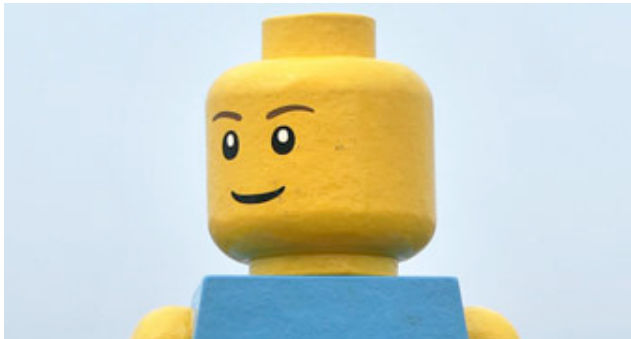


It's toy mania as Lego becomes next Hollywood target

By Steven Zeitchik and Borys Kit



Warner Bros. is building a Lego movie.

The studio and producer Dan Lin have acquired theatrical rights for a motion picture about the timeless toy, and set writers Dan and Kevin Hageman to pen the script.

The live action/CG hybrid is described as a movie set in the world of Lego that centers on the subject of childlike imaginations and examines themes of creativity and teamwork in the manner of “Toy Story.” While the pic will have elements for children, the studio is hoping the film is a four-quadrant play that can also appeal to adults.

In addition to Lin (whose credits include Guy Ritchie’s upcoming “Sherlock Holmes” at Warners), Roy Lee will produce and Stephen Gilchrist will co-produce, while Jill Wilfert will oversee creatively for Lego. Matt Reilly is overseeing for the studio.

The Lego development project continues what has been a veritable craze for toy-based movies, a trend that flowered again at the boxoffice this past weekend with the [\\$56 million opening of “G.I. Joe,”](#) the Hasbro toy that became a Paramount hit, and has extended into lesser-known toys like [the View-Master](#), which is being developed as a feature under the guidance of producers Alex Kurtzman and Roberto Orci at DreamWorks.

It's a bit of a switch for the CAA- and Underground Management-repped Hagemans, who are set to adapt the ensemble monster pic “Hotel Transylvania” for Sony and are adapting the genre tale “Carpe Demon: Adventures of a Demon-Hunting Soccer Mom” for Warners. But apparently when the scribes pitched the Lego execs (in Denmark), there was warm enthusiasm, not always the reception when Hollywood's come a-knocking before.

Some history: Lego began in the 1940s as a toy first popular with Europeans and then around the globe. The company, which remains a privately controlled firm based in Billund, Denmark, has over the years maintained its core lines of building blocks even as it has expanded into robots, space stations and other theme-driven extensions.

The toy has always had a presence of sorts in and around Hollywood. A handful of direct-to-DVD CGI pics have been distributed through the home video arms of companies such as Universal and Miramax, and it also has offered children's video game tie-ins with Warners properties like "Batman." And the only Legoland in North America sits in Carlsbad, about an hour south of Los Angeles, which if you have anyone under 7 years old in your life, you know all too well.

But a big-screen feature has never been attempted.

There's another trend at work here. Warners is keen on developing a toy pic, but it's also hot for live action/CG hybrids. The studio is behind a big screen remake of "Yogi Bear" as well as a reboot of the Don Knotts "The Incredible Mr. Limpet," which live-CG master Kevin Lima is attached to direct, about an adult who turns into a mermaid. Guess it's now time for some computer-generated little yellow men, too.