

TIMEOUT

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Out of the 'Ruins'
Actress Nia Vardalos gets
her groove back/ PAGE 3



CHUCK BARNEY
As Seen On TV

Spread the Emmy love

YOU KNOW Hugh Laurie is going to get his props. And so will Tina Fey and Glenn Close. There are certain TV stars who are pretty much cold-stone locks when it comes to garnering Emmy nominations.

And though we certainly don't begrudge them their raves, the Emmys would be utter dullsville if they consist entirely of predictable, rubber-stamp choices. We crave an infusion of fresh faces and new blood.



NBC

IT'S HIGH TIME that Connie Britton and Kyle Chandler of "Friday Night Lights" get a little Emmy love.

With that in mind, it's time to be proactive and make some helpful suggestions to voters currently mulling their Emmy ballots — suggestions pegged exclusively to newcomers or familiar faces who inexplicably have been overlooked in the past.

And we're hoping that some of our choices actually have a chance to break into the inner circle this year, now that the TV academy has expanded the number of nominees in the major categories from five to six.

Take a look and see if you agree:

BEST ACTOR, DRAMA:

We were thrilled when Bryan Cranston ("Breaking Bad") won last year on his maiden voyage in the category. But where was the love for Kyle Chandler, the inspiring and compelling head coach in "Friday Night Lights"? Also, we realize "Lost" has won its share of hardware, but why does Matthew Fox keep getting jacked by Emmy voters?

BEST ACTRESS, DRAMA:

It's time that we recognize the superb and subtle work January Jones is doing as a conflicted



JENNIFER DOWNEY of Alameda with one of her works of oil paint on canvas at AlbaStudios in Oakland.

D. ROSS CAMERON/STAFF



GIESON CACHO
Game On

'Punch-Out' is still a knockout

WHAT SEPARATES Nintendo from almost every other publisher is its stable of classic franchises. Whenever the company needs a hit, it walks over to that well of nostalgia and draws a title that tugs at those fond childhood memories.

When it needs a racing game, it trots out a "Mario Kart." When it needs to remind gamers which company makes the best adventure games, here comes a "Legend of Zelda." These franchises have stood the test of time across multiple platforms.

Video Game Reviews

■ **WHAT:** "Punch-Out!!"

■ **PLATFORM:** Wii

■ **RATING:** E-10

■ **GRADE:** A-

■■■■

■ **WHAT:** "Boom Blox Bash Party"

■ **PLATFORM:** Wii

■ **RATING:** E

■ **GRADE:** B-

Nintendo's projects are built on fun and easy-to-learn concepts. It's a staple of how they make games, and nowhere is this formula so evident than in its latest project: "Punch-Out!!" The boxing title is an update that should make fans of "Mike Tyson's Punch-Out!!" feel comfortable.

Players take on the role of Little Mac, who is working his way through the ranks to be the world boxing champion. With the help of his trainer Doc Louis, he'll take on some outlandish boxers from around the globe.

The developer, Next Level Games, includes old pushovers such as Glass Joe and King Hippo to fan favorites such as Bald Bull and Super Macho Man. As in the 8-bit NES game, each fighter will have little tells, which alert the fans to punches and special moves. The key to winning is reading these tells, quickly reacting and following up with a combination.

Stands test of time

It's a gameplay concept

Art made here

See where creativity blossoms on Pro Arts Open Studios tour

By Laura Casey

STAFF WRITER

PRO ARTS' EAST BAY Open Studios event is an invitation to be nosy.

Hundreds of artists around Alameda and Contra Costa counties throw open the doors of their studios, sometimes even their homes, and invite the public to see their work and where they make it.

Sometimes snacks are involved. Sometimes fun and games are offered, as is the case with AlbaStudios & Gallery in North Oakland.

AlbaStudios, run by Benny Alba, is in a nondescript building near Oakland's Children's Hospital at 4219 Martin Luther King Jr. Way. You may drive by it on your way to Highway 980 and never blink.

But inside is 7,000-square-feet of space used by four artists, including Alba. Eight more artists have packed their photography, painting and sculpture into the building for the Open Studios event.

Peel open the blue door, and you're welcomed inside by Alba herself. The quirky 60-year-old artist has been making a variety of work for about 40 years — paintings



D. ROSS CAMERON/STAFF

NINE OF THE DOZEN or so artists who will show their work during the Pro Arts Open Studio event at the AlbaStudios, from left: Matlena Hourula, Michelle Levy, Olivia Eielson, Benny Alba, Sherry Wacker, Jennifer Downey, Alys Briggs, Maggie Cockrell and Catherine Herdering.

room where visitors can use flashlights to look at some of her work, which sparkles in the light. She's also placed some jewelry in cabinets with nooks and crannies to explore. Some necklaces and pendants can be had for \$15. Across from Alba's

look at one of her pictures of the bark of a tree, and you'll likely see a human figure somewhere. She sells cards for \$3.50 and 16-by-20 inch posters for \$75.

Nearby, Alys Briggs, a retired public defender for Alameda County, also has

Event

■ **WHAT:** Pro Arts East Bay Open Studios

■ **WHEN:** June 6, 7, 13 and 14. Studios open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.