SMFA Summit Interview with LyNea "LB" Bell, premiering 23 May 2021, 5pm PDT

Bonnie Gillespie

Everyone, I am so excited to bring to you one of my very favorite people in this beautiful industry of ours. It's LyNea Bell, otherwise known as LB of BH Talent. Hey, LB. How are you?

LyNea "LB" Bell

I'm good, Bonnie. How are you? So good to see you, sweetie.

Bonnie Gillespie

Good to see you. Thank you for joining me for this talk. We're talking about Creating the Hollywood We Want. You're someone that came into my life through the miracle that is Clubhouse and all the late-night talks and midday talks and early morning talks and prayer circles and opportunities to connect in so many meaningful ways. I would love to chat with you a bit about how you see... let's start on Clubhouse... how you see new media like Clubhouse playing a role in this, Creating the Hollywood We Want, and coming together.

LyNea "LB" Bell

Relationships. Because of the COVID, right, we were all forced to stay indoors, right? And the connection piece that people are accustomed to was lost. Right? I mean Instagram is good, you know. Facebook is good, but you didn't have that real close, that spirit connection and voice, right? And that's what a lot of people are in tune to. So when, when Clubhouse came, people got to kind of feel your spirit. And you could tell, you could feel how authentic it was, what it wasn't, and then do your research to follow up to it. And then you got some really good gems and because we had so much time, people... and I saw where the things that you would have to pay for... we wanted to share that information. We wanted to get people ready for opportunities such as this, in the meantime. And that's what made it beautiful.

Like, when I saw you come, I was like, "Oh my God." I wanted to be there to meet you and I brought on name clients and so forth as well. And just to get the reaction from people, everyday people, we're all everyday people. We got to say, "Oh my God, I got to be a part of this." Or "I got to talk to someone that I never would thought I would have had the opportunity to speak to." So, the world had... it was enough to slow us down. We got on Clubhouse and we learned to have relationships again. And that to me is more, more personable, more key than any superficial other social media thing that takes away that piece, if you will.

Bonnie Gillespie

I really love that. I think also when I think of like Instagram, we're looking at so many different things at once and so many, you know, the scroll is just forever, and in Clubhouse there's something so beautiful about, "I am in this room, I'm having this conversation. I'm present." Yes, it's big about the now, for sure.



LyNea "LB" Bell

Yes, yes, yes.

Bonnie Gillespie

Now, talk to me about... you're an agent. You rep people for literary as well as on-camera acting so, can we talk a little bit about what you're seeing in terms of trends and how the industry is changing? How we're getting, hopefully, more and more, better representation on screen and in our scripts. Can we talk a little bit about trends? And hopefully, hopefully it not being a trend. Hopefully it being a righting of some wrongs and a shift that is long overdue. Let's not even label it a trend.

LyNea "LB" Bell

Right, well you just said it. It's the shift that's long overdue, because we are in the here and now. And the people want real listening. You know that, that, I won't say that the fakeness, but that we want the truth. We want the authenticity. We want the real things that we can relate to. And I think we're getting a lot more of that now that people are actually living. It's not like something you get to pretend anymore to be, you are actually in that world and people catch that immediately and that's what they're connecting to. And that I think is the beauty behind that. That's what I love to see and that's what I see, because as we're looking at projects, now we can say, "That's that person. That's them." You know what I mean? And that's an immediate. And then they grow into those things. And that's what's making it beautiful because we have more time to do it now.

Bonnie Gillespie

For sure.

LyNea "LB" Bell

Casting didn't have enough time. We were like, "Yeah, they fit it. Let's go, let's go, let's go." And because we closed down, it's like, "No, no, no, we have time for this, let's make it real, and let's make it stick."

Bonnie Gillespie

Oh, I love that. There's something about that slowness that just makes it not like, like, "Get the very first choice that we can." It's, "Let's get the right choice. Let's get the alignment that we need." When it comes to alignment with, with a client, let's say -- because I know a lot of people watching are going to want to know how they can submit to you, whether it's a script, whether it's their, their headshot, demo reel -- what sort of things are you looking for to let you know that somebody is right for your roster?

LyNea "LB" Bell

Um, just kind of what I actually said. I, you know, have some amazing headshots. Have a resume. You know, when we started, we were... I looked for clients that were great -- to the



break – right? And I still use that same that that same idealism of it, but now I want more authenticity, not just what is your true time for why. But I do need headshots. I need a reel.

I need you to know who you are. I need you to know your brand. If you don't know, how do you expect me to know what that is? Because then... as we, you talk about it in your book -- it's your true self. So, now I have you faking something that's not even you; you're never gonna book. And if you do, by miracle, oh, my! But how is it gonna last, right? And since we are in this realness now, everything has transitioned to that change. And that's, that's what I look for: I want to see how real you are and how close of that person I can get because that's what I'm looking to book you on. That's what I'm looking to put you on, so when they see you, they see you. And as you grow, guess what, those opportunities grow with you.

Bonnie Gillespie

Ooh, yes. Yes, yes, yes. Because if you've come in going, "How do I... how do they want me to be?" and then being something that's not authentically you, there's nowhere to grow because you can't, you can't grow where you're not meant to go. Like, that's just not how it works.

LyNea "LB" Bell

You don't even know what to do, you're just... I don't even know what you're doing, but it doesn't work. And then your avatar, your true self, doesn't agree with what you've put on, this mask, and it becomes this fight, right? So, yeah, that... and then it becomes drama. And then it's all these other things. We don't want all that. No one has time for that anymore. But it's, be your true self.

Bonnie Gillespie

Because there is going to be a moment where that disconnect between who you really are and the kinds of things that maybe you got over on people and were able to play for a little while, they're just gonna part ways enough that now there's nowhere to go.

When someone is trying to figure out their brand -- obviously you know I've got a lot of opinions on how to do that -- what sort of things do you say to people, even if like, they're maybe not ready to be repped by you, but you know that they've got some brand work to do. What do you suggest is the starting point with that?

LyNea "LB" Bell

When I do a strategy session, I always ask, "What's your top fives?" What are your top five TV shows, your top five movies? I ask them to ask their friends to imitate them. So why don't you practice just being you, right, and have your friend imitate you. What do you do that you don't know that you do because for... sometimes it's really hard for people to look at themselves, right? They can make all the other people but they have a hard time finding out who they are internally, right, themselves? And I'm like, "Why don't you look and see your surroundings and start focusing on who you are? If you're a great dad, you're a great mother, you're a great sister,



you're a great... and things that you're drawn to, those are the things that your inner you relate to, so you're no longer acting."

And this is for old and new, right? Let's take off the word "act" because we know it's just a word, and then let's put in some truth behind that and say, "How can you relate to that?" Maybe you grew up, there's a situation, there's something somebody you were really close that you can actually essence in touch and grab and evolve in that, right, to make it real. And that's what I look for, that's what I want. I don't want the, I don't want the Hollywood. The Hollywood I want is the one we're creating that you want to create, because you can stand in that and that's just you.

Bonnie Gillespie

Yes! Okay, what, what do I do if I'm an actor and I'm not so crazy about being quiet with myself? Because I know, I know you do so much work around mindset and connection and grounding and being present and connecting with the Spirit. What what is the work of enoughness?

LyNea "LB" Bell

What do you mean? Elaborate on that.

Bonnie Gillespie

I'm thinking about the kinds of things I've heard you talk people through during those early morning sessions on Clubhouse, of just having a practice, getting connected, really listening and being okay with who you are, and not trying to be something you're not. That sort of connection, I think, with self.

LyNea "LB" Bell

If you're an actor, that's something you're going to have to face because there's so many actors that are broken because of that. And they come in for some uplifting, for some spiritual connection, for whatever that search is so they can feel whole. Because it becomes... we are, we live in a world of rejection, right? Hollywood is a world of rejection, right? And sometimes when you take it personal and not look at, "This has nothing to do with me. This is just the job and maybe I wasn't right for that job, but there's gonna be some other jobs out of the millions that are coming out," you know what I mean? Right? Out of this, it's going to be something and just making you better and standing in... on you. And when you know who you are, whether... you gotta know, you already know, that there's going to be a yes. Then it comes to the level of well, just create your own. Why do we have to have the the okay from someone else to be who we are?

Bonnie Gillespie

That! Yes! It's like we're waiting for permission somehow.



LyNea "LB" Bell

Don't wait for permission, no. You don't have to... you get to stand in, and be who you are, and what's for you is going to be for you. And that, that's in anything.

Bonnie Gillespie

So, if someone has created their own content, they've not waited for permission, what are you willing to look at? Because I know most people think that, "I can't even try to get an agent until I've been on something." Do you look at material that's maybe self-produced or even like, self-tapes for auditions?

LyNea "LB" Bell

Everything. I look at self-tapes. I look at every single thing. I look at... but it's quality over the quantity, if you will. It's the quality of work. If you're going to be a slapstick, then you're looking for slapstick information. And just because you researched -- and I love what you say, and I say that -- just because you like me doesn't mean I'm the right agency for you. Do your research, right? So, but what I'm looking for is you knowing who you are so we... because I'm only a partner in this. I'm a... I get 10%. That's all I get. You're 90% of the work so it becomes a matter of what is it that you know about you, so we can make this relationship grow.

Bonnie Gillespie

Yes! I find that your, your connection with your clients and and even with actors you don't take on is so genuine and it's almost like that manager level contact where you're really involved, and that's not typical of most agents. How do you strike a balance with the with getting so involved and still having bandwidth to do it all?

LyNea "LB" Bell

I used to do that and I didn't understand it but I came from a managerial background, so I guess that's just the natural me. So, you get a perk! You get a bonus! And I'm gonna care. And I'm all about the money, right? I'm a business woman, it is business, but you're a person. So, I have to be able to connect to you and if I'm just gonna sell you out on every single thing, I have to care about what it is that you truly want and what the bigger picture is.

Bonnie Gillespie

Yeah.

LyNea "LB" Bell

For me, I wouldn't want that on me so I'm not going to do that. Now, I've had clients say, "I don't care. Just get me that." And then that's what we look for but we have integrity in what we do and we want quality work, you know what I mean? We want quality. We want quality. Like if you do a series regular and you're getting, you know \$100,000 an episode, it's quality versus all these little bitty, you know, just whatever things that deter your career. So, let's look and see what it is that you truly want and let's work on that. And if you're willing to take anything,



you'll take anything, and, you know, there's a lot of people that are willing to just give you anything. I'm not. I don't want to just put you on any, I mean, excuse me, submit you on any project, and hope we get something and then maybe, you know, that you, you get some other thing that lessens you, that other thing that lessons you internally and then I've got to hear about it. I don't want to go through all that; let's talk about some of these things. Opportunities are there. We take them, we look at them, and we love them, and we go with it. I mean -- when I say we -- that is the client making the final decision, but we see if that's the direction that you want to go to, you know? We know Hollywood is not overnight, and that's the misconception people expect a microwave, we're not in a microwave.

Bonnie Gillespie

Ooh! Yes, it's a slow cooker for some folks.

LyNea "LB" Bell

We've had clients overnight, well, I mean, within a year, they've made it to series regulars, right? Some people have done it. You have those, you know, Cinderella stories. You have those prince stories; you know what I mean. But is it the norm? That's the question.

Bonnie Gillespie

Yeah.

LyNea "LB" Bell

You've been doing this forever, right? When you're on, you're on. It's like this. You know what I mean? And when you're on you keep rising and then you look at how to evolve from that, right? But it doesn't necessarily mean it's always to the top. There's peaks.

Bonnie Gillespie

Yes, and for me part of the work is management of those levels and knowing that it's it's gonna be all over, and there's nothing wrong when it's a dip and there's nothing... like everything, "I'm doing everything right, when it's up top," it's because there's so much that we don't control, that is the, the flavor of the month, what the industry is into, what kind of stories are being sold, it's just a matter of timing that we don't control, along with hopefully mindset that we do control.

LyNea "LB" Bell

Absolutely. And you said one of the cool things. Timing. I am... if you've read any of my... in my business, timing is everything.

Bonnie Gillespie

Yes.

LyNea "LB" Bell

It's a timing thing.



Bonnie Gillespie

Yes. Okay, so one of the things that I love that we do together on Clubhouse sometimes and I know there are people here, probably, like, "I'm not on Clubhouse! Give me an invite." Whatever. It's coming for everybody. Don't worry, you'll be there.

LyNea "LB" Bell

It's a resource we're on now.

Bonnie Gillespie

Yes, yes, yes. I want to know, how do you tell when someone... because we go into rooms where people are doing monologues and we're just audio-only listening to a performance. How do you know when someone is fantastic when you're only listening? Can you talk about what kind of what you're doing on the gadget while that's going on?

LyNea "LB" Bell

I am surfing their, their Instagram. Listening.

Bonnie Gillespie

Yup!

LyNea "LB" Bell

And then if they intrigued my... my... if they've intrigued me -- I close my eyes and I listen to see how real it is, right? From there, I go into, "Let me see. Do they fit what they're telling me? What they're selling me?" Right? And that's where I look to see if there's some major connection. Sometimes it is, sometimes it's not. Doesn't mean it wasn't a great read, just means, let's get you in tune to some of those things and then you can hear the authenticity. You can hear if it's relatable, you can hear if it touches and soothes you and that's that's that's awesome. That's awesome. That is, that's amazing, because I've been shocked like, "What?!? Where'd this come from?"

Bonnie Gillespie

Yeah. I love how moved I can sometimes be in just that audio-only performance because I, like you, I do the same. I close my eyes and I just go on the trip. And I wonder... what do we do when they don't have an Instagram? Because some people just don't want to be on social media. They don't, they're, they're not into it. It makes them feel icky. What do we do about that?

LyNea "LB" Bell

Well, I mean, here's the thing: You want to be in the industry. That's part of the, that's part of the job. It's part of the job. This is what, where we are today right now at this very moment. That's like saying, "I want to be an actor, actress, but I don't have headshots. I don't have this." You need to get them. You're building relationships and at some point, they're going to need to



see you. So, you need to create one. If you want to stay private then create one for just your business and use it for business. It's not there to be your personal... it's not there to be all in your business. If you're selling a product, which is yourself, 'cause you are the product, right, and you're bringing us something, you have to give somebody something to see as well. So, complete your package.

Bonnie Gillespie

I love that. I love the idea of have a private one that is your real life, but this is your product. This is your offering to the industry. And even if all it is is a headshot and a link to your IMDb or demo reel, website, something that shows me, "Here's who I am as a performer," so that there's that connection.

LyNea "LB" Bell

It's business. Because this is business, right? And if that becomes... if Instagram is your business card, use it.

Bonnie Gillespie

Yeah.

LyNea "LB" Bell

It's like going out and saying, "Oh, I forgot my business cards." No, no, no.

Bonnie Gillespie

Especially because it's free to use, so, like get on it. Have some kind of presence. Claim your name there. The whole bit. Yeah.

LyNea "LB" Bell

I know, Android folks, they don't have the connection to Instagram. There is no social media link yet. So that's pretty interesting. Today, talking with someone, they actually had it in their bio but that's going to be interesting. And we're just going to have to make a shift and look and see how to make that work as well. How we've done it.

Bonnie Gillespie

Yeah, as the as the Clubhouse app is in beta, and starting to roll out more and more features for Android, it's going to it's going to take refinement, refinement. But, of course, then that means if I'm listening to somebody, and I'm excited by them, I'm going to find what's in their bio. So, if they've given me info... like if they have their own website or if it's their Instagram, Twitter, like just putting it in the bio itself. At least give me something so I know I can find you out there and then make sure you're findable.



Now, I want to shift gears into how we find things online, because I know you've done something incredible in our world that I don't think enough people know about. Could we shift gears and talk about your tech innovation, your brilliance in creating a search engine.

LyNea "LB" Bell

Thank you. Yes, absolutely. That's my baby. Yes!

Bonnie Gillespie

Tell me about GOTCONN. How did you come up with the idea?

LyNea "LB" Bell

Okay, so 2006 I, you know, I had a spiritual moment. And I was playing with my son's puzzles and my spirit was like, "Grab these puzzles." And I did. Throw them in the air and he said, "Hey, these are the people," right? And I've been big on security issues with people and protection. So, for me it's a protection aspect. But anyway, I did that and he said, "You need to help connect dots." So, that's where it GOTCONN came. Okay. And then from there and working with tech and engineers, it became about privacy and how do we protect people's privacy.

So, Martin Luther King Day, I Clubhouse-launched GOTCONN which is a private-based search engine. So, you're not tracked, traced. It's like taking away cyberbullying, if you will, right? It's not okay to bully anyone so why is it okay to cyberbully someone? So, we said, "Hey, you know what, you have options. It's your choice. Your search, you have options now, and you don't have to be open up for this, this, this bullying, if you will, and you get to search privately and do the same things as the big guys, but you get to keep your information." And for my talent, I'm like, "Hey, if your phone ever got stolen, guess what, I don't have to worry about you being on TMZ," and then they chuckle because it stays private, it stays private.

Bonnie Gillespie

Because I don't I don't think people even realize how much we're giving away and granting to these sites and searches and things like, the things when we say, "Yes, accept cookies," I don't think we're going and reading... I read all the terms and conditions, because I'm a junkie for that legalese. I love all that. But it's, it's significant, the things that we are giving technology and the people who run it permission to know about us and to, to track and trace like you said. The work of the tech of it, you... how long did it take you to develop the actual search engine?

LyNea "LB" Bell

Oh, 2006, is the vision came on. I will say, all of COVID is when the engineers came together and we worked creating a presentation, and we went into beta. we launched on Martin Luther King Day, and then we're still growing. So, imagine a world where you can do every single thing you're accustomed to doing, but not and not having to relinquish any of that information, right? I will tell you I've met so many people that said, "Yes, I know I have to give away this



information when I use the big techs," but they didn't know that they had a choice. Right? So being able to give them a choice you get to decide what that looks like for you on both sides.

Bonnie Gillespie

So, anybody watching right now who wants to use it, where do they go? What's, what's the thing to bookmark now?

LyNea "LB" Bell

Bookmark: g o t c o n n. That is GOTCONN.com. G O T C O N N .com.

Bonnie Gillespie

And it's not going to track you. It's not going to trace you. It's not going to ask for an email address. It is just private search.

LyNea "LB" Bell

Just a private search, and I know a lot of people said, "I'm used to with the cookies remembering some of the information." It's a brand-new search every time you use our service so that lets you know we're not asking for any of your information. We're not selling, we don't even want to know who you are. Back in the day of advertising, it was just, if you search for a car, it was just the car and the advertisers paid for the search of the car, that's it. Something you get paid for is a whole 'nother story, right, you shouldn't have to be sacrificed for the car.

Bonnie Gillespie

So true. Oh my gosh, yeah because we think about like, "Oh, the convenience of autofill." I'm like, "Think of the creepiness of autofill. Think about what that is doing," like, come on.

LyNea "LB" Bell

And on another note, back... remember... for me, I used to do wireless communications, I used to remember 100 numbers. I used to remember 100 things. I, now with the convenience of the smartness of other things, it takes away my intelligence or my thinking and so forth because I'm being handicapped by something else. So, it's getting us back into, you know, I like to call it a game. What did I do this time when I searched? Hey let me remember this because now it's building on something, but I know for sure, on the search engine, we are just, we're keeping it anonymous. We're keeping you anonymous and safe and protected and that's that's all that matters to me.

Bonnie Gillespie

Gosh, you brought up such a good point, of the remembering 100 numbers because there was something that I... someone on my team had said, "You know you can just save that and do a shortcut and a copy and paste." And I'm like, "No, it's good for my aging brain to have to go 'What were those numbers, da da da da, oh right. Now I've got it." That's, I need that. That's a workout. That muscle is there to remember the numbers. We want to do that. It's good for us.



LyNea "LB" Bell

And we've gotten so used to the convenience, and turns out that it will cost.

Bonnie Gillespie

Yes, there is always a cost, always a cost. Okay, let's, let's close up on, as we're Creating the Hollywood We Want, the vision that you see for where we're headed for the kinds of opportunities that exist. The kinds of stories that we're going to be able to tell. And I don't, I'm not thinking of any particular date out in the future, I'm just... where do you see us shifting and growing as an industry?

LyNea "LB" Bell

Stories? That's actually a good question. I don't, I mean because we talked about it a little bit before I think the world, in the now, they want the things that they can relate to. So, I think we're starting... we've been getting some of those things and I think we're gonna start seeing a lot more of those things, the reality things have kind of disappeared, right? They're there, but, aaah. People want things that they connect to, you know what I mean? There's a TV show, one of my favorites. The triplets, one of the kids were adopted, right? Sterling. And I love it, because, you know, I'm a triplet, but we want, the world wants things that you can relate to. Things that you can touch and say, "That's me, I see myself in this project. I see myself in that."

And that's what we grew away from and I think everything happens full circle. So, the things that we were watching in the '80s, '90s, you know what I mean, the 2000s, I think they're coming back, which they always do and that's what's going to target... it's family focused. We've been stuck home, right, so we had to learn how, what related to being stuck home with other people, right? And how we grew from that, and then how we came out of these situations with light at the end of the tunnel, not this darkness that they want us to believe that we have.

Bonnie Gillespie

So true because there's always going to be light and dark everywhere but I think there's an agenda behind making us believe there's more darkness than there really is. Because when we know how much light there is, especially coming from within us, we're unstoppable. And I think that's a little terrifying to the patriarchy. So, yeah, awesome. LB you are unstoppable. Oh, so please go ahead.

LyNea "LB" Bell

I said you, figure you put that in a movie that's relatable, it's gonna be a blockbuster. You know, I want... and I don't wanna say blockbuster, but, but it's going to be something that we're going to stand for and that's why you have all the superheroes right? So now they're going to recreate something that we can relate to, and everybody can live vicariously through because it becomes the win. That's what I believe we're coming through, and more women shows right? Because,



I'm sorry, but we're kicking butt right now, no offense guys, right? But when you have an amazing kick-butt woman team. I think transitioning. And we're standing in that.

Bonnie Gillespie

Yes, and that's what I say to guys, I'm like, guys look, "You had a good run. But, we're gonna try it this way for a little bit. Let's just let's see what kind of magic we can make happen."

LyNea "LB" Bell

Balance for everybody. We're gonna keep it balanced and we're gonna keep it 100. And we don't mind sharing, that's the whole thing is, it doesn't become this, this good old... this good old boys thing, it becomes a, you know what, "Oh, you know, no no. I trust her too, come on and let's go." And you're gonna get some quality, amazing things that everybody can relate to.

Bonnie Gillespie

That's the big difference is that there's such a male model of, "us and we've got, no one else can come in, there's no room." And there's something so beautiful about this inclusion of, we're going to get opportunities and there's room for everybody, and, and it's just a different vibe and I'm so here for it.

LyNea "LB" Bell

So am I, So am I.

Bonnie Gillespie

Oh, LB, this is a delight. I just love being with you and having this time. Could you tell everyone how to be in touch with you, follow you, find you on social, submit if they'd like, that sort of thing.

LyNea "LB" Bell

Yes, if you have a package you'd like me to submit, writer, director, producer, celebrity name, you name, it we do it. Because we work with a lot of niche clients as well. You can shoot me an email at agents@BHtalent.com My Instagram, Facebook, and I believe my Twitter is, @IAmLyNeaBell and if you GOTCONN me just look up LB and I should be able to pop up.

Bonnie Gillespie

Excellent. LB.

LyNea "LB" Bell

I just want to say I love you, Bonnie, you are amazing and thank you for creating this and thank you for being you. Thank you for just balancing people, because what you bring in every book, or every time we speak to the talent, we always reference your book for a reason. Because it gives them direction, and it was something that you wrote that came from truth, and that's, that's what I love. And you give real answers, but we always say, "You know what, did



you do your research? Did you read a book? Did you... here, let me redirect you, right? Read that, come back, talk to us after that." And I don't care how long you've been in the industry, because there's always something you can learn so I thank you and appreciate you.

Bonnie Gillespie

Oh, LB, I love you too. Thank you so much and that's it for sure you can tell the difference between somebody who did their reading and did not do their reading because the questions are at a different level, for sure.

LyNea "LB" Bell

Exactly. Exactly.

Bonnie Gillespie

Excellent, thank you so much, LB. I appreciate you.

LyNea "LB" Bell

I appreciate you too, honey.