ÖZDEMİR & YAĞMUR ÇÖL



Telling true crime stories is never easy, and few filmmakers have left as deep a mark on the genre as Andrew Jarecki. With *Capturing the Friedmans* and the groundbreaking HBO series *The Jinx*, he became known not only for his fearless pursuit of truth but also for his unique approach to storytelling. Jarecki is a filmmaker unafraid to explore the fragile ties between crime, justice, and human psychology, often leaving audiences with unsettling questions that linger. His work doesn't just present facts, it compels us to confront the darker uncertainties behind them. We sat down with Andrew Jarecki to talk about the years-long journey of *The Jinx* and the evolving role of true crime in film and television.

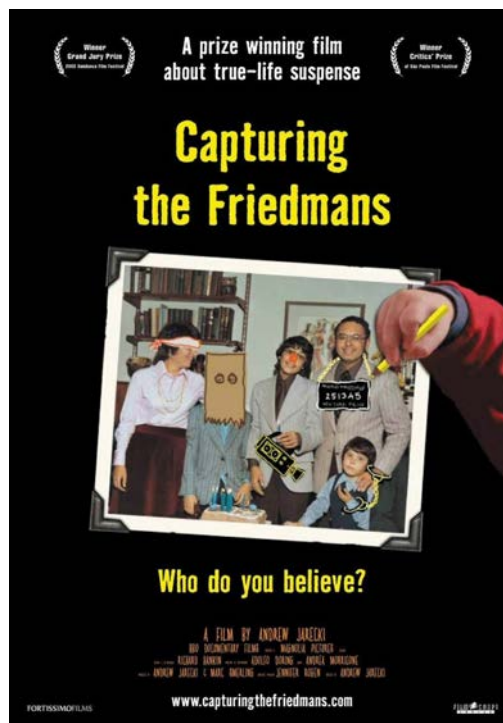
Before *The Jinx*, you had already made *All Good Things*, which told part of the story of Robert, Kathie, and Susan. When and why did this family's story first grab your interest?

I had made this film called *Capturing the Friedmans*, which was also a crime-oriented film that was on HBO in 2003-2004. It was clear that these kinds of stories were very nuanced. I thought there was a lot of television you could watch that was extremely simplified. Very often people would find a book or an article,

maybe use that as the research, and then structure the film around what they read. But I'm always very suspect about material that's been put together by others, especially if you're on a deadline for a typical magazine story. You don't have the time to do a real deep dive into a subject. *Capturing the Friedmans* had taken about five years to make, but we ended up with an extremely rich portrait, and it was a really satisfying film to make.

After that, I didn't really know what I wanted to do next. I had heard little bits about Bob Durst's story over the years. He had been accused of three murders over 30 years but had never been held accountable. He went to trial one time, but it was unsuccessful. That story was always in the back of my mind.

I think what appealed to me was that it was such a complicated story, and there was no way to simplify it. You had this origin story: Bob Durst growing up as a very wealthy, sort of ignored kid whose mom passed away. His dad is a workaholic and doesn't spend a lot of time with the family. They don't have a lot of influence from their mother. Eventually, even though he's an oddball, he meets this beautiful girl. She knows he's





an oddball, but she believes, or hopes, that she can fix him, make him more humanized, and she sees a lot of good in him. They were married for about 10 years, and then she disappeared at 29. Many people suspected that he had done something to make her disappear. Her family certainly did. Partly because he was so wealthy and the family was so prominent, that raised the bar for whether police were willing to really go after him. If you try to go after somebody with those resources, there is a big risk: if you don't succeed, it would be very embarrassing. There is a likelihood that they are going to have a lot of expensive lawyers. So police would sometimes not pursue a case unless they thought there was a good chance of conviction. That case kind of went to sleep.

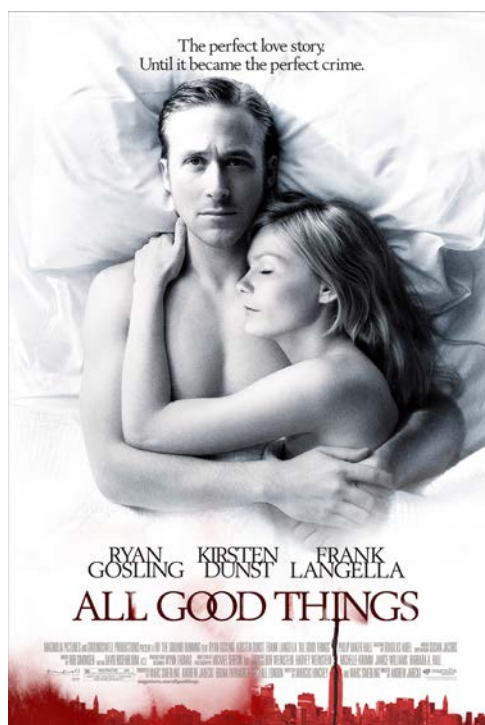
And then, years later, a detective learned something about the case, took another look, and identified this witness, Susan Berman, who was Bob Durst's best friend. This was 18 years after his wife disappeared. In 1999, they started to really consider Susan, who they believed might know something about what happened to Kathie. And then that woman was murdered. That was an unusual thing: a disappearance in 1982, and then 18 years later the police reopen the case, and a new murder happens in real time of a

witness. People started taking interest again, but it went to sleep once more. Nobody really wanted to bring charges. They felt there wasn't strong enough evidence at that point.

Then, seven months later in Texas, I guess police didn't really know where Bob Durst was. He had actually been living there in very different circumstances than you would expect for a wealthy guy from New York. A body washed up on the shore, the dismembered corpse of an elderly man named Morris Black. They started digging around and found that Morris Black had been living in a seaside town in Texas, where people go to disappear. Police went to the rooming house where he lived. In one of the trash bags with the body parts, there was a newspaper with a mailing address in Galveston. They

went to that address. At that point, all they had were body parts, no head, because the head had disappeared. They spoke to the landlord, who said: "Oh yeah, Morris Black lived here. Haven't seen him in a couple of days." They asked for more information. The landlord said: "He lived in that apartment over there, and he was friends with this older woman, Dorothy Ciner. She used to go out walking with him. She comes and goes and she has this nephew that she shares her apartment with. When she's away, he comes and uses the apartment."

That "nephew" turned out to be Robert Durst. Police looked in the apartment. First they used luminol and found blood in the carpet between the dead man's apartment and Robert Durst's apartment. In Dorothy Ciner's place, they found cuts on the floor. They pulled up the linoleum and saw blood underneath. They realized that's where the corpse was dismembered. They looked around and quickly realized there had only ever been one person living in that apartment. They found a wig and a wigstand. They realized it was Robert Durst, living in a \$300-a-month apartment in Galveston, disguised as a woman, not using his voice because he had a very recognizable voice. So he was a mute, and he would write everything down.





So here was essentially a third murder associated with Bob Durst. To me, it was such a complicated story: three completely different events, different circumstances, different causes of death. I gradually thought it would be worth pursuing. The most interesting part to me was that, despite all the salacious, scary, grimy stories, nobody had really explored the origin story, how this young man got together with a beautiful young girl, and how it all went so wrong for him. He was still floating around. He had been tried for the murder and dismemberment of Morris Black and had miraculously gotten away with it. He was released. So I thought it would be interesting to make that film. I made *All Good Things*. Ryan Gosling played Bob Durst, and Kirsten Dunst played his wife.

Out of the blue, I got a phone call from Bob Durst saying, "I'm hearing good things about the movie. I'd like to see it." We ended up meeting. That was a very unusual circumstance, and a fascinating next step. At first, I didn't want to make anything out of it. I just thought: "I have a lot of questions. I'll sit down with him, ask them, and satisfy my curiosity." But it was clear he wanted to tell his side of the story. And all of a sudden, I was making a different piece.

That was actually my second question. Robert watched the film, was impressed, and wanted to give you an interview. Looking back at the time you spent together with him and what you witnessed, why do you think he wanted to talk to you?

I think subliminally, he had a compulsion to confess. I think he always felt guilty about having killed the person who probably loved him the most in the world, his wife.

I also think he's easily bored and needs a lot of stimulation. He saw that there was this movie coming out about him and thought, "Well, maybe this might be my chance to have some fun with this. I can agree to tell my story, I'll probably tell a very superficial version of it, and this guy will just record it. Then at least there will be something out there for me that counters the narrative."

So I presume it was a combination of different factors. And then I think he was very surprised that I spent as much

time investigating. I think he sort of assumed I would pick his word for it: he would tell me his side of the story, and I would say, "Oh, okay, that sounds reasonable."

When you did your first interview with him, you were actually sitting across from someone who had dismembered a body and thrown it into water, for which he went to prison, but he avoided convictions. What was your first reaction from the very first beginning? Like many of us viewers, did you suspect he was also responsible for his wife's disappearance? And when speaking to someone accused of such crimes, what was your game plan, strategy?

It was pretty clear to me that the most likely truth was that he had killed all three people. I knew that because when I was researching *All Good Things*, I had read almost everything there was about it, and I had interviewed a lot of people in a sort of documentary style because I wanted to make sure we were getting as close as possible to the true story. I interviewed Kathie's family, the police, friends of his, and friends of the couple. So I had already made a little documentary about the story, and based on that work, I was pretty sure he was guilty of all three murders.

But I also wanted to keep an open mind, especially if I was going to meet with him. I knew that if I walked in there absolutely convinced that he had murdered all three people, I probably wouldn't be able to hide it. He's pretty intuitive, and I think he would have thought, "This guy's already made up his mind." So I forced myself to stay open-minded and think, well, maybe some of the things people have said aren't true. Many things that people said about him weren't true. In fact, he did murder those three people, but he was also accused of other murders that I don't think he had anything to do with. So I could be genuinely neutral in my conversation with him, because I was genuinely interested in finding out whether my assumptions were correct or not. They might have been completely incorrect. When I made *Capturing the Friedmans*, everybody who knew anything about that case was convinced Jesse Friedman was guilty of terrible crimes, and it turned out that he was not. So I went into the Bob Durst discussions with an open mind.

"He reached out his hand. I shook hands with him, felt his hand, which was very soft. He had never done any manual labor in his life; he had always been wealthy. I remember thinking: that's the hand, his right hand, the one he used with an axe and a bow saw to cut through the bone of his elderly neighbor, Morris Black. Maybe to cut off the head, to remove the legs from the torso, to remove the arms. That was a funny feeling. I remember feeling strange electricity from that."

It's funny you mentioned sitting across from somebody who had dismembered someone. I remember the first time I ever met him. We were at a fancy hotel in Los Angeles, in the breakfast room. I walked in, and he stood up and said hello. He was maybe a little smaller than I thought, but quite handsome, very well put together, and very warm. I think he wanted to make sure I got a good impression of him. I thought, well, he's smaller than I imagined, and he seems very nice. Then he reached out his hand. I shook hands with him, felt his hand, which was very soft. He had never done any manual labor in his life; he had always been wealthy. I remember thinking: that's the hand, his right hand, the one he used with an axe and a bow saw to cut through the bone of his elderly neighbor, Morris Black. Maybe to cut off the head, to remove the legs from the torso, to remove the arms. That was a funny feeling. I remember feeling strange electricity from that.

Most importantly, I wanted to really listen carefully to his story. I wanted him to know that I was genuinely interested. I wasn't just trying to trick him into saying something or manipulate him. I wanted to have a real relationship with him.

For documentary filmmakers, especially those working in true crime and dealing with unsolved cases, perhaps the biggest hope is to uncover evidence that will expose the guilty party. In *The Jinx*, something far greater happens: not only is evidence found, but Robert also, unaware of the live microphone, talks to himself in the bathroom and essentially confesses to the murders. When did you first become aware of this recording, and what was your initial reaction?

Well before the recording, we had discovered this note, a note where the handwriting was a perfect match for the famous "cadaver note" that the killer left behind after Susan Berman was murdered. For years, the police knew they had received a letter in the mail: a simple white piece of paper with the address, "1527 Benedict Canyon," and the word "cadaver." Nobody knew where it had come from, and nobody could tie it back to Bob Durst. When we discovered a note that Bob Durst had written on his own letterhead to Susan Berman, just a small note he sent along with a check to help support her, we immediately saw that the two notes matched. The handwriting was the same. And, if you remember, he had misspelled the word "Beverly" (as Beverley) in exactly the same way on both notes. In some ways, that was the most important



piece of evidence. We had it probably two and a half years before he was arrested, and we had already started talking to police about it.

It was only later, when we were finishing the final audio for delivery to HBO, that the bathroom recording came to light. We were quite far along. One of our longtime editors, Shelby Siegel, was looking at the audio tracks and noticed that after Bob had gone into the bathroom, there was some waveform that looked like he was talking. We knew he talked to himself, but we had never listened to that. Because during the final interview, I had shown him those two notes, and he had such a strong reaction to them. He started burping, rubbing his face, and he started to have a really emotional physical reaction. I thought we had it. That was going to be a very strong ending for the film. We had shown Bob the evidence that he had killed Susan Berman, which basically meant he had also killed his wife. And had this incredibly strong reaction to it. After the interview, he got up, went to the bathroom, and I never thought about it again. I just started thinking about what we were going to do with that evidence.

So we didn't know there was audio in the bathroom until Shelby was going through it. She saw that little squiggle in the waveform. She listened, and isolated the tracks -since there was a mic on me, a mic in the room, all the audio was together- and she heard the first thing he said when he entered the bathroom: "There it is. You're caught."

She just screamed, then ran next door to our main editor, Zach, and said: "You have to listen to this. This is what he said after he went into the bathroom, after Andrew showed him the evidence." Zach said, "Well, I was there during that interview. He was in the bathroom for seven or eight minutes. We have to go back and find the original hard drive with all the audio." So he went back,



"Once he was in jail, it was clear the trial was going to be extraordinary. He was really going to spend like \$20 million trying to defend himself, bringing in experts, doing everything he could to argue that I had tricked him, that it was misleading, that we had manipulated this poor old man."

found this other audio where he continues and says a lot of other things, including "Killed them all, of course." That became another important piece of evidence, which we then shared with the police as well.

***The Jinx* is powerful not only for its interviews with Robert, but also for its conversations with the families of Kathie and Susan. You seem deeply moved when speaking to families who have suffered such losses. The series also stands out for its cinematic qualities, the reenactments, set designs, and overall visual style, and I think it's pioneering in that respect. We'd like to hear about your key creative decisions: building the story over six episodes, incorporating reenactments, designing the settings, including your team's internal discussions and debates. When planning all of this, what kind of connection did you want to build with the audience, and what cinematic language were you aiming for?**

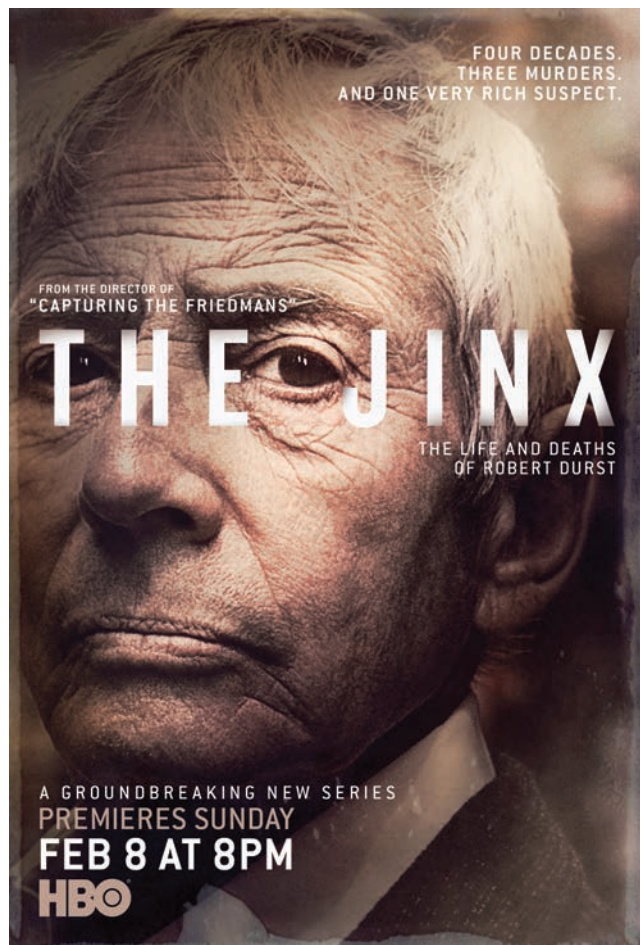
That's a lot of different questions. But we knew that in order to take people so far into the past, we would need to use very rich recreations or reenactments. At the same time, we really didn't like the way a lot of documentaries used reenactments. Very often, television documentaries looks like they did things in a very superficial way. Or you'd have to make all these leaps. Let's say, you'd see a middle-aged guy with blond hair in the reenactment, and they'd want you to believe he was the same person from the photos you had just seen, even though he looked nothing like him.

It seemed like there was no unifying style to reenactments in most documentaries for the most part. So we knew we never wanted to show anyone's face, never wanted things to be too realistic, and never wanted to give the audience the confusing impression that they were seeing a piece of archival footage. We were careful to make the settings extremely accurate, to light them in a way that gave a slightly otherworldly feeling so it wouldn't feel like we were trying to be exactly realistic. We were very careful about getting the period right, we made sure every piece of furniture or every telephone or every typewriter was from that period.

We also tended to shoot reenactments at an alternative frame rate. We shot things either in 48 frames or even more, so it would be clear that we were entering a memory. That was not supposed to be like everything else in

the film. When things slowed down, you got to see Bob Durst looking out at his mother on the roof, or things that we wanted to make evocative and emotional for the audience. So that was very important to us, to do those things in a cinematic way. We just had to, in a lot of ways, make up the rules for that to see what would work. And sometimes things worked, sometimes they didn't. Sometimes we'd use some magical realism. Sometimes it would work, sometimes it wouldn't feel right.

In *The Jinx: Part Two*, we used that kind of magical realism a bit more. For example, when Bob was telling a lie, the visuals would sometimes make it clear that what he had just said didn't really happen. He talks about playing Frisbee with his mom and how he remembers it, and then the prosecutor says: "Would it surprise you if I told you that the word of the game Frisbee hadn't been invented yet?"



And then we see him playing Frisbee on the lawn, but the Frisbee disappears. Those were very good tools to tell the story, and we did a bunch of that.

There's always a debate about reenactments in documentaries. Some people say they shouldn't be used. And I agree, there are many documentaries where they're not appropriate. But usually, if it works, it's because it's not so literal. You're not saying: "He walked down the street, turned right, then made a left." Instead, it's usually like: Let's see what the setting was like. He was near the beach. What did it look like in the early morning? Where's the mailbox where he dropped the letter? That stuff can be very important in terms of sharing the story.

At the time, I don't think we knew all that material would be played in court. For example, they played the entirety of *All Good Things* for the jury. They played the whole film. There was a legal reason why they were able to do it. It wasn't because they were trying to hypnotize the jury and make the jury believe them. There was a reason that the judge allowed it. But I don't know if that's ever happened before. Somebody makes a film about a crime, with famous actors, and then that narrative film gets played for the jury in an actual murder trial.

There's a nine-year gap between the first and second seasons. In the second season, we watch Robert's arrest based on the evidence and audio recording you uncovered, as well as his new trial, with its hearings, witnesses, and the moves of the defense attorneys. Once again, it's a season full of pace and investigative detail. What did the second season mean to you?

For a long time, we didn't think we were going to make a part two. We were amazed, because when we first brought the evidence to the police, we asked them how long it would take. We knew Bob was going to be angry, angry at me, and at various things. So we asked, how long until you arrest him? A district attorney told us, "Oh, maybe five years." And we said, how is that possible? We're giving you evidence that somebody has actively murdered a series of people, and he's still walking around in the world. He has access to guns. What do you mean it's going to take five years? The DA said, "We're not going to bring the case until we're really, really sure we've done all the work. We have to take all of your interviews, then go back and interview every single person you spoke to, and get them to say the same things again. We can't use interviews taken by a movie crew. We have to make sure we get those people to commit to their story, that they're willing to say it in open court. We have to do our own investigation." We thought that was very surprising. And as it turned out, it took about seven years for the case to get to trial.

During that time, we were always filming things that were happening, because we thought it was interesting. We

didn't know if we would ever make anything out of it. At that time, he was in jail, he was arrested the day before the final episode aired. *The Jinx* had six episodes. After episode five, the police and the district attorney were in a big battle over whether to arrest him or not. The DA said, "I'm not ready to bring him to trial." The police said, "That's fine, but we've seen the film. We're not going to let him go. He's going to fly to Cuba, and we'll look like idiots." We weren't sure what was going to happen. Then he was arrested the day before the last episode. It was a very weird time, because I had to have security. That was a strange period.

Once he was in jail, it was clear the trial was going to be extraordinary. He was really going to spend like \$20 million trying to defend himself, bringing in experts, doing everything he could to argue that I had tricked him, that it was misleading, that we had manipulated this poor old man.

When the trial started, we just thought, well, we've got to film this. Even for our own purposes, it would be fascinating to see all the things he said. *The Jinx* itself was such an important part of the trial because they talked about it every day. He had to explain why the bathroom confession wasn't real or why the letter didn't really match. So it got more and more interesting, and we were able to capture all the critical moments of the trial.

Zach and I - he and I had worked on the first season together - spent a lot of time talking about what part two would look like. There was so much material, and we had a big idea for part two. I didn't want part two to just be: here's the trial, or here's the behind-the-scenes of the first season. We wanted part two to be about something pretty specific, to have a reason to exist.

What fascinated me was the idea of complicity. In the edit room, we would ask: How do you kill three people over 30 years and get away with it? It takes a village. We knew that there were all these other people who were Bob's close friends, or people in that it required a lot of people to sort of agree to not remember something, or not have seen something, or to give Bob some help, or to drop off some money, or to do whatever they needed to do. And somehow all these people had gone along with it.

And so the idea of who were the accomplices, in a way, his best friend, his secretary, all of those people, warranted his life. Obviously, his second wife was a hugely important part of season two. So the idea of making it not just about Bob Durst in the trial, but also about this constellation of people around him who had enabled him to do this for all these years and get away with it, that seemed to be a subject that was worth pursuing. That's kind of what the essence of part two was.



"I think I was given a gift, an incredible window into the psychology of a very human story. I was able to walk around in that story like it was the most incredible museum. I feel really lucky to have been able to do that."

You have created one of the most important crime documentaries -not just in my opinion, but in many people's- and won numerous major awards. Looking back now, what do *The Jinx*, the movie, and the case mean to you?

Well, it was a very unexpected part of my life. I didn't expect to be interested in that story, and I didn't expect that it would go on for so long for me. I started researching it around 2005, then *All Good Things* came out in 2010, and five years later, *The Jinx* came out in 2015. Then part two just came out not too long ago. So it was not something I expected to work on for so many years. Luckily, I made some other things in the meantime.

I felt very lucky to have been able to see inside such a complex case, to get to know the family members of the victims, the people who had lost loved ones, and to really get that far into the psychology of somebody willing and capable of killing that many people.

I also think there was a lot of goodness in Bob. I don't think he ever thought of himself as a bad person. I think he thought, well, I probably shouldn't have gotten married. I'm probably not well-suited to being married to somebody. I know I can be very difficult. And I think he imagined that he and Kathie had some kind of fight, not that he had decided to kill her, but that she was being very difficult. They always had pushing and shoving arguments, and they were very passionate and physical, and then something happened to her. Maybe he didn't take responsibility. Maybe he thought: she fell, she hit her head, and so I had to get rid of the body. I didn't mean to kill her. And then, after that, he thought: Susan Berman and Morris Black were my friends, but they were considering talking to the police, and I couldn't let that happen. So it was about survival for him.

I don't think he thought of himself as someone going around destroying other people's lives. I think he thought that Kathie was causing a lot of problems. Then, later, his best friend, Susan Berman, was thinking about talking to the police. She told him that, saying, "I can just talk to the police. It won't be a problem." But he knew it could be a problem, because she knew a lot about what had happened with Kathie. The same thing with his neighbor.

In that way, it tells you a lot about human beings. I don't think people think of themselves as terrible human beings, or as part of a murderous political regime. They think, "I'm doing the best I can. I'm just trying to survive, just trying to get through life. It's not easy for me either." I think I was given a gift, an incredible window into the psychology of a very human story. I was able to walk around in that story like it was the most incredible museum. I feel really lucky to have been able to do that.

Now the film I'm doing, the one coming out on HBO in October, is very different. But it's also a window into a world where crime is being committed by the state, by the government.

Could you tell us a bit more about this new project?

Yeah. It's called *The Alabama Solution*, and it's about the Alabama state prison system. It is definitely true crime, but it's a very different kind of story. It's a single documentary film, not a series.



WHEN JUSTICE FAILS THE DEAD: JOSHUA ROFÉ'S CHILLING NEW DOCUMENTARY, *THE MORTICIAN*

BY YAĞMUR ÇÖL



Joshua Rofé has become one of the most distinctive voices in true crime documentaries. His career has centered on stories of crime, justice, trauma, and collective memory, with each project confronting audiences with unsettling truths. In *Lorena*, he revealed how the media can distort perceptions of violence, gender, and justice; while *Sasquatch* blended murder, drug trafficking, and myth into a unique true crime story. His early works like *Lost for Life* examined the American justice system through juveniles sentenced to life without parole, while *Swift Current* offered a courageous look at the lasting wounds of sexual abuse.

Now, with *The Mortician*, Rofé tells a chilling story of death, impunity, and exploitation. The documentary exposes a family's shocking crimes within the funeral business, the silence that surrounded them, and the people who refused to look away. We spoke with Joshua Rofé about the making of *The Mortician* and the ethical concerns that guide his approach to true crime storytelling.

I'd like to start by asking how you decided to make this impressive documentary series. You have previously worked on other true crime documentaries, but

***The Mortician* is not only a true crime story. As we'll discuss, it also tells an event that feels almost horrific, something straight out of a horror film...**

I had started by thinking that I wanted to find a story set in Los Angeles with a sort of noir vibe. I love old films, noir films, and probably even more than that, I love LA noir stories. This might sound strange and unrelated, but when I think of *The Mortician*, I was also thinking a lot about Sunset Boulevard. In the earliest days, I was just trying to capture what feels specific to this place and this story, Pasadena, even more specifically than LA at large.

There's also this constant undercurrent in and around LA that is at odds with the sunshine, and I think that's what makes LA noir stories so interesting to me. Everything I just said sounds vague and sort of daydreamy, right? And then I started looking online and came across old *LA Times* articles about this case. At that point, I knew I wanted to tell the story.

All around the world, when a murder is investigated, there's a common rule: "No body, no crime." But while watching *The Mortician*, I didn't quite know how to process my feelings, because most of the crimes had been





committed after people had already passed away. How did making this documentary affect you psychologically?

I think every time you make a documentary about something dark, exploring the darker sides of humanity and human psychology, which I've done many times, it takes you to dark places with people. My first doc was *Lost for Life*, and it was about juveniles serving life without parole, all guilty of brutal first-degree murders. My second was *Swift Current*, about the long-term effects of childhood sexual abuse. From there, I made *Lorena*, about Lorena Bobbitt, who suffered horrific trauma not only from one abuser but also from the world at large. So, every time I tell these stories, I go to dark places with people.

But I probably don't have the best perspective on it, because I'm so used to it. That's the truth. But with this one, what felt different was that we spent so much time in the business of death, the mortuary world. My editors, my producer Steven, and I found ourselves talking about mortality, grief, loss, and our own experiences. The question we wrestled with was: how sick do you have to be to exploit the grieving? It's one thing to defile a corpse, which is beyond the pale, obviously, but how do you look somebody in the eye?

I've told it once or twice, maybe in an interview or a post-screening discussion. A man named Luis, who's in the show -and I recently found out has since passed, which was heartbreaking because he was such a sweet guy, one of the only truly decent people there, if not the only-told us this story. He said that he was once in the cold room, the storage room where the bodies are, and he saw a small blanket on the floor. He kicked it with his foot to move it out of the way, and there was something underneath. He knelt down, lifted the blanket, and there was a baby. You know a toe tag? The toe tag was on the ankle of a baby, because the toes are too small. He saw the tag with a name. He realized he had delivered what were supposed to be that baby's ashes to the mother two weeks earlier. Even decades later, when he told us the story, he struggled to make sense of that level of depravity.

That's a strange world to live in, and I lived in it for four and a half years. It's intense. But when you're going through something challenging in life, you don't really process it the same way you do once you're through it. You also feel a lot of gratitude making these films, because it's not your pain, it's their pain. It puts things into perspective how fortunate you might be. We're all dealing with things in life, but usually not things like this.

The crimes that begin in the crematorium gradually expand, to people being dug up from their graves, their valuables stolen, even organs taken. Knowing all that,

interviewing David and the victims and their families, what did you feel, and what were the main things you paid close attention to?

I always say that when you interview people who've been victimized, the fact that they're willing to sit down in front of a camera in a room of seven strangers, let's say, takes a lot of strength. It's always amazing to me when someone is willing to do that and go there. It's unbelievable. I don't think I would.

On the flip side, when you talk to somebody like David -who is, without question, the perpetrator of all of this-that's not even up for debate. And yet he views himself as the victim in all of this. He's able to justify everything. That's about the most terrifying thing you can encounter, because you know that person would have no problem killing you and feeling nothing, believing it was justified. So it's chilling to spend time with somebody like that.

But at the same time, and I think this is what makes a filmmaker a bit of a strange bird, it's really thrilling. It is my idea of a good time. I know that might sound weird, but it's exciting because you've wanted to tell this story, and you don't want to tell it removed from the actual players. Your only interest is to tell it through the people who lived it. For me, there's no reason to make this series if I can't interview David.

And so, it is a thrill when you're sitting there, because you know you're being given the ability to tell the story the way it needs to be told.



"What felt different was the time we spent so much time in the business of death, the mortuary world. My editors, my producer Steven, and I found ourselves talking about mortality, grief, loss, and our own experiences. The question we wrestled with was: how sick do you have to be to exploit the grieving?"

I felt like it was very hard not to get angry with David, because his lack of empathy is something else, something I'd never seen before. And the crimes he committed were seen less as serious crimes, more like minor offenses. I can't believe how he couldn't be held accountable for those crimes. Do you foresee that he will be in the future?

I don't know. That's up to law enforcement. I really don't know. It would be nice. It really would. But again, when you're making these things, you just have to do your best to tell the story as it happened, and everything else is out of your hands. Whether it's the way the viewer responds, or if law enforcement thinks, "Oh God, we should look into this."

I think it's so hard to make those things happen at times. You can't really orchestrate it, it just has to happen organically. I know that we've done our part, and if somebody else wants to do theirs, then we'll see.

What did it make you think or feel, both as an artist and a citizen, that David and his family were able to get away?

Oh, it was sickening. I mean, it was sickening. I don't mean to sound too spiritual, but they've gotten theirs from life, maybe not from the justice system, but they're not living good, happy lives. He's been in prison for the majority of the time since all of that went down. We obviously met him at the gates after a ten-year prison sentence. He is free now, but the life he has been living, and the life his mother is living, are not joyful or great lives.

You reap what you sow, and I believe they have. That still doesn't take away from the fact that there's more the justice system certainly could and should deliver to them. These are horrible people. They harmed so many, caused so much pain, pain that I know people still walk with today. I don't know how many more adjectives I can give, they can have them all.

I was shocked in the final episode, towards the end, when he tried to confess to you. He seemed almost too

eager to tell you about the other things he had done. What did you feel at that very moment?

He wasn't trying to tell me in that moment on camera. He said he could tell me things away from the camera. What he was literally saying was, "Away from all of this, I would like to tell you these three things. But you can't tell anybody."

Well, I'm not in the business of keeping secrets about what are clearly horrific crimes he was implying he committed. So my answer was very simple: then I don't want to know. You're not going to take me off to the side, tell me about some crime you committed, and expect me to keep that secret for you. I don't want to know that. It's really very simple.

Do you think the police will look into whatever he was implying?

I don't know. If you think about how many unsolved murders there are in a major city, it requires so much money from an agency to empower somebody to go try and solve one of them. And if you multiply that, are there thousands? Tens of thousands? Probably more in the tens of thousands in a place like LA over the decades. Somebody would have to really decide this is worthy of the limited resources. Obviously, I do, I spent four and a half years telling the story, but I can't speak to whether somebody else will or not. I think the public would think it's worthy. Thankfully, a lot of people watched our show, and the public made clear it would be of interest to them and worthy of their time. But we'll see.





Why do you think Laurieanne didn't want to give an interview? And what do you think about her?

(Laughs) What do I think about her? Well, she's not very nice, I can tell you that much. I think she didn't want to give an interview because she's guilty as sin of everything you saw on the show, and I would guess maybe some things we're unaware of. Who knows, right?

As someone who was convicted beyond a shadow of a doubt of being guilty of so many horrific things, she didn't want to sit and be grilled about them. Which is not surprising. I'm actually always surprised when somebody does want to be interviewed.

Mentioning that, I think it's very interesting when someone wants to talk so openly about their crimes. We saw that with Bob Durst in *The Jinx* and now with *Mortician*, with David too. How do you explain the fact that people who commit such crimes either can't stop talking about it or choose to talk so openly?

All we can do is be armchair psychologists in this instance, obviously. But I think everybody would point to the ego being this unbelievably powerful element here. People have egos. People want to brag about what they've done. Sometimes these types of characters really get off on bringing you close to the edge of the full truth, but not quite telling it. It's a control thing. It's a power thing. So it's ego, and it's narcissism. I'm sure that's what a psychologist would also affix to that sort of behavior.

It's not new. If you go back to the Zodiac Killer, there's been so much written about him. Fincher's *Zodiac* is a masterpiece for me -maybe a top-five film of all time- and that's a great introduction. This guy couldn't keep his mouth shut. He needed to write letters, play a game, have people try to decipher codes. He loved it.

So I think it just speaks to a certain type of person who's probably been around since the beginning of time. They love the attention. They love the power play of it all. It feeds their ego.

Yes, at the top of my mind, *Zodiac* was probably an outcast in society. But David is more charismatic. Everybody talks about him in his younger days. And now he's all alone, abandoned, and probably wants to be in the spotlight again.

That's a really astute observation. I think you're probably right. Everybody's gone. He's not the big man anymore. He's not on the football team. He's not calling the shots with the guys who worked for him, who all desperately needed him. Now here are people who've taken an interest. And he actually says, when he first gets into the car with us, that he was so happy somebody took an interest in his story.

To be happy to be recognized and remembered that way is pure narcissism, I think.

Oh yeah. I mean, it's crazy. Absolutely crazy.

Especially during the pandemic, when streaming platforms became such a big part of our lives, we saw more and more true crime series and documentaries being made. Why do you think we watch them, and how do you explain the rise in both production and consumption?

None of this is new. If you go back to a very old movie like *The Great Train Robbery*, or Jimmy Cagney films, or even the first Westerns, they're all, in essence, a version of true crime. Some are literal expressions of true, real-life crime stories.

All we're seeing today is filtered through the lens of current technology, which makes it possible to watch them more readily. That means whoever is financing them will pay for more of them, because everybody's watching. To me, there's nothing new here. As time goes on, technology just makes it easier to get your hands on something to watch, and the industry produces more because people will watch. It's a cycle that feeds itself and keeps going.

Within that, there are projects -probably some of the ones you're profiling in this piece- that are really good filmmaking. They're nuanced and thoughtful, and they operate almost like journalism to an extent. But I actually don't believe documentary is journalism. The second you put music to something, it's not journalism anymore. I believe that really strongly. At that point, you're creating cinema. I'm always clear about that: I'm not a journalist, and documentary filmmakers are not journalists. If you took all the music out, you might have a path to journalism with your piece, but once you add music, color correction, sound design, you're working to grab the audience in a cinematic way.

That said, there are people who really care about telling these stories in a thoughtful, nuanced way. And of course, there will always be others who just churn it out quickly and carelessly. But that's true in everything, right?

You can tell too.

It's always so obvious. I don't watch any of that stuff. (Laughs) I don't even really like to watch documentaries anymore. When I first started, I definitely had my moment where I was taken by some of the great documentaries of all time -ones I still love and admire- but I don't really watch documentaries.

I think when you spend your time doing something, you want something else when you get home. For me, I'm a lover of film. It's more about watching old movies, and even new ones, great new films come out every year. I love watching TV shows too, but not doc TV shows or doc films. I'm probably not alone in that.

"I have no interest in storytelling that preaches a point of view. Preaching a perspective is the least effective way to tell a story. If everybody who agrees with me is on board and everyone who doesn't isn't, then we've started in one place and ended in the same place. Whereas, if you tell a story where both very different sides feel like they have a point, it rips at you a little, makes you feel uncomfortable. And I think that's what we're desperately in need of as a species."

You now have a couple of true crime documentaries. What ethical rules and frameworks do you think should always be followed?

I think treating the people who are your characters with respect and dignity, even if you think they're bad or you don't agree with them. I have no interest in agreeing with my characters or my documentary subjects. I also have no interest in doing "gotcha" moments. I just want to know: who are you, and what is your truth? Then I'll tell the story by putting all these different truths up against each other. That's where the drama comes from. So my rule is always: we treat everybody with respect.

I made a doc series called *Sasquatch* that's on Hulu. It came out in 2021, a three-part series about a triple homicide allegedly perpetrated by Sasquatch, the mythical creature. It takes you on a wild, weird rabbit hole of a ride. We interviewed people who call themselves "squatchers," who believe in the existence of Sasquatch. One of the best compliments I ever received was hearing people say we never made fun of those interviewees in the show. I appreciated that, because it's so easy to take a position where you're going to poke fun at someone's belief when it's something so fantastical.

But from the start, I told everyone I worked with: we're going to treat our interviews with squatchers with the same dignity and respect that we would if we were interviewing somebody who was telling us about the childhood sexual abuse they suffered. That was our rule, and we weren't bending. That's how I approach everyone in every project: treat every person with dignity and respect, regardless of your own opinions.

I have no interest in storytelling that preaches a point of view. Preaching a perspective is the least effective way to tell a story. If everybody who agrees with me is on board and everyone who doesn't isn't, then we've started in one place and ended in the same place. Whereas, if you tell a story where both very different sides feel like they have a point, it rips at you a little, makes you feel uncomfortable. And I think that's what we're desperately in need of as a species. We're all so sure we're right. The fact is,

none of us are fully right. We're a little bit right, a little bit wrong, and then there's stuff we just don't understand. I like to take that approach to storytelling. Uncomfortable conversations that leave you thinking, God, am I wrong about everything I thought?, I think that's better. That's good. It's kind of a long-winded answer to your question, but those are the things that I think about.

Do you have any upcoming projects in true crime documentaries, crime series, or films?

Yeah. I'm about to start directing one and producing another. I won't say what they're about, but like all docs, they'll take a couple of years to make, maybe not four years, but still a while. I'm about to start two new projects, actually, and probably a third shortly after that.

I feel so fortunate to be able to make these films and series. I'm grateful to get to do what I love, and I do it with people I love. So I have no complaints.





THE YOGURT SHOP MURDERS:

MARGARET BROWN REVISITS A CRIME THAT STILL HAUNTS AUSTIN

BY YAĞMUR ÇÖL

The Yogurt Shop Murders revisits one of the darkest chapters in Austin's history: the brutal killing of four teenage girls in 1991, a tragedy that continues to haunt the city more than three decades later. The case shocked not only Austin but the entire United States, raising endless questions about flawed trials, lost evidence, and allegations of misconduct. In the documentary, director Margaret Brown goes beyond recounting the crime's chronology. She gives space to the voices of survivors and families, examines the failures of the justice system, and confronts the fragile balance between memory and violence.

The Yogurt Shop Murders asks viewers to look closely at the lives behind the headlines and the gaps that remain in search of truth. We spoke with Margaret Brown about the challenges of telling such a difficult story.

Why do you think we're drawn to telling true crime stories? Why do you think audiences are so captivated by true crime today?

I would say the first thing I learned in making this is that women are more drawn to true crime than men. The sort of citizen-sleuth PI character Sheila in the series, and also, oddly, my friend Rachel Monroe, who writes for *The New Yorker*, both told me that women

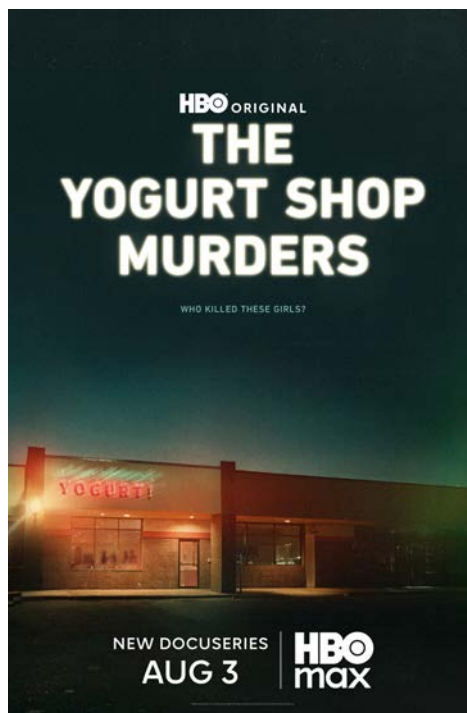
make up most of the audience for true crime. Sheila told me specifically that for her podcast, the audience is 85% women.

I guess I wasn't surprised to hear that as a woman, because when I started making this, I got really scared. I got an alarm system put in my house, I never had one before. I got kind of paranoid. And I think women watch -this is just my theory, there's nothing scientific about it- true crime to maybe figure out how to avoid it, or because it's something you can feel from a distance, perhaps. But I

don't know. I think there are many reasons people watch it. There's the feeling that you can maybe solve something, like a puzzle, that's why some people do it. But I think the reason the audience is primarily women probably has to do with the fact that we are more often ag-gressed upon, or we know what it's like to feel afraid.

Why did you decide to tell this particular story, what importance does it hold for you? Are you from the area or did you grow up knowing the story?

Well, I live in Austin, and I've been hearing about the story as long as I've lived in Austin. When I first moved to Austin in the late 90s,



the billboards were up everywhere. You saw them, and people would talk about it at parties, have theories about what happened.

I didn't grow up in Austin, but I have friends who did. A lot of my friends grew up there, some of whom went to high school with the girls, were cheerleaders with them, or knew some of the boys.

Austin used to be a pretty small place, kind of a sleepy college town. So you kind of knew people. People knew people. It wasn't like it is now. Today, Austin is, I think, the ninth or tenth biggest city in the United States, so it's really different than it was when this crime happened.

Towards the end of the first episode, there is a moment where Claire self-reflects. She reflected on her question that she had asked the woman who lost two daughters. We know that since the pandemic, true crime has exploded more than ever, and we watch so much true crime content right now. There are so many ethical questions too, ranging from glorifying serial killers as rock stars to sidelining victims' families. I think the series was perfectly curated on that point. What do you think about that reflection moment? Do you critique the true crime content out there? What do you think about that ethical part?

I think about it a lot. It's something that's very true in true crime, but also true in documentaries in general. Being a documentary filmmaker, in a way, is playing God. You have a lot of power to edit people, to make them sound maybe different than what they are. So I think it's a really important ethical question, because people believe a documentary is the truth.

There's no set code of ethics in documentary where you're required to do a certain thing. In the United States, I've worked with public television, and they actually do have ethical codes their directors must follow. Some of those I don't even necessarily agree with. For example, if you present one viewpoint, they want you to present the opposite viewpoint. Sometimes I don't think the opposite viewpoint has any credibility, so I don't want to do that. But I am glad they take it that seriously and make directors follow those rules, because a lot of things presented today as factual are not factual. No one is held to account. I think that's partly why the United States is in an information crisis, things are advertised as real when they're actually propaganda.



I'm not someone who usually makes true crime; all my other features are not true crime. This is my first series and my first sort of look at true crime. But I do think I have a very specific personal ethical relationship to what I make. If I want to be true, I don't even know how to define that in a short amount of time, but I do feel an obligation not to sensationalize things that I don't think are worthy of being sensationalized.

The documentary explores false confessions, police manipulation, and an unsolved case with many layers. How did you approach telling a story this complex?

When I first started the project, there was actually a ton of archival footage. Because the crime was so infamous, there was so much coverage. The first question I asked before taking the job was, "Can I see some of the archival footage you've collected?" I wanted it to feel like the 90s in Austin. Even though I wasn't there when it happened, I have a sense of what that was like. And I wanted to see if the footage would reflect that.

When I looked at it, it had this David Lynch kind of vibe, big hair, *Twin Peaks*-like. I thought, "Oh my god, this is fascinating. Yes, I want to do this." The vibe of it felt like I could make something that reflected what Austin was like in that moment, and that was very appealing to me.

"The production company paid for us to have therapy while we were making it because it was so disturbing. I think a lot of people would have quit if they hadn't had therapy, because it was really hard to stay in this amount of darkness without a way through."



"People deal with grief in different ways. I really saw that. There can be no judgment; everyone is different. You just have to allow space for them. I tried to go into everything without judgment because I felt like that was the right way to make this specific series."

My other question is actually about the archival footage. There's like so many interviews and news reports and like integration room footage too, and the curation and editing feel very precise. So how did you plan and organize the archival elements? What was the process for selecting the particular footage, because I believe there should be more than like hundred of hours of footage.

Oh my god, probably thousands. I have a great editorial team. My editor, Michael Bloch, I mean, we had a lot of editors, but he was my main editor, I've collaborated with him a ton. We definitely have sort of a mind meld. He knows what I like, and I trust him. I feel comfortable leaving him with the footage and coming back.

As a director, it's great to have an editor who knows you really well, because I want to keep my eyes fresh to see: does this work, does this not work? If you have an editor who knows how you think and what you'll find interesting, then you can step away and step back in. If you're editing it yourself, you often can't see what's working and what's not, at least that's how I am. I sometimes edit my own stuff, but I think I lose decisiveness if I do.

Because when I saw it all, when I shot it, or when I looked at the archival footage (and I don't always look at all of the archival footage), in terms of organizing it, for a long time it was hard for us to find: what is the kernel here, what is the most interesting thing about this?

I knew the crime was interesting. It was rabbit hole after rabbit hole. But in a certain way, there's no resolution for the families, and I don't think there ever will be when a child dies like that. You just sort of learn how to live with it. For people who love true crime, this is the mothership of fascinating stories. But that wasn't enough for me as a filmmaker, because true crime is not really what I do. I wanted something more. And what I found, -this is going to sound pretty dark- was that there was a curse on this crime, and everyone who touched it was somehow destroyed. It destroyed the detectives; it destroyed filmmakers who tried to cover it. At a certain point, I was afraid it would destroy my crew and me. It was really hard to make. The production company paid for us to have therapy while we were making it because it was so disturbing. I think a lot of people would have quit if they hadn't had therapy, because it was really hard to stay in this amount of darkness without a way through.

The way I found through was by looking at how people deal with grief. In a lot of true crime, there's a distance, and I think part of it is a safety thing, you want to keep it away, to limit it. But I don't make things like that. I want to get to: what is this, and how does it really affect these people?

I felt more curious about whether there was something I could learn here about grief. Because we all, as humans, experience grief. If you're alive, you're going to have pain. So I thought these people who went through this curse, or whatever you call it, they've all touched something hideous. And what can we learn from them? Once I figured that out, it became the frame with which to look at the whole thing.

The family interviews affected me so much because they were so real, and they were genuinely such nice people. At the time of the crime, they were obviously very present in the media and advocating for their family and loved ones. Nearly 30 years later, how did you manage to get them back in front of the camera?

It was really, really hard, especially for the parents. Because they're done. They have been doing it for years. Their whole life has somehow been defined by this, being in the media and speaking about it, and they did not want to do it anymore. So I relied a lot on the younger generation to help me.





I definitely felt really supported by A24. My vision felt supported by them, and visually too. You're definitely right to point out that visually, they're a step above a lot of other companies.

Lastly, are there other true crime projects ahead? Would you want to cover any more cases?

With the Ayers family, I would talk to Sean and Angie, and be like, you know, are Bob and Pam okay to do this? With Sonora, her father didn't agree to participate until that day. He just didn't want to be involved.

People deal with grief in different ways. I really saw that. There can be no judgment; everyone is different. You just have to allow space for them. I tried to go into everything without judgment because I felt like that was the right way to make this specific series.

You made this documentary with A24, one of the most respected independent production companies in the U.S. Their signature quality and tone definitely come through. What was it like working with them?

My cinematographer is amazing, that's him, not A24. :) Yeah, I mean, when A24 wanted to work with my team, they knew my cinematographer was one of the best. We start with visuals. For the next projects we're doing, he's already sending me visual ideas. It starts in a really thoughtful place. After every shoot, Justin's wife, the cinematographer, would send to all of the executives and everyone who worked on it a sort of above-the-line look-book he'd made reflecting the tone of the last shoot. So everyone always kind of knew visually where the film was.

As for A24, speaking to them, Nicole Stott, who was the head of documentary most of the time I was making it, I've worked with her a bunch, and creatively we're very aligned. She's kind of a creative star on the executive side. I worked with her when she was a producer, so I've known her a really long time. That was great because I felt very supported by that team; she knows how I work, and that can be really important, because there are times when you don't feel supported.

I don't know. This was really hard. I don't know how people do it. I think I would have to really think about it, because I didn't really know what I was getting into. I didn't know, because a lot of my films, I mean, you know, drama is about, there's always trauma at the height of drama. Probably, I don't know, that sounds so glib, but I think it's probably true.

I didn't realize how I kind of agreed to do it while I was in the middle of promoting my previous feature, which was about slavery in the United States, and it was totally trauma-based. So I thought, well, if I can do that, I can do this. But it was still extremely difficult to deal with these families.

I think the reason why was because when you interview someone that you're not sure if you're ever going to get another interview with them, this interview is so hard to do, because it involves so much unresolved grief. They're really long interviews. We would do these marathon interviews where I would be feeling this complicated mix of emotions: is the trade-off worth it? Am I making it so this person won't be able to get out of bed the whole next month? Because I knew, for people like Barbara Ayers Wilson, whenever she does an interview, she can't function. So I was always thinking about how this is going to affect these people and whether it's worth it.

And I guess I would say, I think it's the same, of course not to the same degree, but for my crew, who is like my work family: I'm going to put my whole crew through this really stressful situation that we all need therapy for. Is it worth it? Those are the kinds of things I would probably think about if I were going to do true crime again. You need a support system mentally.



BEHIND THE STORIES OF 48 HOURS ASENA BAŞAK

BY ÖZLEM ÖZDEMİR



Very few TV programs can claim a legacy like *48 Hours*. For 37 years, CBS's flagship true-crime series has not only brought America's most striking cases to the screen, but has also helped shape the way crime stories are told around the world. Still on the air today, *48 Hours* remains one of the genre's key reference points, combining thorough reporting with powerful storytelling.

For our MIPCOM issue, we spoke with one of the show's producers, Asena Başak. We asked her how such a large-scale program has managed to stay relevant for decades, how the stories of real victims and their families can be told ethically, and why *48 Hours* continues to be one of the most influential true-crime shows on television.

You produce *48 Hours*, one of the longest-running crime shows in the U.S. How did your journey begin?

I was born and raised in İzmir. I studied Psychological Counseling and Guidance at Boğaziçi University and graduated in 1997. After graduation, I moved to Los Angeles to attend a certificate program at UCLA, where I studied journalism for two years. The program also offered internship opportunities after graduation. I started

out as an intern at various production companies in Los Angeles. Then, I moved to New York and began working in documentary production. Things move slowly in this field, especially when you're a foreigner and working in your second language. I began as a researcher, then moved up to assistant producer, and worked on shows for Discovery Channel. The biggest turning point in my career was the 1999, İzmit earthquake. Discovery Channel wanted to produce a documentary on the disaster. In 1999, our team came to İzmit, filming in tent cities and conducting interviews. That experience became a defining

moment in my career. In 2006, there was a temporary three-month position at *CBS News*. Because it was CBS, I accepted the role. Joining *48 Hours* took my career to another level. I've been with CBS ever since. I became a producer on *48 Hours* and now I create my own programs.

***48 Hours* is still on the air.**

Yes. My most recent episode aired on January 11. The show has been running on CBS since 1988. CBS has two long-running news programs: *60 Minutes* and *48 Hours*. Both are very significant in television history, because staying on the air for that long is extremely difficult.



***48 Hours* focuses on true-crime cases. How do you choose the stories and put it all together? Could you walk us through the process behind the scenes?**

Our program is a news show, so our guiding principle is impartiality. When we cover a case, we try to speak with both sides: the defendant, their family, attorneys, prosecutors, police, detectives... We must reach out to everyone and treat all parties equally.

Stories are usually selected by a dedicated planning department. This team monitors newspapers, magazines, even small local papers, all across the U.S. And because the show has been on the air for 37 years, our sources are incredibly diverse. For instance, a lawyer we featured ten years ago might reach out to us years later with details about a new case. In this business, trust is everything. *48 Hours* is a highly respected program, and people trust in us. That trust greatly enriches the information and research we're able to draw from.

Once the planning department reviews all the leads and case files, they draw up a list of potential stories. The selected cases then come to me. The very first thing I do is reach out -by phone or email- to everyone connected to the story. Sometimes the planning team has already contacted all the key people and secured their participation, so I can move straight into organizing the shoots. Other times, it's up to me to persuade certain individuals to talk. Most of the time I succeed; I think being genuine, showing that I value people, their experiences, and their stories, helps them feel comfortable enough to say yes.

For every case, I do my own research: I go through the news coverage and, if available, watch any previous reports. Then I reach out to all the parties involved. If someone refuses to talk, I try to persuade them, because our job is not to preach a one-sided narrative. I need to know every detail of the case we're covering, and that's absolutely essential.

After that, we start preparing questions for each person we'll be interviewing. We have correspondents on the show, some of whom have been with the team for many years. Together, we finalize the questions before moving into production. We conduct the interviews, film on location, and the shoot usually takes about seven to ten days. Once filming wraps, I review all the footage and



take notes. In *48 Hours*, each case is covered in six one-hour episodes. So I create a six-part story map, what happens in each episode, which interviews go where, how the evidence will be presented. Then I write the documentary script. Editors take that script and shape it into a one-hour episode. The scripts and rough cuts are then reviewed by the senior producer, who suggests any revisions needed. That's how we end up with six completed episodes, each an hour long. The whole process takes about five to six months.

It's intense work...

We have to be careful, because we're making documentaries and TV programs about people's lives and the most difficult moments they go through. That means we have to approach it with respect and always do our very best.

I'd like to touch on the ethical side of telling true-crime stories. As the producer of a long-running show in this field, do you think there should be certain boundaries, lines you simply don't cross?

We do have some boundaries. For example, we never use footage of blood or bodies. We often receive material that shows victims or very graphic details of a crime, but none of that ever makes it to air.

It's also essential for us to speak with the victim's family and get their consent. Many times, they bring us childhood photos or memories of their loved one. When they share their stories, and as we put the program together, we're essentially giving that person a voice again. We always have to keep that in mind.



"It's essential for us to speak with the victim's family and get their consent. Many times, they bring us childhood photos or memories of their loved one. When they share their stories, and as we put the program together, we're essentially giving that person a voice again. We always have to keep that in mind."

Of course, there are cases where the family doesn't want to talk. In those moments, we sit down for long discussions: Should we cover this case? If so, how do we tell it in the most respectful and accurate way possible? Every case is different, and we have to make those decisions carefully for each case.

Which cases have impacted you the most?

One was during COVID: the "eye drops poisoning" case. I didn't know this before, but apparently, if ingested, eye drops can be fatal. A nurse had tried to kill her husband this way. It was very unusual. We had long ethical discussions about it, if we aired the story, would we be teaching people a method of committing murder? In the end, we aired it. After that episode, toxicology labs began testing for the substance, so in a way the program may actually have helped save lives.

Another case was in Florida. A soldier, who was married but also had a girlfriend, got his girlfriend pregnant. He killed her, put her body in a suitcase, and dumped it into the ocean from the military base where he was stationed. A few days later, the suitcase washed back onto shore at the same base. That's how the body was discovered, and the soldier was arrested and put on trial. Throughout the investigation and trial, he denied any involvement; he claimed he hadn't seen his girlfriend at all that night. He was eventually convicted, and I went to the prison to

interview him. During that interview, for the first time, he admitted to me that he had, in fact, been with her that night. Up to that point, he had always denied it. To hear such a thing in the middle of an interview was shocking. But in a situation like that, you can't react; you have to stay professional. I listened calmly, and when he finished, I went back to the beginning and asked him to tell the story again. He admitted it once again. After the interview, I immediately called the detective and passed on the information. It was also shared with the victim's family. Because for them, every detail about what happened to their daughter was important. That case had a big impact on me.

Another important case was Crosley Green. Racism is still a serious issue in the U.S., but it was even more dominant in the justice system in the 1980s and 1990s. Crosley is a black man, and he was convicted of murder in 1989 and sentenced to death. *48 Hours* has been following his case since the 1990s. We made five episodes on this case, and I worked on the last two. Many people believed



he had been wrongfully convicted. Our reporting also played a role in his release after 32 years. This was during COVID, when we were working from home and travel was extremely difficult, but Crosley's release was such a major story that we immediately organized and filmed him walking out of prison. Once he was out, Crosley got a very good job, got engaged, and started building a new life for himself. But Florida's justice system can be a bit tough, a higher court issued a new ruling, and two years later he was sent back to prison. He's still in prison today. I filmed both his release and his return. It was a very difficult and emotional process for me.

That's really moving. *48 Hours* has been running for 37 years, but in the past decade true-crime documentaries, films, and series have exploded in popularity. Why do you think audiences are so fascinated by true crime content?

I think there are several reasons. First, it's a form of escape, people enjoy stepping away from their own lives and immersing themselves in stories that feel far removed. The second is empathy. Most of the people involved in these crimes are ordinary people, just like us. Watching what happens to them makes viewers think, "That could happen to me, too." There's also the mystery factor, it pulls people in and keeps them hooked. I also think the pursuit of justice plays a big role. Seeing wrongdoers held accountable gives audiences a sense of satisfaction.

In the U.S., amateur detective groups often investigate cold cases, and many podcasters chase leads like

detectives themselves. What are your thoughts on this trend?

Yes, it's especially common in the U.S. People come together online to dig into cold case files, and many of these stories actually start out as podcasts. Our planning department keeps an eye on these groups and their work as well. There's also something that has started in the U.S. called genetic genealogy. With DNA analysis, you can sometimes discover that you're related, for example, a cousin, to someone who committed a murder 30 years ago. That kind of thing can lead to some really unusual cases.

It sounds like you start from scratch with every case.

Exactly. With every case, we really do start from scratch. That's why the sense of fulfillment never fades. Each time, we have to learn everything: the people, the documents, the evidence. Impartiality is crucial. No matter what case we're covering, we have to put our own feelings aside and make sure every voice is heard.

At the same time, this must be emotionally difficult work.

There are definitely times when it gets very hard. For example, when judges allow us to film in court, we follow the entire trial. If a case lasts a month, you're there every single day. You're in the same courtroom with the same families everyday. You feel their pain. The witnesses, the testimonies, the evidence... You have to listen to it all with the same focus. These are very heavy processes, and they can be emotionally exhausting.





SPOTLIGHT ON CRIME STORIES AT MIPCOM 2025



From gritty true crime to stylish Nordic noir, from reimagined classics to bold new originals, crime storytelling continues to dominate the global content market. At MIPCOM 2025, some of the genre's most anticipated series and documentaries are taking the international stage.

This year's line-up captures the full spectrum of crime storytelling, from adaptations of cult novels by iconic authors and ambitious international co-productions to detectives deeply rooted in their cities and gripping true-crime stories. Crime remains one of the world's most dynamic and sought-after genres.

In this feature, we spotlight the crime and true crime stories set to spark conversation at MIPCOM 2025, and perhaps become tomorrow's global hits.



THE ANATOMY OF A MOMENT

Adapted from Javier Cercas' acclaimed book, *The Anatomy of a Moment* revisits one of Spain's most pivotal events: the failed coup attempt of February 23, 1981, known as "23-F." When Antonio Tejero stormed the Congress chamber with armed forces, the fate of Spanish democracy hung in the balance. Cercas' narrative focuses on the three parliamentarians; Adolfo Suárez, Manuel Gutiérrez Mellado, and Santiago Carrillo, who remained seated as others fled, capturing a moment of defiance that shaped modern Spain.

Set to premiere on November 20, the miniseries is directed by Alberto Rodríguez (Marshland) and written by Rafa Cobos and Fran Araújo. Starring Álvaro Morte, Eduard Fernández, and Manolo Solo, it unfolds across just four tightly woven episodes, combining cinematic tension with historical fidelity to offer an incisive portrait of courage, politics, and national identity.



THE NAMELESS

Based on the unsettling novel by Ramsey Campbell, *The Nameless* (Los sin nombre) brings noir-inflected horror to Spanish television. The series follows Claudia (Miren Ibarguren), a grieving mother who lost her daughter seven years earlier, until she receives a chilling phone call: "Mom, it's me. Come and save me." Convinced her child may still be alive, Claudia enlists the help of ex-policeman Salazar (Rodrigo de la Serna), embarking on a desperate search that forces her to confront buried traumas and dangerous truths.

Created by Pol Cortecans and directed by Pau Freixas, the show also stars Milena Smit as Laura, adding emotional depth to the layered mystery. Combining family tragedy, psychological horror, and investigative suspense, *The Nameless* is a haunting new entry in Spain's growing roster of internationally resonant crime dramas.



THE CENTER (EL CENTRO)

The Center is a high-stakes espionage drama set in the present day, but with Cold War echoes. When a murder uncovers an international operation by Russian intelligence services, a group of CNI agents are sent in a race against time to dismantle the threat while also confronting the terrifying reality that a mole may be hiding among them.

Starring Juan Diego Botto, Tristán Ulloa, Clara Segura, and Elisabet Casanovas, the first season consists of six episodes, offering a bold, emotionally charged exploration of the spy genre. With its tense atmosphere and nuanced performances, *The Center* positions itself as one of the most provocative espionage series of the year. The series made its debut on October 9.

**MAIGRET**

Chief Inspector Jules Maigret, created by former crime reporter turned bestselling author Georges Simenon, inhabits a vividly realized Paris rarely seen on screen. From the glitzy world of luxury hotels and private mansions to the smoky bistros of the bourgeoisie and the underground haunts of professional criminals, this adaptation explores the city in all its contrasts.

The series reframes Maigret as an unconventional young detective with something to prove, a rising star in the Police Judiciaire. Relentless in his investigations, Maigret demonstrates an uncanny ability to get under the skin of criminals while displaying matchless knowledge of Paris and its people. Lovingly devoted to his wife, Madame Maigret, he also leads La Crim, the elite police unit tasked with solving the city's most serious crimes.

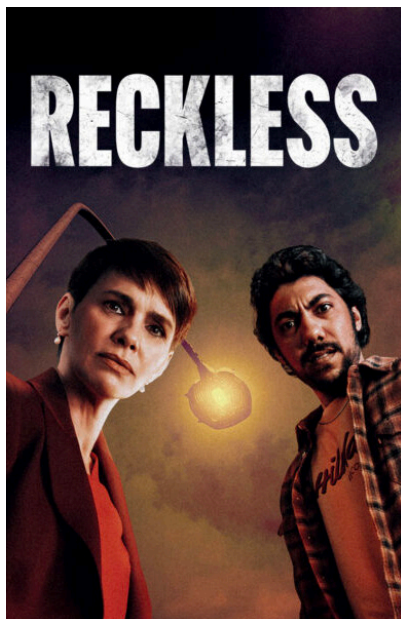
**WALLANDER**

In this bold new Swedish-language adaptation, Kurt Wallander is portrayed at his most vulnerable. Newly separated after two decades of marriage and estranged from his daughter, he is a man on the edge. He is drinking too much, sleeping too little, and weighed down by every unsolved case. This raw and contemporary retelling explores Wallander's personal unraveling alongside high-stakes investigations, offering viewers the most intimate look yet at one of crime fiction's most complex characters. The first season draws on three of Henning Mankell's most celebrated novels: *One Step Behind*, *Sidetracked*, and *Faceless Killers*. Directed by Molly Hartleb (Riding in Darkness, Top Dog) alongside Pella Kågerman & Hugo Lilja (Egghead Republic), the scripts are written by Antonia Pyk, Josefin Johansson, and Jörgen Bergmark.

**DISENCHANTED (DÉSENCHANTÉES)**

Set in the French coastal town of Bouville-sur-Mer, this drama begins with the mysterious disappearance of 15-year-old Sarah Leroy, a case that shocked the nation. Although a suspect was quickly arrested, unanswered questions and rumors continued to haunt the story.

Two decades later, journalist Fanny returns to confront the tragedy that shaped her youth. As she digs deeper, she uncovers buried memories and connections linking Sarah's fate to her own past, her sister Angélique, and a circle of friends once known as "les Désenchantées."



RECKLESS

When high-powered lawyer June and her hapless brother Charlie accidentally kill an old man in a hit-and-run, they make a split-second decision to cover it up. But their lives spiral as the victim's niece begins investigating and a nosy neighbor refuses to stay silent. As guilt festers and suspicion mounts, old wounds resurface and the siblings' bond reaches a breaking point.

June becomes trapped in her own web of lies as she struggles to protect what's left of her former life, while Charlie finds himself torn between family loyalty and a dangerous new romance. With the truth threatening to explode at every turn, the siblings must face just how far they're willing to go to get away with murder, and whether they can survive each other in the process.



SKIN DEEP

Plastic surgeon Mathieu Belmont is found murdered in his clinic's parking lot, a case that strikes painfully close to home for Captain Santoni, as Belmont was the person who reconstructed her face after a brutal assault. Suspicion quickly falls on Jessica, an wannabe influencer disfigured during one of Belmont's operations, and the case attracts intense media coverage.

Investigative journalist Gabrielle Pasquier seizes the story, plunging into the fascinating yet controversial world of 'fake beauty', where image is everything and truth is anything but skin-deep. *Skin Deep* explores the collision of beauty, identity, and crime in a gripping, character-driven thriller.



SHERLOCK & DAUGHTER

In this imaginative new take on the classic detective, we meet an aging, grumpy Sherlock Holmes who finds himself mysteriously unable to investigate a sinister case without risking those closest to him. Enter Amelia, a witty young American who claims to be his daughter.

After her mother's shocking murder, Amelia uncovers clues that suggest her missing father is none other than the legendary detective. Despite their wildly different backgrounds, Holmes and Amelia must work together to solve her mother's murder, unravel a global conspiracy, and confront the truth of Amelia's own origins. Instinct and experience collide in this lively, inventive reimagining of Holmes for a new generation.



FRAUDS

Set against the sweeping hills of southern Spain, *Frauds* stars BAFTA winner Suranne Jones as a terminally ill conwoman recently released from prison, alongside RTS Award winner Jodie Whittaker as her loyal best friend. Together, they set out to pull off one final high-stakes art theft.

Blending survival, deception, and revenge, the series dives into the dark criminal underworld lurking beneath the Costa del Sol's glossy surface. With biting humor, complex characters, and unexpected twists, *Frauds* keeps audiences guessing until its final moments.



COLD WATER

Andrew Lincoln makes his long-awaited return to British drama in this chilling psychological thriller. Lincoln plays John, a middle-aged stay-at-home father whose quiet desperation boils over after he fails to intervene in a violent playground assault. Hoping for a fresh start, John moves his family to the seemingly idyllic village of Coldwater.

There he befriends Tommy (Ewen Bremner), a charismatic neighbor who soon reveals far darker secrets. As John's long-repressed rage surfaces, he finds himself dangerously indebted to Tommy. From award-winning production company SISTER (Chernobyl, This is Going to Hurt), *Cold Water* explores masculinity, repression, and the terrifying fragility of ordinary lives.



A TASTE FOR MURDER

Adapted from Matt Baker's novel of the same name, this drama transports audiences to the sun-soaked landscapes of Italy. Following his wife's death, London detective Joe Mottram (Warren Brown) visits his in-laws' family taverna on a remote island, hoping to heal with his young daughter. But when a body washes ashore and a relative is accused of murder, Joe is pulled back into police work. Partnering with Inspector Lara Sarrancino, Joe unravels a chain of deaths tied to family feuds, forbidden love, and organized crime. Starring Warren Brown, Phyllis Logan, and Beau Gadsdon, *A Taste for Murder* is created by Matt Baker, directed by Jon Jones and co-produced by ITV Studios through Eagle Eye Drama and BritBox.



THE PUZZLE LADY

In the quaint market town of Bakerbury, the discovery of a body with a crossword puzzle clue left behind sets the police scrambling. Enter Cora Felton, known nationwide as “The Puzzle Lady” thanks to her popular crossword column and biscuit brand. But behind the façade of a gentle older woman lies something entirely different: Cora is a chain-smoking, sharp-tongued fraud, with her brilliant niece Sherry secretly creating the puzzles that made her famous.

Despite her lack of expertise, Cora’s curiosity and irreverent streak lead her into the heart of the murder investigation, much to the dismay of Detective Chief Inspector Hooper. Though he initially resents her interference, Hooper soon realizes that Cora’s unconventional approach may be exactly

what his small, overstretched police force needs. What begins as one puzzling case reveals something darker about Bakerbury, as Cora discovers she has a knack not just for crosswords, but for solving murders.



THE LADY GRACE MYSTERIES

Set in the dazzling court of Elizabeth I, *The Lady Grace Mysteries* introduces viewers to Lady Grace Cavendish, the world’s first teenage girl spy. Orphaned but fearless, Grace has spent her youth dodging palace guards, resisting the confines of life as a lady-in-waiting, and sharpening her wits. When her godmother, the Queen herself, enlists her as an undercover agent, Grace is plunged into a world of high-stakes intrigue, assassination attempts, and ruthless betrayal.

Alongside her loyal friends Ellie and Masou, and the enigmatic Lord Osborne, Grace uncovers plots involving stolen crowns, vanished falcons, and even the ghost of Henry VIII. The series reimagines Tudor history as a fast-paced, lavishly produced adventure-visually spectacular yet modern in tone-offering a bold, youthful twist on one of history’s most treacherous courts.



THE MARKOVIČ METHOD

This gripping six-part miniseries explores the chilling career of Jiří Markovič, one of Czechoslovakia’s most legendary detectives, as he relentlessly hunts sadistic criminals during the bleak “normalisation” era of the 1980s. The drama centers on Markovič’s pursuit and eventual capture of Ladislav Hojer, a notorious sexual predator and murderer whose reign of terror cast a shadow over Prague.

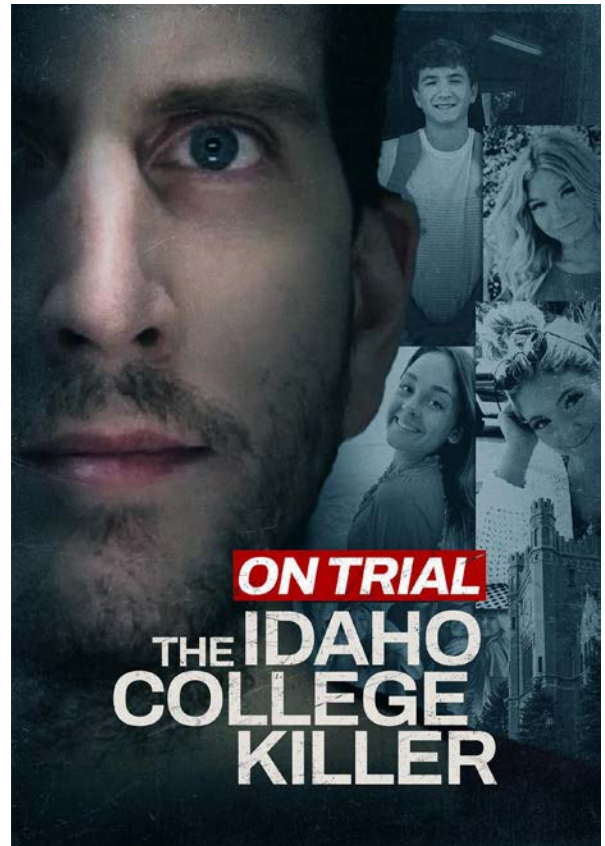
The series doesn’t just recount one case, but threads together closed files from across Markovič’s career, showing how his unorthodox methods and fierce determination forged his reputation. Against a backdrop of drab streets, empty shops, and authoritarian conformity, *The Markovič Method* presents not just a portrait of a terrifying killer, but of the detective whose name became synonymous with justice in a hostile era.



HILDUR

Based on Satu Rämö's bestselling trilogy, *Hildur* is a haunting Nordic crime drama set in Iceland's remote Westfjords. As a child, police officer Hildur Rúnarsdóttir suffered the devastating loss of her two younger sisters, who vanished on their way home from school. More than twenty years later, she returns to her hometown of Ísafjörður, a picturesque village surrounded by icy seas and towering mountains, only to be drawn into a brutal new murder case.

Partnered with Jakob, an ambitious Finnish trainee, and Florian, a well-meaning but inexperienced German recruit, Hildur follows a trail of disturbing clues that not only lead toward a calculating serial killer but also force her to confront the secrets of her own past. Atmospheric and deeply emotional, *Hildur* combines breathtaking Icelandic landscapes with the darkness of human tragedy, offering a story where personal grief collides with the hunt for justice.



ON TRIAL: THE IDAHO COLLEGE KILLER

One of the most shocking true crime cases in modern America is laid bare in *On Trial: The Idaho College Killer*. When four university students were savagely murdered in their off-campus home in November 2022, the crime captured global attention. The manhunt eventually led to an unexpected suspect: Bryan Kohberger, a criminology PhD student with no apparent ties to the victims.

This documentary traces the entire story, weaving together never-before-seen bodycam footage, interviews with those closest to the victims, and courtroom revelations. It highlights not only the brutality of the crime but also the way it became an international media obsession. With Kohberger's confession denying the families their full trial, the film asks the haunting question: why did he do it?



A PROPHET

This ambitious reimaging of Jacques Audiard's BAFTA-winning and Academy Award-nominated film brings to television a raw, high-stakes portrait of survival inside a brutal French prison. The series follows Malik, a young African immigrant sentenced for drug smuggling, who quickly realizes that he must navigate a violent hierarchy in order to survive.

Taken under the wing of Massoud, a powerful and manipulative inmate, Malik begins as a pawn in someone else's game. But as he learns the rules of survival, he also learns how to play them, transforming himself from victim into power broker. Gritty, visceral, and unflinching, *A Prophet* is both a harrowing crime saga and a reflection on how modern societies treat their most vulnerable members.



THIS IS NOT A MURDER MYSTERY

Brimming with surreal energy, *This is Not a Murder Mystery* offers a dazzling blend of art history and crime drama. It's 1936, and a young René Magritte finds himself invited to a private art exhibition at an English estate, alongside Salvador Dalí, Lee Miller, Man Ray, and Max Ernst. But when Magritte wakes after a raucous night to find a young woman dead beside him, with no memory of the events leading up to her death, he is thrust into a nightmare of suspicion and danger.

As Scotland Yard arrives to investigate and more bodies fall, Magritte must clear his name while navigating a hall of mirrors where nothing is what it seems. This inventive thriller mixes historical figures with murder mystery conventions, offering a stylish, genre-bending take on the golden age of surrealism.



THE BLACK FOREST MURDERS

Set in a picturesque village near Germany's fabled *Black Forest*, this dark drama begins with the shocking daylight assault and murder of a young jogger. Investigator Barbara Kramer leads a special commission tasked with solving the crime, but every lead seems to dissolve, every theory collapses, and public pressure intensifies as more women fall victim to a suspected serial killer.

The series follows Kramer and her team as they confront exhaustion, dead ends, and their own personal demons in the face of relentless violence. With its chilling atmosphere and painstakingly realistic police work, *The Black Forest Murders* captures both the terror of a community under siege and the toll such cases take on those sworn to deliver justice.



sphere abacus



PIERRE

David Harewood (Sherwood, *Homeland*) stars as Pierre, a charismatic yet overextended duty solicitor in West London, balancing precarious finances, personal struggles, and a fragile sense of control. When one of his young Black clients dies under suspicious circumstances, Pierre begins challenging the police's narrative-only to uncover a web of institutional corruption.

As he risks his career, family, and reputation to pursue justice, Pierre is drawn ever deeper into a fight against a system designed to silence him. Co-written by BAFTA-winning Roy Williams OBE (*Soon Gone: The Windrush Chronicles*) and BAFTA-nominated John Donnelly (*Summerwater*), and directed by Sarmad Masud (*You Don't Know Me*), *Pierre* is a gripping, socially charged legal drama that marries sharp courtroom tension with urgent political resonance.

HUNTING ALICE BELL

Fran Da Silva's life collapses when an online mob accuses her of being Alice Bell, the former nurse and lover of a notorious anesthetist serial killer. As her world implodes, she discovers she's not the only woman targeted this way. A group of women band together to clear their names-but what if one of them really is Alice Bell, hiding in plain sight? *Hunting Alice Bell* is a tense psychological thriller that explores misogyny, mob justice, and the devastating power of rumor in the digital age. Packed with cliffhangers and built around a central whodunnit, the series asks not only "Who is Alice Bell?" but also how far society will go to vilify women, guilty or not.



THE GAME

The Game follows Huw Miller (Jason Watkins, *Coma*, *W1A*) a retired detective haunted by the one case he never solved: a sadistic stalker who taunted and killed his victims, then vanished. When new neighbor Patrick Harbottle (Robson Green, *Grantchester*) moves in and casually uses the stalker's old taunt "catch you later" Huw becomes convinced he has finally found his man.

What follows is a high stakes psychological chess match that threatens to destroy Huw's already fragile world. As he risks everything to unearth the truth, the question looms: is Patrick truly the stalker, or has Huw's obsession driven him past the point of reason? *The Game* is an intense, character-driven thriller that explores guilt, paranoia, and the fine line between justice and obsession.



BOAT ROCKER
STUDIOS



THE RIDGE

When Mia (Lauren Lyle) travels from Scotland to a remote New Zealand village for her sister's wedding, only to find her sister dead. Struggling with grief and convinced the death wasn't an accident, Mia begins pulling at threads that reveal a tangle of lies, betrayals, and buried secrets within the isolated mountain community.

Her investigation is complicated by an inquiry into her own professional misconduct back in Scotland and by a fraught attraction to Ewan (Jay Ryan), her late sister's fiancé. Taut and atmospheric, *The Ridge* blends personal tragedy with a gripping whodunnit, set against the stark beauty and menace of New Zealand's landscape. The series will make its premiere on 21 October.



LAST SECOND

This tense thriller delves into the little-seen world of bomb disposal units. When a string of sophisticated bombs terrorizes a city, police sergeant Véronique, an expert explosives technician, finds herself personally and professionally shattered after one blast leaves her gravely injured and kills her partner.

Determined to stop the mysterious bomb maker known as "Matryoshka," Véronique must rally her team while grappling with trauma, grief, and the high-wire dangers of her profession. Blending psychological intensity with procedural detail, *Last Second* immerses viewers in a high-stakes battle of wits between a relentless killer and those who risk their lives daily to protect others.

**VANISHED**

A night of partying in the mountains ends in mystery when Jon, a young man, disappears without a trace, leaving behind only a viral social media video posted hours before. Was it a cruel prank, or has something far darker happened? His friends are devastated, though each harbors private resentments that could hint at hidden motives.

Led by the determined mother of one of the girls in Jon's circle, the local police dig deeper into the case, uncovering layer upon layer of secrets. *Vanished* is a tense, character-driven thriller that taps into the anxieties of youth, friendship, and betrayal, capturing the uneasy intersection between digital fame and real-life consequences. The series is created by Xabi Zabaleta and Marta Grau and stars Gorka Otxoa, Itziar Atienza, Jon Lukas, Ane Rot, and Leire Martínez.

**DETECTIVE ROMÍ**

Romí is a thirty-year-old private investigator with an extraordinary gift: born deaf, she has developed an unmatched acuity for reading lips, decoding micro-gestures, and connecting dots that others overlook. Her unorthodox methods often put her at odds with Bilbao's head of criminal investigation—who also happens to be her mother, Alaia.

When Romí begins working on a case that stirs up the “accident” that killed her father and left her deaf, she must confront the possibility that the tragedy was no accident at all. With family loyalty clashing against hard truths, *Detective Romí* offers a fresh take on the crime drama, blending procedural intrigue with an intimate story of resilience, identity, and buried secrets.



FLOWERS OVER THE INFERNO

Based on Ilaria Tuti's internationally bestselling saga, this Italian thriller introduces Teresa Battaglia, a seasoned criminologist leading a team in the Friulian Alps while privately battling Alzheimer's. When a string of murders intertwines with a mysterious long-lost painting, *The Sleeping Nymph*, created with human blood, Teresa must confront not only dangerous criminals but her own fading memory. In the new season, the investigation intensifies after the suspicious death of a young police officer probing her father's past. Balancing haunting atmosphere with psychological depth, *Flowers Over the Inferno* offers both a chilling procedural and an intimate portrait of resilience in the face of decline.

NEUER

Set in Bratislava, *Neuer* chronicles the daily battles of a regional homicide unit facing violent crimes that push them to their physical and psychological limits. Each episode is inspired by a real homicide case, weaving in adaptations of best-sellers rooted in true crime. As officers confront the darkness on the streets, they also grapple with the corrosive effects of violence on their personal lives.

Based on Václav Neuer's best-selling novels, the series combines gritty realism and moral complexity, capturing both the relentless fight against crime and the hidden toll it exacts on those tasked with confronting it.




AI3 MEDIA
INTERNATIONAL


ELLIS

In this crime drama, Sharon D. Clarke stars as DCI Ellis, a tenacious detective called in to salvage failing investigations. Each feature-length episode sees Ellis and her trusted DS Harper (Andrew Gower, *The Winter King*) arrive at a new police station, facing skepticism from local officers as they attempt to untangle seemingly unsolvable cases.

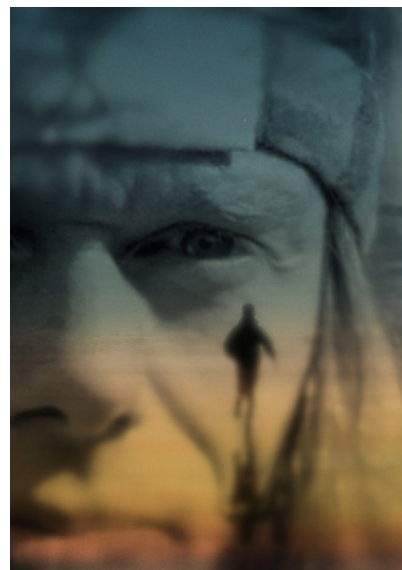
As a Black woman in a male-dominated field, Ellis often finds herself dismissed or overlooked, yet her instinct and compassion make her a formidable investigator. Ellis combines gripping mysteries with a strong character study, offering viewers a detective series that's both classic in form and contemporary in voice.

Fremantle


HOTEL COSTIERA

Set against the sun-drenched beauty of the Amalfi Coast, *Costiera* blends glamour, danger, and intrigue in equal measure. Daniel de Luca, a former U.S. Marine forced to leave his career in intelligence, retreats to the Italian coast, the only place he's ever felt at home. Living rent-free at a luxury hotel, Daniel repays his host by solving problems for elite guests, from mysterious disappearances to urgent crises.

But Daniel's true mission is far more personal: to uncover the truth about Alice, the hotelier's missing daughter. As he searches, he finds himself entangled in a web of deceit, simmering family secrets, and crimes hidden behind the idyllic façade of one of Europe's most glamorous destinations. Directed by Emmy award winner Adam Bernstein (*Breaking Bad*, *Fargo*, *SOrange Is the New Black*), *Hotel Costiera* stars Jesse Williams and Jordan Alexandra.


 viaplay
content
distribution


DEAD MAN RUNNING

This gripping documentary unravels the astonishing story of Kim Avis, an eccentric street performer from Inverness who became one of Scotland's most wanted fugitives. In 2019, Avis was presumed drowned after vanishing from California's infamous "Mortuary Beach." But the truth was darker: he had staged his own death to escape prosecution for horrific sexual abuse crimes in Scotland.

Spanning continents and decades, *Dead Man Running* follows the international manhunt and the survivors whose courage brought him to justice. Written by investigative journalist Myles Bonnar and produced by Calum McKay for BBC Scotland, the film weaves together exclusive interviews, survivor testimony, and never-before-seen evidence. Executive produced by Shelley Jofre, known for *Trumped* and *Matched* with a *Predator*, this documentary is both a chilling crime story and a powerful testament to resilience.

TAKE YOUR PLACE AT THE N°1 GLOBAL CONTENT MARKET.

Celebrate today's content + discover tomorrow's.

13th-16th October
Palais des Festivals, Cannes.

RX In the business of
building businesses



More information
www.mipcom.com



DOMINIQUE MOLONEY

NEW MYSTERIES, FAMILIAR CHARM:
THE PUZZLE LADY

BY ÖZLEM ÖZDEMİR





small-town settings, intriguing characters, amateur detectives, and of course, a healthy dose of humor. Cosy crime has become one of television's strongest rising trends in recent years. *The Puzzle Lady* is among the newest and most remarkable examples of this wave. Adapted from American author Parnell Hall's 20-book series, the show combines

character-driven storytelling with Phyllis Logan's captivating performance, standing out as one of the finest contemporary highlights of the cosy crime genre.

We spoke with Dominique Moloney, one of the creators and executive producers of *The Puzzle Lady*, about the current boom of cosy crime, the evolving representation of women on screen, and the making of this series.

You're both the writer and the creator/executive producer of *The Puzzle Lady*. How did the project first take shape for you?

I was first approached at the beginning of lockdown by Todd Berger who has an independent production company in the U.S. (December Films) and had bought the rights to *The Puzzle Lady* books. Given how the world had slowed down, I had the rare luxury of time to read them all. Cora was such a force of nature and the world of Bakerbury felt fresh and exciting. I worked closely with my script editor Tom Dalton, who executive produced and ultimately directed the show, and I had creative input throughout the process, including casting decisions, and the look, feel and tone of the show.

***The Puzzle Lady* is based on the 20-book series by American author Parnell Hall, who passed away in 2020. Were you involved in the decision to adapt the novels for television, and what can you tell us about the development process?**

Todd Berger was specifically looking for a British writer to set the series in the UK, presumably because of the popularity of British cosy crime. Parnell Hall's novels were set in Connecticut, USA, but I felt it lent itself to a slightly eccentric Englishness. I'd never adapted a series of novels before, but I had written murder mysteries for years, and I was drawn to the books' irreverent tone and energy.

Parnell had woven crossword puzzles into every story, which worked well in the books, but I felt wouldn't be visual enough for a TV audience, so I decided to take the mysteries in a different direction and focus more on the puzzle of solving murders. I had the great pleasure to meet Parnell on a video call from his home in New York, a few months before he passed away, and he gave me his blessing to do whatever I wished with Cora Felton. I think he would have loved Phyllis Logan in the role.

"I think cosy crime is popular because they keep audiences guessing, and at their core they're morality tales, with good triumphing over evil. With the world as complicated as it's become in recent years, I think we lean into stories that don't feel too dark and upsetting, but can still pack an emotional punch as well as make us laugh. These shows feel satisfying because our heroes put the world to rights."



The series follows Cora, who built a regional following with her puzzle column and now finds herself solving murders. She's such a fun character, and as the story unfolds we see that her obsession with crime-solving comes from a deep need to prove herself. What qualities about Cora do you like the most?

I like that Cora's unfettered by the rules that most of us, especially women, impose on ourselves. She swears, she drinks too much, she smokes, and she's happy to take outrageous risks and liberties if she thinks it'll help crack a case. But most of all she's got heart, she'd do anything for her niece Sherry and the people she loves, and despite her unethical approach at times, she has a strong moral core.

Cora starts her journey a little insecure and disillusioned, but once she's pulled into the thrill of a mystery, she investigates as meticulously as the police, sometimes even more so. That journey also deepens her relationship with her niece Sherry, which I found really compelling to watch. I loved seeing their bond, their past and present, and it left me wanting to know where their lives go next. What were your thoughts and feelings as you wrote Cora and Sherry's dynamic?

I think Cora's insecurity about being somewhat fraudulent is what drives her to prove herself as a sleuth – she's a woman truly coming into her own as she discovers a tal-



ent she never knew she had. In many ways Sherry is on a similar journey as she reinvents herself after escaping a violent marriage.

Cora and Sherry have that classic odd couple dynamic; they're very different, so they bicker and clash often, but they adore each other and that's obvious in every scene. The wonderful Phyllis and Charlotte had never met before, but their chemistry was unmistakable on (and off) screen – they played that instant familial bond and emotional history that felt utterly authentic.

The casting in *The Puzzle Lady* is just as striking as the story itself. I found Phyllis Logan absolutely captivating, even in the quiet moments at her kitchen table, and Charlotte Hope brings her character to life in a very profound way. What can you tell us about the casting process?

Because of the nature of TV and film production, casting is almost always the last piece of the puzzle to fall into place (so to speak) and believe it or not Phyllis was cast just two weeks before filming began – she was the last role to be cast and had the very great responsibility of carrying the show. She was of course an inspired choice, and I can't imagine anyone else playing Cora. Charlotte screen tested, and it was clear early on she was perfect for the role of Sherry. As for the rest of the cast, we used a Northern Irish casting director as we filmed in Belfast, so we had a wealth of wonderful Irish and Northern Irish actors to choose from, including the brilliant Adam Best who plays DI Hooper.



The Puzzle Lady is such a delightful and successful example of cosy crime, with its small-town setting, amateur detective, contained murders, and witty humor, it really embraces everything we love about the genre. In recent years, we've seen more and more cosy crime series and films being produced and watched. Why do you think that is?

I think cosy crime is popular because they keep audiences guessing, and at their core they're morality tales, with good triumphing over evil. With the world as complicated as it's become in recent years, I think we lean into stories that don't feel too dark and upsetting, but can still pack an emotional punch as well as make us laugh. These shows feel satisfying because our heroes put the world to rights.

Female characters have always played a crucial role in crime narratives, and their representation has shifted a lot over the past century. Thinking about *The Puzzle Lady*, how do you see the evolution of female leads in crime dramas today?

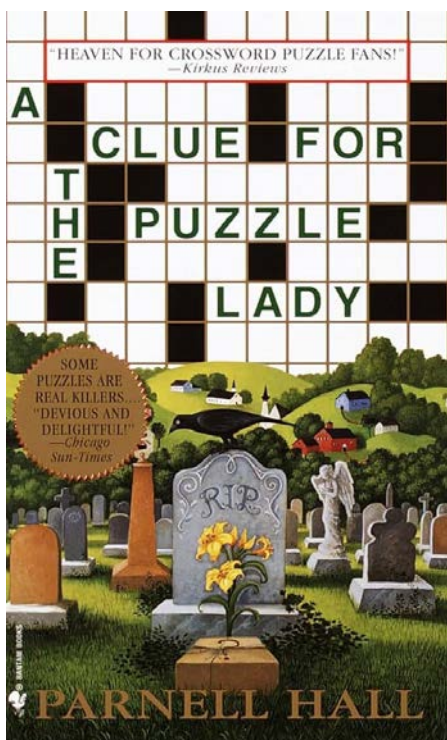
I think the first step in the process was simply having more women represented in leading roles, particularly older women with interesting and complex emotional lives. That has definitely moved into the mainstream, but social attitudes still have a way to go – for instance some critics objected to *The Puzzle Lady* featuring an older woman swearing, drinking and being generally outspoken, something male characters have always done without question. Allowing female characters to have flaws and make mistakes is important, and audiences still rooting for them is a sign of progress.

What are some of your own favorite cosy crime novels, series, or films?

I love *Only Murders in the Building* for its whimsy, humour and zany quality. And one of my favourite films is *The Name of the Rose* which is essentially a dark and brilliant whodunnit.

Are there any updates you can share about a second season of *The Puzzle Lady*?

The show did very well with audience numbers when it was broadcast in the UK on Channel 5 in June this year, and we're still waiting to see how well it does when it airs in the rest of the world this Autumn. That said, the pro-



ducers and cast are keen for us to go again, as am I, and I've got lots of ideas for a potential second series, so watch this space...

I'd also love to hear a bit more about you personally. How did your journey as a writer begin?

I initially went to Film School as I wanted to be a filmmaker, but gradually my passion for screenwriting took centre stage. That said, it took many years before I made a decent living as a TV writer! I started out in BBC radio drama, moved on to long-running soaps like *Doctors* and *EastEnders*, and was a core writer on a hospital drama called *Casualty* for a while.

My first original show was a BBC crime drama called *WPC 56* about a pioneering young policewoman in Birmingham in

the 1950's. It ran for three series (2012-2015). I currently have two more original series in development, a legal drama called *The Basement Files* and an anthology drama with touches of supernatural horror called *The Blink of an Eye*.

You've written several well-loved crime dramas, including *Father Brown*, *Sister Boniface Mysteries*, and *Shakespeare & Hathaway*. It seems you have a real passion for crime and cosy mysteries. How did your interest for crime begin?

I didn't grow up reading murder mysteries, like Agatha Christie, so came to it about fifteen years ago when I wrote my first episode of *Father Brown*. Since then, I've fallen in love with the genre.

As we approach the end of 2025, we're asking writers, showrunners, and directors around the world to share their favorite crime novels, films, and series of the past 25 years. What would be on your list?

My favourite crime film is David Fincher's *Zodiac*, because of its multi-character structure, and the impact a single case has on the investigators' lives over decades. I've recently revisited the *Fargo* film, and TV series, and they're utterly brilliant. *True Detective* Series 1 & 3 are exceptional. Frankly, the golden age of television has been going strong since *The Sopranos* smashed onto the scene in the 90s, so there are too many great crime shows to list.



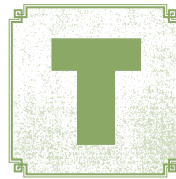
FROM PODCASTS TO SCREEN: THE MOST ANTICIPATED TRUE CRIME ADAPTATIONS

YAĞMUR ÇÖL



MURDAUGH: DEATH IN THE FAMILY

Inspired by Mandy Matney's hit *Murdaugh Murders* podcast, *Murdaugh: Death in the Family* will premiere on Hulu on October 15, 2025. Created by Michael D. Fuller and Erin Lee Carr, the limited series dives into the shocking web of crimes and corruption tied to South Carolina's powerful Murdaugh family. The cast includes Jason Clarke, Patricia Arquette, J. Smith-Cameron, and Johnny Berchtold, with Brittany Snow portraying Matney, the journalist and podcast host who became known for breaking key developments first.



True crime podcasts have been steadily making their way to the screen. But what's next? From the gripping story of the Murdaugh family to a podcast by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Gilbert King, several new projects are set to reach audiences soon. Here's a look at the most anticipated podcast adaptations, either coming soon or still in development.



FINDING SAMANTHA

Dublin-based prodco Keeper Pictures is adapting *Finding Samantha*, part of RTÉ's *Documentary On One* series, into an eight-part scripted drama. Emilia di Girolamo (*Law & Order UK*, *Three Pines*) will serve as the showrunner of the project, which tells the stranger-than-fiction story of Australian con artist Samantha Azzopardi. Over the years, Azzopardi created more than 100 false identities, weaving an elaborate campaign of deception across continents.



KAREN

Prime Video has ordered a limited series based on *Karen*, the true crime podcast from Law & Crime and Wondery. Starring and executive produced by Elizabeth Banks, the show follows the story of Karen Read. When a Boston police officer is found dead in the snow, suspicion quickly falls on his girlfriend, Read. The case split the public: some people convinced she was guilty of first-degree murder, others certain she had been framed in a sweeping cover-up by state and local authorities.



BONE VALLEY

Created by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Gilbert King, *Bone Valley* examines the case of Leo Schofield, a Florida man imprisoned for nearly 35 years for the murder of his wife despite another man confessing to the crime. The podcast has been downloaded more than 10 million times, and is now being developed for television by Cathy Schulman's Welle Entertainment and Primary Wave Music. The scripted series will be written by Dana Stevens (*The Woman King*).



PINK DIAMOND HEIST

Decade Films and Factor 30 Films are teaming up to bring *Pink Diamond Heist*, based on ABC's podcast by Sinéad Mangan, to the screen. Set in late 1980s Western Australia, the drama follows one of the world's most audacious jewel thefts: the disappearance of nearly \$200 million worth of diamonds from Rio Tinto's Argyle mine.

THERE AND GONE: SOUTH STREET

From Glass Entertainment and iHeartPodcasts, *There and Gone: South Street* investigates the disappearance of Danielle Imbo and Richard Petrone, who left a bar in Philadelphia in 2005 and were never seen again. Hosted by Andrea Gunning and Ben Fetterman, the podcast features interviews with family members, friends, and investigators haunted by the case. A television adaptation is now in development.





ALAN BRADLEY

11-YEAR-OLD SLEUTH, TIMELESS STORIES

BY ÖZLEM ÖZDEMİR





Alan Bradley, after working for many years on the technical side of television, established a strong place for himself in the literary world with the Flavia series, which he began writing during retirement. The first book in the series actually started as a 15-page short story in 2007; when Bradley's wife suggested he submit it to the Debut Dagger competition, the work won first prize and soon evolved into a novel. Published in 2009, this first Flavia novel introduced literature to a detective character who stood out with her intelligence at a very young age.

The Flavia series is set in post-World War II England. In the first novel, 11-year-old Flavia's loneliness, her relationships with her family, her growing pains, her curiosity, and her passion for natural sciences intertwine with themes ranging from postage stamps and mythology to chemistry. Bradley has written 11 novels in the Flavia series, and the first book was recently adapted into a film. The film stars Martin Freeman, Jonathan Pryce, Toby Jones, Meera Syal, and Isla Gie. The screenplay was written by Susan Coyne, and the director is Bharat Nalluri. We spoke with Alan Bradley about the Flavia series.

As far as I know, you worked in television for many years and only started writing stories and scripts after retiring, am I right?

Yes. I worked in the technical end of television and published occasional articles, but didn't begin a novel until I was retired. A novel is a major commitment of time and attention and is not easily shared with a full-time job.

As far as I know, the first Flavia novel actually began as a 15-page short story and your wife advised you to submit it to the Debut Dagger competition in 2007, where it won first prize. Then within a year, you turned it into a full novel, and the first book was published in 2009. What kind of child was Flavia in your mind when she first came to you all those years ago?

Flavia was a complete stranger who wandered into the pages of another novel I was attempting. She attracted

me by her differentness: she was unlike any character I could ever have created. My wife once referred to her as "A gift from the universe" and I think she was right.

There are so many elements in the Flavia series that have really impressed me, and I'd love to ask you about them each. First of all, of course, there's Flavia herself. She lost her mother when she was just one year old, and in the early books, she doesn't have the warmest relationship with her two older sisters. She is going through the struggles of growing up, and she's a very careful and an intelligent girl. And definitely very talkative. She is the main character of a detective series, she's the one solving mysteries but she's an emotional and a bit lonely girl discovering more about herself and her family with each book. She's such a rich character for a detective series, but also a risky choice, since she's not an adult. How did you navigate those risks when creating her?

Although it's now commonplace to say that young sleuths or the elderly are invisible, I realized early on that an 11 year old girl is especially so. But she had to be treated with respect. It would be wrong of me to try to impose any of my own thoughts or ideas on Flavia: what I needed to do was sharpen my pencil, shut up, and listen. I became kind of a flawed recording device. But because of my receptiveness, Flavia talks to me 24 hours a day, knowing that she is being listened to and respected.

The Flavia books take place in England, right after World War II, in the year 1950. What made you choose this particular period?

I suppose because I was about Flavia's age in 1950, I knew how an eleven year old thought. I had read widely for many years about England, from Victorian times up until the present. Flavia's world is the England of my imagination. I don't know if it ever existed, but I like to think it did. I hope my characters are happy in the world that Flavia and I have created for them.

"I have always chosen subjects that interest -or have interested- me. To spend a year working on a book requires that you not tire of the matter. I've had many enthusiasms in my lifetime, and have used just a few of them in the Flavia books. These are always great fun to research, and to find out facts that you have missed in the past, as well as catching up on current developments. Fortunately, Flavia's world is frozen in time, and I don't have to research anything after the early 1950's."



I was very surprised to learn that before writing the first story, you actually had never been to England. And yet, you describe the house, the village, the natural beauty, and the people in such vivid details. It must have taken some serious research. What kind of geographical and historical research did you do about England?

A lot of my “research” was done by growing up in Canada in a family of British expats, who were never too ashamed to refer to themselves as “proud Englishmen”. My grandmother’s house was full of British books, and I read widely, from fairy tales to travel, from crumpets to Cornish mythology; from ecclesiastical architecture to natural history. Newspapers, too, and magazines. I spent many a rainy day poring (no pun intended) over long-outdated copies of *Country Life* and *Lilliput*, and yes, *The Strand Magazine* (in bound volumes).

When I read the first book in the series, I assumed you had a deep admiration for chemistry, that it was a long-standing passion of yours. And I believe many readers think the same. But in fact, you didn’t have a chemistry background, and you learned all those details because of Flavia, am I right?

I know little of chemistry. In high-school, I had a home-room teacher whose teaching field was chemistry, but I was never comfortable with it. I didn’t like the stinks and bangs. I still remember with horror the practical jokers who set aflame the gas jets in the Science lab. Electronics seemed to hold much more romance. How wrong I was!

In every book of the series, you manage to surprise your readers. Each story has a subject that Flavia has to investigate, topics that require serious expertise. The history of postage stamps, puppetry, mystical beliefs, the history of graveyards and churches, religious arts,

medieval manuscripts, aviation history, toxicology... You explore each of these themes with such depth that while we’re reading an engaging, fast-paced novel, we also find ourselves drawn into these different topics. How do you choose these themes, and what kind of preparation and research do you do beforehand to write about them in such detail?

I have always chosen subjects that interest -or have interested- me. To spend a year working on a book requires that you not tire of the matter. I’ve had many enthusiasms in my lifetime, and have used just a few of them in the Flavia books. These are always great fun to research, and to find out facts that you have missed in the past, as well as catching up on current developments. Fortunately, Flavia’s world is frozen in time, and I don’t have to research anything after the early 1950’s.

As a child, Flavia investigates crimes happening in her village, or sometimes even in her own backyard. But as the series progresses, she also begins to uncover the secrets and history of her own family. For example, she eventually learns that her mother was a spy. So while your novels follow the traditional structure of a Golden Age detective story, they also blend with subgenres like spy fiction and historical fiction, which adds even more richness to the series. Would you agree?

I have not intentionally touched upon other genres, but feel strongly that the storylines be interesting and the characters real. If, in passing, they happen upon real romance or horror, real suspense or adventure, that simply adds to the richness of their lives, and brings them more to life. It is always rewarding when a minor character develops a sudden and unexpected depth: you can see them coming to life, and you feel somewhat what Dr. Frankenstein must have felt. Which must have been pride and a kind of love.



Flavia and Dogger’s relationship is one that moves me deeply every time I read about it. I feel like you’ve written their connection with such sincerity and it’s very different. Or maybe I just feel that way because I love them both so much. What does their relationship represent for you?

Their relationship moves me, too. I always feel privileged to sit on the sidelines listening to Flavia and Dogger talk. There is always a hush that comes over things as I write these scenes. I am especially aware of the need to remain totally silent, and to record faithfully what they say to one

another. I must not, in even the slightest way, intrude upon their privacy. I must not, under any circumstances, try to insert anything of Alan Bradley into their conversations. It's like being a court reporter: silent but deadly accurate, and above all, respectful.

The first book in the Flavia series is being adapted into a film. The cast has already created a lot of excitement. How does it feel to have your novel turned into a movie? Could you share the latest updates about the film with us? When can we expect to watch it, and what are your own expectations for the adaptation?

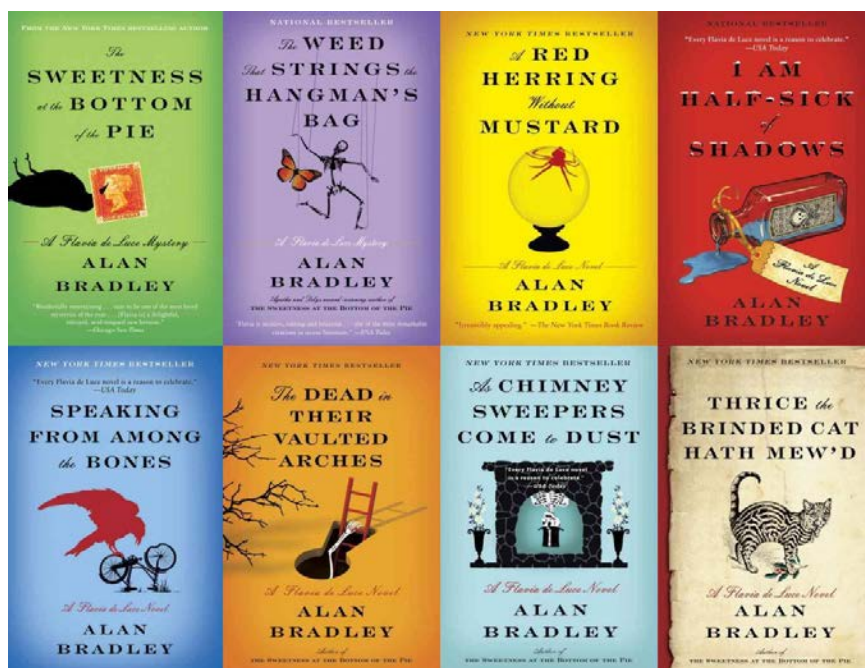
I don't yet have a release date, although I understand that the film is now complete. I was privileged to be invited to several of the filming locations last October, and what I saw far exceeded my expectations. The film was in the hands of people who love Flavia as much as I do, and every aspect of it left me in awe. I can hardly wait!

Also, I would like for your Turkish readers to know about another side of your work. You're actually a devoted reader of detective fiction, and many years ago, you even wrote a nonfiction book called *Ms. Holmes of Baker Street: The Truth About Sherlock*. When and how did your interest in Sherlock Holmes, and detective fiction begin?

I've mentioned my growing up in an expat British household, and it was here that the Sherlock Holmes books were put into my eager hands by an uncle. I remember distinctly being intrigued when he mentioned that Sherlock had an older brother who was too lazy to leave home to investigate. The quirkiness of that caught my interest. It was tantalizing. And then, of course, to become immersed in Conan Doyle's rich prose style. I still think he isn't given enough credit.

When will the 12th book in the Flavia series be released? And what are your upcoming plans for the book series?

I have just in the last week completed the 12th Flavia book, "Numb Were the Beadsman's Fingers." It's too early to have a publication date, but I expect it to be early next year. In a couple of months I'll be 87, and I think it's time to put my feet up for a while and leaf lovingly through some long-outdated copies of *Country Life*, *Lilliput*, and yes, perhaps the *Strand Magazine*.



As we approach the end of the first 25 years of the new millennium, I've been keeping track of the detective novels and series I've truly loved and found original. For me, the Flavia series is undoubtedly one of the best and most distinctive detective series written in this century. In your opinion, what are some of the best and most original mystery novels of the past 25 years? Oh, my goodness. That's the toughest question so far. I haven't had much of a chance to read in the past few years, but I'd certainly have to mention Peter Lovesey. I still remember where I was standing when I picked up a copy of his "Wobble to Death" in 1970. It was seldom I'd found a book so immersive and so rich in ambience (although I hate that word) I became a fan and remain one. One of the greatest highlights of my writing career was to spend a summer afternoon sitting in a Shropshire garden with Peter and his wife.

Other books that have lifted my heart have been Thomas King's *Thumps Dreadful Water* novels. Unique, funny and heartbreaking.

Louise Penny's Inspector Gamache novels have become legendary. I will never forget my gasps upon reading her "Still Life". In more recent years, Louise has been a great Flavia supporter, and her kind words have left me sometimes speechless.

Tony Hillerman's Navajo mysteries and James Lee Burke's Dave Robicheaux novels are solid gold.

Aside from these treasures, much of my limited reading has been outside the mystery genre, and I can never commend too highly Patrick O'Brian's Jack Aubrey novels and George MacDonald Fraser's Flashman novels.



FROM MONTALBANO TO KOSTAS:
THE JOURNEY OF MEDITERRANEAN NOIR
VALENTINA ALFERJ

BY YOLDAŞ ÖZDEMİR





Andrea Camilleri is widely recognized as one of the founding voices of Mediterranean noir, and for many years, Valentina Alferj worked at his side as his literary agent and closest creative collaborator. Together, they brought *Il Commissario Montalbano* from page to screen, shaping one of Europe's most enduring and beloved crime series (1999-2021), which still captivates audiences worldwide. More recently, Alferj has extended this Mediterranean legacy by writing the screenplay for *Kostas*, adapted from the acclaimed novels of Petros Markaris, one of the most prominent living masters of the genre. Produced by Palomar and Rai Fiction, the series stands out as one of the most recent examples of Mediterranean noir. In this conversation, Valentina Alferj reflects on her collaboration with Camilleri, the enduring appeal of Mediterranean crime fiction, and the growing intersection between literature and screen adaptations in Italy and beyond.

You run a literary agency in Italy and worked closely for many years with Andrea Camilleri. Together, you also collaborated on the television adaptation of his novels, *Il Commissario Montalbano*, a cult series that aired between 1999 and 2021. During the period when the Montalbano novels were being adapted for the screen, what was your working process like? How did the creative and production journey unfold?

The work on the television adaptation of Montalbano stems precisely from my work alongside Camilleri for many years. In his later years, when he had lost his sight, our work became much deeper and more detailed. No longer able to write, Camilleri relied completely on me to draft and supervise his work. The work process therefore, consisted of reading the scripts with the actors and the director, which allowed us to understand whether the adaptation respected the key points of Camilleri's writing. Camilleri always gave the fiction team a lot of freedom, because he knew from experience as a director, how much difference there is between writing a novel and rendering it in images. He also trusted his producer and the whole team very much. My work also consisted of revising the dialogues, which were a fundamental part of the fiction precisely because of Camilleri's invented language, a mixture of various Sicilian dialects.

Do you think we might see Commissario Montalbano adapted again in the future? Is it something being considered, or something you personally think could be possible? I believe it is entirely possible to imagine a new life for Inspector Montalbano, and I hope that producer Carlo Degli Esposti will make it happen so as soon as possible. The series of novels about the Inspector lends itself to many different interpretations. *The Young Montalbano* series already offered a different interpretation from the traditional one. For example, I imagine it to be much more of a thriller and much darker. I would emphasize the Sicilian aspect in its grey tones, and I see a Montalbano who is much less resolute than the one we are used to seeing on TV. This does not mean that I do not like it, quite the contrary. After 30 years, I am always happy when I find a rerun on television.

You also wrote the screenplay for *Kostas*, adapted from the acclaimed crime novel series by Petros Markaris, one of the founding voices of Mediterranean crime fiction. How did the process of bringing *Kostas* to life begin, and how did it evolve?

Thanks to my work with Camilleri, I was able to meet Petros Markaris. Our friendship continued even after Camilleri's death. Being a great reader and admirer of his work, when I had the chance, I talked about it to Carlo Degli Esposti di Palomar, and together with the production team and the great director Milena Coccozza, we developed the project and then shot the series in Athens.

With *Kostas*, produced by Palomar and Rai Fiction, it wasn't an Italian crime novelist being adapted, but Petros Markaris's series. I believe Mediterranean noir brings together stories and characters that can appeal to readers and viewers across many countries. As someone who knows these projects from the inside and as a literary professional, do you think we'll continue to see more adaptations of crime novels from different countries in Italy, as happened with *Kostas*? Or is this already happening today?

I don't know if they are developing new foreign series in Italy. Certainly, in Italy we have the largest possible number of crime writers. This is for various reasons, the first being Italian regions so deeply different, that a detective from Turin is so far removed from a police inspector from Puglia, telling and living such different stories that it seems as if they are from distant countries. In the case of *Kostas*, filmed in Athens but with Italian actors, it didn't

"There is always a very strong interest in fictional stories, perhaps with female protagonists, but it seems to me that there is very little courage and that things proceed in 'waves'. There is a trend for autofiction, family sagas, and, of course, crime stories, which are always in high demand."



feel like filming a foreign series; rather, we found so many similarities with Italian culture and society that there have never been any misunderstandings.

You are also the founder of an agency that represents many important authors and their books. So I'd like to explore the subject of adaptations in a bit more detail with you. In Italy, in recent years, what proportion of films or series have been based on novels?

It is difficult to understand how the audiovisual market is evolving. After the COVID and post-COVID bubble, all producers were optioning rights to novels, but it now seems to me that things have quietened down. There is always a very strong interest in fictional stories, perhaps with female protagonists, but it seems to me that there is very little courage and that things proceed in 'waves'. There is a trend for autofiction, family sagas, and, of course, crime stories, which are always in high demand. I would say that at the moment, many mini-series are being developed and few films. Furthermore, in Italy, there is a big difference between Rai products and those for platforms, a gap that seems to me to be increasingly evident.

How closely do the film, TV, and streaming industries work with the publishing world in Italy? As agencies, do you collaborate directly with producers on adaptations, perhaps even making suggestions?

No, we don't collaborate directly, but we are in constant contact. Lorenza Ventrone, who handles adaptation rights for our agency, often finds herself suggesting or listening to ideas that arise from our literary experience in comparison with the demands of the audiovisual market.

Crime fiction is on the rise worldwide, with dozens of new series produced every year for TV channels and

streaming platforms, and many of them based on novels. This is an exciting development, but do you think it also affects crime writers as they create their books? For example, could it be said that more novels are now being written with potential screen adaptations in mind, sometimes at the expense of originality? As both a screenwriter and a literary agent, what are your observations?

I believe the difference lies upstream. There are writers who write their novels with only reading and literature as their reference point. There are writers who already have the idea or proposal to turn that text into a screenplay. Often, the two things cannot coexist at the same level of quality. In fact, there are many writers who have decided to prioritize the television version of their novel, and often this decision can lead to less originality or attention to the quality of the writing. These are decisions.

At the agency, I work with Antonio Manzini who is one of the few Italian writers who manages to keep the writing of his novels and the screenplay of his *Rocco Schiavone* television series distinct, separate, and both of excellent quality. Thanks in part to his past as a screenwriter, he has managed to create two different products of the highest quality. It is no coincidence that *Rocco Schiavone's* books are among the best-selling in Italy, just as the series is the most loved in Italy and abroad.



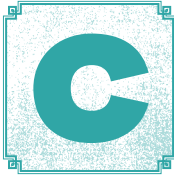
EXPLORING THE WORLD OF CONTENT FROM TÜRKİYE TO THE GLOBE





SEASON RENEWALS

GÖKÇE KOCAOĞLU



Crime dramas show no sign of slowing down, with some of the genre's most beloved titles returning for new seasons. From *Bookish* and *Slow Horses* to *Dept. Q* and *MobLand*, acclaimed series across platforms are gearing up for their next chapters.

'BOOKISH' SEASON 2: NEW CAST JOINS MARK GATISS'S PERIOD DETECTIVE DRAMA

Bookish is returning for a second season on U&alibi, created by and starring Mark Gatiss as Gabriel Book. New cast members include Jason Watkins, Miranda Richardson, Simon Callow, and Rupert Graves.

Set in post-war London, Book continues solving peculiar crimes with the police while trying to run his bookshop. The series is produced by Eagle Eye Drama in association with Happy Duck Films and supported by the Belgian Tax Shelter. Beta Film holds worldwide distribution rights, while PBS Distribution holds the North American rights to season one.



'SLOW HORSES' RENEWED FOR SEASON 7

Apple TV+ has renewed *Slow Horses* for a seventh season. The series stars Gary Oldman as Jackson Lamb and is based on Mick Herron's *Slough House* novels.

With Season 5 having premiered on September 24, Season 6 is expected in 2026 and Season 7 in 2027. The producers for the series are See-Saw Films and Flying Studio Pictures.

BBC GREENLIT 'REBUS' SEASON 2

The BBC has ordered a second season of *Rebus*, starring Richard Rankin as Detective Sergeant John Rebus. The series is produced by Eleventh Hour Films and Viaplay Group.

The new season will follow Rebus as he investigates links between Edinburgh's drug trade and the city's elite. The premiere date for the new season has not been officially announced yet.

'DEPT. Q' SEASON 2 CONFIRMED BY NETFLIX

Netflix has confirmed a second season of *Dept. Q*, starring Matthew Goode as Carl Morck. Based on Jussi Adler-Olsen's novels, the series follows a team tasked with reopening unsolved cases from an Edinburgh police station. The producers include Flitcraft, Left Bank Pictures, and Sony Pictures Television.

CBS RENEWS 'WATSON' FOR SEASON 2 WITH ROBERT CARLYLE TO PLAY SHERLOCK HOLMES

CBS has confirmed *Watson* will return for a second season, with Robert Carlyle stepping into the role of Sherlock Holmes. The first season of *Watson* took place in a modern-day setting without Sherlock Holmes, focusing instead on Dr. John H. Watson, who runs a clinic specializing in rare diseases.

The series blends elements of medical drama and crime procedural, and will reintroduce Holmes in the story with the new season.

'MOBLAND' OFFICIALLY RENEWED FOR SEASON 2 AT PARAMOUNT+

Paramount+ has confirmed a second season of Guy Ritchie's *MobLand*, following its record-breaking debut as the streamer's most successful launch. The finale drew over 26 million viewers, leaving fans eager for more.

Starring Tom Hardy, Pierce Brosnan, Helen Mirren, and Paddy Considine, the series follows the Harrigan crime family as they navigate gang wars and law enforcement pressure in London's underworld. The release date for the second season remains under wraps.

SECOND SEASON OF APPLE TV+'S 'WOMEN IN BLUE' IN PRODUCTION

Apple TV+ has renewed Spanish crime drama *Women in Blue* (Las Azules) for an eight-episode second season. Production is underway, with Bárbara Mori, Ximena Sariñana, Natalia Téllez, and Amorita Rasgado returning in the all-Latin American cast.

Set in 1971 Mexico, the series follows the country's first female police officers as they investigate a string of student murders linked to a wider conspiracy. Fernando Rovzar and Pablo Aramendi return as creators, and Lemon Studios as the producer.





BBC CONFIRMS SEASON 2 OF 'THIS CITY IS OURS'

BBC has renewed *This City is Ours* for a second season, following its success as iPlayer's biggest new drama launch of the year. The series stars Sean Bean, James Nelson-Joyce, and Saoirse-Monica Jackson. Created by Stephen Butchard, the show follows Michael, whose crime empire begins to crumble after years of drug trade. Produced by Left Bank (The Crown), it is distributed internationally by Sony Pictures Television.



'THE CROW GIRL' RENEWED FOR SEASON 2 AT PARAMOUNT+

Paramount+ has ordered a second season of crime thriller *The Crow Girl* for the UK and Ireland. Produced by Buccaneer Media, the six-part series stars Eve Myles and Katherine Kelly.

Based on Erik Axl Sund's novels, the series follows detective Jeanette Kilburn as she investigates the murders of young asylum seekers.



NETFLIX DEVELOPING 'MONSTER' SEASON 4 ON LIZZIE BORDEN CASE

The fourth season of Netflix's *Monster* anthology, centered on Lizzie Borden, will begin production this fall.

The cast includes Ella Beatty as Lizzie, Rebecca Hall as Lizzie's stepmother, Abby Borden, Vicky Krieps as Borden's live-in maid, Bridget Sullivan, Billie Lourd as Lizzie's older sister Emma, and Jessica Barden as Lizzie's actress friend, Nance O'Neill.



'TULSA KING' RENEWED FOR SEASON 4 WITH TERENCE WINTER RETURNING

Paramount+ has renewed *Tulsa King* for a fourth season, with Terence Winter returning as executive producer and writer. The series was Paramount's most-watched original series last year, gathering 21.1 million global streaming viewers with the season two premiere.

Sylvester Stallone will continue in the lead role, following a new deal signed last year. Samuel L. Jackson's character Russell Lee Washington Jr. will also be introduced during the new season, who will later lead the spin-off *Tulsa King*, currently in the works.



'BABYLON BERLIN' TO END WITH SEASON 5

German neo-noir *Babylon Berlin* is set to conclude with its fifth and final season, adapted from Volker Kutscher's novel *The March Fallen*. Filming wraps later this year with Tom Tykwer, Henk Handloegten, and Achim von Borries back as co-creators.

Set in 1933, the season will follow Charlotte Ritter investigating the murders of former soldiers after Gereon Rath vanishes. The eight-episode arc runs from Hitler's rise as Reich Chancellor to the March elections that cemented his power. The fifth season is produced by ARD Degeto, X Filme Creative Pool, and Beta Film, with no release date yet.



'C. B. STRIKE' SEASON 7 ADAPTATION PLANNED

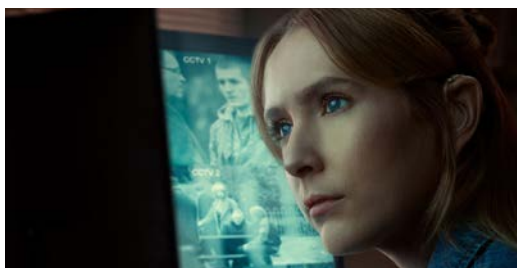
While not yet officially renewed, BBC's *C. B. Strike* is expected to continue with Season 7, adapting JK Rowling's novel *The Running Grave*. Screenwriter Tom Edge is confirmed to pen the script, with filming eyed for this year. The story of the novel sends Robin undercover in a religious cult while investigating a missing young man. However, she soon realizes the farm-based cult is a brutal and sadistic community, and survival depends on protecting her cover while exposing its horrific secrets.





'LUDWIG' SEASON 2 IN PRODUCTION

BritBox has confirmed production has begun on *Ludwig* Season 2. John Taylor, a puzzle-maker turned police consultant, will continue solving “impossible” crimes while searching for his missing twin brother. The first season was the BBC’s biggest new scripted hit since 2022, pulling 9.5 million viewers. A premiere date for Season 2 is likely in 2026.



ITV RENEWS 'CODE OF SILENCE' FOR SEASON 2

ITV has renewed the crime thriller *Code of Silence*, starring Rose Ayling-Ellis, who portrays Alison Brooks, a canteen worker whose lip-reading skills make her invaluable to covert police operations. ITV drama commissioner Callum Dziedzic teases that we can expect “another gripping case” in the second season, but there is no release date yet.



'PATIENCE' SEASON 2 IN THE WORKS AT CHANNEL 4

Channel 4’s *Patience*, adapted from the French series *Astrid et Raphaëlle*, has begun production on its second season. Ella Maisy Purvis returns as *Patience*, with Jessica Hynes joining as new detective Frankie Monroe. Season 2 will continue exploring neurodivergence while balancing romance, workplace dynamics, and unusual cases across York.



'SAINT-PIERRE' SEASON 2 BEGINS FILMING FOR CBC

CBC’s *Saint-Pierre* has started filming its second season in France and Newfoundland, with a 2026 winter premiere planned. The new run will feature two more episodes than in its first season. The breakout Canadian crime drama, which was CBC’s number one most-watched new series, follows Inspector Fitzpatrick, exiled to the remote French territory, where he and Deputy Chief Archambault face hidden criminal networks.



'THE MARLOW MURDER CLUB' RENEWED FOR SEASON 3

UKTV has ordered a third season of *The Marlow Murder Club*. Samantha Bond, Jo Martin, Cara Horgan, and Natalie Dew return as amateur sleuths tackling three new mysteries.

Cases include the sudden death of Marlow’s mayor, a celebrity chef’s shocking murder, and a manor house reunion that places one of their own among the suspects. The release date has not been confirmed yet.

'SUGAR' RENEWED FOR SEASON 2 AT APPLE TV+

Apple TV+ confirmed *Sugar* will return for a second season. Colin Farrell stars and executive produces the detective drama, with an extra-terrestrial twist. In Season 2, John Sugar is back in Los Angeles, taking on another missing persons case as he continues to look for his missing sister. A premiere date has yet to be announced.



'CRIMINAL RECORD' RETURNING FOR SEASON 2

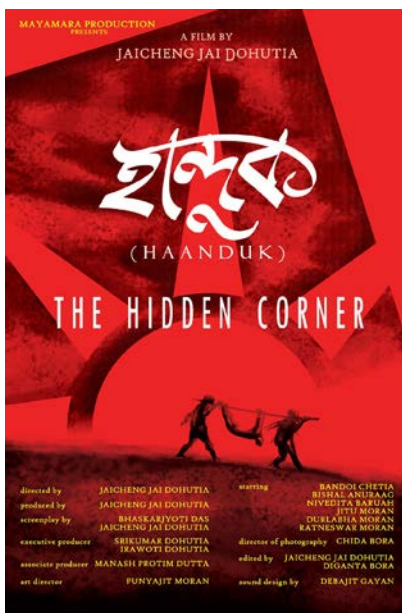
Apple TV+ has renewed *Criminal Record* with Peter Capaldi and Cush Jumbo reprising their roles. Season 2 follows DS June Lenker investigating a protest turned deadly. In the new season In Season 2, a young man is killed in a political rally, driving June to hunt the unknown killer. Her only lead is Hegarty, now entrenched in police intelligence. He may hold the answers, but his help comes with a perilous price. A premiere date is yet to be set.



ASIA'S LEADING STREAMER IQIYI

ON CRIME STORYTELLING VISION

BY YAĞMUR ÇÖL



As one of Asia's leading streaming platforms, iQIYI has built a strong reputation for innovative and high-quality storytelling. In recent years, the company launched Mist Theater, China's leading anthology for premium short-form suspense dramas, while expanding its slate with acclaimed crime titles such as *Mobius* and period dramas like *Records of Snow*.

In this interview, iQIYI's team explains why the crime and mystery genres remain one of their key strategic focuses. They also discuss the global success of their titles, the growing role of book-to-screen adaptations, and what audiences can expect next from the platform's suspense lineup.

I'd like to start with *Mobius*, one of the newest crime dramas in iQIYI's catalog. A story about a brilliant super detective, and I've noticed it's been receiving quite

high ratings from viewers. Could you tell us a little about *Mobius* and how audiences have responded so far?

Mobius is one of our latest crime dramas with a highly innovative narrative design. By incorporating a "time loop" concept into the traditional crime-solving process, it brings a high degree of uncertainty and intellectual challenge, creating a fresh and engaging viewing experience. Since its release, the series has sparked wide discussion on domestic social media. Viewers are fascinated by analyzing its intricate timelines and have resonated strongly with its "imperfect protagonist." Several episodic storylines, though independent from the main arc, became widely discussed "highlight moments" thanks to their quality. Keywords such as "fresh," "gripping," and "cinematic" frequently appear in audience reviews. Notably, the show was released simultaneously on Netflix in nine languages, quickly entering the top-viewed rankings in multiple overseas regions on its launch day, which validated its cross-cultural appeal and production quality.

iQIYI is a major global platform, and your catalog includes not only Chinese productions but also titles from countries like South Korea, Thailand, and Taiwan. In recent years, we've seen a notable rise in crime, mystery, and thriller series, films, and documentaries worldwide, along with growing audience interest in these genres. From iQIYI's perspective, how would you describe the regional and international interest for crime and its subgenres?

iQIYI regards crime and mystery genres as one of our key strategic focuses. We believe their global success stems from two core qualities: a profound exploration of human nature and universally resonant storytelling. Building on these foundations, iQIYI continues to expand influence and audience reach through precise promotion and operations. In recent years, we have seen outstanding results across various types of suspense content, including period dramas such as *Records of Snow* and the *Tang Dynasty Mystery* series; contemporary titles like *Bleach* and *Mobius*; as well as international station originals like the Taiwanese productions *The Victims' Game* and *Oh No! Here Comes Trouble*.

I also noticed that your catalog includes quite a number of book-to-screen adaptations. We're curious about the data behind these projects. Do you have adaptations specifically in the crime, mystery, or thriller genres? And within your overall adaptations, what proportion do these represent?

iQIYI created the "Mist Theater," China's leading anthology for premium short-form suspense dramas, which has maintained close ties with literary IPs since its inception.

Of the 24 works released under Mist Theater, more than 60% are adapted from novels or non-fiction literature, including 14 novel adaptations and one non-fiction adaptation. The sources are diverse: internationally renowned authors such as Keigo Higashino (*Kidnapping Game* adapted into *The Bad Kids*) and Seicho Matsumoto (*A Scene of the Crime* adapted into *Dislocation*); as well as highly acclaimed domestic novels such as *The Bad Kids*



(*The Hidden Corner*), *The Long Night* (*The Truth*), and *Moses on the Plain*. In addition, the non-fiction adaptation *The Dragnet* (from Shenlan's *Please Tell the Director, Mission Accomplished*) has impressed audiences with its documentary-like realism.

Do you currently have any co-productions in the crime, mystery, or thriller genres with creators/producers from other countries? Or are there plans for such collaborations in the near future?

At present, we have not co-produced in these genres with overseas creators or producers. However, we are eager to recommend iQIYI's "Mist Theater" to international audiences. Established in 2020, it is dedicated to delivering high-quality Chinese suspense content and has become a benchmark for the genre in China. Representative works

like *The Hidden Corner* and *The Long Night* have become classics, sparking broad social discussion and receiving international recognition. *The Hidden Corner* won the "Best Creative Award" at the Busan International Film Festival's Asian Content Awards and the Silver Bird Award at the Seoul International Drama Awards, while *The Long Night* won the "Best OTT Original" award at the Asian Content Awards.

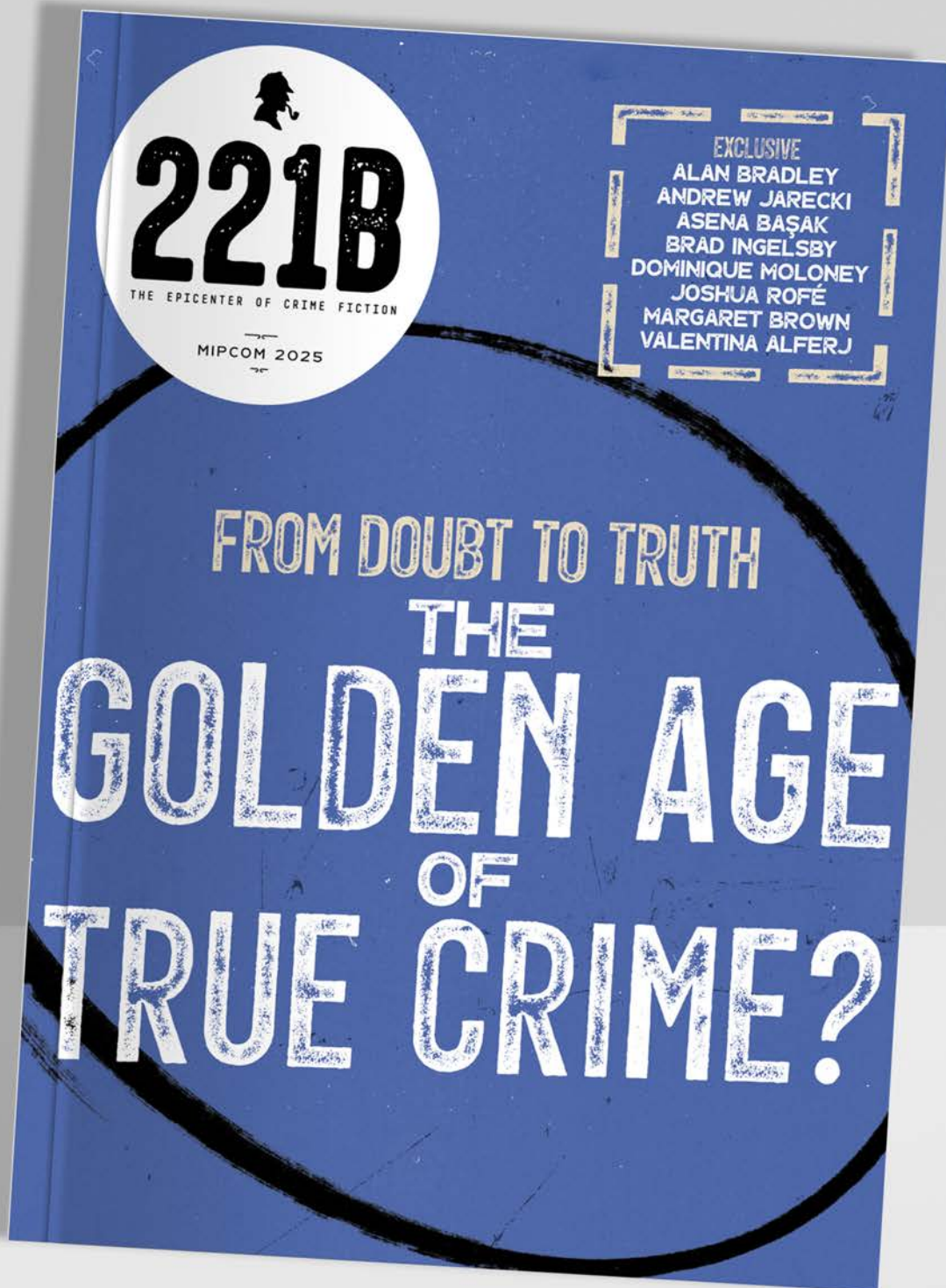
Mist Theater also continues to explore genre hybridity: *The Daughter Back Home* blends suspense with family drama; *Gold Panning* integrates hard-core adventure; and *Moses on the Plain* carries an arthouse sensibility. These works have not only achieved strong results in China but also reached broad international audiences through iQIYI's global distribution network, serving as an important window into Chinese-language series.

And finally, could you share which upcoming crime, mystery, or thriller titles iQIYI is preparing to launch in late 2025 or early 2026?

Several new suspense and crime titles are expected to be released in China and internationally between late 2025 and early 2026, including *A Life on the Line*, *Labyrinth of Shadows*, *Low-IQ Crime*, *Innocent*, *The Coming Night*, and *Eradication*. Please stay tuned.

"iQIYI regards crime and mystery genres as one of our key strategic focuses. We believe their global success stems from two core qualities: a profound exploration of human nature and universally resonant storytelling."

THE EPICENTER OF CRIME FICTION

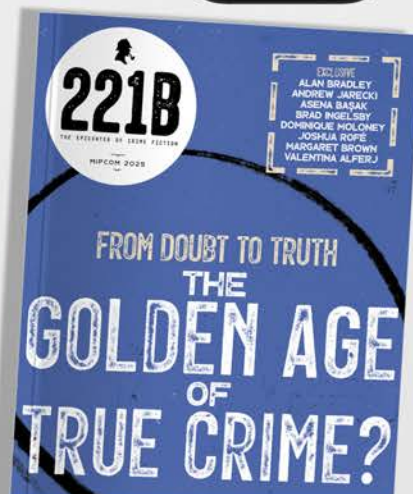
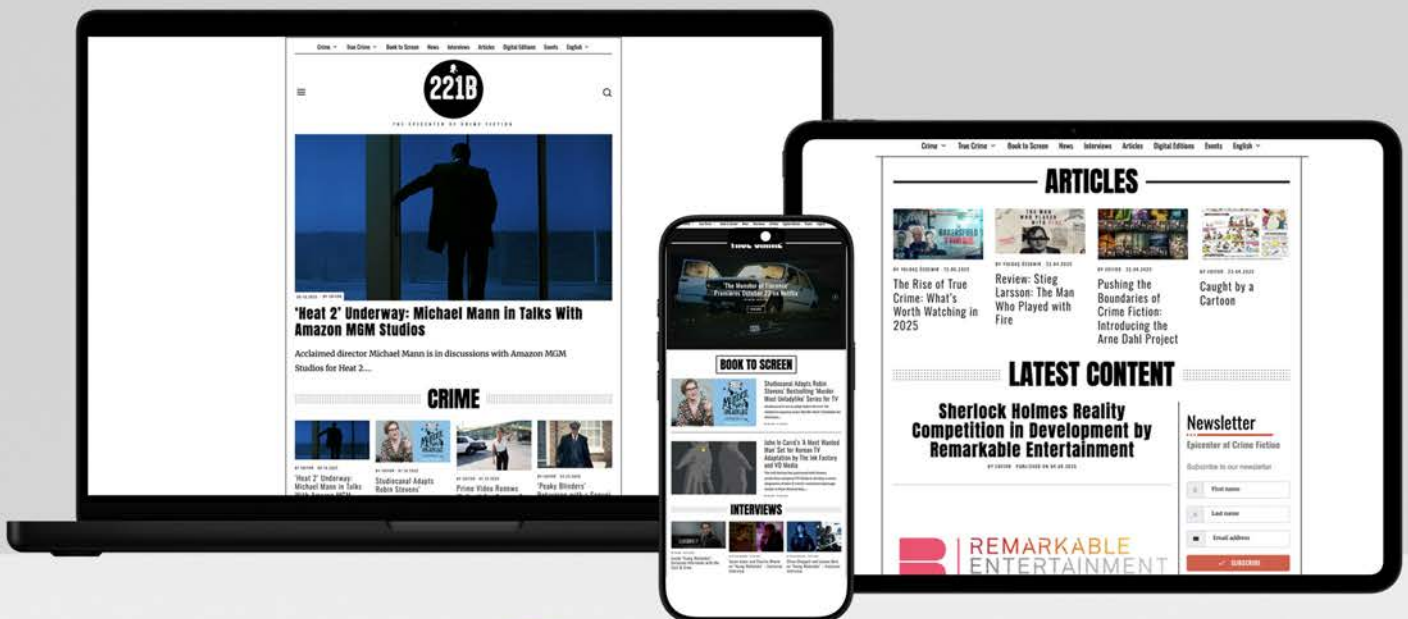


Subscribe to our newsletter: 221bmag.com

www.221bmag.com



THE EPICENTER OF CRIME FICTION



Get in touch: editor@221bmag.com

www.221bmag.com