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WHEELS



### EDITOR'S PICK

**Maude: The Complete First Season** (Sony Pictures Home Entertainment): And then there's Maude ...

Before she was one of TV's Golden Girls, Bea Arthur was the brash, bossy, baritone powerhouse Maude Findley in this '70s spin-off of CBS's *All in the Family*. A matriarch in polyester vests who ruled behind her brandy glass and pointed finger, Maude served as creator Norman Lear's anti-Archie Bunker. She was flagrantly liberal, an outspoken feminist who held her hubby, Walter, under her thumb. Maude was one of a group of early sitcoms to introduce homosexual topics and characters in episodes such as "Maude's New Friend" (1974) and "The Gay Bar" (1977). While season one's episodes lack LGBTQ content, they introduce an edgy American classic, full of social relevancy for its time. The unconventional characters in Maude are always learning from each other, if only after airing screaming matches. But while its characters often realistically lose their tops, the show never quite loses its sense of humor. ([sonypictures.com/homevideo](http://sonypictures.com/homevideo)) — CM

# I Want My Queer TV

Tune into Logo's lineup and the Brits' take on *Buffy*. | By Candace Moore



Catching waves with the *Curl Girls*

Available online for download, through cable broadcast or On Demand, these three shows prove the queer revolution has not only begun to be televised, it's got a sense of humor.

### **The Big Gay Sketch Show** (Logo)

Clutching a glass of wine, a butch (Julie Goldman of *Mom* and *The D Word*) gets comfy and calls an erotic phone service. The sex worker on the line rasps seductively about what she's going to do ... politically. Every righteous act and vegan potluck described sends the caller's groin lustfully more a-wriggle. Executive produced by Rosie O'Donnell and directed by lesbian Amanda Bearse (*Married with Children*), *The Big Gay Sketch Show* wins laughs through sassy, absurd exaggerations of pop-culture stereotypes, tropes and 15-minute stars. Nothing and no one—straight or queer—is exempt. Through parody, the show offers a canny retaliation against the unfunny gay jokes told since time immemorial, as Logo's president Brian Graden explained to *The New York Times*, "you repossess the platform. We know our culture better than anyone. We're going to be the joke-tellers this time." Additionally one signature skit each episode ribs television past for missing, muted, or misguided representations of homos. We see what queer *Honeymooners* or a heterophobic Archie from *All in the Family* would look like, we even revisit *The Facts of Life* as they might better have been taught. Renewed for a second season starting early in 2008, the ensemble cast will add an element

of interactivity, allowing audiences to make online suggestions for sketch material. ([logoonline.com](http://logoonline.com))

### **Hex** (BBC America)

This British *Buffy* knock-off shifts mythologies slightly. Rather than a teen slayer policing a suburban Hellmouth, Ella Dee (Laura Pyper), whose puffy-shouldered leather trench cries "outdated," is a 400-year-old savior sworn to foil fallen angels and their poster boy, Malachi (Joseph Beattie). Thing is, Ella's trapped in a 17-year-old body and her nemesis materializes as a sizzling footballer who just transferred to her school. Always watching on is lesbian ghost Thelma (Jemima Rooper), who gives Ella advice generally more sound than that of the arch angel who acts as occasional cab driver. Within *Hex*'s world, girl ghosts (instead of witches) tend to be gay, perhaps a play on lesbian (in)visibility? Thelma's the ears and eyes of Medenham Hall—especially of the ladies' washroom—until she's distracted by a lady love, the new raven-haired ghost on the block who joins her in eternity to lick cake and kiss fireside. But wait, what's that tattoo on her girlfriend's neck? Might it be a malevolent mark? Square-jawed and asymmetrically shorn Thelma struggles with either doing what's right or having her heart's desire. The characters in this show are addictively handsome, but the eternal, Catholic guilt pitch of the plot is a little much for the mediocre writing to handle. The expressly Euro-goth atmo-

sphere and lovable queer specters still make this show worth a peek, if you're a fan of fantasy. ([bbcamerica.com](http://bbcamerica.com))

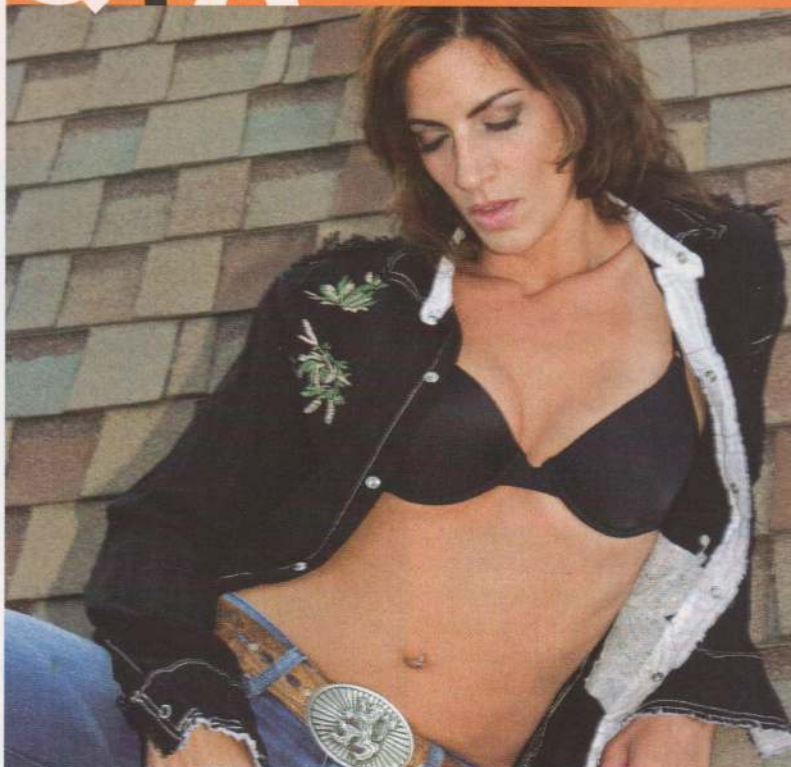
### **Curl Girls (Logo)**

Watch six Southern Californian lesbians of various maturity levels ride the crests of dyke drama as they develop a surf competition, ostensibly to provide their show with a purpose. While the reality show's early episodes impose narrative through personal interviews and relationship back stories, the show hits its stride when it plain revels in itself as spectator sport. With *Curl Girls*, time spent having cat fights and lovers' spats, picking up chicks and showing skin at the hotel hot tub or West Hollywood gay bar trumps time spent in wet suits paddling for a wave. That's not to say that Logo's surf show is devoid of surfing or surfers—save for two beginners, these women are aggressive competitors in the water—and their individual strengths on the board are showcased, if only between cocktail party sequences. And Gingi, new to the sport and to the girl group, quickly proves her mettle. The fascinating personalities of the show are not the camera hogs drumming up its gleefully trashy pleasures, but the chill characters, who hang back and occasionally hold their tongues (unless, of course, a talking-to becomes overdue). Go figure that the ladies with some impulse control end up the most in tune with the waves. ([logoonline.com](http://logoonline.com)) ■



The Big Gay Sketch Show cast

# Q+A



## Cathy DeBuono

| ACTOR |

Sexy actor Cathy DeBuono plays the hot dyke that two sisters end up fighting over in *Out at the Wedding*. Perhaps a bit of typecasting? We asked the real-life lesbian about playing Risa, the Jewish lesbian artist, electrician and double love interest in the film. — *Sheela Lambert*

### **How did you hear about the audition?**

Lee Friedlander [the director] and I had met about four years prior when she cast me in a little indie project. She told me she pictured me in the role of Risa the whole time she studied the script [by Paula Goldberg]. Whose interest wouldn't be peaked after that?

### **What attracted you to the role?**

I read the script and it literally made me laugh out loud. I loved so many things about it: it's gay, yet it's universal, it's silly, yet it's romantic. It's sort of humanly holistic, in that it's a comedy about family and falling in love that includes religion, ethnicity and sexuality as things that can and do complicate our relationships. Besides, as an actor I had yet to have the opportunity to play a role where I dance with the beautiful girl and win her heart in the end, my inner seven-year-old was doing cartwheels, I swear to God.

**One of my favorite parts of the film is when they say "Where are we going to get a lesbian? It's not like a lesbian's just gonna fall from the sky!" And then you fall off a tall ladder right at their feet. It's hard to top an entrance like that. Did you get hurt?**

I worked on the fall with our stunt co-coordinator and I had a nice big fluffy mat to land on. It was certainly unnatural at first to allow myself to fall backwards off a ladder, but after the first couple of times, it was like "Wee! let's do it again!" You're right, though, to top an entrance like that it'd have to have like a dolphin and a tricycle or something.

*Cathy DeBuono continued on page 73*