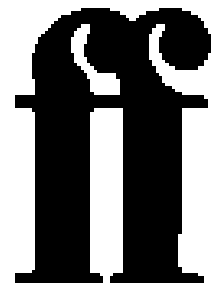


Eddie Dickens Film Deal



21 August 2003

Warner Bros. and the makers of 'The Matrix' option the eccentric adventures of Eddie Dickens.

Warner Bros. Pictures has optioned feature film rights to Philip Ardagh's best-selling Eddie Dickens novels (published in the UK by Faber and Faber) in a deal with Circle of Confusion, the production company responsible for **The Matrix** (the original movie). The announcement is expected to launch a whole Eddie Dickens franchise for the studio, based on a series of adventures that began life as letters to the author's nephew.

In the US, the original Eddie Dickens trilogy is published in hardback by Henry Holt and in audio by Random House's Listening Library. The first Eddie Dickens book **Awful End** (**A House Called Awful End** in America) is about to be launched as a lead paperback for the autumn by Scholastic, US.

Jason Lust of Circle of Confusion, who brought the Eddie Dickens project to Warner Bros., is to co-produce the live-action project with Lawrence Mattis.

Author Philip Ardagh commented, 'I'm delighted by the deal. Eddie's adventures aren't the easiest of books to bring to the screen because it's the way they're told as much as the action that makes them different, and I very much like Jason's potential vision of Eddie's world'.

This film deal comes at a time when Ardagh's popularity is soaring in the UK and internationally and coincides with the launch of the first of 'The Further Adventures of Eddie Dickens', with the publication of **Dubious Deeds** by Faber in hardback in the UK in September.

Sales of the UK edition have now topped 250,000 copies and the 'Eddie Dickens' titles are published in 25 languages all over the world.

Stephen Page, Chief Executive of Faber and Faber, said 'Ardagh's talent was obvious from the beginning and we always knew there was strong development potential with the right partner who would understand and be true to Philip's extraordinary imagination.'

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