

SERIAL PRODUCERS WORKSHOP

May 12-15, Berlin

THE PROGRAM



The Program (May 12th-15th)

DAY 1 - European series development

14:00 – 15:30 Sharing responsibilities & keeping the vision, by Frank Spotnitz

Frank Spotnitz, one of the pioneers who brought the American writers' room system to Europe, talks about the tension between shared responsibility and the need to follow a clear, shared vision. Who is responsible for maintaining this vision - the creative or the producer? What are the central tasks and challenges that producers should definitely master? What do they need to understand about the creative process in order to be able to manage it effectively? How do they manage the balancing act between creative and commercial requirements?

15:45 – 17:15 The European and the US Writers' Room, by Katrin Merkel

After a brief introduction to the US writers' room system, its development history, conditions and modes of operation, a look at European adaptation attempts is taken. Together, we will explore the question of which tools and working techniques are really effective in making fictional material development not only of higher quality and more consistent, but also more effective - both economically and organizationally.

DAY 2 – The Challenges of TV Production

9:15 – 10:45 Shifting the narrative, by Danna Stern

This session explores how macroeconomic pressures, shifting financial models, and evolving audience behaviours are transforming the way producers develop, finance, and position their content. We will examine how broadcasters, streamers, and producers are adapting to tighter budgets and fragmented viewership, while looking for creative and financial opportunities in local storytelling and a re-focus on local markets. We will review programming trends, creative compromises, and the business considerations driving scripted storytelling. What's changing, what's working, and where are the new opportunities?

11:00 – 12:30 Financing European TV Series Together, by Marike Muselaers

After going into Macro Factors and Market trends with Danna, Marike will dive into concrete examples of European co-productions and their financing plans and timelines, including deals with global streaming platforms, territory-by-territory deals with broadcasters and some of the in between options. She will discuss how different co-productions and deal structures can impact the creative process, long-tail revenue, control, ownership, marketing, distribution and a 2nd season commission. But this lecture is not just one way traffic. In the age of coopetition, be prepared to be part of the discussion as we will inspire each other with out of the box financing examples, unlikely alliances and new opportunities on the horizon.

14:00 – 15:30 Legal affairs in changing times, by Katharina Domnick

In this workshop we will focus on copyright and other legal aspects when it comes to collaborate writing and writing in teams. How can producers contractually organize the collaboration of different authors in the best possible way, create obligations, but also remain contractually flexible and react to changes in development due to the financing processes and requirements of co-producers and/or clients? How do you deal with demands from creators for involvement as head writer, creative producer or showrunner? What are the key elements and important negotiation points in such contracts? What contractual adjustments are necessary with regard to AI?

15:45 – 17:15 AI tools and workflows for media production, by Nira Bozkurt

This lecture offers an introduction to AI tools – both commercial and open-source – and practical workflows for media production across story development, production, and postproduction. Participants will also gain insights into essential ethical and legal considerations, as well as the latest trends shaping the future of AI-assisted media creation. With Q&A on individual questions and real-world applications.

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DAY 3 – Leading Creative People & best (European) practice

9:30 – 13:00 Leading creative people, by Linda Green

Does the talent on a project lack inspiration and new ideas, but you are not finding the right way to inspire them? Do you find that you give feedback, and it is not listened to? Do you know that the vision for the series is not on track but don't know how to explain what needs to change? Do you find that personalities are clashing, and you don't know how best to find a resolution? If any of these scenarios are familiar, then Linda will help to make your life easier.

Linda's Ted talk 3 P's are an essential guide to the three ingredients to leading your projects to deliver winning ideas; from knowing how to inspire innovation or new patterns, to leading with purpose and vision, to managing conflict with creative people; this is an opportunity to share your experiences, learn new skills and discuss practical solutions for leading creative people more easily.

14:30 – 16:30 Best Practices in European Rooms, with Andreas Bareiss, María García-Castrillon, Jeppe Gram and Klaus Zimmermann

With their specific backgrounds and national perspectives, the three guests will explore the question of what ideas of showrunning and visionkeeping are prevalent in their professional environment. By sharing practical experiences and case studies, the desired exchange with the participants will create a pan-European overview of mindset and working practices - a central prerequisite for international cooperation based on mutual understanding and trust.

DAY 4

Serial Eyes #12

Final Pitch

(optional)

10:00 – 15:00

The 12 Serial Eyes participants present
their series projects to the industry
in Soho House,
Berlin.

Our Guest Speakers

Andreas Bareiss – Executive producer

Andreas Bareiss ist seit 2018 Senior Executive Producer bei Gaumont Germany. Dort verantwortete er unter anderem die Netflix-Erfolgsserie BARBAREN (Staffel 1 & 2), die ZDF-Produktionen RESET und WESTWALL sowie die Sky-Serie DIE WESPE (Staffel 1–3). Aktuell produziert er die neue Netflix-Serie BONE PALACE. Seit 1994 war er an über 80 Kino- und Fernsehproduktionen beteiligt – viele davon preisgekrönt. Als Produzent wurde er unter anderem mit dem Deutschen Filmpreis, dem Bayerischen Fernsehpreis sowie als Executive Producer des Oscar-gekrönten Films NIRGENDWO IN AFRIKA ausgezeichnet.

Nira Bozkurt – Screenwriter & Producer

Nira Bozkurt is a screenwriter, producer and international speaker for AI. She studied screenwriting and film directing at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne until 2007. She teaches “Producing Interactive Media” and “AI Tools for Storytelling & Producing” at the Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg. She has been working with virtual reality (VR) and extended reality (XR) since 2016, with artificial intelligence for narrative VR experiences since 2019 and with generative AI tools since 2022. She is also committed to underrepresented communities.

Katharina Domnick – Lawyer

Katharina Domnick is a partner at the Berlin office of Brehm & v. Moers. She advises national and international companies from the media sector on all aspects of entertainment and media law. Her work focuses on advising national and international film projects (cinema, TV, streaming / VoD) in all matters relating to rights clearance, development, structuring, financing, production and exploitation. Katharina holds regular lectures and seminars on current legal issues surrounding copyright, media and entertainment law, inter alia for Serial Eyes at DFFB, Serial Eyes Winter Class, Berlinale Talents, in the master's program “Digital Media Law and Management” and “European Film

Business and Law” at the Erich Pommer Institut (EPI) in cooperation with the Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLFF. She is also head of studies in the “International Rights Clearance” programme at EPI.

María Garcia-Castrillon – Executive Producer

María has led Secuoya Studios' European Sales and Global Co-Production team since May 2024. Specializing in the audiovisual market, fiction and entertainment, her area is in charge of overseeing projects in development with an international focus, seeking alliances with production companies and networks around the world. Among her most outstanding projects are the executive production of CICATRIZ (Plano a Plano and Dopamine), EL OLOR DEL PASTO RECIÉN CORTADO or GRANITE HARBOUR (BBC). She has also been involved in co-productions (INÉS DEL ALMA MÍA, TVE) and adaptations (LOS MISTERIOS DE LAURA, NBC; FÍSICA O QUÍMICA, Telemundo).

Jeppe Gram – Showrunner

While working with acquisition of US series at Danish broadcaster TV 2 from 2000-2005, Jeppe Gjernig Gram fell in love with the format, and since graduating in screenwriting from The National Film School of Denmark in 2007, he has devoted his career to tv series. He was an episode writer on SOMMER, before developing BORGEN in 2008 together with headwriter Adam Price and Gram's film school writing partner Tobias Lindholm. In 2016 Gram launched his own show as a headwriter, FOLLOW THE MONEY, which ran three seasons on DR as well and was sold to numerous countries around the world. It too garnered a string of Danish and foreign prizes. New series are on their way. Parallel to his writing, Gram has helped found the European Showrunner Programme, the first course in tv series leadership outside of the US. He currently serves as Head of Program.

Linda Green – Leadership Coach

Linda is Founding Director of Leading Creative Talent, which provides idea development, training, and coaching to the TV industry. She is currently running Netflix's creative leadership program. At the BBC, Linda led

Our Guest Speakers

development on its biggest brands, including DOCTOR WHO, TOP GEAR and DANCING WITH THE STARS.

Katrin Merkel - Serial Eyes Head of Studies & Writers' Room Coach

Starting her career as a screenwriter and Script Reader Katrin worked since 2010 as a freelance dramaturge, script consultant and teacher for serial storytelling. In 2021 she published DER GERMAN ROOM together with her Co-Writer Timo Gößler. She is teaching serial storytelling and Writers' Room protocol at various national and international institutions. Since 2022 she is the Serial Eyes Head of Studies at DFFB in Berlin.

Marike Muselaers - Executive Producer

Marike recently joined the Nordisk Film Production management team (Denmark/Sweden/Norway) as Head of International Financing and Coproductions. She developed an interest for quality storytelling and international partnerships during her 15 years at the Lumiere Group in the Benelux. There, she was responsible for sales, acquisitions, coproductions and international financing in production and distribution, before co-leading the group as Lumiere's co-CEO. She is a member of the advisory board of TV Drama Vision and Nostradamus at the Göteborg Film Festival.

Frank Spotnitz - Writer & Producer

Award-winning US writer&producer Frank Spotnitz (CEO/founder at Big Light Productions) has created and executive produced series including the Emmy award-winning THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE, MEDICI: THE MAGNIFICENT and THE INDIAN DETECTIVE. As Core Tutor of Serial Eyes, Spotnitz leads its WR introduction workshop, teaching participants skills to implement their vision as series creators, as well as consulting on SE curriculum development as member of the board.

Danna Stern - Executive Producer

Tel Aviv-born, Berlin-based, Danna Stern is a seasoned content executive working across borders, genres, and formats. She is the founder and managing director of "In Transit Productions" focused on scripted and non-

scripted co-productions and strategic advisory to producers, channels, and platforms. As the founder of the Israeli-based yes Studios, Danna has been responsible for a succession of successful launches: FAUDA, SHTISEL, THE DEVIL NEXT DOOR, ON THE SPECTRUM and others.

Klaus Zimmermann - Executive Producer

Klaus Zimmermann is a leading international TV producer whose career began in 1993 at KirchGruppe, where he worked on major international co-productions including LES MISÉRABLES and LE COMTE DE MONTE CRISTO. In 2002, he founded Zimt Média, followed by Zen Productions in 2006, where he developed acclaimed projects such as LACONIA (ARD/BBC/Canal+) and THE BIBLE CODE (ProSieben/M6). Zimmermann was nominated four times for Germany's 'Best Producer' award for DIE PATIN, VULKAN, DIE GRENZE, and BORGIA. As Managing Director of Atlantique Productions (Lagardère), he launched globally recognized series including BORGIA, TRANSPORTER, DEATH IN PARADISE, and JO. Since 2014, he has led Dynamic Television as Managing Partner, producing international hits like TRAPPED, DAN SOMMERDAHL, and HARRY WILD starring Jane Seymour.

The Participants

Shanon van den Ancker (Netherlands)
Producer Assistant, Fiction Valley

Luisa E. Beck (Germany)
Sr. Producer & Editor, Audible

Saga Björn (Sweden)
Head of Production, Rainy Days

Gilda Demirtas (Germany)
SVP International Sales, Dynamic Television

Leon Döhner (Germany)
Producer, Beta Film

Lisa-Marie Eigenbrod (Germany)
Junior Producer, Real Film Berlin

Tania Gomes Barbosa (Germany)
Producer Assistant, BBC Studios Germany

Camille Grall (France)
Development Manager & Script Editor, Atlantique Productions

Lea Hirschberg (Germany)
Producer, Gaumont GmbH

Sophie von der Leyen (Germany)
Producer, UFA Fiction

Joséphine Pachta-Reyhofen (Germany)
Supervisor Development Original Production, The Walt Disney Company Germany

Robert Schaefer (Germany)
Producer, Network Movie Film- und Fernsehproduktion