

Poppy Montgomery stars as a cop with total recall in *Unforgettable*.



On with the SHOW(S)!

For fall, CBS unveils new programs, new time slots for old favorites and a new night for fresh comedy

From Kat Dennings' sexy sarcasm and Kevin Dillon's "Johnny Drama" charm to J.J. Abrams' labyrinthine mind, there really is something for everyone this fall on CBS. Two new comedies play on the odd-couple theme, with *2 Broke Girls* pitting an uptown socialite (Beth Behrs) against Dennings' downtown smarts and *How to Be a Gentleman* introducing an uptight writer (David Hornsby) to Dillon's unrefined raunchiness. On the drama side, Abrams fans will not be disappointed with *Person of Interest*, a crime drama about an ex-special forces agent (Jim Caviezel) with a mysterious twist. For those who prefer their drama with a dollop of the undead, there's *A Gifted Man*, about a surgeon (Patrick Wilson) who gets self-help tips from his deceased ex-wife (Jennifer Ehle). And we can't forget *Unforgettable*, featuring Poppy Montgomery (*Without a Trace*) as a cop with the rare ability to recall every moment of her life except its most important event—the murder of her sister. In all, five new star-studded shows from award-winning production teams join a network already knee-deep in hits, some of which will entertain viewers on new nights and times this fall. Here's a closer look at CBS' vision for the new season:

2 GIRLS AND A GENTLEMAN

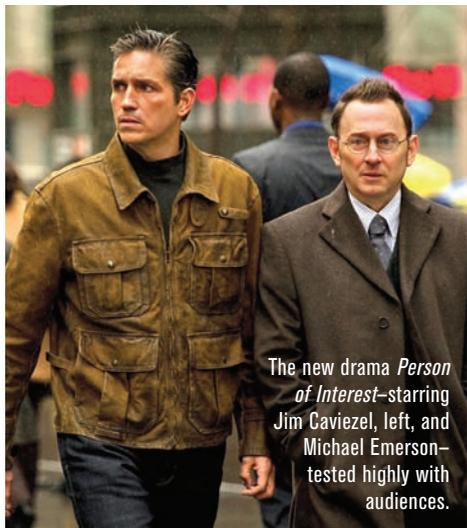
CBS Entertainment president Nina Tassler says the decision to pick up *2 Broke Girls*, which stars big-screen funnygirl Dennings (*Thor*, *Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist*) and newcomer Behrs, was a no-brainer—especially since test audiences gave the pilot record-high marks. *Girls* will call Mondays at 8:30 p.m. home, bridging the gap between the similarly youthful/metropolitan *How I Met Your Mother* and the revamped *Two and a Half Men*, which now stars Ashton Kutcher opposite Jon Cryer. (See sidebar.)

Kat Dennings, left, and Beth Behrs star as waitresses in *2 Broke Girls*.



UNFORGETTABLE: BARBARA MITKE/CBS; GIRLS: MONTY BRINTON/CBS

Similarly, CBS scheduling boss Kelly Kahl hails *How to Be a Gentleman*, starring Hornsby (*It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*) and Dillon (*Entourage*), as a perfect lead-out to *The Big Bang Theory*, seeing as “both shows feature somewhat nerdy guys.” Nerdy?! Somewhere, Johnny Drama is taking umbrage, yo.



The new drama *Person of Interest*—starring Jim Caviezel, left, and Michael Emerson—tested highly with audiences.

AN UNFORGETTABLE CHANGE

As *Adweek* media critic Marc Berman puts it, CBS “has a luxury other networks don’t—to introduce new shows ... in ‘protected’ time periods.” *Unforgettable*, for example, scored a plum perch on Tuesdays at 10 p.m., following the similarly procedural one-two punch of *NCIS* and *NCIS: LOS ANGELES*.

Vacating that choice real estate is *The Good Wife*, which has found a just-as-cushy new home on Sundays at 9 p.m. “We’ll now have our highest-prestige show on our highest-prestige night,” notes Kahl, citing Sunday’s robust viewership. With the acclaimed drama leading out of *60 Minutes* and seven-time Emmy winner *The Amazing Race*, “we’ve got our lineup of award-winning shows, back-to-back-to-back,” says Tassler.

A TIME SLOT OF INTEREST

Akin to *Survivor*’s successful migration to Wednesdays last year, this fall the long-running *CSI* is on the move—to Wednesdays at 10 p.m., where it will follow *Criminal Minds*. That affords CBS the opportunity to make its gutsiest call, slotting Abrams’ *Person of Interest* in what Berman calls “TV’s most pivotal hour,” Thursdays at 9 p.m.

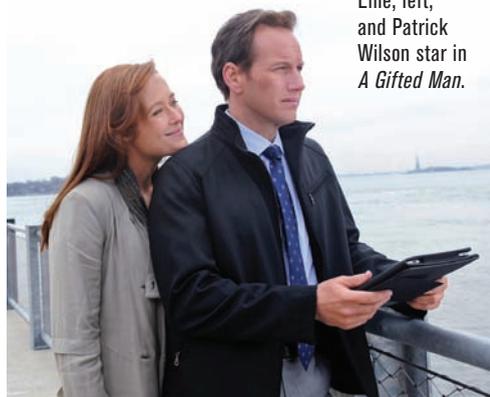
Kahl admits that it may be a risk to plug *Person of Interest* into CBS’ marquee and *CSI*’s long-held time slot, but the show’s pilot—about a billionaire (*Lost*’s Michael Emerson) who bankrolls the crime-stopping capers of a presumed-dead CIA spook (Caviezel)—was the network’s highest-testing drama in 15 years. “It has huge, broad appeal,” Tassler explains.

BREAKING THE SATURDAY RULES

In another surprising move, CBS will serve up fresh, scripted programming on Saturday nights for the first time in nearly 10 years, by unspooling *Rules of Engagement*’s sixth season at 8 p.m. Kahl attributes this experiment to the “problem” of having too many great series to air in the available weekday slots, but also suspects that comedy originals could have the last laugh against paltry competition. Adds CBS ad sales chief Jo Ann Ross, “Advertisers love sitcoms, and [this change on Saturday] gives them an opportunity for another night with us.”

GIFTED MAN LANDS HOT FRIDAY DATE

A Gifted Man will air at 8 p.m. Fridays, a night that has played host to the similarly paranormal-tinged *Ghost Whisperer* and *Medium*. Berman, for one, is willing to give the benefit of the doubt on a new drama with a daring premise. Continuing a tradition of “setting up the schedule with good comedy, good drama and quality reality shows, CBS’ schedule holds up,” Berman notes. “The way it’s balanced, there’s something for everyone on every night of the week.” — *Jim Colucci*



Jennifer Ehle, left, and Patrick Wilson star in *A Gifted Man*.

The ASHTON Effect



After eight years of onscreen laughs, *Two and a Half Men* found itself one man short this spring. But the sitcom’s producers announced in May that they’d found the right actor to play opposite Jon Cryer in his Emmy-winning role of Alan Harper. When the series returns in September, Ashton Kutcher will step into a new character on *Men*.

CBS Entertainment President Nina Tassler broke the good news officially as the network announced its 2011–12 series schedule. “We are so excited to have Ashton,” Tassler told reporters. “All of the details about the master plan for his character are going to be revealed at a later date. But I can say that [*Men* executive producer] Chuck Lorre has cooked up something fabulous.” — *Jim Colucci*