

Q&A

Tours of Duty

Most of us know him as the affectionate Rick Sammler on the short-lived *Once and Again* TV series, or more recently as Darren Richmond on AMC's *The Killing*. But in between his myriad acting gigs, as if on schedule, Charlottesville native **Billy Campbell** has played increasingly prominent roles in Civil War flicks every decade, starting with a supporting role in *Gettysburg*

in 1993, then playing Gen. George Pickett in the *Gettysburg* prequel *Gods and Generals* in 2003. Now, in 2013, he's starring as the president himself in *Killing Lincoln*, the DC-based National Geographic Channel's adaptation of Bill O'Reilly's book of the same title. We caught up with him to chat about the project and his upbringing near Virginia's battlefields. —Jennifer Sergent



HOWEST ABE
Charlottesville native Billy Campbell stars in the upcoming NatGeo film, *Killing Lincoln*.

Is the Civil War a favorite genre for you?

It is very much a favorite. I'm a bit of a history buff—I grew up running around on battlefields. It kind of entered my bloodstream that way.

How about Abraham Lincoln in particular?

I had some passing interest in Lincoln and some passing knowledge. I was fortunate that Erik Jendresen (the film's Emmy-winning executive producer and writer) is what you might call a Lincoln scholar—it was easy for me to dive into the script and use Eric as my research.

***Killing Lincoln* airs directly on the heels of Steven Spielberg's *Lincoln*. How would you compare your portrayal to Daniel Day-Lewis'?**

I don't know. I haven't seen the film.

What did you learn about Lincoln as you got ready for the role?

He appears to us as an icon. [But] the sense I got of him was as a warm and thoughtful human being who was tragically fated.

How was it returning to Virginia for the movie's filming in Richmond last summer?

It was great. I went to Charlottesville, and my family came down to see me (in Richmond). I spent more time filming there than I had ever spent there growing up.

Do you ever make it up to DC?

I've spent a little time—enough to know it's confusing as hell to drive there.

NUMBER CRUNCH

1,000

The number of artists Andrew Purchin of Santa Cruz, Calif., hopes to lure to the National Mall on Inauguration Day to paint, sketch, make silk screens—whatever—in a mass act of artistic democracy. Dressed in white Tyvek jumpsuits and orange beanies, the artists will make a visual statement just by showing up. athousandartists.com —JS