



## TRADES

**Monday, April 5, 2010**

### **'Clash of the Titans' tops box office**

Warner Bros.' 3D epic "Clash of the Titans" muscled its way to the top of the domestic B.O. this Easter weekend, with an estimated \$61.4 million at 3,777 locations to become the highest-grossing pic ever released during the holiday frame. With an added boost from 3D tickets, "Clash" had no problem overpowering the frame's other wide releases. Lionsgate's Tyler Perry comedy sequel "Why Did I Get Married Too?" debuted with an estimated \$30.2 million at 2,155 playdates, while Disney's Miley Cyrus-wrepper "The Last Song" earned \$16.2 million at 2,673. Hoping to take advantage of spring break and Easter, "Song" opened Wednesday, with a five-day domestic take of \$25.3 million. "Clash," co-produced by Legendary Pictures, launched day-and-date in 15 overseas territories at 4,240 screens for a weekend gross of \$44.2 million. Worldwide total for "Clash" stands at \$108.3 million.

### **'Nate Berkus Show' comes together**

"The Nate Berkus Show" is starting to take shape with the appointment of CBS News alum Zev Shalev and syndie vet Terry Murphy as stewards of the daytime syndie strip from Sony Pictures TV and Harpo Studios. Shalev, a former exec producer of CBS' "The Early Show," will serve as exec producer of the hourlong skein, set to bow in the fall, while Murphy will be co-exec producer. Series will originate from New York and be telecast in HD, Sony and Harpo said. The show will air in top markets on NBC O&Os (Daily Variety, Feb. 1). Berkus is a decorator and interior design maven known for his many appearances on "The Oprah Winfrey Show." As he transitions to fronting his own hour, Shalev said the focus would be on extending Berkus' skill at explaining the fundamentals of design and style into other lifestyle, health and wellness issues. "Nate Berkus" will very deliberately mine some of the same themes of healthy living that Winfrey does on her top-rated yakker. "Nate has such an intuitive sense of people," Shalev told Daily Variety. "This show will be a natural extension of his talents into areas such as health, personal values and relationships. It's about helping people build a better and life and to love the life they live." Shalev said he aims to break from the traditional talkshow mold by doing multiple segments each hour, offering a mix of in-studio and pre-taped material from Berkus. Shalev said Berkus' biggest asset is his ease in interacting with people and his strong sense of humor. "Nate just rises to the occasion when surrounded by a live audience," Shalev said. Shalev left the helm of "Early Show" late last year after an 18-month tenure. He most recently launched the Internet venture NewsTsar, which aims to blend news coverage with social media. Before his time at CBS, he worked as senior exec for Canada's CanWest Global, where he helped launch the Canuck rendition of "Entertainment Tonight," among other news and entertainment programs. Murphy has a long resume as a producer in first-run syndie and cable. Most recently she's worked as a producer and exec producer on CNBC series including "The Business of Innovation" and "The Big Idea With Donny Deutsch."

### **'V,' 'Heroes' among bubble shows**

With the May upfronts creeping closer, networks have pared the number of remaining shows considered on the bubble for renewal. Fox's "Fringe," the CW's "Smallville" and NBC's "Community" were rescued by their networks. Fox's "24" and ABC's "Ugly Betty" were not as lucky. Meanwhile,

broadcasters have received added clarity about the strength of their remaining uncertain contenders for next season. On ABC, "FlashForward" and "V" had nearly even odds for a pickup during their four-month hiatus. Now that they've returned, "FlashForward" is considered highly unlikely to get a second season, as its ratings having dropped below the 2.0 threshold in the key 18-49 adult demographic on Thursday nights. After its midseason premiere last week, "V" remains uncertain, but if the sci-fi drama can maintain its current ratings level, the show's evil reptiles will most likely invade ABC next season. On NBC, "Heroes" is the network's biggest question mark, with the Peacock strongly considering a final-season order. Like every bubble show, the quality of the network's pilots will play a key role in deciding how many shows return. "Chuck" is less of a mystery -- the network is more optimistic this year than last. If freshman drama "Parenthood" can remain stable in the coming weeks, NBC likely will give the series another shot in the fall. "Law & Order" is pricey and modestly rated -- the two most lethal causes of death for older shows -- but NBC will find it tough to resist the lure of making "L&O" the longest-running drama series in history. NBC's medical dramas are another story. "Trauma" has no chance for a pickup, and "Mercy" is on life support. NBC keeps pulling for "Mercy" to succeed and feels the show has creatively improved, but its numbers are below the line and this week it was beaten by a repeat of the game show "Minute to Win It" NBC put in its Wednesday slot. NBC's other game show, "The Marriage Ref," is considered a lock for a pickup. Although its ratings have slipped a fair amount, "Ref" has performed solidly for an unscripted program in a tough time period. Fox only has a couple of bubble shows left: "Human Target" and the new comedy "Sons of Tucson." "Target" has managed to win a humble Wednesday time period with an equally humble number. But the network likes the show, and its ratings have appeared to stabilize at a level Fox finds acceptable for its slot. Like most live-action comedies put into Fox's Sunday animated lineup, "Tucson" has struggled to gain traction and is considered a long shot for a comeback. For a network with few slots to fill, CBS has plenty of bubble shows: "Cold Case," "Numbers," "Ghost Whisperer," "Medium," "Accidentally on Purpose," "Gary Unmarried" and "The New Adventures of Old Christine." This group is tougher to prognosticate as all the shows are fairly stable in the ratings and CBS pilots will play a heavy deciding role. "Numbers" and "Cold Case" are considered the least likely to return among the dramas, with "Old Christine" the most likely renewal on the comedy side. On the CW, veteran "One Tree Hill" and freshman "Life Unexpected" continue to duke it out for a presumed single slot on next season's schedule, with the former tending to pull stronger ratings but the latter a less expensive show.

### **Anna Friel joining Bradley Cooper thriller**

Anna Friel is in negotiations to join the cast of "Dark Fields," Neil Burger's thriller for Relativity starring Bradley Cooper. The story centers on a down-and-out writer (Cooper) who gets his hands on a top-secret pharmaceutical drug that makes one smarter. He experiences sudden financial and social success but soon discovers that the drug has lethal and lasting side effects, including "trip-switching," a phenomenon in which time moves with a stop-motion quality. Before long, mysterious antagonists are pursuing him. Friel will play Cooper's ex-wife, a woman who was a go-getter before their breakup. Robert De Niro and Abbie Cornish already are cast in the movie, which Universal will distribute via Relativity's Rogue Pictures. "Fields" is being produced by Leslie Dixon and Scott Kroopf ("Breach") as well as Relativity's Ryan Kavanaugh. Relativity's Tucker Tooley will serve as executive producer. Friel, reped by UTA and Ken McReddie Associates in the U.K., is coming off an acclaimed run of "Breakfast at Tiffany's" in London's West End. The actress, who earned a Golden Globe nomination for her performance in ABC's "Pushing Daisies," next appears in Woody Allen's "You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger" as well as "London Boulevard," the directorial debut of Oscar-winning scribe William Monahan.

### **Erykah Badu charged over nude video**

Erykah Badu was charged with disorderly conduct over her nude video shoot for her latest single, "Window Seat," according to TMZ.com. Badu will be mailed a citation and faces up to a \$500 fine. According to the site, a Texas woman filed an indecency complaint with the Dallas Police Department; an official announcement will be made at a news conference held by the police department soon. The video was shot in one take at Dealey Plaza in Dallas, Tex., the site where John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963. Once Badu gets all the way down to her curvaceous birthday suit, a gunshot

rings out and her body collapses on to the sidewalk, as blue blood spills out to form the word "groupthink." On the complaints about her decision to go naked on camera, Badu recently tweeted, "Funny thing is, the physical nudity is nothing lol. I been naked all along in my words actions and deeds. thats the real vulnerable place."

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