



Upfronts 2018: NBC to Launch 3 New Series This Fall, 9 Total

05.13.2018

Touting its position as the number-one broadcast network in primetime, NBC is taking a somewhat modest approach this fall that will carry into next season. Even though the network is premiering just three new series - dramas *Manifest* and *New Amsterdam*, and comedy *I Feel Bad*- this fall, the changes will impact each of the five weeknights with Saturday, which no network aggressively programs, and Sunday remaining intact.

Midseason will feature the arrivals of sitcom *Abby's*, new reality/competition *The Titan Games* from Dwayne Johnson, spin-off *America's Got Talent: Champions* and three additional new dramas - *The Enemy Within*, *The Village* and *The InBetween*.

Returning in midseason on NBC will be dramas *The Blacklist* and *Good Girls*, sitcoms *A.P. Bio* and *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*, which was a last minute pick up for 13 new episodes after Fox opted against a sixth season, and non-scripted *The Wall* and *Ellen's Game of Games*.

Additionally, *World of Dance* from Jennifer Lopez is a go for a third season in the summer of 2019. And the jury is still out on sophomore adventure drama *Timeless* and recently introduced *Champions*. Not returning on the network will

be sitcom Great News and dramas The Brave, Taken and The Night Shift.

In total, NBC will present nine new series in the 2018-19 TV season, with the breakdown five dramas, two sitcoms, and two reality/competitions.

"Once again, we are coming into the season from a place of strength and stability, which makes us bullish about a scheduling strategy that delivers top-notch original programming not just in the fall, but year round," said Robert Greenblatt, chairman, NBC Entertainment, in a prepared statement.

"We have a very strong fall schedule, as always, but winter, spring and summer are every bit as important to us, and this year we're putting our talent and our money where our mouth is. This schedule builds on the type of programming that makes NBC #1 year after year: bold, humanistic, compelling dramas; an unmatched collection of the highest-quality unscripted shows for the entire family; and one of the strongest comedy lineups on television that is unique to the legacy of the NBC brand."

The Reality

Assuming America's Got Talent holds up this summer, NBC is indeed expected to finish this season - both in the traditional September to May run as well as full season tallies - first in total viewers and adults 18-49.

But the network's average this season includes both Super Bowl LII and the 2018 Winter Olympics. Without those, CBS would have extended its winning streak in total viewers (and the Eye net, of course, will extract both sporting events from the averages and claim victory at its upfront presentation on Wednesday).

Mirroring last season, the strength of NBC's line-up falls on The Voice, Sunday Night Football, This Is Us and the Dick Wolf quartet of dramas (Chicago Fire, Chicago PD, Chicago Med and Law & Order: SVU).

Assuming The Voice remains a solid option - and there is no reason to expect much slippage based on this spring's still solid performance - Manifest in the Monday 10 p.m. ET hour could benefit.

Ditto for New Amsterdam at 10 p.m. out of This Is Us on Tuesday, which remained on the top of the charts in season two. Both have low benchmarks to compare to give the small turnouts for The Brave and Law & Order: True Crime: The Menendez Brothers last fall.

A night of the three Chicago-set dramas on Wednesday is the definition of compatible; there is every reason to expect another season of respectable - albeit older-skewing - deliveries. And Sunday Night Football should have no

trouble topping the primetime charts in fourth quarter.

NBC, additionally, will utilize granddaddy Law & Order: SVU (which heads into season 20, tying Gunsmoke and parent Law & Order as the longest running scripted drama in the history of television) to cap off Thursday.

And surprise returnee Midnight, Texas should at least hold whatever audience lead-in Blindspot offers on low-HUT level Friday. But the ongoing obstacle at NBC, and this is no small thing, is the lack of interest in its sitcom roster.

While the network was quick to re-up Will & Grace for two additional seasons, the reboot lost steam as the season progressed. Superstore is not capable of anchoring Thursday, which does not benefit critically acclaimed lead-out The Good Place. And a night of modest expected returns for this trio of sitcoms could inhibit newbie I Feel Bad.

Until NBC can find a new bona fide breakout hit sitcom - and introducing only two next season lowers its chances - its strength will remain on the aforementioned dramatic and sports vehicles. If any of those entries fall from grace, NBC could suffer noticeable losses. As it stands, however, the network is expected to remain a strong competitor in 2018-19, despite what looks like another weak comedy season. But without The Super Bowl and The Winter Olympics, CBS will still be the network to beat in total viewers.

Here is the NBC primetime line-up this fall (with new series in caps), followed by the new series descriptions.

Monday

8:00 p.m. The Voice (two hours)

10:00 p.m. MANIFEST

Tuesday

8:00 p.m. The Voice

9:00 p.m. This Is Us

10:00 p.m. NEW AMSTERDAM

Wednesday

8:00 p.m. Chicago Med (new day and time)

9:00 p.m. Chicago Fire (new day and time)

10:00 p.m. Chicago PD

Thursday

8:00 p.m. Superstore

8:30 p.m. The Good Place

9:00 p.m. Will & Grace

9:30 p.m. I FEEL BAD

10:00 p.m. Law & Order: SVU (new day)

Friday

8:00 p.m. Blindspot

9:00 p.m. Midnight, Texas (new day and time)

10:00 p.m. Dateline

Saturday

8:00 p.m. Dateline Saturday Night Mystery

10:00 p.m. SNL (encores)

Sunday

7:00 p.m. Football Night in America

8:20 p.m. Sunday Night Football

New Drama Series

THE ENEMY WITHIN

In this fast-paced, spy-hunting thriller, Erica Shepherd (Jennifer Carpenter) is a brilliant former CIA operative, now known as the most notorious traitor in American history serving life in a Supermax prison. Against every fiber of his

being but with nowhere else to turn, FBI Agent Will Keaton (Morris Chestnut) enlists Shepherd to help track down a fiercely dangerous and elusive criminal she knows all too well. For Keaton, it's not easy to trust the woman who cost him so much. While Shepherd and Keaton have different motivations for bringing the enemy to justice, they both know that to catch a spyâ€ they must think like one.

The cast includes Jennifer Carpenter, Morris Chestnut, Raza Jaffrey and Kelli Garner.

Ken Woodruff will write and executive produce. Mark Pellington will direct and executive produce the pilot. Vernon Sanders also executive produces. The Enemy Within is produced by Universal Television.

THE INBETWEEN

Cassie Bishop was born with a gift, though she may call it a curse. She can see and communicate with the dead, helping them with their unresolved problems â€ whether she likes it or not. When her longtime friend Det. Tom Hackett and his new partner, former FBI Agent Damien Asante, need help solving a darkly puzzling murder, Cassie agrees to use her abilities. Despite her reluctance, she may have found a way to keep her demons at bay, all while solving some of the city's most challenging cases. From writer/executive producer Moira Kirland ("Castle," "Madam Secretary") comes this suspenseful, new character-driven procedural drama.

The cast includes Harriet Dyer, Anne-Marie Johnson, Cindy Luna, Chad James Buchanan and Paul Blackthorne.

Moira Kirland will write and executive produce. Charlotte Sieling will direct and executive produce the pilot. David Heyman and Nancy Cotton also executive produce. The InBetween is produced by Universal Television, NBCU International Television Studio and Heyday Television.

MANIFEST

When Montego Air Flight 828 landed safely after a turbulent but routine flight, the crew and passengers were relieved. Yet in the span of those few hours, the world had aged five years and their friends, families and colleagues, after mourning their loss, had given up hope and moved on. Now, faced with the impossible, they're all given a second chance. But as their new realities become clear, a deeper mystery unfolds and some of the returned passengers soon realize they may be meant for something greater than they ever thought possible. From Robert Zemeckis and Jack Rapke comes an emotionally rich, unexpected journey into a world grounded in hope, heart and destiny.

The cast includes Melissa Roxburgh, Josh Dallas, Athena Karkanis, J.R. Ramirez, Luna Blaise, Jack Messina and Parveen Kaur.

Jeff Rake will write and executive produce. David Frankel will direct and executive produce the pilot. Robert Zemeckis and Jack Rapke also executive produce. Manifest is produced by Warner Bros. Television and Compari Entertainment.

NEW AMSTERDAM

Inspired by Bellevue, the oldest public hospital in America, this unique medical drama follows the brilliant and charming Dr. Max Goodwin, the institution's newest medical director who sets out to tear up the bureaucracy and provide exceptional care. How can he help? Well, the doctors and staff have heard this before. Not taking "no" for an answer, Dr. Goodwin must disrupt the status quo and prove he will stop at nothing to breathe new life into this understaffed, underfunded and underappreciated hospital - the only one in the world capable of treating Ebola patients, prisoners from Rikers and the President of the United States under one roof - and return it to the glory that put it on the map.

The cast includes Ryan Eggold, Freema Agyeman, Janet Montgomery, Jocko Sims, Anupam Kher and Tyler Labine.

David Schulner will write and executive produce. Kate Dennis will direct and executive produce the pilot. Peter Horton also executive produces. Dr. Eric Manheimer will produce. New Amsterdam is produced by Universal Television, Pico Creek Productions and Mount Moriah.

THE VILLAGE

Welcome to the Village, an apartment building in Brooklyn that appears like any other from the outside but is quite unique inside. The people who reside here

have built a bonded family of friends and neighbors. Sarah's a nurse and single mom raising a creative teen; Gabe's a young law student who got a much older and unexpected roommate; Ava must secure the future of her young, U.S.-born son when ICE comes knocking; Nick's a veteran who's returned from war; and the heart and soul of the building, Ron and Patricia, have captivating tales all their own. These are the hopeful, heartwarming and challenging stories of life that prove family is everything - even if it's the one you make with the people around you.

The cast includes Moran Atias, Dominic Chianese, Warren Christie, Frankie Faison, Jerod Haynes, Daren Kagasoff, Michaela McManus, Lorraine Toussaint and Grace Van Dien.

Mike Daniels will write and executive produce. Minkie Spiro will direct and executive produce the pilot. Jessica Rhoades also executive produces. The Village is produced by Universal Television and 6107 Productions.

NEW COMEDY SERIES

ABBY'S

From the producers of *The Good Place* comes an aspirational new comedy about the best bar in San Diego, home to good prices, great company and, of course, Abby.

This unlicensed, makeshift bar nestled in her backyard is the opposite of everything annoying about today's party scene. There are rules at Abby's: no cell phones (not even to "look something up"), earning a seat at the bar takes time and losing a challenge means drinking a limey, sugary "not-beer" drink. As the oddball cast of regulars will tell you, hanging out at Abby's is a coveted honor. But once you're in, you're family.

The cast includes Natalie Morales, Nelson Franklin, Kimia Behpoornia, Jessica Chaffin, Leonard Ouzts and Neil Flynn.

Josh Malmuth will write and executive produce. Pamela Fryman will direct and executive produce the pilot. Michael Schur and David Miner also executive produce. Abby's is produced by Universal Television, Fremulon and 3 Arts

Entertainment.

I FEEL BAD

Emet is the perfect mom, boss, wife, friend and daughter. Okay, she's not perfect. In fact, she's just figuring it out like the rest of us. Sure, she feels bad when she has a sexy dream about someone other than her husband, or when she pretends not to know her kids when they misbehave in public, or when she uses her staff to help solve personal problems. But that's OK, right? Nobody can have it all and do it perfectly. From executive producer Amy Poehler comes a modern comedy about being perfectly okay with being imperfect.

The cast includes Sarayu Blue, Paul Adelstein, Aisling Bea, Zach Cherry, Johnny Pemberton and James Buckley.

Aseem Batra will write and executive produce. Julie Anne Robinson will direct and executive produce the pilot. Amy Poehler, Dave Becky and Josh Maurer also executive produce. I Feel Bad is produced by Universal Television, Paper Kite Productions, CannyLads Productions and 3 Arts Entertainment.

NEW ALTERNATIVE SERIES

THE TITAN GAMES

Inspired by Dwayne Johnson's desire to motivate global audiences to reach their potential both mentally and physically, this inspiring new reality series offers everyday people the opportunity to step inside the Titan arena and achieve the impossible. Every episode, six contenders compete against one of six reigning Titans. They will be challenged in incredible, head-to-head battles designed to test the mind, body and heart of our competitors. Sheer brute strength won't be enough. If a contender rises to the occasion and defeats one of the Titans, they take their place and join the elite Titan group. But once one becomes a Titan, they must be victorious every week to keep their spot. In the epic season finale, Titans battle it out against one another in the hope of becoming the last male and female standing.

Dwayne Johnson, Arthur Smith, Dany Garcia, Hiram Garcia, Brian Gewirtz and Toby Gorman executive produce. The Titan Games is produced by Universal Television Alternative Studio, A. Smith & Co. Productions and Seven Bucks Productions.

AMERICA'S GOT TALENT: CHAMPIONS

NBC, Syco Entertainment, FremantleMedia North America and executive producer Simon Cowell have announced that the most talented and memorable acts in series history will compete with one another when America's Got Talent: The Champions airs next winter. Cowell will return as one of the judges.