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Tickle

TV REVIEW | 'OUT OF JIMMY'S HEAD'

What's in a Seventh Grader's Head?

By NEIL GENZLINGER
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Perhaps it's unfair to expect the folks at the Cartoon Network to know this, but if you use human actors in your show, you really need to hire a hair wrangler.

Dominic Janes, the young star of the network's first live-action series, which has its premiere tonight, has an early [Kristy McNichol](#) thing going up top, or maybe Mackenzie Phillips in "One Day at a Time": too much hair for his head size, too many waves for his age. And sloppy. Just because he's playing an awkward junior high school-age boy doesn't mean he has to look like one. Buy some scissors, for crying out loud.

The series, though this has nothing to do with the hair, is called "Out of Jimmy's Head," Jimmy being Mr. Janes's character. The title refers to cartoon characters who live in there and occasionally pop out into the real world, where only Jimmy can see them, causing him untold embarrassment because he seems unable to resist talking to them.

The network apparently decided not to cast a very wide net for the show's audience, because the only people likely to understand it are those who saw "Re-Animated," a movie on the network last year, of which the series is a continuation. Here's the gist of it: Jimmy was struck by an amusement park ride, requiring an emergency transplant that left him with the brain of a famed cartoonist, whose son is trying to get the brain back, sometimes having to dodge people like Jimmy's sister, who is a space alien, brought to earth by Jimmy's mother, an astronaut.

Cast aside all that clutter, though, and this is really just another show about a seventh grader trying to fit in. It's also a show with a sly sense of humor when it's not being self-consciously frenetic. The opening episode centers on a talent show organized by Jimmy's father, Mr. Roberts, the school's guidance counselor (Bil Dwyer, who is very funny). It has "try-ins" instead of tryouts because everyone is special. But at the try-ins there's a gong. As Mr. Roberts explains, "The Specialness Gong will warn you if you're the kind of special where no one in their right mind would want to see you perform."

OUT OF JIMMY'S HEAD

Cartoon Network, tonight at 7, Eastern and Pacific times; 6, Central time.

Created and written by Adam Pava and Tim McKeon; Mr. Pava, Mr. McKeon, Eric Kaplan, David Brookwell, Sean McNamara and Bruce Hurwit, executive producers. A Brookwell McNamara Entertainment production with animation produced at Cartoon Network Studios.

WITH: Dominic Janes (Jimmy), Jon Kent Ethridge II (Craig), Tinashe Kashingwe

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(Robin), Matt Knudsen (Sonny), Rhea Lando (Yancy), Rachel Quaintance (Mom), Bill Dwyer (Dad), and the voices of Carlos Alazraqui (Golly Gopher), Ellen Greene (Dolly Gopher), Tom Kenny (Tux) and Brian Posehn (Crocco the Alligator).

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