

## Episode #028 (Transcript)

Charlie Sandlan (00:01):

(music). Well, my friends, today we are going to go transatlantic, to talk to one of the more versatile artists that I have had the privilege to speak to. The British actress, Jade Asha. This is a woman who has been carving out a successful acting career in London for well over a decade and a half. She's a fellow podcaster, she's a director, a producer, a writer. She created her own production company, London Independent Pictures.

Charlie Sandlan (00:31):

She's a fight performer. She is versatile in over 10 different weapon systems. She's a voiceover artist. She works in commercials, animation, gaming. And now, she can add published author to her list of accomplishments. She has a book that just came out called the Actorpreneur where she has really shared everything that she's learned in her professional life. So we're going to talk about that. So let's find out what she's learned. Put the phone back in your pocket. Creating behavior starts now. (music).

Charlie Sandlan (01:34):

Well, hello, my fellow daydreamers. Happy post Thanksgiving. We are now in the holiday season. So hopefully, we can manage the next six weeks with as much holiday cheer as possible. Let's kiss goodbye this motherfucking monstrosity of 2020. We went Christmas tree shopping on Friday. It was balls hot. 67 degrees. Why can't it be cold? Why can't there be snow on the ground? No.

Charlie Sandlan (02:06):

So we go get a tree. We bring it back. And we brought back ticks. How about that? Wally had about three or four ticks on him. I had ticks coming off my sweater. There was spiders in the tree. So it was a mess. But we got the tree up, it looks fantastic. And I got Christmas carols going all day, every day. They drive Trish crazy.

But listen, day after Thanksgiving, it's holiday classics on Spotify as far as I'm concerned. I love it. So we got some stockings up. We did our thing. And we'll be as festive as we can.

Charlie Sandlan (02:45):

Bernie died. Yup. Yup. We had about 10 really wonderful days with Bernie. We fed him like a king. He probably ate himself to death for all I know. But he had a good run, little booger. So Bernie is no more. But I can't wait to find out what Trish is going to bring into this house next, or what's going to fly into our apartment. I never know here. It's crazy what comes to us.

Charlie Sandlan (03:11):

So Bernie is gone. The tree is up. And now, let's talk about Jade, shall we? I had a great conversation with her, it's really ... I just always find it impressive when you look at an actor who comes out of school, like most of you that are listening to me have come out of a training program of some sort, and you're pursuing your career. I think it's those actors that can wear a lot of different hats, that can find passion, and creativity in other outlets in the business that are going to keep you going.

Charlie Sandlan (03:54):

And like I said in the open, this is the woman who ... I mean, she's done so much. She's versatile, and she's sustaining a career. And I'm excited to talk about her new book, which you can get on Amazon right now, Actorpreneur, where she's...she's paying it forward really, that's what she's doing, she's paying it forward. "This is everything that I've learned, these are all the tips, and all of the things that I think you should think about."

Charlie Sandlan (04:20):

And yes, she's an English, London based actress, but listen, the business is the business. There are universal things that apply to everybody. So I think all of you are going to learn something. I know I did. So I started off our conversation by asking her how she became so interested, and fascinated with different aspects of this business. And this is how she responded.

Jade Asha (04:51):

Well, first of all, I'm just greedy, so I want to do everything. I want to do it all. Why should you just settle for one thing? No, it's, I don't like to say no to things. I think that's the main thing. I think when I see an opportunity, and I think, "Oh, well, that could lead to something." Then I would just do it. So I started in high school, that's when I first found my love for acting.

Jade Asha (05:15):

And when I was in Norfolk, which is about three hours out of London, there wasn't too many opportunities for acting up there. So at 17, I relocated to London. I didn't really know what I was doing. My dad lived there, so I could live with him, and so I had that base, which was nice. But it was ... I just got head shots done, and started applying to work online. And then I found out about drama schools, and I really wanted to go, I did a few courses.

Jade Asha (05:44):

But I never got into the big, famous RADA, LAMDA, all of that. And that's really where I wanted my career path to go. And I found it really difficult, because I auditioned for maybe over three or four years, and I kept on getting shortlisted. And I never got in. And then I thought, well, at that age, I'd spent so much money on the auditions alone, that I felt like I'd invested so much into this career, and I loved it so much. And then I don't know what it was, I got a bee in my bonnet, and I was like, "Right, I'm going to make this happen somehow."

Jade Asha (06:15):

And then I started doing stage combat, because I thought, "Well, if you don't have that initial showcase into the industry ..." Which is why people want to do the big drama schools for a start. If you don't have that, then I felt like if I had a special skill, I could probably skip a few people in the line, because there's less of you. And so I started doing stage combat. And from there, me and

the group I was in, they started writing their own work, and they just inspired me.

Jade Asha (06:43):

And the first time I made a short film ... We literally were meant to do a few scenes of fight using our fight skills. And we ended up hiring a mini van, and driving 10 hours to Scotland, and camping on a derelict castle, on the edge of the sea. It was insane. But we had the best time. And we made something. And that's when I got the bug, and was like, "Right, let's get creating."

Jade Asha (07:07):

And then that was where I started, about 21 years old. And that's when I started writing my own work. And I got addicted to it, because I became in control of what kind of roles I could play, I could create work for my friends. It made sense. It was difficult, but it was really the beginning for me. And the footage I got from that, got my agents, and then it snowballed from there.

Charlie Sandlan (07:31):

It's much easier for actors now, to create their own work. It's certainly not what it was when I was coming out of school. I mean, the ability to be able to write, to produce, to put something out there for people to see.

Jade Asha (07:44):

Well, first of all, it obviously gave you power, it gave you confidence, you could stay busy, which I think for actors, just staying busy ... And this is why I do stay so busy, is because it's so good for your mind, and your mindset. And you get those endorphins every time you do something great. And if you can be in control, and keep that going, then you're happier. And if you're happy in the career, you last longer.

Charlie Sandlan (08:10):

Was there a struggle from going from, "I had these ideas." To, "You know what, I'm actually going to sit down, and I'm going to create something here."?

Jade Asha (08:18):

The other thing that really helped with was understanding how the other side of production worked. That, again, helped me so much from knowing how you cast something, what you look for when you audition people. I think that has to be the most important thing I learnt, was seeing what was good, and what wasn't good when someone walked into the audition room. And it's just that walk. Honestly, that walk. People walk in.

Jade Asha (08:46):

I never really thought about it before, but when you walk into an audition room, you just have to walk. You don't have to walk in and make everyone your best friends, you don't have to show off, you don't have to do any of those things. You just come in the audition room and get on with the job. Your focus needs to be on the job.

Jade Asha (09:02):

And so that's what making my own work did for me. I learnt a lot about auditioning, which has helped my career. But if you are looking to get into production, I mean, that is hard in itself as well. I mean, as much as there's a lot of out of work actors, there's a lot of out of work filmmakers as well. And they're in the same boat. And I always say this to people, it's not the lack of ideas and the work itself, it's the lack of funding that is the problem with our industry. If there was more funding, more people of every sector would be working.

Charlie Sandlan (09:37):

I'm wondering what you learned about how to audition, or how to just treat the audition room from being on the other side.

Jade Asha (09:47):

I learned that being on the other side, you get nervous as well. It can be quite scary having to run a room of auditions, because if you're the casting director, you probably got the director in the room, or the client, depending on what it is.

Jade Asha (10:01):

So if you change that energy, and you walk into a room thinking, "I want to make everyone in here feel comfortable." Instead of you going in there, going, "Oh, I feel really nervous." Because you'll make them feel uncomfortable as well. So if you flip it round and you think, "I'm going to go in there, and I'm going to help them out. I'm just going to walk in, and stand there, and wait for instructions." Don't over talk, just wait. Just find out what they want from you, and listen. That is really useful for any actor really.

Charlie Sandlan (10:32):

I just think it's very difficult. We all have this human need to be liked.

Jade Asha (10:37):

Yeah.

Charlie Sandlan (10:38):

And to want approval. Please like me. And all of a sudden, you become an actor that's like a beggar with your hand out saying, "Please like me. I hope I'm what you want." As opposed to, "I'm an artist. This is my take on the material, this is what you'll get if you hire me. And if not, best of luck."

Jade Asha (11:00):

Yeah. Because that's the thing, you're right for a part, or you're not. You can't walk in a room and persuade people you are. Because that persuasion is going to ... I don't know, there's some weird energy that comes out. And that's what it is, it's a strange energy where when someone is just confident, and they almost don't care, they just walk in, and that energy is again, really attractive to people, it's interesting.

Jade Asha (11:25):

One of the first things that I actually learnt at drama school, my art teacher, he got us to step over a rope. He put a rope on the floor, and he goes, "Step over the rope." And so one by one, we'd step over this rope. And he'd be like, "Nope. Nope. Off you go." And then you get more desperate, and step, and jump, and do all

these crazy things to be like, "Hey, look, I stepped over the rope."  
And he was like, "No."

Jade Asha (11:46):

And then someone just, one of the older actresses, she just walked up and stepped over it. He was like, "Yeah." And then we all started chilling out, and calmed down, and we just started stepping. And anyway, when we'd all done it, still couldn't really figure out the difference. But it turned out that it was ... He could see we were asking for approval just by stepping. And he was like, "I just need to see you not asking, and not wanting to be liked, and just do it. Don't think about being you, just do the action, not the wanting." And I think, yeah, that was a really important lesson for me.

Charlie Sandlan (12:25):

Not trying to perform it. Just do it.

Jade Asha (12:28):

Yeah.

Charlie Sandlan (12:28):

Just do the thing, simply and easily. That's a great exercise actually, and a mind fuck I would think.

Jade Asha (12:34):

Oh, yeah. We were like, "What? Is it step? Skip? I don't know?" It was a big lesson that stayed with me.

Charlie Sandlan (12:42):

I know you've talked about, on your own podcast, your thoughts about training as an actor. I'm just curious what training did for you. And what do you say to actors who think, "Oh, I don't need to train, I just be myself."? Which is what I think a lot of actors think.

Jade Asha (12:58):

Acting is just a very technical thing. And maybe you can get away with a few jobs of just being yourself. But the competition is so high that you really have to be the best that you possibly can be. I didn't have loads and loads of drama training, but I had some. I

feel like I didn't have enough. But still, I think, over the years, I ended up with about six or seven years worth of acting training.

Jade Asha (13:24):

You need a safe space to be able to make mistakes, make a fool out of yourself, push the boundary so far, and yeah, learn, and just exercise what you're doing. So I don't think anyone needs to necessarily go to a big three year intense thing. But definitely drama training. Just to find out what your ... Everyone has got their little ticks, and things that they do. So if you can have someone work with you on that, then it can only benefit you.

Jade Asha (13:59):

I remember when I was filming a scene from *The Intent*, which is probably one of the most fun films that I've done, lots of guns, and fights, and rappers, and stuff like that. But I had this big scene in a nightclub. And yeah, it was with the lead actor, who's a bit of a name in the UK. And yeah, we have this fallout scene before me and this character, the two characters get together.

Jade Asha (14:25):

But it was 100 extras on set, the crew everywhere. And I just kept on thinking back to when I was 17 years old, and did my first extra job. I've done extra work at the beginning of my career. And that was another way of learning about how film sets work. And I found that really useful if you haven't been on a film set. If you're a serious actor, don't be an extra. Never be an extra. But if you've never been on a film set, you should definitely at least do one day, but then never do it again.

Charlie Sandlan (14:57):

I agree. I agree. Once you've done it, and you really want to be an actor, you know, "I will never fucking do this again, ever."

Jade Asha (15:05):

It's torture. It's the worst. And you can't help this thought in your head going, "What if the lead actress gets ill, and they just go, 'Who's an actor in here?' And I just go, 'Me.'" And then suddenly



I'm the next big thing." That's never going to happen. But that's everyone's fantasy.

Charlie Sandlan (15:22):

It is. It's every extra's dream.

Jade Asha (15:27):

I know. I know. And I don't think it's ever happened, or ever will. But yeah, so I don't know, I just had a moment, and I was like, "Ah, I'm the actress." And it was just weird. And I thought, "Boy, does anyone know that I should actually be doing the extra work?" I don't know. It was just a really weird ... But it was nice. And I was like, "Oh, God, it was all worth it." It just makes you think that all the ... Everything you go through is worth it when you have moments like that as well.

Charlie Sandlan (15:58):

I mean, have you ever had a stretch in your career where you've thought, "This isn't worth it. I should do something else. I'm ready to say fuck it."? Or have you always been that compass point due North? "I think this is my life."

Jade Asha (16:15):

I think every other day I have a moment of going, "Let me just look at normal jobs for a second." And then I'm like, "No, don't be silly." No, I've definitely had times where it's been difficult, where just maybe in my mid 20s, I feel like that's a hard time for most people anyway, because you're in this weird in between where you're an adult, but you haven't quite got the experience. I feel like you make a lot of mistakes. For me anyway.

Jade Asha (16:41):

And I just found my 20s in general were just this weird period where I felt like I need to be really successful, and I should have been that successful yesterday. And being an artist, you watch people in the corporate world progress a lot faster than you, even though you're probably doing triple the amount of work half the time.

Jade Asha (17:03):

And so yeah, I definitely have moments. But I don't know, I just ... I know there was nothing ... I knew there was nothing else I could do really. I love it that much. You have to. You have to be able to put up with everything else. All the rejection and stuff. And that's just part of it now. I get surprised if I get a job. That's how my mind now is. It's like, "Oh, I actually got it." But yeah, no, I do love it. And I've learnt to love the bits that I even don't like.

Charlie Sandlan (17:33):

I think that's part of having longevity, is the ability to not have the business crush you, because it crushes a lot of people. You've got to find a way to wrap your mind around it, to think of it as a game that you're going to play, because it's brutal, the business side.

Jade Asha (17:51):

Yeah, definitely. And I was quite surprised actually, because I was quite lucky, yesterday, I signed with a new management. And every so often you think, "Oh, I nearly know it all now. I nearly know it all." And she was like, "How many actors do you think there are in London?" And I was like, "Oh, I think there's about 25,000." And she said, "No. UK Equity alone, there are 450,000 actors registered."

Charlie Sandlan (18:16):

Jesus. And of those 400,000, how many actually make a living? It's the same here with Actors Equity, SAG-AFTRA. I think we have maybe 4% of all of the actors in the unions actually make a living as an actor. So the odds are stacked against you.

Jade Asha (18:36):

You've just got to come up with a good side job that you like, and is ... Because I don't believe that you should be a struggling actor, and not go on holidays, and not be able to go out for dinners, and not enjoying your life. I think enjoying your life is what's going to help you as an actor in a way, because you can use those experiences, you can ... You need to be doing things.

Charlie Sandlan (19:00):

I agree. I don't think you can bring more to your art than what resides inside of you. And you have to continually feed yourself, you have to acquire life experience. And I think actors become so obsessed about the audition, and the next job, and, "I don't have an agent." And all of these things, that you're not going to make it. You will end up doing something else. You have to have a full life. You've got to have hobbies, you've got to have things that inspire you.

Charlie Sandlan (19:27):

And that's why I really admire your whole career here, because you've got a book coming out. It came out on November 4th actually. And it's called Actorpreneur, which is a nice combination of two words there. A Working Actor's Guide. So now you can add the writer of books to your broad resume.

Jade Asha (19:50):

It started last year actually, because an actress I knew actually had a book coming out. And I was quite excited to read it. And I thought, "Oh, I'm going to find out ..." I don't know, I had it in my head exactly what this book was going to be. I thought, "I'm going to find out how she approaches auditions, I'm going to find out her advice on the industry, how she manages agents, what she does on her down time." Blah, blah, blah. I wanted to know all these things about her.

Jade Asha (20:14):

Because I feel like a lot of acting books are written by older actors that aren't actually in it anymore. Or I know there are a lot more acting books now, but there weren't any particularly for the UK either. And I wanted to focus on social media, because I feel like that's a massive part, and technology, because that's such a big part of our industry these days, even self tapes, and everything like that.

Jade Asha (20:38):

And then when I read the book, it just wasn't that. And then I was like, "Oh, well, let me find that book." So I started looking for it,

and it wasn't anywhere. So I thought, "Well, you know what, I've always thought that I've had all these ideas, and maybe a quite different approach to the industry." And I've got to the point now that I'll be in audition rooms, and there'll be actors that have never auditioned for anything before, and they'll be asking me questions. Or I'll be on a job, and yeah, I'll be talking to the extras, or other people in the cast, and they'll be like, "Oh, how do I do this?" And blah, blah, blah. Or even I just get messages on LinkedIn, social media, whatever.

Jade Asha (21:16):

And I thought, "You know what, there's clearly a need for this information, and it's something that I wish had been available to me. So why am I going to write ..." You think, "Oh, if I'm going to write a book, maybe I should be older, and wiser." And I was like, "Well, why wait? Let me just write what I know now." because it's relevant now, this industry is changing so fast that I just wanted to get everything down on paper how I do things now, and how I think it'll benefit other people. And it's useful for actors who are starting out in the industry, it's useful for actors who have been doing it a while, and maybe just need a refresh, or anyone who's just busy and is just interested the way that someone else works.

Jade Asha (22:04):

So January, I just started writing it. And then lockdown happened, and it helped me finish it. So I turned it around in 10 months. The hardest bit was actually going, "Right, I'm going to sit down and write." Because as soon as I start writing, it's all there in my mind already. I knew all the chapters, I knew all the information that I wanted to be put in there. I wanted to cover things like the Me Too Movement, performing intimate scenes, because when I had to do things like that, there's nothing out there, apart from porn sites, to tell you how to do these things.

Jade Asha (22:39):

So yeah, or even when I went to my first premier, I had no idea what to do, or there's all these weird etiquettes that I looked it up

online, and I was like, "Wow, there's no one that's actually shared this information. And I'm sure I'm not the only person out there that's going to want it." So I thought, "Well, let me just write it."

Charlie Sandlan (22:59):

Well, I was looking at your media kit, and you broke down what the book is about. And one thing that jumped out to me, that I thought would be interesting to talk about is, how do you approach intimate scenes? I think it's ... I know, certainly in this country, it's been a very hot topic, it's been fraught with misogyny, and inappropriate behavior, and no one really looking out for the actors, particularly actresses, in terms of how they're treated, and handled, and what's safe, and not safe.

Charlie Sandlan (23:31):

And now I don't know if it's the same in London, but the use of intimacy coordinators, people that are actually on set now, intimacy coaches that really work not just with the actors, but the director, and the entire set, to make a piece of intimate acting safe and believable.

Jade Asha (23:52):

Yeah.

Charlie Sandlan (23:52):

What's been your experience with intimate scenes?

Jade Asha (23:55):

I've done a few over the years, and I have very different experiences. The first essentially sex scenes that I did was all fully clothed, and with a really good friend of mine. So it was fine. But even so, just being that close to someone felt uncomfortable, even though, again, they were very good friends of mine. You should absolutely never be asked to prove you can do nudity or sexual scenes of any kind in auditions, which I actually didn't entirely know myself. I knew there's certain levels, but I thought, "Tarantino comes knocking and he's like, 'Get naked in a scene.' I'd be like, 'Well, I mean, it's Tarantino.'" But actually, yeah, you shouldn't.

Jade Asha (24:39):

And yeah, I've had some strange situations where even a director, last minute on set, he's been like, "Okay, well, we're going to do a blowjob scene now." I was like, "What? That's not in the script." And he was like, "Oh, oh, but you don't actually have to do anything, it's just your head bobbing around." And I was like, "Well, no. No. You can't just ..." And I've had a few situations. I actually know a girl that's ended up doing a nude scene on the set because she was asked there and then in that moment, and she didn't know what to do, she said yes.

Jade Asha (25:10):

So it's just, I really, really felt like it was important to cover that, because they're not in all of the traditional film books, it's not really been covered before, I don't think. So hopefully, I don't know if they're teaching that more in schools more. I guess so, maybe.

Charlie Sandlan (25:27):

Oh, I think absolutely. Certainly the #MeToo Movement here in America, and how it pertains to our business, there's just no tolerance for it, whether it's on a professional set, whether ... And even for me as a teacher, and how I handle an intimate scene, let's say, which I actually try to avoid. But even intimate meaning, okay, you're slow dancing together. And where can I put my hand, or not put my hand? What kind of physical touch is okay, and not okay? And setting boundaries so that you both know, "Okay, these are the ground rules, and now we can play within the ground rules." Even when I was working, I mean, no one thought about that. I mean, you said, "No." How did he respond?

Jade Asha (26:13):

I said no. I nearly started crying, because even being asked, I felt violated by being asked, and that I was put in that position. So I was really quite worked up. I was abroad at the time as well, so it wasn't like I had anyone to talk to. So I was like, "Ah." I had just asked him for a word outside. I pulled myself together, had a chat.

And he went, "Okay, okay." And then he ... I think he then realized.

Charlie Sandlan (26:40):

It's hard, because you're worried about getting fired, or, "What's this going to do to my career? And I don't want to be a problem." And so women end up saying yes to shit that they should absolutely not be saying yes to.

Jade Asha (26:52):

It's difficult when people pull these things up last minute on set. Yeah, I think everything like that should be discussed upfront. And even if you find something that you're not comfortable with, make sure you discuss it thoroughly as well, I think, for any actors.

Charlie Sandlan (27:07):

I think things need to be talked through so that there are boundaries set. I know that this is a safe space, this is what's going to happen. And now I'm free to be creative, and be vulnerable, and be open. It's important. I know you have a part in your book about firing an agent, which I find fascinating, because most actors, all they can think about is getting one, and they can't even wrap their mind around the fact that at some point, you're going to have to fire one. So what's that like to fire an agent? And what would be a way to do that? And why would you want to?

Jade Asha (27:45):

I think the thing is, when you've been in it for a while, things can get a bit stale. So if you're not going up for as many auditions, or ... Actually, agents is probably one of my biggest subjects that I cover, because yeah, it seems to be this massive thing in an actor's life. But it's funny, once you get to the point, and you are busy enough to get an agent, then you're looking for the next one.

Jade Asha (28:12):

Because they never seem to bring you enough work. And that's a really important thing that I wanted to let actors know, that number one, agents are your admin really, they're there to deal with the contracts, and the money side of things. Auditions are the last

thing that I expect from an agent, because that way, I know that the responsibility is on me to keep on networking, keep on making my own work rather than sitting back and waiting, because that's not good for anyone. And then you're just putting pressure on someone who's probably trying their best.

Jade Asha (28:46):

But when it comes to leaving agents, if you've maybe been with someone for three or four years, you could be at the point where you started out with loads of auditions, three years later, you're just getting a few commercial auditions every couple of months. And you need a little bit of a refresh. So it doesn't have to be dramatic. In fact, it should never be dramatic. You should completely always be professional.

Jade Asha (29:09):

I know I say it very dramatically in the book, I'm like, "Dumping your agent." But actually, you have to be really nice. Some agents can put ... They put a lot of time, and work into you, and it can be sad, because they can help you in your career, and then inevitably, you're going to move onto someone who's more connected eventually. So it doesn't hurt to be nice, because just say, "Hello, I've really enjoyed working with you. But I feel like its time to move on. I want to take my career in a different direction." And stay in touch.

Jade Asha (29:43):

There's one agent that I've actually been with three times, because I'll leave, go with someone exclusive, and then I'll be like, "Oh, actually, I'm not as busy as I want to be. I need to change up." And then in my in between stage, if I haven't found someone yet, I'll be like, "Oh, do you want to ... We work well together." So I jump around. But I'm yet to find my forever home. I think that's what it's down to, I'm trying to find the right person who works at my speed as well. And I think I've just signed with someone. So fingers crossed, they seem quite on it. But yeah, so never burn bridges really.



Charlie Sandlan (30:20):

And most actors, they put so much pressure on getting an agent. And then they think, "Once I have an agent, I don't have to really worry about getting work now. Now auditions are going to come to me, and I just have to be able to answer the phone." And it doesn't work that way. I think, if an actor can think of themselves as the CEO of their company, and build a team underneath them, of people that they actually like. And you're paying them. You don't work for them, they work for you. And it's hard for actors, sometimes, to understand that.

Jade Asha (30:52):

And it's that stereotype of the actor, "Oh, call my agent, darling." Kind of thing. It's not the reality at all. They are just an extension of your business. It's such hard work to get an agent. I think that's where the trouble comes. It's so hard ... It can be, when you haven't got an agent, and you haven't got show reels, you haven't been in shows, it's very much like that chicken and egg situation. So that's essentially your break really, trying to get to the point where you can get represented.

Jade Asha (31:22):

And once you are, I guess actors want to go, "Oh, let's relax and enjoy life now. I'm just going to get all these auditions." But actually, that's not how it works. And that's what I'm trying to explain to people, that that is, okay, great, you've got a team member, but yeah, you're the CEO, you've got to keep it moving, because no one is ever going to represent you as well as you do, no one is going to work as hard as you do.

Jade Asha (31:46):

And I think one of my ... I did manage to get a super agent, one of the top 10 agents in the UK at one point. And I did have a moment of thinking, "Oh, this is great. I get to sit back and relax." And I got three auditions in a year, when I was used to getting two or three a week. It's weird, the whole world of agents is not quite what you expect it to be when you get into it. And so many times, I meet up

with actor friends, and I'm like, "How's it going." And they're like, "Oh, my agents not great." And everyone seems to have a bad agent.

Charlie Sandlan (32:25):

Yeah, "I'm not auditioning, they're not returning my calls. I've gone on three auditions in the last 10 months."

Jade Asha (32:32):

Yeah, that's every ... But then actually, over time, I did find that I did ... I don't know, maybe it was me, maybe it was my head shots were better, or I was better, I was building the relationships with the casting directors, so I started getting seen more. So maybe it was the agent wasn't putting me forward for much, or maybe it's the next agent, I'm a better product to sell.

Jade Asha (32:55):

And I think I am now at the stage where I feel like I have got a good show reel and stuff, and I have got the credits. So I am getting seen more than I've ever done before. But now I actually, I spend a lot of time emailing casting directors myself. And I'm trying to build those relationships myself. So I feel like, no matter what agent I go to now, I'm hoping that the casting director who will just follow me there, it's not going to matter who I'm represented by anymore.

Charlie Sandlan (33:23):

You just mentioned about your head shots, and how you thought maybe your head shots improved. And I know you talk about that in your book, about photo shoots. And that's one thing that actors ... It's what you got to do. You got to get head shots. And you're going to get a lot of head shots over the course of your career. And they're expensive. And trying to find a photographer that is going to get the best out of you. What have you learned about getting head shots as an actor?

Jade Asha (33:46):

You don't have to spend loads of money, because I've had head shots that are 500 pounds, and again, yeah, got a couple of

auditions in a year. And then I've paid 150 quid, and been working constantly, got seen for the biggest projects going. It's all about con ... Yeah, it's just that thing of confidence really, and being able to work the camera. And that does take years, and years of practice. Rather than sitting there and being scared, you have to treat it like it's a film camera, and you have to have your mind active. And that's what's going to really make your photos interesting. Yeah, I have a few tips on what I do, and what works for me. But it's taken a really long time, and a lot of practice to get used to.

Charlie Sandlan (34:31):

Yeah, I mean, my students, they come out of school, and they've just spent a lot of money. And then they figure out, "Oh, fuck, I have to drop between head shots, and makeup, and maybe getting some outfits that show me well ..." It adds up. It adds up. And it's the same here, head shots can run anywhere from \$500 to 1,500. Do you know what I mean? Yeah, it's expensive.

Charlie Sandlan (34:59):

And then you get these head shots, and then you ... Maybe six months goes by. Let's say you get a manager, and agent, and all of a sudden, they're saying, "You need new head shots." And you're like, "Fuck, I just got these." I'm interested in finding out how starting a production company was for you. You created London Independent Pictures. And that's a ... I mean, that's a whole nother side of the business to try to learn. What was that like?

Jade Asha (35:25):

Yeah, it was interesting. I was really lucky that the first production that I did on my own, I had a really talented director, Laura [Hipponin 00:35:34]. She directed it for me. And she essentially co-produced. If I hadn't have had her, I think I would have been a bit lost. She really helped me out. So that was nice.

Jade Asha (35:46):

But it wasn't so hard to actually set a company up, because you can literally just create a website, and be like, "Hi, I'm a company now." But it was more the ... It is more the getting a piece of entertainment from beginning to the end, that is ... Creating a company is not that hard. It's the actual you being in charge of an idea from the beginning. You're bringing in all the creatives, you're managing them, you're making sure there's budget, you're stretching that through the whole thing.

Jade Asha (36:20):

You're then having the perseverance to push through and be with it the whole time. It's a little bit addictive. I think it's like having a baby. You hate the process, you're like, "Oh, I'm never going to do this again." And then a few months later, you're like, "Oh, I want another one. I want to do another one."

Jade Asha (36:36):

So yeah, I do, when I'm definitely in it, it is stressful. But I am getting better at it. There's a lot of multitasking going on, and forward thinking, and getting other people who are better than you to do things. So I know some people ... I've seen so many productions that never see the light of day. And sometimes, when I see some footage that my company has made, or I've produced, I will cry. I'll spend the whole night crying. Then I'll wake up the next day, and then I'll re-watch it, and be like, "Oh, it wasn't so bad." But I know a lot of people will watch their footage, they will cry, and they will never look at it again. And yeah, it's a long process.

Jade Asha (37:21):

And a film will change, or a production will change so much from when you have the raw footage to when you add on ... When you cut a scene together well, it completely changes it, and you add the music, and you change things. So yeah, you just have to have the perseverance to see it through, even if it's not what you dreamed it will be. Because at the end of the day, if you create something, even if it's not the best thing in the world, you still get

a lot of kudos for just creating something. Because half the time, even when I make something and it's good, I'll be like, "Do you want to watch a short film?" They're like, "Yeah, yeah, yeah, I'll watch it later." People care more that you've done it than they do to actually watch it.

Charlie Sandlan (38:03):

I think it's because people ... It validates you as a doer. And I think people like that. Like, "Okay, you did something. You did the thing. You didn't just talk about it." And so okay maybe, "I'll watch it later. But okay, I'm impressed that you've done it."

Jade Asha (38:22):

Yeah. And I think that's the problem with this industry, there are too many talkers. And you have to be a doer. And that's what's going to set you apart. Don't think about it, just write your list of, "All right, I'm going to accomplish this, accomplish that." And just find a way of doing it. Otherwise, you'll never do it

Charlie Sandlan (38:42):

Yeah, the one who writes is the writer. You got to do it. But that's hard, because you've got to battle through your insecurities, and the resistance, and the fear that, "I have nothing of value to offer." It's all of these creative insecurities I think any artists battle with.

Jade Asha (39:02):

Yeah. Well, I think you need to finish something. I think that's the main thing, just get in the habit of finishing something. Because I could be saying I'm writing a book, and I could just never do it. And then you'll always be writing a book. But I just want to get it out there, and then move on to the next thing. And so yeah, you just have to finish things, because that's when things start to happen in other ways.

Charlie Sandlan (39:22):

Well, you just mentioned good habits. And it reminds me of a Twyla Tharp book, where she talks about the habit of creativity. And I'm wondering what are some of your habits that you've built

into your life, that you go, "You know what, this works for me. Doing this really helps."

Jade Asha (39:43):

If there's something that needs to be done, I will write a list, and I will do it immediately. I do the thing that I don't want to do the most first. So if I don't want to do it, I'll do that first, because then everything else is easy. So yeah, that's quite an important thing. So I always write goals, and targets. So I'll do my every ... It's really geeky, but I do my three month goals, what I want to achieve in three months. Then I do weekly. So this week is, I've set myself clear targets of when I need my Ebook to be finished, how many chapters of my audiobook I need to do, because I need to get it done. And then yeah, I do the same thing, I break them down into daily targets. I go, "Okay, I need to do this weekly. So I've got to do this, this, and this daily to get to there." So that would be my biggest advice, write things down and tick them off.

Charlie Sandlan (40:42):

So where can all of us get your book, Actorpreneur?

Jade Asha (40:48):

It will be on Amazon actually. Yes, on Amazon. So I have a website, <https://www.actorpreneurbook.com> and from there, you'll find all the links to everything. But yeah, it will be available on Amazon, Ebook, paperback, which will deliver internationally. And in the process of getting the audiobook done as well.

Charlie Sandlan (41:12):

That's great. So I'm wondering ... We'll wrap up our time here. But I'm curious what you'd like to say to the 21 year old girl that came out of school, about living a creative life. What have you learned now that you'd want to pass on to your younger self?

Jade Asha (41:29):

Find something else that you love doing, that can support you. And find a second thing to support you through your career, a job or something, whatever it is, a skill that you can pickup and do freelance. I would just say do that, because then you can be

comfortable, you'll always have something to fall back on in the quiet times. And then you can use what you earn to invest into your own work, because we do have to, unfortunately, invest here and there. So I would say that's the most important thing.

Jade Asha (42:07):

And just put yourself out there. Take as many opportunities as possible, because you never know what's going to lead onto another thing. That one audition that you decide not to go to, that could have led onto five films, or ... Really, there's been so many situations where I'm like, "Oh, I nearly didn't go, or do this thing. And I'm glad I did, because it led onto so many amazing opportunities." So don't let any opportunity ever pass you by.

Charlie Sandlan (42:40):

(music). Well, my fellow daydreamers, thank you for sticking around, and keeping that phone in your pocket. You can find Jade's book on Amazon. You can also go to <https://www.actorpreneurbook.com>. You can also follow her podcast on iTunes, Acting With Asha. You can follow this show wherever you get your podcasts. Show me a little love, post me a review on iTunes. That would be a great Christmas present. You can go to my website, <https://www.creatingbehaviorpodcast.com> for the links and content to all of these shows. You can leave me a message on the leave a comment page. Just press that SpeakPipe button. You can follow me on Instagram @creatingbehavior @maggieflaniganstudio. Lawrence Trailer, thank you for the music, my friend. Stay resilient. play full out with yourself when you can. Find some holiday cheer. And don't ever settle for your second best. My name is Charlie Sandlan. Peace. (music).