



# TV Plus

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## Beauty & the Bots

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Hosts *Robotica*

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the Music

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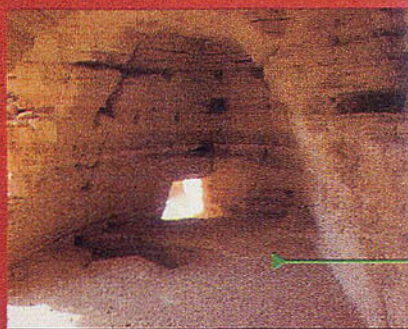
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*Robotica*, with its battling and battering mechanical menagerie, is "kind of like *Gladiator* meets WWF wrestling," says show host Tanya Memme.

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## Having a Blast With the Bots

**Robotica** host passionate about career as entertainer  
By Judy Gaultney

**R**obotica, with its battling and battering mechanical menagerie, is "kind of like *Gladiator* meets *WWF* wrestling," says show host Tanya Memme with a laugh. Memme says she and co-host Ahmet Zappa "have a blast" because the show is "high energy, highly informative." **TLC** just began airing the second season of the popular program in a one-hour time slot at **8:00 p.m. (ET) Wednesdays**, and a third season is already in the can.

Viewers meet both the robots and their creators, who explain how and why their robots were constructed, providing insight on their creations from concept to assembly. The dual focus on people and machinery is what makes *Robotica* a real learning experience, Memme says. "We focus on the builders and their lifestyles," she says. "These people are very, very intelligent and highly skilled."

The high-tech series drew 1,100 applications from robot teams across the country after the first season aired early this year. The seven-part series presents

challenges of speed, strength, strategy and skill in three levels of competition: a revised version of "The Gauntlet," an obstacle course filled with hazards and combat; "The Labyrinth," a new game which tests robots' skills and power; and "The Fight to the Finish," with the bots left standing going one-on-one. The victor from each episode competes in the season's two-hour finale, the treacherous *Robotica* Championship.

*Robotica* is at the opposite end of the spectrum from anything she has done before, Memme says, except that it's entertainment, and entertainment is her life's passion. Memme began dance lessons at five years old, and her first experiences as an entertainer were the times her troupe visited old-age homes. The residents



looked so sad until the dancers began to perform, she says. "Then these people would start dancing and moving around. It was like a whole other life entered the room. I realized that for however many minutes I could take people away from their sadness or their troubles in life and help them experience happiness."

That realization led the brown-haired, brown-eyed beauty to leave her family's 200-acre sod farm in Canada at the age of 15 and embark on a modeling career. She competed in the Miss Teen Niagara Pageant at 16, won Miss Niagara at 18, and was crowned Miss World Canada at 21. Her pageant successes opened the doors of the entertainment world when she knocked, and she hasn't slowed down since. She attended the American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York, then moved to the West Coast, where she has appeared on TV and in movies. Currently, in addition to *Robotica*, she co-hosts ABC7 Los Angeles' weekly events magazine *Eye On LA*, and the informative news show *Customer News* for DIRECTV.

And every chance she gets, Memme returns to Canadian schools to give inspirational talks to students. She tells them about her life—the good and bad—and she gives them the same advice her late uncle consistently gave her: "Follow your heart or follow your passion, and the money will come. Don't believe in the money first. That goes through my mind every day. It was a crazy path I have taken to get here—a lot of ups, a lot of downs. It's so incredibly fulfilling. I wake up in the morning and I think 'I look forward to this day.'"

TANYA MEMME ©HANDELAND TESORO PHOTOGRAPHY; ILLUSTRATION ©STUART THOMPSON

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