

digest

Accused

MADRID — A Catalan regional government prosecutor on Tuesday accused Julio Fernandez, president of Spanish studio Filmmax, of misappropriation of funds while heading film distributor Ivex Films more than a dozen years ago. At the hearing, the prosecutor asked for six years in jail and a fine of \$52,682 for Fernandez, who he alleges transferred some €47.5 million (\$69.5 million) before filing Chapter 11. The producer denied any wrongdoing, saying that all banks, creditors and interested parties were paid according to the Chapter 11 outline.

Purchased

BERLIN — German media group Senator continued its shopping spree Thursday, acquiring boutique production company Weltruf TV. The Cologne-based shingle was set up in 1999 by Niels Ruf and partner Stefan Kiwit. The company specializes in cutting-edge TV formats as well as music videos, commercials and production for mobile devices. Earlier this week, Senator acquired a minority stake in rights group A Company, with an option to take majority control of the Berlin-based operation that specializes in distribution in Eastern Europe.

Renamed

TORONTO — Norman Jewison's Canadian Film Centre has sold the naming rights to its film school program to domestic exhibition giant Cineplex Entertainment. The Toronto-based film center said it will change the name of its film program to the Cineplex Entertainment Film Program in return for \$1 million over five years from Canada's largest cinema circuit. In addition, Cineplex Entertainment will provide an annual scholarship of \$100,000 to aid one film resident enrolled in the film school.

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VOI

By Char

PARIS — If you want to see films such as *Amélie* about life in Paris or John Woo's recent "Bicycle Thieves" following the war.

Until now, they have been in the archives of the Cinéma de la Ville de Paris, respectively the War Museum and the National Film Archive.

But this week, the launch of a wide video-on-demand service is being developed by the company, with content from the Cinéma de la Ville de Paris. Another benefit is that the service will be available to a wider audience.

Europe's largest site will be a child of the French film restoration company Films de la Ville de Paris. The MEDIA program put up half the €500,000 fund the company used to launch the service.

Europe's largest audience is tapping into the service like YouTube, but with a focus on old films and documentaries. The service is being launched in Berlin on September 1st, the best time to see more than 100 difficult-to-find films like *Amélie*.

Each program is a purpose film, and the film specifications to include on criteria for the best and most interesting will be a mix of only, not just may in the associated DVD.

Films of original interest where new languages are used, Italian, French, German, Italian.

The site is being launched with about 100 titles, is to include more once fully