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# SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **SONY PICTURES CLASSICS ACQUIRES TESTAMENT OF YOUTH**

### **BASED ON VERA BRITAIN'S MEMOIR**

**NEW YORK (January 16, 2015)** - Sony Pictures Classics announced today that they acquired the rights in North America, Latin America and Asia from Protagonist Pictures to *TESTAMENT OF YOUTH*, based on Vera Brittain's World War One memoir of the same name. The film, directed by James Kent and adapted by Juliette Towhidi, stars Alicia Vikander, Kit Harington, Taron Egerton, Dominic West, Emily Watson, Colin Morgan, Miranda Richardson, Joanna Scanlan, Hayley Atwell, Jonathan Bailey, Alexandra Roach, and Anna Chancellor.

*TESTAMENT OF YOUTH* is produced by David Heyman and Rosie Alison of Heyday Films, co-produced by Celia Duval, and executive produced by Christine Langan and Joe Oppenheimer of BBC Films, Richard Mansell, Zygi Kamasa of Lionsgate UK, Hugo Heppell of Screen Yorkshire, and Henrik Zein of Nordisk. The film was funded by BBC Films, Screen Yorkshire's Yorkshire Content Fund, BFI, Nordisk Film Production, Lipsync and Ingenious.

*TESTAMENT OF YOUTH* is a searing story of love, war and remembrance, adapted by Towhidi from the beloved First World War memoir by Vera Brittain, which has become the classic testimony of that war from a woman's point of view. Vera, irrepressible, intelligent and free-minded, overcomes the prejudices of her family and hometown, to win a scholarship to Oxford. With everything to live for, she falls in love with her brother's brilliant friend Roland Leighton as they go to University to pursue their literary dreams.

But the First World War is looming and as the boys leave for the front, Vera realizes she cannot sit idly by as her peers fight for their country, so volunteers as a nurse and sets off for France.

The deal was negotiated with Mike Goodridge and Vanessa Saal for Protagonist Pictures and SPC.

"Vera Brittain's heartfelt and powerful memoir defined a generation nearly a century

ago. With TESTAMENT OF YOUTH, director James Kent, actress Alicia Vikander in a fine performance, producers David Heyman and Rosie Alison and their team, bring this vital story to life in a way that speaks to all generations," said Sony Pictures Classics.

"I am thrilled to see Sony Picture Classics partner our journey in bringing TESTAMENT OF YOUTH to the screen. I am so proud of this heartfelt, beautifully performed film of youthful hope and searing love that speaks across the ages. The prospect of this extraordinary story being cherished by an American audience is extremely exciting," stated Director James Kent.

Producer David Heyman added, "I have known Michael and Tom for many, many years and have admired their vision, integrity and passionate support of great films and original voices for even longer and so am thrilled that they have chosen to distribute TESTAMENT OF YOUTH. We could not be in better hands."

## **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 158 Academy Award® nominations (132 at Sony Pictures Classics) including Best Picture nominations for 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/>.

## **ABOUT PROTAGONIST PICTURES**

Commercially minded and creatively spirited, Protagonist Pictures is an international finance, production and sales company committed to strong relationships with filmmakers, financiers and distributors. Launched in London in 2008 by shareholders including Film4, Vertigo Films and Ingenious Media, the company quickly created a strong brand as a home for bold stories and exciting new directing voices. It has now expanded from its UK origins to handle titles from around the world, with a wider range of directors, producers and budgets.

Protagonist's current slate includes Yann Demange's feature debut '71; Peter Strickland's The Duke Of Burgundy; and Yorgos Lanthimos's The Lobster, featuring Colin Farrell, Rachael Weisz, Ben Whishaw, John C Reilly and Lea Seydoux, which is in post production. Shooting in the coming months will be Andrea Arnold's first US project American Honey, Rebecca Miller's romantic comedy Maggie's Plan with Greta Gerwig and Julianne Moore, Whit Stillman's Love & Friendship with Chloe Sevigny, Brady Corbet's feature debut The Childhood Of A Leader, starring Berenice Bejo and Robert Pattinson, and the new Ben Wheatley thriller Free Fire, with Luke Evans, Armie Hammer, Cillian Murphy and Olivia Wilde.

<http://www.protagonistpictures.com>

## **ABOUT HEYDAY FILMS**

Heyday Films was founded in 1997 by British Film producer, David Heyman. Its credits include the Harry Potter film series (the most successful movie franchise in filmmaking history), Yes Man (starring Jim Carey), Holocaust drama The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas, and Alfonso Cuarón's multi-award winning space film, Gravity. Its most recent production is the family film Paddington (written and directed by Paul King) which has just topped the UK box office and opens in the US on January 16th 2015.

Heyday Films has a first-look deal with Warner Bros. but remains an independent production company committed to producing a wide range of films, from large-budget studio movies to smaller-budget independent productions.