

Transcript of Interview with Jorge Martinez by Oscar Ortega

Interviewee: Jorge Martinez

Interviewer: Oscar Ortega

Date: 10/16/2020

Location (Interviewee): San Antonio, Texas

Location (Interviewer):

Abstract: An interview between a student of St. Mary's University who is involved with the university's Drama Department talks about the challenges of the recent school semester in the current circumstances and how the Department is working to overcome them and plans for the future.

Oscar Ortega 0:03

All right. Hello there, Jorge.

Jorge Martinez 0:07

Hi, Oscar. I wasn't too sure of you referring to the audience who might be watching this or myself. I was- I was gonna wait my name. Okay.

Oscar Ortega 0:14

Yeah, yeah. It occurred to me like right at the last second like, I should call him by his name. But um, yeah, so we're just gonna go ahead and get this started. Why don't you introduce yourself?

Jorge Martinez 0:24

Right. So I'm Jorge Martinez, I am the Co-producer for the Theater Project being hosted at St. Mary's University, through Holy Rosary. And I'm here to get interviewed by Oscar Ortega.

Oscar Ortega 0:35

So yeah, just a couple of questions about your experiences this semester. So, um, so I was interested to know, when- before the semester started, what were you prepared to do in the department? Like, did you imagine you'd be co producing anything or...

Jorge Martinez 0:54

So, Bodie had mentioned about this project, you know, right, where I joined St. Mary's, you know, my freshman year, in the fall, and she was talking about- nowhere near did she mention, you know, me co-producing with her. And so I know we had planned Happy Day, you know, last spring, and- and since we had this whole pandemic thing, I think Bodie decided to start the shoot the gun early, and work on this project immediately. And so right around, I believe it was August, early August, maybe late June or July, she shoots- it was two other students and myself,

asking if we wanted to co-produce with her, this project. Immediately, I said, “Yes.” I was very interested in it. And I had heard about heard about it. And it got me really excited. And so I gave her the yes, and unfortunately, those students had said no, they had to decline. And so you know, we, Bodie I- and I have met plenty of times talking about sort of what's going to be happening, what is the plan so far? At first, she basically told me exactly what I needed to do, which is at this moment, this is sort of- the fall was going to be sort of preparing ourselves, you know, and basically what moments are, which I'll talk about later, as you asked about that question. What- what this whole theater technique is going to be about, and then sort of in- after the workshop is going to be interviewing our subjects, which is the students, the or the young, young adults at Holy Rosary Parish, which- which are actually what we'll be beginning soon, in a few weeks, actually. We'll be beginning after the Thanksgiving break, interviewing them, getting an idea of what their identity is. And then, obviously, in the spring, working with the students in the class, and the theatre device project class. And I'll be sort of like a mentor, as well as those who attended the workshop will be mentors who will help out the newer students who were not part of that workshop and helping them out.

Oscar Ortega 2:45

Oh wow. That's really interesting. That's really good to know. I'm learning all kinds of new things. So... So I guess, just jumping off of that real quick, because one question that I did have here was, you know, obviously, you are going to coordi- coordinate with Bodie. So now that you mentioning that you have done that I was wondering- so you are, you are native to San Antonio, and you're living there right now yes?

Jorge Martinez 3:12

Oh, yes. I've lived here my entire life. Born and raised here. And in fact, I've been attending Holy Rosary Parish for over 10 years now. A friend of mine, you know, he and his family used to attend. And my family used to jump around from church to church. And then we found Holy Rosary. We've been there ever since. So, yeah, I've actually even like the Holy Rosary area, I've been here for a long time. My middle school doctor just down the road where I work currently, several schools just down Culebra off Callaghan. And so like this specific area of San Antonio, I've been, I've been here my entire life, essentially.

Oscar Ortega 3:44

Wow. Yeah. So you're- you're pretty familiar with it. So I guess in that sense... I guess the first question is, and, you know, like, you know, we've had classes together, and I know that you're a commuter. You go to St. Mary's a lot. When you're coordinating with Bodie, and when you're meeting with her and discussing these things, you guys, you don't meet in person, right?

Jorge Martinez 4:05

No. Yeah. Because you know, this whole pandemic, we are meeting through Zoom as we are right now. Um, I think the only time we've actually met as of you know, as, you know, post

quarantine, or you know, current quarantine was Bodie had to deliver a book with the devised moment. Actually, I have it right over here, if I could pull it out just very quickly. Right next to my desk; I just left a lot of things on the floor. So she was coming to drop me off this book. And that's the only time we've actually met in person. Obviously, we were social distancing, we're both wearing masks, right. So it was a good precaution. Other than that, you know, everything has been through Zoom..

Oscar Ortega 4:41

Alright. And so now, I guess jumping off of that, because you've mentioned that you'll be mentoring students- students from adults at the Holy Rosary parish. If I said that correctly, forgive me. My brains not working too well, but I'm good.

Jorge Martinez 4:59

You're good. You're good.

Oscar Ortega 5:00

Um, How exactly you guys have planned out how that'll be working? It'll be similar?

Jorge Martinez 5:04

So I think I might have misworded. So as you know, I believe since you are a minor, a drama minor, you've been getting emails from Bodie about this class. The class for next semester.

Oscar Ortega 5:14

Yes.

Jorge Martinez 5:15

So I don't know if you're enrolled in it or not Oscar, but if you are, so you and I, since you took the workshop with me, will be mentors to those other students who were not part of a shop. That's what I meant, when I said being a mentor.

Oscar Ortega 5:28

Oh, of course. So we'll be mentoring other students?

Jorge Martinez 5:31

Exactly. Who are enrolled in that class. And I know Bodie wants a lot more people in that class, I'm not too sure we'll be getting those numbers. But regardless if you're in or not, that's basically our job, as of right now is during that, you know, we become the workshop for them, we have- we take what we learned- we learned from those some of the evenings and applying it to the classroom. And that's what I meant by mentoring. So, uh, in terms of like, mentorship towards the students of Holy Rosary, or young adults, there won't be much to it. You know, we'll be interviewing them, you know, one on one in- through Zoom not in person, asking several

questions, getting an idea of their identity. And the only time, you know, we might interact with them afterwards is if they want to be a part of the production. They won't be in the actual play that itself. We are- we're still brainstorming, you know, everything is, you know, it- we're still calculating what we want to do. An idea that we might have, is using- is actually using you know a prerecorded video from them if they obviously and their parents do consent to it. Because obviously, you know, a lot- some of these students are minors or under 18. There's a lot more paperwork that goes into it. But if they decided they want to be a part of it, you know, that's the only time, you know, we'll be interacting with them. Once we interviewed them once to get that information, there really isn't much, you know, I'm not saying we're abandoning them in any way, shape, or form.

Oscar Ortega 6:53

Right. Of course not.

Jorge Martinez 6:54

But you know, in terms of their hand in the project, it's really- we're just interviewing them. That's it

Oscar Ortega 7:01

Oh, still pretty good, though. Good to know. So, I guess, just backtracking a little bit, let's go back to talking about the moment workshop. Now, I did come in like to that a little bit late, because everything was a little bit jumbled. But, you know, since you and Bodie did talk about it, do you want to explain in your own words, what the workshop was?

Jorge Martinez 7:23

Yes. So um, you know, in theater, there's a lot of different acting techniques. And so sort of this project was aimed at this- this technique called moment- moment works. And so essentially, it's- it's hard to describe, you know, in one go, but essentially, it's using different things to create sort of the idea of a quote, unquote, moment. So it might be a frame, like a picture. So suppose you're watching a show, and some- some actor pulls out a prop, and they open up an umbrella, we'll call that a moment, right. And so the idea of this, of this production is to sort of- is use that technique. And so what the moment was all about was literally learning what- what and how we can use these different objects around us as a moment, right, or in a moment. And so really, as I pointed out before, this, basically, we're just going over the book. And I think- I think that people who are running the, the workshop wanted us to have the books because obviously, a lot of us couldn't afford it. And so it goes into detail. And it's- it was a really- it was really interesting, because, um, my sort of my- what really kept me in theater was improv. And so, right. And so this wasn't really improv heavy. But there was a lot of improv elements used in it because we ah- you know, the- the whole intent was- that was for us to meet in person have this workshop in person, but unfortunately, because of COVID, we're meeting through Zoom. And so, you know, we were using a lot of elements around our own homes to sort of, you know, create moments,

which I think, really opened up the door of like, using Zoom as a possibility for a show. So for example, actually, I do have next to me a prop that I used that I had in my closet, were these red lights, as I actually drag everything on my desk now. And so that was something you know, something in our own homes that you may not find at, you know, St. Mary's University or wherever theater you might be at. So I you know, it was an interesting experience, and I learned a lot from that.

Oscar Ortega 9:19

Yeah. It really was a very, really, like eye opening workshop. I did partake in it, and I did enjoy it very much. So- And like again I came to it late, But and I was just- I mean we were all participants, no one was exempt from it. Bodie, Dion, you know, established members of the department. Ms. Katherine Johnson. A pleasure.

Jorge Martinez 9:44

Right.

Oscar Ortega 9:45

To have her as always, but um-

Jorge Martinez 9:46

Always. Always.

Oscar Ortega 9:47

Absolutely but I guess... how quick- how long in advance did you know that it was going to take place, and when you first like heard about it, were you like a little bit nervous? Like how did the prospect of it, like, over Zoom at first, because obviously they wanted to do it in person, how did that sound to you? How did you feel about that?

Jorge Martinez 10:05

Having it over Zoom... I, for me, specifically, I was a little worried about my space. So currently I'm record- I hosted- or I was in the meeting where I am right now in this interview, in my own room. I contemplated moving my laptop and my webcam to a different room. So I had more space, because if I roll back just a little bit, I hit my wall. And this is a green- this is a green material. This isn't like a painted green wall. That's for something else that I do and I was worried, like, you know, I wouldn't be able to move around as much. Um, but fortunately, you know, as we, you know, we come to the workshop, you know, I felt like the cameras, you know, weren't holding us back that much. And a lot of us were able to, you know, pick up our cameras, move them around, our webcams. So, you know, at first, it was a bit of a hinderance but I think, you know, everybody in the workshop was able to adapt and overcome sort of the limitations of- of being through Zoom. Because I know, there are some moments where, you know, it was going

to be like a sequence, we do something together or an order. And sometimes, you know, internet can be an issue, but for the most part, I think it went well. You know, I would say that it didn't go as well as it would have in person. But I think- I think what the sort of the hosts were trying to show did, you know, come across as that. And it was able to reflect that well.

Oscar Ortega 11:21

Yeah, no, I- I definitely agree. I really think that as much as it had a rocky start, especially the concept of something that's supposed to be in person, digital, I think we did pull it off quite well.

Jorge Martinez 11:32

Yeah.

Oscar Ortega 11:33

And so well, you've been really great. So I guess, just the last thing that I wanted to touch on if we're going to talk about adapting to- adapting a workplace to unforeseen circumstances is like you've mentioned like, with the workshop, it- it was eye opening to what can be done digitally. So since you mentioned that you and Bodie have talked about it, how are you feeling about the production next semester?

Jorge Martinez 12:01

I know Bodie is really hoping that we have an in person production, you know, whether- and you know, she's- she's ready to sort of, we are planning to have it in person at the moment. So you know, I think the classroom is going to be in person. I'm not too sure how this is all going to work out. The way I see it, I feel like- I feel like the numbers of COVID are going to rise up, and we're going to be forced to, you know, be in quarantine. And if we're forced to have a show in Zoom, you know, [knocks on desk] knock on wood, you know, if we're forced, you know, have a show on Zoom, I think it can work. It's going to be difficult; I won't lie. It's going to be very hard, sort of, you know, have a live production through Zoom, because I feel like there's a lot more elements that can go wrong. But I know- I know Bodie is hoping that we can have this, and I know Kendall is in and so was Dion and Ms. Katherine, they're all hoping that how this show in person, and that's sort of what the plan is at the moment. So that's what I'm hoping for too is having a show in person, you know, whether, uh, you know, we all social distance within the show itself at all times, which might be a little weird, you know, but essentially, you know, like, some sort of cable or a rope near us so that, you know, we ensure that we're always six feet apart. But I know, at some point, you know, if you, you know, work with some individuals, you know, assuming you're meeting with them every so often, you know, I think it'd be okay to, you know, limit how far you guys are apart. So, for example, you know, if you and I asked for meeting daily, you know, at some point we it, if you had an I had it, you know, we would just have it at some point. Not saying, you know, we will or anything, yeah, but, you know? Because I know, there were some, like institutions where people are meeting and not wearing masks, because, you know, they're taking the precautions already, and so, maybe that's what we'll do. Um, I know, we talked about, you know, rehearsal spaces, meeting at Treadway, you know, meeting in room 381.

Using that patio- patio area as well. So that's open air, as well, or the workshop even as, you know, separate areas. So if we need to sort of like if, you know, if we have more than two people showing up for rehearsals, we can use the different spaces, so we're not more than 10 people meeting in one space, if that makes sense.

Oscar Ortega 14:16

Yeah, no, absolutely does. Yeah. And I think, I guess overall, that's the thing people are- will always be most concerned about, like, just, we- we can make this work if we try, but it'll take a lot of effort but we'll still be safe.

Jorge Martinez 14:29

Right. So again, you know, only time will tell. As I said before, as of right now, we're- we're preparing as if we'll be having in person production, you know, as of- so for right now, we're planning out shows in Guadalupe Chapel you know, right there in Treadway and then also Holy Rosary. We're not too sure where specifically we'll be having the shows, but Guadalupe Chapel will be you know, spaced out, you know, for you know- socially distance, that's the word I was looking for, socially distanced. So, you know, we can have people come in and watch the show. We might even just record the shows and have them online, you know? And you just have to purchase the link to it. So I know we are thinking of different possibilities. But worst case scenario is if it comes to it, we have to do it through Zoom, you know, then so be it. You know, as much as it sucks to say,

Oscar Ortega 15:18

Yeah, well, I mean, one way or another.

Jorge Martinez 15:21

Right, the show must go on.

Oscar Ortega 15:23

Absolutely. Well, I think I've pretty much exhausted all of the potential questions that I could ask you, but I've gotten everything I was gonna hope for and more. You've been fantastic. I really appreciate you helping me out.

Jorge Martinez 15:36

Of course. Is there anything else you need for me, Oscar, any other question by any chance?

Oscar Ortega 15:40

No. I think pretty much you have absolutely just exemplified the nature of making things work even in impossible circumstances. And like, I'm going to be talking to Bodie, maybe Kendall,

later this week, and I'm sure I'll hear many similar things. So...

Jorge Martinez 15:58

Okay. Awesome.

Oscar Ortega 15:59

I mean, yeah. I really appreciate it though.

Jorge Martinez 16:01

Yeah for sure. Thank you, man.

Oscar Ortega 16:02

You've been fantastic. And, you know, here's hoping. I just may end up being a part of the production after all.

Jorge Martinez 16:11

I'm waiting for the recording to end.

Oscar Ortega 16:14

I was actually about to say. And with that, I think we're good.