Miranda Jory, the youngest competitor on Syfy’s makeup competition series FACE OFF, fell victim to some subpar body painting. Read on as she discusses her experiences on the show…

FANGORIA: What is your background? How did you get to the point that you were on FACE OFF?

MIRANDA JORY: I’ve always had a big imagination, and I’ve always been artistic since I was a little kid. I just never really knew what my medium would end up being. I don’t think, as a child, I really expected that it would be special effects makeup because I didn’t even know that was a possibility of a career. But it kind of ended up that way. And once I figured out special effects makeup was what I wanted to do, it’s been pretty much full speed ahead in that direction, no looking back.

FANG: When did you figure out that was what you wanted to do?

JORY: It was actually after I got out of [high] school. I had been looking at different makeup schools for a few years, but not very seriously—kind of just as a fun thing I might do. I would always look at photos from different movies that had makeup effects in them and was getting inspired by that, but I didn’t really think that would be something I could do as a career. I was kind of trying for a long time to keep art and work separate, because I enjoy art so much that I didn’t want to mix the two and end up having it be something that took away the enjoyment. But ultimately I realized that if you pick a career path you truly love, you never have to work a day

in your life. When I figured out it was makeup that I wanted to do, I just moved right out to California from Seattle and started attending makeup schools.

FANG: When you got to Los Angeles and jumped into makeup school, what did the horizon look like to you? Was it “Wow, there are a million opportunities here,” or “I have no idea what I’m doing. How will I ever get into this business”?

JORY: It was a little bit of both, to be honest. I mean, LA is definitely one of the places with the most opportunities as far as makeup effects go. And it has been awesome living out here. I’ve met so many of the people who inspire me, and my idols in the industry, and I know I wouldn’t have had those opportunities had I been anywhere else. I definitely felt there were a lot of opportunities in LA, but I knew I’d have to go find them. I was just trying to work on honing my artistic skills. I’ve been really focused on getting very good artistically. I probably haven’t put myself out there to apply for as many jobs as I should have, and I’ve done a lot of stuff for cheap or free just because I enjoy doing it so much. I didn’t know what to expect when I moved out here. I just wanted to do my best and see what would happen.

FANG: Who were most excited to meet that you’ve actually met in the industry?

JORY: There are two people who pop into my head. I’ve always idolized [FACE OFF judge] Ve Neill because she’s a woman in the industry who is probably the most well-known and biggest name in makeup effects, as far as women go. So I was always inspired by her work and her work ethic, and just her as a person. So the first time I met her, I was really, really excited. I remember I was actually working up the nerve to go ask for a picture with her for, like, 15 minutes before I actually did. And Steve Wang is one of my biggest inspirations as far as artists in the industry; he’s an incredible painter, sculptor and designer, and I just love his work. So when I got to meet him, that was another moment where I felt like this was really cool: “I’m talking with Steve Wang!” I got to check out where he was working, and he sat down with me and gave me advice, and it was just great to get to do that with somebody I’d idolized for so long.

FANG: So you met Ve before you were on the show. What do you think of her now that she has judged your work?

JORY: I still have tons of respect for Ve and think she’s amazing. Of course, it was hard being on the show, to have these people you idolize, in some cases, tearing down your work, and you just have to be OK with it. The thing with the judges is, if you ran into them at a convention, or just in the working world, and you asked them to give you a critique of your work, I don’t think they’d just tear it down and be mean to you. It’s part of the whole reality-show aspect of it. They have to have a bottom, and they have to have someone who goes home. That’s just kind of the nature of the game. But with Ve specifically, I’ve always respected her and I always will. It was really cool; after the show ended, the school I went to and have worked at since, Cinema Makeup School, did an open house where Ve came in and did a silicon makeup for the students. They picked a team of three graduates to mold, cast, paint and help apply the prosthetics alongside Ve. It was a cool experience to work alongside her.

FANG: Let’s talk about those team challenges. What we see on TV isn’t necessarily what really happens on set. Did you and Beki Ingram really get into it during the “Water World” challenge?

JORY: Everybody’s tense, everybody’s nervous, everybody is out there trying to protect themselves and make the best decisions to keep themselves there. The way Beki came at me, I think, was directly because of what happened in the first challenge with her and Brea. I know she felt maybe she didn’t get as much credit as she deserved. And also, I was kind of putting a lot of my weaknesses out there, and since it was so early on in the show, she didn’t know what to expect from me. She hadn’t seen my work, she had no clue. All she knew was that I was the youngest and greenest person there. She was nervous, and rightfully so. I do wish she had given me a little bit more respect, or at least a little bit more room to prove to her what I was capable of. Because I think just right off the bat, she assumed maybe that I was going to hold her back. But I think that in the end, after she saw my paint, and after she saw my work coming out of it, we have a much better understanding of each other now. There are no hard feelings between us at all. We did argue a little along the way, but if you have cameras around 24-7 following you, of course you’re going to get into arguments. You’ve got a bunch of strong personalities, you’ve got a bunch of people trying to save their own asses.

FANG: How did your pairing with Ian Cromer work out, vs. how you worked with Beki?

JORY: Ian was actually one of my really good friends in the house, so I knew we’d get along. But at the same time, we’re both prosthetic artists. Neither of us were excited or comfortable with the body-paint challenge. I wish we’d gotten to work together on a prosthetics challenge, because we have very similar ways of going about things. But I don’t think the partnership was at all what led to me going home. It was my own bad decision-making [*laughs*] as far as insisting on doing the blended character. I was the one who went more for that background. But you have such a limited amount of time to make these decisions that will shape the way the rest of the competition is going to turn out for you, so it’s hard to really predict what’s going to be the best thing to do when you have a split second to decide.

FANG: What’s it like being in the work room with all those naked people walking around?

JORY: You know, I worked as a PA on X-MEN: FIRST CLASS for the Mystique makeup team, so I saw my fair share of nakedness and fully body-painted blue people. In the real world, if you were in a room full of naked people, you might feel a little uncomfortable. But when you’re there to do a job, and you’re focused on a goal you’re working toward, you’re not thinking about it too much. You’re just trying to be professional. So it wasn’t that big of a deal for me.

FANG: Now that you’ve been on the show, do you think you’ve made connections that will actually get you work?

JORY: Yeah. I believe that for all of us on the show, it’s going to be a matter of us applying for jobs. I don’t necessarily think that because of the show, people are going to be knocking down our doors trying to hire us. But I definitely think it will open up opportunities as far as people taking a look at our work, or seeing us and thinking, “Oh, maybe I’ll look this person up…” and seeing our portfolios and thinking, “Maybe I could hire them for something I’m working on.” If I get even one job out of it that I didn’t have before, that’s awesome. You have to go out there and seek work. It won’t ever come to you.

But I think the fact that I was on FACE OFF definitely will help get my work out there and my

name out there. It definitely took a lot of bravery for all of us. Hopefully people in the industry can recognize that, and realize how little time we had to complete these tasks, and how odd that scenario is compared to the regular working environment. It was different than anybody expected. It was harder than almost everybody expected going into it.

FANG: Would you do it again? Would you be on another reality show?

JORY: I would absolutely do it again. I would do it tomorrow if they called me up for season three! Most of all, I wish I’d gotten to do an individual challenge, to show everybody what I’m personally capable of. Because it’s kind of hard to show what you truly have to offer when you’re working with a teammate. Not only because you both have hands in all the work, but also because you have to make certain compromises. If you’re working alone, you’re going to make all those decisions for yourself. I would absolutely do it again. I have no regrets, ultimately. I met all these people that have influenced my life a lot.

And I’ve learned so much from the show itself. Going in, I was so nervous. I knew I was going to be one of the youngest, and I knew I was going to be one of the least experienced. Coming out of it, I had a confidence I didn’t really have before. I realized that I really am capable. I made it on this show with all these people who are way more experienced than I am. I wish I had gone in with the same confidence I left with, because then maybe things might have turned out differently.

FANG: What’s next for you?

JORY: I’d really like to be an application artist. I think that’s what I’m best at. I enjoy sculpting, but application is really what I’m meant to do. So I would like to get a little bit more into the on-set world. And coming up in April at Monsterpalooza, I’ll be bringing a few makeup demos for Cinema Makeup School, and possibly at IMAPS as well. One of the fun things about this career path is you never really know, and it always changes. You’re always working on something different from month to month. I tend not to predict too much and just let it all happen. If, a year ago, you would have told me I would have just gotten off FACE OFF and be doing an interview with FANGORIA, I would have said, “You’re crazy!” So hopefully, new and exciting things are yet to come.

To see more of Jory's work, go to www.mirandajory.com .