

THE HAMILCAST

EPISODE 317 DEEJAY YOUNG 2 TRANSCRIPT

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

Gillian Pensavalle [00:00:18] Hello, friends. I'm Gillian and welcome back to the Hamilcast this week, I'm wrapping up my conversation with DeeJay Young of the Angelica tour. If you missed last week's episode, check that out to hear all about how DeeJay got his start in showbiz, his experience touring with gospel shows how getting involved with creative writing and other programs in high school prepared him for the work he does now. His friendship with none other than Jordan Fisher and other artists that inspire him. If you're all caught up, we're going to dive back in. Here's part two of my conversation with the lovely DeeJay Young.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:00:51] So you're hearing about this thing, the hype can't possibly be real. And you're like, well, it kind of it does live up to the hype and then you put this thing out there to yourself, to the universe. I'm going to be in the show. So what happens in between 2017 and 2019?

DeeJay Young [00:01:05] So, you know, I always wanted to audition for it. Never got the chance because, you know, with my contract at Disney, I just with the contract at Disney and doing regional stuff, I just never had the opportunity. So I would always miss it in New York. I wouldn't. I would never make it. And I was so upset with myself like, I'm never going to make it. And they ended up coming to Orlando on an audition stop, which never happens. Never never happens. And I ended up like swapping my show schedule that day to be able to go. And I really didn't take it seriously. I mean, I took it seriously, but I I went because I wanted to make this audition. Finally, I never get to go. But I knew for sure, like they weren't casting anyone in Orlando because it just never happens. And I go in and the casting director is there and she has a Bluetooth speaker. I'm not accustomed to that. I'm always, you know, I'm very used to like accompanist being there and like I wasn't used to the the Bluetooth speaker thing. So I was like, Oh, this definitely ain't happening today.

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:02:20] So you were instead of like someone playing the piano, you, they just like press play. And it came out the the speakers and you are it. Got it.

Deejay Young [00:02:27] Got it. Got it. Yeah. I wasn't prepared for that. I had my music and everything. I was like, Oh, are we doing the Bose? We don't have a speaker. Oh, cool. All right.

Deejay Young [00:02:37] I started singing and immediately she says after. And this is if my memory serves me correctly. It was it was the main casting director who cast for the show. And she says, We want to see, we want to see more of you. And I go to New York to learn a dance combination and to sing for the entire team, which I don't know if I even knew that's who it was at the time, because I probably would have been way more nervous than I was

Deejay Young [00:03:13] if I known that's who it was. But Michael Midland taught me the dance combination and, like the entire creative team was, was in the room when I did like all the material that they wanted me to do. And from there, I go back to Orlando. I'm doing my shows. I was contracted in a couple of shows there and. You know, it was just back and forth. It was back and forth between Telsey, the casting company, sending me emails they kept sending me like all these different materials, like one was Hercules Mulligan. One was Laurens/Philip. And I'm like, Oh my gosh. Like, why are they sending me so many different characters and I'm doing like shows? I'm doing my Disney shows in the morning slash afternoon, and then I'm doing my regional shows in the evening. Wow. So I would be up all day long. And then, you know, I have to go do like rent or something at night, which is a totally freaking draining show. And then when I get home, I would study the size that they give me and I like, I just I really wanted to memorize them to let them know, like, Hey, I'm really serious about this and I can learn really quickly. So, yeah, I kept doing that and I did it for, like all the characters that I told you, I know now pretty much is, is how many I did. And then the last one that they gave me was Hamilton, and I was like, Oh, I'm definitely not getting this because I can not do that. I never saw myself playing Hamilton and just never,

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Deejay Young [00:04:58] never, never saw it. So that really scared me when they sent me that, and I was like, There's just no way in heaven, hell, Jupiter, Saturn or any place that I would be cast after this. But after I sent that, they message me probably a week later. I will never forget this. I was at Disney. I just finished soundcheck and Telsey calls me on the phone. I did not answer because I don't think I heard my phone, but I saw the the voice mail notification pop up and I listened to it and they say, Hey, this is so-and-so from Telsey casting, and we'd like to offer you a principle contract in the national tour of Hamilton. And I, I just blacked out. I'm pretty sure I was like, I let out some sort of scream or something, but like my eyes just immediately. Well, with uncontrollable tears because I just couldn't believe it was happening. And then I had to do that freaking show, right? I had to do so show. And I can't even tell you how that show went I don't know how it went. I don't know what was happening. It was the fastest show I've ever done because it just was a blur.

Deejay Young [00:06:12] It was a blur to me. That's all I could think about. I don't know how I got through that show, but it was basically the moment that you always dreamed about happening so quickly because it all happened so fast. Yeah, it was crazy.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:06:27] So then you know, you make the phone calls, those fun phone calls to your friends and family, right? Were you allowed to say that? Were you allowed to make phone calls? Because sometimes you're not. I mean, you tell like your parents

Deejay Young [00:06:36] told my parents and I told my best friend and that and that was pretty much it. I did not. You know, they advised not to post about it and all of that stuff until the person that you know, I was replacing, their contract ended. But yeah, it was the hardest secret I've ever had to keep in my life because I ended up leaving Disney and everyone was so confused. The rumors were ablaze. The rumors were just all over the place. It was crazy, but I wanted to keep my word and not not say what was happening because, you know, I wanted to focus on the job. I'm not one of those to just, you know, announce every single move that's happening. I really wanted to focus on the work I had, you know, so many roles I had to learn. But

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yeah, it was. It was crazy. They were basically like, Hey, we're offering the job. Can you come in a week? Yeah, they wanted me to come in

Deejay Young [00:07:37] a week on the tour, and I actually had to ask for a little more time because I was, you know, I had to leave my contract guy to put in my two weeks at Disney and like, pack my life. Yeah. And that, you know that that was my first time touring since I was, you know, a little kid. So it was like, OK, we're doing this again. OK, so we're doing this right? Yeah. Crazy journey.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:08:01] Did you know anyone in the like? Did your travels lead you to anyone that you had met before? Or was it just like you're just walking in like, holy shit.

Deejay Young [00:08:09] I didn't know anyone. I was by myself. I was the only new person coming in at the time. I learned the show by myself. I was the only body I knew and loved the show. But when you learn it, it's it's it's completely

Deejay Young [00:08:24] different experience because I didn't realize how intricate the show was. I mean, the show is incredibly intricate and there's so much information and everything is so specific, and that's why the show is so good. I was. Mortified when I got on the tour. What do you mean, mortified? Why? I've done a lot of stuff performance wise, and I've been in a lot of shows. I have never been a part of something this challenging and I've never had to be a swing before. I've never played multiple roles in the show. I've always, you know. You know, this is my track. This is this is what I do. I've never had to cover multiple things. And you know, you know, the show one role is meaty. It's, you know, I never thought that I would have to know this many, and I never thought that I would be able to maintain it either. And now I look back from where I started and where I am now, and I'm like, Oh my gosh, I'm doing the thing that I thought I couldn't do one and be the thing I said I would never do. I said I would never go for multiple roles. That's too hard. I don't know how people do that. And this was something I could not pass up. I'm playing every role, you know,

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:09:44] being a standby and Hamilton is a huge undertaking, even if you've been a stand by your whole career. It's a hard gig.

Deejay Young [00:09:52] yeah, it's tough.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:09:53] So what was it like for you to adapt to that as your first time being a standby? And it's and this behemoth?

Deejay Young [00:10:01] I honestly. Cannot tell you, I really have to give it up to Voltaire Wade Greene, he's phenomenal. He's a great teacher. He taught me everything that I needed to know. He's an encyclopedia when it comes to the world of Hamilton, and he really just drilled everything in my brain. It's still there. I honestly did lots of studying and I still do. I still watch a lot of the show. I still take insane notes, and I guess my wanting to write all the time is is good here because I literally have every single detail completely mapped out. I have my, you know, my, my, my cheat sheets and things to just differentiate all the things that I do from the other characters. It's a lot. It's a lot, and it's never ending. But I guess that's what's. Guide me to be able to maintain it is that since I love the show, it's not it's not a lot of work for me to continue watching and continuing to dove in and see what it is I can perfect and what details are hidden beneath the surface. So I'm always learning and just always just trying to be better than the time before I wrote this post on Instagram a couple of weeks ago. I think when it was the National Swing Day, I said that because I'm a perfectionist. The most heartbreaking thing about being a standby is that it's never going to be perfect. It's never going to be perfect. But it challenges me to be better. I can be better than the next time. And that is is my goal. And that's what I'm doing. So I can't ask for anything. Less or more than that, you know?

Gillian Pensavalle [00:12:02] Yeah. What a great way to look at it.

Deejay Young [00:12:04] Otherwise it'll kill you.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:12:05] Well, yeah, I mean

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Deejay Young [00:12:06] literally can can kill you. And that's not that's not fun to bring unwarranted stress on yourself. So, yeah, the best thing to do is just breathe. Trust yourself. Let it be. Deejay. You know this, Deejay you. It's in your body. It's in your brain. Trust yourself, do the work and be better the next time. And that's how I look at it.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:12:28] Yeah. And also focusing on all of the scary stuff. I mean, you can acknowledge that it's scary or that, you know, but

Deejay Young [00:12:35] Its terrifying,

Gillian Pensavalle [00:12:36] right? And it's healthy to say like, Oh my god, this is, oh, this is a big deal. But it also to focus on all the negative stuff takes all the fun out of it. You're doing what you love to do and it's your job. You're making a living, doing this. So it takes all of the all of the things that feed you. Yeah. And that make you you and make you a performer and make you a creative person. And you're you're the way you're expressing yourself, like all of that goes out the window. If you're like, Oh, I did, that wasn't perfect.

Deejay Young [00:13:00] Yeah. And that's when the anxiety comes, and that's when the fear comes. And that's when, you know, we have to let that go and we have to we have to trust ourselves and just let ourselves be perfectly imperfect, because that's that's what we created to be. We're artists, and the good thing is that we can embrace what we wrote down and write something new, you know, so we have to look at our craft the same way. And I think that's that's what's. Allow me to just continue on. And I honestly feel better this time around than I did before the pandemic, because I was able to sit and reflect and look at my my the way that I approach it differently. I was I was so bummed when the shutdown happened because I was like, Oh my gosh, I have to start over. Oh, I have to start over everything that I did. I just finished learning all of my tracks. I remember the week that we shut down. I think I did every single track that I know in the same week. And then we shut down. I was so bummed. Yeah, I was like, There's no way I can. I can do this again. I don't know if I'm going to go back. That's where I was mentally.

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Yeah, yeah. And now. You know, just like I proved myself from before, I proved myself wrong again, like, you can't do it, you just have to focus yourself. And I feel even, you know, I feel like I'm in a better place than I was before, and I have another track that I didn't have before. You can do anything you put your mind to in this. This position has taught me that, and I'm grateful for it.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:14:37] How's Burr going?

Deejay Young [00:14:38] It's really been. It's really been a breath of fresh air. I remember when I was learning it, I was like, Oh, shoot, can I like, you know, give them the offer back? Oh my God, it's very tough because he never leaves the stage and he's always talking and he's always singing. And it's I just was really like, You know, when you ask for something and then, excuse me, you ask for something and then you get it. And then it's like, Did I really want this food or was I just hungry? And I thought that I wanted it? That's kind of where I was. But when I saw the show for the first time, I really, really resonated. With the character, and I really thought it was something that I saw myself doing, but when it came, I was so scared. I was terrified of it in so many ways and for so many reasons. But I'm having so much fun with it now, and it's I'm just grateful every time that I that I get to do it. It's it's a blessing for sure.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:15:46] All right. So now that we're pretty deep in the Hamilton of it all? Mm hmm. D.J., are you ready to take some questions from the Patreon peeps because wow.

Deejay Young [00:15:54] Oh, snap! All right, let's do it.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:15:56] They love you. They're very excited.

Deejay Young [00:15:58] Oh, that's so awesome.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:16:27] And a lot of them have seen you, so that's really fun.

Deejay Young [00:16:29] That's so cool. OK?

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:16:31] Speaking of, Jabo says, I saw DeeJay at the Fort Worth show. He was an amazing Lafayette Jefferson. And he has a couple of questions. So he's asking. So I'll ask all three at once and then we can break. So his questions are, what's it like walking down the stairs during what did I miss? Can you talk a little bit about the new choreography and how much artistic freedom is there during the line that is calling? So let's dove into what did I miss? And then we'll go into that. He's gone.

DeeJay Young [00:17:00] OK, OK.

DeeJay Young [00:17:02] All right. The first question is, how is it walking down the stairs?

Gillian Pensavalle [00:17:05] Yeah, because that's such a moment, right?

DeeJay Young [00:17:07] It's such a big moment. I think it's so much fun.

DeeJay Young [00:17:10] I think it really just shows what it is you're going to get from this character and what his personality is. He gets this big bread and joy and he comes down the stairs. I really love it. The first time was a little scary because that that what he's wearing, it falls. So like, it's such a long coat. I was like, Oh my gosh, I hope I don't trip. But the the wardrobe team is phenomenal. Like it's made perfectly. That would never happen. But aside from that, it's so fun. It's so fun coming down the stairs and they see him in all his glory for the first time. I think it's fun. Yeah, a lot of fun.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:17:47] Yeah. Let's talk about the new choreography and there are a lot of conversations about and I've spoken to Black actors specifically talking about what their approach to Jefferson is and what they put aside and how they approach it as a black person. So I'd love to talk to you about that and also just that new career. I mean, it's been discussed pretty often. It's been discussed a lot for how new it is on the podcast. So I would just love to know your your outlook on all that

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Deejay Young [00:18:18] Let's talk about the first portion of the question. It's always been discussed how the show in general, a lot of people have opinions about how a lot of the people we're portraying can be problematic and more problematic, which we, you know, we obviously know the history and we know what is the layer underneath. And I look at it as a black actor to we're completely stripping that away. We're completely stripping that away. And we're honestly just showing a different side of who these people who these people were. And as human beings, this show is for American people, and America in itself is a flawed, a flawed people. So the good thing about about having the opportunity of actors and color being in these pivotal roles as people who shaped our history. We get to see another perspective and we get to see the change live in front of you. And so that's how I look at it and approach it. As far as what did I miss choreography? It's so funny how a lot of things can just go over your head because I never even realized a lot of the movement and what exactly the ensemble was perched frame in that moment. And. I guess when we were relaunching, a lot of those discussions came up and we had discussions with the creative team and a lot of people expressed what they felt about it. And it was very important

Deejay Young [00:20:01] for me to just have my voice heard. And everyone was very receptive. The creative team was very receptive and really wanted to be the change and what it is that we wanted to see and what it is we want it to be reflected as. And so that's why the change changes there, and I want to say more changes are happening. I think we have another another session coming up where we get like the finalized version, but there are certain things that we like. I said to you, we know happened in our history and they're not discussed anywhere else in the show. So we don't want those things to overpower the the rest of the message that the show is is trying to give off. So we're taking those things out and and we know that they happened and we know that they exist and we're choosing to to just show the other the other side of it. We're choosing to show more of Jefferson and highlighting more of Jefferson and more of, you know, that that personality and that that, you know, huge essence of of of who he is rather than highlighting that, OK, this is what happened. We're slave owners now, you know, I don't think that that needs to be the the huge message. So it is very

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good that people know that that is happening. I was wondering if people noticed or if they really paid attention to the changes or if they really understood what it was in the beginning and what it is now. But I will have you know that this team is aware of things that have been problematic and things that may not have been there may not have been somebody to go, Hey, that's probably not a good idea, you know? And now, you know, especially since the pandemic, people are really being enlightened and people are really appreciating, you know, their heritage and who they are. I think I mentioned this about the primitive album I wanted to write. You know, music for people that look like me to know that it's OK to have darker skin and like, it's OK to be proud of that. So I'm glad that that was a period of people being enlightened and educated. And I think the creative team wanted to do the same. I mean, were actors of color on the road and multiple companies. I'm glad that they found it essential to just hear, hear us and be willing to change. I mean, that's a breakthrough. You know, in my opinion, to change a body of work that people know and people love and an effort for the people who are portraying these characters and bringing the message of what this show to life is. I mean, you know, the whole show is talking about how history has its eyes on you and for showing people our history through the lens of this show and this show is going to live on. Let's show them, you know, let's show them something positive. Let's show them something that is the change that is now. And I'm glad that they decided to do that.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:23:47] Thank you for sharing that point of view.

Deejay Young [00:23:49] Absolutely.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:23:50] Yeah. And yes, he's asking how much artistic freedom is there during daddy's calling.

Deejay Young [00:23:57] I really love our resident director, Ashley. She's phenomenal. She really lets people develop their character. And yeah, there is. There is some freedom there too to say it. How we how we want to go.

Deejay Young [00:24:15] It's it's fun.

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:24:17] I mean, again, for all of the horrible shit that the real Jefferson did, right, rapist, horrible, horrible person in so many ways. But The Jeffersons that I've spoken to like there, it's sometimes it's fun to be the villain, sometimes in absolutes in this story, the way he's portrayed with the Purple Prince outfit. You know what I mean. So like James Iglehart says that all the time he let you know he plays his. He played his. Jefferson is like. A heel in wrestling, and to him, that was fun, like when he comes out like, you know, you know, more from the crowd and all that so little subtle moments like Daddy's Call and like, you could really pack a pretty big punch with those two words

Deejay Young [00:25:00] that piss Hamilton, piss him off a little bit.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:25:02] Well, that's the goal. Always, right?

Deejay Young [00:25:04] Yes, it's really fun.

Deejay Young [00:25:06] Yeah, yeah. For the actor, it's so, it's so fun to to just play with that whoever's playing Hamilton and just really get under his skin a little bit. It's always fun.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:25:16] Joe says I'm curious about what happens as a stand by during a performance when you're not on stage.

Deejay Young [00:25:22] I the majority of the time and watching because I want to know what's happening with the cast that's on every night. I want to know what's happening on stage, what new things are developing. So I'm mainly watching and knowing five roles.

Deejay Young [00:25:36] I'm always, always trying

Deejay Young [00:25:39] to, you know, keep it fresh in my mind. So I'm usually watching. If I'm like, mentally exhausted, I may watch, you know, something on my computer or something, but that's very rare. I like to know what's happening, but there

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have been instances where I have been called on in the middle of a show. It's happened before.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:25:59] I would think that it would be valuable to watch, too, just to see who is playing what role and with what vibe so that you sort of know what you're walking into a little bit.

Deejay Young [00:26:08] I like I like to know what I'm getting into.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:26:11] But he is also asking, do you have a routine that you go through regardless of if you're on or not? I guess, because if you don't know then.

Deejay Young [00:26:19] Water water is my pre-show routine water and lip trills and, you know, just making sure I'm warm in case and steaming. I like to steam every every day, just in case. And this is like a weird, like

Deejay Young [00:26:41] ritual of mine.

Deejay Young [00:26:42] But I really need jolly ranchers to endorse me because I have to have jolly ranchers before I do the show.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:26:49] Wait a second.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:26:51] So I love that. But even like watermelon, jolly ranchers talk about like a throwback. I love.

Deejay Young [00:26:57] I love the watermelon in the cherry. They're my favorite.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:26:59] But now I have to ask you as a singer, because even thinking about having a watermelon jolly rancher that like mouth feeling is coming. And so do they help or hurt your throat when you have to sing? Like, doesn't it sort of like, does it?

Deejay Young [00:27:13] Oh, it's like God's green nectar for me.

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:27:16] Is it really?

Deejay Young [00:27:17] Yeah, I don't know what it is.

Deejay Young [00:27:19] A lot of singers like have a thing about like sour candies and stuff before they sing.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:27:25] right.

Deejay Young [00:27:25] I feel like it has some sort of thing to do with just watering the palate down and making it so your throat doesn't get dry. And we're, you know, I'm saying so many words. So I found that jolly ranchers really help like. I don't know, they just help my throat, and they just cut my throat very well before I have to sing and do the show. It's like my secret.

Deejay Young [00:27:47] That is

Gillian Pensavalle [00:27:48] fascinating. I'm going to have to sing you a whole bunch of jolly ranchers now.

Deejay Young [00:27:52] Oh my god, I love that.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:27:55] Tell me where you are and I'll. Oh my god. Somewhere I can send it. I'll do it. Joe is also asking What is the most interesting or exciting or terrifying thing that you have experienced as a stand by

Deejay Young [00:28:06] terrifying or what I heard terrifying. That was like the the first thing that like popped up in my brain.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:28:11] Interesting. Exciting, terrifying.

Deejay Young [00:28:14] I mean, going on for Burr for the first time was exciting and terrifying. Going on in my first role period was very terrifying because it just goes by. You have to just, you know, rely on your instincts.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:28:30] Who was your first role that you went on for ?

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Deejay Young [00:28:33] Laurens/Philip. That was my first, my first role. I debuted in Philly. Oh yeah, that was my first role. Yeah, it's just it's it just can be scary a lot because I play so many like I play all of the Sons of Liberty. They're all together. They all. Are in the same scenes in like there's just always terrifying moments of, Oh crap, do I say that? Do I say this line? Who am I today? What harmony and my singing? It just always gets super terrifying. And now that I know Hamilton and Burr, it's like the same freaking thing where it's like, it just gets scary

Deejay Young [00:29:10] It's like, What do I say?

Gillian Pensavalle [00:29:11] the beauty of the lyrics coming back can also, I remember Nik Walker saying, which? How does a?

Deejay Young [00:29:17] Oh my god.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:29:19] I imagined for Hamilton. Or, you know, the thing

Deejay Young [00:29:21] that is scary. You know, actually, that's very scary. The soliloquy is very scary because you don't hear anything. It's just you. And my first time doing that, I was so scared because, you know, there are some it's it's pretty much you in the in the beginning. And then at the end, when it gets to what if this bullet is my legacy? It goes in time and the orchestra has to has to pick you up, secured the sound effect pads. Yeah, all of that is scary. It's just this show is just crazy. Yeah, it's crazy.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:29:55] Anya says, Yay Angelica company. I get to see you in North Carolina. Oh, nice. She says. I'm always interested in how you prepare to go on for different roles, so this is a little bit about what you were just saying. She says, How do you get into the right Ham or the right Sons of Liberty headspace? And are there special songs involved?

Deejay Young [00:30:13] OK, yeah. Honestly, I have certain quirks with with every person that I play. I try not to be the same person. Like, I try not to be doing the role. I try to really differentiate every person so I may not walk the same. I

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may not do the same gestures depending on who they are. I, you know, I may not talk the same way. I may not react to things the same. I really try to establish a personality and establish who they really are. So that they're different to me. I feel like if I don't do that, then I'll I'll go in the mindset of it's me doing it, and then that's when I'll make mistakes, or that's when I'll they'll all like mesh into the same person. So I found that being really easy for me so that when I put on the costume, I know who I am. I know I know what this person's motivation is, and that's made it very easy for me to approach every role differently is that they're in their own compartment of who they are.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:31:27] Yeah. So similarly, Kelly says, Oh my god, DeeJay After just seeing the Angelica company come through Dallas and Fort Worth, I'm in awe of his talent. She saw you as Hamilton in Dallas and as Laf/Jeff in Fort Worth.

DeeJay Young [00:31:39] Oh my goodness, that's crazy. That's so cool.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:31:42] She was asking, too, about how you prepare differently for all the roles, but she, she adds, she says, how do you decide where to add in a little more melody in places where it's not on the page? Because yes, I noticed

Gillian Pensavalle [00:31:55] I don't know what she's talking about, but

DeeJay Young [00:31:57] I don't know either.

DeeJay Young [00:32:00] You know, I really like that they give us the liberty to bring our own flair to the characters. I'm not

DeeJay Young [00:32:10] sure which character she's referring

DeeJay Young [00:32:12] to, but I, you know there are a couple of sections where we have a little bit of freedom and I'll, you know, add a little something,

DeeJay Young [00:32:21] something there that our

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Deejay Young [00:32:22] musical director approves of. But you know, it's always in taste, it's always in taste. It's always, you know, Jefferson has. Does just this personality that, you know, that calls for that Hamilton doesn't sing as much. So it's not super, super appropriate, but I'm assuming she may be talking about some of the Jefferson stuff, but we do get some freedoms to just bring our own musical personality into the roles, which is very, very cool. And I really respect our musical director, Patrick Fanning. He's amazing and he just allows us to be ourselves and trust us, trust us as musicians to bring life to what's already there.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:33:09] Yeah, because this has been discussed too. On the pod, where it's you have to be able to have your own artistic freedom and the way you express these characters. But I remember, I don't know, I think it was Kurt Crowley where he was just like, but you can't just like, go on a riff for the sake of it. I guess to make sense for that if you want to do a little journey for one last time. Let's walk together and see what kind of works. But like with Lafayette Jefferson, I remember not to bring them up again, but James Iglehart used to do try to tax our whiskey to make it kind of cool and jazzy. Yeah. So just little things like that where I love all those changes or I love going like, Ooh, I wasn't expecting Angelica to go that route. Like, I love hearing that. It just gives me this like rush sitting in the audience. I just love it.

Deejay Young [00:33:56] So, yeah, it's just something different.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:33:58] Kambouris says, Deejay you are so incredible. I was honored to see your laugh Jeff Re debut in October. Oh, wow! She says. My question is, does one of the roles you cover carry more weight for you than others in any way? I can't imagine being able to remember so many different roles.

Deejay Young [00:34:15] It's a lot of lyrics that just live in my brain. I tell you that. Yeah. I would say. There are just so important and so integral to the story, they all carry some sort of narrative to push the story forward. I really am just super, super grateful about about Burr and his story. I feel like he's

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so looked over a lot and he there's so much more than the person that, you know, kills Hamilton and like. Gets sort of angry at the end, there's so much more to the basic, you know, side of that. And I feel like that aspect of the character weighs heavily on me because you have to be able to to show that you have to be able to see because there is a friendship between him and Hamilton at the beginning that has to be there. You know, it has to be established at the beginning and then it has to go from that to what is this guy doing? What is this guy doing? I'm trying to get somewhere. He's in my way. Oh my gosh, it's because we want, you know, we have the same kind of instincts. They have to be able to see that. And it's hard. It's hard to to go on that arc. So I find it that I put a lot of pressure on myself to to be able to to show that, yeah, Hamilton and Burr are very, very hard characters.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:35:47] Yeah, there's been a lot of conversation on this podcast to about Burr being a villain, and he is in some ways and if he isn't, you know, like how much of a villain is he like, yeah, he kills the guy in the end. But a lot of the Burrs I've spoken to are, you know, the guy had his reasons, right?

Deejay Young [00:36:04] Yeah, I mean, Hamilton was a jerk.

Deejay Young [00:36:06] The word, let's be let's be clear.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:36:08] Insufferable

Deejay Young [00:36:09] Hamilton was a jerk. Yeah. And I mean, you know, Burr says in the beginning, fools who run their mouths off wind up dead. And it's so funny when he says that we see Laurens for the first time. Oh yeah. You know what I mean? There are so many, so many layers of this story that go above your head. So, yeah, it's just very important for for these things to to show through so that the person that's watching for the first time that may not hear every single word, it may not catch it because it's, you know, practically impossible to show them, you know what they may not catch. So there's a lot of a lot of responsibility.

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:36:50] Yeah, I was just thinking about they're so different, and that's part of the sadness that they were friends and it could have gone so many different ways. Yeah. And the story and then I just thought if they only could meet in the middle and then my mind went to the visual, they do meet in the middle and it's the door when they're actually physically meeting each other to sort of like the balance of, OK, he's at 100 and he's at 100. Can we sort of try to meet in the middle? And when they do, Burr kills him

Deejay Young [00:37:20] Yeah. But we also see how Burr also says, Can we agree that those are dumb and immature? Right, right. Well, they are. They are stupid. Why were they doing that? But we basically still do it. We basically still do it. And sometimes sometimes the gun is our mouth, you know, and we still do that. We still, oh my gosh, I don't agree with. But this person is saying, I'm going to. Yeah, I'm going to. Yep, I'm going to say all these these things and then look what we have. We have the door. We have this person against this person because I don't agree with what they believe in and I don't know that we still do that. So it's crazy how relevant this story is and how you know who is the villain? Who is the hero? Sometimes the villain is us. And so we need to we need to understand that sometimes we need to honestly just see eye to eye and really just come together. And that's what I love about the casting of the show is that, you know, we can't get caught up on on the flawed, the flawed ness of the people that we're portraying. If we do that, we miss what we're what we're doing here. People miss what Hamilton is doing. And so it's it's just remarkable how many layers there are to this story. And it's really cool. Like, I could talk about it all day.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:38:41] Yeah, no. I love it. And how how often now that it's part of the lexicon, now that the phrase the world is wide enough, it comes up in my conversations, Hamilton or otherwise. Just the idea of like why like any sort of conflict even or people caring about the wrong kind of thing, like everything you're saying, like our mouth is the gun. And just like, I don't like the symbol, but it's like the world is wide enough to make your thing, do your thing. Like, Yeah, why? Why do everything is very like high stakes? And yeah, you can't exist because I want the and it's like, wait, wait... what?

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Deejay Young [00:39:15] Yeah, exactly. When all the when all along we can come together and create our own opportunities and get there faster,

Deejay Young [00:39:24] get there faster, even,

Deejay Young [00:39:26] you know. So it's all in this story. It's all there.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:39:29] It's like, or you can just mind your business and live your life too

Deejay Young [00:39:32] like that, too. There are options. There are options that

Gillian Pensavalle [00:39:37] is free of charge. Minding your business.

Deejay Young [00:39:38] Yeah, exactly.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:39:42] Rob is asking, what is your favorite moment in the show to witness from offstage or the surround or otherwise while the spotlight is on someone else?

Deejay Young [00:39:49] I always love being Philip and watching room where it happens, like he sees the whole thing. Yeah, from the Surround. He's on stage left around. Yeah, it's very cool watching that every time. It just looks so cool, seeing that whole number from up there.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:40:08] Yeah, from above, from behind and about. That's cool. Yeah. Joel is asking What is life like in between cities? Who do you hang out with and what activities help pass the time

Deejay Young [00:40:18] Traveling on tour with this show is it's hard. I can't lie. It's hard. We get one day off and sometimes that one day is the Travel Day, so it's a little exhausting. And it's it's I don't really like change too too much.

Deejay Young [00:40:34] Yeah, I do, but I don't.

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Deejay Young [00:40:36] I don't like falling in love with something. And then you have to go like, you fall in love with a city. You're there for two or three weeks and then you had to leave. Makes me a little sad, but I love finding little spots, especially places that I stay at. I love finding different places that are unique in their own way. And I love I'm a foodie, so I always like finding, you know, mom and pop places that aren't super mainstream and hip to like, you know, a bunch of people that a bunch of people may not know about and finding them and that kind of that kind of thing. Low coffee shops and bakeries and things like that. I mostly hang with Tyler Bellow and Zoe Jensen. They are the Hercules Mulligan and Eliza on my tour. They were, you know, two of my, my buddies. So we we always kick it a lot. And yeah, I try to find like a good theme park, too cool where we are. I love roller coasters and stuff like that. So if there's something around, I have to go.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:41:39] Well, speaking of food, Deb, Deb always asks this question and I love wherever we go with that because usually it just takes us down a very interesting path. It's beyond food. Deb is asking What is your favorite type of pasta

Deejay Young [00:41:52] like the noodle? Like what? The type of the noodle

Gillian Pensavalle [00:41:54] we can go. Type of noodle. We can go dish pasta dish.

Deejay Young [00:41:58] We can go, OK, whatever that means to you

Deejay Young [00:42:01] this could go many ways. I love macaroni and cheese. I love baked macaroni cheese. Yeah, I make bomb macaroni and cheese as well.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:42:10] So when you say baked, so that means it's like all crunchy on the top. And then really,

Deejay Young [00:42:13] it's like the melted cheese on the top. It's like a little brown. Oh yeah, it's like the cheese is in

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the middle. Yeah, yeah. My my my nanna makes the best mac and cheese, and she may have taught me how to make it. And now I'm unstoppable.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:42:29] I believe, you know, your whole face changed talking about how good that mac and cheese was

Deejay Young [00:42:33] Yeah, southern southern style mac and cheese. You can't go wrong with it. But as a pasta person like I love penne noodles, penne is the way to go.

Deejay Young [00:42:44] Yeah, I just got very hungry. Me too. Me too. If I get a little bit.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:42:49] So now Mac, I know possibilities are endless and

Deejay Young [00:42:53] you can do you can do penne,

Deejay Young [00:42:54] a mac and cheese too. I've had penny mac and cheese. Very, very good. because a lot of people just do the elbow. You can do penny. And it actually like the consistency of like when the cheese like sticks together really, really well with penny noodles. Like, if you want to do like a crab mac and cheese, I would suggest penne noodles.

Deejay Young [00:43:14] Very, very good.

Deejay Young [00:43:16] Yeah, they're very random. When I go to Cheesecake Factory, they have like the Louisiana chicken pasta and it's like the bow tie pasta. I request penne every time I sub it for penne noodles.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:43:26] That's so funny. I have friends that work at cheesecake for years. Like decades ago, the Louisiana chicken pasta comes up a lot when people get the thing of it's my favorite is that the menu's just like it's gigantic. It's known to be gigantic. The portions are gigantic. It's ridiculous. But that Louisiana chicken pasta comes up a lot with those guys when they're talking about it because it's favorites within the group and favorites within the regulars

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Deejay Young [00:43:48] are so good.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:43:49] So that's so funny that you would pick that you would ask for the penne.

Deejay Young [00:43:52] Yeah, every time it's sad, it's like I go there. So much like in Orlando, I'm pretty sure they like, know me because I'm always ordering it.

Deejay Young [00:44:01] But yeah, I sub.

Deejay Young [00:44:02] I sub the noodles out for the penne. They're like, Oh, we know exactly who this guy is. He had us every freakin week.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:44:07] So here's a secret about Cheesecake Factory, which is probably not a secret if you ever worked in any kind of like really corporate restaurant. Okay? But no matter where you are at what Cheesecake Factory this, it's the same exact experience like the same music is on in Orlando and New York. You should be able to go to any Cheesecake Factory in the country and have the same experience. So if you're traveling like it should feel familiar because this is like the same exact one as home. Yeah, it's like the same playlist design, no matter what time of day it is like, it's all the same. It's not so crazy.

Deejay Young [00:44:40] crazy. I didn't know that, and I'm like obsessed with Cheesecake Factory. I find one in every city is horrible.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:44:45] I still love a good corporate restaurant. I'm with you. I'll go to like the Dove Bar. You like the great little Italian joint that released the mom and pop places that shows you really what this city is like, but also like except for the Olive Garden, which I'm not as a Pensavalle, I can't. Sorry, I'm not doing it, but like, I'll go to The Cheesecake Factory.

Deejay Young [00:45:02] For sure.

Deejay Young [00:45:04] Let's go

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:45:04] right now could order the mac and cheese because I'm going to eat yours because I know, I know it's going to be butter

Deejay Young [00:45:10] The fried, I think, is Fried Mac, the fry mac and Cheese and Cheesecake Factory is the little bites.

Deejay Young [00:45:17] They're very good. You must try them. Yeah, yeah.

Deejay Young [00:45:21] And it comes with like the mozzarella sauce.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:45:22] Deejay you're killing me.

Deejay Young [00:45:23] And you know, they're sausages are like, OK, I'm going to stop.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:45:27] No, I love it. And then you go to cheese and then you can eat. If you're into leftovers, you eat for days.

Deejay Young [00:45:33] Oh my God. For centuries, it takes me three days to eat the red velvet cheesecake. Three.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:45:38] Oh yeah, it's like, it's like, Oh God, I remember when there was all this stuff about like, what's cheesecake? Fact what we had to like start putting calories on all the menus.

Deejay Young [00:45:46] Everyone was like, I don't care about that. In fact, are you going to do like, I think about that about. They have a skinnylicious menu and somebody tried to like, give me a skinny, delicious menu. I said, If you don't throw this across the street

Gillian Pensavalle [00:45:57] eat what you want. But I remember when that was all a big thing. Everyone had to know what calorie it. First of all, what you want to eat like, I don't subscribe to that at all.

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Deejay Young [00:46:04] Yeah, exactly.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:46:05] To me, it's it's three meals like, I don't care what the calories are if I were getting it, but

Deejay Young [00:46:10] for sure, it's

Gillian Pensavalle [00:46:11] just it was. I remember that being like, You know, what's cheesecake going to do? And I'm like, nothing. There's still going to be a zillion dollar corporation and we're all going to go

Deejay Young [00:46:18] for a day or two and driving change. Right?

Gillian Pensavalle [00:46:24] Cassie says Deejay is giving me all the boys to men vibes. So I'd like to know. I'd like to know if he was into 90s R&B, and if so, what are some of his favorites from that era of music?

Deejay Young [00:46:38] Oh my gosh, they're so funny.

Deejay Young [00:46:40] I love that question. I literally am such a 90s baby. It's not even funny. I, my dad, had all, you know, a bunch of R&B albums, you know, Earth, wind and fire records, and he had the boys to men II cd, I think it was called II. Yeah, yeah. I love, love, love,

Deejay Young [00:47:02] love, R&B music. And that's, you know, one of the genres I fell in love with. I love Luther Vandross. Loved Anita Baker. Yeah, I can go on and on R&B. Like, Is my whole life

Gillian Pensavalle [00:47:16] Yeah. It's also a compliment that Cassie's saying that you give her Boyz to Men vibes

Deejay Young [00:47:21] That's a huge compliment. I love Boys To Men, and I've seen them

Deejay Young [00:47:24] live a few times. They've come to Disney. Yeah, they always do the Food and Wine Festival at Disney. And I was doing this show that was on the same stage as

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them. And so we basically opened up for oysterman, and when they came on for their set, I want to say it was one year that, like shouted me out. He was like, Yo, the dude

Deejay Young [00:47:45] singing was sick. It's like, Yes, I've arrived. Like, Yeah, yeah, I love Boys to Men.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:47:52] That's awesome. I love this question. This is from Lauren. Lauren says, Hi, Deejay you seem like you like to do it all. I'm always so struck with how people who are involved in Hamilton seem to cross genres and entertainment platforms. Have you ever had to push back on people who have suggested that you just have to pick a lane? Wow, that's so good.

Deejay Young [00:48:14] That's such a good question, Lauren. Oh my gosh.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:48:16] That like stopped me in my tracks today. I was like, This is amazing.

Deejay Young [00:48:19] I love. Yeah, and it literally just brought me back. I remember, like I told you, I grew up, you know, in church, I started singing in church, and when I went to high school, that's when I knew I wanted to start making my own music. I actually started like recording my own music on my laptop, and I had a few mixtapes out when I was in high school and my whole school had them. I would like give them away and sell them and poor people. To this day, still write me like, Oh my gosh, I still have your mixtape. I love this song in this song. In this song. Yeah. Yeah, it was. It was. It was a really cool experience, and people from my church really like a few people, I kind of shunned me and like started to say things to my family like, you know, he's out there doing R&B music now and he comes from the church and you know, and my parents, really my parents are literally the best thing that could have happened to me. They're the reason that I'm that I'm even here because they've stood by me and supported me. And when I, you know, dropped out of college and, you know, when I wanted to pursue this type of music, they stood by me and they go to all of my shows. They actually saw my Burr debut.

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:49:32] Oh, yay, that's yeah.

Deejay Young [00:49:34] So it was. It's it's just exciting. You know that they get to be on this journey. And they stood by me when people were saying those types of things and they were like, Hey, doesn't matter where he's singing, what, what, what he's doing is bringing people together and people are touching. By what he's doing and yeah, people always try to, you know, put you in a lane, and I've never been, I've never been one to be in one lane. I love all types of music and I love all types of messages, and I'm inspired by so many things. So I incorporate that into my artist, into my artistry. And yeah, I don't listen to people that try to say, Oh, you need to do this for people to accept it or you need to sound like this. I've always tried my best to be who I really am and express myself the way that I see fit. And it's always reached someone. And you know, that's all I could ask for is if it touches someone and inspires someone, then I've done my job.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:50:38] I love your relationship with your parents. That's so beautiful. They're the best, but they're so supportive and they're there for you. And in so many ways,

Deejay Young [00:50:46] yeah, they are. They they really are. They're always there, and I've always stood by my side. Yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:50:52] Lastly, Carrie is asking, what is inspiring you right now?

Deejay Young [00:50:56] What is inspiring me right now? Honestly, just the fact that we were not in the show for two years. And now we're back and everybody's killing it and looks great and sounds great and is, you know, kicking COVIDs behind. And you know what I mean? I feel like that's inspiring me is that everybody's out here doing their thing, and we're not letting this pandemic stop us. And we're not, you know, letting obstacles define where we can go and what we can be. I feel like that's inspiring me, and it's really inspired me to really talk to you and hear all these questions from people and people who have, like, seen the show already. And you never know who's watching and you never know who wants to do this. And I've had the opportunity to do some Broadway plus masterclasses in

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Texas and in some other cities we've been in. And you know, there are kids who are really, really great who who really respect what I do and in this profession, and that inspires me as well. So it's just, you know, it's inspiring to be an inspiration to others, and that's what we're doing. Yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:52:13] Yes. I'm glad you feel that love and and really and respect from the Peeps because it's so real. So I'm glad that you can have that connection, especially since so many of them just saw you or have tickets.

Deejay Young [00:52:27] Yeah, that's amazing. I mean, you know, there are people who it was their birthday present. You know, it was their Christmas present. There were people saying, you know, we've been waiting for two years to see it. You know, it's a very special thing.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:52:40] Yeah, yeah. So speaking of Broadway Plus, tell the people where they can find you on social media, where they can find your music, your websites, your Broadway, plus information like where can they find you?

Deejay Young [00:52:51] So a lot of my updates and everything are on my website. DEEJAYYOUNG.COM. I'm on Instagram, Tok, Twitter, all of that stuff. DEEJAY Young, Um, my YouTube and my Instagram are like the same handle @ WHO IZ DEEJAY YOUNG? Yeah, you could pretty much just fine me by either Googling Deejay Young or typing deejay in any search engine, and that's how you can find my music as well.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:53:30] Yes, and I will link all of these in the show notes to make sure that, OK, you're getting those to make sure that people are buying the album and

Deejay Young [00:53:38] thank you, you

Gillian Pensavalle [00:53:38] know, showing you support.

Deejay Young [00:53:40] Thank you. I really appreciate it.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:53:41] And really, Deejay. Thank you for spending your afternoon with me. I loved this conversation. I

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feel rejuvenated after talking to you. I loved spending this time with you. So thank you for coming and being so open and telling your story and just really being so amazing. Thank you so much.

Deejay Young [00:53:57] Thank you for having me. I've had a great time.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:53:59] Yeah, I'm so glad. And thank you listeners for sticking with me for all this time. Thank you. Patreon Peeps your amazing questions, as always. Yeah, I love you all, and I'll talk to you next week. So thank you so much for listening. I'm G. Pen.

Deejay Young [00:54:13] I'm Deejay Young and have a great day.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:54:16] I get that mac and cheese everybody.

Deejay Young [00:54:19] Go, Do it, go do it.

[00:54:50]

Gillian Pensavalle: 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. A big thank you to Jenson Parker Neal, my dear friend and right hand man who helps me make the thing about the thing. To become a Patreon Peep and join the best, kindest and most welcoming corner of the internet. Go to patreon.com/TheHamilcast. You can submit questions to guests, join Zoom Hangouts, get behind the scenes access and of course, my endless gratitude. On social media at the pod is @TheHamilcast and I'm @gillianwithag G-I-L-L-I-A-N-W-I-T-H-A-G. Visit THEHAMILCAST.COM for episodes, transcripts and more. You can see what's going on with Mike, you know Mike, at MichaelPaulSmith.Net True Crime Obsessed is my true crime comedy podcast with my podcast soulmate, Patrick Hinds, and we were the first podcast to ever play Broadway.

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