



Crystal Sky signs \$200 million deal

Grosvenor Park pact covers five films

By ALI JAAFAR

Steven Paul's banner Crystal Sky Pictures has inked a \$200 million theatrical slate financing deal with Don Starr's Grosvenor Park. Deal covers five features, including upcoming videogame adaptation "Castlevania," a co-production with Universal's Rogue Pictures. Project, based on the Konami videogame, is written by Paul Anderson ("Resident Evil") and directed by Sylvain White ("Stomp the Yard").

Crystal Sky has expanded its slate of branded entertainment titles, and coin from the deal will help it further expand its development capabilities.

Other titles in the Grosvenor Park-funded slate include an adaptation of Richard Branson's memoir "Losing My Virginity," a bigscreen adaptation of videogame "Pac-Man" and a sequel to John Woo's actioner "Hard Boiled"; company also controls the rights to Brad Thor's bestselling novels.

Deal was negotiated by Crystal Sky's Scott Karol and Grosvenor Park's Deirdre Owens.

"This financing is helping us in our expansion plans to greenlight films more quickly," Paul told *Daily Variety*. "We're now one of the few companies to have a big budget with which to develop our slate."

Crystal Sky previously produced "Bratz," based on the toy franchise, with Lionsgate, and "Ghost Rider" with Columbia Pictures. The company is also producing "Ghost in the Shell" with DreamWorks and "Robosapien: Rebooted," both in association with Avi Arad's Arad Prods.

Crystal Sky is also producing Giuseppe Tornatore's English-language debut "The Lady," a \$30 million biopic of Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi.

Grosvenor Park recently provided complete financing for Ed Zwick's "Defiance," starring Daniel Craig. Paramount Vantage will release the pic domestically in the fall.

Crystal Sky's international sales will be handled by worldwide sales prexy Daniel Diamond, with Benedict Carver overseeing production.