

the '80s

# Keytar Hero

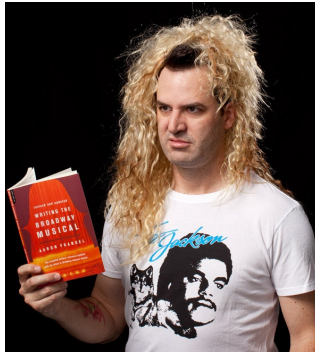
The guy behind the Rock of Ages hair-band extravaganza shares his favorite moments.

Back in the '80s, Chris D'Arienzo was a music geek in glasses and headgear. He took breakdancing lessons. So it was with a flood of nostalgia that he wrote the story and picked the tunes for the arena-rock musical *Rock of Ages*. Now he's a writer on the big-screen adaptation, out in June, starring Alec Baldwin, Tom Cruise, bandanas, and a pair of fringed leather pants.

"It's a throwback to the buffoonery of rock," D'Arienzo says. "The bands drank too much, threw stuff out of hotel windows, and looked ridiculous, but they also had wonderful, underrated musicianship."

Some plot choices were made to accommodate specific songs—he renamed the female lead so he could use Steve Perry's "Oh Sherrie," for example. And D'Arienzo would only do the show if he got the rights to Journey's "Don't Stop Believin'." "It's one of the most perfect pop-rock songs ever written," he says. "You could put it at the end of an insurance seminar and people would lose their marbles."

Other musical high notes: Baldwin kicks off a bromance by singing "Can't Fight This Feeling" to a dude. And Cruise's Stacey Jaxx, the ultimate shirtless, fur-jacketed sex god, gets freaky with a *Rolling Stone* writer to "I Want to Know What Love Is." Get ready for both characters, like their '80s originals, to rock you—all night long. —Sarah Z. Wexler



Chris D'Arienzo in full shred mode.

PHOTOS: GREGG SEGAL

**Winners of a Grammy for best new artist**  
1980: Christopher Cross, 1981: Sheena Easton, 1982: Men At Work, 1983: Culture Club, 1984: Cyndi Lauper, 1985: Sade, 1986: Bruce Hornsby and the Range, 1987: Jody Watley, 1988: Tracy Chapman, 1989: none

## SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES... BACK

This century hasn't been kind to Reagan-era boogymen: Gadhafi and Hussein are dead, and communism is as scary as New Coke. But that hasn't stopped Hollywood from recycling its '80s scoundrels—Larry Hagman is the latest to return, reprising his role as J.R. Ewing in TNT's June *Dallas* relaunch. Judging from how other baddies fared in their own reinventions, though, he may want to slink back to syndication. —Thomas Gollanopoulos



### COBRA COMMANDER (G.I. JOE)

**Then:** Plant spores deformed the scientist so badly that he wore a chrome-faced helmet. **Now:** In 2009's *G.I. Joe: Rise of Cobra*, he's Joseph Gordon-Levitt in a monocle. With Gary Oldman's *Fifth Element* hairdo. **Winner:** Then. What's badass about borrowing eyewear from the Monopoly guy?



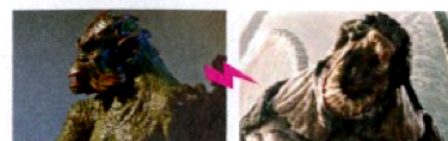
### GORDON GEKKO (WALL STREET)

**Then:** '80s excess personified: Slicked-back hair, power suits, burrito-sized cell phones. **Now:** Freed from prison in 2010's sequel, he's an antihero. Insider trading: bad! Stealing from estranged daughter's fiancé: good! **Winner:** Then. Don't you try to give us nuance, Oliver Stone!



### MEGATRON (TRANSFORMERS)

**Then:** The head Decepticon transformed into a handgun when battling Autobot adversaries. **Now:** His alternate mode in the Transformers "movies" is a jet—except when it's a Mack truck in the third one. **Winner:** Then. Can't overstate the importance of transformative consistency.



### THE KRAKEN (CLASH OF THE TITANS)

**Then:** Poseidon's goofy maritime lummox was more B-movie than sea-monster. **Now:** In the 2010 remake, Kraken 2.0 gets a new master (Hades) and a big bump in awesome (thanks to CGI). **Winner:** Now. We were surprised too, but getting beat down by Harry Hamlin is unforgivable.