



SONDRA CURRIE has survived in the finicky field of Entertainment for over forty years. When you hear many actresses complaining about the lack of roles for “actresses of a certain age”, Sondra Currie, in the past several years, has been busier than ever. Sondra shares stories from her days of “Guerilla Filmmaking” to “The Hangover” and working with director Tyler Perry...

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ZEPHRA: You have been in all three of “The Hangover” movies.

SONDRA CURRIE: Yes, I have. Zackie’s mom.

ZEPHRA: Do you believe that this is going to be the last one?

SONDRA CURRIE: I don’t know. They are saying this is absolutely the last one. They wrapped up all the stories. They still, kind of, have Zack’s story not wrapped up, so technically, if they came up with a really good script, they probably could do another one or one around Zack’s character and hopefully the family.

ZEPHRA: You were born and raised in Los Angeles?

SONDRA CURRIE: Yes, I’m a Hollywood baby and I grew up a Valley Girl.

ZEPHRA: There is a myth that if you are from Los Angeles you don’t get involved in “the industry”. How did you become an actress?

SONDRA CURRIE: My mom, Marie Harmon, was an actress. She was under contract to Republic. She did over forty films. She was Roy Rogers leading lady before Dale Evans. She gave me the drive. Everything that I do now is because of her. She made me do everything on my own. I was a little upset with her for a while because she wasn’t willing to call people for me when I started out, but she was still a driving force behind me wanting to be an actress.

ZEPHRA: Now let’s talk about your extensive career. Your first role was in “Rio Lobo” with John Wayne in 1970?

SONDRA CURRIE: I got my SAG card on that film, but if you blink, you will miss me. Most of what I did was on the editing room floor. Howard Hawkes (the director) kept an apartment in my building and we became friendly and that’s how I got it. He kind of wrote this kind of character in for me...

ZEPHRA: What are some of the changes you see in the Entertainment industry from when you started over forty years ago?

SONDRA CURRIE: It’s totally different. The business of the business is completely different. Everything is digital and online and there is no personal involvement, whereas before you can have an agent and a manager who would take you by the

hand and take you on the lot and have lunch and be seen. They would take you around and introduce you to people. That’s how I got “79 Park Avenue”. You can’t do that anymore. I think it’s much more difficult, frankly, because you don’t have any personal relationship. You have to create a whole new way of getting to people. For those of us who are still in it, we’ve had to make some real adjustments to working this way.

ZEPHRA: What were some famous roles that you’ve gone out for but for some reason or another, you didn’t get it?

SONDRA CURRIE: In 1979 or 1980, “Happy Days” was casting for a character named “Pinky Tuscadero”. They kept bringing me back. They coached me through all the tests. When we went to the network, there was a woman at the network who didn’t think I was “street” enough. They brought in Roz Kelly, who drove in on a motorcycle with a six pack of beer. We went in and met everybody and they went with her. I was devastated about that because they were spinning it off to Pinky’s own show, so that was a big disappointment. There were certain things that I couldn’t get auditions for, like “Charlie’s Angels”. They didn’t think I was pretty enough for “Charlie’s Angels”. Everyone has a point of view.

ZEPHRA: A lot of those actresses who found success back then are not really working right now.

SONDRA CURRIE: I think about that. I think, “wow, I’m still in it and I’m working more the last two, three or four years, than I’ve worked since the beginning”. Mine ebbed and flowed. I worked a lot in the eighties. I worked some in the nineties. I was always working every year, but not steady. I attribute it to renewing my passion and appetite for the work.

ZEPHRA: If you could go back in time, what would you tell the Sondra Currie of 1980?

SONDRA CURRIE: Study. (laughs) Be tuned in and listen. Listening is the most important thing and be aware. You have to work on yourself before anything else can come about.

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ZEPHRA: What do you have coming up next?

SONDRA CURRIE: I’m doing the new Tyler Perry half hour “Love Thy Neighbor”. It’s a recurring character. I play Miss Vivian. She’s hysterical. I hope she’s hysterical. A southern belle...kind of manipulative...all the fun things. I play Mamma Hattie’s adversary. I own the building and the restaurant next door..

ZEPHRA: Were you familiar with Tyler Perry’s work?

SONDRA CURRIE: I knew Tyler Perry’s name, but I wasn’t all that familiar with his work. Not being that familiar with Tyler, I didn’t go in intimidated. When I got home I did my research, plus his place there (Atlanta) is really phenomenal. He’s created this Shangri-La for himself there. Everybody loves working with him. I always say that I want whatever he’s taking. He writes, produces, directs and he never loses his temper. He is really this mellow guy. He starts the day out with a prayer circle. Tyler is a very positive affirming person. I’m a huge fan of his. I really think he’s a master at what he does. He deserves everything he’s gotten.

ZEPHRA: What regrets do you have with your career?

SONDRA CURRIE: I don’t have any regrets. I made my own decisions. I made the decisions that I made, but I can live with them even if they seem not quite right.

ZEPHRA: What are some of the things you are proud of?

SONDRA CURRIE: In my office at home, I have the old one-sheets from a lot of my early films and for a long time I was embarrassed by them, but they have my name above the title and every once in a while, I look at them and I’ve taken a new attitude towards it. I think, “Wow, someone put money up to have me in this film.” That was pretty good. I do have a lot of work under my belt. We live in the present, so I forget about that. I’m proud of those movies now. I don’t get embarrassed.■

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