

VARIETY

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Garrett to play Paganini

Superstar violinist for historical biopic

By [Ed Meza](#)



David Garrett will play his hero, violin virtuoso Paganini, whom he calls the first rock superstar.

Superstar violinist David Garrett will make his feature debut in Bernard Rose's "The Devil's Violinist," a historical biopic about 19th-century Italian violin virtuoso Niccolò Paganini.

Rose is writing and directing the pic, about the imagined Faustian pact Paganini made to become the world's first superstar performer.

Budgeted at between \$15 million-\$20 million, the film is slated to begin lensing in August throughout Europe. Garrett will play the violinist and perform his music in the film.

The parallels are apparent in the casting of Garrett, one of Europe's biggest music stars and a performer who bridges the worlds of rock and classical music. Indeed, Garrett calls Paganini "the first rock star -- an eccentric genius with many flaws."

"It has been a lifelong ambition to be involved in a film about my hero Niccolò Paganini," said Garrett. "He has a special place in my heart and to have the opportunity to bring him back to life on the bigscreen is an extremely exciting experience for me."

Summerstorm Entertainment, a subsidiary of Berlin-based Film House Germany, will produce the film, which will go into production this year. It's one of a slew of projects in the works at Film House, one of Germany's newest players.

Launched in 2010 by Frankfurt-based financial services and investment outfit ABL Group, Film House has acquired a number of high-profile production outfits, including Summerstorm, the Berlin-based firm founded by Marco Kreuzpaintner and Fabian Wolfart, and Jens Meurer and Judy Tossell's Egoli Tossell Film.

It also joined forces with Dutch powerhouse Lemming Film last year to create Hamster Film, a family entertainment label.

Headed by CEO Christian Angermayer, Film House oversees development, financing, production and co-production of films for local and international auds. In addition to its existing equity capital of more than €7 million (\$9.3 million), Film House is also developing private investment vehicles for retail and institutional investors, the first of which will be unveiled in the second half of 2012.

"It is our aim to produce films out of Germany for the world market," said Angermayer. "Film House combines the networks and know-how from both industries -- film and finance -- under one roof."

Also in production at Summerstorm is Kreuzpaintner's "Coming In," a London-based romantic comedy about a gay hairdresser who unexpectedly falls in love with a supermarket checkout girl.

Egoli Tossell, meanwhile, is co-producing Ron Howard's Formula One drama "Rush"; Paul Andrew Williams' "Songs for Marion," starring Vanessa Redgrave, Terence Stamp and Gemma Arterton; Jon Baird's "Filth," with James McAvoy and Jamie Bell; and Kweku Mandela's documentary "Mandela's Children."

The shingle's upcoming projects include Peter Chelsom's "Hector and the Search for Happiness" and Iain Softley's medieval epic "Ivanhoe."

Among Hamster's slate of projects are "Sputnik," an adventure tale about three kids set against the backdrop of the fall of the Berlin Wall, and "Boy 7," described as a teen-skewed "Bourne Identity" and based on the bestselling novel by Mirjam Mous. Hamster is also spinning the wheel on "Heirs of the Night: Nosferas," a co-production with Bavaria Pictures, the first in a series of a planned franchise based on the children's book series by Ulrike Schweikert.

The company, headed by Leontine Petit and Joost de Vries, is presenting "Heirs of the Night" at the Berlinale Co-Production Market.

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