

## Bravo Renews 'The Real Housewives of Potomac' for Season 2

**B**ravo has renewed "The Real Housewives of Potomac" for season two, the cable net announced on Thursday. One of the new installments of the long-running "Real Housewives" franchise, "Potomac" has been a big success for Bravo, ranking as the second most popular version of the "Housewives," just behind "Atlanta." Just this week, Bravo also debuted "The Real Housewives of Dallas."

"Potomac's" renewal comes just ahead of the season's final episode, the Reunion Part Two, which airs Sunday, April 17, at 8 p.m.

The first season of "The Real Housewives of Potomac" has performed very well for Bravo, averaging 2.1 million viewers in Nielsen's "live plus-3"

estimates—good enough to become the network's most-watched first season of a series since "The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills" in 2010. And among both adults 18-49 (1.2 million) and adults 25-54 (1.3 million), it stands as Bravo's top new series since "Vanderpump Rules" in 2013.

True Entertainment produces "Real Housewives of Potomac." Exec producers are Steven Weinstock, Glenda Hersh, Lauren Eskelin, Lorraine Houghton-Lawson, Bianca Barnes-Williams, Ashley McFarlin Buie and Andy Cohen. Anne Swan co-exec produces. — Reuters

The cast of 'The Real Housewives of Potomac' >



## 'Game of Thrones' creators mull shorter final seasons



Game of Thrones show runners David Benioff and D.B. Weiss

**"G**ame of Thrones" will premiere its highly anticipated sixth season on April 24, but the executive producers say they are considering an abbreviated end game for the hit HBO series.

In an exclusive interview with Variety, showrunners David Benioff and D.B. Weiss said they are weighing wrapping up the Emmy-winning saga of Westeros and the battle for the Iron Throne with just 13 more episodes once this sixth season is over: seven episodes for season 7; six for the eighth and potential final season.

"I think we're down to our final 13 episodes after this season. We're heading into the final lap," said Benioff. "That's the guess, though nothing is yet set in stone, but that's what we're looking at." Sources later clarified those exact numbers were premature, given that the showrunners are now just beginning to outline their plans, but said that any upcoming seasons may be shorter than the full 10 episodes of seasons past.

HBO programming president Michael Lombardo acknowledged the showrunners' plan to wind down the series with two more years. "That's my understanding from them right now, those have been the conversations we've had," he says. "Because where these narratives go, it feels like another two years to them. As a television executive, as a fan, do I wish they said another six years? I do."

But, he added, "I'm always an optimist, and I do believe we will figure this out." It's long been speculated that the show would end with season eight; HBO signaled back in January that they were in talks with Weiss and Benioff for two more seasons. Fans might have expected that the two additional seasons would run the usual 10-episode-per-season stretch, but the executive producers say the shorter run will enable them to spend more time per episode. "Thrones" is set to go back into production in July.

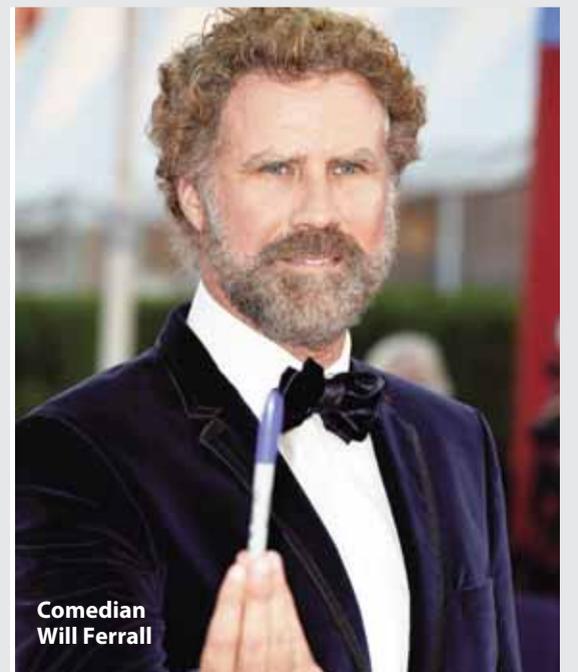
To live up to the standard they've set for themselves and fans—Weiss and Benioff said they can't continue to produce 10 episodes of the show in the show's usual 12- or 14-month time frame. "It's crossing out of a television schedule into more of a mid-range movie schedule," Weiss said.

While the "Game of Thrones" showrunners said the shorter-episode scenario is their hope, HBO executives made it clear there's no deal yet in place. "We're still in conversations," said Lombardo. — Reuters

## Universal lands comedy pitch from Will Ferrell

**U**niversal Pictures has acquired from Branden O'Brien an untitled original pitch for Gary Sanchez Productions that will serve as the basis for a Will Ferrell starring vehicle. O'Brien will write the script, which follows an escaped convict who teams up with an unlikely partner to stop his girlfriend from getting married. Ferrell, O'Brien, Adam McKay and Jessica Elbaum will produce under their Gary Sanchez Productions banner. Chris Henchy serves as executive producer. Related Will Ferrell to Star in North Pole Expedition Movie Exec VP of production Erik Baiers will oversee the project on behalf of the studio.

Gary Sanchez recently produced Universal's "The Boss" along with Melissa McCarthy and Ben Falcone's On the Day Productions, which just bowed to a \$23.5 million opening weekend at the domestic box office. O'Brien most recently co-wrote and produced New Line's "The House," starring Ferrell and Amy Poehler, which will be released in June 2017. He also co-wrote and exec produced the hit 2014 Universal film "Neighbors" and the upcoming sequel "Neighbors 2: Sorority Rising." Ferrell was most recently seen alongside Mark Wahlberg in "Daddy's Home." UTA reps Ferrell and O'Brien, and Gary Sanchez is co-repped by UTA and WME. — Reuters



Comedian Will Ferrell