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Awards Circuit

'Day of the Jackal' Director Paul Wilmshurst, 'Barbarians' Creator Andreas Heckmann Board Spanish Inquisition Epic 'Korsan' (EXCLUSIVE)

Jewish-Ottoman epic blends history, romance, and high-seas adventure By Ben Croll ~













Lazuri Film

Showrunner Andreas Heckmann ("Barbarians") and director Paul Wilmshurst ("The Day of the Jackal," "Da Vinci's Demons," "The Last Kingdom") have boarded "Korsan," a six-part nautical epic produced by France's Lazuri Film.

Set in 1492, the series follows Sara, the defiant daughter of Granada's chief Rabbi, exiled during Spain's expulsion of its Jewish population and captured by Ottoman corsairs ('Korsan' in Turkish). From Andalusia to Istanbul, her journey becomes a daring rescue mission across land and sea, exploring exile, faith and identity. Under an imperial decree, her captors become unlikely allies, guiding Jewish refugees through ambushes, shifting alliances and treacherous waters, while Sara confronts leadership, loyalty and love at a high cost.

Contrasting Inquisition-era Spain with the multicultural Ottoman Empire, Korsan blends historical drama, complex characters, and a central love triangle between Sara, a bold Jewish rebel; Piri, a self-serving pirate with hidden honor, and Jean, his adopted brother and rival. Together, they must survive not only persecution but betrayal from within, delivering adventure and emotion targeting an international audience.

"Rooted in history, emotionally charged and rich in visual and psychological tension, 'Korsan' is exactly the story I want to tell," says Wilmshurst. "While it unfolds in a historical setting, every silence, glance and decision carries contemporary urgency. At its core, the series is about identity, courage and resilience—but it's also a sweeping tale of adventure and romance."

"With family across Germany, Turkey, Holland, and the United States, my life spans two religions and four continents, cultures, and languages," adds Heckmann.

"These differences enrich us rather than divide us. Today, many retreat into their own groups, claiming freedom and justice only for themselves. The challenges we face demand collaboration, compassion, and courage, and remind us that the true heroes are those who dare to fight injustice."

The six-episode series has a budget of \$24 million-\$25 million, with a pre-sale deal with a major international distributor in its final stages. Filming is set in Spain for late summer 2026. Lazuri Film founder Cumali Varer will represent the series at Mipcom in October.

"While Columbus opened the route to the Americas, radicalization and religious tensions were already shaking Europe, eventually leading to the Wars of Religion," says Varer. "Today, Spain is reconsidering its past, acknowledging the centuries-long influence of Jewish and Muslim communities. Korsan tells this story in a thrilling, sophisticated way, fostering understanding of the 'other' and promoting tolerance and cooperation - a timely reminder in today's world."

Read More About: Andreas Heckmann, Korsan, Lazuri Film, Mipcom, Paul Wilmshurst



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