



SHOW BULLETIN

CAST SPOTLIGHT: J.P. Castro Salazar

This season's Cast Spotlight Interview is with a 12-year-old member of the Special Chorus. J.P. is just as eager to help with production-related tasks, such as finding costumes and bringing in materials to help construct puppets, as he is to learn new dance steps.

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How did you first find out about FCCMT? Darío told me about it.

Why did you want to be involved in this year's production? I was in a play called "Un Lote de Yuca" with Darío, and I wanted to keep going in theater after that because I had such a good time with the singing and acting.

Who is your biggest inspiration? Well, my teacher Jesse, who directed "Un Lote de Yuca" has been a big inspiration. And also Luís Darío, because I was in a music program with him and he really encouraged me to act and sing and be part of Far Corners. I admire his talent and he makes me want to do more theater.

What do you like about FCCMT? The schedule is very busy, which is hard sometimes, but I know that if I wasn't here I would just be sitting at home alone all day doing nothing. I like having something to keep me occupied so that I don't spend the summer alone and bored and dying inside.

How many years have you been involved in FCCMT? This is my first year—I didn't even go to see *Oliver!* last year.

Are you interested in being involved with FCCMT in the future? Yes, definitely! And after this I would like to keep going with theater all the way to Broadway. Even before I knew about theater I dreamed of going to Manhattan, and now I know what I want to do there!

What are your other hobbies besides theater? I really like music. I have played guitar for a year and a half, piano for half a year, and flute since fourth grade. I never practiced it that much, so I'm not very good, but I still have a lot of fun with it.





Monteverde Children's Program

¿Bosques, tigres, y niños? To find out more, you would have to sneak into the creative minds of the young people participating in the children's program this summer! We have successfully completed our first week with the help of many amazing volunteers and interns.

During the first week of the children's program, the kids learned about characters and emotions, setting, costumes, and script writing. We read aloud some wonderful children's books that contained social issues, such as empathy, poverty, and discrimination. To our amazement, the kids clearly understood and identified with these issues, and wanted to immediately act out the dialogue in the books! These kids do not joke around—they were ready to jump right in!



The scriptwriting process was surprisingly easy with these amazing Tico kids. They were so motivated and ready that ideas flowed fairly easily from their creative minds onto the page. We even finished writing the script a day early, and decided to take that time to write a song and dance number! That, actually, proved to be a little more difficult, because none of the kids have written a song before, but it's a learning experience for all of us.

A Grandparent's Perspective on FCCMT

Since his appearance in last year's *Oliver!*, Jaden Eckel has shown incredible dedication to FCCMT, which is mirrored by his family, in this case grandmother Angelina Gatgens. "I'm so excited that you guys are back," Angelina said. "It's so great for the kids here. And not just the experience of performing in the productions, but how much they learn during the process."

She recalled a comment Jaden made recently during a middle school production: "He told me that he was a little disappointed that the teachers in his school production weren't as professional and knowledgeable as the teachers at Far Corners." She added that, "Jaden never sang before *Oliver!*, but after working with Lisa, he loves it and has a lot of confidence."

Angelina is very excited about lending a hand this summer and pointed out that Far Corners has really improved its outreach to families, "It is great that you are having parent meetings this year. It has gotten more people involved. You guys are doing a great job!"

You too, Angelina!



Glue Guns are a Girl's Best Friend: Puppetry in *Little Shop*

In Spanish, the word *títere* means puppet, and the word *títritero* means puppeteer—a mouthful for sure! As for the *títritero* for *Little Shop*, I'm working with Andrey, a really enthusiastic student who I feel will really latch onto the basic puppetry concepts of joining your breath with the puppets to make them come to life.

Design-wise, I'm having a lot of fun determining the shapes of each puppet, making sure the mouth curves into a jaunty little smile and creating framework that is both strong and light. However, when the mechanics and engineering come in, I find I'm at an impasse: How do I make this puppet's mouth open and close? How will the puppeteer operate it? I've been brushing the dust off of terms like

mechanical advantage, pulleys, and leverage that I haven't used in conversation since 7th grade physics!

My personal themes for this journey so far have been exploration and experimentation. I brought as many materials as possible with me, the most important being round reed (the kind often used for basket-weaving or wicker furniture). Beyond the reed, I didn't know what materials I would be using, but papier mâché, cotton batting and fabric have all been really useful. My most important tool is probably my trusty glue gun; I couldn't do anything without it!

As I write this, I haven't yet started on the biggest version Audrey II, but with Andrey, my glue gun and the rest of my enthusiastic helpers, I'm eager to face the challenges ahead and create the most ferocious Audrey II yet!





Volunteer Profile: Vanessa Kichline

Several volunteer interns are new to our program in Monteverde this year. Vanessa Kichline, (yes, it is pronounced “kickline”) our costume designer and assistant producer, learned about our program from our puppeteer Michelle, who has been her best friend since the seventh grade. Vanessa is unique for being the first intern in our history to not have a performance-related major. She is majoring in biology and psychology and hopes to eventually get a Ph.D. in biological science.

While her logical, systematic mind is perfect for coordinating the more artistically-inclined, we didn't think that we'd be able to put her scientific expertise to use. However, she has shared scientific tidbits ranging from insights into educational psychology to suggestions for plant design, and we all feel reassured whenever we hear her say “Don't worry; I'm a scientist!”



Any preconceptions we might have had about a scientist lacking creative chops were quickly put to rest when Vanessa showed up; her experience as a costumer has been invaluable, and she has an excellent eye for color and style. She is also extremely resourceful; when she arrived in Monteverde, her suitcase contained hardly any clothes for her personal use because it was full of potential costumes. She has been modifying these items, including thrift-store purchases and her own dress from her freshman formal, on a borrowed army-green sewing machine from the mid-20th century. Everything looks great so far, but her biggest challenge is yet to come; in the next two weeks, Vanessa will have to figure out how to transform every person in our 20-member cast into a carnivorous plant!

Creating a Theater: *El Centro Comercial*

By any measure, this summer is FCCMT's most ambitious. Our largest volunteer staff to date has helped expand our Children's Program, planned a Puppet Workshop, and is in the midst of producing the technically challenging *La Tiendita de los Horrores*, while simultaneously transforming a vacant storefront space in the new *Centro Comercial* into a new theater for downtown Santa Elena.

The management and staff of *El Centro Comercial* have been gracious hosts, offering the use of our primary, 3,000 square foot theater space, and also a complex of discrete spaces for us to use for costume and puppet construction, dance and music rehearsals, and the occasional ensemble movie night.

The main theater space requires construction of a stage, seating area, and lighting capability. It's all happening, *poco a poco*, and as with everything we do, it's a community effort. By opening night, we will have taken an empty, lifeless storefront and transformed it into a vital, new theater for the community to enjoy – hopefully, for years to come.



Virtual Volunteers

As deeply appreciative as we are of our in-person volunteers, we realize that not everyone is in a position to fly to Costa Rica for two months out of the year. One of our biggest success stories this year has been the recruitment of our team of virtual volunteers comprised of people located across the globe. This team has provided invaluable assistance, particularly with translating and video editing. Translating materials from English to Spanish is a huge job, and while many of our on-site staff members are proficient in Spanish, they have many other demands on their time during the busy rehearsal season. Virtual volunteers to the rescue! Mounting the world's first bilingual production of *Little Shop of Horrors* provided us with several challenges. While we were able to come by a cast album from a Madrid production, we still had to transcribe the lyrics from the recording. We had several translators listen to the songs, but in the end only Almudena Soto, herself from Spain, was able to completely understand the accents!

After the music was done, we had to translate the entire libretto into Spanish, a task which requires a great sense of humor and an ability to be playful with language. Five dedicated volunteers helped us translate the script more quickly than we thought possible! We are also extremely grateful to Katherine Garcia, whose family is from the Dominican Republic, who edited the entire script for continuity. And that is just the beginning of our translation needs; we have volunteers who translate our weekly blog, fundraising letters for local businesses, and any other incidental documents. Video editing is another time-consuming task that can be completed anywhere in the world thanks to the internet. Our students are so talented and enthusiastic that we want to be able to share their performances with the world on our website, and our video volunteers help make it happen. You can see the work of volunteer editor Johanna Galvez, using footage from Erin Clarke, on our FaceBook page.

And the whole enterprise would be impossible without the efforts of Sara Clark, our volunteer coordinator. She maintains a list of volunteers, skills and tasks to be completed, so that there is no redundant work. We are always looking for interested virtual volunteers; we particularly need assistance with Chinese translation, web design, general writing and editing and internet research. If you are interested in joining our team, contact Sara at volunteer@farcornersmusicals.org!



Originally from Peru, Daniella Arevalo currently lives in Montreal, Canada. Her work spans across the globe, from her Montreal day job as a translator and assistant, to her input with Mexican-based Ashoka, and to her continuous involvement with Peruvian companies such as Sharing Dreams. Despite her busy schedule, Daniella found the time to earn not just one B.A., but two! She holds a B.A. in both cultural studies and general studies.

Although Almudena currently resides on the East Coast, teaching high school Spanish in Arlington, Virginia, she also spent several years on the West Coast, earning a B.A. in international business and a certificate in Spanish/English translation. While there, Almudena also translated for Habitat for Humanity and worked for the World Trade Center. Almudena is working toward a certificate in Latin American Studies to add to her Master of Education.

Katherine Garcia graduated from college in 2010 with a B.A. in Spanish. While earning her degree, she studied abroad in Spain, South Africa, and Italy. As an advocate of youth development, Katherine has been involved in many activities that promote learning. She mentored a teenager for several years, emphasizing the importance of a higher education. When she's not fostering the growth of those around her in the Bronx, Katherine enjoys all aspects of the arts.

After studying English with an emphasis on writing, Sara Clark moved to Anchorage, Alaska, where she cultivated a career as an administrative assistant. She later traveled to Korea to study the language and reconnect with her homeland. Her present residence is in Cape Cod, Massachusetts and her everyday hobbies include watching reality television and eating ice cream.





A World of Volunteers

FCCMT is lucky to have a dedicated team of volunteers from across the globe!





Ways You Can Help

Because we believe in the power of musical theatre to inform, inspire, and foment change, we strive to make our programming available to all members of the Monteverde community. We do not have fees for our youth participants, and we strive to keep our ticket prices low so that community members can experience our performances. However, mounting a quality production befitting the talents of our young artists requires financial backing. This year, we are especially in need of donations to help build a stage that can be used by other performing arts groups throughout the year. And thanks to an anonymous benefactor, any donation you make during the month of July will be doubled. Here are some different ways you can help support our mission:

- Buy virtual tickets! A donation of just \$3 will help a parent who otherwise couldn't afford to see their child perform!
- Donate via PayPal! More information available at farcornersmusicals.org
- Send a check to:
Far Corners Community Musical Theatre
1108 Fort Street Mall Suite 9B
Honolulu, HI 96813

FCCMT is a 501(3) non-profit organization; all donations are tax-deductible.

Our Mission:

Far Corners Community Musical Theatre is committed to providing diverse youth populations from communities around the world with new opportunities, through committed participation in the performing arts, to grow and succeed as collaborators, performers, thinkers, creators, change-makers, multilingual communicators, and open-minded, responsible members of a global community.

Thank you for your continued support!

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And be sure to follow our **blog** for more updates on our work in Monteverde!

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