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F&ME, Kasander Film ink pact

Antonia Bird, Peter Greenaway projects on initial slate

By Stuart Kemp

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LONDON -- Sam Taylor and Mike Downey's U.K. based Film and Music Entertainment (F&ME) has sealed a long-term, multi-film production pact with producer Kees Kasander's Dutch production company Kasander Film.

The deal covers an initial four films over the next 12 months, with more projects to be announced before next month's American Film Market, the parties said Tuesday.

The companies said the initial deal is worth over \$17.5 million in production spend. Projects from Antonia Bird, Peter Greenaway and Paula van de Oest feature on the duo's debut joint slate.

The first project aims to be van de Oest's "The Domino Effect," about what would happen to families if the global economy came to a halt.

The movie is financed by the Netherlands Film Funds, the Rotterdam Media Fund, COBO, VARA, Video Film Express and Molinare using the Michigan state credit and the U.K. tax credit.

Brit director Antonia Bird ("Priest") is set to direct "Cross My Mind," from a screenplay by Naomi Wallace and Bruce Macleod. The film will shoot in Netherlands and the U.K. It is currently in development with the U.K. Film Council, Screen Yorkshire and the Netherlands Film Fund, with MEDIA support.

The third project will be Peter Greenaway's "Goltzius and The Pelican Company," a movie centering on the 16th-century Dutch engraver Hendrick Goltzius.

A co-production between Kasander Film in the Netherlands, Film and Music Entertainment in the U.K., CDP in France and Film Afrika in South Africa, the project will shoot in Cape Town on a &euro2 million (\$2.75 million) budget in early summer 2011.

The biggest budget project is a screen adaptation of Dutch children's book "To Be King" (Koning van Katoren) by Jan Terlouw. Sander Burger will direct the &euro5 million (\$7 million) fantasy film about a teenager who has to complete impossible trials to become king.

"A key U.K. partnership is essential if we are to compete with our English-language projects in the

international marketplace," said Rotterdam-based Kasander, who has produced films by Peter Greenaway and Andrea Arnold among others. "The European market is such that we need to create a series of reciprocal production arrangements, which benefit all parties. And by hooking up with Film and Music Entertainment on a long term basis, we are creating another block in our series of international relationships that can provide as much security that is ever possible in this kind of business."

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