

HBO Max Waves Magic Wand for Potter Fans

Fans of Hogwarts, Chocolate Frogs and mangled Latin can anticipate a magical 2024 after Warner Bros Discover CEO, David Zaslav, announced plans for a new streaming service whose flagship will feature an animated Harry Potter series based on the seminal stories of J K Rowling.

Zaslav, speaking to Hollywood Reporter on Wednesday, tantalized fans with news of a live-action series set in the imagined world of the accomplished fantasy author, promising the project would be produced with the “same epic craft, love and care this global franchise is known for.”

“The series will feature a new cast to lead a new generation of fandom, full of the fantastic detail, much-loved characters and dramatic locations that Harry Potter fans have loved for over 25 years.”

“Each season will be authentic to the original books and bring Harry Potter and these incredible adventures to new audiences around the world, while the original, classic and beloved films will remain at the core of the franchise and available to watch globally.”

Rowling is expected to work closely with industry favourites, Neil Blair, and Ruth Kenley-Letts, while David Heyman, producer on all eight Harry Potter movies, will be flagged as a potential executive producer.

Fans of the franchise have long suspected a TV series may be in the works, but news of the new HBO project provoked mixed reactions online, with many wondering whether the planned series will stay true to the source material or implement unnecessary changes.

The extended world of Harry Potter, including books, films, theatre shows and video games, is now worth an estimated \$25bn (£20bn), but Rowling’s controversial views on transgender rights have turned many fans away and remains a source of contention for future partners interested in expanding on franchise.

Warner Bros, the parent company of HBO, produced all eight of the Harry Potter movies and are an obvious and trusted choice for pushing the brand forward. The studio previously signed deals with Rowling for the Potter spin-off, Fantastic Beasts and the Harry Potter stage show along with a series of theme parks in Florida and California.

Casey Bloys, chairman and CEO of HBO and Max Content, said of the planned animated series, “we are delighted to give audiences the opportunity to discover Hogwarts in a whole new way... In partnership with Warner Bros Television and JK Rowling, this new Max Original series will dive deep into each of the iconic books that fans have continued to enjoy for all of these years.”

Details on cast and showrunners are yet to be disclosed but fans of the wizarding world can expect updates as soon as we know more.