

French Lit Nights of Hollywood launched in L.A. with Dana Ziyasheva's spy thriller "Shock"

Initiated by French-American producer Igor Darbo, the first French Lit Nights of Hollywood presented novelist Dana Ziyasheva at The Last Bookstore in L.A.

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, July 27, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The inaugural edition of the new literary series at the Last Bookstore gathered Francophiles and those interested in the work of [Dana Ziyasheva](#). The L.A. based French-Kazakh filmmaker is the author of "[Shock](#)", a novel about a young French idealist turned mercenary at the dusk of the century, published in France this year.



The Last Bookstore hosts Dana Ziyasheva and Igor Darbo for the first French Lit Night of Hollywood

Based on real events, "Shock" is a dive into the mind of a young mercenary, a pertinent topic given the presence of both US and French volunteers on the ground in Ukraine. The audience was captivated by tales of Ziyasheva's adventures on the trail of "Shock's" hero that took her mountain hiking with Karen guerillas in Myanmar, mingling with war veterans and mercenaries in Bosnia, chasing a French secret service agent in Ireland while 7-month pregnant, and a lightning strike investigative mission to Comoros.

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With the French Lit Nights, I want to create a curated and fun space for French authors to shine in Hollywood, meet their readers and connect with talent agents, managers and producers.”

Igor Darbo

The French Lit Nights of Hollywood series was imagined by Igor Darbo, French-American producer, who worked both on set and in post-production on shows like Keanu Reeves' executively produced "Kung Fu Man", "The Hunger Games" franchise, Hulu's "Only Murders in the Building" and "The Old Man". His work in China included winning the best Co-Production Award at the Shanghai Film Festival and an acting stunt in Jacky Chan's "Zodiac." Darbo's initiative to

introduce the most exciting contemporary French wordsmiths to Hollywood found a keen

response in the French Consulate in Los Angeles, Union des Français de l'Etranger and the creative community.

In the historic setting of The Last Bookstore, the air du temps of the 90s was created with a soundtrack of French films and pop-hits of the epoch, a traditional non-alcoholic aperitif, and reading of an excerpt from "Shock" about the infamous 1995 overthrow of the President of Comoros by a gang of French mercenaries. The literary soirée was attended by Alan Heim, Academy Award winning President A.C.E. (American Cinema Editors) who consulted Ziyasheva on her fantasy feature film "Greatland" (2020), David Chien, Talent Manager with Art/Work Entertainment, comedy writer Kristen Van Nest, Emmy-winning show host and security expert Kelvin Garvanne, as well as representatives of the French Consulate and the Harvardwood community.

"The ambiguity, universality, and circumstantiality of human nature is the underlying message of my creations, Ziyasheva said during the Q&A session. "Shock", my feature films "Defenders of Life", "Greatland", and "[How I solved the Homeless Crisis in Cali](#)" eschew categorical judgements. I believe a measured approach helps us understand the minds of people we may not agree with, and, thus, contributes to the dialogue among civilizations."

A former United Nations diplomat fluent in 5 languages, Dana Ziyasheva wrote "How I Solved the Homeless Crisis in Cali" during the COVID lockdown. In this modern-day version of 'Crime and Punishment', a disenfranchised young Angeleno inadvertently triggers an all-out war in California by simply helping those in need. Available on Spotify, Buzzsprout and YouTube, the fiction podcast is now in production of its second season, and according to Igor Darbo, "like "Shock", holds an enormous screen adaptation potential."

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