

Participants Alma X Netflix Writing Academy



Christoffer Carlsson

Hello out there, I'm a Swedish writer, trained in criminology. I was born in Halland, in the south of Sweden, where – incidentally – my latest set of novels take place. I started writing fiction long before I even knew what criminology was, though, so while the two themes of my work life are highly intertwined, they are so in ways that may not be as obvious as one might first believe. Telling stories have been part of my life since I was 9 years old, and it still gives me the same spark of energy and joy as it did when I first started out more than 25 years ago. My stories tend to grow out of two interconnected elements: character and place. I am drawn to small, very specific places – a village or a neighborhood, a small town – where big events take place and life's greatest dramas unfold. My experience of writing for television is very limited, but the few times that I have been involved in telling stories for the screen have been wonderful, enriching, and great learning experiences for me. I deeply look forward to participating in this program; see you soon!



Eskil Engdal

I have has worked as a reporter at the Norwegian newspaper Dagens Næringsliv for almost 30 years. Mostly with longform and investigative journalism. Several of these stories spins around themes like extreme luxury and decadence, moral and physical decay, cunning crime and the race for untapped resources. I have been covering wars and conflicts like the Arab spring, the fall of Gaddafi in Libya, wars in Iraq, Syria, Mali and Somalia, and have operated undercover in Zimbabwe and Venezuela. Most recently I covered the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. In 2004 I wrote the book "Berserk" – a travelogue which describes the life and times of the Norwegian viking-king Harold the Hardruler. In 2015 a collection of my journalism was published under the title "På Kjøret – fra Rockefeller Road til Verdens ende". My latest book: "Catching Thunder: The True Story of the World's Longest Sea Chase", has been published in 11 countries. I have received the SKUP journalism award for outstanding investigative reporting, the International Reporter's Journalism Award and the Golden Pen. Apart from that: Family man with two grown up kids, travels quite often with my own band, owns a dog and a motorcycle, loves histories about the human drama and hates things that doesn't move - from queues to thoughts.

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Kristina Sandberg

I am a 50-year-old fiction writer who lives in Stockholm/Haninge with my husband and two teenage daughters, and a cat. I have written seven novels and work as a mentor for the Creative Writing Program at the University of Linneus in Växjö, Sweden. Since 2015, I have been writing literary reviews and essays for Svenska Dagbladet and now I am a critic at the literary supplement of Dagens Nyheter. And I am also a licensed psychologist. When I'm not reading, writing, or watching TV series I love to garden and grow flowers, fruits, and vegetables in a sustainable and wild-life friendly way.

Between 2010-2014 my fictional trilogy about the housewife Maj was published in Sweden "Att föda ett barn" (2010), "Sörja för de sina" (2012) and "Liv till varje pris" (2014). The trilogy takes place in a small coastal town in Sweden between 1938-1970. It was a huge success among critics and readers and has received numerous awards. My latest novel "En ensam plats" was published 2021 and was widely debated in Swedish media.

The last year I have been collaborating with the Swedish director Åsa Kalmér to explore the opportunities to develop "The Maj trilogy" to a TV series or a film. Scriptwriters Åsa Lantz, Pauline Wolff and Jesper Cederstrand have been involved in the process. TV series are such an important way of storytelling today, and I really do love to watch interesting and compelling series – as well as I still love to read... But a good script is of course an essential part of the outcome of the TV series. At a personal level it is just the right time for me to challenge myself and develop new skills and techniques and be a part of a group of creative people. At the Netflix Writing Academy I will probably explore another project than "The Maj trilogy" and I look forward to see where I will be going with new ideas!



Henrik Langedahl

Henrik H. Langeland (b. 1972) is one of Norway's leading contemporary authors with a dozen published books, among them the novels Wonderboy, Francis Meyers lidenskap, Fyrsten, Verdensmestrene and Showtime! He studied at the University of Oslo, the Sorbonne and the London School of Economics, holds a doctorate in literary science and was for several years editor of Vinduetmagazine. Henrik has been co-writer and advisor for several Norwegian films and TV series, for example Occupied, Lykkeland, Thelma and Oljefondet. He has been involved in Norwegian business and community life in various ways, among other things serving on the boards of the National Theatre, the Norwegian Ski Association and the House of Literature, and is also a much sought-after lecturer –several thousand people have participated in his courses in narrative techniques, including many professionals from the film and TV series industry.

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Odd - Magnus Williamson

Hi! My name is Odd-Magnus, but you can call me «Odda» I'm a norwegian actor, comedian and writer. I'm married, got two girls at 4 and 12. Last year I wrote the script and played the lead role in my first feature film «Ingenting å le av» (Nothing to laugh about) ((available on Netflix in the nordic countries))



Shima Niavarani

Hello to you all (I don't know who's reading this, but "hi"). I'm Shima Niavarani. I'm an actress, in theatre, film and television, living in Stockholm, Sweden. I wasn't born there, and I grew up all over, but this is where I've been residing pretty much my entire adult life and my teens.

I have worked professionally for about 18 years and have been acting in around 60 productions, a few which I've also written and/or directed and occasionally co-produced. I've thankfully been able to switch frequently between drama, comedy, arthouse and entertainment, TV and cinema, fine arts and the wider public in Sweden. This is something I truly strived for and have always been intentful with. I believe that every story in any form, be it with the intent of commenting on itself or reaching the hearts of a larger crowd, is worth telling when it has a sense of urgency or has something to say. (Wow, that sounded pompous when I read it out loud, but apparently I didn't go back to rephrase it, so anyways...)

Writing has always been a natural part of my work, ever since I had my breakthrough with my own soloshow at the National Theatre when I was 19. It has been a great tool and an ace up the sleeve, when I for instance have hosted award shows and was able to write my own script and capture my own sense of humor to guide the audience along with. It's also been such a thrilling part of my own participation in productions, where I could brainstorm, develop character storylines and improvise dialogue easily, when been encouraged by the production to do so. But except for theatre plays and solo performances, that I've been creating from scratch, I am yet to actually write for the screen, in the industry I transitioned to from the theatre around 8 years ago. I guess I've always felt that the actual writing was a necessity and a foundation for the story to be told, but that the pleasure of actually getting to perform it was more my natural habitat.

But what has driven me to gradually move towards the writing process is that I've many times found myself within my work and out in the public discourse, reflecting on narratives, trying to give voice to different perspectives and in every sense influence the narrative in which the story is performed - basically the "how, why and to whom". Recently, I've simply just decided to grab the pen and write the stuff I also would want to see and experience myself. I really believe that telling stories through writing is such a powerful art, mostly in how it's further reflected on to the societal narratives we as people put ourselves and others in out in the world. And my aim is to be as good at doing it, or at least learn enough of the craft, as the stories I envision and hope to be told.

I'm participating in the Netflix Writing Academy with one of the ideas that I have scribbled down and submitted, that I would love to further develop. And I'm hoping I can bring back with me some great set of tools in how I can go about creating a story in the format of a tv-series.

I'm a tv-series junkie myself, although above all a cineast. But I believe TV-making as of a couple of years back has played such a vital role in showing a wide range of perspectives from all over the globe and re-mapping the idea of tradition, norms and reliable storytellers. It sounds cheesy, but I think the accessibility to things that people wouldn't normally seek out or be supplied with brings us closer together (I'm fully aware that this ain't a speech at the UN, but who's gonna make me stop? Obviously not me.) This shift in paradigm is interesting. (I'm actually proud of that last sentence and I agree with myself).

Uhm, I don't know what else to write in this presentation. My hobbies include thai kickboxing and staring up the ceiling, but I'm also a workaholic so it's a balancing act.