

THE *Hollywood* **REPORTER**

Showtime, STX Entertainment Announce TV Deal and First Four Films



Matthew McConaughey, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Joel Edgerton

AP Images

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Showtime Networks and **Robert Simonds'** new TV and film studio STX Entertainment have announced a multi-year output agreement for films distributed theatrically by STX to air on Showtime during the premium television window.

The deal begins in 2015 and extends through 2019.

STX Entertainment, backed by TPG Growth, China's Hony Capital, Gigi Pritzker and Beau Wrigley, also announced the first four feature films in its slate, many of which have in part been announced over the past few months.

Hunger Games helmer **Gary Ross** wrote and will direct *The Free State of Jones*, based on the true story of defiant Southern farmer, Newt Knight, and his extraordinary armed rebellion against the Confederacy during the Civil War. Scott Stuber and Jon Kilik will produce the action film, which will star **Matthew McConaughey**. Route One / Union Investment Partners and VendianEntertainment are co-financing, with IM Global overseeing international distribution.

Chiwetel Ejiofor, Nicole Kidman and Julia Roberts will star in the adaptation of *The Secret in Their Eyes*, based on the 2010 Academy Award-winning Best Foreign Language Film. The film is written and directed by Captain Phillips writer **Billy Ray** and produced by **Mark Johnson**. STX is producing in conjunction with IM Global, with Route One / Union Investment Partners co-financing.

Actor **Joel Edgerton** will make his directorial debut with a thriller from producers RebeccaYeldham and Jason Blum's Blumhouse. The film, which will shoot this month, stars **Jason Bateman, Rebecca Hall and Edgerton**, who also wrote the script. Blumhouse International, which recently partnered with Sierra/Affinity to license and service its upcoming films internationally not being distributed by Universal Pictures International, is overseeing international sales on the untitled project. **Couper Samuelson** is executive producing.

And Will Ferrell will star in *Russ and Roger Go Beyond*, based on the true story of the unlikely collaboration between two maverick outsiders - controversial director **Russ Meyer** and his fledgling screenwriter **Roger Ebert** - who stormed the gates of Hollywood and forever changed the course of motion picture history. STX is eyeing a late summer start date for the comedy that will feature a variety of cameos, and is producing with **Mark Amin, Cami Winikoff, David Permut and Richard Waltzer**.

"STX Entertainment is the first major studio to launch in two decades, and these titles reflect the start of our diverse, long-term film strategy," said **Adam Fogelson**, chairman of the STX Motion Picture Group. "We look forward to working with Matt Blank, David Nevins, Kent, Gary and the entire Showtime family as our pipeline of films finds an even broader audience on their cable and digital platforms post-theatrical."