



TRADES

Friday, January 29, 2010

TBS picks up 'Glory Daze'

TBS is in a "Glory Daze," handing a cast-contingent pilot order to an hourlong comedy from "Wild Hogs" director Walt Becker. The pilot, written by Becker and Michael LeSieur ("You, Me and Dupree") and to be directed by Becker, revolves around the lives of four incoming freshman in the 1980s who pledge a fraternity at a Wisconsin college. "Daze" marks the second cast-contingent hourlong pilot order at TBS following the recent pickup of Andy Breckman's "Uncle Nigel," part of the comedy-centered network's new programming strategy to expand its core lineup of half-hour sitcoms to include animated and hourlong series.

Bello, Crowe, Beaufoy team at HBO

Maria Bello has teamed with Oscar winners Simon Beaufoy and Russell Crowe for a series project in the works at HBO. Bello is set to star in the drama "Emergency Sex," which is being written by "Slumdog Millionaire" scribe Beaufoy and executive produced by Bello, Beaufoy and Crowe. Inspired by the book "Emergency Sex and Other Desperate Measures: A True Story From Hell on Earth," by Kenneth Cain, Heidi Postlewait and Andrew Thomson, the project revolves around the larger-than-life exploits of expatriate nongovernment-organization workers who find their sanity tested in the face of atrocities, loneliness and primal desires. The book chronicles the real-life experiences of Cain, Postlewait and Thomson, who met in Cambodia during the 1990s as members of a UN peacekeeping mission. In addition to Crowe -- who purchased rights to the book for a screen adaptation -- Bello and Beaufoy, "Emergency" is produced by Bello's manager, John Carrabino.

NBC picks up 'The Cape,' 'Outsourced'

NBC on Thursday picked up two more pilots: hourlong "The Cape" and the comedy "Outsourced." "Cape," from "Empire" creator Tom Wheeler, is a light drama with a comic book sensibility. Set in a fictionalized version of Los Angeles, it centers on a former cop framed for a crime who becomes the Cape, a masked hero, to clear his name and reunite with his son. The project, from UMS and BermanBraun, was set up at NBC in the fall with a premium script commitment. Wheeler wrote the script and is exec producing with Lloyd Braun and Gail Berman. Based on George Wing and John Jeffcoat's indie movie, "Outsourced" is single-camera office comedy centered on a recently demoted manager of a novelties company who is shipped off to India to manage a ragtag group of customer service reps. NBC originally developed "Outsourced" during the 2007-08 season with Wing and Jeffcoat writing the TV adaptation and Ken Kwapis on board as director and executive produce for UMS. The project didn't make the cut for a pilot order but Kwapis kept it alive.

Matt Damon to receive Cinematheque award

Matt Damon has been selected to receive the 24th American Cinematheque Award, which will be presented to him on March 27 at a dinner at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. The ceremony, which has aired in previous years on basic cable outlets like TNT and AMC, is moving to broadcast TV for this first time this year, with ABC coming aboard to air it as a special dubbed "Hollywood Salutes Matt Damon."

An American Cinematheque Tribute," on a date to be announced. The annual fundraiser recognizes an artist -- actor, director or writer -- who is in the midst of a career "making a significant contribution to the art of the motion picture."

'Ugly Betty' cast in demand

The news of the cancellation of ABC's "Ugly Betty" had barely hit the Internet on Wednesday when the phones of the reps of co-star Eric Mabius started ringing off the hook. With broadcast casting executives again in the hunt for good-looking thirtysomething leading men for pilots, Mabius' sudden availability made him instantly a hot commodity. The early cancellation of "Betty" was done mostly to help the dramedy's producers give it a proper ending, but the timing of the announcement also releases into the pilot talent pool a strong cast just as networks are starting to assemble this year's crop of series hopefuls. "Betty" co-star Becki Newton, also in a sought-after category of beautiful 30-year-old comedic actresses, has additionally been inundated with calls, and Vanessa Williams, Michael Urie and Ana Ortiz also are in demand. It is not clear whether star America Ferrera would be open to another series as she is considering focusing on features full time.

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