

Global Bulletin: San Sebastian Adds Luca Guadagnino's 'We Are Who We Are,' Ziyang Zhou's 'Wuhai'

By Jamie Lang ▾



Credit: San Sebastián

In today's Global Bulletin, [San Sebastian](#) announces it will screen all eight episodes of Luca Guadagnino's "We Are Who We Are" and finalizes its competition sections; Venice selects legendary composer Terence Blanchard as its third Campari Passion for Film winner; Big Light Productions gets a new COO; Small World International licenses "Big in Japan" in Russia; and Fugitive signs on as Topic's international distribution representative.

FESTIVALS

HBO has doubled down at this year's **San Sebastian**, with Luca Guadagnino's "We Are Who We Are" set to world premiere alongside HBO España's original drama series "**Patria**." An HBO-Sky co-production, all seven hours and 50 minutes of "We Are Who We Are" will screen at San Sebastian in the festival's Special Screenings section.

The series was originally selected for the **Quinzaine des Réalisateurs** at **Cannes** but had to be delayed when the festival was cancelled. Two episodes will broadcast before San Sebastian, but the Spanish festival will be the first place all eight episodes will be seen publicly.

Academy Award winner Guadagnino is showrunner, executive producer, writer – with Paolo Giordano and Francesca Manieri – and director of the series, which is an exploration of friendship, first love and identity through the perspectives of two teenagers growing up on a U.S. military base in Italy. The series features Oscar nominee **Chloë Sevigny**, “It” and “Shazam” star **Jack Dylan Grazer**, “The Suicide Squad’s” **Alice Braga** and newcomer **Jordan Kristine Seamón** among its international cast.

San Sebastian has also finalized its competitive sections for this year, announcing that **Ziyang Zhou’s “Wuhai”** will screen in the Official Selection competition, **Christian Johannes Koch’s “Spagat”** (Split) in New Directors and **Marta Sousa Ribeiro’s “Simon Calls”** in the no-holds-barred Zabaltegi-Tabakalera section, open to all formats, lengths, themes and platforms.

“Wuhai” is the second feature film from Chinese director Ziyang Zhou (“Old Beast”) and the twelfth and final title in this year’s Official Selection competition. Named for the small Mongolian town where it unfolds, “Wuhai” turns on a married couple struggling with financial difficulties.



Wuhai
Credit: San Sebastián

Composer and musician **Terence Blanchard** will be honored with this year's **Campari Passion for Film Award** at the 77th **Venice Film Festival**, where **Regina King's "One Night in Miami,"** scored by Blanchard, will screen out of competition. The prize, now in its third year, highlights those in the industry who go beyond their work as craftsmen and become indispensable collaborators to some of cinema's greatest auteurs. Previous winners include American film editor Bob Murawski and Italian cinematographer Luca Bigazzi

With six **Grammy** wins and an **Oscar** nomination, Blanchard is the long-time composer for **Spike Lee**, having worked with the director regularly since 1991's "**Jungle Fever.**" Most recently his scoring can be heard on HBO's updated "**Perry Mason**" adaptation.

Blanchard will be honored on Monday, Sept 7 in the Sala Grande before an out of competition screening of "One Night in Miami."



Terence Blanchard
Credit: Henry Adebonojo

HIRING

London-based independent production company **Big Light Productions** has appointed **Chris Sutherland** as COO starting Sept. 1, reporting directly to founder-CEO **Frank Spotnitz**. There, he will oversee the company's operations, strategic partnerships and project financing.

Big Light has been responsible for several high-end, globally successful dramas in recent years under current COO Oliver Lang, who will be stepping down at the end of August to focus on his own business Sharp Edge Media, where he will continue to work alongside Big Light in that capacity. Popular catalog titles include “**The Man in the High Castle**,” “**Medici**” and the highly anticipated “**Leonardo**,” produced for RAI, France Télévisions, RTVE and Sony.

Sutherland joins the company from Ingenious Group, where he was the company’s commercial investment director.

LICENSING

Format distribution company **Small World International** has closed a new license deal for the reality game-show format “**Big in Japan**” with Russia’s **TNT**. Production on the new Russian version will begin in Tokyo as soon as travel and shooting are deemed safe.

A clash-of-the-cultures style program, “Big in Japan” has previously been adapted in seven territories and optioned in 19 since launching on **ABC** in 2008. In the show, participants are flown to Tokyo where they compete in classic Japanese-style game shows for major cash prizes. The deal is the latest in a series of moves from Small World, which entered into a first-look agreement with **MGM Television** in June in an effort to grow its global formats division.

COMMISSION

BBC One has commissioned a new original thriller, “**The Following Events are Based on a Pack of Lies**,” from siblings **Penelope** and **Ginny Skinner**. Appropriately, the series will be produced by U.K production company **Sister**.

After partnering on “Landscapers” and “Flowers,” Sister executive producers Naomi de Pear and Katie Carpenter will team once again on the new series, along with the Skinners. BBC Head of development Alice Tyler will help the siblings with development.

Controller of BBC Drama Piers Wenger and BBC director of content Charlotte Moore commissioned the series for the BBC. **BBC Studios** will handle global distribution.

DISTRIBUTION

A **First Look Media** company, **Topic's** streaming service has entered into a partnership with London-based development, financing, executive production and distribution company **Fugitive**, in which the later will represent a slate of Topic's Originals on the international marketplace.

Titles included in the deal are "**Rough Draft**" in which writer, producer Reza Aslan discusses writing with other celebrated novelists, screenwriters and musicians; "**What's Your Ailment?!**" an examination of depression and anxiety aimed at removing stigmas with comedian Maria Bamford; comedy series "**The Guru Inside You**" with Vikram Gandhi; and "**Second City Presents: The Last Show Left on Earth**" from Chicago's legendary improv theater troupe.



Rough Draft
Credit:
