

Actors Think Tank

March 17, 2022

(0:12) - Gabi Faye introduced Camillia Monet and shared with the group that she met her by taking a class instructed by Monet. Per Gabi, she was in class three months with Monet and her craft transformed because of her teaching style. Monet makes students feel good and empowered and helps all students to grow. She is a Philly girl who now lives in LA and owns her own production company

(0:15) - Rich Henkels asked Monet if it is her first time seeing a group in Zoom like Actors Think Tank and she replied that she has done three similar setups (podcasts) and she teaches and coaches in the Zoom format. Monet is doing a podcast panel in two weeks .

(0:16) - Henkels explained that the approach of Actors Think Tank is different in that the group reaches out to guests . Monet said this approach is empowering and provides a service.

(0:17) - Henkels asked Monet if she thinks actors are taking advantage of technology in the world post Covid and she said yes. Per Monet, on camera, the frame is storytelling. It is film making versus an audition. Per Monet, the Zoom setting is so much better for coaching. TV and film are based on behavior . Theater is based on work. Actors are indeed taking advantage of the technology.

(0:19) - Henkels asked Monet how she makes a one on one connection with students onscreen and she replied that she focuses on the one person with whom she is speaking and she makes a connection with each student.

(0:21) - Henkels asked about the importance of actors asking questions. Per Monet, her agenda is to help actors be the best . If they appear reticent, she will draw them in by asking engaging questions.

(0:23) - Henkels asked Actors Think Tank members their thoughts about a coach. Per Luca , he tries to absorb all he can from listening. Monet called active listening crucial and underestimated . She thinks of active listening as a super power . Monet said people participate by listening. Dina asked if information is absorbed differently in a live group setting . Per Monet, the format is different, not the intention. Human condition , who you are , being present in the moment and skill set are still required.

(0:26) - Monet feels the Zoom format is more up close and personal. She invites the personal interaction. Monet sees Zoom as a different approach, not a change to acting.

(0:27) - Monet mentioned active listening as one of five superpowers . The remaining super powers are: (1) detective work (why am I here; asking questions); (2) vulnerability (actors versus civilians show emotion); (3) listening ; (4) curiosity and (5) putting attention on other people .

(0:30) - Monet says, get out of your own head and focus on your scene partner. Forget about yourself and put your energy on your scene partner.

(0:31) - Jeanette replied to the super power of vulnerability saying she was told growing up that she was too emotional because she cried easily. Jeanette told Monet it was nice to hear that vulnerability is okay. Tyler spoke to the ability of actors to play like a kid on a playground and Monet agreed that's a good thing. She said sometimes she looks at the crew and laughs that we get to play as actors.

(0:34) - Henkels said another super power is to be present, give your all and let it go. Monet agreed, stating that the actor has no power after the audition. Decisions are then left to the casting directors.

Kelly stated that another super power is to keep going in spite of rejection. Monet agreed and said to remember it is not personal.

(0:37) - Monet added that actors should think of the audition as an invitation versus trying out. She also stated that when an actor is asked what they've worked on, or what they're working on, the reply should be that we are always working. Work includes all activities that contribute to improving the craft. Actors are always working. This is the resilience.

(0:39) - Henkels asked Monet about her "aha" moment in the industry. Per Monet, she has had numerous aha moments. One moment was working with greats like Tom Cruise and Steven Spielberg. Another aha moment was when Monet was working on Broadway and started to second guess herself, wanting to quit. When Monet told the director she wanted to quit he asked her to give it another week, which she did. Monet ended up doing an outstanding job. Working with Tom Cruise, he once said to her not to say she sucks. Cruise said Spielberg was to direct Monet rather than her critiquing herself.

(0:43) - Monet was on "The Shield" for FX, which lasted four years, and it was a male driven show. Monet said her aha moment was six years later realizing that she was good and wondering why she tormented herself when she was on the show.

(0:45) - Henkels asked if trust is laced in the aha moments and Monet agreed. She said actors must learn to trust themselves first. Education and experience are not enough. Monet said she had to reckon with herself and realize she was contributing.

(0:47) - Henkels asked what it was like working with Tom Cruise. Per Monet, when she was in the Steven Spielberg movie with Tom Cruise, she didn't know the name of the big film. All she got was sides and no script. Monet said she really learned the script and prepared for the role. Cruise and Spielberg surprised Monet when they knocked on her trailer to introduce themselves and welcome her.

(0:50) - Per Monet, Spielberg said early on he yelled and scared everybody, but he learned to be calmer and now has a crew that has been with him 19 years. Cruise was very nice. Monet said rather than focus on the celebrity, she reminded herself that they are all in the circle of storytelling.

(0:52) - Monet was asked questions from Actors Think Tank members:

- Shelby was surprised that Monet never got the full script to the movie she did with Tom Cruise and Steven Spielberg
- Luca asked Monet how she made the adjustment moving to L.A. from Philly. Monet said the transition is based on who and what you surround yourself with. She told Luca to focus on his goals and widen the fish bowl.
- (0:55) - Mariel asked Monet what she does to build her students confidence. Per Monet, she identifies the source of their fear and puts that fear to work for them. She reframes fear, so it helps versus hinders the students.
- (0:57) - Monet explained to Gabi how she became a board member of Shine, which started as a six month think tank on how to start a children's theatre.
- (0:58) - Monet was asked her technique to learn script and she said she used every opportunity to memorize it, including while working out, by writing the words out, putting the words under her pillow, making words from the script part of her vernacular and visualizing appearances.
- (1:01) - Justine and Monet have a mutual friend named Glen Mizarro. Justine said her super power is killing the inner critic.
- (1:04) - Shelly said when she watches television she is working because she analyzes shows as she watches them. Her question to Monet was how to get actors to trust themselves. Monet said she will not allow actors to sigh or doubt themselves.

- (1:06) - Henkels told Monet she will receive takeaways from the group, as well as, another mug. Monet's final thoughts to the group were that actors can get work no matter what; to keep working at our craft; be the best; use our super powers and feel free to reach out to her and she will eventually reply.

Respectfully submitted by,

Rosalyn T. Jamal