

People & Places



This image released by Amazon Studios shows Clare Dunne, (left), and Ruby Rose O'Hara in a scene from 'Herself,' available for streaming on Amazon Prime Video on Friday. (AP)

Television

Repurpose foods

Netflix alters leftovers with 'food game' show

NEW YORK, Jan 5, (AP) — Just in time for anyone facing a heaving, post-holiday refrigerator comes a TV show about what to do with all those dubious dishes — leftovers.

Each episode of the food game show "Best Leftovers Ever!" on Netflix sees three skilled cooks make new dishes out of already made dishes, hoping to walk away with \$10,000.

"People think leftovers is just reheating your food. It's not just reheating your food. Get creative with it. You could always create new and better things with it later," says comedian David So, one of the judges.



Tohn

In the first episode, contestants are given healthy leftovers — veggie salad, cauliflower rice, beef tenderloin with beets, and avocado with cottage cheese — and are asked to turn them into comfort food in 30 minutes. They have access to a pantry and kitchen staples.

One contestant turned to Indian flavors, making a chicken curry with fritters. Another went for Greek, making a beet- and meat-stuffed pastry called a tiropita. The third made a tostada with glazed pepper jelly chicken.

In the second round, called the Takeout Takedown, contestants must make new dishes from restaurant leftovers in only an hour. One took chicken fingers and fries and made a potato gnocchi. Another turned old burgers and fries into pierogies.

Later episodes see contestants turn football-watching party food — bean dip, sliders and raw veggies — into beef stroganoff or tacos, and turn leftover barbecue into lasagna or dumplings.

"If the audience can walk away and go back to their fridge and say, 'Hey, I'm not going to throw this away, I'm actually going to make something amazing out of it,' then we did our job," says So.

The show arrives during a time when viewers have had to adjust to ordering takeout during the pandemic and at the end of holiday feasts.

Perfect

"The timing couldn't be more perfect," says the show's host, actress-musician Jackie Tohn, who starred in the TV series "GLOW" and is a self-described "leftover queen."

"We can't go to restaurants and all we can do is order in. And then if you get that Chinese food and you don't want it to be Chinese food on night two, we're giving you a bunch of tips and tricks to make that possible."

Tohn and So are joined by the second judge, British chef and TV personality Rosemary Shrager. The three have a slightly absurdist vibe, tossing cheeseballs into each others' mouths while contestants cook, or imitating Julia Child's high-pitched modulations.

"Being on set wasn't like work. It was just like talking to your friends and eating really good food around talented people," So says. "I mean, everybody would love a job like that, right?"

The show appealed to both So and Tohn since they grew up in households where there was little food wasted. Tohn's grandmother used to keep bones for marrow: "Nothing ever got thrown away. I mean, we ate leftovers until the very end." And So had leftovers all week.

"Everybody thinks that you have to eat new food every day. And that's just not what I grew up with," he says. "My mom would always make a big meal on the weekend and then I would have to be creative and then make good food on the weekdays with it."

He laughs that chefs always stress fresh ingredients but a lot of what restaurants send out is leftovers, like arancini, which are usually just yesterday's risotto, now rolled into balls and deep fried. "I don't think we understand a lot of our favorite foods are honestly repurposed foods."



In this May 14, 2019 file photo, Ryan Seacrest attends the Walt Disney Television 2019 upfront in New York. Most folks have slowed down in the past nine months but Seacrest says he's been juggling more than normal during the pandemic. (AP)



Roberts



Rahbani

Variety

BEIRUT: Elias Rahbani, a Lebanese composer and lyricist who wrote the music for some of the Arab world's top performers, including Lebanon's diva Fairouz, has died after battling COVID-19, his family said. He was 82.

Rahbani was hospitalized last week suffering low oxygen after he contracted the coronavirus and succumbed to COVID-19, the illness caused by the virus, on Monday.

Elias was the younger brother of Mansour and Assi Rahbani, the Arab world's iconic musical duo known as the Rahbani Brothers, who wrote music and plays for Fairouz and other celebrities. Assi Rahbani, who was married to Fairouz, died in 1985, while Mansour passed away in 2009.

The three brothers were pioneers of a Lebanese golden age of music and culture, before the country was plunged into a lengthy civil war in the mid-1970s. Many Lebanese still start their day listening to their songs and see them as uniting figures, beloved across the country's divided political spectrum.

Born into a musical family in the town of Antelias, north of Beirut, Elias quickly forged a path for himself in the music industry. He often worked with his brothers but went on to compose his own songs for veteran Lebanese artists including Fairouz, Sabah, Melhem Barakat, Majida al-Roumi and others.

Elias Rahbani distinguished himself from his brothers, who were the industry's best known duo, with his more modern styles and mix of Middle Eastern and Western music that won him international awards. He wrote some of Fairouz' best hits, as well as the music and lyrics for many patriotic songs.

Rahbani composed hundreds of songs and music for the theater and the soundtracks to dozens of films and TV series, including "Habibati," or my Love, "The Night Player."

Elias leaves behind a wife, Nina, two sons, Ghassan and Jad and a sister, Elham. (AP)

People

'Slow down? Never'

Seacrest says he's busier than ever

By Alicia Rancilio

Most folks have slowed down in the past nine months but Ryan Seacrest says he's been juggling more than usual during the pandemic.

His regular TV and radio gigs as a co-host on "Live with Kelly and Ryan" and his syndicated "On Air with Ryan" Seacrest radio show continue, despite lockdown. On weekends there were tapings for what he calls "the singing show" (otherwise known as ABC's "American Idol.")

"There were also a lot of requests to do extra specials and things for our partners (such as hosting the successful "Disney Family Sing Along" programs) because everyone was going through a tough time. We leaned into doing as much as we could," said Seacrest, 46, in an interview from the radio studio he built in the basement of the "Live" set.

His commute from the morning talk show to radio gig is one minute but Seacrest is still largely bi-coastal and splits his time between New York and Los Angeles.

Last week he returned to New York's Times Square to once again front "Dick Clark New Year's Rockin' Eve." Seacrest counted down to 2021 with the help of actors Lucy Hale and Billy Porter. Ciara cohost from Los Angeles. Jennifer Lopez also performed from New York. The broadcast was closed to the public due to the pandemic but a select group of front line workers were invited to watch.

Comfortable

"It may feel a little different on the ground, but I think on the air it's still going to have that celebratory component to it," Seacrest had said. "Most of us can't go anywhere, so we're going to really try to put on a good show."

He's so comfortable with hosting that Seacrest gets a thrill out of the curveballs

Japanese novelist Haruki Murakami urges politicians to speak sincerely about virus

TOKYO, Jan 5, (AP) — Japanese novelist Haruki Murakami says politicians need to help reduce public uncertainty and fear over the coronavirus and gain people's support by speaking sincerely about the pandemic.

Murakami, in a two-hour live New Year's Eve radio show, urged political leaders to "talk honestly from the gut" to the people to encourage their participation in slowing an upsurge in infections, which are on the verge of getting out of control.

His comments came hours after Japan's capital announced its new daily cases soared to a record 1,337 on last Thursday, up sharply from the previous high of 949 on Dec. 26.

"I think an essential problem with the coronavirus is our uncertain future, which is triggering a sense of fear, anger and escapism among people, which I think is the biggest danger," Murakami said in a conversation with one of two guests, Nobel physiology prize winner Shinya Yamanaka of Kyoto

University.

"It would be difficult for the people to squarely cooperate with the (anti-virus) measures when politicians are not communicating with messages" in words that can reach people's hearts, Murakami said, without identifying any politician by name.

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and his predecessor, Shinzo Abe, have been criticized for reading carefully scripted statements prepared by bureaucrats at news conferences, often repeating the same phrases in response to questions asked by reporters.

Japan so far has avoided an explosive growth in infections, but its recent upsurge has many people worried.

Suga took few pandemic measures until mid-December, when he suspended a state-funded discount travel promotion campaign. He has also been criticized for joining a steak dinner for eight people when the government advised against parties of more than five.

that can pop up. He and Ripa purposely walk onto the "Live" set seconds before show time because, he says, "there's something fun about that."

Seacrest doesn't get nervous before going on air or when he's about to speak to the masses, but says big Zoom meetings leave him tongue-tied.

Of all his work, Seacrest says the most important is his non-profit Ryan Seacrest Foundation, which is run by his parents and sister. They've opened 11 broadcast studios and counting, named Seacrest Studios, in children's hospitals throughout the country to give the kids a positive

distraction. The studios give young patients a taste of producing a radio or television show, with the occasional celebrity guest.

"I've heard from parents that have seen their children in a hospital bed without motivation to get up. They were sad and didn't want to go do anything. And then, you know, when we could bring Selena Gomez through a studio, that patient all of a sudden wants to get up and go downstairs and spend time with Selena Gomez and forget about the maybe the pain they're mentally feeling and physically feeling."

LOS ANGELES: Tanya Roberts, who captivated James Bond in "A View to a Kill" and later played Midge Pincioti in the sitcom "That '70s Show," has

been hospitalized after falling at her home. The actor had mistakenly been reported dead by her publicist earlier Monday.



In this Nov 3, 2018 file photo, Japanese novelist Haruki Murakami signs his autograph on his novel 'Killing Commendatore' during a press conference in Tokyo. Murakami said politicians need to reduce public uncertainty and fear over the coronavirus by speaking sincerely about the pandemic. (AP)

Roberts' publicist Mike Pingel later told The Associated Press Monday afternoon that Roberts, 65, was still alive as of 10 am PST but was in a poor condition. He had said earlier Monday that Roberts collapsed in her home on Dec 24 and was admitted to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, where she was believed to have died on Sunday.

Pingel said Robert's partner, Lance O'Brien, told him that he held his wife and she "seemed for him to slip away."

O'Brien, who'd been unable to see Roberts in the hospital because of COVID-19 restrictions, was allowed to visit Sunday for a last goodbye, Pingel said. The actor does not have the virus, he said.

The publicist said he is awaiting further updates on Roberts' condition.

Multiple media outlets, including the AP, reported Roberts' death. The AP removed its obituary and sent an advisory noting that the actor was still alive.

One of Roberts' highest profile roles was playing geologist Stacey Sutton opposite Roger Moore in 1985s "A View to a Kill."

Roberts also appeared in such fantasy adventure films as "The Beastmaster" and "Hearts and Armour." She replaced Shelley Hack in "Charlie's Angels," joining Jaclyn Smith and Cheryl Ladd as third Angel Julie. She also played comic book heroine Sheena — a female version of the Tarzan story — in a 1984 film. (AP)