

THE HAMILCAST

EPISODE 280 GILES TERERA 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, welcome back to the Hamilcast, I'm Gillian today I am joined virtually by the one, the only Giles Terera. Giles, hi, how are you? I'm I'm glad you're here. Virtually.

Giles Terera [00:00:33] You are here. You are fantastic. I have made it onto the Hamilcast. I mean, everyone else has been on this. It's like you're Hamilton experience is not complete until you've been on the Hamilcast and I been waiting for like four years to get this.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:00:47] First of all, thank you so much that you're making me blush and you're making me very nervous. You are. So, you know what? Before we get in, I've so many amazing things to say to you. But before we start, can I can you please tell me your pronouns?

Giles Terera [00:00:59] My pronouns are he him.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:01:01] Thank you so much. So in case people don't know, Giles is the original Aaron Burr in the West End company of Hamilton. You won the twenty eighteen Olivier Award, which they didn't play you off, by the way. That was amazing. I watched it again today in America. We're used to that mood, that music swelling up. But they like your moment, which I love.

Giles Terera [00:01:20] They did.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:03:58] You have a ton of credits, I mean, pages and pages long Avenue Q, Book of Mormon, Endless Shakespeare, you've performed all over the world, your documentarian, you have a documentary called Muse A Fire, which I mean, we're talking like Ian McKellen and Judi Dench are involved. I mean, real shit. And most recently, you are the author of my new favorite book. And I'm not that's not hyperbole. I mean that sincerely, Hamilton and me. It's an actor's journal. I have it here like we're live on the air, like it's a live video. So it just came out. So we're recording this

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July 3rd. You probably won't come out for probably until like August or September. So this book is so fantastic. You have a companion podcast called Hamilton and US, which is amazing. By the way, listen to it all day today.

Giles Terera [00:04:43] Brilliant. Thanks.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:04:43] So I just have a lot to say. Oh, and we have a cocktail. My husband Mike named it because you love gin and tonic. He he loves the long name cocktail, which I love too, because I just think he just puts like the liquor into the lyrics. And it's there are things that the tonics and the gin, don't teach ya, teach ya, teach ya

Giles Terera [00:05:02] Perfect. And with that I'm going to just tonic here and just complete mine because yes, this is how it works on the Hamilcast. So I've got my interest

Gillian Pensavalle [00:05:10] in keeping it all in. Yeah.

Giles Terera [00:05:12] And then we're going to. So now I'm, I can begin.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:05:17] Well cheers to you. Raise a glass.

Giles Terera [00:05:20] Raise a glass. We got cheers. Cheers everyone. Oh yeah. Thank you for having me on. It's I know which has been on here. Everyone's been on here and so I'm pleased to be here.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:05:32] Yeah. You know it's an honor to have you it's not for lack of of interest or try you know, ideally before the pandemic everyone came over and I miss that recording. Virtually kind of wasn't in the cards because I loved that idea of welcoming you into my home. And I cannot wait to do that again. But, you know, we're doing we're doing this thing now. We're in it. And I have to tell you a few words on Sir Thomas, because the man writes wonderful emails and he put us in touch, like, why now? Yeah. And I just, you know, I have this fear of saying too much and then it'll all go away like I wish I there's a part of me that wants to say what he said in his email because it's so beautiful and like meaningful to, I think, both of us. But then I feel like if I share the emails and the texts

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and the face times that I have some of these people, it'll go away. Yeah, I know what I mean?

Giles Terera [00:06:26] I know what you mean. So the bottom line is he sent the email. It happened and here we are. That's what we need to know.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:06:35] That's all we need to know. So I'm going to try my my hardest to not read your own book back to you, because I do this thing where I have it's highlighted. They're like notes in the in the margin. They're like typed notes that I took. I read this thing in two settings. Giles, I really I cannot it is required reading not for an actor, even, you know, like actors. It's invaluable for actors. But I just think for anyone who's interested and I mean anything like the human experience, like it's just so beautiful and intimate and vulnerable and fascinating and thank you for sharing it with us that I mean, usually it's so it's so intimate, but it's so beautifully written that I don't feel bad for reading it. Do you know what I mean?

Giles Terera [00:07:18] Right.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:07:19] There's a part where it feels like am I is this allowed? But the way you let us in as the narrator Osburn, the narrator as Giles, it's like it's stunning. Thank you so much

Giles Terera [00:07:28] Thank you. I mean, I, I guess I didn't. Well, the fact is I didn't write it to be published, so it was just me, it was just my thoughts and my feelings during the whole Hamilton experience. So there was no filter to it. And I didn't have I didn't have anything. I just wrote down what I was going through. And then it was a bit epic when I thought, OK, we're going to publish it so we could put it out. I thought, well, is it too intimate? Is it too will anyone else get it, you know, who wasn't in the room? So I gave it to some friends who have nothing to do with theater. And they said, oh, no, no, this is cool. That's we get a lot from it. So I'm glad I'm glad that it works out. You know, it's been it's been an interesting experience because so much I mean, you talk about Tommy and so much of the what he talks about is this is a live experience. You know, people fifteen hundred people come to the theater and they're there and it happens that night. It's happening right

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front and that's it. So Tommy, Tommy's not into the whole, like, social media thing. And he's like, this is the life experience. So I've always subscribe to that. That's what I'm like. So the idea of putting something out, I thought long and hard about it. And and I just think, you know, I've I've been blessed with this experience of being in Hamilton, as we all have those of us who've been fortunate enough to be in it. And I'm not sure any more. So what can I you know, I think part of. My Hamilton experience is being able to share, and that, I think, was what made me actually put the book out, put it out. It was an experience that happened. But people are interested. People want to know people. People are invested in Hamilton in a way which they aren't in other shows. So if I can share a bit of that, then that's the least I can do. You know, that makes sense.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:09:18] It makes complete sense. I just got a wave of I can't believe I'm sitting here talking to Giles. I just got a wave of that. You should know that. I mean, this is this book is so so the reason I mentioned the date, first of all, it has been so sweltering hot. We had like a threat of a blackout, like rolling blackouts in New York City today. I don't know who Tommy called. It is like beautiful London, chilly, rainy, gray weather. And I posted in the Patreon Peep group in the Facebook group. We'll hear from them later. They have so much to say to you. But I posted a picture of Lac of the weather app that's at 61 degrees and cloudy and rainy as opposed to like feels like 105 the other day. Kidding. And a view from my window with, like, the raindrops on the window and this gray sky. And I just said something like, oh, Giles Terera at noon, like, allow me to set the mood from the universe. And I was just like, this is so perfect.

Giles Terera [00:10:14] So London. Yes. Here is as high as you'd imagine. It is great. It's really muggy and it's gray and windy and it has been all year. So we're kind of in the same same situation climate wise.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:10:26] Yeah. So the listeners are world wide. So some people have read this book because it came out two days ago, right? Yeah. So right now, when your episodes come out and I will update this in the intro outro and the, you know, the show notes or whatever, but currently like this minute, July 3rd, there is no North American release date that we know of yet. But it's in the works, right?

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Giles Terera [00:10:47] Yeah, it's in the works with I mean, you know, conversations about it. And and it will happen soon, but it's not there yet. But everyone else in the world can read it. And I've been getting really good feedback and tweets and whatever from different countries. So it's cool. It's happening.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:11:02] I mean, how does it feel now that it's out that you had this this feeling of is it too intimate and then you're not? Oh, I'd love that you once you're not theater friends, those are the people to ask. Yeah. And now that it's out, it's been it's been out for two days. What's what's it been like for you? How's it feel?

Giles Terera [00:11:16] It's crazy. I mean, we've been doing a whole lot of press and publicity and interviews and some interviews and radio stuff and live TV stuff. And so it's kind of been crazy. Plus, I've just finished filming I was filming a movie up until like last Friday, so it's been kind of crazy.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:11:33] Congrats.

Giles Terera [00:11:34] Thank you. So now it kind of feels it. It feels great. I mean, I went I listen, I went into the bookshop. I had to be in town. I lived just I used to live right in the middle of town. I used to live in Soho. And now I've just moved about three months ago. So I'm now like, you know, ten minutes on the tube. And I went to town and I went to the bookshop, the big bookshop here, Foyles, the sort of famous old bookshop. And and it was in there, it was stocked. And so I think that moment of like seeing your book displayed in an actual bookshop with a little stack of them and then, you know, one on the top was that made me feel, oh, shit, this is a real thing that is actually happening. I a moment that I've just sort of standing there looking at it. But for the most part, it's been like like I say, you know, those of us who've been in the show are, you know, here and in New York in I can speak for most people, it's a very specific experience. It's very special experience. And you want to you want to make sure that you're handling it right. So I was I thought, OK, is this is this the right thing to do? And I just think like it, like I mentioned before, this especially young people. I think for me, the thing which tipped it was like young people have been completely fucked. It like student drama students. People are training,

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people are coming out into the industry and there's no industry. People have been cut off halfway through the final year. And I spent a lot of the first ones I in it for one year. I spent a lot of my time when I was in Hamilton talking to young people, going, this is about you and it's about, you know, your version of what Hamilton is. Lin looked around him and he didn't see himself in the way he'd like to see himself. He didn't see the stories being told he'd like to hear, so he did it himself. So therefore, it's down to young people to kind of find your version of that. Your version of Hamilton. And I spent a lot of time saying that. So then last year during lockdown, I kind of thought, well, what can I do to contribute to that bit of the conversation? And I think therefore I said, you know what? If if if you know, you can see Hamilton, it's this amazing glossy, amazingly. Polished, immaculate, pristine thing, and even I felt that before I auditioned, I went to the showroom on Broadway and I've been sort of listening to the cast recording, trying to learn the songs. When I sat down in the Richard Rodgers and watched it, I was like it was like I had never heard it before. It's like I knew nothing about it. I was like, this thing is amazing. It's so perfectly formed. And I was totally moved by that. Like, how can someone come up with something which is so perfect? But then when cut to your own cut too, when you're in rehearsals and you're in the show and you realize that it's like any other great piece were going to have a great story, you roll your sleeves up, you go in, you try and get it right, you mess up, you fall over, you you go home, you cry a bit, you come back and you have another go. And bit by bit you get it together. So I thought, well, actually, if if I can share a bit of that with young people, especially young artists, so they can kind of say, yes, Hamilton, I love it. But actually I can see now how I can how it can be built as a thing from it, from from an individual's perspective. But there is I think my hope is that that is where the kind of inspiration will come from, seeing the experience from the perspective of someone who went through it. And then, you know, if you're not into musicals or if you're into if you're an athlete or if you're a doctor or whatever it is, whatever your vision of Hamilton is, my hope is that people might be inspired to kind of keep going with that thing.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:15:28] What was your experience like? Because Lin wrote the foreword, by the way.

Giles Terera [00:15:32] Yeah. To the book

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:15:32] Which is beautiful and must have been. I mean, what is that like to have his words in your book and how did you get there? My goodness.

Giles Terera [00:15:40] Ok well, you spoke about reading it two sittings, so I had to speak to my literary agent and she said, OK, well, let's let me have some conversations with some publishers. I said, OK, fine. And one of the first things I said to it was like, I need to be OK with this stuff. I need to make sure Tom is cool with it and I need to make sure Lin's. So I, I emailed them and said, Lin, you know, I've got this thing and I'd like to do this. And I said, OK, OK, that sounds great. I'd love to see the manuscript when you get when you're ready to share it. So the next day I emailed him the manuscript and about two and a half hours later he emailed back and. With talk about not being embarrassed, but, yeah, he was very emotional and he was very grateful and he said, this is great, that very, very grateful you're doing this. Let me know what I can do.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:16:41] I mean,.

Giles Terera [00:16:43] That was a moment. Yeah. Yeah, that was definitely a moment. So, yeah. So once once once I had his blessing, I thought, OK, this is cool. I'm I'm moving in the right direction with it. And then, you know, maybe a month or so later I said, do you remember when you said, you know, if there's anything you can do, how would you feel about the wedding? Yeah, absolutely. And then, of course, you know, a week later, it's amazing for what came back. And, yeah, it could have been more supportive and generous and gracious with it, as always, you know, I mean, you found that you know all about that.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:17:17] I do. I you know, I I'm trying to get better five and a half years into this thing of accepting that and saying, yes, I do, instead of downplaying that for 15 minutes. Because you said a nice thing to me.

Giles Terera [00:17:29] Yeah. Yeah. And then and that's I'm pretty sure that's a good thing that

Gillian Pensavalle [00:17:32] no time for it. And, you know, I know. I just feel like I think this happens in podcasting too.

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When when Lin came over the first time he said it, it's a very intimate medium because you're depending on how you're listening to it, it's right in your ears or your it's a it's just very intimate. So people feel like they are very connected to their favorite podcast or their favorite podcast host. And I, I feel like I know you because of this book. You did that with this and with your wonderful Hamilton and US podcast that was just like such a wonderful companion to this, like listening to those women, the Schuyler sisters in the front of house, women like. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. That was great. Yeah. So it's it's it was a limited series. Right. Like to come out.

Giles Terera [00:18:18] Yeah. We did six of with six of them which ended up being seven because we did, we did an episode where we got the Sons of Liberty back together.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:18:27] That's right. So I'm behind that one comes out next. Yeah. Yeah. Right.

Giles Terera [00:18:32] Yeah. So we, we spoke for like two and a half hours. We ended up being like two 1/2 hours. So we split into two parts. So we said, OK, we're going to end with that because the first half it's kind of cool because it's very funny and and then it gets quite emotional. So that will end with that. So the first half came out this week and then the next one is the final part of the whole series is out next week.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:18:53] How did you like one podcasting? How did you like podcasting? But also how did you like podcasting about this with your the Hamilton family that you speak so beautifully about in this book?

Giles Terera [00:19:04] Thanks. Well, we are WhatsApp group. It's kind of like a podcast anyway. Like we we're we're we're a family. So we speak all the time. We were in contact all the time. Jam Westman, last week we recorded this launch event for the book. OK, so Jan comes along. I'm sorry about multitenant. This comes along. And he asked me about if I had it right because his brothers Lin play the trumpet. So I said, fine, yeah, I have a trumpet. I'll teach myself a full lockdown. You just have a trumpet because I decided to teach myself that I was going to do a show and and it was it was necessary to play the trumpet in it. So I bought myself a trumpet. Look down happened. I was very thrilled because I could put the trumpet down because

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I was terrible trying to teach the trumpet. And it's also not the kind of instrument you can just practice in your flat. It's not like a guitar, something you can do quietly or a keyboard you can do with headphones. So this trumpet is right because I put it that's a... It's like, have you got a trumpet? I was like, yeah, actually I do have trumpet. His brother's learning to play the trumpet. So I said, OK, fine, I'll bring the bring the trumpet when we go and film this it. So I gave it to him and he texted me yesterday, messaged me say lost it Jam.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:20:19] You know what

Giles Terera [00:20:20] He left it on a train. And that's the kind of shit that like oh I'm fine here. It's all about sort of you know, it's like we see each other all the time. We spent most of the time with each other. What's up with this crazy and funny. So doing the podcast, by the way, at the end of that story hasn't happened because that will happen yesterday. So I don't know quite where the trumpet is or whether he's there, but I'm sure we'll find out at some point today.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:20:44] I mean, Jam.

Giles Terera [00:20:46] Yeah, but that's so jam. I mean, you know, that said

Gillian Pensavalle [00:20:49] I was going to say I know him a bit. I mean, I know him a little bit, but it feels it feels right. It feels like that that tracks.

Giles Terera [00:20:56] And I had to laugh when he sees me because I was like, yeah, that's that's kind of course, left on the train literally after I said goodbye to him from this film

Gillian Pensavalle [00:21:07] you just like put it down.

Giles Terera [00:21:08] you got on the train and forgot

Gillian Pensavalle [00:21:10] He's so he is so tall that he probably just like forgot to look down, to lean down all the way anyway.

Giles Terera [00:21:20] So that is kind of, you know, knowing that that's our relationship with our company. I was like, yeah,

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I can talk about that. I can do it. I can do a podcast. Yeah. No, I'm not I'm not, you know, not, but I can talk about what I'm passionate about and how passionate about, so and then I wanted to have like an episode where it wasn't just the actors. So that's why I had a vision when I was like, oh, we'll do it with an episode where we look at a moment in the show and see where people from different departments were. So from the wig and wardrobe department front of house & stage management. So it was it was cool. It was. I mean, you make it look easy. Podcasters make it really easy sound.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:22:03] Thank you and thank you for that.

Giles Terera [00:22:05] I mean, how many episodes you've done? Like a thousand episodes. Something. How many episodes do you have

Gillian Pensavalle [00:22:10] Five and a half years and around. I think you'll be around like three hundred.

Giles Terera [00:22:15] Right. That's insane.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:22:17] Its crazy. That's absolutely crazy. And I and I still have tech issues and I still don't know what exactly what I'm doing. The conversations I can have. It's the

Giles Terera [00:22:27] yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:22:27] It's just it's I learn every day. I learn every week. So I'm happy to keep learning.

Giles Terera [00:22:32] But, you know, it's like Hamilton is in that there's nothing for me. I've never experienced anything like it and everyone else in our company is the same. So in a way, it's nice to be able to come back into a room and share that again with people, because no one else really completely understands what it is. If we all went through. And maybe maybe that's why we've kind of state so because I think the world's perception of what being in Hamilton is very different from the actual experience, which again, is why I wanted to share this book because and for the general, because people are interested. People want to know who they are.

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:23:16] And I think you were you were talking to the Schuyler sisters about that and specifically about what you've been through together and the closeness that you all feel. And this is a family. And, you know, I was so struck by I because I just love honesty and transparency. And I, you know, because I am also your fellow Sagittarius. September fourteen.

Giles Terera [00:23:37] Yes. Wow. OK, wow. OK,

Gillian Pensavalle [00:23:40] Come on. Do you think I like that part. Also the fact that that your opening night was my birthday December 21st. Like come on.

Giles Terera [00:23:47] OK, yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:23:48] Great a reason. I feel so, so kindred with you for many reasons but that the honesty of you feeling like it is frustrating sometimes. And it is like there are moments where you say and I want everyone to read it. So I'm going to try to not again read your book back to you, but saying, you know, like I snapped a Jam and I didn't mean to. And it was because and you sort of as you're working through it in your journal, you're like, I can't believe that the feeling is jealousy, because he can sort of have fun in this moment and feel I'm so in it. And I think that is so it's it's vulnerable. And I'm not saying that as a throw away like. Yes, it is. It's all of those obvious things. But I say I've been saying this for ever on this podcast that like, I think it's so important that it's never like nothing is just puppies and rainbows all the time. It's frustrating and it's hard. And it's like it can you can love what you do. Right. And have it not like really b work. But I remember when Patrick Vassall was on, he was like, you know what, I don't subscribe to that. Like it's work all the time. And if you love what you do, great. But it's still always work. And sometimes we have bad days at work, like it's so true. And I just think it's it's like, you know, these these conversations I have with people really are wonderful. And talking about, like the bond you have with someone when you walk in the room or a sister or a son of liberty or just another ensemble that just everyone in the room. But like that. Because because that's true. The other side is also true that there is frustrating moments and you need a break and you need to be I don't know, like and I just I love that you so openly share that

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Giles Terera [00:25:23] because I wanted to sort of monitor and just keep a check on how I was doing. I think part of now you've said that I can go. Actually, part of my experience going into rehearsals was not only the technical aspects and what I've got to do and the score and that the track, the character, but also how I'm coping with being in this thing called Hamilton, which for the last I think I was cast in December and then we started rehearsals in October and before my my audition process was like six months. So it's been a year and a half over a year since I've been preparing for this thing. And then in the like, I don't know, three or four months before we opened, you have all the press stuff, the marketing stuff. It's on the busses. It's on the tubes. It's everywhere. And people start talking about it. So I was aware, OK, there's two things. Just a character. And the work that I've got to do, and there's also Giles in Hamilton, which I'm not, which I'm not, I'm not I'm not someone who's particularly a lot of store on the kind of big, glamorous, shopin side of things I'm about. Like, the work is what I now have to control the rest of it. I don't know what to do about it. So for me, it was OK. Part of this is also going to be just keeping a check on where you are in sort of what I call plan Hamilton note. So I think all of that stuff with like me being a bit frazzled, of me being a bit vulnerable or me just checking where I am personality wise, that was also part of the journey, really, just to keep in I just to keep track of what I was feeling and where I was. Tommy said something really interesting was that I was mentioning to him how how I appreciated how funny it was, because to me, like in rehearsals is like the funniest guy. You'd be sort of doing something. And then all of a sudden from your show, you hear, hello, how are you doing? How's it going? What do you think of it? How are you? How you feeling? And then he'll say something funny and you just laugh and it and it sort of relaxes you a bit. And he was saying, you know, I could see Giles in rehearsals and you have a lot to do. And the way that I work and my my my kind of work ethic is can be quite intense. And he he was very mindful that you can't be in that all the time and be doing your work. So it is, as you say, about enjoying it and and having fun and that kind of release as well as the really difficult work. So for me, writing down how I was feeling and where I was on this particular day and this particular moment was actually as much as writing down where I needed to be in my show or for sure what was going on. So again, I don't know if I if I'd intended to publish it, I think it

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would have been completely different, a different thing, and maybe I would have sent it myself. But as it turns out, some of the demands of you, everything you've got. So it was the kind of bits where you stumble in and the frailties that you have as well as your strengths, I think. And I had lots of those days. I mean, you know, I hadn't realized quite how much dancing there was. So I was like, OK, OK, OK, alright. So when I saw the show, I was OK then all the time and I was just about to audition for the show. I sort of a couple of days I was about to audition, so it was a lot to sort of take in. And I remember coming away from and going, OK, know, obviously it's sort of front center a lot of the time. And he said all the time. But I hadn't quite realized that he's in like, how much does he does? I mean, he's a great dancer. So I guess it ended up being a lot of input. And for me, that was what I was really those are the moments I struggled because, you know, with with most shows, you kind of get the scenes that you're not in or the numbers that you're not in, which is usually far more than you are in. Whereas with but you're in all of them the whole time. So from ten o'clock till six pm, I was in everything. So there were those moments where I could go. Right, let me just go over what we did in the right hand man or whatever. So it was that was where I was like, OK, how do I manage my time here? Because you go home and you're tired and you sort of have to look away the next morning. It's hard, but the difficulties are what make it more rewarding when you get there, I think.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:30:20] Yeah, I have to tell you about you talk so much about Steph Klem. Yeah. And she's she's such a powerhouse. But this I mean, I Giles, I was I mean, laughing arguably uncontrollably. My husband was like, what are you laughing at? And there's a moment and I'm not going to I'm going to try not to ruin it because it's to read it. And like the and you're also a phenomenal writer. Did you write any more in this context or is this actually like every word and this is what you wrote in that journal or did you add to it?

Giles Terera [00:30:53] I added the introduction and the and the like and outro because I kept the journal throughout the whole year. But we don't want to do it all year. So I kind of tidy up where we were at the end. And there was a few things I took out. There was one or two entries I took up.

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:31:06] But you didn't like add stuff or context sort to tie things together. Like the words I'm reading now are the words that you wrote regularly in your. Yeah, that's Giles. You're an incredible writer.

Giles Terera [00:31:16] Thank you. I mean, there were moments where my my publisher, my editor said, OK, well, we don't know who such and such is. So you're going to have to know when you're talking about different people. But for the most part, yeah, that's that's that is what it is

Gillian Pensavalle [00:31:29] Well, it makes it you're also absolutely hilarious because you're talking about this. It's on page 81, everyone, my notes. But it is about you working on the turntable for the first time. The words the term seasick goose is involved. It is. So every sentence made me laugh more than the last. And I just thought it was so funny that you were just like, I'm just you were trying to not I think you described, like, you know, here's Burr trying not to, like, run everyone over, like, their bowling pins and just having trouble finding your footing, which I hear about all the time, but like to hear like stuff look up and be like uhhh Burr. What was...

Gillian Pensavalle [00:32:14] I can see Steph just asking like so what seasick goose. So not the choreo

Giles Terera [00:32:23] No exactly.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:32:25] I mean I was I mean tears running down.

Giles Terera [00:32:30] I put Stephanie so much and I don't know what she is very, very patient. That's to say that she's very, very patient because

Gillian Pensavalle [00:32:36] because she's she's excellent at her job.

Giles Terera [00:32:38] She's excellent. But the thing was, I felt bad because I'm like Steph, as we all know, has the whole thing in her brain. If you think that everyone does it every single moment in that show

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:32:51] Times like five, depending on the production, because the measurements of the stages change just because she knows everything in the West End, does it make it the same everything she knows on Broadway? Just a reminder for everyone.

Giles Terera [00:33:01] Exactly, because in our theater there was no crossover backstage, so certain people's entrances and exits had to be different and change around things are slightly different. So as you say, that makes even worse, having like five different versions, which only just slightly different. I have no idea how she did that.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:33:16] Genius.

Giles Terera [00:33:17] So, yeah, I always felt like when I would be messing up my pitch, which is not you know, I'm not one to one of my brothers and sisters doing Room where it happend or Right Hand Man or Yorktown dancebreak

Gillian Pensavalle [00:33:32] You you were you were just walking.

Giles Terera [00:33:36] Im just walking.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:33:36] That, like, I wouldn't be able to do it either. Like, Burr is a dream role. There's no way I'm or, as you mentioned, walking up the stairs backwards for what it's like. That's impossible. So I'm not saying that lightly. I'm just for the sake of the contest. You're just watching that. But the turntable. But there's so much happening. So you're never just walking.

Giles Terera [00:33:59] Yeah, never just walk. But, you know, Steph, the I think the we did a singing through. We did two weeks of learning the score with Lac and then we did. And then we moved upstairs to the to the main rehearsal room. And on that sing through on the on the Saturday before we about to leave and on the Monday upstairs, Steph did say, you know, you will you will cry probably and you will, you will run, run, run out of the building and then your head will explode and then you'll get it. And then at the end of next week, your head will explode again when we do more and then you will do the second half. So she prepared us for that. So I think know she'd seen it, she'd

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been through it so she she could be patient. But for me, I was just like, how the fuck am I going to get this on? How am I ever going to have to do this? And when am I going to get. I'm good if I can get the time to practice. So I'll go home between now and then. The next time I'll I'll have it done. Whereas with this show, there was no time for that. It was no time to kind of go and do stuff. But in the end there was. But, you know, it was. Yeah, it was. We got it. You got to in the end, I knew I knew that ultimately I would get in without knocking anyone else on stage. But it's kind of frustrating in the moment where I want to get it now.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:35:20] Right, right. Right.

Giles Terera [00:35:21] Because I think Steph been through that and so they won't tell me it's OK. Like you're going crazy now and you're in your head now, but it'll be fine by the time we get to doing run through.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:35:33] There are so many Tommy moments in this book that and listening to him on your podcast because he was the first episode of your podcast. And before he came over, Alex Lacamoire told me the thing about Tommy is that there are a million things about him. But not only does he listen and you say this, you know, he asks questions and he directs by stealth because he knows he doesn't talk over anyone and he knows what to say. And you say all these beautiful, like, true things about Tommy that I have experienced in my own way and hearing him say things to you on your podcast felt like such a time warp to me because of he said it to me in my own and, you know, whatever was relevant to us in that moment. But, you know, saying things to you, like, you know, you're here because of you. There's something so wonderful about Tommy and having those conversations with him that you write about so perfectly and so beautifully. And there's this one moment in particular where I was like. Oh, my God, it's when he's like, Hey, buddy, how's it going? And you're like, I'm fine I guess, but like I'm not there yet. And he goes, Well of course you're not. It's the end of week two. You have, like, weeks to go. Like, give me a break.

Giles Terera [00:36:42] Yeah. Yeah,.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:36:43] You could hear it, like, give me a break. And it's so Tommy. And like he said, he says that idea

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constantly. He said it to me like, don't expect to be at week five, at week two. And I for him, like I repeat that shit to myself, like a mantra like I don't know why it's the human condition. Tommy can do it, but it's like it's very hard to put that into practice. And he says it like it's the easiest thing. And when he says it, it is oddly reassuring, if not total envy inducing, that that's how he lives. Yeah, so assuredly. But these glimpses into what it's like to get that reassurance to work hard and like, you know, to have stuff, say or what's going on there, but also you'll get there. Yeah. But today, I got to ask you what's going on there? And this this idea of not trying to be at week five, at week two, like it's so important for all of us to remember, no matter what you're doing in your life.

Giles Terera [00:37:40] Yeah. Yeah. I mean, I don't know quite how he gets that and where that comes from, but he's yeah, he's he's got it. And in a way, I think because it was such a long time between my audition, which was in late July and then my final, which is in December, and then we started rehearsals in October. And I initially thought that that they weren't interested in me at all for the because they were like six months between my meeting, he and Tommy and Lac in New York and then the final in December. I didn't hear anything. It wasn't like it was back and forth all the time and nothing. So by the time I got to rehearsals and I'd managed to sit down and talk with Tommy and we took along, I realized, oh, no, no, he is able to see things in people. And you as a performer, as a person, that is nothing to do with second guessing of how do I get it right and what do they want to hear and am I going to be good enough? It's just looking up at the actual picture. So by the time I got to rehearsals, I could appreciate that a bit more so that when we were in rehearsals and he would say, listen, you know, you're not there yet, don't worry about it, just do what you can do. I could I could hear that. I mean, I didn't hear it one hundred percent because I'm still in there, guy. I mean, one day I went to him and I was like, listen, I just said what I said to you. I'm not having the time to to sort of go over stuff. And I'm struggling with any sort of cable. You know, it's fine. We'll we'll work it out. We'll find a way. And, um, and I'm not actually sure that was we didn't speak about any more, but from that moment on, everything was slightly more manageable. I don't know how he does it. That's what I mean. But still, it's very difficult to talk and talking about him. But when he I mean, you know, he will. But I say to him all the

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time, it's like if it wasn't for him, I wouldn't have been able to do it. And he has that ability. And I think I wish I had that more. But I'm learning a lot about that. Just being where you are,

Gillian Pensavalle [00:40:03] Just be where you are. Oh, my God. Yes. And also that he'll say, you know, you're here because of you, but he no, he knew in that in that room and Alex did and stuff did and Lin did. And Andy and everyone else that you'll get to week five one week five happens.

Giles Terera [00:40:16] Exactly.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:40:17] They they all they they trust you more than you trust yourself, which is beautiful and annoying because at the moment you're like I'm stuff I'm running. It's everybody, what are you talking about.

Giles Terera [00:40:29] But he you know, I also think that Tom has this thing where when we met, first of all, he was very interested in like who I was and and what my my family were and what my parents thought about what I did. And and I noticed quite quickly in the experience, the more time I spent with him and they're going into rehearsals, that for him it's very, very important what we as people, as artists bring into the room, usually with a show. In my experience over here, it is it's not really about what you bring to it. The piece has been written. This is a score. It's the choreography. That's it. You you've got to do that. Whereas Tommy was saying then that this is about as much of what you bring into that space, what you bring into that stage. So when he turned and said to me. You are here because of you. It was like a switch off that bit of yourself. Just be trying to second guess what we want to hear what the creatives want, how it's best to get it right. Perfect. It's as much about you. What do you feel about liberty? What do you feel about freedom? What do you feel about legacy? What do you feel about friendship? And what do you feel about betrayal, ambition, all of those things? And so it was to be constantly reminded of that, because if I took the young performance, I say, let me see, Hamilton. There's no in this no White House set. There's no battlefield set. You have one space and you have some furniture, you have some tables, And that's it. And it's about the people who are performing at the storytellers are performing and what they're bringing to it. So and I remember like saying I can't

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remember what it was. It was maybe what it would have been the time. So I was watching from the side of the restaurant and he was talking to the company about that sequence. And I remember him saying and it really struck me, he was saying, like, when that bullet is coming towards you, you're a soldier, you're that field. When that bullet is coming toward you, you have to see it. You have to see the person who's firing it. You have to see their eyes. You've got to see that look in their eyes and you have to see that really coming towards you. And if you do, then we the audience will get everything we need to know. We'll see all of it. We'll see the battlefield, see the movie, we'll see the guns, will see the walls and we'll see all of that, see the ships. And that really struck me because that's exactly what the show is about. It never ceases to amaze me at the end of that show when we're in the duel. And the idea that bullet that comes across the stage to Alexander and I always try to remember, like I saw the bullet every single night, every single night, I saw a physical bullet. There's no bullet that to me, that's the magic of Hamilton. So when Tom is talking about it, you're here because of you. I think it's like what we're investing and what we bring to the stage, what we bring to those characters and those experiences. So I try to I always try to hang on to that, because if that's not there, then the audience are not going to get the story that we're trying to tell. I think so. Again, that's you know, that's that's to me. And that's Lin then that's Blank. And everyone else in it.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:44:14] Yeah. Speaking of people who would hate us saying nice things about them, Chris Jackson, I am wearing my, I believe in Chris Jackson shirt

Giles Terera [00:44:22] I was going to say. Yeah

Gillian Pensavalle [00:44:23] He's featured in your book when he came to in your journal. I'm sorry, I keep calling it. It's about a book that I'm holding, but it really is a though. But it's like. Yeah, because when he came to see the show and I was it wasn't a it was a run through, I think he watched it. And, you know, he's he you spoke to him on your podcast too. And, you know, you talked a lot about that idea that Tommy says and you know, people say you're never the same. People are never going to have the same experience in the same room again. And talking about Freestyle Love Supreme and we were both at opening night of FLS and we didn't meet.

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Giles Terera [00:44:57] We didn't meet. How did that happen?

Gillian Pensavalle [00:44:59] How did that happen? I blame Chris Jackson. I believe in Chris Jackson, but I blame him for this.

Giles Terera [00:45:04] OK, so you remember that moment. You remember that moment that I was talking about on the podcast of the Truth where Chris Jackson, of course.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:45:11] Yeah. So so the listeners know. So in fls they do. True, which is like a fan favorite of Fls. It's beautiful. And at the audience, Anthony or whoever's the mic one picks the word and there are three or four people and they freestyle about this word and it's called true. And they say everything you're about to hear is true. And this is when we have a very I mean, I think the whole show is intimate and raw and real because it's freestyle and because the people on stage are just so true, no pun intended and just so honest. And Tommy's at the helm of it and Lin and all these amazing people. But CJack opening night. Yeah. I mean, you take it because you just you spoke to him more about it more recently than I did.

Giles Terera [00:45:50] Yeah. I mean, Chris and you know, it's lots of there's lots of humor. People find lots of great rhymes and lots of great stuff. And it's humor. And I when we got to Chris's, it was just it just struck me. He was he started talking about his father and his and I I'm sure it was forgiveness because I remember him mentioning forgiveness during and and he just went in. He went into it and got it. Got very emotional very quickly. One of those moments where, you know, we've had, you know, five, ten minutes of lots of lots and lots of energy, lots of noise from the audience. And all of a sudden you could hear a pin drop. As he went into this thing and I was just really blown away by it in the same way that I had been the last time I saw him on stage, which is in Hamilton, was when I saw that show he was still in it. And again, struck by an artist who or a person before an artist, a person who's just literally going to stand on that stage and have an absolutely authentic relationship with the story he's telling of the words he's telling no matter what. That's that's all there is. And I remember being really inspired by that when I saw Hamilton way before rehearsals, when I auditioned. And I thought, yes, that's that's that's what I want to do. That's that's the task to have

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is as as honest a relationship with the material as as Krystal. At that time I saw him and then when I saw him every step of the previous attack in the same way it was and I was I got emotional. What if he said I got emotional because he kind of got to a point where he could have stopped and passed the thing on or whatever, and he went. He kept going and he kept going and he kept going. And then I was there's tears coming down my face and I sat next to me and I get the OK. And it was it was so powerful, so powerful that yeah. I mean, for me is it doesn't really get any better than that. So so when he came into rehearsals, having seen him in Hamilton, that for me was apart from everyone just being absolutely crazy because Chris Jackson's in the room. But for the fact that I'd seen him and what it meant to me personally that he was there. And then, of course, he was so cool. Obi plays Washington here. And I don't know how Obi did it, Obi was like as cool as a cucumber? I would have. You know, if Leslie's been, I don't think I'd run out the window. But Chris was Chris was so Chris was so cool and so kind of quietly supportive and just encouraging. You could feel him. Go. Come on, let's go. Let's go. You can do this. You can do this. You've got this. You've got this. You got this. And that was all there was in the room. That's all he brought in. And in a way, the fact that it's kind of General Washington, it's sat there.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:48:54] Right.

Giles Terera [00:48:54] Kind of giving us his kind of silent, tacit approval was so powerful. And everyone that you could feel that run through everyone just went up a gear. And I think it was it was a special moment to have one of the original company and have had that moment with us, I think gave us a lot as a company, that kind of endorsement. Yeah, very special.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:49:18] And he he admitted a little bit, which I was happy to hear on your podcast, that he does. He's like, you know, I don't consider myself a minister, but I mean, what CJack brings people to church, whether you want to go or not. Like he just he has this leadership role and this he changes the vibe in the best way possible. Like you were just saying, everyone goes up a gear. Is he? He does lead for lack of a better term by stealth.

Giles Terera [00:49:40] Yeah.

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:49:41] Like Tommy directs.

Giles Terera [00:49:42] Yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:49:42] I mean, when I had my my five year anniversary party, we had like a Zoom party with the Patreon Peep. And I told people I didn't tell the Patreon Peep that I was doing this, but I told people who had been on the podcast, do you want to drop in on Zoom? Like that's what we're doing and there's no pressure, but I'm kind of proud of it. It's been five years and if you want to stop by, like, that's cool. And so many people did and Lac was there and he answered so many questions, but CJack came and like it turned into people. He was like everyone was so generous with their time taking questions from the Patreon Peeps like even though they've already done that on their episodes, like they were just happy to be there and be part of the party. CJack was just saying this like incredible. I mean, because this was in January. So we were still, you know, it was like we were about to hit a year of the pandemic. And he just went said all this beautiful. I mean I mean, the whole vibe changed and we kicked it up a gear, not in performing, but listening and being as present as possible, because Chris Jackson was here talking about the the the power of community and theater and the arts and just all this stuff. And then he was like, all right, what's next? Like, you know, Lac are we fucking around? Like, well, we just had we we're like, OK, like every for like weeks after the peeps were like, do you remember when Chris like, I was in I showed up to a party and then went to church and then the church turned into a party again.

Giles Terera [00:51:01] Yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:51:02] It was all like I'd CJack's direction. It was incredible. Yeah.

Giles Terera [00:51:06] Very, very special. Very special.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:51:13] OK, breaking news, everyone, the trumpet has been found, I repeat, the trumpet has been found. Giles texted me like two days after we recorded telling me the good news. And let's just say after a lot of chaos, the lost and found came through, as did Jam. Of course. All right. Next week, I'll be back with Giles to talk more about his journey with

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Hamilton being in the room with Tommy and Alex and Stephanie Klemons, how he found his footing in the role of Burr, his artistic influences that he mentions in the book and so much more. If you haven't bought the book yet, you can find everything you need to know at HamiltonandME.COM, including what local stores will ship internationally. By the way, I just checked. So until next week, stay safe. Stay healthy. Thanks so much for listening. I love you. I'm G. Pen

[00:52:30] 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](https://www.patreon.com/thehamilcast), 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](http://thehamilcast.com) for transcripts, episodes and more. You can see what's going on with Mike. You know Mike at [Michael Paul Smith dot net](http://MichaelPaulSmith.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