



# in the mix

LABORS OF LOVE

## crimes and opportunity

Karen Gaviola (center) with *Lie to Me*'s Kelli Williams and Tim Roth

**D**irector Karen Gaviola likes being in the middle of the action, and her calm focus is an asset on set — especially those crime dramas — when time is short and challenges are many.

Take the season opener for *CSI: Miami*, when Gaviola had to film a shootout in a graveyard in four hours, and time for setups was reduced because it wouldn't stop raining.

Or the time on *Prison Break* when everyone waited for two hours until an Air Force jet could do a flyover for the cameras. "When we suddenly got the call that the jet's coming, we had ten minutes to get the shot," she says.

She originally planned to be a doctor, but after taking an introduction to film class, Gaviola switched majors and graduated from Harvard with a degree in visual and environmental studies. After completing the DGA's Assistant Director Training Program, she worked her way up, getting her first assignment as an A.D. on *NYPD Blue*.

"I asked politely every year for a shot at directing, and they gave me one," says Gaviola, who credits producers Steven Bochco and David Milch with her first break. "I directed three episodes there

and decided to go out on my own."

She's since directed numerous shows, with gigs this season on *Without a Trace*, *Ghost Whisperer*, *Criminal Minds*, *Lie to Me*, *Brothers & Sisters* and *Eleventh Hour*, in addition to *CSI: Miami* and *Prison Break*.

In 2007 she won a NAACP Image Award for directing "The Whole Truth," an episode of *Lost* that was shot half in Korean and half in English.

"Working with an actor to get a great performance is the most fun," Gaviola says. "A lot of directing is psychology. If you can understand the emotional content of a story and communicate it through acting, props or wardrobe, that's a big part of storytelling."

And after working on so many shows, it's rare for Gaviola to step onto a set where she doesn't know someone.

"When I started out, I was the only Asian American on the set, and sometimes I'm still the only one," Gaviola says. "But I'm seeing more Asians, and I've come across a fair number of women directors with procedurals. It's good that it's not as rare anymore. It's all a matter of taking opportunities when you get them."

—Dinah Eng



**WITH ALL EYES ON THE NATION'S CAPITAL SINCE THE NEW PRESIDENT TOOK OFFICE**, it's not surprising that Hollywood is putting a closer focus on Washington, D.C.

Shows set in D.C. this past season include *Bones*, *Criminal Minds*, *Lie to Me*, *NCIS*, *24* — after six seasons in L.A. — even the animated *American Dad*. Some HGTV series, such as *Get It Sold*, are based there, as is the upcoming CW reality show, *Blonde Charity Mafia*. And several

recent pilots have also been set in D.C., including the ABC television news drama *Inside the Box* from Shonda Rhimes and HBO's comedy *Washingtonienne*, executive produced by Sarah Jessica Parker.

While most shows are still based in southern California and spend a few days per season filming in Washington, activity in D.C. is still up. Just under 320 productions — features, television, commercials — shot in Washington last year, about

30 percent of those for TV, according to Kathy Hollinger, agency director for the Office of Motion Picture and Television Development in D.C.

"2009 looks to be a more active year," she says. And yes, credit President Barack Obama. "The inauguration was wonderful for the city," Hollinger says. "People want to be here because they want to be close to the president. He's absolutely improved the image of the capital." —Libby Slate

