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Warner Music to distribute 'Chemical'

Julian Doyle film stars Simon Callow

By PATRICK FRATER

Warner Music will move into theatrical movie distribution for the U.K. release of supernatural occult thriller "Chemical Wedding."

Pic, helmed by former Monty Python associate Julian Doyle, stars Simon Callow as the reincarnated Aleister Crowley, an occult scholar who was once labeled as the most evil man in Britain.

Deal was struck with L.A.-based Cinema Management Group, which handles global rights. Warner Music's interest was sparked by its connection with heavy metal band Iron Maiden, whose front man Bruce Dickinson penned the screenplay.

"'Chemical Wedding' is our first major step into the theatrical market. The film has great potential as it appeals to several broad consumer groups who happen to be both ardent cinemagoers and DVD purchasers," said Jon Sadler, marketing director at Warner Music Entertainment.

Music giant has hired an experienced theatrical exec to oversee the Blighty release and will handle advertising and marketing itself. To build word of mouth, Warner Music plans to bring British fans to the Cannes Film Festival for a sneak preview. It will release in Britain shortly after.

Pic is produced by Focus Films ("51st State") and Bill and Ben Prods. in association with Duellist Film Prods. and E-Motion. Producers are David Pupkewitz, Malcolm Kohl, Ben Timlett and Justin Peyton. Executive producers are Andy Taylor and Rod Smallwood, Karl Richards, Paul Astrom-Andrews and Peter Dale.

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