

# Five Drama Trends for 2015

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## Five Drama Trends for 2015

By The Wit

What are the 2015 outstanding trends in the effervescent drama genre? Where do writers and drama producers get inspiration from? Which are the trending topics that travel the most?

International research company The Wit has picked five creative and strategic streams that shape 2015's drama business.

Two content ideas and three market opportunities behind new drama series: Missing Children, Drug Trafficking, Scripted Formats, Dramas Based on Books and Country Agnosticism.

Find out more in this exclusive white paper.



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**Trend #1**  
**MISSING CHILDREN**

# MISSING CHILDREN

The ultimate drama motivation

2014

Whether central to the intrigue or rooting the characters motivation, missing and dead children are at the heart of many riveting drama series.



**Missing**  
India (Life OK)  
Telemundo International

Local version of the Chilean novela revolving around a missing 18-year-old daughter.



**Missing**  
South Korea (TvN)  
Telemundo International

Local version of the Chilean novela revolving around a missing 18-year-old daughter.



**The Third Eye**  
Norway (TV2)  
Shine International

A police detective tries to find his daughter who's been missing for four years.



**Happy Valley**  
UK (BBC One)  
BBC Worldwide

A police sergeant - whose daughter committed suicide - investigates a kidnapping.



**The Affair**  
USA (Showtime)  
CBS Studios International

The illicit relationship between a married father of four and a married woman mourning the loss of her child.



**Gracepoint (Broadchurch)**  
USA (FOX)  
Shine International

Local adaptation of the UK format, about the mysterious death of a young boy in an picturesque seaside town.



**The Missing**  
UK (BBC One)  
All3Media International

A father's efforts to find his son, who was abducted while on holiday in France.

# MISSING CHILDREN

The ultimate drama motivation

2015

Whether central to the intrigue or rooting the characters motivation, missing and dead children are at the heart of many riveting drama series.



## Jordskott

Sweden (SVT1)  
ITVS GE

A female detective returns to her small town ten years after the disappearance of her daughter to work on a missing boy case.



## Secrets and Lies

USA (ABC)  
Cineflix Rights

Local version of the Australian thriller about a family man who finds the body of a boy and becomes a suspect.



## The Returned

USA (A&E)  
Zodiak Rights

Local version of the French drama about a small town turned upside down when several local people presumed dead, suddenly reappear.



## Under suspicion

Spain (Antena 3)  
Beta Film

Two detectives investigate the disappearance of a seven-year-old girl who goes missing on the day of her first communion in a small village.



## Tod eines Mädchens (Death of a girl)

Germany (ZDF)  
ZDF Enterprises

In a quiet town on the Baltic coast, a teenage girl is found dead on the beach.

## Broadchurch season 2

UK (ITV)  
Shine International

The trial following season 1 + new case of missing girls.

## Le secret d'Elise (Marchlands)

France (TF1)  
ITVS GE

Local adaptation of the UK format about three families living in the same house in 3 different eras, all linked by the spirit of a girl.

## Malaterra (Broadchurch)

France (France 2)  
Shine International

Local adaptation of the UK format.

## Disparue (Desaparecida)

France (France 2)  
Grupo Ganga

Local adaptation of the Spanish format about a teenager who disappears after an evening out.



**Trend #2**  
**DRUG TRAFFICKING**

# DRUG TRAFFICKING HELPS LATIN SERIES TRAVEL

Colombia/USA/Mexico join forces to produce narconovelas

Drama series from Latin America revolving around the drug trade seem to have a better chance of breakthrough in the international mainstream market than the usual telenovela storyline.

2014



**In the Jaws of the Wolf**  
USA (UniMás)  
SPTI

Based on a book about an engineer who rose to become head of security for the Cali cartel., and led to its downfall.



**The Dark Widow**  
USA (UniMás)  
Caracol International

Bio novela on the life of Griselda Blanco, the most notorious Colombian drug dealer.



**Acero, Woman of Steel**  
USA (Telemundo)  
Telemundo International

An attractive Mexican woman makes up a name for herself among the drug dealing kingpins.



**Lord of the Skies**  
USA (Telemundo)  
Telemundo International

In the 90s, one of the biggest drug lords in the country decides to change names and faces.

In Canada as well...



**The Godmother**  
French Canada (Series+, 2014)  
Armoza Formats

A woman born in Colombia smuggles cocaine into Montreal and helps launder money.



**Le Clan**  
French Canada  
(ICI Radio Canada, 2015)

A reformed criminal is using a fake identity after testifying against his accomplices in a drug trafficking ring.

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## DRUG TRAFFICKING HELPS LATIN SERIES TRAVEL

Real-life based, action-packed « super series » (60-80 episodes) are trending in Hispanic US

### 2015



**Lords of the Paradise**  
USA/Chile (Telemundo/TVN)  
Telemundo International

Telenovela charting the real-life story of a drug lord widow who got involved in the "drug wars" in Florida in the 80s.



**Shot of Grace**  
USA (UniMás)  
Caracol International

A lousy actor is forced by a powerful drug lord to become his double to hoax the justice system.



**The Devil's Corner**  
USA (UniMás)  
RCN International

A female cop works undercover among drug dealers.



**El Capo season 4**  
Colombia (RCN)  
RCN International

The destiny of the leader of a drug trafficking ring who's become the richest and most wanted man in the country.

### Upcoming

**Narcos**  
World (Netflix)

Biographical series that chronicles the life and death of Pablo Escobar

**El Dandy**  
USA (UniMás)  
SPTI

Crime telenovela inspired by the Oscar-nominated gangster film Donnie Brasco.

**Ruta 35**  
USA (Univision)  
Cisneros Media Dist.

Telenovela about the "Ruta 35", a repentance system offered by the American legal system to drug dealers.

**Miss Gunpowder**  
Mexico (Canal 5)  
SPTI

A beautiful woman falls for a hit man only to find out that he belongs to one of Mexico's most powerful drug cartels.

# NARCONOVELAS: THE BIONOVELA CULTURE

Deeply rooted in Colombia, growing in Latin America

Narconovelas are part of a “biographical novela” tradition in Colombia: dramas charting the lives of “heroes” of pop culture: drug lords, but also... football players, musicians, singers.

## 2014 in Colombia



**Niche**  
Colombia (Caracol)  
Caracol International

Musical bio-novela about Colombian salsa band Niche, known in the entire world since the early '80s.



**La ronca de oro**  
Colombia (Caracol)  
Caracol International

Biographical telenovela about the life of Helenita Vargas, one of the most popular Colombian singers.



**La selección**  
Colombia (Caracol)  
Caracol International

Series about the golden age of the Colombian football, led by the national team of Valderrama.

## 2014 in Latin America



**Sudamerican Rockers**  
Chile (CHV, 2014)

Drama series about the debuts of legendary rock group Los Prisioneros in the 1980s Chile.



**Viudas e hijos del rock and roll**  
Argentine (Telefe, 2014)

Telenovela named after the cult band *Viuda e hijas de Roque Enroll*, set in a music radio. The band regularly appears in the series.



**Goleadores**  
Peru (Latina TV, 2014)

Period drama series about the Peruvian football team during the 1936 Olympic Games.

## MUSICAL BIONOVELAS

The next Colombian export to the US?

Two unauthorized biopics, two of the most-buzzed-about premieres of the season !

2014



**Aaliyah: The Princess of R&B**  
USA (Lifetime)

TV movie based on the bestselling book "Aaliyah: More Than a Woman", by Christopher Farley, which chronicles the R&B Superstar's rise to fame and tragic death.

2015



**Whitney**  
USA (Lifetime)

TV movie executive produced by Angela Bassett, which chronicles the headline-making relationship between the iconic singer and husband Bobby Brown

As Colombian series rely on cartels, Italian series get help from the mafia mythology to go global

## 2014



**Gomorrah**  
Italy (Sky Atlantic)  
Beta Film

Adaptation of the eponymous novel/feature movie by Roberto Saviano, about the Neapolitan Camorra.

## 2015



**1992**  
Italy (Sky Atlantic)  
Beta Film

Thriller looking back at a massive political corruption scheme linked to the mafia investigated in Milan in 1992.

## Upcoming



**Zero Zero Zero**  
Italy  
Tandem Communications

Adaptation of Saviano's novel, a sequel to global bestseller Gomorra revolving around the cocaine trade.



**Trend #3**  
**SCRIPTED FORMATS**

## SCRIPTED FORMATS

Great stories have no homeland

*New scripted shows based on foreign formats in 2014*

87

5%

*New scripted formats 2014: new scripted shows launched in 2014 with an upcoming adaptation abroad*

17

# SCRIPTED FORMATS

The most adapted Scripted Formats of 2014 came from Spain



The everyday work of Laura, a detective who uses her intuition and instinct to solve cases.



Six teens who are patients in the children's wing of a big city hospital, become unlikely friends.

## Los misterios de Laura

Spain (TVE, 2009)  
Boomerang International

## Polseres Vermelles

Spain (TV3, 2011)  
Filmax International

**The Mysteries of Laura**  
USA (NBC)

**Rechercheur Ria**  
Netherlands  
(SBS6)

**Red Band Society**  
USA (FOX)

**Braccialetti Rossi**  
Italy (Rai1)

**2014**

**Mama Detektiv**  
Ukraine (STB)

**Pulseras rojas**  
Chili (TVN)

**Upcoming**

**I misteri di Laura**  
Italy (Canale 5)

**Red Band Society**  
Germany (VOX)

**Krasnyje Braslety**  
Russia (1TV)

**Pulseras rojas**  
Peru (AméricaTV)

2015



**The Gordin Cell**  
ISRAEL (Yes Drama, 2012)  
Keshet International

The spy parents of an officer in a high-security post are tasked with recruiting him into espionage activity.



**Spy**  
SOUTH KOREA (KBS2)



**Allegiance**  
USA (NBC)

2015

Upcoming



**Prisoners of War**  
ISRAEL (Channel 2, 2010)  
Keshet International

After years in captivity, a group of soldiers are returned to their country.



**Rodina**  
RUSSIA (Rossija1)

MEXICO/USA

SOUTH KOREA

TURKEY

BRAZIL

2015



**Secrets and Lies**

Australia (Ten, 2014)  
Cineflix Rights

Thriller about a family man who finds the body of a boy and becomes the prime suspect.



**Secrets and Lies**

USA (ABC)

2015

Upcoming



**The Returned**

France (Canal+, 2012)  
Zodiak Rights

Drama about a small town turned upside down when several local people presumed dead suddenly reappear.



**The Returned**

USA (A&E)

RUSSIA (1TV)

ITALY (Sky Atlantic)

**2015**

**Upcoming**



**Little Mom**

Israel (Channel 10, 2013)  
Dori Media International

**Nie rób scen**  
Poland (TVN)

FRANCE (TF1)

UKRAINE (TET)

Four very good female friends would like to be glamorous but their reality is very different.

**2015**

**Upcoming**



**The Man of Your Dreams**  
Argentina (Telefe, 2011)  
Telefe International



**O Homem da Sua Vida**  
BRAZIL (HBO)

ECUADOR (Telemazonas)

COLOMBIA (RCN)

MEXICO (Azteca 13)

An unattached father agrees to work for a dating service by charming his female clients.

# STEPHEN KING

## 11/22/63

A NOVEL

U. S. Weather  
Cloudy, wind  
tonight  
Temp range: 52-

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1963

# JFK SLAIN IN DALLAS

# LBJ TAKES OATH

First Lady Emerges  
Unharmmed; Shooter  
Charged as Killer  
by MAX H. LITTELL

Trend #4  
DRAMAS BASED ON BOOKS

## DRAMAS BASED ON BOOKS

A classic opportunity on the rise

*New dramas based on books in 2014 (incl. comic books)*

9%

*New dramas based on books in 2014 (excl. comic books)*

8%

*New dramas based on books in 2013 (excl. comic books)*

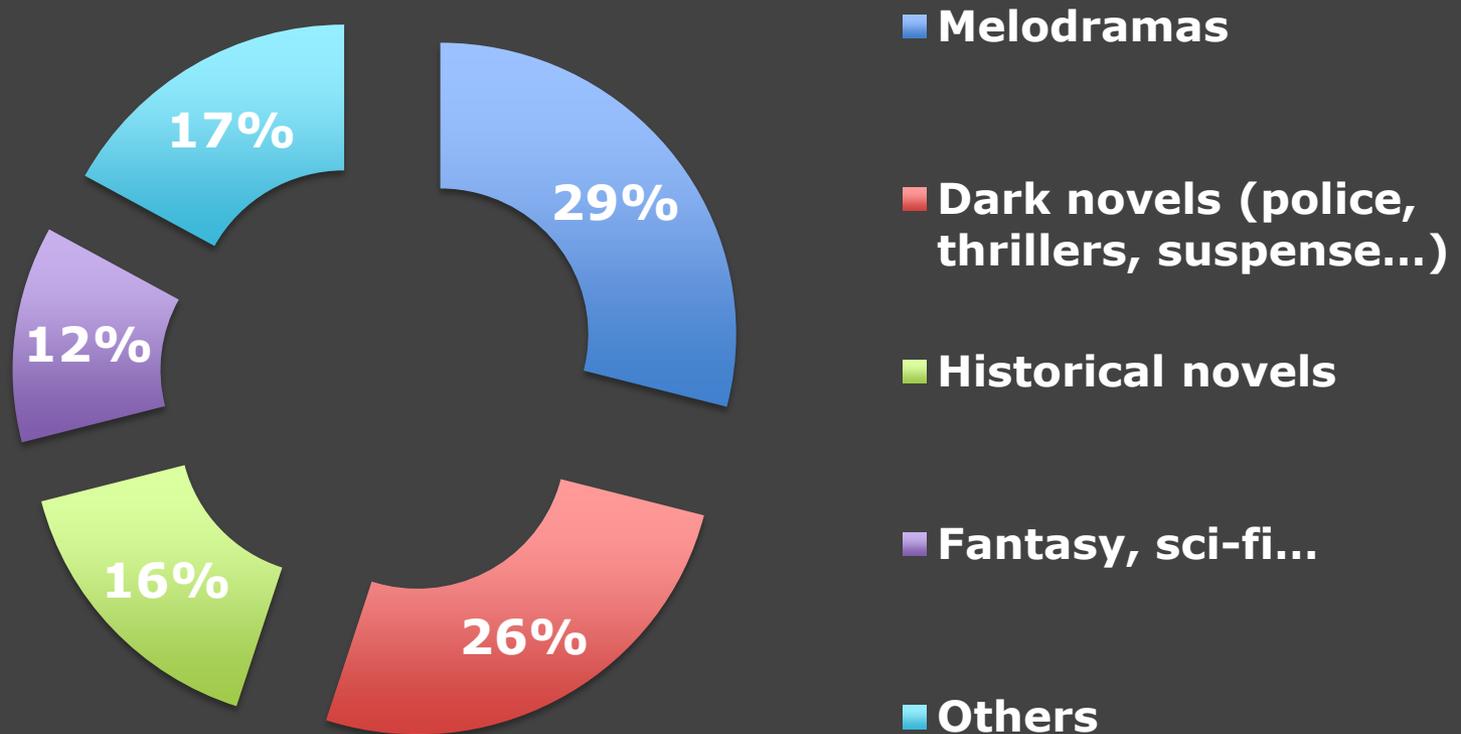
7%

+22%



## DRAMAS BASED ON BOOKS

Melodramas and police stories are the most inspiring



## DRAMA SERIES BASED ON BOOKS

New international Hit series of **2014** based on books

**2014**



### **The Last Ship**

USA (TNT)  
WBTD

Based on the novel by William Brinkley. The crew of a naval destroyer must adapt to a new existence when a pandemic decimates most of the Earth's population.



### **The Strain**

USA (FX)  
20th Century Fox  
Television Distribution

Adaptation of the book trilogy by Guillermo Del Toro and Chuck Hogan, about a vampire virus that infects New York.



### **The Musketeers**

UK (BBC One)  
BBC Worldwide

A new take on Alexandre Dumas' novel "The Three Musketeers".



### **Gomorrah**

Italy (Sky Atlantic)  
Beta Film

Adaptation of the eponymous novel by Roberto Saviano also adapted as a theatrical movie in 2008.

## DRAMA SERIES BASED ON BOOKS

In **2015** > Noir crime & Period dramas

### Noir crime

### Period dramas



#### Backstrom

USA (FOX)  
20th Century Fox Television  
Distribution

Based on Swedish criminologist and novelist Leif G.W. Persson's hit series of books featuring a misanthropic police officer.



#### Bosch

USA (Amazon Instant Video)  
Red Arrow International

Based on Michael Connelly's novels following the investigations of a veteran police homicide detective.



#### Wolf Hall

UK / USA (BBC Two / PBS)  
BBC Worldwide

Based on Hilary Mantel novel portraying a fictional account of Thomas Cromwell's rise to power in the court of Henry VIII



#### The Book of Negroes

English Canada (CBC)  
eOne Distribution

Based on the novel by Lawrence Hill depicting the journey towards freedom of an African woman enslaved in South Carolina.

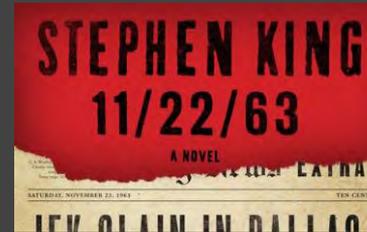
By the same author

#### Death Of A Pilgrim

Sweden (SVT1, 2013)  
ZDF Enterprises

#### Another Time, Another Life

Sweden (SVT1, 2014)  
SVT Sales



#### 11/22/63

USA (Hulu.com)  
WBTD

Based upon the best-selling 2011 novel of S. King. A thriller starring James Franco in which a high school English teacher travels back in time to prevent the assassination of President JFK.

# DRAMA SERIES BASED ON BOOKS

US 2014-2015 new series (loosely) based on comic book franchises

**2014**



## **Gotham**

USA (FOX)  
WBTD

Prequel to the adventures of Batman that explores the origin stories of Commissioner Gordon and notorious Batman villains.



## **The Flash**

USA (The CW)  
WBTD

Spin-off of the series Arrow, centered on the DC Comics superhero character Dr. Barry Allen, a.k.a. The Flash.



## **Constantine**

USA (NBC)  
WBTD

Fantasy drama based on DC Comics' about an irreverent con man-turned-reluctant supernatural detective .



## **Marvel's Agent Carter**

USA (ABC)  
DMD

Drama that brings back Captain America's girlfriend Peggy Carter, a budding secret agent.



## **iZombie**

USA (The CW)  
WBTD

TV adaptation of the DC Comics 'iZombie', about a med student-turned-zombie.



## **Marvel's Daredevil**

USA (Netflix)  
NETFLIX

Sci-fi series focused on Marvel hero Daredevil, a blind and flawed superhero with extraordinary senses.

## **Next on Netflix:**

**Marvel's A.K.A.  
Jessica Jones**

**Luke Cage**

**Iron Fist**

**The Defenders**

**2015**



**Trend #5**

**COUNTRY AGNOSTICISM**

## COUNTRY AGNOSTICISM

### The Turkish breakthrough

Turkish series have taken over Latin America & beat telenovelas on their own ground!

Prime time ratings leaders in Chile / Argentina



#### 1001 Nights

Turkey (Kanal D, 2006)  
Global Agency

An architect is forced to spend a night with her boss in exchange for the money needed for the surgery of her leukemic son.



#### Fatmagul

Turkey (Kanal D, 2010)  
Kanal D Sales

A young woman of humble origins is raped by four men from rich families.



#### Ezel

Turkey (ShowTV, 2009)  
Eccho Rights

Betrayed by his friends and the woman he loved, a man takes a new identity to exact his vengeance.

### Are Turkish scripted formats next?



#### Game of Silence

Turkey (ShowTV, 2012)  
Global Agency

An attorney is about to lose his perfect life when his long-lost childhood friends threaten to expose a dark secret from the past.

Pilot order (USA, NBC)



#### The End

Turkey (ATV, 2012)  
Eccho Rights

The story of a wife whose life is turned upside down when her husband is involved in a plane crash. She later discovers he never boarded the plane.

Pilot order (USA, NBC)

## COUNTRY AGNOSTICISM

Great stories have no homeland

### Continental European drama breaks into the USA and the UK



#### **Gomorrah**

**Italy** (Sky Atlantic, 2014)

Beta Film

Thriller series based on R. Saviano's best-seller about the Neapolitan Camorra.

Italy/Germany coproduction,  
Aired on Sky UK & sold to 100 territories



#### **The Returned**

**France** (Canal+, 2012)

Zodiak Rights

Drama set in a small town where dead people suddenly reappear.

Aired on Channel 4 (UK) / Sundance (USA), over 70 territories  
Sold as a format in the USA



#### **Mysteries of Laura**

**Spain** (TVE, 2009)

Boomerang International

Drama about a detective & mother who uses her intuition and instinct to solve cases.

Sold as a format in the USA

### Danish don't export only Nordic Noir, they now export family comedy!



#### **Rita**

**Denmark** (TV2, 2012)

LevelK

The eventful life of a school teacher who has to juggle her work and family life, especially raising her three children.

Season 3 co-financed by  
Netflix (USA)

Format adaptation > soon in  
France (TF1)

# COUNTRY AGNOSTICISM

Continental European drama breaks into the USA and the UK



**1992**

**Italy** (Sky Atlantic, 2015)

Beta Film

Thriller using multiple storylines to look back at a massive political corruption scheme linked to the mafia investigated in Milan in 1992.

Launched the same day on all 5 Sky markets including Sky Arts (UK)



**Deutschland 83**

**Germany** (RTL, 2015)

FremantleMedia International

In 1983, in the backdrop of the euro missiles crisis, a young Stasi spy is sent to West Germany.

Sold to Sundance (USA)



**Cordon**

**Belgium North** (VTM, 2014)

WBTD



**Witnesses**

**France** (France 2, 2015)

NeweN International

Set in Northern France, an investigation on a bizarre case involving grave-robbing and the placement of corpses in model homes.

Sold to Channel 4 (UK)

Thriller about a deadly and contagious virus that strikes in the centre of Antwerp.

Pilot order (remake) in USA (The CW)

# About the Author

## The Wit

**The Wit - World Information Tracking** - is on a mission to feed its proprietary FreshTV database everyday with new TV and digital content news, trends, practices, from around the world in order to help its subscribers (broadcasters, producers, advertisers) come up with the TV & digital hits of tomorrow.

The Wit recently published two drama guides:

- The 2015 edition of **The Wit Guide to Scripted Formats**, including The Scripted Formats Trend Report (charts and analytics) and The Online Scripted Formats database access allowing to search, browse, filter, export all past, present and upcoming scripted formats.

- **The Wit Soaps & Telenovelas Guide 2015**: an overview and trend analysis of the soaps & telenovelas on air in Europe, Turkey, Russia, Latin America, South Korea, Japan, India.

To know more, please contact [thewit@thewit.com](mailto:thewit@thewit.com).

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