

Actor treasures move from film to television

By Mary Ann Townsend

Joe Pantoliano doesn't worry about getting bogged down with his work on the new NBC series *The Fanelli Boys*.

The actor, who has been seen in big-grossing feature films for the past 10 years, is actually looking forward to what others may consider the grind of weekly television.

"The medium is completely different from the mediums I've practiced in—theater and film and television—this is a combination. You're filming the show in front of a live audience, so you're getting the immediate response, but the cameras are covering you like you're on film, so you can't really play the audience because then you'd be too large for the people that are going to watch you on television. It's a medium that intrigues me in terms of conquering it," he said.

Pantoliano has always loved the challenge of conquering new things. Having "slipped through" grade school in Hoboken, N.J., the actor was evaluated with having a third grade reading equivalency when he was in

high school. With the help of a concerned history teacher and a tutor, Pantoliano soon set a goal for himself. "It was just practice. I just needed to read and learn, my comprehension was good. So I started reading a book a week for like the next 10 years, and it got better."

Whether it was the ability to read or talent or both, Pantoliano has done well with acting.

Throughout the course of his 18-year professional acting career, Pantoliano has played Maggio in the miniseries *From Here To Eternity*, Gino in *The Idolmaker*, Guido the killer pimp in *Risky Business*, a photojournalist in *The Mean Season*, a punk rocker in *Running Scared*, Ritchie Valens' manager in *La Bamba*, and a retarded brother in *Orphans*, as well as many other roles.

Even with that diversity, the actor said he doesn't think he'll look at *The Fanelli Boys* as a weekly rut. "With any luck, if the show is successful, I would need about 22 to 25 shows just to get into the swing of things."



Joe Pantoliano

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