

VARIETY

Berlin: Bruce Willis, M. Night Shyamalan's 'Labor of Love' Has Buyers Lining Up



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Stuart Ford's IM Global has closed more territories on one of the powerhouse sales titles at this year's European Film Market: "Labor of Love."

Produced by Emmett/Furla Films, "Love" marks a reteaming of "The Sixth Sense's" M. Night Shyamalan and Bruce Willis.

"Labor of Love" has seduced Australia (Roadshow), Spain (Corbi), Iceland (Myndform), Israel (United King), South Africa (Ster Kinekor), Poland (Kino Swiat), Eastern Europe (Multi-territory) (Grandview) and Malaysia (Golden Screen).

Deals were for France (Metropolitan), Italy (Andrea Leone), Latin America (Gussi), Japan (Shochiku). Canada (VVS), Scandinavia (Svensk), Benelux (DFW) and Middle East (Italia) had been previously announced.

The reteaming Shyamalan and Willis made "Labor of Love" an "event," Ford said. The director flew in to Berlin to have wall-to-wall meetings talking buyers through his ideas for "Labor of Love."

"That was a huge help and that injected a lot of life and vitality into everything," Ford said.

IM Global also put on a presentation, lauded by EFM buyers, of "Max Steel," teaming with Dolphin Films Intl. and Mattel.

Based on a screenplay written before "Sixth Sense," "Labor of Love" stars Willis as a bookstore owner who honors his late wife by walking across the U.S.

"In the last few years, there has been an overabundance of slightly formulaic mid-budget action thrillers. 'Labor of Love' clearly plays to a female as well as male audience," Ford said. "From a marketing perspective, buyers are looking for material that can play more than one demographic."