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# Interview with Clarissa Hoffmann

102 SHARES



Hi, my name is Clarissa and I'm a stage and screen actress, originally from Germany. The first time I acted was with 7 years in elementary school. I was playing a hunter with a huge hat, a mustache and a rifle. I was probably the smallest hunter in history as I was always the smallest kid in class my whole school life, but I had the biggest role. So I was very proud and even more when I received great feedback for my performance afterwards. I enjoyed this attention "on stage", even though I was very quiet and shy off stage. Fast forward. My family moved to another city and I got into junior high where I didn't know anyone. I was still the smallest girl and even shyer than before. So shy I didn't dare to get up on this huge stage and act in front of hundreds of people, uhm kids, but I still felt the need inside. Fast forward. While writing my Bachelor thesis about work life balance I remembered my suppressed passion for acting. I started a beginners acting class and it clicked - this is what I need to do in my life - acting. Since then my life has been an exciting adventure I had been wishing for so long. And I have to say, finding my calling a bit later than others felt just like pressing my own power button which catapults me to the next levels even faster than others. So to anyone out there who is hesitating to go for what they feel called for, start now and kick ass! It will be rewarding, you'll see.

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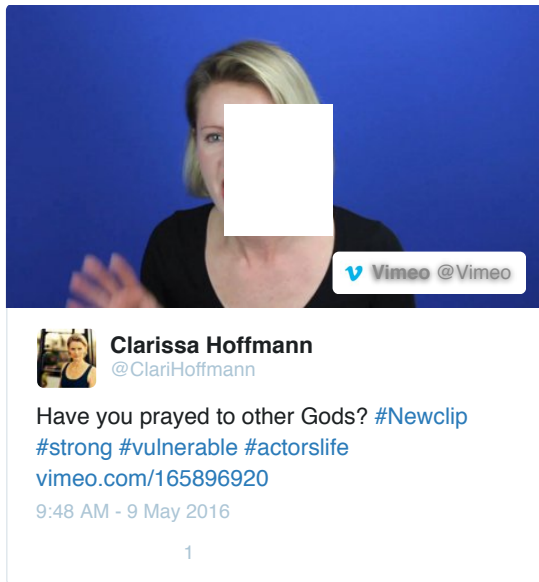


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### Did you study acting

Yes, I did. I chose the Stella Adler Studio in New York for my training. It was a great experience I wouldn't want to miss. Apart from the Stella Adler technique, you learn individual acting techniques of the world class teachers. After graduation you leave with a pool of different tools you can choose from and create your own technique. But what I loved most about the school was that they believe in what Stella Adler said: "The growth as an actor is synonymous to the growth as a human being". They encourage you to live your life fully, so that you have something to draw from for your acting.



### What acting technique do you use

I use my own technique which changes with every role. It's a mix of what I've learned so far: Stella Adler technique, Method acting, Michael Chekhov and Meisner technique. They all offer a wide range of tools to choose from and get your imagination and emotions engaged and help you to stay in the moment. The most important thing just before you start performing is to let go of all the preparation you've done and enjoy the character's journey.

### What wrong impressions do actors hold about acting

There is no perfect performance. There's only your own, individual performance. Check out this great video with a lot of celebs demonstrating this [Video](#)





### **Do you take courses to improve your craft**

Of course I do, you can never learn enough. The last one was a masterclass with acting coach Larry Moss who coached Leonardo DiCaprio in The Revenant for example. Apart from that I'm still in touch with some acting teachers from the Stella Adler Studio who coach me for roles now and then.

### **What acting books do you read**

The Art of acting by Stella Adler, The intent to live by Larry Moss, The Tao of the business by Dallas Travers, The Lucid Body by Fay Simpson, The Power of the actor by Ivana Chubbuck, The Power of now by Eckart Tolle

### **How do you keep fit as an actor**

I practice a daily morning routine which consists of stretching and yoga, breathing exercises, meditation, writing in my gratitude journal, eating a healthy breakfast and listening to inspiring people like Oprah Winfrey, Tony Robbins, Tim Ferris, Deepak Chopra, TED Talks, etc. Actually a healthy diet without gluten and dairy and less carbs is very important to me to keep myself fit and energetic.



### **When you're offered a role, what do you do next**

First of all I read the script as often as I can, because I always find new things in it and my first impression

usually changes very quickly. And I love to rehearse before shooting if it's somehow possible. I don't think that a scene loses its freshness with rehearsals. I actually believe you can connect even better to the other person and that's what it's all about – connection.

### **How do you take a character in a script to a honest, believable and breathing person**

After reading the script several times I write down ideas, do research (watch films with similar characters), talk to people about it, answer 50 personal character questions, find a personal gesture, the right physicality with the Lucid Body approach or animal work. But the most important thing for me is to find the human condition in the character and connect it to myself.

### **How do you stay fresh on set**

It depends on the scene. Before an emotional loaded scene I prefer to have my own space to relax, do breathing exercises and focus on the circumstances my character is in and sometimes I also add things to

my character's bio. Before lighter scenes I enjoy being around people, getting involved in conversations, doing fun exercises like Taekwondo kicks for example. Apart from that I'm always open to talk about the scene with my scene partner or director. The more I can do for the project, the better it will be.



#### **Describe a memorable character you played**

One of my favourite roles was Irina Arkadina in a new translation of "The Seagull" by John Donnelly.

Arkadina is such an iconic character and so thrilling to play. A woman full of power, charm and playfulness, but at the same time she's bitter, depressed and very vulnerable. I love playing those roles which seem to be powerful on the outside, but are very vulnerable on the inside. It just demonstrates the human condition in the perfect way and helps people understand that we all have the same needs and problems.

#### **What do you want most from a director**

For me the most important thing between a director and actor is trust. I believe that being open to each other's ideas and choices creates a huge playground with unanticipated moments.

#### **What actors do you long to work with**

Leonardo Dicaprio.

#### **Why**

He just won an Academy Award and I want to work with the best. And fulfill my teenage dreams. Lol. Apart from that he plays those characters who are smart, powerful and ambitious and have a deep vulnerability. I could be his female counterpart...Just saying.



#### **What advice would you give to actors**

Instead of competing with each other, create something amazing together.

#### **Briefly write about your career**

As I am a stage and screen actress, I've been in numerous theatre and film productions playing a single mother, a prostitute, a secret agent, a doctor, a

famous actress, a lesbian, an ordinary woman with dark secrets, a business woman, a police officer, a kids store manager etc. I've also helped produce films, and have written and produced one of my own which took place in a confessional in a catholic church. I want to make films with meaningful stories that encourage others to follow their dreams and help people understand that we're all the same. While I gravitate towards drama, I love psychological thrillers and smart action films as well. I look forward to working with Directors/Actors/Producers that share my vision of creating more empathy in the world. Thank you.

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