



TRADES

Tuesday, February 16, 2010

Barbara Walters to end Oscar special

Barbara Walters is ending her annual Oscar night celebrity interview special. The veteran newswoman announced on "The View" that this will be the last year she does the ABC special, which has become an Oscar night tradition. "ABC has asked me to keep doing these specials as they have been so successful -- and I'm thrilled we have such great stars and have such a wonderful show -- but to be honest, I feel like I've 'been there, done that,'" Walters said. The news comes shortly after ABC announced the return of Oprah Winfrey's Oscar special, an annual event which started in 2007. The Oprah special airs the week before the Oscars, on March 3rd. Walters' final Oscar night guests will include nominees Sandra Bullock and Mo'Nique. Walters will continue her other annual ABC News special -- "The 10 Most Fascinating People," as well as additional ABC News specials.

Two actors join 'Matadors' pilot

"The Forgotten" co-star Michelle Borth has landed the female lead in ABC's drama pilot "The Matadors," with Jonathan Scarfe also nabbing a lead role in the pilot. Additionally, Amy Smart has been tapped to star on CBS' untitled medical drama executive produced by John Wells, Beau Garrett will play the female lead on CBS' "Criminal Minds" spinoff, Brian Dennehy is set to star opposite Dana Gould in Gould's untitled multicamera pilot for ABC and Australian actor Sullivan Stapleton has landed the lead in CBS' multicamera comedy pilot "The Odds." "Matadors," from Sony TV, is a Romeo-and-Juliet-style drama about two feuding families' battle against each other as one populates the state attorney's office and the other manages an influential private law firm.

121 Oscar nominees attend luncheon

Amid the final weeks of Oscar campaigning, the Motion Picture Academy of Arts and Sciences' annual Nominees Luncheon represents something of a cease-fire. Not a complete cease-fire, of course: For the A-list actors and big-name directors who dominate the race, the gathering is one more opportunity to charm some of the key voters in the Academy -- albeit in a low-key way. And because the seating is intentionally democratic -- with stars sharing tables with sound mixers, feature directors seated next to creators of short films -- it's also a chance for all the nominees from different categories to introduce themselves to each other, free of the anxiety about who will ultimately win that takes over on Oscar night. On the way into the pre-lunch mingle at the Beverly Hilton Hotel, some of the name nominees stopped by for a brief interview session with the media.

Johanna Fuentes joins Showtime PR

Johanna Fuentes has joined Showtime Networks as vp corporate public relations. Based in New York, she will handle corporate trade and business media relations for the pay cable network, reporting to Richard Licata, Showtime's executive vp corporate communications. Fuentes most recently was vp communications at Bravo. Before that, spent six years at CBS as director entertainment communications. She oversaw campaigns for the telecasts of the Grammys and Tonys and series "The

King of Queens," "CSI: NY" and "Survivor."

Mel Gibson's 'Summer' lands slew of sales

Icon Entertainment International has locked up multiple sales on the Mel Gibson action movie "How I Spent My Summer Vacation," one of the bigger titles at the European Film Market. "Summer" is the first big pre-sale of the fest and could be a hopeful sign for other companies selling on scripts and unfinished films. Covering most of Europe, Icon has closed deals with the Telemunchen for Germany, Eagle for Italy, Metropolitan for France, Paradiso for Benelux, Revolutionary Releasing for Eastern Europe, Svensk for Scandinavia, Odeon for Greece, Ascot Elite for Switzerland, Lusomundo for Portugal, and Fida for Turkey. Nu Metro picked up "Sumer Vacation" for South Africa while Prime Pictures snagged it for the Middle East. Deals also were closed with Pioneer for Philippines, PT Amero for Indonesia, SSG for Taiwan and Sahamongkolfilm for Thailand.

Central Talent Booking