

THE WOMEN WHO RULE TV

EMMYS 2015

The biggest stars of the small screen open up about fighting the pressures of Hollywood—and making it on their terms

Portfolio by **WILLIAMS & HIRAKAWA**

CLAIRE DANES | *HOMELAND*

After four seasons playing a mentally unstable CIA agent on Showtime's *Homeland*, "psychologically, I've taken a beating—physically too," says Danes, who just received her fourth nomination for the part. "But it's just so wonderful to play a character who is not necessarily defined by her sex." It's a welcome change for Danes, 36. "I had spent a long time playing girlfriends before this," she says. Off-camera she felt similar injustices. "I feel like my body is monitored and commented on infinitely more than my male counterparts," she says. When she was pregnant with her son Cyrus, now 2, with husband Hugh Dancy, "I was mindful of what I was eating because I didn't want to look pregnant. I think I was very anxious because I was responsible for this huge show, but I had this other major project of growing a person." Since then it's been all about finding balance, with Cyrus a fixture on Mom's international sets. Says Danes: "He's a *Homeland* baby through and through. Little tiny Cyrus in the ops room, saving the world from Armageddon! He loves it."

Photographed in Berlin on Aug. 4

“
WE TAKE IT FOR
GRANTED
THAT IT'S ACCEPTABLE
TO JUDGE
WOMEN'S BODIES,
THAT IT'S FINE.
AND IT'S NOT
”

EMMYS
2015



“
I’M NOT GOING
TO LIE AND
SAY I DON’T FEEL
PRESSURE, BUT
THERE’S A PART OF
ME THAT’S LIKE,
‘AH, [SCREW] IT’
”

JULIA LOUIS-DREYFUS | VEEP

There’s the staggering number of Emmy nominations—16 for acting, including this year’s for HBO’s *Veep*, shattering a record previously held by Lucille Ball. Then there’s the fact that she’s the only woman to ever win three Emmys for three different comedy series. But for all the achievements, Louis-Dreyfus, 54, isn’t about to start settling down. “There is a very ageist and sexist culture in show business,” she says. “There have been numerous occasions in my career where I’ve had to push harder because I’m a woman. My point of view wasn’t taken seriously enough.” Now Louis-Dreyfus, who poked fun at Hollywood standards in a riotous Amy Schumer sketch (Google their names and “LFD”), is feeling more comfortable in her skin than ever, though she admits she “feels the pressure” to look youthful. “I certainly have my share of vanity,” says the mom of two. “But on the other hand, I’m not pulling my face back behind my ears. I’m glad to be the age I am and to have the career I’ve had. It’s like, ‘Yeah, I’m here, I’m still doing this, and my plan is to continue for quite some time.’”

Photographed in Los Angeles on Aug. 6

PREVIOUS SPREAD: HAIR: JENNIE ROBERTS/OLO/NYFRANK AGENCY; MAKEUP: MICHELLE CAMPBELL/ROBI BROWN/FRANK AGENCY; STYLIST: ZOE COSTELLO/ARTDEPT; DRESS: DOLCE & GABBANA; EARRINGS: CARBON & HYDE; PRODUCER: LUKE LAJONIA/PHI POOL; (THIS PAGE) HAIR: DAVID GARDNER/RENE FURTERER/GRID AGENCY; MAKEUP: JENN STRECHER/GIORGIO ARMANI/BEAUTY/FORWARD ARTISTS; STYLIST: CRISTINA EHRLICH/THE ONLY AGENCY; DRESS: ANDREW GUN; RING & EARRINGS: NEILL LANE

“
I THINK WHEN
PEOPLE LOOK BACK
AT HISTORY,
THIS WILL BE THE
PIVOTAL MOMENT FOR
WOMEN ON TV
”

VIOLA DAVIS

HOW TO GET AWAY WITH MURDER

Bedtime stories at Davis's house always star the same heroine: her daughter Genesis, 4. "She says, 'Make the princess me. Let it be me,'" says the actress. "That's what happens when you're young. Then something happens where you realize, 'They don't see me that way.'" But the two-time Academy Award nominee, 50, refuses to let go of that childlike desire. "I want to be in the story," she says. "I think I deserve to be in that story, and I believe my story deserves to be told." And now, as an embattled law professor on ABC's *How to Get Away with Murder*, the first-time Emmy nominee feels she's been given a role that's a "stepping-stone in taking people out of their comfort zone" of how they see black women. "She's not a cartoon cutout," she says of the "hypersexual antiheroine" character. "She's a mess and she's nothing that someone who looks like me has played before. I think, win or lose [at the Emmys], that's a step in the right direction."

Photographed in Los Angeles on Aug. 7

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“
I WAS
EXCITED
CLAIRE
WASN'T A
STEREOTYPICAL
MOM
CHARACTER
”

JULIE BOWEN

MODERN FAMILY

When Bowen auditioned for the role of Claire on the ABC sitcom *Modern Family*, she had but one thought: “They’re staring at my giant belly.”

Convinced that being pregnant with twins would keep her from landing the role, Bowen, 46, says she went home “and cried and cried.” Flash forward six years (and two Emmy wins for Supporting Actress in a Comedy), and Bowen finds her appearance crosses her mind far less now that life outside of work is lived in “survival mode” raising a house full of boys (Oliver, 8, and Gus and John, 6, with husband Scott Phillips, 42, a real estate investor). “If we’re going to the park I’m going to be mud-splattered, so I’m not thinking about how I’m going to have to physically present myself,” she says. Professionally the actress is looking forward to jobs that require less time in the hair-and-makeup trailer. “I’m more interested in the stuff going on behind the camera,” she says. “I love *Modern Family*, but the reality is, it is a very safe place. I think to get that feeling of pride back, I need to feel a little unsafe again.”

*Photographed in
Los Angeles on July 31*

(PREVIOUS SPREAD) HAIR: JAMVKA WILSON/EPHRAIM ARTISTS GROUP; INC.; MAKEUP: AUTUMN MOUTRENNAS COSMETIC/EXCLUSIVE ARTISTS MANAGEMENT; STYLIST: JENNY BRUNTTHE WALL GROUP; DRESS: CARMEN MARC VALVO; EARRINGS: HOUSE OF LAVANDE; (THIS PAGE) HAIR: JILL GROSSY/NEUTROGENA/CLOUTIER REMIX; MAKEUP: HEATHER CURRIE/NEUTROGENA/CLOUTIER REMIX; STYLIST: ZOE COSTELLO/ARTDEPT; DRESS: SELF PORTRAIT



“
ACTING GIVES
ME POWER.
IT MAKES
PEOPLE LISTEN
TO WHAT
I'M SAYING
”

TARAJI P. HENSON

EMPIRE

Growing up in Washington, D.C., Taraji P. Henson says it was “rare” to turn on the TV and “see a woman that looked like me—that inspired me and showed me how to be powerful.” So when she was cast as the formidable matriarch Cookie Lyon on *Empire*, she felt an added pressure to, as she says, “not [screw] it up.” Henson’s hit Fox show can tend toward the melodramatic, but the Academy Award nominee, 44, says she has been intentionally “delicate” in developing the character of Cookie. “She can be really bigger than life, so I took very good care [to make] her someone that people could identify with,” says the second-time Emmy nominee. “It was important that I gave her dimensions and made her a real person, not just a caricature who could be sassy and roll her neck.” As for the real-life women Henson looked to for inspiration, she says she didn’t have to look far: “the women in my family.”

Photographed in Los Angeles on Aug. 7

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TATIANA MASLANY

ORPHAN BLACK

Playing not one but more than 10 leading ladies on BBC America's cult clone drama *Orphan Black*, Tatiana Maslany has been blonde and brunette, punk rock and preppy. But off-camera, she's not even remotely interested in conforming to Hollywood's beauty standards. "I've been asked to shave my armpits, wax my mustache—which I refused to do!" says the Canadian-born actress and first-time nominee, 29. For women in the industry, "there's a power struggle for sure." But Maslany remains resolute: "Botox and all that stuff is not interesting to me. Gena Rowlands is the reason I am an actor. She's 80-something and she's still acting." Now, with more and more series showcasing strong female characters, "I feel very lucky to be part of TV right now, but I hope that at some point that is just the default," she says. "Strong women' should just be part of the fabric of the storytelling." *Photographed in London on Aug. 3*

“
I DON'T THINK
THAT ANY WOMAN
IN THIS INDUSTRY
HASN'T EXPERIENCED
SEXISM. BEING
HIT ON BY A
50-YEAR-OLD GRIP
WHEN I WAS 17?
IT'S PATHETIC
”

HAIR: CARLOS FERRAZ/ORBIE PRODUCTS/CAROL HAYES MANAGEMENT MAKEUP: AMANDA GROSSMAN/FRANK AGENCY; STYLIST: ZOE COSTELLO/ART DEPT.; JUMPSUIT: YIGAL AZROUEL; RINGS: CARBON & HYDE