

MASTER CLASS

Matt Czuchry & Henry Winkler



Photograph by Sophy Holland

The Resident

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TV GUIDE MAGAZINE was lucky enough to witness the first meeting between *Barry's* Henry Winkler and *The Resident's* Matt Czuchry back in 2018. Winkler, 75, spied Czuchry, 43, in our photo suite during the Television Critics Association summer press tour and, being a fan of the medical drama, rushed over to introduce himself.

Seeing them together, we knew they'd be perfect for our "Master Class" interview series, where we spark a conversation between a TV icon and a rising star.

Winkler, of course, found success playing the Fonz on ABC's *Happy Days* (1974–84). He appeared in such comedies as *Arrested Development*, was a producer on *MacGyver* (original and reboot) and directed several sitcoms. He won his first Primetime Emmy for the role of grandiose acting teacher Gene Cousineau on HBO's *Barry*. The

comedy follows hitman Barry Berkman (Bill Hader), who questions his choices after he enrolls in an acting class taught by Cousineau. Czuchry rose to fame in 2004 as Logan, the rich boyfriend of Rory (Alexis Bledel) on *Gilmore Girls*, then played lawyer Cary on *The Good Wife*. Season 4 of *The Resident* features the wedding of his Dr. Conrad Hawkins and nurse practitioner Nic Nevin (Emily VanCamp). The men, who discuss acting advice, choosing roles and roller skating with Cher, did not disappoint.

Matt Czuchry: When I first moved to L.A. in 1999, I said, "I really, really want to meet Henry Winkler" from what I'd heard about you as an individual.

Henry Winkler: Wow, I didn't know that. That makes me feel good. When did you know you wanted to be an actor?

Czuchry: I loved history and political science, which I think ultimately is about understanding people. And as actors, that's what we do as well.

Winkler: But not every actor has that

ability to understand the idea of your truth and it becomes everybody's truth. You have the ability to show us how you are feeling for real, and then everyone goes, "Oh, I know how that feels. I've been there." It's rare.

Czuchry: Thank you. When people ask for [acting career] advice, as I'm sure everyone does with you, for me, I say that there's no playbook. Everybody has their own path. And if you're thinking, "If I can get to this point, it's going to be easier," it won't be.

Winkler: I always feel like I'm going back to square one [after a job ends]. In 1984, I had finished this incredible run on *Happy Days*. Everybody said, "Oh, he is such a good actor, but he's the Fonz." That's when I started producing, and I started to try and direct, because I wasn't getting anywhere anytime soon. I had to go through the fear

invited me. I said, "I don't roller skate, but thank you so much." And she said, "Oh, you don't sound like the Fonz." She literally thought that she was going to be talking to the guy I was playing on TV.

Czuchry: One thing I say is, when you get to that place that you think you want to be at, it's never going to be like you think it is.

Winkler: That is a very important statement for young actors to know. Holy mackerel, that is insightful! With *The Resident*, did you have a fear at the start—"Is this going to work?"—or did you know?

Czuchry: I read the pilot and I had a connection to the story and the character. It also took a different window into the medical world, like *The Good Wife* did in terms of the legal aspect. With *Barry*, for you?



Czuchry and VanCamp in the season premiere of *The Resident*



Barry's Winkler and Hader

of it, the reality of it, the pain of not being able to move forward at the moment.

Czuchry: How did you do that?

Winkler: You know what? I kept thinking, "If you don't know what to do, don't do anything. It will present itself." Growing up, I wanted to be an actor since I was old

enough to reason. I now had lived my dream to the nines. I did not have a plan after having lived my dream.

Czuchry: I certainly resonate with the square one aspect. With *Gilmore Girls*, people saw me as that character, and that was a scary thing to break through. My identity was a little bit attached to him. Did you have that experience?

Winkler: Yes. Cher called me when I was doing *Happy Days*. She was famous for having roller skating parties, and she

Winkler: Oh, my God, I read it and I knew I was in greatness. With *Barry*, it was the writing and the name Bill Hader, who I watched every Saturday night [on *Saturday Night Live*] for years.

Czuchry: Did you feel like you had a bead on that character right away?

Winkler: I did. I did not know he was as creepy as they wrote. To me, he was a "Hey, if you can pay [for acting classes], you're a great actor. I've got high hopes for you...if you pay in cash." Are you great at memorizing lines?

Czuchry: No, I have to work really, really hard at it. It does not come easy for me.

TV GUIDE MAGAZINE: What's on your bucket lists as actors?

Winkler: I'm telling you, I'd love to create a character who doesn't speak.

Czuchry: How about a buddy comedy where we both don't talk? So we won't have to worry about lines.

Winkler: Unbelievable!

Czuchry: That's my new bucket list. —Jim Halterman

INSETS: FROM LEFT: GUY DALEMA/FOX; WARNER MEDIA