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‘Heated Rivalry,’ ‘Hacks,’ ‘Pluribus,’ ‘The Pitt’ Among Top Nominees for LGBTQ Critics’ Dorian TV Awards

AWARDS HQ June 22, 2026: Emmy Voting Ends at 10 p.m. Tonight; Isa Briones and Gerran Howell; Luke Tennie; Rhea Seehorn; More!

By Michael Schneider ▾



Courtesy of Bell Media



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Greetings from Variety Awards Headquarters! Today is **June 22, 2026**, which means nominations-round voting is ends **TONIGHT** at 10 p.m. It's then **16 days** until Emmy nominations are announced on **July 8**. And looking far ahead, it's **84 days** until the 78th Emmy Awards on **Sept. 14** on NBC.

OK, procrastinators: This is it! Get your nomination ballots in by 10 p.m. tonight! If you're in line, stay in line. (Actually, I'm not sure that's how it works here.) I'm happy to see that the Television Academy has eliminated the confusion that was going to come with having two different nominations announcements, and now we'll have the full list of nominees on July 8 -- and everyone will be able to include full bragging rights in their marketing campaigns.

Meanwhile, there's mourning in TV land, as we lost one of the all-time TV legends on Friday. Jimmy Burrows was an icon in every way, and it's still stunning to think about his impact on this business. "Mary Tyler Moore," "Taxi," "Cheers," "Frasier," "Friends," "Two and a Half Men," "The Big Bang Theory," "Will & Grace"... the list goes on. And of course, we most recently saw him playing himself on "The Comeback," where he performed a memorable monologue about how A.I. can't replace the blood, sweat and tears that come with creating and writing entertainment.

I once asked Burrows what his secret was to directing comedy. "You gotta make sure they hear the joke, you gotta make sure they see the joke, you gotta make sure you cover the joke, and, hopefully, the joke is funny."

Given his track record, I believe it's safe to say that's pretty good advice. Rest in peace, James Burrows.

Now, let's get going!

SHARE YOUR BURNING EMMY OR AWARDS QUESTIONS! Leave a message on the **Emmy Emergency Hotline** at **323-417-9110** or email machneider@variety.com and we will answer your question on an upcoming episode of the Awards Circuit Podcast!

'Heated Rivalry,' 'Hacks,' 'Pluribus,' 'The Pitt' Among Top Nominees for LGBTQ Critics' Dorian TV Awards

I'm starting to think that the Emmys may be the only awards show *not* to nominate "Heated Rivalry" this year. GALECA: The Society of LGBTQ Entertainment Critics has revealed nominations for its 17th Dorian TV Award nominations, and both *Crave*/HBO Max's "Heated Rivalry" and HBO Max's "Hacks" lead with noms including Best LGBTQ TV Show and Best Written TV Show.

In Best TV Drama, last year's winner, "The Pitt," will go up against "Heated Rivalry," as well as "Pluribus," "Industry" and "The Gilded Age." In comedy, "Hacks" faces off with "The Comeback," "Widow's Bay" and previous winner "Abbott Elementary."

As for limited series, "Half Man" will go up against "Beef," "DTF St. Louis," "Love Story: John F. Kennedy Jr. & Carolyn Bessette" and "All Her Fault."

"Ultimately the Dorian TV Awards are about queer critics deciding, collectively, what television did right. The shows leading our nominations this year—Heated Rivalry, Hacks, Pluribus and Half Man—aren't just excellent television, they're queer at their core," said GALECA Vice President **Gerrick Kennedy**. "GALECA is proud to recognize these outstanding programs and performances."

Here are this year's nominees:

BEST TV DRAMA

Heated Rivalry (HBO Max)
 Industry (HBO Max)
 The Gilded Age (HBO Max)
 Pluribus (Apple TV)
 The Pitt (HBO Max)

BEST TV COMEDY

Abbott Elementary (ABC)
 The Comeback (HBO Max)
 Hacks (HBO Max)
 Shrinking (Apple TV)

Widow's Bay (Apple TV)

BEST LGBTQ TV SHOW

The Comeback (HBO Max)

Hacks (HBO Max)

Half Man (HBO Max)

Heated Rivalry (HBO Max)

Fluribus (Apple TV)

BEST TV MOVIE OR LIMITED SERIES

All Her Fault (Peacock)

Beef (Netflix)

DTF St. Louis (HBO Max)

Half Man (HBO Max)

Love Story (FX/Hulu)

BEST NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGE TV SHOW

Blossoms of Shanghai (Criterion Channel)

Dan Da Dan (Netflix)

Friends: Beyond Journey's End (Crunchyroll)

Mussolini: Son of the Century (Mubi)

Squid Game (Netflix)

The Summer Hikaru Died (Netflix)

BEST LGBTQ NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGE TV SHOW

The Boyfriend (Netflix)

Chosen Home (Netflix)

Go For It, Nakamura-kun! (Crunchyroll)

The Summer Hikaru Died (Netflix)

Tremembé (Amazon MGM)

BEST WRITTEN TV SHOW

The Comeback (HBO Max)

Hacks (HBO Max)

Heated Rivalry (HBO Max)

Fluribus (Apple TV)

The Fit (HBO Max)

BEST TV PERFORMANCE – DRAMA

Marisa Abela, *Industry* (HBO Max)

Jamie Bell, *Half Man* (HBO Max)

Carrie Coon, *The Gilded Age* (HBO Max)

Myha'la Herrold, *Industry* (HBO Max)

Mark Ruffalo, *Task* (HBO Max)
 Eliza Scoborn, *Pluribus* (Apple TV)
 Connor Stoorie, *Heated Rivalry* (HBO Max)
 Hudson Williams, *Heated Rivalry* (HBO Max)
 Noah Wyle, *The Pitt* (HBO Max)
 Zendaya, *Euphoria* (HBO Max)

BEST SUPPORTING TV PERFORMANCE – DRAMA

François Arnaud, *Heated Rivalry* (HBO Max)
 Patrick Ball, *The Pitt* (HBO Max)
 Isa Briones, *The Pitt* (HBO Max)
 Richard Gadd, *Half Man* (HBO Max)
 Katherine LaNasa, *The Pitt* (HBO Max)
 Ken Leung, *Industry* (HBO Max)
 Charles Melton, *Beef* (Netflix)
 Sepideh Moafi, *The Pitt* (HBO Max)
 Colman Domingo, *Euphoria* (HBO Max)
 Karolina Wydra, *Pluribus* (Apple TV)

BEST TV PERFORMANCE – COMEDY

Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, *Wonder Man* (Disney+)
 Quinta Brunson, *Abbott Elementary* (ABC)
 Ayo Edebiri, *The Bear* (FX/Hulu)
 Elle Fanning, *Margo's Got Money Troubles* (Apple TV)
 Ethan Hawke, *The Lowdown* (FX/Hulu)
 Liza Kudrow, *The Comeback* (HBO Max)
 Dan Levy, *Big Mistakes* (Netflix)
 Matthew Rhys, *Widow's Bay* (Apple TV)
 Tim Robinson, *The Chair Company* (HBO Max)
 Jean Smart, *Hacks* (HBO Max)

BEST SUPPORTING TV PERFORMANCE – COMEDY

Leslie Bibb, *Hacks* (HBO Max)
 Colman Domingo, *The Four Seasons* (Netflix)
 Paul W. Downs, *Hacks* (HBO Max)
 Hannah Einbinder, *Hacks* (HBO Max)
 Harrison Ford, *Shrinking* (Apple TV)
 Janelle James, *Abbott Elementary* (ABC)
 Kate O'Flynn, *Widow's Bay* (Apple TV)
 Ashley Padilla, *Saturday Night Live* (NBC)
 Michelle Pfeiffer, *Margo's Got Money Troubles* (Apple TV)
 Meg Stalter, *Hacks* (HBO Max)

BEST TV MUSICAL PERFORMANCE

Andra McDonald, "Rose's Turn," *The 78th Tony Awards*

Bad Bunny, The Apple Music Super Bowl LX Halftime Show

Miles Caton, Raphael Saadiq, Misty Copeland, Eric Gales, Buddy Guy, Brittany Howard, Christone "Kingfish" Ingram, Jayme

Lawson, Li Jun Li, Bobby Rush, Shaboozey and Alice Smith, "I Lied to You," The 96th Academy Awards

Sabrina Carpenter and The Muppets, "Manschild," The Muppet Show

Sabrina Carpenter, Kermit the Frog and Miss Piggy, "Islands in the Stream," The Muppet Show

BEST UNSUNG TV SHOW

Boots (Netflix)

English Teacher (FX/Hulu)

The Four Seasons (Netflix)

From (MGM+)

Murderbot (Apple TV)

BEST CURRENT AFFAIRS SHOW

The Daily Show (Comedy Central)

Hot Ones (YouTube)

Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (HBO Max)

Late Night with Seth Meyers (NBC)

The Late Show with Stephen Colbert (CBS)

BEST TV DOCUMENTARY OR DOCUMENTARY SERIES

Kyle (Netflix)

Mr. Scorsese (Apple TV)

Seen & Heard: The History of Black Television (HBO Max)

Selena y Los Dinos (Netflix)

The Yogurt Shop Murders (HBO Max)

BEST LGBTQ TV DOCUMENTARY OR DOCUMENTARY SERIES

Club Cumming (WOW Presents Plus)

Enigma (HBO Max)

It's Dorothy! (Peacock)

Lilith Fair: Building a Mystery (Hulu)

Murder in Glitterhall City (HBO Max)

BEST GENRE TV SHOW

Alien: Earth (FX/Hulu)

The Boys (Amazon Prime Video)

IT: Welcome to Derry (Max)

Pluribus (Apple TV)

Widow's Bay (Apple TV)

BEST REALITY SHOW

The Boyfriend (Netflix)

Love on the Spectrum (Netflix)
RuPaul's Drag Race (MTV/Paramount+)
Top Chef (Bravo)
The Traitors (Peacock)

BEST ANIMATED SHOW

Bob's Burgers (Fox)
Invincible (Amazon Prime Video)
Hazbin Hotel (Amazon Prime Video)
Long Story Short (Netflix)
South Park (Paramount+)

MOST VISUALLY STRIKING TV SHOW

Alien: Earth (FX/Hulu)
Euphoria (HBO Max)
The Gilded Age (HBO Max)
Heated Rivalry (HBO Max)
Fluribus (Apple TV)

CAMPIEST TV SHOW

All's Fair (Hulu)
The Comeback (HBO Max)
The Hunting Wives (Netflix)
Palm Royale (Apple TV)
The Traitors (Peacock)

'Give Me a Call Back, HBO': Why Brittany Allen Submitted Herself for an Emmy as a Dying Cancer Patient on 'The Pitt' After the Network Ignored Her Calls



HBO Max

Clayton Davis has the details:

"Give me a call back, HBO," **Brittany Allen** says with a smile, on a Zoom call from the Pasadena backyard where she lives with her husband and raises their 3-year-old son. The cable network hasn't been in touch since she learned, through her now-former publicist, that she would not be part of its Emmy submission package for the medical drama "The Pitt." So she submitted herself.

Allen plays Roxie, a dying wife and mother who arrives in the trauma bay during the show's second season. The role was written for six episodes, then two more were added, and Allen spent weeks unsure whether she would surface in what would have been Roxie's eighth, lying in frame as a body after the character succumbs to cancer. Had that scene aired, it could have pushed her past the threshold for guest drama actress and forced her into supporting drama actress, where she would compete against reigning champion **Katherine LaNasa** and contenders **Sepideh Moafi**, **Taylor Dearden** and **Isa Briones**.

"I was waiting to see if they would include that scene they had shot," Allen says. "When I saw that they just had her pass away off camera, first of all, I thought that was a beautiful decision creatively. And then it opened the door for me to be eligible, which was, oh my God, exciting."

[Read more here.](#)

Variety and CNN's Actors on Actors Season 24 Breaks Emmys Lineup Record With 178 Million Social Video Views: Watch The Conversations Here

Variety and CNN's "Actors on Actors" Season 24 is the franchise's biggest Emmys lineup to date.

The video series, which pairs actors in conversation with one another to discuss the top contenders of awards season, amassed an additional 80 million views from the previous season, reaching a total of 178 million views across all platforms. The social campaign was led by Variety's social media team, **Antonio Ferme** and **Harper Mays**, with support from Online Managing Editor **Zack Sharf**.

"From Jennifer Aniston and Lisa Kudrow cracking up over their memories from 'Friends' to Kerry Washington and Tony Goldwyn speculating about where their 'Scandal' characters would have ended up, 'Actors on Actors' continues its remarkable run as one of the Internet's most viral and talked about interview series," said **Ramin Setoodeh**, Variety's co-president and co-editor in chief. "You can stream all 13 new episodes now on the CNN app or Variety's YouTube channel."

Or, you can click on the videos right here!

Jamie Lee Curtis & Mariska Hargitay | Actors on Actors

Colman Domingo & Sarah Pidgeon | Actors on Actors

Bryan Cranston & Rhea Seeborn | Actors on Actors

Peter Dinklage & Kit Harington | Actors on Actors

Claire Danes & Richard Gadd | Actors on Actors

Sally Field & Noah Wyle | Actors on Actors

Josh Hutcherson & Elizabeth Banks | Actors on Actors

Tracy Morgan & Marcello Hernández | Actors on Actors

Bryan Cranston & Rhea Seeborn | Actors on Actors

Bowen Yang & Rachel Sennott | Actors on Actors

Paul Anthony Kelly & Patrick Ball | Actors on Actors

Kerry Washington & Tony Goldwyn | Actors on Actors

Peter Dinklage & Kit Harington | Actors on Actors

Keke Palmer & Sharon Stone | Actors on Actors

AWARDS CIRCUIT PODCAST: 'The Pitt' Stars Isa Briones and Gerran Howell on Who Gets Squeamish on Set, Season 3 Expectations and the Unlikely Santos/Whitaker Friendship



PHOTO: Mike

"The Pitt" stars **Isa Briones** and **Gerran Howell** say they're no longer squeamish about the things they see on set. "It is weird that I don't get grossed out anymore?" asks Howell, who plays resident doctor Dennis Whitaker. "Is that a red flag? It is gross, don't get me wrong, especially when we're about to do a take and they'll rush in and make it look fresh by putting all sorts of liquids in"

Briones, who plays fellow resident Dr. Trinity Santos, agrees that "it doesn't feel as weird anymore. Everything's so cool. I'm just so impressed by our team that they can make all this happen. I feel like **Katherine [LaNasa]**, who plays Nurse Dana Evans, is the one who still gets the most grossed out, because she's not always in all of those intense moments."

But that doesn't mean there still aren't some awkward moments.

"I remember walking to makeup one day, and seeing Tom, the fantastic SFX guy, with a clear box that just had a prosthetic erect penis," Howell recalls. Adds Briones: "It was so funny in a box, as if you were at a Michelin star restaurant where they serve you something in a clear cloche."

Briones and Howell stopped by the Variety Awards Circuit Podcast to talk about the unlikely friendship between Santos and Whitaker, some of the rabid fan reaction (including a candle depicting Santos swaddling Baby Whitaker) and what they'd most like to tell their characters. The duo also share what they know about Season 3 (not much!) and take our 10 Questions quiz.

Listen below!

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO ISA BRIONES AND GERRAN HOWELL ON THE AWARDS CIRCUIT PODCAST](#)

10 QUESTIONS WITH ISA BRIONES and GERRAN HOWELL:

- 1. Childhood nickname:** Briones: "Isa Pizza." Howell: "Big G." (Says Briones: "Oh, that's gonna stick!")
- 2. Something you loved as a kid but can't believe you were into it now:** Briones: "I still love everything. My mind immediately went to Polly Pockets. And chewing on Polly Pocket clothes... i don't regret Polly Pockets but i do regret Bratz dolls because you can take off their entire foot and that's so spooky to me." Howell: "I went through a puppet phase when I was a kid."
- 3. Go-to Karaoke or sing-in-the-shower song:** Briones: "Wannabe by Spice Girls." Howell: "Kiss from a Rose by Seal."
- 4. Give me an alternate title for your show:** Briones: "The Piss." Howell: "Whitaker's Very Bad, No Good Day."
- 5. What's your secret talent?:** Briones: "Once I have a talent, it's never secret. I'm telling everyone!" Howell: "Puppetry, apparently."
- 6. Favorite ice cream flavor:** Briones: "Van Leewen honeycomb. Also a classic, cookies and cream." Howell: "Pum and raisin."
- 7. The one item you couldn't live without:** Briones: "Fish sauce." Howell: "Caffeine at the moment."
- 8. What TV show in all of history do you wish you were a cast member of?:** Howell: "Twin Peaks." Briones: "New Girl" or "Parks and Recreation."
- 9. Fictional character you most admire:** Howell: The Dude from "The Big Lebowski." Briones: Leslie Knope.
- 10. Your favorite piece of advice:** Howell: "In the industry, I think the best advice I was given is being comfortable with uncertainty. It was basically kind of saying accept the powerlessness you have sometimes as an actor, but as long as you keep doing what you're doing, stuff will find you." Briones: "Celebrate the little things. Because if you're constantly waiting for the big thing that you're going to celebrate, then you're going to be living in such disappointment until then. So actually celebrating like the little moments that, 'that audition went really well. I felt really good about that.' Or, 'I got a call back. Like, how exciting is that?' Always in my family, we would be like, if someone got a call back, then we'll make a steak tonight. Those little things to kind of keep the magic in life. It's all just these little steps forward."

"Variety's 'Awards Circuit' podcast, produced by Michael Schneider, is your one-stop listen for lively conversations about the best in film and television. Each week 'Awards Circuit' features interviews with top film and TV talent and creatives;

discussions and debates about awards races and industry headlines; and much more. Subscribe via Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, Spotify or anywhere you download podcasts. New episodes post weekly.

Liza Colón-Zayas and Jeff Miller to Announce Emmy Nominations



Clayton Davis writes:

The Television Academy has announced that Emmy winners **Liza Colón-Zayas** ("The Bear") and **Jeff Miller** ("Somebody Somewhere") will present the nominations for the 78th Emmy Awards on July 8. The nominations ceremony will stream live from the Academy's Wolf Theatre in the Saban Media Center on [Emmys.com/nominations](https://www.emmys.com/nominations) at 8:30 a.m. PT. Television Academy Chair **Cris Abrego** will host the event.

"This year's submissions reflect the undiminished creative range and vitality of our medium, celebrating both emerging talent and beloved creative voices who are shaping the future of the industry," Abrego said in a statement. "We are thrilled to acknowledge these artists and storytellers whose work matters so deeply to audiences around the world. I'm delighted to welcome Liza and Jeff to usher in another exceptional Emmy celebration."

[Read more here.](#)

AWARDS CIRCUIT COLUMN: 'Shrinking,' 'The Pitt' and 'Abbott Elementary' Made Luke Tennie the King of Warner Bros. This Season



Kevin Estrada

You want to feel good about Hollywood, or even the world, at the moment? Go over to **Luke Tennie's** Instagram account. It's OK, I'll wait.

You're back! So did you see the post where Tennie created a montage of his characters: Sean on "Shrinking," Cruz on "The Fit" and Dom on "Abbott Elementary"? "Grateful," Tennie wrote.

My favorite part came in the comments, with his co-stars and producers out in force. From "Abbott Elementary" co-showrunner **Patrick Schumacker**: "You are the king of Warner Bros.!" From "The Fit" star **Taylor Dearden**: "The King of the Warner Bros. lot!" His "Shrinking" colleague **Jessica Williams**: "Incredible incredible! Sooo proud of you!" **Ted McGinley**: "This kid BRINGS IT!" **Patrick Ball**: "This is so legend." And so on.

There are a lot of overachievers on TV this Emmy season — **Michelle Pfeiffer** ("The Madison" and "Margo's Got Money Troubles"), **Jason Bateman** ("Black Rabbit" and "DTF St. Louis") and **David Harbour** ("Stranger Things" and "DTF St. Louis") among them. But Tennie has the rare bragging rights of being seen on three different shows on three different outlets (Apple TV, HBO Max and ABC) at the same time.

The through line is Warner Bros. TV — which is how he was able to pull off that triple play. And it's also an encouraging note that all three shows shoot in Los Angeles, including on the Warner Bros. lot.

So, Luke Tennie, are you currently the hardest working man on TV?

"I keep seeing the hashtag, and I ain't mad at it," he smiles. "I'll take it!"

[Read more here.](#)

WDF and ReFrame Release Emmys 'Who to Watch' FYC Guide Highlighting Women, Nonbinary and Trans Individuals in the Least Gender-Diverse Categories



Jazz Tangney writes:

WIF (Women in Film) and ReFrame have partnered to release a "Who to Watch" TV FYC guide spotlighting the contributions of women, nonbinary, and trans individuals in the least gender-diverse categories for TV series awards.

Among the highlighted women creatives are: **Quinta Brunson** ("Abbott Elementary"), **Lucia Aniello** and **Jen Statsky** ("Hacks"), **Jenny Han** and **Sarah Kucserka** ("The Summer I Turned Pretty"), **Jess Brownell** ("Bridgerton"), **Hailey Z. Boston** ("Something Very Bad Is Going to Happen"), **Jenni Kanner** ("Nobody Wants This") and **Rebecca Perry Culter** ("The Hunting Wives").

In a statement to Variety, Kirsten Schaffter, CEO of WIF said, "The Who to Watch TV FYC List is a call to action to awards voters – these directors, writers, cinematographers, composers, and VFX supervisors are doing extraordinary work in categories where gender representation has the furthest to go." Schaffter added, "This list is uniquely powerful because it was built by our community: WIF members, tastemakers, executives, creatives, and actors who know the entertainment industry from the inside. See their work. Champion their shows. And when it's time to vote, remember their names."

Read WIF & ReFrame's 2025/2026 TV FYC Guide [here](#).

Watch My Show: 'The Paper,' 'The Testaments,' 'American Classic' Producers Tackle Our Showrunner Survey



Karen Eastman/PEWRESEARCH

We've asked showrunners on first-year (or one-time-only) programs to fill out our irreverent 'Watch My Show' survey and its seven questions. Here's this week's batch.

Greg Daniels and Michael Koman, "The Paper" (Peacock)

- 1. Sum up your show's pitch in one sentence.** A documentary crew follows an idealistic young editor's attempt to revive a struggling mid-western newspaper.
- 2. What's an alternate title for your show?** "Arbejdsglæde" (An actual Danish word I just found and don't how to pronounce that means "happiness at work.")
- 3. What do we need to know before tuning in?** A newspaper is like a web site made of dried leaves you can hold in your hand.
- 4. Give us an equation for your show.** [Didn't answer]
- 5. What's the best thing someone said about your show?** It feels wrong to repeat a compliment, but somebody gave it a compliment.
- 6. If you could work on any other series in TV, what would it be?** To impress my children: "Wild Kratts".
- 7. Finish this sentence: "If you like _____, you'll love our show."** Food and shelter



Stacy

Bruce Miller, "The Testaments" (Hulu)

1. Sum up your show's pitch in one sentence. "Growing up Gilead"
2. What's an alternate title for your show? "A Plum's Tale"
3. What do we need to know before tuning in? You might want to have some Scotch in the house?
4. Give us an equation for your show. Men plus power equals women minus fingers.
5. What's the best thing someone said about your show? "I see myself in those girls."
6. If you could work on any other series in TV, what would it be? "The Firm"
7. Finish this sentence: "If you like _____, you'll love our show." Free speech.



Bob Martin and Leslie Urdang, "American Classic" (HGN+)

1. Sum up your show's pitch in one sentence. After a spectacular public meltdown, celebrated actor Richard Bean (Kevin

Kline returns to his hometown and his legendary family-run theater to find his brother (**Jon Tenney**), now married to the woman they both love (**Laura Linney**), has turned it into a third-rate dinner theater, prompting Richard to vow to save the theater and the struggling town by producing, directing and starring in an audacious production of "Our Town."

2. What's an alternate title for your show? "Full of Beans"

3. What do we need to know before tuning in? That the show is so much more than you expect. It's about family and community— it's surprising, hysterically funny and has many moments that will move you to tears. It is optimistic and human and a much needed balance to so many of the darker shows on television.

4. Give us an equation for your show. 94% Rotten Tomatoes + a ton of laugh out loud experiences + innumerable emotional moments + Kevin Kline + Laura Linney + Jon Tenney + **Len Cariou** + **Tony Shalhoub** + **Jessica Hecht** + **Aaron Tveit** + numerous of other extraordinary actors + dozens of surprises + the must-see TV jewel "American Classic".

5. What's the best thing someone said about your show? "The MGM+ comedy American Classic deserves a standing ovation. It's perfectly cast and written so sincerely, with genuine laughs but just as much genuine emotion." And: "This is Emmy Award-worthy work for Kevin Kline... It's also a show that will make people want to go to the theater. Or maybe just go back home. And those kinds of TV series, the ones that also make people nostalgic about life, just don't happen very often."

6. If you could work on any other series in TV, what would it be? "American Classic, Season 2"

7. Finish this sentence: "If you like _____, you'll love our show." Laughing and crying at the same time.

AWARDS CIRCUIT PODCAST: 'The Four Seasons' Stars Will Forte and Karri Kenney-Silver on How Close to Home Their Show Really Is



Earl Gibson III

"The Four Seasons" writers often mine their own lives — and their spouses — for material on the Netflix comedy. But for one Season 2 storyline, the producers were inspired by something that actually happened on set.

Early on in Season 2 of "The Four Seasons," the show's vacationing pals are forced to quarantine inside their cabin because a deranged criminal is on the loose. Turns out actually happened to the show during the production of Season 1.

"We were shooting, as, as **Colman [Domingo]**'s character would say, 'too far upstate,' and I remember we were in our trailers at lunchtime, thinking 'this is taking a long time. Normally, we would be back in hair and makeup by now, and this is very strange,'" recalls star **Kerri Kenney-Silver**, who plays Anne (the ex-wife of **Steve Carrell**'s Nick).

"And then they finally came and said, 'Actually, you guys are gonna go home,'" she continues. "Everyone's kind of whispery, and I'm like, 'uh oh, did someone get like stuck in a crane or something, like lose a leg?' No, there was a manhunt, there was someone on the loose with a weapon, and the whole area was locked down. They had to get us out, our crew, everybody to safety. Not funny at all. Yeah, life imitates art."

OK, so perhaps most of us have never been on lockdown as a lunatic on the lam forces you indoors. But we've all been handed curveballs in life, just like the characters in "The Four Seasons," as the show checks in with them on vacation every few months. And that relatability is what makes "The Four Seasons" tick.

"I feel very seen," says **Will Forte**, who plays Jack, a school teacher who's married to Tina Fey's character, Kate. "The writers do such an amazing job of pulling out all these moments that are so relatable, and I see myself very much in my own character," he says. "So much stuff hits so close to home. It's a real honor to be a part of this show, where the writing is just so amazing, it's perfect."

Forte and Kenney-Silver spoke to the Variety Awards Circuit Podcast about Season 2 of "The Four Seasons," and how it's fun to watch the series a few times to get all the references and jokes. They also looked back at their first time in Variety, and took the 10 Questions quiz. Listen below!

CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO WILL FORTE AND KERRI KENNEY-SILVER
ON THE AWARDS CIRCUIT PODCAST

10 QUESTIONS WITH WILL FORTE and KERRI KENNEY-SILVER:

1. Childhood nickname: Forte: "'Will the FILL.' 'Foreplay' was also one, Foreskin, for 'Forte.' Or 'Farts.'" Kenney-Silver: "Care Bear."

2. Something you loved as a kid but can't believe you were into it now: Forte: "Mine is pixie sticks. Just plain sugar, and now it's too much!" Kenney-Silver: "I guess mine would be those Stouffer's Salisbury steak dinners. But mine would still be that."

3. Go-to Karaoke or sing-in-the-shower song: Forte: "'Just Once,' by James Ingram. Merle Haggard, 'Mama Tried.' Black Sabbath, 'War Pigs.'" Kenney-Silver: "I hate karaoke! I like to sing along with a lot of yacht rock."

4. Give me an alternate title for your show: Forte: "Seasons." Kenney-Silver: "By our 13th season, they'll just be calling it 'Seasons' or 'Sons' or 'Siss.'"

5. What's your secret talent?: Forte: "Probably skiing for me. I don't know people would know I'm a good skier. My dad was a huge skier, loved skiing, and so he got us on the ski team really early." Kenney-Silver: "I am a surprisingly good cake decorator, because I worked at a place where I decorated cakes and cookies when I was in college. So I tend to, when I really want to dig in, like my son's first 14 years of birthdays were sometimes three and four layer cakes that I would spend a week or two on."

6. Favorite ice cream flavor: Forte: "Jeni's Goopy butter cake. Honorable mention to Caramel Cone from Haagen-Dazs and Double Chocolate Malted Crunch from Thrifty." Kenney-Silver: "Cotton candy. I like some really gross stuff. It's pink and blue, sometimes it turns your mouth blue for several days"

7. The one item you couldn't live without: Forte: "My wife and kids." Kenney-Silver: "How do you not say that? Like, my wife and kids! Oh, wait, I have a husband and a son. They're great."

8. What TV show in all of history do you wish you were a cast member off? Forte: "Cheers." Kenney-Silver: "Carol Burnett."

9. Fictional character you most admire: Kenney-Silver: "I love Eloise from the book 'Eloise.' The idea of like living at the Plaza Hotel, dancing around, not a care in the world, jumping on beds, eating candy."

10. Your favorite piece of advice: Kenney-Silver: "My favorite piece of advice I ever received was from my mother. 'People would take you more seriously, Kerri, if you wore eyeshadow,' and she meant it in the most loving way. She's the greatest mom ever, she was my biggest cheerleader, and she really meant that. And you know what, she wasn't wrong. Guess what? I put on eyeshadow for you guys today." Forte: "Work wise, it would have been Bruce Dern doing the movie 'Nebraska,' which just distilled down, it was basically 'just be honest. Just do everything honestly.' Which at the time, I don't think really soaked in, because I was like, that's sounded so actor mumbo jumbo. But the longer we were there, and the more he talked, the more I realized, 'oh, he's absolutely right.' You got to find the truth of each character, and try to be as honest as you can. Find the truth of the scene, maybe it's some absurd sketch, and you just got to find that truth of that scene."

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'The Pitt,' 'The Simpsons,' 'The Chair Company' Among 2026 Rockie Awards Program Competition Winners



19/39

"The Pitt," "The Simpsons," "The Chair Company" and "Mountainhead" were among the big winners as the Banff World Media Festival announced winners on Tuesday for the 2026 Rockie Awards International Program Competition. Hosted by Aliana Harkin ("Full Frontal With Samantha Bee"), the event took place at the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel in Banff, Alberta, Canada, at the same time as the Banff Gala Awards.

The Rockie Awards this year featured 151 nominees from 21 countries across 29 categories, while the Banff Gala Awards recognizes top creative talent and executives -- which this year included Jason Priestley (Canadian Award of Distinction), Tantoo Cardinal (Career Achievement Award), Mae Martin (Creative Voice Award) and Ken Jeong (Sir Peter Ustinov Award).

Also, Spain was named this year's Country of Honor.

Here are this year's winners:

Arts & Entertainment

Comedy & Variety: "The Graham Norton Show" (So Television) UK

Competition Series & Game Shows: "Destination X" (Twofour, BBC One) UK

Docuseries: "Tous en chœur" (Sphere Media, AMI Télé) CANADA

Lifestyle: "No Taste Like Home with Antoni Porowski" (Studio Ramsay Global, National Geographic) USA

Reality Series: "Bloodlines" (Seefood TV, TV 2 Norway, Seefood Distribution) NORWAY

Documentary & Factual Arts & Culture: "The Last Musician of Auschwitz" (Two Rivers Media, BBC, Access Entertainment, Sphere Abacus) UK

Crime & Investigation: "Don't Date Brandon" (Wag Entertainment, See It Now Studios, Paramount+, Fremantle International) UK/USA

Environmental & Wildlife: "A Real Bug's Life" (Plimsoll Productions) USA

History & Biography: "The Twister: Caught in the Storm" (RAW) UK/USA

Science & Technology: "A.I. Love You" (Nordisk Film TV Denmark) DENMARK

Short Form Non-Fiction Series: "Guardians" (Zandland, The Royal Foundation of the Prince and Princess of Wales, United For Wildlife) UK

Social Issues and Current Affairs: "Love + War" (Little Monster Films) USA

Sports Documentary: "Saints And Warriors" (SonoNative, Grand Scheme, Uninterrupted Canada, First Take Entertainment) CANADA

Children & Youth

Animation Preschool: "The Scarecrows' Wedding" (Magic Light Pictures, BBC, ZDF) UK

Animation Children: "Pudsey and the Thread of Hope" (BBC Studios Kids & Family, BBC) UK

Live Action/ Children: "Knee High Spies" (Werner Film Productions, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Australian Children's Television Foundation, Screen Australia, VicScreen) AUSTRALIA

Live Action/ Youth: "Crington" (New Pictures, BBC) UK

Scripted

Feature Length Film: "Mountainhead" (HBO Films, Project Zeus, Hot Seat Attractions) USA

Drama Series/ English Language: "The Pitt" (HBO Max, John Wells Productions, R. Scott Gemmill Productions, Warner Bros. Television) USA

Drama Series/ Non-English Language: "Empathie" (Trio Orange) CANADA

Comedy Series/ English Language: "The Chair Company" (HBO, HyperObject Industries, Zanin Corp) USA

Animated Series: "The Simpsons" (20th Television Animation) USA

Limited Series: "Prisoner 951" (Dancing Ledge Productions, BBC) UK

Podcasts: "Toy Soldier" (The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) AUSTRALIA/CANADA

Web Series and Content Creators: "Moonbird" (Kutkina Productions, Shevak Films, SBS) AUSTRALIA

Best Use of Music in a Series: "Stranger Things" (Picture Music Company, Inc.) USA

Best Performance in a Drama: Malin Åkerman, "The Hunting Wives" (Linnagate Television, 3 Arts) USA

Best Performance in a Comedy: Aimee Lou Wood, "Film Club" (Gaumont, BBC) UK

AWARDS CIRCUIT COLUMN: The TCA Awards Must Bring Back An In-Person Ceremony to Ensure Its Longevity



Courtesy of the TCA Awards

The Television Critics Association last week announced nominations for this year's TCA Awards, and I love that the categories are simple and to the point. We're choosing the outstanding individual achievement in drama (Noah Wyle vs. Ehea Seeborn) and comedy (the Harrison Ford-Jean Smart smackdown of our dreams), in addition to best new show and overall program of the year ("The Late Show With Stephen Colbert" beating out its scripted rivals? Could happen!).

It's a nice antidote to the Emmys and other TV awards shows. Too bad an actual TCA Awards ceremony doesn't exist at the moment. Like many events, the TCA Awards went press-release-only during the pandemic, and then in 2023 due to the Hollywood strikes.

Finally, the awards returned to an in-person event during the org's 2024 summer press tour, just in time for its 40th edition. It was a dynamic evening, with the producers and stars of FX's "Shogun," HBO Max's "Hacks" and Netflix's "Baby Reindeer" among those in attendance.

Because they weren't televised, the TCA Awards were always a fun, pressure-free night for the folks behind some of TV's biggest shows – and getting recognition from the country's most influential TV critics and reporters meant something extra special.

The TCA Awards traditionally took place during the summer press tour. But the 2024 edition also was, sadly, what appears to have been the final one (after four decades!) for the group. Last year, with networks and streamers dropping their participation in the press tour, and members outside Los Angeles finding it increasingly tough to find the funds to travel here for several weeks, the event was again scrapped.

So what happens in 2026? I phoned TCA president Andy Dehnart, who told me that like last year, winners will be announced via social media. In prerecorded videos, TCA members will present the awards to honorees.

"Our No. 1 idea is to make sure that the TCA Awards are being seen by a much broader audience, and to make sure that people know about the shows that we're highlighting," says Dehnart, who also runs the indispensable *Reality Blurred* website.

So is that it? Will TCA Awards ever be in person again? Without a press tour acting as an anchor, it's financially difficult. Unlike many other awards shows, TCA doesn't charge submission fees (which is how most of the smaller organizations are still able to put on a show). And as of now, the TCA doesn't want to appear compromised by accepting sponsorship from the

very networks and streamers it's supposed to be impartially judging.

And yet ... if the Television Critics Association is to survive long term without any more press tours, I think it's crucial that the TCA Awards return to an in-person event. And it needs to come back soon.

Read my ideas on how to save the TCA Awards here.

ON THE CIRCUIT: Banff World Media Festival, "The Bear," Bentonville Film Festival



At last week's Banff World Media Festival in beautiful Banff, Alberta, Canada -- at the stunning Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel -- I moderated an all-star showrunners panel, featuring **Nick Antosca** ("Cape Fear"), **R. Scott Gemmill** ("The Pitt"), **Amy B. Harris** ("Every Year After"), **Glenn Kessler** ("Memory of a Killer"), **Lee Sung Jin** ("Beef"), **Oren Uziel** ("Spider-Noir") and **Aaron Zelman** ("Memory of a Killer"). (Photo credit: Kristian Bognor/Banff World Media Festival)



Also at Banff, I chatted up Netflix's head of US-Canada scripted originals, **Jimmy Howell** (Photo credit: Kristian Bognes/Banff World Media Festival)



Jason Priestley ("Beverly Hills 90210"), **Kan Jeong** ("Community"), **Mao Martin** ("Wayward") and **Tantoo Cardinal** ("Killers of the Flower Moon") were this year's Rockie Awards Gala honorees at the Banff World Media Festival. (Photo credit: Kristian Bognes/Banff World Media Festival)



Matty Matheson, Liza Colon-Zayas, Jeremy Allen White, Ebon Moss-Bachrach, Ayo Edebiri and Lionel Boyce attended FX's "The Bear" "Final Family Meal Event" on June 15 in New York. (Photo: John Nacion/PictureGroup for FX)



Our own **Carole Horst**, deputy editor, features for *Variety* presented **Katherine LaNasa** with the Variety Virtuoso Award at the 12th Annual Bentonville Film Festival Led by **Geena Davis** on June 20 in Bentonville, Arkansas. (Photo by Jason Davis/Getty Images for Bentonville Film Festival)

AWARDS CIRCUIT PODCAST: 'Pluribus' Star Rhea Seehorn on Why She Hasn't Grilled Vince Gilligan and the Writers About Season 2 Just Yet¹



Michael Buckner

Think your fan conversations about Apple TV's "Pluribus" are heated? Try being on the actual series set. "We have healthy, sometimes tongue-in-cheek debates about different questions that the show brings up, whether it's your personal take on what you would do or what you think your character would do," star **Rhea Seehorn** tells the Variety Awards Circuit Podcast.

Of course, this isn't new for Seehorn on a **Vince Gilligan** show. She remembers having spirited debates with "Better Call Saul" co-star **Bob Odenkirk** back in the day. "He would be like, 'well, obviously Kim thinks blah blah blah,' and I was like, 'yeah, well, I don't think so.' He's like, 'yes, she does,' and I was like, 'you can't make me say she thinks that!' It's good to have like different perspectives on the same scene."

Seehorn credits Gilligan for leaving his stories and characters open to interpretation. "There are times where people are telling me their interpretation of what they think Carol is doing, thinking, or is feeling, that it's interesting to take in," Seehorn says. "It's just a facet that I'm like, 'oh, that could be interesting for me to explore,' or sometimes they are saying something that I already was thinking about exploring. And then there's other things, that I'm like, 'I'm just gonna let that be your interpretation.'"

As Emmy Phase 1 voting comes to an end on Monday, Seehorn drops by Variety's Awards Circuit Podcast to talk about "Pluribus" theories, how her co-stars are nothing like their characters, her anticipation for Season 2 and more. She also looks back at her first time in Variety and takes the 10 Questions quiz. Listen below!

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO RHEA SEEHORN ON THE AWARDS CIRCUIT PODCAST](#)

10 QUESTIONS WITH RHEA SEEHORN:

1. Childhood nickname: "Britches." I had a habit, I've been told, as a toddler, running away from the house and just running to other neighbors and playing with their dog, or going in their backyard, joining other people's barbecues. People would call my parents and let them know where I was, but they would run after me, calling me 'Britches,' because when I would go on my teetering escape, could not keep my pants up to save my life, apparently."

2. Something you loved as a kid but can't believe you were into it now: "Eating Campbell's cream of potato soup in its condensed cold form straight out of the can."

3. Go-to Karaoke or sing-in-the-shower song: "I'm not a karaoke person, but when I am dragged or somebody has a birthday and they really, really want me to do it, it's Wham's 'Careless Whisper.'"

4. **Give me an alternate title for your show:** "Oh, dude, that's so hard. I can't believe they were even able to come up with a log line. I give them all so much credit. It's an impossible show to explain"
5. **What's your secret talent?:** "Tedious, methodical following of instructions, like everything from a Lego set to like building an Ikea piece of furniture, or somebody saying we can't figure out how the VCR works, learning to caulk a bathtub. I will sit and patiently and start over when I mess up again and again and again."
6. **Favorite ice cream flavor:** "Peanut Butter and Chocolate, together."
7. **The one item you couldn't live without:** "My family and my pets. I have two cats, Auggie and Milo. They have their own Instagram account."
8. **What TV show in all of history do you wish you were a cast member off?:** "Six Feet Under' Or 'Pen15."
9. **Fictional character you most admire:** "Sarah Lancashire's character in 'Happy Valley.'"
10. **Your favorite piece of advice:** "I think one that I come back to all the time is, and I've gotten it in various different phrasings from various different parts of my life, but it's 'Keep your side of the street clean.' If something goes poorly, you can still examine, what was my side in this, is there anything I could do differently. The things that you can't change, at least make sure your side of the street was clean."

Also on this episode of the Awards Circuit Podcast: "Matlock" star **Kathy Bates**.

10 QUESTIONS WITH KATHY BATES:

1. **Childhood nickname:** "Well, my grandmother called me Dosha when I was bad and Kitty when I was good."
2. **Something you loved as a kid but can't believe you were into it now:** "Canoeing. It was my favorite thing. I went to the YMCA camp, and in a beautiful place in Hardy, Arkansas, and I learned how to canoe, and I was really, really good at it. I was about 11 or 12. I loved it."
3. **Go-to Karaoke or sing-in-the-shower song:** "I'll Be Seeing You."
4. **Give me an alternate title for your show:** "Mrs. Opioid"
5. **What's your secret talent?:** "I can whistle."
6. **Favorite ice cream flavor:** "Depends, there's a restaurant in New York called Balducci's, and they have profiterols with vanilla and this wonderful hot fudge sauce, but my favorite flavor would probably be Salt and Straw, the one that they have with salted caramel. Oh no, you know what my favorite one is? Mint chocolate chip."
7. **The one item you couldn't live without:** "It would probably be a pillow of some kind."
8. **What TV show in all of history do you wish you were a cast member off?:** "The first one that came to mind was 'The Twilight Zone.' The other first one was 'Ponderosa.'"
9. **Fictional character you most admire:** "I was going to say Scout in 'To Kill a Mockingbird.' There was another one, my favorite, but she was a real.. she wasn't fictional. She was a real woman. She was part of the English underground during

World War II, and she had one leg because she had one foot was blown off and she did all of these amazing things there."

10. Your favorite piece of advice: "Somebody said to me about this business, 'you have to have a head like a bullet and a heart like a baby.' I think that's probably a good advice for life."

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Clayton Davis' Emmy Predictions: 'Widow's Bay' Could Help Apple Land Three Comedy Series Noms as 'The Pitt' and 'Pluribus' Chase Dominance



Source: Variety, May 17, 2026

Clayton Davis predicts:

Top 10 projected nomination leaders (series): "Pluribus" (24); "The Pitt" (21); "Beef" (19); "Hacks" and "Love Story: John F. Kennedy Jr. and Carolyn Bissette" (17); "Shrinking" (14); "Saturday Night Live" (11); "DTF St. Louis," "The Oscars," "Stranger Things" and "Widow's Bay" (10); "The Apple Music Super Bowl LX Halftime Show Starring Bad Bunny," "The Bear" and "A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms" (9)

Top 10 projected nomination leaders (networks): Netflix (134); HBO Max (112); Apple TV (80); FX (33); Hulu (31); ABC (27); CBS and Prime Video (25); NBC (23); Disney+ (15); Paramount+ (14)

DRAMA:

"The Diplomat" (Netflix)

"A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms" (HBO Max)

"Paradise" (Hulu)

"The Pitt" (HBO Max)

"Pluribus" (Apple TV) ***

"Slow Horses" (Apple TV)

"Stranger Things" (Netflix)

"Task" (HBO Max)

COMEDY:

"Abbott Elementary" (ABC)

"The Bear" (FX)

"Hacks" (HBO Max) ***

"Margo's Got Money Troubles" (Apple TV)

"Only Murders in the Building" (Hulu)

"Rooster" (HBO Max)

"Shrinking" (Apple TV)

"Widow's Bay" (Apple TV)

LIMITED/ANTHOLOGY:

"Beef" (Netflix) ***

"Black Rabbit" (Netflix)

"DTF St. Louis" (HBO Max)

"Half Man" (HBO Max)

"Love Story: John F. Kennedy Jr. and Carolyn Bessette" (FX)

MOVIE:

"Deep Cover" (Prime Video)

"Mike and Nick & Nick and Alice" (Hulu)

"Miss You, Love You" (HBO Max)

"Remarkably Bright Creatures" (Netflix) ***

"People We Meet on Vacation" (Netflix)[Read more here.](#)

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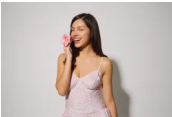
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