



German regional fund hands \$14.7m to co-productions

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Germany's leading regional film fund, Filmstiftung NRW, has allocated \$14.7m (€11m) – a third of its annual budget - to 35 projects, including a film by UK director Alex Winter.

The Düsseldorf-based fund awarded \$1.2m (€900,000) to actor-director Alex Winter's remake of the 1987 horror film *The Gate*, which will be Germany's first 3D live-action feature film. The screenplay has been written by Kerric MacDonald

The international English-language production, which will be shot almost completely at the MMC Studios in Cologne this summer, will be the second collaboration between the studios' production arm MMC Independent and Andras Hamori's H20 Motion Pictures after co-producing Stephen Frears' *Cheri* last year.

A further \$1.2m (€900,000) was also allocated to another co-production from MMC Independent, Jean-Paul Rappeneau's spy drama *Foreign Affairs*, which will be produced with France's Soudaine Compagnie at the MMC Studios in late summer.

Meanwhile, UFA Cinema - who announced a strategic partnership with Universal Pictures International and Focus Features International last month - has received \$1.67m (€1.25m) for two of its first projects. They are Otto Alexander Jahrreis' screwball comedy *Pigeons On The Roof (Tauben Auf Dem Dach)* about four different, but interrelated inner-city couples whose lives are all shaped by love; and S-born Granz Henman's family adventure film *Devil's Kickers (Die Teufelskicker)* based on the books by Frauke Nahrgang. Both will be partly shot at locations in North Rhine-Westphalia.

Istvan Szabo's English-language adaptation of Magda Szabo's novel *Behind The Door* has also received support. It will be produced by Sandor Soth's Berlin-based Intuit Pictures with Jenő Habermann's Film-Art at locations in Budapest and Cologne.

Other international co-productions to receive support are Emily Atef's *Kill Me (Töte Mich)*, a German-Swiss-French co-production between Wüste Film West, Hugofilm and Cine Sud Promotion; Turkish director Semih Kaplanoglu's *BAL - HONEY*, the third and final part of his Yusuf trilogy, between Kaplan Film and Heimatfilm; and Mika Kaurismäki's low budget documentary *Mama Afrika* which he will be producing with Rainer Kölmel's Starhaus Filmproduktion and South Africa's Day Zero.

The Filmstiftung NRW also allocated a total of \$1.81m (€1.35m) to two local sequels: Christian Ditter's second outing for the Suburban Crocodiles gang, *Vorstadtkrokodile 2 - Das Abenteuer Geht Weiter*, a co-production by Westside Filmproduktion, Rat Pack Filmproduktion, and Constantin Film Produktion, while Munich-based producers ndF and Caligari Film are now preparing a second feature film based on *Princess Lillifee* with Universum Film as distributor and Beta Film as sales agent.

At the same time, two "event" productions for Cologne-based private broadcaster RTL were awarded a total of \$ 4.4m (€3.3m). TeamWorx's two part *Hindenburg*, to be directed by Philipp Kadelbach, received \$ 2.4m (€1.8m), and \$ 2m (€1.5m) went to Florian Baxmeyer's adventure film *Die Jagd Nach Der Heiligen Lanze* by Dreamtool Entertainment.

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