USC VISIONS AND VOICES: THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES INITIATIVE PRESENTS

The Real

JAMES BOND

...Was

DOMINICAN

Saturday, March 26, 2022
7:30 p.m.
Bovard Auditorium
University of Southern California
Support for the creation and development of The Real James Bond...Was Dominican has been provided through the Harlem Stage Fund for New Work, which has received support from the Jerome Foundation. Additional development support was provided by the Tecovas Foundation, HI-ARTS through their Critical Breaks program, and by Playmakers Repertory Company. Support for the world premiere production provided by the National Hispanic Cultural Center and the National Hispanic Cultural Center Foundation.

Christopher Rivas appears courtesy of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Please join us for a conversation with the artists following tonight’s performance.

A DNAWORKS PRODUCTION

Photo: Laura Bustillos Jáquez
Christopher Rivas (Writer/Performer/Creator) is an award-winning storyteller, actor, author, and podcaster. He currently co-stars in the second season of the FOX series, Call Me Kat, opposite Mayim Bialik. Christopher is simultaneously authoring a book, Brown Enough, slated for release by Row House Publishing in September 2022, as well as two podcasts with SiriusXM's Stitcher: the first, a limited series on the life of Porfirio Rubirosa, and the second, a 40-episode talk-back by the same title of his book. Additional on-screen credits include roles in NBC’s New Amsterdam, CBS’s 2 Broke Girls, ABC’s Grey’s Anatomy, and FOX’s Rosewood.

Daniel Banks (Director/Creator) has directed productions including the African premiere of August Wilson’s Jitney at the National Theatre of Uganda; the Eastern European premiere of Anna in the Tropics by Nilo Cruz at the Belarussian National Drama Theatre; a workshop production of Zakiyyah Alexander’s hip hop play Blurring Shine at The Market Theatre in South Africa; Tap Into Peace, a tap and spoken word tribute to love, set to the music of Stevie Wonder, at Playhouse Square in Cleveland; and workshops of new works with Bay Area Playwrights Festival, PlayMakers Repertory Company, and McCarter Theatre (McCarter/Sallie B. Goodman Fellow). He also served on the dramaturgical team for Camille A. Brown & Dancers’ Black Girl: Linguistic Play and ink (touring). Daniel is the co-artistic director of DNAWORKS, an arts and service organization dedicated to engaging the arts as a catalyst for dialogue and healing around the topics of representation, identity, and heritage. He is founder and director of the Hip Hop Theatre Initiative, which promotes youth self-expression and leadership through the genre of Hip Hop Theatre and is associate director of Theatre Without Borders. Daniel is the 2020 Recipient of TCG’s Alan Schneider Director Award. Daniel is represented by the Michael Moore Agency.

Jonathan Gomez (Percussion) is a New York City–based percussionist, composer, and arranger born in Bogota, Colombia. There is no question as to why he has been able to take traditional Colombian music to popular venues around the U.S. His musical career began at the age of five at Orquesta Sinfonica Juvenil de Colombia and continued at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, where he gained a better understanding of world music. He has performed in renowned festivals such as Globalfest, Music of Colors (Detroit), and SXSW (Austin, TX). He has also participated in the first Colombian musical presented at the Lincoln Center, La Mas Grande Historia Jamas Cantada, and earned a Grammy Award with Arturo O’Farrill and his Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra. Jonathan has an extensive career in the salsa scene in Colombia as part of La Real Charanga, recording two productions and taking first place in Salsa al Parque and Jazz al Parque. He has had the opportunity of playing and recording with well-known artists such as Luisito Carrión, Luis Felipe Gonzalez, Luis Fonsi, Daddy Yankee, Kader Japonaise, and Shwekey.

Aaron Johansen (Production Stage Manager/Lighting Supervisor) is pleased to be returning to DNAWORKS! Previous lighting design collaborations have included Dallas Theater Center, Dallas Children’s Theater, Second Thought Theater (artistic associate), Kitchen Dog Theater (company member), Theater Three, Stage West, Uptown Players, Cry Havoc Theater Company, Cara Mia Theatre Co., and Sweet Tooth Hotel Art installation. Aaron recently became the co-lighting director for the Drone Racing League, where he designs lighting for drone racing courses around the country. By day, Aaron is the Lighting Manager for the AT&T Performing Arts Center in the arts district of Dallas.
Matt Soson (Video Supervisor) is a writer, director, programmer, and performer who pursues research and art practices that allow audiences to see both the fluidity of their personal reality and the way a life can be expressed. Hailed by the Los Angeles Times as being “cinematic while theatrical in the same moment,” he focuses on new affordances in site-specific, mixed-reality narratives. Spanning multiple genres and mediums, his work has been featured on stages such as Opera Omaha and the Fowler Museum, festivals including the Austin Film Festival and Leeds Festival, and on mobile phones and other XR mediations around the world.

Recently, Driscoll Otto (Lighting Design) designed lighting and projections for Chicago Opera Theatre’s *Becoming Santa Claus*, lighting and projections for Houston Grand Opera’s *Marian’s Song*, lighting for The Huntington Theatre Company’s production of *The Purists* directed by Billy Porter, projections for Maggio Musica Fiorentino’s *The Flying Dutchman*, and lighting and projections for *Iolanta* at Chicago Opera Theatre. Driscoll’s design work is seen frequently in New York City in American regional theatre and opera. His credits include The Huntington Theatre Company, Utah Opera, The Old Globe, Opera Omaha, Opera Philadelphia, Dallas Theater Center, Drury Lane Theatre, the Dallas Opera, Chicago Opera Theatre, Houston Shakespeare Festival, Trinity Repertory Company, Hangar Theatre, Flat Rock Playhouse, Lyric Opera Kansas City, and productions of *Legally Blonde* and *Rock of Ages* for Norwegian Cruise Lines. Highlights to his resume include projection design for Santa Fe Opera’s production of *The Golden Cockerel* and The Metropolitan Opera’s production of *La Donna Del Lago*. Upcoming projects include *The Life*, reimagined and directed by Billy Porter for New York City Center’s Encores!, and Paul Moravec and Mark Campbell’s new oratorio, *Sanctuary Road*. Driscoll received his MFA from New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts, and his work can be seen at driscollotto.com.

Alexandra Kelly Colburn (Projections Design) is a Washington, D.C.–based multidisciplinary artist working as a producer, director, designer, and deviser for live performance. She is the artistic lead for theatre at Flying V as well as the digital producer at Theater Alliance. She is a DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities fellowship awardee, a co-recipient of a 2019 Helen Hayes Award for Lighting/Projections Design for *Blood at the Root*, a 2017-2018 NextLOOK Resident, and a recipient of the 2018 Jim Henson Puppetry Grant, who received a BFA from NYU Tisch School of the Arts in 2011 and MFA from the University of Minnesota Duluth in 2018.

Wilson R. Torres (Original Score) is a New York native, born and raised in Washington Heights. He began his musical journey at the age of two, holding it down on the pots and pans. When he was three, he received his first drum, putting his journey in motion. His formal training began at the age of 12, when he received a scholarship from The New York Pops Orchestra to study with percussionist Susan Evans. Wilson is a graduate of the Juilliard School Music Advancement Program, the Juilliard School Pre-College program, and the Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music and Art (*Fame*). He received his B.M., M.M. in Orchestral Performance from The Manhattan School of Music under the tutelage of Duncan Patton and Christopher S. Lamb. Broadway credits include the Tony and Grammy Award-winning musical *In the Heights*, *Les Misérables* (25th anniversary revival), *Lysistrata Jones, The Wiz* (encores), *On Your Toes* (encores), and *Cabin in the Sky* (encores). Tours include *The Lion King* (first national), *The Lion King* (Cheetah), and *Wicked* (first national). Orchestral credits include the San Francisco Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, Staten Island Symphony, and Albany Symphony. Wilson is a proud endorser of Latin Percussion and Sabian Cymbals.
DNAWORKS is a Fort Worth, TX-based arts and service organization dedicated to dialogue and healing through the arts. Founded in 2006 by Daniel Banks and Adam W. McKinney, DNAWORKS centers Global Majority and LGBTQ2SPIAA+ voices to create more complex representations of identity, culture, class, and heritage through dance, theatre, film, and writing.

DNAWORKS has led its award-winning programming and performances, promoting dialogue-based social justice action and community building, with arts, educational, and community organizations in 37 states and 17 countries. DNAWORKS believes that art = ritual = healing = community and that this philosophy and practice lead to a more peaceful world. For more information, please visit dnaworks.org.

DNAWORKS STAFF

DANIEL BANKS, Co-Artistic Director
ADAM W. MCKINNEY, Co-Artistic Director
Tiffany Hall, Co-Managing Director
Morgana Wilborn, Co-Managing Director
Marirosa Garcia, Social Media Coordinator
Erik Monak, Covid Compliance Officer
Sekou Campbell, Legal Counsel

ALC MANAGEMENT, Consulting Producer & Booking

SOURCES

0 “Diversity in Movies Largely Unchanged Despite Increased Awareness, Study Finds,” The Hollywood Reporter (July 31, 2017).
0 Gary Cohn, “The Legend of Rubirosa,” Vanity Fair (December 2002).

SPECIAL THANKS

DNAWORKS would like to give special thanks to: Evan Hyde; Ray Codrington, Aaron McKinney, and Raelle Myrick-Hodges at Hi-ARTS; Adam McKinney; Kristin Marting, Aislinn Curry, and the HERE staff; Jessica Hanna; Reeve Love, Elsa Menendez, Andres Martinez, and the NHCC staff; Juli Hendren; Clyde Valentin, Elizabeth Riley, and IgniteArts Dallas; Teresa Coleman Wash, Adam Adolfo, Arty Mata, and Bishop Arts; Mark Cuddy, Jenni Werner, Jenn Lyons, Theresa Granger, Chris Mannelli, and the staff at Geva Theatre; Mary-Margaret Dale and Christina Tassy-Beauvoir at Cultureshock; Javier Siut, David Solomon, Valentine Medina, and Patricia Hechavarria at MDCA; Daria Yudacufski and Marie-Reine Velez at Visions and Voices; and the Bovard Auditorium staff.

Thanks to Troy Lambert for the postcard designs and Zavier Taylor for additional animation.

The Real James Bond…Was Dominican was created for a live stage audience and was also adapted for a live Zoom-theatre experience at Geva Theatre in May 2021.
KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

The Real James Bond . . . Was Dominican is a performance by writer-actor Christopher Rivas about a Dominican boy who learns that Porfirio Rubirosa was the inspiration for author Ian Fleming’s character James Bond, and the immense impact of this discovery.

Ian Fleming did not cite Rubirosa as a reference or inspiration, but a forensic historian named Daniel J. Voelker has made a compelling argument that Rubirosa was Fleming’s primary model for Bond.

James Bond is the protagonist of twelve novels and two short-story collections by Fleming, and 26 films released between 1962 and 2021.

As the central figure in one of the highest-grossing and most popular media franchises ever, James Bond has occupied a starring role in the pop-culture landscape since the early 1950s.

PORFIRIO RUBIROSA

When Porfirio Rubirosa Ariza died after his Ferrari crashed into a tree in Paris in 1965, the New York Times described him as “a former Dominican diplomat, international sportsman, and playboy.” He had been a polo player, pilot, and rumored assassin for the Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo, and his love life was legendary. He was linked romantically to Eva Perón, the wife of Argentine president Juan Perón, and to movie stars including Ava Gardner, Jayne Mansfield, and Dolores del Río. He was married five times, including to two of the richest women in the world, Doris Duke and Barbara Hutton. He traveled the world as a diplomat, and his hobbies included polo playing and car racing.

CHRISTOPHER RIVAS

Christopher Rivas is a storyteller, actor, author, and podcaster. He currently co-stars in the series Call Me Kat. His literary memoir, Brown Enough: True Stories about Love, Violence, Worth, Race, Familia, the Student Loan Crisis, and Making it in America, will be released by Row House Publishing later this year. He has appeared in shows including New Amsterdam, 2 Broke Girls, Grey’s Anatomy, GLOW, and Rosewood.

“Because I still don’t see me or my father or the people I love on those screens and in the major stories being pushed into our culture. Because my narrative is so much more than struggle and drugs. Because mainstream stories are not honest representations of life. Because people’s stories are still being white-washed, silenced, and taken from them every day. Because the Black body has given so much more to society than it has ever received in return.”—Christopher Rivas on creating The Real James Bond . . . Was Dominican
LATINX REPRESENTATION IN FILM

In 2020, the USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative published a study looking at portrayals of gender, race/ethnicity, LGBTQ, and disability in 1,300 popular films from 2007 to 2019. The study found that

- In 2019, only 4.9% of speaking characters in the surveyed films were Hispanic/Latino
- 44 of the 100 top movies in 2019 “erased Hispanic/Latino characters entirely from on screen roles”
- The erasure of women of color on screen was even worse; out of those top 100 films of 2019, 71 had no speaking roles for Latinas

Meanwhile, the U.S. Census (whose numbers are probably low) reports that Hispanic people represent 18.5 percent of the U.S. population. Latinx people make up about half the population of Los Angeles, the epicenter of U.S. film production.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- Why do you think Ian Fleming did not name Rubirosa as a reference or inspiration for James Bond?
- Why was it so impactful to Christopher Rivas to learn that the real James Bond was Dominican?
- Imagine pop culture of the last 70 years if the character we know as James Bond had been Dominican. What would be different in the films, the films’ reception, and the wider popular discourse?

IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT:

- Christopher Rivas Online
  christopherrivasstorytelling.com
- The Latino Theater Co. at the Los Angeles Theatre Center
  latinotheaterco.org
- Latino Film Institute
  latinofilm.org
- National Association of Latino Independent Producers
  nalip.org
- Annenberg Inclusion Initiative
  annenberg.usc.edu/research/aii
- Upcoming Visions and Voices events:
  3/31 Tracing Our Creative Origins: A Workshop with Sita Kuratomi Bhaumik
  4/1 Belonging as Survival: Creativity, Activism, and Community
  4/14 Crafting Change: An Afternoon with the Social Justice Sewing Academy
  4/21 Ku’er Worlds: Queering Chinese American Identities in Art and Film
  4/22 Ku’er Worlds: Art and Filmmaking Workshop
  4/29–30 South of Expo: Art, Artists, and Cultural Spaces Since the 1960s
**DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES**

**EIMMY SOLIS** of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about this evening's event. Those with a call number (e.g., books) are physical items which you can find in our campus libraries. Those without a call number (e.g. e-books, journals, and databases) are electronic resources, which you can access through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at libraries.usc.edu.

**BOOKS**


**DATABASES**

- **Digitalia Film Library**
  
  A multilingual, multinational streaming video collection of nearly 1,000 feature films and documentaries, mostly in Spanish and Portuguese with English subtitles, from the Iberian Peninsula, United States, and Latin America.

- **Digital Theatre Plus**
  
  An immersive platform for English Literature and Performing Arts that brings contemporary theater to life. Digital Theatre collaborates with leading theater companies worldwide to develop their engaging collection of filmed and written content, including exclusive backstage insights.

- **Latin America & Iberia Database**
  
  A database of academic journals by scholarly publishers and educational institutions throughout Spain, Portugal, and Latin America. Subject areas represented include business, science, technology, engineering, social sciences, education, and humanities.

- **Theatre in Performance**
  
  This curated selection of theatrical productions allows one to revisit a great performance again and again, ensuring these landmark events can become a permanent part of scholarly curriculum.
World Scholar: Latin America and the Caribbean Portal

A rich collection of primary source documents about Latin America and the Caribbean; academic journals and news feeds covering the region; reference articles and commentary; maps and statistics; audio and video; and more.

JOURNALS
- Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies
- The Caribbean Writer
- Journal of Caribbean Literatures

RECORDING