

# THE HAMILCAST

## EPISODE 250 TRANSCRIPT: CODY RENARD RICHARD PART 1

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Lin-Manuel Miranda 0:00

Hi, I'm stage and stages Lin Manuel Miranda and you're listening to the Hamilcast.

Gillian Pensavalle 0:19

Hello everyone. Welcome back to the Hamilcast. I'm Gillian. Today I am here finally with Cody Renard Richard. Hi Cody. How are you?

Cody Renard Richard 0:29

Hello I'm so good. I'm so happy to be here. Finally

Gillian Pensavalle 0:32

Welcome to the pod Can you just let us know your pronouns before we get going

Cody Renard Richard 0:37

my pronouns are he him his

Gillian Pensavalle 0:39

So you are a badass stage manager like that's just your actual title. Broadway Off Broadway award shows events. The assistant stage manager, Hamilton Cirque du Soleil, Kinky Boots Motown after musical... after musical... After Midnight, which my husband and I loved my husband's like a big Wynton Marsalis fan.

Cody Renard Richard 0:57

Oh my god, I love that.

Gillian Pensavalle 0:59

And then you were the production stage manager for Freestyle Love Supreme so I'm going to ask you a zillion questions. One of them is the difference between a stage manager and a production stage manager, which I'm sure you've answered 5000 times. You also worked on the 2019 Tony's the 2019, MTV VMAs Jesus Christ Superstar Live,

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Hairspray Live, The Wiz Live. You're the first stage manager to be featured in Variety's Broadway to watch list in 2020. If you think we're not talking about this year's Out 100 you are out of your mind. Congratulations.

Cody Renard Richard 1:27

Thank you.

Gillian Pensavalle 1:28

I mean, we're just scratching the surface you're also one of like the strongest voices out there fighting against systemic racism, especially in theater. You have your scholarship fund, the Broadway Advocacy Coalition, you're involved in that We See You White American Theater, there's like so much to talk about Cody.

Cody Renard Richard 1:46

When you say it like that. I guess there is a lot to talk about. Who knew?

Gillian Pensavalle 1:50

so much because I want to you know, I want to dive into how I love talking to stage managers and people you know, quote behind the scenes, I want to talk about your whole like the whole Cody story, how you got to New York, but I also want to talk about you know, like, the real shit, you know, why? Why you you ended up on CNN because of a tweet that went viral about you know, talking about your, your experience in theater and experiencing racism, like I want to get to all of it

Cody Renard Richard 2:17

Buckle up, then. Let's go.

Cody Renard Richard 2:22

Okay, great.

Gillian Pensavalle 2:25

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So let's start, I guess with like, just from the beginning how, like, if I were to ask you, which I'm going to how did you get from Texas to being on this podcast? How would you start?

Cody Renard Richard 2:35

Wow, that mean, what a journey? Yeah, I grew up in Texas, I grew up on a ranch. Fun fact, my family are all cowboys and cowgirls. They still compete. And I got pushed into the theater. Theater was not something that I ever thought of. I started doing it in high school because I was, for lack of a better word. I was a class clown. So I was always getting in trouble. I was always talking about the teachers. I thought it was funny. I didn't mean it. But it was just, I made people laugh. And I was in detention a lot. I was in suspension a lot. And they pushed me into the theater. They told me I had a lot of pent up energy that I needed to direct somewhere. And once I joined the theater, I fell in love with the people and my theater director. And she really pushed me to pursue stage management and to like, go to school for this. I remember being I think, was a sophomore in high school, and I had acted my freshman year. I'm not an actor. not great at it. It was fun. But that's not something that I enjoy. But I did it my freshman year because I think we all like if you're in the theater, you kind of start off that way, I guess. And my high school theater teacher said to me, she was like, you have this way of making people listen to you without yelling, I want you to be our stage manager. And at the time, you know, I was what 15... 14? All I heard was I get to be in charge. So I was like, let's do it. So from that moment on, I was kind of her right hand person. And I found I did all the props. And I helped her with all the technical stuff. And I wrangled the cast and I got to like be her assistant director and all those things. And I love that responsibility. And from then on, obviously, I've learned a lot more about stage management, but but she actually drove me to Lincoln, Nebraska, where I interviewed for like 50 or some odd schools for college. And then I selected Webster University. And I was accepted into their conservatory program. And from there I went to Webster in St. Louis and from St. Louis. I, you know, came to New York, my journey to New

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York is, you know, interesting, but, but yeah, that's kind of in a nutshell, it was one person who kind of saw something was like you should look into this and at the time, who knew that it would turn into what it has turned into? But I'm grateful that she was like try this out and it was something that really stuck with me.

Gillian Pensavalle 4:58

I love that. I love hearing some about teachers or mentors, or someone who says, You know what, they see something in you and they communicate it, they tell you,

Cody Renard Richard 5:05

all it takes is one person to believe in you. I know that sounds so cliché, but really, I mean, especially as a young kid, you don't think about it that way. And now that I'm doing a lot of like, engaging with students, it's important to like, tell them what, what what they're good at, and tell them like inspire them to, to pursue things that they might not think about.

Gillian Pensavalle 5:25

So were you instantly passionate about it?

Cody Renard Richard 5:27

I don't know. I think I am such a, I'm such a passionate person. Period. Like anytime I'm involved in something, I put my all into it. And I think I learned that from, honestly from rodeo, and that's how, you know, my chores as a cowboy as a young cowboy. That's kind of like what started my passion because we were taught to if you're going to do it, you're going to do it, you know. So when I got into the theater, and she was like, your, you should look into this. I'm like, Alright, let's figure it out. And then, and then I kind of just fell in love with it. Especially when I got to college. I've met so many people who were like me, but not and that was very interesting. And I'm a people person, I love figuring people out. And that's a huge part of stage managing is, is working with people and figuring out what they need to succeed, essentially. And I love and I love

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that. So I guess I was kind of passionate about it. Well, I know I actually was and I'll tell you the stuff forgot about this. I graduated high school, and I was already accepted to go to Webster, obviously, and I was going there in the fall, may I, I ended up doing an internship at the alley Theatre in Houston, Texas as a production assistant as one of the state's management interns. Because I thought that if I was going to a conservatory, I needed to have more experience before I entered this college program, which looking back It makes no sense because you go to schools to get the information and to learn. But in my mind, I was like, I'm gonna be behind I have to I have to know. So I looked for internship before I went to school. And I ended up working at the alley with a bunch of professional stage managers. And I got a bit more information about what a stage manager does. Before I went to Webster. And in hindsight, I didn't need to do that. I'm glad that I did. But best so that's the type of person that I was like, Oh, I have to get this information before I go and like learn about it. I don't know. So I guess I was very passionate about it.

Gillian Pensavalle 7:11

I understand. It's so funny, because I'm the background where you are, it's just your home. You're not like an avocado on zoom or anything. It's just where you live. But it's like the background I see like Hamilton and your your posters of work and also a cowboy hat on the wall.

Cody Renard Richard 7:26

I bet this was not planned. This is where I just my desk is here. But that's so funny.

Gillian Pensavalle 7:30

Twoi worlds just combined right behind you.

Cody Renard Richard 7:33

Oh my god.

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Gillian Pensavalle 7:34

Can you just tell me what a stage manager does? And then we'll get to it like how you came to New York?

Cody Renard Richard 7:39

Yeah, absolutely. So a stage manager essentially, is the person that makes sure that the show happens. I know that's very general. But in a sense, we, we work with every department within the production, the directors, the cast, the producers, general managers, designers, and we kind of figure out what each person's goals are. And we try to make sure that those goals are met throughout the process, which which is very different for for different departments. But essentially, you know, we we help set the schedule, we help make sure things are running as they should. We work with the technical team to make sure that all the technical aspects are safe and that they are functioning properly. The cast to make sure that they have the tools that they need in order to do their job, the director to make sure that they're A) staying on track track and still like upholding their vision of what they initially set out to do. So it's kind of like a huge facilitator, we facilitate a lot of conversations and a lot of a lot of a lot of momentum in a nutshell. So that's essentially what a stage manager does. We're that we're the we're the center point of a production to make sure that everybody is is functioning and getting the correct information so they can do their job.

Gillian Pensavalle 8:54

Yeah, it's so funny because we you and I had met and hung out a little bit after Freestyle Love Supreme shows and opening night party but we haven't really like sat down and chatted like this before. And just even in these first couple minutes, I'm like, Oh, so that is why you and Holli are so tight.

Cody Renard Richard 9:11

Oh, my God

Gillian Pensavalle 9:11

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Like, it all is coming together.

Cody Renard Richard 9:13

Holli Holli, is it she's amazing. And when Freestyle happened, I know we're not talking about Freestyle yet, but I just have to when freestyle happens. And when I found out that Holli was going to be the company manager. I was so happy and so excited just because we had worked together on Hamilton briefly, but we you know, I was I wasn't a replacement assistant. So I wasn't there full time. But I really got to know Holli and I just loved her demeanor and I loved the way she worked with the company and she's always so gracious and so on top of everything. And me being a first time PSM on Broadway, knowing that I was going to be working with Holli I was like, Oh, I'm not worried about this. I know that I have it. You know, I knew that I had someone who would A) have my back and also like uplift me and those moments when I needed like support or whatever. So I was so excited that she was she was doing it.

Cody Renard Richard 9:22

I feel like it's you know, you, Holli, Andrew Fick, there are people who like their names on a call sheet and you're like, oh, everything's gonna be fine.

Cody Renard Richard 10:11

Right?

Gillian Pensavalle 10:11

And you I think Holli felt that about you. And you know, like, oh, Cody's gonna Okay, it's fine. Because just from what I've heard about you, from other people, it's exactly how you described Holli, of course, in your own way, but it's very, like, everything's gonna be okay when Cody's around like nice, you're fun, but you also like, get shit done. And there's a good like, your teacher was absolutely right. Like, there's such a great balance of, you know, not because I think a lot of people can feel not nervous to be in charge. But this

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like, do I have that right? To tell people what to do? Have I earned that? Or am I not old enough for that? Or

Cody Renard Richard 10:51

I went through that, that the age thing comes into play, or has come into play for me a lot, just because, you know, I'm 32 now, which still very relatively young to be a PSM in New York City on Broadway. But even before that, you know, just working in theater. I have a very young face. And I know that so no matter how old I am, a lot of people if they don't know me, they look at me, they're like, Who's this kid trying to ask me You mean? So that's a hurdle that you either have to face right on, or you just have to do the work inside to know that, you know, that, that you're supposed to be in that position, and you can't worry about whoever is challenging your authority because of your age. But that is something that I find a lot of stage managers especially particularly young stage managers have to deal with at some point.

Gillian Pensavalle 11:36

Can you tell me the difference between a stage manager and the production stage manager? Is there a big difference there?

Cody Renard Richard 11:40

Um, there is a big difference. So the PSM, the production stage manager is essentially the the leader of the team. A lot of people say that they're in charge, which I say to certain extent, yes. But I think that the PSM is really the the team captain, if you will, the PSM is the person is the face of the stage management team and kind of the face of the production within the when you think about the people who are all working on it. It's the person that everyone knows is the person that everyone comes to, for information is the person who, who has to give out the information to make sure that that that everyone is equipped with what they need. So the PSM does a lot of administrative stuff, a lot of emails, a lot of scheduling, a lot of day to day maintenance, if you will for the production. The PSM also calls the show initially, like they'll tech the show and figure out

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how things work. And then kind of pass that on to the assistants. So the stage manager and assistant stage manager necessarily doesn't is not meant to face they're kind of like the people on the ground making sure that that things are actually happening you know, that the the the systems are the ones who are backstage dealing with all of the crew and the cast wants the shows and running. And in rehearsals they also vary firsthand with the cast and and they deal with setting up the room and and making sure that all the paperwork and stuff is updated. So people are kept in the loop but that type of stuff too. But you know, it's really a team and everyone kind of has their hand and everything. But I guess the biggest difference is that the PSM is the person who who kind of steps to the front of the pack to make sure that that everyone is is taken care taken care of.

Gillian Pensavalle 13:24

Right? I'm thinking about when Deanna Weiner was on and she was saying things like having to keep certain rambunctious cast members a little quieter backstage I'm talking about I don't know your Anthony Lee Medinas, he comes to mind, just having to

Cody Renard Richard 13:40

Your James Igleharts

Gillian Pensavalle 13:43

That voice travels no matter where you are,

Cody Renard Richard 13:45

It does. He means well, but it does travel.

Gillian Pensavalle 13:49

Hey, this is Tony Award winning voice he has there and Yeah, but you know, like having that having to have that great dynamic with a group of people you're working with, because it just helps the room it helps the vibe, but also having to say like, "stop, you're at work."

Cody Renard Richard 14:04

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Yeah and that's true. I'm glad that Deanna brought that up. Because if if you're if your cast, if your cast doesn't respect you as a person, they're not going to listen to you when you ask them to. Or I should say they're not gonna do it's gonna be harder for them to listen to you when you ask them to keep it down. And when you ask them to, to take a note or when you ask them to do things, they shouldn't end mean. So I think that that's really important to like, what she was saying, you have to have that rapport with people so they know that sometimes you have to, you have to be the person's like, Alright, you're acting a little out of hand let's pull it back. You know,

Gillian Pensavalle 14:38

it's a balance really is it is like you have to be everyone's friend but to say like, it's all fun and games until Cody tells you to quiet down. No, and like that's just the gig. That's the nature of the gig

Cody Renard Richard 14:49

Totally

Gillian Pensavalle 14:50

So just Can you tell me about your whole Broadway experience how you got here and just Yeah,

Cody Renard Richard 14:55

yeah. Broadway is it's my experience on Broadway has been Incredible, you know, I mean, I can't lie. So I, my first Broadway show was a show called Lysistrata Jones, back in 20... I think 12 or 11. But, but it didn't run very long. But the show was full of people who were just amazing humans in the show was so fun, and I loved it. And I still keep in touch with most of them. But so I got that show. I'll go back. I'll give you I'll try not to make the story too long. But

Gillian Pensavalle 15:31

Hey, I have time.

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Cody Renard Richard 15:32  
Okay, great.

Gillian Pensavalle 15:33  
Where am I going? It's 4:00 on a Monday. I'm good. Im here for you.  
You have me the rest of the day.

Cody Renard Richard 15:38  
I took a trip to New York City, my sophomore year of college, and I never been to New York City. And that trip, essentially changed my life. And I know that whatever, but it really did. I came here. And I fell in love with this city. I've never been in a city like this I loved. I just loved how things moved here. I was so many people. And I never seen a Broadway show. My first Broadway show that I saw was Avenue Q. And I remember sitting in the theater and I was reading through the playbill, and fun fact Rashidra Scott was playing. What's the cat Gary Coleman and I didn't know her then. But literally Three years later, we work together in St. Louis doing a Little Shop. I was like, Oh my god, that name. I know that anyway. So I was reading through the playbill. And I was looking at all these names and I started reading the stage managers like Oh, that's so cool to have BIOS in this playbook. Then my friend was like, my bio is gonna be in one of these things one day, and you just say things but and and and at that time in my life, I didn't think about the power of manifestation and like your words and what you say really mean it's meaningful. I didn't think like that when I was in college. But, but it's a true testament to my entire life and my entire journey CUT TO however many years later that dream became reality. So anyway, New York sophomore year of college, I can't became enamored with the city. And I was like, I have to live here. And you know, okay, I grew up in a small town in Texas. I went to college in St. Louis, that progressively got further and further away from home. I'm an only child as well,

Gillian Pensavalle 17:09  
Me too.

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Cody Renard Richard 17:10

Oh you are?

Gillian Pensavalle 17:10

Yeah.

Cody Renard Richard 17:11

Oh my god, amazing.

Cody Renard Richard 17:13

So my mom was like, you're gonna go where? and I was like New York girl is happening. And so so she of course supported me but she was a little bit kind of nervous and scared. But I was such an independent child. I was not nervous about moving here. Anyway, every break that I had, since my sophomore spring break or fall break, I came to New York City. So fall break, junior year, spring break of junior year, fall break, like I just came to New York, I took that weekend I came here saw a bunch of shows and just like learned about the city cuz I was like when I moved here, I don't want to feel like a deer in headlights. My senior year, I took an internship my first semester and I did an internship here in New York, at the Pearl Theatre Company, which is now they have since closed. But it was great to work with them. We did a show at City Center. So I was able to like work in kinda like in the theater district and this be around this world and meet people meet people. I mean, whatever that means. At the time, it was kind of just like the people I was working with. But still, you know, it was nice to be in New York working. And then I, you know, went back to school, I finished up my degree. I was doing a show in Kansas City to save money so I can move to New York that fall, I got a call about a Cirque du Soleil show. A friend of mine who I worked with at the alley theatre, that internship that I did before I went to college, she called me she was like, Hey, I, I hope you've been well. I've been following you. I know you're in New York now. Because she thought I moved here with that internship. And she was like, I'm coming to New York with this Cirque du Soleil show. Are

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you available? And and she's like, are you still in town? And I wasn't. But I was planning to move. So I lied and said, Of course I'm in town. When does it start? I would love to do this. Because who gets a call about a Cirque du Soleil show without interviewing like that, to me, it blew my mind. You know what I mean, so I was like, yeah, I'm doing this. So I had to leave the show that I was doing early in order to make this work like a week early. And I moved to New York City with this Cirque du Soleil show. And it was I was 22 and probably not qualified to do it. But I made it work. And I faked it. And it was one of the best experiences. It was at Madison Square Garden. It was for two and a half months. It was amazing. That show close and I had no idea how to find a job in New York. So I went from being like making the most money I've ever made in my entire life doing this Cirque show meeting all these people, you know, all this these technical elements, like just learning so much and being like yeah, this is amazing. I can't wait to do this on Broadway. And then it closed and I was like, Okay, what do I do? So I I got on playbill and I started looking up jobs and I couldn't find any jobs because there were a few they were few and far between. But I saw a press release for a show called Hello Again at the Transport Theatre Group. And I wrote Jack Cummings, who's the artistic director and I was like, Hey, I don't know if any stage managers but I'm equity. I just did this thing. I'm looking for work. I'm new here, you know, not expecting to get anything but I've seen so many cold emails in my life at this point is like, is laughable, but the amount of sometimes people write back and they say great, and sometimes they never respond. But in this instance, he wrote back and he, he said, we already have equity stage managers, but we can bring you on as a PA. And the transport theatre group at that time was a very small Off Broadway company. So they could only pay me unfortunately, a very, very, very small stipend, which I'll say was under \$100, and a MetroCard. And I was like, Sure, absolutely. You know, I'll make it work. So I took the job. And the reason why I took the job, because when I looked at the press release, there were a bunch of people who I didn't know, but they all have worked on Broadway. And I was like, if I can get in the room with people who have worked on Broadway and

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know people who have who interact in that world, it's just going to get me closer to where I want to go. And it essentially works. Because after that, they did Lysistrata Jones Off Broadway, which was the show that was ultimately became my Broadway debut. I did that with them again for a MetroCard in a very small stipend. So I worked with them for like six, almost, I think, eight months, I think,

Cody Renard Richard 21:08

doing that, and it was a great experience. And Lysistrata Jones moved to Broadway. And they replaced the stage management team, a lot of times when shows moved from Off Broadway. They bring on stage managers who have Broadway experience, who knows the union rules and can navigate those politics and all that stuff. At the time. I didn't understand that. Now, I understand that quite well. But so I called our PSM of the Off Broadway show. And I was like, Hey, this is so exciting. We're going to Broadway when we start, you know, and she looked at me and she, she took a breath. She was like, Oh, yeah, we're not going to Broadway. And like, in an instant, my heart broke. And then I was inspired at the same time. It was so weird. I was like, oh, that sucks. And I was like, well, that sucks for you. Because I'm gonna figure this out. Like, I didn't say that, sir. But that's the way my wheels started spinning.

Gillian Pensavalle 21:58

Yeah

Cody Renard Richard 21:58

I was like, No, no, no, I, I didn't get this close to just for it not to happen. So I, I emailed the director, I email the associate choreographer, and then I sent the lead actress of Facebook message, saying, you know, I was like, I can't not reach out, you know, and the worst thing they can all say was, fuck off. You know what I mean?

Gillian Pensavalle 22:20

Sure.

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Cody Renard Richard 22:20  
Can I curse? I'm sorry.

Gillian Pensavalle 22:21  
You can say anything you want.

Cody Renard Richard 22:22  
Okay, good. So I just reached out to them. And I was like, Listen, I love working on this show. I love all of you. I really think that I have a great relationship with you and the cast. Here's why I think I should move on with the show on Broadway. If you can connect me with anyone, I'll be so grateful. And they all wrote back amazing things, which I'm so indebted to them for that. And they essentially got me an interview with the PSM of the Lysistrata Jones on Broadway. Her name was Lois Griffin. And she hired me. And that was how I got my first Broadway show. So brought me on as a PA and I. And that was essentially because I reached out, you know, so I guess the moral of the story is ask for what you want. And sometimes you might get it you know what I mean? So that

Gillian Pensavalle 23:03  
Yeah, so you just said I want this job and here's why I think I would be great at it?

Cody Renard Richard 23:08  
Basically, I mean, cuz I I you know, I did it off Broadway and Off Broadway was amazing. But it was also a little hard just because of some of the things you have to go through just to make sure the show what happened or whatever. And I and I really felt like I had built a relationship with every single person on the show. So I was like, I have to move on with this. And if they would have said no, of course, I would have been sad, but it would have you know, it would have been the journey I would have figured something else out. But right. But yeah, so they brought me on and, and, and that led to the next thing, which you know, and then the next thing and that's kind of how it started.

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Gillian Pensavalle 23:43

So tell me your Hamilton story. Were you a fan of the show before? Cuz you said you you were a replacement, right?

Cody Renard Richard 23:50

I saw I saw Hamilton offbroad... Oh my god. I saw Hamilton Off Broadway. When I was going through a breakup. And I remember I forgot who I went with. Oh, I went with Shannon Hammonds, who was another stage manager. Wow, I have not remembered this in so long. We saw this is 2015. Was it 15 or 14? I don't know. Anyway, so at The Public Off Broadway, and Shannon and I are sitting and sitting there watching the show. And I remember when the Helpless, Satisfied transition and I am just bawling. I am bawling like a little baby. Because I'm like, Oh, she's never gonna get her true love. This is so sad. She's doing this for her sister. And I am so anyway, I love this, to say the least I love this show. And....

Gillian Pensavalle 24:34

I can't believe you got tickets to see it at The Public.

Cody Renard Richard 24:36

Yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle 24:37

Fancy

Cody Renard Richard 24:36

My friend got them and she was like, would you want to come to this thing with me? I was like, absolutely. Why not? And because I didn't know much about it before I knew people who had done... I knew Sasha and Ephram and Ariana and people who did the workshop before. But I you know, and I think Daniel Watts was in it at the time maybe I don't know. Anyway, I so yeah, when saw the show And I fell in love with like, Oh, this shows amazing. And obviously, like I said, I loved it. And the show came to Broadway and I don't think I saw it

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before. I worked on it like on Broadway. What happens? The show was getting ready to do. I think the first tour, it must have been the first tour not Chicago, but but the Angelica company. And I met with Jason Bassett, JB who is incredible. He was original PSM on Broadway, and now as the production supervisor of all the Hamilton companies. And I met with him about going out on the road with the Angelica company. I have never toured, I don't necessarily want to tour and I think he probably knew that, by the way we interviewed but I'm just glad that he we had we were able to meet and and essentially there wasn't a place for me on that tour, which was fine. And but but it was glad to make the connection. And that was that he was just like, I don't have a place for you right now. But it was so great to meet you. Blah, blah, blah. I was like cool. And I went on about my life. I was doing Paramore. And then I was I took a leave of absence from Paramore to do Hairspray live in LA. I was in LA I was on a break. I was on a lunch break. And I got this email saying hey, can we talk about Hamilton? And I was like, sure. And I'm

Gillian Pensavalle 24:48  
from JB

Cody Renard Richard 25:28

Mm hmm. And he was like, I want you to meet with Amber white, who's the PSM? We were we're moving our team around. And he said call me to discuss. So I called him and he basically was saying that Scott was taking time away to do I forget to do something I don't remember. And he was like, would or would you be are you available? Would you be interested in coming in? If you and Amber hit it off? We would love to bring you on. And I was like, Huh, because I written like, you know, I written Hamilton off. I was like, that's not my show out, you know, I'll work and do other things. And and when he called I was like this is just so bizarre. And I was like Absolutely. I will make time for this like I will Yes, yes, yes. Yes. And yes. So I met with Amber and we had a really great conversation. And then literally I think it was not even the next day JB was calling to be like, yeah, so we want you to start on this day, we want you to you know, it's a

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it's a I think it was a seven month contract for the first time when I went back in later. But that's essentially how it happened. I interviewed for the angelica company. And that wasn't a place for me on the tour. And you know, not even a year later, it might have Yeah, not even a year later, they I got a call to come in and be a replacement for them.

Gillian Pensavalle 27:28

How'd you get in touch with JB at first?

Cody Renard Richard 27:30

Oh girl, I am the queen of, of, or King whatever the day may be of finding emails and emailing people cuz I didn't know JB before I've heard of him. And I don't really remember how I got his email address. I probably you know, I'm I'm a little detective I probably like searched it or ask someone and like kind of found a way

Gillian Pensavalle 27:50

And then just like reached out and did the same thing.

Cody Renard Richard 27:52

Absolutely. 1,000% I do that all the time. And like my thing is if people don't respond, that's cool. Because you know, not for nothing. I don't respond all emails either not because I don't want to just sometimes you just you can't you just whatever. So like, I don't take offense to it. I'm like, I get it. I'm not looking for somebody right now. I'm always looking for whatever. But I just reached out because I was at that time I was, um, I was actively looking to because I assisted I was a second assistant stage manager a lot. And I and I knew that I wanted to PSM. And a lot of people don't a lot of people aren't meant to PSM. But I knew that that's what I needed to be doing. Maybe not at that exact time in my life. But I knew that that is something I needed to be doing. So I needed to start talking to people about either being the first assistant stage manager about PSM. And even if they can't offer me the job, just to let them know that this is what I want to do. That's essentially what I do with JB

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we met and I was like, that's this is where I want to go. And that's probably why they'd have a position for me at the time, because it's just the way it all worked out. But um, so yeah, that's kind of how I got involved with Hamilton.

Gillian Pensavalle 28:54

I'm fascinated by this because and I know this happens and with many of these shows, and really many of these industries, not just the performing arts or theater or anything, but the phrase that you just said like if you hit it off with Amber and I think that's really important because yes, you have to do your job well, but you also just in life, like have to be pleasant to be around and

Cody Renard Richard 29:14

1,000%

Gillian Pensavalle 29:15

I just love that he was so open about like, well, if you guys get along and it feels like you'll be a good work fit.

Cody Renard Richard 29:20

Yeah, absolutely.

Gillian Pensavalle 29:22

That's so important.

Cody Renard Richard 29:22

Yeah. And I think because I'd already interviewed with him and actually I interviewed with Amber years prior for Scandalous, which was the the musical with Carolee Carmello. At the, at Neil Simon, I interviewed the PA that like back in whatever year that was, and it didn't work out but I met her before I just didn't know her. So I think because I already interviewed with JB he was basically like, I he has the tools he can do this job. He's This is his resume. Just I want you to meet with him and see if this is something that would work and I in it. And essentially it did so so that was great.

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Gillian Pensavalle 29:59

Super what was it like walking into that theater where everyone? It was like a well oiled machine at that point?

Cody Renard Richard 30:05

Yeah. I mean, I was very nervous. I was nervous. But then again, I wasn't. I joined in December of 2015. So I was it was in the second I'll wait 16 yet. Sorry. It's December 2016. It was in the second year. So it because they opened in 15. Right. Yeah. So I joined December 2016. So most of the original cast had left I think, who was still I don't remember who was still there at the time. But, but most of the first replacement classes already has already come in. And I was nervous because it was Hamilton. And there was so much revolving around the name of the show, which I was also excited because it was that I was like, I knew that the show had already made history. And I was very grateful to be a part of as I was looking for it to just be like, I'm a part of this, this history, this this thing that has kind of changed American musical theater like that, that to me, it was very exciting. But also very nerve wracking. Because I didn't know I didn't know Deanna at the time. So I was walking into a team. And I didn't really know Amber as I was walking into a stage management team that already existed. So I had to figure out how I fit within that. And the the good part was that I knew a lot of the people in the show, I think Brandon Victor Dixon was playing Burr at the time. And I had done a couple of shows with him before and was Chris still there, I think, oh, Chris was still there. I think maybe I don't remember. But there were a lot of other people. It's all like, it's all going. But there are a lot of people in the show that I knew at the time, which was great. So I had people that they were excited for me to come into the building, which I think helped other people like me, I guess, or just or respect or whatever, you know what I mean? So that helps because I worked with a lot of them on Motown and another show. So that was something that kind of made it feel a little bit the transition a little bit easier. But it was it was a lot to learn that show so quickly. The hardest part well, there were two parts

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that were hard for me to learn this show. The first one is that there's so many props and you don't think that there's a lot of problems by watching the show because it's really just a turntable and you have like you know the the the tavern table and you have like chairs and but there are a lot of hand props, there's a lot of guns, there's a lot of paper, there's a lot of letters, there's a lot of like cups, cups, a lot of cups, and a lot of chairs. There's so many props. And Deanna is the queen of that show. Like if anybody knows how long is it inside is inside and out is Deanna and I was so grateful that she was still there to teach me the show. But it was a lot to learn because like I said, I didn't, I didn't I knew the show cuz I saw it off Broadway, but I didn't. I didn't follow it like that. I listened to it a couple times. I wasn't like a superfan. I liked the music, but I didn't you know, I did listen to the mixtape with with all the famous people cuz I love that and actually joined the show two weeks after they did the performance that was very sad about it. But anyway, I digress. But yeah, so so that was a huge learning curve, just learning all the props and learning, like where everything went and the terminology for everything because everything had a different name. And and you know, the the preset list was like four pages, it was just a lot a lot of information to download. So that was that was a lot.

Gillian Pensavalle 33:26  
Can you explain the preset list?

Cody Renard Richard 33:28  
Yeah, yeah, absolutely. So the preset the props preset list essentially is is is a checklist of all the the props that are in the show. And before the show, we come in an hour and a half before his performance to to check in all the props and to just get ready for the performance. So that's one of our responsibilities is that we go through backstage and the crew, the the props crew are preset will, they'll put everything in into position. And then we'll go back through and just double check that everything is in the right place and making sure that everything has been reset from the previous

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night. So we have this we have a checklist because like a lot of it is... that you remember a lot of it, but we keep the presale, just in case we forget something. So we go around, and the same order every day and make sure that everything is where it needs to be. So you know, the cast has it when they hit that part in the show.

Gillian Pensavalle 34:16

Yeah, it's all very organized back there.

Cody Renard Richard 34:19

It is, yeah, everything has its place. And like everything has like a little nook and people put it back to where it needs to go. Or they grab it from

Cody Renard Richard 34:25

and its labeled and certain characters or certain, you know, for the Helpless or whatever. Yeah, it's all like

Cody Renard Richard 34:32

And there's backups of certain things to like in case like, you know, somehow it doesn't make it over there and people forget that sometimes there's like a backup of something that someone can grab or we have like stacks of stuff we can easily get to them. But yeah, everything is very much organized and everything is like in its place

Gillian Pensavalle 34:46

Your own little language.

Cody Renard Richard 34:47

Totally, totally. And that was another thing to learn because every theater has their own language and has their own like, you know, set of set of rules or whatever. So learning that too was another thing just going into a new building. That's the biggest thing for me. When I replace on shows is that I'm stepping into an existing family, I'm stepping into an existing routine. So I have to not only learn the show, but I have to learn how people like to work. So I know like

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where I fit in in that, because I think, I think the reason why I, I guess I'm successful in replacing is that when I come into a building, I don't necessarily, like, throw myself at the process. I like, assess what it is, and then figure out how I can infuse what I bring to whatever someone else is doing.

Gillian Pensavalle 35:30

it's that whole thing you were saying before about, like learning it.

Cody Renard Richard 35:32

Exactly, exactly. You know, totally, totally. Um, so that was a big part. And the second part that was hard, like, was learning to call the show. And, and the reason why I say it was hard was because I... it's a rap musical... They speak so quickly, all the time.

Gillian Pensavalle 35:51

So can you explain to the listeners what it means to call the show? Because I've played I've played that the the ham for ham?

Cody Renard Richard 35:56

Oh, JB Yes. Yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle 35:58

Which is like the best. I think I just played it in Holli's episode.

Cody Renard Richard 36:02

Oh, fun

Gillian Pensavalle 36:02

but I'll play it again. Because it's so good. And it's so worth it. But um, yeah, can you just explain what that means.

Cody Renard Richard 36:07

So calling a show essentially, it's, it's, the stage manager has the scripts or a prompt book. And we have all the cues for the show, when

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I say cues, it's, it's lighting cues. Anytime you see a light change on stage, it is triggered by a stage manager calling the cue and then an operator pressing a button. Anytime you see something move is triggered by a stage manager calling that technical cue and the operator pressing a button to make that equipment move. So So learning to call Hamilton was I got my prompt book the scripts and had already had all the cues in it. So I would follow along while Amber or Deanna call the show, and I will learn like tricks to like to hit a certain button or to hit something at a certain time. And it's all written down so you can follow along, but it moves quickly. And as their art to calling the show. It's like choreography, you know, you have to breathe with the company have to breathe with the cast. So just learning to get all the words out is also an art too, because people are used to hearing it a certain way. And of course, the people on the lightboard and the people running, you know the automation, they have your back because they've done it, which is great, but they still listen to you. Because you might be delaying a cue because something is going wrong on stage. Or you might be delaying a queue because of something that the cast is doing or whatever so they so they still take the cue from you. So you have to really know what the cue supposed to do when it's supposed to happen and call it appropriately

SHOW CALL HAM 4 HAM AUDIO CLIP 37:36

45 ON THE RED 46 ON THE BLUE 47 ON THE YELLOW LIGHT 450 GO (sung)

123456789 AUTOMATION (sung) its the ten duel commandments

[<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XqE-mGI5OaM>]

Cody Renard Richard 38:20

You know, with the show like Hamilton because it is such a masterpiece, it's easy to want to watch the show or it's easy to like fall into a moment. But our job is not when you're calling the show. Our job is not to feel what the people are doing on stage is to is to make sure that we're executing everything so the show can continue. Yeah, I mean, so it's so it's Yes, paying attention and listening to the words and watching what's happening. But it's not necessarily

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investing in and the feeling or whatever of the show. So it's a very, so it's a very different part you have to cut off, you know, I mean, it would be very hard to call the show up you're crying at the end of the year. And it means that you have to really just like, you know,

Gillian Pensavalle 38:58

I'm glad you got the Helpless/Satisfied moment out of your system before.

Cody Renard Richard 39:01

Could you imagine

Gillian Pensavalle 39:05

that's the thing though to like life happens. Yeah, you can have a really shitty day and like Burn could hit you really hard that day or, or the Story of Tonight can hit you really hard. And it's kind of like you're at work and you have to hear it just for the actual like as logical as as possible. If that makes sense.

Cody Renard Richard 39:21

That's the other thing about working on a team, you come in and you were very I mean, at least I try to be anytime on a team, you just you come in, you're like, this is where I'm at today. I can't call this show. I'll do X, Y and Z Can someone else do it today. And that's how, and that's how I think teams should work. You come in, you're like, Listen, this is I you know, and we have each other's backs and we work together and we're all equipped to do this job. So it's nice to know that or sometimes you're like, I really need to call this everything to focus on something other than my life today. You know what I mean, so so that's the beauty of theatre and the beauty of what we do is that we have the opportunity to detach just like the cast. When they go on stage. They get to detach From their personal and they get to infuse someone else's life with with what they're saying on stage or whatever you know. And that's the same thing. That's why I say stage managers are artists like what we do requires a way of thinking and a way of breathing with the show. So

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I, so I love that about stage management too. And sometimes you got to suck it up. And you're like, Well, listen, it's your turn to do and now I'm going to do it. So then you have to do it and that and that's their job. So you figure it out. But but I do think because it's the theater, and because it's art, we are very aware of what's going on. And we're like, we got it. I got you today, you know what I mean

Gillian Pensavalle 40:37

Can we maybe shift gears to Freestyle Love Supreme a little bit because talk about like, a family just having your back on stage and off stage and just working together truly in every sense of the term. So I would just love to hear about that whole gig,

Cody Renard Richard 40:53

Man, that show.

Gillian Pensavalle 40:57

Oh Im wearing my FLS shirt

Cody Renard Richard 40:57

Oh, I love that. I love that

Gillian Pensavalle 40:58

I wore it with Holly too, of course

Cody Renard Richard 41:00

Amazing.

Gillian Pensavalle 41:00

I'm not very subtle.

Cody Renard Richard 41:01

Listen, we who needs who needs subtlety?

Gillian Pensavalle 41:03

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Right?

Cody Renard Richard 41:03

Um, I don't know if you met me. My nails are normally painted. So they're not today, but I'm not subtle either. Um, yeah, Freestyle Love Supreme, was a blessing that came out of nowhere for me. I loved working on that show. So I'll go but I was doing a show at Williamstown Theatre Festival doing Lempicka the musical, which is Broadway Bound at some point in life. We were doing that. And we had a donor event after performance. And I went and I was talking to someone and then I met James Hickey, who was one of the general managers with Andy Jones at Baseline. And we were talking and we're just getting to know each other. And I'll just tell him about, like, you know, my journey and my goals. I don't know how we were, we were probably drinking a lot of bourbon. And that's probably why we got on such a, you know, deep subject, I guess, you

Gillian Pensavalle 41:55

You know

Cody Renard Richard 41:56

it happens. but I was telling him how I wanted to PSM or PSM, or, and, and how, you know, people been very supportive on Broadway, but no one was offering me jobs, they would say, Oh, my God, that's so amazing. We're so excited for you to do that. And the conversation went in there, you know, like, I would get the support, but I wouldn't get the job. And that happens over and over and over. And I you know, and it. And I wasn't discouraged. But I was like, in my time will come I just you know, it's just interesting that every time I reached out someone's a positive response, but it was never the position that I was asking about. So anyway, I was talking to him, and he was like, Oh, we might be doing a show. with Tommy. Off Broadway, it probably isn't a lot of money. But you know, I think it'd be great for you to work with Tommy in that capacity.

Gillian Pensavalle 42:37

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Tomy Kail, everybody listening at home

Cody Renard Richard 42:37

Tommy Kail yes. And and he was like, I think it'd be great for you to work with him that capacity. Oh, amazing. And that was in the summer. And then I didn't hear anything else from him. So I forgot actually forgot about that entire conversation forgot about this show, because he never mentioned the name of the show. And he never mentioned, you know, anything further than that. And so I forgot about it. I was doing a show off Broadway. And then that shows you ready to close? And it came from like, Oh, I should reach back out and just say Do you have anything? And I did. And he was like, Oh, well, yeah, we're just trying to figure things out. So I was like, Oh, this is not happening. So I was supposed to go to a ART to do a show with my dear friend Sammy Canales and she has forgiven me for for for dropping off dropping that show. But I was supposed to go do this show with her. And I get a call from James saying that they're bringing Freestyle Love Love Supreme Off Broadway, and that he wanted me to essentially interview with Tommy, just to make sure that like I would be the right person for this. I was like, absolutely. When I when the date seems like Oh, it was start, you know, January through March. I was like, I'm supposed to be an ART January through March. But I was like, sure. Let me meet with Tommy. And he calls me and I don't know if you know Tommy very well, but he's like, he's he's very to the business. You know

Gillian Pensavalle 43:53

oh my god.

Cody Renard Richard 43:54

So he calls me he's like Cody. It's Kail.

Cody Renard Richard 43:56

Same G Dot, its Kail.

Cody Renard Richard 43:58

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Yeah, Cody is Kail. And I was like, hey, Tommy,

Gillian Pensavalle 44:01

Its Kail... Oh, my...

Cody Renard Richard 44:01

Right. And he's like, you know, he's like, so this is the show. This is what we need. Do you think, you know, it was so quick and it was out? Because the way James set it up? I thought it was gonna be this full on interview. And I'm sitting here like, Alright, you know, I stepped out of the theater to like, you know, talk and I was ready to interview and it was very much it was so casual and so quick. And he was like, these are the players. This is what the show is about, you know, these people. Can you handle this type of personality? This is what we need from you, blah, blah, blah. And I was like, Yeah, of course. Sure. I love that. Yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle 44:34

You're just like trying to like mimic like Tommy's energy

Cody Renard Richard 44:37

But he was moving quickly. And I was like, trying to Oh, yeah, I didn't know. And I was waiting for the moments for him to be like, so tell me about XYZ. And it just wasn't that because because I knew him from Hamilton. But because I was replacement and he necessarily wasn't at the theater all the time. We only knew each other in passing and we didn't really get to work together. So he knew me and I'm sure he did his homework and talk to JB and other people and asked around. So since I guess we didn't need to interview because I'm assuming that I got good recommendations from people, at least I'm hoping that I did. So it was very quick. And then like two days later, James texted me was okay, great. So we're going to start on this day. And I was like, hold on, we're missing a whole step here. So anyway, I decided I was like, Yes, I want to do this show. Because I desperately wanted to work with Tommy in that capacity, especially as a PSM. And I wanted and I knew that Lin would be involved and I

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knew Lin from Broadway as well. Same thing, he would pop into the theater. And and he was just a great guy, great presence. And he was always so nice. He's like, I would love to get to work with him that way. And I had known Chris, I know Chris Jackson for years. And I worked with James on Hamilton. So I was like, Oh, this is feels like

Gillian Pensavalle 45:51

James Iglehart that is ?

Cody Renard Richard 45:52

Iglehart. Yes. just just just felt like a great opportunity. And it and it was this. I didn't really know what the show was about to be honest. Like James kind of started... James Hickey started telling me about that it was an improv show. I was like, I've never done that cool,

Gillian Pensavalle 46:06

cuz I was gonna ask you like when Tommy's saying, here's what we need. Can you do that? What was he pitching to you? How was he describing it

Cody Renard Richard 46:12

At the time he was telling me about the they did an Amazon special. And he was like saying that you can see the video of the show here. It's he was telling me about like, Anthony and how they created this thing and and what it has been and how they have never done an extended run. And how this was essentially a trial run for the future. He never said Broadway never said to her never said any of that stuff. But but but it kind of felt like they wanted to do this off Broadway to see what could be possible. And that could be like a TV special, whatever I just knew that they wanted to see like, what it was, he was like, we just haven't, we haven't had a chance to get the group together to sit down and do this for a long time. So that's what we're trying to do. And essentially what it was, he was just like, telling me about the personalities like well, you know, a lot of them, but they a lot of them haven't done theater. So we need

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people who can, you know, show them like what this means and you know, all that stuff. So that's essentially what it was just telling me about the dynamics of what the show was less about what the actual show is, like, like the games and the structure but more about the overall feel and what the show needed, I guess from my position, and and I was like, I was ready to come back like hell yeah, I'm a people person. I know how to deal with people. I can, you know, I was ready to respond with you know, my selling points and my, my, my strengths and what you know, and I didn't have to say any of that, which was very interesting.

Gillian Pensavalle 47:35

Tommy Kail picked up the phone and pitched you.

Cody Renard Richard 47:37

I mean, I don't know if it was that, but

Gillian Pensavalle 47:40

Hi, Tommy.

Cody Renard Richard 47:41

Right, exactly. But I did I did as he was speaking, I was like, Oh, I don't know much about this show. But this does feel like a perfect fit for me. And, and I'm grateful that they took a chance because like I said, Tommy and I had not necessarily worked together before. And he's worked with a lot of people and he, he has the people that he likes to work with. So I'm glad that they took a chance and brought me on in that position. And then the show happens,

Gillian Pensavalle 48:05

The madness begins. Downtown

Cody Renard Richard 48:06

Well, and when I say madness begins, I have to I have to talk about the first day of rehearsal. Oh, my goodness. So the first day of rehearsal for Off Broadway. Freestyle Love Supreme. Oh, my goodness.

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So I, Patrick Vassell who was the Associate Director off Broadway, we knew each other very well, because he was always at Hamilton on Broadway. So we got to work together very closely. And we have a great working relationship. I love working.

Gillian Pensavalle 48:33  
He's amazing. He's amazing.

Cody Renard Richard 48:34  
I love working with him. And we were I was prepping the show just like getting paperwork and stuff together and trying to figure out what the hell this show was. So I was in I was at Baseline a lot talking to James and Andy about what we needed. And like, what, what equipment and all that stuff. And I was talking to Patrick the day before rehearsal, I was like, I'm a little bit, you know, in the dark about what's going to happen tomorrow. I'm like, do you have more information? Are you in the same boat? He's kind of like, he's like, I'm kind of in the same boat as you, but we'll figure it out. And that's the kind of person that I am. I'm kind of like, I don't stress over things that I can't control. So I'm just like, Sure, let's do it. And I think and I think that's another reason why I felt like I was a great fit for this show. Because I'm very much go with the flow, you know, and if it's not that type of situation, I'm very much like, Alright, here are the rules. Let's do it this way. But like, also, I'm easygoing until I don't until I don't need to be but you know what I mean, I'm very easygoing, laid back

Gillian Pensavalle 49:28  
Easygoing until you're not

Cody Renard Richard 49:29  
Yeah. So we, Tommy, emailed Patrick and I, and saying so here are some key points to do for rehearsal. You know, spend a little time so they can warm up and get back into the swing of things. And then here are three numbers that they should focus on today. And I was like, great, and he sent I forget it, I think it was like second chance.

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Have you seen the show? These are like games within the show. You've seen the show but people listening so so he sent over three games or activities. Whatever for them to do, in addition to the warm up, and it was like second chance it was true. And it was foundations of freestyle. So I didn't know what any of those three things meant. So I was like, okay, we just gonna tell them to do this and they can figure it out. And that's like Patrick you know what these are?. He was like, No, but Anthony will know. And I was like, great, because neither one of us like, I had watched the Amazon thing, but I still didn't necessarily understand the show. To be completely honest, I watched it one time, and then I was like, You know what, I'm just gonna figure it out. When I'm with these people. We're gonna give them their toys, and they're gonna play and then we're gonna, you know, go from there.

Gillian Pensavalle 50:38

And if I made the show is very different. It is a show that's on Amazon, you can buy it on iTunes. But it's different. Because there were like sketches.

Cody Renard Richard 50:45

Yeah. And

Gillian Pensavalle 50:46

woven into, the numbers and

Cody Renard Richard 50:49

it's in the show even morphed from Off Broadway to Broadway. So like, every time the show happens, there is like the same version, but like a more mature version, I would say, to me like it, it keeps evolving. So I was just like, you know what, I'm just gonna be there to answer questions and to figure things out. So first ever heard. So we were rehearsing in this studio, and I get there and I walk in, I'm like, I think this studio is not big enough. But you know what, we're just gonna fit because I didn't know what we like how much space we needed, or whatever. Patrick gets there. Haley, who was the assistant

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stage manager at the time, and Aldora, who was our PA. And then Ryan Sweeney, who was our company manager off Broadway, we were all there. And then we end up switching to a bigger studio, our equipment gets there, we load it in, I look at Patrick, and I'm like, what are we about to do? Like, what are we walking into? And he's like, Oh, I don't know what's gonna be fine. He's like, I thought you knew. And I was like, okay, and that's like, that's what I love. Patrick is always kind of just like, let's go, let's figure it out. And I had, you know, we had each other to whatever. So I guess I should also say that Tommy was doing another project at the time, so he was not available for he wasn't available until we got into the theater. So Patrick, and I were in the rehearsals. And what was also interesting is that the same people like Patrick and I knew this, essentially knew the same people. We didn't necessarily know, Anthony, we didn't know Arthur, we didn't know UTK. We didn't know Shockwave, we didn't know Bill Sherman. And all of these people are the only people who are rehearsing the people that we knew were not available. So Chris Jackson was not there. James Iglehart was not there. Lin Manuel Miranda was not there. And neither was Chris Jackson. So the people that I had a relationship with, were not in the room. So I couldn't even like look at them and like be like, can you? Or like, what do you or like, whatever. It was all these people that didn't know who were lovely people

Gillian Pensavalle 52:37

Oh, yeah

Cody Renard Richard 52:37

I didn't know that at the time. But they are all lovely people. So they all show up at varying times, because that's what they do. And we get virtual started after you know, they catch up for a little bit, and we do the equity meeting and all these things. And, and I'm just gonna say this, I don't know how I'm supposed to say this. But this is a part of the experience. And I joke with him about it all the time. We go to start rehearsing, and they look at me and they go, Cody, where the microphones. And I was like, we're in rehearsal, what

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microphones like, What do you mean? And, and the Shock was like, it's hard for me to do to beat box over them without a microphone. I was like, Oh, I didn't realize y'all needed microphones. I'll see if I can get them, you know. And then in Bill Sherman fashion, and I and I, that's why they call him The Bear. He is also the nicest man, I should say. But he, this is my first impression of him: RAW RAW WE NEED MICROPHONES WE DONT HAVE MICROPHONES?

Cody Renard Richard 53:35

And I'm sitting here like, Who is this man? I was I looked at Patrick, and I was like, Did I make the wrong decision?

Gillian Pensavalle 53:45

Here Tommy Kail said nothing about this, one the phone

Cody Renard Richard 53:48

He didnt talk about this, this gentleman yelling about microphones. So anyway, for whatever reason, their microphones were left off of the equipment list through a series of emails of us figuring out what we needed. And now that we know we had microphones when we rehearsed on Broadway. But anyway, we call Jason Crystal and Nevin, who are our sound designers, and they had microphones to us within the hour, which was amazing. But anyway, that was my first impression of that. And I was like, I don't know if this is the show after but I looked at Patrick and Patrick was like, yep, this is what we're in for. And it wasn't always that but it was just so chaotic in the beginning, because we didn't know who anyone was. We didn't know how to like wrangle or like the language that they needed in order for them to do it. And then you know, as we continue to work, I was like, Oh, this is how this process works. This is how we get into a game this is how they start they need to cipher they need to do this and you know, you get them together and you let them whatever like like, finding that language was a journey. But But I will never forget that first person. I was like, What is happening?

Gillian Pensavalle 54:50

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What did I just agree to?

Cody Renard Richard 54:52

And it was so untraditional like from anything I've ever done. which I love because I mean you can tell from my resume like I love doing everything you know I don't like opera I worked at the Met like I love doing it just to say like I've done it just to experience something new so I'm so it was really cool to get to do that but but man that first rehearsal I was like what is happening

Gillian Pensavalle 55:14

I get it in terms of you are coming from the Broadway world

Cody Renard Richard 55:17

Right but we don't... we never have microphones for a Broadway rehearsal unless you're showing or something

Gillian Pensavalle 55:22

So Shock and UTK they're like wait, we like show up to the venue back like I completely understand how those lines were crossed.

Cody Renard Richard 55:29

And and for us rehearsal is his exploration rehearsal is figuring out what the show is. But for them, they knew what the show was, that was the time for them to get their chops back up to remember what it was. So so we were essentially working towards the same goal but but different ways of doing it. It was very interesting. And also speaking of like, coming from a different world I remember. I remember Shockwave and the first rehearsal when we did equity, the equity meeting, and you know, a shock wasn't a member of equity at the time and he was like, Oh, I don't need to join equity I won't be doing this again it cut to Joke's on him. We did Broadway You don't have to be you don't have to join equity to get the benefits if you're working on equity production that's you know, let people know that but but he was like, Oh, I don't need to join this is you know, I'm doing this thing this time and we'll go back to doing our gigs

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and x y&z places, but we did it on Broadway. So I kind of attribute that to him that like He manifested our Broadway run.

Gillian Pensavalle 56:29

Yes, Shockwave with the reverse manifesting. I'm into it. Next week. I'll be back with Cody for part two of our conversation. We talked all about Freestyle Love Supreme going to Broadway, uplifting the next generation of stage management, Cody's advocacy work and holding Broadway and theater in general accountable. You're not gonna want to miss it. So until then, stay safe. Stay healthy. Wear that mask. I'll talk to you soon. I love you. Im G dot Pen.

Gillian Pensavalle 57:28

[WEEKLY OUTRO] The Hamilcast is brought to you by my love of the thing (TM) My complete lack of chill Please join me in raising all the glasses to Sir Alex Lacamoire for generously making my intro music and this custom Yorktown arrangement that I will never ever get over. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. To become a Patreon Peep and join the best, kindness, and most welcoming corner of the internet go to [patreon.com/thehamilcast](https://patreon.com/thehamilcast). You can submit questions to guests, join Zoom hangouts, get behind the scenes access and of course my unending gratitude. I'm @thehamilcast on all social media and you can listen wherever you get your podcasts. Visit [thehamilcast.com](https://thehamilcast.com) for transcripts, episodes and more. You can see what's going on with Mike, you know Mike, at [MichaelPaulSmith.net](https://MichaelPaulSmith.net). True Crime Obsessed is my true crime comedy podcast with my podcast soulmate Patrick Hinds of Theater People and Broadway Backstory fame. Thank you so much for listening. It means the world to me [with clip] To the Revolution!