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# Orlando Bloom's 'Smart Chase' at Center of Hollywood-China Legal Dispute

Getty Images  
Orlando Bloom

Das Films claims Bliss Media breached their deal and lied about abandoning the film to cover it up.

China's Bliss Media is facing a lawsuit over the upcoming Orlando Bloom film *Smart Chase: Fire & Earth* from American film producers who say they were duped.

Das Films is suing Bliss for fraud and breach of contract, claiming Bliss "wanted only to learn from Das Film's experience and not pay for the work."

According to the suit, Das Films had secured a director and hired someone to rewrite the script when Bliss tried to fire the producers in breach of their contract.

"Bliss almost immediately began filming in China with Orlando Bloom in the lead role, without including Das Films," writes attorney Bryan Freedman. "Das Films has at all times complied with the contract and was willing and able to produce the film until it was unfairly cut out of the production."

Bliss and Das Films signed a producer memo in December 2015, according to the complaint, which required Bliss to pay the producers a fixed fee of up to \$750,000, as well as box-office bonuses and profit participation. Bliss paid an initial \$75,000 for the development phase of production but hasn't paid since.

Das Films claims Bliss founder Wei Han blocked them from hiring lead actors for the film, citing script approval as the reason, and then proceeded to cast several roles without consulting them.

"By casting Asian actors before the script was even final, Defendants were making it more difficult to cast the lead actor, a much more important role for purposes of scheduling and financing," Freedman writes. "Defendants were holding up the entire production process by failing to approve the script and preventing the casting of the lead role, but were also complaining about the delay."

In April, Han indicated she wanted the project to begin filming in July — but, at the time, it had no lead actor, no approved script, no schedule and budget and no sales agent. Das Films claims this was all in an effort to "invent" reasons to terminate them.

After notifying Das Films they were "off the project," the producers say Han then claimed Bliss was abandoning the film altogether but then "proceeded to film the Picture without Plaintiff and commenced production sometime before September 2016."

Bliss Media sent The Hollywood Reporter a statement in response to the lawsuit on Wednesday. "The allegations against Bliss Media by Das Films are wholly without merit as they were terminated with cause. As this matter is currently the subject of aggressive litigation/arbitration, it is inappropriate to comment further other than to vehemently deny the claims put forward by Das Films. Smart Chase is an extraordinary collaboration with talent and filmmakers from the U.S., China and Europe that is being shot entirely in Shanghai and will receive a wide release in China."

**Oct. 5, 3:30 p.m.** Updated with a comment from Bliss Media.