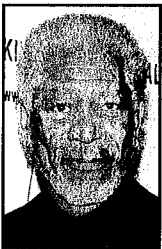


'Love' grows for Freeman at Lakeshore

By Tatiana Siegel



Freeman

Morgan Freeman is in talks to star in the drama "The Feast of Love" for Lakeshore Entertainment.

Based on a Charles Baxter novel, the film revolves around a community of friends in Oregon and is described as an exploration of the magical, mysterious and sometimes painful incarnations of love. Freeman will play philosophy professor Harry Scott.

Oscar-winning helmer Robert Benton ("Kramer vs. Kramer") recently signed on to direct the film, scheduled to begin shooting in August (HR 4/27). Allison Burnett penned the screenplay.

Lakeshore's Rosenberg and Gary Lucchesi are producing in association with Revelations Entertainment. Revelations' Lori

See **FREEMAN** on page 26



Tom Cruise totes a Nokia phone on the run in "Mission: Impossible III."

'M:I-3' tough on tie-ins

Promo partners faced obstacles

By Gail Schiller

While problems with A-list Hollywood talent frequently are blamed for the demise of film tie-ins, Paramount Pictures' latest theatrical release starring Tom Cruise turned out to be a true "Mission: Impossible" for several of the film's promotional partners, sources close to the deals said.

Brands such as Casio and

Nokia had to either shelve or curtail elements of their promotional programs, mostly because of difficulties winning approvals from Cruise and his C/W Prods. With Cruise both starring in and producing the film and Paramount hoping to launch a worldwide blockbuster, the actor had an unusual amount of control over promotional decisions that are

See **TIE-INS** on page 17

Activision moves in with DWA

By Chris Marlowe

In a first for the two branches of the entertainment industry, DreamWorks Animation SKG and Activision Inc. said that Activision will be opening a dedicated studio facility on the DreamWorks campus.

The companies said the arrangement will enable their ongoing relationship — which already has resulted in more than \$300 million in video game sales worldwide — to develop into a more organic and integral part of the develop-

See **DREAMWORKS** on page 25

Stars finding 'Guidance' in ensemble film

By Gregg Goldstein

NEW YORK — Frankie Muniz, Ryan Pinkston, Jamie Kennedy, Andy Milonakis and Matthew Lillard will lead an ensemble cast in writer-directors Adam Jay Epstein and Andrew Jacobson's teen sketch sex comedy



Muniz

"Parental Guidance Suggested" for indie producers Richard Suckle, Warren Zide and Laura

See **"GUIDANCE"** on page 26

Lionsgate, 'Sin,' Art Machine top Key Art noms

By Gail Schiller

Lionsgate Entertainment led the nominations Tuesday for The Hollywood Reporter's 35th annual Key Art Awards with 26 noms, while Dimension Films' "Sin City" scored more noms than any other movie and Art Machine led the field among agencies with 20 noms.

"Sin City" topped the movie pack with nine noms, followed by "Crash," "The 40-Year-Old Virgin" and "Saw II," which tied for second with six noms each, and "Deuce Bigalow: European Gigolo," "Batman Begins" and "Chicken Little," which all placed third with five noms apiece.

Among the studios, Universal came in second with 20 nominations, and Disney and its Buena Vista distribution arm placed third with 19.



"Sin City" Web site is up for multiple Key Art Awards.

On the agency/vendor side, BLT & Associates Inc. and Trailer Park tied for second with 10 noms each, and Mark Woollen & Associates and the Ant Farm came in third with seven noms each.

See **KEY ART** on page 22



Tie-ins

Continued from page 1—

usually left more solidly in the hands of studios.

"Tom Cruise is probably one of the top three movie stars in the world, and if any movie is going to have challenges with talent approval, it's going to be a Tom Cruise movie," said Sabrina Ironside, chairman of the board of the Promotion Marketing Assn. and vp integrated marketing at Fox Home Entertainment.

But while entertainment marketers acknowledged that talent approvals always are a major obstacle to getting film promotions off the ground, they allege that in the case of "M:I-3," Cruise declined to approve marketing materials that didn't even include his image.

"We are very proud of the relationships we have with our partners on 'M:I-3,'" Cruise's producing partner Paula Wagner said. "However, as filmmakers our obligation is to the movie as we are not in the business of making commercials. The products that are featured in the film are utilized in creative ways that support the movie, and we have to approve materials that reflect our creative vision. We stand behind every decision we made."

Paramount Pictures president of marketing Gerry Rich said "Mission: Impossible" is one of the studio's most important franchises. "We know that it is critical to protect its integrity," he said. "We work closely with Cruise/Wagner to select partners and images that best represent the films. On 'Mission: Impossible III' we worked with some extraordinary companies on exciting promotional programs. They were great partners on this film, and we would work with any of them again."

Casio, whose G-Shock watch is worn by Cruise in the film, manufactured a limited edition "M:I-3" watch with the movie's logo inscribed on the back that it planned to promote and sell in the U.S. But Casio said that after failing to obtain a signed contract from Paramount in time to deliver the watches to retail outlets, it was forced to can its promotion and ship all the watches back.

"We were hoping to promote the product during the time that the movie was slated to open, and in order to do a promotion of that nature, you need approval from the production company, and we were unable to get that, at least not in time," said Denise Ruiz-Cabrera, spokeswoman for Casio Inc., the

U.S. subsidiary of Tokyo-based Casio Computer Co. Ltd. "I honestly don't know why we didn't get the approvals. I just think the promotion of the movie was being very tightly controlled and they were being very cautious about affiliating it with any product." Ruiz-Cabrera said she did not know how much money Casio lost because of the U.S. deal falling through.

Casio did manage to get distribution and promotional agreements signed and approved in time to sell and promote the watches in certain countries in Europe and Asia. But the company only was permitted to use separate side-by-side images of an "M:I-3" one-sheet and the G-shock watch in counter-top display ads, sources close to Casio said.

Sources close to Paramount said the studio had approved distribution of the watches at Macy's stores, along with print ads featuring both the movie one-sheet and images of the G-Shock watch, and that Paramount was not at fault because Macy's rejected the deal.

**"We are very proud of the relationships we have with our partners on 'M:I-3.' However, as filmmakers our obligation is to the movie as we are not in the business of making commercials."
— Paula Wagner, C/W Prods.**

But the sources close to Casio said Macy's turned down the distribution agreement because it was not satisfied with the ads, which appeared as two completely separate images on the same page rather than as a single cohesive ad. The sources said Casio had submitted about 20 different versions of print ads to C/W for the Macy's deal. Once it fell through, Casio lined up alternative U.S. distribution partners but was unable to get the necessary approvals from C/W in time for those retailers to tie in with the film, the sources said.

Sources close to the deal said Nokia, which provided all of the production's telecommunications needs and had its phones placed in the film, was able to get C/W approval for an international TV spot only after a long and arduous process but never won approval of its print ads. Nokia went ahead with its promotional plans even after discovering that a competitor's products wound up in the movie despite assurances that Nokia would have placement exclusivity in the telecommunications category, the sources said. While Nokia phones appear in the film, the company's

logo is not visible. Nokia did get approval to use the video from its international TV spot for online, viral and mobile phone ads and has plans for more promotional activity around the DVD release.

"We are unable to comment in depth on rumors surrounding our marketing plans," a Nokia spokeswoman said. "We do have some involvement in 'M:I-3,' and like any project, there were some bumps in the road. But suffice it to say we still have plans around 'M:I-3,' particularly around the DVD release, and look forward to that."

DHL is the only brand of eight listed as partners on the official "Mission: Impossible" Web site that is running a major U.S. ad campaign tied to the film. Other listed partners such as Foot Locker, Best Buy and Xbox said they had no problems working with Paramount or C/W, but none is implementing a media campaign.

Entertainment marketers speculated that C/W was not anxious to have promotional partners nor did

"The DHL spot used no digital collateral of DHL in the movie," said one brand marketer involved with the film. "They created a scene to mimic the movie, but it wasn't from the movie, and then they tagged 'M:I-3' scenes on at the end. The reason you do a promotion around a movie is to build assets around a star interacting with your product."

But DHL corporate advertising manager Dirk Ude claimed that from the outset DHL and its ad agency wanted the TV spot to depict a DHL courier parachuting into Hong Kong to deliver a film reel to underscore the fact that DHL was the official logistics and shipping partner for the movie.

Ude said it also was DHL's decision not to incorporate any images from the film on its billboards and to limit the movie logo to small print in the right-hand corner of the outdoor ads. He said DHL wanted the billboards to be consistent with its 2004 and 2005 outdoor ad campaigns, which also featured large red type on yellow background. "We are very happy with this partnership because it's been very successful for us," Ude said. "It's the first major film promotion we've ever done, and we have gotten so much positive feedback throughout the world. In the end, we did even more than we planned from the beginning."

DHL, which delivered everything needed to effectively produce the movie at all its locations from Los Angeles to Shanghai to Rome, said it spent several million dollars on its media campaign in the U.S. alone. The company declined comment on how much it spent on shipping costs for the movie or on international media.

But while Cruise may have been difficult for promotional partners to work with on "M:I-3," he is by no means alone, especially among A-list celebrities striving to protect their image and the possibility of future endorsement deals. Tom Hanks, Brad Pitt, Julia Roberts, Ben Stiller, Harrison Ford, Will Smith and Danny DeVito are among the many other top-name actors known to shun any association with commercial tie-ins.

"Actors can spoil a lot of promotions by refusing to lend their likeness or refusing to allow footage from a film to be used in commercials," said Aaron Gordon, president of entertainment marketing firm Set Resources Inc. "One of the first things I do as a marketer is find actors who are easy to work with."

it think the film needed them. However, the film's North American opening of \$47.7 million was judged a disappointment by many boxoffice observers.

"Cruise/Wagner holds the 'M:I-3' brand very close to their hearts and don't want to over sully it with corporate presence," said Stacy Jones, executive vp entertainment at marketing agency Creative Entertainment Services.

Said one brand marketer whose company's products were placed in the film: "Why bother pleasing partners when you don't need them? Cruise/Wagner was just not overly interested in finding promotional partners. The reason we know that is studios usually say, 'We'll do placement, but we also want promotion.' They didn't say that. Placement is where the conversation ended."

While DHL insisted that it was very happy with its global promotion for "M:I-3," entertainment marketers noted that the company's TV spot does not feature a key scene in the movie in which Cruise is driving a DHL van and that its billboard ad features no images at all from the film.