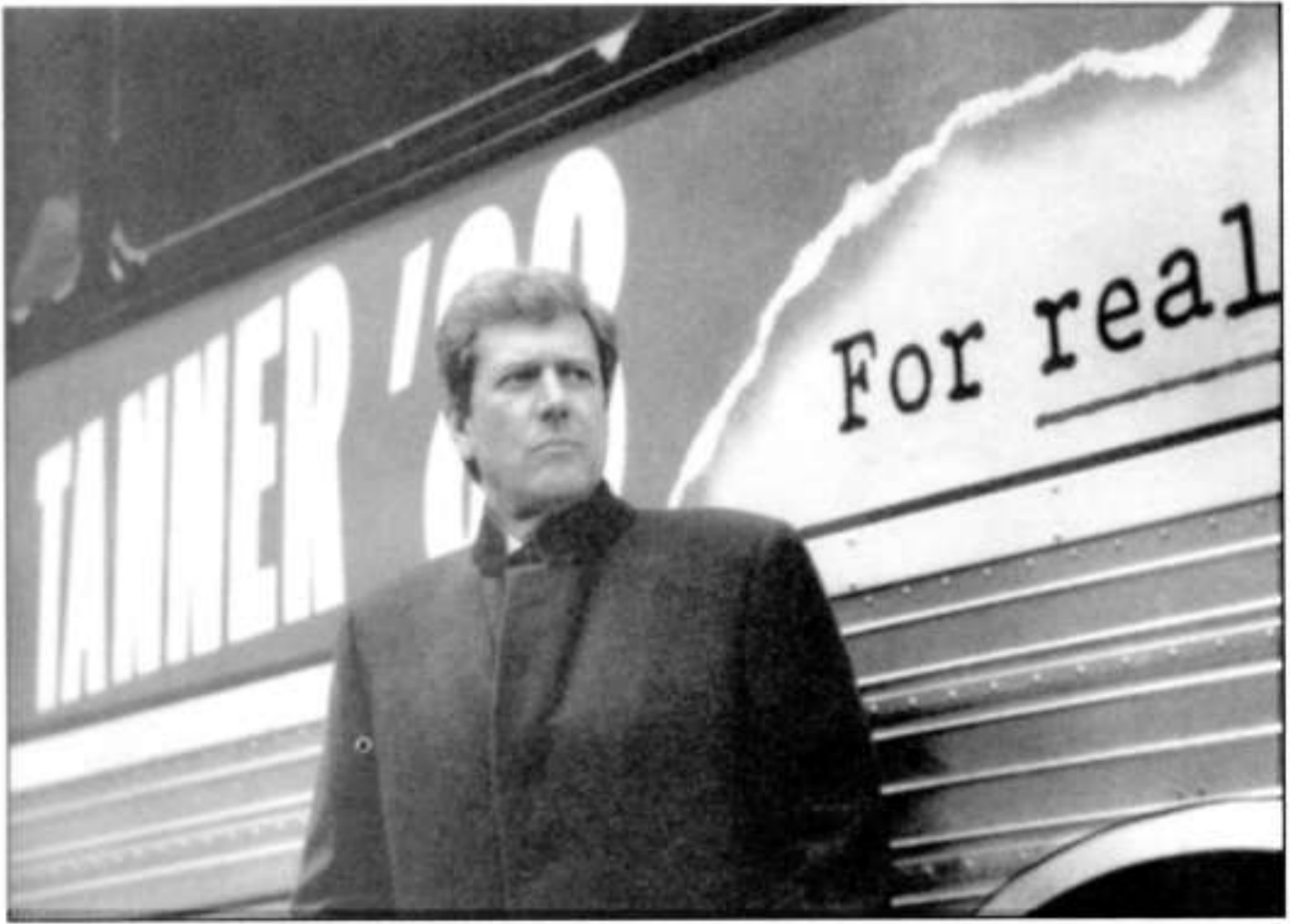


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Tanner '88

USA 1988, 300 min. Screening in two parts

DIR Robert Altman **PROD** Scott Bushnell **SCR** Garry Trudeau

CAM Jean Lépine **ED** Ruth Foster **CAST** Michael Murphy, Pamela Reed, Cynthia Nixon, Kevin J. O'Connor, Daniel Jenkins *SFIFF, Apr. 17, 2003, p. 102*

ROBERT ALTMAN: FILM SOCIETY AWARD

FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN DIRECTING

Altman had been raised in American television, even if its steady diet of adventure series hardly satisfied him. But he had felt the unholy clash of fact and fiction in the medium, and so in 1988 he jumped at the offer from HBO to provide a parody political serial that could be played alongside the “real” coverage of the Bush-Dukakis contest. The result was *Tanner '88*, written by Doonesbury cartoonist Garry Trudeau, and shot so as to be indistinguishable from regular campaign coverage. Just as he had played advance man John Triplette in *Nashville*'s fabricated campaign for Hal Philip Walker, so Michael Murphy was perfect as candidate John Tanner—handsome, affable, decent, reasonable (so long as you remember to put all those vague stars and stripes of Americana in quotation marks). There was an hour-long pilot and then a series of 30-minute episodes, with people like Bob Dole, Pat Robertson and Chris Matthews playing themselves. The result makes clear Altman's abiding notion that “reality” is just a matter of filmmaking style or authority. It also now looks like a dazzling prediction of the kind of “reality television” that adds to our confusions as to whether we are “on” or “off.”

—David Thomson



Robert Altman (b. Kansas City, Missouri, 1925) See filmography on page 27.

4/19 KAB 12:00 TANN19K
(1-5)
4/19 KAB 3:30 TAN219K
(6-10)

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