

Cannes serves as launch pad for Roman Coppola's sci-fi mission

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WTTW National Productions has teamed up with Roman Coppola's Directors Bureau to launch Mission To Planet 429 (104 x 11 mins or 52 x 30 mins), a new mixed-media comedy-adventure series for children aged between six and nine.

Daniel Schmidt (photo), president and CEO of WTTW, said the property would premiere on US public television in 2010, as well as on media platforms and in markets worldwide.

The retro sci-fi Mission To Planet 429 focuses on the twists and turns of two rookie intergalactic 'earthsplorers', who are attempting to save their planet from peril.

The series aims to encourage children to develop their reading and comprehension skills as they tackle informational text. The project has been partly funded through a Ready To Learn grant from the US Department of Education.

Schmidt said: "**Mission To Planet 429 is a tremendously exciting project and it has been great to have Roman Coppola, who is the son of the legendary film producer Francis Ford Coppola, and Directors Bureau involved.** Roman has built a very successful career in film and music, but this is a new departure for him."

At MIPCOM, WTTW is seeking international co-production partners for the series, which combines strong storylines with adventure and comedy. Coppola added: "Mission To Planet 429 will be truly innovative. I created the series to be the type of show I would have loved when I was eight-years-old and watching iconic titles like UFO and Thunderbirds. Although kids' programming is a new area to me, I jumped at the opportunity to become involved with this project."