



Ryan Seacrest and Peter Chernin at BritWeek's gala dinner benefiting Malaria No More Tuesday; right: Tony Blair addresses the BevWilshire crowd

GALA'S BIG NET WORTH

By TED JOHNSON

Former British prime minister **Tony Blair** mingled with stars and Hollywood studio chiefs during the kickoff dinner for BritWeek Tuesday at the BevWilshire. The event was a benefit for Malaria No More, the group chaired by News Corp. chief operating officer **Peter Chernin** to eradicate malaria around the world, in part by seeking contributions for \$10 mosquito nets that could be sent to areas ravaged by the disease. **Haim** and **Cheryl Saban** said they would match the evening's take of



Left: British Consul General Bob Peirce with Nigel Lythgoe



Daughtry performs; inset below: Sarah Brown, wife of British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Naomi Campbell

\$500,000, and Ryan Seacrest, who has hosted "American Idol" specials focusing on malaria, appeared onstage and pledged \$100,000.

Blair said that because the nets could mean the difference between life and death, the evening "is about a precious, precious gift that we have the power to give."

Seacrest's presence inspired Blair to recount his own story of trying to launch a singing career — but he admitted that when he auditioned, "It wasn't like a Susan Boyle moment." During one tryout, he got cut off by the producers. "I said, 'Why do you do that?' 'Act of humanity, mate, act of humanity.'"



Bono, Bill Clinton and Jon Bon Jovi join forces for Food Bank for New York City's sixth annual Can-Do Awards dinner Tuesday.



"Fighting" co-stars Terrence Howard and Channing Tatum punch it up on the red carpet during the pic's N.Y. bow in Union Square Monday.

Singling out 'Soloist'

Par's Monday preem for "The Soloist" was that rare Hollywood event: the launch of a potential kudos magnet while the town is still recovering from the previous season of kudos magnets.

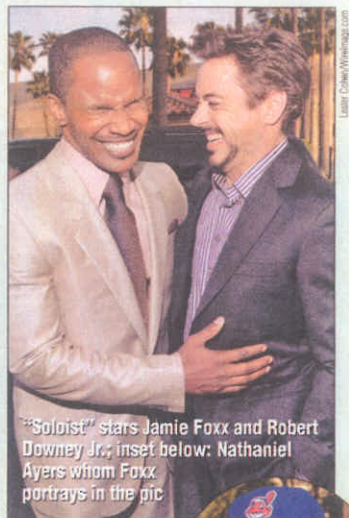
The pic garnered a pre-reception in Par's theater and then a filmmaker after-party at the Chateau Marmont. Execs on hand said the early release date could work to the film's advantage.

"Not every film for adults has to be jammed into the fourth quarter," said Par vice chairman **Rob Moore**. "Every film for adults doesn't have to have as its first priority positioning for the Oscars."

Producer **Gary Foster** said the April opening "gives us a spotlight. The film can have its own moment and not be jammed in when there's no breathing room."

Aside from any possible kudos, exec producer **Jeff Skoll** of Participant Media said that what got his company interested is that "this is a powerful film about something that matters. This film puts a face on homelessness."

— Bill Higgins



"Soloist" stars Jamie Foxx and Robert Downey Jr.; inset below: Nathaniel Ayers whom Foxx portrays in the pic



Above: producers Russ Krasnow and Gary Foster with pic's helmer Joe Wright; left: preem guest Halle Berry; below: Stacey Snider, John Lesher and screenwriter Susannah Grant at the Par theater



Hugh Jackman, Brett Ratner and Rupert Murdoch celebrate Jackman's hand and footprint ceremony at Grauman's Theater in Hollywood Tuesday.