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The Americans FX

This drama about married Soviet spies (Keri Russell and Matthew Rhys) targeted the point at which two blood-red lines—love of country, love for spouse—intersect and part. That it's set near the Cold War's end gives it all a sort of funny, if fatalistic, irony.



Behind the Candelabra HBO

Michael Douglas glittered like a rhinestone as Liberace, a dazzling showman with a tin heart.



Orange Is the New Black Netflix

This grim comedy-drama about a women's prison unexpectedly flowers into a touching study of bad choices and bad karma.



Brooklyn Nine-Nine FOX

Sitcom of the year. As a cop who loves his job, Andy Samberg is as giddily happy as a kid larcenist in a candy store.



The Returned Sundance

France gave us both this eerie, stiller-than-night zombie series and the word for its elusive, exquisite chill: *frisson*.

TELEVISION

BY JAMES PONIEWOZIK

(1)

ENLIGHTENED (HBO)

In the second and final season, New Age crusader Amy Jellicoe (Laura Dern) exposed corruption at work while wrestling with life post-nervous breakdown. An unsparing but hopeful look at how much work it is to be good.

(2)

BREAKING BAD (AMC)

Forget Chekhov's gun; the final act of this meth morality drama started with an arsenal—a machine gun, a ricin capsule, Walter White's cancer, a pile of money and several barrels full of secrets.

(3)

ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK (NETFLIX)

Netflix emerged as a TV force with *House of Cards* and *Arrested Development*. But its most original voice was this prison ensemble drama in which every jailbird had a song worth hearing.

(4)

GAME OF THRONES (HBO)

GOT was TV's best drama about politics. The battle for the Iron Throne of Westeros became a complex study of power, leadership and the difference between the two.

(5)

THE GOOD WIFE (CBS)

This legal drama had it all: humor, sexiness, political smarts and moral complexity. How do you improve that? By blowing it all up with a thrill-

ing boardroom war in which the audience won.

(6)

BOB'S BURGERS (FOX)

In its fourth season, *Bob's* was the most grounded family sitcom on TV. In the spirit of *The Simpsons* and *King of the Hill*, its eccentricities only made it more universal.

(7)

RECTIFY (SUNDANCE)

Sundance found a niche for slow-burn series like *The Returned*, *Top of the Lake* and this tale of a man who served 19 years for murder then had his conviction overturned.

(8)

THE AMERICANS (FX)

Matthew Rhys and Keri Russell played KGB agents trying to make a forced marriage work in the Virginia suburbs. Their identities were fake, but the emotions were real.

(9)

MAD MEN (AMC)

With the end of the '60s (and the series) approaching, the show found sly angles on the sky-falling zeitgeist of 1968 and ended with chameleon Don Draper on the verge of his life's most intriguing change.

(10)

ORPHAN BLACK (BBC AMERICA)

Tatiana Maslany played the role of the year as a series of clones who discover they're connected by genetic material and a dark conspiracy.

The Hottest TV

BY JOHN GRIFFITHS

1. **MAD MEN** As intoxicating and bittersweet as a Manhattan! The '60s drama proved profoundly moving, with adman Don Draper (Jon Hamm, never better) finally, even triumphantly, owning his shady past. (AMC)

2. **BREAKING BAD** Meth kingpin Walter White (Bryan Cranston) and this raw drama went out with, yes, an unflinching bang. Required viewing for any year. (AMC)

3. **ORPHAN BLACK** The thriller's Tatiana Maslany captivated as seven clones marked for death. (BBC America)

4. **THE GOOD WIFE** Badass lawyer Alicia (Julianna Margulies) opted for power over friends, giving this intelligent drama new sizzle. (CBS)

5. **SCANDAL** The watercooler drama's politicos and assassins riveted with "What next?" chills. (ABC)

6. **30 ROCK** Liz Lemon (Tina Fey) found love, but TV lost one brainy, surreal, funny sitcom. (NBC)

7. **HOUSE OF CARDS** Kevin Spacey's adept turn as a sly congressman made this drama binge-worthy. (Netflix)

8. **THE WALKING DEAD** This zombie drama ramped up the action with a classic hero/bad guy rivalry. (AMC)

9. **BEHIND THE CANDELABRA** Famed pianist Liberace (Michael Douglas) and his drugged-out boy toy (Matt Damon) were TV's It couple of the year! (HBO)

10. **BATES MOTEL** Vera Farmiga killed it as Norman Bates' desperate mom in this *Psycho* prequel. (A&E)



Fey with James Marsden



Broadchurch BBC America

An addictive British murder mystery that exposed the underbelly of a small town, then dug deeper and found its bruised heart. Olivia Colman and David Tennant (he'll star in FOX's *American reboot*) were superb as mismatched detectives.



Masters of Sex Showtime

This dual portrait of sex researchers William Masters and Virginia Johnson in the late '50s is elegantly smart and sharp. It's like being seduced in an Eames chair.



Breaking Bad AMC

If the finale didn't fully come to grips with the sins of Walter White, at least TV now has a myth to equal the fall of Adam. Only he's bald.



Hannibal NBC

Psychiatrist and cannibal Hannibal Lecter (Mads Mikkelsen) agrees to counsel a troubled FBI profiler of serial killers. This is a diabolical thriller, a vision of hellish anguish—also the sickest buddy comedy ever.

Photograph by Peter Hapak for TIME