

Hollywood Exclusive: Spiro, Cannavale, Fillion - Making the best of economic realities of TV

by Marilyn_Beck_ & Stacy_Jenel_Smi

Jordana Spiro is certainly keeping her sense of humor about the fact that they're doing a short season of her TBS "My Boys" series. "We're right in the thick of shooting right now on No. 5 of our whopping nine episodes," she says. "The economy is hitting everybody hard. It's obviously changing the amount of shows that are being produced. I guess I should be glad we're not shooting them on a iFlip video and posting them on Facebook."

In fact, Jordana is well aware that the popular show, in which she plays a sportswriter surrounded by the men in her life, is in an enviable position. "I felt like we had something very natural and easy and really fun from day one â€” the writers are so funny and strong, and have such a clear vision of what they wanted to do. And TBS has been very good to us in terms of giving us a chance to evolve," she says of the series, which has its third season premiere March 31.

As far as being one of a comparative handful of scripted comedies that's managed not only to hang on, but to thrive in these times, she notes, "It's tricky, but I think the cream does rise to the top. Right now, everyone is interested in voyeurism. Maybe that's like a momentary explosion that will die down. Let's hope, right? I have to tell you, I would just make a super boring reality show."

Spiro also has the big-screen "The Goods: The Don Ready Story" coming up, with Jeremy Piven, Will Ferrell and James Brolin, who plays her dad. "It seems every part I'm doing these days involves hanging out with a bunch of guys. I love it," she says.

AND: Bobby Cannavale is staying philosophical about the fate of his March 31-debuting ABC "Cupid" series â€” which has seen its episode order slashed from 13 to eight to seven. "I take it all in stride. There are so many pilots that haven't gotten picked up, we're still ahead of that. It's still seven more episodes than I'm used to doing," says the hunky star of "Third Watch" and "The Station Agent" fame â€” who plays a man who believes he's the Roman god of love, and maybe he is, in the forthcoming show. "It's like when people ask me if I think it's going to be a hit. I don't know. I know I really like the show, and I'm really proud of it. I don't know what it's going to do or why they make the decisions they make â€” except that they're driven by economics."

AND: Nathan Fillion shrugs about the fact that his Monday (3/9)-debuting ABC "Castle" drama has wrapped its first season with 10 episodes, reduced from the 13 originally planned. "It's something that's happened across the network, and it's happened worse to other shows than ours," says the suave and charismatic actor, who plays a freewheeling mystery writer in the new show. "Everyone is screaming 'Economy' at the moment. I just know that at 'Castle,' we're all really aware that we're happy to be working."

ON A PHILOSOPHICAL NOTE: "Survivor" creator Mark Burnett may be one of TV's most successful

producers, but he had some less than glamorous jobs along the way. However, the British media mogul says the secret to his success is that he made the most out of every experience. "When I came to America, I was a nanny â€” basically a nanny/servant for a wealthy Beverly Hills home. It sounds very unusual for a young English guy in America, but you know what, I made the best of it. I learned to enjoy it," he tells us.

"Prior to that, I was in the British parachute regiment. It was extremely tough, but I learned to enjoy it. I've also worked on a farm. I spent days shoveling cattle sâ€™", and I was also a milk delivery driver in London. None of them were bad jobs," he adds. "That doesn't come into our family beliefs. You have to make the best of everything and be glad you have a job."

Now his job is being televised for all the world to see, including season 18 of "Survivor: Tocantins," which is currently airing on CBS. Burnett also has over 13 other shows on the air or in production, so he's certainly not complaining now. "Just to live in America was an unimaginable dream for me. Every day is a blessing."

A REAL FRIEND: Michael Shulman feels he owes a debt of gratitude to his former "Party of Five" cast mate, Lacey Chabert, for coming aboard his first indie film as producer-star â€” "Sherman's Way." The coming-of-age/buddy road trip saga, which Shulman has shown at a string of film festivals, goes into limited release today (3/5). Shulman jumped into the project after graduating from Yale. "I called Lacey and said, 'I need you to be a part of it â€” I just don't know what that part is yet.' And she said OK. We worked together as kids, in New York in 'Les Miserables' and in L.A. We filmed most of the movie in the middle of nowhere in California, where there were no working cell phones and no email and they closed the restaurant at 6 p.m., not opened it," says the New Yorker. "Lacey flew to be there. Then she flew to New York to do a scene there. And she just has a small part in the film. I can't tell you how much it means to me."

With reports by Emily Feimster.

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