



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

'On Their Way' Theme Song composed by Bajio Alvarado
(It's light and energetic. It puts a little pep in your step)

Jade: Hey, y'all. It's me Jade and this is the final episode of On Their Way's Bonus season. We did it! You know, I'm taking some time to reflect as I sit here recording this intro in the wee hours of New Years Eve, and I would like to say that I am very proud of the work that I have done for On Their Way and WGC as a whole. And I am very proud of the work that all 15 of my guests from the first season and bonus season have put in this year, and most importantly I am proud of the kindness with which they've decided to treat themselves. It's been a tough year, 2020, but look at us. We're here and what a beautiful thing that is. Before I move on I want you to know that Season 2 of On Their Way will focus on all the up-and-coming folks of my wonderful hometown of Tampa, Florida. Season 2 starts on February 19, 2021, mark your calendars. Okay, the final bonus episode of On Their Way season one is here, so buckle in and remember that this is a WGC production.

'On Their Way' Theme Fades

J: Chinna Palmer is a DMV artist and recent Howard grad. You may have seen her grace the stage in *Fairview* at Woolly Mammoth Theater Company or virtually in Roundhouse's Homebound series. Securing her passion in a middle school musical, Chinna now finds her way onto stages, sets, writers' rooms, and beyond continuing to explore through every door with her name on it. Hey Chinna. How you doing?

Chinna: Heeeey.

(Chinna & Jade Laugh)

J: (Laughing) What? Okay. How are you?

C: I can't help, but laugh when I see or hear you. I can't help-

J: Aww, thank you. Thank you. I appreciate that very much.



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: But how are you?

J: Oh, I'm good. I'm good hat you're doing good. Okay. So, I'm going to, uh, start this off with the first question I ask everybody: where are you from and where are your roots?

C: I'm from...Well, I was born in Newark, New Jersey, but grew up most of my life in Virginia Beach. Virginia, 757 what's up.

(Jade Laughs)

C: And my roots are, um, all over. I mean, in terms of my family, they are here in the States as far back as I know, but I do believe I may be from the Islands. I took a trip to Angola and felt like, "wow, this is home."

J: Mhmm.

C: "Yep. This is my essence right here." But then I also went to South Africa and felt like, "wow. Okay. Yep. This is home. This is my essence." So, I guess like most of us from everywhere.

(Chinna Chuckles)

J: All right. Okay. Diaspora power.

C: Come on.

J: Come on. And could you tell us in your own words, what it is that you do?

C: I act and I dance and I sing and I talk and I write and I give advice and I started cooking.

C & J: Oooh.

(Chinna and Jade Laugh)



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: Yes. Um, all of those things. I do service. Any way I can serve.

J: Service.

C: Yeah. That's a good encapsulation, I believe. I like to think that I'm just a vessel so that, you know, wherever I'm needed, however I'm needed, I will find a way to satisfy and fulfill the role, you know?

J: I do know, but before we go back to that, uh, in your bio, it said that you secured your passion in a middle school musical. Could you tell us about how you, um, about what happened in that musical that made you realize that you wanted to be, uh, an actor and a vessel in that way?

(Chinna Chuckles)

C: It was Annie. And-

J: Ooo.

C: Yeah. I played Ms. Hannigan.

(Jade and Chinna Laugh)

C: She was so far beyond my personality type and who I was, and I felt like I was able to trick people. I remember being on stage and feeling just like a beam of light that was on me and that was coming through me and it was incredible. And coming off the stage and talking to parents, um, afterwards they would run up to me like "you were amazing. You need to be acting. Dadada," and then they would be so surprised that I was, you know, as nice as I was and a lot of students too...I just remember them saying that "Chinna, you play that role so well, you're so mean. I can't believe it."

(Jade Laughs)



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: It was-

(Chinna Laughs)

C: It was, uh, was such a moment for me to realize like, “wow, I can be this other person and it feels so good. Why not? From there, I ended up applying to a more performance focused Academy, high school for acting and singing and...yeah, the journey won't stop.

J: Mhmmm, the journey won't stop. So let's take a couple of looks at where the journey has led. So, firstly one thing that I want to talk about is a performance that I got to see you in, uh, what in, what is now like almost a year ago? Almost two years ago. Uh, it was in 2019. It was *Fairview* at Woolly Mammoth Theater Company. Uh-

C: You saw *Fairview*?

J: Oh, did I see *Fairview*? Yes, Chinna! You were so good. Okay-

C: Jade.

J: Yeah! No, you were really great. Had me laughing. Had me tearing up. It was great.

(Chinna Laughs)

J: Uh, but for our audience you played Kiesha who was one of the central characters of *Fairview*. She was the daughter of the family. And, um....how, how would you describe *Fairview* exactly? In your words, how would you describe the plot?

C: It is

(Chinna Chuckles)



On Their Way Transcript:

Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: This was always like the most difficult thing to do, especially for this type of show.

J: Mhmm.

C: It's, what you think coming in, an average middle class Black family with Keisha being your rather typical high-school student on the track team, and, um, involved in choir and you know all of the extracurriculars on this journey to being to being this black excellence that she comes from a lineage of.

C: You know, her mother going to college and her grandmother going to college and her sister going to college and being well off as they are. Um, and you see this household start to, uh, shake a bit around their grandmother's or my grandmother's birthday dinner, and the pressures that come along with really satisfying and receiving acceptance from the matriarch of this family. And, uh, through the second half of it, you see how we are perceived by, our take on it, "neighbors" who were sort of peeking in on this world and on this story and lifeline here. And to hear the perception from these White men and women, some foreign, there was a one woman who was, um, where was she from? I think we went with Russian or something like-

J: She was from Eastern Europe

C: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. And so we get to hear their perspective on how they see these Black bodies moving through the space and how they relate to one another and you know how they basically are living their lives, and the amazing thing about watching that play. Oh, I didn't even get to the,

(Jade Laughs)

C: To the big to-tal, right?

J: Uh-huh.



On Their Way Transcript:

Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: So, we hear them narrate over what's happening as they're watching this whole time, right? And they're having conversations about, you know, what race they would be and why they would be that race and they say the most absurd things, you know, to me, of course.

J: Mhmm.

C: But, um, as these two worlds merge. Come the third act, uh, they bring their perceptions of us to life by actually enacting what they see and who they would have wanted to be in that race. So-

J: Yeah.

C: It's-

(Jade Laughs)

C: You know, so, yeah, it's a parody of sorts, but it's satirical in that it's true and really disturbing and it's funny at first glance, it seeing how these people come in and what they think being Black is

J: Mhmm.

C: And how they see it and how outrageous it is, and it turns into a point of actual danger and in the same way, that perception is really critical, uh, we see it come to life as they destroy this grandmother's birthday in this beautiful family gathering. And I as Keisha, the youth of the family, the only one with the insight as to what's happening here, couldn't allow it to happen anymore.

J: Yes. And, at the end of the play, you give this really bombastic speech, which end with, like a really powerful line of like, "wouldn't it be nice if everything was fair" and then you storm off and then the show ends and it's a moment-



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: Mhmm.

J: But one thing I wanted to ask you about was...so in this particular production of *Fairview*, after the show, the audience was split up into groups and, um, you joined us for one, uh, the Black people were split up into their own group to talk about their feelings about the show afterwards. And one thing that I remember you saying was, uh, to some effect that it was somewhat of a, and you can correct me if I'm wrong, of course it was almost a year ago after all, but that it was kind of an emotional show just because it had so much weight around it, like, um, weight around it. Uh, am I correct? Am I remembering correctly?

C: Absolutely.

J: So can you tell me about, um, with a show that deals so heavily with, um, with racism and sort of the parts that like, we don't really talk about in our day-to-day life., cause like, why talk about it? It's so much all the time. Can you tell us about what that process was like, just living in that for...for months at a time?

C: Oh yeah. And one of the things about the show too, even beyond the race, was the factor of surveillance. That was the main thing that really shook me.

J: Mhmm.

C: Um, just being under this watchful eye of the white gaze. It was disturbing and the most troubling part of it. But, um, yeah, so much of what we talked about in the play is, uh, not new to me-

J: Mhmm.

C: At least in my experience and, um, and working on it, oh my gosh, I'm so blessed to be at Woolly Mammoth while doing this show because they are incredible at supporting their artists and supporting stories and topics like this, and I had an amazing director, Stevie Walker-Webb, and incredible cast mates who were so very seasoned and empathetic and truly willing to listen



On Their Way Transcript:

Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

and understand how difficult this may have been a show for, um, us people of color, Black people on stage. And there was a space in working on it where if I did feel uncomfortable about something that would not be an issue to stop and let's talk about it. It was encouraged. We had many days where we would just sit and talk about issues really.

J: Mhmm.

C: And there were a couple of days in particular that were. You know, more troubling than the others. I remember one, I came in early or I was outside. I was down the street actually by the, uh, what's that big center down there with the McDonald's and movie theater and-

J: Oh, the one where they play hockey?

C: In Chinatown.

J: I think it's Verizon.

C: Yeah, the Verizon center. Here we go. Here we go. I was out in front of the, um, the museum though, on the steps, and they had a bunch of food trucks out there and-

J: Yeah.

C: I was just going through my script, and next to me was this big class, I guess, from out of town, full of younger white kids and there was a young black man that came up stumbling a bit. Uh, it was a hot day. He had on a black hoodie and I remember looking at him like, "damn, I know he hot," and next thing I know he passed out right there on the sidewalk and sort of tumbled into the gutter. And of course I rushed over, um, grabbed some people from the food truck, get some water and call the police, they're never far by in that area-



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

J: Mhmm.

C: So, they came rather quickly. But as I looked up, there were only Black people surrounding trying to help this man, and as I looked back this class of white kids and their teachers were just gawking at the whole situation. Didn't inch a bit to try and help or to call anyone or do anything. They were just surveying the whole situation, and it brought into perspective completely what we were doing in this show. And....I remember walking back really dazed by it, like, "what just happened?" And I walked into rehearsal, you know, trying to put in....the game face again. cause you got to go into work now-

J: Mhmm.

C: You don't bring that in here, but luckily I have a wonderful position in the line of work I'm in where I can bring this shit in and it helps completely. So as we started, at least in the bit with my director and stretching and warming up, he just sensed that something wasn't right, and we took a step out and I completely broke down about it, uh, again the week of the show and the impact, not just on the stage and in the theater, but seeing the shit reflected out in real life. And in that moment, and in this small bit of time seeing just how the pieces connected so sharply, it, it was a really troubling in the moment, but it gave a great drive to what I was doing in this show and what I was bringing forth for these people who have a perspective that isn't, um, as couth or as empathetic or....ignorant. A Lot of it is ignorance, you know?

J: Mhmm.

C: And a lot of what I dealt with around that show in terms of the weight wasn't with as much, um, my role as this young black girl, but a lot of it was taking on these white people shit. I have to say-

(Jade Laughs)

C: So many coming up to me with stories of either guilt or "I'm so sorry, this must be so difficult for you." And, uh, you know, I...I can accept that sympathy, but the show was not for me.



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

J: Mhmm.

C: And as I, uh, tailored, and as we decided to tailor really that final monologue, as much as we could to the people of color, if you were in the theater, you know, um, I asked the white people to..oh, is this a spoiler? Can I-

J: Just say, just say-

C: It doesn't matter much now.

(Chinna Laughs)

J: Just say spoiler for the end of *Fairview* if you see it. Yeah.

C: Spoiler Alert. Spoiler alert.

(Chinna Laughs)

C: At the end of my monologue, I asked all the people who identify as white to get on stage and it leaves, well, you know, in a handful of times that leaves the people of color-

J: Mhmm.

C: Or, um, the Black people left in the audience for me to give this small, tiny bit of story to and share a space with, and, um, the reflection of that outside of, you know, the directness of the monologue is to look at, for these white people....how, how, uh....how slim this experience is and how blessed and eager one should be to allow this space for these people of color. And so I say in that final monologue, it is for the people of color, but the show in its entirety, I don't believe is. I think most of the takeaways from that, um, were directed to the white people to be quite honest.

J: See that's interesting.



On Their Way Transcript:

Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: To be quite honest with you.

J: Yeah. To be frank, Fairview was studied in one of my classes last semester, playwriting classes, and we also talked about how we felt that *Fairview* wasn't necessarily for Black people or non-white people in general, because it had messages that we'd already known-

C: Mhmm.

J: And it would only really seem new to people who didn't have to live the experience,

C: Right.

J: And so it's interesting that you also picked up on it, but I want to ask them, have you ever been in a show that you felt was written for Black people, and if so, uh, what was your, how was your process different for, for, uh, filling out your character in that show?

C: That was written for...for a Black experience-

J: For a Black audience. Yeah.

C: Ooooh. I did *In The Red and Brown Water* at-

J: You know that's the show that, go ahead go ahead-

C: **(Laughs)** What?

J: I was gonna say I've seen, when you did that production I saw nearly, um, every production that was put on of that show. Yeah. I still have my notes from it.

C: Jade!



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

(Chinna and Jade Laugh)

C: I love you. Thank you.

J: Aww thanks, Chinna. I love you too. I love your work. But go ahead. Go ahead, I didn't mean to cut you off.

C: No. *In The Red And Brown Water* Uh, felt like.....well, I've probably been blessed with a lot of my roles now feeling like, um, I at least didn't have to adapt myself too far, but Tarell and his work in that show in particular has a cast of all Black, young people in a space where, uh, you can't help but to relate if you black. Sure there are takeaways of it that are universal as any good writer would do, and Tarell absolutely is an amazing writer, but it is a show about, and for Black people, I believe.

J: I dig that. I think it, I think it is as well. Um, one question, on the same track, but one question I do want to ask is as a young up and coming black actress in the DC theater world, how do you advocate for yourself? Especially since, uh, theater isn't necessarily, um, always made with Black people in mind, as we've seen from like this past year and the history of theater. So how do you advocate for yourself? Do you say?

C: Look, I walk in and I'm black. Ain't no getting around that. Ain't no conversation or question to be had about it. Okay. So, um, what's the question directed towards, in terms of, um, like equality or-

J: Well, when I talk to my, uh, my other acting friends or things like that, sometimes they can feel, um, not necessarily intimidated, but like, they don't know what to ask for. They don't know what to ask, like, how do you go about learning the things that you hadn't necessarily not been taught, but do you know like how...how some people just because they've never heard it or been around it sometimes they don't know like, not not what's going on, but like they don't know the



On Their Way Transcript:

Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

depth of what's happening because they're not involved in those conversations. Like how do you get yourself in those conversations?

C: Absolutely. Absolutely. Um, I am a really curious person and I am not shy at all about asking questions and I'll be the first to admit that I don't know anything and I think I'm smarter for it.

(Chinna and Jade Laugh)

C: And I'm just bringing that, I think, uh, especially in DC because so many theaters are open to having these conversations and talking about these things.

C: And they're also curious about our perspective-

J: Mhmm.

C: It's not difficult to breach and I've had a lot of, um, great mentors, and I'm going to say, I guess, allies, in this theater company-

(Jade and Chinna)

C: This is so strange because it just feels like because I don't see the race as the center of what we do here.

J: Yeah!

C: And a lot of my questions are things about me advocating for myself, have to do in terms of the business, because at the end of the day, it is a business, and I don't know too much about that, and so my questions stem from there, perhaps, and not so much around where or how I fit as a black woman, because that just is, there's no changing that, and I have no interest in convincing anyone of anything about that or explaining anything about that or breaching any questions about that. You know what I'm saying?



On Their Way Transcript:

Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

J: No, I definitely get that, yeah.

C: That is what it is, and it's not going to change, honey. Okay?

(Chinna and Jade Laugh)

C: I'm a beautiful, young, black thing till the day she die.

J: Okay!

(Jade Laughs)

J: Um, okay, then that brings up a question of what's the most useful thing you've learned about the business side of theater since you've been in the industry?

C: Nothing is confirmed until you sign a contract.

(Chinna Laughs)

J: Bet. Okay.

C: That was really, probably one of the first lessons I learned. When I booked, um, my first show, I was still in school, I hadn't yet graduated. And it was a major theater in the DMV, and I was so thrilled obviously, because "hello, I'm going to be working when I get out of school"

J: Wooo.

C: And I went in for another show and I auditioned for it, and I knew the casting director, she was amazing. And I let her know, like, "sorry, I'm already booked for a show at this time slot, but



On Their Way Transcript:

Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

I'm still gonna audition because, you know, 'respect'." And she was like, "well, you know, it's not really official until you sign a contract, right?" And I was like, "Hmm, I didn't know that."

(Jade Laughs)

C: But thank you. And I ended up getting that role as well and was split in a decision where I had to choose.

J: Mhmm.

C: And I felt terrible because, "Oh my gosh, this is my first professional show, and they're going to hate me if I have to leave," because I really wanted to do this other show, right?

J: Mhmm.

C: "They're going to hate me and they're never going to want to work with me again." And you know, at the end of the day, after a couple of, you know, back and forth, uh, they were both putting in their, their picks It was so stressful.

(Chinna Laughs)

C: Oh my gosh. But the main takeaway is, remember not to take things personally. It is a business and of course, um, read your contract and it's not official until you sign it. Yeah.

J: Do you have an agent?

C: I do now. Yes.

J: Oh!

C: Yes. Yes.



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

J: So, what made you, uh, decide that you needed an agent and then how'd you go get an agent?

C: Well, that was sort of the plan cause as far as I knew in order to get into bigger rooms and, um, into broader audiences, you needed-

J: Mhmm.

C: An agent to get in those doors, or you needed to be, in terms of stage work, you needed to be Equity.

J: Mhmm.

C: And that was just another blessing that came along with doing Fairview is that I got my equity based off that contract.

J: Nice.

C: And so auditioning at least was easier. Uh, I started making trips to New York more frequently. Actually being able to get into audition rooms at that point. And my agent just came in the past....during COVID, in the past couple months. He's in LA, so he's focusing on TV and film for me, and things are rather slow or they happened this past month. Wow. They've picked up. I'm like, "damn, I'm, low-key, sick of doing these self-tapes"

(Jade and Chinna Laugh)

C: I love being in the room, you know?

J: Mhmm.

C: And just feeling that energy and letting it bounce off the walls and off the people and you know.



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: But, um, I've been getting some really fun ones for that. Got some callbacks, fingers crossed for me y'all.

J: Okay. Okay.

C: On, you know, your prime time TV, fingers crossed. Um, but I always knew at some point that would be a part of the process just to, um, broaden where I could go and what doors I could get into and who I could be seen by, and he came along by an amazing Instructor I had at Howard Ka'ramuu Kush who lives in LA.

J: Oh.

C: Yeah. Did you ever meet Kush?

J: I never have, but I've heard his name tossed about in many a room.

C: Oh man. You should. You two would certainly get along.

J: Aww.

C: Um, but yeah, I think they were friends and they were talking about students and he showed my video and he was excited to talk and at that point it was during COVID, so I wasn't expecting too much to happen. I was just really curious and wanted to know a couple of things about that side of the world and the industry,

J: Mhmm.

C: Because I expected TV and film to be a little bit later down the line. I was like, just let me live on stage and in theater just a little bit longer. I had planned this past summer to move to New York. Um-

J:: Oooh.



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: With hopes of this, you know, living out this..."okay, a little bit more stage life, and then once I get my agent, boom, I can be on TV and film." And then you know?

J: Mhmm.

C: That whole shebang, but you know, just looking at how things are going, it's just a smart move to not delay. Jump in now while we got it.

J: Yeah. Well, congratulations on your agent and congratulations on those prospective primetime TV spots, fingers crossed indeed.

C: Ayeeeeeee. Yes, thank you.

J: Ayee.

(Chinna and Jade laugh)

J: So, you mentioned that you were making trips up to New York at one point in time. So, how in your experience, how does the New York theater scene in DC theater scene differ and like, do you have to do anything different? Like what's the, what's the vibe

C: In terms of auditioning?

J: Yeah. In terms of auditioning,

C: Um, DC is far more lax? Is it lax? I mean, no, because I guess either way there's the same sort of angst you feel walking into a room of waiting auditionees.

J: Mhmm.

C: So, that's never really going to change, but the auditions I went to in New York were in the Equity building.



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: And I just remember feeling really freaking lucky that I was Equity at that point

J: Mhmm.

C: Because I went up a couple of times beforehand when I wasn't and I didn't get seen. I was waiting literally all day, and I would book one-ways and then hopefully just, you know, book a flight or book a bus ticket by the time I'm out. And I would just be there all day waiting for a chance to get in.

J: Got to love a cattle call.

C: Ugh.

J: Yeah.

C: It was terrible.

(Jade and Chinna Laugh)

C: At least here is D.C. where the crowd is a bit smaller, there's a...yeah, there's a bigger chance that you'll be seen, and especially once you make an impression, you definitely have a bigger chance of being called in personally for things which is, you know, the sweet spot, right? Where, you know, a casting director or someone is familiar enough with your work to just email you and reach out and ask you to come in. That is where you want to be. But until then, you go to those open calls early, as early as you can, so you can get in and get out, be prepared and show your best work. Okay? Come with that good energy I know you have and just do what you do. There's always so much like nervousness and angst walking into those rooms either way. And I always sit somewhere off to a corner to the side. Cause I'm like, "I don't need none of that on me, please."

(Jade and Chinna Laugh)



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

J: Okay. Well, this is a question I was gonna ask, but this is a great segue way. So, one thing I think that people in the entertainment industry forget is that we deal with a lot more rejection than the average person. Like, the average person you get rejected every now and then, but like in acting-

(Chinna Chuckles)

J: It's every...it's essentially, every time you go in for an audition, you...you're more likely to get rejected than to get hired, and that's just like a thing that happens. So, uh, in an industry that's so

(Chinna Laughs)

J: Hey, you're laughing, but it's true.

(Jade Laughs)

C: It is. It's different because, I'm sorry to cut you off, but the rejection is low-key worse because at least in real life when you're rejected, you're told pretty straight off. Like, no, it's not going to happen.

J: Mhmm.

C: The rejection for us is just completely not hearing back at all.

J: Yeah, just straight radio silence.

C: And no. Nothing. It's terrible.

(Chinna Laughs)



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

J: It really is. It's disrespectful, but in an industry that deals so heavily with rejection, how do you preserve your, um, sense of self image and your own sense of self-worth?

C: Oh man, I go into auditions...I like to sit for a little bit. I get there super early and a lot of it is in the preparation for me. And it's in the....upkeep of self, you know, beyond the craft and what we do in terms of going in these auditions and work, it's really about the care and work that I've put in to my own being. Um, yeah, that really feeds into my acting as well. It gives such a place of security to work from when you can be secure in who you are or where you are at least, um, who you are is such a loaded question, right? But at least where you are, if you're at peace with that. And then, I mean, there's nothing to sway you from it. There's no one that can tell you. You're not, when you know that you are. Um, another big part of that, or in terms of my general upkeep of not being bogged down by the failures and the call backs I didn't get, are treating myself after the audition. And so like, I'll walk in, feel good, go in there, let it all out. However, I feel it needs to be let out. and as soon as I walk away, whatever sides I have..."I don't need this anymore. It's done. I've put it in the past. You know what I'm going to do too? I am going to go get some ice cream or I'm going to go buy myself a meal, or I'm going to go get my nails done." Something that says you did it. No matter what they say or what you have to think about, you went in there and you did your thing, okay? And that's a pat on the back just for that, okay? Appreciate yourself at all times.

(Jade Laughs)

C: I thank my body. I do a nice stretch sometimes. Like just thank you body for being in there. You know, I might sit down with my journal. Journaling is oh! I talk, but when I can't talk to someone else, I'll just talk to myself in my journal and write it down. So-

(Chinna Laughs)

C: Journaling.

J: Hey, it works!



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: It works! Like magic, and it sucks that, you know, at least in school, we had to do journaling quite a bit.

J: Mhmm.

C: And it was a task and homework. And so there was a period in time where I was like, “Ugh, I'm not journaling. I can't stand this,”

(Jade & Chinna Laugh)

C: But you do it from a place of, um, real progression and self documentation it's really helpful. Incredibly inspiring, especially by what you discover, just from writing out what you're thinking and what's on your mind. It's super helpful.

J: Mhmm. It is. I started journaling this week and....it makes you feel lighter. It's nice. Um-

C: Yeah.

J: One thing...yeah....one thing that, um, keep popping up every now and then is the ever present COVID-19, so we don't know how it's going to affect theater, but we know that it's gonna affect theater in a way that, um, it's going to be pretty massive. So, what are you doing to sort of prepare for a post COVID theater world?

(Chinna Sighs)

C: Praying.

(Chinna Laughs)

J: Oh, yeah.



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: I'm praying, and I'm preparing myself. There are lots of innovative things that are happening as COVID is already tremendously sort of crippling the theater as we once knew it.

J: Mhmm.

C: And I'm trying to...it's really upsetting because the thought of either not going to see a show live and the full experience, you know, having all the chatter behind you and hearing and seeing all the expressions of what's happening

J: Mhmm.

C: Or not being on stage and feeling full, packed out, sold out show... like that just it's, it's a different experience, okay? You know what I'm saying? Being on stage is one thing. Being on stage in a sold out show is a whole other beast, and it's an amazing thrill and feeling and so it hurts my heart a bit, but, um, um, I don't know. I don't know.

(Chinna Laughs)

J: I think that's-

C: And my mind still can't really wrap around the fact that it's going to change it as dramatically as I'm, as I'm sure it will.

J: Mhmm.

C: But I'm still, you know, finding my way through that or how that looks. Yeah. I have thought about, and it's been haunting me for a bit now, to do...it's not live theater in the sense of going to the theater and sitting down in this auditorium of sorts and watching, but more so like public live art exhibits, where I've been writing these mini monologues and having this idea of just going and saying them and talking to random people on the street about it.

J: (Pleased) Mhmm.



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: You know, that's live theater.

J: Yeah, that is life theater.

C: In a way.

J: Audience performer. Yeah.

C: Yeah. And sort of mini series, uh, what is it like? Uh, art exhibit sort of way.

J: I'd watch it.

(Chinna Laughs)

C: Thanks.

(Jade Laughs)

C: Let me go find a corner one day.

J: Yeah, I would love that.

(Jade and Chinna Laugh)

J: I would love that. Okay, so that's your response for a post-COVID theater world. What are you doing currently in a COVID theater world? I know that you've done projects like the Roundhouse Theater's, *Homebound*, which is about, uh, COVID life. Um, but like could you, one, talk to us about that and talk to us about how that was, uh, filming that remotely, and then also talk about what else you're doing in this, uh, in this COVID time?



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: Yeah. *Homebound* was great. That was earlier on in this sort of COVID quarantined world and, man *Roundhouse* is amazing. They sent somebody over to drop off this full package of equipment for lighting and sound and resetting stuff and we zoomed through the entire time with the director and the lighting/sound guy, and of course the other actors....and it worked. It really wasn't an issue at all. And although it didn't feel like theater, of course it was the best mode that we could do, and I'm really proud of that work actually.

J: Mhmm. It was good.

C: Because it was early on, A, in the COVID, um, scene trying to create theater in this world and at the quality it was done at, it was amazing. I've done a couple other readings through zoom and, um, working with new plays. I did a reading with the National New Play Exchange and the Kennedy Center. Working with, um, the handpicked playwrights on pieces that they were developing, and there's a world in theater of working on new and still in process and developing plays that, even through Zoom felt like I was back in the theater, you know? It felt like, okay, this is, this is a bit of that innovation that I need to spark my love of theater and what I'm losing here. Um, but yeah, a couple of readings, uh, I'm writing a one-person show, but it doesn't look like it'll be theater much at all.

J: Oh, it's gonna be like a film? Web series?

C: A film. A short.

J: Okay. Yeah. That's interesting. Could you tell us what it's about?

C: It's still taking shape though.

J: Oh, okay.

C: Yeah. It's about a bit of everything at this point.

(Chinna Laughs)



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: It's a lot of brain dump on pages

J: Mhmm.

C: And lots of excerpts from my journal. Um, lots of just random writings and thoughts and words and voices that I hear come to me.

J: Mhmm.

C: But...yeah. Yeah, I'll say that.

J: Okay. Well, I look forward to that. I look forward to that as well. Um, so we're round, we're winding down, but I want to give you this one question before our last question. So, take a moment, close your eyes, if you want to, but think about little Chinna. Little Chinna Palmer, maybe like 5, 10 years old.

(Chinna Laughs)

J: Maybe that Chinna Palmer, who was being congratulated for her performance as Ms. Hannigan. What do you think that kid version of you would say if they saw you right now?

C: You're doing it.

(Chinna and Jade Laugh)

C: You're doing it. It's crazy because even in taking this interview with you, part of me felt like, am I in the position to be talking about, you know, all of this and giving this sort of what will be influence and advice to someone, I hope? Am I, you know, in the position to do that?



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: And very quickly I thought “Bitch, yes! Because doing it and you're living it. And, you know, you haven't gotten here by not working and by not fulfilling your purpose here. Um, it's been really important for me as a young kid. I mean, I've always been rather, um, sparky

(Jade Laughs)

C: And active in terms of dancing and singing, and it was always sort of destined that I would be a performer of some sort and being the only one in my family with this sort of endowment and seeing so much of them really working to keep us all afloat and keep us happy and not necessarily following a dream, but you know, doing what we gotta do to get by and make sure that we're solid. And I feel incredibly, incredibly blessed to really be following through with that dream and to be seeing it piece by piece, come to life. And I feel that beyond my doing of it personally, for me, that it's important that I do it for my family and for all of the working class, Black people out here who are trying to get by and not putting what they love to do first or what they truly feel. Not doing what they feel, but doing what they have to do to survive and I, and, um, yeah, I'm blessed to be in this purpose and just happy that I'm actually doing it and following through. Yeah.

J: Mhmm.

C: Little Chinna will be proud of me. Thank you.

(Jade Laughs)

J: Alright. Well, I'm glad that little Chinna would be proud of you, and I'm glad that you feel that you're blessed and you're glad to be where you are right now, because you are clearly on your way to success. You're doing all these wonderful things. You're sitting in on new plays. You're doing the self-tape circuit for television and film. You're really doing it Chinna.

(Chinna Chuckles)

J: So, I want to know how will you know, when you've made it?



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: Have I not?

(Chinna Laughs)

J: Okay.

(Jade Laughs)

C: Part of me feels like, “Oh gosh, what's the pressure of like, oh, being on a red carpet or winning an award.” I feel like I have and am making it. I've worked with amazing, incredible artists and collaborated to bring to life a piece of work that I believe in and that is impactful and is rooted in love, and I made it. I made it. I want to keep going, that's um, that's certainly part of this journey and aspiration for me

J: Mhmm.

C: To keep doing it, but every day, and it feels, like, really cheesy saying this out loud now, but-

(Chinna and Jade Laugh)

C: Living life the way I am and in purpose, the way I feel I am, feels like I'm making it. And my dad says, all the time, like, “you're doing it, baby. You're doing it.” You know-

(Jade laughs)

C: It keeps you driven enough. That keeps me, um, eager for what's ahead. I don't as Virgo as I am in my nature, and planning things out and setting a schedule for everything. in terms of this life path and where I'm going, you know, I'm, I'm here for the ride. I'm here for the journey. Cause I'm doing what I'm doing and I think I'm making it.



On Their Way Transcript:
Bonus Episode: Chinna Palmer

C: Certainly it'd be beautiful, I must say, to be a writer, director, producer, and actress of my own thing. That'd be another, another big step, but you know, every day we're making it.

J: All right. Wonderful. So, could you tell the people where they can find you?

C: Yeah, look on Instagram, Chinna, C H I N N A. Thank you two N's. Dot Palmer (@chinna.palmer) Uh, I'm really not on there much, I'm not much of a social media gal. Other than that, hit me up! Email me sometime, chinnapalmer@yahoo. I'd love to chat.

'On Their Way' Theme Song composed by Bajio Alvarado

J: You have just finished listening to the last episode of the On Their Way's bonus season. On Their Way was created, hosted, and edited by me Jade Madison Scott. The theme was composed by Bajio Alvarado and the logo was created by Amaka Korie . If you want to support us financially consider buying our merchandise which you can do by going to our website wgcpredictions.com. Personally, I'm gonna buy an "On Their Way" sweatshirt in black after I finish recording this, so feel free to hop on that bandwagon. If you want to stay in contact and see what we're getting up to, follow us on our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @withgoodco. We'd love to hear what you think so slide us a DM or comment. Lastly, transcripts for the episode are on our website, wgcpredictions.com, under the On Their Way tab. Alrighty, I hope you guys ate plenty of black eyed peas and collard greens this New Years Day. See you on February 19th with season two, and remember to be kind to yourself.