

TV Review: Spectacular ‘Justified’ Returns For Promising Second Season

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on February 9, 2011 - 1:52pm

- [Brian Tallerico](#) [2]
- [Elmore Leonard](#) [3]
- [Erica Tazel](#) [4]
- [FX](#) [5]
- [Graham Yost](#) [6]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [7]
- [Jeremy Davies](#) [8]
- [Joelle Carter](#) [9]
- [Justified](#) [10]
- [Margo Martindale](#) [11]
- [Natalie Zea](#) [12]
- [Nick Searcy](#) [13]
- [Television](#) [14]
- [Timothy Olyphant](#) [15]
- [Walton Goggins](#) [16]

CHICAGO – We have every reason to believe that the second season of “Justified” will be even better than the first and that excellent outing landed on [my top ten for 2010](#) [17]. In other words, one of the best shows on TV is back and looks likely that it could get even better.



TV Rating: **5.0/5.0**

Why better? Well, there’s a commonality in TV shows like “Justified” in that they almost always get better in the second season. The list of great programs that improved in the second season (the decline usually happens in three if it’s going to at all) is extensive. Your favorite shows in history are probably on it. Why? There’s confidence that comes with success and confidence breeds creativity. Think of it like a great sports team that finds rookie success — they’re naturally going to be even better with a year of experience and time to fine tune what worked about year one.



Justified

Photo credit: FX

To be fair, “Justified” has always been a confident program. It’s one of the elements that distinguishes the show. Strong characters, complex writing, moral gray areas — these are the kinds of things that take confidence from the very beginning. It’s there in nearly every frame of that first season. It just feels more underlined at the start of season two. Timothy Olyphant looks more comfortable in the shoes of Raylan Givens,

a character who now feels like he's going to be around for quite some time.



Justified
Photo credit: FX

The second season premiere of "Justified" picks up immediately where the last left off, tying up the loose ends left by the climactic shoot-out in the finale. Walton Goggins makes a brief appearance, but the writers wisely don't waste too much time on past arcs, moving on to set up new ones as well, including the addition of two great actors in supporting roles, Margo Martindale and Jeremy Davies. The former plays the matriarch of a family-based marijuana operation and Davies (most recently so great on "Lost") steals scenes as her sadistic son who uses a bear trap as torture device to scare away competition. Olyphant and Goggins were spectacular in season one but they have now been accompanied by a pair of equally-talented supporting players (no offense to the lovely Natalie Zea, who continues to do solid-if-unspectacular work).

Creator Graham Yost has refined "Justified"'s amazing sense of impending violence, a trademark of Elmore Leonard's writing that has arguably never been more brilliantly translated to a form other than fiction. In Leonard's world, a witty remark could always be followed by a gunshot or a punch to the face. The writing on "Justified" perfectly captures that balance of wit and danger. The show traffics in worlds of drugs, sex offenders, white supremacists, and other portions of society that present a challenge to writers to not get "too dark" and miss the entertainment value of their program. Rarely has a show more deftly walked that line of being entertaining without losing the edge of what it's covering.

When "The Shield" and "Nip/Tuck" left FX and "Rescue Me" announced an end date, it was unclear what would fill that void. They were clearly the first chapter of the network's success. Would they have another? "Justified" now can easily be mentioned in the same breath as "The Shield," still the best program in the history of the net but also one of the best cop shows, period. Vic Mackey has a worthy successor in Raylan Givens. Having another Golden Globe winner in the beloved "Sons of Anarchy" doesn't hurt either. With that program and this even-better one, FX has proven that it's not going to stop being a major dramatic player any time soon. There's no better drama on TV right now than "Justified."

'Justified' returns on FX on Tuesday, February 9th, 2011 at 8pm CST. It stars Timothy Olyphant, Erica Tazel, Natalie Zea, Joelle Carter, Jacob Pitts, Nick Searcy, Margo Martindale, and Jeremy Davies. It was created by Graham Yost from a character created by Elmore Leonard.



[18]

By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [19]

Content Director

HollywoodChicago.com

brian@hollywoodchicago.com [18]

Source URL (retrieved on Apr 23 2024 - 11:35pm):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/13325/tv-review-spectacular-justified-returns-for-promising-second-season>

Links:

[1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/briantt>

[2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/brian-tallerico>

[3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/elmore-leonard>

[4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/erica-tazel>

[5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/fx>
[6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/graham-yost>
[7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
[8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/jeremy-davies>
[9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/joelle-carter>
[10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/justified>
[11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/margo-martindale>
[12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/natalie-zea>
[13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/nick-searcy>
[14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/television>
[15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/timothy-olyphant>
[16] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/walton-goggins>
[17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/13034/tv-feature-the-10-best-shows-of-2010>
[18] <mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com>
[19] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#BRIAN>