

JONETTA KAISER

ABOUT

Stunning actress and singer Jonetta Kaiser shines as one of the leads of NBC Peacock's newest series "Vampire Academy" from paranormal television experts Julie Plec and Marguerite MacIntyre ("The Vampire Diaries," "The Originals," "Legacies") who both write and executive produce, with Plec directing the series. The popular fantasy horror invites fans to the new and exciting world of St. Vladimir's Boarding School and a royal society of vampires and half-human dhampirs. Kaiser brings to life 'Sonya Karp', quiet, careful and decidedly odd, Sonya is not of royal bloodline and sits out on the fringe of Moroi society, preferring to spend her time in the library or her gardens. Not a person who likes a scene, nonetheless she has a quiet but profound power of her own. She is taken by surprise when a Dhampir Guardian named 'Mikhail' shows interest in her, a relationship that will expose both the brightest and darkest parts of her heart.

Born and raised in Louisiana, Kaiser grew up knowing in her heart that she wanted to be an actress and at the age of 14, after receiving a jarring diagnosis for scoliosis, she decided to actively pursue it. She researched how to become an actress (thank you Google), took her own headshots in her back yard, and started sending her resume out to casting directors. Around this time, she also started developing a passion for STEM and tech, teaching herself how to code and create websites which led to her starting her own tech business. She ultimately went to college for biochemistry but dropped out her junior year to fully immerse herself in the acting world and move to Los Angeles. Her first break was landing a role in a Big Sean music video, and from there she booked the SnapChat series "Two Sides" and "Breakwater". She also shot the sitcom "Millennials" opposite Philip Bolden and Kyle Massey.

Kaiser is a big advocate for mental health and body image positivity, something she personally has struggled with due to her scoliosis. Growing up in a low-income community herself, she is passionate about giving back and mentors underprivileged youth showing them that there are pathways to break the poverty cycle and empower them to get into fields related to STEM and entrepreneurship. She also has a special connection to sexual abuse and lends her voice to causes that fight against human trafficking. She additionally advocates for diversity in television and film both in-front and behind the camera.

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How Jonetta Kaiser of 'Vampire Academy' Harnessed Her Passion Into a Career

Article & Interview by Zana Rawoof



up her dream.

If there's one way to describe Jonetta Kaiser, it's her passion. A word lately overused when describing even the most lackluster subjects, the passion that drives the 24-year-old actress is what led to her booking the role of Sonya Karp on Peacock's new TV series "Vampire Academy." It's also the reason Kaiser powered through an interview with NFM the day after her Lasik eye surgery.

Jonetta's tenacious spirit, in spite of life's curveballs, is not recent character development. Diagnosed with scoliosis as a freshman in high school, she remembers the fear instilled in her by doctors when explaining the restrictions that come with the diagnosis. "I was heartbroken. No one's ever going to want someone like that to be the actor in their show," Jonetta said, reflecting on her teenage years. While some remember high school for the pivotal memories it created, Jonetta remembers these years as when she thought she had to give



Being an actress was what Jonetta Kaiser always wanted. As a kid in Louisiana, she would spend hours Googling “How to become an actress” in hopes of finding the key to her big break. Her aspirations were the same as almost every child at one point. But Jonetta’s actions set her apart from other kids with the same goal. Kaiser did everything she could. After reading “The Hunger Games” as a preteen, she wrote the film franchise’s casting director, pitching herself for the lead role of Katniss Everdeen. Jonetta submitted headshots taken in her grandma’s backyard. As the momentum building up for years came to a sudden halt as she entered high school, Kaiser focused on more STEM-related activities. At 14, she was making money designing Myspace layouts for people. “It was just the math and the science of it all. I love studying. I read books, and I just took notes and marked pages. I loved, loved, loved, loved doing that,” she gushed, explaining how her love for STEM resulted in her majoring in biochemistry. “It was something to keep my mind busy until I realized what I really wanted to be doing is acting,” Jonetta said. After getting a second opinion about her scoliosis treatment and saving up the money she made as a waitress, bartender, and web designer, Jonetta left Louisiana for an entirely different LA. “I moved here in January of 2018. By February of 2018, I was fully repped with a manager, theatrical agent, commercial agent, and modeling agent. I just emailed people and hoped they responded to me!” The actress used the skills she developed years before to create the life she had always dreamed for herself.

Jonetta’s journey is admirable, but her methods to success are simple. The actress has spent her whole life putting herself out there and asking for what she wants. Rejection was never a concern of hers. “I wanted to be a cheerleader but never made the cheerleading team. I wanted to play soccer but didn’t make the soccer team. I think I had enough rejection in my childhood. I’m kind of used to being told no, so I’ll just keep going and it’ll work out eventually. The worst they can say is no. And then you go to the next person, and they’ll probably tell you no as well. And then the next person will as well! But then, eventually, you’ll get a yes. You keep trying!”

In hindsight, Jonetta made all the right decisions. But as a college student thinking about dropping everything in her small-town life for the opportunities of a big city, thinking positive can be harder. Especially for loved ones. “I was doing pretty well in Louisiana, working at the bar. I had my finances figured out, so quitting and moving to a place where everything is three times more expensive was terrifying. But my mom was always super supportive. She always knew I was going to be an actress. And then my dad told me that I made a big mistake, and I should move back to Louisiana. He’s very logical,” Jonetta explains, understanding where her father was coming from. “He wasn’t saying anything that was crazy. It was scary until I hit the ground running and just figured it out.”



By “figuring it out,” Jonetta means booking a Big Sean music video, two Snapchat series, and most recently, her role in “Vampire Academy.” Based on the 2007 young adult novel by Richelle Meade, this series is the second on-screen adaptation of the hit story. With a new intensity to the story, the project is executive produced by “The Vampire Diaries” creator Julie Plec, who says this was something she had been “dying to make.” St. Vladimir’s Academy for royal vampires and their human-vampire-hybrid counterparts has a darker, sexier undertone not yet found in this sci-fi niche. But amidst the enticing romance and drama of these vamps, themes of classism parallel reality, adding a refreshing take that steers clear of an artificially unblemished fantasy world. Jonetta Kaiser plays Sonya Karp, an introverted librarian whose love life brings her out of her shell. “It’s really different from what people are used to,” Jonetta explains. “And we’re streaming, so there aren’t rules as far as cursing and all of the normally restricted things. It’s really exciting.” A book lover herself, Kaiser had been immersed in the vampire world as a teenager. From “The Vampire Diaries,” “Twilight,” and even to the “Vampire Academy” movie, booking this role was a full circle moment. This would normally cause some nerves, but Jonetta hadn’t realized that her audition for “Vampire Academy” was for *the* “Vampire Academy” until she saw Julie Plec’s name. By then, she had already sent in her tape. “At that point, I just thought it would be so cool if I booked this,” she said. “There was no pressure because I hadn’t realized what it was!” It ended up working in Jonetta’s favor, helping her connect to Sonya without auditioning in a certain style. “I read what was on the page. I did that to the best of my ability, and it worked out!”

Paving her way in the acting industry, Jonetta Kaiser still keeps herself grounded with her activism. Supporting A21, a non-profit dedicated to ending all forms of human trafficking and modern-day slavery, the actress admires the work done to actively protect victims and prevent the continuation of these humanitarian crimes. “I did my senior thesis in high school on human trafficking, and at Louisiana State University, I spoke to some of the people who worked for an organization to end human trafficking. It was something at the time I didn’t really know that much about. There are the “Taken” movies which are so scary, full of action, and fun to watch, but not the reality. These are real lives.” Human trafficking was something Jonetta didn’t learn about until later in life. But her advocacy for diversity and opportunities for underprivileged children comes from a more personal place. “I grew up very poor myself. It’s getting out of the box that you can get stuck in and seeing outside of that box to know that there’s more to life than what’s right in front of you. It’s one of the hardest things to break out of. And in generationally poor families, it’s really because they can’t see past a box. It’s a mental struggle on so many levels, and growing up that way, it’s something that I’m passionate about.” While Jonetta could break out of that mindset, she’s adamant about shining a light on the lack of opportunities in the arts for poorer communities. “In small towns in the middle of nowhere, you do what you know,” she says. “Go to school, go to college, get a job. Pursuing the arts is not something that guarantees any money. That’s a fear for a lot of parents. There aren’t a lot of resources where you can go to a music class or have those programs.”





Giving us a glimpse into the methods behind her success, Jonetta says she writes down short-term goals she can achieve to reach the long-term ones. "That's one of my biggest motivators. I want to work with Academy Award winners. So what do I need to do on a smaller scale to get there?" She's also candid about just wanting to pay her bills. Coming from where she did, making sure that money is not an issue drives Jonetta's work. She also stresses the importance of maintaining a job that will support your dream. Putting it bluntly, she says, "Don't expect anything to be handed to you because it will not be. The guys being found in a restaurant by Martin Scorsese is quite a long shot." Reading, listening to podcasts, and consuming information help Jonetta become a better actress. "If you don't know where to start, start with your favorite actor. Mine is Jennifer Lawrence, so I watched probably every interview and project she's ever been in. Study all the time. And then, put yourself out there. Send out emails; sagaftra.org has a list of agencies that are sag franchised [Screen Actor's Guild]. Reach out to them if they don't respond, wait a while, and reach out again. Eventually, someone's going to respond to you."

The clichés about hard work paying off and never giving up retain less meaning each time someone mindlessly utters the words. But seeing powerhouses like Jonetta Kaiser turn those phrases into actions shows the true value of hard work. As if the emails she sent were promises made to her future self, Jonetta is already fulfilling the dreams she had her entire life. With a role in "Vampire Academy" this early on in her career, Jonetta Kaiser is becoming the actress she always knew she would be.

Photography by Kristina Yamamoto, Styling by Venetia Kidd, Makeup by Tiffany Thater and Hair by Brooklyn Cardenas.

COSMOPOLITAN

In the Mood to Party? Go Inside the CosmoTrips Launch at the Mondrian Hotel With Cover Star Laura Harrier

Just here living vicariously through these extremely hot photos.

by THE EDITORS OCT 3, 2022



Kane Lim With Lewis Tan, Sisi Stringer, Sav Palacio, Jonetta Kaiser, and Harley Fothergrill

We have fun. _(ツ)_/

CosmoTrips has arrived to curate your best vacation ever, and the first stop on our itinerary? (Heh.) Celebrating with *Cosmopolitan's* new cover star Laura Harrier at West Hollywood's Mondrian Hotel. Step inside the CosmoTrips launch party, where your favorite celebs and TikTokers—including the cast from Outer Banks and Pretty Little Liars: Original Sin—joined our Editor-in-Chief Jessica Giles to fete Laura's cover. All while sipping on TRULY Flavored Vodka Cosmos, naturally, because lord knows we love a theme.

Between the drinks and the vibes (did we mention Kitty CaSh was DJing and there was a makeup touch-up station thanks to COVERGIRL?) this was truly an evening to stock up on travel bag goodies from Shea Moisture and TRESemmé—er, I mean, an evening to *live vicariously through*, so TG for these behind-the-scenes party pics from photographer Davis Bates. And while we're here, head over right this way to start vacationing like an editor with CosmoTrips. Your friends/wallet can thank us later, bye!

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THE ADVOCATE

Louisiana-born actress Jonetta Kaiser sinks teeth into Peacock's 'Vampire Academy'



For Jonetta Kaiser, the film "Salt" was a turning point.

After watching the Angelina Jolie-starring 2010 action-thriller, Hammond native Kaiser's aspirations for an acting career were solidified.

Twelve years later, she's playing Sonya Karp in streaming service **Peacock's new drama-fantasy series, "Vampire Academy."** Five episodes of the 10-episode freshman season are available now, with a new one releasing each Thursday.

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"She's (Jolie's) so good at what she does, but I think it was that movie because I've always wanted to play a spy and she was like a Russian spy or something like that," Kaiser, 27, recalled last week. "That's when I realized, wait, this is something I can actually do. I always knew it was a thing, but that's when I knew it was a tangible thing."

With that in mind, after graduating from Hammond High School in 2013 she took a "gap year," spending that time dipping her toes in acting as an extra in several Louisiana movie and TV projects filming in New Orleans, Lafayette and elsewhere.



"I was like, just do all of the background work to see if I liked being on set. And then I still didn't know how to go about it," she said. "And money was a main issue. OK, how can I afford to live in California?"

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That's when she took a three-year detour to her hometown's Southeastern Louisiana University, where she studied ... biochemistry.



THE ADVOCATE

"Because my dad told me, you know, go into STEM (a science, technology, engineering and mathematics discipline), being a woman and STEM will be so good. You'll be successful.

"So I did that, but I wasn't happy and kind of like lost my way. I just sat in bed one day and was like, 'Why am I so unhappy?' And it was 'because you're not doing what you always said you always wanted to do. The only thing you've ever wanted to do with your life is be an actor,' career-wise anyway," Kaiser said.

Approaching her senior year at SLU, it was time to switch gears and figure out a new game plan. First up was getting headshots done, then submitting her résumé to numerous Louisiana talent agencies. No responses. Kaiser broadened her submissions to the southeast region from Louisiana to Florida. Still no luck.

Undeterred, she applied to agents in Los Angeles, got one reply and scheduled a general meeting.

"So in December of 2017, I drove, because I couldn't afford to buy myself a plane ticket, so I drove three days to California (in an economy rental car) and had the general meeting. They did not sign me, but while I was out there, I met with another agent through someone that I just happened to communicate with on Instagram. And they told me if I move out (to L.A.) after the holidays and I reach out to them again, they'll sign me on. And they actually did."

By February 2018, Kaiser had commercial, theatrical and modeling agents and a manager. Soon after, her first gig, as half of a young couple in a **Big Sean** video.

THE ADVOCATE

"They have websites where you can submit yourself for things. I would just spend hours on there, submitting myself for short films and things like that," Kaiser explained. "I absolutely am such a huge fan of (rapper Sean). But the video never came out. It's so funny, but I got a little (maybe \$500) paycheck and I got to meet Big Sean. So I was just kind of on cloud nine."

During those first months in Tinseltown, Kaiser juggled auditions, working at a coffee shop and as a restaurant bartender, a common scenario for those trying to break into the business. She took a leave from the restaurant in November 2019 when she landed the role of Mia in the adapted-from-a-video game film "Root Letter." In addition to earning her a SAG-AFTRA (actors' union) card, the movie brought her home to Louisiana for the Shreveport-shot project.

Returning to California, the restaurant manager told her it was either bartending or acting — she had to choose one.

"So obviously I was like, well, I think I've come too far now to choose bartending over acting so acting it is. He gave me the option to be fired, so I would qualify for unemployment. Just before those checks kicked in, Kaiser booked a Coke commercial in Thailand for two weeks. At this point, COVID-19 hadn't reached the U.S.

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"So I am flown into Hong Kong and then Bangkok. I asked the production company who's based out of Shanghai, 'So what's this COVID like, is it serious?' And their response to me, honest to God, was that they wear their mask and they go home and quarantine. That was the extent of the information they gave me.

"So when I got back to the States, I was like, 'Oh, why are we shutting down?' and then COVID really got to America. I'm experiencing a pandemic for the first time."

When auditions did resume, Kaiser picked up work on a few short films and the Snapchat original drama "Two Sides," where she played supportive best friend Heather.

Acting classes here and there helped Kaiser hone her craft, she said.

"But a lot of my growth, I feel like has been from reading books and just understanding what the craft is and then applying it," she said. "I've been fortunate enough to just work and then learn on the job.

"I've always been such an avid book reader, and I have such a vivid imagination. So I think combining those two things, ... and then being able to take on the essence of that character that you're reading. And I've just always done that."

And on her reading list as a teen was the "Vampire Academy" book series.

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"I was a huge fan of the books, a huge fan of the movies. So it wasn't until after I submitted the audition and my agent told me I was actually in the mix for this character that I realized 'I'm gonna get this. I already know this is my role.'"

"Vampire Academy" is the story of two young women, Rose and Lissa who, despite being from opposite social classes, forge a lasting friendship inside the academy's walls as they are readied to become members of royal vampire society.

Kaiser described her supporting role as the mysterious Sonya.

"Sonya Karp is kind of an odd girl. She's very kind, but she spends a lot of her time alone. She's a librarian at St. Vladimir's Academy. She's the sister of Mia Karp and the adoptive daughter of Victor Dashkov. And yeah, so she talks to birds," she explained. "She's a spirit user. So, we don't know a lot about the spirit, which is like one of the powers that vampires can have, but it's not really recognized. And so throughout the series, you'll start to see what spirit is and what comes with being able to use it and all those cool little things.

"And, you get to see the lightest and the darkest parts of Sonya's heart as she falls in love with Mikhail and all of that plays out."

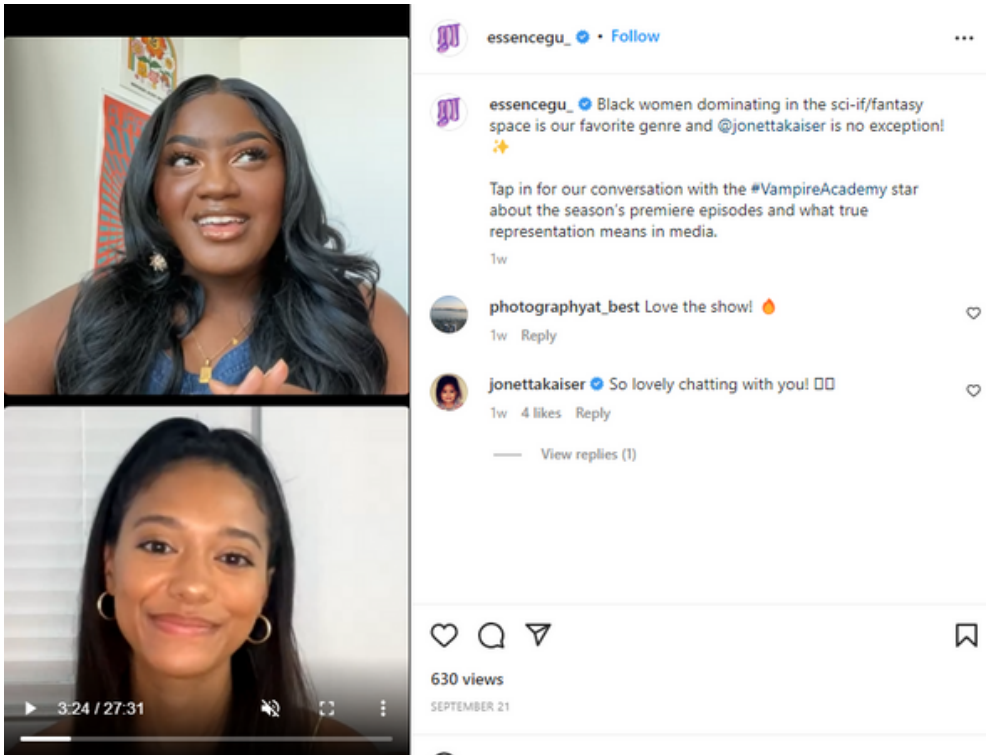
Seeking an authentic backdrop for the series, cast and crew headed to Spain in winter 2021, where an old monastery became the fictional St. Vladimir's Academy for the next seven cold months.

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"It was so much fun, honestly. Like Spain is one of the only places in the world that I've always wanted to live. And I got to do that and get paid. So it's just kind of like a dream come true," Kaiser said. "We lived in Pamplona, which is known for the Running of the Bulls. The monastery is about a 30-minute drive from Pamplona. And then we would go to other amazing locations. So we shot in San Agustin, we shot in Portugal. I definitely want to go back there on a vacation. That is such a beautiful place. It was just such a good time filming in all of these areas and getting to see Spain."



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essencegu_ • Follow

essencegu_ Black women dominating in the sci-if/fantasy space is our favorite genre and @jonettakaiser is no exception! ✨

Tap in for our conversation with the #VampireAcademy star about the season's premiere episodes and what true representation means in media.

1w

photographyat_best Love the show! 🔥

1w Reply

jonettakaiser So lovely chatting with you! 📺

1w 4 likes Reply

View replies (1)

630 views

SEPTEMBER 21

3:24 / 27:31

The screenshot shows an Instagram post from the account 'essencegu_'. It features a video of two women, Jonette Kaiser and another woman, in a conversation. The post includes a caption, a video player with a progress bar, and several replies from other users. The video player shows a timestamp of 3:24 / 27:31. The post has 630 views and was posted on September 21.

THE *List.*

Actress Jonetta Kaiser Talks Her Role In Vampire Academy - Exclusive Interview



Contains spoilers for "Vampire Academy" book series and potential spoilers for "Vampire Academy" TV series

Best friends Lissa Dragomir and Rose Hathaway are pretty standard teenagers. They go to school together and protect each other from any roadblocks that come up during the day. However, there are a couple of important differences between their relationship and the one you have with your own best friend. For starters, Lissa is a vampire princess and the heir to a royal dynasty. Oh yeah, and Rose is protecting her from something a bit more threatening and bloodthirsty than a mean gym teacher.

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That's the plot of Richelle Mead's acclaimed young adult saga "Vampire Academy," and the novels are coming to life in the form of a new series on Peacock. [Daniela Nieves and Sisi Stringer](#) take the lead in the upcoming show, and they've spilled some tea about the project in an exclusive interview, as have [showrunners Julie Plec and Marguerite MacIntyre](#). But they aren't the only cast members along for the ride. Rising star [Jonetta Kaiser](#) stepped up to play Sonya Karp in "Vampire Academy," and the Louisiana native is bringing something special to the show.

Kaiser spoke exclusively to The List about how she got involved with the series. In the process, she revealed that she's a longtime fan of Mead's books. She also opened up about her favorite characters and favorite vampire story (spoiler alert: It stars [Aaliyah](#)), what it's like to play an established character, her acting aspirations, and so much more.

Jonetta Kaiser read the Vampire Academy series as a child



What drew you to "Vampire Academy" in the first place?

Doing the audition process when you're just getting your foot in the door. I moved down [to Los Angeles in] 2018 to start acting professionally. When you're doing it, you literally audition for everything.

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When it came my way to audition, I don't turn down auditions, so I just did it. It wasn't until I got the audition for the character that I ended up being hired for Sonya Karp. Because I did an audition for Rose [Hathaway], which all of the girls did, and then they gave us each [the] character that they saw us more as.

When I got the audition for Sonya Karp, that's when I realized, "Wait a second, 'Vampire Academy,' the books, like that?" That's when I got a little excited. I was like, "I didn't realize." Then I saw Julie Plec's name attached to it, and I was like, "Wait a second, this would be ..."

So then I immediately went and watched the movie, and I was like, "Whoa, this would be so cool with the book." That's what drew me to it. [I realized] in real time what was going on.

Had you had read the books before auditioning?

I read them when I was 13. Those are the first young adult fantasy books that I read. It was so cool. My sister [and I], we would just go. She'd be on book two, I'd be on book one, and then I'd catch up with her, and then she'd go on. We were superfans of these books. I think it was the "Vampire Academy" books that actually got me into "Twilight" [and] "The Vampire Diaries." I read those books. There's other[s]. The young adult fantasy book section in Books-A-Million — I'd go in there, and we'd browse and go get those.

The following question contains spoilers for the "Vampire Academy" book series and potential spoilers for the "Vampire Academy" TV series.

Do you have a favorite character from the series that isn't Rose, Lissa, or Sonya?

That is a good question. I think Christian is ... No, Mason. Mason's my favorite. You root for him so hard, and then you're absolutely, in the books, heartbroken when you read that he dies. It's like, "No." Yeah, Mason's my favorite.

He's a fun character. I loved reading him with Rose.

Yes. The way they're written is just so ... It's great. You're fully there. You're like, "Yes! Team Mason, Team Rose."

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Katniss Everdeen is one of Jonetta Kaiser's dream roles



Speaking about Rose, would you say you relate more to Rose or Lissa?

From the books, I would say Rose for sure, because Lissa is a princess, and she's a royal. She has that whole dynamic going on. [During] my upbringing as a kid, I was always a kid that was not cool. Rose is kind of on the outside, and she's like that person — she knows everyone, everyone likes her, but she's rough around the edges and things like that. That's why I definitely relate to that a lot more. I would love to relate more to Lissa. That'd be so cool if I could relate to being a princess and being super rich.

Rose is a baddie, though! So in the long run, you came out ahead.

Yeah, and 13-year-old me was like, "I want every guy to like me." Every guy loves Rose.

I saw on Instagram that you said you'd always wanted to play a book character. If you could play anyone, who would be your dream character from a book?

Oh, this is so easy for me: Katniss Everdeen from "The Hunger Games." I read those books, and those books have my heart. When I found out that they were casting for the movie, I wrote the casting director, Deborah Zane, a little letter on my Dell desktop computer and dial-up, and printed it, and then snail mailed her my headshot and resume telling her why I should be cast as Katniss Everdeen. I'm such a dork. She probably never saw it, but it exists. I have it. I still have the letter.

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Speaking about Sonya, she's already an established character in the books, but she seems to play a little bit of a different role here. Can you talk at all about how she's different?

I can't say too much. We've taken the world in "Vampire Academy" and we've expanded upon it. Everyone's getting a little bit of a backstory, which we never got with Sonya in the books. That's a main difference. I can't say what will happen or won't happen that's different from the books to the TV show, because some of that may or may not be a spoiler. You have to watch to find out!

Playing an established character comes with challenges



Another thing about playing a character like Sonya is that there is a fan base who expects them to behave a certain way. Are there any challenges as an actor to bring a character like that to life?

Yeah, definitely. Especially when you're portraying a character from a book series that [is] so loved by so many people worldwide, there's a little bit of, "I do want them to be proud of what I did, and I hope that they don't hate it." But there's only so much that I can ... It comes down to a person being a people pleaser. If that's what I'm thinking about when I'm acting in the midst of doing a scene, then I'm probably not doing my best job because I'm not present. I'm not in the moment.

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Maybe there's something that's not in the character or [not] something that Sonya Karp herself would do, but if there's something in the moment that happens, and she reacts, whether it's out of character or not, but it's true to the moment that's happening in front of me, then who's to say that wasn't something Sonya would do? Because in the moment, it happened, and if she just stands there like a doorknob and doesn't do anything, then that's weird.

That's the joy of acting; it's spontaneous. You never know exactly what's going to happen. You can prep. You can prep. And I try to honor who Sonya Karp — based upon the scripts we were given — who she is. Then ... when I show up on the day, that prep work goes in and hopefully it shows, but also there's a certain amount of presence to being there in the moment that you have to also maintain.

It sounds like part of it is having that confidence in yourself and faith in knowing your character.

Yeah, and hoping that the prep work, the homework that I did before I went to set, is there. That helps with the confidence.

Jonetta Kaiser's favorite vampire tale involves Aaliyah



Photo: Kristina Yamamoto, Makeup: Tiffany Thaler, Hair: Brooklyn Cardenas, Stylist: Venitta Kidd

[HTTPS://WWW.THELIST.COM/1009836/ACTRESS-JONETTA-KAISER-TALKS-HER-ROLE-IN-VAMPIRE-ACADEMY-EXCLUSIVE-INTERVIEW/](https://www.thelist.com/1009836/actress-jonetta-kaiser-talks-her-role-in-vampire-academy-exclusive-interview/)

THE *List.*

You mentioned "Twilight." I have to put you on the spot: Do you have a favorite vampire story?

Good question. I loved the movie "Queen of the Damned," with Aaliyah. My mom was super obsessed with that movie. Aaliyah is so beautiful and captivating, and it's so dark. I love that about it. It's like the underworld. It's a lot like "Vampire Academy" in the sense of [how] there's a king, there's a queen, and that's so cool to incorporate that into a vampire world because they are so old, usually. Yeah, I think that's my favorite vampire story.

You mentioned that you've been working in acting since 2018. What drew you to the field?

I've always wanted to do it. Being from the South and not having the means to go to Juilliard, I would Google things all day long. I would watch movies with my favorite actors. Angelina Jolie is a huge one. I've always absorbed everything I could. Even subconsciously, [I] was doing it, studying, without realizing that that's what I was doing.

I'm very much a quiet person, and I'm very shy, and I've always watched people. I've always studied people and really good actors doing what they do by watching their movies. That's when I found my way back to "I can actually do this professionally. That's something that people actually can do." Then I made the big move to Los Angeles. Then everything fell into place because it was something that I'd always been exercising without actually doing it.

That was a whole different thing once I actually started auditioning and then exercising that instrument. It's a whole craft to master in itself, auditioning. Having that, and then reading books and educating myself, and watching interviews like the Roundtable [from] The Hollywood Reporter — their Roundtables with those actors that are absolute masters at their craft. I think that's what got me to this point. Then in 2018, [I was] like, "Screw it, I'm just going to do it."

Is there any actor or actress that you would most love to work with?

Yes, absolutely! Obviously, Jennifer Lawrence; I love her. I've loved her since her playing Katniss Everdeen. Also, I've gone back and watched other things that she's done. She's so great.

Charlize Theron. I really want to work with Denzel Washington. He's so great at what he does. Leonardo DiCaprio. Oh my gosh, there's so many. Zendaya! Zendaya is killing it. She's so great. Love her. Yeah, the list goes on and on. Those are the few off the top of my head because they're the most recent people I've watched in things.

THE *List.*

Jonetta Kaiser is also interested in coding and biochemistry



Photo: Kristina Yamamoto, Makeup: Tiffany Thaler, Hair: Brooklyn Cardenas, Stylist: Venita Kidd

I was reading your bio, and it mentioned that you were also interested in coding and biochemistry and other science-related things. Do you still get to do anything in those fields as you're pursuing acting?

Yeah. Before booking "Vampire Academy," I actually had website clients [whose websites I'd] code. And I still have them because then I had to uproot my entire life and move to Spain for seven months, which was such an amazing experience. I haven't had time to hand off the clients to anyone else yet. It's been like, go, go, go, go, go. So I'm looking to do that. If there's anyone who wants a website client, let me know. I will be happy to hand them off.

But yeah, I loved coding. That started back in the MySpace days, and I remembered everything — HTML, CSS, all that good stuff — for whatever reason. One of my first friends in LA, she's a senior software engineer, so she taught me shorthand JavaScript, which is now called React, and things like that. That's just one of the ways to do shorthand JavaScript. So I know all of that. It's literally another language that I know and understand.

The biochemistry came in when I was diagnosed with scoliosis in ninth grade. I gave up on becoming an actress. I was like, "Okay, well, I'll graduate, and then I'll go into STEM." My dad, he's like, "Women in STEM, that's the new direction. Do that; you'll be successful." So I was like, "Okay," and went to school for biochemistry in 2018. '17-'18 is when I dropped out to move to LA and do the acting professionally. But yeah, that's what I was doing before, right before.

THE *List.*

Vampire Academy's diverse cast was a draw to the project



Your bio also mentioned that you're an advocate for diversity in Hollywood, and the casting for "Vampire Academy" seems fantastic for that. Did that draw you in at all when you were looking at the offer?

Oh my, yes. When I saw that our female lead would be a Black woman, I was like, "Finally. It's time." For a show like this, I want people to be able to see themselves in the characters. The world has evolved. As a society, we've evolved, so now it's time for the entertainment that we all watch and love to reflect that. "Bridgerton" is doing it. It doesn't take away from the acting. It doesn't take away from the story at all.

"Game of Thrones: House of the Dragon," they're getting so much hate for casting people of color and Black people, and it's so upsetting because we are good actors too, and we can do this story and play the storyline, and it does not take away from the story.

Yeah, it drew me to it. [I love] being able to look at my co-stars and be so proud of who we are and look at every person and be like, "My god, so many people, so many young people are going to watch this and actually be able to see themselves." That's so amazing and beautiful.

'Vampire Academy': Jonetta Kaiser Talks Her Character Sonya Karp and How the Revamped Series Fits a Modern Era

by Gabriela Silva | More Articles: TV
Published on August 19, 2022

The era of vampires is returning with the [Peacock](#) series *Vampire Academy*. The series is [led by Julie Plec and Marguerite MacIntyre](#) and adds a modern twist to the infamous YA books and 2014 movie. Actor Jonetta Kaiser joins *Vampire Academy* as Sonya Karp, an outcast and somewhat mysterious with the ability to use Spirit. In an interview with Showbiz Cheatsheet, Kaiser breaks down her character and why the series will succeed.



Fans will get to see Sonya Karp's full story and love interest in 'Vampire Academy'

Unlike the book series, the 2014 movie did not fully flesh out Sonya's story. She was a peculiar teacher at St. Vladimir Academy who was rumored to have willingly turned Strigoi. Like Lissa, she also had the unique ability to use Spirit. But Kaiser explains her character will get a more extensive story similar to the books and one fans can relate to.

Showbiz CheatSheet

"So what I can tell you, there's a lot I can't tell you. But what I can tell you is that Sonya Karp is a librarian at St Vladimir's Academy. She is the sister of Mia Karp and the daughter of Victor Dashkov. And he adopted both of us. I have a love interest, Mikael, which you'll see that play out," explained Jonetta Kaiser about her *Vampire Academy* character.



[HTTPS://WWW.CHEATSHEET.COM/ENTERTAINMENT/VAMPIRE-ACADEMY-JONETTA-KAISER-TALKS-CHARACTER-SONYA-KARP-HOW-REVAMPED-SERIES-FITS-MODERN-ERA.HTML/](https://www.cheatsheet.com/entertainment/vampire-academy-jonetta-kaiser-talks-character-sonya-karp-how-revamped-series-fits-modern-era.html/)

Showbiz CheatSheet

But the actor explains Karp is like a fly on the wall who does not conform to the vampire world she lives in. "She doesn't really care about the hierarchy of it all, like the king or queen and all of those things going on. She's really on the outside, and she pays attention to a lot of things. So she notices a lot of things going around that everyone else that is maybe, relative to today, like in their phones, 24/7," explains the actor.

Kaiser cannot give too much away about what events will take place in *Vampire Academy*. But between the vampire drama and her finding love, the actor reveals fans will get to see Sonya come out of her shell.

With strong female leads, LGBTQ romance, and diversity, Jonetta Kaiser says its the perfect time for 'Vampire Academy'

Adaptations of popular YA books [can be a hit or miss](#). Fans saw how Julie Plec's decision to change the blonde book Elena to Nina Dobrev caused an uproar but ultimately became the best decision ever made. From photos and trailers, *Vampire Academy* is changing the book characters to be more inclusive and focused on talent rather than an exact copy. A key example is Kaiser herself. Karp is a white, blue-eyed, and brown-haired character in the books.

"We come so far past the point where we're watching a project, and everyone in that project is just one color, like let's diversify it. Whether it's a black show, even BET incorporates white people into their shows. It should be the same the other way, you know, there's no show that should be 'Oh, it's a white show. Oh, it's a black show,'" explained Kaiser about *Vampire Academy's* cast. "But outside of that, especially in a fantasy world like ours, there are no rules."

Showbiz CheatSheet

The actor explains [Plec and MacIntyre](#) did not have time to get into the nitty-gritty of how they would change the characters before starting casting and production. "They cast who was the best person who had the essence the most for every single character. And that's what's so great because the whole thing for an actor is you feel the character, you become the character," explained Kaiser.

Its been almost 15 years since the publication of the book series. Kaiser explains it is the right time to re-animate the beloved story. "If we can get our audience to relate to our characters because we're actually bringing things to the screen that they can look at be like, 'oh my gosh, I get that. I understand that' then yeah I think it is right time," said the actor.



Is Jonetta Kaiser 'Team Damon' or 'Team Stefan'?

Vampire Academy is bringing back fond memories for fans who grew up in the vampire era of TV. Kaiser is no stranger to the craze as she grew up reading the *Vampire Academy* and watching *Vampire Diaries* and *Twilight*. It was only after booking the role of Sonya Karp did Kaiser realize the series was based on the popular YA books [and helmed by Julie Plec](#).

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"Instantly, I went and watched the movie. I loved it. I loved it. Like, 13-year-old me was just crying and laughing with joy," said the actor. Doing the table read with Plec, and MacIntyre felt "surreal." Getting into what fans really want to know – is Kaiser Team Damon or Team Stefan?

"Oh, my God, you know what? Young me was Team Damon. But older me is Team Stefan," said Kaiser. Continuing the line of questioning, Kaiser also revealed she was Team Jacob. "Oh, a sucker for a little heartthrob. I think Team Jacob."



The actor explains everyone wants the mystery and intrigue of a troubled man. But she admits the [series does have some troubled relationships](#) and romance that will be riveting to watch. "While I love a good romantic drama and a rom-com, let's add some tension with that, some friction in there. That's what makes the story interesting. Also, people dying in a story. It's tragic, but that's the Shakespeare of it all. It's the love and the death."

Vampire Academy will stream on [Peacock](#) on Sept. 15.

Showbiz CheatSheet



Vampire Academy Jonetta Kaiser on Her Character Sonya Karp + How a Revamped Series Fits a Modern Era

Jonetta Kaiser gives the inside scoop on her 'Vampire Academy' character Sonya Karp and how the series modernizes the book story and characters for our current society. The actor also reveals juicy details of whether she's Team Damon or Team Stefan.

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=MRW7OUNVQZS](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRW7OUNVQZS)



"Vampire Academy" star Jonetta Kaiser sinks her teeth into new tv role



"Vampire Academy" star Jonetta Kaiser sinks her teeth into new tv role



Jonetta Kaiser of Peacock's 'Vampire Academy' talks show premiere, Louisiana ties

SHREVEPORT, La. (KTAL/KMSS) – The star of NBC Peacock's upcoming series "Vampire Academy" visited the morning show to talk about what fans can expect.

Jonetta Kaiser portrays librarian Sonya Karp in the streaming adaptation of the paranormal young adult romance series of the same name by author Richelle Meade.

Wolk asked her how it feels to accomplish so much so young, to which Kaiser laughed.

"I have to make myself take moments to be grateful, and that's when I'm like, 'oh, I'm really doing this,'" said Kaiser.

She said her Louisiana roots played a part in her career.

"One thing I know about the south is people keep it very real and grounded. And I appreciate that so much because when you get to a certain point, especially as an actor, things are so glamorous. And I just never want to forget where I come from. My roots are in Louisiana. They'll always keep me grounded.

Her advice to locals who look up to her was, "Don't give up, no matter how hard it gets."

"Vampire Academy" premieres Thursday, September 15, on NBC Peacock.



Jonetta Kaiser of Peacock's 'Vampire Academy' talks show premiere, Louisiana ties



[HTTPS://WWW.KTALNEWS.COM/ENTERTAINMENT-NEWS/JONETTA-KAISER-OF-PEACOCKS-VAMPIRE-ACADEMY-TALKS-SHOW-PREMIERE-LOUISIANA-TIES/](https://www.ktalnews.com/entertainment-news/jonetta-kaiser-of-peacocks-vampire-academy-talks-show-premiere-louisiana-ties/)

Actress Jonetta Kaiser talks starring in 'Vampire Academy,' giving back to community, more



Jonetta Kaiser stars in "Vampire Academy," a series streaming on NBC Peacock.

She joined us Monday on "All Indiana" to discuss the new show, the show's diversity compared to the books, giving back to underprivileged youth, her past experience in the STEM industry, and more.

"Vampire Academy" premieres this Thursday, September 15 on Peacock.

BingetownTV Podcast

E285Vampire Academy: Jonetta Kaiser AKA Sonya Karp Interview



E285Vampire Academy: Jonetta Kaiser AKA Sonya...

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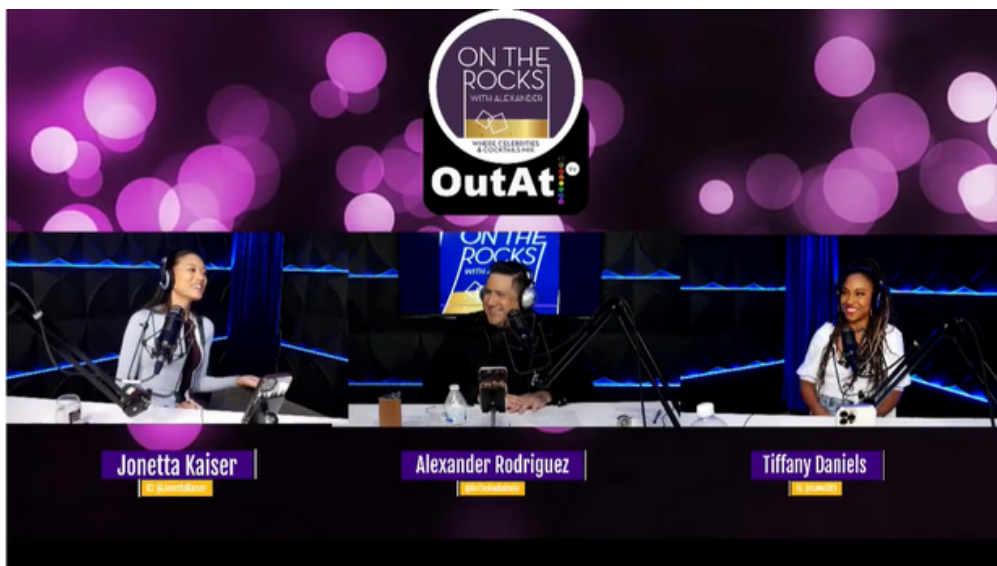


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Fellow Vampire Academy fans! We have a special treat for you. Jonetta Kaiser AKA our girl Sonya Karp was nice enough to sit down and chat with us about all things episodes 1-5. She tells us what it was like to act with birds, how great her scene partners were, and her approach on how to play such an important character like Sonya. We cannot thank her enough for this great convo! We had such a blast chatting with her! We hope you all enjoy it as much as we did!

[HTTPS://WWW.BINGETOWNTV.COM/E285VAMPIRE-ACADEMY-JONETTA-KAISER-AKA-SONYA-KARP-INTERVIEW/](https://www.bingetowntv.com/e285vampire-academy-jonetta-kaiser-aka-sonya-karp-interview/)



Actors Tiffany Daniels (That Girl Lay Lay) & Jonetta Kaiser (Vampire Academy): On the Rocks LIVE!

It's a women in entertainment episode as we chat with dancer, producer, and actress Tiffany Daniels (Nickelodeon's That Girl Lay Lay, Hairspray, The Color Purple) and actor and advocate Jonetta Kaiser (Peacock's Vampire Academy) with guest co-host Stephanie Erb (Netflix's Dahmer, Amazon Prime's A League of Their Own) and your sassy host with the sassiest, Alexander Rodriguez. Among chats about current projects, topics will cover diversity in Hollywood, taking chances, getting into the biz, social media, mental and physical health, body positivity, and overcoming obstacles. Raise a glass and join in the chat, it's On the Rocks!

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Sink Your Teeth Into Our Interview With “Vampire Academy” Star Jonetta Kasier



Last week, the first four episodes of Peacock’s new series “**Vampire Academy**” made their premiere. Actress **Jonetta Kasier** has since spoken with us, filling us in on the series and her character of Sonya Karp.

Based on the Best-Selling six-book collection by Richelle Mead, the series is filled with “Friendship, romance, and danger. In a world of privilege and glamour, two young women’s friendship transcends their strikingly different classes as they prepare to complete their education and enter vampire society. One as a powerful Royal, the other a half-vampire Guardian trained to protect against the savage ‘Strigoi’ who threaten to tear their society apart. That is if Royal infighting doesn’t do the job first.” Learn more about the series [here](#).



Kelli: "I watched the first episode last night. I enjoyed it."

Jonetta: "Oh, my god. Really"

Kelli: "I did. I have to say it's very different than the vampire series I've seen. It's complex (in a good way).

Jonetta: "It's a little different."

Kelli: "Yeah, it is, and that's not a bad thing."

Jonetta: "Right?"

Kelli: "Being different is a very good thing in my book. I see the same things over and over, and over, you know, the same plots."

Jonetta: "Exactly."

Kelli: "Tell me a little bit about Sonya? Who is she?"

Jonetta: "Sonya Karp is a librarian at the Vampire Academy. She is there the entire time. There is one that is not recognized as one of the royals. We see kind of how she's isolated from just, I think, society as a whole, kind of the girl that's always there, but no one quite knows why she's odd or anything like that. Yeah, that's kind of my character. She is also the adopted daughter of Victor."



Kelli: "And because you're adopted, you don't get recognized as a member of society with the other royals?"

Jonetta: "Yeah. They know I'm adopted by a royal vampire, but I'm still considered a non-royal vampire. That's one of the main things that drives Victor when it comes to politics and creating equality in the world. It's a very political society, and he made it his mission to bring that equality because of the social injustice that his daughters have to experience. They can't get into the same events or things like that just because they weren't born into the bloodline."

Kelli: "Well, that's not fair."

Jonetta: "Yeah."

Kelli: "Is one of the big parts of the series the drive for the throne? Victor seems to be a very important part of that."

Jonetta: "He is. He is, and the thing with the show is, I think for the audience, like if you were watching, they have to start here because later on in the book there are big things that happen, and no one who hasn't read the books would understand those things that will come in later seasons if they didn't start here. There are things that are going on with the fight for the crown and understanding the way the world works, and why someone can't get something just because they don't have enough royal blood or enough cousins that are alive there in their line of the family and things like that."

Kelli: "Right, right. Another part of the story that interests me is the situation between vampires and the Strigoi. Can you explain that a little?"

Jonetta: "Yeah. The Strigoi are traditional. They can't go out in the sun. They are evil, violent, and soulless. That's what they are. The vampire society sees them as dead. They actually give them a funeral. When they turn into Strigoi. At that point, they are dead to them. There's a lot of mystery about who the Strigoi are. They're considered dead. They're outside the ward of the dominion and we only see them when they're attacking someone or killing someone, so we don't know much about them. We'll get to see them explored in this first season and maybe, hopefully, see what the Strigoi are and the mystery of everything in season two."

Kelli: "What can you tell our readers about the academy itself? It looks fantastic."

Jonetta: "Oh, my gosh. It's totally sick. The actual academy was built. It's in Spain. They built it at a monastery, so it's very classic, old school. It looks like a castle. It hasn't been here, and they just built the barracks that the dhampirs sleep in, which is another type of vampire that we have. They're half human, half vampire. They sleep in the barracks. Then we have my library inside the monastery. It's very beautiful. They're actually old Spanish textbooks that they put on the shelves there. It's just such a beautiful, what they were able to create, such a beautiful environment. There is a church that they built and it's absolutely stunning, breathtaking as you walk in, everything is so rich, and it was built very well. I hope that in the future if people get to tour the school of Vampire Academy, it would be such a cool thing to go and sit down at the grounds where it is. My garden is there and on set when I'm walking through that, it's amazing. It's so cool to have a set that actually has been built for a show because rather than being in a studio where there's just a green screen or something like that."



Kelli: Right. Building it and having it physically there, does lend an air of authenticity to it."

Jonetta: "Yeah, it does. It's so, so cool."

Kelli: "What is Sonya's function in the academy besides just being a librarian? I think she's probably got more in store for her."

Jonetta: "Oh Yeah, there's definitely more in store. But I can't really say much about it yet."

Kelli: "I understand."

Jonetta: "Hopefully after episode five, episode six, we get to see some of that revealed. Yeah, she's just cherished by Victor, her father, and Mia is like her sister and they have that kind of sister relationship, but you can tell that Sonya cares about her, and she does love her, and they fight like sisters would, right? She may think that because Mia wants the crown and wants those things, and she thinks maybe Sonya is a little bit embarrassing or something like that, like the sister that does embarrassing things. Sonya's just there. She's at the library, she does what she's supposed to do, and she does little more than that to bring more attention to herself. She stays out of everyone's way. She's kind of in the background in the first episodes."

Kelli: You mentioned earlier that she has the power of spirit magic what is that?

Jonetta: "She does. That's the whole thing is we don't really know what the spirit is, and it's going to be talked about in later episodes since that was revealed because it's one of the elements of power, and she's going to show more. I believe in episode six, we get to see some of that."

Kelli: "In what episode do we really get to know Sonya?"

Jonetta: "We meet Sonya in episode one. Well, I guess in episode four when a boy comes in and they have this beautiful, innocent love that gets played out and they go to the garden, and they have a beautiful moment and we get to see the spirit magic at work at that moment as well. Yeah, I think that's kind of where we get to see more of Sonya. Episode four, I'd say."

"Episode five comes out tomorrow."

Kelli: "Yay. I'll have to watch more. What's your favorite aspect of the series?"

Jonetta: "My favorite aspect is that we have such diversity in our show, but that's not the focus of it. There are dynamic characters that will have to be played by people of color and Black people. Yeah, it's just like cool stories that are being told here in a world where there's such a heightened state and everything is just urgent, if it's not right now, it's right now. I think that that's kind of what I love so much about the show. It's everything is so real and serious. If this person gets the crown, then the whole dominion will start to fail, and it's that sort of thing. It's a very fun world to play in with all of the cast and the locations that we filmed in. We were all over Spain. We got to explore Barcelona and Madrid. I think all of those things combined were what made the seven months of filming the show such an amazing experience."

Kelli: "Right. I'm guessing you haven't heard any word if it's going to be renewed?"



Jonetta: "Not yet. We're really hoping. Really hoping."

Kelli: "Oh, I bet."

Jonetta: "It would be so sad for them to have to tear down that entire academy after just one season."

Kelli: "Right. Plus I'm sure they're so many more stories to be told and explored."

Jonetta: "Absolutely."

Kelli: "I haven't read the books, but I would love to see more of the story, you know?"

Jonetta: "Yeah. Yeah. There are a lot of things that need to be explained about the world. We have half human and half vampires. They are not royal vampires. There are royal vampires. We have the Strigoi vampires, so it's like all of those things have to be explained in the first couple of episodes or you just would be so lost as to what we're doing."

Kelli: "At the same time, it was, like I said, I've never read the books, and it's a new world to me. There are so many different types of relationships and political issues. It's very interesting."

Jonetta Yeah. Yeah, it is interesting.

Kelli: "There are a ton of action sequences and magic. Are those practical or CGI, or a combination?"

Jonetta: "It's CGI. I think it's episode two. I'm in the library and I'm talking to a bird, so what that was the bird, they kind of had like a fake bird sitting on the shelf, and I'm talking to this stick bird, and then they, brought in CGI equipment and they, I don't know, take pictures and record it. I know they made it fly in. It was so cool. Then in episode four, I'm healing a bird, a dead bird, and it lights up. It was actually a little bean bag. I reach out my hand and there's light and then the bird flutters off.

What I had to do was, the director, Jesse, he was so great, he was just like, "Okay, now reach out." He just instructed me. There were no lines. He was like, "Okay, now reach out. Okay. And now look up and follow the bird, the direction of where the bird would go." When they cut all of that together, they had the bird fly off. It's like, "Oh wow, it looks like I'm looking at a real bird flying away. That's so cool."

Kelli: "That has to be a little awkward, talking to a bean bag like that, pretending it's alive."



Jonetta: "Yeah, it was definitely a little awkward. It's funny. It's like you're trying not to laugh while you're doing these scenes because it's all in your mind, it's all make-believe, and it's like, okay, this is where the kid inside gets to come out and play because I'm just using my imagination completely at this point."

Kelli: "I always love hearing interesting things like that about what takes place behind the scenes. Bean bags and stuffed birds. Gotcha."

Jonetta: "Yeah [laughter]."

Kelli That's awesome [laughter]. If you had to tell somebody why they should watch this series, what would you say?

Jonetta: "Oh. "If you're looking for something that's different to watch on TV. We have the political drama, we have the relationships that you can become obsessed with and fall in love with, and we have lots of options. Our stunt actors for this show were so talented. The stunts were not CGI. That's something that was just very, very, very cool to witness and see how hard a lot of our actors work trying to keep up with the stunts."

Kelli: "I bet that's awesome to see."

Jonetta: "Yeah. I'd like to say that we have great acting in our show. We have a lot of actors that have been working for many years. We have J. August Richards. He's been acting for 20-plus years. Mia McKenna-Bruce, she's been acting since she was probably like eight years old. Daniela Nieves, she's done Spanish soap operas and then a Nickelodeon show, and Sisi Stringer who's done Mortal Combat. I think we have such a great cast who have been brought together and really do care about the craft. I think that that passion relates to the screen. I think if that's what you're looking for, is something where there's passion, and there's action, and stuntmen, the political drama, then that's our show. It's a combination of Game of Thrones and Harry Potter if you will."

Kelli: "That's a great description actually."

Jonetta: Thank you."

Kelli: "Are you working on anything else besides the series right now?"

Jonetta: "I actually just did a national commercial. I have no idea when that will come out. I did a film, a thriller, when I got back from Spain. I went to New Jersey for three weeks and did a kind of thriller. I'm excited to see that come out. I believe it's called A Party to Die For. It is a thriller. I believe it's still in production. Right now, I'm just auditioning for things again, which is always so much fun going in and the height of exercising my craft."

Kelli: "If one of our readers wanted to follow you on social media so they could stay up to date on your projects, where could they find you?"

Jonetta: "I'm on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [TikTok](#). The handle is all the same. It's just my first name and my last name."

See Jonetta Kaiser, who is an absolute sweetheart, on Vampire Academy, now streaming exclusively on Peacock. Watch the first five episodes now and see new ones on Thursdays. Be sure to follow Jonetta on social media to stay up to date on all her projects and more.

THAT #HASHTAG SHOW



[#VampireAcademy](#) [#interview](#)

VAMPIRE ACADEMY: J. August Richards and Jonetta Kaiser Interview | That Hashtag Show

Jessica sat down with J. August Richards and Jonetta Kaiser to discuss their new Peacock Series, Vampire Academy!

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=A7QZOKGMHBA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A7QZOKGMHBA)

FRESH PAIR OF IIS

[INTERVIEWS] VAMPIRE
ACADEMY'S CAST MEMBERS
JONETTA KAISER AND J.
AUGUST RICHARDS AND
SHOWRUNNERS MARGUERITE
MACINTYRE AND JULIE PLEC
TALK VAMPIRES, DHAMPIRS,
AND RELATIONSHIPS



Vampire Academy is the new Peacock show based on the books series by Richelle Mead. Set at St Vladimir's Academy, the series explores the friendship between vampire Lissa and her protector, dhampir Rose. The series stars Sisi Stringer (Mortal Kombat), Daniela Nieves (Sex Appeal), Kieron Moore (Sex Education), André Dae Kim (Degrassi), J. August Richards (Angel), newcomer Jonetta Kaiser, and more.

I talked to Jonetta Kaiser (Sonya Karp) and J. August Richards (Victor Dashkov) about how they relate to their characters, Sony and Victor being underestimated if they rather be a vampire or dhampir, and which of the elements would be theirs.

[HTTPS://FRESHPAIROFIIS.COM/2022/09/12/INTERVIEWS-VAMPIRE-ACADEMYS-CAST-MEMBERS-JONETTA-KAISER-AND-J-AUGUST-RICHARDS-AND-SHOWRUNNERS-MARGUERITE-MACINTYRE-AND-JULIE-PLEC/](https://freshpaiofiis.com/2022/09/12/interviews-vampire-academys-cast-members-jonetta-kaiser-and-j-august-richards-and-showrunners-marguerite-macintyre-and-julie-plec/)

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Vampire Academy's Jonetta Kaiser & J. August Richards Choose Between Elements, Vampire and Dhampir

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[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=ZDD0WIYCY58&T=1S](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDD0WIYCY58&T=1S)



Vampire Academy | Interview with Jonetta Kaiser and J. August Richards



Peacock TV is giving us our fix of vampires, and we couldn't be more excited! The new series, *Vampire Academy*, starts streaming on Peacock on September 15, and we can't wait to watch it! Here at YEM, we got to sit down with Jonetta Kaiser and J. August Richards, who star in the new series. They told us a little bit about their characters and what we can expect from the show. You'll definitely want to tune into the full interview!



[HTTPS://YOUNGENTERTAINMENTMAG.COM/VAMPIRE-ACADEMY-INTERVIEW-WITH-JONETTA-KAISER-AND-J-AUGUST-RICHARDS/](https://youngentertainmentmag.com/vampire-academy-interview-with-jonetta-kaiser-and-j-august-richards/)

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First, Jonetta shares some information about her character, Sonya Karp. Sonya is a librarian at Vladimir Academy, and one thing that Jonetta tells us is that her character is a little bit spaced out at times. She also shares some fun things on set and what it was like to get into character. J. August Richards plays Victor Dashkov, Sonya's adopted father. The show's characters have a lot of interesting dynamics, and Richards dives a little bit into what we can expect from the world of the underground vampire society.

It was also so much fun to talk to J. August about his experiences being such a seasoned actor, and what his process was like working with the other actors. Jonetta also tells us a little bit about what her time was like on set, especially working with such a refined actor as J. August. It was so great to hear about how they learned from each other on set. We also got to talk to Jonetta and J. August about their past endeavors, whether it be working on films or going to college, so stay tuned for that!



We can't thank Jonetta and J. August enough for sitting down and chatting with us, and we're so excited to see them on screen! Be sure to catch *Vampire Academy* streaming only on Peacock TV on September 15th! Also, make sure to comment down below and subscribe to YEM's YouTube channel for all things pop culture!

YOUNG ENTERTAINMENT



#vampireacademy #peacocktv

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We can't thank Jonetta and J. August enough for sitting down and chatting with us, and we're so excited to see them on screen! Be sure to catch Vampire Academy streaming only on Peacock TV on September 15th! If you enjoyed getting to know more about Jonetta, J. August, and Vampire Academy, please be sure to smash the like button and subscribe to our channel! For more exclusive pop culture content, check out website and the links below.

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=O8W92ONLNTG&T=3S](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8W92ONLNTG&T=3S)



#VampireAcademy

Vampire Academy - J. August Richards & Jonetta Kaiser on representation, royalty & vampire powers

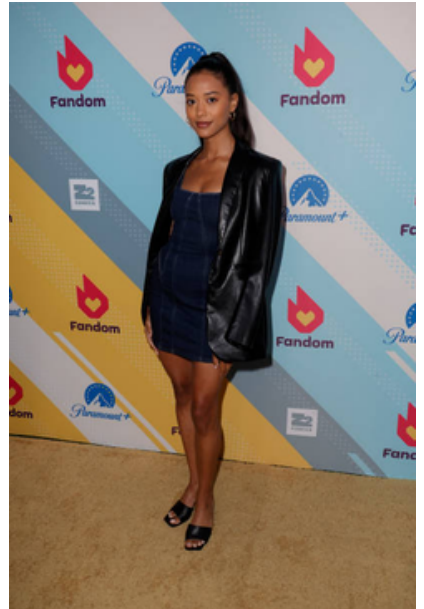
J. August Richards & Jonetta Kaiser are interviewed for Vampire Academy. Directed by Bille Woodruff (first episode), Luis Prieto, Jesse Warn, Erica Dunton, Geoff Shotz and Julie Plec, and written by Richelle Mead, Vampire Academy stars Sisi Stringer (Mortal Kombat), Daniela Nieves (Snowfall), Kieron Moore (Sex Education), Andre Dae Kim (Locke & Key), J. August Richards (Agents of Shield), Anita-Joy Uwajeh (Lucky Man), Mia Mckenna-Bruce (Persuasion), Rhian Blundell (Nobody Girl), Jonetta Kaiser (Tales) and Andrew Liner (Grown-ish). Sarah Cook is asking the questions.

Plot: From executive producers Julie Plec ("Vampire Diaries") and Marguerite MacIntyre ("The Originals") comes a story of romance, friendship, death, sex, and scandal. "Vampire Academy" is based on a series of young adult paranormal romance novels by international bestselling author Richelle Mead. In a world of privilege and glamour, two young women's friendship transcends their strikingly different classes as they prepare to complete their education and enter royal vampire society. This serialized and sexy drama combines the elegance of aristocratic romance and the supernatural thrills of the vampire genre.

The first four episodes of Vampire Academy are available 16th September on Peacock exclusively on Sky and NOW, with new episodes dropping weekly.

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=P3VTGXPN_ZS](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P3VTGXPN_ZS)

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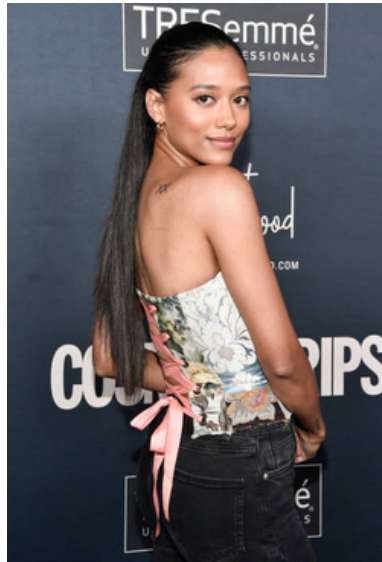


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COSMOPOLITAN COSMOTRIPS LAUNCH 09.29. 22



BARBARA BERLANTI HEROES GALA 10.01. 22



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