

## Old Faces Monologue

By Jen Davis

Hi. Very few of you know me. That's because I don't do things like "audition" or "participate". You may be familiar with my work as "Schoolgirl" in *Little Women* from the YES Festival in 2001, or perhaps my latest performance as "run crew/random racist farmer" in *To Kill a Mockingbird* last fall, both of which garnered multiple award nominations.

However, what I lack in savvy about the department I more than make up for in life experience, as you can clearly see. While I can't tell you where to find lighting equipment or elusive props, I can offer you a bit of advice about how to get along in your professional lives from a more general stance, ideas which translate very well to your training here at NKU.

Here are just a few thoughts I have on succeeding in business, though you will really have to try:

1. Professionalism. The way in which you present yourself is crucial in any field. As out-of-work actors with restaurant jobs, you'll want to establish a professional web presence and maintain it. Set up a Facebook page strictly for promoting your theatrical work and then use it to disparage anyone and everyone you believe has crossed you. Regularly post snide, passive/aggressive, thinly-veiled comments about the director who didn't cast you, the A.D. who didn't choose your play, or the stage manager who was too busy calling cues to let you know your entrance was coming when you had your headphones on full-blast in the green room. They're all assholes, and clearly do not know as much about the business as you do. You need to make sure they know that. Remember, you're the victim here—every single time.  
Professionalism.
2. Presentation. It's very important that every person you encounter knows that you're an actor. Being an "artist" makes you special and unique. If you lack adorable quirks, develop some! Make sure that everyone within ten tables at restaurants can hear your hilarious conversations and random bursts of song. Be sure to conduct your obnoxious and pretentious vocal warm-ups in as conspicuous a place as possible before any performance; this lets others know how serious and deep you are about your craft.  
Presentation.
3. Preparation. You may be lucky enough to be cast far enough in advance that you'll be given a script several weeks or even months in advance of the start of rehearsals. It speaks volumes about you if you read it—once. The rehearsal schedule says "Off Book" two weeks before opening, so there's really no need to put pressure on yourself by learning your lines ahead of time. And speaking of time, no one knows your routine better than you, so

even if your call time is at 6:30, it's okay to roll in around 7:45, because you know it only takes you a few minutes to get ready. The stage manager will appreciate it—that's one fewer person to worry about for a little while, and if there's one thing stage managers can't handle, it's responsibility. Preparation.

4. Put yourself out there. Audition! I know—hypocritical coming from me. But do it anyway. Get rejected. Fail miserably. Feel twinges of jealousy toward the people who get the roles you want. But rather than sit back and tell yourself that you're not good enough, use those people as motivation to become better—at being vindictive and hateful. Comment behind their backs that they can't sing or that they only got cast because they're seniors. It's your birthright, as underclassmen. Should you get cast—enjoy it! There is nothing more rewarding than sitting back stage in full costume for two hours only to appear onstage for thirty seconds early in Act I and then again at curtain call. Use this time to catch up on your math homework so that you can get a job someday, or grab Chorus Member #7 and strike up a game of Euchre. This is a great chance to hone your skills. Put yourself out there.

My final thoughts, based on my very lengthy experience? Do your production credits early. They are not fun, especially if you require a babysitter every night for three weeks. Take Stagecraft your first year, go to your damned lab, no matter how much you'd rather be sitting at Chipotle, and get it over with. Know that no one owes you anything, and that you have to bust your ass to matter, and that's anywhere in life. The only person who thinks you shit rainbows is your mom, and unless she's a casting director or is sleeping with one, that does you no good. Be kind to people. Respect people. Show up and try. And go out of your way not to be a colossal, entitled douchebag. Thank you.