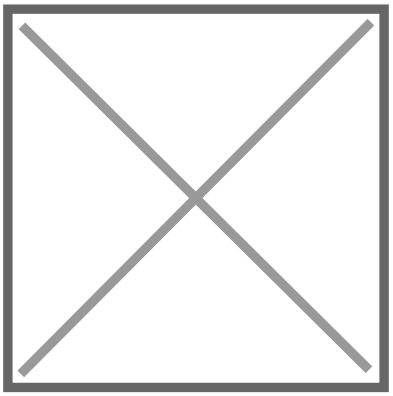


Makeup Artist Spotlight: Kirk Cambridge-Del Pesche: â??Donâ??t Give Up! Manifest Your Destiny! Trust Your Process!â?•

Description

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Kirk Cambridge-Del Pesche has had to work hard for opportunities in his life, but he says makeup is what he is called to do. This makeup maestro hails from St. Vincent. Under the banner of Summit Entertainment Group LLC., he etches his mark as a trailblazer orchestrating magic on the touring Broadway revival of *The Wiz*, while setting his sights on Germany for the January 2024 production of Disneyâ??s *Hercules* at the Neue Flora in Hamburg.

Portrait of a man in a tan sweater and beaded bracelets touching his ear.

I recently had the opportunity to go down to Arizona and review *The Wiz*, which is the Broadway show Cambridge-Del Pesche is currently touring with. We connected online after he read my review and I was delighted to find we had so many similar views on life. I instantly knew I wanted to write a feature on him. I offered to do a Zoom interview, and well, the rest is history.

Looks from The Wiz Designed by Kirk Cambridge-Del Pesche

Every single character in *The Wiz* has a different application technique. Some of it I pulled from my own art backgroundâ?¦Everything that I have learned in the last 25+ years as a makeup artist comes into play. This show has pushed me to

the edge.

â??Kirk Cambridge-Del Pesche

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Top: **Kyle Ramar Freeman** (Lion), **Melody A. Betts** (Evilene), and **Avery Wilson** (Scarecrow). Bottom: **Phillip Johnson Richardson** (Tinman), **Deborah Cox** (Glinda)

Kirk Cambridge-Del Pescheâ??s Makeup Team for The Wiz:

Kyle Kroger, **Travis Lester, Natalie Reynolds**

Journey as a Makeup Artist

Cambridge-Del Pesche has quite literally put in the time to become the talented artist he is today. I think my jaw dropped when he told me he had done TWENTY-SIX shows in the last two years. Talent like his canâ??t easily be replicated; it has to be earned. He deserves every bit of success that comes his way, and I hope he continues to be compensated in equal measure for his knowledge and skill. I am honored to write this piece on him because makeup artists and other backstage artists rarely get the spotlight they deserve, especially if they specialize in stage makeupâ??the kind of makeup that rarely gets seen up close by audience members.

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A person in dramatic makeup and a gray robe holds a phone to their ear while displaying color
Jordan E. Cooper in *Ainâ??t No Moâ??*

A performer in colorful retro attire holds a microphone while standing on stage, with a vibrant b
Jordan E. Cooper as Peaches in *Ainâ??t No Moâ??*

Cambridge-Del Pesche took the time to explain his intricate designs and the multiple stages they went through from inception to their final design for performance. I was again floored by the attention to detail and consideration he gave to every character, even though so many audience members would not be able to see the details. He is not only a skilled makeup artist but a lovely human being. I left our conversation humbled by how little I had considered makeup design in my previous reviews and grateful for Cambridge-Del Pesche and his patience and willingness to teach me.

> You donâ??t necessarily have to be on stage to be part of a production. Whether youâ??re a lighting person, a makeup person, a hair and wig person, a sound person, or a costume person, you can be a part of theatre!
> *â??Kirk Cambridge-Del Pesche*

With an accounting background, Cambridge-Del Pesche did not always plan on pursuing makeup, but MAC Cosmetics gave him his first job when he moved to the States. Later, he started working as a model in the fashion industry but found himself getting picked last at gigs. So, Cambridge-Del Pesche sought a makeup lesson from Richard Young so that he could come with his makeup already applied. People started to ask Cambridge-Del Pesche, â??Who did your makeup?â?• And he replied, â??I did!â?•

A woman in a yellow patterned dress sits at a table, looking thoughtfully toward the side. A fishbowl
Debra Messing in â??Birthday Candleâ?•

Cambridge-Del Pescheâ??s career spans 25+ years, working with icons like Phylicia Rashad and the incredible Eartha Kitt. As the face of Aprilskin, he became the first Vincentian to represent the brand, etching his name in cosmetic history. His portfolio, rich with experiences from MAC Cosmetics to Broadwayâ??s FELA!, reflects a journey transcending borders and genres but he left the makeup business altogether with the intention of never coming back around 2015.

> For 7 years I walked away. Someone said the wrong thing at the right time. I took my makeup kit and my brushes and threw them in the trash. I said, â??Iâ??m never doing this again!â?• I had no intention of coming back.
> *â??Kirk Cambridge-Del Pesche*

A detailed illustration of a female face showcasing makeup techniques, featuring one eye with a colo

Cambridge-Del Pesche worked retail for seven years when his long-time friend Cookie Jordan called him up and said, â??Itâ??s time for you to come back to what you are great at! No one can do what you do!â?• He knew at that point it was time to return. Cookie Jordan would turn out to be a pivotal figure in Cambridge-Del Pescheâ??s life for many reasons.

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> One day in the Summer, Cookie Jordan came up to me and said, â??I want to give you your Solo Makeup career.â?• Usually, a Makeup Artistâ??s name always falls under hair. And so I go in to design the makeup for Trouble in Mind, a play by Alice Childress, and it was incredible, it was incredible, it was incredible! And that started the journey.
> *â??Kirk Cambridge-Del Pesche*

Close-up portrait of a woman with styled red hair, wearing orange lipstick and a black outfit, resting h
Marilee Talkington as Morgan Le Ray in Lincoln Centreâ??s â??Camelotâ?•

Influenced By His Background and Culture

I love that Cambridge-Del Pesche pulls inspiration for his designs from his background: Cambridge Del Pesche is from the beautiful West Indies archipelago of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. He is proud of his mixed-race and eclectic culture.

Cambridge-Del Pescheâ??s portfolio includes MAC Cosmetics, BareMinerals, Harvard University, Broadway, Tours, TV, Boston Ballet, Boston Lyrics Opera, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Boston Symphony Orchestra, New York Symphony Orchestra, and Santa Fe Opera.

Make-up designed for Broadway: Trouble In Mind, Clydeâ??s, Skelton Crew, Birthday Candles, Skin Of Our Teeth, For Colored Girls, Strange Loop, POTUS, Into The Woods, The Piano Lesson, Ainâ??t No Mo & Camelot, Merrily We Roll Along, Hercules (in Germany), The Notebook, Lempicka, The Wiz, and The Queen of Versailles.

Off-Broadway: Merry Wives, Sand Blasted, Confederates, Into The Woods, and Melissa Etheridge â?? My Window. Regional: Disneyâ??s Hercules, Opera: This Little Light Of Mine. National Tour: Into The Woods.

A list of theater roles and opening dates, including makeup design, nail consultant, and associated d

A list of theater productions with their opening dates and makeup designer credits, including titles lik

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I ended my conversation with Cambridge-Del Pesche with a deep appreciation for the artistry that goes on behind the stage each and every night as a theatre-lover, but especially as a theater reviewer. When I told Cambridge-Del Pesche, â??Youâ??re Amazing!â?• He respondedâ?¦

> â??Listen, I am just a part of the process and I am grateful to take up the space that I now have. I hope to inspire younger people who are coming behind me and the people beside me because I draw inspiration from not just my background and my culture, but the people around me and the people that I work with everyday.â?•
>
> â??Kirk Cambridge-Del Pesche

Illustration of a face with makeup instructions, detailing eye makeup, eyeliner, blush, and lip products

It is easy to focus on the artists in the spotlight, but the work happening behind the scenes is just as important. Taking the time to recognize and support those contributionsâ??however we canâ??matters.

â??Donâ??t forget the artists working behind the scenesâ??those putting in the labor, honing their craft, and often going unseen. Support them by showing up, engaging with their work, and letting them know their contributions matter.â?• â??*The Rhetorical Revie*w

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