

Last 'Arrow'

Series kicks off 10-episode swan song

By Michelle Rose
TV Media

Last 'Arrow': Goodbye, Oliver Queen? Maybe. At least, it could be on *this* Earth.

On Tuesday, Oct. 15, "Arrow" debuts its eighth and final season on CW. The DC Comics series that launched the Arrowverse will have an abbreviated run of just 10 episodes to bid farewell. But in that short run, anything and everything is possible.

Last season's "Elseworlds" crossover event opened the door for CW to explore the idea that every DC Comics TV show ever made might have been set on parallel Earths within the Arrowverse.

The collapse of that multiverse was one of the biggest comic book arcs of all time, with Earth-shattering events that resulted in the deaths of classic DC characters. On TV, "Crisis on Infinite Earths" is the mega crossover the Arrowverse has been building towards. And that's why we're hearing about former DC Universe stars, such as Tom Welling ("Smallville") and Brandon Routh ("Superman Returns," 2006), suiting up again this season, although we don't know exactly when or where they'll appear just yet.

As for the Arrowverse's original hero, "Arrow's" Oliver Queen (Stephen Amell, "Private Practice") will likely be a "Crisis" casualty, but not before some return appearances from fan favorites such as Thea Queen (Willa Holland, "Legion," 2010) and Katana (Rila Fukushima, "The Wolverine," 2013).

The Oct. 15 season opener picks up one week after the events of the Season 7 finale, when The Monitor (LaMonica Garrett, "Designated Survivor") asked Queen to make good on his deal to help "prevent the inevitable." It wouldn't make sense for CW to kill off Supergirl and The Flash, the leads on two other popular series, to match the events in the comics. However, Queen sacrificing himself to save them does make sense, and end-



Stephen Amell stars in "Arrow"

ing "Arrow" now will free up space in CW's lineup for a new Arrowverse series in 2020.

Whatever happens to Ollie in these next 10 episodes, fans can take solace in knowing the series' TV legacy seems secure. After all, it single-handedly breathed new life into DC Comics (and CW) in the post-"Smallville" TV era.

As for the five-part "Crisis on Infinite Earths" TV event, it will begin on the Dec. 8 episode of "Supergirl" and continue on "Batwoman" and "The Flash" that week before impacting "Arrow" and "DC's Legends of Tomorrow" in January 2020. "Black Lightning" characters will also appear in the crossover event.

Big 'Bang' Reunion: Amy and Sheldon ... sorry, Mayim Bialik and Jim Parsons are headed to Fox.

The "Big Bang Theory" co-stars are reteaming to bring you "Carla," a new comedy series that is touted as "an unapologetically big, broad multi-cam with a strong female point of view" (per Fox Entertainment president Michael Thorn).

Bialik will play the titular character, a 39-year-old woman who is constantly struggling to show her mother that you can still be happy in life without having everything you want. And Carla hopes to prove it by opening a cat café in Louisville, Kentucky, using the money her parents had set aside for her wedding.

The comedy is based on the hit BBC sitcom "Miranda," which ran from 2009 to 2013 and earned BAFTA TV nominations.

And while this TV project is a reunion of sorts for the former on-screen couple, only Bialik will appear before the camera. Instead,

Parsons, who is the narrator in the CBS series "Young Sheldon," will serve as co-executive producer.

Both are under overall development deals with Warner Bros. TV, the studio behind "The Big Bang Theory." And it's interesting to note that the series is a co-production between WBTV and Fox Entertainment; partial ownership is a must for Fox since it no longer has an in-house studio after the Disney deal.

"Carla" is currently slated for fall 2020 but it's already a winner — at least for the team behind it. All broadcast networks were bidding on it, but Fox went all in, and the series pickup came with a hefty commitment penalty.

Seacrest In: When "American Idol" starts up again in 2020, the only new faces will

likely be the hopefuls auditioning for a spot in the competition.

In August, ABC announced that Katy Perry, Lionel Richie and Luke Bryan would be returning as judges while Bobby Bones will reprise his role as in-house mentor. But at the time, there was no mention of Ryan Seacrest in the news release. And naturally, some began to wonder if the longtime host was thinking of leaving — especially after his first "Idol" sick day back in April, when Bones filled in as host.

Despite rumors of cost-cutting measures, ABC/Disney sources were quick to say Seacrest wasn't out for the next cycle, they were still negotiating his involvement. Well, a deal has now been inked and the last piece of the puzzle has fallen into place: Seacrest will be back again as host.

It's hard to imagine "American Idol" without Seacrest, who

has been a constant on the show since it debuted in 2002. He shared hosting duties with comedian Brian Dunkleman for Season 1 — the one that launched Kelly Clarkson's career — but he's been the sole emcee ever since.

This upcoming 18th edition will be "Idol's" third season on ABC (you'll recall seasons 1 through 15 aired on Fox). That means more frequent flyer miles for Seacrest, but he's already used to splitting his time between Los Angeles and New York. After all, the busiest guy on TV and in radio still has his iHeartMedia morning radio show, the daytime TV show "Live With Kelly and Ryan," the weekly "American Top 40" radio program, plus a host (pun intended) of ABC specials and scripted projects to produce through his Ryan Seacrest Productions company.