

### SuperHERoes To Rule The Playroom And Beyond

(NAPSA)—If you've paid attention to the recent release of "Star Wars," you've probably heard something about the backlash that toymaker Hasbro received from the omission of Rey in the first wave of action figures on shelf in time for the holidays. So disappointed were consumers, in fact, that #WheresRey was born. Even director J.J. Abrams piped in, calling it "preposterous."

But the absence of strong female characters on the action figure aisle isn't something new, unfortunately. In toys, the action figure category is 95 percent male dominated. So traditionally, girls have also been underserved in this area. But is that because, until now, no one has ever really given girls a fair shot?

Girls have always been big business in the \$5 billion fashion doll category. But the truth is, girls are interested in more than just shoes.

But now manufacturers of toys and other consumer products are hoping that the HER-oes in recent years like Katniss of "The Hunger Games," Marvel's Agent Carter and recent powerhouse Jessica Jones can help to break down that man-of-steel retail door for girls.

A new female superhero is now on the scene: Ladybug of "Miraculous™: Tales of Ladybug & Cat Noir," the newly minted series currently airing on Nickelodeon in the United States. Young girls can get into the action—in a way that traditionally leans to boys.

Filled with action, comedy and adventure, "Miraculous: Ladybug" is authentic and aspirational—a story of today's modern everygirl superhero who comes to life. The series, about a young girl who taps into her superhero powers and innocent optimism to save Paris from the evil Hawk Moth, will no doubt inspire today's youth to try to save the day, each and every day in their own way.

Bandai, one of the world's largest toy manufacturers (makers of Power Rangers action figures), is introducing an assortment of toys centered on aspirational action play, transfor-



**A female superhero, Ladybug of "Miraculous: Tales of Ladybug & Cat Noir," can be seen on Nickelodeon.**

mation and, of course, friendship. Arriving on shelves this fall, the Miraculous line includes the first-ever action figures designed specifically for girls with other products to support, like transformational role-play and plush pets.

"Mysticons," headed for Nickelodeon and powered by toy heavy-hitter Playmates, follows the story of four girls who are transformed into legendary warriors and undertake a quest to find a magic tome called the Codex. Slated for a global debut in 2017, these ladies are looking to kick serious retail butt.

Other dames on the horizon include classics from DC, now DC Super Hero Girls. The team includes the likes of Wonder Woman, Supergirl (also the star of a live-action prime-time show currently on CBS), Batgirl and Harley Quinn, with Mattel on board for toys.

And well loved by millennials, Cartoon Network's Powerpuff Girls are back and badder than ever. Blossom, Buttercup and Bubbles will again be saving the world from monsters and a few other gross things.

Even the iconic "Ghostbusters" franchise from Sony is jumping on the girl power bandwagon with an all-female Ghostbusters team led by XX-chromosome all-stars Kristen Wiig and Melissa McCarthy. With the largest toy company in the world, Mattel, taking the helm on toys, the public's fervor for the reboot seems to be near-supernatural.

With all these new properties, in pure female form, these characters work collaboratively and creatively to solve problems and save the day. You go, girl!