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Sony Pictures Classics Acquires North American Rights to Writer/Director Stefan Ruzowitzky's "THE COUNTERFEITERS"

Nominated for 7 LOLA (German Oscars) Awards including Best Picture, Screenplay and Actor

New York, NY. March 19, 2007. Sony Pictures Classics announced today that they picked up North American rights to critically acclaimed writer/director Stefan Ruzowitzky's Nazi--era drama "The Counterfeiters." On the heels of receiving seven LOLA nominations (the German equivalent to an Oscar) including Best Feature, "The Counterfeiters" is the true story of the largest counterfeiting operation in history, set up by the Nazis in 1936. Ruzowitzky is best known for directing the award winning film "The Inheritors" (1998) and the German box office hit "Anatomie" (2000). He adapted the LOLA nominated screenplay for "The Counterfeiters" from the Adolf Burger memoirs Des Teufels Werkstatt ("The Devil's Workshop").

Salomon "Sally" Sorowitsch (played by LOLA Best Actor Nominee Karl Markovics) is the king of counterfeiters. He lives a mischievous life of cards, booze, and women in Berlin during the Nazi-era. Suddenly his luck runs dry when arrested by Superintendent Friedrich Herzog (played by LOLA Best Supporting Actor nominee Devid Striesow). Immediately thrown into the Mauthausen concentration camp, Salomon exhibits exceptional skills there and is soon transferred to the upgraded camp of Sachsenhausen. Upon his arrival, he once again comes face to face with Herzog, who is there on a secret mission. Hand-picked for his unique skill, Salomon and a group of professionals are forced to produce fake foreign currency under the program *Operation Berhard*. The team, which also includes detainee Adolf Burger (August Diehl), is given luxury barracks for their assistance. But while Salomon attempts to weaken the economy of Germany's allied opponents, Adolf refuses to use his skills for Nazi profit and would like to do something to stop *Operation Bernhard's* aid to the war effort. Faced with a moral dilemma, Salomon must decide whether his actions, which could prolong the war and risk the lives of fellow prisoners, are ultimately the right ones.

After purchasing this year's Academy Award winning Best Foreign Language film, "The Lives of Others" from Beta Cinema, Sony Pictures Classics re-teams with their Managing Director Dirk Schuerhoff on "The Counterfeiters." Schuerhoff said, "We are very proud and honored that Sony Pictures Classics picked "The Counterfeiters". From the very beginning Sony Pictures Classics was our first choice, especially after seeing what a terrific job they did on "The Lives of Others." We feel in very good hands and it is great to see Michael, Tom, Dylan and the whole team, believing so strongly in this film."

Director/Writer Stefan Ruzowitsky added, "Having SPC as partner in the US is a dream coming true. I always felt that SPC has the perfect mix of love and respect for European movies and the skills to sell it to the American audience."

Sony Pictures Classics released the following statement, "'The Counterfeiters' is a tale of the holocaust never recounted before on film. Stefan Ruzowitzky's skills as a filmmaker make the story riveting from start to finish. After having succeeded with films from a variety of genres, it is 'The Counterfeiters' that firmly qualifies Stefan as one of Europe's finest directors. We look forward to the film reaching a wide audience in America."

"The Counterfeiters" was written and directed by Stefan Ruzowitzky; Adapted from the Adolf Burger memoirs, Des Teufels Werkstatt (*The Devil's Workshop*); Produced by Nina Bohlmann, Babette Schroeder and Josef Aichholzer; Co-Produced by Caroline von Senden, Henning Molfenter and Carl L. Woebcken; Original Music by Marius Ruhland; Cinematography by Benedict Neuenfels (LOLA Nominee); Film Editing by Britta Nahler and Costume Design by Nicole Fischnaller (LOLA nominee).

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