

CBS
2010
Fall
Preview

FALL'S ALL-STAR LINEUP

THIS
SEASON'S
NEW SHOWS
ARE SURE
TO SHINE

BY JIM COLUCCI

This fall, CBS is proud

to introduce five new shows that are sure to have everyone talking—from the highly anticipated *Hawaii Five-0* reboot to the sitcom that started as an outrageous Twitter feed. “We’ve got exciting new faces and voices,” CBS Entertainment President Nina Tassler says. Here’s your exclusive look.



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HAWAII FIVE-0

A genetically blessed task force fights crime and terrorism on the island of Oahu in this high-octane thrill ride.

DEBUTS SEPT. 20

When writer-producer Peter Lenkow was growing up in Montreal—where “there are two seasons: winter and July”—*Hawaii Five-0* was appointment television, his family’s much-welcomed weekly escape to the tropics.

So last fall, when Lenkow, the guy behind such hits as *CSI: NY*, was approached to “reboot” the famed 1968–80 detective series, he was thrilled. “I knew everything you could know about the islands,” he says. “I knew what the special task force did, and that they were considered the best of the best.” So what will he change? “The original show never really dug into who the characters were. I want to get to know what makes them the best.”

DIGGING DEEP: The writer started with tidbits divulged during the original series and hit the ground running: Task force leader Steve McGarrett had a background in Naval intelligence,

then entered law enforcement after his father’s murder. Lenkow twisted this a bit and added more back story as well as the notion that he gets full immunity to hunt down the biggest game in town.

Lenkow also injected the new *Five-0* with a healthy shot of humor, and reimagined Danny Williams—the object of the famous “Book ‘em, Danno!”—as a sarcastic New Jersey cop and divorced dad who’s very vocal about his preference of the city over the idyllic islands. A lot of Danno’s best lines will come from his “seeing Hawaii through the eyes of someone who doesn’t look at it as paradise,” Lenkow says.

A NATURAL CHEMISTRY: Lenkow says stars Alex O’Loughlin (*Moonlight, Three Rivers*) and Scott Caan met for the first time at the airport en route to their first day on set. “Alex kept saying, ‘Where’s my Danno?’ Finally, Scott gets off the plane, and the two guys clicked right away,” he says.

O’Loughlin says that chemistry showed up immediately on-screen. “The great thing about watching these two guys is that it’s like watching brothers,” he says. “They can be getting along, laughing together, but it could come to blows at any minute. That’s a relationship I think we all know.” And by adding Daniel Dae Kim (*Lost*) and Grace Park (*Battlestar Galactica*) to round out the diverse task force and hiring director Brad Turner, who helped bring hair-raising action to *24*, the show has been able to lure a team that Lenkow says is, like the *Five-0* force, the best of the best.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS



<< Aired Mondays
at 10 p.m. 11/11P
on CBS

DEBUTS SEPT. 24

Former *Sopranos* writers Mitchell Burgess and Robin Green weren't interested in working on a cop show until prolific producer Leonard Goldberg made them an offer they couldn't refuse: a hybrid police drama that the septuagenarian legend had created himself.

"Here was a cop show that was also a family show. And family shows, with their character-driven drama, are what we love and specialize in," Green explains. "The only thing we kept asking ourselves was, 'This is such an elegant and clean and

workable idea. So why hasn't this been done before?'"

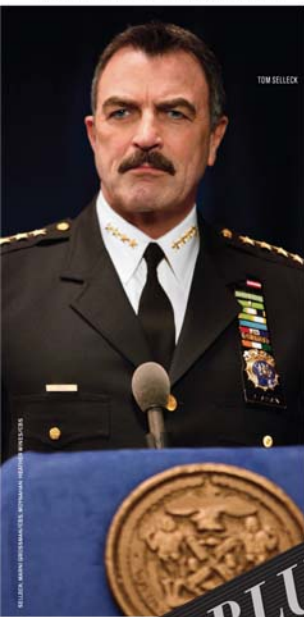
TELEVISION ROYALTY: The top-notch cast includes CBS veteran and TV icon Tom Selleck as family patriarch and police commissioner Frank Reagan; Donnie Wahlberg as son Danny, an Iraq war veteran prone to taking shady shortcuts in enforcing the law; Bridget Moynahan as daughter Erin, working in the district attorney's office; Will Estes as son Jamie, a Harvard Law graduate and the family's "golden boy" who becomes a newly minted cop; and Broadway legend Len Cariou as Frank's father, Henry.

Each week's work story will affect each character differently, while competing agendas cause friction during the traditional Sunday night dinners at the family home. "That's the beauty of this show, and what makes it so true to life," says Wahlberg. "Every character in this family thinks he or she is doing the right thing."

FAMILY MATTERS: Burgess says he and Green had always wanted to set a show in a blue-collar neighborhood, and for authenticity they recruited writers who could provide firsthand experience. Several of the show's writers come from police families and a few, with names like Siobhan Byrne and Brian Burns, also bring their own Irish-American heritage to this authentically ethnic portrait.

The result, the part-Irish Wahlberg says, can be eerily accurate. "When I first read the pilot's dinner scene, I just visualized my sister and me arguing," he remembers. "And then when my mother saw the show, the first thing she said afterward was, 'That dinner scene, it was just like you and Tracy!'"

Tom Selleck stars as the New York police commissioner and patriarch in a family full of tough New York City cops.



TOM SELLECK



BRIDGET MOYNAHAN

SELLECK: MARK BRONSTEIN/ABC; MOYNAHAN: MICHAEL O'NEILL/CBS

★ BLUE BLOODS ★

◀◀ **Airs Fridays**
at 10 p.m. ET/PT
on CBS.

★ THE DEFENDERS ★

Two rugged Las Vegas attorneys will do just about anything for their clients. Sin City-style.

important. "It's like casting a husband and wife," Mendelsohn says. "You need two guys who have that great chemistry." Luckily, after Belushi signed on as Morelli, producers met O'Connell and watched the two actors click immediately. At the time O'Connell was cast as Kaczmarek he was, in real life, midway through his first year of law school at Southwestern University.

O'Connell was impressed with the pilot. "There were a lot of legal dramas out there, but this one didn't hinge on finding a fingerprint or hair, or matching DNA, or locating a witness," he says. "The *Defenders* had Jim's character tricking a judge. This is a different law show. This is about guys with street sense. They're great attorneys, and they really believe in what they do. And if you're up on criminal charges in Las Vegas, these are the guys you're definitely going to want."

DEBUTS SEPT. 22

Perhaps the slogan should be What happens in Vegas becomes a hit on CBS.

A few years ago, documentarians Joe and Harry Gantz were working on a reality show about a Las Vegas bordello when a resident pimp asked for a legal referral. The brothers met lawyers Michael Cristalli and Marc Saggese, and realized these guys would make far better TV subjects.

The rub? A reality show about this legal defense firm proved unairable because of attorney-client privilege. Enter CBS Entertainment President Nina Tassler, who still spotted the potential for a series and ordered up a fictional drama instead. In Kevin Kennedy and Niels Mueller's adaptation, Cristalli and Saggese have become Nick Morelli and Pete Kaczmarek, two down-to-earth yet larger-than-life Chicago natives played by Jim Belushi and Jerry O'Connell, respectively.

VEGAS, BABY! Overseeing the show's production is Carol Mendelsohn, herself an attorney as well as the executive producer of *CSI* (and thus a Vegas veteran). "Like *CSI*, *The Defenders* will bring you the nonchoked Vegas, the stuff that happens off the Strip," she promises. "Anything can happen in Vegas, and the justice system is a little different there. To a certain extent, it's still the Wild West."

TWO WISE GUYS WALK INTO A CASINO: *The Defenders* is both a crime show and a bromance with funny repartee, so the right casting was particularly

JERRY O'CONNELL AND JIM BELUSHI

Airs Wednesdays
at 10 p.m. ET/PT
on CBS. >>



MIKE & MOLLY

A romantic comedy about a Chicago cop and a fourth-grade teacher who find love at an Overeaters Anonymous meeting.

Airs Mondays
at 9:30 p.m. ET/PT
on CBS >>



BILLY GARDSELL AND MELISSA MCCARTHY

DEBUTS SEPT. 20

When Melissa McCarthy (*Gilmore Girls*, *Samantha Who?*) first heard the concept for *Mike & Molly*—an overweight Chicago cop falls in love with a plus-size schoolteacher at an Overeaters Anonymous meeting—she wasn't amused. "I thought it was just going to be sight gags and mean jokes," the actress says. "But when I read the script, I could tell they didn't just throw words around glibly. The show has such heart, and being fat is not the whole story. This is a love story, and the story of two people trying to make themselves a little bit better."

WORKING-CLASS HERO: Pittsburgh native Billy Gardell, who plays Mike, identifies with his character's working-class roots. "It's a blue-collar guy who falls for a girl, and is trying to make a life," he says. "I think we've touched on something people are going to root for."

Gardell, who got his sitcom start on CBS' *Yes Dear*, says he feels as though he's been blessed with

the part of a lifetime. "I'm 40, I'm fat ... and in the world we live in, you've got to be gorgeous. But then [show creator] Mark Roberts and [executive producer] Chuck Lorre write this beautiful, honest show about people trying to overcome their flaws."

THE BIGGER, THE BETTER: In casting, Roberts had to decide whether to go with actors who would be considered "heavy for TV" or ones who actually were on the heavier side.

"I think that if we had gone with actors for whom a couple of sit-ups and a bowel movement would make the difference, the viewer would have felt cheated," says Roberts, who has been an executive producer of *Two and a Half Men* and a writer for *The Big Bang Theory*. "If I'm not invested in their struggle—and ultimately their triumph—I can't laugh at them, because I don't see anything there that's real. The shows that make me laugh are the ones that make me care." **W**



CBS
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The hilarious Twitter feed comes to life with William Shatner as the cranky crosspatch dad.

DEBUTS SEPT. 22

"We're making television history," William Shatner brags. Not only will *My Dad Says* be "the funniest show on television, but it was been electronically. And second, you can't say the title on the air. You can only think it!"

(Actually, CBS has found a way to say the title in its on-air promo, network Entertainment President Nina Tassler explained to TV critics last May, by substituting "bleep"—the actual word, not the sound—for that four-letter expletive.)

GETTING *##* STARTED: The show's rapid rise began with screenwriter and freelance magazine scribe Justin Halpern living at his parents' home in San Diego. "I would be in my underwear looking at YouTube videos," Halpern remembers. "And my dad doesn't see that as work. He would come in and ask me to clean the bathroom. Then I would half-ass that job, and we would exchange words."

Halpern began using his outspoken father's sayings as his online status updates, and such gems as "Oh please, you practically invented lazy. People should have to call you and ask for the rights to lazy before they use it" quickly attracted a following. A friend persuaded him to tweet his father's rants on Twitter, and within weeks he had a deal to turn them into a book and a CBS sitcom. The show's writers and producers, Max Mutchnick and David Kohan, thought of no one but Shatner to step into the title character's shoes.

CHANGING *##* AROUND: Mutchnick and Kohan have taken some liberties with the story and relationships: The real Halpern is close to his happily married parents, while *##*'s titular Dad is a set-in-his-ways divorcee from whom his son is somewhat estranged. Jonathan Sackwsky and beloved comic actor Nicole Sullivan and Will Sasso rounded out the cast.

Now, Kohan says, *##* can explore some of life's largest themes, with "a father who has to learn how to bring people into his life, and a son who needs his father's help passing into manhood. And yet, each of them also has to deal with the day-to-day situation of two people living together whose temperaments are very, very different." Now, that's good *##*.

>> **Airs Thursdays
at 8:30 p.m. ET/PT
on CBS.**

**! MY
DAD SAYS**