

German Distributors in Cannes

# Television as event – and as serie

Munich – Well-equipped, German distributors present themselves for Mipcom 2013: Drama series, event-films and miniseries rank among the highlights being presented to buyers in Cannes.

With confidence and optimism, German TV-distributors once again arrive on the Côte d'Azur. The reason: they bring with them the exact programme range that buyers from around the world are looking for. Fred Burcksen, chief executive of investment and marketing at ZDF Enterprises, suggests examples: crime series such as 'The Fall', 'The Killing' and 'The Bridge', all of which are productions in which the mystery of the culprit is only finally unveiled at the end of each entire season.

As a highlight in the drama sector in Cannes, ZDF Enterprises introduces the second season of the Danish-Swedish crime-series 'The Bridge'. In addition, Christiane Wittich, head of sales at Studio Hamburg Distribution & Marketing confirms that long-running series are the most successful format: "Our 'Tatort' series, particularly those with the new police inspectors played by Til Schweiger and Wotan Wilke Möhring, as well as Sibel Kekilli alongside Axel Milberg, are showing great potential through their – to some extent – international fame. All of our 'Tatort' series are in great demand in the European market." Due to current demand, Thomas Weymar, chief executive at Global Screen, assumes

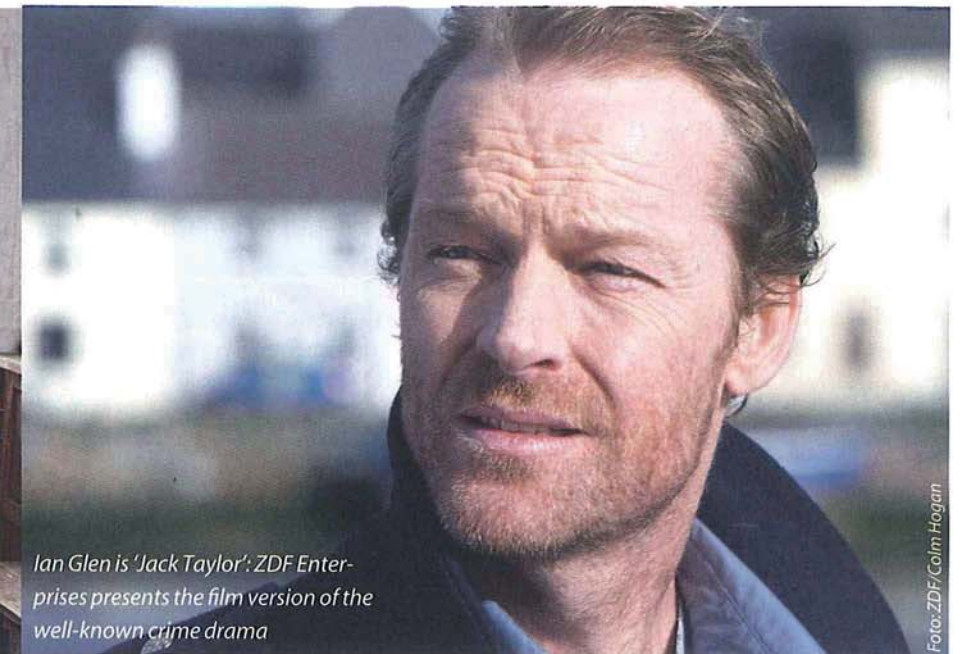
"Video on Demand offers us great new opportunities"

Alexander Coridass, Chief executive at ZDF Enterprises

that the upcoming Mipcom will run "at least as good as last year" for his company: "Our long-running series 'Storm of Love' and 'Alarm for Cobra 11' provide our foreign licensees with considerable income from the marketing of TV-commercial time. 'Storm of Love' this year moves into tenth place in the Europe-wide ranking of high-value series, and in this sector meanwhile it can even measure up to the US-series 'The Mentalist'. We thus



Event-movies made in Germany: 'Pinocchio' with Mario Adorf



Ian Glen is 'Jack Taylor': ZDF Enterprises presents the film version of the well-known crime drama

expect increases in turnover with sales of its new season."

The fact that new digital platforms continue to have an ever-larger significance for sales agents was already observed during the last few years. As a result, the increases in turnover appear to be quite considerable. "Video on Demand offers us new big chances", says Alexander Coridass, executive director at ZDF Enterprises, "we are working very hard on this topic and we have developed good national and international business models and partnerships." Particularly content which could be difficult to include on television could now be better utilised. The percentage share from these transactions of total turnover in the core business sector of programme trade – an annual sum amounting to between €65 and €85 million according to information from Coridass – was still in single figures last year. "Next year it is expected to be in the double-digit range." In view of developments in the digital sector, Carlos Hertel at Tele München assumes that there will be an increase in content production since this will be required to sufficiently fulfil the demands of the new channels. He emphasises: "the 'eventisation' of the content business is one of the most important generators of this development". Among other titles, Hertel and his team will place the film version of the fantasy novel 'Ruby Red' as a focal point of their Mipcom activities. At Global Screen too, event-movies play an important role, above all 'Heroes' with

Christiane Paul and Hannes Jaenicke playing the leading roles, which RTL will broadcast in prime time on 3rd October and about which – according to Weymar – "our customers are already very excited – not least because of the countless special effects in cinema quality." Furthermore, he emphasised 'Pinocchio' – "this year's Christmas highlight from ARD, with Mario Adorf in the leading role." Pinocchio is a subject adored by children and adults all around the world, and in this sense it will arouse much interest from programme buyers.

In addition, the trend towards internationalisation at the television trade-fair will become more visible than before. This is assumed by Tandem Communications boss Rola Bauer: "The world of the television drama will become more international. Not only due to the co-production business model, but because audiences become more openly interested in such tales that are internationally created or which are set in another country." She sees 'Downton Abbey', 'The Bridge' and 'Broadchurch' as significant examples of her appraisal. Tandem itself is presenting the second season of the European cop-series 'Crossing Lines' in Cannes. International flair also traditionally surrounds the productions that Beta Film distribute: With the Mafia series 'Gomorra', classic Italian subject matter is offered this autumn, which has already been successful in its film version (2008). Jan Mojto and his assistants have continued positive ex-

pectations for the filming of the assassination in 'Sarajevo': "A determined investigative judge attempts everything imaginable in order to discover the identities of the individuals organising the killing. However, the events in Sarajevo have set off a chain reaction that inexorably leads to catastrophe" according to the official synopsis by the distributor.

Red Arrow International's boss, Jens Richter, looks forward to Mipcom optimistically: "The future of television opens up an unimagined diversity for audiences. The increasingly fragmenting TV landscape, new online platforms and new ways of monetisation lead to more complex business models. In order to stand out from the large diversity of programmes on offer, it is important for us to find themes

## TV landscape increasingly fragmenting

that are of interest to a worldwide audience, which have from the very start a high marketing potential: Thus we are presently developing the crime series 'Bosch' based on Michael Connelly's inspector 'Harry Bosch' bestsellers that have a worldwide fan base. Outstanding creativity – in front of as well as behind the camera – as in our productions 'The Escape Artist', 'Esio Trot' and 'Lilyhammer' are important marketing aspects. We are thereby already able to create brands during story-development." In Red Arrow's pro-

gramme catalogue, the filming of Roald Dahl's novel 'Esio Trot' receives particular significance: This 90-minute TV film for BBC One with Dustin Hoffmann and Dame Judy Dench in the leading roles should also conquer the international TV market. The most important core-markets for local programme exporters of purely German or German-language productions are in France, Italy and Spain, if they aim to make profits. "There are then also the medium sized markets in Benelux and Scandinavia, as well as in Central and Eastern Europe" adds Coridass. The sale of a product in these regions "preferably to two large markets and to two or three medium-sized markets" would guarantee economic success. "Everything else – regarding classical German TV business – is of no interest in our view." A completely different picture presents itself with large international English-language productions of 'youth live-action series'. For example, the series 'H2O' filmed in Australia was sold all around the world. ZDF Enterprises wishes to take up this trend this autumn with 'Sam Fox – Extreme Adventures'. In connection with 'Mip Junior', which takes place in the run-up to Mipcom, children's and youth programmes are in any case very much in focus this autumn – and these generally offer the possibility of international cooperation, since for instance animated content can be less noticeably dubbed into other languages. Thus for example Studio 100 will introduce in Cannes its new animated series 'Tashi'. *wu*