

## Jose Rivera

To Whom It May Concern,

I've known Heidi and Johnny for decades. They are both friends and colleagues whom I admire and respect and I'm proud to recommend.

My own work includes decades of writing for Theater, TV, and Film. I was also the first Puerto Rican screenwriter to be nominated for an Academy Award (*The Motorcycle Diaries*.) As a writer for both stage and screen, I've experienced the skills it requires to balance and express our creative visions for different mediums.

I first met Heidi when she was a young theater director assisting on one of my productions, *Cloud Tectonics*, at the Humana Play Festival. Since then, we've nurtured a lifetime friendship and a shared love for supporting artists of color and the development of original works in both theater and film.

When I heard she directed her first short film, I attended the screening at the Los Angeles Film Festival. She was the only woman on a stage of male directors, and she was the most eloquent one. I even remember telling Johnny that, next to Heidi, these men have nothing to stand on. Heidi knew what she was talking about. I was excited when she started developing her first feature. I'm glad she has decided to take her years of experience in the theater and translate it to the screen. After all, that is what Orson Welles and the majority of other film directors before him also did.

Heidi is filled with compassion for artists that is pure and enduring. She is constantly looking for honesty in her work and collaborators. I've watched her grow and I admire her belief in this film and endurance to fight the good fight to direct her feature film debut.

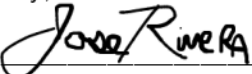
Johnny. Have you met Johnny? You should. I've seen him grow from highly energetic, passionate actor to extremely persistent, committed filmmaker. When he believes in something, he wrestles it with his heart and soul. He'll be forthright in his opinions about art, politics, and any topic you find yourself engaged in deep conversation with him on. This is reflected in the subject matters of the films he chooses to write and produce. He is a unique spirit that will challenge and inspire you to stand up and fight for your dreams and your point of view.

So, when they came to me with their first screenplay, I sat with them both and went page by page, giving detailed feedback on the entire script. Heidi and Johnny carefully took notes and listened as I shared my critique and offered suggestions. Johnny grasped what he needed to do to make this charged story be more visual. Afterward, not only did Johnny rewrite it, he did an entire overhaul on the script that brings this true story to life in a more complex way.

The commitment I see in them is what every film requires from its Director and Writer. Together, I believe that Heidi and Johnny are capable of creating inspiring and provocative work that will ignite their collaborators and audiences. I'm glad to say they are not only my friends but also my colleagues. Their work will raise the bar and bring a whole new voice to storytelling.

Please support them.

Sincerely,

  
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Jose Rivera