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## 3-genre threat Murphy signs with D'Works

By Zorianna Kit  
and Chris Gardner

After a successful collaboration on the blockbuster "Shrek," for which a sequel is due out in the summer, the film's co-star Eddie Murphy has inked a two-year, first-look production deal with DreamWorks Pictures.



Murphy

The deal cements a long-standing relationship between the star and studio topper Jeffrey Katzenberg that goes back 20 years to when Katzenberg was an executive at Paramount and Murphy was a rising comedian making his big-screen debut in the studio's 1982 feature film "48 HRS."

Their relationship continued on such Paramount features as "Trading Places" and "Beverly Hills Cop" before

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# Supreme Court wrestling with copyright conundrum

By Brooks Boliek

WASHINGTON — In a spirited debate, justices on the U.S. Supreme Court appeared to struggle Wednesday with the conundrum presented by Congress' decision to extend by 20 years the period for which copyright holders can

profit from their works: Does that aid art, commerce and science, or does it lock out free public access to important works?

In arguments before the bench, the justices peppered attorneys with questions about the contradictory nature of the constitutional clause that gives Congress the power to

set a limited copyright term.

Congress most recently extended the term with the 1998 Sonny Bono Copyright Term Extension Act. The act marked the 11th time in 40 years that Congress has extended the copyright term, leading the justices to ponder: When does a limited extension become permanent?

"It's very hard to find a basis that this isn't a limited term. It's longer than one would like, but isn't it still limited?" Justice Sandra Day O'Connor asked. "I can find a lot of fault with what Congress did. This flies directly in the face of what

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## 'Party'-goers: Star, Presley Remake of Sellers comedy set at MGM

By Chris Gardner

Darren Star is teaming with Priscilla Presley for MGM to remake the studio's Peter Sellers comedy "The Party."

Star and Presley will produce together, with Star eyeing the project for his feature directorial debut.

Blake Edwards directed the 1968 release that saw Sellers star as an Indian film extra who is mistakenly invited to a swinging Hollywood party. There, he embarks on a series of slapstick misadventures. Claudine Longet, Natalia Borsova, Jean Carson, Marge Champion and Al Checco also starred.

It's unclear whether the remake will follow the exact story line.



Star



Presley

There is no writer yet on board to adapt it.

At MGM, Elizabeth Cantillon is overseeing the project.

Star and Presley are both repped by WMA. Star has directed episodes of his series "Grosse Pointe" and "Sex and the City." Presley serves on the board of MGM. ■

## Mantegna pulls double duty with CBS series deal

By Nellie Andreeva

Joe Mantegna is back in business with CBS.

The actor, who co-starred in last season's drama "First Monday," has struck a deal that calls for CBS to develop two series projects for him, both targeted for fall 2003. Mantegna is said to be open to both comedy and drama ideas.

In the first phase of the deal, Mantegna will receive a consulting fee for closely working with

See **MANTEGNA** on page 18



Mantegna

## DirecTV: Merger unlikely if not OK'd by Jan. 21

Related story on page 5.

By Georg Szalai

NEW YORK — Satcasters EchoStar Communications and DirecTV parent Hughes Electronics will likely drop their bid to merge if regulators — who have signaled that they could block the deal — do not approve the transaction by Jan. 21, a top DirecTV executive said Wednesday.

John Malone's Liberty Media and Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. both have hinted that they might go after DirecTV again —



Hartenstein



Ergen

for a lowered price — if the EchoStar deal falls through.

"By Jan. 21, we will have been at this process for 15 months," DirecTV CEO Eddy Hartenstein

said here at the SkyForum, organized by the Satellite Broadcasting and Communications Assn. Without regulatory approval by then, "it's a fair assumption we would go our separate ways," he said.

But EchoStar CEO Charlie Ergen would not yet predict what will happen after Jan. 21, which the merger agreement specified as the date at which each party can terminate the deal. "I don't think about decisions that need to be made in the future because I don't have all the information yet," he said.

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