

A mix of horror and kids for IDT

Mip sees the unveiling of IDT Entertainment Sales' *Masters of Horror* (13x1-hour), looking at legendary horror movie directors as well as a slate of new kids' programming, including live-action/animated kids' series *Zixx*, live-action series *Harriet the Spy*, interactive *Dungeons and Dragons*, a series of animation from Stan Lee, Rob Zombie's *El Superbesto*, and Harry Connick Jr.'s new animated holiday special *The Happy Elf*.

Zed rounds up Mip TV slate

France's Zed's main Mip push is 52-minute HD doc *Rounding up Buffalo!*, following three modern-day cowboys in their year-long herding adventures. Also being showcased is docu-soap *The Nature Brigade* (2x26-mins or 6x52-mins), tracking down illegal gold prospectors invading natural reserves within Guyana's 14 million acres of tropical rainforest.

Something old and new from NBCU

NBC Universal Television Distribution's collective programming stable delivers the latest installment from Dick Wolf, *Law and Order: Trial By Jury*, medical drama *The House*, the US version of *The Office*, and an updated version of *Kojak* starring Ving Rhames, in addition to returning series like *Battlestar Galactica*, *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, and *Celebrity Poker Showdown*. Among its feature films are *Ray* and *The Interpreter*.

Slew of telenovelas from Globo

Among the eight new telenovelas from Brazilian distributor TV Globo are *Celebrity* (170x1-hour), *Cabogla* (150 x 1-hour), *Starting Over* (150x1-hour), and 1920s-set *Pepper Chocolate* (170x1-hour), telling the story of a blossoming ugly duckling.

TWI packs varied slate for Mip

TWI is launching several new programmes at Mip TV including *Jennifer*

Kiss frontman rocks Cannes

With an international deal with Australia's Network Ten already in place and strong pre-market interest from Europe and the US, UK independent distributor RDF Rights is expecting strong sales for its new format *Rock School* (pictured) at this year's Mip TV.

Set to air on the UK's Channel 4 this summer, the six-part series sees Kiss frontman Gene Simmons ditch his make-up and platform heels to tutor a group of classically trained school children in the ways of rock. While that might sound more than a little bit similar to the hit movie *School of Rock*, in which Jack Black played a rock-guitarist-turned-substitute-teacher, Grant Mansfield, creative director at RDF, says the series has more in common with the company's hugely successful *Faking It* franchise.

"It's much more drawn from the *Faking It* experience," says Mansfield, who admits to being something of a rock buff. "We're always thinking about ways that we can sort of spin-off and develop the *Faking It* format."

Over the six half-hour episodes, Simmons will have to transform the group of 13 to 14 year-old musicians, all of whom attend the 450 year-old Christ's Hospital boarding school in West Sussex, into a fully-fledged rock band. "We've got a fantastic climax planned at the end of the month," says Mansfield. "They are going to have to open for a very big band indeed."

While the children are all talented musicians, the big challenge will be teaching the band – whose normal school uniform is full-length house coats and knickerbockers – how to look and act like real rock stars. "The physical makeover and having the balls to stand up in front of a rock crowd in four weeks time, that's going to be fairly challenging," says Mansfield.

Simmons was initially sceptical that the challenge could be successfully pulled off, until he saw some of RDF's pre-



vious *Faking It* transformations, such as punk to classical music conductor. Even so, Mansfield admits the new show is much more ambitious: "We would like to feel that this is a big event. It's got elements of *Faking It*, but it's on a much, much bigger and more ambitious scale. Gene Simmons is an absolutely enormous star in America. Bringing someone like that over to the UK is quite a thing in its own right."

That star appeal should certainly bode well for a US sale, and RDF expects the show to be its biggest seller in Cannes. "We think it's a format and a programme that will travel," says Mansfield.

Other highlights of the Mip slate include *The Nightmares Next Door*, a four-part series in which five diverse households from around Britain move into a purpose-built community for a month, makeover show *Brand New You*, and *Windsor*, an observational documentary series for BBC 1.

Efficio outlines new funding model for distributors

Brussels and Paris-based Efficio will be attending Mip TV for the first time to offer distributors a new model for programming barter deals.

Founded in 1995, Efficio's core business is in retail and corporate barter and the company already works with a number of Europe's leading broadcasters, including M6 and Canal Plus. Now, though, it is talking to distributors about how barter can be used as a tool for acquiring programming.

According to general manager Eric T'Scharner, Efficio will be acquiring catalogues from distributors that are no longer being actively marketed. These will then be sold on to broadcasters for a combination of cash and advertising airtime. Efficio then remarkets the acquired media making sure not to cannibalise existing sales.

The company is also talking to producers about gap financing new programming.