



Wednesday, December 9, 2009

## **'Men' opens to solid ratings for TNT**

TV audiences accepted Ray Romano's move from comedy to drama as TNT series "Men of a Certain Age" opened well Monday night. Following strong reviews, the skein's premiere drew 5.4 million viewers and was the most watched cable premiere of the year in the adults 25-54 demo. Opener of the series, which also stars Andre Braugher and Scott Bakula, improved on lead-in "The Closer" in both adults 18-49 and 25-54. TNT has ordered 10 episodes of "Men of a Certain Age," which is exec produced by Romano, Mike Royce, Rory Rosegarten and Cary Hoffman. The cabler will begin running "Southland" on Jan. 12 after having picked up the series from NBC. TNT recently canceled Steven Bochco's "Raising the Bar"; "Leverage" is returning in January, while "Hawthorne" and "The Closer" begin new seasons in the summer.

## **Chang joins 'Good Morning America'**

ABC's post-Diane Sawyer "Good Morning America" plans are falling into place. Insiders close to the show confirmed Tuesday that JuJu Chang has been tapped to serve as the morning chatfest's new news reader, replacing Chris Cuomo. Cuomo, who had been on the shortlist of candidates to replace Sawyer, has instead been offered a co-anchor slot alongside Elizabeth Vargas on "20/20," replacing the recently ankled John Stossel. As part of his new role at ABC News, Cuomo would also be given expanded reporting duties. George Stephanopoulos, meanwhile, is expected to be named the new co-anchor of "Good Morning America," alongside Robin Roberts, before Friday. ABC News is still hammering out details of Stephanopoulos' new gig, including future plans for the Sunday chatshow he hosts, "This Week." Chang currently serves as a correspondent for "Good Morning America" and "20/20." She has anchored ABC's "World News Now" and "World News This Morning" telecasts.

## **Jones logs in to 'Social Network'**

Rashida Jones is the latest to log in to Columbia Pictures' "Social Network." Justin Timberlake and Jesse Eisenberg have already boarded the David Fincher-helmed pic, which revolves around the founders of the social-networking website Facebook. Aaron Sorkin penned the screenplay. Pic is currently lensing in Los Angeles. Jones, who recently wrapped the bigscreen drama "Monogamy," sold her script "Frenemy of the State," which she co-wrote with Will McCormack, to Universal. In addition, she and McCormack's screenplay "Celeste and Jesse Forever" is in development at Overture, with Team Todd producing. Jones will also star in the comedy. The actress-scribe, who most recently starred opposite Paul Rudd in the DreamWorks comedy "I Love You, Man," can currently be seen on the smallscreen in NBC's "Parks and Recreation." She is reprised by UTA and Brillstein Entertainment.

## **Corbin Bleu heads for 'Heights'**

Corbin Bleu will be the first "High School Musical" alum to hit Broadway, with the thesp stepping into the lead role of Tony-winning tuner "In the Heights" early next year. Bleu, who appeared as

basketball player Chad in both "HSM" telepics as well as the 2008 "HSM" feature, will play young bodega owner Usnavi in "Heights." His 13-week stint in the musical runs Jan. 25-April 25. Casting has the potential to prompt a significant boost at the box office for "Heights." Celebs with an avid fanbase (such as the youthful one generated by the "HSM" franchise) can pull in new audiences for a Main Stem production, particularly when the target demos of the show and the star overlap. "American Idol" winner Fantasia Barrino's stint in the lead role of 2005 tuner "The Color Purple," for instance, resulted in a major sales spike that helped extend the Broadway lifespan of "Purple."

### **Broucek in tune with WB gig**

Warner Bros. Pictures has shaken up its music arm, tapping veteran executive and producer Paul Broucek for a new post as president of music to replace the departing Doug Frank from his slot as prexy of music operations. Studio president Jeff Robinov made the announcement Tuesday. The move, effective immediately, gives Broucek responsibility for the overall creative direction of music operations and oversight of the administrative, production and day-to-day business functions. He'll report directly to Robinov and is charged with strategic development and deployment of music-related initiatives to meet the needs of Warner producers and directors. "Music plays an incredibly important and creative role in filmmaking," said Robinov in a statement. "In addition to being incredibly talented, Paul has terrific instincts and relationships throughout the music and film industries and can help us evolve our theatrical music operation, both from a business and a creative aspect." ([Read Story](#))

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