

celebrity q&a

BY JAY BOBBIN

Dwayne Johnson

OF 'YOUNG ROCK' ON NBC



In depicting your boyhood, "Young Rock" deals with your early interest in wrestling. Is that where you wanted to place a lot of the focus from the start?

It's truly a love letter to professional wrestling, which is a business that I grew up in and a business that I've loved all of my life. I learned some of my most valuable, while very unorthodox, lessons coming out of the world of pro wrestling ... so (I appreciated) to be able to highlight and showcase these men who were, in essence, my superheroes.

I will say that of the actors we cast, all of them really, truly embodied these professional wrestlers. In many ways, this is the very first time you're seeing these wrestlers portrayed, certainly in primetime.

How did you decide on the approach you wanted "Young Rock" to have?

I thought, "Let's not take the easy route." It was incredibly complicated and it was incredibly tough growing up, and we specifically went with these timelines in my life that were very defining times ... at 10 years old, 15, and 18. And if we are, universe willing, lucky enough to come back for another round of this thing, there's a lot of other things in between those years that took place.

It's immediately clear that "Young Rock" has one of the more diverse casts on primetime broadcast television. Is that a particular point of pride for you?

It was important for us to showcase diversity, – but also, it was important for us to be real and authentic. This is my life; it is who I am. I'm half-Samoan and half-black, and that combination ... came together in the world of pro wrestling.

We have the Iron Sheik from Iran. We have André the Giant from France. We have the Junkyard Dog. We have my dad. We have the Wild Samoans from Samoa. And these are the ones that we just showcased in the pilot. There's more to come down the road.



triviaquiz

BY JOHN CROOK

Her Emma-nence

Questions:

- 1) Emma Thompson once guest starred on "Cheers" as a character named Nanny Gee, who was revealed to be the first wife of which character?
- 2) Thompson won a 1992 Academy Award as best actress for her acclaimed performance in what movie adaptation of an E.M. Forster masterpiece?
- 3) Thompson's leading man from that same movie reunited with her for another critically acclaimed film, "The Remains of the Day." Who was he?
- 4) A 1998 Emmy went to Thompson for her hilarious guest appearance on what ABC sitcom, in which she pretended to be a closeted American lesbian?
- 5) Thompson kept that faux-Yank accent in "Primary Colors," the 1998 political satire in which she played a character transparently based on which U.S. first lady?

Answers:
 1) Dr. Frasier Crane
 2) "Howards End"
 3) Anthony Hopkins
 4) "Ellen"
 5) Hillary Rodham Clinton

Emma Thompson

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