



## NBC Gives 'This Is Us' Three-Season Renewal Ahead of Upfronts

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NBC is coming off its sixth straight season as the top-rated network among primetime's key demographic of adults 18-49, even though it's seen its overall ratings decline in the demo by more than 25 percent. Some of that is due to the lack of a Super Bowl or Winter Olympics, however.

As it works to maintain its dominance, NBC's clear on at least one thing: It's keeping *This Is Us* on the air for as long as it can. After renewing the tear-jerking drama after season one for two more seasons, the network has now renewed the family drama for three more seasons, taking it through the 2021-22 TV season and the likely planned end of the series as executive producer Isaac Aptaker has said the show could wrap up after season six.

"In a television landscape with nearly 500 original scripted series, there are very few, if any, that have the critical and cultural impact of *This Is Us* and we couldn't be more proud to bring fans three more seasons of a show that so well represents the NBC brand," said Lisa Katz and Tracey Pakosta, presidents of scripted programming for NBC Entertainment, in a statement. "A huge thank you and congratulations to our executive producers, cast and crew who reach new heights every week with the show's inventive and compelling storytelling."

Moreover, show creator Dan Fogelman also signed a five-year deal with Disney-owned Twentieth Century Fox Television said to be worth \$125 million.

This Is Us tells the story of the Pearson family - Jack (Milo Ventimiglia), Rebecca (Mandy Moore), their three grown children Kevin (Justin Hartley), Kate (Chrissy Metz) and Randall (Sterling K. Brown), and their growing families. This Is Us is executive produced by Fogelman, Aptaker, Elizabeth Berger, John Requa, Glenn Ficarra, Ken Olin, Charlie Gogolak and Jess Rosenthal, It is produced by Disney's 20th Century Fox Television.

That move was made as part of a raft of pick-ups and cancellations ahead of the Comcast-owned broadcast network's upfront presentation at Radio City Music Hall on Monday. Several of the network's new shows lean into themes that have been prevalent on the national stage lately, including civil rights and immigration.

Also announced was the news that Melissa McCarthy is replacing Steve Harvey as the host of the show Harvey co-created with Ellen DeGeneres, Little Big Shots. Little Big Shots returns to NBC in early 2020.

Other unscripted shows that are returning to NBC's slate next season include America's Got Talent, American Ninja Warrior, Ellen's Game of Games, Hollywood Game Night, Making It with Amy Poehler and Nick Offerman, The Voice, The Wall and World of Dance.

On the scripted side, besides This Is Us, coming back are Will & Grace and this season's break-out hit, Manifest, although not until mid-season. New Amsterdam also is returning for season two and was the first show NBC gave a second-season renewal to this year.

All of the network's Chicago franchise - Chicago Fire, Chicago PD and Chicago Med-will return on Wednesday nights. James Spader-starrer Blacklist is returning for its seventh and likely final season, while Blindspot is coming back for its fifth and final season.

Rounding out NBC's procedural slate, Law & Order: SVU will be back for its historic 21st season, making it officially broadcast TV's longest-running drama, beating both its parent, Law & Order and Gunsmoke.

Mike Schur's Brooklyn Nine-Nine, which NBC picked up after Fox canceled it, will remain on Sunday nights. Good Girls-starring Mad Men's Christina Hendricks, Parks and Rec's Retta and Parenthood's Mae Whitman-also was renewed earlier and will return this season on Sunday nights.

The network picked up four dramas and four comedies. Trailers, where available, and loglines for each follow.

## Bluff City Law

TV veteran Jimmy Smits stars in this new legal drama that follows elite Memphis law firm Strait and Associates that specializes in civil-rights cases. Smits plays the legendary lawyer who heads up the firm; Caitlin McGee is the daughter that is following in his footsteps.

Bluff City Law comes from writer Dean Georgaris-who also has new series The Baker and The Beauty at ABC-and David Janollari Entertainment.

The series is expected to air Mondays at 10 p.m.

## Council of Dads

This drama tells the story of Scott (Tom Everett Scott), a father of four who is diagnosed with cancer. To get through the crisis and try to avoid leaving his family in the lurch, he assembles a team to support his family at every stage.

That team includes his best friend Anthony (Clive Standen), his AA sponsor Larry (Michael O'Neil) and surgeon Oliver (J. August Richards), who's also the best friend of his wife (Sarah Wayne Callies).

Council of Dads is based on a memoir by Bruce Feller and is slated for midseason.

## Lincoln

Russell Hornsby stars as Lincoln Rhyme, a criminologist seriously injured in his hunt for a serial killer. Lincoln is based on Jeffrey Deaver's best-selling Bone Collector series of books (which also was turned into a 1999 movie starring Denzel Washington and Angelina Jolie). Arielle Kebbel plays a young beat cop who helps him.

Justified's VJ Boyd and Mark Bianculli co-wrote the pilot.

Lincoln is slated for midseason.

## Perfect Harmony

Another show starring a TV (and West Wing) vet, Perfect Harmony stars and is executive produced by Bradley Whitford as a former Princeton music professor who wanders into choir practice at a small-town church and suddenly finds himself much more involved with the group than he ever planned. The series also stars Anna Camp (Pitch Perfect, True Blood).

The comedy is created by Speechless' Lesley Lake Webster while Jason Winer also executive produces and directed the pilot.

Perfect Harmony is scheduled to air Thursdays at 8:30 p.m.

#### Sunnyside

Yet another single-camera comedy from Mike Schur - co-creator and executive producer of such series as The Office, Parks and Rec, The Good Place and Brooklyn Nine Nine. This one stars Kal Penn as Garrett Shah, a former New York City councilman who finds his calling when he meets immigrants in need of his help.

Parks and Rec's Matt Murray co-wrote the script alongside Penn. The show comes from Universal TV, Schur's Fremulon and 3 Arts Entertainment.

Sunnyside will close out NBC's Thursday night comedy block at 9:30 p.m., airing right after The Good Place at 9 p.m.

#### Indebted

Also planned for mid-season, Indebted is NBC's lone multi-cam comedy (think The Big Bang Theory or Friends). It stars Adam Pally and Abby Elliot as parents ready to reclaim their lives now that their kids are finally growing up and gaining some independence - until his parents (Fran Drescher and Steve Weber) show up broke at their door.

The Goldbergs' Dan Levy created and executive produces the series with Sony-based Doug Robinson.

#### The Kenan Show

This one is also for midseason and stars Saturday Night Live's Kenan Thompson, who plans to remain on SNL for now, as a husband, father of two adorable girls and a father-in-law (Andy Garcia) who is there to help in all the least helpful ways.

The Kenan Show comes from Lorne Michaels and his Universal TV-based Broadway Video. Superstore's Jackie Clarke created the show.

#### Zoey's Extraordinary Playlist

Finally, Paul Feig and Austin Winsberg are producing this musical drama slated for Sundays at 9 p.m. in early 2020.

Jane Levy (Castle Rock) stars as a quick-witted Silicon Valley coder who starts to hear people's innermost wants and desires expressed through songs. After spending some time questioning her sanity, she starts to think the unwanted

curse might be an unexpected gift.

The series also stars Skylar Astin, Peter Gallagher, Alex Newell, John Clarence Stewart, Carmen Cusack and Mary Steenburgen.