

TBI Vision

Television Business International



Show of the week: Klondike

Klondike was Discovery Channel's first move into drama and is distributed internationally by Entertainment One. Discovery has had a lot of success with unscripted shows about gold and gold digging such as *Gold Rush*, but this will be the channel's first original scripted series.

Based on the Charlotte Gray novel *Gold Diggers: Striking it Rich in the Klondike*, the series will follow the intertwining stories of six key characters in the 1890s, seeking to make their fortunes in the gold-rich Klondike region.

Sam Shephard (*Black Hawk Down*), Richard Madden (*Game of Thrones*), Abbie Cornish (*Limitless*) and Tim Roth (*Lie to Me*) star in the show. Madden (pictured) will play the youthful and idealistic Bill Haskell, Shephard Father Judge, the town's holy man, and Roth The Count, a ruthless German seeking his fortune. Cornish stars as Belinda Mulrone, a tough mill owner. The characters are fictionalised versions of real people or composites of characters from the time.

Directed by Simon Cellan Jones (*Boardwalk Empire*), the series was made by eOne, *Hell on Wheels* producer Nomadic and Ridley Scott's prodco Scott Free and shot in Alberta, Canada.

"Ridley Scott is a virtuoso storyteller and we thought this would be the perfect marriage," Dolores Gavin, Discovery Channel's executive VP of development & production and Klondike executive producer told TBI.

"Some characters are running to something and some are running from something and they all interact with each other," explains Gavin. "It's man versus nature and man versus himself. Some people made a fortune and some made nothing during that time and a world in microcosm was created out of nothing."

The resulting series runs to three two-hour episodes. David Zucker, president of Scott Free's increasingly prolific TV division says: "Each [two hours] has its own dramatic arc and definitely has a climax although they are linked in the style of the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy."

He adds that although Discovery will run it as 3x120mins it would work as single hours. Speaking about the creative challenge of the series, he says: "We have tried, in one TV cycle, to capture the thrust of what happened there dramatically."

There is the potential to take characters and storylines and develop them further should ratings demand a follow-up. "We do tell the complete story, but could split it into an adjoining series," Zucker says.

The show: *Klondike*

Producers: Discovery Channel, Entertainment One Television and Nomadic Pictures in association with Scott Free Television

Distributor: Entertainment One

Concept: Drama series about the titular American Gold Rush region during the 1890s

Airing: Discovery Channel

Date added:

March 17, 2014

Company:

[Abbie Cornish](#), [Black Hawk Down](#), [David Zucker](#), [Discovery](#), [Dolores Gavin](#), [Game of Thrones](#), [Klondike](#), [lie to Me](#), [Limitless](#), [Lord of the Rings](#), [Richard Madden](#), [Ridley Scott](#), [Sam Shephard](#), [Scott Free](#), [Simon Cellan Jones](#), [Tim Roth](#)