TV Review: ‘2 Broke Girls’ Poised to Make a Lot of Money For CBS

Submitted by BrianTT [1] on September 19, 2011 - 9:04am

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CHICAGO – CBS’s “2 Broke Girls” doesn’t reinvent the formula but it certainly provides laughs within it. The new program most likely to be a consistent hit on any broadcast network makes a perfect fit on Monday nights and should work for audiences loyal to “How I Met Your Mother” and “Two and a Half Men.” With two very-talented stars, clever writing, and a funny pilot, this could be a Monday night staple for years to come.



TV Rating: **3.5/5.0**

The “Laverne & Shirley” formula of “2 Broke Girls” features Kat Dennings and Beth Behrs in the title roles of Max Black and Caroline Channing. Max has been a “broke girl” for years. She’s the working-class heroine of the piece, the tough-as-nails, cynical waitress who knows a bad customer from a good one and basically keeps the greasy spoon at which she works from falling apart. Naturally, she’s thrown off by the arrival of Caroline, a socialite, silver-spoon, spoiled princess forced to work for a living after her father gets caught up in a Bernie Madoff-esque scandal. Caroline is high maintenance, needy, and generally annoying but Max can tell she has a good heart and the two have a clear friendship by the end of the first episode.



2 Broke Girls
Photo credit: CBS

Max & Caroline work at a dive called Williamsburg Diner, while the brunette (of COURSE, one has to be a brunette and the other a blonde) makes award-worthy cupcakes at night and dreams of starting her own business. They are surrounded by stereotypes — the smooth-talking cashier (Garrett Morris), the sleazy cook (Jonathan Kite), and the Asian owner (Matthew Moy). My biggest concern about “2 Broke Girls” has to be that the supporting cast will never come close to matching the two leads and I don’t think the title characters can carry every single

episode.



2 Broke Girls
Photo credit: CBS

Having said that, Dennings and Behrs are stellar. The former has been great in films like “Nick & Norah’s Ultimate Playlist” and “Thor,” while the latter is less familiar. They have perfect future-friend chemistry while also having some of the best comic timing I’ve seen in a pilot. As they get more accustomed to these roles, they could easily be in the conversation regarding the best actress in a comedy category for the Golden Globes and Emmys. And they’re two of the new Fall season’s most likely shots at breakout stars.

“Laverne & Shirley,” “Alice,” “The Odd Couple,” hell, it could even be argued that the title is designed to remind viewers of “Two and a Half Men” — “2 Broke Girls” may be the most derivative new program of the Fall…but that only matters for a scene or two. If you’re laughing, you don’t care. Sure, one would hope that more original programming like “Community” or “Louie” finds a wider audience, but formulas get remixed for a reason — they still work. If the writing and acting are strong enough, no one notices the cliche; no one cares about the formula. And the writing and acting on “2 Broke Girls” work — it’s simply a funny show, which makes any extreme criticism about it being derivative just silly. Who cares if we’ve seen it before if it makes us laugh again?

Created by Michael Patrick King and the new David Kelley of the 2011-12 season (in that she’s everywhere, with three new shows), Whitney Cummings, the pilot of “2 Broke Girls” is ably assisted by direction of the sitcom God — James Burrows. The man knows comedy, having worked on many of the shows from which “2 Broke Girls” was derived. Is “2 Broke Girls” groundbreaking? Hell no. I don’t even think its creators would argue that it was. But not everything needs to be. After a long Monday, you just want something funny. And, if the quality of the pilot continues through the first season, this is your best choice for comedy on the entire night.

“2 Broke Girls” stars Kat Dennings, Beth Behrs, Garrett Morris, Matthew Moy, and Jonathan Kite. It was created by Michael Patrick King and Whitney Cummings and premieres on CBS at 8:30pm CST on September 19th, 2011 (before moving to its regular time slot of 7:30pm CST the next week).


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By BRIAN TALLERICO [19]
Content Director
HollywoodChicago.com
brian@hollywoodchicago.com [18]

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