

Women In Motion Talk

Jeremy O. Harris

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Elizabeth Wagmeister

I am *Variety's* Chief Correspondent, Elizabeth Wagmeister, and we are thrilled to be back with a fantastic lineup of many women – and *men* who empower women.

This morning, we are beginning our Women In Motion talks with playwright, producer and actor, Jeremy O. Harris. You may know Jeremy O. Harris from *Emily in Paris*. You may also know that he is a producer on HBO's *Euphoria* and he is the playwright behind the groundbreaking show *Slave Play*, which was nominated for 12 Tony Awards.

Today, we are going to be talking with Jeremy about his career and also how he empowers women in underrepresented groups across the theater industry. Without further ado, let's get ready to chat with Jeremy O. Harris.

[pause]

Can you see? With all the flashing lights?

Jeremy O. Harris

Yeah. Listen, I'm not used to that. You know, every time I come. The last time I came to Cannes I was in.... the first time I ever walked that little like carpet to go to the Grand Lumiere was behind Kaia Gerber, and I've never seen someone have so much grace amongst so much flash, and she was like, "um, um, um, um". And I was like... But now I'm used to it. You know what? I did a master class with Kaia Gerber.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Uh-huh.

Jeremy O. Harris

Now I feel good.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

I was going to say, you're a pro, you handled that with a lot of grace as well now, you look incredible.

Jeremy O. Harris

Thank you.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

I love this outfit. It is Cannes, so we do have to talk about the fashion of it.

Jeremy O. Harris

It's true.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Now, a little birdie told me that you have 21 outfits for Cannes, is this true?

Jeremy O. Harris

Wow... Ok, now I know. Yes, I do have 21 outfits for Cannes, I'm very excited about it. I was a critic, I see one of my very good friends right here from my critic days, hi! I was a critic, so I would go to all the film festivals and each film festival has its own identity, right. And so and I really wanted to live inside of each of those identities, fully.

So like the identity of being at Sundance, for example. It's like wearing a puffy coat. Like, you know, like feeling breathy, feeling like masculine, like feeling viby and like, so I did that when I was in the jury this year. Like wore all the big coats. I like was very into that.

This year I found out I was going to Cannes as an actor, which is how I want to identify here.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Congratulations, by the way.

Jeremy O. Harris

Thank you. I'm really excited, I'm really glad that one of my very good friends make this movie, and it's just really fun because I get to work with a lot of friends.

But I was like, I wanna be fun being the 2007 Cannes this year. So Cannes being like iconically had like, you know like 25 looks like on every carpet. So I was like, I wanna try to do that. So me and Mel Ottenberg, we had a suite of looks. So like today I'm doing four outfits in one day.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

I love it. I love it. Yeah, and fashion really plays a part of your persona. And you could tell that you have so much fun with fashion. Can you talk about how fashion really plays a role into your life and your career creatively?

Jeremy O. Harris

Absolutely. I mean, I think that, you know, being a queer person, being a person who has, you know, like you know has constantly wondered how they want to express both their gender and their, like identity to the world, without people writing the story onto my body, which is often

happens. Like there's no way I could stop the stories people write on my body because I'm 6 foot five and I'm black, right? And also I like flounce about like this.

And as a child I recognized that but I knew that I could like confuse that story the minute I wore like a baseball uniform you know to school instead of like my school uniform. And so being able to tell different stories about my body about my day about the world I want to exist within through clothing became my armor for the world.

And I still like having that armor cause armor or something like that, you know, not only protects you but, like you know, gives you a little more strength. Like the more you're carrying on you, the more like, the heavier things you can lift around you.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Absolutely. I do feel like today you are ahead of your time, but today, fashion norms are really changing, and gender is becoming more fluid. The definition of masculinity is really changing. There's a bigger embrace of femininity, certainly with fashion. How have you seen that progress, certainly in the entertainment industry?

Jeremy O. Harris

What is funny is that, like you know, the more you read about, like you know, both indigenous cultures and like early African cultures, and like you know a lot of spaces that were like, they were free from the like, you know, and unvarnished by like Western Christianity and there the morals that came with Catholicism, you see that like, you know, and even in Catholicism you see that like, you know, gender had no presentation for a very long time. There was a lot of like complexity around like how we expressed ourselves and I think that what is exciting is that like that goes in and out of fashion for specifically men in the West.

And I really like that now it seems we're actually having the conversation without it just being like Prince wandering around in like, you know, his girlfriend's T-shirts, you know, now it's like actually, like, now let's talk about what gender means, let's talk about the construct of this and let's start deconstructing it as a society as a whole, right? And maybe through deconstructing it, we can get to a more equitable space around people who are people who are different genders and have different gender expressions.

Because like you know, I have a grandmother who is 6 foot five, right? And and hearing all this, hearing all the conversations around specifically trans-ness in America, right. And how like you know there's a certain type of woman, "that is a woman and like this is what...". And I'm like, it's so crazy because my entire life I watched my grandmother have her gender challenged by people the minute she walked to a woman's bathroom were like, what are you doing? This woman who birthed 4 kids, you know? And so I'm really excited that like perhaps those things that stopped my grandmother from feeling fully embodied and the gender she was assigned and fully embodied, and even the gender that she expressed, might – some of those barriers entry to like womanness will start to be eroded by people like having a deconstruction of how we define gender.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Absolutely. Now let's go back to your childhood.

Jeremy O. Harris

Yeah.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

When did you know that this is what you wanted to do? Or did you know, I know that when you were young, you acted, you wrote. But did you know that you would be –

Jeremy O. Harris

Sitting on a stage in Cannes, talking to a room full of people?

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Yes.

Jeremy O. Harris

Yeah. Yes, I did. You know, when I was a kid, I actually wanted to be a lawyer.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Oh wow.

Jeremy O. Harris

That was. Yeah. Yeah. Like I and I don't know who gave me that idea or why, but I read, so I and this is very Elwoods-coded.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Yeah.

Jeremy O. Harris

But when I was... I wrote this into my pilot actually. I have a pilot, guys. I'm not supposed to be talking about it, but it's WJ Charms, but I wrote one and it's good, and it's this childhood memory of me in a barbershop at like 5 years old. I had to have been five, because they were talking about OJ Simpson and I wanted to like zone out, because I was like, "this is getting dark". And I was looking at a magazine and they said like Harvard Law School was the hardest school to get into.

And so I told, I remember telling my mom, like, "I wanna go there". And my mom was like, "why?" And I was like, "well, it looks pretty and it's really hard to get into". So I was like, "I'm gonna go to Harvard Law School and I'm gonna be a lawyer".

And then I watched that TV show, *The Practice*, that David E. Kelley show all the time and like, the black lawyer on *The Practice*, like, never lost a case. I'm like, "I'm going to be like him".

And then as I started exploring, like, my love of literature, my like obsessions with like embodying things on stage, because I had great drama teacher, Candace Owen Williams – shout-out – who, like, really invited the stage into like, my understanding of how to extend my love of literature. As I started seeing that, I started realizing like, "oh Jeremy, you never wanted to be a lawyer. You just wanted to play one on TV"

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Right.

Jeremy O. Harris

And so I think that like, you know, so much of my childhood had the theatricality to it. So I knew that theater in some way was going to be a part of that.

And because I also, like, you know, had a great film world around me growing up. Like, I had a lot of my favorite people in the world were at the video shop in my town. And then when I moved to Chicago, I randomly lived about a block away from Facets Videotheque, and that was where this man name Lou introduced me to all these *auteurs*, artists. And so I got to see how like there were all these like people like, you know, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, who like, wrotes plays and also wrotes movies.

And then like, you know, Shirley Clarke, who is my favorite documentarian, you know, filmed so much of the theater around her, while also like making a new language of cinema. And I was like, oh, maybe cinema is gonna be a part of this theater thing I do as well. And that's finally coalescing this year.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Yeah, I love it: we have a Prince reference and we have an Elwoods reference in the first few minutes.

Jeremy O. Harris

You gotta give both, you know.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

I love this. All right. So you started to write slave play when you were at Yale, is that correct? Yes. And tell me about the journey to from when you wrote it to bringing it to Broadway.

Jeremy O. Harris

It's really wild. You know, I kind of misspoke because I don't, I think we have to redefine that again, thinking about the writers' strike, we have to redefine what writing is, right? And for me, I actually started writing *Slave Play* in my head for this and amongst my friends group for months and months and years and years before I got into Yale.

So by the time I applied to Yale, when they asked me, "Why is Yale the right school for you?" Jeanie O'Hare, who is, once again, a genius – if you saw with *Matilda the Musical*, that was her brainchild, Jeannie O'Hare – she was the head of the program at the time. She was like, "if you could come to Yale, like what would you do here? Like why do why do you, why does Yale need you? And why do you need Yale?"

And I was like, "I work in a donut shop. I am a film critic. I had a massive car accident". That was the exact things that year. I was like, "I can't go back. I was like too many hospital bills and I don't know how I'm gonna pay them". I was like, but I was like, I was like, "but I have a idea for a play and I know that if I don't have to work a donut shop so I can pay off my hospital bills" because I

had to go to the hospital in Utah leaving a Film Festival, “Umm, I will give the right this play”, because that was the idea.

And because I had been writing it in my head for 2 1/2 years, I was able to tell this woman in this interview every beat of *Slave Play* up to act one. Like *The Turn*. *The Turn* is in the act one, was what I've beaten out of it. There's a character named Kanisha, she's married to Jim. Then there's a character named Alana. She's with Philip. And lalala, and the when I said, “*The Turn*”, she said, “that's interesting”.

I said: “And I'll write that in my first year”. And she was like, “You're in”.

So my first year I worked really hard, wrote the entire thing, started writing the entire thing, couldn't figure out the third act. There was a third act that I think a lot of people who like, critique the play now, would have loved, but that everyone that read it was like, “This is bad”.

I was like, “I know, I know it doesn't feel real.” And then when I finally, like you know, listened to the woman that was playing the role at Yale, Antoinette Crowe-Legacy, I realized what the play was and like was able to push through it. But the thing that got me to get her to read that was the that was that Janicza Bravo into my first year contacted me and said, “I've heard about this thing called *Zola*, I really want you to write it, but you're in grad school. Do you have homework over the summer?”

I'm fast forwarding to that story, because I know I'm talking for a long time.

And I was like, “I do have homework over the summer”.

She was like, “Finish your homework, then you can – then I can have you interview with A24 to see if you can be the writer of this movie”.

Elizabeth Wagneister

Wow.

Jeremy O. Harris

So I like rushed to – I sat down with Antoinette, finished the play, the play was done. As soon as it was finished, I was like, “It's done! Can I write a movie now?” So Janicza is also part of how it ended at Yale. Anyway, did it at Yale, and then I don't know. It's so hard to explain.

Like I was a hustler. I had knocked on every door before I got into school because I didn't think I was gonna get in. But I had made the decision that I had to leave LA. I couldn't be there anymore. And so every theater artistic director or like their intern knew me. And I'd had a meeting with them. I'd like written them letters and they'd all been like, “well, when you write something grad school like send it to us”. And so I sent all of them *Slave Play*. And seven theaters said: “absolutely not – there is no interest in this”. But three theaters actually of ten said, “actually you're doing something interesting here”.

And so one of the theatres was the New York Theatre Workshop. I put it up there. A producer who no one talks about anymore because he throws potatoes at people who spread the word that he wanted to take it to Broadway. But another man, Greg Noble, had already invested in it, so he had

first rights. And after The Potato Man decided he didn't want to do it anymore, the other producer was like, "I'm still gonna do it. I've never lead-produced on Broadway, and I'm 27 years old. I'm gonna do it". And so I still don't know how Greg was able to pull it off.

I know how we got the theaters because I sat down with Bob Winkle and we sat across from him and I was like, and Bob is like, you know, a sub-[unclear]. You know, like he's like from a very specific generation, he's from a line of Schuberts because Broadway is run like the mafia. There's three families that run all the Broadway theaters. We have sit down with people like septa- octogenarians and explain to them why your new play should be there and not like another Arthur Miller. And they're all lovely people. They also really love theater. They just also come from different generation, right?

So he's like, why would we do a play called *Slave Play*? This feels crazy. And that's like a really wild Bob Winkle impression. And I was just like, I was like "Bob, in 1975 like this played for me other than in 1976. You guys did enjoy Ntozake Shange's "For Colored Girls" at the Booth Theatre. That's a Schubert organization. That place should have been on Broadway and get it worked. In 1967, you guys did "Look back in England", right?, with John Osborne, which started the Angry Men Plays of London. Like that premiered at the Golden Theatre. My play could go to the Golden. There was the End Game premiere, in 1947.

And he was like, "how do you know all these dates?" Now to be fair, I knew all those plays I mentioned there. I didn't know the dates off the top of my head. But here's a key clue. If you're gonna meet someone important, just Google everything they've done right before you walk into the meeting. So I had all the years like fresh in my mind, like: 1947, 1967, blah blah.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

You came prepared.

Jeremy O. Harris

I came prepared. And then we got the theater.

And I don't know, it's really wild because I'm making a documentary about *Slave Play* right now. That's a secret. I wasn't telling anyone that. Anyway.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

I was going to say: I think that's new.

Jeremy O. Harris

Yeah. Anyway. Oh, and wow, I can't believe I said that. Well, OK anyway.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

But since you did, can you tell us more?

Jeremy O. Harris

Well, it's about it's really about how, you know, I think when *Slave Play* went to Broadway, there was a sensibility or critique that, like, it was written for that space. And there's also this idea that like, if you've written a play that's on Broadway, the play should then become a film, right?

And I was like, I never made *Slave Play* to be a film. That's not the idea of why, that's not why I write plays, either. There are some plays I have written, and thought, "Oh, that could be a film". But *Slave Play*, specifically with the plays that I wrote for Basement with my friends, I always imagined that play would maybe be like a place that the Wooster Group would do with in the Performing Garage. Or that, like, could happen at Abrams Arts Center. I've said that to everyone since the beginning. It's why I was most excited about New York Theatre Workshop doing it, because that's the closest off-Broadway theatre to being in a basement.

And yet when it got to Broadway there were people saying like, "oh he always wanted to the Broadway" or like, "Oh my God it's on Broadway now, can we do a series? Kind of like a *Westworld*, but like with slavery!" And I'm like, "No!"

A very sweet person pitched that to me. I hope... please don't... I love your ideas, just not that one. And I wanted to make a movie that was about how *Slave Play* would never be a movie; it was always going to be a play. So it's kind of inspired by Shirley Clark, kind of inspired by William Greaves, because *Symbiopsychotaxiplasm: Take One* is my favorite movie. Yeah, it's about, it's about that sort of tension.

But when we got to Broadway, it was really bizarre because I I didn't know what that would mean for my life. And what it meant in the interim was that the the bet I made – see, see how you helped me get it full circle? – the bet I made on myself when I sat down with Jeanie O'Hare, and said "I need to be able to pay my medical bills, I need to go to Yale so I can write this play, paid off". Because the only way a playwright can have anywhere near a middle class existence, for even a year, is by getting a play in a commercial theater or getting lots of licenses.

But like, two months of my play on Broadway helped pay off those medical bills, got me my first apartment in New York and, like, allowed me to have, like, you know, a lifestyle where I wasn't sleeping on couches like I was doing in LA.

Elizabeth Wagneister

Now you brought up the Potato Man, and we're not gonna mention anything further, but I'm glad you brought up –

Jeremy O. Harris

The Potato Man can be quite lovely. He's like, the best-read person I know, and really taught me a lot. He didn't throw a potato at me.

Elizabeth Wagneister

I'm glad to hear that. But I'm glad you brought that up, because I think it brings up this changing of the guard that we're seeing across many industries, but certainly entertainment and I think what you're doing so incredibly well – not for yourself, for others – is really paving the way forward and

making spaces for underrepresented groups that don't typically have that access. So that includes your community, that includes women. You speak out a lot about this.

Can you talk about where this confidence comes from that you knew that you have a bigger purpose, that is larger than Jeremy O Harris and you knew that when you had a bit of success in this industry, that you would then push forward and pave the way for others?

Jeremy O. Harris

I think it's a mix of stupidity and daddy issues. Oh, like, I am dumb, right? Like, I don't know.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

You're not dumb, but OK.

Jeremy O. Harris

Like, I'm dumb in the sense of, like, I'm not like, protective of my, of myself when it comes to powerful people, right? Like, I think that, like, I speak my mind too often, and that's mainly because I have, like, authority issues – issues with authority, right?

Like I was raised in a matriarchy with a lot of women who were told by a lot of men like what they could and couldn't say and how they could and couldn't be. And they all said, like, "fuck you". And they raised me with that energy. And like, you know, I didn't know my dad, so I was like, "Fuck you!"

They're like random men and they're like, what?

Elizabeth Wagmeister

"What did I do?!"

Jeremy O. Harris

So, I think that like that, that means that like, you know when you, when you see a system that like isn't like, you know when you see that you're a part of a season of theater, at like a historic theater in LA, and you were... You weren't like the only... I think I was one of two black people in the season that year. But there were no women except for a revival of *Pearl Cleage*. You say, like, "this doesn't feel right".

And then when you hear someone else articulate, "this doesn't feel right". You say, like, "yeah, this definitely doesn't feel right". So then you tell the theater, like, I don't feel good about this. And then when the theater doesn't say, like, immediately, we don't believe it either, you pull your play until they make a commitment to women.

Now, a smarter person, like most of the other playwrights, wouldn't have done that, right? Just like even in doing that we got, we got a full season of women the next season, a commitment to full season women next season and parity over the next five years. We also got 9 commissions for women of color to write new plays for them. That was amazing. And yet there were still critiques online, even by some feminists, that I did that for my own brand. It was like, I don't think, I don't know, but like maybe there was a smarter way to do that, you know, that wasn't so public.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

I hate to use the word “disruptor”, but that really fits in this story, because you weren't thinking, but you just said “I'm gonna do it”, because it's what feels right. And then you disrupted the system. That was in, I believe, 2021.

Jeremy O. Harris

Yes.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

There was a theatre group in Los Angeles and you said there is no equity here – maybe not none, but there were not enough female playwrights.

Jeremy O. Harris

The theatre has like multiple theaters and specifically there was literally no women, at the Mark Taper. It was like psychotic. Love those people. Lindsey and Tyrone showed up and like really listened, which is rare for any people of that much power, you have to listen and make swift shifts and changes. But yeah, it was crazy.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

And they did.

Jeremy O. Harris

They did, they did and they their commitment still stands, you know, And Tyrone created this amazing system where not like these nine or ten women of color all having phenomenal commissions with commitments to stage their work.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

That's amazing. Now you have recently been speaking out on social media certainly about the writers strike and we recently learned that the Tonys are going to happen. It was questionable for a moment there with the WGAM strike. You actually have some... You wrote some very impassioned tweets that I wanted to read.

You said: “in the season that has more writers of color and women nominated than the whole history of these categories in the Tonys, if we deny them this showcase, this ability for the nation to see them in their work. We are damaging a new ecosystem, one that's finally seeing new voices”. That was part, I encourage you all to go to Jeremy's Twitter, see everything that he has been saying about the Tonys and the strike.

But what is it about the Tonys that it's so important, that it did continue to happen in terms of the promotion for the theater industry?

Jeremy O. Harris

Yeah. I think I have to say first and foremost that like you know, the reason the Tonys weren't gonna happen is like those fault rests solely on the AMPTP. I can't... I don't know... it's some

weird acronym on those rich producers. Now on the execs who didn't come to the table to make a deal with the writers that was equitable and fair. Right, point, blank. Period.

But you know what I said in my tweets is that like, you know the reason I had to reach out to the WGA and we all had to reach out to WGA to ask them to not pick the awards, that the awards do mean something to the entire ecosystem of the very delicate ecosystem. I expressed that I feel that theater is....

Theater is like a coral reef, right? It's like it's literally endangered. And in our battle with the AMGP-blalabla, we cannot drive a battleship through a coral reef. You know we need to protect him because that's gonna be our only safe haven. Like, if this lasts a decade, every single writer in the WGA can write a play. Right. That they will own. You don't own the TV shows that you write. You don't own the movies that you write. But you own your play. That's why you get paid so little for them. But like. But once you own something that like, brings joy, brings community around it, there's no better feeling. So we must protect that.

And as a boy who grew up in a rural county, Virginia, who like, had nothing around him, except for books and tobacco fields, it's very, very important to me that kids in other rural spaces and that don't have access to theater can watch it on the Tonys and see just a little glimpse of what else there is.

Moreover, inside the ecosystem of the theatre, and I'm going to talk about quite quickly, having your play showcased gets your play done in a lot of different places. Licenses is how people get money for theatre. This is how you have a middle class life, you know?

So if you're Martyna Majok, who wrote *Cost of Living*, one of the best plays of the season, she's amazing, if you haven't read it, read it, she's Polish. If you're Martyna Majok and you do *Cost of Living* on Broadway, that means that like 10 to 15 theatres will then license your play around America. And if those 10 to 15 theatres in regions are doing it, that means that like 20 to 30 colleges or high schools are doing it. And that means that like that year, you will have enough money to pay your rent, whether you're writing on, you know, secession or not.

Elizabeth Wagneister

This reminds me of... a few days ago you were on MSNBC. We were talking about that. It was a very powerful interview and you were talking about the play that you are producing with Oscar Isaac and Rachel Brosnahan. And you really helped get it on to Broadway.

And you said the reason why this is so important is it was written by a queer black woman. And now that it's on Broadway, this kind of forces the hand that now at high school that's going to be in school theater and community theater. So can you talk about that play, and why it was so important to give it that big platform and what that will do specifically right now when books and stories are being withheld from a lot of people?

Jeremy O. Harris

Yeah. I mean, in this time, when you know people like Ron DeSantis and a litany of other horrifically fascist people – and again, if you haven't seen Steve McQueen's 4.5-hour documentary yesterday, because it is phenomenal, watch it because it really does paint a picture of how quickly

fascism can infect everything and how fascism fills all of our architecture and so the ghosts of it are still possessing us.

Like, those men are possessed by the ghost of fascists and nazis, and they're trying to get rid of everything that says that we are equitable people to white men, right? They want to get rid of the books of Patricia Highsmith. They want to get rid of the books of Lorraine Hansberry. And Lorraine Hansberry wrote this play. That's her last play, she wrote. She was 34 years old, which I'm about to turn next month. It was last play that she wrote, and she died at 34, of pancreatic cancer, and she's one of our greatest minds.

And part of a project that I started with *Slave Play* when I was on Broadway was *The Golden Project*, which is a project wherein I made a list of the most influential black plays to me, some of which made it Broadway, many of which never did. And then we sold them all in the lobby of the theater. And then we sent one to every one to a library in every state, right? Primarily places that like didn't have like access to, like a strong dramatic literature space.

And one of those plays was *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window*. And that play for me is as rebel yell about our time now that people don't know and people don't really care about. And I think that you know something about being a, like if you're a woman of influence, a woman of status generally, people distill your genius down to one work, right? You know, if you're Sylvia Plath, the people love to just like minimize the like, contributions of these people that have been so influential to like the canon.

And meanwhile we get the B, C, D sides to every Arthur Miller play that's ever happened. You know and so, with Lorraine Hansberry, her hit single is *A Raisin in the Sun*, obviously. But I was like, I think it is actually necessary for the world to see the complete picture of this woman's life, this woman's very short but very impactful life, by also seeing *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window* and having that play in this companion piece to *Raisin in the Sun* in everyone's mind.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

I wanna get back to the strike for a moment. How do you foresee this all ending? I know you're you're very involved and very helpful about it.

Jeremy O. Harris

I mean, I see it ending with a deal. A deal that is equitable. A deal that doesn't imagine that you know – here's how I've been explaining it to people because I don't like... Again, like one of the great things about being in interviewing is that you don't have to love the way every person you're interviewing explains or tells their story of why we're striking.

But what I love about the story I tell is that it's the way my mom understood it. So I'm gonna share that with you guys. My grandmother used to do big pies, right? People would like... people would order a lot of pies from my grandmother and like, she always like, you know, and she knew that, like, if she made these pies for women, there would be enough left over for her to also make a pie or some some other sweet nothings for her kids. She had four kids and we were in the South.

So, essentially, the AMPTP has told us for years that streaming was going to be our way of like – they were going to give us money to make a pie and we were always gonna have enough leftover to eat like pies for years to come.

And it used to be that way when we were making TV shows on Fox and then in the 90s: you would make a pie and you'd be able to eat off that pie for months and months and years and years and years after. People who made the pies for friends are still eating, right?

Now, we are making pies for people who are paying for them, and after promising us that they would give us enough, that they would leave enough, that there would be enough left over for us to also eat, we are seeing that all we're left with is crumbs. And all we're asking for is enough on the side to also make our own pies, you know?

And so, yeah, I think that it's going to end with us having enough to make our own pie soon, right? Because right now, everyone at the top is getting fat on pies. And I don't want... I wanna be a little fat too, you know? I mean like it's important. It's important to leave this world a little chubby.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

That is a great analogy. I might be quoting you on a bit when I have to explain the strike to some people who are not following it so closely.

Jeremy O. Harris

Yeah.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

So we spoke about the Tonys and the importance of how they really magnify a great work and *Slave Play* was nominated for 12 Tonys. It made history – and a lot of people very upset – didn't win anything. Why do you think that is?

Jeremy O. Harris

Why didn't we win?

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Great question!

Jeremy O. Harris

No, I think that like, I think that like again, I said this at the time and again, and because I'm making a documentary, I've had to watch all these annoying videos where I was like crying about it.

But like, it's like, you know, if you if you set out to make something that like upsets people, that like would like get people to like think about their complicity inside of a complex system, right, you can't also expect expect to be patted on the back by the same people you're asking to, like, reengage with their privileges, right?

And so, I actually see it as like a badge of honor that a play like mine got to have such such a large platform. And will most likely stay in the history books forever, because even if another play somehow gets 13 nominations – which would be really hard – if another play does get more nominations than me, I don't know that another play with that will lose as many as me.

So no matter what, I will always have a trivia line on the Tonys, which I think is really iconic. People always have to wrestle with what was *Slave Play*. You know, in the same way that, like, I

wrestle with, like, you know what...? Like all these I'm such a weird freak. Like, there's so many weird things I know about, like which roles have gotten nominated for the Tony the most time. And so then it makes you go and read that play.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Right.

Jeremy O. Harris

I want some weird freak to go back and read play, play and like 55 years and no one cares about Jeremy O. Harris anymore.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Well, this is also the best way to reframe the narrative, which basically what you're saying is if I am the biggest loser of the Tonys, then that's an award in itself.

Jeremy O. Harris

It literally is, the most iconic award.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Yes. And then you keep going and going. Now with that said, there's a lot of new voices on and not just on Broadway – in the theatre industry. Is Broadway doing enough to sustain these new voices? Because we're seeing some open, but then they're gone. I mean, *A Strange Loop* was the most talked about show for the year gone pretty quickly. So yeah, is Broadway doing enough?

Jeremy O. Harris

Yeah, I mean I'm nominated for two Tonys for producing, which is very cool. One for *Sidney Brustein* and another for a play called *Ain't No Mo*, by Jordan E. Cooper, who took my title as the youngest black man ever to have a play on Broadway when *he* became the youngest black man ever play on Broadway, which is very cool.

And Jordan Cooper is nominated for six Tonys with his first play on Broadway, tied with Tom Stopper, which is crazy. And he's also nominated as actor and playwright, which he's in a lineage. I think the last person to have that is Harvey Fierstein. But I have to look that up. His play closed early. His play closed, I think, after 23 performances.

And that's based on a lot of things I think that like, when you have new, when you have new people on Broadway, you also have to know how to market to those people. I think that like you know, the fact and this is across the board in film, television, everything, in literature; literature actually does it better because there are more women in publishing who recognize that women read 75% of the books in America, so they actually publish, they actually like target women in how they sell them. People don't target our biggest theater-goers, which are 70% women in America as well. We don't target, we don't target people outside of the white Upper East or West Side.

Like across the board if you ask any major theater agency like, "how do you market plays?", like "what sells tickets the best?" They'll say have your show on MSNBC or have a big article in the

New York Times. Now, no, none of my friends read the *New York Times*. A couple of them watch MSNBC, but mainly because their parents tell them too.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Or they watched it because your clip.

Jeremy O. Harris

Like, yes, they never actually watched the show. And I think that like, you know, we have to reframe and reimagine how we invite people to the theater. I think also in the case of black people, you know, coming back to the theater is a historic thing, we have to think about – again, thinking about the ghosts in our architecture.

My grandmother could not go to a theater with the women in this room, all together, when she was my age. For a little bit younger but when but in South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Jim Crow laws were still such that she would not be able to sit across from you as someone who was like developing a taste as a child for like what their leisure activities were. So, if we are recognizing that there are still people alive, and children of those people who have a feeling that they're not allowed in a space, don't you think you have to radically apologize for that somehow?

You know, so one of the ways I radically apologize for that is by creating “blackout nights” for my shows, you know, where I have a whole theater just for black people, and I'm like, guys come in, our theaters can look like, you know, the Gershwin Theatre when they're doing *Music Man*, Right. And when you go to *Music Man*, I will be the only black person in the Orchestra 99% of the time, right? That's no shade on that. It's just like that's who it's marketed to, and that's how they get there. But I'm like, we can also, they're, I want more people to be able to, I wanna go see *Music Man* and see like all black people in the audience somehow, or all Asian people in the audience somehow because the demographics are such in New York that that could be possible.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Right.

Jeremy O. Harris

You know, it's just about like, you know, telling the telling a different story about how we who we want in the theater. And so I think they're telling a good story about who they want, which names they want on the marquee right now. I don't think they fully understood how to say like, “here's also who we want in our theaters”.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Well, aside from the “blackout nights”, I want to talk about some of the philanthropy that you do.

So you also you're doing a lot to make theater more accessible. Of course, tickets are through the roof and I know for *Slave Play* you had a certain amount of tickets or certain nights that you lowered prices. As you said, you also donated books by black playwrights to libraries. When you sign your overall deal with HBO, you made sure to include a fund in your deal to Commission theater projects for others. You pledge fees and royalties from *Slave Play* to fund micro grants to

playwrights. And you funded within New York Theater Workshop two \$50,000 commissions. For new works by black women playwrights.

So you're investing a lot of your time into making theater more accessible, into really making it so that there are new voices that continue to come.

I want to pivot to some of your other work aside from theaters. So we mentioned the HBO deal. You are a producer on *Euphoria*. That is a show that has a lot of incredible women on it and a lot of incredible young women from a younger generation. What have you learned from working on that show with those young women?

Jeremy O. Harris

I mean, Sydney is like such a special young person. And saying with Maude, like the ways in which these young women show up and like are the hardest working people you've ever met in your life is like otherworldly. It like teaches me how to work better, you know what I mean?

Like they, like, are very much about their.... They're very much, not only about the business they're doing, but they're very much about their craft. And that's so inspiring. But, you know, and there's you can't talk about *Euphoria* without talking about like the ways in which Zendaya is such a leader there, right?

Like, you know, you, you see her and Sam sitting together, going through every scene in the script and then, she's a producer as well. You see her like, asking questions not only as lead actress, but also as a producer and also someone who I think is secretly about to be a director. Right? Because she's also, like, mining him for every piece of information. Well, she's like, so when the camera is gonna move there, why is that? You know?

And I think that like, you know what I learn every time I go to that set, is that like, I can't stop working really hard. I can't, like, rely on, you know, my charms and you know, the ways in which people perceive, you know me because of my height, right? Like I do think that like I get, I get away with a lot by being tall, you know? So it's like, it's like, yes, I might, I might charm the pants off you by being really tall, but I also have to work really hard once I get there, you know?

And then I also am learning a lot about having like an unerring sense of curiosity about the craft I do. You know, like I think that one of the things that Z told me because I'm trying to convince her to do something in my sphere.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Oh...

Jeremy O. Harris

But one thing she told me that she's...

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Wait, hold on, let's go back to that. What would that be?

Jeremy O. Harris

[murmuring] Hm. Might be a play.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

For those just sitting here, he said it might be a play.

Jeremy O. Harris

Yeah...

Elizabeth Wagmeister

That he's trying to get Zendaya for.

Jeremy O. Harris

Anyway, maybe this will bully her into calling me back. What she said was that she was like, "I'm actually really excited about doing this because I only like doing things that scare me".

And I think that, you know, me being here with the movie is like that, you know? I mean, again, not to call him out again, I am in Zach's movie, and it is very fun to act in things. Like, I love acting. But I do think that like once I got like, you know, all these laurels and people were like, "we really like Jeremy", I stopped doing things that scared me as much, you know. It became very easy to be like on a show like in *Emily in Paris*, where like I could show up, do two episodes, have a lot of fun and leave. But like, now I'm like, "OK, I did train with an actor. Like, what if I do...? What if I call up, you know, one of the directors I've worked with, like Olivia Fayette, and I'm like, hey, like, is there something, like, really crazy I can do? Like, can I run around with a gun in Tokyo for you or something".

You know, because that would literally scare the pants off me. Like, imagine myself have to embody someone who's like the type of person who holds a gun legitimately would frighten me to my core. and I think that's the kind of thing that Z does all the time, this kind of thing that Sidney does.

Sidney isn't my friend's movie right now called *Reality*, which is based on the best play that was on Broadway and closed too soon. It was called *Is This A Room?* Oh, phenomenal, phenomenal theater. Go to Lincoln Center and watch it. But the movie is coming out on HBO and I know that that's scared her. You know, she's working with first-time director, a theater director like and having to embody a real-life person, not from an adaptation of what they said, but from the literal transcript of what they did. And I'm really, I'm really thrilled to to move in that direction, especially now that the writers are striking.

And we're striking as long as it takes, guys. And so if this strike is happening for as long as it takes, I think it's giving, It's giving me time and license to like step out into the world and do something that scares me.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

I know the writers strike obviously impacts this, but is there anything that you know about the timing of Season 3 of *Euphoria*?

[silence]

We could do a staring contest. No? Not getting anything?

Jeremy O. Harris

All I can say is Sam Levinson is not a scab. So, David Zaslav, make a deal. OK? That's what I'll say about Season 3 of *Euphoria*. Make a deal, David. It's easy. Just come to that table. You're like, you know what? You got it, kids.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

See, a good interviewing tactic is if you stay silent, you might get something. So I'm seeing how much.... No, no, I think that's all I'm getting. OK. But that's good. Thank you. Thank you for that.

Jeremy O. Harris

Listen, you know who you can ask about it? Sam is coming –

Elizabeth Wagmeister

For *The Idol*.

Jeremy O. Harris

On Monday. Yeah. Ask Sam.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Have you seen it?

Jeremy O. Harris

I have.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Oh, and? Thoughts?

Jeremy O. Harris

It's premiering Monday at the Lumière. See you there. What are you wearing?

Elizabeth Wagmeister

I don't know. You have to help me pick out my outfit. Maybe I can borrow one of yours.

Jeremy O. Harris

I'm wearing something really fun.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

OK. Yeah. I cannot wait to see it.

Jeremy O. Harris

I will just say this. I think it's gonna be like the talk of the summer.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

OK. Yeah, OK. It's already very talked about.

Jeremy O. Harris

It is very talked about and I, I just wanna say yeah. Oh, God damn it. But OK, OK, listen, I get in trouble for, like, defending my like, like one of my loudest champions. You know, one thing you asked me earlier, like why I feel the need to champion so many people.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Yes.

Jeremy O. Harris

I had a lot of great people who went out of their way to, like, help me when they didn't need to help me when they still didn't have their own things going on.

And Sam was one of those people, He and his wife. Like Ashley, like made sure that whenever I wanted to go to Sundance when she knew I had the negative \$75 in my bank account. I was always there. I never felt nervous while paying for a meal because the meal was gonna be paid for and she was going to introduce me to every important person there. Even though no one cared who I was and didn't know who I was, I sat with Megan Ellison because of Sam and Ashley. Like, you know. I learned from titans.

And I would say Sam. Sam is a lot of things. The main thing he is, is a weirdo and he doesn't talk to press. And that opens him up for a lot of really big critique from people who like aren't, people who would rather like, engage in rumor mills than anything else.

And I would just say look up what Cheryl Roundtree was writing about before she went to The Rolling Stones, because that is the thing that most like the fact we have no criticality around the people who like, are doing these like really toxic stories about liken these like, well, "this is what's happening on this set". It's like, who is this person? Why? Why does this feel like the National Enquirer? It's because they basically are National Enquirer writers.

And I know this because Cheryl Roundtree also wrote about Zola and said the most messed up thing about Zola that was like fully false. And then maybe look her up and I was like, "oh, you're the person who writes fake stories about Meghan Markle for the Daily Mail. Got it." Anyway, that's what I have to say about *The Idol*.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

You're like, "with that tangent"... I am excited to see it and to interview the cast next week and to hear from them what they have to say about it.

OK, now, you spoke about some influential women in your life on the set of *Euphoria*, Sydney Sweeney, Zendaya... Another woman that you are friends with is Rihanna, and I know she was a big influence for *Slave Play*. You're like, "Yes she is, yes!"

Jeremy O. Harris

She texted me.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

She texted you. What does she text you?

Jeremy O. Harris

The other day, she said, "Bitch, I miss you. Where you at?" That's literally like verbatim the text. And I was like, "I'm in New York", and then she didn't text back.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

She's a little busy.

Jeremy O. Harris

She's a little busy. She's a mom right now, you know.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Yes. She is.

Jeremy O. Harris

I love Ri. She's the best. We ran into each other in Barbados when I was there for Christmas last year. And she met my entire family. My mom freaked out.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Incredible, I'm sure.

What have you learned from her?

Jeremy O. Harris

I mean, I've learned how to always – to make sure you always smell good.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

OK.

Jeremy O. Harris

That's what I learned from Rihanna. Make sure you always smell good. Today, I like I am laxing on that because I didn't do my... my... like something I learned from her, layer your scents: it's a key tactic. TikTok is teaching a lot of people to do it now. Rihanna is always, "Layer your scents". That's why she smells like bubble gum and the sea. And so, yeah, so you're like, how does someone smell like both things at the same time?

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Right.

Jeremy O. Harris

Layer your scents.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

OK.

Jeremy O. Harris

That's the Number 1 thing I've learned from her.

I've also just learned that, like, nothing in life... no project in life is too important. No one else's deadline is too important.... is more important than, like, the deadline you set for yourself, right. Which is to, like, make something beautiful, fun that gives you joy, right?

And I think, you know, speaking of the writers' strike, me and my fiancée, you know, saved up our docketts and invested in a house, an apartment together – right before the writers' strike. And I had a deadline for a very big movie that I'm supposed to... I was supposed to have written this movie a year and a half ago. Luckily, my producer is here. He's a kind man. He only works with weird auteurs. And so he was like, I don't care if it takes you four years, it's fine. But please get it in before the writers' strike if you want money. And I was working really hard to get in for the writers' strike.

And then I got Covid, yeah. And I could have stayed up like, you know, fall past my sickness to get 20 pages done, so I could send the first draft I didn't really like into the studio, so I could get his paycheck that would like sustain me for the next six months. Or I could sleep and not feel like crap. So I slept. Then we closed on our apartment and I realized I have no money. [laughter]

Umm, but it was fine, you know, and I feel like Rihanna would also say that's fine because you know what? Like I didn't want people to read it when it didn't look good, right? I wanted people to read it after it felt right, after it felt like something I was proud of. And I think that a lot of women, a lot of people of colour are, especially once they have this thing called "heat" around them, are told to just torpedo on, and like live on other people's schedules and Rihanna is like, "no".

And you know this thing I just did this thing, speaking of philanthropy, I did this thing that I was very, very excited by recently, thanks to Gucci. I see one of my Gucci boys here too. Where they invested deeply in me as an ambassador, and me as someone who believes another artist and gave me the funds to bring five young writers. I'm gonna name all of them right now: Rianna Simmons, DJ Hills, Chloë Myerson, Raffaella Donatich. I'm missing someone. And Asa Haynes, there we go. Asa, I'm so sorry.

They gave me the power to bring all five of these riders with me to Italy for a month to sit with me and have dinner every night and to like have them and to write, to write work basically like you know they they already plays for the Francine Horn Yale Drama Series Prize which I'm the president of. And Francine, I'm coming to visit you this week. And I was president, I got to pick a play.

The play I picked was by Jesús Valles, who wrote a play called *Bathhouse.PPTX* and and. Jesús, they're grad school now, so they couldn't come. So it opened me up to bring like a fourth writer, I mean a fifth writer with me. And they sat with me every night with my friends. I had Rebecca Hall coming in. I had Janicza Bravo, Lena Dunham, Jim Wilson, who's here with *Zone of Interest*. They all sat with these people and they talked to them.

And the main, the main fear all these kids had was that, like, they were like, "oh, an agent just called me because I'm in the newspaper, with my name next to yours and it says Gucci and Jeremy O. Harris, and now I feel like, if I don't use this heat now, then what am I gonna do? So should I sell this script or should I do?"

And I was like, "no, yeah, like work on, work on your writing. Take your time. Be really happy about something. Because heat is something that does not disappear. Like energy cannot be destroyed, right? Like, you know it is innate and you have an energy. That's why you're here. That's why you're sitting at this table. So relax, eat and like, do not feel pressured because you were primarily people of color, because you were primarily fem, that like this that the the that you being here has a timeline, there's a timeline on the success that's possible in your career."

Elizabeth Wagneister

Well, that is great advice from Rihanna to you that you're passing on to others, and I mean she recently proved this pretty well she did her thing. She lived her life. She came out to the Super Bowl, everyone was there. And you know what? We're all waiting for that album. Whenever it comes, we will be ready.

OK, so we're getting to be out of time if there's some social media questions that were sent in, so. First one, about someone that you mentioned: what was it like working with Janicza Bravo on *Zola*?

Jeremy O. Harris

Janicza Bravo is my big sister and she's the love of my life. You know that Gail, that Oprah-Gail thing?

Elizabeth Wagneister

Yes!

Jeremy O. Harris

Just like just quote that as my quote, because that's how I feel about Janicza. She's right now in Manchester. She was gonna try to come in today. She's filming a new TV. And with our friend in Manchester and yeah, I love her. I love her very deeply.

Elizabeth Wagneister

All right. Our next question is... This is a great question. I'm going to read it, but I feel like we've answered it, so I think we should get to the audience. But thank you to whoever sent this in. How are you ensuring equitable representation and opportunities for playwrights? Is there anything you wanted to add, beyond our conversation?

Jeremy O. Harris

The only thing is I think if anyone is looking for how to be equitable to people, it's, you know, I got... when the New York Times wrote the story about my residency, one of the comments said : "oh, so obviously there is a, there's a, there's a, obviously there's a criteria to be in here and it's obviously that you're not white or male. Like all of these titles look like agit prop because one of the places called like you know Racism and Essay". Another one called White Girls Game, one is called Class, which I'm like, I guess that's agit prop, but whatever.

But I was like, you know, I was like I didn't know who wrote these plays. I these were all blind submissions. These are all literally... I mean, I followed my gut on the things that excited me. I was like, so you wanna start, like, imagining differently? I think, literally, take 20 scripts, like, get your assistant to take the names off of them and just read them, and I promise you, in this moment, right now, the stories that will excite you the most will most likely be written by a complex array of voices.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Yes.

Jeremy O. Harris

Because it was undeniable. When I went through the list of all the plays that my readers have read, every single person had like like the kind of list of a season that I would want every theatre to have. There's like one brown person, one Asian person, one black person, one queer person. I'm like, "You did it! You did it!" And you know what happens when you take people's names off of things, and you don't need to see a face.

So that's that's how I would say you make it more equitable theatre. Start like living inside of the work and the work that's about the world around us, and the loudest of that work is gonna be from the people who are generally oppressed, I think. Right?

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Alright, time for few audience questions. There's a mic going around. Does anybody have any questions?

Jeremy O. Harris

It's fine if you don't. I've had you in this room for like... Oh, there we go. There's someone right over there.

As the microphone goes over there, I just want everyone to know: I know my voice makes it seem like I was up late last night, because I was partying. That is not why I was late here. My hair stylist dropped out at like 1:00 AM last night and I was freaking out because I am a black man, and I love my hair and my mom did hairstylist and my mom sees pictures of me, and my hair is not right, she's like, "Who the Hell did your hair? Why is it not right?"

So I was like up until 5:30 this morning be like [sobbing], and my very sweet new assistant came to the house and saw I was still asleep and she was just like I don't need to wake him up. I'll let him sleep, because she was so kind. But she should have woken me up. That's why I'm late.

A Journalist

Thank you very much for a wonderful conversation. My name is Anna Gab. I am from Finland.

Jeremy O. Harris

Oh I love Finland!

A Journalist

Thank you.

Jeremy O. Harris

You also have the coolest Prime Minister.

A Journalist

Yes... Party time! We should invite her next time.

Jeremy O. Harris

Oh my God.

A Journalist

Absolutely. But actually, I have worked all my life and fashion and art and I would love to ask your position about fashion and gender and this bridge between these two topics. Can you little bit explain more?

Jeremy O. Harris

I mean, I think fashion and gender, like, you know, fashion has no gender. And that's what I love about fashion. You know what I mean? I think that like having a Women's Week in a Men's Week is so dated. And I'm so excited for that to like sort of fall away because like often times, you know, I I called Daniel Roseberry is one of my very good friends.

And I called him up and I was like, "hey, I'm getting 21 looks for Cannes. I want these three looks." And he was like, "Jeremy, these are women's couture looks. They won't be able to –". And I was like, "Get more men in the women's couture!" Make something for my waist size, please. And he was like: "OK, I'm gonna do it". So he's like found some things for me.

But it's like, I think that there should be looking... Again, because I think once you start erasing what a woman's shape is, what a woman's size is, we will also be more inclusive around bodies, right? Because as we know, not every woman's size is represented by Women's Week right? And a lot of women I know feel more represented during Men's Week, which is why Bodie, one of my very good friends, this guy was so popular, right? Because a lot of them were just like buying Bodie because it was. It was shaped in a comfortable way for like a contemporary woman. Right. But it was only being showed at Men's Week.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Right. I mean, I would wear this in a heartbeat [pointing to Jeremy O. Harris' attire].

Jeremy O. Harris

Oh, thank you. Yeah. See. Well, Gucci has always known. You flip and switch and shape and share.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Yeah.

A Journalist

Can I ask one more question if it's OK?

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Yeah.

A Journalist

What is your favorite color?

Jeremy O. Harris

My favorite color? Ooh. All of them. No, I think, on me it's like a blue.

A Journalist

Like Navy blue?

Jeremy O. Harris

Yeah. I think maybe... I'm wearing maybe blue after this. And then I think that otherwise, I really, I really like seeing the color red. I'm looking at this purse right here. I'm like that's a great red.

A Journalist

So it's perfect color matched to Cannes, because the blue is the Mediterranean, the flowers.

Jeremy O. Harris

Exactly.

A Journalist

Fantastic. Thank you.

A Journalist

Hey. Jeremy, I am with the Golden Globe Awards.

Jeremy O. Harris

The what...?

A Journalist

The Golden Globe Awards

Jeremy O. Harris

Oh great.

A Journalist

Yes. I have to congratulate you. You are a revelation. You are amazing. What fascinates me is the 27 outfits that you brought. How many... Sorry for the primitive question, how many suitcases did you need, and what's gonna be the order that you're gonna be wearing them? And what is your most favorite one?

Jeremy O. Harris

OK, so that's a very good question. Because it also reveals something else that's going on with me right now and why I'm really upset, why I'm not layering my scents.

I didn't want to reveal this, but British Airways, I'm really mad at you, I brought five suitcases, four of quite large, like trunks basically, that had all of the clothes in it then I had a fifth one, a very small one that just had all my toiletries in it. Somehow, all four of the largest suitcases I've ever seen made it here. So I have all my clothes here. My smallest suitcase with my toiletries is *gone*. It's just lost. So that's that. So it's four suitcases,

My favorite outfit. OK, I, they they're all my favorites. That's like you. Outfits like children. You don't have a favorite, but the one I'm excited for the world to meet is most likely this one by a young designer who I'm also friends with named [Louar]. I have a very good [Louar] outfit that I'm wearing to *The Zone of Interest* and it's gonna gag the girls.

But also I have I have a really good Gucci outfit that I might be wearing to my premiere tonight.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

By the way, I have to say the little birdie who told me about the 21 office, which I'm sorry that I've now put you on blast with that is our editor in chief –

Jeremy O. Harris

Whom I love.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

One of your friends. And he tipped me off on that. But I am going to be watching now. Just get all the outfits. I believe we're out of time.

Jeremy O. Harris

Oh my God, this person has a mic, so I just want to do it.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Is that OK? OK, Yeah. Yeah.

A Journalist

Jeremy, I am Italian, and you know, I direct the festival Filming Italy Sardegna, because you speak about Italy before I love it. And you know, I try to support women empowerment in the movie industry. And I would love to ask you why you think now in 2023, still the woman, you know to have a high position, or to become more screenwriter, more director, more female producer, why so difficult to us to join the high position in the industry of the cinema?

Because you know that, you know, I am one of the very rare female directors. We are only two in Italy. Yeah, you know, it's very difficult for us to have the position and I would love to ask your opinion because you support a lot women position in many, many ways: you know, in theater, and in many of the things you do.

Jeremy O. Harris

Thank you. I've been very blessed that I have worked with some of the most powerful, most phenomenal women in this industry, across the board as executives like *Franny*, who's coming *Franny* from HBO, is coming with *The Idol* this week. She's a force. Francesca Orsi. Love her so deeply. Janicza Bravo, obviously I literally learn how to make her like she is my Pedro Almodovar, like she taught me everything.

But I think the same reasons that like you know, there are not as many people of color in power as there should be is the same reason why there are not women. We live in a patriarchy and we live in a white supremacist like culture, right? And so much of that patriarchal mindset is set in across the board.

Like the fact that most of multiple times and me and Janicza would like have be having Notes Calls, like she'd say something and they're like right anyway and they keep going and I'd be like "you know I think Janicza had a great idea, like I really think this is the thing". I'm the writer by the way, she is the director.

And they would say, "that's such a great point. I don't never heard that before". And we're looking at each other and thinking, Janicza just said it! It was a really interesting thing to notice that like, you know, the best thing I could do is like as an ally, amplify those voices. And I think more men need to actively amplify voices and not run away from that amplification. Like love Thierry, like he's had programmed a great thing, but I do think it's weird that he like keeps articulating that it was like an accident, that like there's gender parity this season. He keeps going like, "well, we didn't try to do that. We're not some woke festival." And I'm like, "yes, you are. You did actively try." Because that that's the only reason why for the first time ever, there are seven women in competition.

Like, don't *act* like it wasn't like a concerted effort by a lot of women in France to make this happen. And I think it needs to be fewer women making these things happen, fewer people of color making things happen, and more allies. More men saying, like, let me put women at the top, let me bring more people of color into this space. Because, if we don't have allies doing that, then like, our voices are going to go hoarse and we're not going to do our own work. Like, you can't work if you're also advocating, right, like. Which is very difficult.

Elizabeth Wagneister

Thank you so much.

Jeremy O. Harris

Who made this??

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Jeremy asked who made this? [referring to own jacket] And since you shouted out your grandma a ton, this is my grandma's. It's real vintage. She's 97 years old.

Jeremy O. Harris

Oh my God.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

So she'll be happy to be watching from LA.

Jeremy O. Harris

Tell your grandmother she slayed. This is amazing.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Oh, I will. She's probably not watching now, because it's nine hours ahead. But she will be watching and she'll hear it and she'll be so excited.

Jeremy O. Harris

One of the things I used to tell Alessandro all the time that Gucci was at the thing I loved the most about like his his time at Gucci is that it made Gucci feel like you were wandering through your grandma's attic.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

I love that.

Jeremy O. Harris

And that that, like, drew me to it. Cause like all of my favorite pieces I got from my grandma and grandpas attic, you know.

Elizabeth Wagmeister

Thank you so much, Jeremy. Thank you for being an ally.