



IMTA ALUM MOISES ARIAS COMING OF AGE

**IMTA Press Release
August 18, 2016**

Ben-Hur opens in theatres nationwide and “*Jean-Claude Van Johnson*” premieres on Amazon on Friday, August 19th

Since attending IMTA in Los Angeles 2005, IMTA alum Moises Arias has grown from a comedy child star on shows such as Disney’s “*Hannah Montana*,” “*The Suite Life of Zack and Cody*” and “*Wizards of Waverly Place*,” to become a solid dramatic actor in critically acclaimed films such as *The Kings of Summer*, *The Stanford Prison Experiment* and *The Land*. Two new projects add variety and depth to the now 22-year-old Arias’ résumé...and they just happen to open on the same day.



Ben-Hur is the epic story of Judah Ben-Hur, a prince falsely accused of treason by his adopted brother, an officer in the Roman army. Based on *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ*, the 2016 film is the latest adaptation of Lew Wallace’s 1880 novel, following 1925’s silent film starring Ramon Navarro, 1959’s multi-Oscar blockbuster starring Charlton Heston, and 2010’s TV mini-series starring Joseph Morgan. Jack Huston plays the new Judah Ben-Hur, alongside Toby Kebbell, Rodrigo Santoro, Morgan Freeman and Arias.



Although the initial casting announcement had Arias in the role of Gestes, a teenage Jewish zealot whose family has been murdered by the Romans and who is desperate to fight for his people’s freedom, the current cast lists him as the character Dismas. This is an interesting side note, as there is no one named Gestas in the original novel, but Gestas *is* the traditional name for one of the thieves who were crucified with Jesus. Gestas is the one who mocked Jesus. The one who repented is called Dismas.

Also debuting is the pilot for the Amazon series “*Jean-Claude Van Johnson*,” which stars, of course, Jean-Claude Van Damme as a skilled and deadly undercover private contractor who comes out of retirement to take on the world’s bad guys. Much like the characters that Van Damme portrays in his films, Johnson is one of the best at eliminating rivals, bringing down a corrupt multinational corporation or overthrowing an entire government. Arias, Kat Foster and Phylicia Rashad also star.



Arias recently completed filming the comedy *Little Bitches*, which follows a group of friends who vow to open their college acceptance letters at the same time during the big end-of-year party. Currently slated to open by the end of the year, the film also stars Jennette McCurdy, Kiersey Clemons and Virginia Gardner.