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Inside the Emmys

Posted on September 25th, 2008 by Adrienne Papp



TV's brightest stars were aligned at Sunday night's 60th Primetime Emmy Awards held at the Nokia Theater, a celebration of television's biggest talents and the best in televised shows in the ever-expanding world of network and cable TV. Attendees ranged from industry legends like Don Rickles to glamorous model/reality show host Heidi Klum.

After several hours of red carpet fashion commentary and interviews, Oprah Winfrey kicked off the show as part of the new 5 co-host format. As the presentations continued, highlights

included Rickey Gervais taunting Steve Carrell about giving back his 2007 Emmy award (Carrell had accepted in Ricky's place last year), Jimmy Kimmel presenting the award for the best reality show and then leaving the nominees hanging until after the break (how do you like it now, Seacrest?), Stephen Colbert and Jon Stewart talking NOT about politics, but instead referring to prunes as a personality reference, winner Glenn Close championing "...complicated, powerful mature women who are also sexy ...and can carry a show," Tina Fey crediting Julia Louis-Dreyfus for her win, Bryan Cranston looking at his award and saying "She's bold too, I guess the restraining order has been lifted," and gorgeous Heidi Klum reigning as the sole woman in the heavily contested reality show host category, proving that beauty and brains do go together. There were also tributes to popular shows from television history throughout the night, including *Laugh In*, with original stars Ruth Buzzi, Gary Owens, Jo Anne Worley and Lily Tomlin socking it to the audience. Martin Sheen also reprised his role in the Oval Office from the highly regarded *Westwing* series (and reminded everyone to vote).

Another highlight of the show was crowd favorite Don Rickles winning the Emmy for Outstanding Individual Performance in a Variety or Music Program for HBO's *Mr. Warmth, the Don Rickles Project*, based on his career. Rickles accepted the award, his first Emmy, with sincere appreciation and also some of his legendary quick-witted acerbic humor. "It's a mistake," Rickles said. "I've been in the business 55 years and the biggest award I got was an ashtray from the Friar's in New York."

The big winner was the HBO historical miniseries *John Adams*, which racked up a record 13 overall awards, an unprecedented breakthrough for a period piece about American politics. It was followed by *30 Rock* with 7 Emmys and *Mad Men* with 6. *30 Rock* picked the Emmy for Outstanding Comedy Series, while *Mad Men*, a well-appointed and costumed 50s period show about the advertising industry, won in the Outstanding Drama Series category, the first basic-cable series ever to take the award,



Ever-dapper Alec Baldwin won for Lead Actor in a Comedy Series and saluted Tina Fey as "The Elaine May of our generation." Fey herself took Best Actress for *30 Rock*. Industry vet Glenn Close was the winner of the Emmy for as Outstanding Lead Actress in a Drama for the FX show *Damages*," and Bryan Cranston's performance in AMC's *Breaking Bad* earned him a surprise win as Outstanding Lead Actor in a Drama.

Other key winners included Paul Giamatti for his role as John Adams in the miniseries of the same name (who quipped that it shows that anyone can play the President), Laura Linney as a Lead Actress in a Miniseries for *John Adams*, and Jeremy Piven and Jean Smart for supporting roles in *Entourage* and *Samantha Who?* respectively.

In the popular Reality category, *The Great Race* was the series winner, while Jeff Probst saw Heidi Klum and the competition voted off and took the Emmy as best reality series host for *Survivor*.

Josh Groban provided the evening's sole musical performance, singing a medley of well-known television themes that ranged from *Mission Impossible* to *The Jeffersons* to *South Park*.

The night was lavish and fun. The 60th Emmys glamorous presentation ended with the Governor's Ball's everlasting Cinderella's glass slipper - galas galore.

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