

THE Q&A

High Nunez

Oscar Nunez of "The Office" and "Halfway Home" talks about juggling two series and the perils of success

By Abby West

This year, Oscar Nuñez's inept boss outed him on *The Office*, and a penchant for sexual manipulation landed him in a *Halfway Home*. Best known as the buttoned-down gay accountant Oscar on the hit NBC show, the 50-year-old comedy-troupe veteran plays the other extreme as the flamboyant male prostitute Eulogio Pla on the largely improvised Comedy Central series *Halfway Home*, about five cons living in a rehab facility. (He's also an executive producer of the show.) With the season finale for both series coming up, Nuñez is waiting to hear if *Home* is renewed and hoping he'll get to continue his juggling act next year.

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY: All right, let's get straight to it. What can you tell me about the season finale of *The Office*?

OSCAR NUÑEZ: We're done shooting, and I can't really say much. Only that there will be some movement. Major things moving. Major shifts that affect the entire office. So there's some good stuff coming up. That's all I can say.

Really? You can't even give us a tease?

I don't tease well. I'll spill the whole bucket. Even if I start a little bit, I'll blab it out, and then [*Office* creator] Greg Daniels would send his goons out, and I'd get beat up in an alley.

Well, we don't want that. So what's up with your other dysfunctional TV family, on *Halfway Home*, which is airing its final first-season episodes?

We're just waiting to hear from Comedy Central to see if they want more. But the numbers are good so far.

Are you happy returning to improv?

Oh yeah. It's a lot of fun. I get to do on *Halfway Home* what Steve [Carell] and Rainn [Wilson] get to do on *The Office*, which is stretch and have fun. All those people on *Halfway Home* are friends. None of them had to audition. That's the cast we wanted, and Comedy Central was cool enough to agree to it. We've known each other for years, and it's great to get to work with people you know and love.

You shot the first episodes of *Halfway Home* while your *Office* character was on his "gay-cation" after he was



'HALFWAY' THERE Nuñez's Comedy Central series is up for renewal

Jesse Grant/WireImage.com

outed. If it gets picked up for a second season, how will you do both?

I wish you could tell me. I don't know. If it does get picked up, we'll cross that bridge and hopefully I'll be able to do both shows. Now it's just scheduling. And it's up to people other than myself to figure that out. Of course I will want to do both of them.

What's been your favorite episode of *The Office* this season.?

I've had so many. Obviously "Gay Witch Hunt." Phyllis' wedding was kind of fun. The one where Jan and Michael go to the party and we go to the bar and Dwight is running around and checking the foundation — that one was neat because Greg Daniels' son got to be in it. He played the little boy who woke up in bed.

How do you feel about Oscar's growth in the show?

I think it's great. I think *The Office* has got legs. And I think each character being fleshed out adds to more varied scripts and more of a life in this office. We have to go a lot longer than the original Ricky Gervais series, and it helps to have these characters fleshed out. It helps the writers create more of a world. Hopefully we'll be around for a while depending on people's schedules. The only problem is success — which is a great problem to have — and people becoming so popular and wanted in other venues.

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