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In Focus: Shoreline Entertainment

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29 Aug 2008 00:00

Morris Ruskin, chief of the Los Angeles-based financing, sales and production outfit Shoreline Entertainment, is expanding the business by returning to his roots.

The sales agent launched the company years ago primarily as a production entity and recently he has concluded that greater focus on production will build momentum for Shoreline's two labels: the arthouse-oriented Watermark and the genre-led Riptide.

"I want to increase the budgets on the Riptide titles (generally in the \$8m-\$15m range) and perhaps partially replace the service New Line International used to provide," Ruskin says. "There's some kind of void there now, in terms of distributors around the world. We're in a position to do movies, like *Crank*, that are a bit bigger."

To this end Shoreline is in production on 3D comic-book adaptation *The Living Corpse* and is in post on *High Life*, a heist caper in association with Triptych Media that stars Timothy Olyphant and Joe Anderson.

There is also *Pomona Queen*, which Ruskin is producing with his sister Susan Ruskin (the executive producer of *Anaconda*), as well as *Spanky*, *HP Lovecraft's From Beyond*, the prison-break story *Under Uruguay* and *Master Harold And The Boys* with UK-based Focus Films.

Ruskin does not plan to neglect arthouse, either. Titles have included Toronto 2007 selection *The Tracey Fragments*, *Good Time Max* and *The Elder Son*. "There's still a model for arthouse fare because that audience hasn't disappeared," he says.

"It makes sense to make a cast-driven film as long as the budget is sensible. IFC has been smart in targeting the arthouse crowd with their day-and-date theatrical and VoD model, and as the world becomes more and more wired it's easier for the product to reach the audience. The problem is it takes a lot of advertising to make the audience aware; so casting, branding and niche marketing become important for arthouse movies."

Shoreline can access its acquisitions and production fund Mind The Gap to help cover film-making and marketing costs.

Ruskin says the company attends around 12 international markets a year, from Sundance - where this year he sold the Chris Klein comedy *Hank And Mike* and picked up Ari Gold's air-drumming comedy *Adventures Of Power* - and Filmart and Cannes to Discop in Budapest and CineVegas, an event Shoreline co-sponsors.

"Our focus is to understand what the market wants and then have the ability to produce these movies and bring them to buyers. It's important to be on the ground and meet people. We have a great team in place across the board and we have the infrastructure to market and sell the films. All this has given me the time to produce."

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