

Julia Farino: 'I decided to share my experiences to help other actors navigate the industry'

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The singer, actor and author has written a book called *Surviving Hollywood*. She offers her advice for students and graduates



Julia Farino. Photo: Elina Dmitrieva

How did you start in theatre?

I joined a local youth theatre group at 15. After a three-year musical theatre diploma, followed by a BSc degree in Sociology and Drama, my first theatre job was in *Les Misérables* in London's West End.

What led you to write your advice book?

After living and working in Los Angeles for the last eight years, I noticed not many actors sustain a career in Hollywood. So I decided to share my experiences to help other actors navigate the industry.

What is your advice for students and graduates today?

Remember you are a storyteller. The most important part of your job is for your character to drive the story forward. Understand your role in the script and add your imagination – the actor who tells the most compelling story will get the job.

What would you change about the industry?

Equal pay for women and equal representation in film, television and on stage. There are still almost twice as many roles for men as women.

Who are the practitioners you admire the most/who should students look up to?

What makes life interesting is that it is a combination of many thoughts and ideas and my approach to acting is the same. I studied various practitioners and probably use a little of each of their techniques throughout my work.

What skill should every successful theatre professional have?

Self-belief. It's too hard to take the knocks and sustain a career if you don't have it.

What should readers do to increase their mental and physical well-being?

My dad is 92 years old and he believes the secret to his longevity is routine. I agree. Our business doesn't lend itself to routine so you have to create it for yourself. A routine will keep you motivated and being proactive will get you results. Results lead to confidence and when you have confidence, everything in life becomes a lot easier.

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