

Q&A: Amy Acker stars in Hallmark Channel's 'Crashing Through the Snow'



Maggie and Sam are crashing Christmas! When he proposes they team up against his sister's perfect Christmas to make a better one, neither is prepared for the blended family challenges that ensue. Warren Christie, Amy Acker and Summer Howell star in the Hallmark Channel's "Crashing Through the Snow." (©2021 Crown Media United States LLC photo by Steven Ackerman)

Part of 'Christmas in July' holiday movie collection

BEHIND THE SCREENS WITH JOSHUA MALONI

With graduations, weddings, festivals and concerts already in play, America continues its 2020 reclamation tour with a holiday celebration this month. "Christmas in July" will soon pop up everywhere from retail stores to "Wheel of Fortune" to the Hallmark Channel — where fan-favorite films will make the season bright. "Angel" and "Person of Interest" star Amy Acker leads the cast of "Crashing Through the Snow," Crown Media's lone debut in the Hallmark "Christmas in July" film-festival stocking.

"It is a really fun script," Acker said in a phone interview this week. "I play Maggie. My ex-husband (Kristian Bruun as Jeff) and I share custody of our kids, and we have a pretty great, healthy, like co-parenting/blended family relationship that we are still really active in each other's lives. And he has a new girlfriend (Brooke Nev-in's Kate) that he's going to spend Christmas with; and so, the girls and him are going to her family's house in Aspen for Christmas. I'm pretty intimidated by how perfect she is, and how great she is, and a little scared that everyone — mainly my children — are going to like her better than me. But kind of against my ex-husband's will, she invites me to come to Christmas with them in Aspen."

"And so, I basically crash his Christmas with his new girlfriend's family. And when they get there, it turns out her brother (Warren Christie's Sam) is back in town — who has been in Japan, working as a chef, and he has unexpectedly showed up for Christmas back at home and is crashing Christmas as well. So, the two of us have a little plotting to try to

make it so that — his term is that he wants me to 'win Christmas' for my kids, and I am very resistant to that term; but eventually I'm kind of like, 'You're right, I have to win Christmas.'

"We get to do all sorts of crazy things, and the best Christmas activities, and have a good time with the kids ... and we end up, maybe, falling in love ... as you do in Hallmark ... and having a pretty great Christmas with everybody all together."

As more and more of the country reopens and remembers what was lost to 2020, why not add Christmas to the list of things we can do again — even if it is July?

"It does feel like that, doesn't it?" Acker said. "I was saying the same thing. We didn't get to be with my whole family, for sure. I mean, LA was really bad over Christmas. And we had such a removed and different holiday than we've normally had."

"I had never done 'Christmas in July' before, but when they were telling me about the movie, and it's coming out in July, I was like, 'This seems like the perfect excuse to have my family over. Let's make a big, kind of Christmas/summery dinner, and just celebrate.' And someone's like, 'I want to put up a tree,' and I was like, 'OK, let's do it. Why not?'"

"Crashing Through the Snow" premieres Saturday, July 10 (9 p.m.), on Hallmark Channel as part of "Christmas in July." Read our full Q&A with Acker at wnypapers.com.

NBC has 'Macy's 4th of July Fireworks Spectacular'

Renée Elise Goldsberry, a Tony and Grammy Award winner and star of Peacock's "Girls5eva," and Ryan Eggold, star of NBC's "New Amsterdam," will host the "Macy's 4th of July Fireworks Spectacular."

Blake Shelton is set to perform during the Independence Day broadcast. The Grammy-nominated entertainer begins his "Friends and Heroes 2021 Tour" Aug. 18.

Jonas Brothers will also join the performer lineup. The Grammy-nominated band will perform a medley of hits and be joined by special guest Marshmello for a performance of their new song, "Leave Before You Love Me."

For the first time in Macy's Fireworks broadcast history, a drone light show will be featured. During the Jonas Brothers' performance, 350 drones will be included to honor Team USA as they prepare to depart for the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games. The drones will collectively symbolize the unity and strength of Team USA — meeting together for the first time in the sky before Team USA gathers on the ground in Tokyo.

The annual star-filled TV event airs Sunday, July 4 (8-10 p.m.), on NBC with an hourlong encore presentation at 10 p.m. Previously



"Macy's 4th of July Fireworks Spectacular": Coldplay rehearses for the big show. (NBC photo by Virginia Sherwood)

announced acts include Black Pumas, Coldplay, OneRepublic and Reba McEntire. The evening will also include special appearances by some of the top names in entertainment.

Throughout the telecast, a series of uplifting personal stories, called the "American Spirit," will put the spotlight on the everyday heroes who make this country so special. Olympians Allyson Felix, Simone Manuel, Tatyana McFadden and Jessica Long will share their stories.

At key moments throughout the

night, viewers will have the opportunity to donate to Red Nose Day in support of children and families facing hunger and food insecurity.

In an effort to create a more inclusive experience for blind and visually impaired viewers, NBCUniversal will present the full NBC broadcast with live audio description on the Secondary Audio Program channel (SAP), provided by Descriptive Video Works. This year's broadcast will be available with additional audio narration, describing the visuals and performances of the annual special.

NFP contests to name favorite summer eats

Who has the best summer menu? No, really, we're asking. Voting is underway for Niagara Frontier Publications' "Savory Summer Eats & Treats" contests, wherein the local communities will determine which restaurant is the place to go in the summer — and which eateries have the best ice cream, beef on weck, hot dog, hamburger, fries and barbecue.

Variations are allowed — so, a bacon cheeseburger, a Coney Island-style hot dog and ice cream sandwiches, for example, are eligible in their respective categories.

Shine a spotlight on your favorite restaurants and enter to win a monthly prize. One entry will be pulled from a hat filled with entrant names.

Voting runs until 11:59 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 15. Winners will be announced the following week — and each eatery will receive a write-up in our newspapers and on our website.

Participants can enter via a paper ballot in this newspaper, or at www.wnypapers.com. Rules are posted on the website.

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FRI 6AM-2PM - Haddock, Fish Sandwiches, Tuna Melts & New England Clam Chowder
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From May 28 through Aug. 13, vote for your favorite Summer Eats & Treats by filling out the entry blank below or visiting www.wnypapers.com. The winner of each category will be featured in the Niagara County Tribune/Sentinel and Island Dispatch. When you cast a vote, you'll be entered to win a monthly prize. Winners will be selected by random draw and notified by phone or email.

Visit www.wnypapers.com/savorysummer for a complete set of rules & to enter online.

NO PHOTOCOPIES WILL BE ACCEPTED

Categories

1. Best Summer Dining Spot _____
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