

CONGRATULATIONS

TO DISNEY'S HONOREES ON THEIR INDUCTION TO THE 2025 TELEVISION ACADEMY HALL OF FAME



VIOLA DAVIS



DON MISCHER



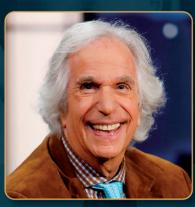
RYAN MURPHY



CONAN O'BRIEN



MIKE POST



HENRY WINKLER





Saturday, August 16

JW Marriott L.A. LIVE



Television Academy HALLOFFAME 2025

Viola Davis • Don Mischer Ryan Murphy • Conan O'Brien Mike Post • Henry Winkler

Saturday, August 16 JW Marriott L.A. LIVE

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DICK WOLF

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WELCOME...





Good evening, and welcome to the 27th Television Academy Hall of Fame induction ceremony. We are delighted to have you with us to honor a group of visionaries who have shaped the landscape of television in lasting, transformative ways.

Each of tonight's honorees is an Emmy winner, and deservedly so. But induction into the Hall of Fame is not about awards. It's about impact: indelible, enduring and undeniable.

Viola Davis, an actress and producer of extraordinary range and power, has brought truth and depth to every role she inhabits. Her work has elevated the standard for what we see — and feel — on screen.

The late Don Mischer was a master of the live event; a producer whose steady hand and creative vision gave us some of the most iconic moments in broadcast history. His legacy is one of elegance, precision and joy.

Ryan Murphy, a creative force who redefined television storytelling, has given voice to characters and communities long overlooked while delivering some of the most watched, most talked-about and most honored programs of the last 25 years.

Conan O'Brien, with his singular wit and fearless originality, has not only entertained millions but reinvented what a host can be across multiple eras and platforms.

Mike Post has composed the soundtrack of American television. His music is deeply embedded in our collective memory, instantly conjuring characters, stories and emotions.

Henry Winkler, whose portrayal of "The Fonz" became a cultural touchstone, is an actor, director, writer and producer whose wide-ranging career is a testament to his artistry, versatility and enduring appeal.

On behalf of the Academy — and everyone who loves television — we extend our deepest gratitude to the Hall of Fame Selection Committee, led by Rick Rosen. Their dedication and discernment have assembled a worthy group that reflects the highest achievements of our industry.

Thank you for being part of this historic moment as we honor these remarkable individuals and their unforgettable contributions to the medium we cherish.

Cris Abrego Chair

Maury McIntyre President & CEO

N B C U N I V E R S A L

PROUDLY CONGRATULATES

COMPOSER

MIKE POST

ON HIS INDUCTION TO THE

TELEVISION ACADEMY HALL OF FAME







TELEVISION LEGENDS

Since 1984, the Television Academy Hall of Fame has honored those who have made outstanding contributions in the arts, sciences or management of television over a lifetime career or through a singular achievement. The class of 2025 — Viola Davis, Don Mischer, Ryan Murphy, Conan O'Brien, Mike Post and Henry Winkler — joins an elite group.

The late John H. Mitchell, a former Television Academy president, founded the Hall of Fame. Tonight's honorees will bring home an award that takes the form of a crystal television screen on top of a cast-bronze base, designed by the late art director Romain Johnston.

The Hall of Fame Selection Committee is chaired by Rick Rosen, head of television for WME. In addition to Rosen, this year's committee included Emmy Award-winning producer Marcy Carsey; Pearlena Igbokwe, chairman, Universal Studio Group; Peter Roth, former chairman, Warner Bros. Television Group; Nina Tassler, partner at PatMa Productions; and Karey Burke, president of 20th Television.

PAST HALL OF FAME HONOREES

26TH HALL OF FAME

Debbie Allen, Ken Burns, Bob Daly, Robert L. Johnson, Rita Moreno, Donald A. Morgan; Bob Hope Humanitarian Award: Sean Penn

25TH HALL OF FAME

Robert A. Iger, Geraldine Laybourne, Seth MacFarlane, Jay Sandrich, Cicely Tyson

24TH HALL OF FAME

Roy Christopher, Shonda Rhimes, Joan Rivers, the original cast of Saturday Night Live, John Wells

23RD HALL OF FAME

Ray Dolby, David E. Kelley, Jay Leno, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Rupert Murdoch, Brandon Stoddard

22ND HALL OF FAME

Philo T. Farnsworth, Ron Howard, Al Michaels, Leslie Moonves, Bob Schieffer, Dick Wolf

21ST HALL OF FAME

Mary-Ellis Bunim & Jonathan Murray, Michael Eisner, Bill Klages, Mario Kreutzberger, Chuck Lorre, Vivian Vance & William Frawley

NETFLIX

PROUDLY CONGRATULATES
OUR FRIEND

RYAN MURPHY

ON HIS INDUCTION INTO THE

TELEVISION ACADEMY HALL OF FAME

20TH HALL OF FAME

Diahann Carroll, Tom Freston, Earle Hagen, Susan Harris, Peter Jennings, Cloris Leachman, Bill Todman

19TH HALL OF FAME

Candice Bergen, Charles Lisanby, Don Pardo, Gene Roddenberry, the Smothers Brothers. Bob Stewart

18TH HALL OF FAME

Beatrice Arthur, Larry Gelbart, Merv Griffin, Thomas S. Murphy & Daniel B. Burke, Sherwood Schwartz

17TH HALL OF FAME

Tom Brokaw, James Burrows, Leonard Goldberg, Regis Philbin, William Shatner

16TH HALL OF FAME

Bob Barker, Charles Cappleman, Art Carney, Katie Couric, Dan Rather, Brandon Tartikoff

15TH HALL OF FAME

Tim Conway & Harvey Korman, John Frankenheimer, Bob Mackie, Jean Stapleton, Bud Yorkin

14TH HALL OF FAME

Herbert Brodkin, Robert MacNeil & Jim Lehrer, Lorne Michaels, Carl Reiner, Fred Rogers, Fred Silverman, Ethel Winant

13TH HALL OF FAME

James L. Brooks, Garry Marshall, Quinn Martin, Diane Sawyer, Grant Tinker

12TH HALL OF FAME

Edward Asner, Steven Bochco, Marcy Carsey & Tom Werner, Charles Kuralt, Angela Lansbury, Aaron Spelling, Lew R. Wasserman

11TH HALL OF FAME

Michael Landon, Richard Levinson & William Link, Jim McKay, Bill Moyers, Dick Van Dyke, Betty White

10TH HALL OF FAME

Alan Alda, Howard Cosell, Barry Diller, Fred W. Friendly, William Hanna & Joseph Barbera, Oprah Winfrey

9TH HALL OF FAME

John Chancellor, Dick Clark, Phil Donahue, Mark Goodson, Bob Newhart, Agnes Nixon, Jack Webb

8TH HALL OF FAME

Andy Griffith, Ted Koppel, Sheldon Leonard, Dinah Shore, Ted Turner

7TH HALL OF FAME

Desi Arnaz, Leonard Bernstein, James Garner, Danny Thomas, Mike Wallace and the series I Love Lucy

6TH HALL OF FAME

Roone Arledge, Fred Astaire, Perry Como, Joan Ganz Cooney, Don Hewitt, Carroll O'Connor, Barbara Walters

5TH HALL OF FAME

Jack Benny, George Burns & Gracie Allen, Chet Huntley & David Brinkley, Red Skelton, David Susskind, David L. Wolper

4TH HALL OF FAME

Johnny Carson, Jacques-Yves Cousteau, Leonard Goldenson, Jim Henson, Bob Hope, Ernie Kovacs, Eric Sevareid

3RD HALL OF FAME

Steve Allen, Fred Coe, Walt Disney, Jackie Gleason, Mary Tyler Moore, Frank Stanton, Burr Tillstrom

2ND HALL OF FAME

Carol Burnett, Sid Caesar, Walter Cronkite, Joyce C. Hall, Rod Serling, Ed Sullivan, Sylvester L. (Pat) Weaver, Jr.

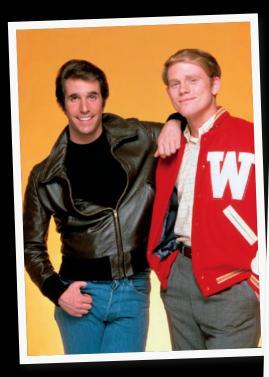
1ST HALL OF FAME

Lucille Ball, Milton Berle, Paddy Chayefsky, Norman Lear, Edward R. Murrow, William S. Paley, David Sarnoff

QUITE A JOURNEY FROM THERE TO HERE, MY FRIEND.

Congratulations on this long deserved honor.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT,
TALENT, COLLABORATIONS AND MOST OF ALL,
ENDURING FRIENDSHIP.





Love from all us Howards.

Ron, Cheryl and Family



VIOLA DAVIS

iola Davis defers to a philosophy when discussing her Television Academy Hall of Fame honor. "Our purpose is not what you do," she says. "It's what happens to people when you do what you do." She expands on the thought in a strong voice brimming with purpose: "I want my work to mean something. I want people to remember me in a good way."

As an esteemed artist, activist, producer, philanthropist, New York Times bestselling memoirist, EGOT winner and the first Black actress to win the Emmy Award for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Drama Series, Davis is already a legend for the ages. And while the star appreciates her accomplishments, she takes special pride in knowing what she had to overcome to achieve them.

Davis was born on a former plantation in South Carolina and raised with her five siblings in a condemned, rat-infested apartment building in Central Falls, Rhode Island. Her dad was a horse groomer; her mother worked as a maid and factory worker. "My background was so fraught with poverty and dysfunction," she says. "And when you're poor with dark skin, a wide nose and thick lips, people don't see you."

Acting, she notes, served as a salvation: "I wanted to heal and to be seen. I could work out everything going on inside me in a character. I could put it all out there." An excellent student and a gifted performer, Davis graduated from the prestigious Juilliard School in 1994.

She first made a name for herself in theater, earning a Tony nomination in 1996 for August Wilson's Seven Guitars and winning Tonys for King Hedley II in 2001 and Fences in 2010. She appeared in such films as Out of Sight, Traffic and Far from Heaven. Her brief but fiery performance in 2008's Doubt earned her an Oscar nod, and she won for Fences in 2017. But Davis grew up on series

like The Jeffersons, Sanford and Son and What's Happening!! She still reveres Cicely Tyson, who starred in The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman and Roots, and her own TV projects have always held deep significance.

"TV was the gateway into my dreams," she says.
"There are no words to describe the importance of seeing someone who looks like you. When you're in someone's home, you become part of their lives."

To this day, Davis says her role as a corrupt excop on a 2002 episode of Law & Order: Criminal Intent is a résumé highlight. "I played a serial killer who killed people with a baseball bat so I could collect money for my children's school," she says. "It was so out of the box." She also enjoyed portraying a vigilante on The Practice in 2003 because "the part was different and complicated." And, of course, Davis made history playing criminal defense attorney and professor Annalise Keating on ABC's How to Get Away with Murder from 2014 to 2020.

Looking back on her milestone 2015 Emmy night, "I remember taking a breath before I made my speech," she says. "I had to acknowledge the contributions of all the Black actresses on television at that time and who had come before me. The award was a conduit to something bigger and greater than me." She was Emmy nominated four more times for the role.

For all her accolades, Davis has never forgotten her roots. She's partnered with multiple programs to eradicate childhood hunger in the United States, and she and her husband, actor-producer Julius Tennon, recently launched the Davis-Tennon Foundation to address critical needs within Rhode Island communities. "I don't mean to sound so 'kumbaya,' but I want to live a transcendent life," she says. "It's not just about my successes. I absolutely believe you have to leave something to people, because that's the legacy that will last forever."



DON MISCHER

t's not wrong to refer to Don Mischer as an events producer and director. But that job title hardly does justice to the man responsible for delivering countless highlights across entertainment, culture, sports and politics for more than 40 years — and who continued to work right up until his death on April 11 at age 85.

"Don wasn't just covering someone walking out and getting an award," says Suzan Mischer, a former CBS executive who married her husband in 1989. "He was artistic. He was a thinker. He tried to find meaning in whatever story he was telling."

The 13-time Emmy winner — and 40-time nominee — told those stories as the preeminent behind-the-scenes architect of landmark TV events. A curated list includes 1983's Motown 25: Yesterday, Today, Forever, which featured Michael Jackson's electrifying "moonwalk" during his performance of "Billie Jean"; many Kennedy Center Honors; six Super Bowl halftime shows; the 2004 Democratic National Convention; the Opening Ceremony of the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City (the first major global event held after 9/11); 20 consecutive 9/11 Memorial Services at Ground Zero; and numerous Emmy, Oscar and Tony awards telecasts.

An executive producer and director of the Opening Ceremony at the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, he maximized a secret known to only a few higher-ups: The Olympic cauldron would be lit by ailing former heavyweight champion Muhammad Ali. "After he walked out, Don first kept the camera far back because it was this big mystery," Suzan recalls. "Then he finally went in close, and there was a roar in the stadium."

During the 2007 Super Bowl halftime show with Prince in Miami, Mischer let his meticulous researching and planning quite literally wash away and embraced Plan B. "It was pouring rain and

the electricians were out there trying to get wires connected — it would have given you a heart attack!" she says. "But he loved the unpredictability. Wonderful visual effects came out of it."

Mischer's vast output derived from a confluence of diverse skills and experiences. Growing up in San Antonio, he liked to make home movies. He araduated from the University of Texas in 1961 and earned a master's in political science and sociology there in 1963. The broadcast coverage surrounding President John F. Kennedy's 1963 assassination inspired him to go into television, and he received a grant that allowed him to work at a public TV station in Austin. He was also a disc jockey at a local radio station, played in a country band and could read music. "When he was visualizing material, he could always look at it in different ways other than 'Let's put a camera here,'" Suzan explains. "On top of that, he was a good leader, knew how to communicate and was an adrenaline junkie."

Mischer never lost his desire to live in (and for) the moment. Suzan says he was thrilled when Quincy Jones asked him in 2017 to oversee the ABC special Taking the Stage: African American Music and Stories That Changed America, which commemorated the opening of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History. His final credit was executive producer of the April 5 Breakthrough Prize ceremony, known as the Oscars of science; he had announced that he would retire after that event.

"He was not ready for his career to be gone," Suzan says. "But he felt very good about it, because he knew he did some wonderful work." That's why, she adds, he would have been "very happy" about his induction into the Television Academy Hall of Fame: "It's a beautiful award for him to get. He loved the people he worked with, and he loved what he did."



RYAN MURPHY

or a TV producer, having a single numberone show is enough to cement a career. In 2024, Ryan Murphy boasted a winning streak in which seven of his series were top-ranked on their respective platforms: Feud: Capote vs. The Swans, American Horror Story: Delicate, American Horror Stories, American Sports Story: Aaron Hernandez, Monsters: The Lyle and Erik Menendez Story, Grotesquerie and 9-1-1.

That incredible success is just one of the reasons why Murphy has become a peerless and prolific titan in entertainment. A screenwriter, producer and director, he's collected six Emmy awards out of 39 nominations in addition to a Tony award and three Grammy nominations. Beyond the credits and the lofty numbers, he has blazed a trail for bringing the stories of marginalized characters to the mainstream while exploring topics once considered too taboo for TV.

As The New Yorker put it in a 2018 profile, "Murphy's choices, perhaps more than those of any other showrunner, have upended the pieties of modern television. Like a wild guest at a dinner party, he'd lifted the table and slammed it back down, leaving the dishes broken or arranged in a new order."

Murphy's story begins in Indianapolis, where he performed in numerous local musicals and edited his high school newspaper. The ambitious student then studied journalism at Indiana University while holding down three jobs — including prestigious internships at the Miami Herald (he interviewed Meryl Streep!) and the Washington Post. After graduation in 1986, he landed in Hollywood and freelanced witty pop-culture stories for the Los Angeles Times and Entertainment Weekly. Good, but not good enough. He still sensed there was a more fulfilling way to combine his ideas and passions.

Murphy's first series, *Popular*, debuted on The WB in 1999. A biting satirical drama about two contrasting high-school girls that layered in ahead-of-its-time surrealistic comedic elements, it was

canceled after two seasons despite critical raves. Murphy was undeterred. During a meeting with FX in the early '00s, the former journalist regaled executives with anecdotes about the time he reported a feature on the booming and truly unbelievable plastic-surgery scene in Miami. He wanted to channel those observations into a TV show.

Nip/Tuck (2003–10), which juggled outrageous dark comedy, compelling family melodrama, riveting nighttime soap and suspenseful crime thriller, was the most popular basic-cable series in the 18–49 demographic for its first five seasons. More important, its phenom status enabled Murphy to develop more of his out-of-the-box ideas.

The glossy high-school comedy Glee proved to be a cultural game-changer. Unlike typical teen fare, it proudly featured queer kids, oddballs and underdogs in lead roles singing and dancing in iconic musical numbers. (The show received 40 Emmy nominations and won six during its 2009–15 run, also earning a Television Academy Honor in 2010; Murphy won in 2010 for Outstanding Directing for a Comedy Series.) On the darker end of the narrative spectrum, American Horror Story premiered in 2011 and ushered in the return of the now-familiar season-long anthology format. His body of work also encompasses American Crime Story, Doctor Odyssey, Mid-Century Modern and the upcoming American Love Story.

In between, Murphy has delivered provocative and wildly entertaining hits such as Scream Queens, Ratched, The Politician, Hollywood, Pose and the 9-1-1 franchise — many of which have starred his regular repertoire players Sarah Paulson, Billy Porter, Ben Platt, Judith Light, Gwyneth Paltrow and Angela Bassett. Murphy also launched the HALF Initiative, which aims to produce a more inclusive entertainment business by providing mentorship and education to people from underrepresented groups who are pursuing storytelling careers.

Murphy is now the ultimate Hollywood insider. Yet no matter what his future holds, he'll be showcasing and supporting outsiders for years to come.

CONAN O'BRIEN

e's been a revered TV fixture since the 1990s. He can effortlessly host anything from the Emmys to the MTV Movie Awards. His whip-smart brand of comedy has influenced the likes of John Mulaney and his own former intern, Mindy Kaling. He's a hilarious six-footfour ginger, for crying out loud!

And yet, Conan O'Brien admits he has difficulty processing his Television Academy Hall of Fame induction. "It just felt like there was an interminable period in my career when people said, 'What's he doing there and why is he writing that?'" he says. "Then very quickly, I have this honor. It's like we fast-forwarded my life."

First, let's rewind. O'Brien grew up some 3,000 miles from Hollywood in Brookline, Massachusetts. For this reason, he never believed show business was a tangible goal. But he did come from a big, bustling Irish-Catholic family that was, in his words, "really odd and eccentric." And while teen Conan lived to make his friends laugh and obsessed over SCTV, he also ground out his homework at his bedroom desk with the door closed.

The pieces started to fit when he attended Harvard and managed to land on staff at the famed Harvard Lampoon during freshman year. "The nickel dropped," he says. "I knew all I wanted was to be around funny people and write funny things." He honed his skills and hosted school concerts. He even took his SCTV hero John Candy on a campus tour. In retrospect, he says, "I wish I had gone to the mountain top at 12 years old and said, 'It shall be comedy for me or death!' But that didn't happen."

O'Brien did relocate to Los Angeles, where he wrote for HBO's *Not Necessarily the News* and performed with the Groundlings comedy troupe. He joined *Saturday Night Live* as a writer in 1987, and in 1989, the show's writing staff won an Emmy, its first since 1977. After leaving in 1991, O'Brien joined *The Simpsons* as a writer and supervising producer. He continues to have a soft spot for his classic "Marge vs. the Monorail" episode from 1993 because it paid homage to two childhood favorites: *The Music Man* and 1970s disaster movies. As he puts it, "It was very me."

His anonymous behind-the-scenes career ended when he was plucked to replace David Letterman on NBC's Late Night in 1993. Despite initial struggles, O'Brien persevered and established himself as a TV favorite via self-effacing humor, hysterical recurring characters and quirky stunts. "I think I brought silliness to late night," he says. "And I will commit to anything." He brought a similar comedy style to hosting both The Tonight Show and Conan, which aired on TBS for 11 years. He now hosts the Conan O'Brien Needs a Friend podcast (part of his Team Coco empire) and stars on the HBO Max travel show Conan O'Brien Must Go, which earned him his fifth Emmy in 2024.

Still, it's impossible to find a thread that connects all of O'Brien's work ... and that delights him to no end. "If you took the images of my comedy and put them together, you'd see so many different things," he says. Yes, the kid from Brookline really did interview Mary Tyler Moore and tour Spain with Javier Bardem and go up in a World War I airplane and don latex to look like an 800-year-old witch on Game of Thrones for a Comic-con gag short and jump into the Hudson River wearing a tuxedo. At night.

"I still don't understand what happened in my career," he says. "I don't think I can take credit for it. I've worked really hard, but mostly it's been impulse and drive." No joke.



MIKE **POST**

s a kid, Mike Post didn't just watch television; he devoured the entrancing instrumental themes he heard on shows like The Wild West West and Peter Gunn. So when he embarked on his music career, there was only one logical goal. "The truth is that going into the movie business wasn't a goal for me," he says. "TV fit perfectly."

Post's remarkable output is noteworthy in every sense of the word. For more than 50 years, the musician, composer, arranger and producer has contributed to instantly recognizable opening-credits themes for classic series such as *The Rockford Files, Hill Street Blues, The A-Team, The White Shadow, L.A. Law, Quantum Leap, NYPD Blue, Law & Order and Law & Order: SVU as well as the current BBC2 sitcom Mammoth. A five-time Emmy nominee, he won in 1996 for Outstanding Main Title Theme Music for Steven Bochco's acclaimed Murder One.*

The dun-dun sound effect that connects all the time-stamp scenes in the Law & Order universe? That's a Post marker, too. He submitted it after creator Dick Wolf asked him to craft something nobody had ever heard. "We sampled a bunch of drums, guys stomping on a wood floor in Japan, a hammer, a brake drum being hit by a hammer and a jail door slamming," he explains. "Dick Wolf has joked that when I die, that [contribution] will be on my tombstone."

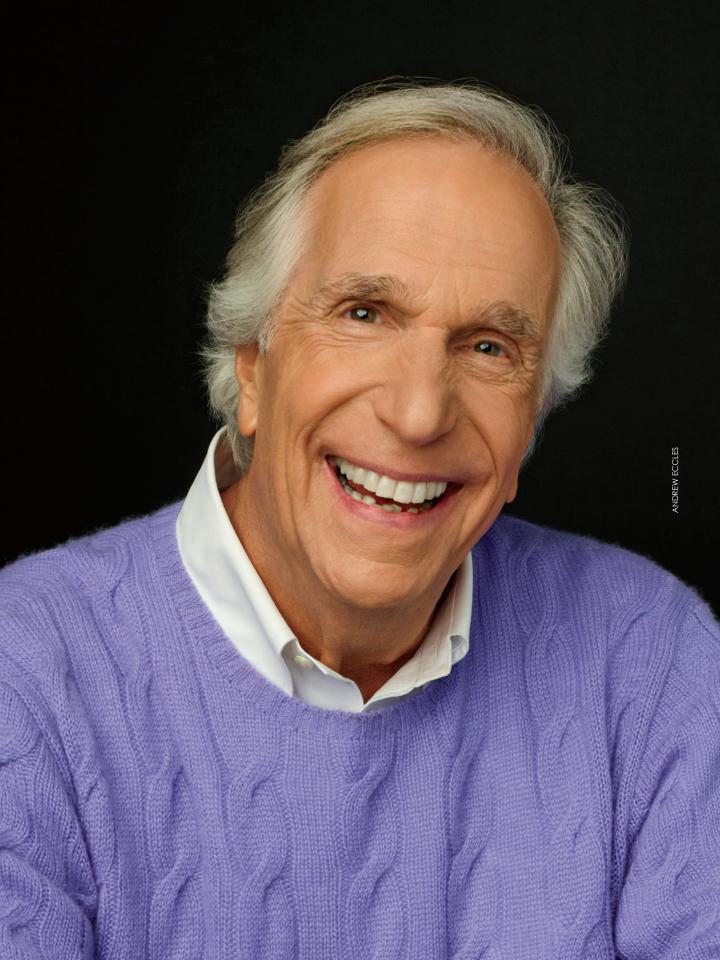
Born and raised in the San Fernando Valley, Post likens his illustrious résumé to a series of doors in rehearsal rooms that opened up for him. He walked through the first one as a young studio musician for the legendary Wrecking Crew during the 1960s. (That's him playing the 12-string guitar on Sonny & Cher's "I Got You Babe.") By 1968, the 24-year-old Post was serving as musical director for The Andy Williams

Show. Pete Carpenter, a trombonist friend who was a composer for Bewitched and The Andy Griffith Show, soon showed him the next entryway: "He said, 'Hey, you think arranging is great? When you're working with blank paper and you're the composer, it's even cooler, with more possibilities." They often worked together; Carpenter passed away in 1987.

Post took his first job in the field writing music for the ABC drama Toma in 1973. Though the series was short-lived, producer Stephen J. Cannell offered Post the opportunity to compose the title sequence for his upcoming detective series. The theme for The Rockford Files, a mix of blues and orchestra with an electric guitar bridge, was so popular that it reached No. 10 on the Billboard singles chart in 1975 and landed Post one of his five Grammys. His themes for The Greatest American Hero, Hill Street Blues and L.A. Law also transcended the medium and became radio staples.

"My background is pop and rock 'n' roll music, so every time I write a theme I'm trying to write a hit record," he explains. "If you're humming it and go, 'I can't get this thing out of my head,' then I've accomplished what I set out to do, and proud of it." While Post doesn't have a favorite among his themes, he singles out the harrowing music cue that played as Detective Bobby Simone (Jimmy Smits) succumbed to a post-heart-transplant bacterial infection in a 1998 episode of NYPD Blue.

Post is still busy working on TV music in his L.A. studio, with no plans to retire. Indeed, at 80, he still exudes both a youthful vigor and humble attitude. "I'm lucky enough to have a life making art that transports us," he says. "And to get this honor makes me feel so grateful for everything that's happened to me and everything that I've been given a chance to accomplish."



HENRY **WINKLER**

hen Henry Winkler accepted the Emmy in 2018 for Best Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series for his work on Barry—his first win of six nominations spanning 42 years—he started his speech by quoting a friend: "If you stay at the table long enough, the chips come to you. Tonight, I cleared the table."

Winning at life decade after decade? Well, that's the result of betting on yourself. With his innate likability and gung-ho determination, Winkler has triumphantly pivoted from frustrated student with a learning disability to Ivy League drama school graduate to TV comedy star to director and producer to bestselling children's book author to beloved scene stealer.

"It's all about the tenacity of knowing what you want without ambivalence, staying with your dream and not allowing all the other stuff to chuff it up," says Winkler, who went on to earn three more Emmy nominations for *Barry*. "Certainly, you cry and moan a little bit. But if you stay focused, you'll get to be in the Television Academy Hall of Fame."

Raised on the Upper West Side of New York City in the 1950s and '60s, Winkler found his escape at home, watching TV heroes on Zorro and The Lone Ranger. Though he struggled with dyslexia, he was determined to be a working actor. "Everybody in my life was against it," he says. "But I feel like I was born with a burning desire to make this living."

He studied at the Yale School of Drama, where a favorite professor taught him to "get the job and then do the job," no matter what. Winkler remembered that credo when he moved to Hollywood in 1973 and auditioned for the part of greaser Arthur "Fonzie" Fonzarelli on a new sitcom that would become Happy Days. "Changing my voice in the audition allowed my imagination to explode," he says. "But I did not know that the producers wanted an 11-foot Italian. What they got

was a five-foot-six New York Jew." Winkler imbued the character with so much coolness — the Fonz could turn on that jukebox with just one confident fist bump! — that Fonzie's brown leather jacket remains on display in the Smithsonian.

After Happy Days' 11-season run ended in 1984, Winkler forged a new path by starting a production company. He won two Daytime Emmys for a CBS Schoolbreak Special, which he directed and executive-produced. He also helped put together the action show MacGyver and served as its executive producer from 1985 to 1992. Winkler recalls that while filming one episode, he told then-ABC primetime series vice president Peter Roth that he'd be willing to pay out of pocket to have several horses chase the crafty title character on his white steed. "Peter said, 'OK, you can have your horses,'" he recalls, adding, "That was the day I became a producer."

Winkler eventually returned to the front of the TV camera, racking up dozens of memorable credits on series such as Arrested Development and Parks and Recreation. Then, in 2018, he started playing hilariously egocentric acting coach Gene Cousineau in HBO's Barry. The reinvention was complete. "I knew the actor I wanted to be at 27 and I pummeled the demons," he says. "But at 72, I got Barry and finally started to arrive where I wanted to be."

In his sixth decade of acting, Winkler doesn't like to dwell on previous accomplishments. Naming his professional high points, he selflessly offers, "I am amazed that I have worked with dynamic creators like Garry Marshall, Mitch Hurwitz, Michael Schur, Bill Hader and Alec Berg, because without their imaginations, I would have had nowhere to hang my hat."

Looking ahead, he promises the best is yet to come. "My favorite thing," he adds, "will be the next thing I do."

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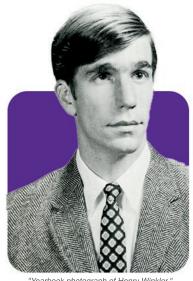
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"Yearbook photograph of Henry Winkler." The Emersonian, 1967, p. 67. Emerson College, 1967.

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