

HBO Leads 60th Primetime Emmys
30 Rock, Mad Men Take Top Series
September 21, 2008

A 1960s advertising agency, a fictional sketch-comedy show and the second president of the United States were among the big winners at the 60th Primetime Emmy Awards.

Among the twenty-eight awards handed out over the course of the Television Academy's diamond anniversary event, which was telecast live on ABC, HBO topped the night with 10 winged statuettes. NBC followed with four.

Combined with its awards at last Saturday's Creative Arts Emmys, HBO led for the year as well, with 26 in all.

Leading the recipients of multiple awards between the two awards ceremonies was HBO's seven-part historical miniseries *John Adams*, with 13 Emmys, surpassing a miniseries record set by another HBO production, *Angels in America*, which won 11 in 2004, and ABC's *Eleanor and Franklin*, which won 11 in 1976.

It was an evening of milestones and memories. Among the September 21 ceremony's firsts: the Primetime Emmys' debut in their new venue, NOKIA Theatre L.A. LIVE, in downtown Los Angeles.

In another landmark, 2008 was the first time an Emmy was awarded for outstanding host for a reality or reality-competition program. The five nominees, Tom Bergeron (*Dancing with the Stars*), Heidi Klum (*Project Runway*), Howie Mandel (*Deal or No Deal*), Jeff Probst (*Survivor*) and Ryan Seacrest (*American Idol*) — commemorated the new category by hosting the festivities.

In addition, a new record was set for consecutive wins in a single category when Comedy Central's *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* prevailed as outstanding variety, music or comedy series and CBS's *The Amazing Race* was named outstanding reality-competition program. Their victories marked six straight for both shows, breaking the mark of five in a row held by NBC's *Frasier* in the outstanding comedy series category and CBS's *The*

Late Show With David Letterman in the outstanding variety, music or comedy series category.

Yet another breakthrough: in an unprecedented achievement, a basic cable production was named one of the year's top series when *Mad Men*, the moody AMC network ensemble set in an early-1960s New York City advertising agency, took the award for outstanding drama series. Heretofore, only the only cable series to win this award was *The Sopranos*, which aired on the pay service HBO.

For the second consecutive year, outstanding comedy series went to NBC's *30 Rock*, set amid the farcical backstage antics of a network sketch-comedy show.

30 Rock's other awards for comedy series included outstanding lead actor, which went to Alec Baldwin for his performance as officious network executive Jack Donaghy, and outstanding lead actress, which was awarded to Tina Fey for the role of harried writer-producer Liz Lemon. Fey also scored outstanding writing for a comedy series, for the episode titled "Cooter."

In addition to Fey, others prevailing in the writing categories included Matthew Weiner, who took the award for outstanding writing for a drama series for "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes," his pilot script for AMC's *Mad Men*. Outstanding writing for a miniseries, movie or dramatic special went to Kirk Ellis for *John Adams*.

After three previous supporting actor nominations for his comedic work on the Fox comedy *Malcolm in the Middle*, Bryan Cranston took home the statuette for outstanding lead actor in a drama series for his performance in AMC's *Breaking Bad*.

In a departure from Cranston's best known work, his character, Walter White, is a high school chemistry teacher who, when he is diagnosed with cancer, begins manufacturing methamphetamine in an effort to earn money to leave to his family upon his death.

Marking her second career Emmy among 11 nominations, Glenn Close was named outstanding lead actress in a drama series for the role of brilliant but devious attorney Patricia Hewes in FX's acclaimed legal thriller *Damages*.

Outstanding supporting actress in a drama series — the second Emmy of a distinguished career that also includes two Oscars — went to Dianne Wiest for her performance as psychotherapist Gina Toll on HBO's *In Treatment*. Outstanding supporting actor in a drama series went to Zeljko Ivanek, of FX's *Damages*, for his performance as Ray Fiske, a troubled attorney representing a volatile billionaire, played by Ted Danson, in a major lawsuit.

On the comedy side, outstanding supporting actress in a comedy series went to Jean Smart, as Christina Applegate's mother on ABC's *Samantha Who?* It was the third Emmy of Smart's career.

Also winning his third Emmy — for the third consecutive year — was Jeremy Piven, who was named outstanding supporting actor in a comedy series for his performance as frenetic, foul-mouthed talent agent Ari Gold on HBO's *Entourage*.

Outstanding miniseries was given to *John Adams*, based on David McCullough's biography, and outstanding made-for-television movie went to yet another HBO production, *Recount*, about the events surrounding the disputed results of the 2000 U.S. presidential election.

Paul Giamatti was named outstanding lead actor in a miniseries or movie for the title role of *John Adams*, and in the same production, Laura Linney captured the award for outstanding lead actress in a miniseries or movie for her performance as Adams's wife, Abigail.

John Adams also took outstanding supporting actor in a miniseries or movie, which was given to Tom Wilkinson, who played Benjamin Franklin. Outstanding supporting actress in a miniseries or movie was won by Dame Eileen Atkins in *Cranford*, a production of PBS's *Masterpiece Theatre*.

The ultimate winner among the reality competition program hosts was *Survivor*'s Jeff Probst, making him, fittingly, the sole survivor of the five nominees.

Crowd favorite Don Rickles was honored for outstanding individual performance in a variety or music program for HBO's *Mr. Warmth: The Don Rickles Project*.

Greg Yaitanes took outstanding directing for a drama series for the “House’s Head” episode of Fox’s *House*. Outstanding directing for a comedy series went to Barry Sonnenfeld for “Pie-Lette,” the pilot episode of ABC’s *Pushing Daisies*. Outstanding directing for a miniseries, movie or dramatic special was taken by *Recount*’s Jay Roach.

Outstanding directing for a variety, music or comedy program went to Louis J. Horvitz, who accepted the award, which was given for his work on ABC’s *80th Annual Academy Awards*, from the NOKIA Theatre L.A. LIVE production truck, where he was directing the very show that had just honored him with an Emmy.

Also among variety, music or comedy programming, Comedy Central’s *The Colbert Report* won its first Emmy when it was singled out for outstanding writing for a variety, music or comedy program.

Other highlights of the 60th Primetime Emmys telecast included onstage replicas of sets from such classic series as *Seinfeld*, *The West Wing*, *M*A*S*H* and *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*; a video montage of memorable acceptance speeches; the bestowal of a commemorative Emmy to writer-comedian Tommy Smothers, presented by Steve Martin; and a reunion of five stars from the groundbreaking comedy series *Laugh-In* — Ruth Buzzi, Gary Owens, Alan Sues, Lily Tomlin and Gary Owens — to present the award for outstanding variety, music or comedy series.

Rounding out this year’s winners between the 60th Primetime Emmys show and the Creative Arts Emmys, after HBO’s 26 Emmys and ABC’s 12, were CBS, NBC and PBS with 10 each; AMC with eight; Showtime with five; Fox with four; Comedy Central and FX Networks with three; Bravo, Cartoon Network and Sci Fi Channel with two; and The CW, Discovery Channel, Disney Channel, National Geographic Channel, nbc.com, Nickelodeon, SciFiChannel.com, TBS, The History Channel/VOD and TNT with one each.

Among recipients of multiple awards this Primetime Emmys season, following *John Adams*’ 13 wins, was *30 Rock*, which took seven overall. *Mad Men* won six, and *Damages*, *Pushing Daisies*, *Recount*, CBS’s *50th Annual Grammy Awards* and PBS’s *The War* captured three each. *Breaking Bad*, *Cranford*, *In Treatment* and *Mr. Warmth: The Don Rickles Project* all won two, as did ABC’s *80th Annual Academy Awards*, PBS’s *American Masters*,

HBO's *Autism: The Musical*, Sci Fi Channel's *Battlestar Galactica*, ABC's *Dancing with the Stars*, ABC's *Jimmy Kimmel Live* and Showtime's *This American Life*.

A complete list of winners is available at
http://cdn.emmys.tv/awards/2008pte/60thpte_nomswin.php