

coverstory

BY JAY BOBBIN

The CW's superheroes unite in the crossover saga "Crisis on Infinite Earths," which starts Sunday on "Supergirl."



The CW's superheroes unite again to face a 'Crisis'

The CW's annual superhero-show crossover events always gather familiar faces, but this year's includes some blasts from the past.

Past incarnations of Clark Kent and/or Superman – those played by Tom Welling on the series "Smallville" and Brandon Routh (more recently The Atom on "DC's Legends of Tomorrow") in the 2006 movie "Superman Returns" – appear in "Crisis on Infinite Earths," an adaptation of a DC Comics series that starts on "Supergirl" Sunday, Dec. 8, then continues that week on "Batwoman" (Monday) and "The Flash" (Tuesday). The saga concludes Tuesday, Jan. 14, with episodes of "Arrow" and "DC's Legends of Tomorrow."

Advancing elements of last year's crossover, "Elseworlds," the story keeps alternate universes integral to the plot ... also indicated by corresponding Lois Lanes for the multiple Supermen. Elizabeth Tulloch returns as The Daily Planet's ace reporter to "Supergirl" guest Tyler Hoechlin's Man of Steel, and Erica Durance comes back as Lois to Welling's Clark Kent.

The crossover gave Routh a sense of completion to the Superman chapter of his career. "After finishing that film, I thought I would be doing at least one more, so saying goodbye to the character had not been something that was in my mind," the pleasant actor reflects. "That has caused some emotional ups and downs for me since then, so this process has been really healing for me. And also, I think it will be

validating for some fans. So many people come up to me and say, 'I don't care what anybody says. I love "Superman Returns"!'"

Though Durance also has been a "Supergirl" guest star, she hasn't played Lois since "Smallville" ended in 2011. She says it was "awesome" to reunite with Welling, reasoning that "it's like seeing family again. We worked really well together, and we hadn't seen each other for a long time, but it was like we hadn't missed a beat.

"Now we're parents and we've got little kids," adds Durance, "and we talked about how neither of us sleeps very much anymore. And Lois Lane is a great character."

Among others back in their DC guises for "Crisis on Infinite Earths," Ashley Scott again takes on her "Birds of Prey" role as Helena Kyle (alias The Huntress), and Johnathon Schaech continues his "Legends of Tomorrow" portrayal of Jonah Hex. Also, Cress Williams brings his Black Lightning character from his own CW show into the supersized superhero fest.

Durance confirms that being amid a plethora of costumed heroes and heroines was something special. "There were so many of us, we didn't all necessarily get to connect," she reports, "but it's neat to see how they've pulled it all together and created these shows that the fans enjoy."

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