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September 29, 2010 by Thomas J. McLean Print This!



South Africa-based Triggerfish Animation Studio has announced production is under way for its first full-length feature film, called *Zambezia*, scheduled for a worldwide theatrical release in 2011.

The feature is about a falcon named Kai who leaves home to find a bird city on the edge of Victoria Falls and learns to fight for his community.

'We are opening the window into a world not many children have seen – the mighty Zambezi River Valley, the awesome Victoria Falls and the varied and rich cultures (and birdlife) of Africa,' says director Wayne Thornley.

'We are passionate about telling African yet universally-appealing stories and story for us has always been key,' says Triggerfish executive producer Stuart Forrest.

The project has emerged out of a creative, transatlantic exchange between America and South Africa. The central theme of the story penned by South African writers was inspired by the quintessentially African concept of what it means for an individual to live and grow within a community. To ensure that the script's local flavor and humor would appeal to American audiences, U.S. writer/director team Cory and Todd Edwards, who wrote the international success *Hoodwinked!*, provided a comedic polish.

The script team worked closely with U.K.-based script editor Camilla Bubna-Kasteliz with additional guidance provided by Kiel Murray from Pixar.

'We were fortunate to have someone with Kiel's experience on board – especially since we believe in Pixar's ethos of character-driven stories,' says Anthony Silverston, head of story. 'Working on *Zambezia* has been a fantastic opportunity to explore and play with the color, chaos and magic of Africa', adds co-writer Raffaella Delle Donne.

Providing voices for the film is a cast with extensive animation experience including Jim Cummings, Deep Roy, Jeremy Saurez, Jenifer Lewis, Richard E. Grant and Phil Lamarr. The film also features South African performers, including David Dennis and local comedian Brent Palmer.

Zambezia is executive produced by Wonderful Works based in San Francisco and is

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represented for international sales by Edward Noeltner of Los Angeles based-Cinema Management Group.

Noeltner has already sold *Zambezia* to a number of territories worldwide and was pivotal in helping to close a deal with U.S. film finance group 120db. A large majority of the funding is provided by the Industrial Development Corp. of South Africa, while the remaining monetary support comes from National Film and Video Foundation and original investors Wonderful Works and Triggerfish.



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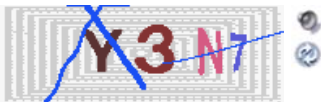
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