

SCREENDAILY

Annecy-bound Triggerfish, CMG tempt buyers with 'Seal Team' (exclusive)

BY JEREMY KAY | 1 JUNE 2018



**SOURCE: TRIGGERFISH
SEAL TEAM**

Annecy-bound South African animation house Triggerfish Animation Studios has begun production on the action-comedy *Seal Team*, which Edward Noeltner's Cinema Management Group (CMG) has licensed in a raft of pre-sales.

Triggerfish and CMG partnered on *Adventures In Zambesia* (2012) and 2013 Annecy International Animated Film Festival contender *Khumba*, two of the highest grossing South African productions of all time with combined worldwide box office exceeding \$50m.

Cape Town-based Triggerfish has a strong presence at this year's Annecy (June 11-16), where its short film *Belly Flop* will receive its world premiere screening at the closing ceremony, and *The Highway Rat* is in contention for best TV film.

The Highway Rat featuring David Tenant in lead voice role marks the third consecutive year that a Magic Light Pictures production with animation from Triggerfish is in line for the award, after *Revoltin' Rhymes* and *Stick Man* won the Grand Cristal Award in Annecy for TV in 2017 and 2016, respectively.

CMG, which attended Annecy last year with eventual feature animation Oscar nominee *Loving Vincent*, has closed a raft of pre-sales on *Seal Team*. Rights have gone in: Middle East (Front Row), Benelux (eOne), Poland (KinoSwiat), South Korea (First Run), CIS (Voxell), Baltics (Best Film), Portugal (Outsider), Czech Republic and Slovakia (Bohemia), former Yugoslavia (2i Film), Central America (ProLatAm), Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador (Delta Films), Philippines (Crystal Sky), and Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar (Golden River).

Seal Team centres on an orphan seal, Quinn, who has dodged sharks his entire life. When he loses his best friend to a great white, Quinn forms a ragtag special ops unit to fight back.

Veteran TV animation director Greig Cameron makes his feature directorial debut as writer-director, working from an original story and screenplay by Brian and Jason Cleveland and Wayne Thornley (*Adventures In Zambezia*).

The Industrial Development Corporation, The Department of Trade and Industry, and CMG are financing *Seal Team*, which CMG has pre-sold to more than a dozen territories.

Triggerfish head of development Anthony Silverston said, "We're delighted to be returning to our own IP after honing our skills on Magic Light Pictures' BBC Christmas specials like the Oscar-nominated *Revolting Rhymes*. The Story Lab showed us just how many untold stories Africa has and we're ready to get back to sharing them with the world."

Belly Flop is co-directed by Jeremy Collins and Kelly Dillon and tells of Penny, a young diving student who becomes frustrated when a talented rival steals the limelight. Dillon won an internal scriptwriting competition at Triggerfish in 2011 and the five-minute short has been a passion project at the studio for the last seven years.

The Highway Rat is adapted from the book by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler about a greedy rat that meets a sticky end. It screened on the BBC last December and recently won the audience award for three-six-year-olds at New York International Children's Film Festival.