

The Eye Behind Talent with Talent Agent, Hayley Littman

Owen Shapiro 00:04

Welcome to Kino Society with Owen Shapiro. In today's episode, we have Hayley Littman, founder of the Littman Talent Group, a talent agency that represents both adults and young actors. She loves helping her clients build a casting image so that there's no doubt that when they walk into a CDs office, that that is the guy or girl that they are looking for. Welcome to Kino Society, Hayley.

Hayley Littman 00:35

Hi, Owen, how are you? Nice to chat with you

Owen Shapiro 00:37

share with you as well, whether you start working as a talent agents, and how do you get into the industry.

Hayley Littman 00:42

And I started working here when we moved from the east coast to LA, which was about 10 years ago. Um, I started I wasn't sure exactly where I was going to fit fit and where what kind of job I would be getting. So I sent my resume, I thought casting would be my first Avenue. So I sent my resume, which I had no casting experience to, to casting directors hadn't didn't hear anything. And then somebody suggested agent team. So I just did a little bit of research, I took a class and learned a little bit about what an agent actually does. And I started interning, and then I started my path at littmann in 2013. Sorry, intern for about three years and worked at different agencies and then I opened Lippman.

Owen Shapiro 01:34

Yes. So how did your relationship with acting begin?

Hayley Littman 01:38

Um, you know, I think I was a closet actor if that's such a thing. I'm when I was growing up. I thought I wanted to be an actor, even though I never really I was made to had major stage fright. So after a camp production, I realized I was never going to be an actor, but I was wanted to and but I went to college for regular, you know, a psychology major minor in business. I, you know, I don't even know how I've always loved actors and their their creativity and their persona and their artistry, that I just connect with them, on a personal level, understand that they're their passion.

Owen Shapiro 02:21

So do you think that Do you have any experience with acting yourself, though? No, I

Hayley Littman 02:27

mean, besides Kim productions, no, not at all. I'm a great viewer and watch her an audience, but I would never be in front of the camera.

Owen Shapiro 02:35

She would say advice to Europeans, to most inexperienced actors.

Hayley Littman 02:39

I'm inexperienced actors, I think training, training training. Um, because without training, you're not going to be able to connect to the material and really pull into pull yourself into the character on because that's what casting wants to see. They want to see a piece of you in the character that they gave their casting, and that the writers and producers created on for actors who, once they've done the foundation of training, I think the most important thing is to know who you are, and know your character know, your marketability, how when people see you, when casting sees you, how are they going to have? What kind of of character or emotions are you inflicting into the character that they can see the marketability, and you becoming the character that they're looking for?

Owen Shapiro 03:40

Speaking American ability, something I've always wondered was, how about much bigger actors? Why do what's the deal with those people? Because sometimes the audience sees them as the actors and not the characters.

Hayley Littman 03:53

I mean, I think, unfortunately, a lot of it is money. I think, you know, the larger actors and producers and writers, you know, it's all about how many office the box office sales and box office, you know, so a lot of times an actor will get a part, not saying that they're not good, because clearly they have to have the talent to be good. But I think they also are looking for their name to bring in a specified audience to because that audience and their their fans per se will go and see this movie. Um, you know, and a lot of times, if you're doing the same types, like look at comedians, that if when they're doing certain types consistently of comedic roles, then they can branch they're able to because of their notoriety, and their marketability and their success rate. If they want to choose to go to a different genre, like the dramatic end to really show show people what they can do, because they already was the

Owen Shapiro 05:03

highlight of your career.

Hayley Littman 05:07

You know, the highlights of my career, I would say, our booking my clients, like really, it's not specific to one client or to one booking, I think it's bill to having my relationships with my clients, and watching them book and get to their path desires, um, you know, to some, it's serious reg, so some of its features on but my biggest, I think, high five is watching the success of my actors. And then that to me, is you know,

Owen Shapiro 05:56

or at least experience what to see ideal actor agent relationship.

Hayley Littman 06:02

Trust, care and consideration, those are my three things, I'm, I feel like it's, you've got to trust your agent, that they are scouring to find the right role for you, you've got to, you know, trust that they have

the relationships with casting directors to get you in the rooms. And I think it's consideration by not, you know, bombarding them with emails not being the needy grabby, you know, just just trusting that they're, they're working hard on your behalf. And by emailing them saying I saw this breakdown, or I have a friend who's going out for this or that, that's just going to get in a block. So I really think that it's the communication on you, that you guys are a team that it's not the agents not superior than the actor, the actor is not more superior than the agent on it's a teamwork, and everyone is equal. And all we want is for your new to some you the actor to succeed.

Owen Shapiro 07:14

So, what do you tell us, any actor that you have seen potential event did not have success? or what have you thought what's going to go wrong and men triumph.

Hayley Littman 07:23

And I think a lot of times, like any actors, actors are human. And I feel like sometimes there are blocks that happened. And, um, there might be, you might actor might be aware of the block, and they might not, um, you know, I, I've had many different scenarios that actors, I know that they are talent, they have connections in town, and for the life of me, I can't get them in the room. And then it's not until after whatever the situation is clears up. I, you know, I don't know, if it's, they are ready and open for it to happen, you know, for the auditioning and for booking to happen again, or it just kind of re manifests itself that it it happens that then they start auditioning when, when the time is right for them. And they're able to give acting 100% and not get distracted. That's when I think success happens again,

Owen Shapiro 08:25

what do you like to see an actor's

Hayley Littman 08:27

I want to see their authenticity, and I don't, I don't need an actor who's looking for representation to pretend to be something they're not I want to see who they are, I want to know who they are. Because I feel as though especially now I'm casting and producers are looking for authentic, they're not looking for somebody trying to pretend to be even though that's acting, it's a very catch 22 because an actor is supposed to act, but at the same time casting and producers want the authentic person. So, um, you know, I need to know who they are as people, what kind of maybe life stories or where they came from, or even even how I see them on how I would mark at them. I want them to respect that and to, um, be open to maybe some different possibilities and roles. But you know, if I think that they could do it, and if they feel comfortable with this new role, then they should be able to jump on it.

Owen Shapiro 09:40

So what are the most challenging things in your job?

Hayley Littman 09:44

I think the most challenging thing. Of course, you want all your actors to work all the time, and I think obviously COVID has put a whole shed a whole new light on to production and there's A lot of things now that have to be reconsidered when it comes to COVID on, you know, I have some clients who aren't comfortable working on set, and I understand them. And, you know, and appreciate their honesty

to me that they can say that to me, I have you know, clients who have, I'm not. I've got, I've had clients who've gotten COVID from being on set for being infected on set. I've got COVID, who were our clients who were exposed to COVID, but did not get it of her mindset. So there's a lot I mean, new scenarios because of COVID that have come out. Um, you know, I think that that's a whole new plethora, and then before that, probably the most, the most difficult thing is just just keeping actors in a positive headspace. I feel like that's really the most important thing for actors.

Owen Shapiro 10:56

What's a common misconception that people have about your job?

Hayley Littman 11:01

Um, that agents are assholes. Sorry, I'm, but you know, that, that we're sharks and that we're power hungry, and we don't care? You know, there's a lot of agents like that, but that's not me. So I think that, um, a lot of, you know, I think that a lot of agents are doing it for their own night notoriety. And that's not what I'm doing. I'm doing it for the clients notoriety. And I think I realized that, you know, a year or so ago that it's not, I'm not looking, I'm looking to be the stepping stool for my actors. I'm not looking for littmann to be, you know, high and mighty if that I'm doing this for the success of my clients

Owen Shapiro 11:50

show. Do you have any new project said,

Hayley Littman 11:53

I mean, I've gotten clients who are working on new shows, but I can't you know, everything is NDA, so I can't disclose anything. But of course, I have clients who are on you know, amazing Apple shows to network shows to features you know, anything else different different genres different is exciting.

Owen Shapiro 12:15

So are there any clients particular or any project since they've gotten better you're particularly proud of,

Hayley Littman 12:22

I'm I have a series reg on home before dark, which is a new Apple show, which is amazing to see and watch her on. I've got clients who are recurring on swagger, which is a new TV show, that should be coming and I believe I coming out pretty soon I think, and I've got clients who are on everything from manifests to, you know, Grey's Anatomy to a new a brand new show that I can't discuss that's with huge names. I've got people who are on features and you know, it's kind of ad not a bragger. But yeah, I've got I've got great people who are working great stuff, you know, and I say to people, if you want to see who my clients are and what they're booking go on my IMDB page.

Owen Shapiro 13:15

So what would you recommend to someone that is starting on acting and goes to the casting

Hayley Littman 13:22

I would say know who you are. Don't try to impress you know, it's a very fine line when you go into a casting directors office because you you can't be desperate needy grabby to them. You This is a job.

So you have to be respectful, you have to obviously do have, put yourself into the character and do the best that you can do with this character. I mean, I feel as though any new audition should you should be training for it. You should train with a coach and you should really feel comfortable with the character and embrace who this is this character is while putting a twist of yourself into it.

Owen Shapiro 14:13

So finally, where can my listeners find and connect with you?

Hayley Littman 14:17

I'm finally on I have a website you can email on at the end of the website there's an info account that you can email me to, um, you know if there is questions concern, I've Instagram, I've got Facebook I you know, I feel I love connecting to actor sometimes. And you know if it's somebody who's developmental at this time, I'm only taking actors who are sag or sag eligible or looking on to people who are sag and sag eligible. If your clients you know are just starting out and have questions, feel free to email me at The info account and I will do my best to try to get in touch. Um, and yeah, I'm, I want to help. I love helping actors. That's really who I am and how I feel the most of giving back.

Owen Shapiro 15:15

Thank you so much for your time. It was a pleasure talking with you.

Hayley Littman 15:19

Thank you so much. It was so much fun. Thank you. Take care.

Owen Shapiro 15:22

That's all for today. Don't forget, you can subscribe to Kino Society on iTunes and Spotify.