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Mark Waters to direct 'Blood Sisters'

Reliance and IM Global pic is first in 'Vampire Academy' series

By Dave McNary

Mark Waters will direct "Blood Sisters" as the first installment in a planned feature franchise based on the "Vampire Academy" fantasy series for financiers Reliance Entertainment and IM Global.

Zoey Deutch ("Beautiful Creatures") and Australian thesp Lucy Fry have been signed to play lead characters Rose and Lissa, while Russian actor Danila Kozlovski will play Dimitri.

Producers are Don Murphy and Susan Montford of Angry Films; Michael Preger; and Deepak Nayar of Kintop Pictures, with IM Global CEO Stuart Ford exec producing. IM Global will be handling foreign sales in Berlin.

Waters

The director's brother, Dan Waters, penned the script for "Blood Sisters," based on the first book in Richelle Mead's series of books. Producers plan to start lensing in the early summer.

Preger initially optioned the property. Variety reported in July 2010 that Murphy and Montford had come on to the project. The trio then brought on Kintop and Reliance.

The series, set at St. Vladimir's Academy in the Montana forest, centers on Rose Hathaway, a 17-year-old "dhampir" -- a half human/half vampire and a guardian of the Moroi race of peaceful mortal vampires. She must deal with the intricacies of the Moroi social order and the Strigoi, a race of bloodthirsty immortal vampires and predators of the Moroi.

The six "Vampire Academy" books have sold more than 8 million copies in 35 countries. The last four -- "Shadow Kiss," "Blood Promise," "Spirit Bound," "Last Sacrifice" -- are on the New York Times bestsellers list.

Mark Waters directed "Mean Girls" and "Spiderwick Chronicles," while Dan Waters' screenplay credits include "Batman Returns" and "Heathers."

Murphy and Montford are producers on "Transformers" and "Real Steel." Nayar's producing credits include "Walking With Dinosaurs" and "Bend It Like Beckham."

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