

ZDF Studios & Three Tables Team for New Heist Drama - TVDRAMA

ZDF Studios has partnered with the U.K.-based indie Three Tables Productions to develop the tentatively titled heist drama *A Theft of Lies*.

Written and created by Chris Cornwell (*Strike Back*, *A Discovery of Witches*), the series is about an art forger who's forced into teaming up with a professional thief to steal back priceless Asian artworks that were taken during Britain's colonial past. It is inspired by true-life raids of Chinese art from museums and collections throughout Europe over the last decade.

Yi Qiao, director of drama at ZDF Studios, said: "The search for self-identity and belonging is a lifelong one that is known to every single one of us. If you link this with today's discussion around the colonial history of art and artifacts, you realize that this makes a compelling ground for storytelling. Hence, there was no hesitation for us to board *A Theft of Lies* when JT Wong from Three Tables came to us with this original story from Chris Cornwell. It not only combines these elements but transforms them into a high-stakes heist drama. I couldn't be more thrilled for us at ZDF Studios to be part of this journey."

JT Wong, managing director of Three Tables Productions, added: "Chris brought us an idea that was immediately compelling and exciting. We could clearly see his ambition to create a fun and entertaining show that is driven by two complex characters who, underneath the thrill and glamour, are searching for their place in the world. Bringing Chris, Yi and us together felt instantly like a great combination—each of us having grown up with mixed cultures and all still working out how our heritage, nationality and identity fit together."

Cornwell commented: "Heist dramas are games of identity and deception. The con artists, at heart, are desperately trying to fool those around them that they belong. It's something most of us have felt at one time or another, especially if you've a foot outside of the culture you're trying to fit into. That's what all of us find so exciting about this story. It'll have the thrilling twists and character turns that we love about the genre, but it's ultimately about what it takes to bluff your way into British high society. Beneath the genre beats, it's a story of the pieces of ourselves that we sell in order to fit in."