

# THE HAMILCAST

## EPISODE 293 JORDANA GROLNICK PART 1 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 am Gillian and today long overdue, I'm here with my friend Jordana Grolnick. Hi. Hey, how are you?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:00:30] I'm doing great. How are you doing?

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:00:31] You know better that you are here. And I mean that sincerely.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:00:35] Well, thanks.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:00:36] You're welcome. Before we get started, can you please tell me your pronouns?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:00:41] She her hers.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:00:42] Thank you. You are a swing in the And Peggy Company of Hamilton.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:00:46] That's true.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:00:47] You also part of the national tour of Cinderella.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:00:50] Also true.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:00:50] Tell me if any of these things are false regional work and shows like a chorus line.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:00:55] true.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:00:55] On the town.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:00:56] True.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:00:56] Oliver.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:00:56] True.

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**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:00:57] Hunchback of Notre Dame.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:00:58] True

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:00:59] Thoroughly modern Millie.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:01:00] True.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:01:00] And we met at the Hamilton Holiday Party in 2018.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:01:03] True.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:01:07] And then hung out in Puerto Rico in 2019.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:01:08] True. Unless it was a dream.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:01:10] I mean, it feels like it. I can't quite place it. But how are you doing, my dear friend? Where are you this minute?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:01:16] This minute I'm in Sacramento, California, on a bed in an Airbnb.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:01:23] The that you share with friend of the Pod, Ashley De la Rosa, is that correct?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:01:27] Absolutely, Rosa. I'm using her microphone. I'm using her headphones. OK, great. Actually, I lean on her.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:01:33] This episode of The Hamilcast Brought to you by Ashley Dela Rosa.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:01:36] By ADLR

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:01:39] Well, let's tell the people how we met because it was really a really nice thing for me to meet you at the Hamilton Party in 2018. How about that number

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**Jordana Grolnick** [00:01:49] Oh my God, it was so long ago.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:01:50] I was like, what?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:01:51] We met. Well, I can't remember the exact way it happened, but I had listened to your voice for hours and hours and hours.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:02:02] I'm so sorry.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:02:03] No, it was. The millions of subscribers will will say otherwise, but I was like obsessed with the Hamilcast when I was auditioning and in bootcamp for Hamilton. So I I knew exactly who you were. And I don't know, did did someone introduce us or like, did I? I don't remember how it exactly happened.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:02:28] First of all, that is all very nice to say. I'm sure my one subscriber Tommy Kail is thrilled. No, we met. I believe it was Holli Campbell who introduced us or we. I was talking to Holli and you came over and said, Hi, but you were so nice. I was just drawn to you immediately. But you said nice things about the podcast, which is wonderful, but it's not why I was drawn to you. We just like, sat and hung out for a little, and I was. It was just look at twenty eighteen, especially. I still have imposter syndrome any every day, but like the fact that someone related to Hamilton was like, Hey, sit with us. I was like, Wait, what? So it was really like a meaningful and sweet to meet you as well. And then that was, you know, December 2018. And by January 2019, we were in Puerto Rico. You were in Puerto Rico, and then I came with Mike and you killed it. And then we like hung out. You like, came to our hotel. Yeah, we like hung out with it. We like, had a cocktail time.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:03:25] Just so nice.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:03:26] Does that sound creepy? The way I describe it, you can't. I mean, I just think it was fun.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:03:30] Other people might feel that way, but we know the truth that it wasn't.

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**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:03:34] That's on them.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:03:35] Yeah, no, I I. It was like it was a it was a great resource for me to feel like I was like connected to the Hamilton world in a way before I was even employed by them. So. So, yeah, thank you for doing what you're doing because it's you. It's so important. The document, a historian.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:03:54] Oh boy, you know I'd rather historian than journalists sometimes CJack calls me a journalist and I'm like, I'm so not. Oh, don't use that word. So tell me how you have been over the last. You know, it's been a little a bit of a time for all of us. Just tell me, like how you are, I want to check in with you.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:04:14] Oh man. How have I been? It can be one word, but I am doing great right now. I'm so happy that I'm randomly in Sacramento doing Hamilton again. I mean, since we last spoke, so much has happened. I spent a year and sitting in San Francisco and then a year and a half, not in San Francisco, living through the global pandemic, and then they got a nice call to be like, Come back to work. And we all, yeah, it's just, I don't know. I feel it feels crazy some days, like walking into the theater. It's. Easy to forget how how much we wanted, only that just to be able to walk into the theater again. So, yeah. I'm I'm super I mean, this is a word that's so overused, but it's a useful word in the English language, and it's grateful. I'm so grateful to just get to do this again because we didn't.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:05:32] Yeah, when that word is used sincerely, like you're using it, there's no such thing as overusing that word when you mean it like you do. Yeah, that can be like hashtag grateful. But no, not how you're

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:05:44] Booked and blessed

**Speaker 1** [00:05:46] But oh god, you're such.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:05:51] You're an adventurer. You have all these all of these gorgeous photos on your Instagram of just traveling and being in nature and in the desert and just all of

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the camping and all of this gorgeous these gorgeous images. Oh my god, thank you.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:06:07] I have very little to do with it. I just point a camera at it. Yeah, yeah, that's why I'm from Colorado. So and during the pandemic when when it happened on March 11th and we shut down in a matter of hours, it was sort of a no brainer for me to go home to my parents. And because I had an apartment in San Francisco, I didn't have an apartment in New York anymore, but it really helps people in San Francisco, besides my classmates and everyone else kind of slept. So I'm in Colorado and bought a bunch of gear, you know, of like things that people in Colorado own and started going out. I had a lot of

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:06:52] sleeping bags and stuff

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:06:53] Yeah, I got a big backpacking backpack. I got some hiking, some poles to help your knees when you're walking uphill and downhill skis and like, thanks unemployment.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:07:11] Yeah, right?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:07:12] Yeah. So that was like what brought me a lot of joy and peace and just sanity during the insanity. Yeah, yeah. That's what I'm like trying to keep. Keep going while I'm back to work and on tour and in different places where we can adventure and do all the amazing things that are in this in this world.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:07:35] So you're from Colorado, you know the drill. You know what? I'm going to ask you. I want to hear your whole entire story, the whole Jordana story, like how did you get from Colorado to acting in New York, acting at all? And then that will lead to the Hamilton ness of it all. But I want to talk about you and like how you you got here.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:07:53] I also want to talk about me. So this is great. Well, I was born and so that was the first thing. And then and I'm grateful for that and Yeah, I grew up in Colorado. My mom put me in dance class. I stayed in dance class.

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I was obsessed with it, and I I slowly became also obsessed with singing and went to a performing arts camp in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. Shout out to Perry Mansfield. And I then fell in love with the musical theater of it all and then got really deeply obsessed with Michigan's musical theater program, which was going through like. There was a lot of YouTubing happening when I was a high schooler, so I was just like on the Michigan Musical Theater YouTube page all the time living vicariously and then. I went to school for musical theater, decided I wanted to do that, got into Michigan, went to Michigan, loved it there. We were not allowed to put things on the internet while I was there, which was a fun thing.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:09:17] Why?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:09:18] It was a philosophy that the chair of our program had that we were in an educational program, so we should keep. It shouldn't be about the outward, performative part of it, the the like selling yourself kind of because you do that when you graduate. So this was like a learning kind of bubble. which I really appreciate that actually after the fact, there's enough of there is enough of the me, me, me performance of it all in the world. So, yeah, I went to Michigan for musical theater. I graduated. Thank God and and moved to New York and sort of just like the launching pad, you just bounce from one place to another and was sort of the obvious choice for me and I move to New York and and started doing it. It was very I was lucky to get Cinderella pretty, pretty quickly after graduation. So then I left New York and traveled the country doing the Cinderella waltz. Pretty much. And yeah, the rest is history. I just kind of,

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:10:32] yeah, what's interesting and almost 300 episodes of this thing is that I talked to so many people who are really cool and really interesting, and hardly any of you know that you're really cool and really interesting. So like I said, you're just like, Well, I was in dance class, and then I was like, Do you know how many people want to like, go to start as a kid dancing and then go to a school that that helps you realize how to be amazing at it and then go to New York and book stuff? And everyone's like, Yeah, well, you know, the rest is history, and I'm like, You people have no idea.

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**Jordana Grolnick** [00:11:08] I mean, I was 100 percent that person. And I also like, still am that person who was like, obsessed with other people's careers and lives too. Like, I don't know, I totally get that, and it is a good reminder to be like, it is not just like simple, even though it felt like everything that you know, every decision you make in your own life just feels right for you at the time. But it is hard to like, zoom out and be like, Whoa, I really was crazy when you do zoom out. So, yeah, yeah, I mean, lots of lots of hours put in to doing the thing. It's just like the the Spark Notes version is like I was here, then I was there and then I was here. I'm in Sacramento, right?

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:11:54] And then I woke up in Sacramento, and that's the end of that.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:11:57] Let's talk about the Hamilton ness of it all, then, because I love hearing when people discovered it. Are you one of those people who you thought, I want to be in it, so I can't listen to it because it means too much? Were you a fan of the show and then auditioned for it? Like, what is your journey with Hamilton pre audition, even?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:12:19] Yeah. When I was on tour with Cinderella, I took maybe a weekend or a week or we had a layoff, I think, which for those who don't know, it's like when you're touring, you're kind of our go go going. It's not like you go to one city and then you go home like you have a whole schedule for as long as the tour is in existence. And sometimes they don't book a week for the show. So you get to go back to your point of origin, which for me was Newark. So I happened to be in New York. Oh God, it was the summer of 2015 pre. It was probably August pre pre soundtrack coming out. And I had heard about the show and I was like, Okay, I don't really know. I wasn't very good about keeping up with the current events like beyond Playbill.com too much. And so I knew it was a thing and it was like hyped. And I happened to be on Facebook. Remember Facebook when people were like, This is let's let's keep in touch with people on this place. And one of the kids I went to school with posted that he had an extra ticket to Hamilton. Eighty dollars

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in the mezzanine, like this is the pre a lot of things happening, like it had just opened.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:13:36] I was going to say this is like August 2015 is when it arrived on Broadway from the public. So this is like early, early, early.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:13:45] Yeah, yeah. So I was like, \$80? done. I'm doing it and I happened to nab it. I happened to be on Facebook at the right time. Right place, right time.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:13:55] Were you really friends with this person or was it one of those things where it's like I can sit next to them quietly in the theater for two and a half hours for the sake of Hamilton?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:14:02] Well, he wasn't going to be there. He was doing something else. It was his family who's from, like, New Jersey or something. Trevor Kerr bless his heart. He's a big part of my Hamilton journey. Yeah. And so I sat next to Trevor Kerr's family and we watched the show together and I was insanely lost. I was so lost. I like I hadn't who up to like my history. I remembered what had gone on, and I was just like trying to follow the rap, but I could not take my eyes off of Betsy Struxness. Oh yeah. And we don't know each other, but I'm a huge fan because I was like, Oh my God. Like, I was obsessed with her as a dancer and she's like, Fuckin jacked. Act in Hollywood. Oh my God, she's got broad shoulders like me, like I loved it. So I I was obsessed with her and I just I couldn't stop watching the dancing and the choreography. I was mesmerized and I had no idea really what was going on, but I was. I just could not pinpoint what it was about the show. So then the soundtrack came out. I was in East Lansing, Michigan, and I was I listen to it front to back. Every day we were all obsessed with it and the Cinderella dressing room and then, oh, I love Cinderella in twenty sixteen. In the winter time, and I got back to New York and I got an audition for Hamilton. And so that began my like an audition journey, and it was definitely like I saw the show and I there were, you know, I knew that the casting was people of all colors and creeds and amazing things. And you know, you look at the rooms and musical theater and just rooms, and there are a lot of people who look like me, who are



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Caucasian females. And so I was like, OK, my odds are pretty low of getting in the show, but I'm going to go, I'm obsessed with this work and the choreography. And so I went and I just remember loving doing that movement. And loving the intention behind it, I just thought it was like, so the audition itself is so different than any other typical audition, like usually it's you're not it's not imbued with meaning from the get like, you know. I remember Steph Klemons teaching it and and there being. Like dig deep importance behind everything we were doing, and I was just like, this is this is what I want to be doing forever and ever like. Musical theater can no longer exist any other way in my brain, like something's shifted. So, yeah,

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:17:13] can I ask you something? Yeah, I want to ask, You want the end? But first about Andy and Steph I was just talking to, I think it was Stevenson from the West End company about how when they teach the choreography, it's not in counts. It's on the lyric. And I've seen videos of them teaching before, like just, you know, stuff that's out there. Press that they've done. And I'm like, Oh my God, it hit me like, I knew it. But then talking about it where it's like, I knew it was all about the intention. I knew that. But it's like, maybe they count in. But when they're teaching the Koryo, it's the words so like, it does make so much sense, like the lyrics. They just it's like Shakespeare. It's just like, Yep, then you're going to go, Yeah. And so even though it's mind-blowing, like, there's this flow to it. And I'm saying this not as a dancer at all. So please correct me. But to be like, Nope, that intention makes sense. And it I think maybe it would help you learn it and also feel it if it's like, Nope, this lyric means this or this lyric means this to Andy, and it means this to me. And so I'm doing this move

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:18:17] exactly like you said it with Shakespeare. I mean, it's exactly that. It's sort of it's stands in the same way. And I think that's why you can watch the show, like without ever having listened to the soundtrack or knowing what's going on and understand what's going on. Because the movement scans with the lyric, which scans with the the melody and the beat, like it's all going towards the same intention. And it's yeah, I mean, that's why it's brilliant.

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**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:18:49] And my question for you was, what kind of did you focus on a particular style of dance when you were studying?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:18:55] Yeah. I mean, I grew up like in a really crunchy granola modern studio where it was like, OK, I can make up your own dance in the woods.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:19:05] You're a tree, you're a tree

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:19:07] Which is a lot of who I am today. But also at a certain point, I was like, I can't really get anywhere with this. So then I really like focus on ballet. I did a lot of the like typical ballet stuff and which I'm like would never trade for anything but. In my ballet studio, there was one guy named, Larry Southall, who had come teach like hip hop fundamentals. So I did that as well. And like, I'm so grateful to that man for teaching me what pop and a Lac is. And like the boogaloo and all of those things that, like Longmont, Colorado, did not really have much of that back in the day. So. So yeah, I got a little little of that. And then musical theater styles, jazz all up top, all of that. When I went to school, more more of that. That was sort of my dance journey.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:20:08] I was just curious what you were really focused on or really sort of in love with before you met Andy's way of doing. You know what I mean? Like?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:20:16] Yeah, I mean, the jazz of it all is like my favorite place to live, and I think him too. Like he it. It's it's it's it's the Fosse. Anything Fosse inspired and that movement feels feels the best. But.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:20:32] Yeah. So you're there, you're in love with Betsy Struxness, of course. Yeah, you're falling in love with the movement and the show and everything next to your friends, family. How did they like it? Did they have a nice time?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:20:46] I think so.

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**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:20:47] Yeah, yeah. You're like not focused on them at all.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:20:49] We didn't go out to dinner after I was just like, I mean,

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:20:53] yeah, like leaving the show for the first time and just having these conversations with yourself on the way home or whatever. Like, didn't you just want to talk about it to anyone and everyone?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:21:03] Well, I didn't understand what had happened. You know what I mean? Like, I didn't. I was not quite following the plot. Like, I can't remember knowing what was going on, which is a little embarrassing. But also, I know that I'm not alone in that. I'm not alone at all. Oh my God. When I was in the boot camp, I was at the show and this or maybe it was when I was rehearsing for four and Peggy. But whatever this woman came up to us, we were standing room in the back. And she came up to the group of us who were there from rehearsals and was like, You guys seem like, you know, this show? My husband and I spent so much money on these tickets and and we're so lost like, we don't know what's going on. Can you just? Yeah. Is it going to get better? Like, we spent so much money and I was like, Oh, I really feel for you, baby. Like, she was like an older white lady. I was like, You know?

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:22:04] You know, I just feel it, lady. Just like, let let it go.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:22:09] Yeah, it is hard. That's why I always tell people to listen to the soundtrack before you go, because I was like, I just got to get acquainted and understand what's going on. So it's not like going to run you over with overwhelm when you see it, because there's a lot going on.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:22:23] I love standing room at the Rogers. You're talking about this. I love Standing Room because I just feel like freer. Like, I just feel not like I'm dancing back there. But I just love that you all of you were doing whatever you were doing so much where she was like, You seem like, you know, like, I thought I was super into it, watching it

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and standing room. But clearly, this crowd, you whatever you guys were doing, this woman was like, OK, they're the people to ask.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:22:53] I have no idea why she gave up. It's not like we were doing Yorktown full out, and then I was on the mezzanine and we would never dream of that. I'm sure, you know, I don't know once or twice, maybe.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:23:04] Yeah, that poor lady.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:23:06] Yeah, I hope she got it. I know and like

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:23:08] that desperation of like of just needing to be a part of this thing. That's the biggest thing in the world. You know, it was so big at that time, and for her to feel like she's missing it, I'm sure she got it way more than she was giving herself credit for. Yeah, sure. It's just like just just just get it, just sit down like it's just whatever your feeling is, right?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:23:28] That's the beautiful thing about the show, though. Like, it's not going to hold your hand through it, like it's not going to be like, this is what you should be watching at this moment. It's very much like layers and you just got to get what you get.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:23:42] Lin was still learning things, and he came over. He was the last person to come over in February of 2020. Lin learn stuff from Andy Lin wrote the thing, and he was just like, Wait, what? There are other times that I've heard from him where a cast member will say something that they do like from the original company, and he's like, I never like that on the album. It's like I never even knew that. And I'm like, Wait, what? It's like, incredible. Not only does that speak to the layers and why this podcast has gone on for so long and why it will continue to, because so many, everyone's experience adds to it. Yeah, no matter what company you are, what role you're playing or what part of the process you came in to, like everything adds to that to those layers and the layers, were there enough that the layers were there already? But. The fact

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that it's also very freeing as someone who makes things to know that Lin is still learning about the thing he made like, you can sort of take a deep breath and just like let the thing be what it is. instead of you think that he wrote it, he must know every single thing that is said was still learning things, too. And that's like, really beautiful and reassuring to me.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:24:52] I mean, it's got the bones of like, you know, the the strongest, the best bones, the most well, put together a structure, but then you invite the most incredible artists around it. And yeah, it's like it's it's like a garden that just is going to keep keep growing

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:25:12] and the freedom of people to, you know, you have to do the Koryo and sing the notes, but the freedom of you to make the freedom that you can sort of add yourself to it.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:25:21] There's there's no end.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:25:22] Yeah, yeah. But, you know, like George Washington, if you want to take a journey on one last time, it's got to make a little sense. You can't just be, you know, singing up to the rafters for the sake of it, but you can also go on some vocal journey, you know what I mean? Like, there's that freedom to have a conversation about what speaks to you. But also sticking with, you know, the beautiful bones of it.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:25:44] Totally, totally. Yeah. Everyone and everyone's an individual in the Hamilton world. Yeah, it's a beautiful thing. So we're doing it. Oh, yeah, yeah.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:25:55] You were just saying that you felt not alone, but also a little shy about that. You that there are things that you missed, which was how we got here because it's like people, I'm still learning stuff every day. So or, you know, making connections. So there's no shame in any of that to anyone listening that you're doing. Wait, why? Like, it happens all the time. So you didn't go out to dinner and talk about it. You just like had yourself. And then like, what comes next after you leave the Rodgers? And then what?

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**Jordana Grolnick** [00:26:20] And I guess I went back to doing Cinderella, which couldn't be further from Hamilton in a beautiful way. But yeah, and and I I was like, I would love to do that choreography. But I just, you know, it was it was a pipe dream. It was like, All right. Well, I was also twenty three and, you know, young not really sure what where my career would take me. So. So yeah, then I and when I left Cinderella, I just started auditioning and I had. I think when I when I finally got the like, you got the job, I went back and counted and I think I had probably. 10 or 12? Like emails of audition appointments. So, you know, that's over the course of three ish years. So like, I mean, exactly like how it was built, it's it takes time for it to like grow and and to to learn sort of what the what it is that is necessary to then like to be in in the thing. Hmm. I loved the audition processes because I picked up something new every time. Like, like when you go see the show, it's just like you're there's a you become you, you gain a little more mastery over the movement and the and the lyric and the anything, whatever you're doing, every time you go in and the intention or whatever, and it kind of grows on you as. As you're auditioning, which is a crazy thing, too, that Hamilton does differently than pretty much anyone else. I think it's pretty rare that people audition once and then they're in the show, or even if it's like a final callback moment, like they take time to get to know you and you take time to get to know them, and it's interesting.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:28:28] So 10, 10 to 12 times over three years. So there would be like major gaps in them. What were you? A couple questions. Mm-Hmm. What were you told, if anything? Because I know a lot of actors like feedback where it's like, OK, you know, you just don't hear anything. And then a couple of months later, we want to call you. And again, you know, were you doing the the part of the famous packets where you say, or is it like we want to audition you for Chicago? We want to because there are times where it's like, I thought I was auditioning for Chicago and then I'm on Broadway in a week, or I thought I was going to be on Broadway and then I'm out on tour. And so like, what was your knowledge of sort of what was happening while you were also going through this other very emotional process?

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**Jordana Grolnick** [00:29:12] Had such a good question. I yeah, I guess. OK, so my first audition was for the Chicago cast because I was the first one they were putting up after Broadway. So I think I was in in first Chicago. I can't remember if I was like, got two final callbacks or even at all close. I don't even remember this was. Seven years ago and no. And then at one point, I think maybe around that same time, I went in for Lac. I remember being in a room with only Lac and a piano player and singing my like my own song. Then I brought it. Not not Yorktown

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:29:58] Yeah. What was it like from your book? It was for me

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:30:01] rise up by Andra Day.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:30:41] I was pretty proud of that, but, you know, the double entendre of it all,

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:30:45] but also they love her.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:30:47] Yeah, I didn't even yeah, the tape wasn't even out, right?

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:30:51] So it just that connection is sort of, yeah, wow.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:31:42] Yeah, I have a little playlist of like the songs I was thinking of for my Hamilton audition.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:31:47] We might have to take a deep dove into that playlist.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:31:49] Oh, it's not great. I'm not going to lie. I mean, OK, it was. It was. It was good ideas. I landed on the right one.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:31:56] I think I'd like you never know. Like what's going to inspire you like I'm coming from? I don't believe in the term guilty pleasures, you know what I mean? Like, I don't I don't like if you're into it, you're into it. So if you don't want to share, I totally collapse.

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**Jordana Grolnick** [00:32:08] Let's see what we got. Oh, OK, she's pulling it up and had some Z.Z. Ward to the casket to

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:32:44] Oh God. And a little Jessie Ware on this playlist, some Rihanna, actually some of her like kind of belt things, and some had a prince song, which I don't think was going to work.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:33:02] But that's so Jefferson.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:33:04] Yeah. And then Alicia Keys? Sure. Oh, and there was this Adam Lambert song that was crazy. This is bring me down memory lane.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:33:14] Love that. So that's what you were listening to, just like in your life while you were in this time of auditioning for the show. Yeah, it

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:33:21] was like stuff I knew. But also these were songs that I was like when I got the audition I like was so pumped that I started figuring out what I was going to sing, you know, and I made this list. So, yeah,

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:33:34] my God, I love that. So, yeah, is there more about being in the room with Lac? Because what a dream

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:33:39] I was like. Definitely like, oh, like this is, this is crazy. This is about to happen. Just me and this dude who is like, apparently ending a really, really big deal. And not apparently, I mean, he was like the Hamilton guy. And I had been, like, deeply obsessed with In The Heights when I was in high school because the camp that I went to. They brought Andrea Burns, came with and spoke to us. And so I was like, OK, well, I have to see the show. And then I went to go, see it.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:34:12] What a cool camp.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:34:14] Oh, it was a cool camp.



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**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:34:15] Yeah, what I'm like that is wild. Oh my God. I think her

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:34:20] husband or partner was like there for some reason. But yeah, she just came to our camp and was like, Hey, like, Oh yeah, I'm an actress. Yeah, I'm just doing this little show. Yeah, it's off-Broadway downtown right now, but it's getting a lot of really good buzz and it's about people who live in Washington Heights and, you know, like. And I was just like, Wow, that's amazing. And and and so I I have a lot of family in New York, and when I went to go visit them, I was like, We have to go see the show. It's called In The Heights. It's really cool, like we just had to go. And I ended up going like a couple of weeks after they opened. I'll also like back in the day Eliza In The Heights OBC and I was obsessed with it, obsessed. So I knew Lac and I knew Andy and I knew Lin. All right. And you know, all of those people that were involved in that from from high school back in the day, my early musical theater girl obsession.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:35:18] Okay, which is why you were like, I will happily sit with my friends, family for Hamilton because they're all back and it all like there was that.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:35:26] Yes. Yes, there was. There was a familiarity and the knowledge of the the greatness that I knew us was about to happen.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:35:35] Yeah, yeah.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:35:38] So I was in a room with Lac and he was really nice. That's all I remember is that he was really nice and I was like, definitely nervous because that's a crazy thing to just like, go into a room with the Alex Lacamoire and just sing only for him. But he was super kind. So thanks, Alex. Thanks.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:35:58] Yeah, I mean, I yeah, so many of the stories I hear are being in that room with Tommy or with Alex, and it's it must be like, I can't even explain it. And everyone's like, Yes, like that. Like, that's what's happening inside of you. But even the most constructive criticism is and

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this they just know how to communicate and they know how to get what they want. And so like and it feels so foreign to a lot of people in the creative world because not like Tommy, like doesn't believe in raising his voice to get a point across and he doesn't like, there are so many things about the way they communicate. That is, I think, surprising to a lot of people. When they experience it, they're like, Oh, so OK, so we could be like, That's Oh, that's all right. That's that's different, right?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:36:47] You assume people at the top of their game are just like sharks. And often you assume those people are assholes. And yeah, these people are gentle and and yeah, and humane was just like, just should be the baseline, you mean? No, no, they're and they're and they're good people. So, yeah, that makes people feel comfortable.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:37:16] Yeah, they listen. Mm hmm. And my experience with them, which is not auditioning for them, but my my energy and nerves can be just as heightened. Don't get it twisted, just being, you know, recording with them or, you know, just being whatever around them. So I get it, but it's it's nice. It's just all nice. So you thought you were Chicago was on the table.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:37:41] Yeah, Chicago was maybe on the table for a second and then it wasn't on the table. I don't remember exactly what that was, how that went. But I was like, Yeah, fine. Not for me. That's all right. Mm hmm. And then they kept calling me back. So I was like, OK, yeah, I I remember

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:38:10] I remember there was one time it was like six of us in a room for a swing position in Chicago. And so I was like, OK, this is like a tiny group. Like, I felt like it was getting a little closer. And I didn't get that job, which was all well and good. It was a crazy audition and we got to do the mens. They, like taught us the men's section of Yorktown that we never learn the like Hercules Mulligan intellectuals government, which is just like the dopest choreography in the world. So that was fun. But, you know, it's just like a little group and they were like, Oh, you guys come learn it, whatever it was like, very friendly. Yeah. And I remember like, I don't

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know, that's three times of auditioning. I don't really remember the rest of it. There was a there were many other dance calls, I'm sure. I went to do the podcast help.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:39:09] You did it. How did you did you get anything from it that you used or like? And that's not asking about me. It's asking about other people who,

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:39:17] you know, I I did feel like a familiarity. Like, I listen to Steph Clemons, speak for a few hours and I was like, OK, I have a better understanding of like this woman. And it's like, fairly creepy when I say, like this sorry stuff. But I think they're really cool. Yes. But there's something about. For me, like the the interpersonal of it all, like it just felt like I had more of a sense of who the people were, that I was kind of putting myself in front of and how they created the thing and what is important to them in the who, the people that they're choosing to do the the show. So yeah, I think that like more of like a in a holistic sense, just the feeling comfortable in the rooms with the people because I had heard their voices. Well, I'm glad. Yeah, truly. Me too.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:40:21] So you book it, you get the call. Tell me that call. How about 10 12 auditions?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:40:26] Well I did an audition for the boot camp. Then at one point, like my final final, it was ended up being my final flight audition. It was like, this will be for the boot camp.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:40:36] Can you just give a little refresher to the boot camp? Because we've discussed at length, but not in a while. Yeah, just for people. Yeah, jumping around in episodes and stuff.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:40:46] Boot camp is a week of it's basically an extended audition, like an intensive week where you are given a track to follow through. And I think we did four numbers. So you learn the vocals and you learn the staging. The choreography for those numbers and you get to work with the people you're going to work with when you eventually book the show, so you know, we. It was Stephan Boldy and it was Matt

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Gallagher, and I think Lac came in at the end and Andy came in at the end. And yeah, you get paid because you're giving your time for that work, but you're not guaranteed a spot in any Hamilton company and you're not guaranteed to get the job. It's just like, we're highly interested in you and we want to see how you work and just get to know you better. I think is the idea behind it?

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:41:50] Yeah, it feels like a screen test for film.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:41:52] Absolutely.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:41:53] You know exactly what kind of exactly that. And it's, you know, it's like, Do you drive with these people? Are you easy to work with? Are you an asshole? Are you? You know, so like, how do you handle stress like that? The whole thing. So. So I did that and there was a crazy, crazy week because you're just like, so excited and also just so like you're still auditioning, like it's but you're like. But it feels like totally right. And yeah, it was. It was. While we got really drunk after we were all done, a group of us, we were all like, Let's get a margarita.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:42:33] Yeah, no, I get it.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:42:34] But it was great. And then I and then that was it. April and then in July, I got a call or an email being like, Are you interested in available in the and Peggy tour, which they had announced while we were in boot camp, they were like, There's give me a tour that's going to go to Puerto Rico like new Hamilton tours. Like it came out, the breakdowns came out. We were like,

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:42:55] Oh yeah, OK, yeah, that adds a little more thing, more slots to be filled in here.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:43:04] Yeah, yeah.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:43:04] Yeah, that's interesting because so during the boot camp, you're also seeing the show, right? So yeah, what is that like to watch the show, not just as a fan or

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as an audience member, like you're watching it because you're also still auditioning for it. So my only experience with that is like, you know, I saw the show, I saw a matinee, the Sunday matinee before Andy came over the next day and I was like, I'm going to go in and like, take notes in standing room and my notebook short. And I didn't do that like, I didn't, because you think you're going to I'm going to focus on this. And then I was just sort of I'm like, I'm just going to feel it. I feel like that's what Andy would want me to do. And he talked. He was like, the next the next day, he was like, Yes, I'm so glad we're just going to like, talk about it. There's not like an outline. I'm like, No, but it's not even what I would do for this, for this podcast, like, it's just such a free flowing conversation. So I was like, why did I think I was so like, It's Andy. There's so much stuff I know that there's like so many layers and I'm going to go in there and I'm going to try to remember everything. And then I just watched it and took it in and had that experience that night. That was totally different from any other experience I've had, because that's the thing. And all these different people were in and all these, you know, standby and everything. And it was just like and then I spoke to him about and what was at the forefront of my mind was just what I saw the night before. You know, the Hamil film had her out. And so I went in there with this expectation that I was going to try to focus and do all the stuff, and I didn't. So I'm curious, though, for people who are still in the bootcamp, how much of you just gets to experience it because then your experience is part of your performance. And then how much you're following, woman four or whatever.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:44:49] That's so interesting. I'm I'm do, I'm. Newly appreciative of that insight, because I I was a I'm still swing. But in this new post-pandemic world, I miss the dance captain amazing. I was so used to tracking one track and just like focusing, hyper focusing on one person and and I think that started in the boot camp of it all because I was I was learning woman one. And so I was just like, I think because the stakes were high and because I wanted to be sure that I was like doing getting me getting the ideas and the crux of the show and also was definitely still learning the Correio during that week. I was like hyper focused on her. But I. I can't remember thinking about anything else, like I would go home and just like

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study the hell out of that. And the same was when I was swinging. Pre-pandemic, I was I was. There were so many things that I didn't even know were happening in the show that I was performing because I was hyper focused on on certain tracks. The woman went through five of it all and. And so now that I am more comfortable with my swing tracks and feel really confident that I know what each girl is doing and b because I have to open my lines a little bit, I'm able to see things and like focus less on on that stuff because I'm I'm, you know, I got to watch the whole show now, which is crazy to me that I ever lived my life without without that wider lens. But.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:46:45] Well, congratulations on being it. Yeah. So you're in the boot camp and they announced Puerto Rico and you're like, how interesting? Or the and peggy tour that's going to start in Montreal and you're like, Oh, OK, you go. You have the boot camp. You have the margaritas cut to June, July, whatever you get the email. Are you available for the Peggy tour or however they were did at Boston, where you're like, Oh my god, yes. Yes, I am. I'll make it work. Yeah, check my schedule, Tommy.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:47:10] Yeah, exactly. It was very much that I was doing Oliver in Goodspeed Opera House, and they were like. It worked out. Timing was it, I could finish Oliver, which was actually just a wonderful little experience, but just hilarious. I was doing Oliver before Hamilton, but yeah, and I said, Yes, I am available and yeah, I'm interested. I'm definitely interested. They really do want to go to Puerto Rico and then San Francisco for a year, and I was like, Hell, yeah, yes. Yeah, it was. It was a super exciting time. Very exciting.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:47:49] Yeah. So then and also like what it meant to take the show to Puerto Rico. I was just talking to Rebecca Covington Webber about that, about what it was like to be part of something that was, you know, the show is so big. And then for Lin to take it down there and the way they did like it's then that experience is like bigger than the show that is already so big because of the why and the how and all of that.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:48:14] Yeah, it's it's incredible to be a part of something like it. There are a couple of things that are

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incredible. It's incredible to be able to to make a living doing theater. And that is never lost on me, especially after this year. But it's incredible to be a part of something that is so good and so universally loved that it it can give people the opportunity to make a living and also. It gives back to the world in a way that says we're not just here to make our pockets fatter. We're here to like, yeah. To do some good and to try to help people that need help. And you know, the show continues to. To prove that in all of the things that they that they do and the things that they stand for and the actions that they take. And the choices that Hamilton makes, but yeah, it was it was huge to be in Puerto Rico. It was crazy. I mean, for a lot of us, it was our first time doing Hamilton, so. Oh yeah, that was crazy. Just no matter what, like opening, opening Hamilton, period, opening a new company period. I mean, that was that was so exciting. But to do it in the way we did it in a beautiful place that had had such hardship. And they were so excited to have us there. I mean, for the most part, certainly it was controversial in some ways, but it was like this energy that I don't think I'll ever feel again in my life, like just just electric every second. And the moment we woke up to the moment we went to bed. And to know that you're there for for good, just like it's almost like hard to do anything else after that because you just it's crazy to to be able to give back in that way. And even though we every singular one of us was a small part of it, we all got to be a part of this huge, huge project. Yeah, and Lin, I mean, I mean, frickin insane. Like, 14 year old me was like shitting her pants.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:50:46] My God.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:50:47] Yeah, yeah, it was. It was a cool time. And then we were like, on the beach. It was so great.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:50:53] Now it's so beautiful. And we talked about this in my hotel room. But Mike and I were at the show where Lin had to arrange freestyle like into my shot and yell at. I'm using air quotes, but like scold some lady to put her fucking camera away, because that's like the downside of something that is so big doing and something that's so big, like so many eyes were on this cast and this production in Puerto Rico. And it was, I mean, Rebecca and I used the word it was

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electric. It was electrifying. Even even being in the lobby, buying the merch, you know, it was just like I felt like a mosh pit out there. It was just it was this like, you know, beautiful chaos of every like people could not believe what was happening. And the downside of that is that people like, lose themselves or, you know, people don't understand. And it's like this one, like your camera, like kids again, just like live in the moment, please. Oh my god. But like he and I remember he did like a move like he. He did like a it's hard to describe visually, but he like put like he was just like, no, like he did like a how would you describe it?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:52:06] Like it was like a like a throat slit kind of like, cut it off.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:52:09] Yeah, yeah. Like, yeah, not like a threatening I will kill you. Yeah, yeah.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:52:12] Yeah. Not like it's not threatening because I'm just like, you know,

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:52:16] with the hand around the throat. Just like, yeah, it was like, the more I think it was, who is it, Seth Rogen that GIF? Or he's like, Oh, Jonah Hill who's like, Oh no, it's just Lin on stage in Puerto Rico being like as Hamilton in my shot. Like that energy and telling that woman, like, put your fucking camera away, like, stop it, stop fucking filming or whatever, he said. And then like income security. And it's like, Oh my god, oh my God.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:52:42] But like, didn't miss a beat like he was, he was in the pocket and he was like, I am not throwing away my shot. If you put it like he's, I will never even attempt to say what he said. But it was crazy.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:52:55] Yeah. And I remember asking you, like, how often does that happen? And you're like, it's happened a little bit like it's happened a couple of times where people were just so excited. And you know, he has to deal with that.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:53:08] Yeah. Crazy, though, that he was like, I mean, I remember he had he had not done the show in a



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couple of years, so he was like, Oh God, I don't remember how this fits, you know, and, you know, gone on to craziness and fame and all of that after afterwards and to go back to the thing that you know, that he started doing and then. But just to be so present and just to be able to be like, I'm here, there's a woman she's filming, I have to say something. I mean, that's like, I don't leave the stage for another couple of hours, so I can't really tell the stage manager. Like, like, I guess I just tell her right now, like whatever cognitively went on in his head, like so quickly for him to just frickin freestyle. It's crazy.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:53:59] And it is, you know, the Rodgers is a very cozy theater. But that theater in Puerto Rico, too, like everything, felt very close. So it felt very intimate, at least, at least for us. Yeah, yeah. Being on the stage after the show, which is I understand how that sounds that I've been lucky enough to be on several stages in several states and places after the show. But it all when you're standing there, I'm like, it feels so much smaller when I'm watching you and be amazing. And, you know, saying jump leaping during Yorktown, and I'm like, How where is that space coming from? Like, it feels so small?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:54:40] Yeah, it's um, I think it's like the illusion of theater. It's totally, oh yeah. We're just you're also sitting lower and you're just like looking up. And yeah, or sometimes you're sitting lower, so you're sitting higher. It really depends.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:54:54] It really depends. Yeah. Yeah. So then Puerto Rico, that was what, three weeks, something like that?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:55:01] Yeah, we were there in my crazy. I think we played two and a half weeks or something. It was all changing every day. It was wild.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:55:09] And then you head to San Francisco.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:55:11] Yeah.

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**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:55:11] For like a long time, like it was the And Peggy Tour. The plan was to be in San Francisco for a while and you were.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:55:20] It was the And Peggy sit down for for a long time. Yeah, yeah.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:55:25] Because Peggy could do whatever the fuck she wants. So sometimes she's in Puerto Rico for a couple of weeks and sometimes you just hang out sounds as though

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:55:29] she's really doing the most different things. Yes, she is. Yeah, she went on vacation in Puerto Rico and then she, like, went back to. Life, Francisco de San Francisco, the apartment I lived in, there was the longest consecutive home I had had since the home I grew up in. Wow. So yeah, I was over there a long time. Yeah. And even I was we were even supposed to be there six more months at the time of the shutdown. Yeah, right. So we were there, all told, like 13 months.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:56:01] And then after the shutdown, you open back up for a little bit and now. Yeah, like. And Peggy tour is like the actual tour. No, it's actually moving.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:56:10] Peggy's on the run. She's she's going. She's on the move. She's lifting up her yellow dress and she is running in her little, little tiny shoes.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:56:19] Yes, she's confident now. She's like, she's at the it's it's the last, the last 30 seconds of the Schuyler sisters. Always like that. Survive.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:56:26] Yeah, she's figured it out. Yeah, she's like, I'm a grown up. Yeah.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:56:33] Let's talk about some of the changes in the show. So, you know, Hamilton and there was their opening night was September 14th, which I had tickets to Mike and Jenson listeners. You guys know who they are. We went to it. And of course, you know, Mike, we had tickets for reopening

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night, but I was lucky enough to be invited to the invited address on Sunday. And the Sunday before which was wild and amazing. And I happened to run into none other than Andy Blankenbuehler in the lobby and met his fantastic daughter Sophia, who I'm telling you has it more together than most, like 30 year olds I know. Yeah, is one of the most. She's incredible. I was like, So I was like, Oh my God, like, I'm a nervous, crazy wreck. Like recognizing people with their masks on that kind of whole social thing where I'm like, You're who I think you are, right? It was a mortified. It was a mortifying situation, right? And I was like, That's you right, Andy, you're in my apartment. He was like, Yes, hi, how are you? You, nutcase. And it just to be in a theater again and be out. It was like a whole lot, but with the masks on, there's that heightened like, is it? Am I saying hi to the right person or are you just some person? I don't know. But he was like, Hey, so there are some changes. And I was like, OK. And he goes, he goes, you know, the show better than anyone, so I'd really love to hear what you think, and I was like, That's not true. Maybe I talk about it more than anyone, but visually like, there are still things I'm learning, but I didn't say I was like, Well, you know, that's not true. But then he was like, I'd love to hear your thoughts on the changes and then just sort of left it at that. And then I felt like another like a feeling like I was just telling you earlier, earlier where it's like, What do I have to pay attention to? I was just, am I just going to feel it? Am I?

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:58:27] He didn't tell you exactly where and when?

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:58:28] He didn't say anything.

**Jordana Grolnick** [00:58:29] That's that's like a really hard test.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [00:58:32] And I was like, Oh, and he was like, Well, email after. Let's email after. I want to know what you think, what you felt like. I'm going to fail like I'm going to follow. So act one happens and I'm having that moment where I'm like, What? You know, Cal Jeffrey, they do. They're like opening welcome to the invite address and it's like friends and family, essential workers. Like it was just a moment to be in

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that theater and just be sitting in a crowded space and everything that comes along with that, right?

**Tommy Kail** [00:59:01] I've got like 80 minutes of material. So have you guys, are you guys cool with that

**Tommy Kail** [00:59:10] I didn't know that I'd be standing on the stage and I didn't know a lot of things just a few months ago. But we're here. As far back as the Greeks, they made a fire. They sat around in the dark and they told stories with a group of strangers who had never met and might never meet again. And we're here.

**Tommy Kail** [00:59:44] And your love, because I know if you're in this building, you love somebody backstage.

**Tommy Kail** [01:00:03] And I want to welcome you to an event, a dress rehearsal, so be kind for so we're so ready to uncork this thing. And we're so thrilled with this. We will be doing it for you. The first New York City audience for Hamilton, the Kennedy mouth all the words,

**Tommy Kail** [01:00:20] and no one will care. So.

**Jeffery Seller** [01:00:27] Hundred ninety two thousand one hundred minutes, that's how many minutes it's been since we could perform our show for you. And the reason we can home for my child for you is because we all took the vaccine.

**Jeffery Seller** [01:00:56] We can perform this show for you

**Jeffery Seller** [01:00:58] is because so many amazing first responders have helped to get

**Jeffery Seller** [01:01:03] us through this. And we have some in the audience.

**Jeffery Seller** [01:01:53] Tommy said it best. This is a love fest. Let's get on with the show.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:02:01] And then it starts the tears, the feelings that whatever. And now in the back of my head, I'm

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thinking now, is this something I'm just noticing for the first time?

**Jordana Grolnick** [01:02:11] Yeah. And you haven't seen the show in a year an a half

**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:02:15] a year and a half. It's a compliment to think that Andy's like, you know it better than I do, and I'm like, That's just factually inaccurate. Like, there's no way. So I'm thinking, OK, is this one of those things that I'm noticing for the first time or it's hitting me different the first time? Or is this something that that is different? So there was that and then I'm in the lobby at intermission, and I run into none other than Eddie Lee, who I loved my dear friend Eddie Lee. And he's like, Hey, like, what do you think? And I told him the whole Andy thing, and he was like, Oh, you should get back to your seat then. And I was like, OK, yes, no, I'm on my way. And he was like, I know he was like, I just don't miss. What did I miss as on? And then what did I miss happens? Well, you tell me what you can tell me, and then I'll actually keep rambling.

**Jordana Grolnick** [01:03:01] I would love if you keep kept rambling because

**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:03:05] no one has ever said that. Jordana said on episode 295 that I'm allowed to keep rambling

**Jordana Grolnick** [01:03:12] Keep rambling because it's a really still morphing thing that we at And Peggy don't quite we're not doing what Broadway is doing. So I would I would love to hear your thoughts, and then I will absolutely give you my thoughts on it. And my experience with it, really?

**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:03:34] Yes. So you're not doing what Broadway is doing now, but are you also not doing what's on Disney Plus?

**Jordana Grolnick** [01:03:40] Yes. Also not.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:03:41] Oh, OK.

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**Jordana Grolnick** [01:03:42] Like if you were to hop around to each company in the United States right now, I'm doing Hamilton. I believe at this point that you would see a different What Did I Miss everywhere, I think.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:03:57] Wait, what?

**Jordana Grolnick** [01:03:58] Far as I know. Yeah.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:04:00] OK. So. My thoughts on it were like the I know that that's different, but it's still cohesive, it doesn't feel like, wait, what is this? It still made sense to me and I guess like it didn't take me out of the experience is what I'm trying to say. But then so that was Sunday, Tuesday. I go with Mike and Johnson, and after the show, I don't say that they're going to be a lot of changes, whatever. But after the show, I asked, I asked Mike, I was like, What do you think of what did I miss? Did you notice those changes? And he goes, Oh yeah, yeah, I guess it was a little different. And I took that as like that means that whatever it is, it works that didn't make him think, Wait, because he's seen it with me most of the time. And he's also watched it on Disney Plus. So the fact that he was like, Yeah, oh wait. Yeah, they didn't. Oh yeah. Like it. Just in the moment, it didn't take him out of it, either. And it just feels it gets the job done either way. You know what I mean? Does that make sense at all?

**Jordana Grolnick** [01:05:04] Yeah, totally. Totally, my god, I so I don't I actually don't. I'm not sure if what I have seen bootlegs of is what you saw on Broadway,

**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:05:19] but they're not bootlegs, bootlegs, they're just like what the company?

**Jordana Grolnick** [01:05:22] Yeah, it's not like it's on the internet. Just.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:05:25] We do not support bootlegs on this podcast. That's what, yeah, the companies censor, I think.

**Jordana Grolnick** [01:05:31] I'm not sure of what I have seen going on on Broadway is what you saw or if has been updated and

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edited. And it's so I will say that events of the pandemic, specifically Black Lives Matter. Summer of reckoning, racial reckoning and all of that show shown shone the light on shined the light. On, I don't know which way a light wash was shown. Wow, no such suture on on what did I miss? And you know, obviously all of these characters owned slaves. So yeah, that's problematic. But. Not something we can change, and that's historically a fact. And so what did I miss the ensemble? Is there Jefferson's slaves? Mm hmm. Sally Hemings is is his particular favorite slave.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:06:35] Yeah. Well, I'll always say he's he was a rapist and a piece of shit, so I'll almost always I will always take the opportunity to call out Thomas Jefferson for being a racist and a rapist.

**Jordana Grolnick** [01:06:45] Yeah. So the apparently Andy Andy in the cabinet spoke with the foremost historian on Sally Hemings, who is alive today. And she she there's a lot that we don't know because obviously she didn't write her own history. And so, you know, there's it's just like a really gray. And difficult. Part of history to show and and it's it's about what we want to show now, how we want to and. How we want to portray these people that were around him, how we want to portray him, it's all of a sudden from his point of view, so so that has to be taken into account. And so what I think is going on is that Sally is who we are. They want Sally to have more agency as a person. And so in the choreography that was happening prior, she was really sexualized and sort of just like boopy and she was there but didn't really have any anything active to do except deliver the letter to Jefferson that there's a, you know,

**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:08:22] like a really sexy high

**Jordana Grolnick** [01:08:23] kick moment with an high kick. And then she's off stage like in the blink of an eye

**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:08:28] and like, happy to be there.

**Jordana Grolnick** [01:08:29] Yeah, yeah, yeah, exactly. Right. There is like no nuance. If you were still coming in from the restroom, you'd have no idea that like you, even she was even

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referenced. So, yeah, it's something that company members and, you know, journalists and people have brought up and and that the the creative team is, is listening to and is there have been a lot of discussions with each company about what it is I know Andy has set. Different versions are on, I think, every every company and I, and so it will all become cohesive within. With time when when each company gets the chance to rehearse it and learn it and when they decide on what they want it to be. The problem is, I think Lin wrote this incredible song that's plucky and upbeat. It's act to opener. You have to introduce Jefferson and and so it's it's trying to deal with these really difficult, thorny hard issues while also staying within that that framework. So. That's what's going on. I don't think I've said anything offhand.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:09:59] And you know, I think just one thing about the point of view of what did I miss? I remember even Daveed saying, that's the music of it is like older because Jefferson's so far behind everybody else. Right? That's why it's this fun jazz. No, because he thinks he's the greatest thing ever.

**Jordana Grolnick** [01:10:15] Like, he's your dad still listening to Crosby Stills Nash,

**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:10:21] one thousand percent Steely Dan like dad rock. Yeah. Only in his like thinking he's cool and going to hang out with the youths, but he's like super far behind. So that's why like and it's also an act two opener and all of that. And I remember talking to Andy when he came over so long ago now. But even like Washington, on your side is from their point of view where, like even the like, the ensemble behind them is like kind of all in their heads. It's just like everyone's going to be behind us, right? Yeah. It is so, so, so much of Jefferson because he was so self-centered and because he was so terrible as a person and like that does make sense. Not excusing any of it. But I do understand like why he's jumping and why it's a bop is because that's what he thought of himself. He thought

**Jordana Grolnick** [01:11:11] exactly



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**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:11:13] greatest. Totally. And it's also, you know, good to hear because I've had so many conversations with people on the podcast like I did like two special episodes with Ashley La Rosa, who came on after she was already on, and Jared Dixon about the task force and what the Racial Justice Task Force and what hamper changes doing and what Hamilton is doing behind the scenes. Krystal Joy Brown, you know, all of these people who are so involved and me asking them like, people miss theater, but we want to know where our money's going. It's super expensive. That's a whole other thing. We have to tackle one of these days that it's a little more accessible and less gatekeeping. But a lot of people are talking the talk Are they walking the walk? Like, What is Hamilton doing to make sure that the fans of the show can feel comfortable still supporting this thing? And there are so many things that people said about having H.R. people or having like meetings before rehearsals and and just people like being in their feelings and having a safe space and being able to communicate what they're feeling. And that's wonderful. And that's also so important. And then also to see that like they are listening on this level, too, I think, is just interesting and worth noting.

**Jordana Grolnick** [01:12:26] It's what you want. I don't think anyone can say is that Hamilton and the powers that be in Hamilton are. Not listening. They are definitely. Hearing what everyone is saying and taking it into account and and trying to make it the best possible environment for both the people that they work with and the people that are coming to see the show. You know, I think. Andy said when he was creating it. You know, he knew less than he knows now. And so let's update it and give it and give it the the weight that it deserves in twenty twenty one, which is an amazing thing. I mean. Producers can say sorry. That's what it's a it's a period piece now, you know, and and you people still have to get on stage and and just fall into line as Jefferson's slaves and just, you know, grin and bear it. But, you know, we don't live in that world anymore. And yeah, it's it's a it's a beautiful thing that that that these discussions are happening. They're hard. They're not they're not like comfy for anyone. And so, you know, it's it's putting yourself in that uncomfortable place and and saying we can do better, which is amazing. Yeah, and I think the people that will come and see it, whether you get what's happening or not, it's

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it's very much that intrinsic. It's just going to you'll absorb it by osmosis and maybe you will feel because the people on stage feel a different way about Jefferson. You will also have a different idea about him. And and so and you're not glorifying these people who had flaws. So I think it is I think it'll all be. It will be really interesting to see how it plays out and what what people take away from it.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:14:43] Yeah, I agree with you. You said it perfectly. Osmosis, it's that because it's not like anyone's going to be like, No, he didn't do that thing where he's like so grossed out by being touched by a slave of like, no one is like missing any of that. Right, right. One is no one is saying like, I really love the show, but they lost me when Sally didn't do that high kick. Like, no one is saying that. So it's more about what is being projected from the stage and how people are receiving it and what that means. And yeah,

**Jordana Grolnick** [01:15:13] yeah, yeah. But stay tuned. What did I miss? So, yeah, it's a work in progress still so.

**Gillian Pensavalle** [01:15:29] This is such a good conversation. OK. Next week, I will be back with Jordana for part two. We're talking about the future of theater and inclusivity. The journey back to the stage after the long break. Pre-Show rituals, onstage mishaps, Yorktown from the perspective of woman five. So much more. So until then. Stay safe. Stay healthy. I love you. Thank you so much for listening. I'll talk to you soon. I'm G. Pen.

[01:16:28] 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

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