



## TRADES

**Thursday, January 7, 2010**

### **Saoirse Ronan to play teenage assassin 'Hanna'**

Saoirse Ronan is in negotiations to reteam with her "Atonement" director Joe Wright to star as the title character in "Hanna," Focus' tale of a teenage assassin. "Hanna" is described as having shades of "La Femme Nikita" and the "Bourne" movies. The story follows a 14-year-old Eastern European girl (Ronan) who has been raised by her father to be a cold-blooded killing machine. She connects with a French family, forms a friendship with their daughter and goes through the pangs of adolescence. When the girl is dragged back to her father's world and discovers that she was bred as a killing machine in a CIA prison camp, she must fight her way to a free life. Leslie Holleran, Marty Adelstein and Scott Nemes are producing. Seth Lochhead and David Farr worked on the script. Ronan, reped by CAA and Talent Management Group, stars in Peter Jackson's "The Lovely Bones."

### **CW previewing 'Life Unexpected' online**

The CW will put the first 10 minutes of its new drama "Life Unexpected" online a week before its linear debut. Starting Jan. 11, the network is putting an extended preview across all official CW fan pages. The approach marks the first time that Facebook has hosted a screening across multiple pages, with "Unexpected" available to the network's 5.4 million Facebook fans. The move allows CW to directly target its most dedicated viewers online. The network is partnering with video provider Ustream for the effort. Fans who catch the "Unexpected" preview during the first 24 hours will be able to leave comments as they watch. "Unexpected" is the story of a 15-year-old foster child who moves back in with her biological parents. The series debuts on the CW on Monday, Jan. 18.

### **'Avatar' now No. 3 among top film grosser**

"Avatar" continues to cruise. James Cameron's sci-fi epic now sits at No. 3 on the list of all-time worldwide boxoffice hits. The Fox-distributed blockbuster has blown by the Disney actioner "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest" -- which plundered \$1.07 billion in global booty in 2006 -- and is gunning for the second-top grosser, "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King," New Line's 2003 fantasy sequel that conjured a \$1.12 billion worldwide tally in 2003. "Avatar's" cume sits at \$1.1 billion through Tuesday. That includes \$367.5 million in domestic coin and a doubly stupendous \$731.2 million in foreign lucre. Cameron's 1997 blockbuster "Titanic" -- distributed domestically by Paramount and internationally by Fox -- sits atop the historic rankings with \$1.84 billion. By next week, "Avatar" is expected to dock somewhere south of "Titanic," though few believe it can steam past the disaster pic for top global bragging rights.

### **USA greenlights 'Covert Affairs'**

USA Network's newest scripted series is "Covert Affairs." Cable's top network has picked up the 90-minute pilot starring Piper Perabo to series with an 11-episode order. The spy drama, from Universal Cable Prods., centers on Annie Walker (Perabo), a multilingual CIA trainee unexpectedly promoted to field operative while reeling over a mysterious ex-boyfriend who appears to be of particular interest to

her agency bosses. The core cast of the pilot -- including co-stars Christopher Gorham, Peter Gallagher, Kari Matchett and Anne Dudek -- will continue on the series, created and co-executive produced by Matt Corman and Chris Ord. Eion Bailey, who guest starred in the Tim Matheson-directed pilot as the elusive boyfriend, is expected to at least be a recurring on the show. USA already boasts a solid slate of original series that have propelled the network to the top spot in the basic cable rankings, so the mandate with "Covert" was to push the envelope, USA president of original programming Jeff Wachtel said.

### **'Hangover' remains atop video charts**

Warner Home Video's "The Hangover" remained the country's No. 1 home video seller for the third consecutive week, and regained the top spot on the rental chart as well. The quirky comedy, which tells the bawdy tale of a Las Vegas bachelor party road trip gone wrong, ended 2009 as the year's No. 2 seller, right behind Summit Entertainment's "Twilight" and just ahead of Walt Disney Studios' "Up." "Hangover" easily held onto the No. 1 spot on the Nielsen VideoScan First Alert sales chart for the week ending Jan. 3 over its closest competitor, second-ranked "Paranormal Activity," from Paramount/DreamWorks. In its first week in stores, the low-budget horror film, dubbed this year's "Blair Witch Project" for its spectacular theatrical success, only sold 47% as many copies as "The Hangover" in its third week of release.

**Central Talent Booking**