

Tropical Trio

WITH THE ADDITION OF THREE NEW ACTORS, *CSI: MIAMI* TURNS UP THE HEAT AND KEEPS VIEWERS SWEATING FOR MORE

★ As co-creator and showrunner of *CSI: Miami*, Ann Donahue has spent seven seasons dreaming up crimes, and sending her intrepid investigators to solve them thanks to clues in fingerprints and carpet fibers. But this year, Donahue and her writing staff have given Horatio Caine and company what may be the most important element of all for their forensic series: new blood.

By beefing up its diverse cast with three additional accomplished actors and opening story avenues via the new characters they play, *Miami* spent last fall getting even hotter. This season, the show has averaged nearly 13 million viewers each week, and regularly wins its time period in viewers and key demographics.

THE PHOTO EXPERT: OMAR MILLER

Donahue and her writers homed in on Omar Miller, a 6-foot-6-inch film actor (*8 Mile*) who had worked on a previous CBS series, *Eleventh Hour*, to play one of the team's new detectives, Walter Simmons. It's the first starring role for the actor, who came recommended by *CSI* producer Jerry Bruckheimer. To spice up the back-story, writers made his character a recent transfer from the *CSI* night shift, and also someone with an art history background and Louisiana pedigree "because I think that would add authenticity to someone living in Miami to be actually from the South," says the 31-year-old Los Angeles native. "And it gives me the opportunity every week to flex my Southern



Omar Miller

Detective Jesse Cardoza (Eddie Cibrian), one of the new characters introduced this season on *CSI: Miami*, already had a history with Horatio Caine.

accent. My father is from Mississippi, and now a lifetime of imitating him has paid off."

Walter adds a bit of levity to sometimes grim crime scenes—particularly in his rapport with fellow *CSI*-ers Jesse Cardoza (Eddie Cibrian) and Ryan Wolfe (Jonathan Togo). "Science is not the only dimension to his character," Miller explains. And yet, Walter more than gets the job done—and Miller is right there with him, doing his homework.

Like all new *CSI* recruits, Miller met with actual investigators—particularly those who, like Walter, have expertise in the photographing of evidence. As Donahue explains, Walter's specific contribution, to the team and to her story-writing staff, couldn't be more timely. "Today, everyone's walking around with a cell phone camera," she says, "or you're probably on a camera some other way. We realized, 'Wow, Walter's background will open up so many possibilities.'"

CSI: MIAMI AIRS MONDAYS AT 10 P.M. ET/PT ON CBS. MEET THE ACTORS AND SEE BEHIND-THE-SCENES FOOTAGE AT CBS.COM/CSIMIAMI.

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there was another time, with a Jell-O mold.

But ironically, Tom's gift for simplification only makes Clemenson's job more complicated. "It's a much harder job than *Boston Legal*," the actor admits. "The amount of work I have to do to prepare for these scenes is the most I've ever had to do for any show. I have to do research to learn how to say these very technical words. And then—and only after I'm comfortable with that—I have to do the acting."

**THE MYSTERIOUS DETECTIVE:
EDDIE CIBRIAN**

With the addition of Eddie Cibrian as Detective Jesse Cardoza, "we found that in a way, by going forward, we were going backward," Donahue explains. The writers decided the recent returnee to Miami would already have worked in this CSI lab, before anyone else other than Horatio. "We found that with Cardoza, we could open up a really dramatic story that started in Los Angeles and then came back home to Miami."

The reason Jesse originally left, then spent 10 years in the Los Angeles Police Department, comes from deep within the core of the handsome yet haunted new character. It's a mystery that Donahue says will unfold slowly over the next few seasons—and that drew Cibrian to the show.

"I was always attracted to the look and tone of *CSI: Miami*," Cibrian says. "Instead of being a straightforward procedural, they mix a lot of character development into the series. ... I particularly liked how the writers gave Cardoza a history with Horatio and with [Emily Procter's] Calleigh, so that when he returns there is a familiarity and a connection.

"I think it's pretty exciting to bring in three completely different personalities to the show," says the 36-year-old actor, who has plenty of experience appearing on TV's top hits. "*CSI: Miami* airs on so many channels worldwide, and by adding some fresh faces, it distinguishes Season 8 from the others. From the start, I couldn't wait to see how this season will ultimately unfold. So far, it has been very exciting." — *Jim Colucci*

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THE MEDICAL EXAMINER: CHRISTIAN CLEMENSON

In 2006, Christian Clemenson won an Emmy for his portrayal of an Asperger's-afflicted lawyer on ABC's *Boston Legal*. Now, in Dr. Tom Loman, Clemenson finds himself playing a character with a different, dialed-down kind of quirk.

Sure, Loman's otherwise normal-seeming predecessor, Khandi Alexander's Dr. Alexx Woods, had a strange penchant for talking to the bodies on her slab. But as Donahue distinguishes, whereas an emotional Alexx would promise justice to the cadaverous victims she'd maternally address as "baby boy" or "baby girl," the more detached Tom greets each new body—or part thereof—almost gleefully, as clues to cracking the next big case.

"There is an element of 'Mr. Wizard' about him, which is in fact what other characters call him," notes Clemenson, 52. "[Tom] is passionate about science, and loves to share that passion with others. He has a gift for translating these very technical, complicated medical processes into an image that a layperson can understand—and those have been my favorite scenes to play so far."

In one installment last fall, Tom used a banana to illustrate a vertebral injury. Then



Christian Clemenson

Cibrian: Cliff Lipson/CBS; Clemenson: Phil Amato