

# Breaking

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The raves were universal. Though he admired it, the *Los Angeles Times*' Robert Lloyd felt in the show's later arcs that White's story arc was wearying: "Walt has long since crossed the line in which it is possible for me to feel for him."

"Breaking Bad" opened its fifth season last July to its largest audience, some 2.9 million viewers. Along with "Mad Men," "The Walking Dead" and "The Killing," the series was also pivotal in establishing AMC's elite status in the cable universe.

It also caught the first wave of a new phenomenon that was unheard of when it premiered — binge viewing. As buzz over the show grew,

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weeks to prepare. However, things have fallen into place better than expected, she said.

"They've all worked really hard," Spak said. "The kids have pulled together and worked together as a team. It's been really cool."

The director added that a few of the actors have been involved in the YCTC for several years, and the guidance they have offered the inexperienced children has helped considerably.

Logan Haak, one of the older actors who plays Jon's father, said he has enjoyed playing a paternal role both on and off the stage.

"Some of the kids have special needs, and it's been fun to help them get involved and participate," he said.

Tickets for "The Reluctant Dragon" will be available at the door. Children under 3 are admitted free of charge.

"We would like to see people come out," Spak said. "It's not very long and perfect for a kid. And getting those young ones in to see a show could help spark that creativity in a child that we hope for."

## CAST AND CREW

Jon — Jaden Pearson  
Dragon — Jordan Kuipers  
Ulrick — Macklin McNatt  
Jennifer — Emily Wieseler  
St. George — Shaun Morkve  
Heinrick — Blake Wieseler  
Meg — Jennica Young  
Charli — Anna Carda  
Dan — Joselyn Pearson  
Grindl — Amelia Morkve  
Anne — Tess Zoss  
Ermengarde — Alyssa Ogstad  
Aelfrick — Logan Haak  
Ben — Dayton Bullard  
Backstage — Sky Nockels  
Sound — Tibor Spak  
Costumes — Tammy Wieseler  
Directed — Allison Spak

You can follow Derek Bartos on Twitter at [twitter.com/d\\_bartos](https://twitter.com/d_bartos)

# Arts

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artist statements and a short overview of the MSAC project. The reception is free and open to the public.

Taking advantage of another view of the Mighty Mo, Yankton Area Arts has successfully partnered with the City of Yankton all summer long to offer its summer band and pops concert series at the picturesque Riverside Amphitheater. The series will conclude Tuesday, Aug. 6, with the Hegg Brothers performance beginning at 8 p.m.

And of course, don't forget the biggest river celebration of them all: the YAA Summer Arts Festival in conjunction with Riverboat Days, Aug. 16-18! One hundred-twenty vendors will be showcasing their fine arts and crafts along the river's banks in Riverside Park. Plus, singer and multi-instrumentalist Paul Imholte will provide strolling and stage musical performances and local artist Dan Bartos will offer half-hour "make and take" pottery sessions for kids.

Whatever way you look at it, Yankton Area Arts offers many artistic and enjoyable views of the Mighty Mo.

Yankton Area Arts is a non-profit arts organization located at 508 Douglas Avenue in Yankton. The G.A.R. Hall Art Gallery is open to the public free of charge from 1-5 pm weekdays and from 1-3 p.m. on Saturdays. For more information, call the YAA office phone at (605) 665-9754 or email Executive Director Jackie Quinn at [yaa@iwnet.net](mailto:yaa@iwnet.net).

the curious began checking out the earlier seasons on DVDs and streaming services.

"It was pure dumb luck," Gilligan said, typically low-key. "We timed it perfectly. I know we were on the bubble at the beginning, but binge watching saved our bacon."

In an interview last year before the final half of the season was written, Gilligan suggested that White should go straight to hell, that extremely evil people need to be punished for their misdeeds.

Whether that philosophy is carried out is being guarded with National Security Agency-level stealth. But for Gilligan, the cast and pro-

ducers at Sony, the end of the journey has been simultaneously exhilarating and wrenching.

Cranston, who just scored another lead actor Emmy nomination, said the countdown to the final installments has been "a mixture of dread, anxiety, excitement and thrills. There's been a lot of tears, rejoicing and lamenting. The full spectrum. The whole thing ends in a very 'Breaking Bad' way. I think fans will embrace it."

Anna Gunn, who plays White's embittered wife, Skyler, and was also nominated this year for an Emmy, said there were scenes that "were difficult and emotional."

Sitting in a darkened room of the studio during a break, Paul, who was again nominated for his role as Pinkman, seemed the most upset about the approaching end. "My heart starts to race a little when I think about it," he said. He decided to relive his "Breaking Bad" experience by watching all the episodes from the pilot. "It's very hard to let go," he said.

Gilligan appears to be a bit more at peace. Just a few weeks before the farewell hoopla began ramping up, he sat among several boxes in his Burbank office containing props, mementos and story notes.

The toys, puzzles and

Play-Doh that Gilligan and his writing staff had fidgeted with during brainstorming sessions had been packed away. Still unboxed and on a shelf by itself was a clay figurine of a severed head on top of a tortoise, one of "Breaking Bad's" more gruesome — and darkly humorous — images.

"I'm really happy to say, as sad as I am to be sitting in this office, with these boxes all around me, the one thing I haven't lost any sleep over, the one thing I'm not sad about, is that we're ending it now," he said. "I don't think we overstayed our welcome, not for a minute. That was a big concern for me."

Now that the series is ed-

ited, some members of the troupe have moved on. Cranston is preparing to play President Lyndon B. Johnson in the American Repertory Theater premiere production of Robert Schenkkan's "All the Way" in Cambridge, Mass., in September. Gilligan is excited about developing a possible "Breaking Bad" spin-off that would feature Saul Goodman, the shady lawyer played by Bob Odenkirk that was one of the show's more humorous characters.

Gilligan is making one promise to "Breaking Bad" fans about the finale: "To quote a famous movie, there will be blood," he vowed with a wicked chuckle.

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