

Lorimar reveals its fall line

Programmer will have 10 shows in development at networks and Fox, but only one at CBS, where management shakeup cost company several development commitments

A series that blends clay animation and live action, a drama starring James Earl Jones, a *Midnight Caller* spinoff, and five comedies are among the network series projects in development at Lorimar Television for the fall, David Salzman, president, Lorimar Television, and Leslie Moonves, executive vice president, creative affairs, Lorimar Television, told BROADCASTING last week.

Lorimar Television, the leading supplier of network television with 10 series on the air (sister company Warner Brothers Television is second with seven series), can double its current output next season with a development slate that stands at 10 projects, with the possibility of adding at least one more.

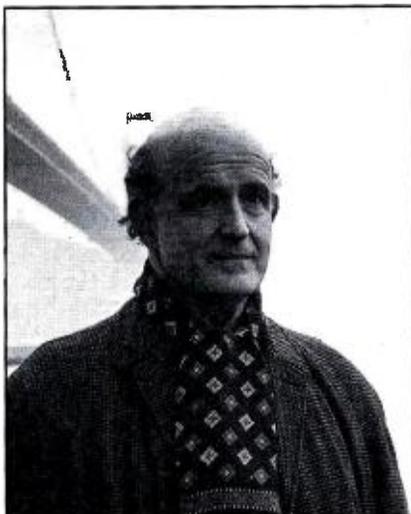
In fact, were it not for the shakeup at CBS Entertainment that saw Jeff Sagansky replace Kim LeMasters as president of that division late last year, Lorimar would have had several additional projects. Surprising in Lorimar's development slate this year is that there is only one project in the works for CBS, and that one was only firmed up late last week. Lorimar has traditionally had a strong presence at CBS, supplying them with *Dallas*, *Knots Landing* and *Falcon Crest* throughout the 1980's. At the start of the season, CBS had six Lorimar-produced series on their schedule, the three prime time soaps plus *The People Next Door*, *Island Son* and *Paradise*.

"The rules have definitely changed [at CBS] with Sagansky there," said Salzman. Salzman said when Sagansky took over the entertainment division of the third-rated network, "he swept all the pieces off the chess board and started again." He said numerous development commitments Lorimar had with CBS were lost due to the reshuffling.

While the bad news for Lorimar is that it has only one project in development for CBS, the good news is that it has a total of 10 projects under consideration at the networks. In addition to the CBS development project—a comedy for 8 p.m.—Lorimar has four projects for ABC, three for NBC, and two for Fox.

ABC

■ *Gabriel's Fire*, a one-hour drama starring James Earl Jones, "is one of our strongest projects," said Salzman. Jones stars as a former Chicago cop who is freed from prison after 20 years by an aggressive woman lawyer. She convinces him to join her as a private investigator. Coleman Luck, execu-



Peter Boyle: 'Three for the money'

utive producer on the project, served as executive producer and writer on *The Equalizer*. *Gabriel's Fire* has a pilot commitment from ABC. Included in the cast with Jones are Laila Robbins, Madge Sinclair and Charlie Walsh.

■ *The Danger Team*, a one-hour drama, features three clay figures that come to life to help a young, aspiring detective solve her cases. The project, which blends clay animation and live action, is produced by David Bleiman and Ken Pontac, who produced the *Gumby* children's series. The cast includes Kathleen Beller, Steve Levitt and Steve Gilborn.

■ *Maverick Square*, a one-camera, half-hour comedy, about "the unusual denizens of Boston's Maverick Square neighborhood and their pursuit of instant riches," is from first-time pilot writer Frank Renzulli and will be produced by Steve Miner, former director of *The Wonder Years*. *Maverick Square* has a pilot commitment from ABC.

■ A half-hour comedy pilot produced by Tom Miller and Bob Boyett, who anchor ABC's Friday night at 8-9:30 with *Full House*, *Family Matters* and *Perfect Strangers*. No other details were available about the project.

NBC

■ *The Sisters*, a one-hour drama, focuses on the relationships of four dissimilar, upper middle class sisters who are dealing with the recent death of their father. Ron Cowan and Dan Lipman, who serve as executive producers of the project, formerly wrote for the drama series *Family*, and also co-wrote the highly acclaimed made-for-television movie *An Early Frost*. No casting has been done.

■ *Three for the Money*, also a one-hour drama, is a spinoff of NBC's *Midnight Caller*, starring Peter Boyle, who portrayed Gary Cole's father in an episode of the series. Scott Valentine, who co-starred on NBC's *Family Ties*, co-stars in the project as Peter Boyle's son, as the father and son team up as bounty hunters who find missing people and valuables. Also starring is Cynthia Gibb. Robert Singer, currently the executive producer of *Midnight Caller*, serves as executive producer of this project.

■ *Just Friends*, a half-hour comedy, will be produced by Jeff Franklin, executive producer of ABC's *Full House*.

Fox

■ *D.E.A.*, described by Moonves as a "gritty, fictionalized version of Fox's *Cops*, is a 9 or 10 p.m. one-hour drama, and is created by Richard DiLello, who created *Midnight Caller*. The project revolves around an ensemble cast of young Drug Enforcement Administration agents, produced in cinema verite format. Salzman said the series will be shooting from locations around the world. Salzman also said he thought, if accepted, the show might fit into Fox's Friday night schedule. *D.E.A.* has a pilot commitment from Fox.

The World According to Straw is a half-hour comedy, "with *Married...With Children*-type of humor," said Salzman, who added that the project "might not work at the other networks." The project looks at how a rigid and uptight corporation is "turned upside down by unorthodox operations manager John Straw and his band of maintenance men." Jordan Moffet, who wrote *The Marshall Chronicles* (a midseason comedy series for ABC), and Edward Milkis, former producer of *Happy Days* and *Laverne and Shirley*, serve as executive producers of the project. —SC

King World scouts independents for production partners

COO Palley says company is looking to distribute programs to all markets; late night and reality offerings are among possible new projects

King World chief operating officer Stephen Palley said last week the company was talking with some major independent station groups (outside of the Fox network) about "collaborating" on the development of programs for the independent station market.