

VARIETY

EuropaCorp Buys Domestic Rights to ‘The Circle’ With Emma Watson, Tom Hanks (EXCLUSIVE)



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EuropaCorp has acquired the domestic distribution rights to [“The Circle,”](#) an upcoming thriller featuring Tom Hanks and Emma Watson, Variety has learned.

A theatrical release date is still being weighed. James Ponsoldt (“The Spectacular Now”) directed the film and wrote the screenplay. John Boyega, who recently headlined “Star Wars: The Force Awakens,” rounds out a cast that includes comic Patton Oswalt and “Boyhood” star Ellar Coltrane.

The story centers on a young woman (Watson) who joins a social media company. After getting pressured by the company's founder (Hanks) to step in front of the [camera](#), she attracts a vast group of followers and finds her identity threatened by her brush with the spotlight. Dave Eggers ("A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius") wrote the book that inspired the movie.

Hanks next appears in Clint Eastwood's "Sully," a biopic about Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger, a pilot who landed a troubled aircraft on the Hudson River, saving the passengers and [crew](#) on board. Watson, best known for her work in "Harry Potter," will star in Disney's live action remake of "Beauty and the Beast." Gary Goetzman is producing the film with Hanks, along with Anthony Bregman for Likely Story and Ponsoldt. EuropaCorp's CEO Christophe Lambert will executive produce with Steven Shareshian, Evan Hayes, Stefanie Azpiazu, Ron Schmidt and Sally Willcox.

"We are thrilled to welcome such an innovative and talented writer and director as James Ponsoldt into the EuropaCorp family," said Lambert in a statement. "We have been very passionate about this project since the first time we read it and are very pleased that 'The Circle' has found a home at EuropaCorp."

Ponsoldt returned the compliments, saying in a statement, "I'm thrilled to work with EuropaCorp on the release of 'The Circle.' Their passion, ambition, and savvy, forward-thinking approach to bringing our film to a wide audience is inspiring."

The film was fully financed by Image Nation Abu Dhabi and is presented by Image Nation in association with Parkes MacDonald Productions.

Domestic rights on the film were represented jointly by UTA Independent Film Group and CAA. IM Global is handling international rights. Federica Sainte-Rose, head of worldwide acquisitions and Aaron Michiel, EVP of business affairs negotiated the deal on behalf of EuropaCorp with Evan Hayes and Ben Ross on behalf of Parkes MacDonald and Image Nation.

James Ponsoldt is represented by UTA, managers Brillstein Entertainment Partners and attorneys Andrew Hurwitz and Alan Sacks at Frankfurt Kurnit Klein & Selz.

<http://variety.com/2016/film/news/europacorp-buys-domestic-rights-to-the-circle-with-tom-hanks-emma-watson-exclusive-1201701050/>