

Great casting makes great TV duos, but even with supremely talented actors, there's an unpredictable X factor in any pairing. **Randee Dawn** chatted up five terrific twosomes to find out what makes them click — and why you just gotta have friends.

DYNAMIC DUOS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **SANDRO BAEBLER**

GABRIEL MACHT (Harvey Specter)
PATRICK J. ADAMS (Mike Ross)
Suits, USA

Meet Cute: After they'd been cast but before shooting started, the pair met for the first time over a lunch in Beverly Hills. "I heard that USA doesn't really 'chemistry-read' people," Adams says. "I was a little worried — handsome, debonair Hollywood guys like Gabriel are not always the nicest people to be around. But in a short period, we realized we were both down-to-earth."

Two of a Kind? "Patrick is a very intelligent actor," Macht says. "He comes to the role thinking about every dynamic in the scene, and he's very cerebral. Whereas I come from the outside in with a character. He's pretty consistent and solid in his approach, though I'm a little more off-balance."

Adams admits: "I didn't like Gabriel's style at first — he was so hyper-aware of everything going on in the room. As a young actor, I just wanted to be in the moment, and he'd say, 'The moment is great, but your tie was off.' He's capable of noting stuff I'd just barrel through as I'm trying to make a basic decision. But I've learned a lot from him over the years and one great thing is, we never try to bring the other too deeply into our process."

You Gotta Have Friends: "Everyone can relate to friendships," Macht says. "So much of television is created conflict, where people are at odds with each other. So while it's a cliché, it's nice to see people being good to each other somehow. Love makes the world go 'round.'"

"With a friendship, you can get away with a lot more than you can in a romantic relationship," Adams adds. "We show the parts of ourselves we're not as proud of to our friends — they're who we reveal our true selves to."

Expert Opinion: "The core of Harvey and Mike's relationship is that of two brothers who love each other and would do anything for each other — and at the same time are highly competitive," executive producer Aaron Korsh says. "Whatever it is between these two actors, they've been able to push each other to six-and-a-half years of making me believe they are nothing short of Batman and Robin."

GABRIEL MACHT AND PATRICK J. ADAMS



STYLING BY **JOLIE ANDREATTA** WITH ASSISTANCE BY **RICHARD AUTIO**
GROOMING BY **ANGELA McQUEEN**

STYLING BY **JAMIE GRACE**/EXCLUSIVE ARTISTS MANAGEMENT
GROOMING FOR CRAWFORD BY **T.C. THECLA LUISI**
GROOMING FOR WAYANS BY **NAIVASHA JOHNSON**/EXCLUSIVE ARTISTS MANAGEMENT
USING PETER THOMAS ROTH AND ARTIS BRUSHES



CLAYNE CRAWFORD AND DAMON WAYANS

DYNAMIC DUOS



CLAYNE CRAWFORD (Martin Riggs)
DAMON WAYANS (Roger Murtaugh)
Lethal Weapon, Fox

Meet Cute: The rebooted Murtaugh and Riggs bonded over a breakfast, Crawford says. He was impressed by the Wayans family "pedigree" and by Damon's family in particular. "It sounds corny, but when Damon mentioned something about his grandchildren, this light went on inside him and I saw his heart," Crawford recalls. "Then all my concerns went out the window."

"He seemed like a very down-to-earth guy, and I immediately connected with his vibe," Wayans says. "I felt whatever his work was going to be would be honest."

Two of a Kind? Crawford, who took cues about line delivery from his comedy-vet costar, improvised in one scene about having a baby his character had never seen. "[Wayans's] eyes welled," Crawford recalls. "At that moment I knew what show we were making — and it wasn't about car chases or bad guys. It was about two guys in a relationship that would be a love affair, in a sense."

Meanwhile, Wayans has learned about drama from Crawford. "His preparation is impressive — he can sit in the pocket and not worry about whether he's funny or not," Wayans says. "I go for the joke. He finds the truth in what's written, as opposed to my brain: I think, 'That's the blueprint... let me put my [mark] on it.'"

You Gotta Have Friends: "You want to see yourself in characters, and you want to believe these guys would die for each other," Wayans says. "That whole 'ride or die' feel. We watch sitcoms to figure out how to be better kids, spouses, parents — because we're living vicariously through these characters. It's something to strive for."

"I see us as an old married couple," Crawford says, chuckling. "We fight and we're forced to compromise — that's the fun of the show."

Expert Opinion: "When we were looking for our [main characters], it was important for us to find actors who didn't constantly compare to the originals," showrunner Matt Miller says. He's referring, of course, to Danny Glover and Mel Gibson, who created these roles in the 1987 *Lethal Weapon* feature film and its three sequels. "Damon brought a refreshingly comedic take to the role of Murtaugh, our family man who is getting 'too old for this shit.' Clayne's performance evokes a soulfulness and empathy. Together, these are two very distinct characters."

DYNAMIC
DUOS



LILY TOMLIN AND JANE FONDA



JANE FONDA (Grace Hanson)
LILY TOMLIN (Frankie Bergstein)
Grace and Frankie, Netflix

Meet Cute: Fonda caught Tomlin in a one-woman show in the late 1970s. "I was smitten by her and her brilliance," Fonda says. She was planning the 1980 feature *9 to 5* at the time, so she talked Tomlin into signing on. "I didn't want to make a movie about secretaries unless she played one of them," she recalls.

Two of a Kind? "We're very similar actresses — we work internally," Tomlin says, noting that they've shared an acting coach over the years. "We work from our own lives, as most actors do. In [*Grace and Frankie*] our styles contrast because we're playing different characters. [Jane's] always saying she has no sense of humor, but that's not true at all — she's funny when you don't expect she's going to be funny."

"I come from a long line of depressives," Fonda adds. "Lily laughs a lot, and I'm trying to [pick up her traits]. Ted Turner has a little of that, and I was with him intimately for ten years. It started to rub off on me from Ted. So it's easier for me to be ridiculous and over the top because of Ted, but Lily augments that."

You Gotta Have Friends: "You can tell a great story without friendships," Fonda says. "That said, there was a Harvard University study that showed us that not having women friends, for a woman, is as bad for her health as smoking. There's just something cathartic about having women friends — you laugh with women differently. You feel that feel-good hormone flooding your brain. It's so unusual for audiences to see two older women who become such profound friends — and aren't competitive."

"We're telling the story [on *Grace and Frankie*] of a relationship, and [of] older women who have to go through all kinds of obstacles," Tomlin says. "Some people would interpret what we go through very differently — but not if they were really in touch with their humanity."

Expert Opinion: "Jane and Lily have this incredible comic chemistry that's fueled by the fact that these two are really good friends in real life," executive producer Howard J. Morris says. "The audience senses that. As comedy writers we can throw all kinds of crazy conflict their way, knowing there's always this safety net: Grace and Frankie, like Jane and Lily, really love each other."

DYNAMIC DUOS

DONAL LOGUE (Harvey Bullock)
BEN MCKENZIE (James Gordon)
Gotham, Fox

Meet Cute: Logue and McKenzie were familiar with each other's work: McKenzie calls Logue's performance in the 2000 feature *The Tao of Steve* "fantastic," and Logue's sister, Karina Logue, worked with McKenzie on the NBC-TNT series *Southland*. Yet they only crossed paths post-casting, while shooting show promos and interviews. "It was insane how easy the rapport was, and how we fell into step with each other," Logue recalls.

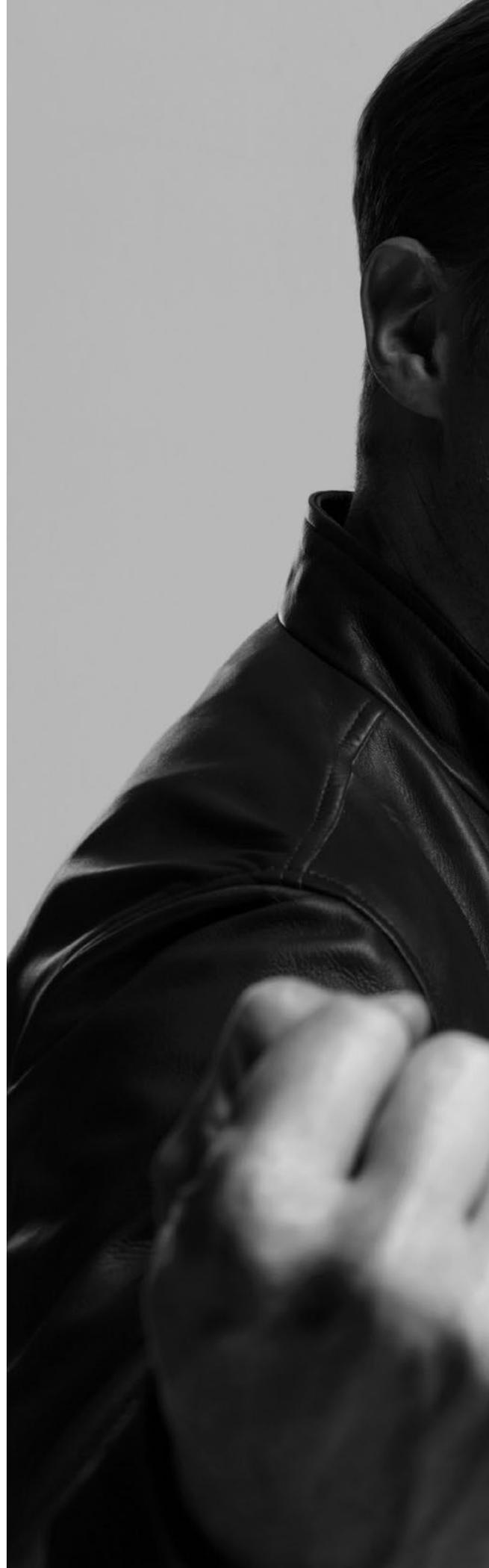
Two of a Kind? "It's easier to play the whirling dervish," Logue says of his role. "Jim is the sun around which all other bodies on the show rotate. Ben has to be the strong-jawed, strong-shouldered centerpiece, which is the most challenging in acting. Jim stands in the middle of the storm, and I can be the guy running around disheveled saying, 'A tornado is coming!' He has to deal with the tornado itself."

"We shot the pilot in a cold March three years ago, and it was like trying to catch hold of a train going sixty miles per hour," McKenzie recalls. "You know quickly whether another actor is going to give you the space and benefit of the doubt to roll with whatever ideas you have for the scene, and whether it's going to be a true collaboration. We respect each other at the end of the day, and that's the most important dynamic of the partnership."

You Gotta Have Friends: "The world of *Gotham* is at its core fairly masculine, with all these macho cops and Bruce Wayne," McKenzie notes. "So to find true connection between characters, you lean into friendships, or partnerships. On any good TV show you need those bonds to show relationships evolving and devolving and coming back together."

"People underestimate the power of buddy stories," Logue says. "You can be free and honest with people with whom no other agenda is at play."

Expert Opinion: "What makes Ben and Donal work so well together is that they convey a feeling that these two characters respect and care for each other," show-runner John Stephens says. "That makes you, as the viewer, want to be with them, invest in what they invest in and go on the journey. As our eyes and ears on the show, they make everything — even the wildest things — real."







KAT DENNINGS AND BETH BEHRS

DYNAMIC DUOS

KAT DENNINGS (Max Black) **BETH BEHRS** (Caroline Channing) *2 Broke Girls*, CBS

Meet Cute: The pair first met at Behrs's network test. "I was nervous," Behrs remembers. "Everyone walked into this dark theater and it was just Kat and me waiting off stage, and she grabbed my hand and said, 'We got this.'"

"I thought this girl was perfect in every way — there's a no-brainer," says Dennings, who will be a bridesmaid in Behrs's upcoming wedding to actor Michael Gladis (*Mad Men*).

Two of a Kind? "[Showrunner] Michael Patrick King referred to it as a tennis match: one person throws something out; the other person meets it and throws it back," Dennings recalls. "A very harmonious tennis match." She notes that she had to adjust to the rhythms of TV: "I'm used to being quiet and doing films. Beth is a theater actress, and she's used to projecting and keeping up the energy. Sitcoms are more like theater than film, and she can really command a scene."

Behrs agrees. "I'm big and loud, and Kat is much more grounded and a good observer," she says. "She always has your back, but since half of the physical comedy comes from me being a klutzy person, she's also delighted when I fall down, too."

You Gotta Have Friends: "Friendships last and relationships don't," Dennings says. "Friends are the loves of our lives. It's fun to watch friends, and really fun to watch people you know are best friends in real life — it just adds more layers into every screen relationship."

"A true friendship is there for life, and knowing there is someone there who, no matter what happens in either of our lives, we'll have each other — that's amazing," Behrs says. "It's more complicated when it's a partner or a lover."

Expert Opinion: "They are a good comedy duo because they are opposites," King says. "Max is tough on the outside, but surprisingly soft on the inside; Caroline is soft on the outside but surprisingly tough on the inside. Caroline is book smarts; Max is street smarts. Max is salty; Caroline is sweet. Salty and sweet — great combination in comedy as well as in cupcakes." ©