

Inside Hollywood

COM alum Cody Brotter's podcast features Terrier power players

By Megan Woolhouse

Los Angeles television writer Cody Brotter has long wondered how successful alumni make it in Hollywood's entertainment industry.

Now, he satisfies that curiosity, one interview at a time. Brotter (COM'13), a story consultant on the show *Comedy Knockout* and a script reader for a variety of agencies in Los Angeles, last May launched the podcast *Hollywood Terriers*, featuring his interviews with alums in the entertainment industry. Guests on the podcast, created in conjunction with the BU Los Angeles Internship Program (BU in LA), are a who's who of LA power brokers, such as BU overseer Jay Roewe (COM'79), HBO senior vice president, and *Orange Is the New Black* writer Hilary Weisman Graham (COM'92).

"LA attracts all these hardworking, big-dream people who have come from other places to pursue something," says Brotter. "BU alumni have traveled across the country to be in LA. A lot of these people are also super-successful, and I wanted to know how."

One of his favorite episodes is a conversation in May about men and the #MeToo movement with Emmy-nominated TV producer and *Grey's Anatomy* showrunner Krista Vernoff (CFA'93), who talked about what men can do to help support women writers in a male-dominated industry.

In her interview, Vernoff noted that she successfully pursued acting roles after college, but eventually decided to change course. "My family really struggled with that," she said. "I probably have the only family that struggled with someone quitting acting" for another career.

Actor and comedian Langston Kerman (GRS'11) recalled his passion for writing poetry in graduate school and



Cody Brotter has interviewed *Orange Is the New Black* writer Hilary Weisman Graham (COM'92) and TV producer Krista Vernoff (CFA'93).

taking a job as a high school teacher after graduation. He said that for sheer enjoyment, he always performed stand-up comedy on the side, which resulted in his first big break: working with comedian and writer Chris Rock. Kerman wrote some of the jokes Rock used as host of the 2016 Academy Awards, and he landed the role of Jared Oliver in season one of the HBO hit show *Insecure*.

Brotter recruits his guests by leveraging many of his professional experiences. For example, he worked at HBO as Roewe's intern during a semester in LA before he graduated. And Kerman helped Brotter, who did stand-up comedy as a BU undergrad, get his first gig at Nick's Comedy Stop in Boston. Bruce Feirstein (COM'75), a screenwriter for the James Bond series and author of *Real Men Don't Eat Quiche*, who is featured on an upcoming podcast, has been a mentor since Brotter's undergrad days.

That networking has resulted in more than 20 podcast episodes currently available on iTunes.

Other episodes include an interview with Maureen Bharoocha (COM'07), a segment director on *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, and producer Sabrina Wind (COM'90) of *Desperate Housewives* fame.

Besides doing stand-up comedy as an undergrad, Brotter was also a writer and actor in the BUTV10 Telly Award-winning show *Welcome Back, Brotter*, a *Seinfeld*-inspired sitcom.

He's come to enjoy the earnestness of podcasting and says he's become a better listener.

"Throughout the experience of doing these podcast interviews, there's also been the journey of me figuring out what I want to do, or who I want to end up like, and I'm getting to see all these paths," he says. "That wasn't the intention of this, and I try not to use these as therapy sessions. I'm just a very curious person."