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Anne Landois's speech at FSE European Screenwriters Award 2017

Anne Landois, showrunner and writer of the award-winning TV drama series “Engrenages” (“Spiral”), received the 2nd FSE European Screenwriters Award at a ceremony organised on 23rd November 2017 by the **Federation of Screenwriters in Europe (FSE)** in Brussels. “Engrenages” won the 2015 International Emmy Award for Best Series and has been nominated at the Globes de Cristal Awards four times, winning once.



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« Good evening everyone,

It's a great honor for me to receive this award from the FSE.

A great honor and more because I succeed Adam Price with whom I have at least one point in common. He wrote BORGES, a series on the danish political system of which no one knows anything, and I wrote SPIRAL, a series on the french legal system incomprehensible to the entire world, even for the French !

Joking apart, these 2 series which are very deep rooted in the reality of each country, are sold in more than 70 other countries around the world.

Strangely, when I used to write crime series at the end of the 90', I was always asked not to use too much reality of my country, to be spectacular, despite the reality aspects. The most important was to maintain a mainstream image accepted by everyone, and to imitate what already existed.

Today, I'm asked to explain SPIRAL's international success, even though the french legal system resembles none other. The police have no right to use their arms, lawers do not conduct investigations, judges do not use a gavel to maintain order in court, and criminals cannot ask to see a search warrant when the police knock at their doors at 6 in the morning !

What has changed ?

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Executive Officer David Kavanagh / Manager Amélie Clément

FSE c/o UNI-Europa, rue Joseph II, 40, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium / T +44.20.3287.3366 / F +32.2.235 0861 / info@scenaristes.org / www.scenaristes.org



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In my opinion what has changed is the role now given to authors over several years in the writing process. The public's appetite for original series, for complex, fragile, temperamental, heroic, cowardly – and therefore normal characters - has brought writers upstage.

When a series is ambitious, that suggests a universe, a vision of the world, characters full of defects and deeply human, you can be sure that there is an author behind it.

I recently heard a story of a french magistrate who confessed to the actor Philippe Duclos who plays Judge Roban in Spiral. He told him « When I have a difficult decision to make in a case I say to myself, what would Judge Roban do if he were me ?

On another occasion, a detective told me that during a phone taping session of 2 drug dealers, he heard one say to the other « Do you know the series called Spiral ? No, the other replied, what is it about ? To which the first said, it's crazy, it's about us ».

This recognition of the public, and I mean all members of the public, European, whether a judge or a criminal, is without doubt the most wonderful response to the freedom we have had in the creation which led us in the writing of this series.

This freedom in writing was possible thanks to our 2 important partners, whom I would like to warmly thank here tonight : the team at Canal + Fiction, and more particularly Fabrice de la Patellière and Véra Peltekian, and the Producer of Spiral, Vassili Clert. They have always been supportive and encouraging for the authors, in order to maintain Spiral at its High formidable category of a quality series.

I know other writers in Europe who are also as fortunate to have such valuable partners. Partners who have understood that the key to a good series is first and foremost content. One just needs to look at the quality, the richness and the diversity of european series as proof of this.

Share emotions, gather different audiences, take news from around the World... Series allow all this at the same time. For this to last, protect and defend the value of those who create. They will give you back a hundredfold.

Thank you again for this award. I am very grateful. »

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