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‘Borderlands’ Videogame Movie in Works at Lionsgate

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Lionsgate (http://variety.com/t/lionsgate/) is developing a tentpole movie based on the videogame “Borderlands (http://variety.com/t/borderlands/),” with producers (http://variety411.com/us/los-angeles/producers/) Avi and Ari Arad (http://variety.com/t/ari-arad/).

“Borderlands,” launched in 2009, is a role-playing first-person shooter videogame created and developed by Gearbox Software and published by Take-Two Interactive Software’s 2K label. More than 26 million copies of the game have been shipped worldwide, including 8 million during Take-Two’s 2015 fiscal year, which ended March 31.

The game is set on the frontier of a sci-fi universe — the planet of Pandora — which has been abandoned by a mega-corporation prior to the game events.

Avi Arad (http://variety.com/t/avi-arad/) and his son Ari Arad have been involved in the creation of the film franchises for Iron Man, Spider Man, The Amazing Spider Man, X-Men, Ghost Rider and Blade.

Lionsgate made a major push last year into videogames when it named Nerdist Industries CEO Peter Levin as president of interactive ventures and games.

“Part of our strategy in entering the game space under Peter Levin has been to source new brands with built-in audiences that will translate into great films and television shows,” said Lionsgate Motion Picture Group Co-Chairs Rob Friedman and Patrick Wachsberger. “The ‘Borderlands’ games don’t pull any punches, and we’ll make the movie with the same in-your-face attitude that has made the series a blockbuster mega-franchise.”

Friday’s announcement comes less than three months before Lionsgate opens its fourth and final film in its highly successful “Hunger Games” franchise, which has grossed $2.3 billion at the worldwide box office. The studio’s Summit label generated $3.3 billion from its five-film “Twilight Saga.” And it has grossed more than $550 million from the first two films in its four-film “Divergent Series.”

“Lionsgate has emerged as a major creative force in the global marketplace with an incredible portfolio of brands; our partners at Gearbox have pioneered and cultivated an iconic property; and Avi and Ari Arad are two of the most successful producers of action franchises,” Take-Two Interactive Chairman and CEO Strauss Zelnick said. “This alliance is ideally positioned to create a bold, provocative, no-holds-barred motion picture phenomenon that will delight ‘Borderlands” current legions of fans and captivate moviegoers around the world.”

Avi Arad founded Marvel Studios in 1993 and resigned 13 years later to form his own production company (http://variety411.com/us/new-york/ad-agencies-production-companies/), where Ari Arad is the president. He’s continuing to produce some of the Marvel films, such as the “Spider-Man” titles, along with videogame adaptations such as “Uncharted” and “Ghost in the Shell.”

His first feature outside Marvel was 2007’s “Bratz: The Movie,” which was released by Lionsgate.

Movies based on videogames have not yet achieved blockbuster status in Hollywood. Disney’s “Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time” is the highest grosser, with $337 million worldwide on a

$200 million budget in 2010.

The deal was orchestrated by a Lionsgate team led by Peter Levin, Summit Entertainment President of Production Geoff Shaevitz and Lionsgate Motion Picture Group President of Business and Legal Affairs Patricia Laucella.

The news about Lionsgate acquiring the rights to “Borderlands” was first reported by The Tracking Board.

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