



Thoughts from Acting School Alums and Working Actors

By Backstage Staff | Posted April 7, 2011, 11:16 a.m.

On surviving emotionally

"Actors have to cope with rejection, growing older, being broke, deciding if or when to quit, jealousy, and anxiety. I call it the head game. They don't teach you how to handle that. Someone should write a book or teach a class for actors about emotional survival."

—Sarah Glendening

On recognizing your type

"Technique and scene study classes give you a lot of leeway to play any character, but there are only particular roles for which you are suited in reality. Not to mention, way too many actors are delusional about the roles they can play. Not everyone can be a romantic lead."

—Nate Barlow

On doing it yourself

"Starting your own company and producing your own plays in a major market is a viable alternative to sitting in a theater lobby all day, waiting for someone to give you a shot. In school, they don't teach you how to sell ads for a program, to get tax-exempt status so you can solicit donations, how to negotiate a residency contract

with a theater, or how to make a press release—all the stuff you end up doing if you want to do it yourself."

—Aaron Kirkpatrick

On being yourself

"Whether you're in the audition room or working a networking party, I have found that people respond best when I stop trying to be a sort of character in the room and just be the best me that I am at that moment. We are all unique, and the more we embrace who we really are, the more everyone else will embrace us as well, and those roles that we were born to play will be quicker to gravitate towards us. As Oscar Wilde said, 'Be yourself; everyone else is already taken.' "

—Malerie Grady