Spirit of Paul Henderson portrayed in comedy-drama

Bob Spence
Entertainment
Thomson News Service

The working title for the first program in a new Atlantis Films Limited anthology series for CBC-TV is so distinctively Canadian, it drips maple syrup.

Pray For Me Paul Henderson is a one-hour comedy/drama set in 1972, when Henderson and the rest of Team Canada proved to the Russians that Canadians could still play hockey.

The plot centres around four Toronto high school students who surprise everyone by their success in the CBC's Reach For The Top quiz show.

The spirit of Paul Henderson becomes a guiding force for the quartet's captain, Cameron Alexander. Alexander is one of three teammates who do not fit in with the "in" crowd. Another, Russell Johns, is a black student who feels rejected because he is from the "wrong" island - Cape Breton, that is.

Torquil Campbell, Yannick Bisson, Samantha Follows and Richard Chevolleau portray the students. Jan Tennant portrays herself. She was the host of the original Reach For The Top series.

Pray For Me Paul Henderson (we hope they keep the working title) is tentatively scheduled to be broadcast Nov. 5 by CBC.

Denise Huxtable has a surprise for her family on the sixth-season premiere of The Cosby Show (CTV, Sept. 21).

When audiences last saw Denise, she was off to Africa as a photographer's assistant. The prodigal daughter returns unannounced, with a new husband and a three-year-old step-daughter in tow.

To mark the 25th anniversary of the multi-award-winning Broadway musical Hello Dolly!, RCA Victor has reissued the soundtrack on cassettes and compact disks. The cast members featured on the soundtrack include Carol Channing and David Burns.

Sunday night is family night on C B C - T V. The taxpayers' network is offering a weekly one-hour program that showcases some of Canada's top talent - at a time when children are still up.

Family Hour, 7 to 8 p.m., will be launched Sept. 24 with a Canadian video that has been on Billboard Magazine's Video Chart for more than 40 weeks: Raffi in Concert with the Rise and Shine Band.

Also slated for Family Hour are Anne Murray's Greatest Hits, Volume II (her Christmas show drew the largest audience of any CBC program last year, 4.3-million Canadians); Brian Orser Skating Free; The Irish Rovers Silver Anniversary and K.D. Lang's Buffalo Cafe. This is Lang's first TV special. The energetic young Alberta singer, who desperately needs a new hairdresser, just won the Entertainer of the Year award at the Canadian Country Music Awards.

Crimes of the Heart, a bittersweet comedy by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Beth Henley, airs Sept. 23 on CTV.

This is the story of the hapless Magrath sisters (played by Diane Keaton, Jessica Lange and Sissy Spacek), three eccentric women learning to come to terms with an unusual and troubled childhood. Their father abandoned them and their mother committed suicide.

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