

An open letter to the Grass Roots from Tim Minear,
Executive Producer of "Wonderfalls":

Hi. My name is Tim Minear and I write television. Usually. Right now I guess I'm writing SPAM. But I'm not asking you to donate to some shady or even worthy cause. I'm not offering to enlarge any of your body parts (though I haven't ruled it out), and I make no claims of miraculous cures for exotic diseases. What I can offer you is sixty minutes (really about forty five, minus commercials) of quality entertainment if you do one thing: turn on your TV to Fox this Friday night at nine.

For the last year or so I've been working with a bunch of really talented people to make a new show for Fox called "Wonderfalls." We've made 13 episodes so far, and I really want you to see them.

Some of the folks at the network are telling me that "Wonderfalls" is the best reviewed new series they've had in ages -- maybe ever. I'm currently sitting on a stack of raves from all over the country, from major magazines, newspapers, small dailies, internet sites, etc. They seem to be doing me no good. Also, uncomfortable because of the sitting.

The big brains at the network, while happy with the reviews, tell me that good reviews don't bring in an audience. Guess they were right. We premiered on Friday, March 12th to less than great numbers.

There are several things stacking the odds against us. Our time slot, charmingly known as "The Fox Friday Death Slot" is quickly living up to its name. There has been much confusion and differing opinion over just how to promote this odd little series. Maybe the unique charm, heart and volcanic snark aren't coming through. I dunno. Fact is, I have no power over network promotion, I can't force Fox to air "Wonderfalls" on Monday nights, I don't have a Nielsen box or know anyone who does.

But I do have this keyboard, my cable-modem and a relationship with genre fans all over the world because of the internet. All of the shows I've worked on in the last several years have had loyal internet followings. From "Lois and Clark" to "The X-Files," from "Angel" to the short-lived but much-loved "Firefly." Ever since I've been associated with genre television I've had the extreme honor and pleasure (and sometimes hair-pulling madness) of interacting with fans of these shows via the internet. You are the most dedicated, passionate and, frankly, smartest fans around.

And I'm turning to you now because I believe you're a huge untapped resource.

I know that every one of you is connected to many others that I can't reach. If you can give a hand here, you might be keeping us afloat long enough for us to catch the tide. Worth a shot, anyway.

I know the network wants this show to work. They're willing for it to work. And if there's any way that my plea now will help Friday's numbers tick up just a touch, I think that would be a tremendous sign to them.

The next new episode of "Wonderfalls" airs Friday, March 19th at 9:00pm on Fox. Please tune in and mention it to someone else. Preferably someone with a Nielsen box.

So anyway, I thought I'd mention it. Oh, also, the network is going to repeat our pilot on Thursday, March 18th at 9:00pm after "Tru Calling." So if you missed it last Friday, here's your chance to catch it.

Thanks --

Sincerely,

Tim Minear

PS - I know the conventional wisdom says that good reviews don't mean anything to potential viewers, but here's a taste of them anyway:

TV GUIDE (3/13-19), Matt Roush

"Ironic and romantic, WONDERFALLS is a true original. Surrender to its charms."

PEOPLE (3/22), Terry Kelleher

"The reason to watch WONDERFALLS is Dhavernas. With a star like this, a series doesn't really need a gimmick."

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY (3/19), Ken Tucker

"A-" "...a revelation - a blessing, even.... Each of the four episodes I've seen is better than the one preceding it."

USA TODAY (3/12), Robert Bianco

"WONDERFALLS is such an unexpected treat"

LOS ANGELES TIMES (3/12), Robert Lloyd

"WONDERFALLS is so well done, so fresh and unpredictable, and so little in thrall to conventional virtues as to make the weary reviewer prostrate with joy... everything clicks here"

NEW YORK TIMES (3/12), Virginia Heffernan

"Beautifully shot and written with wit... Dhavernas is delightful."

NEWSDAY (3/12), Noel Holston

"the best pilot of the 2003-2004 season... Dhavernas is a find, a marvelously understated comic actress and her supporting cast is impeccable"

CHICAGO TRIBUNE (3/12), Steve Johnson

"the series looks and feels like nothing else on television... it all remains, almost magically, in balance, a delicate, roadside-attraction wonderland where mysteries of the cosmos, lowbrow popular culture, family dysfunction, longing and, mostly humor can coexist."

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (3/12), Tim Goodman

"unquestionably the best new drama series of the 2003-04 season... this is your time to love TV"

WASHINGTON POST (3/12), Tom Shales

"WONDERFALLS is wonderful... a prime example of risk-taking originality, a brassy blast of fresh air any way you look at it."

BOSTON HERALD (3/12), Amy Amatangelo

"Executive producers Todd Holland, Tim Minear and Bryan Fuller have created a show unlike any other on television."

THE GLOBE AND MAIL (3/12), John Doyle

"WONDERFALLS is the best new drama in ages... Caroline Dhavernas is impeccable"

US WEEKLY - John Griffiths

"The writing is deliriously clever, the plots strangely Zen and uplifting, and Dhavernas is beyond winning as the loser-stamped Jaye. A fun, wild free fall."

POPGURLS (3/12), Allyson A Popgurl

"...get together with some friends, order in some Chinese, watch Wonderfalls at 9pm on FOX this Friday, and then go out to your favorite dive bar and snark with each other. Make it a regular Friday thing. You'll be happier for it."