

Deep Inside Hollywood

by Romeo San Vicente



Lucy Lawless to imprison 'Spartacus'

A perfect storm of gay TV is on the horizon, thanks to ancient Rome and Xena. The upcoming Starz series "Spartacus: Blood and Sand" was already set to feature a "300"-style interpretation of the Spartacus legend, meaning that lots of muscular, barely-dressed men would be training or battling non-stop on your basic-cable system. We've also been promised queer characters. But now that the cast is fixed, lesbian audiences have a reason to tune in: Lucy Lawless. Yes, yes, it's a cliché, but it would appear that all lesbians everywhere on earth still love Lucy. Recently seen online interrogating former "L Word" cast members about the murder of Jenny, Lawless will star on "Spartacus" as the owner of the gladiator prison holding the rebel slave. That means she'll probably be somewhat wicked. And who doesn't like that? So while the warriors may be men, the princess returns to weekly TV in January of 2010. That gives you about eight months to plan the viewing party.

Steve Buscemi is not "Handsome Harry"

The new indie drama "Handsome Harry" stars veteran character actor Jamey Sheridan ("Law & Order: Criminal Intent") in the title role of a man on a mysterious road trip to uncover the truth about a long-ago event involving several men in the Navy. And if that brings to mind The Village People then, well, that's not exactly the movie's fault. Yet "Handsome Harry" is about a disruption in the ranks of traditional masculinity and stars Steve Buscemi as a dying man out to make amends for that breach of the brotherhood. Joining him are Campbell Scott, Aiden Quinn and John Savage as participants in the wrongdoing and keys to the puzzle. From Bette Gordon (director of 1983's acclaimed feminist drama "Variety"), this serious exploration of gay denial is already making the film festival rounds and wants a distributor, so catch it while you can.

Almodovar on the "Verge" of a Fox TV Series

If you were brainstorming about unlikely pairings in the entertainment world, and even if you were brainstorming really hard, then Fox TV Studios and Pedro Almodovar's breakthrough hit 1988 film "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" still might not ever cross paths in your mind. But Almodovar himself is in the process of developing his crowd-pleaser for an international English-speaking TV audience with the production company right now. The one-hour, so-far-untitled pilot will focus on a suburban group of women (cue "Desperate Housewives" comparisons, even though that series studied at the feet of Almodovar) who are confronting middle age and all the comedic scenarios that come along with it. Unknown is if, like in the film, one of the women on the verge will be a voice-over actress who

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gets abandoned by her lover and proceeds to drug houseguests with sedative-laced gazpacho. But it could happen.

Broadway + Liberace: What could go wrong?

Romeo's already reported on a Liberace biopic in the works, but are modern theater audiences clamoring for a recreation of one of his Las Vegas concerts, starring an accomplished Liberace impersonator? Even if they aren't, it looks like they'll be getting one if "Liberace: the Man, the Music and the Memories" opens this fall season as planned. Starring Wayland Pickard as the be-sequinced one, it appears that this channeling of one of the late pianist's showroom revues is going to be, pardon the pun, done with as straight a face as possible. Pickard's already been performing a version of the show, most recently at the Welk (as in Lawrence) Resorts Theater in Escondido, Calif., which tells you something about its audience and what's most likely "not" in the show itself, aka any kind of commentary on the man's life. But then that would be fitting, as Liberace himself vehemently denied his homosexuality even as he died from AIDS in the 1980s. Still though, doesn't this all seem a little bit weird?

Romeo San Vicente is never straight-faced. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.

Forget Perez, Romeo San Vicente is the go-to gay for accurate insider info when it comes to the stars, film and the tube as it relates to a queer audience. With previews of gay-related projects, and breaking tidbits on Tinsletown happenings – and just a dash of gossip – Q Syndicate's most popular column takes you deeper than you've ever been. Well, maybe.