

## **NOTES - ACTORS THINK TANK, OCT. 21, 2020 PAT YORKS, AGENCY CONNECTS**

**Slate Comments:** Highly positive impression, each was very professional, personable, well-lit and had great backgrounds. Suggested keeping age range to 10 years, the customary length, unless you are auditioning, costumed and presenting as a specific character. She felt comfortable with each person slating and could relate to each actor personally.

**Pat's Background:** As a Philadelphia schoolteacher Pat took her daughter and niece and nephew to summer casting calls, and networked with the city's industry members. She was not an actor but loved the business. After interning for a year to learn the trade, she started her agency with an unexpected 'found money' windfall, letters of recommendation and networking. Making connections at all levels and across all industries is one of the keys to her success and continues to be a mantra.

**Current Environment:** Today's pandemic era actors have to also be filmmakers and directors, creating their own films and running their own business because they want to get the job. Be ahead of the game by being business smart and showing acting chops as well as knowing how to follow directions especially naming and uploading files properly. Make a checklist in advance. More CDs (Casting Directors) are switching to DropBox from We Transfer. Since she doesn't make money unless her actors do by getting bookings and growing resumes, she advises to get your face out there on FB and IG so the new younger CDs know you are there. Written thank you notes still work. DO NOT take set photos on shows you are working and post, wait till show airs.

**Facts of Casting Life:** CDs have long memories and even if you are not booked for auditioned role, they will remember you at another show/job/agency/project. CDs are the first door you go through, they remember good performances even if you may not be right for the current role. Don't be pigeon holed, go out of comfort zone and take your craft in another direction. CDs have more information about their character than they post so take risks and the advice of your agent to go for a role you may not have considered. Never give up, don't doubt yourself. If you believe, they will believe. She is currently working with Kathy Wickline on a national web episodic casting project. Many of her actors are working on big Philly projects such as MARE OF EASTTOWN, SERVANT and HUSTLE.

Acting is a waiting game and a numbers game and actors cannot take rejection personally, that right role will be there for you. We throw the process up to the universe and see what happens, regionally there are 30-40 talent agents, and there could be 10,000 hits for a breakdown, according to Pat's NY contacts.

**Advice:** YOU not agent, have obligation keep resume, reel and photos up to date. If she has only 2 photos to work with, CDs will go right past you. When breakdowns come out she likes to be first (Holidays and weekends are no barriers!), so having updated and choices of recent

materials on casting sites is crucial. CDs don't have time to open separate links. DO NOT use self tapes used for auditions as reels. Yes to self-produced scenes, or snippets of shows you have been featured in - for reels are acceptable. Take great care with your headshots, eyes are a reflection of your soul, make sure you work with photographer to get the look you need. Don't expect him/her to know what that is.

**Background roles:** Actors new to business should pursue background roles, however serious actors should not continue booking background as CDs will continue to see you that way only. In NY BG actors cannot get other roles until a year after taking BG roles. However ,if you are BG and have special expertise or skill (swords!!) or a particular look that is in demand, rules can be broken.

**Advancing Career:** Actors constantly need training at all levels, requiring a variety of skills to get ahead. Those who have training will succeed. As a boutique agency, she expects some of her talent who have scored major roles will move on up to a 'name' agency in LA or NYC. Coaching before going into a role is recommended. Most of the session was for Stage/TV/Film work but she also books major commercial work which can be very lucrative especially for Sag Aftra actors who will reap residuals.

**Follow Up:** Everyone is welcome to contact Pat with headshot, resume and reel. She will set up a Zoom appointment or a social distanced outside meetup, since her office is a one person operation these days.

**Final thoughts:** Be patient, respectful, graceful and maintain a team effort. You will find the right niche and door. To those who wait good things will come!

*Thanks again for another winner!*

*Harriet J. Dobin*

*harriet@hdobin.com*