

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**EPIX STARS SIR BEN KINGSLEY AND JACK BANNON TALK ALLURE OF TELEVISION IN JUNE *EMMY*[®] MAGAZINE**

(NoHo Arts District, Calif. — June 11, 2019) — As the EPIX cable network poises to launch a slate of new scripted dramas, which it has dubbed “cinematic television” for a discriminating television audience, *emmy* sits down with Sir Ben Kingsley and newcomer, Jack Bannon, each of whom is starring in a new EPIX series. The two actors provided insight into episodic television’s appeal not just for talent at the beginning of a career build but for proven, multifaceted performers who are selective and strategic in their career choices.

The award-winning official publication of the Television Academy hits newsstands June 7.

EPIX has evolved from 20 hours of fresh programming in 2016 to more than 100 hours in 2019, which has opened the door for great storytellers and a host of new opportunities for actors.

When newcomer Jack Bannon auditioned for EPIX’s new series, *Pennyworth*, premiering July 28, he was ready to give up on acting. In *emmy*’s cover story “**Knight Moves**,” he describes the disheartening months that he endured without a single call back. “I figured I might as well learn the lines and do it,” said Bannon. “You have to keep plugging away and knocking on doors and eventually, hopefully, something will work.”

His tenacity paid off and Bannon scored the title role in *Pennyworth*, the latest program from *Gotham* creators Bruno Heller and Danny Cannon. Although it explores the early years of Alfred Pennyworth, long before he became the trusted butler of Bruce Wayne, aka Batman, *Pennyworth* “is not a superhero show, it’s a character-driven drama and very stylized, and we’re all excited by it,” said Bannon. EPIX President Michael Wright agrees, describing it as “...something wholly distinctive and instinctive.”

As Bannon makes waves as a rising television star, veteran actor Sir Ben Kingsley is making his first foray into episodic American television with EPIX’s *Perpetual Grace, LTD*. Kingsley hadn’t auditioned for a role in nearly 40 years, but the Oscar winner for *Gandhi* was intrigued by the plot for the show, about a seemingly kind-natured pastor who is actually a violent con man. “There would be delightful blank spaces that the audience has to fill in for themselves rather than be over-explained,” said Kingsley. “It’s a wonderful way to reintroduce myself because television is a future with present authority, and the range that it offers is absolutely beautiful.”

Wright is aware that casting an actor like Kingsley is a big win for the network. "The audience will see that if actors of his [Kingsley] caliber are doing this project, wow, this must be good," said Wright. "They know that [certain] actors are only drawn to superior material. One show can change the game."

With great talent signed on to the new EPIX series, Wright is committed to greenlighting a solid slate of curated programs that will resonate with audiences. "When a show pops, it's a reminder that even in this increasingly disjointed, disconnected and tribalized world, television is great."

Additional feature highlights from the new issue include:

- HBO's ***Succession*** was born from writer Jesse Armstrong's deep interest in dynastic monarchies. In "**Crown and Country**," *emmy* talks to the performers who play the four adult children of a powerful media mogul about how improvisation was an important part of the show's drama and comedic relief.
- In "**Grief and Gratitude**," *emmy* speaks with writer Kit Steinkellner, creator of Facebook Watch's *Sorry for Your Loss*, about her emotional inspiration and the show's ability to connect with viewers through its portrayal of grief and loss.
- With growing competition from Netflix and Hulu, Comedy Central has faced its fair share of challenges. In "**Bespoke Spoken Here**," *emmy* delves into recent tactical changes at the network and a production climate ripe for new ideas.

About *emmy*

Emmy, the official publication of the Television Academy, goes behind the scenes of the industry for a unique insider's view. It showcases the scope of television and profiles the people who make TV happen, from the stars of top shows to the pros behind the cameras, covering programming trends and advances in technology. Honored consistently for excellence, *emmy* is a six-time Maggie Award winner as Best Trade Publication in Communications or the Arts and has collected more than 50 Maggies from the Western Publishing Association. *Emmy* is available on selected newsstands and at TelevisionAcademy.com for single print and digital copies as well as subscriptions.

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