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Hardwicke vamps on fairy tale

By Steven Zeitchik

Eight months after Catherine Hardwicke left the "Twilight" franchise, she will be running with the wolves again.

The director is in final negotiations to helm "The Girl With the Red Riding Hood," the Warner Bros. reboot of the classic Grimm brothers fairy tale that the studio developed with Leonardo DiCaprio's Appian Way.



Hardwicke

She also is in early talks with Sony to board its feature version of "21 Jump Street," an undercover cop tale that like "Twilight" centers on high schoolers with unusual abilities, though other directors are in the running.

It's unclear whether Hardwicke could helm "Jump" in addition to "Hood"; though both are in the development stage, they're considered priorities for their respective studios,

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ACTORS INEQUITY

Seymour Cassel is at the center of a political storm involving SAG's bitter rival factions.
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FOCUS

The level of angst over upstart kiosk DVD retailer Redbox has created a schism among the studios.

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Next on 'Earl' guy's list: Fox family show

By Nellie Andreeva

Fox has teamed with "My Name Is Earl" executive producer Bobby Bowman for a family comedy project.

The untitled show, which has received a premium script commitment, hails from 20th TV — where Bowman has an overall deal — and the Chernin Co.



Bowman

It marks the first sale in what is shaping up as a busy first year for former News Corp. president and COO Peter Chernin's recently launched company, whose TV division is run by former NBC Universal TV executive Katherine Pope.

Bowman's project, which he

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Weinsteins bank on 'Basterds' b.o.

By Carl DiOrio

For better or worse, this weekend's opening of "Inglourious Basterds" looms large in the fiscal health of its producers and distributors at the Weinstein Co.

Executives at the New York indie say its financial woes have been greatly exaggerated and that the company's fate won't be sealed by the success or failure of any single release. But it's safe to say the Weinsteins would welcome a big "Basterds" bow, and prerelease tracking offers auspicious signs of must-see interest among key demos.

One of four domestic wide openers set for today, "Basterds" is tracking best among 18- to 35-year-old males. But though the R-rated,

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"Inglourious Basterds"

Script is 'Bourne' again

By Borys Kit

Josh Zetumer has signed to open the fourth installment in Universal's "Bourne" movie series, writing what is being described as a parallel script.

George Nolfi, who worked on "The Bourne Ultimatum," initially came back for the fourth entry. He also

boarded to write and direct "The Adjustment Bureau," an adaptation of a Philip K. Dick short story that reteams him with



Zetumer

"Bourne" star Matt Damon.

But as that movie nears its September start date, Nolfi had to step away from "Bourne." Not wishing to slow development and keen on making "Bourne" part of its 2011 slate, Universal hired Zetumer to write a new script. It is unclear what will occur after his draft is submitted or whether his script will be integrated with Nolfi's.

"Our hope is that Nolfi, a key member of the 'Bourne' team, will return after he is done with 'The Adjustment Bureau,'" a Universal spokesperson said.

Writing two scripts, though

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Chernin TV channels

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wrote and is executive producing, is a multicamera comedy that centers on an oddball kid trying to be normal in an eccentric home.

Fox, which had made finding a new live-action hit comedy a priority, has been stocking up on multicamera projects.

In addition to the Bowman comedy, the network also recently handed a cast-contingent pilot order to "The Rednecks & Romeos," a multicamera ensemble coming-of-age comedy from "That '70s Show" co-creator/exec producer Mark Brazill.

The two shows are reminiscent of Fox's top live-action comedies of the past decade, "Malcolm in the Middle," which also centered on a kid with an eccentric family life, and "70s Show," also about a group of working-class teenagers.

Chernin's new producing deal with News Corp. has several blind production commitments at the Fox network built into it. It is not clear whether the Bowman project would fall under any of them.

In addition to his stint on Greg Garcia's "Earl," where he ran the writers room, the ICM-repped Bowman worked on "Yes, Dear" and "Family Guy." **THR**

'Bourne' writer

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rare, is not without precedent in the tentpole movie world. "Star Trek: Generations," "Fantastic Four: The Rise of the Silver Surfer" and "Wolverine" are movies that had parallel scripts commissioned and sometimes had them combined. "Conan," still in development, is another project that falls into that category.

Frank Marshall and Jeffrey Weiner are producing the latest "Bourne."

Zetumer, repped by UTA and Management 360, is generating heat around town for writing "Dune" for Pete Berg and Paramount. He wrote "The Infiltrator" for Warner Bros., to which Leonardo DiCaprio is attached and is being produced by Film 360, Appian Way and David Benioff. **THR**

Film-based games get a need

Closer cooperation between industries is becoming more commonplace

By Scott Roxborough

COLOGNE, Germany — Movies and games seem like a match made in heaven, so why are games based on hit films so bad?

Despite sharing the same demo as devoted fans, action, sci-fi and fantasy films rarely translate into branded video game hits.

"Movie-based games almost never work; no matter how cool the movie, the game is almost always lame," said Philipp Dollinger, a game reviewer for German blog Pressakey and one of thousands swarming the halls of the Gamescom trade fair, which runs through Sunday in Cologne. "Most are just bad imitations of better games already out there."

Hollywood has been burned before in the gaming space. Just ask Brash Entertainment, the U.S. group that raised \$400 million to buy film licenses and turn them into games. After two flops — an "Alvin and the Chipmunks" game and one based on Fox's 2008 sci-fi feature "Jumper" — Brash folded.

The story is similar for Pandemic Brisbane, the Australian outpost of the Los Angeles-based game developer that shuttered in February after a disastrous attempt to deliver an ambitious game based on Christopher Nolan's blockbuster "The Dark Knight."

Despite those warning signs, there are plenty of new A-list movie ties at Gamescom and just as many developers saying they have learned their lesson.

"For a lot of movies, the game is an afterthought," said Jake Meri,



"Star Wars: The Old Republic"



PLAYING "AVATAR": James Cameron has been hands-on in the game's development.

a producer at LucasArts. "The filmmakers are close to finishing production, and they say, 'Oh, what about the game?' But a good game takes years of development."

LucasArts put in the time for its new release, "Star Wars: The Old Republic," a game it is developing with Canadian outfit BioWare for Electronic Arts.

"Star Wars"-based games have received mixed reviews, but buzz has been strong for "Republic." LucasArts and BioWare spent years designing the title, which will be a massively multiplayer online game similar to "World of Warcraft" — a game intended to be played online by thousands simultaneously.

PC Gamer U.K. called "Republic" "a credible 'World of Warcraft' killer," and the lines here to see the demo have been longer than those at most movie premieres.

"We have a lot to live up to with this game, which is why we've spent so much time and money on it," Meri said. "It will be the first fully voiced MMO game in the world. Voicing this game has been the most ambitious voice-over project ever; we have thousands of characters speaking

more than 200,000 lines of dialogue."

LucasArts is famous for its obsessive protection of the "Star Wars" franchise, but the trend toward closer cooperation between film studios and game studios is seen across the industry.

James Cameron was hands-on for the three-plus years France's Ubisoft took to develop "Avatar," a combat game based on the helmer's upcoming epic.

"It was really unprecedented," Ubisoft developer Patrick Naud said. "We had full access to everything: the storyboards, the concept art, the sound, the voices, the animation. It wasn't a typical movie-licensing deal, where you buy the license and go away and make the game. It was a much closer collaboration."

"Avatar" will be one of the first big tests of such movie-game teamwork when it hits stores in November ahead of the film's holiday release.

"It might be too soon to say this, but James Cameron is a trend-setter, so maybe, in the future, this is the way everyone will do business," Naud said. "It would certainly make a lot more sense." **THR**