

FINAL: FIVE FLIGHTS TRANSCRIPT

VC: Hello, I'm Vanessa Corwin

KK: And, I'm Kathleen Kaan

VC: So, this podcast is going to be a little different because one of the people that we'll be interviewing is none other than my podcast partner Kathleen Kaan. Now, Kathleen is writer and executive producer of the short film *Five Flights* which will screen on Sunday, May 5th at the International Filmmaker Festival in New York and along with Kat, we have our director, Daryl Denner, the producer, yours truly, and one of our very talented cast members, Johnny Tamaro. So welcome, guys, and Kat, let us just start with you. Talk about what this movie is about and what inspired you to write it?

KK: Well, *FIVE FLIGHTS* is my first short film and I'm hoping it won't be my last. It's a dramatic account of domestic abuse seen through a child's eye. There's a husband, wife and a child but we never see the child. We do hear her. I had what the child said, I wrote that a long time ago and so it was there and I thought it was time to follow up with a story.

VC: So, but Kat, your background is in music, right, and you kind of turned to writing as a focus.

KK: Yeah, I sang all my life, I sang internationally with my own act and worked with great people. One day I woke up with what is called Sudden Hearing Loss and that just wiped out one side of my head, my ear, and it took me a long time to even walk straight. So, I knew I had to do something creative and that's when I wrote my play, *Teddy's Doll House* which I'm still kind of working on. When Covid hit, Vanessa, we both thought, we should do a podcast around Covid and that's when I started writing these stories and I've had *Remember* which was produced in New York and *Lost and Found* which we did for Virtual Arts Festival, and *FIVE FLIGHTS*. It started with a terrible thing but it wound up to be a gift.

VC: Bit of a silver lining (KK:Yeah). So, Daryl, tell us what attracted you to direct *Five Flights* and can you talk about your process. Was there a lot of improvis, did you rehearse a lot? How did that unfold?

DD: What attracted me to the project was, I felt it was, the story was very grounded and it just felt so real. It kind of drew me back to the days of like John Cassavetes when he was doing his independent filmmaking and it had that kind of feel. These people felt real. Essentially, it's like, I like the idea of having the audience be like a fly on the wall as they're listening and watching how this relationship is between these characters. I really enjoyed the realism of it. It was really exciting to, yeah, it was like, once I read the script I was like yeah, this would definitely be a good project to go into. And as far as my process, I mean, I don't think we did any improv but the actors, Johnny and Concetta, they came in, when we were rehearsing, they were already prepared, they understood their characters so that made my job a lot easier. There were just little things, maybe just tweaking, but they already had an idea, they understood their characters fully and it was a pleasure just working with them on that.

VC: And Johnny, what attracted you to the role of Frank?

JT: Kathleen and I have been working together for a while now and when she approached me about this script, she sent it to me and I read it and the conversational aspect of the dialog was so raw and so real and I was excited about the seriousness of it because I'm usually drawn to comedy and comedic roles and the seriousness of it was the thing that really made me go "oh, wow, I think I want to get into this." And then we had somebody else for the role and that person couldn't do it and Kathleen reached out to me and said, "Oh, we have Concetta Rella," and I was like, "I know her since she's ten years old! What???" That was crazy in itself.

KK: The chemistry was amazing.

JT: It was great. And the two characters are so vulnerable in their own way and to be in that situation with someone that I kind of had a relationship with was very, it was comfortable to come out of my—that's odd to say, it was comfortable to come out of my comfort zone and be in that serious rawness of the part. I had a great time, the whole day. It was very inspiring; it was very cathartic for me and it was great.

VC: Which leads me to what I was going to say. I want to say a few words about the production. First of all, since Kathleen was funding this project, obviously budget was a concern. And we were extremely fortunate to get a location that turned out to be basically a one-stop shop. We had everything we needed, exteriors, interiors, a staircase. It really had it all—the apartment. It was just perfect and because of this we were able to

complete the entire shoot in one day without any company moves or anything like that which would have extended our time and also because we had an outstanding—not to mention cast, but outstanding crew, and we were thrilled to be able to complete it in that one day.

JT: I agree. (KK: Yeah). Everything went extremely smooth. The way Daryl spoke to us before each take and before each moment, like he said, to tweak little things, was extremely helpful and everyone else at the shoot, it was like, a couple of friends just hanging out, making a movie. But everybody knew their job. It was everybody knew their job, everybody did their job but it was still a relaxed, fun day at set.

KK: It was amazing to me to see this come to life and Johnny and Concetta were amazing. Concetta's not here today to talk to us but Daryl Denner is my hero. I love him and we were right on the same page at the same time, right, Daryl?

DD: Yes.

KK: Even when I said, the only thing I said was that I wanted to shoot this in black and white.

DD: I didn't think about that but when you mentioned it, I said wow, that is perfect, that goes with this kind of story so I totally agreed with it.

VC: Let's now talk about, FIVE FLIGHTS has been in a few film festivals and won a few awards. So, Kathleen, talk about your experiences with these festivals. What was that like for you to see your film projected on a big screen in a real movie theater?

KK: You know, it's always in my head what Daryl had said when I was submitting to festivals. Don't go crazy, that's number one, and don't get depressed if you get rejection letters. Well, I went crazy and then I kind of backed down a little bit. And at the beginning it was back-to-back to back, three festivals in New York selected us. And I thought, this is too good to be true. And we had a wonderful, beautiful festivals. We were at the International Film Festival of Manhattan, the Big Apple Film Festival, and the New York Shorts festival. And it was just done so well. I was so proud and happy.

VC: Yeah, it's exciting!

KK: Now Sunday we're in the International Filmmaker Festival. And that's been around, I think, 16 years, so that's ... (VC: Yeah). I've learned a lot but I've learned it from Daryl, he's the one who guided me.

VC: Daryl, you are our spirit guide. (Laughter) You were. Absolutely.

DD: It was great working with you guys. It's definitely a pleasure. And to see the film getting into these festivals is definitely, it's amazing. It's already had an amazing run. I'm very proud of it.

VC: And we're hoping there will be more because we've entered more, so we'll see.

KK: I will say one thing funny. Daryl, when you said to me, don't get down when you have a rejection. I've gotten some rejection letters; they are the kindest things. They are so kind. Tribeca just sent me a letter that I swear, I think I want to frame. (laughter). It was the loveliest rejection I ever had (more laughter).

DD: That's good.

VC: It was pretty nice, I've got to say.

DD: Well, listen, just hearing from Tribeca, that's great.

VC: So, Johnny, let's go over to you. Do you have any upcoming projects in the works that you would like to tell us about?

JT: I do. I do. We are doing a staged reading at the Sheen Center on Wednesday, May 22 at 4:00. It's a script called "It Fell Off a Truck" and it's about this husband and wife. His father comes out of the witness protection program and the FBI drops him off at his house and I play the son. And again, this is the thing we've been doing for many years, different incarnations of. We did a reading on Zoom with Stacy Keach playing my father. We did a staged reading two years ago with David Proval playing my father, of Mean Streets and Sopranos fame, and on May 22, Tony Danza will be playing my father. To me that's a huge, huge thing because both of us are from Brooklyn and I grew up watching Taxi and Who's the Boss, and watching this Italian kid from Brooklyn make it and do it and now I'm reading, playing a character, his son, so, it's gonna be great. It's written by Jules Feiler and directed by Charles Messina, also starring my good friend Joli Tribuzzio and Dominic Scaglione Jr. and Amelia Milo and Michael Townsend Wright.

VC: Great, so how can we get tickets?

JT: Oh yes, there's limited seating but if you email itfelloffatruckRSVP@gmail.com you can request free tickets. (VC: Awesome) Yeah, and then, also waiting on The Wanderer to hit Broadway sometime soon.

VC: Well, we will certainly stay tuned for that. And Daryl, what about you, what have you got in the works?

DD: You know, I recently wrapped on a short film late last year, a film with Concetta. So that film is now, has been sent out to festivals. I'm just waiting to see how that does and recently a filmmaker got in touch with me that he wanted to work with me doing a feature, a horror feature, so we're still in the works with that one. So that's kind of where I've been right now.

VC: Great, well, keep us posted on the new film. (DD: Absolutely). Yes! So, we'll see you guys at the screening on Sunday. And just so everybody knows, Five Flights will screen on Sunday May 5th at 6PM as part of the International Filmmaker Festival of New York at the Producers Club Theater. Ticket are available at Eventbrite dot com. You go to Eventbrite.com and search for International Filmmaker Festival of New York.

END