



Thursday, December 17, 2009

## **SAG nominations announced**

"Inglourious Basterds," "Precious" and "Up in the Air" have scored the most traction with Hollywood thespas as each received three Screen Actors Guild feature nominations. Quentin Tarantino's "Basterds" and coming of age drama "Precious" landed nods in the best ensemble cast category along with British drama "An Education," Iraq War drama "The Hurt Locker" and the musical "Nine." George Clooney took a best actor nom for "Up in the Air" and castmates Vera Farmiga and Anna Kendrick each received nods in the supporting actress contest. "Basterds" castmates Christoph Waltz and Diane Kruger scored nominations in the supporting actor and actress categories, respectively. Newcomer Gabourey Sidibe continued to rack up recognition with a best actress nod for "Push," as did castmate Mo'Nique in the supporting actress category.

Michelle Monaghan and Chris O'Donnell announced the nominations Thursday morning at the Pacific Design Center in West Hollywood. Nominations were based on voting by a panel of 2,100 randomly selected SAG members. ([Read More](#))

## **More Chuck Lorre for CBS**

CBS is turning into the Chuck Lorre Broadcasting System, having picked up the half-hour comedy pilot "Mike and Molly." "Two and a Half Men" scribe Mark Roberts is behind the project, a multi-camera laffer about a couple who have difficulties with overeating. Roberts will exec produce with Lorre; Warner Bros. TV is the studio. Lorre is the mastermind behind CBS' "Two and a Half Men"/"The Big Bang Theory" juggernaut on Monday nights. Besides serving as an exec producer on "Two and a Half Men," Roberts has also directed segs of the comedy.

## **HBO's 'Pacific' on the horizon**

HBO will debut 10-part miniseries "The Pacific" March 14 and air an hourlong episode every Sunday through May 16. Project, produced by Playtone and DreamWorks and exec produced by Steven Spielberg, Tom Hanks and Gary Goetzman, is the pay cabler's complement to "Band of Brothers," which aired in 2001 and was nominated for 19 Emmys, winning six. "Brothers" profiled Easy Company, which parachuted into Europe on D-Day and eventually helped end World War II. "The Pacific," which stars James Badge Dale, Joe Mazzello and Jon Seda, examines a select group of Marines who make their way through the Pacific Theater, including battles at Guadalcanal and Iwo Jima. Part one is written by Bruce McKenna and directed by Tim Van Patten. Mini is based on the books "Helmet for My Pillow," by Robert Leckie, and "With the Old Breed," by Eugene B. Sledge. HBO is launching new seasons of two other shows in the first quarter: "Big Love" on Jan. 10 and "The Life and Times of Tim" Feb. 19.

## **Rene Russo joins cast of 'Thor'**

Rene Russo has joined the cast of "Thor," with the actress set to play Frigga, the mother of Marvel Entertainment's hammer-wielding Norse hero. Kenneth Branagh is helming the actioner that starts lensing in January and stars Chris Hemsworth as Thor. Paramount will release the pic

on May 20, 2011. As the wife of Norse god Odin, to be played by Anthony Hopkins in the film, Frigga is the queen of Asgard. She's also the mother of Thor and Loki, the pic's primary villain, portrayed by Tom Hiddleston. Natalie Portman is playing Thor's love interest. Mark Protosevich and Zack Stentz penned the script, which has the powerful but arrogant warrior Thor reigniting an ancient war. As punishment, Thor is cast down to Earth and forced to live among humans. Once here, he learns what it takes to be a true hero when the most dangerous villain of his world sends dark forces of Asgard to invade Earth.

#### **Endemol teams with 'Others' duo**

BERLIN -- Endemol Germany is joining forces with Quirin Berg and Max Wiedemann, producers of the Oscar-winning "The Lives of Others," on a new joint shingle that will focus on scripted TV fare. Officially dubbed Wiedemann & Berg Television, member of the Endemol Group, the new company opens for business in January and will bundle current and future scripted projects from both partners. Berg and Wiedemann will oversee management of the joint venture, which will have offices in Munich and Cologne, while continuing to run their Munich-based Wiedemann & Berg Filmproduktion. Jan Richard Schuster, who has overseen development and production of series and telenovelas for Endemol, will continue to head the Cologne office, focusing on scripted shows and formats. Endemol Group CEO Ynon Kreiz said: "Drama is a key strategic growth area for Endemol and this joint venture represents a significant step forward in one of the world's largest and most important TV markets. "The launch of this new company with such accomplished creative talent who are at the top of their game will broaden our local offering in Germany and further grow our portfolio of hit drama formats that we offer to broadcasters around the world." The Endemol group has production operations in 26 countries.