‘The Head’ Lands on Starzplay in U.K., Germany – Global Bulletin

variety.com


DISTRIBUTION

The Mediapro Studio Distribution has closed a deal with Starz that will land South-Pole murder mystery series “The Head” on the broadcaster’s streaming platform Starzplay in the U.K., Ireland, Germany, Austria and German-speaking regions of Switzerland and Luxembourg on Feb. 7.

One of the most significant steps into scripted drama production by Spanish producer The Mediapro Studio, “The Head” was
executed in partnership with Hulu Japan and HBO Asia. It was written by Alex and David Pastor (“Hogar”) and directed by Jorge Dorado (“The Department of Time”)

“The Head” uses tricks of time and perspective to slowly uncover the details a grizzly series of murders, started with a decapitation, at one of Earth’s most isolated human habitats, an Antarctic research station over the winter months. When the summer staff flies off to leave a skeleton crew behind, all is well, but after an unexpected radio silence, tensions are high as the helicopter returns in spring.

International by nature, the series features well-known actors from several countries, including BAFTA nominee John Lynch (“The Fall”), Álvaro Morte (“Money Heist”), Katharine O’Donnelly (“Mary Queen of Scotts”), Tomohisa Yamashita (“Code Blue the Movie”) and Mónica López (“En la ciudad”).

“The Head” is one of our biggest bets at The Mediapro Studio, a large-scale international project with which we wanted to open borders and guarantee its worldwide distribution,” said The Mediapro Studio general director Laura Fernández Espeso.

“The confirmation of its Starz premieres in the U.K. and Germany, strategic markets for our interests, reinforces the presence of the series at a global level and opens the door to future projects and collaborations.”

*****

Starzplay has also announced a strategic partnership with Abu Dhabi Media, the UAE’s largest public broadcaster, to live-stream UFC events across the Middle East and North Africa.


Under the terms of the partnership, Starzplay will gain access to all UFC Live events and an on-demand content catalog of previous fights, shows, interviews and special content.

APPOINTMENT

BBC Studios Americas has named Tara Maitra its chief commercial officer and Jennifer Ball as senior VP of marketing in two newly created roles created to grow the company’s brand across the pond.
In her new role, Maitra will head the brand’s commercial growth strategy for the U.S. by identifying new revenue-generating opportunities as well as seeking out partnerships and promoting BBC Studios’ existing licensing, home entertainment and BBC Learning businesses.

For her part, Ball will work to promote the company’s marketing and media strategies and deliver valuable content to global partners and BBC worldwide.

Maitra comes to BBC Studios from BDEX, where she served as chief revenue officer, while Ball joins having most recently helmed an independent consulting company.

**DOCUMENTARY**

Shooting has finished on a new post-WWII era historical documentary, “Lawless,” from Februar Film and co-produced by ZDF Enterprises, commissioned for ZDFinfo and ZDF.History.

Focusing on the years immediately after WWII, 1945-49, the documentary looks to chronicle the horrible brutality and criminal activity which took place in Germany as the country was left divided and in ruins. Leading historical experts on both halves of Germany in the post-war era contributed to the shooting and seek to provide a portrait of life in a war-torn society where survival was at the forefront of a once affluent citizenship.

“Lawless” is available from ZDF Enterprises as either two-part series or a one-off special, and is currently in post-production.

**COMMISSION**

A+E Networks U.K. has commissioned Brighton-based Hello Mary to produce a new six-part factual series, “Survivors with Denise Welch” (working title), for Crime + Investigation.

Denise Welch, one of British TV’s best-known presenters, will examine the lives of trauma survivors, focusing on the strength and determination demonstrated by those working to rebuild their lives in the aftermath of horrific crimes.

Dan Korn, VP of programming at A+E Networks U.K., and Diana Carter, commissioning editor and head of talent at A+E Networks U.K., ordered the series, which is executive produced by Hello Mary creative director Clare Hollywood and CEO Steve Welch.
FESTIVAL

Denmark’s international documentary film festival CPH:DOX has rescheduled from its original March dates to run April 21 to May 2, and will roll out as a hybrid in-person and online event. The festival’s industry section will run April 26-30.

“2020 was a year that taught us so much and pushed us into thinking new formats, new ways of reaching people and new ways of creating social and cultural impact” said festival CEO Tine Fischer. “Needless to say, the digital experience and the democratic potential in reaching a much larger and diverse audience has been and will be central in the new version of the festival. We’re preparing an ambitious program to be experienced theatrically as well as online and digitally live.”

A complete program for CPH:DOX will be made public in late March.

ANIMATION

China’s iQIVI, Nickelodeon International and VIS Kids have partnered to bring CG-animated series “Deer Squad” to U.S. audiences. The series will premiere on Nickelodeon Jan. 25 in the network’s preschool block, airing regularly on weekdays thereafter.

Following four heroic deer friends, the series is an adventure-rescue show for young children and tracks the quartet as they protect the animals of Central Forest and their human counterparts in Platinum City.

Nick aired “Deer Squad” across Asia in 2020 to exceptional results. The series was the number one show in the Philippines among kids 2-14, propelled Nick Jr. to the top spot among STV channels in Australia for toddlers, and pulled ratings 148% above the benchmark for its time slot in the U.K. A second season is currently in production.

Deer Squad Credit: Nickelodeon