



Third 'Bridget Jones' in works



Working Title has confirmed that it is developing a third installment of the "Bridget Jones" series starring Renee Zellweger. The British producer has also attached Cate Blanchett to star in helmer Joe Wright's "Indian Summer."

News comes as the company's previously stellar track record for boffo films has hit a bumpy patch, causing the shingle to pinkslip six of its 45 staffers in recent days.

The untitled third "Bridget Jones" pic, which is still in its early stages and probably won't go into production until the end of next year, will see Zellweger reprise her role as a British publishing exec struggling to find love.

It will likely be based on the weekly columns author Helen Fielding wrote in 2005 for British newspaper the Independent in which Bridget, now in her 40s, attempts to have a baby before it's too late.

Working Title co-toppers Eric Fellner and Tim Bevan have yet to set a writer or director.

Meanwhile, Blanchett will star as Lady Edwina Mountbatten in "Indian Summer," based on the book of the same name by Alex von Tunzelmann, about the last days of Britain's colonial rule of India in 1947.

As previously announced, Fellner and Bevan will produce alongside Hilary Bevan Jones. William Nicholson ("Gladiator") is penning the screenplay. Lensing is set to begin next year.

As with all Working Title projects, Universal will handle worldwide distribution.



The staff cuts come as Working Title adjusts to the realities of the global economic downturn.

Helmer-scribe Richard Curtis' "The Boat That Rocked," which cost upward of \$50 million, came in below expectations in the U.K., where it cumed \$9.1 million, and elsewhere.

Focus Features is taking over domestic distribution from U and is working with Curtis to create a leaner version of the ensemble comedy for Stateside release. It was due to unspool Aug. 28, but that date has been pushed back to November.

Although Fellner and Bevan would not comment, it is understood that the cuts at Working Title won't affect its core production, development, finance and legal departments, and the company will still make its average of four features a year.

Working Title's inhouse development fund, believed to be the largest by some margin in the British film industry and funded by Universal, is also unaffected.

"Tim and Eric are absolutely fine," said one British producer. "They've got this incredible deal with Universal, which still has a few years to run. I find it laughable that some people in the industry here are trying to put them down. They are the British film industry."

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