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Interview

'Vampire Diaries' CD Olubajo Sonubi on How to Get Noticed and Stay Noticed

By John Stoneburner | Posted July 7, 2015, 9:51 a.m.

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Photo Source: CMK Photography

"Bajo," as Olubajo Sonubi is known locally, is quickly earning a reputation as the "actor's casting director" in Atlanta, Ga., thanks to his performance background and the comfortable environment he creates at his company, [OAS Casting](#).

With his MFA from Southern Methodist University and his years spent as an actor, Sonubi has gained "the ability to spot honest, grounded performances, as well as a language to connect with actors," he says. "Actors do best when you give them something to do...I stay away from talking about feelings and emotions, and focus on what actors know—actions and objectives."

Sonubi serves as the local casting director for "The Vampire Diaries" and the new CW show "Containment," and also casts commercials and industrials. He offers this advice to actors, "find ways to get on set, on a project in any capacity. Learn as much about this industry overall as you can—you will get a much better idea of the role you play in this much larger system."

How do you feel about self-taped auditions?

I understand the need for self-tape especially in terms of TV and the speed it offers, but I like to get to know actors in person first. I try to reserve my live auditions for actors whose work I'm not familiar with yet. Once I've seen people a few times and then I get their self-tapes, I'm able to tell if that's their first, second, or third take, or if it's their 40th. That plays a part in who gets sent to producers.

What do you think makes a good audition tape?

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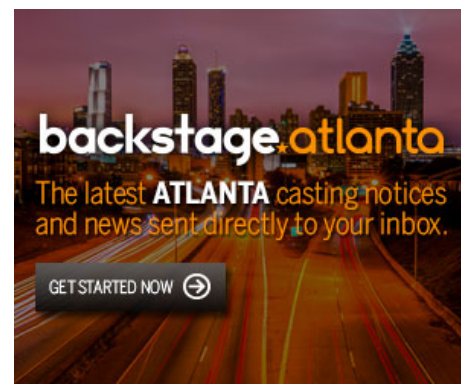
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Tapes are a higher quality now. Your tape is in competition with other tapes so quality makes a difference. Use a quality professional taping service if you can.

Also, it's crucial [to follow instructions]. If the instructions say to separate your takes—that's so I can easily send your best take to producers. If you send me a tape with all your takes lumped together and your second take is the better, there's no guarantee a producer will watch that long.

How do actors stay on your radar?

Be working on something. If you're only auditioning, start creating your own stuff or start making friends with the people who do. [You can email me your project] but make sure it's a good showcase of your work, neither of us want my opinion of you going backwards. Invite me to your showcases and plays. Whenever my schedule allows I always try to come out.

What's your greatest joy as a casting director?

I love being moved by a real performance, especially in the audition room. I get a kick out of seeing an actor deliver a performance. You know you've just discovered an amazing piece that's going to fit into a larger puzzle. There's no greater sense of satisfaction.

Any final words of advice?

Make sure your sense of self-worth and sanity are not linked to what happens in an audition room. Have a life outside of the industry. The more you enrich yourself with life in general, the better actor you will be. It will make you stronger.

And take a basic business course. Learn how to budget your money so that you really can make a living at this. Learn where to make your sacrifices.

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 **Andi Behring** · Location Manager at Vampire Diaries
Yay Bajo!
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 **Natalie Karp** · Actor at J Pervis Talent Agency
Great interview John! Bajo is a giving CD and a pleasure to audition with!
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 **Jessica Leigh Smith** · [Follow](#) · Actress at J Pervis Talent Agency · 116 followers
I love reading for Bajo! He is truly an amazing casting director; when he gives a note, it truly means something and will better your performance.
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 **Omer Mughal** · Owner-operator at Actors Taping Actors
I had the opportunity to take an acting workshop with Bajo many years ago, and I have been in the room with him and self taped many times since then. He is a great guy, and makes you feel comfortable so you can do your best work in the room! Thanks for the tips Bajo!
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 **Karen Cox** · Works at Ignition, Inc.
He is awesome I had an audition in person with him and also he came to one of my classes, Pretty great person!
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Great tips. Thank for for this article. Very helpful.
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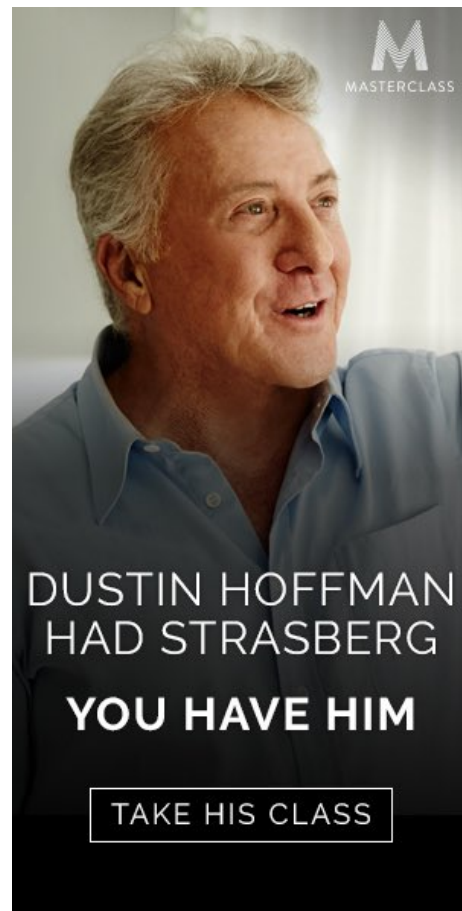
 **Actress Karissa Parran** · Works at Actress and Model
Great tips, Bajo! Thank you!
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 **Neva Krauss** · [Follow](#)
Yes! Yes! Yes! Great advice!
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 **Samuel Scanlon** · Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Good advice.
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 **Elizabeth Ann Miller** · Actor at People Store | Atlanta Talent Agency
Olu is the best :)
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