

The 2016 BOTOC: Surprise Me Award Nominations Are Heeeeeere! Yah!

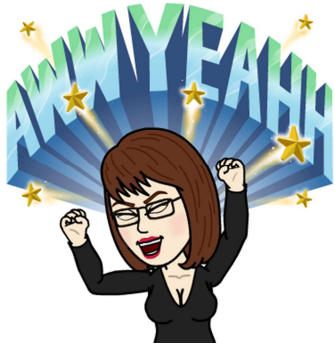
For those of you unfamiliar with the phrase, a BOTOC is a **B**attle **O**f **T**he **O**ngoing **C**lasses. Get it? **BOTOC**. It has nothing to do with that BOTOX crap you shoot into your forehead. A BOTOC is a Kahntest -- or dare I say Kahnpetition – between and among the Ongoing Classes. For the past several years we've done BOTOCs during the last week or so of the year and performed them during the last classes.

Every BOTOC is different. Recent BOTOCs have included, among others:

- 2016 BOTOC: Science Fiction and/or Fantasy (in which classes got to create a Science Fiction and/or Fantasy show – yah, there were a lotta STRANGER THINGS),
- 2015 BOTOC: Surprise Me! (in which classes got to create a show that surprised me).
- 2014 BOTOC: Romance (in which classes got to create a show based around the theme of Romance),
- 2013 BOTOC: Talent Show (in which classes got to put on some kind of talent show),
- 2012 BOTOC: Dealer's Choice (in which classes got to do a Broadway musical, a theme show or create their own non-revue show),
- 2012 BOTOC: Scare Me (in which the scariest show won),
- 2011 BOTOC: Broadway (Broadway shows),
- 2011 BOTOC: Intermezzi (original performance pieces),
- 2011 BOTOC: Kahncepts (groups taught an acting-related Kahncept like listening, threes or reversals to the rest of the class),
- (I was, apparently, really into BOTOCs in 2011!),
- 2010 BOTOC: Scenes from AFI Top 100 Films,
- BOTOC: Kissing Scenes,
- BOTOC: Reality Show Pilot Teasers,
- BOTOC: Kahndance Film Festival, and
- BOTOC: The Kahnnes Film Festival.

January 4, 2017

Y'all! I loooooooooooooooooooooooved the 2016 BOTOC shows! They were UHmazing. And they were all good!!!! In years past one or two have been – shall we say – disappointing? But NONE of 'em disappointed this year! All of 'em were creative and thought-provoking, intelligent, fun and had lots of moments of fabulousity. There were some great performances, ideas and some wonderful execution.

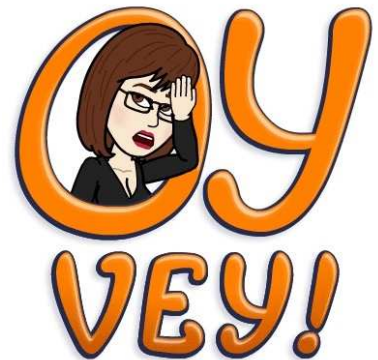


I am a thrilled acting teacher.

Even more thrilling is that some classes which might have had a history of being – shall we say – messy in performance? Less than specific in execution? Were neither messy nor unspecific! Superb transitions, extreme clarity, gorgeous moments made – uch, I was verklempt. (Lookitup.)

Kahngratulations!

But get this! I also found out why I insist upon doing BOTOC at least annually, in spite of the – shall we say – blowback? Violent antipathy? Abject hostility? I get from some of you.



See, I've always thought I did BOTOC because it was good for you to

- get to make something,
- try new things,
- do things you never get to do, and
- performjustforthehellofperforming.

- (a) With regard to making something, so many of y'all call yourselves actors but you never get to ACT. You audition, you do scenes from stuff, you do stand up, and you do sketch and improv, but I think it's important to get to DO what you really wanna DO -- a whole freakin' show. Whether it be tv, film or theatre. Top to bottom. At least once in a while. At LEAST once a year.
- (b) Lots of y'all get to try different things during BOTOC. One year a guy tried editing and now he's a full time, wildly successful editor. This year people who have never written ANYTHING, wrote the whole show and some who have never produced or directed did BOTH. How great is that for your growth and confidence?!

- (c) Other people got to do stuff they love but don't get a chance to do very often 'cuz they're too busy dragging dishes around Los Angeles county. Like they got to design and execute costumes, make-up, sets, lights, and choreography. Many of you got to sing and dance and play characters you are never asked to play out there in the real (read: Hollywood) world.
- (d) But mostly, it's just so important that you – at least occasionally -- get a chance to freakin' ACT WITHOUT ANY FREAKIN' CONSEQUENCES. Without agents, managers, casting directors, studios and networks barring the road, putting in their two cents, going olderyoungermoreethniclessdiversefunnier-orfreakin'-sexier).

But this year, I learned that I do BOTOX for another reason as well.

Me.



I do it so that not only are there no CONsequences, but also so that there are no KAHNsequences!!!!

Every weeknight and most weekdays of the year my job is to fix you. To scrutinize you and your acting and your essence and your marketing and your confidence and your charisma and your text analysis and your emotional reservoir, your forehead and your feet, your ability to handle complex language, your accent (or lack thereof), your hands and your voice and your speech and your posture (I'm exhausted just listing all of it!), in order to determine where SOMEONE out there MIGHT HAVE an itsy bitsy PROBLEM with like your nose hair or your shoes or your vocal fry or your choices or your personality. Once I see an offending issue, no matter what – no matter your tears or enthusiasm, agreement or hostility – I have to bring that issue to your attention and FIX the SHIT out of it. That's what you are paying me to do, so I'm gonna do it.

And I'm honored. I am HONORED to have your confidence and your willingness to keep coming back. I will not stop doing what I gotta do until you are too busy thriving out there to show up here. It's what you hired me to do and I'm gonna do it come cold or flu or really bad tummy-ache.

But because of that? I never get to just BE with you. ENJOY you. Love you. Admire you. Laugh with you. Cry with you.

And while you might say, "Well, Les, that's not your job. My FRIENDS get to adore me. My FAMILY can hang out with me. YOU? You gotta FIX me."

But I gotta WATCH you – SEE the real you – the you that LOVES to perform (Troy), has a phenomenal voice (Tara), dances like a dream (Jaime), is an amazing writer (Amber), thrives when you're doing ten thousand things at the same time (Nikki). The you that turns on when nobody who matters is watching, when you're with your friends, when you maybe had a little something before the show. THAT you. The FREE you. The FUN you. Theyouthatdoesn'tgiveafuck. The you that I gotta make them BUY.

So guess what. I freakin' NEED that. I freakin' need ONE night a year in which I get to just sit back and SEE, APPRECIATE, RELISH, and REVEL in you. I need a night to just LOVE you and support you; to simply encourage you and validate you. And SEE the FUCK outta you.

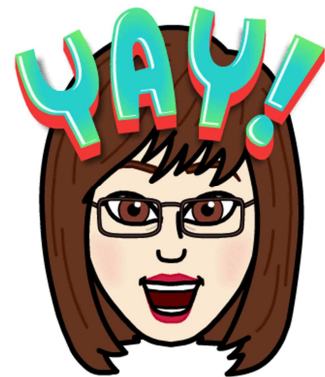
Now I have to admit that I have not always known this about BOTOC v. LK. It's true. In the past I have taken y'all to task about being messy or sketchy or not doing your best or not listening or not trying hard enough.

But I'm done with that shit. (During BOTOC. Don't get excited. One night a year. Thassit.)

Just so ya' know, it's hard to pick at you every freakin' time I see you. It's hard to alllllways be the bitch, to alllllways have to bring this up and remind you of that and repeat this and reiterate that. I know you're frustrated when you haven't yet "got it," and I get frustrated with myself because I haven't figured out the magic words or the spell or the trick or the game or the exercise that will miraculously GET YOU THERE RIGHT NOW. I WANT to get you there RIGHT NOW because then (1) you'll be working, and (2) you'll be HAPPY, which means (3) I WILL BE HAPPY because we will have BOTH achieved our dream. Which is the point, right?

And you might say I don't have to do that, that I could give you a break every once in a while, that perhaps I could, as my old friend Patrick used to say, "cut you some slack," but see, I caaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaan't. You're paying me to move this shit ALONG. You came to me saying, in effect, "Les, I wanna do this, and I'm not getting any younger. Tell me what I gotta do to get on the boards NOW. Make it happen. Do it now." You did NOT come to me and say, "Hey, you're a cute Jew. Let's hang out for a while and see what happens. I love waiting tables. I don't mind doing that forever." Didja? Nope. Every time I don't pull at a string that might be loose, I'm not doing my job. I'm not giving you the full bang for your buck.

So I need a night. I need that week. To just get to look at you and appreciate you. And that appreciation will make me even better at torturing you into fabulousity



when I see you next.

Yay.

Ok? Ok.

So now, without further ado, here are **The 2016 BOTOC: Science Fiction and/or Fantasy Award Nominations.**

They are my gift to you. For all your hard work, enthusiasm, craft, talent, time, effort and love. Yes, love! I think it's important that you get recognized for all the schlepping you did. (If you schlepped.)

My beloved acting teacher, Barbara June Greener Patterson, used to tell us all the time that acting was a gift of love. That's what y'all gave me a couple weeks ago. A big ol' gift of loooooooooooooove.

So here is a bit of a record of all that love for you to keep.

Much love,

Lesterina

P.S.

All that said, there were some problems with the photos. SOME classes didn't really take any, others sent in upwards of five hundred, lots were sent over so small that the quality is poor, and some classes successfully managed not to get pix of stuff we needed. So we gotta find another way. Am totes avail for suggestions. Meanwhile, I did the best I could with what I had.

Oh and also, please forgive if there is some horrific omission or oversight!!!! None are intended! But there are a LOT of awards, a LOT of you and a LOT of shows, and I am just one relatively small Jew. There will be mistakes and omissions. Please forgive me in advance.