

April 23, 1979

ABC TELEVISION
PRESENTS
ITS 1979-80 PRIME TIME
PROGRAM SCHEDULE

ABC Television will present six new series in its prime time schedule for the 1979-80 season — three comedies, a lighthearted glamorous suspense series, a medical drama and an hour-long rescue adventure program.

In addition, the ABC News magazine, "20/20," now seen monthly, will be presented every week on Thursdays at 10:00 p.m., EDT, starting May 31 and will continue in that time period in the fall.

Eighty per cent of ABC's programs will continue on the prime time schedule this fall, with several programs moving to new time periods. ABC Television will begin its new season on **MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1979.**

Commenting on today's announcement, Anthony D. Thomopoulos, President, ABC Entertainment, said, "Our schedule changes are aggressive. We are moving some of our existing successful series to expose them to new audiences and to position our new shows advantageously. While our broad range of distinctive comedy remains the backbone of our lineup, we have been careful to introduce new drama and adventure, supplemented by a weekly news program, to preserve a balanced schedule. Our audience continues to change and grow, and our new schedule provides three different types of comedy and three varying types of drama. We're pleased with our schedule for the diversity we feel it will supply our viewers."

James E. Duffy, President, ABC Television Network, said, "Our new schedule is unique in that it clearly maintains its previous strength and stability, yet provides our new programs with the greatest possible chance to flourish. Our 9:00 p.m. program lineup remains unchanged throughout the week, while in most cases we begin each evening's prime time viewing with programs of proven audience appeal. It's a schedule we feel will provide ABC with even greater viewing stability and one we feel audiences will enjoy tremendously."

The new programs, with time period and day in parentheses, are:

- "The Associates" (8:30-9:00 p.m., Sundays), a comedy about life in a large Manhattan law office, fashioned by the producers of this season's smash hit, "Taxi."
- "240-Robert" (8:00-9:00 p.m., Mondays), a tension-filled drama about the dangerous work of three dedicated officers attached to the Los Angeles Sheriff's Search and Rescue Unit.
- "Hart in San Francisco" (Tentative Title) (8:30-9:00 p.m., Tuesdays), a dizzying farce about Scotland Yard's most unorthodox inspector, who moves to San Francisco's force with devastating effect, starring Ron Moody.
- "The Lazarus Syndrome" (10:00-11:00 p.m., Tuesdays), Louis Gossett, Jr. and Ronald Hunter star in a realistic dramatic series about a brilliant heart surgeon and one of his patients, a tough newspaperman, who survive their bruising interpersonal relationship and wind up running the hospital together.
- "Benson" (8:30-9:00 p.m., Thursdays), a comedy starring Robert Guillaume, the irrepressible butler of ABC's comedy series, "Soap," who leaves the Tates' home to run the household of a well-meaning but naive governor.
- "Hart to Hart" (10:00-11:00 p.m., Saturdays), a romantic comedy-drama about a jet-set couple — a businessman and his authoress wife — who double as private eyes. Robert Wagner and Stefanie Powers star.

(MORE)

In the 1979-80 prime time schedule, several popular ABC programs will move to new time periods. They are "Mork & Mindy," which moves to 8:00 p.m., Sundays; "Laverne & Shirley," which moves to 8:00 p.m., Thursdays; "Fantasy Island," which moves to 8:00 p.m., Fridays; "The Ropers," which moves to 8:00 p.m., Saturdays, and "Angie," which moves to 8:30 p.m., Saturdays.

In addition, "Family" will return to the ABC schedule at 10:00 p.m. Mondays, following the conclusion of "ABC's NFL Monday Night Football" at the end of this year.

Also during the 1979-80 season, ABC Sports will present an impressive array of major sporting events, including the World Series, the XIII Winter Olympic Games from Lake Placid, New York, and an exciting lineup of 20 regularly scheduled NFL football games.

ABC Television will continue its policy of presenting important Novels for Television selectively in prime time along with a broad range of quality made-for-television motion pictures and new and experimental programs for "ABC Theatre." Among major works scheduled for the coming season are:

- "Masada," an eight-hour motion picture telling the story of the heroic, four-year rebellion of hundreds of Judeans against the powerful Roman army. The production will be filmed entirely on location in Israel.
- "Titanic," a three-hour motion picture, currently in production in London, about the tragic sinking of the "unsinkable" ocean liner. The film, which concentrates on the human drama of real-life passengers during the voyage, has an all-star cast headed by David Janssen, Cloris Leachman and Susan Saint James.
- "Breaking Up Is Hard to Do," a four-hour motion picture about divorce from the male point of view and how it affects the lives and families of those it touches.

Also in development for coming seasons are these major works: "East of Eden," a six-hour Novel for Television based on John Steinbeck's masterpiece; "Passages," a long-form adaptation of Gail Sheehy's best-selling book about life's crises; "Women of Crisis," a multi-part nonfiction Novel For Television which chronicles the lives of five women who broke the chains of poverty to begin a new life; "Winds of War," based on Herman Wouk's best-selling novel about a U.S. Navy family told against the explosive background of World War II, and "Hanta Yo," a multi-part Novel for Television based on the critically acclaimed best-selling novel by Ruth Beebe Hill, tracing the history of two American Indian families from the late 1700s to the 1830s.

More complete descriptions of the new prime time series follow:

"THE ASSOCIATES" (8:30-9:00 p.m., SUNDAYS) - The producers of this season's smash hit, "Taxi," now take the law into their own creative hands to present a new half-hour comedy series about life in a big New York law office. Pandemonium is legal and humor is always in court when struggling young lawyers, office boys, secretaries and the aging chairman of the firm get together for very funny encounters.

Jim Brooks, Ed. Weinberger and Stan Daniels who, in addition to "Taxi" have been associated with such major hits as "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," "Rhoda" and "The Bob Newhart Show," are the executive producers of the Charles Walters Production. The series is from Paramount Television.

(MORE)

"240-ROBERT" (8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., MONDAYS) — The California Coast is unspoiled and beautiful, but its azure sea, dense mountains and vast desert regions, spread over 4,000 square miles, pose life and death challenges for three dedicated, resourceful officers attached to the Los Angeles Sheriff's Search and Rescue Unit. When a blind boy is lost, or a small plane crashes into the ocean, or a truck plunges down a ravine, the call goes out to 240-ROBERT — radio code for Deputies Trap and Thibideaux and beautiful female jet-chopper pilot, Morgan. The one-hour action/adventure series has the badge and seal of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department — a television first, and stars John Bennett Perry as Trap, Mark Harmon as Thibideaux and Joanna Cassidy as Morgan. Rick Rosner is executive producer and creator of the series from Rosner Television/Filmways Television.

"HART IN SAN FRANCISCO" (Tentative Title) (8:30 p.m., TUESDAYS) — The San Francisco Police Department and Scotland Yard decide to exchange police officers — and San Francisco will never be the same. Roger Hart, Britain's most unorthodox cop, arrives on our shores to wreak havoc. For example, at San Francisco Airport, he saves a hijacked plane, but mistakenly pilots it onto the freeway. His boss, Lt. DeGennaro, is beside himself, but officer Dempsey, a lady cop who is teamed up with Britain's most dangerous policeman, is all Hart. The half-hour comedy series, starring Academy Award nominee Ron Moody as Hart, with Michael Durrell as Lt. DeGennaro and Cassie Yates as Dempsey, is from Universal Television. The executive producers/writers are Arnie Sultan and Chris Hayward.

"THE LAZARUS SYNDROME" (10:00 p.m., TUESDAYS) — Louis Gossett, Jr., the memorable "Fiddler" of "Roots," plays Dr. MacArthur St. Clair, a brilliant heart surgeon who encounters a tough newspaper reporter who has suffered a coronary (Ronald Hunter). Their bruising relationship during his recovery develops into mutual respect and, finally, their decision to run the hospital together. This unique medical drama, which centers on two strong-willed men concerned about human life and welfare but who often see things from very different points of view, will be a one-hour series from Blinn/Thorpe Productions, with William Blinn and Jerry Thorpe as executive producers. Thorpe directed the two-hour pilot film, which was written by Blinn. Blinn, who wrote "Brian's Song," one of television's most memorable dramas, also developed "Roots" for television. Thorpe has been associated with such important programs as ABC's "A Question of Love" and the hit ABC series, "Eight Is Enough."

(MORE)

"BENSON" (8:30-9:00 p.m., THURSDAYS) — When you need to keep a ship of state afloat, call for Benson. The man who kept things together for the zany Tate family in "Soap" becomes butler to Jessica Tate's cousin, an honest but inexperienced and inept governor. Thanks to Benson, the governor and the government endure — but only because the irrepressible butler becomes the brains behind the scene. In the process, however, Benson must survive a dictatorial maid and the governor's precocious young daughter. Robert Guillaume continues his role of Benson in the half-hour comedy from Witt/Thomas/Harris Productions. Also starring in the series written by "Soap" creator Susan Harris are James Noble as the governor, Inga Swenson as the Teutonic housekeeper, Missy Gold as the governor's daughter and Caroline McWilliams as the governor's secretary.

"HART TO HART" (10:00-11:00 p.m., SATURDAYS) — Jonathan and Jennifer Hart are two beautiful and wealthy people who are very much in love. Jonathan is a very successful businessman and his wife is a well-known author. But their greatest interest is a passion for danger and high adventure. In their roles as private detectives, they frequently find themselves jetting across the continents to some of the world's most glamorous locations as they investigate new mysteries and intrigues involving the well-to-do as well as the less fortunate.

Robert Wagner and Stefanie Powers star as Jonathan and Jennifer Hart in a one-hour series that combines spirited humor, romance and suspense. Lionel Stander is cast as the Harts' chauffeur, Max. Aaron Spelling and Leonard Goldberg are the executive producers of the Spelling/Goldberg Production.

The 1979-80 ABC Television Network prime time schedule is as follows (all times are EDT):

SUNDAY

7:00 p.m. TO BE ANNOUNCED
8:00 p.m. "MORK AND MINDY" (New Time Period)
8:30 p.m. "THE ASSOCIATES" (New Program)
9:00 p.m. "THE ABC SUNDAY NIGHT MOVIE"

MONDAY

8:00 p.m. "240-ROBERT" (New Program)
9:00 p.m. "ABC'S NFL MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL"
"FAMILY" (will return at 10:00 p.m. following the conclusion of football)

TUESDAY

8:00 p.m. "HAPPY DAYS"
8:30 p.m. "HART IN SAN FRANCISCO" (New Program) (Tentative Title)
9:00 p.m. "THREE'S COMPANY"
9:30 p.m. "TAXI"
10:00 p.m. "THE LAZARUS SYNDROME" (New Program)

(MORE)

WEDNESDAY

8:00 p.m. "EIGHT IS ENOUGH"
9:00 p.m. "CHARLIE'S ANGELS"
10:00 p.m. "VEGA\$"

THURSDAY

8:00 p.m. "LAVERNE & SHIRLEY" (New Time Period)
8:30 p.m. "BENSON" (New Program)
9:00 p.m. "BARNEY MILLER"
9:30 p.m. "SOAP"
10:00 p.m. "20/20"

FRIDAY

8:00 p.m. "FANTASY ISLAND" (New Time Period)
9:00 p.m. "THE ABC FRIDAY NIGHT MOVIE"

SATURDAY

8:00 p.m. "THE ROPERS" (New Time Period)
8:30 p.m. "ANGIE" (New Time Period)
9:00 p.m. "THE LOVE BOAT"
10:00 p.m. "HART TO HART" (New Program)

Programs that will not return to the ABC Television Network prime time schedule in the fall are:
"Battlestar Galactica," "Starksy & Hutch," "What's Happening!!," "Delta House," "Makin' It" and
"Welcome Back, Kotter."

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