



**SERIES MANIA FORUM
ANNOUNCES WINNER OF THE CO-PRO PITCHING SESSIONS
AND RECIPIENT OF THE €50,000 PRIZE**

**Series Mania Forum Best Project Award given to the
Russian period drama series “Red Rainbow”**

LILLE, FRANCE – August 30, 2021 – Ms. Laurence Herszberg, founder and general director of Series Mania, and professional jury president Polly Williams, managing director, Federation UK, announced this evening the winning project of Series Mania Forum’s annual Co-Pro Pitching Sessions. Of the 15 projects selected and pitched on the first day of Series Mania Forum, the industry arm of the Series Mania Festival, the jury team selected the Russian period drama series *Red Rainbow* (8 x 50’) as winner of the Series Mania Forum Best Project Award.

Along with Williams, the jury included Daniel Campos Pavoncelli, (Italy), Head of Film and TV, Partner, Indiana Production PSA SPA, Sened Dhab (France), VP Digital Scripted, France Télévisions, Mar Diaz, (Spain), Fiction Executive Producer, RTV, and Maria Feldman (*USA/Israel*), Producer and Creator, Masha. Together they had the honor of presenting a check for €50,000 to producer Alexander Rodnyansky of AR Content/Non-Stop Production and writer Matt Jones. Based on a true story set in 1979 and as a result of a series of mistakes and misunderstandings, *Red Rainbow* follows three young gay activists from West Berlin who are invited to Moscow with an official visit. They are thrilled to see the country of their socialist dreams, not realizing that being gay is a crime there.

“We were incredibly impressed with all of the pitches, yet it was the strong story and LGBTQIA+ elements of *Red Rainbow* that helped us to reach a unanimous decision. The pitch was very original and at the heart of the story was a warmth. This is a narrative that is still very relevant today and a story that definitely needs to be told,” commented Williams.

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“The Co-Pro Pitching Sessions are one of the most anticipated part of the Series Mania Forum. We are delighted to be giving the €50,000 prize to Alexander and Matt for their wonderful period drama *Red Rainbow*. With its LGBTQIA+ theme, it is stories like this that will help build awareness. I have no doubt this series will soon find the perfect partners, and this once again confirms that Series Mania is the place where series begin,” commented Herszberg.

More than a hundred projects have been presented as part of the Co-Pro Pitching Sessions since its creation in 2013, including “The Head” (Mediapro/Hulu), “No Man’s Land” (Arte/Hulu) and “Devils” (Sky). This year, three series that previously participated in the Co-Pro Pitching Sessions are part of the Official Selection of the Series Mania Festival including: “Blackport”, “Jerusalem” and “The Last Socialist Artefact”.

About Red Rainbow

It’s 1979, and Soviet Central Committee Secretary KAPTINOV commits an idiotic blunder. While recruiting East German communist groups to visit the communist utopia that is the USSR, he accidentally invites a group of gay communists to the Soviet Union, where homosexuality is illegal and culturally unacceptable. ROBBIE, STEF, ARLENE, and the pug known as VLADIMIR arrive in Moscow. When the truth is uncovered, their translator LARISSA is given the impossible mission of ensuring that a) no one finds out they are gay and b) they don’t find out that no one knows they are gay. Larissa is promised promotion in success, disgrace and firing in failure.

The truth of course soon comes to light and shatters the group’s illusions about the USSR. But by then, Robbie has already met MAXIM, his love interest and a closeted gay man, though he doesn’t yet know that Maxim, like so many gay men at the time, is being blackmailed by the KGB to act as an informant on homosexuals. As the KGB smells something fishy and deploys operative YURI to spy on our group, Robbi, Stef, and Arlene continue their series of Moscow misadventures, along the way revealing to Larissa just how many people, some closer to her than she ever imagined, have to live a lie for fear of state violence and thuggery due to their sexuality. While Robbie and Maxim find love, Larissa and Yuri’s hearts begin to change, as another misunderstanding sees Yuri and Stef (who thinks Yuri is hitting on him) becoming friends.

As Robbie prepares for his climactic address to a crowd of USSR communists, Larissa and her superiors scramble to make sure he doesn’t make any mention of being gay.

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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.

<https://seriesmania.com/en/>

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