

Episode #019 (TRANSCRIPT)

Charlie (00:02):

Character acting. It is the highest level of this art form. I think that any serious actor aspires to be transformational, to have the ability to be able to alter your vocal, your physical, your emotional instrument in order to step into the shoes of another human being. It requires imagination. It requires insight into the human condition. It requires empathy. It requires an ability to risk, to be bold, and in some cases, it means you got to go to the darker parts of who we are and today we're going to talk to a hell of an actor, a real character actor, Trevor Long, Ozark's Cade Langmore. We're going to shoot the shit, so put the phone back in your pocket. Creating behavior starts now.

Charlie (00:57):

(singing)

Charlie (01:21):

Well, hello my fellow daydreamers. So character acting, right, what is it? How do you do it? It's like this mystery in a bottle when you're watching transformational actors, someone like Daniel Day-Lewis or Meryl Streep or Toni Collette, Tilda Swinton, Ben Kingsley, these guys and gals who are completely transformational. So everything they do is really unrecognizable from what they did before. I mean that's what real character acting is. When you look at a body of work and every film, every show, every piece of theater is a completely realized human being. That's when you just tip your hat and you say, "That's incredible. I don't know how I could ever do something like that."

Charlie (02:19):

Trevor Long is a consummate character actor and he has cobbled together over... the guy's been gritting it out for 25 years. A reputation of someone who can go to a dark place. Trevor has the ability to go to the darker sides, to the uglier sides of who we are as human beings, and that's not easy to do. If you want to have a

real appreciation for his work, I want to give you three things to watch. First watch *Low Winter Sun*. It was an AMC show, came out a few years ago. Mark Strong is the star of the show about a bad cop. He plays this ex-cop who is a drug addict now. His name is Shawn Foster. He's got a number of episodes. It's excellent work, and what's amazing about that is it was his first television work. It was his first time on a set and he's going to talk about what that was like and he was lucky enough to also to be directed by his brother.

Charlie (03:28):

Check out *Seeds*. You can get it on Amazon. It's a dark psychological thriller. He goes to some really nightmarish places in that film, and then of course *Ozark*, which I hope all of you have watched. It's one of the best shows on television right now, an incredible ensemble Laura Linney, Jason Bateman, Julia Garner who plays Trevor's daughter in this series. Season two, Cade Langmore, he comes in like just a bolt of thunder and fucks up everything. He's dangerous. He's dark. He's unpredictable, but yet you also have some empathy for him. You can see that there's humanity there. It's a complex part. It's nuanced and it's just excellent work. So I'm excited to share a conversation. We're going to time about time on *Ozark*. We're going to talk about some very personal searing moments that we both had in grad school, our thoughts about the state of actor training in this country, particularly in the university world. So sit back. I hope you enjoy it. Here's Trevor Long.

Charlie (04:48):

Trevor, thanks for coming on, man.

Trevor Long (04:49):

Yeah, man. Totally appreciate it. I was just telling you a second ago that I dove into your sessions with Maggie Flanigan who was also my teacher, as you know.

Charlie (05:02):

That's digging some memories up for you, I'm sure.

Trevor Long (05:04):

Wow. It just totally made me realize how important she was to me in that moment and stuff I didn't know about her life that just really moved me. The struggle she had coming to New York on her own and then becoming a teacher and how that evolved. It was just beautiful. Like you said so well, she's so tiny and frail but she's a giant in the room. I deeply respected her and wanted her to appreciate my work. I mean, I played hard too, but I really worked hard with the work and I think she got a kick out of it. I was nervous, don't get me wrong, but it was more of a respect than of fear, but yeah, I didn't want to face the wrath of her major calling you out on shit, and she would.

Charlie (06:02):

She'd call you out on your bullshit.

Trevor Long (06:04):

Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

Charlie (06:06):

Her bullshit detector, her sense of truth, it set the bar for me, right?

Trevor Long (06:13):

Absolutely. I bet.

Charlie (06:15):

But she got soft... I mean, I wouldn't say softer. But certainly when she opened up her own studio, she had to adapt a little bit because you can teach in an MFA program in a way you can't teach in a private studio.

Trevor Long (06:25):

Everything's so sensitive now that it's like you can't be rough like that, man. You just can't now.

Charlie (06:31):

The academic university training in the country so far censored.

Trevor Long (06:38):

Yeah.

Charlie (06:39):

The bullshit that those teachers have to go through, what you can say, can't say, students saying, "Ah, I'm not going to do this. This is too offensive."

Trevor Long (06:49):

Yep. So that being said, I wouldn't even consider grad school in this day in age. I mean, it's just, you can't, you're not going to have the freedom to feel safe, to explore very relevant, dark subject matters that are very real. It's too censored, like you said. I can't imagine.

Charlie (07:10):

Yeah. You can't do this scene because it's racially insensitive. You can't deal with this piece of work because it's offends this segment of population, but you want to be an artist.

Trevor Long (07:22):

Yeah. Imagine doing, I don't know, I did To Kill a Mockingbird or Rutgers, very racist character. I don't think they touch that now. I don't think they touch it even though it's a very important piece that is against racism, it shows that the badness of racism, I don't think, even then when we did it there was controversy with a board coming in and saying, "well, what's going on here. We've got to really make sure this is handled right." Now they wouldn't touch it, I doubt.

Charlie (07:54):

And even in the classroom as a student, if you say something, do something that's insensitive. You're in a whole heap of trouble. So you're trying to teach these actors to be open and be free and be truthful and then they're in trouble.

Trevor Long (08:10):

I mean, remember this stuff, we could yell, "you fucking cunt. You fucking this." When you're coming alive because it's getting your stuff out as an actor and open and the emotions and the, you have to be watching, even monitoring yourself.

Charlie (08:32):

Listen, in first year I did my first scene, was a scene called Advice to the Players. It's between a theater director and a lawyer and it's all about the part-time.

Trevor Long (08:43):

Yeah. I remember that scene. It's a touch one.

Charlie (08:45):

So, Larry Ballard, he was my, he was a black guy, not one of my best friends, he was my partner and Lloyd Williamson wasn't doing hands-on work. Okay.

Trevor Long (08:57):

I remember that episode Lloyd was in.

Charlie (08:59):

Right?

Trevor Long (09:00):

Yes.

Charlie (09:00):

So it's getting raw, right? So he's doing hands-on, he's adjusting us, we're getting off script, we are improvising and he's in our ears like this little devil angel on the sides. He's talking us through it and we're alive and now we're improvising, we're saying what we want and he just kept saying to me, "say what you want. Say what you want." And I was getting enraged and he was pissed and I called him the N word. I said, "you're just nothing but a stupid..."

Trevor Long (09:23):

Yep.

Charlie (09:24):

Right in class and I couldn't believe I said it. It hit Larry like a ton of bricks. Ripped his fucking heart out. Ripped my heart out. I was a wreck. I mean I was a wreck all day. I could not believe that came out of me.

Trevor Long (09:36):

Yeah.

Charlie (09:36):

It was one of the most important moments of my training.

Trevor Long (09:40):

And it's an environment where that stuff was understood on both sides and it's not a personal thing, it's not, but anything approaching that now you'd be out of school. You'd be done.

Charlie (09:53):

I mean, we sat on the floor and cried and everybody was crying, but you know what I'll never, I'll forget Maggie said, "so you want to be an actor?" And I held onto that as I was grieving, because I couldn't believe, I mean, my God, what else am I capable of?

Trevor Long (10:09):

Yeah. It reminds me of a similar experience when Lloyd came in. I was preparing an activity that just really persona, obviously, and brutal and my emotions were, I knew that I was going to be working soon in a class and my emotions were going and Lloyd was up there with two other actors doing his whisper in the ear, and putting his hand, like having them bend over and putting the hand on the back and they, the woman started to cry and they stopped for a minute to discuss it. This is the open, and Charlie, this the weirdest thing. Out of body experience.

Trevor Long (10:58):

I start screaming at Lloyd. "You're a fucking con artist! You fuck, fuck!" And I'm screaming, "you fake fucking bullshit Straussburging, fucking..." and Lloyd just kind of just looked at me and I saw red. I just clicked and I just saw red and I got out of my chair and I went to go hit him and then I somehow regrouped and ran out of the room and I'm in the hallway and I'm like, "I almost attacked a teacher. I verbally attacked a teacher. I'm out of, this is my first two months of grad school, I'm gone, I'm done, I'm out of school." And so I sit out there for, that shit felt like two hours. I'm like, "I'm done."

Trevor Long (11:44):

And I come back in. I'm like, "I got to go back in." Nobody came to get me. I go back in and he's still on the stage talking and I look at Maggie and she's just like, nothing, just sort of poker face, but not

angry, not anything and I sit back down and I, Lloyd's talking a little bit and he was like whatever and he said, "we can talk about this. That was a very truthful reaction." And I said, "I really apologize, Lloyd." I started apologizing and I started again. I said, "but you're a fucking bullshit..." and I just started screaming. Everybody starts crying. The people on stage are crying. Other students are crying and I'm like, "I've got to calm down." And again the thought was, "I'm done. I'm out of here." And I looked over at Maggie and she just went (nods her head). She was like, "that's it." She just gave me this smile.

Charlie (12:47):

What triggered that? Where did that come from?

Trevor Long (12:50):

I don't know. What he was doing with the actors I felt was manipulative for whatever reason. You know I love Lloyd. Lloyd's Lloyd and he's great but what he was doing, I thought, was just sort of dishonest or in that moment I thought it was manipulative, I thought it was that he could get anybody to open, break down by what he was doing, I was doing the whole, there must have been stuff, I was feeling raw from the work and I don't know. I don't know. I literally saw red.

Charlie (13:26):

See, but then you know after that, that that's a safe space with the way you should've handled it.

Trevor Long (13:31):

And then Lloyd laughed, kind of. It's cool with Maggie and I went up to Maggie afterward and I said, "I'm really sorry, Maggie, for this. I don't know what happened." She's like, "no need. Don't apologize. Don't apologize." That was it. That's all she said. And people came up to me afterward and they're like, "thank you." Or, "I felt the same way." So it was very powerful.

Charlie (13:59):

You'd be kicked out for it. You'd be kicked out today.

Trevor Long (14:00):

Ohhh yeah. You'd be done. You'd be done.

Charlie (14:06):

We're putting in a generation of young artists that are too, I don't know, politically correct. It's like we're sacrificing truth for political correctness.

Trevor Long (14:17):

Yeah, and the problem with it, too, is Charlie, what I've heard from another mentor teacher of mine who has taught millennial ages, they use it as a defense. Like, "I'm better. I don't need this. This is bullshit. I'm not going to do that." And so they have this entitlement and protection with this. Sort of like, "this is not appropriate." And so they use it as a protection for themselves to not have to go there and not have to do this. That's a problem.

Charlie (14:50):

I agree.

Trevor Long (14:56):

And yet, our world is different and it's a fine line and it's...I think it's a shame.

Charlie (15:06):

You've got to be able to go anywhere. You know what I mean?

Trevor Long (15:08):

Yeah, you do. And you have to know you're there for that. You're not, when you're in that space, you're not Charlie Charlie, like I am shooting the shit. I mean, it's you but it's your space of being an artist. Your space of anything flies.

Charlie (15:24):

Yeah. Was Seeds the darkest thing you've done?

Trevor Long (15:26):

I don't know if it was the darkest but for me it was the most challenging. I don't think it was...that's a good questions. I mean, it's a tough subject matter to begin with but then it came out around the Me Too stuff and people just didn't want to go near it. Even one of the major festivals said that it was a really great film

but we can't touch this. Can't touch it? What's going on politically? We need to go on to other stuff. So, that was tough.

Trevor Long (16:01):

I know we made a great film and people have really strong reactions to it. Both good and bad. But I think for me as an actor I didn't want to do it. I think I mentioned that before. I didn't want to do it. I thought it was too challenging. I didn't think I could pull it off. It was the first time I was on screen the entire time. It's like, I just didn't see it. My brother kept, he was like, "I wrote it for you. I created the character for you. I think you'd be great. I think you can do it. You can do it." And I would've been happy not doing it and playing a different role if he could get a name or whatever but it worked out and that was, I was in a dark, interesting, as an actor, I've gotten better at not carrying stuff. I don't need to go in a corner so much anymore and prepare emotionally because I do all that on my own. When I'm on set I can be light like we are now and I could do something pretty heavy.

Trevor Long (17:00):

That one I was in a very weird place pretty much 24/7.

Charlie (17:08):

Did you go all Daniel Day Lewis on that one?

Trevor Long (17:10):

It's not that I went Daniel Day Lewis is that I had a very creepy vibe. Even on set and I wanted to be as secluded as possible offset and onset. I didn't really, obviously I was nice. I didn't ignore people. I'm just saying for that role, more than any role I've done, I was, I had to keep it churning because it wasn't a lot on paper and it was such a unspoken character, and internal character that it had to be all in the eyes and the face that I had to keep the gears moving. So it was exhausting to a degree but I felt for that role, I don't know why, I just felt like I needed to keep the intensity onset and offset.

Charlie (18:06):

I know I read that somewhere you said that you couldn't necessarily relate to his behavior but you could relate to his pain. Because actors always are trying to find their way into something.

Trevor Long (18:17):

Yeah. Well, obviously we've all got pain. Obviously, I don't care how wealthy you are, how your background is, poor, rich, we've all got a ton of pain and even if it comes to our imagination and again, I know our training is a lot with imagination, which I love because I don't have any, as me Trevor, painful things. Yeah, they're there, but the wellspring of imagination, the what-if. What if someone murdered my son? What if someone came and took my son and raped him or murdered him? I mean just right there I could feel it. Just the image of it. The talking about it. That is so much more powerful than, "oh, my dog died back in 2003. I remember those feelings." It doesn't work. It's whole nother way of working. The imagination is limitless and it's routed in something in you. If you routed in reality, you're not going outside yourself, you're rooting in something that's very meaningful to me. What would happen if this happened to my wife or to my child and you can just go anywhere with it.

Charlie (19:27):

Yeah. Because you've got to think essentially on this. I mean, that's really what it's about. The essence of what is this emotionally? How do I understand it?

Trevor Long (19:36):

Yes. And what I find too, Charlie, it's interesting. It's like I said, as I think, I'm still discovering it and playing with it but as I get more experienced and older and a it's a lot less tiring. I mean you put in a lot of the rigorous work but I feel like if the work is deep enough on your own, it's in your cells, it's in your, your energy starts to shift and change. You don't have to hold on to it so much when your on the set. In fact, I find it almost better, even if it's heavy material to just be very open and relaxed and if conversations come up you talk and not to distract. You know what I mean?

Charlie (20:21):

Yeah.

Trevor Long (20:22):

You're pretty loose rather than in the corner because I think it flows better if you've done the work. You've got to do the work but then you can just really trust. I don't need to keep grappling with it. It's there.

Charlie (20:40):

Did you know that you were a character actor from early on, or did that kind of reveal itself?

Trevor Long (20:46):

I didn't, well I knew Rutgers, because they pretty much told me. It's funny, my first role at Rutgers was a very leading man, romantic. It was good. He was a very sweet guy and then it all changed from there but it went well and then I just started gravitating my activities and my emotional life was always very fiery and dark. My imagination goes more dark and that lended to my temperament and so I think I began to realize through the work and through the roles I was cast in, someone who's going to play a very different, on edge, kind of...it's funny, it's like with the people that I meet now with Ozark, they're like, "I cannot believe it's you." Because I'm nothing like that in my energy, my openness is very different, he's a very heavy energy so it's very different and so people are like, "I don't get it." I don't really get it.

Charlie (21:53):

But you read it. You read the script and you go, "oh, I can do this. This is in my wheelhouse."

Trevor Long (22:01):

Yeah. It's funny, my friend Brett Leonard is a writer in TV and lab because of everything that's going on and how TV's changing, how casting is changing now, and he said, "I don't feel I have..." I mean we all do, to a degree, "but I'm not a racist person." And my friend's like, "you're going to have a ton of racist roles ahead of you. With the environment we're in they're going to be calling for

stuff like that." It's just so interesting because you fell like that's just not me but you somehow find...

Charlie (22:42):

But yet it is, right? Because it's in you, right?

Trevor Long (22:45):

Yeah. The anger. You're inner life is a very strange world that doesn't necessarily match your...you as Charlie everyday, me as Trevor every day. It could be very, very different.

Charlie (23:02):

Well, I know you mentioned Brett. He's the one who really opened the door for the Winter Sound, right?

Trevor Long (23:07):

Yeah, and my stage work. I did most of my lab work was through Leonard's play. I went to London and did one of his plays and did the same play in New York and again, there's a guy who's, he's a complex guy in real life but he's a fun, loving guy and he writes very dark, heavy, beautiful, heartbroken stuff. It's like, where's that come from? He had a good childhood and good parents and it's just very strange. So, yeah. Brett did open up Winter, another great character-actor role. Broken, homeless.

Charlie (23:49):

Yeah, I heard you would bring your own bag of dirt. You were homeless. You're a drug addict. Like, "don't wash my clothes. Don't wash my fucking clothes."

Trevor Long (23:59):

I'd rub the dirt in my nails and I'd drink. One guy made a joke of it when he did an interview after the show. He's like, "Yeah, this one dude, man I saw this guy in the lobby talking about what's this homeless guy doing in the hotel. Not that I, he had his own bag of dirt and he was like, "what the fuck?" I guess that was just one of those, I wanted my first big TV thing. I better pull it all out.

Charlie (24:26):

What was it like with Mark Strong? That guy's a pro, man.

Trevor Long (24:30):

He's, it's..I have another, we've become pretty close and the sweetest, again, the guy who plays a lot of villains. Sweetest guy. He's like 6 3. He's just got this beautiful physique and face and voice and talent to back it up and the first day on set our big, sort of one of our bigger scenes, it was my first big scene to shoot, my first television scene to ever shoot and Brett was on set because it was his episode that he wrote and I would do in the first, it was the worst feeling, Charlie, we would do it in the first five takes and I feel it, it's just dead, it sucks and I could feel it. I'm like, "oh, fuck this is rough."

Trevor Long (25:22):

Every take we do it's getting work and I'm like, I can see Brett's face like, "you fucked me on this. I fought for you." I could just see it in his eyes. "What the fuck are you doing?" Mark Strong says nothing. Totally open, just cool and he's like the head of the show and I'm like sucking up the...I'm like this is...and I went up to Brett, we stopped for a minute, I went up to Brett I'm like, "Dude." He's like, "It's not working. Whatever you're doing it's not working." And I was like, "I know dude, let's..." my whole body shut down and I was like, "Oh my God."

Charlie (25:57):

And this was your first major TV series?

Trevor Long (26:01):

First TV ever.

Charlie (26:02):

Oh, man.

Trevor Long (26:02):

I'd never been on television.

Charlie (26:03):

You're making me sweat just thinking about being in that space.

Trevor Long (26:06):

And it's like this big scene and I'm running around, I'm drunk and he tackles me and I can feel my body just go ohhhh, "You suck!" And I knew it and then somewhere around the sixth take or

whatever, it just clicked. I don't know what happened. I just sort of fucking threw it away. I don't know what and it started to, I could feel it. It was starting to, it was happening between me and Mark, we were doing shit. Stuff started happening and then by the time we finished the scene, we got it and it was great and Mark Strong came up and I was talking to someone, maybe Brett, and I feel these arms come behind me and gave me this fucking hug like, dude, it's all right, man.

Charlie (26:55):

And that's scary because that's pressure, man. What did you learn? Was that like a seminal moment there for you? Did you learn something from that?

Trevor Long (27:05):

Yeah, I don't know what happened. I remember feeling it, the shift. I just stopped thinking. I was like, "just fucking do it. You're prepared as much as you can be." That's another thing. I had like two days to prepare because it's so fast. It was like, phone call, "you're doing it, you're on a plane in two days, you're going to start shooting the next day." I was like, "what? What? What?" And so it was so very quick but I had an idea, the character, but I had virtually no time and then the scene after the one I just told you about was like one of my biggest scenes. It was a huge physical scene and it went great but Brett told me afterward, and I learned I'd gotten a little better with it but he was like, "you were great." He's like, "your continuity was fucking all over the place." He was like, "they had to really work to cut around that shit." Because he was like, "you had no concept of continuity. You were just, but it was all right because we got it."

Charlie (28:05):

You don't think of that when you're first on a set.

Trevor Long (28:07):

No. I ran into that problem in Ozark lot because they're smoking a lot and so every time you, you've got to know what line, you're going to take a drag, and then say the line. You can't say the line

then hit it and then you've got to kind of know it and kind of map it out a little bit so you don't run into a lot of trouble.

Charlie (28:26):

I mean, do you like improvise that a little bit in the master shot and then like, "okay, I got to remember that?"

Trevor Long (28:31):

Yeah. I don't map it all out. You improvise it. What feels right and you try to get as close as you can to it and then forget about it and don't do too much of it because if you're doing left hand, right hand, take a drink, then you're getting into trouble. You did too much stuff. I mean, yeah, you just kind of learn by doing it. I still fuck it up. The key is, fuck the continuity if it's going to fuck with your performance. Get the performance, try to keep it in the back of your mind but don't let that override...

Charlie (29:04):

Let them worry about it in the editing room.

Trevor Long (29:05):

Yeah, yeah, yeah. They'll get it. They'll get it and they'll catch you if it's way off they're going to go, if it's the script supervisor, they'll come over and go, you took a drag off your cigarette and half of you said, they're on it. They're on it. So they're really going to come up if you're way out of the waters. They're going to come over and say, "just make sure you take the puff before you say the line rather than after."

Charlie (29:28):

Did you know, that when you got Ozark, that it was going to do what it did?

Trevor Long (29:33):

No, I'm still waiting for it to do what it should. I'm still waiting for it do what it...

Charlie (29:43):

I'm ready for one on the call sheet now, come on! Let's go!

Trevor Long (29:46):

Come on! I'm ready for a job.

Charlie (29:47):

Yeah. But did you know it was good?

Trevor Long (29:51):

Yeah, yeah. So, after second season, if I was good in it, I didn't really know how good it was going to be, if I did what I felt it could be. I was like, "Yeah, this is going to be great. I'm in the entire season. It's a great character with a relationship with one of the leads." I knew going into the second season, its already very popular. Interesting, in the first season, there was no indication he was going to continue in the second season even when I finished the first season. Now I've got a sense that he might to a degree because I left it with that opening of we need to talk, but I didn't think I'd be in it more than an episode or two in the second. I thought they would just kind of kill me or leave me in prison. I had no idea I'd get out and then at the premiere, or no a screening of it, no it was the premiere of season one in New York, I was invited and I'm sitting in the audience.

Trevor Long (30:57):

Jason Bateman's announcing it before it comes on and he mentions my name and I'm like barely in it, I was like, "whoa." He's like, "and our cast member Trevor Long." And I was like, "yeah, I'm only in it for like five minutes total. All three scenes." So, I was like, "oh, that's kind of cool." And then later that night he came up to me and Bateman, I was talking to him, he goes, "get ready for season two. You've got your work cut out for you." And I was like, "holy shit!" So then I knew. I was like, "oh, shit. That's awesome." I didn't know how much even then and then I got a call a month before shooting. I still figured maybe five eps maybe six eps and then I got a call from the show runner a month prior to shooting. He's like, "I got good news, bad news. Bad news, you die. Good news, you're in the whole season." I was like, "fuck it I'll take it." Man, I was like, "great."

Charlie (31:51):

I mean man, Julia Garner is just, she's really carving out a career. At her age, unbelievable.

Trevor Long (31:59):

She's a star.

Charlie (32:00):

Body of work already. I didn't know she was also a character actor. I was watching her in Waco.

Trevor Long (32:07):

Totally. Did you see her first thing, Martha Marcy May Marlene?

Charlie (32:11):

Yes.

Trevor Long (32:12):

Amazing.

Charlie (32:13):

Yes.

Trevor Long (32:14):

Totally character actress. Very different in everything.

Charlie (32:17):

She's so good. I mean, you guys had, I mean, a lot of chemistry there.

Trevor Long (32:21):

Yeah. We really did. We got lucky with that. That was the key too.

We had a lot of fun off screen. Me, Julia and Charlie, who plays Wyatt. We would all hang out and get in trouble. Just be stupid

trouble, like funny. We'd all as a little trio just go out and do our thing on our off nights and we felt very relaxed with each other.

We weren't like, "see you later." And then don't see each other until we show up. Which is normal, but we all hung out and it was

very comfortable and very crazy and fun and so it does translate. I absolutely agree.

Charlie (33:00):

And the love, the violence, I mean it's...you're not molesting her, but it's there like...

Trevor Long (33:07):

No, no, no.

Charlie (33:10):

But there's like, it's there. So how did you find that? Did you push, it's not in the page.

Trevor Long (33:15):

No, well, it's implied and so I had talks with the showrunner before shooting season two and I'm like, "I just need to know, was there any kind of sexual abuse?" We do imply it. She was nine years old when you went into prison and that would be a whole different thing. And he's like, "no, it's just that she's like the surrogate wife. There's an attraction." It was a deep attraction that I'm probably not even aware of on certain, and it does probably overlap into sexual and I look at her in a weird way as a wife figure and I think part of the vibe of the sexual attraction is him wanting to control her, and doing things that are just a little inappropriate, a little weird.

Charlie (34:08):

And its violent too, though. That scene in the, is it the scene in the funeral home?

Trevor Long (34:17):

Yeah. That was a tough one to shoot, but Julia's so great and she was comfortable with anything and we could talk her through.

Charlie (34:25):

He had a stunt coordinator there?

Trevor Long (34:29):

Oh, yeah.

Charlie (34:29):

Did they have an intimacy coach on set?

Trevor Long (34:32):

Didn't exist.

Charlie (34:32):

Didn't exist. Yeah.

Trevor Long (34:33):

Yeah, that didn't exist yet, so. Yeah, that was one of my favorite scenes even though it was one of the harder ones just to get it right, to get it real. She's in a very vulnerable place. I'm in a very fucked up, starting to lose it, place. And that's the thing, I think a lot of my inner work on that role, I did do a lot of fantasy work on a relationship with her, sexually. Just so that it would bleed through. I would do that in my imagination. Imagine being with her character. Her and Cade together.

Charlie (35:19):

Well, you have that scene when you get into bed. She climbs over you or you climb over her?

Trevor Long (35:26):

So, that was an improv. So, in the script, that wasn't written. It was written as just laying next to her and kind of like we're talking and I'm going to pass out and we chopped the scene and Jason Bateman was directing, and I'm like, "can I just try something?" He said, "yeah, yeah." He was totally open to anything. He said, "yeah, do it. Let's try it." And we'd already gotten it and so I'm like, let's just, and so we do it and then I come in the room and I get on the edge of the bed and I'm like I'm just going to get over her like I'm going to mount her and then...he's not really conscious of it but he's on top like he's going to maybe...and then he rolls and they kept it. It was a total improv. I'm like, "they're never going to use that." I was like, "it's too dark."

Charlie (36:12):

See man, it's all about ideas. That was an idea you had, right?

Trevor Long (36:15):

Yeah. And it wasn't something I planned. It was in the moment. It was after shooting the scene. I'm like, "Oh, what if I, what if I just..." And that was great about Jason, he opened a door to that freedom. A lot of directors won't. He opened the door to that freedom of trying ideas and speaking up and saying, "what if I try this?" He did it with me and I was like, "let's try this line on the fly. Just say this instead."

Charlie (36:46):

I guess it helps that he's an actor, right?

Trevor Long (36:49):

Yeah. Totally. Because he gets it. He's been doing it for so long. I know he prepares but it's like, but I've seen him, but he's juggling so many hats, directing, producing, starring. I know there are certain scenes that he's barely looked at and certainly doesn't know the lines fully and I've seen him studying the script like ten minutes before, memorizing the lines because he hasn't had time and he's like literally like a cold read, going through and learning the lines and he'd be like, "what's that line again?" He's been doing it for so fucking long.

Charlie (37:36):

Yeah. So, how important is listening?

Trevor Long (37:45):

What did you say? (Laughter) Its everything. And again, it's not just listening with your head, it's listening viscerally, sensorially, with your entire being, with your entire body. It's like feeling the tingle in your left leg when someone says something or it's being alert to your emotions. It's an inward/outward listening constantly. You're checking in inward. 50 percent in, 50 percent out and it's like this dance. So, it's not just all out, it's a very alive flowing thing that's like you're checking in, you're checking out, you're checking in, so I think it's everything. I think it's the aliveness of the acting.

Charlie (38:30):

It is.

Trevor Long (38:31):

I'm not a great, you should ask my wife, I'm a terrible listener. I can turn it off pretty good. When it's a focus thing and the listening happens it's an organic thing. I think it's, especially for film and TV, it's really, really the touchstone, the listening, the responding. I like the word, it's interesting, I like the word responding better than reacting at this stage in my work because you may not react but you're going to respond even if it's very subtle. There's going

to be a response and if you're listening, the response will read, even if you're sitting there doing nothing, the response will be alive. You're not necessarily going to react, but you're going to have a response.

Charlie (39:29):

Do you miss theater?

Trevor Long (39:33):

I do, but I was just somebody who was just a wreck the entire day before going on stage. I was always nervous. I always worried about my voice because I do catch it a lot in here. I was always, I was always just so preoccupied with eight o'clock, eight o'clock and your whole day is just colored by that feeling whereas film, I'm much more playful and relaxed prior. I'm just like we are now and I'm like, "all right, we've got to go shoot this big scene." Because there's so much time and there's so much, it's very normal, you can do it again, you know you've done the work.

Charlie (40:14):

I know you did *In Arabia We'd Be Kings*, back in the day. What was it like working with Phil?

Trevor Long (40:19):

It was a turning point in my work as an actor. Phil, again, is someone who ruthlessly calls you on your bullshit and he had a thing to go after me. He had certain people he's hard on, and I was playing the charming, getting by, doing my heroin addict, charming, and he just fucking stopped me in a rough way.

Charlie (40:57):

In rehearsal? Yeah.

Trevor Long (40:58):

Oh, yeah. He was rough, but he was like that because he truly wanted the artist to be beyond great. He had that standard for himself. He was really, really passionate. He was very good at speaking to an actor and saying, "this is what it's like. What you're doing, you're play acting. This is what this moment is." One time I was the first opening scene in a bar and I'm waiting to score some

heroin and I'm trying to con people a little bit, trying to get 20 bucks here and I'm just like sitting in the bar and it's pouring rain out, which is barely mentioned in the stage, right, but it's raining and it's like one in the morning and I'm doing the scene and Phil, in the middle of rehearsal is like, "what the fuck are you doing? What are you doing?"

Trevor Long (41:55):

And then he went into this, "this is what this is. You are a fucking guy whos career might have been an actor." Because the guy, he talks about acting. "You might have had your looks and you might have had some potential, but it started going downhill. You started partying. You fucked yourself and now you're living on the fucking streets and you're in this fucking bar and if you don't get that fucking 20 dollars, you walk out of here and you fucking kill yourself. That's your fucking life right now. You're fucking dead."

Charlie (42:27):

Fuck.

Trevor Long (42:27):

And I was just like, "whoa." It just changed it. I was like, "I was just playing a dude who was like, 'hey, give me some money.'" And it was just this whole shift and I knew this stuff from the training.

Charlie (42:41):

That's very much like a Maggie moment. Something Maggie would do.

Trevor Long (42:45):

It is. Very much. Yeah, it is. He was such a genius.

Charlie (42:50):

The champion of the actor. The champion of art.

Trevor Long (42:53):

Just a genius and you can't use that word lightly but he was one of a kind. He's in the leagues of Daniel Day Lewis and to be directed by him, as painful as it was, it was something I'll never forget and he shaped that performance. Obviously it took me to

do the work, it took me to take it seriously, but he pushed me into one of the better performances I've given.

Charlie (43:29):

Well, my favorite daydreamers. I hope you enjoyed that talk. Thank you for sticking around, keeping that phone in your pocket. Please subscribe to the show, follow it wherever you get your podcasts. Leave a review on iTunes. I really appreciate that. You can go to my website <https://www.creatingbehaviorpodcast.com> for all of the links to all of the information and content to this show. You can leave me a message. I use SpeakPipe. Press a button. Leave me a comment. Let me know what you're thinking. Your thoughts, your opinions. You can follow me on Instagram @creatingbehavior. You can follow my studio @maggieflaniganstudio. Lawrence Trailer, thank you for the music my man. Okay you guys, come on now. Stay resilient. Play full out with yourself when you can. Operate outside of your comfort zone, and don't ever settle for your second best. My name is Charlie Sandlan. Peace.