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Italian distributor Lucky Red reveals ambitious production plans

Description

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Distributor plots move into genre and family movies, beginning with Asghar Farhadiâ??s upcoming thriller.

Italian distribution company Lucky Red is planning to ramp up its production operation, with a focus on genre and family movies.

At an event held in Rome yesterday (June 26) to mark the companyâ??s 30th anniversary, founder and CEO Andrea Occhipinti said: â??Distribution will remain our core business, but we want to become one of the most important production companies in Italy.â?•

â??Production may be a good way not to be too dependent on acquisitions, since itâ??s becoming harder to get the good movies. Instead a good Italian film can make a big difference at the box officeâ?•.

One of the most prestigious projects that Lucky Red is co-producing is Asghar Farhadiâ??s untitled Spanish-language thriller starring Penelope Cruz, Javier Bardem and Ricardo Darin (pictured, top).

As *Screen* announced during Cannes, the $12-13m project is a French-Spanish-Italian co-production with Lucky Red, French producer Alexandre Mallet-Guy of Memento Films and *Che* producer Ã•lvaro Longoria of Spanish stalwarts Morena Films.

It will also be made in co-production with France 3 Cinema and supported by Canal Plus and France TÃ©lÃ©vision.

Other projects already greenlit by Lucky Red include the untitled new feature from Gabriele Mainetti (*They Call Him Jeeg Robot*), which started shooting in January; the GoPro-shot sci-fi horror *Ride*, from *Mine* directors Fabio Guaglione and Fabio Resinaro, and *Sotto La Mia Pelle* (*Under My Skin*), a legal drama centred on a man who gets beaten by the police, with Jasmine Trinca (*Fortunata*).

The move into production will help Lucky Red expand beyond the arthouse audience, which is not as lucrative as it used to be, according to Occhipinti.

â??Our audience is getting old,â?• he said. â??Once also small arthouse movies were able to make a good result, now itâ??s impossibleâ?•.

As a result, Lucky Red is branching out into genre and family movies, popular comedies, and television: â??We are working with Fox Italy on a series but still canâ??t tell if it will be an international or national projectâ?•, said Occhipinti.

Lucky Red previously moved into the exhibition sector after becoming the main shareholder in the 130-screen Circuito Cinema arthouse chain. They also co-founded world sales company True Colours together with Indigo, which scored a series of deals for its Cannes 2017 slate, including for Sergio Castellittoâ??s Un Certain Regard drama *Fortunata* and Simone Godanoâ??s body-swapping comedy *Wife & Husband.*

At the press conference, Occhipinti also discussed why Lucky Red became the first company in the Italian cinema industry to commit to an ethical code of inclusion and tolerance towards gay employees.

â??Being gay myself Iâ??m very close to these problems,â?• says Occhipinti, â??We decided to issue and promote this code publicly before the first law allowing gay unions was passed in Italy. We wanted to make a statement not only to guarantee maternity and paternity rights to our gay employees, but also to say that if our institutions are not moving and addressing the issue, we are doing it by ourselvesâ?•.

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Category

1. distribution
2. television

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