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# SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

## **SONY PICTURES CLASSICS ACQUIRES DIRECTORS' FORTNIGHT THE RIDER**

NEW YORK (May 23, 2017) – Sony Pictures Classics announced today that they have acquired all rights in North America, Latin America, Asia, Australia, New Zealand and Eastern Europe to Chloé Zhao's *THE RIDER* at the 2017 Cannes Film Festival. Written and directed by Zhao (*SONGS MY BROTHERS TAUGHT ME*), *THE RIDER* premiered in Directors' Fortnight to critical acclaim. The film marks Zhao's second feature to be selected for the Directors' Fortnight.

While visiting the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota for her first feature *SONGS MY BROTHERS TAUGHT ME*, Zhao connected with a group of Lakota cowboys including Brady Jandreau and wrote *THE RIDER* around Brady's tragic and ultimately universal story.

Based on his a true story, *THE RIDER* stars breakout Brady Jandreau as a once rising star of the rodeo circuit warned that his competition days are over after a tragic riding accident. Back home, Brady finds himself wondering what he has to live for when he can no longer do what gives him a sense of purpose: to ride and compete. In an attempt to regain control of his fate, Brady undertakes a search for new identity and tries to redefine his idea of what it means to be a man in the heartland of America. Tim Jandreau, Lilly Jandreau, Lane Scott and Cat Clifford also star.

Said Chloé Zhao, "The films Sony Pictures Classics has distributed throughout the years have been of great inspiration to me. I'm very excited to find such a great home for *THE RIDER*."

"*THE RIDER* is a real find, a fresh, authentic American movie. Watching it with an audience is a transformative experience. Chloé Zhao is a new master of the medium. We are excited to be bringing *THE RIDER* to the public." said Sony Pictures Classics.

*THE RIDER* is produced by Zhao's Highwayman Films, Bert Hamelinck and Sacha Ben Harroche of Caviar Films, and Mollye Asher. Caviar's Michael Sagol and Jasper Thomlinson serve as executive producers.

Chloé Zhao is the Chinese writer, director and producer whose 2015 feature debut *SONGS MY BROTHERS TAUGHT ME* premiered in US Dramatic Competition at the Sundance Film Festival followed by its Directors' Fortnight selection. The film was nominated for three 2016 Independent Spirit Awards.

The deal was negotiated between Protagonist Pictures and WME with SPC.

### **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 37 Academy Awards® (33 of those at Sony Pictures Classics) and have garnered 163 Academy Award® nominations (137 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/>.

### **ABOUT CAVIAR**

Caviar is an award winning entertainment company with offices in Los Angeles and across Europe. Caviar's business is rooted in Film, TV, Post Production, digital, music videos, and branded content; representing a large roster of impressive commercial directors.

### **ABOUT PROTAGONIST PICTURES**

Protagonist Pictures is an international finance, production and sales company which has a proven track record in outstanding films and commercial successes. Based in the UK, the company handles films from around the world, always maintaining a strong focus on filmmakers with exceptional vision and storytelling skills.

Protagonist's current successes on release around the world include Ben Wheatley's *Free Fire* with its ensemble cast of Brie Larson, Armie Hammer, Cillian Murphy, Sharlto Copley and Jack Reynor; Adam Smith's *Trespass Against Us* starring Michael Fassbender and Brendan Gleeson, Charlie McDowell's *The Discovery* with Rooney Mara, Jason Segel and Robert Redford, William Oldroyd's TIFF 2016 buzz feature *Lady Macbeth*, the 2017 Directors' Fortnight selections

*The Rider* from Chloé Zhao and *The Florida Project* from Sean Baker and the 2017 Un Certain Regard Official Selection *April's Daughter* from writer, director, producer Michel Franco. Currently in post-production are Clio Barnard's *Dark River*, Richard Loncraine's *Finding Your Feet* and Amma Asante's *Where Hands Touch*, whilst Pawel Pawlikowski's *Cold War* and Kristoffer Nyholm's *Keepers* are currently shooting. Newly announced *Paramour* starring Kristin Scott Thomas will be in production in early 2018.

[www.protagonistpictures.com](http://www.protagonistpictures.com)