

# DAILY VARIETY

## Purchase posse prepares

**E**very new company headed to Toronto offers a line you might hear in an expensive boutique: "We're just browsing." Reality often proves otherwise, of course: Witness the recent fest circuit acquisitions frenzy.

Here's a sampling of some of the newer U.S. distribution entities and what they're after:

### OVERTURE FILMS

**Danny Rosett**, one-time chief at United Artists, has reunited with his former boss **Chris McGurk**, who ran the last iteration of MGM, to form Overture Films.



The distrib was conceived by Liberty Media mogul John Malone as a way to plug feature films into complementary assets he controls, among them Starz.

Emphasises McGurk, "We open up the back door and, unlike some others, we have a strategic investor behind us, not just financial investors looking to make a quick return."

Overture is aiming to put out eight to 10 titles a year, starting in January. "We feel like we hit the ground running in Cannes with 'Righteous Kill,'" **McGurk** says. Overture negotiated a domestic buy of the Robert De



Niro/Al Pacino cop thriller at fest/market. Company also jockeyed for James Gray's star-driven "We Own the Night" there, which eventually went to Sony.

### SUMMIT

The longtime sales entity has recently been retrofitted as a full-service studio backed by \$1 billion in financing and topped by Rob Friedman and Summit vet **Patrick Wachsberger**.



Along with continuing to sell films, Summit is planning to release 10-12 pics a year, including eight inhouse productions.

"Toronto is a place to find mainstream releases, so it should be a much more active festival for us," **Friedman** says. "We've been heavily into the homework phase this summer, talking to sales reps about things that interest us."



### CITY LIGHTS

An outgrowth of Gotham-based TV and film production outfit City Lights, new distrib will have execs in Toronto scouting for buys during the early days of the fest. Company took on some modest releases

this year ("Descent," "Brooklyn Rules"), but made an aggressive leap with Sundance doc-winner "Manda Bala." Brazilian pic "The Year My Parents Went on Vacation"



goes out this winter. City Lights, headed by CEO **Danny Fisher**, plans to produce and acquire 36 projects over the next year; 12-18 to go theatrical, the rest straight to video or television.

### SENATOR

The longtime German stalwart has now turned its attention to the U.S. distribution market. Topper **Marco Weber** plans to release five to seven movies in 2008, including "All the Boys Love Mandy Lane," which he acquired from The Weinstein Co.



— Dade Hayes and Anthony Kaufman