

“Jamming on the Job”

Episode 10: Costume Designer

[PBS KIDS music]

PBS KIDS Announcer: From your friends at PBS KIDS.

[a tour bus zooming down the open road]

Andrés: Vamos amigos, it's time to go.

Christina: Get ready BoomBox, we have a show.

[Music: Jamming on the Job theme song]

Christina, Andrés, and BoomBox: (singing)

Jamming on the Job

Ja, Jamming

Jamming on the Job

Wooh Ooh

I'm Christina,

Y yo soy Andrés

And we play music

All over the states

We jam and learn

With people who

Work in jobs

They love to do!

If we get stuck

Or something goes wrong
An expert helps us
And we write a song!

[BoomBox beats]
Hey...Go BoomBox...¡Vamos!

Jamming on the Job
Ja, Jamming
Jamming on the Job
Wooh Ooh

[microphone feedback]

Andrés: (into microphone) Hola, Jam Fam! We're so happy to have you here with us in Cleveland, Ohio!

BoomBox: WADDUP OHIO?

Christina: Andrés, BoomBox, and I are doing a show tonight at one of the many beautiful theaters in the city's Playhouse Square.

Andrés: And we're just now finishing up our sound check. [guitar strums]
Hello, hello? Uno, dos, tres... check, check! [guitar strums]

Christina: ¡Perfecto!

BoomBox: SOUND CHECK SOUND CHECK! SOUNDS GREAT,
SOUNDS GREAT! SOUND CHECK!

Christina: ¡Tú también estás perfecto, BoomBox! You sound perfect, too!

BoomBox: THANK YOU!

Christina: Cleveland is a great place to put on a concert! The city loves

music so much, they even built the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame!

Andrés: Which is why Cleveland is called...“The Rock and Roll Capital of the World!”

Christina: Almost done... All we need now is our costumes!

BoomBox: COSTUMES, COSTUUUUMES! COSTUMES!

Andrés: We’ve put together some fun new costumes for tonight’s show!

[door opening, outside footsteps, bus doors opening, luggage coming out]

Christina: Andrés...

Andrés: Yes?

Christina: Uh, I don’t see the costume suitcase.

Andrés: What? Impossible. ¡Tiene que estar ahí! [Christina: Um... bueno...] The suitcase must be buried under... hmm, let’s see... Ah! Cables de guitarra, eh, no that’s not it. Ok let me move this... Hey look! Here’s my lucky rubber chicken! [rubber chicken squeaks] Hey gallinita! ... [Christina: Um...] Well, that’s not it... oh no, [Christina: hmm...] I don’t see it either!

BoomBox: UH-OH... OH NO, OH NO, OH NO!

Christina: Hmm. Maybe we can figure out where it is by trying to think back into our memories. Where did we see it last?

Andrés: The last place I remember seeing it was next to our tour bus in Cincinnati while we were packing up, right before we drove off.

Christina: Great! And then, uh, do you remember putting the costume

suitcase INTO the bus?

Andrés: Uh-oh, I don't think I did! [Christina: gasps] And there's no time to get them now! ¡Qué gran error! Agh! I have really messed up. You must be so upset with me!

Christina: Well... to be honest, Andrés, I AM upset. We wear costumes for all of our shows. They're an important part of our performance!

Andrés: Ay, ¡lo siento!

Christina: But (sighs)... I also understand how you must feel.

[SFX: record scratch]

Andrés: You do?

Christina: Yes, because of a little trick I like to call "taking a walk in your shoes"!

BoomBox: [Remixes the phrase "walk in your shoes!"] WALK IN YOUR SHOES, WALK IN YOUR SHOES...

Andrés: But you can't take a walk in my shoes, Christina. I'm wearing these ones, and I forgot the other ones in Cincinnati!

Christina: (laughing) No, Andrés, it's an expression! [Andrés: Oh.] It means that I tried to think about your point of view, your perspective. And I asked myself, "How would I feel if I'd forgotten the costume suitcase?", and I realized I'd also be sad... [Andrés sighs] so for a moment it was like I was taking a walk in your shoes.

Andrés: Claro, ¡ya entiendo! "Taking a walk in your shoes" means "imagining someone else's perspective."

BoomBox: IMAGINING SOMEONE ELSE’S PERSPECTIVE... YEAH!

Christina: ¡Exactamente! Well, we can call somebody to deliver our costume suitcase to us later... but, uh... the show – tonight! It’s in only a few hours! What are we going to wear??

Andrés: ¡Ay! Maybe someone back at the theater can help us. [Christina: Ok!] ¡Vamos, BoomBox! ¡Vamos, Jam Fam!

[music, theater doors opening]

Andrés: Ay, everyone’s so busy getting the theater ready for the show tonight. Where do we even begin?

Christina: ¡Espera! ¡Mira! Look at that sign on the wall.

Andrés: Oh! It says “Costume Shop,” and it’s pointing at those stairs heading down. ¡Qué suerte! A place to shop for costumes right in the basement! Yay!

Christina: ¡Vamos!

[footsteps on stairs, sound of sewing machine, knocking on door]

Christina: ¡Hola!

Kai: Hello? Can I help you?

Christina: Hi! I’m Christina.

Andrés: Y yo soy Andrés... and this is our magical music machine, BoomBox!

BoomBox: BOOM B-BOOM BOOM BOOM B-BOOMBOX!

Christina: We're also here with our Jam Fam, the listeners of our podcast!

Andrés: Say "Hola" Jam Fam!

Kai: Hi, everyone. My name's Kai. You're putting on the concert here tonight, right?

Andrés: Yeah! That's the plan...except, uh, we're having a LITTLE problem, and we were hoping you could help.

Kai: Sure! Any way I can.

Christina: We accidentally left our show costumes back in Cincinnati.

Kai: (laughs) Whoops. I can imagine you're feeling frustrated about that. I've left a suitcase behind before, and I felt the same way.

Andrés: But luckily we found your costume shop! Now we can just buy new costumes for tonight!

Kai: Buy? Oh (laughs) I see the confusion! This isn't a "shop" like a store. [Andrés: Huh?] "Shop" is short for "workshop."

Christina: Oh. So... you can't help us?

Kai: Oh... I can definitely help you. I'm a theatrical costume designer. I design costumes for the theater and performances!

Andrés: So you're like a fashion designer!

Kai: Well, kind of. Fashion designers and costume designers do both work with clothing but, in other ways, our jobs are very different.

Christina: What do you mean?

Kai: I would say that a fashion designer's job is to create a collection of clothes that all fit a particular style or idea. [Christina: Oh!] But the job of a theatrical costume designer – and also costume designers who work on movies or television – is to help tell a story.

Andrés: Really? Well I know how to tell stories with words, but how do you tell a story with clothes?

Kai: That's a great question! We costume designers help tell stories in a unique way, by imagining and then creating what the characters in the story will wear. [Andrés: Huh!] Maybe you've seen a show where actors are wearing cowboy hats, or baseball uniforms, or even spacesuits?

Andrés: Yeah!

Christina: Oh, sure! Jam Fam, have you ever seen a show like that?

Kai: Costume designers like me are responsible for making sure all those costumes are in the show.

Christina: It must be so much work to make new costumes for every show.

Kai: (laughs) I don't have to make everything myself by hand. Let me show you our costume stock.

[door opening, lights turning on]

Andrés: Wooooow!

Christina: What an enormous room! [Andrés: Whoo!] There are so many clothes in here!

[clothing hangers moving on racks]

Andrés: It's like a closet... if the closet were as big as a house!

[hangers sliding on racks]

Kai: (laughs) Yeah! The theater keeps all of its collected costume pieces in here. Some were bought brand-new or from used clothing stores, and others were handmade. Why don't you take a look and see if there's anything that matches the costumes you lost?

Andrés: Yeah! That's very helpful! ¡Muchas gracias, Kai!

BoomBox: LOOK AT ALL THESE COSTUMES. 'BOUT TO GET THE WARDROBE POPPIN'!

Christina: Jam Fam, this costume collection is amazing. There are smooth silk shirts, scratchy wool sweaters...

[costumes rustling, jingling]

Andrés: ...feathered hats, buckled shoes, belts with gemstones...

Christina: ...fluffy coats, (laughs) a suit of armor...

Andrés: Careful with that one! Ow!

Christina: (gasps) Whoa! (laughs)

BoomBox: COSTUMES, REALLY AWESOME COSTUMES, REALLY AWESOME COSTUMES

Christina: When I was little I would have LOVED a closet like this one! I would have spent days and days putting different outfits together and pretending I was different people!

Kai: I used to do the same thing when I was little! [Christina: Really?] You bet! One time, I remember I put on a big coat, a scarf over one eye, and a

clothes hanger up my sleeve. Then I went out to my backyard and pretended I was a pirate! [Christina laughs] I used to think I wanted to be an actor myself, but later I realized what I enjoyed most was figuring out what the characters would wear.

Christina: Oh, ok!

Andrés: Wow, there ARE so many costume pieces, and they're fantastic! ...But I just don't think anything is quite right. [Christina: Yeah...]

BoomBox: UH-OH... OH NO, OH NO, OH NO!

Andrés: Thank you for trying anyway, Kai... Come on, Christina, come on BoomBox, let's go.

Kai: Oh, but wait, not to worry! It would be my pleasure to design new costumes for each of you.

Christina: ¿De verdad?

Andrés: Really?

Kai: Let me get my pencil and sketchbook ready...(pulls out a pencil and sketchbook)... and uh, we can get started!

Christina: Oh well, what do you do first, Kai?

Kai: Well, when I start a costume design, I read the script for the play, and also talk with the people who will be wearing the costumes to learn more about the characters they act in the play. So I might ask an actor: "What's your character's daily job?" Their answers will give me an idea of how they might dress for those activities.

Andrés: Oh! So if a character works in a bank, they might wear some kind of business suit.

Christina: Or if the character works on a fishing boat, they would probably wear waterproof boots and overalls.

Andrés: Or if the character is a wizard, maybe they can have a pointy hat with stars all over it!

Kai: Those are great examples. Sometimes I also ask more personal types of questions, like “What’s this character’s favorite color?” It helps me understand how those characters think and feel.

Andrés: Huh! You learn their PERSPECTIVE! [Kai: Yup!] You learn how to walk in their shoes!

BoomBox: WALK IN YOUR SHOES, WALK IN YOUR SHOES!

Kai: Right! “Walk in their shoes” is something I like to say too! And I’ve also designed costumes for non-human characters who don’t wear shoes at all! [Andrés laughs] One costume I made had a mask with horns on its face and a lumpy gray sweater to make the actor look like a rhinoceros!

Christina: That must have been so much fun, Kai! (laughs) Um, there’s just one problem: we don’t play characters in our show. We’re just... us. [Kai: Oh...] Does that make your work more difficult?

Kai: Not at all. Let’s start with an easy question: What colors do you like to wear onstage?

Andrés: We wear every color in the rainbow!

Christina: Sometimes all at once!

[writing in notebook]

Kai: Fabulous... So what’s the mood you try to create during your show?

Christina: Fun!

Andrés: Full of energy!

BoomBox: ENERGY ENERGY ENERGY!

Kai: Do you jump around?

Christina: Oh yeah! Jump, and dance, and twirl...

Andrés: That's also how we want the audience to feel! We love when they sing along, clap their hands, or get out of their seats to dance with us. Come on Jam Fam, move around with us!

Kai: Oh, so you move around a lot...

Andrés: Yeah!

Kai: That's another great detail for me to know. I want to make sure I design costumes that allow you to move comfortably and safely.

Christina: Oh! I didn't even think about that! If I'm not wearing the right costume, I could trip and hurt myself when I'm moving onstage.

Kai: Yeah! Andrés, you play a few different musical instruments, right?

Andrés: ¡Sí, la guitarra! Mostly guitar, but sometimes I'll play the clarinet or the saxophone.

Kai: Great! Then I'll make sure your costume lets you move your arms so it's easy to play whatever instrument you want. [Andrés: Ok!] Also, do you like to wear any accessories?

Andrés: I usually wear a hat onstage.

Christina: And sometimes we like wearing something that reminds us of our Colombian heritage!

Andrés: Oof! I never knew there were so many questions to answer about the costumes people wear!

Christina: Jam Fam, what other questions could you ask to help you learn someone else's perspective and walk in their shoes?

BoomBox: WALK IN YOUR SHOES, WALK IN YOUR SHOES!

[pencil scribbling]

Kai: Ok! I've made some quick drawings of some costume ideas.

[paper tearing]

[SFX: Kai handing them his sketchbook]

Christina: (gasps) Kai, these are wonderful!

Andrés: ¡Sí, me encantan!

Kai: Thank you!

Christina: You can do ALL that before the show tonight?

Kai: I'll try my hardest, and I feel confident. This isn't the most difficult costume I've had to design.

Andrés: Now I'm curious! What was the most difficult costume you ever had to do?

Kai: Well that depends... costumes can be difficult in different ways.

[Andrés: Huh!] One time I had to create an alien monster costume with dozens of eyes that had to each be carefully attached.

Christina & Andrés: (laughter) Oh! Awesome! Whoa!

Kai: Oh! And another time I had to make a costume that could be turned inside out in seconds for an actor making a quick costume change. So the outside and inside were both costumes! [Christina: Wow! Andrés: No way!] Every challenge is about what the story needs. Anyway, let me take your measurements.

[measuring tape unfurling]

Christina: And you do this all by yourself for every show presented by the theater? That's amazing!

Andrés: A-MAY-zing!

Kai: Oh, I'm not usually here alone. Depending on the show, there might be an entire team. There are even designers who work on special costume pieces like a wig or a long rubbery nose. [Andrés laughs] Done with measurements... now to gather clothes, fabric, and other materials.

[tearing, cutting, sewing]

Andrés: Listen to all the different sounds of a costume designer at work, Jam Fam! BoomBox, hey, can you please record them?

BoomBox: RECORDING!... [tearing, cutting, sewing] SAMPLES RECORDED!

Kai: Can you hold this a sec?

Andrés: ¡Claro!

Kai: Thanks! It takes teamwork and careful listening to put a stage show together. Look this way, and...

Christina: Ok...

Kai: ...perfect! Anyway, I talk to the actors, but also to the director and other designers to make sure we're all doing what's best for the story.

Christina: Other designers? Like for lights or scenery?

Kai: Yep! It's important we listen to each other.

Andrés: So everyone who works on a show has to learn each other's perspective and take a walk in their shoes!

BoomBox: WALK IN YOUR SHOES, WALK IN YOUR SHOES!

Christina: Can, uh, we do anything to help you build the costumes?

Kai: Thanks for asking. But I can take it from here!

Andrés: Hey! Maybe can we do something else?

Kai: Like what?

Andrés: Like... write a special song about you and all other costume designers! We could even play it at the show tonight!

Kai: Really? I'd be so honored! What a thoughtful gift.

Andrés: Sounds like we've got a job to jam on!

BoomBox: WE'VE GOT A JOB TO JAM ON! WE'VE GOT A JOB, WE'VE GOT A JOB... JAM!

Andrés: ¡Vamos, Jam Fam! Let's give Kai space to concentrate while we go write our new song.

[music, sewing machine, audience murmuring]

Christina: (whispering) Andrés...

Andrés: ¿Sí?

Christina: It's time for our concert to start! I don't think we can wait any longer for our costumes!

Andrés: ¡Ay! Un minuto más, Christina... I just know Kai will be here any moment.

Kai: (rushing in) Hi hi hi I'm here I'm here I'm here!

Andrés: I told you!

Christina: Oh, Kai, you made it! Thanks for taking on this emergency job. ¡Eres nuestro héroe!

Kai: Ok, now quickly, let's get you dressed and out onstage!

Christina: Oh, ok, ok!

Andrés: Um, where does my arm go? Oh... how does it look?

Christina & Kai: Great!

Andrés: Ok great!

[music, applause]

Christina: ¡Hola, amigos de Cleveland!

Andrés: We're so happy to be here tonight in some brand new costumes!

Christina: BoomBox! How about some music while we model our costumes?

[music]

Andrés: Oh yeah! [making drum noises] Yeah, yeah, yeah!

Christina: Andrés is wearing one of the latest costumes from Kai's workshop. It's a pair of aquamarine pants, a green and orange jacket with short sleeves for playing instruments, and extra pockets for holding guitar picks, and whatever else he needs. (laughs, gasps) Look at his hat! It's a Colombian sombrero vueltiao! ¡Un aplauso!

[applause]

Andrés: Oh yeah! And Christina is wearing a silver jumpsuit with red, yellow, and blue stripes, and a purple cape! ¡Mira, mira, look! It flares out when she spins around! ¡Cuidado, Christina! [Christina: Whooo! (laughs)]

Christina: And now... everybody make some noise for our Cleveland friend who made us these amazing outfits – on very short notice! Kai the costume designer!

[applause]

Kai: Thank you so much! You look fantastic, if I do say so myself. I have one more surprise! I couldn't make new costumes for Andrés and Christina without also making something for... BoomBox! [Andrés and Christina gasp, crowd claps] And since your costumes are so casual and free, for BoomBox I decided to make something a little more fancy!

Christina: What? (gasps) It's a bowtie!

Andrés: BoomBox!

Christina: Kai, you made a purple bowtie for BoomBox – and look! It has tiny musical notes on it!

Andrés: Oh you look sharp! ¡Te ves fantástico!

BoomBox: ¡FANTÁSTICO! BOOMBOX! BOWTIE, BOWTIE, BOWTIE!

[applause]

Andrés: Okay, we're going to start with a brand new song that we wrote today, all about costume designers! (clears throat) Ready?

Christina, Andrés, and BoomBox: (singing)

Oh, I'll design it for you
I'll design it for you!
But if I want to be effective
I have to walk in your shoes
I have to walk in your shoes
Understand your perspective... Walk in your shoes!

You are a character, you need a costume
Before you go on stage
My job's to decide what suits you... a jacket, a wig
Or maybe a cape?

I'm a costume designer
Is your character a king, or a clown?
Will you be prancing? Will you be dancing?
Will you be jumping up and down?

(spoken) Here's a shoe with a little grip... so you don't slip! (Whoa!)

Oh, I'll design it for you
I'll design it for you!
But if I want to be effective
I have to walk in your shoes
I have to walk in your shoes
Understand your perspective... Walk in your shoes!

I'm a costume designer
And I work with a team
What is the set like? How 'bout the lighting?
That's what I'm thinking when I'm deciding

For a pirate who sails the high seas
I'll get boots, with a buckle, and laces in the back!
For a tiger tiptoeing through the trees
I've got orange stripey socks, how about that?

[tiger snarl]

(spoken) Nice kitty...

Oh, I'll design it for you
I'll design it for you!
But if I want to be effective
I have to walk in your shoes
I have to walk in your shoes
Understand your perspective...

(spoken) I'm a costume designer... and it's showtime!

Walk in your shoes!

Christina: Thank you! (laughs) We all learned something today: It's always great to find out another person's perspective. When I understand what you

think and feel it's like I'm taking...

Christina, Andrés, and Kai: ... “a walk in your shoes!”

BoomBox: WALK IN YOUR SHOES, WALK IN YOUR SHOES...

[music shifts, applause fades]

Christina: Jam Fam, what did you learn about being a costume designer? I learned how people can use clothing to tell a story about themselves, and that a costume designer's job is to help tell that story.

Andrés: The next time you put on a new outfit, think about what you're trying to tell the world around you!

Christina: Well, we should get ready to leave. BoomBox, how about a little wrap-up credits rap as we pack up?

Andrés: We'll catch you next time on “Jamming on the Job!”

Christina, Andrés, and BoomBox: (singing)

Jamming on the Job

Ja, Jamming

Jamming on the Job

Wooh Ooh

BoomBox / Pierce Freelon: (singing and rapping)

Jamming on the Job is

Hosted by Christina Sanabria

And Andrés Salguero plus me Pierce Freelon

We wrote the songs and really hope you feel 'em

And one day we hope you find a job that makes you say

WOO!

This episode was written by Bilal Dardai

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To PBS and PRX you're listening
And we thank y'all for listening friends
Visit PBSkids.org to jam with us again

Christina: Jamming on the Job is made possible by a Ready To Learn grant...

Andrés: ...from the U.S Department of Education through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Christina and Andrés: ¡Hasta pronto!

[music ends]

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