

Yu Hin Bryan Chan on Working With Costume Designers and His Favorite Designs

by Nadja Sayej - Tuesday, September 10, 2024

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[Yu Hin Bryan Chan](#) knows what it's like to transform into a character through costume. From Shakespeare plays to Asian R&B, he has done it all.

The New York actor and singer can move in a costume, be it dance, music, or theater. After graduating with an MFA in Musical Theatre Voice Pedagogy from the Boston Conservatory at Berklee, his theatrical credits range from classic productions like *The King and I*, to *Much Ado About Nothing*, as well as contemporary works like *Exist: The Musical*, and *In The Heights*.

He has performed in regional theaters, including Beef & Boards Dinner Theatre and The Green Room 42, while his performance credits include roles as Lead Singer/Producer in *Late Night Vibing: Asian R&B*, and starred as Prince Christopher in *Cinderella*.

Beyond theater, Bryan's dance training includes five years of hip-hop and two years of ballet, allowing him to integrate movement seamlessly into his performances. His commitment to excellence is reflected in his participation in showcases featuring the music of Billie Eilish and his impressive work in operatic settings with productions like *Così fan tutte*.

Fluent in English, Cantonese, and Mandarin, Bryan's diverse cultural background enriches his artistry, and informs his music, as he is proficient in piano and violin. He is also a vocal coach at New York Vocal Coaching. He has worked with a myriad of costume designers and speaks about some of the costumes he has worn onstage.

What is your process like when you get a new role? How do you get into character?

Yu Hin Bryan Chan: It really is a mixed bag. I have worked with theaters who had extensive costumes and closets doing so much in every single scene. You have flamboyant costumes and period pieces. I have worked in smaller productions asking us to bring our own costumes. It's always fun to see how a costume can help with the storytelling, to get into the character. Especially with period pieces.

What goes into costume design as an actor who wears costumes onstage?

The King and I and Cinderella, where I played the prince featured Victorian-style costumes. It was a vague Victorian fairytale. For The King and I, I wore a traditional tie-style costume where I was barefoot the entire time. It helps me get into that time period. It helps me get into the story every night.

What are your favorite costumes you've worn onstage?

Aladdin pants and shirt from The King and I, I wore embroidery gold shirts and a wig. It was a major highlight because it's such stage costume material, a wild and exotic outfit that sparkled under the stage spotlight.

Can you speak to the transformative experience of getting into a costume and a character?

Wigs, everyone wears wigs. Essentially how we did it, I had a headband and clipped my wig. Every day was a 15-minute process, I had the most hairspray I've ever used, it smoked up the whole green room. My wig was made of human hair. You're able to hide the mics underneath costumes when you're putting costumes on. I had three costumes for The King and I. It's always a battle in time to change from one costume to another. It keeps you on your toes, for sure while you change backstage.

You are a young actor but have such a diverse portfolio. How did you get your jobs?

It's luck to me. I came across a lot of people who were really generous. The other day, I did a reading, and a week later I was offered to fly to Arkansas for a play festival. It's about making connections and really helping each other out. Little things contribute to it. Being kind to people and creating work for each other helps a lot. That's the core of it

What advice do you have for young actors?

Support each other. Build connections. This is truly not a competition. The world is so wide and it will be wide enough for us all. A win for them is a win for you. Support others so they can support you.

Check out Yu Hin Bryan Chan's work at [@bryanchanuwu](#) and his website www.chanyuhinbryan.com.