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ALLEN: Welcome to the Talks at Google, podcast, where great minds meet. Once again, I'm Allen, bringing you this week's episode of the podcast. Talks at Google brings the world's most influential thinkers, creators, makers, and doers all to one place. Every episode of this podcast is taken from a video that can be seen at [YouTube.com/TalksatGoogle](https://www.youtube.com/TalksatGoogle). This episode features an incredibly inspirational talk with writer, director, producer, and actor Tyler Perry discussing his movie "A Madea Family Funeral," which hit theaters back on March 1, 2019--a joyous family reunion becomes a hilarious nightmare, as Madea and the crew travel to backwoods Georgia, where they find themselves unexpectedly planning a funeral that might unveil unsavory family secrets. Moderated by De'arra and Ken from the DK4L YouTube channel, here is Tyler Perry: Tyler Perry's "A Madea Family Funeral."

[00:01:00]

TYLER PERRY: Praise God. Praise God. Praise God. Praise God. Praise God.

KEN WALKER: Sing it.

TYLER PERRY: Praise God. What's up, everybody? How y'all doing? You sound beautiful, guys.

KEN WALKER: Amen.

TYLER PERRY: What's up, Ken?

KEN WALKER: What's going on, man? What's going on? So, we're gonna just jump right into it.

TYLER PERRY: Okay.

KEN WALKER: Why Madea? Right? I think everybody wants to know--I know, when I seen it, I was a little heartbroken. My momma called me crying. I told her I was gonna--you know, we were gonna come down Tyler Perry Studios in Atlanta and we were gonna have to have a conversation.

TYLER PERRY: About-about her dying?

KEN WALKER: About her--

TYLER PERRY: Leaving. She's not dying. She's not dying. She's alive.

KEN WALKER: Well, she's dying in our hearts.

TYLER PERRY: No, she's not dying. She's gonna live on in your heart.

KEN WALKER: See, Tyler.

TYLER PERRY: She gonna be in your heart, man. Hell.

[00:02:00]

KEN WALKER: We just want to know, you know, why? What made you decide to lay her to rest?

TYLER PERRY: 'Cause--how old are you?

KEN WALKER: I'm 24.

TYLER PERRY: See, when I was 24, man, she was gonna live forever. I'm turning 50 this year, and I'm-I'm like, it's time for her to [inaudible]. I don't want to be this old broad's age playing her. So-so it's just-it's just time. it's been a good run. It's been a--franchise has done--a multi-billion dollar franchise. You know, been really good for the company. Been really good for myself. And it's just time. I want to do other things.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Great. So, at any point did you have second thoughts of, like, not killing her?

TYLER PERRY: No, I won't kill her, 'cause they'll kill me. I have second thoughts all the time, 'cause we're on tour right now, with the farewell tour, and we-we're 34 shows in, of 140-something shows.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Wow.

TYLER PERRY: And these 34 shows have all been sold out.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Wow.

TYLER PERRY: And I had second thoughts the--Saturday night, 10,000 people showed up at the Kodak--at the Dolby Theatre in L.A. And in the audience is Jay-Z and Beyonce.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: What?

[00:02:57]

TYLER PERRY: So I sure have second thoughts when Queen Bey sitting out there going...

KEN WALKER: I can imagine.

TYLER PERRY: "Wait, she came to see Madea?" Madea was like, "Yes, she did, thank you." Yeah.

KEN WALKER: Sheesh. So, for everybody that knows, Tyler Perry's an extremely hard worker, extremely hard worker.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Yes. Definitely.

KEN WALKER: "A Madea Family Funeral" was shot two years ago.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

KEN WALKER: Comes out March 1. I see the look on your face. I'm about as surprised as you are--

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: I was surprised.

KEN WALKER: So want to give a little in-look or outlook into your creative process, because we had a chance to be on set with you...

TYLER PERRY: That's right.

KEN WALKER: For "Boo 2." And you work extremely fast.

TYLER PERRY: Really fast.

KEN WALKER: You're a very nice person, but you work extremely fast, and you tell people to move.

TYLER PERRY: Thank you for saying I'm nice, 'cause you know--look, I'm gonna tell yes, when I put that costume on, I'm trying to direct, I'm not nice, so thank you for saying that.

KEN WALKER: Absolutely.

TYLER PERRY: [inaudible] like, "Get the damn camera in the right place, shit, so I can go take this shit off." Yes. Excuse me. Excuse me. Excuse me.

KEN WALKER: We just want to know where that comes from. Like, where does that creative--

TYLER PERRY: The hard work?

KEN WALKER: Not even just the hard work, but the timely manner.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: The dedication.

KEN WALKER: The dedication to shoot this movie in a record-breaking amount of days.

TYLER PERRY: Well, the reason it was set for two--it sat in the camp for two years is because we did--we had just finished "Boo 2."

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Mm-hmm. I remember.

[00:04:00]

TYLER PERRY: And I didn't want to go "Boo," "Boo 2," and "Madea Funeral." So I put "Acrimony" in the middle, and "Nobody's Fool," and now I was ready to release it. But-but the speed of it is--you ever look at somebody working and you go, "This doesn't make sense"? Like, a lot of times I've seen other people shoot movies, and how much it time it takes, the downtime--I've seen a guy--I was on set for this one movie. Wasn't my movie. And I got there. They called me in at like 6:00 in the morning to come and shoot. By noon, I still hadn't shot anything. By like 3:00, I'm sitting in their trailer like, "Okay, what the hell's going on here?" So, I go out, and the director comes to set, and he goes, "I don't like it. Change all the lights." After I had been sitting there for like 12 hours. That wasn't a good day for him. 'Cause I'm thinking, why didn't the director show up early that morning, get it set, get what he needed, make sure it was right, and not waste everybody's time? I'm all about efficiency, and I'm all about--I have a great team, so we all move quickly. We have a shorthand, so it doesn't--like-like, we--"The Have and Have Nots," we shoot an episode and a half in a day.

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If that were, like, let's say "Scandal" or "Empire," it takes them a week and a half to shoot--a week and a half, or seven to ten days, to shoot one episode. I just--I just got to--I like to move. And as long as the actors can keep up, you know, it's a great thing. And y'all kept up. Y'all kept up.

KEN WALKER: Luckily. Luckily.

TYLER PERRY: I was talking to him about these holes in his jeans. It's a bold man that's gonna wear holes in his jeans in the wintertime, 'cause my-my knees would be completely white. Just ashy.

KEN WALKER: I guess I'm a lucky one. I'm a lucky one.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah, okay. Or you got some good lotion is what it is.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Ashy.

KEN WALKER: So, I want to ask, Madea came out so long ago.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

KEN WALKER: At one point, I guess, long ago, that you decided, "Madea's gonna be Madea, but not only that, I'm gonna play Madea"?

TYLER PERRY: Two things happened. And I just did this Op-Ed piece for the New York Times, where I talked about--they were asking me questions about, like, how did this start? And it hit me. My mother used to take me to the projects with her to play cards on the weekends. And all these women would sit around playing cards.

[00:06:00]

Now, these weren't your Sunday morning proper bridge ladies playing bridge. These were cussing, spitting, smoking, talking trash, strong, black women. And they would sit around making all of these jokes and laughing. But the minute they started talking about relationships, it was--the whole room would get quiet. So I remembered, as a kid, when my mother would be going through things, I would imitate those women to make her life. So here I am, all these years later, being able to do this. I didn't know that that was, like, a masterclass for me, as a little boy, to be able to do this. But where she started we also in that moment. But I had a show in 2000, at the theater in Chicago, the 79th and Stony Island Regal Theater, and this particular actress that I had been promoting was gonna be there. She had a hit song on the radio. She was huge at the time. She didn't show up. So Madea was only supposed to be on stage for five minutes. After I seen Eddie Murphy do the Klumps, I was doing two different characters in the play. But when she didn't show up, I had to say all of her lines and Madea's lines, and the audience went crazy.

[00:07:00]

And that's where it started. You were two. But that's where it started. That's where it started.

KEN WALKER: Wow.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: [inaudible]. Wow. So, my question is, for the "Madea Funeral," was your whole thought behind this movie and coming out with this movie, and it being the last movie that Madea would be in--was it like a trick to get people to think, like, "Hey, she's gonna be dead"? Because, we saw the movie yesterday. But before we watched the movie, we thought, like, she's gonna die.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah. I can't kill her. No, it's like--it would be like killing a family member. Like, it's a family member to so many people. So no, I didn't want to kill her. But I-I didn't think--I didn't know the funeral was gonna be the last one. I just made the decision, after, you know, all of this, and doing the final tour, I was like, you know, this is a good time to put it to bed. 'Cause part of the--part of the franchise and everything--what I was trying to do is get to the studio down in Atlanta, which is--if you haven't seen it, it's 330 acres, 12 sound stages. "Black Panther" reshoots were done there. "First Man" was shot there. "Rampage" was shot there. "Walking Dead" was shot there. So all these things were shot at the studio. But that was--that was the goal.

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So, all these franchised, everything that I was doing, I was working toward a goal. 275,000 cars came through the gates since I've opened--working toward a goal. So, now that the goal has been achieved, now I feel like I've met that level, and I'm free to just do what I want to do.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: That's good. Clap it up.

TYLER PERRY: Meet the goal. Meet the goal.

KEN WALKER: So, we noticed that you start incorporating influences...

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Mm-hmm.

KEN WALKER: Into your movies and your films.

TYLER PERRY: Like you two. Yeah.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Yeah.

KEN WALKER: Like us.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Thank you for the opportunity for our first film, actually.

TYLER PERRY: No. Please, come on, you kidding me?

KEN WALKER: At what point did you decide, "Hey, these influencers are funny"--and you decided not to go with the traditional actor. So, what has been, like, the best and the worst part of making that kind of decision?

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Or, like, what was your--you and your team's decision to put influencers in your content?

TYLER PERRY: I just--you know, people are used to--you know, the way you got things in the past was just, you had to go to an audition and be--and a casting director. You have to figure out--now, it's like, you go on the internet, you see somebody, I'm like, "Whoa. This person funny. I need to know this person." Like, Blame It on Kway--Kwaylon Rogers.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Uh-huh. Yes.

TYLER PERRY: He's on tour with me right now.

[00:09:00]

That dude is stupid funny.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Yes.

TYLER PERRY: You guys, I was just like, I got to--because--because I do realize, getting closer to 50, you start to age out, the character starts to age out, so you have to spice it up, you know. And you guys are a whole 'nother generation, and doing something differently. So I wanted to give you a shot, 'cause maybe somebody would see something I'm doing and realize they can do it too, but do it better, on another level.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Yes. Yes. I agree.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah. Yeah.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: So, has it been proven beneficial, having influencers in your films?

TYLER PERRY: Oh no, it's been great. Yeah. Yeah. Especially--well, it started with the "Boo" films.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Uh-huh.

TYLER PERRY: But absolutely. Yeah, it's been--definitely been beneficial. Yeah, y'all people--y'all people buy tickets too.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Yeah.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah. Yeah.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: They do.

KEN WALKER: Buy tickets.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: They are consumers.

KEN WALKER: So, has it been tough working with someone [inaudible]?

TYLER PERRY: When y'all getting married? I'm sorry. That was left field. Sorry.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Ooh, I don't know.

TYLER PERRY: Okay.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Ask him.

TYLER PERRY: Okay, got it.

KEN WALKER: I feel like--all right. I feel like--

TYLER PERRY: He just wanted to crawl up in his casket just then. He just want--he just wanted to get up and--"Dude, don't do that to me."

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Next.

TYLER PERRY: No, go ahead. I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

KEN WALKER: Time for me to go.

TYLER PERRY: I'm sorry.

KEN WALKER: But, so--normally

[00:10:00]

TYLER PERRY: Man down. Man down.

KEN WALKER: Man down.

TYLER PERRY: Man down.

KEN WALKER: All right. We're good. So, as an influencer, normally, when we talk to, like, the casting directors, a lot of them feel as though influencers don't have the experience that a traditional actor...

TYLER PERRY: That's true.

KEN WALKER: A person who's practiced or whatnot.

TYLER PERRY: That's true.

KEN WALKER: So, have you faced, I guess, working with an influencer, and you're like, "Hold on. This guy"--you could just pretty much tell that this person doesn't have the practice or the necessity--needs.

TYLER PERRY: Well--exactly right. But what it is for me is, like, there are a lot of people that I've worked with that are first-timers. So, not just influencers, but this is their first time, that they auditioned, did a great job, or they were like, "You know, I really want to act. Can I?" And I'll give them a shot. So, my studio, and what I've done, it's always been a training ground for a lot of plan. So I don't mind that. I don't mind being in a situation where I can instruct and train, as long as the right disciplines are there. If you--if you're open to learning and not just thinking, "Okay, this is just what it is, you know, I'm gonna just do this my way." If you're not open to learning, then it's gonna be a problem. But everybody that I've worked with has been open to learning. So yeah.

[00:11:00]

Don't let them tell you that.

KEN WALKER: Yeah.

TYLER PERRY: You tell them, you've been on--you've been in a movie. You know what to do.

KEN WALKER: Right.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Oh yeah. Definitely. That's my--when people ask, "Who are you?" I'm like, "I'm an actor."

TYLER PERRY: That's right. Own it. Own it. That's right.

KEN WALKER: So, we want to talk a little bit about your work ethic.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

KEN WALKER: Because not only are you on tour, you're doing, like, the whole press thing for "Madea Family Funeral."

TYLER PERRY: It's so funny. I'm gonna tell them--when I walked in, I didn't even recognize it. I just--I left the Oscars Sunday and went to the parties, got on a plane, landed here, had to get dressed to go to the premiere, and had a few hours of sleep last night, and I'm trying to figure out my name right about now. But yeah. Yeah. But it's--but it's worth it. It's fun.

KEN WALKER: It's hilarious. We were in the back, and the guy asked him, you know, "Where was the last city you were in?" He didn't know. Somebody else answered for him. "Oh, you were in L.A." He was like, "Yeah, L.A."

TYLER PERRY: Yeah. And I'm not crazy. I'm not slipping. It's just being on tour--and listen, I'm on stage some nights, and they have to give me a note saying, "Okay, this is where you are." 'Cause it's like, city to city, place to place.

[00:12:00]

And these arenas and theaters, they all start to look alike. So yeah.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Always working. That's good.

TYLER PERRY: But work ethic. You were asking about work ethic.

KEN WALKER: Absolutely.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

KEN WALKER: Definitely want to know where that comes from. Because as an influencer, a YouTuber, we see a lot of people reach a certain level of success and kind of go stagnant.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

KEN WALKER: Become inconsistent, stop working as hard as they did...

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

KEN WALKER: Trying to reach a certain goal. But you, it just seems like, the "Madea Family Funeral..."

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

KEN WALKER: The tour, you just seem to keep moving, keep moving.

TYLER PERRY: Those people aren't hungry, man. And when you hungry, you-you keep grinding, keep grinding, keep grinding. And what it-it went from me wanting to do well enough to take care of my mother, to then realizing that all these people are depending on me, to realizing that, "Wait, now you've got an opportunity to lift and share and show other people the way." So I've always got a motivation. As long as something's in front of me, I work hard. But, you know, when you have a four-year-old, he'll slow all that down. Be like, "Hey, I'm over here. Come get--I need some attention." So yeah.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: So, I'm gonna go back to the--about the character Madea. And I know that you don't--you also play other characters, like Joe. So I want to ask, like, is he going away?

[00:13:00]

TYLER PERRY: No. No. Nobody's asked that. I think Joe and Heathrow--see, Brian is such a square, right?

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

TYLER PERRY: So, Joe and Heathrow--Heathrow's in a wheelchair. He speaks with--

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Little mic. He's funny.

TYLER PERRY: And he says he was a war hero. And, you know, he lost his legs and lungs from being in the war. All lies. He bought all those medals at Walmart. I mean, and just--he just--so--but they're gonna take him on a road trip to Vegas, kind of like "The Hangover."

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Oh.

TYLER PERRY: And get-and get him in trouble. So we'll see. We'll see.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Okay, then.

KEN WALKER: Wow. I guess that pretty much answered my next question. I just kind of figure, what were you planning to do next with, I guess, a particular character. And I guess Heathrow's going to Vegas.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah. And Madea's not going. Here's what I'm gonna do with that. I'm thinking of going to--back to the '70s and telling the story of a young Madea and a young Joe and a young Brian.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Ooh.

TYLER PERRY: But with a real actress, you know, playing the role, and real-and real other people playing all the other roles in those ages.

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So, kind of like a Foxy Brown kind of thing.

KEN WALKER: Wow.

TYLER PERRY: So that should be exciting.

KEN WALKER: So, Madea will resurface.

TYLER PERRY: Yes. With another-with another person.

KEN WALKER: With another actor.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah. For sure.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Yeah, okay.

KEN WALKER: A younger-a younger Madea.

TYLER PERRY: Younger Madea. Yeah.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: So it won't be you. Got it.

KEN WALKER: Wow.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah. Yeah.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Got it. Noted.

KEN WALKER: But you're still gonna play Joe, Heathrow.

TYLER PERRY: No, no, no. Those are all other actors.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Oh.

TYLER PERRY: Younger people. They're, like, in their 20s. I can't--as good looking as I am, I can't play in my 20s anymore.

KEN WALKER: You do look good. You look good.

TYLER PERRY: I cannot play in my 20s anymore. People don't believe it.

KEN WALKER: Wow.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Wow. That's gonna be dope. I'm excited.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah. It's gonna be fun. It's gonna be fun.

KEN WALKER: So, I guess one of my final questions is how do you want Madea to be remembered? I guess, with this being her last film, a lot of funny jokes. I know Madea very well. A lot of crazy things, she's said. A lot of inspirational things, she's said.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

KEN WALKER: In a very messed up way, a lot of things have been inspirational. So how do you just want her to be remembered on a larger scale?

TYLER PERRY: That's the most--when you--when I look back at the body of work, when I look at all of it, I realize, like, the first few movies, when I was talking about abuse and getting over things and bad marriages, I was actually, subconsciously talking to my mother.

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In my writing. And I didn't get it until I looked back on it. But what I want her to be remembered as is this grandmother that made you laugh, have a good time, you know, forget about the man in the dress, but just somebody who spoke wisdoms, made people feel good, and made things lighter and their life a little bit better. So, that's my hope. That's my hope, for sure.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Okay, cool. And my last question was--well, you kind of already answered--but, like, what is next for you?

TYLER PERRY: After this nap?

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Yeah.

KEN WALKER: After the nap.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah. I--again, right now, it's about legacy. It's about what am I leaving behind?

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Mm-hmm.

TYLER PERRY: It's about the studio. It's about my son. It's about what is the legacy? And how many doors--how wide can I hold this door open? 'Cause I'm looking at what's happening in Hollywood right

now, and everybody's like, "Oh my God, diversity is so amazing, and it's great." It's like, "Tyler, do you think it's wonderful?" But the truth is I was doing diversity before diversity was cool.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Right. I agree.

TYLER PERRY: I was--I was on--you know, hiring people, like Idris Elba and Viola Davis and Sofia Vergara and Kerry Washington, Taraji P. Henson--these people couldn't get work.

[00:16:00]

So now, to look at what's happening here, I don't want people to forget that there was a fight for--from many, many years, to get to where we are now. We still have a long way to go. But I'm seeing the nucleus of a brilliant time where all stories are being able to be told. And the beauty of that is, I realize that my criticism is a lot less, because everybody gets a chance to tell their stories now. When you're the only black person out there telling this kind of--your stories, you got black people going, "What the hell? No, that's not me. That doesn't represent black people." But it represents the black people I know, right? So now, to see Issa Rae and Donald Glover and, you know, Ryan Coogler, and all these people get to tell their stories. I'm just--I'm in heaven. So I just want to keep holding the door open as wide as I can.

DE'ARRA TAYLOR: Great.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

KEN WALKER: So, we're gonna open it up to the audience. You guys have any questions about Madea, "Madea's Family Funeral," anything of the matter. Anything.

QUESTIONER: Hi.

TYLER PERRY: Hey.

QUESTIONER: Hey, Tyler. Latoya Drake. I work here at Google.

[00:17:00]

I grew up in Georgia. So shout out to the state. It's really encouraging to see everything that you've done with the studio, all the economic prosperity you've brought to the state. After the gubernatorial election, there was talk of Hollywood pulling its dollars as a reaction to Brian Kemp winning. Wondering what you crossed your mind, if that was something you considered, or how you felt you needed to react to that, to that move to take our dollars away.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah. I'm--well, listen, I'm glad people didn't, because it's so important for so many people that are working there, and I fought so hard to have the tax credit and everything else. And I hate when politics start to dictate what happens in the state, because there's so many good people there. There's so many people who have never had an opportunity in the business. The great thing about what is happening now--and watching Stacey in her fight, and what recently happened in North Carolina, with the new election--as long as Stacey keeps up her fight, I'm on her side. I'm right there in her corner, so that there can be a fair and balanced moment in all of this, for sure. Yeah.

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

[00:18:00]

QUESTIONER: Hey. Thank you for coming. You-you wear a lot of hats. You're a director and writer and producer.

TYLER PERRY: And a couple wigs.

QUESTIONER: And a couple wigs. Yeah.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

QUESTIONER: Is there anything, maybe inside or outside of show business, that you want to do that you haven't done yet?

TYLER PERRY: No. The great thing about it is I've been fortunate enough to--'cause if I wasn't in the business, I'd be an architect. I love designing. So I've been fortunate enough to be able to design the studio, design my house, design different places. That's what I'd be doing--I would be doing. So it's awesome to be in a position where one thing can afford you to do everything else you want to do. And I also--this was--this was a really, really, really big dream of mine, but I'm not sure that I'm ever gonna get a chance to do it, 'cause I'm older now, but I want to win a gold medal in the Olympics, as a gymnast. I'm kidding. I'm kidding.

KEN WALKER: You're this close.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah, this close. This close. This close.

QUESTIONER: Hi, Tyler. Thanks for coming.

TYLER PERRY: Oh, it's my pleasure.

[00:18:58]

QUESTIONER: So, looking at your career, one of the most amazing things about it--about it is really the way that you've tapped into your imagination to unlock all these different possibilities. And it's a powerful thing that I think not enough people spend time doing. And so thinking about your career, just as an actor and then stage and then film and then--for most actors, the big step is going behind the camera, and you're like, "Screw that, I'm gonna get a studio," right?--and then have Marvel and partner with Marvel and all these other companies. And so, for me, I'm just curious about your process for unlocking your imagination and then perceiving things or trying to achieve things that would seem, you know [inaudible].

TYLER PERRY: Here's the thing for me. I was praying one day, and I said, "God, I don't want to leave this planet until I've done everything I'm supposed to do." And this studio, this level of the studio--the one I had before this was about 30 acres, six sound stages. I was comfortable, man. I was so happy there. everything's good. I was shooting all the "Have and Have Nots." I'm like, 'Yes. This is it.'

[00:19:59]

But then I got that nudge that it's time to grow, it's time to move. And you got to be careful when you get comfortable in a situation, because there's--things will start to fall apart if you don't move. This what I've found, just in my [inaudible] that when things--when I'm getting hints to, like, move, if I don't, things start to fall apart. So I move into this new studio. I didn't want to. But now, looking back at it, three years into it now, I go, "Okay, this was beyond me. It's bigger than me." So you have to understand that

when you get the opportunities, they're not just for you. Sometimes what's happening for you is for the next person and the next person and the next person, and your example can change their lives. So, holding that in the front of my mind has been--has been so important every time I get ready to go. 'Cause I've gotten to a place in my life, like, turning 50, I just want to go sit on the beach and smoke some weed, right? But now--and truth. Truth. You're too young to do that, son. But-but the truth is, making sure that I'm being faithful and loyal to everything that I'm supposed to do.

[00:21:01]

'Cause a lot of times your visions are tied into the next person's. So, I hope that answers your question. Yeah.

QUESTIONER: Thank you for being with us here.

TYLER PERRY: It's my pleasure.

QUESTIONER: I have two questions. You mentioned the speed of your work and how fast you get things done. Did that affect the quality of the--and the production in any department? Second question is I'm a YouTube musician, and we've seen you before work with YouTube influencers, and I've been humbled getting noticed by the great Quincy Jones and--do you have any plans in the future working with YouTube musicians as well?

TYLER PERRY: Working--I'm sorry, what's the last part?

QUESTIONER: YouTube musicians.

TYLER PERRY: Oh, wow.

QUESTIONER: Not just influencers. Musicians as well.

TYLER PERRY: That would be incredible. Let me answer the first part of your question. You look at it. you tell me. If I'm--if I'm--I look at my movie and I compare it to other movies like that, right? And I think nothing's suffering. There's no quality that's suffering. They're--they look beautiful. The sound is beautiful. Lighting's beautiful. It's--compared to everything else in that space.

[00:22:00]

Now, if I was making "Schindler's List," then we have to have a conversation, because I can't do that in five days. There's--there's a process there, and if I was--if I was working with a cinematographer who wanted the sun to fall just perfectly over her beautiful hair and lashes, and it has--we have to shoot this scene on Thursday at 4:36 in the evening, not a second later, then it would be a different things. This is Madea. You know what I mean? So I take it for what it--for what it is. But no. I wrote a piece that I wanted to play. I wrote it in 1995. It's called "A Jazzman's Blues." It's about a jazz singer and a Holocaust survivor. Big band music. And I wanted to play the role, but I've aged out of it now, so I have to hire somebody else to play the role. But as I'm thinking about big band and jazz, I will start looking at YouTube musicians--magicians--musicians. That'll be really good to think about, so thank you. Thank you.

QUESTIONER: Hi.

TYLER PERRY: Hi.

QUESTIONER: My name is Shayla Byrd. I am actually the only full-time black writer here at Google New York.

[00:23:00]

And so I took this job 'cause I'm really into writing. But as I've been working here, there's so many things that--like, logistical things and meeting and strategy and all these other things that kind of come along with it. So I look to you as someone who created this amazing character, who created this, like, cultural phenomenal, and I'm wondering how do you, like, structure your life, or make sure that you're able to hold on to the creative things that you--that you enjoy while also, like, running your business.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

QUESTIONER: And how do you hold on to [inaudible]?

TYLER PERRY: You have to nurture both. Like, for them, I have to--you make space for it. I have to make--like, when I write, I have to go to a certain place, write about--and let the writer speak. Let the writer feel free. Let the writer do what he wants to do. That's the one who wants to smoke weed. Business guy doesn't smoke weed. But the writer--the writer--that guy, let him be. So, you compartmentalize. Like, for me, my brain has--I want all sides of it to work. So this moment, I'm gonna just write. I'm gonna take this time and I'm just gonna write. That's all I'm gonna do. Then, when I'm directing, I just want to direct.

[00:24:00]

And when I'm running the business, or signing, you know, monthly checks, that's where my focus is. So make--what I would suggest is that you make sure that the writer has its space, its time, and protect--protect her, so that she can be as creative as she wants to be however she wants to be, and give--allow her that space. Like, this is time for this specifically, period. And then let the business side of it be that.

QUESTIONER: Yeah.

TYLER PERRY: Make sense?

QUESTIONER: Yeah, it does.

TYLER PERRY: Okay.

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

QUESTIONER: Hi, Tyler.

TYLER PERRY: Hi.

QUESTIONER: I'm Yeseni. I work here at Google. Thank you so much for coming to us.

TYLER PERRY: It's my pleasure. Everybody work at Google?

All: Yeah.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah? Oh, that's awesome. That's awesome.

QUESTIONER: I recently saw "Boo" with 20 of my cousins. I just told them that I met you, so they're all going crazy.

TYLER PERRY: That's awesome.

QUESTIONER: Latin audiences love you. My question is, for people that are looking to get into the space--production--content production--what would be the simplest advice--piece of advice that you would give to someone wanting to get into the space?

[00:25:00]

Thinking about all of the areas that are disrupting the space, right? You have technology, you have creators, YouTube creators, you have so many Hollywood actors that are already in the space, and so many production companies. What would be the one piece of advice that you would give to someone?

TYLER PERRY: Tell me what space you're talking about. Entertainment? Show business?

QUESTIONER: So, creating--making a movie, for example.

TYLER PERRY: Making--yeah, listen, with technology today, you can take an iPhone and make a great movie. So I think--everything is so open now. It's such a great time for creators or content creators, for artists--just, whatever your uniqueness is, if you have a story that you think is so special--listen, my first play, I put every dime I had in to make it work. And I think now, with all of these platforms that you can place them on, you're exposing your talent to millions of millions of people. And I think that's the best way in. That's the best way into investing yourself. Show something different, something unique, and make people go, "Wow. What is that?" End up with 7 and a half million followers, just, you know, looking at what you--what you're doing from day to day.

[00:26:00]

So that's the--that's the way in. It's a whole new world now. Yeah.

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah. For sure. Thank you. Tell all 20 cousins I said hi. Okay.

QUESTIONER: Hey. I'm Omar. I'm a high schooler, and I'm a YouTuber. So I was just wondering, like, if you had any piece of advice that you wish you knew when you were in high school, like, trying to become a filmmaker and trying to, like, become an actor.

TYLER PERRY: You know what I wish I would have done? I wish I'd have took more time in--okay, I know you're in school. I shouldn't say this to you. But algebra, you're probably not gonna use very much, unless you're going--but just--I wish that I had done better in school and went on to college, because I paid for a Harvard education 50 times in all the mistakes that I've made. So I didn't realize that everything that I was learning in school, in high school, would have been so important now. So, what I would say to you is education is gonna be key. Man, go on to college to get every bit of knowledge you can, so that you don't end up like me, spending that kind of money two, three, four, five times on things that you could have learned by going to school for a few semesters, you know?

[00:27:03]

So--and because you're here, which tells me you're pretty smart, so I would hold on to that. Just stay in--stay in school. Get as much knowledge as you can, so when you take--when you go on out there to do whatever you're doing, it's gonna--that bit of education will help you--take you a long way.

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

TYLER PERRY: I know it sounds cliché, but true. So true. But the algebra ain't gonna help you much, unless you just--yeah.

QUESTIONER: Hey, Tyler. Jose. Nice to meet you.

TYLER PERRY: Hey, Jose.

QUESTIONER: You talked a little bit about legacy. And, you know, you've had the privilege of seeing your success get you to a platform where now you can think back...

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

QUESTIONER: And think about legacy. So, my question is kind of multi-fold. But when you look back and you think about your mentors and each stage that you were in, were there--were the mentors the same? Did they change at all? And when you think about where you are now, who are your mentors, and who are you pouring into as a mentor?

TYLER PERRY: Wow. Yeah. Mentors. That's a great question. My mentors--

[00:28:00]

All of a sudden, I feel like I'm running for president. "Yeah, it was a great question from Jose. Thank you. I want to talk to all the men and women of America." And yeah. But my mentors coming up were Oprah, and people like her. Maya Angelou. Just wisdoms. I loved wisdoms. Nelson Mandela. And getting a chance to meet those people and see them and hear them talk about how I inspired them was really mind-blowing for me, right? So, you know, Maya's passed on, and Nelson's passed on. Oprah's still here, thank--and thank God. And--wait, did something happen y'all ain't telling me? No, she's fine. No, she's fine. I just talked to her a little while ago. The--now--she's still a mentor. T.D. Jakes is a mentor. You know, spiritual-spiritual growth is so important to me. So, all of these people who have wisdoms--just bring me wisdoms. And what I'm trying to do at this point in my life is be more open to other people, just to see--to be open enough to understand that there are so many other people who have something to bring.

[00:29:04]

And everybody teaches you something in this life. Everybody. Everybody. Everybody you come in contact with can teach you something. One way or another, good or bad, right, wrong, indifferent. I don't believe that anybody shows up in your life that is not supposed to be there. Either it's to press you, to make you stronger or better, or to depress you. But whatever it is, it's gonna make you better. So, what I'll say to you--mic just went out. that reminded me of the Oscars. Is it time for me to go? They about to start playing the music? No. So, what I would say to you is that those people are--and as far as mentoring you, you see that kid back there on the camera there? He's one of them. That's--and I have tons of people at the studio who are young and fresh and excited and who never had the opportunity before, and they're walking through those gates going, "A black man owns this? What?" And for them, it's like what it would have been like for me walking into somebody else's space, going, "Wow," letting them know that anything is possible.

[00:30:02]

I mean, this Army base was once a Confederate Army base. To be owned by a black man--you know, it's shocking to--so, I think all of that speaks to mentoring. Okay.

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

TYLER PERRY: Thank you.

QUESTIONER: Hello. My name is Angela.

TYLER PERRY: Hey, Angela. How you doing?

QUESTIONER: And I've actually been to--since everybody's saying their connection--I went to Tyler Perry Studios in 2012, for the Obama fundraiser.

TYLER PERRY: Obama. Yeah.

QUESTIONER: That was before I worked at Google, and so I scraped all my change together to get there. But it was a great experience.

TYLER PERRY: I love how she said, "It was before I worked at Google, 'cause now I'm at Google, I got a little money. I can [inaudible]."

QUESTIONER: Because I got a little money.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah. Yeah.

QUESTIONER: I made it a little bit further.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

QUESTIONER: But that was a great experience. I'd love for you to speak more about your early days and talk about more the communities and really churches and groups that supported your early work.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

QUESTIONER: You know, the circuit that you were running, and you were writing the plays, and performing them, where really, you know, local communities and churches--who thought it was funny.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

[00:31:00]

QUESTIONER: So I'd love to hear you just talk more about that experience and what it was like getting the word out among that community, and then how you're also remembering those communities that supported you in those days, and what you're doing with them.

TYLER PERRY: Let's start--let's start with community, 'cause you talk about being there in 2012, that was the old studio. You got to see the new one. But I'll never forget that. You talk about how I'm supporting the community, by just building in the community, 'cause it's in one of the poorest areas in Atlanta. The median income is about \$25,000 a year. Nobody really owns their house. When the Army base closed in 2011, it left the place decimated. So, to build in that area is so powerful for--to build among black people, the ones that supported me, the ones that put me here--so powerful. I'll never forget that day, when President Obama came, he was a sitting president coming to the poorest part of Atlanta. The

motorcade comes down the street, and I'm looking at all these little black faces, holding these flags, these kids, waving.

[00:31:58]

I'm just thinking, they never would have seen this had I not put this studio right here. So building in community and hiring from the community has been so important to us. Pulling people in so that they know and take pride. And I'll never forget. I was coming to work one day, and this woman was out picking up trash in the grass. And I stopped. I said, "Hi. You need a job? You know, we're"--she's like, "No. No, I work for the federal government. I'm good." I'm like, "You're just picking up the trash?" She's like, "Yeah. Yeah. Because you're in the neighborhood, and you did a beautiful job here, and we want you to know how thankful we are that you're here with us." So it's those kind of moments that let me know I'm in the right place. And going back to the beginning and doing these plays--you know, back in--when I started, there was a Mama on the Couch play everywhere. You know, that's what we call the Mama on the Couch. "Mama, my man left me." "Mama, Jesus is real." "Mama, where is my shoes?" You know, just--so I started putting my name on it, in front of it.

[00:32:58]

Tyler Perry's--I went a little far with it was Tyler Perry's, Tyler Perry, Tyler Perry, Tyler Perry. And the audience started to recognize it and they started to identify that when you see his, it's gonna be more than a piece of plywood on the stage. 'Cause [inaudible] these shows, there was a sofa, a piece of plywood. Some of y'all been to them. And a couple of--and a couple of speaker from your momma house, trying to do the sound in the theater. But trying to raise that and elevate it was really important to me. So, to see how far it's come now, and even this show that I'm doing now, this farewell tour, it's been just phenomenal to see the audience and their reaction to how far I've come. But going through those times was very, very difficult. There was no social media. It was just word of mouth. And if you got--what I did was a hired the most--kind of what we're doing with influencers now--just hired the most popular people in their churches in their time, or have these popular DJs or their cities to come--from their cities--to come and show up and help promote. And it all worked.

[00:34:00]

Just, to be at this place, it's beyond-it's beyond moving. So, I hope I answered your question.

QUESTIONER: Yeah, you did. Thank you.

TYLER PERRY: Okay, great. Awesome.

QUESTIONER: Tyler, this is an honor. Chris Clark. Here at Google as well. My mom has caused many fights with my dad over you.

TYLER PERRY: Oh, Lord.

QUESTIONER: So meeting you right now is an honor for her.

TYLER PERRY: I appreciate it. Wow. Okay. Wow.

QUESTIONER: My brother, I'm curious, for your legacy, you talk about, you know, all the work that you've done with your studio and the community in Atlanta. Amazing work. I think about the work that

you do as being inspirational not just for the people that you employ but for the people that watch your performances, your characters that you create. Are there any characters that you want to create, characters you have not created yet? Or characters that you want to play from present history or past history, or shoot those characters so that you can display their accomplishments on screen?

[00:34:59]

Anything like that that's a part of your future legacy that we can look forward to?

TYLER PERRY: Yeah. Oscar Micheaux. I'm working on something with HBO to tell the story of Oscar Micheaux. It was--he was the first African-American to own his own studio, to do his own movies, to write novels. And I have such a kinship to his life and his story. It's really, really powerful. If you don't know who he is, you should look him up in history books. It's just--what he was doing back in the 1930s and '40s is phenomenal. And to be at this moment now, yeah, it's--he's one that I like forward to. I just read a great script about Nat King Cole, too. I didn't even--I had no clue the level of fight he went through. So there's some great hero stories that need to be told. We'll see. We'll see. Don't be nervous, girl. Just talk in the microphone.

QUESTIONER: Hi, Tyler.

TYLER PERRY: Hey. Hey.

QUESTIONER: My name is Chrissy, and I am a YouTube creator. And it's an honor and a blessing to be here. I'm so humbled right now. I'm a huge fan. Oh my gosh.

[00:36:00]

Like, back in high school, I did--I'm sorry I'm so nervous--but I did a play--well, a part for a play, and I had to audition, and I did the Helen part from "Diary of a Mad, Black Woman." Yes.

TYLER PERRY: Oh, you know I'm about to ask you do that right now, don't you?

QUESTIONER: "Let me explain something to you."

TYLER PERRY: She remembers every word. I love it.

QUESTIONER: "Old Helen is gone. And you are not going to talk to me like that. Now, I came here to help you. But now, I'm gonna get even. Shut up!"

TYLER PERRY: That's good. Y'all give her a hand. That's good. That's good. That's good. I love it.

QUESTIONER: I love all of your movies.

TYLER PERRY: Thank you.

QUESTIONER: And, like, the whole class died laughing when I did, 'cause I was so extra with it. But I came to ask, as a creator who's using her platform to build opportunities for herself--

[00:36:59]

Because I'm a stay-at-home mom, and I'm just trying to, you know, [inaudible] and do something that I love and I'm passionate about, but I'm also really passionate about acting. Like, that's always been my

thing. That was my minor in high school--I mean, that was my minor in college. And with the way things are going, just seeing how influencers and YouTubers and social media influencers are getting these opportunities, like commercials, magazines, movie deals, like you guys--so proud of y'all--they're getting these opportunities. So do you suggest, like, just keep putting yourself out there and just hoping that opportunities come to you? Or do you suggest, like, I go the agency route? Or what's your suggestions [inaudible]?

TYLER PERRY: I think you do both. But yeah--but keep doing what you're doing. Be specific about what you're doing. And find that unique thing. Like, what is the thing that's gonna make you stand out? What is that one thing that's gonna make you--that plan notice and go viral? And those are the--those are the moments that make things change. So what is that thing, you know? And everybody has it. They just have to find what it is.

[00:38:00]

And it's usually something that lots of people could connect to, right?

QUESTIONER: Yes.

TYLER PERRY: Laughter is always that.

QUESTIONER: Yes.

TYLER PERRY: And so if it's funny and it's amazing, people are always--I see clips of stuff that I've done and that make myself laugh from years ago, that somebody's put up on YouTube. And, you know, it shows up in the middle of somebody's day, and all of a sudden, you know, they're laughing. So, whatever it is, stay specific to it. And the agency route is not a bad route, but--I shouldn't say this, 'cause the agency will get mad at me, but there's a shift. Things are changing. You know, things are changing. So just--I don't know. You're in the right place.

QUESTIONER: Thank you so much.

TYLER PERRY: You're welcome, Helen. Good job.

QUESTIONER: God bless you. Thank you.

TYLER PERRY: Helen. Shut up.

QUESTIONER: Hi, Tyler.

TYLER PERRY: Hey.

QUESTIONER: I'm Michelle. Thank you so much for being here. Definitely super nervous. I had to write my question. So, you know, being as ambitious and hungry as you are, I'm pretty sure that you're managing so many different competing priorities and responsibilities.

[00:38:59]

How do you find time to, like, self-care and nourish so that you're able to, like, give back? I know how deeply-rooted you are in faith and being a prayer warrior and you know, aside from smoking the weed

and stuff. But how else are you self-caring so that you can be, you know, this creative and caring and just give--this individual who gives back to so many. How to give to yourself?

TYLER PERRY: I build in breaks. I work for really long--like, three months at a time, like really, really hard. Day, night, let's go, let's go. I don't want a minute off. Just go, go, go, go, go. But then I'll take three, four months off and do nothing. Just absolutely nothing. Just watch my beard grow. You know, just nothing. And I think it's very important that you build in those breaks. And even if you can't--when you're working at a place like Google, you've got to be here a certain amount of time, and you get a vacation so often, you can still have places that are sanctuaries for you in your house. Just little things, man. You can have a little, small room in the corner that is just, like, this is my sanctuary. This is what I do for myself. You know--you know, hot, salt bath, and just relax, and have a good time. But it's very important that you build in breaks for yourself.

[00:40:01]

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

KEN WALKER: I actually think that was the last question.

TYLER PERRY: OH, you woke up now? You woke up? Been sitting there sleeping halfway through all of it. You back there too. I see you. I see you got that NoDoz on. I'm just giving you a hard time.

QUESTIONER: My name is Helasedibe. I'm originally from West Africa. Mali. This is not a question. I just want to say that your presence here is very motivating. And Dk4life, very motivating. So, as a person coming from West Africa, Mali, there's a lot of ambitions and goals that I have in mind that I want to accomplish, and just the fact that I have you guys around, and just, like, I'm over the moon. I just want to just share my gratitude and just--it's making me feel like the sky is not even the limit, and there's so many things I want to accomplish and to it back home in Africa. Even though my parents are there, my whole family is there, I'm here to better myself, and if I can help my country along, that's what I want to do in this life. So thank you guys. That's all I want to say.

TYLER PERRY: That's incredible, man. Thank you. I appreciate that. Thank you.

[00:40:59]

KEN WALKER: All right, guys. This is gonna be the last question.

QUESTIONER: Okay. Hello.

TYLER PERRY: So you can go take a nap.

QUESTIONER: Hey, we both tired, man. We both working.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah, that's right. That's right.

QUESTIONER: I know you as, like, a TV mogul and entertainer, producer, and everything like that. But I view you as an entrepreneur, and this is just your industry that you decided to--

TYLER PERRY: That's right.

QUESTIONER: You know what I'm saying? So my question is the entrepreneur--here's the thing. We all look at all these entrepreneurs and whatnot, and we want to--"Oh, this person--Elon Musk does this," or, you know, "Jeff Bezos does this." It's easy to follow someone when they're--why they made it.

TYLER PERRY: Right.

QUESTIONER: So, my question is, back during your early days, and your early times, of how you struggled to kind of establish yourself--is well-documented. My question is, as an entrepreneur, what do you--what happened when you have to decide between being true to yourself, believing in yourself, and that decision of take an investor's money, or that financial gain where you know your business will advance, but at the same time, being who you are and your foundation is shaken a little bit.

TYLER PERRY: Yeah.

QUESTIONER: You have to kind of find a balance of do I go left or right?

[00:41:58]

The fork in the road of being an entrepreneur, and what is best for what you need to do?

TYLER PERRY: I'm a gut guy. Everything has always been about my gut. I'm like, "How do I feel about this?" And prayer. Like, "How do I feel about this? How do I feel? Am I supposed to do this? Am I supposed to do that?" And listen to me. Here's the thing. People--when I say this, people don't--my agent clearly doesn't believe me. But it's--I never chase the money. I was very focused on what I wanted to do. I knew in had something that was special, was gonna help people. 'Cause my first show was about adult survivors of child abuse, and I thought 1,200 people would come the first weekend, and only 30 showed up. But out of that 30, it helped somebody. So that was my focus. That was always my focus. So, as long as I kept my eye on what my focus was, the money came. everything else fell in place. So don't deviate from the focus. There have been moments that I've had to turn down things. I mean, there was this one deal, I'll never forget--was so good, but for me, it just didn't feel right. One--it was--"Two and a Half Men"--Chuck Lorre, who did "Two and a Half Men," "Roseanne"--we were working on a sitcom together, and it just didn't feel right for me. And I had this deal.

[00:43:00]

I was locked in. I was just--everything in me--I was just praying that the deal didn't happen, because it didn't feel right. My agent's, "Oh my God, you're gonna make so much money, so much money." But it just didn't feel right. So when the deal fell apart, I was so happy and so relieved, 'cause out of that, "House of Pain," "The Have and Have Nots," "Meet the Browns"--all of these shows were born. And the difference is I own all of them. And that show, I wouldn't have owned anything. So that--that made the difference. So go with how you feel about it, man. That's--what does this--what does this feel like? Does it feel right? And if it doesn't feel right, don't do it. no matter what it is, no matter how much money it is. I know it's hard for a lot of people. "They just offered me \$3 million, and I got \$2.50 in the bank. You think I'm not gonna take this money?" But just--it's got to be what you feel. 'cause had I--had I taken that show, my life would be very different. Ownership would be very different. I would have never been able to own this studio. I would never have been able to hire all the people that I've hired and helped all the people, and make as many millionaires as I have, because I would have been tied to someone else owning my intellectual property.

[00:44:02]

So, ownership is the key. Yeah. Yeah. Thank you, everybody. Thank you.

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