



SERIES MANIA ANNOUNCES OFFICIAL “PROJECT EXCHANGE” WITH THE BERLINALE CO-PRODUCTION MARKET

**Ms. Laurence Herszberg announces “*Balaton Brigade*”
as winner to come to Lille**

LILLE, FRANCE AND BERLIN, GERMANY – March 2, 2021 – For the seventh year, Ms. Laurence Herszberg, founder and general director of Series Mania, announced today that Series Mania (August 26-September 2) and the Berlinale Co-Production Market (Berlinale), have once again formed a partnership agreement surrounding Berlinale’s Co-Pro Series (formerly known as Drama Series Days) and held virtually this year during Berlinale’s Series Market (March 1-5).

As part of the partnership, Series Mania and Berlinale have set up a “Project Exchange”, whereby one project pitched at Series Mania is invited to pitch again in Berlin, and, in return, Series Mania will invite a Berlinale project to pitch in Lille as part of its professional event, the Series Mania Forum, set to take place on August 30-September 1. The project chosen today and set to be presented in Lille is *Balaton Brigade*, an 8x 50’ historical spy drama produced by Joyrider and Film Force (Budapest). The series was created by Gábor Krigler, Balázs Lengyel, and Balázs Lovas, and directed by Ildikó Enyedi. It was also recently announced that Hungarian broadcaster, RTL Klub, has just signed on board.

“This year again, we are delighted to collaborate with Berlinale, to choose a project that will be pitched during the Series Mania Festival. Amongst the presented projects, one did particularly stick out to us: *Balaton Brigade*. We were drawn to the story’s original sunny lakeside setting, the complexity of the characters and its fresh and deliciously vintage tone. This period spy drama revisits a historical time that all Europeans think they know through a daring angle, allowing us to deal with our recent past in a way that is both thought-provoking and fun,” commented Herszberg.

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Series Mania – Berlinale

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Balaton Brigade, set in summer of 1986 during the Cold War, the series follows the leader of a small Stasi unit that is stationed at the Hungarian Sea: the Balaton Brigade. The unit is tasked with observing the East German holidaymakers to prevent them from meeting their relatives from West Germany and being infected with imperialist notions or even attempting to escape to the other side of the Iron Curtain. While trying to manage this unrealistic task of monitoring hundreds of tourists and the monotonous workload on extremely minor cases, the leader of the unit is faced with many challenges of his own. In hopes to protect his family from the East German doping machine, he plans to flee to the West. However, his plans are halted when he is presented with the career opportunity of his life.

ABOUT SERIES MANIA

Based in Lille since 2018, Series Mania - Lille / Hauts-de-France has become the biggest event dedicated uniquely to television series in Europe. Its festival offers exclusive world premieres of the greatest international series on the big screen, giving its audience - up to 72,000 spectators - 9 days of discoveries, parties and masterclasses with some of the most renowned personalities in the series world.

At the same time, Series Mania welcomes 3,000 international professionals from the television industry at Series Mania Forum and Lille Dialogues summit. Two key events for networking and business are now extended online with the creation in 2020 of Series Mania Digital Forum.

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