



TRADES

Monday, March 8, 2010

Oscar wins could boost 'Hurt' revenue

Maybe the DVDs will sell -- accent on the word "maybe." With five of the 10 category nominees already on shiny disc, there was always a good chance that Oscar's best pic winner this year would be unable to exploit much of a boxoffice bounce from the success. Summit Entertainment opened "The Hurt Locker" in limited theatrical release on June 26, ringing up \$14.7 million in domestic boxoffice to date. The Iraq War thriller was released on DVD and Blu-ray Disc on Jan. 12. When "Hurt Locker" morphed into an Oscar nominations magnet on Feb. 2, there was little Summit could do to exploit the film notably further theatrically. For better or worse, its Oscar bounce was going to come in home entertainment or not at all. Still, revenue is revenue, right? Yes and no. Certainly, Academy acclaim enhances marketing. But there is a twofold problem with exploiting Oscar renown in home entertainment: The popularity of DVD is on the decline, and the installed base of Blu-ray Disc players remains relatively modest.

John Hughes script stirring up interest

He passed away in August, but the film legacy of John Hughes may not be over. The late writer-director -- who was given an Oscar tribute Sunday -- has an unproduced screenplay, "Grisbys Go Broke," floating around the industry ether. Word crept out Friday that Paramount, which has a long history with Hughes, was picking up the script with hope of turning it into a family comedy with Joe Roth ("Alice in Wonderland") producing. However, the studio told THR that it is not negotiating to purchase the screenplay, which follows a wealthy Chicago family that loses everything and is forced to move to the sticks. But Paramount certainly has no problem with digging back into Hughes material. Hughes' last feature was Paramount's 2008 Owen Wilson comedy "Drillbit Taylor," which began as a Hughes original but was rewritten by Seth Rogen and Kristofor Brown (Hughes' story credit appeared under the pseudonym Edmond Dantes).

'Almost Famous' star joins ABC comedy pilot

"Almost Famous" star Patrick Fugit has joined Debra Messing in ABC's comedy pilot "Wright vs. Wrong." Melissa Rauch also has been cast in "Wright," Tim Pepper has landed the lead in Fox's comedy pilot "Most Likely to Succeed," Scott Foley has joined ABC's cop drama "True Blue," "Past Life" co-star Nicholas Bishop is set as a lead on ABC's drama pilot "Body of Evidence," Aly Michalka has landed the lead and Gail O'Grady also tapped to co-star on the CW's drama pilot "Hellcats," and James Patrick Stuart and Cheyenne Jackson have come aboard ABC's comedy pilot "It Takes a Village." Additionally, Michael Cassidy has landed one of the two leads in NBC's comedy pilot "The Pink House," Jessy Schram has a lead on the CW's drama pilot "Betwixt," Dorian Missick has joined NBC's drama pilot "The Cape," and Ryan Hawley has been cast in CW's untitled Wyoming project. Meanwhile, CBS' untitled Tad Quill comedy pilot has been pushed because of difficulties casting the lead. "Wrong" centers on Evelyn Wright (Messing), a driven conservative pundit who tries to maintain her public persona despite facing her own vulnerabilities. In his first regular TV gig, Fugit is set to play

her contributing writer, a liberal NYU graduate. Rauch will play her wide-eyed personal assistant.

'Worst Week' star joins CBS comedy pilot

Kyle Bornheimer has been tapped to topline in CBS' untitled Bays/Thomas comedy pilot. The untitled Bays/Thomas multicamera comedy -- penned by "How I Met Your Mother" writers Carter Bays, Craig Thomas, Kourtney Kang and Joe Kelly -- revolves around an unmarried couple and their friends in Pittsburgh. Bornheimer will play Tommy, the lovable, slightly unkempt and highly entertaining half of the couple who means well but doesn't always finish what he starts. For Bornheimer, the casting is in second position to ABC's midseason comedy series "Romantically Challenged."

Kathy Bates eyeing role in 'Kindreds'

Kathy Bates is in final negotiations to star in her first regular TV role, David E. Kelley's NBC drama pilot "Kindreds." "Kindreds" follows a curmudgeonly former patent lawyer (Bates) and her group of misfit associates. The character was conceived as a man, Harry Korn, but is being reworked for Bates. The Oscar winner, who appeared in an episode of the Kelley-produced legal drama "L.A. Law," is doing an arc on NBC's top comedy "The Office." She is repped by ICM and the Susan Smith Co.

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