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✉ Untitled Great War project wraps in Prague

Scott MacMillan in Prague 06 January 2002 17:50

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- Home
 - Free news email
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 - Reviews
 - Industry Jobs
 - International Production Listings
 - Festival Calendar
 - Conferences
 - Contacts
 - About us/Feedback
 - Advertising
 - Oscar Moore
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 - Change your password
 - FAQs
 - Links

The as-yet untitled World War I thriller starring *Billy Elliot's* Jamie Bell wrapped in the Czech Republic in December, a UK-German co-production and the first from UK-based Film & Music Entertainment Ltd.

The \$5 million shoot finished on time and on budget, according to producer [Mike Downey](#), who explained that the Czech Republic was chosen due to lower costs. "We considered shooting in London," he says, "but we believe that our \$5 million film would have cost \$7.5 million if shot in the UK. There was also the UK actors' strike looming, which eventually did cross over with our dates."

F.& M.E Ltd is a joint venture launched in early 2001 between UK producers [Downey](#) (*Josephine*, *Seven Days To Live*) and Sam Taylor, who together own 40%, and Munich-based Film And Music Entertainment AG.

The film was shot entirely on location at a paratroopers' base in the Central Bohemian city of Benesov, just outside Prague.

First-time helmer Michael J. Bassett was given the go-ahead to direct his own screenplay after proving his skills to producers during a "test shoot" near his home-town of Shropshire last year.

The "Untitled Great War Project," as the producers have dubbed it, is only the second film for Bell, who won critical acclaim for his portrayal of a boy dancer in *Billy Elliot* last year. Here he plays a 16-year-old private who confronts a supernatural terror in the trenches of the Western front.

"The film will be a cross between *All Quiet On The Western Front* and *The Evil Dead*," says [Downey](#), who points out this is the first major independent film to go into production following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11.



REVIEW



CASINO ROYALE
Bond is back in a wildly successful mix of heart-thumping action, strong characterisation and gritty realism, says Allan

