



# THE ROLE OF THE SHOWRUNNER - BREAKING THE MOULD

## SHOWRUNNING FORENSICS - SPEAKER BIOS

SPEAKERS ARE SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY.

ANY UPDATES RE SPEAKERS AND SESSION THEMES THAT MAY OCCUR WILL BE ADVISED TO PARTICIPANTS IN ADVANCE OF A SESSION.

### Lauren Schmidt Hissrich

Lauren Schmidt Hissrich is currently the Creator, Showrunner, and Executive Producer for the highly acclaimed Netflix show, *The Witcher*, based on the Polish book series of the same name.

Lauren is also Executive Producer on Netflix projects *The Witcher: Nightmare of the Wolf*, and *The Witcher: Blood Origin*.

Before that, she was a Co-Executive Producer on *Defenders* for Marvel/Netflix and on *Daredevil* for Marvel/Netflix. Previously, she worked as a Co-EP on *Power* at Starz, a Supervising Producer on both *Do No Harm* and *Parenthood* for NBC, and worked on *Private Practice* for Touchstone/ABC for two seasons.

She has also developed multiple pilots for CBS, NBC, and Bravo. Lauren started her career as a writer for Aaron Sorkin and John Wells on *The West Wing* for NBC where she spent multiple seasons.



### Chris Black

"Chris Black has had a prolific career in television working as a producer and screenwriter on a wide range of iconic hit shows that have earned praise from critics and audiences alike.

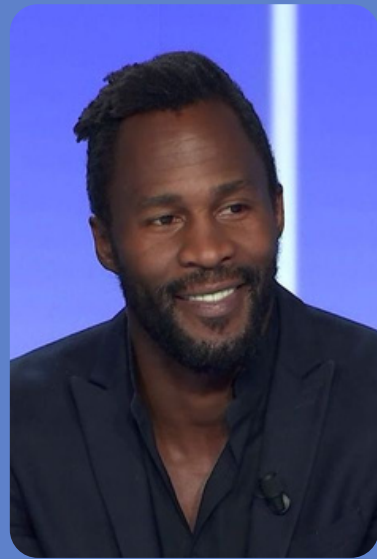
Black's credits include serving as Co-Executive Producer on AMC's Emmy and Golden Globe Award-winning "*Mad Men*." Black was also Co-Executive Producer and writer on ABC's Peabody Award-winning show "*Ugly Betty*," the show was his second with the network. The first was "*Desperate Housewives*," which Black joined in its record-breaking first season, serving as Co-Executive Producer and writer. He also co-executive produced and wrote on the sci-fi cult favorite, "*Star Trek: Enterprise*," as well as writing and showrunning the Cinemax series "*Outcast*" from "*The Walking Dead*" creator Robert Kirkman. Recently, Black contributed to the Amazon Studios hit "*Invincible*" and helped develop and served as Executive Producer on "*Severance*" from Apple TV+. He is currently the co-creator and showrunner of Apple's upcoming series set in the world of the Godzilla "*Monsterverse*."



Originally from Toledo, Ohio, Black is a graduate of the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts."

# Sydney Gallonde

Sydney Gallonde, the French producer of Harlan Coben-penned “No Second Chance,” launched Make it Happen Studio in 2017, a Paris-based independent production outfit. Financially backed by Alliance Entreprendre, a private equity subsidiary of Natixis group, Make it Happen Studio is dedicated to producing premium drama for French and international audiences. The company has also signed a first-look deal with MGM International Tv Productions.



Make It Happen Studio is producing and will release three productions in 2022: *The Reunion*, based on Guillaume Musso’s bestselling novel “La jeune fille et la nuit”, starring Ioan Gruffudd, produced with France TV, RAI, ZDF (The Alliance) and worldwide distributed by MGM International TV Productions; *Last Light*, starring Matthew Fox, for NBC Peacock, Viaplay (Nordic territories), Stan (Australia), MBC; and “Giant with Feet of Clay” (“Le colosse aux pieds d’argile”) starring Eric Cantona for TF1.

# René Balcer

René Balcer is well known as the showrunner, head writer and executive producer of the iconic television series *Law & Order*, as the creator and Showrunner of its hit spin-off series *Law & Order Criminal Intent*, and as creator/Showrunner of *Law & Order True Crime - The Menendez Murders*, an eight-part limited series for NBC starring Edie Falco. In addition, he created the Paris-based international hit series “Jo” starring Jean Reno.



In 2019, he created *FBI Most Wanted* for CBS, starring Julian McMahon and Dylan McDermott. The series was the top-rated new drama of the 2019-20 season and is presently in its third season. René’s feature *Highway of Tears* is currently in pre-production with Constantin Films. He is in active development on a series about Big Oil in Saudi Arabia for MBC.

René has also written and produced award-winning documentaries on art and China, including *Above the Drowning Sea*, the epic story of Jewish World War Two refugees in China. Narrated by Juliana Margulies and Tony Goldwyn, *Above the Drowning Sea* was the official selection at 31 international film festivals, winning a number of awards including Best Documentary at the Ferrara Film Festival.

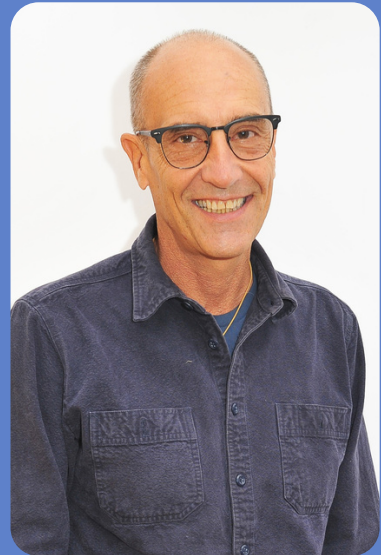
Balcer was a front-line cameraman during the 1973 Yom Kippur War, a journalist in Montréal and an editor at the National Film Board of Canada. He has won an Emmy, the Peabody Award, a Writers Guild of America Award and four Edgar Awards for his television work.

His writing on social issues has been recognized with awards from Planned Parenthood, the Alliance for Justice, the American Bar Association and other organizations. René has lectured widely about writing, art and the duties of artists in free societies, notably at Harvard, Columbia, NYU, UPenn, the Sorbonne (Paris), the Central Academy of Fine Art (Beijing), and the Journalists Club (Moscow).

# Maddalena Ravagli & Leonardo Fasoli

Maddalena and Leonardo's work together includes writing on all 5 seasons of GOMORRAH and on ZEROZEROZERO. Both series, originating from Italian creative teams, made an impact through international platforms and partners including Canal+, Sky, Amazon, the Sundance Channel and HBO Max.

Their perspective on DJANGO, an English language reimagining of the world of the original Italian film version, is due to premiere later this year, on Sky and Canal+ and, most recently, Netflix announced their new series THE LOTTO GANG.



# Willem Bosch

Willem Bosch (35) is currently showrunner and creator of Disney Plus' first Dutch original drama NEMESIS, and Viaplay's true crime drama THE HUNT FOR JASPER S, both greenlit to start shooting in the coming 12 months.

For the past ten years Willem Bosch has been one of the most prolific screenwriters in the Netherlands, working on Dutch hitshows as Van God Los (Godforsaken) and Penoja (Black Widow). His latest creation The Spectacular, an Dutch Irish co-production that he wrote and directed, earned rave reviews nationwide and is currently being sold to numerous country's around the world.



Last year, he sold his company to Dutch based production company Pupkin and became part of European Production Group Newen, based in France. Since then he works exclusively for Pupkin as a writer, director and producer.

# Dahvi Waller

An Emmy and WGA Award-winning writer and producer, Dahvi Waller is the creator, showrunner, and executive producer of the Emmy award winning series "Mrs. America" on FX on Hulu. She is presently under an overall at Lionsgate in addition to adapting nobel laureate Kazuo Ishiguro's novel "Klara and the Sun" for Sony.

Waller previously served as a writer and producer for AMC's critically acclaimed "Mad Men," as well as working as a writer and co-executive producer on AMC's "Halt and Catch Fire." Past television credits include the ABC series "Desperate Housewives" and "Eli Stone."

Waller taught TV writing at USC's film school for their MFA program. She hails from Montreal, and currently resides in Los Angeles.



# Bill Finkelstein

William M. Finkelstein is a New York City native, who wrote and produced NYPD Blue, Brooklyn South, Law & Order, Murder One, The Good Fight, and L.A. Law, for which he won an Emmy for Outstanding Drama Series in both 1989 and 1990.

He co-created and produced Cop Rock with Steven Bochco, and created and produced Civil Wars, which starred Mariel Hemingway.

Finkelstein created and wrote a law series, Justice: Qalb Al Adala, based in Abu Dhabi, which aired on Netflix. He also wrote Werner Herzog's Bad Lieutenant: Port of Call New Orleans, starring Nicolas Cage. Finkelstein's most recent project is East New York, a drama series for CBS.



# Neal Baer

NEAL BAER, MD, is an award-winning showrunner, television writer/producer, physician, and author. A graduate of Harvard Medical School, he lectures around the world on public health advocacy. Dr. Baer served as Executive Producer and Showrunner of *Designated Survivor* and as the Executive Producer of *Baking Impossible*, both on Netflix. He is also an Executive Producer of the new HBO documentary, *Welcome to Chechnya*, which won a Special Jury Award at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival, a Peabody Award, and was shortlisted for an Oscar for Best Documentary and Best Visual Effects.



Prior to *Designated Survivor*, Dr. Baer was Executive Producer and Showrunner for the CBS television series *Under the Dome*. Previously, he was the Executive Producer and Showrunner of the hit NBC television series *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit* from 2000-2011, where he oversaw all aspects of producing and writing the show. During his tenure on SVU, he received the Shine Award, a People's Choice Award, the Prism Award, an Edgar Award, Sentinel for Health Award, and the Media Access Award. Actors on the show were awarded six Emmys and a Golden Globe.

Dr. Baer was also Executive Producer of the groundbreaking NBC hit series *ER*. A member of the show's original writing staff and a producer on the series for seven seasons, he was nominated for five Emmy Awards as a producer. He also received Emmy Award nominations for Outstanding Writing in a Drama Series for the episodes *Hell and High Water* and *Whose Appy Now?*, for which he also received a Writers Guild of America nomination.

Dr. Baer is a lecturer on Global Health and Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School and a lecturer at the Yale School of Public Health. He serves on the Board of Fellows at Harvard Medical School. He is the editor of *Reshaping Human Nature: The Promise and Peril of CRISPR*, a collection of essays exploring the moral and ethical challenges posed by CRISPR technology, which will be published by Johns Hopkins University Press in 2023.

# Chris Brancato

Chris Brancato has written and produced over 250 hours of television, including such series as *"X-Files," "Law and Order: Criminal Intent,"* and *"Hannibal,"* and co-created the Netflix series *"Narcos."* In addition, Chris wrote MGM's popular gangster feature *"Hoodlum,"* starring Lawrence Fishburne, the sci-fi thriller *"Species II,"* and the upcoming *"Sherlock 3"* for Warner Brothers. He is currently the co-creator and showrunner of *"Godfather of Harlem,"* starring Forest Whitaker, currently in its third season on Epix.



He's won the Peabody award (*"Boomtown"*), two Saturn awards (*"Hannibal"*), Golden Globes and BAFTA nominations (*"Narcos"*) and a Writer's Guild award for his work on one of the Hundred Best Television Series (*"X-Files"*). From 2006 to 2011 he was President of the Writers Guild Foundation. He works closely with Autism Speaks and other charities.