

Entertainment

Standing by your man

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Eliot Spitzer, Ted Haggard and of course, Bill Clinton represent a only few of the biggest sex scandals from the past few years. Even kindergartners could recognize these infamous, scandal-plagued men. These men's sexual selfishness left their wives in a wake of flashing bulbs, unflattering pictures and appalling news stories. But the "good wives" of Spitzer, Haggard and Clinton stood by their men and weathered the media frenzy that was their husbands' infidelities.

And so CBS created "The Good Wife," a drama series that follows a disgraced wife returning to work as a defense attorney. While "The Good Wife" falls under the category of a standard courtroom drama, the show was fortunately conceived

before Bravo had a chance to add "The Real Housewives of Sex Scandals" to their collection. The result is a pretty good series with real, genuine characters as opposed to the money-hungry fame mongers the "Housewives" series would have produced.

Julianna Margulies stars as Alicia Florrick, a heartbroken woman trying to keep herself together while re-assembling the

fallen pieces of her life. Chris Noth is a perfect fit for Alicia's husband, Peter Florrick. Noth is well known for his role as the infamous Mr. Big on "Sex and the City."

"The Good Wife's" pilot opens with a disorienting scene where Peter Florrick is resigning his post as State Attorney due to the discovery of his sex and corruption scandal. Bright lights,

close-ups, flashing and whirring cameras and quick montages establish Alicia Florrick as a very hurt, very conflicted person. The framing in this scene isolates Alicia from her husband, expressing her loneliness. Sometimes Margulies delivers a monotonous performance, but mostly she portrays Alicia Florrick as a strong, if wounded, and sympathetic woman.

Matt Czuchry, best known for his role as Logan on "Gilmore Girls," plays Cary, the recent Harvard graduate who Alicia must compete with for her job. Cary is a young, career-driven lawyer who handles workplace competition with a healthy dose of passive aggression. Czuchry performs with a devilish slyness and an angelic smile.

The obvious motif of "The Good Wife" is the success story of underdogs. Florrick is the shamed wife of a scorned politician who must prove herself when she re-enters the

courtroom for the first time in 13 years. To intensify the underdog sentiment, Florrick's cases share the recurring theme. For example, she exonerates a woman accused of killing her ex-husband in the pilot episode. Florrick's complicated cases include jury tampering and a wrongly accusation of murder, but some cases are both complicated and complex, like the stripper who accused a young, wealthy man of rape or a company's cover-up of a train crash that blamed the overworked engineers whose widows demanded compensation.

"The Good Wife" handles drama well but often ignores the equally as important light-hearted moments. Without a few more smiles or a little subtle humor, the show's plot seems more like a commute than an adventure. The only question that remains is who will get a reality television show first: Silda Wall Spitzer or Gayle Haggard?



Photo courtesy of bimedia.net

Everything must go! Lehman Bros. art auctioned off

By JOANN LOVIGLIO
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Even in these trying financial times, you're not going to see many going-out-of-business sales like this one.

On Sunday, hundreds of works from the art collection of failed banking giant Lehman Brothers will go on the auction block at Freeman's auction house in Philadelphia.

The 200-plus pieces of modern and contemporary art up for bid once lined the corridors and graced the board rooms of Lehman's offices in New York, Boston and Wilmington, Del. Highlights of Sunday's sale include prints by Claes Oldenburg, David Hockney, Robert Indiana, Frank Stella and Roy Lichtenstein.

Anne Henry, vice president of the 204-year-old auction house, valued the collection at \$500,000 to \$750,000. There is no reserve price on most of the

art, save for about a dozen pieces estimated at \$10,000 and up.

"Our phones have been ringing off the hook," she said. "The pieces are interesting, in great condition and appeal to all kinds of collectors."

The group is largely comprised of American artists from the 1930s to the present. Some pieces were purchased mere months before

Lehman's spectacular collapse in September 2008 under \$600 billion of debt, the biggest bankruptcy in U.S. history and the harbinger of the worst U.S. financial crisis since the Great Depression.

Now, everything must go.

The Philadelphia auctioneers will hold two more sales from the Lehman collection: paintings

and sculpture on Dec. 6th and a no-reserve auction of 450 more prints on Feb. 12.

"Freeman's is giving us national exposure for our better works as well as the moderate items that would be overlooked by larger houses," said Kimberly Macleod, spokeswoman for Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc.

The auction does not include any of the personal collection of Richard Fuld, Lehman's vilified former chief executive and (formerly) avid art collector. A year ago, 16 works owned by Fuld and his wife were auctioned by Christie's for \$13.5 million, far below the \$20 million estimate. The market for postwar contemporary art has fallen precipitously, along with the fortunes of high-end art collectors, since

the world economic free fall. But Henry believes that applies more to the big-ticket art market.

"Things priced reasonably, in good condition and with good provenance will continue to do very well," she said. "There hasn't been the same kind of impact at this level than might be true for the multimillion-dollar Damien Hirsts."

The Freeman's auction includes an Alexander Calder print with an estimated price of \$800-\$1,200 and a set of nine Walker Evans photographs estimated to fetch \$1,000-\$1,500: not exactly fire-sale prices, but within reach of those beyond the super wealthy.

At the upper end of the price spectrum is a print of the Statue of Liberty by pop art master Roy Lichtenstein, expected to sell for \$15,000 to \$25,000.

"A lot of long-standing collectors who had been priced out of the market are able to come back in," Henry said. "We're also seeing new clients too, people who've never bought art before, who are really interested."



Photo courtesy of Yahoo.com