

YOUR NIGHT-BY-NIGHT GUIDE TO FALL'S BEST NEW SHOWS

WHAT'S WORTH WATCHING



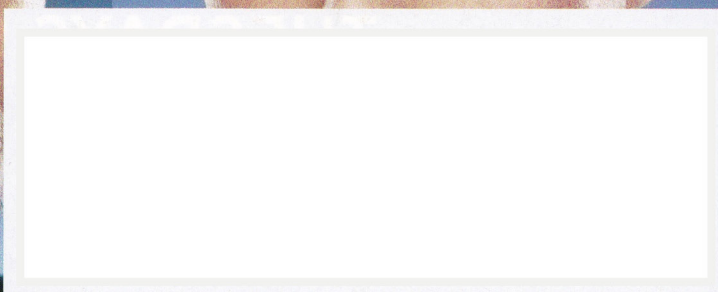
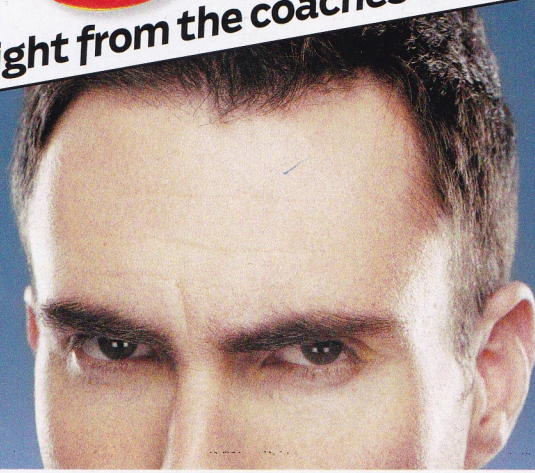
MAY 30—JUNE 5, 2011



SECRETS OF

# THE VOICE

Inside the new musical smash—straight from the coaches' mouths!



Cee Lo Green,  
Christina Aguilera,  
Adam Levine and  
Blake Shelton  
(Tuesday on NBC)

TVGUIDE.COM \$3.99

## Think of it as *The First Supper*.

One night before taping the initial audition episodes of his new NBC show *The Voice*, exec producer Mark Burnett wanted the music competition series' four coaches—Christina Aguilera, Blake Shelton, Cee Lo Green and Maroon 5 lead singer Adam Levine—to bond. So, after handing over his personal credit card, he sent them off to L.A.'s trendy Soho House for dinner. Shelton was the first to get there, with Levine and Green not far behind. The three performers then took bets on whether Aguilera would show up. "When I arrived, they had shocked looks on their faces," she recalls with a laugh. "They didn't think I was going to make it." As the evening rolled on, and one bottle of champagne turned into several, the singers realized how much they believed in each other *and* the show's mission: discovering new musical talents by first hearing, and not seeing, them. Not only did the coaches connect with each other that night, but the chemistry they've created has hooked viewers as well. *The Voice* has averaged

# PERFECT

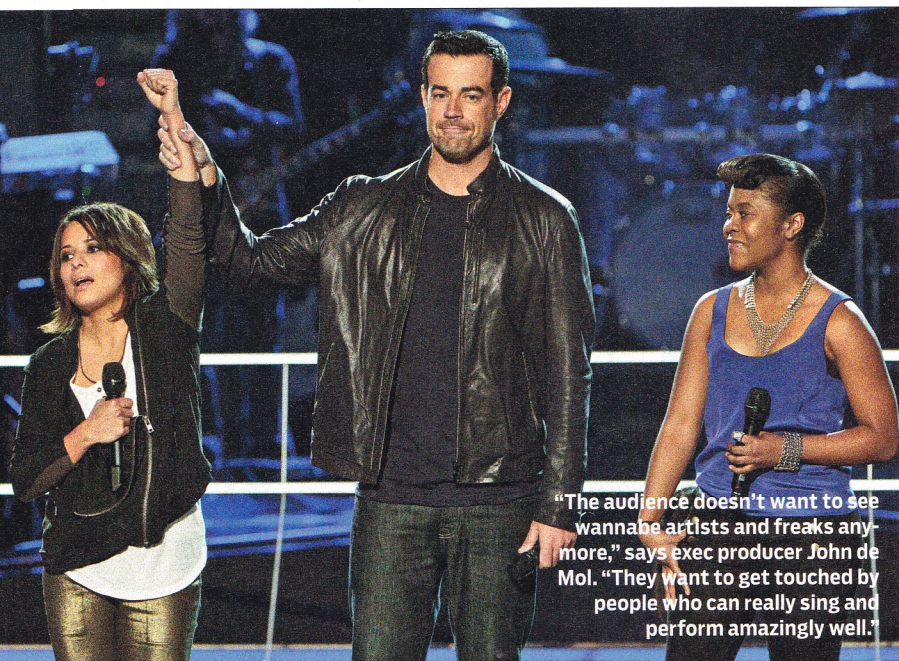
# HARMONY

Cee Lo,  
Christina, Adam  
and Blake spill  
secrets about NBC's  
new hit *The Voice*





BY CRAIG TOMASHOFF



"The audience doesn't want to see wannabe artists and freaks anymore," says exec producer John de Mol. "They want to get touched by people who can really sing and perform amazingly well."

## BLAKE SHELTON

The reaction to the show has been a lot more than I expected. I've always been a country artist struggling to get on television, but now that I am, it's a completely different world. Now I'm "that guy from that show," which is fine. I'm happy with anything that can help people focus on what I do, which is make music.

That's my strength as a coach. I've made tons of mistakes along the way, and I love to share that with my team, not just for this show but for the journey beyond

12 million viewers in its first four weeks. The show has survived all "the initial views from skeptics who wanted to see whether or not we'd be a train wreck," says Green. And as for Burnett, he's convinced his dinner plan was worth the price he paid. There's just one problem: He still doesn't know what that price is. "They called the next day and said, 'You're going to regret giving your credit card to us.' I haven't even looked at the bill yet. I don't *want* to look. I'm just extremely relieved that their natural chemistry is coming through." As the coaches prepare for the first live shows beginning June 7, when viewers will begin voting on which singers stay or go, they tell TV GUIDE MAGAZINE—in their own voices—about their connection with one another, their coaching styles and which one is known as the Dirty Uncle (take a wild guess).

for them. There are things I've done in my shows that I wish I hadn't—bad song selection, showing too much nerves or attitude—and a couple of girls on my team get really nervous. Clearly I don't have a problem coming out of my shell, but that wasn't always the case. Who knows? I might take them to make asses of themselves at karaoke and get it all out of their system.

One thing I'm not doing is coaching them on how to sing. They know how to do that. I'm mostly trying to figure out what the right songs are for them. We're communicating through email because the network wants us to have a little distance from them. I'm getting more emails than I've ever seen in my life!

I have no idea what the other coaches are doing or how into it they are with their teams. I just want



## JAVIER COLON

TEAM ADAM

**Hometown** Stratford, Connecticut **Age** 34  
**Judging Adam** "He jokes around with you and is easy to get along with," says Javier. "But he's also very passionate, and you can feel that he really wants to win this."

**Why he'll win** Javier's already had a record deal that didn't work out. "I've got stage experience that I hope will help. I need to make sure I leave it all out on the stage."

**Biggest surprise** The contestants were sequestered together in an L.A. hotel while the first shows were taped. During that time, Javier "made some great friends, which makes the battle rounds tougher than you think."



## VICCI MARTINEZ

TEAM CEE LO

**Hometown** Tacoma, Washington **Age** 26  
**Judging Cee Lo** "Cee Lo is like this big Buddha," Vicci says. "He's totally Zen and makes you comfortable. [He told me,] 'Sing from your heart, and I'll know if you're not.'"

**Why she'll win** "I feel like I speak for a lot of people who have felt 'I won't be the next big thing because I don't look or act like a rock star.' I have been told that, but I stuck to my guns. And to the end, that's what I'll stick to."

**Biggest surprise** *The Voice* doesn't manufacture drama, Vicci says: "The person you see [on camera] is who that person is. That's what's so magical about all this to me."

to keep it light and fun for mine. The only part I don't like about working with them is I have to be the one who whittles down 50 percent of the team. The fun stuff I'd like to do with [them] won't happen till the live shows start. That's when we dig in, and it's more about what America thinks. That's when I'm out of the equation and I can be the parent at the baseball game in the stands.

## ADAM LEVINE

Doing *The Voice* has given me a whole new perspective on music. It's really humbled me. I've spent so many years working my ass off and doing my thing with my band and I'm really happy and satisfied, but it's been a life-changing experience being a mentor. I think of myself as a child and never realized I'd turn around and have something to offer someone else who was starting out.

Critiquing my team is not as important to me. My whole angle is that we've heard people say brutal truths on these kinds of shows, but I don't

**"THAT'S WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT AT THE END OF THE DAY. I'VE FOUND THREE FRIENDS IN ALL OF THIS." —ADAM LEVINE**

know that's what viewers are interested in. I'm more about the overall feeling I get when I hear somebody sing. I think the singers being on the show at all is a success. You're exposed to a huge number of people who see you sing, so you're happy. Even if you go home tomorrow, you're happy. This is the spark that could ignite a

career. I'm pretty confident that whatever happens, this isn't the end for them.

It's also a new experience for us as coaches. We're in foreign territory. Everyone's having fun and doing something different. We get a chance to talk and show our personalities, something we never get to do. Not to take away from the artists, but if there's no chemistry between the four of us, there's no show. As for what I bring to the group, I like to defuse things by making light of the situation and having fun. The other coaches make up crap about me, but it's all in good fun. That's what it's all about at the end of the day. I've found three friends in all of this.

## CHRISTINA AGUILERA

What's been great about this experience is that I'm able to see things from a fresh perspective through my team. Sometimes you can become too critical of yourself, jaded to certain experiences out of repetition and routine. This is breathing new life into me, which is why I'm telling them to appreciate the moment.

I had two girls on my team who really didn't get along. It was sad for me to witness this, and I told them, "You guys are exuding that energy on stage. Honestly, the audience is going to feel that and not have a good time. You're going to let this moment pass you by and not enjoy the experience." I've had moments on the show like that where I say to myself, "Look where I am and how far I've come," and I want to share what I've worked hard to have over the years.

With the other coaches, I'm also like the teacher



**JARED BLAKE**

TEAM BLAKE

**Hometown** Star City, Arkansas **Age** 32

**Judging Blake** "Blake is an absolutely amazing man. Most of the time, the music industry hits on negatives. I haven't heard that from him," says Jared. "He's more about what you do right and what showcases your talent the best."

**Why he'll win** "My only strategy is focusing on exactly what I am. I've got more of a country-rock thing, so I'm going to stay true to myself and give the best performance possible."

**Biggest surprise** He's shocked at how quickly everything on the show happens. "They'll tell us who we're battling and then 10 minutes later, you're behind the piano learning a song you've never known. I think it's part of the game to see how good you are."



**FRENCHIE DAVIS**

TEAM CHRISTINA

**Hometown** Washington, D.C. **Age** 32

**Judging Christina** "I've been pleasantly surprised at how much of a mama bear she is," Frenchie says. "Plus, she'll make us laugh. I'm trying to figure out the words to a song and she'll say, 'Don't worry. I never figure out the words.'"

**Why she'll win** Frenchie was on *American Idol* in Season 2 and has appeared on Broadway in "Rent," so she knows how to handle pressure. "You have to stay true to who you are as a singer and trust that that's enough."

**Biggest surprise** She is shocked at "how many people remember me from *Idol*. Our first day on *The Voice*, one of the guys said, 'The whole back table wants to know if you're Frenchie Davis.' I was on that show for two seconds almost 10 years ago. I'm still baffled by that recognition."

in the classroom. I have to tell them to cut out the jokes and get down to the matter at hand. Meanwhile, Blake is the funny one with the one-liners. He's a smartass and a country badass wrapped into one. Adam is the annoying brother. He's like the guy who'll sell a used car to your grandma. He's definitely the one who likes to be the center of attention, and I like to take jabs at that. And Cee Lo...I call him the Dirty Uncle for fun. He's got that little swagger going on.

them via email. And when things get down to the nitty-gritty with the live shows, I might join in with them myself. Anything's possible.

### CEE LO GREEN

When this show first came up, we coaches were all calling around through management to see if one party was going to be involved, would the other be more apprehensive. We had our own preconceived notions about something that didn't exist until a few weeks ago. We didn't have aspirations to be the judges of anyone. But the concept where we can mentor and give constructive consideration, that's a better format.

As a coach, I don't speak on a soapbox. I believe in music for the people by the people. My team has to sing from their hearts. If it's not from the heart, the heart won't fill the song. That's what they need to do. What I need to do is to avoid being preoccupied with my schedule. There were some decisions that had to be made on my behalf [since I wasn't available]—like putting Vicci [Martinez] against Niki [Dawson, in the first competition show]. I would have changed that. When I had to hurt Niki's

feelings, that's when I realized this is serious. So now I'm focused.

I don't really know what anyone expected of me when we started—maybe that I'd be the wild card. As for Adam, he's brought a boyish charm. I'm sure there are a lot of the ladies tuning in to check him out. He's also very serious about his craft when it

comes to coaching, and that's something I've come to appreciate about him. That, and his sense of humor. Blake is the tall, handsome cowboy. You'd think a stiffness would come with that, but he's very funny, which I can appreciate. And Christina...she *is* the Voice. She's one of the best vocalists of all time. She's also very nurturing, and

I know she's being cute and sassy with the whole Dirty Uncle thing she's got going with me. We all work together so well, maybe when this is done, we can all do *Friends, Part 2* or something.



"Christina and the three men take their job as coaches seriously," says de Mol. "We have paid a lot of attention to getting the right mix of personalities."

**"WE HAVE THESE GREAT MOMENTS TO KICK BACK AND POKE FUN AT EACH OTHER"**  
—CHRISTINA AGUILERA



"I guess I bring a cool to the show," says Green (left)

It's all so good, so positive with them. It's almost like me and my brothers up there. We have these great moments to kick back and poke fun at each other. But I definitely still want to be a nurturer for my team, too. I want to show a part of myself that people aren't aware of. My closest friends know I'm a mama bear. I want everyone around me to know they're taken care of. I wanted really badly to have a party for my team, but for one reason or another, it fell through. There were certain rules and legalities. But I definitely talk to

### THE VOICE

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