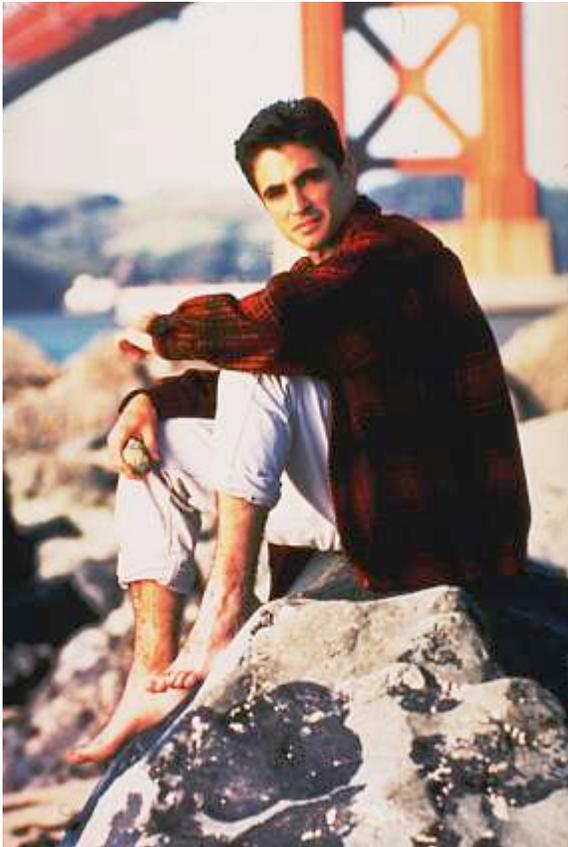


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"Real World" star's AIDS message drives MTV's "Pedro"

http://blogs.orlandosentinel.com/entertainment_tv_tvblog/2009/03/real-world-stars-aids-message-drives-mtvs-pedro.html



Pedro Zamora was a reality star on a mission -- one far greater than winning money or fame.

The Miami man (pictured) was a riveting presence on "[The Real World: San Francisco](#)" in 1994, yet his importance extended far beyond the show.

Zamora, who was HIV-positive, forcefully promoted the view that AIDS was a health issue and that people needed to take responsibility for themselves. His message propels "[Pedro](#)," a well-meaning film drama that debuts at 8 p.m. Wednesday on MTV, MTV TR3S, mtvU and Logo.

Dustin Lance Black, an Oscar-winner for "Milk," wrote the poignant script, although the telling is unnecessarily complicated and repetitive. The movie starts with a health crisis for Pedro (played by **Alex Loynaz**) and goes into a flashback about "The Real World." Then

Pedro's sister Mily (**Justina Machado** of "[Six Feet Under](#)") takes over as the movie goes into another flashback about his life.

Mily becomes the crucial character because her reactions reflect how her brother changed attitudes about AIDS, HIV and homosexuality. Mily serves as the movie's life force as Pedro declines.

As Pedro, Loynaz captures the man's charm and eloquence, then the actor portrays the character's physical and mental decline with unflinching candor. Machado beautifully plays a range of emotions that should help "Pedro" connect with a wide audience.

Pedro even impressed President **Bill Clinton**, who called the young man's home to thank him for his AIDS crusade. That scene -- in which we hear Clinton speak -- becomes a high point in the movie, and Clinton introduces the film in its TV premiere.

"To this day, Pedro Zamora remains an extraordinary example of what a huge impact one young person can make in our world," Clinton says in press notes. "I'm glad to have known him, and I'm grateful his life has been able to inspire and enrich so many others."

"Real World" executive producer **Jon Murray** produced the film, which mercifully doesn't linger over the reality show. The movie notes the sad irony that "The Real World: San Francisco" aired its final episode on the day that Pedro died of AIDS at age 22.

A card at the movie's end notes that Pedro's call for action is as important as ever. In death, he continues to send a message that young people need to hear.