

Viewers are left cold with 'Love Monkey'

There's a world of difference between casting against type and simply miscasting. In the past week, we've seen examples of both and we suffer through it again tonight on "Love Monkey" (10 p.m., CBS, TV-14), starring Tom Cavanaugh.



Kevin McDonough

Asking Jean Smart to play the president's tortured, paranoid, overmedicated wife on "24" is brilliant.

Expecting that audiences will buy Heather Graham as a sympathetic and funny single woman is what makes "Emily's Reasons Why Not" unwatchable.

Unfortunately, Cavanaugh's turn as an edgy rock 'n' roll talent scout is almost painfully preposterous. Don't get me wrong: Cavanaugh and his character, Tom Farrell, seem like really nice guys.

Not only is Farrell a nice guy, but he seems to work hard all of the time trying to remind us of what a nice, sweet, quirky, sensitive and silly guy he can be.

It's as if "Ed" were on his way to an audition for a Dockers commercial but found himself marooned in the East Village and asked to give a lecture on the history of punk rock.

And "Love Monkey" is an ensemble comedy. In fact, it's pathologically ensemble-rific. Tom can't go anywhere without a posse of pals, relatives and in-laws. His guy friends include an ex-jock, a businessman and his brother-in-law. He has a close female confidant and a pregnant sister who are both blond and hard to tell apart.

Everybody in this show seems to finish each other's sentences, correct one another's grammar and know each other's secrets. It's a claustrophobic world where "I'll Be There For You" and "Everybody Knows Your Name" all of the time.

The show's music-industry setting also means we have lots of emotionally laden songs inflicted on us at random moments when the narrative sags. "Love Monkey" mixes classic-rock riffs with tunes by Tom's newly discovered talent, a photogenic young hipster given to singing about his feelings.

"Love Monkey" is not without some redeeming aspects. Erik Bogosian plays Tom's boss, who manages to embody everything sleazy, corrupt and compromised about the music industry. It's too bad he fires Tom early in the pilot. I suspect the show's tenure will be equally short-lived.

Again, I have nothing against Cavanaugh. But it's high time he takes on the roles that suit him. He's a dad, not a dude.

Who wants to watch a punk rock Peter Pan? "Nova" (8 p.m., WFYI, WTIU) looks at the perils of mountain climbing. Every year

more than 1,000 intrepid souls attempt to scale Alaska's Denali (the peak formerly known as Mount McKinley).

Many fail, and some of them die. While most of these fatalities are from accidents, others succumb to mystery ailments common only at extremely high altitudes that scientists are only now beginning to understand.

Tonight's other highlights

- Auditions, with an accent on musical atrocities, on the fifth-season premiere of "American Idol" (8 p.m., Fox, TV-G).
• An abandoned infant on "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit" (10 p.m., NBC, TV-14).
• Second chairs and second guessers on "Boston Legal" (10 p.m., ABC, TV-14).
• The noose tightens on Vic on "The Shield" (10 p.m., FX, TV-MA).

Cult choice

A married woman (Celia Johnson) and a young doctor (Trevor Howard) meet at a train station and carry on a short, tortured and furtive romance in "Brief Encounter" (10 p.m., TCM).

Series notes

A suicide might be linked to a mass murder on "CSI" (9 p.m., CBS, TV-14) ... On back-to-back episodes of "Scrubs" (NBC, TV-14), faith (9 p.m.), bliss (9:30 p.m.) ... Demon-fighting takes its toll on "Supernatural" (9 p.m., WB, TV-14, L, V).

Late night

Jeff MacGregor appears on "Late Show With David Letterman" (11:35 p.m., CBS) ... Jay Leno hosts Heath Ledger, Heidi Klum and Ray J on "The Tonight Show" (11:35 p.m., NBC) ... Michael Chiklis and Roselyn Sanchez appear on "Jimmy Kimmel Live" (12:05 a.m., ABC).
Martin Lawrence and the Soweto Gospel Choir are booked on "Late Night With Conan O'Brien" (12:35 a.m., NBC) ... Craig Ferguson hosts Greg Kinnear, Paula Poundstone and Ming Tsai on "The Late, Late Show" (12:37 a.m., CBS).

Kevin McDonough is a TV columnist for United Features Syndicate.

TUESDAY EVENING

JANUARY 17, 2006

Table with TV channel logos, show titles, times, and descriptions. Includes channels like WTTV, WRV, WISH, WTHR, WFI, WNDY, WTIU, WHMB, WCL, WXIN, WIPX, WTB, A&E, AMC, AP, BET, BRAVO, CNBC, CMT, CNN, COM, DISC, EI, ESPN, ESPN2, FAM, FNC, FOOD, FOXMV, FOXSM, FX, HALL, HGTV, HIST, LIFE, MSNBC, MTV, NICK, OXY, SCIFI, SPIKE, TBS, TCM, TLC, TNT, TOON, TVL, USA, VH1, WE, WGN, DISN, ENC, HBO, SHOW, MAX, TMC, STARZ.

ACCENT ON PEOPLE

The Associated Press

Paltrow confirms she's pregnant at screening

After months of rumors about a pregnancy, Gwyneth Paltrow has confirmed she's expecting her second child with Coldplay lead singer Chris Martin.



PALTROW

In an interview following a screening of her movie "Proof" late Thursday, the 33-year-old actress was introduced as a pregnant woman, according to the syndicated entertainment television show "The Insider." Moderator Lou Diamond Phillips asked Paltrow, "How far along are you?"

"Far enough along to feel very cumbersome," she answered. Paltrow's publicist, Stephen Huvane, would not comment.

A spokesman for the Screen Actors Guild, which sponsored the screening, referred callers to Huvane. Paltrow and Martin already have a 20-month-old daughter named Apple. They tied the knot in December 2003.

Paltrow won an Academy Award for her role in 1998's "Shakespeare in Love."

She plays the daughter of a mentally unstable math genius in "Proof," an adaptation of the Pulitzer Prize- and Tony-winning play.

Actor second guesses director's Nixon choice

Anthony Hopkins says he thought Oliver Stone was kidding when the director first asked him to play Richard Nixon.

"I said, 'I can't play Nixon. I'm not an American,'" Hopkins said Sunday on ABC's "This Week with George Stephanopoulos."

"(Stone) said, 'Well, I want you to do it.' He said, 'I think you understand his paranoia and his insecurity.'"

"I said, 'Well, OK, but does that qualify me to play this?' I think so."

The British actor starred in the 1995 film "Nixon" and earned an Academy Award nomination for the role.

Hopkins won an Oscar for portraying Hannibal Lecter in "The Silence of the Lambs" and also was nominated for his portrayal of John Quincy Adams in the movie "Amistad."

BUFFALO, N.Y.

Indie performer prepares for launch of music hall

Ani DiFranco gave hundreds of people a first glimpse at her latest project: a Gothic revival church being transformed into a performance and art space.



DIFRANCO

The indie musician and owner of Righteous Babe Records has spearheaded a \$10 million restoration of the old church along with her manager.

More than 500 people got a first look inside "The Church" on Friday.

"A few years ago, when this space was much more raw, I did a little playing here and I thought this is going to be a beautiful place to perform," DiFranco told the invitation-only crowd.

The nearly completed performance space is expected to open in late spring.

Paradise found for 'Lost' actor Kim

CALENDAR

By JAYMES SONG

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HONOLULU

Beaten, kidnapped and tossed in a pit, Jin Soo Kwon hasn't had many pleasant days on ABC's hit drama "Lost."

He's stranded on a mysterious island with dozens of plane-crash survivors who don't speak his language and carry way more baggage than the suitcases they brought on ill-fated flight.

In real life, actor Daniel Dae Kim, 37, who plays Jin, the Korean tough guy, couldn't be happier. He's enjoying living with his family in Hawaii, where the show is shot; he's earning a regular paycheck doing what he loves, and a day at the office means getting into filthy clothes and hitting the beach.

"I'm incredibly grateful for this opportunity," Kim said in an interview. "It's the most stability I've had in my career. I have a family, and to think about the fact that we're living in Hawaii and I have a fantastic job. I can't think of anything better."

"Every day I'm at work and I look out at the ocean and see the crystal blue waves crashing on the beach. I just look up and thank the universe for putting me here."

Working on "Lost" (9 p.m. Wednesdays) wasn't always so smooth for Kim, however.

In the series' Emmy-award winning first season, Jin was portrayed as a detached and chauvinistic thug who was overly protective of his wife, Sun.

The character drew sharp criticism from some Asian viewers, who accused Kim of perpetuating stereotypes on national television.

"Initially, I was stung by it," he said. "I rejected a lot of roles that were one dimensional and put Asian Americans in a bad light, so to receive the amount of criticism I did when the show came out was hurtful."

But as audiences learned more of the character through flash-



AP PHOTO

Actor Daniel Dae Kim, pictured in Honolulu, plays Jin Soo Kwon in the ABC series "Lost." The show airs at 9 p.m. Wednesdays.

backs, and as Jin warmed up, so did his critics.

"All these characters have layers, secrets inside of them," he said. "It was difficult, but the thing that kept me hopeful was my trust in the producers."

Other characters started out in a positive light, but their dark pasts are being divulged this season.

Besides Koreans, "Lost" also features an Iraqi, blacks, a Hispanic, an Australian and a Brit among the large, diverse and mostly unknown cast compiled by creators Damon Lindelof and J.J. Abrams.

"In a way, this show has an opportunity to make a lot of commentary on politics, human relations, human rights," Kim said. "For Koreans, I think it's the best opportunity that American television has ever had to be visited by Korean characters once a week and learn what it is to be Korean."

Lindelof has said speaking English was not an option for Jin and Sun, who exclusively talk to each other in their native language (although Sun, it was revealed, speaks English).

He noted that subtitles are not used when Jin speaks to other castaways, because he wants the viewer to share the frustration of trying to communicate.

The show is making a commentary on language because of "this sort of interesting American conceit, 'Everybody else on the planet should speak English,'" Lindelof said.

Today Meetings

Professional Referral Exchange of Indy South, 7 a.m., German-American Club, 8602 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Information: 902-6538

Franklin Rotary Club, noon, Franklin College campus center

Greenwood Kiwanis Club, 6 p.m., Jonathan Byrd's Cafeteria, Main Street and Interstate 65, Greenwood

Trafalgar Weight Watchers, 6:30 to 7 p.m., Trafalgar Christian Church (next to elementary school). Information: 878-5161

TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly), 6 p.m. weigh-in, 7 p.m. meeting, Morgantown Fire Station, 269 N. Highland St. Information: (812) 597-1535

Compulsive Eaters Anonymous, 6:30 p.m., Christ United Methodist Church Room 12, 8540 U.S. 31 South, Indianapolis. Information: 736-6234

Diabetes support group, 7 p.m., physical therapy room at Johnson Memorial Hospital Cancer Center, Franklin

Emotions Anonymous, 7 p.m., Peblee Creek Community Center, 225 Peblee Creek Drive, Greenwood. Information: 859-9569

TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly), 7 p.m., Smith Valley Baptist Church. Information: 535-7468

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