



TRADES

Friday, January 8, 2010

'Jay Leno Show' future uncertain

Are Jay Leno's days in primetime numbered? The future of NBC's "The Jay Leno Show" is in question as Web reports Thursday triggered all sorts of scenarios for the troubled program. What is clear is that the network is reconsidering its commitment to Leno at 10 p.m., with moving him back to late-night being a credible option. In such a scenario, Leno would return to 11:35 p.m. for a half-hour program, with Conan O'Brien and Jimmy Fallon shifting back a half-hour to 12:05 a.m. and 1:05 a.m., respectively. If he agrees to the plan, O'Brien would retain the "Tonight Show" name for his show. TMZ first reported the possibility of a shift, saying the move will happen after next month's Winter Olympics, which pre-empt NBC's primetime programming for two weeks. NBC did not deny such a possibility.

Showtime greenlights Laura Linney series

Showtime has given a series order to three-time Emmy winner Laura Linney's project "The Big C." The premium cable network has ordered 13 episodes of the series (formerly titled "The C-Word"), in which Linney plays a suburban wife and mother whose cancer diagnosis forces her to shake up her life.

"Laura Linney is the consummate actor and producer, and we're thrilled she has chosen to come to Showtime in this extraordinary series," Showtime president of entertainment Robert Greenblatt said. "The character and her journey are complex, requiring layered nuances of comedy and drama which I believe no one else could do better than Laura. And she's surrounded by a gifted ensemble of actors who will bring this show vividly to life."

Hasselhoff leaves 'America's Got Talent'

David Hasselhoff is leaving "America's Got Talent" after four years as a judge alongside Piers Morgan and Sharon Osbourne "I am proud that I was part of making 'America's Got Talent' the No. 1 rated show for the past four summers," Hasselhoff said in a statement to People magazine. "It's been a rewarding experience and now I'm thrilled to be able to follow my dream to do my own TV show, which will be announced very shortly."

The actor/singer, who has battled alcoholism, offered no further details on his new project.

Fox pulls 'Our Little Genius' quiz show

In a shocking move, Fox on Thursday pulled Mark Burnett's quiz show "Our Little Genius" less than a week before the series' Jan. 13 premiere to do reshoots. At the heart of the matter was a recent discovery by Burnett that some contestants were provided "information" -- though not the actual answers -- ahead of time. Hosted by Kevin Pollak, "Genius" features academically accomplished kids ages 6-12 answering tough questions for the chance to win hundreds of thousands of dollars.

"I believe my series must always be beyond reproach, so I have requested that Fox not air these episodes," Burnett said. Mark Burnett Prods. will shoulder the cost for reshooting the episodes. The

company also will pay the winnings to the contestants who took part in the original eight episodes, which will be shelved. No new premiere date was announced.

'Babel' actress joining Marvel's 'Thor'

Adriana Barraza is in negotiations to join the cast of Marvel Studios' "Thor," being directed by Kenneth Branagh. The movie centers on Thor (Chris Hemsworth), the god of thunder, a powerful but arrogant warrior whose reckless actions re-ignite an ancient war. As punishment, he is cast down to Earth and forced to live among the humans. Once there, he learns what it takes to be a hero when the most dangerous villain of his world sends dark forces of Asgard to invade. Details are scarce, but Barraza will play one of the humans. She joins a supporting cast that includes Anthony Hopkins, Rene Russo, Stellan Skarsgard, Idris Elba and Kat Dennings.

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