

'The Legend of Zelda' will be made into a live-action film

November 8 2023, by Yuri Kageyama



A Nintendo Switch console is seen at a retail store in Buffalo Grove, Ill., Thursday, Feb. 9, 2022. Nintendo is developing a live-action film based on its hit video game "The Legend of Zelda," the Japanese maker behind the Super Mario franchise said Wednesday, Nov. 8, 2023. Credit: AP Photo/Nam Y. Huh, File

Nintendo is developing a live-action film based on its hit video game

"The Legend of Zelda," the Japanese company behind the Super Mario franchise said Wednesday.

The film, with financing from Sony Pictures Entertainment as well as its own investment, will be directed by Wes Ball, the American director of the upcoming "Planet of the Apes" film. It's being co-produced by Nintendo and Arad Productions Inc., which is behind the live-action Spider-Man films and headed by Avi Arad.

The move highlights Kyoto-based Nintendo's strategy to leverage various aspects of its business, including theme parks, merchandising and movies, to boost machine and software sales, and vice versa.

That strategy has met success. Its animated film "The Super Mario Bros. Movie," released earlier this year, has raked in more than \$1.3 billion and drew nearly 170 million people worldwide.

President Shuntaro Furukawa, briefing reporters online, said the company was pleased with the success of the Super Mario animation film, the first movie of which Nintendo was a direct producer.

The planned release date of the Zelda movie was not announced. Shigeru Miyamoto, the Nintendo executive who has spearheaded the creative innovations at the company for decades, said it will be released only when it's ready, while stressing that work on the project has been going on for a decade.

"I realize there are so many Zelda fans, and we cannot betray their expectations. That is a big hurdle. But we are ready," said Miyamoto.

[Nintendo reported Tuesday an 18% rise](#) in net profit for its first fiscal half, totaling nearly 271.3 billion yen (\$1.8 billion), up from 230 billion yen a year earlier.

Nintendo officials said the success of the Super Mario film has translated into bigger sales for its Switch machines, as well as for game software with Super Mario themes.

The "Super Mario Bros. Wonder" game software, on sale since last month, has been selling at a record brisk pace, they said, totaling 4.3 million games sold in just two weeks.

The latest Zelda game called "Tears of the Kingdom," has been selling well, and Nintendo is hoping the planned movie will benefit from the popularity of the game, which stars a hero and a princess fighting against evil.

The Switch machine, already in its seventh year after its debut, is still doing well in sales, according to Nintendo.

Nintendo is banking on having more people come in contact with its intellectual property through official stores, including pop-ups, theme parks and special events, and now movies.

In the U.S., Nintendo World has opened in Universal Studios in Hollywood, and the company is planning another in Orlando. The area for the park it already has in Japan will grow next year to include a section devoted to Donkey Kong, another Nintendo character, officials said.

Nintendo is also opening a museum devoted to its history and legacy in the ancient Japanese capital of Kyoto in March next year.

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