

Cheers & Jeers

CHEERS to *Inside the Actors Studio* for returning its focus to, you know, actors. After stretching the word's definition to include everyone from Billy Joel and Elton John to Rosie O'Donnell and Barbara Walters, James Lipton will spend the Bravo series' upcoming 12th season chatting up Al Pacino, Dustin Hoffman (the show's 200th guest), Tom Hanks (the first two-time interviewee), Robert Downey Jr. and Don Cheadle. OK, he's talking to Tim Allen, too, but five out of six ain't bad.

JEERS to movie studios for continuing to churn out ill-conceived big-screen remakes of beloved TV shows. The latest potential fiascoes include updated versions of *Welcome Back, Kotter* (with Ice Cube slipping into Gabe Kaplan's title role as an inner-city teacher) and *Dallas* (with a proposed cast that includes *Kotter* alum John Travolta as J.R. and Jennifer Lopez as Sue Ellen). Has Hollywood learned nothing from "The Dukes of Hazzard" and "Bewitched" and "The Honeymooners" and...?

CHEERS to *Grey's Anatomy* for keeping up its tradition of casting actors of all backgrounds and sizes with the addition of Sara Ramirez. The voluptuous Tony winner (for her role as the Lady of the Lake in "Monty Python's Spamalot") has set pulses racing as flirtatious Dr. Callie Torres. If anybody can help poor George get over his heart-breaking fling with Meredith, it's Callie. More Dr. Torres, please—stat!



Cheer of the Week

to *Big Love* for bringing some of the film world's finest character actors to series TV. Where else but on HBO's daring polygamist drama could you see Harry Dean Stanton ("Repo Man"), Bruce Dern ("Coming Home") and Mary Kay Place ("The Big Chill") on a weekly basis? Now there's a supporting cast that deserves big love.

CHEERS to Ray Wise for his slyly sinister performance as Vice President Hal Gardner on *24*. As lily-livered President Charles Logan (Gregory Itzin) has wilted under the pressure of a nerve gas attack, Gardner has been sowing the seeds of his boss' destruction. Wise has crept us out ever since he played murderous Leland Palmer on *Twin Peaks*. Paired with his affecting turn as depressed newsman Don Hollenbeck in "Good Night, and Good Luck," *24* represents quite a smart comeback for Wise.



24 gets Wise—Ray Wise

JEERS to Tommy Lee for selling out his rock-and-roll cred again with another reality show. The Mötley Crüe drummer headlined the NBC failure *Tommy Lee Goes to College* last summer. He'll spend this summer as part of the prefab band Supernova, searching for a lead singer in



Bill Paxton stands behind Stanton

CBS' second season of *Rock Star*. Doesn't Tommy know he'll never top his work alongside Pamela Anderson in *America's Dirtiest Home Videos*?

CHEERS to Timothy Olyphant for his surprisingly hilarious guest shot on *My Name Is Earl*. The normally deadpan *Deadwood* lawman was barely recognizable as Billy Reed, a dim-witted hot-rod who challenged an 11-year-old Earl to a drag race in a flashback. When he put on a bald cap and a beer gut to play the middle-age Billy, Olyphant proved his comedic aim is as steady as Sheriff Seth Bullock's trigger finger.

JEERS to *The Surreal Life* for scraping the bottom of the D-list celebrity barrel. The VH1 sideshow's sixth season features such never-knowns as Smash Mouth singer Steve Harwell, Poison heavy metallist C.C. DeVille, Playboy TV vixen Andrea Lowell and Alexis Arquette (Rosanna, Patricia and David's transgendered sibling). Has showbiz run out of has-beens?