

The DAILY NEWS
tvspotlight

Your Weekly Guide to TV Entertainment

• For the week of October 14 - 20, 2017 •

Jamie Foxx and Jay Pharoah as seen in "White Famous"



Making it

"Saturday Night Live" alum Jay Pharoah headlines "White Famous," a new comedy that draws loosely on the real-life experiences of megastar Jamie Foxx ("Django Unchained," 2012), who appears as himself in a recurring role. The series follows an up-and-coming black comedian trying to make it big in Hollywood without losing himself along the way. Catch the premiere of "White Famous" when it airs Sunday, Oct. 15, on Showtime.



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Road to stardom

Jay Pharoah headlines new Showtime comedy 'White Famous'

By **Jacqueline Spendlove**
TV Media

When Jay Pharoah said goodbye to his "Saturday Night Live" spot last year, fans were quick to voice their shock and disappointment. The rapper, standup comedian and impressionist extraordinaire had become a well-loved cog in the "SNL" machine during his six-year tenure, and his abrupt departure came as an unpleasant surprise to many.

Nobody stays on "SNL" forever, though, and for Pharoah, as for so many others before him, the long-running sketch show was simply a stepping stone to bigger things — assuming, that is, his latest venture takes off. "White Famous" is a new comedy coming to Showtime, and stars Pharoah in a role that draws loosely on the pre-fame life of megastar Jamie Foxx ("Django Unchained," 2012), who's an executive producer for the series. The show premieres Sunday, Oct. 15.

According to Showtime, "White Famous" is "a new comedy about trying to make it without losing your soul." Pharoah plays Floyd

Mooney, an up-and-coming black comedian trying to maintain his integrity — and his sanity — as he crosses the divide into achieving big-time fame. The series follows Floyd as he navigates that road to the next level of Hollywood success, without losing himself along the way.

"You always root for Floyd. It feels like he can be himself and still make a way, somehow," Pharoah said of his character in a promo video for the show.

The series also stars Utkarsh Ambudkar ("Pitch Perfect," 2012) as Malcolm, Floyd's agent who wants him to do whatever it takes to achieve stardom, and Jacob Ming-Trent ("Feed the Beast") as Ron Balls, Floyd's voice-of-reason roommate. Cleopatra Coleman ("The Last Man on Earth") plays Sadie, Floyd's ex-girlfriend and baby mama to his young son, Trevor (Lornie Chavis, "This Is Us").

Stephen Tobolowsky ("Silicon Valley") guest stars in the pilot, reprising his

"Californication" role as movie producer Stu Beggs. Tom Kapinos, "Californication's" creator, also created — you guessed it — "White Famous," and Stu isn't the only character who crosses over this season: Keep an eye out for Meagan Good ("Think Like a Man," 2012) and Natalie Zea ("Justified"), both of whom appear as their "Californication" characters. Michael Rapaport ("The War at Home"), Jack Davenport ("Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl," 2003) and Kendrick Sampson ("How to Get Away with Murder") are all slated to appear in the 10-episode freshman season as well.

Much of the show's material comes from real experiences that Foxx — now an Emmy-, Golden Globe- and Grammy-winning A-list star — had as his star was still rising. "I came up from standup comedy, so to be able to share that aspect of my life on screen with a project like 'White Famous' is incredibly exciting," the actor said in a statement.

Besides his work behind the scenes, Foxx plays himself in a recurring role in the series. In the pilot, he has what turns out to be an awkward meeting with Floyd at the urging of Beggs, and Floyd is nonplussed to find that the actor is wearing what appears to be a cheerleader skirt.

While it's Foxx's past that lays the groundwork for the series, the material is not such a far cry from Pharoah's own experiences as well. Like his character, Pharoah doesn't feel that making it big in the entertainment industry means that an actor has to sacrifice the person he is, or bow to the whim of every Hollywood bigwig. It's an issue he had during his "SNL" tenure, however much he respects and appreciates the show and its creator, Lorne Michaels.

"They put people in boxes and whatever they want you to do, they expect you to do," he explained in a radio interview with Hot97 after his departure from "SNL." "And I'm fiery. I'm not a yes [man]."

Whatever bits he may have refused to participate in, Pharoah was a memorable presence in the "SNL" cast from the time that he first joined the show in 2010. His impressions are truly uncanny, and he quickly became known for his near-flawless portrayals of black celebrities and politicians, including Jay-Z, Ben Carson, Denzel Washington and Barack Obama. While viewers loved the bits, Pharoah felt he was being underutilized.

Safe to say that will hardly be the case in "White Famous," which is the network's second recent series about standup comedians. The dramedy "I'm Dying Up Here," produced by Jim Carrey ("The Truman Show," 1998), aired its first season over the summer, and follows a group of young comedians trying to find success in Los Angeles in the early 1970s. The series features Melissa Leo ("The Fighter," 2010), Clark Duke ("Hot Tub Time Machine," 2010), Ari Graynor ("Bad Teacher") and others, and has been renewed for a second season.

While landing a spot on the cast of "Saturday Night Live" was no doubt one of the highest points of Pharoah's career so far, leaving it may just prove to be even better for him. With a hot new comedy to headline on his own terms, the funnyman is going nowhere but up. Catch the premiere of "White Famous" when it airs Sunday, Oct. 15, on Showtime.

Jacob Ming-Trent in "White Famous"

Video releases

Spider-Man: Homecoming

High school student Peter Parker (Holland) has a secret: He's the crime-fighting Spider-Man with an awesome suit made for him by Iron Man himself, Tony Stark (Downey Jr.). Despite Stark's protests that he's too young to be a member of the world-protecting Avengers, Parker is determined to use his superpowers to protect the city from the villainous Vulture (Keaton), while also keeping up with his school's academic decathlon team, hanging out with his best friend Ned (Batalon), and keeping his vigilantism a secret from his Aunt May (Tomei). Without the experience that the older superheroes have, though, Spider-Man's crime-fighting antics are as likely to get him into sticky situations as they are to stop the bad guys.

Director: Jon Watts. Cast: Tom Holland, Michael Keaton, Robert Downey Jr., Marisa Tomei, Jacob Batalon, Jon Favreau, Zendaya, Donald Glover. 2017. 133 min. Action.

Girls Trip

With dreams of rekindling their friendship and sisterhood, four

lifelong friends — Ryan (Hall), Sasha (Latifah), Lisa (Pinkett Smith) and Dina (Haddish) — plan a girl's weekend to the Essence Music Festival in New Orleans. In a trip filled with wild parties, bad decisions and crazy hook-ups, the four friends reforge their lifelong bonds with each other and get crazy enough to make even the Big Easy blush.

Director: Malcolm D. Lee. Stars: Regina Hall, Queen Latifah, Jada Pinkett Smith, Tiffany Haddish, Larenz Tate, Mike Colter. 2017. 122 min. Comedy.

Lady Macbeth

Locked in a loveless marriage with an older husband (Hilton), Katherine (Pugh) is unhappy with her situation, and is sometimes scolded by her husband's elderly father, Boris (Fairbank), for not bearing him a son. While both men are away from their manor on a business trip, Katherine begins an affair with a handsome young laborer (Jarvis). When her father-in-law returns home, he discovers their secret romance and threatens them both, leading Katherine to murder him in cold blood, and setting her down a dark path to maintain both her romance and her position within the family.

Director: William Oldroyd. Stars: Florence Pugh, Cosmo Jarvis, Paul Hilton, Naomi Ackie, Christopher Fairbank. 2016. 89 min. Drama.



Tom Holland in a scene from "Spider-Man: Homecoming"



Cooking this week

SATURDAY

6:00 p.m. FOOD (40) Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives This trip, Guy is filling up on soup.

6:30 p.m. FOOD (40) Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives In San Francisco, a Triple-G competitor.

7:00 p.m. FOOD (40) Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives

7:30 p.m. FOOD (40) Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives Guy Fieri visits familiar faces and their new places.

SUNDAY

6:00 p.m. TRAV (67) Food Paradise We feature comfort food like mama used to make.

7:00 p.m. FOOD (40) Guy's Grocery Games

TRAV (67) Food Paradise Diner menus across the country have been upgraded.

8:00 p.m. FOOD (40) Guy's Grocery Games Four chefs who like some heat fight to be spice master.

TRAV (67) Food Paradise

MONDAY

7:00 p.m. WGBX (16) The Great British Baking Show The bakers face Paul's most twisted challenge yet.

TRAV (67) Bizarre Foods Andrew enjoys giant offal kebabs in Croatia.

8:00 p.m. FOOD (40) The Halloween Baking Championships The bakers create left brain/ right brain desserts.

TRAV (67) Bizarre Foods: Delicious Destinations Andrew explores the cuisine of Brussels, Belgium.

TUESDAY

7:00 p.m. WGBX (16) The Great British Baking Show The bakers bring old-fashioned suet pudding up to date.

FOOD (40) Chopped

TRAV (67) Bizarre Foods America The food in Austin can get a little weird and funky.

8:00 p.m. FOOD (40) Chopped Junior The heat is on in this spicy competition.

TRAV (67) Bizarre Foods: Delicious Destinations Andrew explores the scorching dishes of Chengdu.

WEDNESDAY

7:00 p.m. WGBX (16) The Great British Baking Show The five remaining bakers work with unusual desserts.

8:00 p.m. FOOD (40) The Halloween Baking Championships The bakers make a dessert inspired by Day of the Dead.

THURSDAY

7:00 p.m. WGBX (16) The Great British Baking Show Three French bakes stand between four semi-finalists.

FOOD (40) Chopped The baskets are packed with healthy ingredients.

8:00 p.m. FOOD (40) Chopped Chefs plan dishes using premade dough and florals.

FRIDAY

6:30 p.m. FOOD (40) Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives Guy gets into some righteous barbecue in Dallas.

7:00 p.m. WGBX (16) The Great British Baking Show Which of the finalists will emerge as Britain's best.

FOOD (40) Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives Guy's visits some families keeping it real.

7:30 p.m. FOOD (40) Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives Guy's gets a taste of New York.

8:00 p.m. FOOD (40) Ginormous Food Josh Denny searches for the hugest Halloween meals.

Newburyport Daily News, MA: Food Oct 14, 2017 to Oct 20, 2017

taste tv

'MasterChef Canada' gives a hit show distinct flair

By Andrew Warren
TV Media

Been watching the latest season of "MasterChef?" Don't worry — new episodes of the Gordon Ramsay-headlined hit cooking show haven't snuck onto TV screens while you weren't looking, but its more northerly sibling might have crept in under the radar.

This past spring's season of "MasterChef Canada" premiered south of the Canada-U.S. border with back-to-back episodes last week and continues to air Tuesdays on Cooking Channel. As with previous seasons of the Canadian version of the hit series, Cooking Channel is broadcasting the show a few months after it wrapped up in its home country, with a new episode airing Tuesday, Oct. 17.

But what's different about the Canadian version of "MasterChef?" Well, not much — but also a lot. The basic trappings are all the same: A group of talented home cooks with dreams of careers in the culinary world take part in a series of challenges un-



Michael Bonacini, Alvin Leung and Claudio Aprile in "MasterChef Canada"

der the watchful gaze of three knowledgeable judges — chefs Claudio Aprile, Michael Bonacini and Alvin Leung in this version. Week after week, the weakest performer is eliminated, until the sole remaining home cook wins the "MasterChef" title and a nice heap of cash. Like its American parent, "MasterChef Canada" has team, mystery box, elimination and pressure test challenges, and the kitchen itself even has a very similar look and feel.

The big difference, though, is in the tone. Ramsay has a notoriously bad temper, and while he definitely tones it down for "MasterChef" — these are amateurs, after all, not trained chefs — the threat of one of his outbursts always looms. True to stereotype, the Canadian judges are just so much nicer, with their criticisms always accompanied by advice.

Of course, the show also has a healthy dose of Canadian culture. In this week's episode, the season's

first team challenge celebrates Canada's 150th birthday by challenging the home cooks to prepare a meal for 150 new Canadians who have just had their citizenship ceremony — what a way to say "welcome home!"

And that's really "MasterChef Canada" in a nutshell: It's "MasterChef," but with some softer edges and a slightly different coat of paint. The fourth season of the northern hit airs Tuesdays on Cooking Channel.



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- Milo
 27 Marge's father-in-law in "The Simpsons"
 28 "To ___ is human ..."
 29 Iranian currency units
 32 Swashbuckling Flynn
 34 Plush fabric
 36 Santa ____, Calif.
 37 Upcoming film that's the late Carrie Fisher's final role
 42 Order acknowledgement, in the navy

- 44 Hit the jackpot
 45 Horse coloring
 46 The light or dark in 37 Across
 47 Jackie's "O"
 48 Sitcom starring Anna Faris and Allison Janney
 49 Snick-or-___
 50 Tennis court divider

DOWN

- 1 Cultivate
 2 Rolling in dough
 3 Indian flatbread
 4 Proposals
 5 Toronto Maple ___
 6 Ten: Prefix
 7 Swelling
 8 Nasal-voiced actress Fran of "The Nanny"
 9 "V for Vendetta" (2005) star Stephen ___

- 10 Religious sch.
 13 Bridge support
 16 Oscar-nominated film "Volver" (2006) star Yohana ___
 18 "For shame!"
 21 Designed for flight
 22 Loose, crumbly soil
 23 Sportscaster Albert
 24 "___ Baby" ("Hair" song)
 25 New CBS drama starring David Boreanaz
 30 "Mean Girls" (2004) star Lindsay ___
 31 Chop ___
 32 Second ingredient basket in "Chopped"
 33 British rule in India
 35 Like May through August
 36 "All kidding ___"
 38 Z ___ zebra
 39 McGregor of "Trainspotting" (1996)
 40 Scale start
 41 Former game show hosted by Guy Fieri and Apolo Ohno "___ to win it"
 42 Elbow's site
 43 "___-hoo!"

Solution on page 7

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