

'Odd' man in Peculiar shop in East Village makes for quirky series



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TV REVIEW

"Oddities"

Tonight at 9 on Science



Forget the pimped-out, one-of-a-kind Harley, the original Picasso in your aunt's garage and even the cache of Lincoln's letters in grandma's attic.

If you want something *really* unusual, you've got to catch "**Oddities**," the little series that could, which premieres its third season on the Science channel tonight.

"Oddities" is "**Pawn Stars**" for weirdos — not that the people on "Pawn Stars" aren't weirdos themselves, but even they can't compete for strangeness with the folks on this show.

How is that possible?

Do you think you'd find a pickled human heart (complete with a bullet hole), a tiny monkey skeleton that fits inside a small antique monkey racing car (yes, they used to strap monkeys to race cars and send them around tracks!), a dead, stuffed two-headed lamb or that always-welcome prostate warmer anywhere but on "Oddities"?



CHECK IT OUT RIGHT MEOW: Oddball customers in the strange East Village shop Obscura are the best part of reality show "Oddities."

The series takes place in New York's East Village shop, Obscura Antiques & Oddities, at 280 East 10th Street, one of the few *true* peculiar shops left in this city, where strange and disgusting have been smothered by expensive and chic.

The purveyors of the weird here are Mike, Evan and bones-specialist Ryan, who have seen it all — and are more than happy to buy, trade and sell it all.

Unlike “Pawn Stars,” the shopkeepers here are the most normal-seeming, at least when compared to their customer base of loonies.

Like? Like Johnny Clockworks, a puppeteer with a tiny storefront theater where he puts on shows with scary, old doll puppets. Johnny’s desperate to buy the shop’s one and only, “Hypnowhirlscope,” and really who wouldn’t? It was once used by a dentist back in the day. Don’t ask.

Johnny Clockworks tries to hypnotize Evan with the Hypnowhirlscope into lowering the price. He probably would have had better luck sticking her up.

When Mike brings the pickled bullet-hole heart into lawyer Ron Kuby’s office to see if it’s legal to buy or sell such a thing, Kuby looks genuinely touched and says, “I so appreciate my clients asking me *before* they do the thing that ends up being illegal!” Right.

Then, there’s Michael Lee, an Escape Artist / Mentalist who (probably like you!) already owns 13 straight jackets and uncountable numbers of handcuffs, but is looking for that special something.

There’s a woman who’s moving and wants some “decorations” to remember her old neighborhood, and buys an elaborate 100-year-old “painting” of a turreted castle — that’s made of human hair.

The customers are the greatest, including your everyday evil clown, burlesque dancer, Tibetan skull drummer, sorceress, yogi who bends parts you don’t want to know about, and, of course, there is every fan’s favorite, Edgar “Is That A Straight-Jacket” Oliver.

Best of all, nothing shocks the deadpanning shopkeepers who seriously say things, like, “I’ve seen my share of pickled pig hearts in my day . . . but people would give their right arm for *this* heart!” Right.