

Brian Grazer, Mitchell Hurwitz, Larry Flynt Set for PromaxBDA Conference

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The three are all featured at the marketing confab at L.A. Live, which promises to bring together the most innovative people in the industry.

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The buzzword in marketing circles is "disrupters," and there will be plenty of them in attendance as more than 3,000 marketers gather for PromaxBDA's annual conference, set for June 18 to 20 at the JW Marriott at L.A. Live. "This is a conference that brings together the most prolific disrupters in the communications industry," says **Jonathan Block-Verk**, the organization's president and CEO, defining them as "the people who are fundamentally changing the paradigm of television, creating the new mechanisms and the new business models that the rest of the industry will see emerging over the next six, 12, 18 months."

Attendees will hear from *Arrested Development* creator **Mitchell Hurwitz** because Block-Verk sees TV series migrating to Internet platforms like Netflix as a major development. Producer **Brian Grazer** -- "who's been behind some of the major brands in our industry" -- will be honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award. And *Hustler* publisher **Larry Flynt** will take part in the keynote. "Disrupters by virtue of what they do are controversial," says Block-Verk. "Larry is one of those folks who recognized an audience and then gave them what they wanted."

The conference also will include an exhibition and silent auction to benefit the Promo Pathway Program, an accredited training program to prepare young people aged 18 to 26 for careers in entertainment marketing and promotion.

With the goal of diversifying the field of on-air promotion, the South Bay Center for Community Development, PromaxBDA and Santa Monica College have joined forces to develop a one-year training program which combines technical skills in promotions and digital production with paid internships, mentoring and student supports. Participants -- more than 90 percent of whom are African American and Latino -- complete the program with an industry-recognized certificate, skills in entertainment technology and industry connections to help them establish careers.

Since its launch in 2011, PPP has provided 25 students annually with opportunities to develop skills in short-form writing, creative execution, video editing and production, while gaining hands-on experience working alongside promo writers, editors and producers.

Proceeds from last year's auction specifically were used to assist Santa Monica College, which had been affected by statewide budget cuts. PromaxBDA used the funds from the silent auction to buy 15 new Macbooks loaded with Final Cut and Avid software. Fifteen students without computers in the program received the laptops on loan, and Santa Monica College professors held their classes at the PromaxBDA offices when the school's winter session was cancelled. The proceeds from this year's auction will be used to increase their technological access by loading more production software and enriching the training/internship/mentorship programs.

Items to be auctioned include a phone call from SpongeBob SquarePants for your child; a dinner for six in your home by a Bravo Top Chef; and a lifetime subscription to Netflix.

Additionally photographs, presented and curated by bpg advertising agency, will be exhibited and auctioned. They include the work of such noted photographers as **Nadav Kander, Ellen Von Unwerth, Patrick Demarchelier, Martin Schoeller, Mark Seliger, Frank Ockenfels 3, Art Streiber, Michael Muller, Jim Fiscus and Stefanie Schneider.**