

In Its Second Season, Bosch Is Everything True Detective Should Have Been



Courtesy of Amazon Studios.

The Amazon Prime series is the best show with the least ripple effect, and that ain't right.

Now in its second season on Amazon Prime, *Bosch*, based on the crime novels of **Michael Connelly**, leans into the steering wheel with complete confidence, control, and seasoned-pro know-how. Season 2 is not only superior to Season 1 (a serial-killer story line that got tangled up in its own stomach knots), it's everything that *True Detective* Season 2 should have been had it not succumbed to sadistic, self-pitying, mood-mongering, garbage-barge bloat.

At 10 episodes, *Bosch* Season 2 is long but lean, a neo-classical procedural that maintains a close shave. Everything about it is old school with a modern shine. Its hero, L.A.P.D. homicide detective Harry Bosch (**Titus Welliver**, with his patented head cock that puts a

sardonic spin on every comeback), is a lone gray wolf whose taste in jazz and refusal to play nice mark him as a man out of time, a proud throwback. And cool blondes don't come any more old school than goddess **Jeri Ryan**, playing the un-grieving widow of a porn-merchant money launderer, who stands in the doorway of her gated-community mansion as if modeling for the special gangster-moll edition of *Architectural Digest*. A Rodeo Drive vision in white, flowing outfits and gold accessories, Ryan's Veronica deserves the crown of queen of the femmes fatales, toying with her power over men and their pathetic lusts. Reading the mind of a lawyer who's giving her the once-over, she says with a smile, "If I were you, I'd want me, too." But even an experienced femme fatale can be outmaneuvered by a younger femme fatale, which results in one of *Bosch's* numerous double crosses that leave dead bodies wherever X marks the spot.

As in any classic procedural saga, the key to solving the initial crime unlocks the portal to an entire labyrinth of conspiracy and corruption, setting into motion a chain of personal betrayals, inter-agency rivalries, botched cover-up attempts, long drives through the desert, and lots of quality time in the interrogation room. We get to visit all the off-the-beaten-path tourist attractions: crummy, makeshift brothels overstocked with sullen prostitutes; meth houses in drastic need of a holiday makeover; convenience stores where it is always three A.M. in the badly lit night of the soul. When **Brent Sexton** (remember him from Season 4 of *Justified?*) pops his head out of a guard booth as an ex-cop who seems a little too affable and helpful, you know things are going to get heavy.

Although *Bosch* doesn't squander as much ammo as most detective/crime series (in keeping with its procedural bent), there are a couple of standout action set pieces: a hostage rescue that reminded me of the hostage siege in **Michael Mann's** *Miami Vice* movie and a triangulated shootout in a bank parking lot between a convergence of L.A.P.D. detectives, heavily armed rogue cops out for a big score, and a carful of mob guys, with Ryan's Veronica and the suitcase she's wheeling as the point of interception. Episode 5 of the series, directed by **Ernest Dickerson** (who's directed numerous episodes of *The Wire*, *Treme*, and *The Walking Dead*), achieves the mood and menace *True Detective's* second season was striving for, without the metaphysical baggage.

I can't nominate *Bosch* for Best Show You're Not Watching since I don't know what the viewing numbers are or who you are and what you're watching in the privacy of your dungeon, but I *do* know that it's the best show with the least ripple effect, and that ain't right. Perhaps its low profile in online conversation is an indicator of the cachet gap

between Netflix and Amazon Prime. Far dinkier comedies and brutalist superhero noirs on Netflix draw way more press and social-media spillage than almost any original series on Amazon Prime, apart from *Transparent*. (Although the upcoming **Woody Allen** series for Amazon Prime should close that gap considerably.) A marvel of long-form plotting and execution, Season 2 of *Bosch* is the only show I've watched this young year that delivers the sustained suspense, discovery, and enjoyment of the returning *Better Call Saul* and *The Americans*. I put "delivers" in the present tense because I still have one episode, the concluding episode, to go. I'm not a binge-watcher. I believe in the power of delayed gratification, which may be old school of me, but that's why Bosch and I are bros.



Claire Underwood

Robin Wright's environmental activist is apparently just as ruthless with her tailoring as she is with her nonprofit, demanding flawlessly fitted shift dresses, pencil skirts, and overcoats in no-nonsense shades of ink black, gray, and white. The Angelina Jolie of serialized programming, she can even make a cashmere robe or workout gear seem chic.

Courtesy of Netflix.



Roger Sterling

Whether making off-color comments in a client meeting or enjoying a three-martini lunch, John Slattery's *Mad Men* alter-ego always looks the part of the dapper Madison Avenue executive with his slim three-piece suits, smart double-breasted jackets, and pocket squares with triple-peaked folds so elaborate they deserve their own credit.

Courtesy of AMC.



Olivia Pope

Olivia Pope's elegant Escada pantsuits, Burberry trenches, and structured Armani blazers are so coveted by the Internet that they've earned their own fan base and multiple Pinterest pages, espousing the Kerry Washington character's feminine take on capitol style.

Courtesy of ABC.



Ike Evans

Jeffrey Dean Morgan's character epitomizes late-50s Miami Beach glamour, signaled in his wardrobe by cream-colored dinner jackets, skinny ties, and copper-colored suits, accessorized, more often than not, with a Cuban cigar.

Courtesy of Starz.



Diane Lockhart

The Good Wife costume designer Daniel Lawson has said that he has probably 250 designer suits on hand for the immaculately styled Diane Lockhart, played by Christine Baranski—most often, sophisticated designs by Ferragamo, Escada, and Givenchy in muted tones.

Courtesy of CBS.



Lady Mary Crawley

Whether she's buttoned up in tweed or dressed in a gauzy tea-party shift, the eldest Crawley sister (Michelle Dockery) consistently resists the siren call of waistless, potato-sack frump that lured many a beautiful lady to ruin during the inter-war years.

Courtesy of PBS.



Robert Crawley, Earl of Grantham

Perhaps most dapper in white tie and waistcoat, the Crawley-family patriarch, played by Hugh Bonneville, frequently cuts a fine figure in olive green, too—while dressed up in his belted British-military uniform, touring the Scottish Highlands in wool knickers, and, most notoriously, rendezvousing in a brocade dressing gown with the housemaid Jane.

Courtesy of PBS.



Megan Draper

Don Draper's second wife, played by Jessica Paré, was the breakout character of *Mad Men's* fifth season—not just because of her ability to sing sexy yé-yé pop songs but because of her lust-worthy, Janie Bryant–stocked closet. However, none of Megan Draper's signature pieces—like the 60s print blouses, pantsuits, and tangerine-colored mini-dresses—can compare to the now-famous bat-winged cocktail dress she wore to Don's 40th.

Courtesy of AMC.



Enoch "Nucky" Thompson

For Steve Buscemi's character, nothing says swagger and polished gangster style like an eye-catching accessory. "Nucky" likes to pair his three-piece suits with patterned ties, two-tone Oxford shoes, suspenders, bowler hats with grosgrain detail, and even the occasional flower in his lapel.

Courtesy of HBO.



Sally Draper

Last season, *Mad Men* viewers watched Don Draper's eldest mature into swinging-60s fashion, as evidenced by her cowl-neck sweaters, white Lesley Gore-style go-go boots, and grown-up lamé

Courtesy of AMC.

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