

The 10 Most Promising New TV Shows of Fall 2010

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on August 19, 2010 - 7:47pm

- [ABC](#) [2]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [3]
- [CBS](#) [4]
- [FOX](#) [5]
- [Hawaii Five-0](#) [6]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [7]
- [List](#) [8]
- [Lone Star](#) [9]
- [NBC](#) [10]
- [Nikita](#) [11]
- [No Ordinary Family](#) [12]
- [Outsourced](#) [13]
- [Raising Hope](#) [14]
- [Running Wilde](#) [15]
- [Television](#) [16]
- [The CW](#) [17]
- [The Event](#) [18]
- [The Whole Truth](#) [19]
- [Undercovers](#) [20]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [21]

CHICAGO – The broadcast network rookie class of 2009 was one of the best of all time with “Community,” “Glee,” “Modern Family,” “The Good Wife,” “NCIS: Los Angeles,” “The Middle,” and “Cougar Town” finding loyal fans. Even relative (and mostly canceled) missteps like “FlashForward,” “V,” “Mercy,” and “Melrose Place” were interesting disasters. Will the upcoming season continue the pattern or drop the broadcast nets back into the misery of being unable to find a new hit?

Don't get your hopes up. Having seen at least rough cuts of all of the new programs except for the still-in-production “Law & Order: Los Angeles,” we can say without a doubt that this upcoming freshmen class will not produce the same number of all-stars as last year. Even the majority of the ten shows below are going to require some tinkering to stand out. It should be noted that most of what we've seen were rough cuts that could see major changes before debut. Just because a show is NOT on the list, it doesn't mean that it can't be altered enough to make it a quality program by the time we review the finished pilot and we suppose it's possible that what works about some of these could be mangled before airing but that seems unlikely. Expect to see full-length reviews of every new show at HollywoodChicago.com in the month of September.

As for general trends, the new broadcast lineups feel remarkably safe. The departures of “24” and “Lost” have not left vacuums that the creative departments of the big five are looking to fill with similar programming. It feels like the relative failure of high concept shows like “FlashForward” and “V” may have turned off a few programmers and so they're sticking with pretty simple formulas and leaving the complex stuff to the cable channels. There are a few ambitious programs and they're near the top of the list below and a few of the attempts at popcorn entertainment succeed but the new freshman class is a remarkably safe one. We've seen most of it before and with the incredible success of unique programs like “Modern Family” and “Glee,” it's disappointing to see so much generic new programming.

It also feels like the wave of comedy success has crashed. After an amazing year for sitcoms last year, only three make the list below and most of what we've seen is pretty horrible. CBS only has two and one, “\$#! My Dad Says” with William Shatner is being completely overhauled before release (and, based on what we've seen, it needs it). ABC only has one to fill in the gap on Wednesday nights and the version we've seen of “Better With You” is a complete mess. More on that when we see the final version. The CW — zero. And the remaining three are on the list although, as you'll see, not that high.

Let's get to it. Mark your calendars. Figure out your season pass conflicts. Here are the ten most promising shows of the new season:

10. “Lone Star”

Network: FOX

Premieres: Monday, September 20th, 8pm CST



Bryce Johnson, Jon Voight, Mark Deklin, Adrienne Palicki, James Wolk, Eloise Mumford and David Keith.
Photo credit: Patrick Ecclesine/FOX

“Lone Star” has echoes of ‘80s soaps like “Dallas” but with a modern spin. With an expertly-directed pilot courtesy of Marc Webb (“(500) Days of Summer,” the announced “Spider-Man” reboot), “Lone Star” tells the story of Robert Allen (James Wolk), a charismatic con man who has worked his way into a double life. When the time comes to cut and run after it looks like his cover will be blown, Robert makes the dangerous decision to try and keep his dual existence in play. In one life, he is married to the stunning daughter (Adrienne Palicki) of a notorious oil magnate (a perfectly-cast Jon Voight) and is climbing the corporate ladder. In another, he has a more blue-collar existence with the lovely Lindsay (Eloise Mumford). Keeping one con going is tough enough. Can he keep up two? The cast of “Lone Star” is strong but the premiere is a bit too soapy for my tastes. Having said that, the intriguing premise and above-average ensemble means that all it would take for “Lone Star” to rise up a list of freshman faves is a bit of work on the screenwriting. The premiere may be just okay, but this could be brilliant by the end of October. We’ll have to wait and see.

9. “Raising Hope”

Network: FOX

Premieres: Tuesday, September 21st, 8pm CST



Garret Dillahunt, Martha Plimpton, Lucas Neff, Shannon Woodward and Cloris Leachman.
Photo credit: Matthias Clamer/FOX

The very talented Greg Garcia (“My Name is Earl”) brings his unique world view to FOX with the hit-and-miss “Raising Hope,” another comedy about societal outcasts proving that family is a term with multiple definitions. The not-so-nuclear clan of “Raising Hope” features the wide-eyed Jimmy Chance (Lucas Neff), who finds his life turned upside down when he sleeps with a murderer (Bijou Phillips) and then gets forced to raise their offspring alone after she’s given the electric chair. Of course, the child’s name is Hope. Neff is going to take some practice to become believable in this straight-man role but the supporting cast of “Raising Hope” is very strong with the wonderfully cast Garret Dillahunt (“Deadwood,” “Last House on the Left”), Martha Plimpton (“The Goonies”) and Cloris Leachman rounding out the Chance family. Like some episodes of “My Name is Earl,” the premiere of “Raising Hope” sometimes feels a bit desperate in its need to please but this is the kind of fast-paced sitcom writing where if one joke falls flat, a great one is just around the corner.

8. “The Whole Truth”

Network: ABC

Premieres: Wednesday, September 22nd, 9pm CST



Rob Morrow, Christine Adams, Anthony Ruivivar, Rick Kelly.

Photo credit: Adam Taylor/ABC

Very few shows will be as radically revised from the version I saw as ABC’s legal drama “The Whole Truth.” The two leads of this Jerry Bruckheimer-produced series were originally played by Joely Richardson (“Nip/Tuck”) and Rob Morrow (“Numbers”). Rob’s still going to be there when it premieres, but the tough-as-nails prosecutor played by Richardson will be replaced by Maura Tierney (“ER”). I’ll miss what Richardson brought to the show but Tierney is easily her equal and the promise of the show is all about premise and production. “The Whole Truth” is a roller coaster legal series that attempts to present both sides of a case. So, we see both prosecution and defense teams dealing with new evidence, planning for cross-examination, and generally playing mind games with each other. The actual case in the premiere could have used a rewrite as well but there’s something addictive about the pace of the show. It’s got that same Bruckheimer sheen that he’s brought to crime-solving with the “C.S.I.” juggernaut but in a courtroom setting. Sure, it may be ridiculous, but it’s also probably going to be a lot of fun.

7. “Outsourced”

Network: NBC

Premieres: Thursday, September 23rd, 8:30pm CST



Anisha Nagarajan as Madhuri, Rizwan Manji as Rajiv, Rebecca Hazelwood as Asha, Parvesh Cheena as Gupta, Sacha Dhawan as Manmeet, Ben Rappaport as Todd.

Photo credit: Harper Smith/NBC

Will NBC ever find a complete Thursday night comedy lineup? They're sure trying and they've given their lone new fall comedic offering the prime slot between "The Office" and the return of "The Apprentice." The workplace connection between the three shows is a clever one if viewers don't get too fatigued by two hours of reminders about how much they loathe their jobs. Ben Rappaport is the charming lead of the show, a manager at Mid America Novelties asked to move to India and manage a call center. Yes, some of the fish-out-of-water jokes could be a bit culturally insensitive and on-the-nose but the writing in the premiere of "Outsourced" is consistently clever and the cast is extremely likable. Thursday nights on NBC have become a critical darling that's rarely matched by big ratings. The lowered expectations have allowed excellent shows like "Community" and "Parks and Recreation" to be given the time to develop despite sometimes-anemic numbers. If "Outsourced" is given the same time to gel, it's not hard to see this talented cast and writing team fitting in perfectly with its beloved network-and-nightmates.

6. "Running Wilde"

Network: FOX

Premieres: Tuesday, September 21st, 8:30pm CST



A lovable but immature playboy (Will Arnett, C) tries desperately to win (or buy) the heart of his childhood sweetheart (Keri Russell, L).

Photo credit: Brian Bowen Smith/FOX

With the cast and creator pedigree of "Running Wilde," it had to be a pre-game favorite for the top of this list. Reuniting the hilarious Will Arnett with "Arrested Development" creator Mitchell Hurwitz and adding the charming Keri Russell to the mix should be comedy gold and I believe that someday it will be. From what I've read, the pilot I've seen has been radically revised and that gives me hope because this one stumbles out of the starting gate. It's wildly inconsistent, only building into something interesting in the final scenes. But, this list is not a straight-up pilot ranking. It's about potential. And "Running Wilde" clearly has the most of any FOX program. Arnett has perfect comic timing and his off-the-wall antics should make for an interesting counter-balance to Russell's more genuine approach to character-building. I don't love what I've seen of "Running Wilde" but I love Arnett, Russell, and Hurwitz enough to give it a second chance. And a third. And a probably a fourth.

5. "Nikita"

Network: The CW

Premieres: Thursday, September 9th, 8pm CST



Maggie Q as Nikita.

Photo credit: Jan Thijs/The CW

Nothing will be guiltier than the pleasure you'll get from The CW's reboot of the franchise that started with Luc Besson's "La Femme Nikita." Who could have possibly imagined that the great original film would be followed by a remake ("Point of No Return"), basic cable series ("La Femme Nikita"), and now a network reboot? The ridiculously sexy Maggie Q stars as the title character and this time she's escaped from her former employers and is planning to bring down the infamous network of assassins in whatever way possible. TV veterans Shane West ("Once and Again"), Xander Berkeley ("24"), Lyndsey Fonseca ("How I Met Your Mother"), and Ashton Holmes ("The Pacific") make the more ridiculously cheesy moments easier to take but the fact is that this is pure popcorn entertainment. The dialogue is often cringe-worthy but who cares when the pacing is so breakneck, the cast is so easy on the eyes, and the action is so well-done? The point is that no one should check out "Nikita" for the character development or witty repartee. For every other reason you want to be entertained on a Thursday night? You could do a lot worse.

4. "No Ordinary Family"

Network: ABC

Premieres: Tuesday, September 28th, 7pm CST



Julie Benz, Michael Chiklis.

Photo credit: Eric McCandless/ABC

If it wasn't for the recent failure of "Heroes," this would be number one. And if we're judging purely on the pilot and not the potential of the premise than it would also hold the top of the list. We'll get into it with a full review later when it's been finalized but the premiere of "No Ordinary Family" is great. Two of the best TV actors of the last decade — Michael Chiklis ("The Shield") and Julie Benz ("Dexter") — star as the drifting patriarch and matriarch of a family that tries to reunite by taking a trip that ends with a plane crash. The family survives but they come home to slowly discover that they have super powers. Don't worry. There's no comic-book aesthetic or great conspiracy like on "Heroes." Do you remember the early days of that show when the characters still felt genuine? When it was about everyday people stuck in fascinating situations? "No Ordinary Family" finds a way to ground the lunacy of its concept with people who feel real (thanks mostly to Chiklis, Benz, and Romany Malco). Similar shows have fallen flat in recent years but I truly hope that "No Ordinary Family" is as good as its pilot for an entire season. If so, it will be one of the best shows on television.

3. "Hawaii Five-0"

Network: CBS

Premieres: Monday, September 20th, 9pm CST



Scott Caan plays Detective Danny "Danno" Williams, Daniel Dae Kim portrays Chin Ho Kelly, Alex O'Loughlin plays Detective Steve McGarrett, and Grace Park plays Kono.

Photo credit: Mario Perez/CBS

In terms of ratings, I expect that "Hawaii Five-0" will rule over all other new programs this year. Not only is it being handed the cushy timeslot that turned "C.S.I.: Miami" into a monster hit but it is cut from exactly the same cloth that turned "NCIS: Los Angeles" into a smash success last year. With incredible production values, very charismatic leads, gorgeous locations, and fast-paced action, "Hawaii Five-0" is shockingly entertaining. It helps to have an amazingly likable cast headed by Alex O'Loughlin (who has finally found the right role after "Moonlight" and "Three Rivers"), the best role of Scott Caan's ("Entourage") career, the shockingly sexy Grace Park ("Battlestar Galactica"), and the always-fantastic Daniel Dae Kim ("Lost"). The snob in me who wants all TV to be like "Mad Men" or "The Pacific" feels somewhat obligated to point out that this is nothing more than well-done escapism but, you know, sometimes that's what you need on a Monday night. It's a trip I expect millions of viewers will enjoy taking.

2. "Undercovers"

Network: NBC

Premieres: Wednesday, September 22nd, 7pm CST



Boris Kadjoe as Steven Bloom, Gugu Mbatha-Raw as Samantha Bloom.

Photo credit: Frank Ockenfels/NBC

The odd pairing of high-concept expert J.J. Abrams (“Lost,” “Star Trek”) and the typically-more-grounded writer Josh Reims (“Brothers and Sisters,” “What About Brian”) results in an expertly produced, paced, and performed spy-show that should easily rise to the top of this suddenly-trendy genre (“Covert Affairs,” “Nikita,” “Burn Notice”). The gorgeous pairing of Boris Kodjoe and Gugu Mbatha-Raw as 2010’s version of “Mr. and Mrs. Smith” is matched in a pilot that sends them around the world to breathtakingly beautiful settings. In the premiere, Steven (Kodjoe) and Samantha Bloom are living happy “normal” lives having put their spy work behind them but the disappearance of a former friend in the business (Carter MacIntyre) forces them into action and reinstatement under a liaison expertly played by TV veteran Gerald McRaney. This is the “fastest” new hour of the season — a show that zips by with Abrams’ remarkable sense of pacing, very likable lead and supporting performances, clever dialogue, and theatrical-quality production values. Kodjoe and Mbatha-Raw could be the breakout stars of the season.

1. “The Event”

Network: NBC

Premieres: Monday, September 20th, 8pm CST



Laura Innes as Sophia Gavras, Ian Anthony Dale as Simon Lee, Jason Ritter as Sean Walker, Bill Smitrovich as Winston Jarvis, Blair Underwood as President Martinez, Lisa Vidal as Christina Martinez, Zeljko Ivanek as Blake Sterling.

Photo credit: Joseph Viles/NBC

The concept behind this list is potential. “The Event” could go either way. Is it the next “24”? The next “Lost”? That level of potential is there and so it has to top a list of the most promising shows of the season. Of course, as when any project swings for the fences like this unusual show, it has just as much potential to strike out as it does to hit a grand slam. Only time will tell for sure. But the ultimate test of a pilot is whether or not you’ll tune in again to see what happens next. The premiere of “The Event” isn’t perfect but it hints at what could be a remarkably addictive show where you simply have to keep watching to see how the writers plan to unravel their plot threads. The first episode jumps back and forth in time, introducing us to several characters, before ending on such a bizarre and unusual note that it’s going to have people talking the next day. The cast is uniformly strong, including TV veterans Blair Underwood, Laura Innes, and Zeljko Ivanek, but the main reason “The Event” is the most promising new show of 2010 is simple — with a freshmen class full of programs that feel cut from the same cloth, this is one of the few that stands apart. It may not connect the way I think it will but there certainly won’t be anything else like it in 2010.



[22]

By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [23]

Content Director

HollywoodChicago.com

brian@hollywoodchicago.com [22]

Source URL (retrieved on Apr 19 2024 - 2:59pm):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/11573/the-ten-most-promising-new-tv-shows-of-fall-2010>

Links:

[1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/briantt>

[2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/abc>

[3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/brian-tallerico>

[4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/cbs>

[5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/fox>

[6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hawaii-five-0>

[7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>

[8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/list>

- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/lone-star>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/nbc-0>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/nikita>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/no-ordinary-family>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/outsourced>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/raising-hope>
- [15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/running-wilde>
- [16] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/television>
- [17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-cw>
- [18] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-event>
- [19] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-whole-truth>
- [20] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/undercovers>
- [21] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dvd-theater-tv-news>
- [22] <mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [23] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#BRIAN>