

NBC Buys Comedic Drama Set Behind The Scenes Of Reality Series; Mariska Hargitay, Andrew Lazar & Steve Shainberg Producing

By NELLIE ANDREEVA Friday December 16, 2011 @ 5:53pm PST



EXCLUSIVE: NBC already has a series set behind the scenes of a sketch comedy show in Emmy-winning comedy *30 Rock*. Now the network is looking to pull back the veil on the inner workings of reality series. NBC has

bought *American Dream*, an hourlong spec written by Paul Kolsby and executive produced by *Law & Order: SVU* star Mariska Hargitay, feature producer Andrew Lazar and Steve Shainberg. Shainberg, director of the 2002 feature

Secretary, is also attached to direct the potential pilot. *American Dream* is described as a biting funny, risqué and sophisticated melodrama about the symbiotic relationship between network executives and the “talent” in a reality television series.



Kolsby, a playwright and screenwriter, had a lot of personal experience to draw on in writing the *American Dream* — he has worked as a producer on a number of reality series, including *Jersey Shore* and *Bridezillas*. Kolsby developed the project with Shainberg and Lazar. Original Artists, which reps Kolsby and Lazar then gave the script to Hargitay who loved it and came on board as an executive producer. Through her producing deal at NBC, she took the script to the network’s brass who picked it up. Hargitay is repped by CAA; Shainberg is managed by Industry Entertainment. Lazar is currently producing *Akira* for Warners with Jaume Collete-Serra directing and *Gunslinger* for New Regency with James Mangold directing.

This article was printed from <http://www.deadline.com/2011/12/nbc-buys-comedic-drama-set-behind-the-scenes-of-reality-series-mariska-hargitay-andrew-lazar-steve-shainberg-to-produce/>

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George Clooney Producing Smothers Brothers Movie -- NPH as Tommy Smothers?

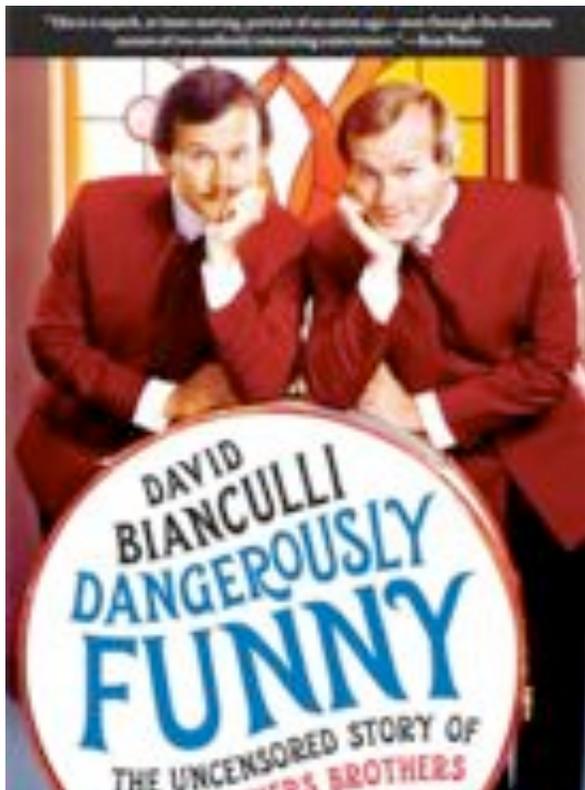
By *Anonymous*

Created 12/12/2011 - 07:31

George Clooney Producing Smothers Brothers Movie -- NPH as Tommy Smothers?

Published: December 12, 2011 @ 7:50 am

Oscar winner George Clooney -- a current awards season favorite with "The Descendants" -- has added another project to his packed upcoming movie slate: Clooney and Smokehouse Pictures partner Grant Heslov will produce a movie about the Smothers Brothers and their groundbreaking TV series.



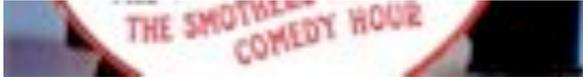
Clooney and Heslov are teaming with Sony to turn David Bianculli's 2009 book "Dangerously Funny: The Uncensored Story of 'The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour'" into a film.

Bianculli [confirmed](#)^[1] the project on his site, TV Worth Watching. He called Clooney his dream choice for the movie adaptation of his book about the Smothers and their 1967-69 variety hour series.

His dream casting choice? Neil Patrick Harris as Tommy Smothers.

Read more: [Clooney Tells Berlusconi Over Sex Trial: Do I Know You?](#)^[2]

"The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour" -- which counted Steve Martin and Rob Reiner among its writers -- drew the ire of CBS censors by including social commentary about the Vietnam War and politicians. It was cancelled by the network in 1969.



"First, I'm thrilled on behalf of Tom and Dick, whose story deserves to be told and retold, and whose efforts to inject topicality into scripted TV comedy in

the 1960s led very directly to the sort of thing Jon Stewart, Stephen Colbert and Bill Maher are doing today," Bianculli wrote.

"But I'm also thrilled because, when the book was still in galleys and I was asked by the film-division agent at my literacy agency to name my dream filmmaker for a Smothers Brothers movie, I said two words. One was George. The other was Clooney."

Read more: [Hugh Jackman Shows Conan How to Be Like George Clooney \(Video\)](#)^[3]

Bianculli, a TV critic and Rowan University professor, said he uses Clooney's Oscar-winning film "Good Night, and Good Luck," and live remake of "Fail Safe," in his courses.

Brian Hecker and Craig Sherman will write the screenplay for the Smothers movie. They are also co-writing "Atari," a biopic about Atari founder Nolan Bushnell.

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[Clooney on 'The Descendants': 'I'll Be Shocked If It's Not Nominated'](#)^[4]

['Descendants': George Clooney as a Cuckold? Heck, Yes!](#)^[5]

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IM Global Snags Spec Script 'Kidnap,' Lorenzo DiBonaventura to Produce (Exclusive)

By *Brent Lang*

Created 12/09/2011 - 14:39

IM Global Snags Spec Script 'Kidnap,' Lorenzo DiBonaventura to Produce (Exclusive)

Published: December 09, 2011 @ 3:32 pm

EXCLUSIVE

IM Global snapped up the rights Thursday to "[Kidnap](#) [1]," a spec script by [Knate Gwaltney](#) [2], TheWrap has learned.

[William Brent Bell](#) [3], who directed the 2006 horror film "[Stay Alive](#) [4]" and the upcoming exorcism drama "[The Devil Inside](#) [5]," is expected to direct.

The movie centers on a woman whose son is kidnapped at a local mall and her subsequent race to find his abductors.

[Matt Peterman](#) [6] ("The Devil Inside") is expected to produce the thriller alongside [Lorenzo DiBonaventura](#) [7].

Automatik will produce as well, with IM Global CEO Stuart Ford and Deepak Nayar ("Bend It Like Beckham") on board as executive producers.

IM Global has a number of projects in the pipeline, including "Hummingbird" and "Dead Man Down," which are going into production early next year. Next year, the company's thriller "Bullet to the Head" with Sylvester Stallone will be released by Warner Brothers and the action drama "Safe" with Jason Statham will hit theaters via Lionsgate.

[Original Artists](#) [8] represented Gwaltney in the sale.

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Nikki Reed, Sean Faris Join Michael Chiklis' 'Pawn'

The two join Stephen Lang, Marton Csokas, Jessica Szohr and Jonathan Bennett as new cast in the indie crime thriller.

12:26 PM PST 12/1/2011 by Jay A. Fernandez

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Getty Images

Nikki Reed, Sean Faris, Stephen Lang, Marton Csokas, Jessica Szohr and Jonathan Bennett have joined the cast of the indie crime thriller Pawn. Michael Chiklis is starring in and producing the project through his Extravaganza Films.

OUR EDITOR RECOMMENDS



Michael Chiklis Tapped to Star in Conan O'Brien's CBS Comedy Pilot (http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/live-feed/michael-chiklis-tapped-star-conan-166251)

Chiklis, Forest Whitaker, Ray Liotta and Common lead the cast in the story of a botched hostage situation that involves the mob. David A.

Armstrong (cinematographer on the Saw films) is directing a screenplay by Jay Anthony White.

Producing along with Chiklis are Michael Becker of Imprint Entertainment, Jeff Most of Most Films

and **Brad Luff**.



'Breaking Dawn' Finale Wasn't 'Super Dramatic,' Says Nikki Reed
Repped by Paradigm and Thruline Entertainment, Reed is currently in theaters in *The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn - Part 1*.

Repped by Gersh and Dino May Management, Faris appeared in *Never Back Down*.

The Innovative Artists-repped Lang recently appeared in *Conan the Barbarian*, and he stars on the Fox series *Terra Nova*.

Repped by WME and Anonymous Content, Csokas recently appeared in *Dream House* and *The Debt*.

Repped by ICM and Luber Roklin Entertainment, Szohr stars on the CW series *Gossip Girl* and recently appeared in the films *I Don't Know How She Does It* and *Tower Heist*.

Repped by Evolution Entertainment, Bennett appeared in *Mean Girls* and *Cheaper by the Dozen 2*.

JESSICA SZOHR ([HTTP://WWW.HOLLYWOODREPORTER.COM/CATEGORY/TOPICS-ENTITIES/JESSICA-SZOHR](http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/category/topics-entities/jessica-szohr))

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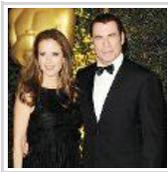
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DEADLINE | HOLLYWOOD

International Press Academy Taps Peter Bogdanovich For Auteur Award

By THE DEADLINE TEAM Tuesday November 29, 2011 @ 1:15pm PST

Los Angeles, CA, November 29, 2011 –The International Press Academy today announced that acclaimed director Peter Bogdanovich will receive the 2011 Auteur Award at this year’s 16th Annual Satellite Awards™ on Sunday, Dec. 18, 2011 in Beverly Hills, Calif. IPA defines “Auteur” as a filmmaker whose singular vision and unique artistic control over the elements of production give a personal and signature style to their films. Past recipients of the International Press Academy’s Auteur Award include: Alex Gibney, Roger Corman, Baz Luhrmann, Robert Altman, Julian Schnabel, and George Clooney.



This article was printed from <http://www.deadline.com/2011/11/international-press-academy-taps-peter-bogdanovich-for-auteur-award/>

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'Shield' Cohorts Michael Chiklis And Forest Whitaker Team For Indie Feature 'Pawn'

By MIKE FLEMING Monday November 28, 2011 @ 1:07pm PST



EXCLUSIVE: Michael Chiklis is teaming with former *The Shield* co-star Forest Whitaker for *Pawn*, an independent crime film centered around a hostage situation that



has gone terribly wrong. Also starring in the film will be Common (*Hell On Wheels*), and Ray Liotta. The film marks David A. Armstrong's directorial debut, and the feature debut for Chiklis' production company Extravaganza Films. Chiklis will produce with The Story Department's Brad Luff, Most Films' Jeff Most and Imprint Entertainment's Michael Becker. Jay Anthony White wrote the script, in which an ex-con becomes entangled in a manipulative chess game between the Feds, local police and the mob. Chiklis, who most recently starred alongside Jason Statham and Jennifer Lopez in *Parker*, was introduced to the project by Luff, who's executive producer of *Parker*. *Pawn* starts production December 1. Chiklis is repped by WME and Management 360, Whitaker by WME and Brillstein Entertainment Partners. Common is repped by WME and Oasis and Liotta by UTA and Untitled. Armstrong's repped by Original Artists.

This article was printed from <http://www.deadline.com/2011/11/shield-cohorts-michael-chiklis-and-forest-whitaker-team-for-indie-feature-pawn/>

DEADLINE | HOLLYWOOD

ABC's 'Body Of Proof' Gets Order For 3 More Episodes, 'Pan Am' Gets 1, 'Man Up' Done

By NELLIE ANDREEVA Friday November 18, 2011 @ 2:26pm PST



UPDATED: ABC has given drama *Body Of Proof* an order for 3 additional episodes. Meanwhile, new drama *Pan Am* will wrap its run after one extra episode, bringing its freshman season to 14 episodes, and remaining in contention for next

season, while new comedy *Man Up!* will end its run after completing its initial 13-episode order. *Body of Proof*, starring Dana Delany came into its second season with a 13-episode sophomore order and 5 episodes in the can leftover from its freshman midseason run, so the network already had 18 episodes on tap for this season. Last month, ABC picked up 2 extra scripts, which now has been followed by a 3-episode order. While not as hot as it was last spring, *Body of Proof* does a credible job in the Tuesday 10 PM hour. Earlier this fall, freshmen *Once Upon A Time*, *Revenge*, *Suburgatory* and *Last Man Standing* and sophomore *Happy Endings* all got full-season orders



This article was printed from <http://www.deadline.com/2011/11/abcs-body-of-proof-gets-order-for-3-more-episodes/>



<http://www.variety.com/article/VR1118045902?refcatid=13>

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Posted: Wed., Nov. 9, 2011, 2:03pm PT

BVI mines Chilean horror pic

Long in the works 'Caleuche' now shooting

By ANNA MARIE DE LA FUENTE

Buena Vista Intl. has picked up Latin American distribution rights to Chilean helmer Jorge Olguin's fantasy horror pic, "Caleuche."

Long-gestating pic is shooting on the Chilean island of Chiloe, whose myths and legends inspired the story penned by Olguin and Carolina Garcia.

Pic stars Brazilian thesp Giselle Itie ("The Expendables"), Catalina Saavedra ("The Maid") and Marcelo Alonso ("Profugos," HBO).

Itie plays a terminally ill marine biologist, based in Boston, who keep a promise to her father to visit the island of her ancestors, where she discovers her family's links to a ghost ship, Caleuche.

Co-produced by ChileFilms and Olguin Films, pic will feature CGI special effects plus full-size mock-ups of a tall ship that will be built at a hangar in Chile's capital, Santiago, where interiors will be shot.

It's budgeted at \$2 million an above average budget for Chile, per Olguin, adding, "We can optimize this amount to make a film that would cost \$20 million to \$30 million in the U.S."

BVI has the option to buy worldwide rights.

Contact the Variety newsroom at news@variety.com

Read the full article at:

<http://www.variety.com/article/VR1118045902?refcatid=13>

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Ken Jeong to Star In, Produce 'The Chung Factor' for Lionsgate (Exclusive)

By *Joshua L. Weinstein*
Created 10/25/2011 - 12:19

Ken Jeong to Star In, Produce 'The Chung Factor' for Lionsgate (Exclusive)

Published: October 25, 2011 @ 12:28 pm

EXCLUSIVE

"Community" star [Ken Jeong](#) [1], who also played Mr. Chow in the "Hangover" movies, is starring in and producing "[The Chung Factor](#) [2]" for Lionsgate, TheWrap has learned.

His manager, Brett Carducci, is also producing.

Lionsgate bought the spec script from [Andy Selsor](#) [3] Tuesday. "The Chung Factor" is his first sale.

Also read: [Ken Jeong Named NBCU 'Stand-Up for Diversity' Spokesman](#) [4]

The movie is about a nice guy who meets the girl of his dreams after being unlucky in love. But because he's afraid of screwing up the relationship, he takes advice from an offbeat relationship coach, played by Jeong.

As it turns out, the coach is actually the woman's ex-boyfriend and is out to sabotage the relationship and win her back.

Also read: [Ken Jeong, Isaiah Mustafa and Eddie McClintock](#)

[Send 'Love Bites' Into Orbit \(Video\)](#) [5]

The script, formerly called "The Ex-Factor," was on the 2005 Black List of best unproduced scripts.

Jeong is repped by UTA and Carducci at Aligned Entertainment.

Selsor is repped by Original Artists.

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[Ken Jeong Named NBCU 'Stand-Up for Diversity' Spokesman](#) [6]

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Fox Acquires Helen Childress Spec 'The Mountain' For Ben Stiller To Direct

By MIKE FLEMING Thursday October 20, 2011 @ 5:05pm PDT



EXCLUSIVE: 20th Century Fox has preemptively acquired *The Mountain*, a spec script by Helen Childress that Ben Stiller will develop to direct. Stiller and his Red Hour partner Stuart Cornfeld will produce. It's a re-team for Stiller and

Childress, who wrote *Reality Bites*. The project is a horror story based on characters from *Summer*, the novel by Edith Wharton. Set in the early 1900s, *The Mountain* revolves around a young woman who struggles to confront her destiny after stumbling upon a mysterious object that forces her to examine the secrets of her past. It's a sophisticated horror premise in the vein of *Rosemary's Baby*. Stiller and Childress are also developing an adaptation of the children's book *The Snowy Day* under his Fox deal. Stiller continues to work on a remake of *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* at Fox that he'll direct and star in. He's shooting the Akiva Schaffer-directed comedy *Neighborhood Watch* with Jonah Hill and Vince Vaughn for Fox.



Original Artists-repped Childress also scripted *Mother's Confidential* at Paramount and *Allison's Starting To Happen* for Sandra Bullock and Warner Bros.

This article was printed from <http://www.deadline.com/2011/10/fox-acquires-helen-childress-spec-the-mountain-for-ben-stiller-to-direct/>



<http://www.variety.com/article/VR1118043718?refcatid=13>

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Posted: Fri., Sep. 30, 2011, 2:49pm PT

Sony Classics near 'Hysteria'

Company negotiates for domestic rights to Victorian romcom

By DAVE MCNARY

Sony Pictures Classics is in negotiations to acquire domestic rights to the romantic comedy "Hysteria," centered on the invention of the vibrator in Victorian-era England.

"Hysteria" premiered on Sept. 15 at Toronto Intl. Film Festival following several press and industry showings. If Sony Classics closes the deal, it would be the first TIFF title that it has acquired.

Cassian Elwes, who's handling the U.S. sale, confirmed the negotiations Friday. Elle Driver is handling foreign sales

IFC, Samuel Goldwyn and Millienium Entertainment have also been bidding on "Hysteria," starring Hugh Dancy, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Jonathan Pryce, Felicity Jones and Rupert Everett. Pic, penned by Stephen Dyer and Jonah Lisa Dyer, is directed by Tanya Wexler.

"Hysteria" is produced by Informant Media and Forthcoming Films in association with Beachfront Films and Chimera Films. Producers are Sarah Curtis, Judy Cairo, Tracey Becker. Exec producers are Michael A. Simpsons, Eric Brenner, Ken Atchity, Sandra Siegel, Leo Joseph, Nathalie Joseph, Mark Kress, Hakan Kousetta, Claudia Blumhuber, Florian Dargel, Peter Fudakowski and Stephen Dyer.

Dancy and Pryce star as doctors in London treating cases of hysteria, a condition said to be characterized at the time by a woman's irritability, anger or unexplained tears. Dancy's character and his best friend, portrayed by Everett, experiment with a new electrical device for treatment for the ailment. Gyllenhaal portrays the daughter of Pryce's character.

Contact Dave McNary at dave.mcnary@variety.com

Read the full article at:

<http://www.variety.com/article/VR1118043718?refcatid=13>

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Peter Bogdanovich Joins Supernatural Thriller 'The Healer' (Exclusive)

3:29 PM PDT 9/9/2011 by Gregg Kilday

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Peter Bogdanovich

Getty

The director will play a character inspired by the Greek ferryman Charon in the movie, starring Isabelle Fuhrman and Joel Courtney.

Peter Bogdanovich has joined the cast of the supernatural thriller, *The Healer*, playing a mysterious character inspired by Charon, the ferryman in Greek mythology who carries souls across the River Styx.

Written and directed by **Giorgio Serafini**, the film stars **Isabelle Fuhrman** and **Joel Courtney** as teenage twins who go on a camping trip with their father, played by **James Le Gros**, only to become lost in a haunted forest.

The movie, which begins filming in North Carolina on Sept. 14, is being produced by **Giuseppe Pedersoli** and **Susan Johnson** through Pedersoli's Italy-based Smile Prods.

Although best known as a director, Bogdanovich, repped by Abrams Artists, Original Artists and Management Production Entertainment, makes frequent appearances before the camera as well, with acting roles in such recent films and TV series as *Humboldt County*, *The Sopranos* and *Infamous*.

OUR EDITOR RECOMMENDS



'The Healer' Starring Isabelle Fuhrman and Joel Courtney Set to Film in North Carolina
<http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/healer-starring-isabelle-fuhrman-joel-230922>

PETER BOGDANOVICH ([HTTP://WWW.HOLLYWOODREPORTER.COM/CATEGORY/TOPICS-ENTITIES/PETER-BOGDANOVICH](http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/category/topics-entities/peter-bogdanovich))

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THE Hollywood REPORTER

Ben Affleck in Talks to Direct and Star in Thriller 'Line of Sight' (Exclusive) 2:16 PM 8/23/2011 by Borys Kit



Frazer Harrison/Getty Images For BAFTA Los Angeles
Ben Affleck

He is in negotiations to join the Warner Bros. action project, being produced by Joel Silver and Andrew Rona.

Just as **Ben Affleck** gears up to begin production on his thriller *Argo*, the filmmaker-actor is already targeting his follow-up.

Affleck is in negotiations to star in, direct and produce *Line of Sight*, an action project at Warner Bros. that is being produced by **Joel Silver** and **Andrew Rona**.

The idea, conceived by Silver Pictures' **Alex Heineman** (who also exec produces), centers on an elite commando squad transporting cargo while dealing with a global threat. One of the conceits of the movie is that it tells the tale from a point-of-view akin to a first-person shooter game. The script was recently worked on by **Peter O'Brien**, the man who wrote the game *Halo: Reach* for Xbox 360.

The project was initially picked up by Warner Bros.-based Silver Pictures in March as a spec written by **F. Scott Frazier**.

Affleck has been moving almost non-stop as a filmmaker since his directorial debut, 2007's *Gone Baby Gone*. His follow-up, the 2010 crime thriller *The Town*, grossed \$154 million worldwide and generated an Oscar nomination for co-star **Jeremy Renner**. Affleck has proven himself to be especially adept at making thrillers on tight budgets while garnering acclaim for his actors.

Affleck, repped by WME, just this week began shooting *Argo*, a drama set during the Iran hostage crisis involving a CIA team going undercover as a sci-fi film crew. The movie is shooting in Los Angeles and will also briefly shoot in Istanbul, Turkey.

Sarah Schechter is overseeing with **Chantal Nong** for the studio.



<http://www.variety.com/article/VR1118040070?refcatid=14>

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Posted: Mon., Jul. 18, 2011, 3:41pm PT

Gross signs new deal at ABC

'Body of Proof' exec producer inks 3-year pact

By STUART LEVINE

"Body of Proof" exec producer Matthew Gross has signed a three-year extension of his current overall deal at ABC Studios.

Gross, who is a co-showrunner of the Dana Delany medical series with Chris Murphey and Sunil Nayar, has been exclusively at the Alphabet since 2003, and will now remain there until at least 2014.

As part of the pact, Gross has hired Lindsay Goffman as his VP of development. Goffman arrives from FremantleMedia North America Prods., where she developed shows for Comedy Central and TBS.

Gross said bringing aboard Goffman will allow him to focus on second season of "Body of Proof," while she helps determine what projects ahead might be worth undertaking.

"This extends our longstanding relationship," Gross told Variety on signing on again with ABC. "We've had a great run together, and I hope to get more than one show on the air."

"Body of Proof," which premiered in March and ran for nine episodes, was the most-watched new series of the 2010-11 TV season.

Gross was formerly exec producer on ABC's "Dirty Sexy Money" and "Day Break," as well as several pilots. He has feature film experience as producer of "Across the Universe" and "Fired Up."

Gross also is working on a legit production of the 1973 Robert Redford-Paul Newman pic "The Sting."

Contact Stuart Levine at stuart.levine@variety.com

Read the full article at:

latimes.com/entertainment/news/tv/la-fi-0712-vuguru-20110611,0,5702728.story

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Web-only studios mature by mimicking 'old media'

Digital studios such as Vuguru are adopting Hollywood rituals for their new media series and applying traditional business models to underwrite production costs.

By Dawn C. Chmielewski, Los Angeles Times

8:05 PM PDT, July 11, 2011

Nine studio executives sat in a glass-enclosed conference room in Beverly Hills, discussing potential snowy locales for filming later this year.

Utah was a viable option, advised the head of production. So, too, was upstate New York — in part because of tax credits. Over the course of the hourlong production meeting, the executives also received casting updates, discussed social media plans for one soon-to-debut series and mulled over a festival screening strategy for another project.

Such a session would not have been out of place at any major studio. That it occurred at the offices of Vuguru, the digital studio founded in 2006 by former Walt Disney Co. Chief Executive Michael D. Eisner, is a sign that Web video is growing up.

"It's a little bit like when TV guys were no longer considered ghetto people, we could actually grow into being the movie business," said Eisner, who spent his early career at ABC television before running Paramount Pictures. "Slowly, the people who work in the digital space are no longer considered odd and strange. ... And advertisers think these guys may be the new breed."

Vuguru, the creator of such Web series as "Prom Queen," is doing more than adopting the rituals of Hollywood. The studio is applying familiar "old-media" business models to underwrite the cost of digital production. Vuguru strikes foreign distribution deals that can cover roughly half a given project's budget, in a funding approach borrowed from the world of independent film. And it structures its original series like interlocking Lego bricks that can be snapped together or pulled apart for viewing on multiple platforms.

Take, for example, a scripted series like "The Booth at the End," which makes its U.S. debut this week on online video site Hulu. It can be watched in two-minute vignettes on mobile phones (62 episodes in all), as five half-hour TV episodes or as a single full-length movie. This approach is designed to attract advertisers

advertisement



who are eager to follow audiences onto the Web and portable devices — but also is packaged in a familiar-enough format to be placed on TV.

The potential for more ad revenue translates to healthier production budgets. The \$300,000 spent to create "The Booth" — in which a mysterious man sitting in a diner grants wishes while posing moral dilemmas for the requesters — shows how far digital video has come from its early, DIY phase. That's about one-sixth of what a network typically would spend on an hourlong TV drama.

"As the market matures, maybe we increase our budgets as it makes sense," said Vuguru President Larry Tanz. "It's all about being disciplined."

For the moment, Web-exclusive video is far from a moneymaker. One study of 250 new media titles made available on YouTube, Hulu, Netflix and other major digital platforms revealed that such entertainment attracted sizable audiences — about 1.3 billion views. But the payback to producers was relatively paltry: a combined \$15 million paid by 13 major distributors last year.

"This is a tough business to make money in," said Arash Amel, the digital media researcher at IHS Screen Digest who conducted the study. "Original new media brands are just voices shouting in the wilderness, without the support of a major media marketing campaign to make them stand out for the consumer."

That's why digital studios like Vuguru script and structure their new media series with old media in mind. Fox International Channels, News Corp.'s international multimedia business, acquired rights to "The Booth at the End," which it aired on its pay-TV channels, as well as on the Web.

"They're rolling it out online, putting it on TV; they're experimenting, cross-promoting," Tanz said.

Media companies are betting that these new platforms, including cellphones and tablets, eventually will become big business. Eisner predicts that digital distribution will one day be the first stop for new projects, in the same way cable channels HBO, AMC and FX now compete with networks.

"Digital distribution is so obviously the future," Eisner said, adding, "That is happening, but there's a long way to go."

The desire to find programming suitable for leaping from the smallest screen to the living room TV is part of what attracted an investment in Vuguru in October 2009 from Rogers Communications Inc. The Canadian company's vast media holdings span television and radio stations, Web properties, mobile phone service, cable TV and Internet access.

"Digital cuts across all our assets now," said Jason Tafler, chief digital officer for Rogers Cable. "The way you program and distribute that content has to change. We're really just following our audiences across all these devices. There's a lot of flexibility in the way Vuguru creates content."

Because of Rogers Communications' reported multimillion-dollar investment, Eisner spun off Vuguru as a stand-alone company and began assembling an executive team with experience in film, television and new media. Its president, Tanz, has a long list of digital credits, including serving as chief executive of LivePlanet Inc., an entertainment company founded by Matt Damon and Ben Affleck that created the Emmy-nominated TV series "Project Greenlight" for HBO.

Vuguru Chief Creative Officer Kristin Jones spent five years as senior vice president of production at Miramax Films, where she oversaw projects including Academy Award-nominated films "Gone Baby Gone" and "The Queen." She said Vuguru offers the same creative freedom of independent film.

"I joke with everybody — you know, there's no Internet jail," Jones said of her meetings with talent agents to discuss opportunities with Vuguru. "There's a lot of opportunity for people to take risks they could not necessarily take in TV or features."

To be sure, there are compromises: Vuguru seeks to match the quality of other TV shows — but must do so on a tight budget and on a compressed schedule.

Consider the accelerated pace of Vuguru's "The Millionaire Tour," a thriller with elements of Tom Cruise's 2004 cab driver hostage drama "Collateral" and Kevin Spacey's suspenseful 1995 crime mystery "The Usual Suspects." Jones said she read the script in February. The series started shooting in May. In the feature film world, such development could take 18 months or longer.

Dominic Monaghan, who has appeared in the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy and on the ABC-TV series "Lost," said he was attracted to "The Millionaire Tour" because of the quality of the script as well as the opportunity to be in the vanguard of the changing media landscape.

"Right now, there is a slight novelty value ... to making a movie that is specifically made for an online release," Monaghan said. "But I think in the next five to 10 years, everyone will be doing it and this film will be recognized as one of the forerunners. And that's important to me."

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Warner Bros Lines up 'Halo: Reach' Writer for 'Line of Sight'

The film, about an elite commando squad transporting cargo while dealing with a global threat, looks good to Warner, who have hired Peter O'Brien to work on the script.

6:26 PM 6/17/2011 by Borys Kit

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Action projects have been given a higher priority at Warner Bros., and one of the projects heating up right now is *Line of Sight*.

Peter O'Brien has been hired to work on the project, which Warner initially picked up in March as a spec written by **F. Scott Frazier** for Silver Pictures, where **Joel Silver** and **Andrew Rona** are producing.

The idea, concocted by Silver Picture's **Alex Heineman** (who also exec produces), centres on an elite commando squad transporting cargo while dealing with a global threat.

O'Brien is best known for writing the 2008 Black List script *Unlocked*, which landed at Warners last year with **Lorenzo di Bonaventura** as one of the producers. That led him working on Paramount's **Robert Ludlum** thriller *The Chancellor's*

Manuscript, which **Marc Forster** is attached to direct, and a gig penning *The Jury*. The latter is a Fox 2000's adaptation of British mini-series created by **Peter Morgan** that being produced by Forster, **Brad Simpson**, **Guymon Cassidy** and **Quentin Curtis**.

But not as well known but perhaps most pertinent is that O'Brien, repped by Original Artists and Brillstein Entertainment Partners, wrote the story for *Halo: Reach*, the Xbox 360 video game that grossed over \$200 million on its opening day and was called the best Halo game by gaming publications. *Halo: Reach* also told the story of an elite commando squad, albeit in a sci-fi setting, a similarity that did not go unnoticed by Warner execs.

Silver is in post on *Sherlock Holmes* and the **Todd Phillips**-produced found footage comedy *Project X*.

Action projects have bubbled up to the top of the pile at the studio who, according to insiders, is seeking to replicate the success of Universal's *Fast Five*, which successfully revitalized a franchise.



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Spanish film-maker tackles invisible legacy in book

Thu, May 5 2011

By [Martin Roberts](#)

MADRID (Reuters) - Having children spurred Spanish award-winning director and script-writer Julia Montejo to turn her hand to literature and she has just published her second novel with a third one on the way.

"I've been far more productive since I've had two kids, maybe because I'm scared of all the talk that, oh, now you're a mother you've stopped dead," Montejo told Reuters from her Madrid home.

"I haven't stopped work at all. I've written for television, I've got two novels out, there's the Fox deal and my university teaching," she added, referring to an agreement to film her script "Heart for Auction" with Twentieth Century Fox, a unit of News Corp.

Heart deals with a young woman eager to study and escape a poor background in which her friends' aspirations are limited to being footballers' girlfriends.

She takes the desperate step of putting her virginity up for auction on a game show fighting for ratings.

"It's a film about sex, without sex. She would go to any lengths on television, which I think is very topical," Montejo said.

INVISIBLE LEGACY

Montejo lived in the United States for eight years, during which she wrote and directed U.S.-Spanish production "No Turning Back" in 2001, which won best independent Latino picture at the ALMA awards, a Latino version of the Oscars.

She returned to Spain in 2004 and had her first child in 2006, the same year she released "Eva Desnuda" (Naked Eve), a finalist for the Plaza y Janes book prize.

"Violetas para Olivia" (Violets for Olivia), her second novel, went on sale last month in Spain and is due to be published in Italian by Mondadori.

Montejo tells of a young professional struggling to shrug off the shackles of what Montejo dubs the "invisible legacy" of female role models handed down over the centuries, set in the context of a hide-bound family in southern Spain.

"We have only just begun to make a break," she said. "They're still selling us the tale of Prince Charming and all those Bridget Jones-type novels in which women are professionals but unfulfilled because they haven't met the perfect man."

"We women have to understand where this comes from, because if not we won't be happy or form meaningful relationships."

"Olivia" charts how generations of women have married by arrangement or out of convenience, which either forces them to hide behind religion or become rebels.

"The character of Olivia learns a lot, lives a lot, to the full, she rebels but is incapable of teaching her daughter to prevent her from making the same mistakes," Montejo said.

The novel marks a departure from her first book, which was more of a crime novel. Montejo declined to reveal the theme of her third book, but promised it would be "very different" again.

"I like to write books which are varied, shall we say. I get a bit bored with authors who write the same old stuff. I'm mulling over a lot of ideas and I still like to explore, not just plots and subject matter, but structures and styles."

(Editing by [Paul Casciato](#))

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Posted: Tue., Apr. 12, 2011, 4:00am PT

HSI hot for 3D Chile pic

Jorge Olguin helming 'Los Elementales'

By ANNA MARIE DE LA FUENTE

Hollywood Studios Intl. is boarding Chile's first live-action 3D pic, "Los Elementales" (The Elementals).

Jorge Olguin, who made the first horror/fantasy pics to come out of Chile, begins helming in late May, with Cristian Campos, Loreto Aradena and Sofia Kaufmann to star. Dave Brown, prexy of HSI's management arm, Artist Intl., will produce. HSI Chairman/founder Steven Saxton will executive produce.

Olguin is keeping the budget under \$1 million by limiting the number of thespis and locations. Co-producer VisualBox Chile will provide 3D cameras and post-production facilities.

"Los Elementales" will be shot mainly in English with some Spanish and the local indigenous dialect, Mapudungun.

Described as "Pan's Labyrinth" meets "Avatar," it tracks a young girl (Kaufmann) who meets the ethereal creatures of a forest. They seek to convince her -- and the dam-building company her father spearheads -- not to destroy their ecosystem. Pic will shoot for three weeks in the Arauco region, which continues to be the site of political and ecological conflicts.

Olguin's credits include "Angel negro" (Black Angel), "Sangre eterna" (Eternal Blood) and "Solos" (Descendants). His "Solos" -- Chile's first zombie pic -- was shot in English for seven days for \$200,000. Olguin is repped by Chris Sablan of Original Artists and Brown.

HSI is likely to board Olguin's long-gestating pic "Caleuche," which has been pushed to the fall with Leonor Varela set to topline it.

HSI Films prexy Eric Christenson will be taking "Los Elementales" to Cannes to kick off presales.

Contact the variety newsroom at news@variety.com



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Posted: Mon., Mar. 21, 2011, 4:00am PT

Marino, Hyland prep Stokes story

Joel Silverman has been tapped to write project

By DAVE MCNARY

War-hero-turned-football-star Brian Stokes will be the subject of a feature from NFL Hall-of-Famer Dan Marino, Brian Hyland, Doodle Films and Scarpe Diem Prods. Joel Silverman, who has penned a variety of inspirational sports dramas including "Full-Court Miracle," has been tapped to write the Stokes project.

Stokes was awarded the Purple Heart after he was hit with shrapnel from a roadside roadside bomb in Iraq while serving as a sergeant in the Marines.

The drama introduces a young Stokes who, unable to fulfill his dream of becoming a college football player, descends into alcohol and drugs before being pushed by his parents to join the military -- where he led his men through two tours in Iraq. Near the end of his tour, his men urged him to resume his dream to play college football, so Stokes began training and made the Appalachian State football team at age 27, and helped lead them to a national championship.

"When my friend and producer at HBO, Brian Hyland, made me aware of the incredible heroism and valor in combat of Marine Sgt. Brian Stokes, I was overwhelmed," Marino said. "It's a miracle he survived. When I learned of his determination to achieve the one dream in his life that had alluded him -- to play college football, the game I love -- at an age when most college guys are well past their playing days, I almost found it hard to believe."

Hyland, who won multiple sports Emmys for his work on "Inside the NFL," said the film will focus on football and Iraq. "The film will show Stokes and his crew for what they were -- American kids thrown into impossible situations, whose reactions under bizarre circumstances proved the content of their character and a do-the-right-thing attitude they took directly from their leader, Brian Stokes," he said.

Silverman recently wrote a biopic for Jerry Bruckheimer and Disney about Miami Dolphins kicker Garo Yepremian.

He's repped by Original Artists.

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Television review: 'Best Player' on Nickelodeon

The Nickelodeon movie features 'iCarly's' Jerry Trainor and Jennette McCurdy in a fun, if obvious, bit of gaming rivalry.

March 12, 2011 | By Robert Lloyd, Los Angeles Times Television Critic

Without making any too great claims on its behalf, I would like to direct your attention, in a good way, to the Nickelodeon TV movie "Best Player," featuring two stars of "iCarly" who aren't Miranda Cosgrove. You won't mistake this for "The Lady Eve" or "The More the Merrier" in either invention or wit, but it has been made (by director Damon Santostefano, working from a script by Richard Amberg) with a light, sure hand. And although the film, which premieres Saturday, runs toward the obvious and the preposterous — sometimes both at once — it's cheery and charming and, in spite of its calculated commercial appeal, never feels cynical.

Jerry Trainor, who plays Cosgrove's older brother on "iCarly," and Jennette McCurdy, who plays her best friend, are the leads here. If the world they inhabit is a little more dimensional than that which their sitcom portrays, it will still behoove adult viewers to forget what they know about how things actually work, and forget also the many other movies and sitcom episodes that have been fitted to similar carriages. (Including, see above, "The Lady Eve.")

Long and floppy, Trainor plays thirtysomething child-man Quincy, known as Q in the world of multiplayer video games, in which he is a superstar. He has apparently not thought to monetize this fact, as he still inhabits his parents' basement and delivers Chinese food for not quite a living. When his folks announce a move to Florida ("It's what the aging do," his mother says), Quincy, loath to lose his perfected gaming environment ("I have very specific lighting needs") determines to buy their house. There is, conveniently, a contest with just the right amount of prize money and less conveniently, a talented opponent, who turns out to be Chris (McCurdy), a teenage girl Quincy sets out to sabotage.

Quincy is both hero and villain, although it's never in doubt that the villainy will be swallowed in some final heroic gesture. Along the way, there's a good bit of farcical lurking as Quincy, incognito, dates and falls for Chris' mom (Janet Varney, looking more like an older sister) and masquerades incompetently as a home economics teacher. ("Teaching is exhausting," he admits. "You have to know things, which is very difficult for me.") His class includes all the young principals in the story: the jock, the nerd, the mean girl and our heroine.

Chris has no friends, but this seems as much a matter of economy as of character. Black leather jacket, bad attitude and video-game mastery notwithstanding she is required to stand for the imagined conventional aspirations of the girls in the crowd — she really would like to go to the prom with that cute football player (Jean-Luc Bilodeau). There is a nerdy boy who likes her, but the usual math applies: Pretty people get the pretty people.

Such moral as "Best Player" offers is that there's more to reality than virtual reality, but that while maturity does sometimes mean having to say you're sorry, does not mean an end to fun. The kids can rest easy.

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Sylvester Stallone to Star as Hitman in 'Headshot'

3:15 PM 2/6/2011 by Pamela McClintock, Borys Kit

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Getty

IM Global announces the casting with Wayne Kramer directing the project.

Sylvester Stallone will star as a New Orleans hitman who teams with a New York City cop in action pic *Headshot*, from IM Global and Alexandra Milchan's EMJAG Prods.

IM Global CEO **Stuart Ford** -- who announced the project and Stallone's casting on Sunday -- will launch *Headshot* to foreign buyers this week at the European Film Market in Berlin. Market runs concurrently with the Berlin Film Festival.

Wayne Kramer (*The Cooler*) will direct *Headshot* from a script by **Alessandro Camon** (*The Messenger*). Kramer begins shooting in May in Louisiana and New York.

In the film, Stallone's character teams with a young NYPD detective in a high-

stakes investigation that leads from the dingy back alleys of New Orleans all the way to the power corridors of Washington, D.C.

The unlikely duo, brought together by two vicious murders, take on all who stand in their way, and are willing to sacrifice everything to exact revenge.

Stallone was last in theaters in the sleeper hit *The Expendables*. Milchan will produce *Headshot* with **Alfred Gough**, **Miles Millar** and **Kevin King Templeton**, Stallone's longtime producing partner. Among their credits, Gough and Millar produced the upcoming DreamWorks' picture *I Am Number Four*.

Ford will executive produce with **Deepak Nayar**.

"*Headshot* is exactly the type of fast-paced, universally themed project that suits our business model. Sylvester Stallone is an international icon and we're really excited to be in business with him," Ford said.

The deal between IM Global and the producers was negotiated by Ford, senior exec **Michael Roban** and attorney **Irwin Rappaport**. Stallone's deal was negotiated by WME and attorneys **Jake Bloom** and **Ralph Brescia** at Bloom, Hergott, Diemer, Rosenthal, Laviolette & Feldman.

IM Global has a busy slate at Berlin. In addition to *Headshot*, IM Global's genre arm Octane will launch **Kevin Smith's Red State** and **Rob Zombie's The Lords of Zombie** to foreign buyers.

IM Global also will show footage of **Barry Levinson's The Bay**, while **Madonna** will be in Berlin to share footage from her period drama *W.E.*, which IM Global's specialty division Acclaim is selling.

Ford's company also has a movie in the Berlin Film Festival, Jose Padilha's *Elite Squad: The Enemy Within*.

Kramer is reped by WME and Sentient.

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'The Children' Director Enters 'Dark Corners'!

Tuesday, January 18, 2011



By: **MrDisgusting**

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Some very exciting news as Bloody Disgusting landed word that UK director Tom Shankland - best known for the chilling Ghost House release, *The Children* - has signed on to direct **Dark Corners**, penned by E.L. Katz and Tim Day. The pic will revolve around Jess, a beautiful blind college girl who is tormented by a methodical killer who knows her well, and therefore knows what terrifies her. He is motivated by sadistic revenge, but she turns her apparent weakness into a strength and fights back. It will be produced and financed by A Bigger Boat with producers Peter Block (*Saw* franchise, *Frozen*, *The Ward*, *The House at the End of the Street*) and Andy Gould (Rob Zombie's *Halloween* films), in association with GreeneStreet Films. Tim Williams and Amanda Essick will executive produce, while Jeremy Platt will serve as co-producer. More details inside!

Tom Shankland's most recent feature film, *The Children*, was produced in association with the BBC and released in the US under Sam Raimi's Ghosthouse banner. It was also an official selection of the Sitges Film Festival 2009 where it was nominated for Best Film. Shankland has been nominated for two BAFTA awards for his short films *Bait* and *Going Down* while his debut feature, *the Killing Gene*, was released by Dimension Extreme in 2007.

The script for *Dark Corners* is penned by E.L. Katz and Tim Day. Originally based on an idea by Block and Gould, the script was developed internally at GreeneStreet and A Bigger Boat and was featured on the 2010 Bloodlist, the genre community's version of the Blacklist which features the year's best horror and thriller scripts.

"Tom Shankland is the perfect choice for 'Dark Corners,'" says Block. "When you watch 'The Children,' it's unsettling and creepy while at the same time you find yourself being drawn in deeper and deeper. Likewise with 'Dark Corners;' this is a cat-n-mouse thriller in the spirit of 'Wait Until Dark' and 'Panic Room' that gives you someone to root for, someone to fear and something going bump in the night."

"Dark Corners will be Hitchcock re-imagined for a modern audience who love to be scared in the dark," says Shankland. "I've always loved films where characters have very limited choices and tools to solve problems and survive, and then mining suspense from these claustrophobic situations."

FilmNation will handle worldwide sales through its partnership with GSF and ABB. Principal photography is scheduled to start in Fall 2011.

Source: [Bloody Disgusting](#)



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