



'Elite' competes for Brazil

Padilha's sequel chosen for Oscar race

Tues, Sep. 20, 2011, By MARCELO CAJUEIRO

RIO DE JANEIRO -- Jose Padilha's "Elite Squad 2" is Brazil's representative in the Oscar foreign-language race.

A commission comprising seven film industry and government representatives announced the unanimous decision Tuesday in Rio de Janeiro. They chose "Elite Squad 2" from among 15 entries.

Besides being a film against corruption, 'Elite Squad 2' is very well made and has excellent direction," said Jorge Peregrino, Paramount's senior VP for Latin America and a member of the selection commission.

As in "Elite Squad," which won Berlin's Golden Bear in 2008, "Elite Squad 2" concerns the criminal world in Rio. This time around, Captain Nascimento (Wagner Moura) hunts the corrupt cops who form militia groups to exploit impoverished communities. More than a well-made dramatic thriller with topnotch action scenes, "Elite Squad 2" exposed the corruption in Rio's police and its connections with the government and congress and had an impact on the political debate here.

Pic grossed \$61.6 million locally, making it Brazil's top earner since reliable stats became available in 1970.

"Elite Squad 2" also had an impact on local theatrical distribution. Padilha's production company, Zazen, hired vet distribution exec Marco Aurelio Marcondes and distributed the pic itself, bypassing established distributors and the existing business model.

Now Padilha is putting together a distribution company with other local producers so all can pocket a larger slice of the B.O. of their pics.