

Production underway in New Orleans on *The Butler*

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Laura Ziskin Productions and Lee Daniels Entertainment made the announcement today. IM Global sold out the project at Cannes.

The story is based on the experiences of White House butler Cecil Gaines who served eight US Presidents and witnessed tumultuous change in the country over three decades.

Lee Daniels directs from the screenplay he co-wrote with Danny Strong. Forest Whitaker stars alongside Oprah Winfrey, David Oyelowo, John Cusack, Alan Rickman, Jane Fonda, Liev Schreiber, Vanessa Redgrave, Robin Williams, Melissa Leo, Vanessa Redgrave and Terrence Howard, among others.

Pamela Oas Williams produces alongside Daniels and Cassian Elwes, while the late Laura Ziskin also gets a credit. Hilary Shor and Adam Merims are the executive producers.

Icon UK Group is financing the film with Len Blavatnik, who is also on the executive producer roll with Aviv Giladi and Vince Holden. CAA packaged *The Butler* and handles North American sales with Elwes.