

# Summit gets rights to 'Men Are From Mars'

**BermanBraun to produce a feature based on the books**

By Gregg Kilday

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Summit Entertainment is wading into the battle of the sexes by acquiring film and TV rights to John Gray's "Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus" franchise and has set Gail Berman and Lloyd Braun to produce a feature film via their BermanBraun banner.

The producers weren't ready to tip their hand about what direction the film might take, saying it was still in early development, but the moniker suggests the possibility of a high-concept ensemble comedy along the lines of the hit 2009 release "He's Just Not That Into You."

Summit president of production Erik Feig and vp production Meredith Milton will oversee the project with Andrew Mittman, head of feature film development at BermanBraun, who brought in the project.

Gray's original book about gender differences, whose title became a pop-culture catchphrase, was published in 1992 by HarperCollins. Its success triggered a dozen-plus "Mars/Venus" titles, selling more than 50 million books in 45 territories worldwide. The first book was on the New York Times best-seller list for nearly seven years.

The "Mars/Venus" property already has seen several media incarnations: It inspired a short-lived talk show, produced by Merv Griffin Entertainment and distributed by Sony, in 2000, and a musical comedy that bowed on Broadway in 1997. In addition, Gray's video/DVD lecture series has earned more than \$100 million.

Berman and Braun called the franchise "the Rosetta Stone for understanding the opposite sex."

"While men and women may never truly speak the same language, we're thrilled to explore their perpetually hilarious, painful and romantic conflicts on the big screen," they added.

Said Feig, "We know it will become an amazing film and TV franchise."

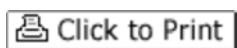
Gray is repped by San Francisco attorney David Given.

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