

## Co-star says 'Rosie O'Neill' like a good jam session

### Dorian Harewood likes character's conflicts

By Mary Ann Townsend

Dorian Harewood thrives on bringing out the human element in the characters he plays, and he does just that in his co-starring role on CBS' *The Trials of Rosie O'Neill*, which airs Mondays.

Harewood plays public defender Hank Mitchell, who is often at odds with his office-mate Rosie O'Neill. Sharon Gless stars as Rosie, a divorced woman who, in her quest to start her life anew, has given up corporate law to serve as a public defender.

The role of Hank Mitchell is a good one, Harewood said, because the character has a lot of conflicts.

"There are several faults that he has, but the conflicting thing is the fact that he's got a lot of integrity; he's a real good person, and he's just trying to be the best public defender that he can be. But in his passion to be a public defender, he becomes kind of limited in his thinking about other people, narrow-minded and impatient with people that aren't as committed as he is," Harewood explained.

*The Trials of Rosie O'Neill* marks Harewood's fourth regular series role.

He enjoys working with Gless on the new series, not only because she has a good balance of comedy and drama, but also because she has a way of bringing out the best performances in her co-stars, he said.

"She's the kind of person who challenges people to be better. It's like a good jam session when I'm acting with Sharon, like when good musicians get together and they make great music. Sharon and I and the rest of the cast are getting together and we've got great words to say and we make great acting," he said.

Harewood ought to know about jam sessions. He started his professional career in 1972 as a singer. While attending the University of Cincinnati's Conservatory of Music, Harewood saw an ad in the paper for the national touring company production of *Jesus*

*Christ Superstar* and was cast in the role of Judas. He moved on to New York where he performed in several Broadway musicals. Although a co-starring performance with Bette Davis in Philadelphia ended abruptly when the legendary actress injured her back, that appearance changed the course of Harewood's career.

"She's the one who turned me toward acting. I did a musical with her called *Miss Moffat*, and she said that she loved my singing, but she also felt that my dramatic instincts were similar to hers and that I should at least explore dramatic acting," the actor explained. He took her advice and won a Theatre World Award for his first dramatic role in *Don't Call Back*.

His dramatic acting career has also kept him busy with miniseries and made-for-TV movies including *Roots: The Next Generations* and *The Jesse Owens Story*, and more recently *Polly* and *Polly — One More Time*. In addition, the talented performer is pursuing a recording career. His pop and rhythm and blues album, *Love*



Dorian Harewood plays Hank Mitchell, a colleague who is not keen on sharing his office with Rosie.

*Will Stop Calling*, was released to good reviews a year and a half ago, and he's working on another album. In the meantime, he's concentrating on his Hank Mitchell character.

"I just want to show many levels to Hank's character and show that you can never really generalize about people because everyone is an individual and they're all different," he said.

## CABLE NEWS

### 'Godfather' film fest heralds new release

By Christy Bergslien  
The *Godfather* Parts I and II will be featured in a special presentation heralding the release of *The Godfather, Part III*, opening in theaters nationwide on Dec. 25. The special debuts Tuesday, Dec. 11, on HBO.

A *Broadway Christmas*, premiering on Showtime Monday, Dec. 10, assembles the casts of today's biggest Broadway and London musicals. Cast members of *Les Miserables*, *Cats*, *Aspects of Love* and *Miss Saigon* sing their favorite Christmas carols.

Dylan Thomas' tale about Christmas in a Welsh town, *A Child's Christmas*

in Wales, comes to life on The Disney Channel Dec. 11. Denholm Elliott plays grandfather to young Mathonwy Reeves. Inspired by his grandson's yuletide wonder, the grandfather is reminded of the Christmas magic of his own boyhood.

Melissa Gilbert stars with husband Bo Brinkman in *The Lookalike*. A woman just getting over the death of her family is driven to the brink of insanity after spotting a dead-ringer for her deceased daughter. The USA film premieres Wednesday, Dec. 12.

Ned Beatty, Peter Boyle and Vincent Gardenia star in the true-life drama of the bombing of a flight over Lockerbie, Scotland. *The Tragedy of Flight 103: The Inside Story* scrutinizes the activities of authorities and airline officials prior to the incident. Sunday, Dec. 9, is the airdate for the HBO-made film.

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