Tara Lang’s exit from Syfy’s makeup-competition series FACE OFF was caused by a perfect storm of FX-related mishaps in the workshop.

FANGORIA: What were you doing before you ended up on FACE OFF?

TARA LANG: I was working in the film and television industry, mostly just film, independent features. I’ve been doing makeup for five years now. This is actually my 24th project.

FANG: Are you self-trained, or did you go to school?

LANG: I went to Cinema Makeup School. I took their master class, which taught everything from beauty to special effects. Actually, at the time, I just wanted to do beauty, but I saw the effects class and thought, “That looks cool. Maybe I’ll give that a try…” And look where it led me!

FANG: When I watched your final episode, I just thought, man, she is having the worst day!

LANG: [*Laughs*] It was not the greatest day, no. There’s no one else to blame but myself. I was so eager to really try and go for it. I just wanted to show what I could do. I have a hard time conceptualizing. I’m not a concept artist. I’ll read a script and discuss with the director and go from there. So I was really excited about that one, because I didn’t have to spend the time coming up with the concept, which everybody saw me struggle with on the horror challenge. So I think maybe because I thought I was saving time, I thought I’d try a few bigger things. Despite the arm [falling apart], I had more [pieces] than I had on any other challenge. So it was still successful in that way. I got a lot done.

But the arm molds fell maybe 15 minutes before time was up that day. So I said, “What can I do in the next 15 minutes?” And I thought maybe fabricating, but I’m not as experienced at that, so it wasn’t going very fast. I just figured I’d pull it together the next day. Unfortunately, the little hand bit I wanted to do didn’t come together. I was hoping to save it with the paint job, but I spent so much time attacking that that I overlooked other details. Like teeth [*laughs*]!

FANG: It must have been frustrating, because some people get sent home for a concept that was weak, or a skill set that was lacking. But you got sent home because of a string of bad luck, stuff that could happen on set that wasn’t anyone’s fault. Am I reading that situation correctly?

LANG: You are reading that situation correctly! I was a little embarrassed, because I think I may be the only person in the history of FACE OFF who got sent home because of time-management issues, not because of a bad makeup. It’s silly, and I was really upset about it when I first got eliminated. But thinking back on it, it is a tough challenge to keep your wits about you. And if you’re not spot on every day, which obviously I wasn’t, one wrong turn and you’re going to spiral out of control. And that’s what happened. I wish…I’m almost OK with it being that. It’s embarrassing, but at the same time, I’m really happy it wasn’t just a terrible makeup. Then I would be harder on myself [about] being a lousy artist.

I’m trying to be positive about it. It was well-applied, it was a pretty decent paint job. At least I showed I could do it. And the time management is something that can be improved on. So I’m OK.

FANG: If conceptualizing isn’t your strength, what do you think your strengths are?

LANG: I they’re definitely in the application part. One thing the show doesn’t recognize is, usually on set, one of the things we pay attention to the most are the edges and the technical applications. I spent so much time putting those edges down nicely, and never once were they acknowledged. I think it’s because the audience doesn’t recognize what edges are and how important they are, perhaps?

FANG: When you were eliminated, you were the fifth woman in a row to be sent home. Any thoughts on that?

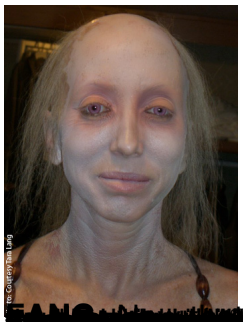
LANG: It certainly wasn’t planned, and none of us wanted it that way.

FANG: When I interviewed Heather Henry, I mentioned that I thought Ve Neill might be harder on the girls as a judge, and she agreed. Did you feel the same way?

LANG: I don’t think Ve was harder on the girls. She wasn’t harder on us, but she warmed up to the guys more easily, if that makes sense. Honestly, in the moment, I didn’t really notice anything like that. I thought the judges were pretty fair. When I thought a makeup was one of the lower ones out of the group, it was generally on the bottom. I honestly thought on the body-painting challenge I was the worst one, so I was the one going home. Hence why I was so upset at that one—Miranda [Jory] did a better job than I did.

FANG: Was there a point during the challenge where you thought, “I’m going home on this one…”?

LANG: When I realized the teeth didn’t make it in. I was still feeling positive and thinking maybe I could pull it all together, but when I realized, “Oh my gosh, the teeth aren’t in!” and started putting them in, and they called time, that’s when that feeling hit. A lot of people thought I just gave up. I think resignation is a better word for it. I couldn’t change the makeup at that point. So I just chose to accept it and not cry about it while I was on stage with it. I don’t believe in standing up there and talking back to our judges. I didn’t want to tell them this was a great makeup when I knew it was incomplete.



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