

## TV Review: Strong Cast Anchors Drama of ‘Men of a Certain Age’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on June 1, 2011 - 9:46am

- [Andre Braugher](#) [2]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [3]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [4]
- [Men of a Certain Age](#) [5]
- [Ray Romano](#) [6]
- [Scott Bakula](#) [7]
- [Television](#) [8]
- [TNT](#) [9]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [10]

CHICAGO – TNT’s “Men of a Certain Age,” returning this week to finish out its second season with six episodes that the producers promise will be backed with character-driven drama, has quietly grown not just a loyal following but a reasonably strong critical foundation as well. With an Emmy nomination for its first season likely to be followed by another one this year, Andre Braugher, Scott Bakula, and Ray Romano continue to anchor their tales of the modern male mid-life crisis in believable, well-written drama. After initially writing off the show in its series premiere, my tune has definitely changed. This is worth your time.



Television Rating: **4.0/5.0**

As we’ve been going through the Fall pilots on the networks, one things is abundantly clear — high-concept hooks have been deemed more important than ever. There are ghosts (“A Gifted Man”), fairy tale creatures (“Once Upon a Time”), spy stewardesses (“Pan Am”), and even Playboy bunnies (“The Playboy Club”). It feels even more refreshing to see a show like “Men of a Certain Age” that is based purely on character and to watch three underrated actors bringing the realism that’s often missing from modern television.



Men of a Certain Age  
Photo credit: Danny Feld/TNT

Technically, what premieres tonight, June 1st, 2011, isn’t a season premiere. It’s a mid-season mid-life crisis. TNT continues that bizarre pattern (that also takes place at USA) in which they’re seasons are sometimes cut in half. These six episodes finish what was started last December as Joe (Ray Romano), Owen (Andre Braugher), and Terry (Scott Bakula) come to potential turning points in their lives. I say “potential” because one of the interesting things about “Men of a Certain Age” is how accurately it represents the fact that we’re often at turning points where we could change our lives — the issue is actually taking the turn.



Men of a Certain Age  
Photo credit: Danny Feld/TNT

In the mid-season premiere, "The Great Escape," Joe struggles to keep up his work ethic and actually get on the senior golf tour when life presents so many distractions including a friend with cancer and an ex-wife who may be trying to reunite with him. Owen faces the possibility of a buy-out of his car dealership and isn't sure that it's not exactly what he wants. Terry seems in the darkest place as he approaches the big 5-0 and realizes that his life of flings and younger girlfriends hasn't turned as he hoped, especially when life with his gorgeous new girlfriend (Melissa McGraw) gets complicated.

In the past, Terry/Bakula's plotlines have been frustrating but he's great here. The scene with his birthday party in the second episode is stellar and the hard work Bakula has done to find something genuine in a relatively-cliched character is paying off. I still think he's slightly less interesting than Braugher (who's just one of the best actors on TV) and Romano (because he's the lead of the program if one had to pick) but Bakula's doing the most with what he's been given.

Braugher was nominated for Supporting Actor for the first season and if Lead Actor in a Drama weren't such an incredibly crowded category, I would think that Romano could join him this year (but there's just an overabundance of talent in that category for that to happen). The point is that Ray Romano is EASILY doing the most complex, interesting work of his career here (and that's coming from someone who loved "Raymond").

"Men of a Certain Age" can sometimes be frustratingly slow but if the final six episodes live up to the promise of the producers and actually push these men into the next chapters of their individual mid-life crises than I think the lengthy build-up will have been worth it. It takes time to find the truth in the cliché and "Men of a Certain Age" has done just that.

*'Men of a Certain Age' returns on TNT on Wednesday, June 1st, 2011 at 9pm CST. It stars Ray Romano, Scott Bakula, Andre Braugher, Lisa Gay Hamilton, and Richard Gant.*



[11]

By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [12]  
Content Director  
HollywoodChicago.com  
[brian@hollywoodchicago.com](mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com) [11]

**Source URL (retrieved on Apr 23 2024 - 11:04am):**

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/14516/tv-review-strong-cast-anchors-drama-of-men-of-a-certain-age>

#### Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/briantt>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/andre-braugher>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/brian-tallerico>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/men-of-a-certain-age>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/ray-romano>

- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/scott-bakula>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/television>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/tnt>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dvd-theater-tv-news>
- [11] <mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#BRIAN>