



TRADES

Thursday, May 20, 2010

'Holy Rollers' team cruising 'Kings Highway'

As "Holy Rollers," their 2010 Sundance Film Festival entry, rolls out in theaters Friday, the pic's filmmakers have reunited for a follow-up feature, "Kings Highway." "Rollers" director Kevin Asch, writer Antonio Macia and actor-producer Danny A. Abeckaser are taking on those same duties for "Kings." The crime thriller will shoot on location in New York. Allen Bain and Jesse Scolaro of New York-based the 7th Floor are producing with Abeckaser and his 2B Prods. The project centers on a disgraced former Mossad agent who moves to New York during the mid-1980s and falls in line with a burgeoning Israeli crime syndicate. "After reading dozens of formulaic thrillers, I read the first 20 pages of 'Kings Highway,' and I was hooked," Asch said. Added Abeckaser, "I am excited to bring this new and never-before-seen New York story to the big screen." Macia calls the trio's reunion "a dream collaboration," adding that the new project "is a natural and explosive extension" for the group. Asch is repped by Paradigm; Macia is repped by APA. Both are managed by Trevor Engelson at Underground. "Rollers," nominated for the Sundance Jury Prize, also stars Jesse Eisenberg, Justin Bartha and Q-Tip. First Independent Pictures is releasing the film, which opens Friday in New York and Los Angeles.

ABC lands Jesse James interview

ABC has landed the first interview with Sandra Bullock's ex Jesse James. "Nightline's" Vicki Mabrey will talk with West Coast Choppers CEO and reality TV star James in an exclusive interview -- his first since Bullock filed for divorce -- to air on May 25. ABC.com mentions that the discussion will address James' split from his Oscar-winning wife and his recent stint in rehab but remains mum on specific details of the interview

Miranda rights screenplay optioned

Alive Entertainment chief Philip von Alvensleben and former Columbia TriStar vp James Veres have optioned "Noble Soul," a screenplay by Joe Wallenstein, a producer and USC film school administrator. "Soul" is a fact-based legal drama probing the Supreme Court's landmark 1966 Miranda case on criminal-arrest procedure. Wallenstein based his script on accounts passed on by his friend John Flynn, the attorney who successfully pleaded the case. "In some quarters, Miranda was and remains a deeply unpopular decision," Wallenstein said. "However, it is crucial that all Americans remember that at no time is their liberty more precious than when it is unpopular." A TV multihyphenate on such series as "Knots Landing" and "7th Heaven," Wallenstein is director of physical production at the USC School of Cinematic Arts. He is repped by Roger Strull at Preferred Artists and Dionell Guanco at Avery Management. Financial terms of the "Noble" deal weren't disclosed.

Walden turning 'Cosmic' kids book into feature

Walden Media is bringing U.K. author Frank Cottrell Boyce's children's book "Cosmic" to the big screen. Boyce, also a screenwriter, will adapt his own novel, which is a comedy described as "Apollo 13" meets "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory." It follows a boy who, after going through an early

growth spurt, is often mistaken for an adult. One day he decides to pose as his best friend's father in order to snag a seat on an experimental spaceship ride. The journey goes awry and he needs to save the crew. The book was released through Walden Pond Press, the joint venture between Walden Media and HarperCollins. "The hero of 'Cosmic' is a boy who goes further away from Earth than any human being has ever been, but his big discoveries are all about family and home," Boyce said. "Frank has created one of the most original characters in recent memory with the book's hero, Liam," said Michael Bostick, CEO of Walden Media. "In order to preserve his wildly funny and unique voice, we're thrilled to be working with Frank to develop the film adaptation that will appeal to the whole family." Bostick is overseeing the project with Evan Turner, Walden vp production and development.

Hollywood Reporter taps Michaela Apruzzese

Michaela Apruzzese has been named associate publisher, entertainment, of The Hollywood Reporter and will oversee entertainment industry advertising across the brand's platforms. She will assume her post in early June and report to publisher Lori Burgess. Apruzzese now serves as the director of movie advertising for Los Angeles Times Media Group. "Michaela's rich array of advertising and marketing experience across print, broadcast and digital in both trade and consumer media will be an important asset to The Hollywood Reporter," said Richard Beckman, CEO of THR owner e5 Global Media. In her role at the L.A. Times Media Group, Apruzzese is responsible for nearly \$100 million in revenue through entertainment industry advertising and marketing campaigns for the L.A. Times and other Tribune properties across print, broadcast, digital and events. Previously, she was publisher of Law.com and National Law Journal and west coast sales director for the Robb Report. "Michaela has had great success in the entertainment industry and with just about every other category of marketer," Burgess said. "She will be a strong addition to our leadership team."

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