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Swiss Female-Driven Drama '40 & Climbing' Set for August Alpine Shoot (EXCLUSIVE)

By Nick Vivarelli



Courtesy Hugofilm

[Bindu de Stoppani](#), the India-born but Switzerland-raised multi-hyphenate who directed Swiss films “Jump” and “Finding Camille,” is set to direct her third feature, a female-driven dramedy titled “40 & Climbing” set in an Alpine valley and featuring a strong Italian cast.

Italy’s [Anna Ferzetti](#), who recently scooped multiple local prizes for her role in dramedy “Domani è un altro giorno” – is set to star in “40” along with Elena Di Cioccio (“Squadra mobile”) and Eurice Axen (“Loro”).

The plan is for cameras to start rolling Aug. 10 on this Italian-language film in the Blenio Valley, in Switzerland’s Italian-speaking Canton of Ticino, amid Alpine peaks and routes that have been used for centuries.

Pic is about three middle-aged female friends who meet up in the mountains to scatter a dead friend’s ashes and then embark on adventures in the Alpine wilderness that make them “rediscover a past they’ve turned their back on,” and also “remember what true female solidarity, forgiveness and love is all about,” the logline reads.

“I haven’t seen many films about women (buddy movies), lost in the wild, getting dirty, messy and rugged (peeing and getting their period),” de Stoppani said in the film’s promotional materials. She also underlined her intention to “talk about the complexities of women.”

The film is basically about “these three friends who have to get into this extreme situation to understand what’s important in life,” producer Christof Neracher, head of Zurich-based [Hugofilm](#), told *Variety*.

Neracher added that because “Bindu is based in the U.K.,” she “brings this Anglo-Saxon storytelling sensibility which you don’t find that much in Switzerland,” to the film. A mindset “that’s very focused on finding and engaging an audience.”

The primary audience for this film will of course be Italian.

Neracher, who also produced “Jump” and “Finding Camille,” said he was also happy that producer Michela Pini and Amel Soudani’s Cinédokké are executive producing “40 & Climbing.” “I am very dependent on Michela not just for servicing the film, but also for her help with fine-tuning the Italian dialogue,” Neracher said.

Hugofilm is co-producing with Swiss TV RSI and has some financing from the Swiss Teleproduction Fund and the Ticino Film Commission.

To contend with COVID-19, the actors have been tested for the virus and are rehearsing onsite in the Alps ahead of the Aug. 10 start of production date.

Neracher said his goal is to premiere the film in the 2021 Locarno Film Festival’s Piazza Grande.