
SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

SONY PICTURES CLASSICS WINS WORLDWIDE RIGHTS TO MAGGIE BETTS' *NOVITIATE*

NEW YORK (January 22, 2017) – Sony Pictures Classics announced today that they have acquired worldwide rights to Maggie Betts' *NOVITIATE*. The highly anticipated film is writer and director Betts' feature debut. It recently premiered in competition at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival to rave reviews.

Starring Margaret Qualley, Julianne Nicholson, Dianna Agron, Morgan Saylor, and Melissa Leo, *NOVITIATE* is produced by Carole J. Peterman and Maven Pictures' Celine Rattray and Trudie Styler. Betts serves as an executive producer on the feature alongside Jessica Betts and Roland Betts.

Spanning over a decade from the early 1950s through to the mid-60s, *NOVITIATE* is about a young girl's first experience with love. In this case, her first love is God. Raised by a vehemently non-religious, single mother in rural Tennessee, a scholarship to Catholic school soon finds Cathleen drawn into all the mystery and romanticism of a life devoted to the worship and servitude of God. With the dawn of the Vatican II era, radical changes in the Church are threatening the course of nuns' lives. Cathleen finds herself struggling with issues of faith, sexuality, and the changing administration. As she progresses from the postulant to the novitiate stage of training, she finds her faith repeatedly confronted and challenged by the harsh, often inhumane realities of being a servant of God.

The film reunites actress Leo with Sony Pictures Classics, who previously distributed her film *FROZEN RIVER*, for which she was nominated for an Academy Award® for Best Performance by an Actress in Leading Role. Sony Pictures Classics plans to release the film by the end of the year.

The deal was negotiated by CAA on behalf of the filmmakers.

ABOUT SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

Michael Barker and Tom Bernard serve as co-presidents of Sony Pictures Classics—an autonomous division of Sony Pictures Entertainment they founded with Marcie Bloom in January 1992, which distributes, produces, and acquires independent films from around the world. Barker and Bernard have released prestigious films that have won 32 Academy Awards® (28 of those at Sony Pictures Classics) and have garnered 159 Academy Award® nominations (133 at Sony Pictures Classics) including Best Picture nominations for *WHIPLASH*,

AMOUR, MIDNIGHT IN PARIS, AN EDUCATION, CAPOTE, HOWARDS END,
AND CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON.

ABOUT SONY PICTURES ENTERTAINMENT

Sony Pictures Entertainment (SPE) is a subsidiary of Sony Corporation of America, a subsidiary of Tokyo-based Sony Corporation. SPE's global operations encompass motion picture production and distribution; television production and distribution; home entertainment acquisition and distribution; a global channel network; digital content creation and distribution; operation of studio facilities; development of new entertainment products, services and technologies; and distribution of entertainment in more than 142 countries. For additional information, go to <http://www.sonypictures.com/>.