



david

gonzalez

**the david g. berger
master class series**

about david gonzalez

Dr. David Gonzalez is a speaker with decades of experience empowering people to realize their creative potential. He has given more than 5,000 presentations at companies such as Proctor & Gamble, Colgate-Palmolive and JPMorgan Chase & Co., universities, many of the best theaters in the U.S., conferences and schools. Gonzalez seamlessly blends poetry, storytelling and music into his talks to inspire and motivate.

Gonzalez is the recipient of the International Performing Arts for Youth “Lifetime Achievement Award for Sustained Excellence.” He was named a Joseph Campbell Foundation Fellow and was nominated for a Drama Desk Award for “Unique Theatrical Experience” for his production of *The Frog Bride* at Broadway’s New Victory Theater. He has created numerous productions, including the critically acclaimed *¡Sofrito!* with The Latin Legends Band, and *MytholoJazz*, both of which enjoyed sold-out runs at New Victory Theater. David completed *Wounded Splendor*, a two-year residency and commission from the University of Maryland that celebrates the natural world and our responsibility to it. *Sleeping Beauty*, featuring Bach’s “Goldberg Variations,” premiered at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center. Gonzalez was a featured performer at the National Storytelling Festival, and has performed at festivals in Spain, Switzerland, France, Costa Rica, Norway, Puerto Rico and throughout the United States. He also appeared for three seasons at the Royal National Theatre in London. Gonzalez was the Artistic Director for The Alliance for a New Humanity, an international service organization dedicated to peace and sustainability. *The Man of the House* was commissioned by and premiered at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Gonzalez’s work *Double Crossed: The Saga of the St. Louis* toured nationally, including a run at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1998. The same year, David was honored with the Helen Hayes Performing Artist of the Year Award. *As If the Past Were Listening*, a suite of creation myths, was selected for Lincoln Center Institute’s repertory for three seasons. Gonzalez’s Latin jazz poetry project *City of Dreams* was commissioned by the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center and premiered at La Mama Theater. He wrote *Finding North*, a one-man play based on Underground Railroad hero John Parker that was commissioned by the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park and performed at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center; *Aesop Bops!* and co-wrote *Mariel*, an Afro-Cuban musical set in the turbulent times of the Mariel boatlift from Cuba, with GRAMMY®-nominated songwriter John Forster. *Mariel* is the winner of the Macy’s



“New Play Prize for Young Audiences.” Gonzalez is also the author of the opera libretto *Rise for Freedom!* produced at the Cincinnati Opera, and *Jimi and Mr. B*, a musical commissioned by the Empire State Plaza Performing Arts Center. His long form poem *Oh Hudson*, in collaboration with violin virtuoso Mark O’Connor, commemorates the Hudson quadricentennial, and his version of *The Carnival of the Animals* with classical piano virtuoso Frederic Chui, has toured nationally. He received his doctorate in Music Therapy from New York University and taught there for 10 years.

David’s poetry was featured at Lincoln Center’s Out-of-Doors Festival, Bill Moyers’s documentary *Fooling with Words* on PBS, NPR’s *All Things Considered* and the World Science Festival among many other venues. His poetry book, *Soundings*, is available wherever books are sold. He was the host of *New York Kids* on WNYC for eight seasons. He earned a doctoral degree from New York University in Music Therapy and has conducted numerous seminars, workshops and lectures, and worked as a music therapist in clinical and educational institutions. He is the Artistic Director of Crisalida Communications, an organization that supports communities through arts outreach.

“With speech, poetry, music and, above all, inspired imagination, Mr. Gonzalez has the gift of creating magical worlds and drawing his audience into them.” - *The New York Times*

accolades

- Recipient of the International Performing Arts for Youth's "Lifetime Achievement Award for Sustained Excellence"
- Named a Joseph Campbell Foundation Fellow
- Received the Helen Hayes "Performing Artist of the Year Award"
- Nominated for a Drama Desk Award for "Unique Theatrical Experience" (*The Frog Bride*)
- Winner of the Macy's "New Play Prize for Young Audiences" (*Maribel*)
- Featured performer at the National Storytelling Festival
- Work presented at prestigious institutions including the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, Royal National Theatre and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
- Poetry and performances featured by *The New York Times*, PBS, NPR and WNYC
- Selected artist for Lincoln Center's Institute Repertory (*As If the Past Were Listening*)
- Earned a doctorate in Music Therapy from New York University



If it's win/win, **do it now**"

— A quote spoken to David Gonzalez by a former teacher. He resonated with how it points to mutual benefit and action.

seed questions to consider

1. How do performing arts partnerships with independent artists help the theater climate?
2. When does a story become a performance rather than a narrative?
3. How does storytelling create empathy more effectively than data?
4. How does cultural context shape how a story is performed and received?



vocabulary

Artistic Director

A leadership position that focuses on implementing the artistic vision for an arts organization

Book Writer

A person who writes the text of a musical

Lyricist

A person who writes song lyrics

Playwright

A person who creates the story and writes the text of a stage play

Music Director

Leads, trains and conducts a musical group (like an orchestra, choir or band) to achieve a cohesive sound

Storyteller

Someone who narrates or writes stories to entertain, inform or inspire an audience

resources

Videos

“Oh Hudson Demo: David Gonzalez with Daniel Kelly and Gretchen Koehler” – David Gonzalez
youtube.com/watch?v=2uAl8T4tKRY

“The Ties That Bind: A Conversation with Librettist David Gonzalez” – Opera One-Acts
youtube.com/watch?v=qrNXJKJ_2uA

bring the arts to your school

In-School Residencies

NJPAC teaching artists come right to your school to teach the performing arts to your students. Our super-flexible in-person residencies are designed to meet your needs and you'll have a dedicated program manager to help you every step of the way. It's the perfect program to keep your students creating, connecting and expressing themselves through the magic of the arts.

Professional Development

Calling all educators! Expand your teaching skills, deepen your curriculum and give yourself a creative boost in NJPAC's forward-thinking professional development workshops. Our virtual PD programs are for teachers all the way from pre-K to high school and include hip hop, dance, storytelling, theater, music and more. Not only will you learn something... you'll also have fun and be inspired.

arts training for students

Saturday Programs

NJPAC's Saturday programs are geared towards students at every level — from those who dream of starring on Broadway to those who are still learning their scales. Students work with professional artists to build technique and develop their own creative style in hip hop, jazz, theater, musical theater and symphonic band.

Summer Programs

Want to begin to explore the arts? Or immerse yourself in the study of one genre? Then join us at NJPAC next summer in our immersive programs that spark the creativity in every child through the study of music, dance and theater.

NJPAC Arts Education Berger Masterclass Series team

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contact us!

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please email our team at artseducation@njpac.org. Or visit njpac.org/education

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