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'Eternal Sunshine' Screenwriter Sets Directing Debut With Arty 'Where Is Rocky II?'

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Elsa Keslassy
International Correspondent
@elsakeslassy

PARIS — Pierre Bismuth, the French artist who nabbed an original screenplay Oscar for co-writing "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind," is set to make his directorial debut with "Where Is Rocky II?"

Weaving fiction and documentary-style footage, "Where Is Rocky II?" is a multilayered thriller revolving around Bismuth's near-obsessive search for a mysterious object, believed to be a fake rock that was created by artist Ed Ruscha in 1976 and reportedly hidden in the Californian desert.

On top of hiring a private detective to uncover the truth about the object, Bismuth taps two screenwriters to come up with a fiction story chronicling the search for Ruscha's rock.

Gregoire Gensollen, who currently serves as senior VP of international distribution and strategy at Filmfilation, is producing "Where Is Rocky II?" and has enlisted screenwriter duo DV DeVincentis ("High Fidelity" and the upcoming Johnny Depp starrer "The Night Stalker") and Anthony Peckham ("Invictus," "Sherlock Holmes"), to take part in the project.

The producer is kicking off an Indiegogo campaign today, aiming to raise $150,000 to shoot the fiction portion of the movie. The campaign (igg.me/at/whereisrocky2) will be live for 32 days through February 20.

"For me, 'Where Is Rocky II?' is about more than Ed Ruscha and finding his hidden art. At the core, it is a film about how we project fantasies and how works of art can be the perfect object of fantasy," said Bismuth.

Gensollen also said the film gives audiences a behind-the-scene look at the art industry through the eyes of the detective, who knows little about art before taking on Bismuth's mission.

Personalities from the film and art worlds will be featured, including Mike White; Michael Govan, topper of LACMA; Philippe Vergne, director of MOCA; Eli Broad, philanthropist and founder of the Broad Museum; and Connie Butler, the chief curator of the Hammer Museum.

Pic is being backed by ZDF/Arte and select European funds. The Sundance Institute was key in finding finding the screenwriters, per Gensollen.

Pic is due to be completed in December.