



Wednesday, December 2, 2009

## 'Glee' co-creator gets big Fox deal

"Glee" exec producer Brad Falchuk is in tune with 20th Century Fox TV. Studio has sealed a seven-figure, multiyear overall deal with the writer-producer-director, who will continue on the show and also develop new projects on the side. Falchuk co-created "Glee" with Ryan Murphy and Ian Brennan. The trio have written all of "Glee's" initial 13 episodes, and will write the freshman season's back nine segs. 20th Century Fox TV chair Dana Walden said Falchuk came highly recommended by Murphy, and that was good enough for them. "Brad is an extremely versatile and talented team player, and when Ryan went off to direct 'Eat, Pray, Love,' Brad stepped in, and they didn't miss a beat," Walden said. "His partnership with Ryan is so meaningful. The fact that Ryan singled him out helped drive this deal." Besides looking at Falchuk to develop projects, Walden said the studio will look to take advantage of his directing skills, perhaps on future pilots. Falchuk has directed several episodes of "Glee," including the well-received "Preggers" (in which the football team dances to Beyonce's "Single Ladies") and the fall finale "Sectionals," set to air next week. "The tone of 'Glee' is so specific, it takes delicate balance," Walde said. "If you can direct 'Glee' successfully, you can probably direct anything."

## Charles Gibson to sign off Dec. 18

ABC News expects to announce Diane Sawyer's "Good Morning America" replacement sometime next week. That would rep the final prong in ABC's "World News" transition plan, which was further revealed with little fanfare by the net Tuesday -- including a firm date for the departure of anchor Charles Gibson. Under the timetable, Sawyer is set to depart "Good Morning America" on Friday, Dec. 11 -- and then take just one week off to prepare for her new gig as anchor of "World News." Gibson will sign off from ABC's "World News" for the last time the following Friday, Dec. 18. Then Sawyer will take the anchor chair the following Monday, Dec. 21. That settles every question but one: Who will be sitting permanently next to "GMA" anchor Robin Roberts? ABC News execs have said they would like Sawyer's replacement in place before she departs -- and now that she's leaving on Dec. 11, that gives them a little over a week to finalize a deal with her successor. The short list continues to include "This Week's" George Stephanopolous, "GMA" news anchor Chris Cuomo and Weekend "GMA" anchor Bill Weir.

## Greengrass bows out of 'Bourne'

Paul Greengrass has opted out of helming another installment of Universal Pictures' successful Jason Bourne franchise, and Matt Damon's participation is not sealed. That's a blow for the studio looking to assemble another sequel to one of its most important franchises, but hardly a fatal one. Hollywood's top franchises, including the long-running James Bond series and Warner Bros.' Batman pics, have successfully gone on with new filmmakers and stars, with many even besting previous installments at the box office. And with successful reboots such as the latest "Star Trek," studios are moving forward with plans to breathe new life into other franchises, like the "Mission: Impossible" and Jack Ryan pics at Paramount, or "Alien" and "Predator" at Fox, many with new

cast members and creatives.

### **'Ugly Betty' moving to Wednesday**

ABC is set to make its long-rumored "Ugly Betty" move to Wednesday nights. Schedule shift could give "Betty" a boost, as it would now air behind the highly compatible half-hour "Cougar Town." "Ugly Betty" fills the void left by "Eastwick," which was not picked up for a full season. Scheduling move shifts "Betty" from what had been a lonely Friday night slot, sandwiched between the reality series "Supernanny" and the newsmag "20/20." Airing in that rough slot, "Ugly Betty" had been a Nielsen also-ran -- most recently, during the holiday weekend, posting just a 0.9 rating/3 share among adults 18-49. With "Ugly Betty" moving off Friday, ABC plans to return to a completely non-scripted lineup on the night, replacing the 9 p.m. hour with the reality series "Shark Tank." ABC has five more episodes in the can of "Shark Tank"; no word yet on what the network plans to do there once those segs complete their run. Moves are effective this January.

### **NBC to develop 'Tommy Supreme'**

NBC is taking its development all the way to the Supreme Court. Peacock is developing the legal franchise "Tommy Supreme," from scribe Barry Schindel. Universal Media Studios is behind the project, which also comes from Circle of Confusion. Project is based on the exploits of real-life attorney Tom Goldstein, who has argued 21 cases in front of the Supreme Court. Circle of Confusion bought the life rights to Goldstein, who's a partner in the D.C. law firm Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, and also a co-founder of the popular Supreme Court-themed blog SCOTUSblog. Goldstein will serve as a consultant on the project. "Tommy Supreme" is being described as the "inverse 'House'" -- "a likable guy in the most unlikable profession." Schindel is already busy serving as showrunner on the NBC pilot "Rex Is Not Your Lawyer," currently in production. Schindel, whose credits also include "Castle" and "Law & Order," will exec produce with Circle of Confusion's David Alpert and David Engel. Circle of Confusion recently sealed a first-look deal with 20th Century Fox TV, but "Tommy Supreme" pre-dates that pact.