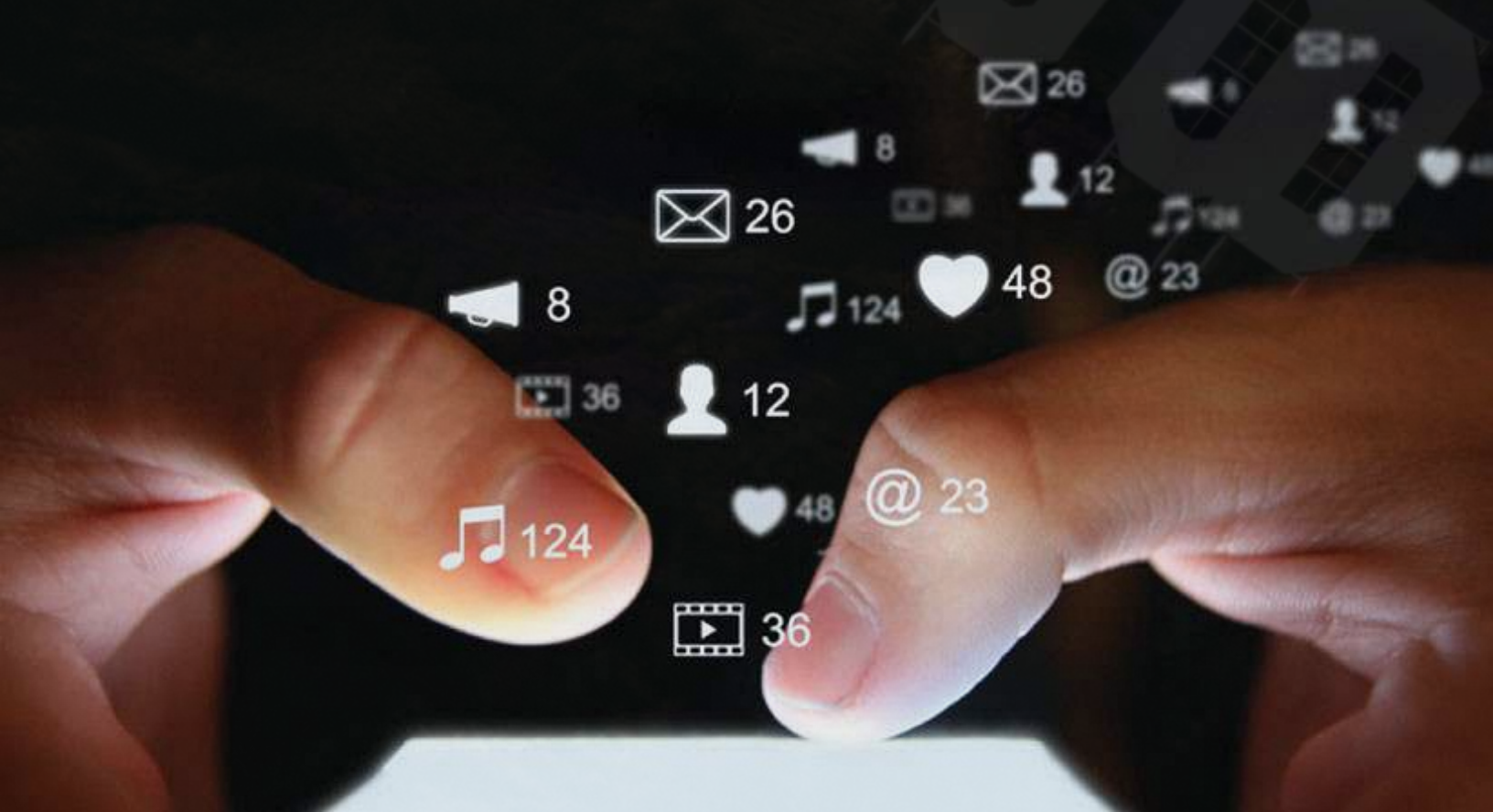


5 Opulent Acting Foundational Secrets

Denim Richards



THE Opulent FOUNDATION

SECRET #1: HOLLYWOOD IS AN IDEA, NOT A PLACE

I want you to picture this: I'm standing in my bedroom, rain falling outside, with my iPhone propped up on a stack of books. The bedsheet I've pinned to the wall keeps slipping. My "key light" is the lamp I borrowed from another room. I'm about to audition for what would become television's biggest show—Yellowstone—and I'm nowhere near Los Angeles.

This was my moment of truth. The moment I realized everything I'd been told was wrong.

They say you have to be in Hollywood to make it in Hollywood. They're wrong. **Hollywood has left the building.**

The Data That Changed My Mind:

- In 2022, only 12% of Netflix's original content was filmed in California (MPAA Report)
- Georgia, New Mexico, and Louisiana now host more major productions than California
- The UK's film industry employs over 200,000 people—most of whom have never set foot in Hollywood

My Personal Turning Point:

I've booked *multiple roles* from my bedroom. Not only that, but I've since:

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- Auditioned for Netflix, Apple, & Amazon from home
- Consulted for production companies all over Africa from Montana
- Spoken at the World Bank about creative economies while based in another country

Your Action Step Today:

Write down your exact location. Now write three ways that location gives you a **unique advantage** over someone in Los Angeles. (Lower cost of living? Unique cultural perspective? Less competition for local work?) This isn't your limitation—it's your strategic headquarters.

SECRET #2: THE 90-SECOND RULE (AND WHY IT MAKES OR BREAKS YOU)

Early in my career, I'd leave auditions replaying every moment. "Was I good enough? Did they like me? Should I have made a different choice?" Then I learned the truth: Casting directors make their initial decision about you in **the first 90 seconds**.

Not theory—fact: The Casting Society of America's internal data shows that for self-tapes, 73% of "yes/no" decisions happen in the first 90 seconds. For in-person auditions, it's 60 seconds.

Opulent 90-Second Blueprint:

Seconds 0-30: THE HOOK

- Don't start with your lines. Start with your eyes.
- Your first look should communicate your character's entire world.
- *My technique:* Live your characters true life.

Seconds 30–60: THE REVEAL

- Show us the thought behind the words.
- Let us see you thinking, not just reciting.
- *My secret:* Tell the Truth with the Lie you've been given.

Seconds 60–90: THE DEPARTURE

- Leave us wanting more, not less.
- End with forward energy, like you're walking into the next scene.
- *My rule:* Your last moment should be grounded & forward focused.

Your Exercise Right Now:

Film yourself doing a monologue. Watch only the first 90 seconds. Would you keep watching? Be brutally honest. This single habit improved my callback rate ten fold.

SECRET #3: THE \$1,000 GLOBAL AUDITION STUDIO (YES, REALLY)

Let me be completely transparent about money. Early in my career, I thought I needed:

- A professional studio (\$5,000+)
- An expensive camera (\$3,000+)
- Fancy lighting (\$2,000+)
- A soundproof room (priceless)

I was broke. So I created what I now teach everyone: **The \$1,000 Global Audition Studio**. Here's the exact breakdown:

The Essential Setup (That Books Roles):

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1. Camera: Your Smartphone (\$0 if you already have one)

- iPhone 11 or newer, or Android equivalent
- 4K capability is standard now
- **Pro tip:** Clean your lens every time. It matters.

2. Audio: Lavalier Microphone (\$50)

- This is non-negotiable
- Bad audio kills more auditions than bad acting
- My pick: Rode SmartLav+ (I own three)

3. Lighting: Two LED Panels (\$150)

- Soft, even light > expensive, harsh light
- Place one at 45 degrees to your face, one as fill
- **Game changer:** Never use overhead lights

4. Background: Gray Seamless Paper (\$100)

- Neutral, professional, works for all skin tones
- Not white (washes you out), not black (too harsh)
- Hung smoothly with clamps

5. Total Investment: \$300 (not \$1,000)

Because you already own the phone

Your Checklist for Tomorrow:

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- 1) Audit your current setup
- 2) Order one improvement (start with audio)
- 3) Test and compare—film the same scene with old vs. new setup

The difference will shock you.

SECRET #4: THE MINDSET SHIFT THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING

For years, I walked into rooms with what I call "**The Beggar's Mentality.**" It sounds harsh, but it's true. My energy said: "Please choose me. I hope you like me. I'll do anything."

My booking rate: **What bookings?!**

Then I had a conversation that changed everything. I was having coffee with a casting director friend (who's cast major Hollywood TV shows & Films), and she said "Denim, we're not looking for someone to fill a slot. We're looking for someone to **solve a problem we didn't know we had.**" That night, I rewired my entire approach.

The New Mindset: "The Problem-Solver's Mentality"

Instead of: "I hope they choose me" I now think: "How can I advocate for the character on the page, and highlight the humanity that's not written".

The Practical Shift:

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Before each audition, I now ask myself:

1. What's the Truth of this character?
2. What are they fighting for?
3. What experience can I pull from to bring this to life?

Your Action Step:

Before your next audition, write down:

- What do I want?
- What is in my way?
- What am I willing to do to get what I want?

This alone improved my booking rate going from “Begging” to “Living”

SECRET #5: THE GLOBAL SUBMISSION STRATEGY

Here's a truth that took me years to accept: **You can be completely right for a role and completely wrong in how you submit.**

I learned this the hard way. Early in my career, I'd send in tapes with:

- Files named "audition1.mp4"
- No slate or a rushed slate
- Poor lighting I thought was "artistic"
- Audio that sounded like I was in a tunnel

Then I worked with a submissions coordinator who showed me the data:

What Casting Directors Actually Do:

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1. They receive 200–500 submissions per role
2. They watch each tape for 90 seconds max initially
3. They eliminate based on technical issues first
They spend more time on well-presented submissions

The Exact System That Works Globally:

File Naming Convention:

LastName_FirstName_Role_Project.mp4

Example: Richards_Denim_Colby_Yellowstone.mp4

Why this matters: Casting offices download hundreds of files. Yours needs to be instantly identifiable.

The Professional Slate (Your First 10 Seconds):

1. **Full body shot** (hold for 3 seconds—let us see your physicality)
2. **Close up** (say: "Hi, I'm [Name]. I'm [Height]. Based in [City, Country].")
Then your scene

Pro tip: Smile with your eyes during your slate (This is also a great way to show personality). After hundreds of tired slates, yours will feel like a glass of cold water.

The Platform Strategy:

- **EcoCast:** Most common in the US
- **Casting Networks:** For commercial work
- **Vimeo/YouTube Unlisted:** For international submissions
- **WeTransfer:** For larger files to international offices

HOW THESE 5 SECRETS CREATED MY GLOBAL CAREER

Let me connect the dots on how these 5 secrets didn't just get me auditions—they built an entire career:

2016: Using Secret #1 (Hollywood is an idea), I stopped trying to "make it in LA" and started building where I was.

2017: Mastering Secret #2 (90-Second Rule), my callback rate tripled. I went from struggling actor to working actor.

2018: Implementing Secret #3 (\$1,000 Studio), I could audition for anywhere in the world. My geographic limitations disappeared.

2019: Embracing Secret #4 (Mindset Shift), I started booking not just more, but better roles—roles with depth and complexity.

2020: Perfecting Secret #5 (Global Submission), I began working internationally without travel.

The Result:

- Starring on the hit TV series (*Yellowstone*)
- Speaking engagements at the World Bank and US-Africa Business Summit
- Consulting for film commissions all around the world.
- A sustainable career built on forward thinking, and adding value without losing myself.

But Here's What These 5 Secrets Couldn't Teach You:

- How to negotiate your contract for maximum upside
- How to turn your acting income into investments (real estate, wine, luxury goods)
- How to build a personal brand that attracts opportunities
- How to create businesses that work for you while you sleep
- How to transition from actor to speaker to entrepreneur

That's why I had to learn—and document—the **next level**.

THE NEXT LEVEL: WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE AUDITION?

These 5 secrets will get you in the door. They'll get you auditions, callbacks, maybe even a role or two. But they won't build you an **Opulent** career—a career that's rich, sustainable, and global.

What I Learned After Booking Yellowstone:

The audition was just the beginning. Then came:

- Contract negotiation (where most actors lose thousands)
- Brand building (while working 14-hour days on set)
- Business creation (because acting income is irregular)
- Global expansion (how to work internationally without burning out)

This Is Why I Wrote "The Opulent Artist":

The book contains:

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- **The exact negotiation scripts** that have made me thousands
- **The business models** that work for artists (not just business people)
- **The global networking strategy** that requires zero travel
- **The mindset frameworks** for sustainable success (not just survival)

And Why I Created the "Business of Entertainment Masterclass":

Because some things can't just be learned from a book. Like:

- How to read a contract so you don't get exploited
- How to build multiple income streams as an artist
- How to work with agents across different countries
- How to transition from local to global without losing yourself and your money.

Your Invitation to Go Deeper:

If these 5 secrets resonated with you—if you saw yourself in my journey from struggling in the bedroom to building a global career—then you're exactly who I created my book and courses for.

Special Offer for Reading This Far:

Use code **OpulentArtist** for:

- 15% off "The Opuent Artist" book
- 10% off the "Business of Entertainment Masterclass"
- Priority access to my monthly consultation group

My Final Truth:

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I don't teach this because I've figured it all out.. Trust me I have not. I teach because **I remember what it felt like to be stuck.** To think geography was destiny. To believe I had to choose between art and money. To feel like the industry was a wall I couldn't scale.

These 5 secrets scaled the wall. What comes next builds the castle on the other side.

Your Next Steps:

1. Implement one secret this week
2. Notice what changes
3. When you're ready for what's next, join me

The global entertainment industry isn't coming to you. It's already here. And it's waiting for what only you can bring.

See you on the other side,

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P.S. The actors who thrive in the next decade won't be the most talented. They'll be the most adaptable. They'll understand that our industry has globalized, digitized, and democratized. And they'll build accordingly. Lets start building today.

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Unlock the secrets to building a thriving acting career with "5 Opulent Acting Foundational Secrets." This transformative guide reveals essential techniques and mindset shifts that empower you to audition successfully, regardless of your location, and navigate the global entertainment landscape. Discover how to turn limitations into strategic advantages and elevate your craft from struggling to thriving artist.