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Malkovich, Mandate to make movies

Duo pact for two-year first-look deal

By [TATIANA SIEGEL](#)

John Malkovich's Mr. Mudd shingle has inked a two-year first-look deal with production and financing outfit Mandate Pictures to produce at least one film a year together.

The two companies, which teamed up on "Juno," will next collaborate on the noir drama "Broken City," marking their first project under the new deal.

Penned by playwright Brian Tucker, "Broken City" centers on a cop-turned-P.I. who finds himself thrust into the seedy backroom politics of a corrupt mayoral election. Mandate and Mr. Mudd will attach a director and a cast in early fall.

Mr. Mudd, which was formed in 1998 by Malkovich and fellow Steppenwolf Theater Company alums Lianne Halfon and Russell Smith, also produced "Ghost World," "The Dancer Upstairs," "Art School Confidential" and "The Libertine" and executive produced the documentary "How to Draw a Bunny."

In 2006, Mandate brought Diablo Cody's script for "Juno" to Mr. Mudd.

"I hope we will look back on that film as the start of a really productive relationship between companies rooted in their love and appreciation for great filmmaking," Smith said.

Mandate Pictures prexy Nathan Kahane said: "We really admire their passion and eye for finding great material. As producers, they ensure the most is made out of every moment of production."

Mandate also has production deals with Steven Zaillian's Film Rites and Zach Helm's Gang of Two.

Though it was recently acquired by Lionsgate, Mandate continues to operate as an autonomous brand,

whose recent films include "Harold & Kumar Escape from Guantanamo Bay."

Their upcoming slate includes "Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist," which stars Michael Cera and Kat Dennings and will be distributed by Columbia Pictures, and the Rodrigo Garcia-helmed "Passengers," with Anne Hathaway and Patrick Wilson toplining and Sony Pictures distributing.

Mandate is in post-production on "Peacock," starring Cillian Murphy, Ellen Page and Susan Sarandon. The company also operates a partnership with Ghost House Pictures, which is dedicated to financing, developing and producing films in the horror/thriller genre.

Mr. Mudd's credits include the documentary "Some Assembly Required," which was part of the First Amendment project for the Sundance Channel and Court TV. Though Mr. Mudd is best known for producing feature films, documentaries will continue to be a focus of production.

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