

International conference

Call for papers

## EURONOIR

Producers, distributors and audiences of European crime narratives

*30 September to October 2 2019*

*Venue: Aalborg University*

### ***Confirmed keynote speakers***

Robert Saunders (Farmingdale State College, SUNY)

Arne Dahl (penname for Jan Arnald)

Annette Hill (Lund University)

Gunhild Agger (Aalborg University)

Anna Estera Mrozewicz (Adam Mickiewicz University)

Katrine Vogelsang (TV 2 Denmark)

Jennifer Green (TV 2 Denmark)

Hanne Palmquist (HBO Nordic)

Andrea Esser (University of Roehampton)

Although a widely popular genre for over a century, crime narratives are presently experiencing an unprecedented popularity all across Europe. In the fields of literature and television, we are witnessing a deluge of episodes and series utilizing crime and violence as a central source of inspiration. Reaching into the shadows of societal construction, these narratives do more than simply fascinate readers and viewers with fantasies of extreme brutality; at best, they express a remarkable tension in social engagement worthy of a critical and scholarly response. More than any other narrative genre, the crime genre has proven able to travel across the European continent and beyond, becoming a vehicle for cultural exchange and debate (Nestingen 2008).

As a result, the generic concept *noir* is now common among producers, distributors and audiences of crime fiction, and increasingly *noir* narratives have been located in recognizable places and regions across Europe. Several labels have been coined in order to identify different strands of EURONOIR by means of geographical qualifiers such as Mediterranean, Tartan, Catalan, Nordic etc. (Hansen, Turnbull and Peacock 2018). Besides evoking transborder cultural exchange, crime narratives are today a strategic means in European place branding on local, regional, national and transnational levels of communication.

Such spatial labels evoke local and regional narrative/visual styles that, carefully built by authors, publishers and producers, at the same time may achieve transnational

success in foreign markets. Exchange between different strands of EURONOIR is creating new opportunities for generic and cultural hybridization. The international appropriation of certain stylistic features of Nordic Noir (possibly the most popular cross-media production strand on the continent for the past decade) in a great number of European crime narratives is a most interesting case in point.

Through especially the 1990's, producers and distributors turned to international collaboration and circulation as a significant way of funding increasingly expensive film and television, here with the crime genre as an especially exploitable vehicle for international attention. In the increasing demand for crime film and television, producers turned to the vast European traditions of crime literature and utilized familiar franchises in crime narrative adaptations. The popularity of EURONOIR has since been fueled by a plethora of translations, co-production agreements, local, regional and transnational policy changes as well as transnational distribution channels and services.

Although EURONOIR is historically linked to the degrading notion of Euro-pudding, "a co-production determined by the necessities of funding" (Eleftheriotis 2001) or even "a perversion of the system" (Liz 2015), there has been a steady rise in successful trans-European co-productions, especially within film and television production. As a result, crime narratives are now rather labelled "natural transnational cop stories" (Bondebjerg 2016), since the topicality of the genre works very well with transborder activities. Significant transborder television crime fiction titles are *Eurocops* (1988-94), *Crossing Lines* (2013-) and *The Team* (2015-). As a concept, then, EURONOIR has gone from being a critical perspective on funding methods to now involve neutral references to cross-media crime fiction from somewhere in Europe (Forshaw 2013). Conceivably, EURONOIR is merely crime literature, television and film from anywhere in Europe, fostering potential social debates on a continental level.

In the new millennium, the "digital revolution" (Levy 2001) and "the Netflix effect" (McDonald and Smith-Rowsey 2016) has disrupted both production and distribution, challenging traditional distribution channels and providing new transnational opportunities for producers and audiences. In this context, written and screened crime fiction is one of the most important market drivers of transnational cultural exchange in Europe and beyond. Besides distributing dozens of crime titles, SVOD services also engage directly in producing crime films and serials, singling out crime narratives as an important way of penetrating local markets as well as reaching global audiences through digital streaming services.

The organizers invite speakers to present work on the production, distribution and reception of explicitly transnational European crime narratives as well as more local strands of European crime narratives production, distribution and reception. This includes significant market players and institutions in/across Europe, transcontinental creative and culture industrial processes and practices as well as more locally and regionally successful and less successful crime narratives. The conference invites papers on European crime narratives from 1989 until today.

*Thematic concerns of the conference include, but are not limited to the following topics:*

#### LABELS AND CONCEPTS

- What do we conceptualize as EURONOIR?
- What does EURONOIR mean for producers, distributors and audiences?
- What are the major failures and pitfalls of EURONOIR?
- In which ways do the production, distribution and reception of crime narratives forge a spatial negotiation of Europe and European cultures and identities?
- What will be the future major tendencies in European crime narratives?
- What role does national cinemas play within EURONOIR?

#### PRODUCERS AND MARKETS

- What are the significant contemporary European market players in crime production and distribution?
- How has the production and distribution of the crime genre changed during the past three decades?
- How has changing funding and media policies affected the production of crime narratives?
- How has production and distribution of crime narratives been affected by new transnational streaming services?
- Where are the crime stories located, and has the location strategies of crime narratives changed?
- Do writers and producers of crime fiction have specific European audiences in mind?

#### AUDIENCES AND RECEPTION

- (How) do the audiences of crime narratives conceive of Europe?
- How has the European consumption of the crime genre changed during the past three decades?
- How do audiences experience European crime fiction?
- In which ways has the critical reception of crime narratives changed?
- How does audiences' reception of crime narratives affect the production the crime genre?
- How do audiences creatively engage with European crime narratives?

The conference will include industry and keynote panels with invited speakers from European crime production and crime narratives research.

### *Deadlines and practicalities*

Abstracts:	Deadline: 15 April 2019
Feedback:	15 May 2019
Registration deadline:	1 August 2019 (online on the conference website)
Conference website:	<a href="https://www.en.cgs.aau.dk/research/conferences/euro noir/">https://www.en.cgs.aau.dk/research/conferences/euro noir/</a> .

Submissions are welcome as open call papers and pre-constituted panels. Submit your proposal (max 300 words) to through this website:  
<https://www.en.cgs.aau.dk/research/conferences/euro noir/abstracts/>.

Conference fee:	€240
Early bird registration	€175
DETECT members' subsistence:	€90 (covers only the meals)
PhD students:	€125
Conference dinner:	€85 (not included in the fee)
Other costs:	Participants cover costs for travel, accommodation etc.

Organizing committee: Kim Toft Hansen (Aalborg University), Lyne Stegger Gemzøe (Aalborg University), Pia Majbritt Jensen (Aarhus University) and Anne Marit Waade (Aarhus University).

Academic board: Stefano Baschiera (Queens University of Belfast), Anna Keszeg (University of Debrecen), Jacques Migozzi (University of Limoges), Valentina Re (Link Campus University of Rome).

The conference is hosted by the Horizon 2020 research project *DETECT: Detecting Transcultural Identity in European Popular Crime Narratives* and co-financed by Aarhus University and Aalborg University.