

SCREEN DAILY

Barnes headlines Bono's Doppelgänger for Salt

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Finance has closed and pre-production begun on *I Was Bono's Doppelgänger*, Nick Hamm's Irish comedy based on Neil McCormick's autobiography. The film is being sold at the AFM by London-based Salt.

The cast is headed by Ben Barnes (*Dorian Gray*, *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian*) and Robert Sheehan (*Season of the Witch*, *Cherrybomb*), who play hapless brothers Neil and Ivan McCormick. Together, they set up a band in Dublin in the late 70s. Sadly for them, so do their classmates and rivals, who go on to become U2.

The film starts shooting January 11 on location in Northern Ireland with additional photography in Dublin and London. The script is written by Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais (*The Commitments*).

Salt has already closed a deal for France with Pyramide, which recently enjoyed brisk business on another Britcom, *Easy Virtue*, also starring Ben Barnes. Other deals closed include Svensk for Scandinavia, Prime Pictures for Middle East, Jaguar for air lines, Lusomundo for Portugal and Odeon for Greece.

Producers are Piers Tempest (*Like Minds*) for The Salt Company, Ian Flooks (*Confetti*) for Wasted Talent, Mark Huffam (*Mamma Mia!*) for Generator Entertainment and Nick Hamm for Greenroom Entertainment.

The film is backed by Isotope Films, Matador Pictures, Cinema Three, Regent Capital, Molinare, Silver Reel, Sony Music Entertainment UK who will release the soundtrack worldwide and Northern Ireland Screen.

"We are thrilled to be involved in this adventure with Salt," said Pyramide chief Eric Lagesse. "I always

wanted to be a rock star but decided against it as a career for fear of ending up like the character Neil in this great script to be directed by Nick Hamm. I couldn't help myself from buying this funny and sweet story of two brothers chasing success."

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