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TWC gets into vamp biz with 'Blood Sisters'

Company gets U.S. rights to first installment in planned franchise

By [Dave McNary](#)

Another vampire franchise is headed to the big screen via The Weinstein Co.

In a deal disclosed at Berlin following a bidding war, TWC bought U.S. rights to "Blood Sisters" as the first installment in a planned feature franchise based on the "Vampire Academy" fantasy series..

TWC is entering the vampire business at an opportune time. Summit's five-film "Twilight" franchise is ending its theatrical run with an impressive \$3.3 billion in worldwide box office.

TWC said the film will go into production this summer with plans for a release on Feb. 14, 2014. It announced the deal Sunday at Berlin, where financiers Reliance Entertainment and IM Global had been selling rights.

Mark Waters came on board a week ago to direct "Sisters" with Zoey Deutch ("Beautiful Creatures") and Australian thesp Lucy Fry signed to play lead characters Rose and Lissa. 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.

The director's brother, Dan Waters, penned the script for "Blood Sisters," based on the first book in Richelle Mead's series of books.

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.

The deal was negotiated by TWC's Harvey Weinstein, David Glasser and Mark Gooder with Ford and attorney Craig Emmanuel of Loeb and Loeb.

TWC said Sunday that "Blood sisters" will be its first move into the world of young adult franchises.

"I am thrilled to be working on the first feature for "Vampire Academy," Weinstein said. "The series is fantastic and I am excited to bring it to the screen for diehard fans and introduce the stories to a whole new audience."

Murphy said in a statement, "The addition of Harvey and the TWC distribution and marketing team gives us the opportunity to present this wonderful franchise to the world in a bold, unique fashion and only adds to 'Vampire Academy's' considerable momentum."

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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