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## RLJ Entertainment teams with Fox on Agatha Christie's 'Murder on the Orient Express'

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Silver Spring-based RLJ Entertainment Inc. has sold rights to Fox to make a film based on Agatha Christie's novel "Murder on the Orient Express."

Fox won out in a "highly competitive bidding process," according to a statement from RLJ. The price of the acquisition was not disclosed.

RLJ Entertainment acquired a majority share of Agatha Christie's literary estate in 2012; "Murder on the Orient Express" is the first work for which it has sold the feature film rights.

Fox and RLJ have named three producers: Ridley Scott ("Black Hawk Down," "Gladiator") Mark Gordon ("Saving Private Ryan") and Simon Kinberg ("X-Men: First Class," "Sherlock Holmes").

"We have worked closely with Mathew Prichard, Agatha's grandson, to find the right studio and filmmakers to grow the Christie brand," Miguel Penella, CEO of RLJ Entertainment, said in a statement. "We are excited to be working with Fox as well as Ridley Scott, Mark Gordon and Simon Kinberg to produce a new, star-studded adaptation of one of the most well-known mystery novels of all time."

No actors or writers have yet been named for "Murder on the Orient Express," but whoever they are, they'll have a lot to live up to. The last full-length film version of the mystery novel came out in 1974. It was directed by Sidney Lumet, starred Albert Finney and Ingrid Bergman and was nominated for six Oscars.

RLJ also is working closely with Agatha Christie Ltd. to develop the first authorized novel featuring Christie's Hercule Poirot character.

RLJ Entertainment, founded by Robert Johnson, was created in 2012 with the combination of Acorn Media Group Inc. and Image Entertainment Inc.

<http://www.bizjournals.com/washington/blog/top-shelf/2013/12/rlj-entertainment-teams-with-fox-on.html>