



TRADES

Tuesday, March 16, 2010

Jason Segel to star in Muppets movie

Jason Segel has found his rainbow connection with Disney's Muppets movie, signing to star as the human lead. He also will join David Hoberman and Todd Lieberman of Mandeville Films/TV, the studio-based shingle behind last year's "The Proposal," as a producer on the project. James Bobin is on board to direct the movie, the plot of which is under wraps. The TV show as well as some of the movies tended to have one key human actor with whom the Muppets associated on their adventures. It is known that Segel plays a man on a quest to find and reunite the Muppets.

Syfy picks up 'Three Inches' pilot

Syfy has greenlighted a pilot that puts a spin on the traditional superhero genre and seeks to continue growing its "Battlestar Galactica" empire. The network has ordered a 90-minute pilot, "Three Inches," from Fox Television Studios, writer Harley Peyton ("Twin Peaks") and executive producer Bob Cooper. It centers on an underachiever who gains the power to move any object using his mind, but only for a distance of three inches. He recruits a team of fellow heroes, each with their own less-than-spectacular abilities. " 'Three Inches' is a fun, smart, offbeat spin on the superhero genre," Syfy executive vp development Mark Stern said. "It's a very postmodern approach, with a really wonderful, tongue-in-cheek script." Added David Madden, executive vp at Fox TV Studios, "We felt there was something special and particularly twisted about this script, both in tone and in its sense of imagination."

Paula Abdul in talks for 'Star Search'

Paula Abdul is in talks to join ABC's "Star Search" revamp. The former "American Idol" judge is in negotiations to play a role on a new edition of the classic TV talent contest, sources confirm. Abdul's position would likely involve being a judge of some kind. ABC has been hoping to make a deal with Abdul since she left "Idol," with a "Dancing With the Stars" gig having been discussed. Fox has also been looking at Abdul as a potential judge for Simon Cowell's "X-Factor," which gets underway next year.

Mia Maestro eyeing ABC's 'Cutthroat' pilot

Mia Maestro is in negotiations to play the lead in "Cutthroat," marking a last-minute recasting for the ABC dramedy pilot. Additionally, Treat Williams is set to co-star opposite Katee Sackhoff in ABC's drama pilot "Boston's Finest," Donnie Wahlberg and Len Cariou have been tapped as leads in CBS' untitled Burgess/Green drama pilot, Melissa Sagemiller has joined NBC's "Rockford Files" and Anthony Ruivivar has been added to ABC's drama pilot "The Whole Truth." "Cutthroat," from 20th TV, centers on Nina Cabrera (Maestro), an upscale Beverly Hills widow and soccer mom who runs an international drug cartel.

Warner Bros. nabs 'Sterling' comedy

Warner Bros. has picked up "Sterling," a comedy project from writers Mike Bender and Doug Chernack that's being produced by Chuck Roven and Alex Gartner of Atlas Entertainment. The studio is keeping the logline in the drawer, but it's described as a high-concept action-comedy. Sarah Schechter oversees for the studio. Bender, repped by WME and Benderspink, made a name for himself as a writer on the MTV Movie Awards and with the spoof "Not Another Teen Movie." The scribe, who has "Bob the Musical" set up at Disney, first teamed with Chernack to create comedy Web site awkwardfamilyphotos.com. The success of the site led to a book deal, with a tome based on it coming May 4 from Random House.

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