

THE HAMILCAST

EPISODE 277 @HAM4PROGRESS 2 TRANSCRIPT

[00:00:00] Hi, I'm stage and stage's Lin-Manuel Miranda, and you're listening to the Hamilcast.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:00:18] Hello, everyone. I'm Gillian. Welcome back to the Hamilcast. Today, we're picking up where we left off last week with members of both the Hamilton Company and the Ham4Progress Initiative, Ashley de la Rosa and Jared Dixon. We're talking about the very important work being done within the theater community in regards to racial justice and making sure Broadway comes back better for everyone. There's a lot more to do. So thank you for joining us for this conversation. If you missed last week, that's episode 276. Make sure you catch up there first. Look, I know I say that every week, but it's extra crucial this week. You can find links for resources and more information on how you can take part in making these changes happen in the show notes and at the Hamilcast dot com. So if you're all caught up, I'll leave you to it. Here's part two of my conversation with Ashley de la Rosa and Jared Dixon.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:01:14] I would love to to talk a little bit about this sort of performative activism that we touched on earlier, because I'm seeing a little bit on social media that there are there's now like people are mad at others for not doing enough or not doing it right or not saying the right thing. And there are times where it feels like people are competing for, like activism points. And I'm I would love to hear your perspective on on all of it. You're both laughing hysterically. So clearly there are thoughts and feelings.

Jared Dixon [00:01:50] Yeah, we we talk about Ashley and I specifically have talked about this so much.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:01:57] Yeah. We even talked about it like in the task force, like with our producer, our executive producer. And she's white. And she was just like, I just don't want to say the wrong thing. And like, I don't want to I don't think she said, like, want to be canceled. But I was like, you don't want to be canceled. And you're like that, you know, like that's a really big fear. And I'll say the same thing to you that I said to her, like, as long as people are leading with with authenticity, like whether that is I don't know what I should say or so I'm just not going to say anything right now or, you know, I, I am taking this time to like, can someone help me? Like, I'm confused and, you know, or if someone is being loud and proud and continues to follow through on that, then like, you know, then then lead with that lead with, like your authentic self. And even if your authentic self is I don't want to participate. I don't believe in this because that's basically, you know, it's like

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I don't want to participate is code for like I don't believe in equality for everyone, like, truly, because I feel like if you're just like actively like. No, this no, I don't like this.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:03:18] What if you're not great at social media, but you still and

Ashley De La Rosa [00:03:21] that's what I was going to say, the social media thing like for me, I don't actually judge and I know everyone's different and that's why it's like really hard. But I guess it's easy for me to be like if you're not participating, then you don't believe in it. But for me, like participation is not social media engagement. Like if I truly am like, ha, this person has been silent on their Instagram, like, let me give them a call, like then I will. But I'm never like this person has been silent on their Instagram so they don't care, like unless it's like a big public company like Hamilton when they were silent for a really long time. When it's like you have the responsibility now because you are a company, because you make money off of these people, because you put forth this messaging and this media like to the public and you influence a lot of people whether you want to or not. You influence a lot of people. That's totally different. But like I know for me, like I was really just like I didn't want to talk to anyone for a really long time. And, you know, and I had my I had friends reach out. And even the people who did reach out, like white friends specifically with that, whether it was some of it was coming from guilt, some of it is like coming from genuine concern, like these people love me and I love them. And I was just like, honestly, I. I am not in the space to respond right now, but I will talk to you when I'm ready, like and then then I did. And it's just and so that's I think for me personally, that's how I view it on social media and performative activism. To me, performative activism is someone who is doing a lot of the posting. And I know in real life I know them or I've seen them around or they have said things that do not align with that and completely contradict that. That's the only time when for me I'm like, oh, I can call that out as being performative, because if it's if it's something that's not that I can't, like, verify, you know, where if it's just like, oh, they're posting. I don't know if they really believe it or they're not posting so they don't believe it. Like for me, I'm just like I have to see both, I have to see they're not posting and they don't believe it in person or the opposite. Like I can't just assume either way because one that takes too much energy into like you're usually wrong when you assume something about someone.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:05:53] Yeah I mean Krystal was just talking about that on her episodes.

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Ashley De La Rosa [00:06:29] I think we had a really crucial point right now, because people are going back to work and accepting contracts, which is like all well and good, and there was that fight of like nobody should go back or white people shouldn't go back and only people should go back. And it's like, OK, none of that is realistic. And even like I gave a speech at the march on Broadway and I said, like white actors specifically, you need to withhold your work until it is safe for everyone. And that doesn't mean, like, do not go back. It was because, like, followed up with that of in the in the speech, like, you need to negotiate safety into your contracts because not every show is doing what we are. What Hamilton is doing with Hamilton, we are speaking directly with the people who can implement these policies so that when we go back there is an anti-racism policy in place along with your sexual harassment policy to sign like that's there. And the onus for a lot of actors like to to make it safe. It's on them. It's not on there and on their productions. And that is not fair. It should be on our union. And they have not picked up the slack. Once again, it is not fair. It is it is like arguing with with a fellow. It is like arguing with a white girl who played Avita, who's saying for me, saying, why did you take that job? Because she needed a job. It's the same thing for me, going up to a black cop and saying, why are you a cop? Because he needed a job. Like there's I mean, there's so many things involved in that. But just like all the arguing down here at the bottom ignores the fact that there are people that we can't even see at the very, very top who are benefiting from us squabbling at the bottom. And and we will never, ever get to get up to them if we keep, like, arguing with each other. And so for me, it's just like now that we are going back, go back. But then I'm encouraging people around me, like, OK, you want to go back to the to the Whitest show on Earth. Fine. But like, put it in your contract that you need to get like get around with your fellow actors. Like this is what this is what community looks like. Right. Like this is what we've been talking about for four years. I mean, especially for this last year.

Jared Dixon [00:08:54] Yeah. I've said often I don't show up at the the revolution to criticize my show, but the revolution to hold accountable. And I it's interesting because we've had like in the past year. Right. And throughout social media, but specifically the let the past year we've been in the age of like the age of transparency and apologies, right. Where someone is transparent about a wrong that was done to them. And then it's it's apologize to someone, apologize, apologizes for doing it, and then they, quote unquote, hold themselves accountable. That's not a thing. You don't hold yourself accountable for a community issue. Right. Like racism is a community issue. It does start with me. It does start with you. But I'm not interested in criticizing people who are asking racist people to not be racist. I'm asking I'm interested in asking racist

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people why they or people who have proximity to racism. I won't even say because everyone is not racist. Right. But all white people have proximity to racism. That is just a fact. Right? I'm not I'm interested in asking that community how we can be a part of fixing, how we can be a part of fixing it and how they can get active in fixing it. Because it's more you know, it's more that the it's the more the institutionalized, you know, white corporate system in America that has created a system that perpetuates the things that we experience, both as people of BIPOC people, LGBTQ people, marginalize people, and also white women like experiencing the white male patriarchy just in general. Like, I think there's like I don't I'm not here to, like, criticize people who want to fix the problem or how they fix it. I'm here to criticize the circumstances that created the problem that led to them having to say anything anyway. You know, um, so, you know, there's there's certain things along the line like, you know, that I think obviously, like everybody is not a professional in litigation and not even just actors, but just in general, anyone who comments and comments on, like having been wronged in their workspace is their version. There's the other version and there's what actually happened. And I'm not here to judge any of that. I'm here to fix the problem or that's that's what I want to do and. So often I spend a lot of time seeing the like the actors post or seeing the shows post and wondering, like wondering and I'm trying to figure out if I can help in any way. And if I can't help, then I just don't say anything. It's not like I'm neglecting it, but my social media repost is not going to is not true amplification. If I'm only reposting it to my community of actors who, you know, true amplification would be me taking it to my executive producer and saying, I don't know if you've seen this, but let's talk about it. You know, I'm down to do that work, but I'm not going to criticize. I'm just not going to criticize the revolution because the revolution is the revolution. The power is with the people, you know

Gillian Pensavalle [00:12:18] Mojitos for the people, really

Jared Dixon [00:12:20] I didn't I didn't I didn't plan it. But that is such an appropriate title because like for the people is like a, you know. Yeah.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:12:30] How did you not plan it?

Jared Dixon [00:12:31] I just did it just like in my head. I was like mojito for the people, like, you know. But then I thought about it like, you know, actually being, you know,

Gillian Pensavalle [00:12:40] and here we go. Well, we started this thing you said when I said, like, Jared, explain the cocktail to us. You sounded very like, oh, well, the idea. Yeah, no,

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Jared Dixon [00:12:48] there was a surface level that was like a base level like version of it. But then I really I'm like sitting here thinking about it and listening to actually like talk about her parents.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:12:58] I really did a good job.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:12:59] Yeah, I love it. Like as we're ramping up, we're like, you know what, that's cool. That's really what I

Ashley De La Rosa [00:13:06] go back to the cocktail because

Ashley De La Rosa [00:13:09] I delivered on the name,

Jared Dixon [00:13:11] oh, we're going to have this cocktail in person too.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:13:14] That's my favorite one zillionth excited you're coming over, you're meeting. It's going to be a whole thing, but I do love that. Like, it all comes back. It's all connected because it's all that's like it's connected to everything. And it sounds silly to connect it to a stupid cocktail at a dumb podcast. But like, it's it's.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:13:32] It's intentional.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:13:33] Like, yeah.

Jared Dixon [00:13:35] I'm curious Gillian if there's anything like what what is what's been your experience with, uh, the social reckoning of what like what we're going on, what's going on right now and what's your perspective of what you hope the industry looks like when we come back?

Gillian Pensavalle [00:13:53] You know, Broadway can't come back the same way. I mean, if we're talking specifically about Broadway today, it can't look the same as as the day it shut down, March 11th, whatever that was. I want everyone to be able to have a safe, healthy, nontoxic place to work. You know, it's been a very eye opening, infuriating educational time. I've been horrified. I've been heartbroken. I've felt frustrated. I felt helpless. I look, I'm I'm an independent podcast. I started this thing five and a half years ago because I fell in love with the show. I had no idea what was going to happen. And there have definitely been things in this conversation alone where I'm just like, wait, what? And on top of that, I mean, I think if I'm being totally honest with you, there's definitely some imposter syndrome at work here. I mean, this is a

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this is an independent passion project. I do this for the love of the thing and because I want to hear everyone's stories. So there's something in me that's saying, like, no one cares what I have to say about it. I have a right to say anything. You know, who that who am I? I want you to tell the stories. I want you to tell your perspective. So, you know, I always say that, look, you both got the same the same email, the same pitch. Right. It's called the Hamilcast. But I want to talk to you. I want to hear your story. We'll talk about Hamilton a little bit. But really, I mean, that's why so many episodes I mean, that's why so many people have so many episodes, because we just I'm not going to say, all right, time's up. I want to hear what you have to say. So I'm rambling clearly, but I'm grateful to have these conversations. I hope that people are learning from them as I am. I hope people are getting riled up about it as I am and and inspired to make the change and take a look at yourself in the mirror. As hard as that may be, depending on what your experience is. And I guess in the simplest terms, I mean, we're all here for the same thing, right? Like we're all here for the love of the thing. You you, these actors, these creators, you know, the lighting people. You work your whole life to get this gig and it's here. So what are we doing here? If it can't be if it can't be healthy and creative and nurturing and and and a safe place to work, then what's the point? So, yeah, I mean, we're all here for the same reasons, even though it seemed, you know, I don't want to be on the stage, but I want you at the core of it. I want everyone, no matter where they are, what they do. to feel safe when they go to work or do the thing they love. You know, it's equity. Of course it has to be it has to be better when we get back and some. Or whatever it is, it is, it has to.

Jared Dixon [00:16:31] It's funny how many how many, like white people I've spoken to that have that same perspective, like as powerless as we felt like as as people of color, like as black people, as marginalized people. My white friends are grappling with their powerlessness as well. And some of my white friends are in perceived power, like, you know, Marc Branden's a friend of mine who's a casting director who had had some questions about things that he didn't know, that he had the power to change or wasn't sure whether he had the power to change or not. But like, you know, the more conversations I have with people, the more I realize, like there's a lot of people who are not at the very top who are on this this like list of hierarchy. In the closer you get to the top, the more power you think you have. But I also don't think like don't think you have its weird. You don't realize you have like, Andy Jones, like telling us about beyond the stage, that that was one of the most incredible meetings that I've ever. If I if I ever have to recall a zoom from last year and be like all those zooms or worth it, it was that one.

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:17:51] Right. So it's beyond the stage door. When Holli Campbell came back for her second round pretty recently and Cody Renard Richard, he told me about it. So it's beyond the stage. It's this amazing program. I'll put it in the show notes. I'll give you all the contacts. But yeah, Jared, as you saying, we

Jared Dixon [00:18:06] should we should shout that out and the scholarship. So but like, when he's we're talking about going back to work and as we're having that conversation, they're asking us how to frame the conversation with the companies and stuff like that. And they're asking us for our honest opinion on on some of the logistics and making sure that they're squaring off the needs of of of the companies going back. And I don't know, I'm just like I love I love politics. I love, like, you know, words and jargon and history and blah, blah, blah. But I really, really love people and how people feel because of things and how how how I make people feel things or whatever. And we're having this conversation. And I was like, yo, I don't know. I just feel like this is missing. Like the personal aspect. I'm really more interested in how ham4progress is changing you, how this social reckoning is changing you like that's what's the most important thing, because that's what we don't get on the regular like before. 2020 Your CEO, CFO, unless they're like Renee Brown or you know, or like some like magical spirit guru type person who just loves to tell. They're not the kind of people who tell you on the regular how they're putting their heart into the work. They just do the thing and then that's it. But, um, you know, I kind of challenge him to I challenge everyone. I was like, can we, like, put some personal something in here? I'm just curious, like, is there anything that's happened? And it's funny, like we all most of us knew beyond the stage door already existed. We didn't know who started it. And he was like, well, I just want to tell you guys a story. Like a year ago, I was sitting there and I realized, like, I'm thinking about like how Hamilton is structured and how how baseline is structured. And I'm looking at the people I work with. And I was like, man, why are we why are we mostly white? And then I realize, oh, my God, I hired all these people like I am directly responsible for, you know, and but then it went further and he started talking about how they started beyond on the stage door. And it was just so ironic that we all knew what it was. But he was like, what's the like in his mind? He was like, what's the is there power in me saying, like, why I started this thing? Or should I just do it? And I was like, there is power. And you saying it like now we feel seen like it doesn't feel because somebody might come, scroll across the beyond on the stage or page and just be like, oh, another scholarship internship situation. Somebody wants to write off, you know, have a corporate write off at the end of the year. Right. Because that's that's how a lot of people see Grant. Grant in general was like, oh, they can just they can write that money off at the end of the year. But for him to say,

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like, no, I actually wanted to put my power where my mouth is like one. I didn't know I had that power. Like, because when you're just hiring one person, it's easy for you to say, I'm going to hire the. Best person for the job and in this moment, the best person just so happens to be a white person or just so happens to be a man or whatever, marginalized, you know, whatever powerful category. But then when you think about hiring an entire company and you've neglected the idea of inserting bipoc people in marginalized communities into your workspace, you've neglected it. You haven't thought about it at all. So of course, it doesn't exist. And when you look at your one hundred and fifty people that you've hired and only 10 of them are black LGBTQ plus identifying maybe one person disabled in some way, and then you actually go, oh my God, I'm way more powerful than I actually am, you know, who am I spotlighting? Whose voices am I putting? Whose voices am I putting near me? Like, if you want to know somebody, look at the books they're reading, right? They're all about white authors. Then they don't know anything. If you want to know somebody, look at who they work with, that they work with only white people. They don't know anything because they could have very well went the extra step. And him talking about going that extra step and saying like, oh, well, often our issue is that these people don't exist in our community because of access. Well, how do I change that? I'm just going to change it. I'm going to I'm going to teach these people and then I'm going to hire them like two steps, teach hire. That was incredible. And like, I, I don't talk about it often, but I cried on cry. Yeah. I don't talk about like crying often because but you know it's twenty, twenty one and you know, hypermasculinity has got to go out the window.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:23:16] Crying is great.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:23:18] I love a good cry.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:23:19] Crying feels awesome

Jared Dixon [00:23:21] it does right.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:23:22] It's a treat.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:23:24] It is yourself a moment for you to just stop. And I know it sounds funny like I know it's not actually knows exactly what I'm talking about.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:23:32] Sometimes, sometimes you just need I have princess sob sometimes if I get really into it and I'm on my bed like.....

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:23:41] So I just want to ask you, I know that there are people Broadway's opening up now and so tickets are on sale. I mean, we're recording this on May 24. This episode won't come out until about July. So I'm sure there's going to be more news. But just for people who maybe are holding back, feeling guilty to be excited about going back to Broadway as audience members, let's get rid of all the like. Now I'm in a crowded room. I said, oh, is that like let's get let's take that out of the equation for a second. What can people do to feel OK walking and giving money to these corporations?

Ashley De La Rosa [00:24:19] Yeah, I think it comes down to like knowledge. Knowledge is power and just being able to ask questions and ask the why. And at least with Hamilton, it's pretty easy because we've made it so like audience accessible by having the hamper progress like Instagram. And I know that for other shows it may not be as easy to know like what their policies are

Gillian Pensavalle [00:24:47] so Ham4Progress is telling the world what Hamilton as a company is doing. Is doing everyone feel safe?

Ashley De La Rosa [00:24:54] Yes. Yeah. And that's our social justice arm. Yeah. Yeah. And like and I just know as an audience member, like for me, I'm trying to think of when I would buy tickets to shows and like who do I at? Like, if I wanted to ask these questions, who would I ask. And it's more than just like when you buy the ticket, like I did not realize how much information this sounds so silly, but how much information is available on the Internet, like when all this stuff started coming out about like these not for profit theaters and how you look at their board and most of the people on the board or sometimes all the people on the board white and then the person at the very top salary is like almost a million dollars, sometimes a million dollars. And you're like, OK, with these actors contracts, they're making four hundred and fifty dollars a week off Broadway or like, you know, like doing these shows and and why is that? How is that allowed and why is that OK or or you know, looking at James Nederlander. Hey. And seeing how much he's donated to the Trump campaign and look up all of the theaters that that James Nederlander owns and puts money in and maybe, you know, ask some questions there because like at the end of the day, like, it's really hard because the actors on stage, like they would love to perform for a full house and a full audience. And it's going to be tough getting back just in general because of covid filling houses, packinghouses, but. I if this past year and a half has taught me anything, it's the power of your own voice and especially an educated voice like educated enough to have to form an opinion that you truly stand by and, you know, writing to these people and asking questions and just saying, like, I'm a concerned patron. And I really I would rather I want to check

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your show out, but I'm going to actually go here instead to this other show that I want to see, because it aligns with my values and my morals. And I want to be a conscious consumer, because at the end of the day, like people like the need for landers, like they don't care until it starts hitting their pocket, like they're so far gone that they and and so I don't fully know how to address something like that because you have to it's almost like you're hurting a lot of other people to get to the top. Like if you don't go to these shows and the show, the run is over and then these actors are out of work. So, like, I truly I wish I had an answer, but I don't know.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:27:40] And I wasn't asking you to solve like

Ashley De La Rosa [00:27:43] I just feel like sometimes they're so untouchable.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:27:46] Yeah. I mean, we got Scott Rudin out of there, thank God. So that's like one step in that direction.

Jared Dixon [00:27:51] Yeah, yeah. Yeah. I think I think Hamilton is actually a great example, considering like the you know, James Nederlander exists like, you know, it's very it was very easy at one point to say that a person who donated to the Trump administration in any way did not belong in certain circles and communities. Right. Probably still is very easy to say that. And I and I challenge people to think not about. Not about like his power, but think about how many people are involved in his work that also are holding them accountable or attempting to hold him accountable, like Disney donated money to Trump. But I also know that I also know that Disney's I think it's his great granddaughter or granddaughter who's now this who was recently stepped down from her position, if I'm not mistaken. But she's still on the board. But like, not and like I think she's more of an advisory position. She she actually was was very open about her disdain for the way Disney operated for a while and her disdain for how the former CEO of Disney's income was going up exponentially over the course of his tenure. While wages didn't change much and they had the issues with they had the labor issues at the parks. And, um, I can get into very specific things about Disney, theatrical, blah, blah, blah. But like every corporation is every corporation, every company is a community. And I think with Hamilton, if you look at the community and you can see that one, you can visibly see that Hamilton is giving us their platform. Right. Um, obviously they're not giving it to us to just do what with whatever we please. But, you know, it's they're giving us their platform. They're giving us the access to the Hamilton community and saying very fervently and very strongly like this is what we believe. And in our specific view and however we got this platform, reckon with it and consider that. But the money is also a part of the thing that

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we're fighting against to fight fighting. We're trying to fight to get them on our side more than anything. Like you can visibly see that. But then for other shows, it's not as visible. It is it is important to go and look at the structure of the companies that that put these shows up. It is important to go and look at the money that the shows generate. And if you can get some insight into what, um, I won't say actors, but if you can get some insight into what crew members are making or, you know, or, um, dressers or what the lowest paid person in the company because there is a CEO and then there's the janitor. Right. For everything. If you can get some insight into those things, like that's where you do your reckoning. And if it doesn't look like it's lining up with the activism in the statements and the tweets in the memes and the Broadway announcements, we're coming back better than ever. Then you know what to do. You vote with your dollars. You know, I want people to feel safe coming back to Hamilton. I want people to know that when when they look up on stage and they see these big old pearly whites that I just got, I wore a liners for the past like 14 weeks or whatever. But when you go when you go to look at the show and you see me smiling now that the smile is backed up by by the work of of the people who who've given me that job and give me the opportunity, it's not just because Aaron Burr smiles from time to time. It's because Jared Dixon truly, truly, truly, truly loves his job and loves what we're doing. And you can you can you can feel that shit like I've been to plenty of shows where I look up there and I'm just like, maybe it's the actor in me that can see through the facade. But I can tell I can tell when people are not loving their job, you know. And there's plenty shows that I've seen on Broadway where that was apparent. And I mean, I have for example, I haven't watched a lick of I have I don't think I've watched more than five to ten minutes of NFL football since Colin Kaepernick lost his job. I'll read stats, you know, about my favorite team, but I'm not giving money to the conglomerate until until I feel like it's it's worth it. They're going to get their money regardless. There are enough white people in the world who love NFL football. There are enough black people, brown people, whatever, who love it. And they're going to get their money, give their money. I'm not giving it and not that that means anything to them. But, you know, I openly tell people that, like, until the cows come home.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:33:13] Well, Jared, we're not done.

Jared Dixon [00:33:14] I know. Keep going. I can do this all day.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:33:18] Jared, can I ask you something? The question before about my experience. I mean. Did I even answer that? Is that what you are looking for and selfishly, is there anything that the podcast could be doing better or that I could be doing better?

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Jared Dixon [00:33:31] Your job your job is like for fronting voices, right?

Gillian Pensavalle [00:33:34] I mean, that's how I think of it.

Jared Dixon [00:33:36] Yeah. I just think it's I mean, the I think the the honesty that you approach people with is disarming. Like, it's easy because it's easy. Like, you know, even just even just the like the the precursor email you send is just like this is not an interview. This is this is us talking about real things like, yes, I'm asking you questions, but I really want to get to know the heart of you. Like, just continuing to do that is what's most important. And I think, um, as you explore, like expanding like your view of what Hamilton is like, the kinds of people you interview like that you can get access to, the more the better.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:34:17] Yeah. Right. And if if they're not interested, I will not push them. I've run into that before where it's clear they don't want to talk about stuff on the air or on the record and the record for lack of a better term. Yeah. Well thank you. I mean, I swear I wasn't fishing. I was genuinely asking, but thank you. I appreciate that. So, yeah, I'm just going to keep doing what I'm doing. Yeah. For sure. And speaking of which, hey, Ashley and Jared, you two up for taking some questions from the Patreon peeps.

Jared Dixon [00:34:41] Yeah. Do we do the sound effect?

Ashley De La Rosa [00:34:43] Do you actually just have Jared to do that, that weird whistle.

Jared Dixon [00:34:53] That's me impersonating me, impersonating Lin impersonating shockwave.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:34:59] You know what? People don't know. People think that Lin did both. It's me and him doing it. So not to take any credit away from Lin,.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:35:05] But give you your flowers

Gillian Pensavalle [00:35:06] The two of us doing it. And sometimes people are like, oh, I like what he's like, oh, if it were a shockwave, it would be much more impressive. People are like, no, you're doing like it's me. And there's another voice in the room.

Jared Dixon [00:35:17] I didn't know that.

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:35:20] To me it's so clear that it's me going like yourself or whatever I'm doing at it. To me, it's just like it's so obvious that there's two of us like that. It's just like another. Let them know.

Jared Dixon [00:35:32] No, no, I'm hearing it in my head. And I know

Gillian Pensavalle [00:36:03] OK, Andrea says Ashley and Jared were both once part of a major pop culture productions, Ashley for Rent and Jared for The Lion King, those shows often brought in audiences that wouldn't normally attend theater, especially a younger and more diverse crowd, much like Hamilton. Now that the Hamilfilm has taken the world by storm, I expect you will have even younger audiences and likely those singing along as they did when I saw the tour of Rent and The Lion King. Does the audience singing with you throw you off? What quick advice would you give to other tours on how to anticipate an audience like this? Lastly, my eight year old Jacob wants to see you at the stage door when you come to Ohio again, which I welcome as a Hispanic mom. And in parentheses, she says representation matters. Yes, yes. Is this something the tour does usually?

Jared Dixon [00:36:46] Yeah, usually.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:36:46] Covid, so far, no

Gillian Pensavalle [00:36:49] in terms of singing along.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:36:51] It doesn't I mean, I've never it's never been loud enough where I could hear someone in any show that I've been in. But as an audience member, having someone sitting next to me, I'm like, OK, you need to stop. Like, I can't hear the actors. But Jared,

Jared Dixon [00:37:07] I have a few stories during during Lion King

Gillian Pensavalle [00:37:12] tell me they were trying to do the opening number.

Jared Dixon [00:37:14] No, there was singing during endless night. I just remember, like, I'm like half crying, like doing the the Simba smolder thing. And then I'll never forget that it was great. And then Hamilton is funny because like you like Hamilton, you naturally have like um especially for like all of the rapping you have like you have like hype men because like, you know, a hype man is supposed to be like you're all rapping in a freestyle, he freestyle,

Jared Dixon [00:37:45] you know, and in the audience during like the the cabinet battles

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:37:51] over invited Jared were invited to share.

Jared Dixon [00:37:53] Yeah. We're like invited. So in Hamilton it's like welcome unless you know, it's during like wait for Burton or satisfied like pick like pick your poison

Gillian Pensavalle [00:38:03] bottles if you know it's to Jeff or anyone is saying like oh you know, like root for me. Great. The Cabinet battles are fair game when the king says everybody.

Jared Dixon [00:38:13] Yeah.

Jared Dixon [00:38:14] Like drop in. Find your note

Gillian Pensavalle [00:38:17] Laurens says everybody's saying whoa, whoa, then you're allowed to. But like those are also moments where it's like I thought those everybody's we're like hypothetical. I thought that was fun because they're the story is there was one time where Mike and I did a podcast. We did like we used to call it, the emergency podcast system, like we saw the show. And then Mike was like singing along with King George. And I like elbowroom. I was like, don't do that. And then Lin came on and said he was right. And I was like, well...

Jared Dixon [00:38:41] like, no, this is the part what

Gillian Pensavalle [00:38:43] you know, that as somewhat like because like King George, King George, especially like is so kind of I don't know, he's solitary on the stage. Right. You're just like when he goes everybody, I'm like I assume he's talking to everyone on stage, not in standing room at the Rogers.

Jared Dixon [00:38:58] Like, I would I would love to be in like rent. So like I played when I played Tom Collins every night, I was like, I have to figure out how I can get the audience to sing Santa Fe with me. Like as an actor, as an actor, you, like, try to figure out how to elicit certain things out of people. And I never quite figured it out like I would love it. The audience just came in like, whoa oh. Just for that part. I never figured it out, though, so.

Jared Dixon [00:40:45] Ashley is like hell, no

Ashley De La Rosa [00:40:47] was just thinking, and I'm like, do I even remember the songs like, well, that's like Santa Fe. Yeah, that one

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:40:58] Santa Fe is before over the moon.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:40:59] Right. That's super participatory.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:41:01] Even back in the day at oh

Gillian Pensavalle [00:41:03] I'm sorry, the Nederlander. But even back a day like she would be begging people to move with her and there were people who were just like do we like is that allowed?

Gillian Pensavalle [00:42:04] All these stuffy like dads who came for their sixtieth birthday or whatever, like they would be like, oh no, I'm like, yeah, fucking Moo with her. It's a protest.

Jared Dixon [00:42:15] My Maureen when we had a very like, um, I was at Gateway Playhouse in Long Island, we had we had a very, like, stuffy audience one night. Oh. The irony of that question is like also knowing that for all of the young people that come to shows like Rent and Hamilton and any show that's about some kind of like change, there's also going to be a bunch of like old stuffy people who will walk out when they get uncomfortable.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:42:43] Did they not know what they bought the tickets for, though? Is always my question.

Jared Dixon [00:42:47] You know, they come they come for the car accident, but they keep driving. Know, I feel like it's crazy, just like, you know, being on the other side of that and just being like, well, I guess I did my job. I made you uncomfortable. Hopefully you think about it. But one night the Maureen, they were like really not feeling her and Joanne at all. And it was very clear that all of their energy was directed at the couples. And when she got to the moving part, she was just kind of like she was going through it. She was like,

Jared Dixon [00:43:15] moo, moo. Come on, move with me, moo with me, more with me. I will do this shit until I die. And she was like,

Jared Dixon [00:43:27] she just like starts going off and then it broke them and then they started moving like it was like MOOs with questionmark at the end of the month. Moo moo. And they finally got into it. I was like, you did your job tonight.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:43:41] Yeah those people who don't move, moo or you're not fun or you're in the no fun. Moo or move No exclamation point. Amit it is asking you were touring with the show when it closed. You'll be there when the tours reopen. What kind of changes do you think will take place and touring productions. And if you've

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started rehearsals again, what differences do you see in the rehearsal rooms for the show? Apart from masks, of course.

Jared Dixon [00:44:09] Hmm.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:44:09] Well, I haven't started rehearsals yet and Jared hasn't either, so we don't know yet. But I think I mean, from what I do know, that we're going to be masked backstage. And I think I'm still not fully, fully sure on, I think the audiences that could change between city to city. But from what I'm assuming, audiences won't be masked. And I know it's like touring. It's kind of it's kind of tricky because like where we're living and like company housing versus just getting an AIRBNB or should we be like the bubble, like the NBA or something. So I know that for my company, at least in our first stop, we are trying to do a company housing thing so that we're in a bubble. But I don't know if all the other stores are operating that way. And then also, once we start moving, that's going to change. I think it's just for the first the first city.

Jared Dixon [00:45:14] I'm I'm I'm anxious about the about the like the whiplash of, like, having a thousand people blasting at me for the first time. You know, I'm the first I'm going to be the first one to walk on the stage in my company. Yeah. There's going to be some response to us not having been to work. And at that point, almost 20 months, I think. And I might collapse. I might like

Ashley De La Rosa [00:45:43] yeah.

Jared Dixon [00:45:44] I might not be able to to I don't know. I'm afraid of that. But in terms of the of the fear, like, I don't know, being an actor is bravery. You know, being a theater professional is bravery. Um, we put our hearts out there and at the end of the day, I'm there. I'm not there for myself. I'm there for the people on the other side of the stage. And as long as they feel comfortable, like that's honestly that's really what got me through the last six or seven shows in Toronto was looking out in the audience. And even though there were seats missing, like when people were in there, they had their mask on and, you know, people were going crazy apeshit with the hand sanitizer during the show. It's like it's like the entire show. I was like, thank God they're here. They're taking a pandemic on face, face first for me. So I got to give something back. So, you know, I'll do it. I just know that my company is going to do anything to protect the life of the show. And, you know, I'm going to hold my fellow actors and company members accountable, like continue to hold them accountable. And hopefully we come up with some cool things along the way. Like there was a point where we explore the idea of like. Signing Playbills in advance to have to pass them out at the stage door, then it was like, you know, questions about contamination

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and stuff like that or like how would they be transported? But like just the fact that just the fact that companies are thinking about stuff like that, like they do want they even though we can't open anymore, or at least right now, they are thinking about that. And what I mean, they just lifted mask mandates. And most of the states like I have to assume by the end of August or by August, when the shows start opening, that things will be a little different and maybe we can be within like maybe there's like a come to the stage door. If you have a mask on, I don't know. Who knows.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:47:47] Ricardo is asking what cities are y'all looking forward to visiting again? And what was your favorite thing about Dallas, Texas?

Ashley De La Rosa [00:47:54] I don't even remember my tour schedule. I think we are going somewhere in Canada and I've never been to Canada, so I'm excited for that.

Jared Dixon [00:48:02] Calgary is like, go get a log cabin somewhere and and enjoy that. Enjoy that.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:48:07] Okay. Good to know.

Jared Dixon [00:48:09] No, I mean, like there's a city obviously, but like if you if you wanted to live outside the city you could live. Uh, maybe not. I feel like it might be a little further to get to stuff like that. But we're going to Ottawa. Um, I'm excited. I'm excited about I'm excited about Atlanta. I feel like a bad bitch on that stage at the Fox Theater. They got the the the, um, the the lights are so far back because the house is so big that the the stage lights kind of feel like concert lighting. And there's like for the house is like a four thousand seater. Yeah. So you. Yeah. The Fox Theater in Atlanta is amazing.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:48:50] I like orchestras mostly under under.

Jared Dixon [00:48:52] It's mostly the orchestra still under like the the whole show is pushed towards the pit because they don't have a they don't have the like open thing. It's like flat. But um yeah I think, I think it's like I want to say it's like thirty six hundred or something like that. Seats and um when I did the Color Purple there, uh I don't have words for it like, like I said, I was, I was greedy and I was like I feel like Beyonce like so I'm excited to go back to Atlanta in the food and what a time to be in Georgia. Like I'm down. I'm ready to celebrate, you know, uh, the the special election and the changes they made in the Senate and also get get active on the ground with, um, hopefully while I'm there, get active on the ground with whatever local politics are going on that I can

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:49:48] for both of you. What was your favorite thing about Texas? Dallas, Texas?

Ashley De La Rosa [00:49:52] Oh, yeah. I've never been to Dallas, Texas. So pass. But what city? I look forward to visiting again. I've only been in Hamilton. We were only in one city. So I guess I will say San Francisco, because that's where we were when we closed. Um, but yeah, I'm looking forward to I'm trying to think of what other cities I've done with other tours that I've seen on this list. And it's really been I don't know if there's like much overlap. Like, I think Spokane, Washington is an overlap. But I wasn't there for very long. I just I don't remember. So I'll say San Francisco.

Jared Dixon [00:50:37] I love Dallas. I start, oh, my God, I started my Lion King there. And I, um. And I did color purple there. But Dallas was where I sprained my ankle, uh, my first my first like ten shows. And then I missed the rest of the sit that we were there. But because of that I got to experience a lot of Dallas, um, great food, cool people. Um, the theater scene there is really like the I'll never forget the theater, the the performing arts center forgot the name of the theater, but all of the seats are like like this old or auditorium style plush blue seats, if I'm not mistaken. And then the the House kind of looks like the auditorium at LaGuardia and my high school. Oh, cool. So I remember being there and just kind of like just enjoying that. Like every night I felt like I was singing in my high school. Like, um, Dallas was pretty cool though. They got that golden chick, the like the restaurant that I think it's um. I want to say it's only in Dallas, but it might only be in the south. It's like pretty good stuff.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:51:51] Nice.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:51:52] Jessica saying I'm curious if either of you will be on the tour that will be in Louisville, Kentucky in twenty, twenty two. I have tickets. I can't wait to see the skit live. Also, I hope you and your families are doing well.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:52:04] Thank you, Jessica.

Jared Dixon [00:52:06] The irony of I'm going to Louisville, Kentucky, and that show that I did before Hamilton, the day that I found out I booked Hamilton, I was going back to perform in Lion King after I had already left for an emergency coverage. I think I had been out of the show for like three weeks. And they called me and they're like, Jared, can you come back? We need like emergency coverage. And I was like, oh, man, I'm in a callback situation. Like, I have to get the OK from them like that. It's cool for me to go. And

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they're like, all right, let us know even if it's like three days from now. And then I called the Hamilton casting or my agents call it Hamilton casting, and they were like, Jared's got got a they want Jared to come back for emergency coverage at Lion King. Um, what's his standing with, with casting. And they were like, well we're we're we're going to reach out to Tommy and Lin. They're the last two people who have to sign off. Tommy was really busy at the time so he couldn't come to actually audition me. And I think we talked about this during the podcast. And Tommy Tommy couldn't come in. And eventually he was just like, I've seen everything I need to see. We're sending a tape to Lin. He'll let us know in the morning. Go have a good time in the morning. I flew the immediately. The next day I flew to Louisville, Kentucky, on my way to the airport. I call Lion King. I'm like, Yeah, I'm on my way, get on my flight, blah, blah, blah. I pick up the phone the next call and my agent, he's like, You booked Hamilton. So I got on the plane knowing I booked Hamilton and walked into the into the theater. And I was like, I got some news. I booked Hamilton. And they're like, wait, what? They didn't know that. That was what I was. I had a callback for it. So I'm excited to go back just for that. I just remember being in Louisville like.

Ashley De La Rosa [00:54:04] Cloud9.

Jared Dixon [00:54:04] I was I was on ten. Yeah. And good food everywhere I go. It's about the food

Gillian Pensavalle [00:54:12] Tabatha's says this is for Jarrard. Not a question, but just a huge shout out for being the warmest, sweetest person and also such a source of inspiration with your activism. Oh, thank you, Jared, for using your platform to educate and share your art. I am so, so lucky to know you.

Jared Dixon [00:54:26] So, yeah, I love Tabitha. She's, um, we met her in, uh, in Nashville and, uh, co-owner of the za restaurant. If you're in Nashville, folks, go get some ZA. If you watched new girl then you kind of get that too.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:54:46] And one more for Jared. Michelle is saying, Jared, I had the honor of meeting your dad, Rodrick Dixon, when he was in Chicago to perform too hot to handle. My company was a sponsor of the event and I sat next to him at a pre show dinner. We had the best chat about music, theater and the amazing opportunity to stream too hot to handle and correctional facilities. He he also proudly showed us photos of you in The Lion King. My question is, how were you influenced by his work as an artist slash performer and also as an advocate for others?

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Jared Dixon [00:55:18] Oh, that that's cool as hell. Honestly, I don't it's funny. Me, him talk about this a lot. I don't mix my dad with my career much. So I like forget that he's a legend. I know my dad is like, I'm not. Yeah. I'm not going to I'm not going to act like I don't know. But I just forget how much impact he has on people and how much his like his career means to people. And also, you know, people. If you know my dad, you love him. Um, so that that's just really cool. And he was he was very like hands off with me, like most of my life didn't really like. But in our like tell me specifically to do anything about becoming an actor, artist or musician, whatever. He's just always been a source of, um, of support and advice. And, um, I like to think that if you've seen him perform, you see it in me. And he always tells people like he tells me all the things I get when I talk about you. I just so I tell everybody, like, you got everything I got and then some more. And, um, and I think that's pretty true. Like, I, um, I do approach, um, my process. And I like the work ethic with the same veracity and preparation that he does. And, uh, I honestly like my I got I won the I won the lottery, my parents man. So like, when I go out there, there's not there isn't a night where I'm not thinking about the two of them. And, um, my dad definitely informs a lot of my choices as an actor, just without even. Just by being himself, you know,

Gillian Pensavalle [00:57:01] Onea says, thank you both for your incredible work with Ham4Progress and beyond, she says. So here's the thing I'm thinking about for a while. My boss, who's been active in the fight for more equality and inclusion for a long time, published a piece looking back on his life and career and the privileges he had as a white male. He got a lot of applause, but there was also one person criticizing that this is another white centered story that takes away space from BIPOC and that it would be much more important to give the room to them and listen to their voices. I really try to educate myself. And the last point is when I heard repeatedly and I think it is so important to make sure we make enough space for everyone, I'm sure there's no right or wrong. But I just wonder what your thoughts are about that.

Jared Dixon [00:57:37] It's a hard question to broach because the perception is that like people who have privilege shouldn't forefront their privilege and like, flaunt it to people like, you know, he's a man who's worked very hard and uses his platform to to advocate or help with, obviously, and whether he excels at that or not, like, you know, it's like do you celebrate it? But then I keep coming back to that idea that, like, maybe his message is not for the people who are criticizing him. I do think that some people need to do the work and shut up. But there are certain people who, if they speak and talk about what they're doing, it brings a level of accountability to others who aren't doing the work or maybe want to get involved and

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don't think that other people are doing it. Like I'm just thinking about Andy Jones. And for every every one of him, there's five or six of him in other companies who are not using their privilege. And him put him as long as it's not in a celebratory way, like a pat me on the shoulder way or like, you know, you don't deserve a you don't deserve a Purple Heart, like, you know, let's not go there. And we've talked about this with ham for progress, too, because we want to forefront our activism more, too. But there's this fear that because Hamilton is the big show, that it is the corporate and the financial and artistic success that it is. You know, we have things that Hamilton has, things that other shows don't have. But in terms of the size of its platform, the financial bankroll, things of that nature, but for fronting like very specific things, like talking about the fact that a lot of the work that we've done on the task forces has been done for free, like things that were yes, there are things that were there, money they put their money where their mouth is like those aren't the most successful things that we've done have been like free work. The the the Joy in our Voices concert. Those were all free performances that were in-house. The task forces volunteer. Some of the system is already set up for us to succeed. Um, so I just think that, you know, I think with with him, as long as that article wasn't like, look at all these amazing things that I've done, if it was more like I think this is why this like why this work belongs in my business, you know, like if you're speaking to the value of that's more important than celebrating that you're doing it. You know, that's that's you should celebrate it, but you shouldn't you shouldn't do it without talking about the value of it, you know.

Ashley De La Rosa [01:00:26] Yeah. Yeah, I agree entirely. It's hard to know because, like, we don't have any more context on the case.

Gillian Pensavalle [01:00:33] Yeah.

Ashley De La Rosa [01:00:33] So, yeah, but I agree with Jared. Like, it's I think it's important when people with power are vocal about protecting, like not doing harm, like laterally and also, you know, not punching down. And I think it's important, especially when people who have privilege are like, hey, I did this and and this is like how it's going and I'm being transparent about it versus like, look at me, I did this and it's so great and I've, like, solved racism. Yay. So I hopefully that's not the context of the piece, but either way, like the more transparent you are with people and the more criticism that it will open you up to until, you know, eventually that criticism will be less and less as long as you continue to be authentic in your in your actions.

Jared Dixon [01:01:31] It's almost like if you knew that strangers were coming to your funeral, how would you like how would you

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strangers were going to speak at your funeral funeral? How would you act in life? Because the people that I love are going to say loving things about me. But strangers who maybe saw me in a show and don't know me personally, you know, people who have only seen my Instagram or Twitter have seen me and whatever, uh. Those people, I hope that I hope that the the work that I do in my community speaks volumes beyond, you know, who I am and like those strangers will have something to speak to. This guy that wrote that article, hopefully it was presented in a way that strangers would not criticize him at his funeral. They would say, I read this amazing article that he wrote just that just spoke to the authenticity of the work that he does in his community. But if it's the other, then you're going to get the kind of person who comes and says this is performative and there's no place for it. You know

Gillian Pensavalle [01:02:36] look, I can't I cannot thank you both enough for being here again. So soon after you both sat with me for like three hours a piece. I'm enamored. I'm in love with both of you. So before we wrap up, let's go through all the social media, not just your your personal one, but just all the people where they can go to help and listen and learn and get educated and all the things. Yeah.

Ashley De La Rosa [01:03:03] So first and foremost, hamper progress on Instagram. Is it with a no shirt for. I think so, yeah. So ham 4 progress. And my Instagram is at AshdelaRosa and that's not on all the things but basically on all the things I just wanted to say on all the things

Gillian Pensavalle [01:03:28] Ashley I see you, thats a tco reference. Thank you so much. I love you.

Jared Dixon [01:03:34] My handle is at itsjDixon. Follow hiam4progress. Um, shout out to all of the advocacy organizations that have been formed in the Broadway community in the past year and then also back referencing the scholarship. Yes, I know it's seniors in high school who are interested and potentially interested in and having a career in theater. There is a number of scholarships going out.

Gillian Pensavalle [01:04:03] Yeah, I'll put it on the website and in the show notes

Ashley De La Rosa [01:04:05] beyond the stage or also follow Broadway for racial justice

Jared Dixon [01:04:09] Broadway for racial justice,

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Ashley De La Rosa [01:04:11] a great resource not affiliated with Hamilton, but a really great resource.

Gillian Pensavalle [01:04:14] Yeah. Really, I cannot stress how grateful I am that you would come hang out with me again. So listeners, thank you so much for listening. And also just please, you know, do the work, follow the things and just educate yourself, I think. Right?

Jared Dixon [01:04:27] Yeah.

Ashley De La Rosa [01:04:27] Yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [01:04:28] OK, I will see you so soon. Probably next week. Same time. Same place. Thank you so much for listening. I am G.Pen.

Ashley De La Rosa [01:04:36] Oh, A.De La Rosa. That's so long.

Gillian Pensavalle [01:04:41] You've done this before.

Jared Dixon [01:04:43] And JD Burr Sir.

Gillian Pensavalle [01:05:34] The Hamilcast is brought to you by my love of the thing TM and 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, kindest and most welcoming corner of the Internet, go to Patreon dot com, slash the Hamilcast. You can submit questions to guests, join Zoom Hangouts, get behind the scenes access and of course, my unending gratitude. I'm at the Hamilcast on all social media and you can listen wherever you get your podcasts. Visit the Hamilcast dot com for transcripts, episodes and more. You can see what's going on with Mike. You know Mike at Michael Paul Smith dot net. True Crime Obsessed is my true crime comedy podcast with my podcast soul mate Patrick Hinds of Theater People and Broadway BackStory fame. Thank you so much for listening. It means the world to me, to the revolution