



Jada Pinkett-Smith is a part of a quickly rising new Hollywood royalty, with husband Will Smith and son Jaden Smith (starring in this summer's 'The Karate Kid'). Jada returns to her hit TNT show HawthoRNe on June 22. We caught up with her to talk about the show, her life, her son and everything in between.

SHAKEFIRE: How did you originally hear about this role?

JADA PINKETT-SMITH: I was approached by Jamie Tarses and John Masius who created the show. They gave us - they gave the script to my manager and I read it. And it mirrored a very familiar part of my own life.

My mother was a nurse. She was the head nurse of this inner-city women's clinic for many years and she raised me as a single parent.

And I was a pretty rebellious teenager at the time. And so I just felt like the show had a lot of heart. And I felt like it was an opportunity for me to pay homage to all the wonderful nurses I had come across and my mother. And so I just had a lot of affinity for the project.

SF: My first question for you is you're one of the only African-American women to have had a leading role in a Prime Time dramatic series. And I wonder what you thought about that fact in this day and age?

JPS: Well it's definitely interesting. I think that's one of the reasons why I wanted to be in partnership with TNT because they were focusing on creating very strong leading roles for women in television shows.

I think in Hollywood in general right now leading roles for women is a very difficult thing. And so it's a particular season right now. It's a particular cycle and it always comes back around.

And I feel as though as far as roles for women and roles for African-American women, you know, there's always room. We definitely - we still need a lot of work in that area. But I feel very blessed to have this opportunity.

SF: What is the difference between doing television and doing film?.

JPS: Yes. It's definitely. It's a huge, huge, huge difference - lot more responsibility on television for me with this show being an executive producer and a lead actress.

For this particularly show it is a strongly - it's a producer's - I look at television as a producer's realm more than a director's realm where in film everything - the director leads the ship. In television you have to have very strong producers to keep in the vision of the show.

And so this year Will and I really with Glen Mazarra and Miguel Melendez really had to come together, put our heads together and get - become very solid on the vision of the show and really push forward to make this - make the vision happen whereas like I said before, usually that is the director's job to do.

But it was a very interesting season. We worked very hard. I really think we were successful in solidifying the vision for the show.

SF: There is such great chemistry between you and Michael Vartan and you and the young lady who plays your daughter. How do you all maintain that?

JPS: I think, you know, it's - you get lucky. I think you get lucky sometimes because chemistry is not something you can really create. It just has to kind of be there.

I think Michael Vartan and I, we're really good friends. And we're - what's crazy is that we're like



sisters and brothers. We really don't have any real like chemistry off-screen. We're kind of goofballs together. But it works onscreen which is amazing.

And my daughter and I, I think I just have a lot of affinity for women in general - teenage girls. And so I just raised my goddaughter who is close to Hannah's age. That's the young lady who plays Camilla.

And so everything that I'm going through with her on the show I've been through already with my goddaughter who I just sent to college year before and worse.

So she just reminded me of that relationship with my goddaughter. So I had instant affinity for her that I just placed, you know, into that daughter relationship that we have and just very much mirroring also my relationship with my mother who we were more like sisters than mother and daughter because she had me at such a young age. And on the show I had Camilla at a young age as well.

So I had a lot to work with and just, you know, loving Hannah herself as just being the individual that she is. She's a hard girl not to love. So, you know, that's how we do it.

SF: I'm back. I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about guest stars coming up for the season?

JPS: Oh man we had - Mark Anthony came on for two episodes and ripped it. That was a real blessing to have Mark Anthony for those two shows. We did a really interesting episode together.

And Debbie Mazar came on who I love. Debbie and I have worked a lot together. We did - she did all of us the first season. And then we did the women together. And so she came on the show. So those were the two.

We had a couple of other guest stars come as well. We also have a new cast member, British actor who's really fantastic and quite handsome I must say. He's one of our new doctors, a new doctor dynamite that we have on the show this year, (Adam).

And so I think people are going to be pretty pleased with some of our new cast members. Also Vanessa Bell Calloway came on and blessed us for eight episodes this year. She's my nemesis this year. And so I think - I hope people are pretty happy with what we did with casting this year.

SF: What specific ways will we see Christina's character evolve on Season 2?

JPS: This year it's all about Christina surrendering. She is going to have to surrender this year. Last year, she was so in control and, you know, so stern and strong. And, you know, she was always right.

This year's going to be a little different. She's going to have very high stakes in her personal life in which she's going to have to really make some hard core strong decisions.

She this year is going to learn to work with people versus rolling over people and working around people. She cannot do that in this hospital this year. So she has to take a much different attitude as far as how she deals with her staff and the people that she's working with.

And so I think you're going to see a Christina who is going to fight like tooth and nail to, you know, keep in her, you know, her control.

SF: It seems like it's going to be a very exciting summer for the Smith family with HawthoRNe coming back and with the Karate Kid coming out. What is the summer going to be like for the Smith family?

JPS: Well we're hoping that it'll be a very successful summer with the Karate Kid and with HawthoRNe. We'll be doing a lot of traveling for Karate Kid because we'll have to take it internationally. I'll also be doing some stuff internationally for HawthoRNe while I'm traveling with



Jaden. And then we'll go on vacation after that. I'm going to take my little boy somewhere he wants to go to surf and relax. And then that'll be that.

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