

The Editor's Cut - Episode 068 - "Post in Black"

Sarah Taylor:

This episode was generously sponsored by PurpleDOG LightVAULT.

Tatiana Johnson:

I think it's interesting the past two years with the pandemic in the bit of social unrest here in America, we have seen a lot more DEI initiatives, where doors have been opened. I think we're just hoping that the opening of those doors are genuine and authentic and not just for show, but we want that to be in the long term, 10 years from now, 25 years from now. What does your set look like? What does your edit bay look like? It's our hope that some of these moves that are being made by some studios and productions are genuine and live long.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

We would like to point out that the lands on which we have created this podcast and that many of you may be listening to us from are part of ancestral territory. It is important for all of us to deeply acknowledge that we are on ancestral territory that has long served as a place where indigenous peoples have lived, met, and interacted. We honour, respect, and recognize these nations that have never relinquished their rights or sovereign authority over the lands and waters on which we stand today. We encourage you to reflect on the history of the land, the rich culture, the many contributions, and the concerns that impact indigenous individuals and communities. Land acknowledgements are the start to a deeper action.

Sarah Taylor:

Today I sit down with the wonderful team behind the podcast Post in Black, Daniel Hunter Jr., Daniel Hunter, David Hunter Jr., and Tatiana Johnson share the journey of how Post In Black started as a blog and is now in its third podcast season, showcasing post-production professionals in the Black community. We talk about their hopes for the future of Post in Black and the industry at large.

[show open]

Sarah Taylor:

Thank you so much for joining us on The Editor's Cut today. I'm very excited to chat all things editing and post-production and podcasting. How fun is this? So welcome, Daniel, David, and Tatiana.

Tatiana Johnson:

Thanks for having us.

David Hunter:

Thank you for having.

Sarah Taylor:

I am going to steal a note from your playbook and we're going to do a little icebreaker. So this icebreaker is, what show on Netflix or any streaming service did you binge watch embarrassingly fast? We'll start with David.

David Hunter:

Ooh, I definitely binge watched House of Cards when it first came out. Daniel and I were born in DC and I saw that and then, obviously, there was a lot that happened with the show with a certain individual, but I remember when the character Frank turned to look at the camera and started talking directly to me, it felt like. I was like, "What is this? What going on?" and I just could not wait to watch another episode. When they paused in between seasons, Frank and his wife Robin Wright, such an amazing portrayal. I love that show and so I watched that ASAP. There was no waiting. Anytime a season dropped, I was on it.

Sarah Taylor:

And wasn't that one of the first originals? I feel like that was one of the first original streamers.

David Hunter:

House of Cards is what made Netflix. I mean, it really popped. And then Orange is the New Black obviously was right along with it, but House of Cards really popped it and it turned everything on to where we see Netflix now.

Sarah Taylor:

Amazing. Okay, we'll go with Tatiana.

Tatiana Johnson:

So yeah, recently for me, it was Ozark, the final season. I probably watched five episodes in the day, just took a Sunday and was just like, "I have to watch it. I have to know what happened." So yeah, it was Ozark for me recently.

Sarah Taylor:

Love it. Daniel.

Daniel Hunter:

For me, I would say The Queen's Gambit.

Sarah Taylor:

Oh, so good.

Daniel Hunter:

Yeah, I just flew through that. It was incredible.

Sarah Taylor:

Oh, I love it. Okay, now we'll get to the real questions that I've already shared with you so we're not testing you on the spot, but I'd love to learn a little bit about each of you, where you're from, and how you ended up being part of the podcast team of Post In Black. Let's give Daniel a go first because I feel like he might have been the catalyst, maybe.

Daniel Hunter:

Yeah. Yeah. I went to undergrad at Berklee College of Music and that's where my introduction to post-production began. And it continued after college in LA, where I interned at a post-production facility called Danetracks, which was founded by a sound designer, Dane Davis, who worked on the Matrix trilogy, won Academy Award for the first one, actually got to hold his Oscar as an intern, which is amazing. Early on clearly saw a lack of diversity in the industry, and that was the inspiration and motivation for starting Post In Black. Originally it was just a blog and over time, it's grown into a podcast, and just wanting to give folks in the industry of colour an opportunity to tell their stories and also to inform Black people who may not know of post-production and the opportunities that are there, that it's a career path for them, too.

Sarah Taylor:

Yeah. Amazing. Okay, and Tatiana, and what's your story?

Tatiana Johnson:

So yeah, I did my undergrad at Hampton University in Virginia, where I met Dave. After I graduated, I moved straight out to LA and David reached out to me and said, "Hey, my brother's out there," so I got a chance to meet Daniel while I was out there and I think probably a couple months after that or maybe the next year, Dave moved out. And he's such a people person so he connected us all to a bunch of other Hamptonians that were out there. And I think at one point, there was 10 of us living in the same complex. We were all creatives, filmmakers, directors, editors, kinda working in the field, so we were able to collaborate and work on each other's projects and really encourage each other during that time.

And while I was out there, my 9 to 5 was working at a talent agency. So I was working in the music department doing music bookings and tourings for various artists all over the country, so that was really exciting for me, but on the side also doing a little bit of talent management and a little producing, so had my hands in a bunch of stuff. That was an exciting time, I think, for all of us as collaborators out there and decided to move back to North Carolina and got married and decided to take a "stable job," that took me out of the industry a little bit. But unfortunately or fortunately for me, I went through a divorce and after that, just really seeking more creative things to pour into my soul. And then Dave pitched Made For More to me and Daniel around that time and the concept of building this company that would create content that outlived us and doing content that was more purposeful, so I was really excited about that and the opportunity to breathe new life into Post In Black, which originated as a blog. So just really excited in what we've been able to do in just two and a half years, some of the strides that we've been able to do, and also the things that are on the horizon for us, so excited about the journey.

Sarah Taylor:

Amazing. And David, the voice and the face of Post In Black podcast.

David Hunter:

Yeah. Now Daniel and Tati are so chill, so humble, but they're real. I'm using slang when I say that they're real hitters and what I mean by that is they are the ones, Tatiana is the one that makes Post In Black go. So Daniel started it and founded it, but none of this happens without Tati. Tati runs all the stuff behind the scenes, coordinates getting all the interviews scheduled, gets Daniel and I on track for what we need to follow up on, make sure we're responding to emails, sending us voice notes, so I'm going to give Tatiana a little bit more credit. And she said a little entertainment industry, like a little market? She worked for WME, so that's one of the top five out here. And Daniel worked at Sony, so I'm not going to let them downplay themselves. They are some real, real talented people.

But Daniel and I were born in Washington DC and we grew up in the suburbs in Northern Virginia and we lived in Maryland as well. I moved to LA after going to Hampton and I was working in DC doing improv shows, all of that, but I wanted to pursue acting, primarily in LA. When I got here, I was really focused on doing that and Daniel was so diligent. We were living together, but he was working in post and doing things and he was telling me, he is like, "Man, there's nobody like me. I'm 21, 22 and I don't see anybody like me," so he just started emailing people and I didn't know what he was doing, but he was like, "I'm going to Warner Brothers." And I was like, "What?" He was like, "Yeah." And we used to collect the passes that he used to keep from going on set, but I didn't know he was meeting Terilyn Shropshire, he was working with Dane Davis.

I didn't know all these things were happening until I started going with him to some of these lots. And then he started making this blog, talking about he wanted to interview people in post. So again, I'm primarily focused on acting and I'm doing all these things, but I'm going with him. Skipping ahead, Daniel helped me out so much because I got sick, really sick, and almost lost my life a little bit. I was really down. It was a really bad experience and then Daniel ended up moving when I was getting my health back. Now during that time I really thought about, "Man, my brother was doing all this stuff with Post In Black," and I wasn't really focused on that. I was focused on trying to get my career going, but what's this about? And I looked at some of the names of the people that he had already interviewed in the blog and I said, "No, man, we got to restart this."

So Made For More, our production company, came out of me being sick and almost losing my life to say, "I'm made for more than just being an actor," because you don't know how long you have to live. So while you're here, let's make every day count. So every day may not be perfect, but every day is a blessing. And so Post In Black, I said, "Let's relaunch it and let's relaunch it maybe as a podcast." So Daniel, he did all that work initially by himself and his words to me were like, "Well, fine, if you want to do it. I'm not going to do it by myself."

So we got Tati on and we talked for maybe about four or five months before we actually did anything, but we started interviewing people in February, 2019 or 2018, I believe. It's really taken off since then and it's been a lot of fun. And I think that's the joy, that's the goal for a lot of people. You want to work in entertainment, you want to work and do what you love, you want to have fun, and you want to do it with people that you love, and so I think I've been blessed that Daniel started this and now to see where we are now, we're getting to meet so many great people like yourself, so that's the gist. I've been in LA now 15 years and I look forward to another great 15 years from now, too.

Sarah Taylor:

I love that you also, as brothers, came together, you have a team of people that you can rely on, and what you're creating is amazing. I love it. It's so great. And I think our listeners of The Editor's Cut totally obviously overlap with Post In Black. We often have some of the same guests too, so it's just exciting to have people spread the word about post-production because we're often left behind the screen. But more so, I think we need more diversity behind the screen and in the edit suite. We're telling stories about all the people. We need to have all different people in the seat that's helping shape the story, makes the most sense. Like, hello!

Daniel Hunter:

Right.

Sarah Taylor:

I'm curious, what have you learned through this process of producing and creating Post In Black?

Daniel Hunter:

I would say the biggest takeaway has been just noticing that people don't know each other, is eye-opening and enlightening. The fact that we're interviewing folks and after the interview, we're just talking about just life in general and they're like, "Oh, I didn't know so and so," or "I had heard about that person but never met them." And it's exciting because I feel like we're, in a way, bringing a lot of people together, not formally, but it's nice to be able to see people learn about their colleagues because it's hard. You're in an edit bay, what, 40, 50 hours a week for weeks at a time. And then when you get a break, you're just trying to probably spend time with your friends and family, catch your breath, and then you're back at it again and so it's hard to get to know other people, so that was surprising and enlightening.

Sarah Taylor:

You'll have to do a Post In Black wrap up season party and all the guests can join in and they can all meet each other. That'd be so fun.

Daniel Hunter:

Exactly. Yeah.

David Hunter:

That's actually in the works. Yeah.

Sarah Taylor:

Yeah. Nice.

David Hunter:

I would say one of the things I think that's been difficult sometimes is just you're doing the work but staying encouraged yourself because sometimes it feels like you're doing a lot, but you don't know if everybody's watching or if people are really... you know. You just don't know what the impact you're making is because it's not always visible. People watch it all the time, but they may not comment. They may not say anything. They may not say, "Oh I'm listening to Spotify." You may not know how many people are sharing it. There's another one and it was a slip of the tongue sometimes when people talk about it, but we're Post In Black, but there's something else called Black In Post and it's not anything against anybody, but you do the work and, "Oh, man, I'm meeting you guys. Man, it's so great to meet Black In Post." And we're like, "No, we're Post In Black." Not to be defeated or competing with anybody because we want to get the word out, that's the goal, but I think sometimes you're just like, "Is what we're doing being received? Is it really making the impact that we think we're making? Is the work that we're doing actually going to pay off in a way where it's what we dreamed of, what we hoped for?" so I think you just got to keep running towards a goal that you can't necessarily see, but you know it's there.

Sarah Taylor:

Yeah, totally. Yeah.

Tatiana Johnson:

Yeah, I agree. I'm so inspired by these stories that I'm hearing, also, when we do get into those realms of being defeated because Daniel and I still have full-time jobs, we're producing on the side, but hearing

how these very successful editors and sound engineers have pivoted midway through their careers and it's just like, "Hey, some of my skills are transferable and this is something that I love." Being outside of the typical cities where this is supposed to happen, hearing the stories about people that have come from the South or the Midwest and decide to make a career change into this industry is very inspiring and it's why we do what we do because some kid in rural America could watch an episode of Post In Black and is like, "Oh, I didn't think I could do that. I thought I could just be an actor or director. I can work in all these other fields and still be involved in entertainment," so that's what drives me and inspires me as I've been producing the shows.

Sarah Taylor:

Yeah, yeah. I find that's the biggest thing, talking to young kids in high school. I've been fortunate enough to do some mentoring with this program called Girls in Film and Television. So for me, really trying to uplift young women to join the industry and to join post and they've no idea that there's so many different positions that we could be in and not really understanding what editing is until I drop a few clips down on the timeline and they're like, "What? You can do that?" And so exposing young people and people who just don't realise that there's options in this world, in this field, and we're here. I'm like, "I'm here. I'm ready. Let's do this. I want to bring you up," so it's exciting to have people like the three of you helping lift groups of people.

Tatiana Johnson:

And also the post community that we've interviewed, they're so welcoming. It's like, "Oh, yeah. Just email us. Hit us up. We'll be welcome to talk to you."

Daniel Hunter:

That makes it easier to do this work, is how welcoming and open people in the community are to speaking with us and to doing these interviews. We couldn't do it without them and they're very gracious with their time and it's amazing.

Sarah Taylor:

Have you, over the years, because it's been years of doing this, has there been an important skill that it seems like everyone has that are in this industry of post-production? What is the one thing that's come up a lot that you've seen over the years?

David Hunter:

I would say outside of the technical skills of editing or working, colouring, all that, it's being self starting, being a self starter. A lot of our team, the people that we interview, are freelance. They work on these shows, but then when the show's over, then you got to get your next one. And you know, as quiet as some of them may seem, you can't be that quiet and actually still work. You actually have to speak up. You actually have to reach out to people. You actually have to know how to talk, and so I think that's the biggest thing in the industry, being able to be your own cheerleader in a way to like, "Hey, I need a job," because they say closed mouths don't get fed. I think that's one of the biggest things I've seen, in terms of networking, connecting, reaching out, asking. They're not afraid to ask questions. They're not afraid to say, "Hey, I don't know how to do this. Hey, what do you guys think?" Being confident enough to put yourself out there, I think, that's one of the biggest keys that I've seen, just in terms of interviewing people and talking to them.

Sarah Taylor:

Yeah. Totally.

Tatiana Johnson:

Yeah, perseverance is a big one. We had the interview with a sound designer who told us point blank. He was in a break room and one of his coworkers was like, "Oh, you'll never get promoted because you don't fit the mold." It's not that you're not talented, but just the way you look. So the fact that he didn't just say, "Okay, well, forget this. I'm going to do something else." He was like, "No, I'm going to get promoted. And matter of fact, I'm going to make my own company." And this guy has a slew of credits now. Shout out to Ken Johnson, just his tenacity and his posture to not be shot down in that moment, because it's so easy to come into these rooms and not see people like you to turn right around and walk out the room, so you got to have some tenacity in you.

Sarah Taylor:

Yeah, totally. I felt that too, as a woman in the industry. That fire is lit in you sometimes and you just keep going. I'm going to do it to spite you!

Daniel Hunter:

Exactly.

Sarah Taylor:

Well, since you've been doing this for a while, have you noticed the industry shifting or changing since you've started?

Daniel Hunter:

I have. So I've seen more and more producers and creators supporting the post-production teams that are helping build and craft these powerful stories. And I'm not going to attribute that to us or any podcasts or any specific group, but I do see that improving and I think the more podcasts, the more exposure that these incredible artists, in my opinion, get, the better it'll get and more recognition and the more exposure to communities that need to know this exists, which is the ultimate goal for us, since we want people who have no idea post-production exists or what it is to learn about it. I think when you start seeing A-list actors and "celebrities" talking about post-production, I think that's when we'll maybe reach a tipping point, where it's like, "Oh, man. This is what we've been dreaming of all this time," is for it to be on the same level as everything else and it should be.

Sarah Taylor:

I remember one year there was an actress that thanked the editor. I was like, "Yes".

Daniel Hunter:

Right. Yeah.

Sarah Taylor:

Because we do make a difference, what happens when they're on screen.

Daniel Hunter:

It's so rare.

Sarah Taylor:

Yeah, it's very rare. Yeah.

David Hunter:

I would definitely say I've seen a change in the industry, too. And I think one of the things that's pretty cool, again, I say this a lot on the podcast, but I came into the industry and I still am primarily an actor in front of the camera, do a lot of voiceovers, but a lot of my friends, they're all actors and they're like, "Hey, what's this Post In Black? What are you doing?" And I talk to them about it and they're like, "Oh, that's cool." And I think bringing awareness, because sometimes regardless of race or whatever, I think you don't do things or you don't try things out of fear. And then as you get older, you don't want to look silly, you don't want to look stupid. You don't try because you might fail.

And I'm the opposite. Daniel and Tati will tell you. Sometimes people will see somebody and they're like, "Man, I haven't talked to them in a year, I can't reach out." And I'm like, "I ain't talked to them a year, I got to hit them," and that's just how my mind goes. And so I really don't think about, "Well, if they don't reach back, whatever," but that's not how a lot of people work in terms of this. So trying post, a lot of people may want to try it and may want to give it a go, "But I don't even know where to start. And then once I start, what if I'm not good right away? What if I ask a question that looks silly or what if I don't how to format things or what if it takes me longer?" It doesn't matter. Just start where you are and you can try. And then that first day we leave it to your next day and next thing you know, it's two weeks and three weeks, but I think we got to just get the conversation going, get people started, and lose that sense of fearing what could happen in a negative light and thinking of the possibilities that could happen in the positive way. It's definitely sparked more conversation.

Sarah Taylor:

Well, and by highlighting the people that you do, I feel like as an editor you're always learning. There's always something new to learn, so we're always unknown in what we're doing. We're just collecting more skills as we go and so that's how it's always going to work. So to have the ability or the want to learn and keep growing, it'll be great.

Tatiana Johnson:

Because I'm not directly in the edit bay, I admire all of you that are, but I think it's interesting the past two years with the pandemic, in the bit of social unrest here in America, we have seen a lot more DEI initiatives, where doors have been opened. And I think we're just hoping that the opening of those doors are genuine and authentic and not just for show. I think a lot of people are jumping on the bandwagon just to say, "Hey, yeah. We support women. We support people of colour. Yeah," but we want that to be in the long term, 10 years from now, 25 years from now. What does your set look like? What does your edit bay look like? And there's nobody that I know that are going to these sets and going to these editing rooms just to make sure it's like, "Oh, how many women do you have? How many people of colour do you have?" Nobody's really checking, so I think it's our hope that some of these moves that are being made by some studios and productions are genuine and live long and not just a brief six-month initiative for one particular project. There's other projects that need to be staffed other than Black Panther, and I'm just putting that out because the trailer just dropped.

But one of our guests was saying they don't want to be pigeonholed as the BET guy, you can only do Black films. And it's like, "No, I can cut some action films." I love seeing Terilyn Shropshire and it's the action films that she's able to do now. That's amazing to me so I just hope that there's more mentorships, more opportunities for women and people of colour as well, as we move forward.

Sarah Taylor:

Well, and you're creating a database. People can't say, "Oh, I just don't know where they are." It's like, "Well, no. They're right here. Here they are."

David Hunter:

Right. Sometimes, and I'm just being real, if I could speak candidly. Sometimes when you're Black, you feel like when you bring up race, you don't want to bring it up because then people are always going to be like, "Oh, you're always bringing up race," but you're just trying to make a point. And the point of the matter is, for a lot of the editors or people that are working behind the scenes when they work on a Black show, what has a predominantly Black cast, and usually that means more than two Black leads. You know what I mean? Oh, that's a Black show. Then it's like, "Oh, that's what they cut," versus somebody else who's just an editor and they work on *The Queen's Gambit* and it's like, "Oh, they do that." You know what I mean? I think there's certain people like Terilyn, who have crossed over where she's just considered an editor, but you got other talented people who are working and they're cutting a lot of things that are really great, they have that unique style to do that, but they can cut other ... It's dialogue. It's storytelling.

There's a lot of stuff that's on TV now that's very diverse. I'm saying back in the day, I sound like I'm old, where TGIF, all these shows, we grew up watching predominantly shows that sometimes didn't have Black people on them. We weren't thinking as a little kid, "Oh, it's like this." It was storytelling, it was captivating. And I think when you just put an editor in that room, give them a chance, give them a shot, that's all you're asking for. You're asking to be considered equal and not considered a quota because we're not stupid. We know when you're filling a data sheet, we know when you're filling or checking a box and I don't want a job that I feel like you're just checking a box on. That's not fun. That doesn't qualify me. That doesn't reward what I've been doing. And I think nobody wants to feel like that. I think that's just what we're trying to highlight and showcase. It's not trying to take anybody else's jobs. It's not trying to move people out the room. It's just saying, "Hey, give a chance, give a shot, give an opportunity." I really think that's the gist of it.

Sarah Taylor:

Yeah, there's more than enough pie to eat, as they say.

David Hunter:

Yeah.

Daniel Hunter:

Yeah.

Tatiana Johnson:

Hell, yeah.

Sarah Taylor:

Obviously, I'm white, as people know but I was always identified as the female editor. There could only be one of me in the room. When I first came up in the industry, which is very rare, there was a team of 10 of us in the studio I worked at, but I was the only woman. And then if another woman came in, I was like, "Mmmmm!" I'm the only one, right? I had to shift internally as well. "Oh, wait. No." And now I'm like, "Everybody, come on. Let's go. Let's create stuff," but it takes a shift on all parts to-

Daniel Hunter:

Yeah.

David Hunter:

Right, a hundred percent.

Sarah Taylor:

... to be not threatened because society is telling us, "Nope, just room for one. We've made that check."

Daniel Hunter:

That's a great point. Yeah.

David Hunter:

That's fine.

Sarah Taylor:

Anyway, so let's talk some hopeful, future stuff. What is your hope for the future of Post In Black?

Daniel Hunter:

I think the vision is to do more things centred around community. COVID happened and that made things difficult, but we definitely want to do more in-real-life events at film festivals. We'd love to do tours of panels at historically Black colleges and universities in the US. We want to go to where the people are. It's great to do things virtually and we have the podcast and we're creating all this content online, but there's something special about being in person in a room with someone who looks like you talking about something you don't know about, but are curious about. You're like, "I don't know what post-production is, but I know it's related to filmmaking and this person worked on Insecure and I loved Insecure, so let me go and check it out." But doing that in someone's neighbourhood is a whole nother level, versus creating a podcast. The podcast is our foundation, it's great, but taking the next step and going to where people actually live, who we're trying to reach, I think, is a bright future for Post In Black and will help us achieve our ultimate goal of getting more people into the industry.

Tatiana Johnson:

And I think in addition to that community piece, a lot of the barriers to entry is financial. So being able to partner with companies and get sponsorships so that we can offer scholarships to students who might be interested in, if not going to film school, taking an editing course, because they're doing this anyway on TikTok. You already have the basics. Let's teach you the system. And just being able to financially assist different communities who might need that support as well, I think, is another goal of ours.

David Hunter:

No, I would agree with both of those points, just continued exposure. I think we've just touched the tip of the iceberg with what we're doing. And like you said, money definitely helps and not for anybody to get rich, but Daniel and Tatiana are both working other jobs and I'm in the industry and I think we've come as far as we can come doing it this way. I think some changes do need to be made so that we can all work together full time in this thing and that happens with partnerships, that happens with grants, that happens with investors. That's what we're at the next phase of right now, looking towards that, just to help facilitate more forward movement with Post In Black and the exposure and connecting us to audiences that are still out there that don't even know about us.

Sarah Taylor:

So exciting. Well, what is your hope for the future of post industry in general?

Tatiana Johnson:

That's a big question.

Daniel Hunter:

Yeah, I think I'd love to see supervising, sound editors, sound designers, mixers, getting more, I'm not sure what the right wording is, but better credits in the films instead of you wait until when the film is over and you see the long scroll of all the people that worked on the film. It's this little small line, their name, because their impact on projects is so great, as great as the producers and the editor and the composer. I would love to see that eventually.

You'll notice in animated films, like Pixar films, they do that. Skywalker Sound is one of the premier post-production sound facilities, probably the premier, I would say. I don't think many people would argue with that. And if you look at all other films, the sound designers get single frame credit. I think one of the best examples of this was Ben Burtt on the film WALL-E, because he actually was the voice of WALL-E. If remember correctly, I think he had to join SAG because he was basically an actor now. But he was the film, as a sound designer and WALL-E was incredible, won a ton of awards. So if Ben Burtt can get credit for WALL-E and him getting that credit didn't hurt the film, it's like, "Oh, why did we take up one second to give the sound designer a frame?"

Sarah Taylor:

It failed. Come on.

Daniel Hunter:

Yeah, it's insane, so I'd love to see that.

Sarah Taylor:

What a good point because I have a sound designer I work with on almost everything. He's the guy that I go to and I get the sound back and I put it to my picture and I don't know. There's something special about watching that with that fresh sound and... oh, changes everything. It's amazing. It makes the show, right? And you add colour on top, but those things make the show. If you watched the picture lock with no colour and unmixed sound, you'd be like, "What crap is this? It's horrible."

Daniel Hunter:

Yeah.

David Hunter:

Yeah.

Tatiana Johnson:

Yeah. No, I agree with that. I think there needs to be more acknowledgement of the post community. And credits for sure, but some of these awards shows can stand to take a couple minutes to acknowledge your sound editors, your music supervisors. They give credit to the editors, but the "little guys" that actually make it happen and whether that's a segment the day before, where they have a full-on, "Okay, this is our post award ceremony," and just so that kid or somebody who's looking to pursue a career in this, they're like, "Well, I do all this work. First of all, I'm not getting paid a lot, but what other recognition do I get besides the small prints at the end of the movie?" It's like, "Oh, well you could be up for this award or this award or whatever," and actually having some competition as you're working, too, so just having that acknowledgement, I think, will be important, moving forward.

Sarah Taylor:

Totally. Yeah.

David Hunter:

I guess just to sum it up, I agree with all of that. I think it's really important, and again, I speak from actor's standpoint, again. A lot of people want to be actors nowadays, and I don't know, I can't read everybody's mind, but sometimes they want to be famous. You know what I mean? I remember going to the movies and wanting to be an actor because of the way the movies make me feel. And I was like, "I want to make people feel like that." And so I could care less about the fame. You're going to be noticed just because of what you do, because of that, but I think if we took more time at the award shows or these places to highlight how important it is for these positions...

I remember specifically, and I forget the name of the studio, but it was a studio down in Santa Monica with Daniel and Tom Hanks had a studio right next to it. And I remember we were in there and Daniel and the team, they were in there cutting or doing some ADR on a film for the Wayans Brothers. And I was watching it and I was like, "Yo, this is crazy," because there were some issues with the dialogue and so the editors, the sound mixers, they were in there actually doing the ADR themselves. And they were like, "Yo, you're a actor. You want to say something?" And they actually let me just get on there and obviously they had to do it themselves, but they just let me see what it was like to dub and do that. And I'm like, "Wow, the actors are important but the team behind them are the ones that make the actors look great," and so it really made it clear to me how important their job is.

And so I know the actors, and I'm speaking as one, we get the credit for it, but if we really highlight how important the team is behind the scenes, really bring more exposure to that and not just oh, cast away, because I'm telling you, no film gets done. All the stuff you film on set is important, the camera, all that, but everything that happens after the fact, that's the magic of putting it together. I didn't even know when I was young growing up that movies are filmed out of sync. I'm reading the whole script and then they're telling me I got to cry from the beginning of the first day. I'm like, "No, that's at the end."

Sarah Taylor:

"I'm not prepared yet!"

David Hunter:

They're like, "No, but the lighting is here. We're going to film at the house this day." And I was like, "What are you talking about?" And so being able to take the first day and make it the last day and put that together, that's the team behind. So I really didn't, just more exposure and really making it clear what these jobs are, because again, it's out of sight out of mind. If you don't know, you're just like, "Oh, okay." But if you make it clear what it is they're doing, it becomes cool, so that's what it is.

I think even for directing, I said this before, I think when Ava DuVernay jumped out there, I think where she really made directing cool for women and Black women or women in general and for Black women just in the last few years because before, I think it was still primarily in acting, but then everybody's like, "Oh, Ava. Yeah, we like Ava," and so that opened the door for a lot of other women directors of colour, too. All it takes is one and then we can keep going.

Sarah Taylor:

Totally. Yeah. Well, leads to my next question of how can other post professionals in the industry help make some of these changes? What can we do to open the doors?

Tatiana Johnson:

Yeah, I was thinking about that question so I was looking at ... Well, I was listening to one of your interviews with, was it Elísabet [Ronaldsdóttir]?

Sarah Taylor:

Yes.

Tatiana Johnson:

I thought it was amazing what she said. She's like, "Basically, we all enter the edit suites with our own bias and with our own prejudices so you got to check yourself once you get in there." It's like, "Okay, why am I making this cut? Is there anything inside of me that's causing me to cut this way or whatever?" I thought that was really interesting that she brought up that point. So I think for any allies or accomplices that want to help more women and people of colour enter, just checking your own bias. Of course, we're never going to get it all right. Even with me, myself as a Black woman in America, you think I'm the bottom of the totem pole, but I'm also able-bodied and I'm of the hearing community so I don't need those types of hospitalities afforded to me, but also being cognizant that other people might need those things. So I think in that, if we could all just check ourselves, as we walk forward and just as we're walking through doors, leave the door open. Just don't just slam it like, "Okay, there's only one Black woman allowed." No, bring us all. Like you were saying earlier, there's pie enough for all. Who doesn't like pie?

Sarah Taylor:

Everybody loves pie.

Tatiana Johnson:

Everybody loves pie! Yeah, just leaving the doors open for others and stretching yourself a little bit. I know there's probably speakers that go to USCs and the NYUs. Expand your reach. Go to a historically Black college and go to a community college. There's people there that would love to be exposed to

these types of industries and have the talent for it, too. It's just they don't know about it, so just expanding ourselves.

Sarah Taylor:

As Dave puts his hand up, money, we need money.

David Hunter:

I was also going to say, sometimes the people that go to community college, maybe it's not that they don't want to know, but they didn't have the resources to go to a bigger school, so they go there, but that doesn't mean that you can't go to them. That's great. Great point. Tati, you answered that well. I don't know how-

Sarah Taylor:

You nailed it.

David Hunter:

Anything I say would take away from it.

Daniel Hunter:

I know.

Sarah Taylor:

Just a little story I want to share. I'm working on a show coming up. As a crew and as a team, we had to take accessibility training, which is great. I'd never been offered that. And I feel like this thing or diversity inclusion training, I feel like we should all be taking those courses, just so that we can even acknowledge the biases that we have that we don't even know it's a bias yet because we haven't been shown the other side. So even in this accessibility training, they have an accessibility coordinator on the show, and so the point of that is to go out and ask, "What do you need as a person to do the best work you can do?" and so that was something that twiggled in my brain.

I've never thought about that for my world. What do I need in order to do the best I can do? And so in this same situation, it came up with, in the editing world, we have many platforms to edit on. So there was this, "Oh. Well, this person only uses Avid and this person only uses Adobe." So I was like, "Well, how can we figure out a way that we can all use what is the best for us so we can do the best work?" That wouldn't have been something I would've even dared to bring up years ago. I'd been like, "Oh, we'll just do Avid. It's fine. Everything's fine." But I was like, "No, it's not fine. That's closing the door. That's not fair," so I decided I was going to speak up and I did it, and then it worked out. We're just going to make it work. We have to allow ourselves to have those tough questions or conversations, of how about we try doing it a different way because this way isn't always going to ... It's not always working. It's not always the best way.

Tatiana Johnson:

And a lot of people see it as them being called out in ... I heard this phrase recently of calling people in, so it's not like, "Oh, you're wrong. You're doing X, Y, Z." It's like, "No, I just want to show you a new way that you could possibly do this. Come in. Let's have a conversation.

Sarah Taylor:

Yeah, let's try this. Everybody can feel comfortable. How can we make everybody feel comfortable?

Tatiana Johnson:

That's what we need. Advocacy.

Sarah Taylor:

Advocacy, yes. If you're in a state, a position where you've been in the industry for a while, you have a reputation, use your voice where it matters and make a shift or at least let people think about something in a different way. Maybe they'll shut you down, but at least you've used your voice to try to push something in a different direction. Anyway, that's my little tidbit.

Daniel Hunter:

I like it.

Sarah Taylor:

Are there any episodes that you're particularly happy about or loved and want our listeners to check out?

Tatiana Johnson:

All of them.

Sarah Taylor:

I had a feeling that might be the answer. We can't just name one.

Daniel Hunter:

I mean, I guess the last one, to be honest. I would say watch them all, but Madonna Wade-Reed, music supervisor. And if there's one other episode, it's probably be the first one with Adam Lingo from National Geographic.

Sarah Taylor:

Oh, I liked that one.

Daniel Hunter:

Which was actually at Nat Geo in DC, so that was fun to be in person there. But yeah, watch them all.

Sarah Taylor:

That's what I really love about what you're all doing, is you highlighted a world where we don't hear much about. We don't hear much about how National Geographic shows are made, right?

Daniel Hunter:

Yeah, exactly.

Sarah Taylor:

That's not something that we talk about. It's so cool as an editor to learn about, Oh, that's neat, how that works and how he got in. Anyway, I thought that was a great episode.

Tatiana Johnson:

Yeah, I'll piggy back on that with Madonna's episode. She's also a fellow Canadian, so she talks about how she made her transition to Hollywood, so that was interesting, going international that way. But yeah, I'm going to stick with all of them because they all have so many different gems and their backgrounds and where they came from and how they've manoeuvred throughout the industry. So I'll just stick with that.

David Hunter:

I talked to everybody and I really think I've been blessed to be able to have these conversations with so many different people. I would say everyone stands out differently, but we talked to Darryl Jefferson and hearing about his schedule for the Olympics and then like Daniel said, going to Nat Geo, that was really special. Being a kid, even though we were born in the city and we grew up outside in the suburbs a little bit, but DC is really special. And so to be able to do that as an adult, to be in the building and do that and your hometown, that was really cool. That really meant a lot. Talking to a legend like Terilyn, and obviously, Daniel knows her very well, so she responds to Daniel's emails like, "What do you need? Anything you want," but just being able to talk to her was really special because you understand who she is and what she does.

I just went to a screening and they show clips of The Woman King and Gina Prince was just talking about, "Oh, my editor, Terilyn," and I was like, "Man, I know her." You know what I mean? And it was a room full of people, but I felt really special. I'm like, "Man, that's a privilege I get to talk to her." And then I do crack jokes about how Daysha Broadway and that episode, I just had so much fun with her energy and talking about her experiences. She's just a great person. So Stephanie ... When you start naming names, you get in trouble, but I think there's something from each one. And what excites me is that, again, it's just the tip of the iceberg. We're going to look at this years from now and be like, "Man, look at all these amazing people that we got to talk to and had these unique relationships with throughout the years."

Tatiana Johnson:

And I'd like to credit that also, too. Of course, we're a great team, but our team of editors behind the scenes, Precious and Andrea, that are based here in North Carolina, have to put that out there, Southern girls, but Black women, brown women just doing it for us and making these episodes really pop from season to season. So you'll see the trends, the transformation from season one to now and the certain elements that they've been able to bring to each episode have been really awesome, so shout out to Precious and Andrea for making us look good.

Sarah Taylor:

Yeah. Shout out to the editors. I love it.

David Hunter:

Shout out to them.

Sarah Taylor:

Is there anything exciting coming up that you want to share with us?

David Hunter:

We're going to be doing a panel at the Guild of Music Supervisors here in LA in October and so that's going to be a really fun event. And we have some pretty cool guests. Can't announce some just yet, because we're still solidifying everything, but it's going to be in person. It's their first one since the pandemic, so we're excited. And that's just another testament to the reach that Post In Black has, that people are reaching out to us now to ask us to do these really cool events and opportunities. And then like I said, there is talks about having an in-person Post In Black event for our past guests of all the seasons, so to have them all be in person and meet will be very cool. And I think they'll be good and it could be the start of something that we do annually.

Sarah Taylor:

I just want to come and be the fly on the wall.

David Hunter:

Come on, come on.

Tatiana Johnson:

Come on.

David Hunter:

Come on. We got to bring Sarah. We could bring you in.

Sarah Taylor:

Amazing. Amazing. Well, I hope one day y'all can come to Canada for our edit conference and do a panel. I think that would be so fun.

Tatiana Johnson:

We would love that.

Sarah Taylor:

See what we can do. It'll be cold in winter, though. I don't know. You'll have to bring a winter coat.

David Hunter:

We'll be there. I'll get a parka or something.

Sarah Taylor:

Awesome. I love it. I love it. Well, thank you so much for taking the time to sit with me to chat, all. Thanks, Post In Black. I love what you're doing. I think it's so important and I will continue to cheer you on and I hope all of our listeners tune in as well, so thank you so much.

Daniel Hunter:

Thank you for having us, Sarah.

Tatiana Johnson:

Thank you.

David Hunter:

Thank you for having us, Sarah. Appreciate it.

Sarah Taylor:

Thanks so much for joining us today and a big thanks goes out to Daniel, David, and Tatiana for taking the time to sit with me. Special thanks goes to Jane MacRae and Alison Dowler. The main title sound design was created by Jane Tattersall. ADR recording by Andrea Rusch. Original music by Chad Blain and Soundstripe. This episode was mixed and mastered by Tony Bao.

The CCE has been supporting Indspire - an organization that provides funding and scholarships to Indigenous post secondary students. We have a permanent portal on our website at cceditors.ca or you can donate directly at indspire.ca. The CCE is taking steps to build a more equitable ecosystem within our industry and we encourage our members to participate in any way they can.

If you've enjoyed this podcast, please rate and review us on Apple Podcasts and tell your friends to tune in. 'Til next time I'm your host Sarah Taylor.

[Outro]

The CCE is a non-profit organization with the goal of bettering the art and science of picture editing. If you wish to become a CCE member please visit our website www.cceditors.ca. Join our great community of Canadian editors for more related info.