EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

You’ve Got to Go Out There and Get It

Annabella Sciorra talks with Paul Salfen about playing Joanne on Tulsa King, as Season 4 airs on Paramount+ and Season 5 films in New York, and about the cold call that landed her first professional job.

Interview by Paul Salfen · AMFM Magazine



(L-R): Annabella Sciorra as Joanne and Sylvester Stallone as Dwight Manfredi in Tulsa King, episode 3, season 4. Image Credit: Steve Swisher/Paramount+

Annabella Sciorra is already back at work in New York. Season 4 of *Tulsa King*, the Paramount+ crime drama created by Taylor Sheridan, premiered Friday, October 16, 2026, and new episodes continue on Fridays through a planned December 18 finale. Mid-season, she is filming Season 5, which Paramount+ has moved to New York to explore the mafia roots of Dwight “The General” Manfredi, the role Sylvester Stallone plays and executive produces. Sciorra plays Joanne Manfredi, Dwight’s sister, a part she has held since the first season. Talking with Paul Salfen on November 20, she would not describe the unaired work that felt like a dream come true, something she had always wanted to do. Of what has already aired, one stretch stood out.

“Particularly the going to the racetrack, that whole sequence, and having Joanne speak in a different way and dress in a different way was really a lot of fun,” she said. “And I’d love to see more of that.”

The sequence is in Season 4, episode 4, “Square One,” which began streaming November 6. That is the pleasure of the current job. The story she told Salfen about how she got into the work at all was older, and sharper. She never thought she wasn’t going to act. Her first professional job started with an item on Page Six, a phone call to a network, and a refusal to wait on a stoop in Brooklyn.

I'D LOVE TO SEE MORE OF THAT

Salfen opened with a compliment the audience has been making since the show's first season: *Tulsa King* keeps getting better, which is rare by a fourth season, and he cannot wait to see what happens. Sciorra loved hearing it. Asked whether she feels the same way when a new script arrives, she did not hedge.

"Yeah, absolutely. Yes. Really wonderful things are happening right now."

He asked whether this season had given her a moment on set when she looked around and thought, I cannot believe I get paid to do this. Her answer was not a single day.

"That happens all the time. That happens absolutely all the time. Especially, I don't know, in the fourth season," she said. "There's some stuff coming up that hasn't aired yet that was just like a dream come true, something I had always wanted to do that I can't tell you."

Then she turned to the work viewers can already see. The racetrack stretch let Joanne speak and dress in a different way, and she wants more of that latitude. Asked what she loves about the character, she did not reach for a monologue. She reached for a temperament.

"She's just brash and tough and says what she wants to say," Sciorra said. "I think she's kind. I think she's warm, but she's very honest, and that's fun."

YOU JUST KEEP GOING WITH HIM

Salfen has had Stallone on with him more than once and called him a great storyteller, the kind of scene partner you never quite know what you will get. Sciorra did not disagree.

"You never know," she said. "He's just somebody who, it's like he doesn't even know the camera's in front of him. He doesn't know the camera's rolling, so he just says whatever comes to mind comes out of his mouth, and the cameras are rolling and you're in a scene. So you just keep going with him."

The habit has a way of rewriting the day.

"One line, two lines, and all of a sudden you're in an improv and you don't know if it's actually really the scene or not the scene. And then it ends up to be in the episode. That's fun."

It is a working method, not a war story. Joanne has to stay with him. The episode, as she tells it, often keeps what arrived in the moment.

YOU'VE GOT TO GO OUT THERE AND GET IT

Salfen asked what advice she would give people who look up to the work and want to follow it. She did not start with a branding tip. She started with appetite, and then with labor.

"You have to really love it. And if you really love it, then pursue it like it's the only thing in the world to do," she said. "Do the work. Don't expect it to come to you. It's not going to come to you. While you're sitting on your stoop in Brooklyn, you've got to go out there and get it."

> *"While you're sitting on your stoop in Brooklyn, you've got to go out there and get it."*

Salfen asked about a Hail Mary moment in her career, a time she had to go for it and it worked. She did not describe a late break. She described a certainty that never left her, and the first job that proved it.

"There was a moment where I never thought I wasn't going to act. I always thought that was what I was going to do. There was never a moment in my entire life where I didn't know what I was going to do with my life," she said. "And I read on page six that Sophia Loren had bought the rights to Mario Puzo's first novel."

She had already read the book in high school, in an Italian-American studies class. Then she picked up the phone.

“I called CBS, and I said, I understand that you’re going to produce this mini series with Sophia Loren. And they said, yeah, but we have enough. I just answer the phones here. You have to find the casting director. And I said, do you happen to know her name?”

They did. She tracked the casting director down.

“She laughed at me and said, well, what have you done? And I said, well, I had a theater company and I did this play and that play. And she said, well, you have to have an agent submit you. So I found an agent to submit me and I got an audition. And that led to four more auditions. And that was my first job, my very, very first professional job.”

> *“That was my first job, my very, very first professional job.”*

The job was *The Fortunate Pilgrim*, the 1988 NBC miniseries drawn from Puzo’s novel, with Loren at the center. Sciorra played Octavia. The call she remembered was to CBS. What followed was a career that would include *Jungle Fever*, *The Hand That Rocks the Cradle*, and an Emmy-nominated turn as Gloria Trillo on *The Sopranos*. The method, as she told it, was already in place. Find the name. Do the work. Do not wait on the stoop.

ACTING IS KIND OF A MEDITATION

Salfen asked what she keeps in mind, a mindset that stays on the path. Her answer was as practical as the first-job story, and quieter.

“I think you have to know what you want, and you have to be relaxed and in the moment while you’re doing it,” she said. “In terms of acting, while you’re in a scene, there’s no behind you or ahead of you. There’s just what’s happening in the moment. So acting is kind of a meditation in that way. I mean, I don’t think of it that way while I’m doing it, but it does feel that way.”

That way of working also describes why she thinks people stay with the series. Salfen asked what makes *Tulsa King* so appealing, why viewers get hooked. She pointed to Stallone.

“I think it’s all Sly. I think he’s immensely appealing. He’s incredibly charming, and there’s nothing he does that is not watchable, from my opinion,” she said. “And he’s got this wonderful voice that just connects him to everything he says. There’s no nasality. It’s just this deep, booming voice that makes it connect to his guts. Everything is very connected. It’s beautiful.”

She remembered him talking to her about legacy, “like a dinosaur in a museum or something like that.” The impression that stayed with her was simpler.

“He’s just very much in the moment.”

Asked about the next season, she would not unpack the plot. She would talk about the city. *Tulsa King* has already been renewed, and production on Season 5 is underway in New York.

“We’re on to season five, and it’s great to shoot New York because it’s all the beautiful New York locations and skylines,” she said. “And I get to stay home, which is fun.”

Is there anything else coming that viewers should know about besides this? She did not dress up the answer.

“That’s it for right now. This is what I’m doing right now. I’m really focused on this because it takes up a lot. We’ll see what happens after this season.”

The stoop, for the moment, can wait. She already went out and got the work. The new episodes of Season 4 are still arriving on Fridays, the finale is set for December 18, and Joanne is in New York, in the moment, doing this.

FIND TULSA KING

Stream: Exclusively on Paramount+. New Season 4 episodes arrive on Fridays. The season premiered October 16, 2026, and is scheduled to conclude with the finale, “Exit Interview,” on Friday, December 18, 2026. Seasons 1 through 3 are also available on the service.

Watch: paramountplus.com/shows/tulsa-king

Official Season 4 trailer: Tulsa King | Season 4 Official Trailer | Paramount+

The series: Created by Taylor Sheridan. Terence Winter is head writer and an executive producer. Sylvester Stallone stars as Dwight “The General” Manfredi and is an executive producer. Produced by Paramount Television Studios and 101 Studios. Annabella Sciorra plays Joanne Manfredi, Dwight’s sister, a role she has held since Season 1. She is filming Season 5 in New York.

Interview conducted by Paul Salfen for AMFM Magazine on November 20, 2026.

Paul Salfen is Managing Editor of AMFM Magazine and a veteran interviewer of film, television, music, and sports figures. He is the author of Going For It!, a collection of Hail Mary moments from the artists and athletes he has spent two decades putting on the record.