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STAR OF THE NEW
ANIMATED SERIES
"BIG NATE" SET ON
PARAMOUNT+

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FASHION

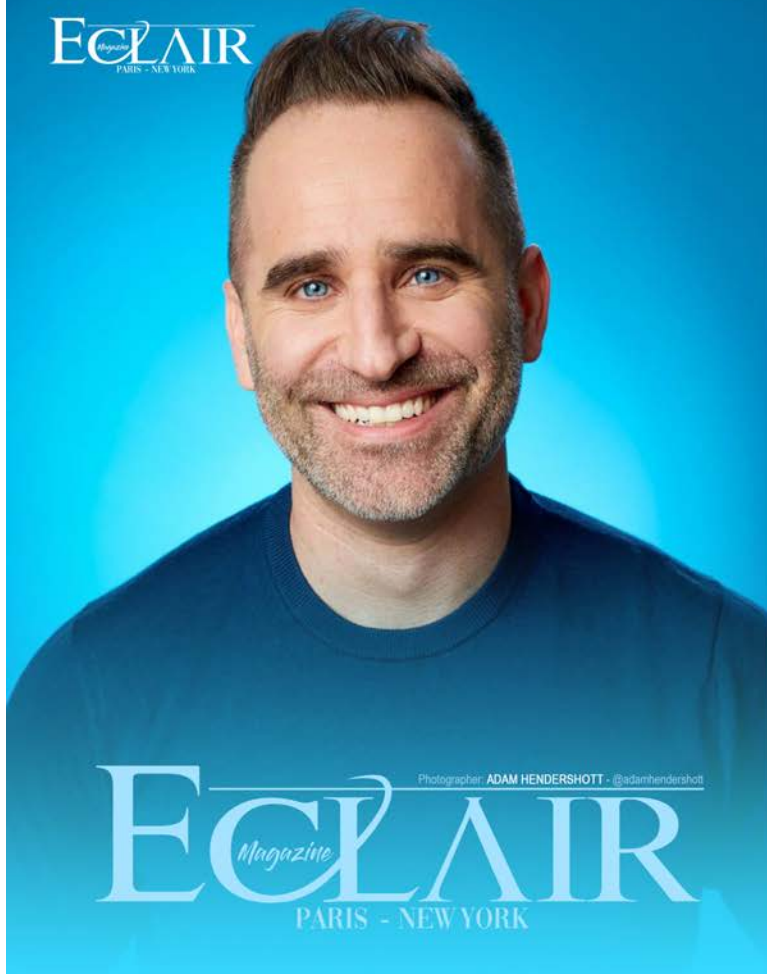
THE BEST STYLES TO
PREPARE FOR SPRING

COVER STORY

BEN GIROUX

BY ADAM HENDERSHOTT

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Photographer: ADAM HENDERSHOTT - @adamhendershott

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PORTRAIT OF THE MONTH BEN GIROUX

BIOGRAPHY

He voices the lead character in the highly-anticipated Nickelodeon animated series, the first episode which aired February 17th on Paramount+. The show, based on the books of the same name, follows 11 year-old Nate Wright, a rebellious sixth-grader with a never-ending need to prove his awesomeness to the world. Whether he's dealing with disasters at home or detention at school, Nate is no stranger to a challenge. Luckily, he's able to express himself through the cartoons he creates. The cast also includes Dove Cameron, Rob Delaney, Carolyn Hennesy, and special guest star Jack Black to name just a few.

Giroux is best-known for his portrayal of The Toddler, the main and original villain on the hit Nickelodeon series Henry Danger. After a five-season run on the show, he brought his popular character to the spin-off series Danger Force. Since its inception, the "Dangerverse" has become one of Nickelodeon's most successful and longest-running franchises of all time.

To date, Giroux has showcased his talent on over 100 episodes of television, including a recent recurring role on the Netflix sitcom The Big Show Show as the comedic nemesis of WWE star Paul "Big Show" Wright. Other appearances include Will & Grace, NCIS, Bones, Psych, and House, M.D. to name a few. He has also made a name for himself with an extensive resume of voiceover roles. Notable credits include Bunsen is a Beast, Batman vs. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, DC Superhero Girls and The Loud House, among many others.

With his huge fanbase, Giroux has built an impressive social media presence and is verified on all platforms. He launched a very successful TikTok channel with over 113 million likes and over 4 million followers where he posts hilarious content including Dumb Dubs, Mostly Good Advice, and Ruin A Toon. He has also established a loyal following on Instagram with over 192,000 followers, Facebook with over 168,000 followers, and Twitter.



INTERVIEW

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BEN GIROUX

BEHIND THE VOICE STAR OF THE NEW ANIMATED SERIES "BIG NATE" SET ON PARAMOUNT+

1. Hello Ben Giroux, can you please introduce yourself to our followers who may not know you?

Hi! I'm an actor, director and producer. On-camera, I've appeared in over 100 episodes of television including appearances on NCIS, Bones, House, Psych, Anger Management, and many more. Most notably, I've played The Toddler on Nickelodeon's Henry Danger and Danger Force superhero franchise for nearly a decade. Behind the microphone, I've voiced many animated series roles including Robin in Batman vs TMNT and Mikey on Nickelodeon's Bunsen is a Beast. My recent voice credits include the Emmy winning Love, Death, and Robots and Rick & Morty. Online, I create viral content under my production banner Small Red Cape, including the viral music video Back to the 90s that charted on Billboard, amassed 100 million views, and landed my team in Las Vegas with the Backstreet Boys. I also create daily content on TikTok.

2. You voice the lead character in Big Nate, a newly released Nickelodeon animated series based on the books/comics about 11-year-old Nate Wright. Can you tell us about this experience?

I'm thrilled to be voicing Nate Wright, the title character in Big Nate, Nickelodeon's new animated series streaming on Paramount+. I grew up watching the original NickToons like Doug, Rugrats, and Ren & Stimpy so voicing my own Nickelodeon animated series has been a really joyful, full-circle moment. There's also the exciting added responsibility with bringing my voice to a beloved character that already has a global fanbase from its long-running comic strip and book series. Nate is a precocious, mischievous sixth-grade kid with an affinity for pranking. He's on an endless quest to achieve awesomeness.

3. Do you have anything in common with the rebellious sixth-grade student you voice? What kind of student were you when you were a child?

Absolutely! I was really into drawing and painting as a kid. I almost pursued the fine arts. On our show, Nate is also an artist. His doodles come to life routinely in our series. So I love the art parallel with Nate as it relates to my own passion for drawing. But in many ways, this is a sixth-grade do-over for me. I was an introverted kid who struggled to make friends in sixth grade. Nate is the opposite—he's fearlessly confident on his quest to achieve total awesomeness. He also has a tight-knit group of misfit friends. We can all aspire to have Nate's level of confidence and unbreakable friendships.

Photographer: ADAM HENDERSHOTT - @adamhendershott
Production Design: LINDSEY FERGUSON - @lindseyferguson
Stylist: FLORA RONZONE - @sunny_goth
Grooming & Makeup: MONIQUE LUCERO - @beauty_brigade_

4. Some very talented celebrities including Jack Black, Dove Cameron, Rob Delaney, and Carolyn Hennesy took part in this project. Can you tell us about your experience connecting with such great actors and comedians--in particular Jack Black?

I'm grateful to collaborate weekly with an incredibly gifted, hilarious cast on Big Nate. I had the luxury of having real-life friendships with the entire main cast, coincidentally, before we were hired on the show together. Arnie Pantoja, who plays Teddy Ortiz on the show (Nate's pranking co-conspirator), is my writing and improv partner in real life. I met Bryce Charles (Dee Dee) performing in a play together. Daniel MK Cohen (Francis) and I met years ago in a casting lobby as we both auditioned to play Christmas elves in a commercial. Friendship is a through line in our series, and I believe our genuine friendships shine through in the characters we play on-screen.

Sharing scenes with Jack Black in our pilot episode was also a bucket list moment. I've been a big fan of Jack's comedy for years, so performing with him in Big Nate was such a treat. There are so many brilliantly funny people on our show—every time we record it's a big fraternity of gifted entertainers doing what they're best at.

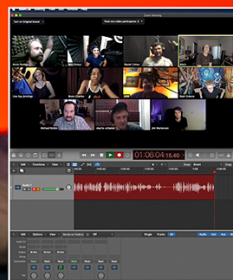
Credits: Courtesy of Ben Giroux



5. Did it ever feel like being back on the playground while recording this series?

Our showrunner, Mitch Watson, is a theater guy like me. So there's a real spirit of improvisation and creativity in our voice sessions. I give him a lot of credit for giving us the creative freedom to put our own spin on the characters. When I prepare for a Big Nate script, I'll write alternate punchlines or circle areas where I want to riff in a given episode. It's the most freedom I've ever been given on a series. Recording this show during the pandemic has been a unique experience, as we've exclusively performed each episode remotely from our home voice-over studios. While many animated series will retroactively edit actors' performances together, our show is the first of its kind: we still found a way to record as an ensemble over Zoom.

That gave us the luxury of riffing with each other, reacting to each other's performances, and bonding virtually as a cast. I truly think the ensemble nature of our recordings has been instrumental in Big Nate's success. It certainly has felt like a playground, as we escape into P.S. 38 each week.



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Actor/Producer/Director: BEN GIROUX | Photographer: LAUREN MAYER

6. Do you have any funny or rebellious anecdotes to share that you had during your adolescence?

Early in my career, I appeared on a Disney show. Somehow, a young, obsessive fan found my phone number and began incessantly contacting me. I needed to find a way to stop the fan from messaging me. In one of my greatest pranks ever, I decided to give that fan the phone numbers of three of my buddies, pretending the numbers were for Justin Bieber, Miley Cyrus, and Zac Efron. The obsessive fan believed me and stopped contacting me—deciding to focus their stalker-like efforts on the bigger “stars.” Months later, my friends mentioned offhand: “Dude, it’s so weird, but somebody keeps texting me thinking that I’m Justin Bieber...”

7. You have had over 100 roles in cartoons, films, TV series, and more (Henry Danger, The Big Show, Will & Grace, NCIS, Bones, Psych, and House, MD to name a few.) What experiences have been the most memorable for you and why?

As a comedy character actor, I’ve had the privilege of playing such a variety of roles.

I really enjoyed my time on The Big Show because I got to work with WWE legend “The Big Show”—and we actually wrestled each other in an episode! Paul “The Big Show” is like 7 feet tall and 400 pounds... and I’m 5’2” and barely crack 130 pounds. So, the juxtaposition was hilarious. I love any role that I get to use physical comedy for. I’ve also really enjoyed the longevity of playing The Toddler on Nickelodeon’s Henry Danger franchise.

My parents owned a comic bookstore in Phoenix, AZ for nearly 40 years, so playing the main villain in a superhero series has definitely felt full-circle. I’m grateful the character has achieved new momentum online, as I’ve amassed a dedicated following of Toddler fans (4.5 million) on my TikTok account.

Credit: Courtesy of NICKELODEON



8. We can hear your voice in several projects (like Batman vs. The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles). How did this passion for voiceover work come about? When did you realize that your voice could be an asset in your professional career?

As a kid, I used to run around the house terrorizing my little sister with high-pitched cartoon voices. It’s crazy to think I’ve somehow turned that into a career! While I love all kinds of entertainment (whether I’m on camera, behind the camera, or at my microphone), animation provides a unique opportunity to play a wider range of roles. Nate Wright, for example, is a sixth-grader. I can play a kid, a teenager, and an old man all in the same episode of a cartoon so I really appreciate the flexibility voiceover provides. As a voice actor, I think it’s important to identify the unique things your voice can do. Early on, I realized I could authentically skew my voice younger so I’ve played a lot of “kid” animated roles as a result.

9. Your family and friends should be proud of you, your talent, and your success in so many fields from acting to directing and writing. When you started out, were you always supported by those around you? What was the profession your parents imagined you would pursue?

Thank you! I’m immensely appreciative of my loving and supportive family. They’ve always had my back and have been supportive of anything I wanted to pursue. My parents fostered an incredible environment of creativity and comedy throughout my childhood. There’s a photo from 1985 that says it all: my dad holds me up to the TV screen (as an infant) and he’s showing me an episode of The Three Stooges. From the moment I saw Moe slam an anvil over Curly’s head, I was hooked on a lifetime committed to comedy and entertainment. And I have my family to thank for that.

Actor/Producer/Director: BEN GIROUX | Photographer: LAUREN MAYER

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BEN ALIAS NATE
GIROUX WRIGHT

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Credit: Courtesy of NICKELODEON



10. What future project would you like to be involved with either as a director, producer, writer or actor?

I'm ready to be a showrunner. My writing partner and I are currently developing a myriad of original comedy series that we're pitching around town. Ultimately, I'd like to sell one of our shows so I can hire all my friends!

11. Who are your inspirations? What motivates you in life?

This has been a brutal two years. The pandemic has been such a mental health struggle for everyone on Earth. I'm driven by laughter and comedy. If my work can provide a brief moment of levity—a way for people to disconnect from the world's problems even for a minute—that's all I can ask for. At my core, I just want to live a creative life where I get to make cool stuff with my friends as much as possible. And hopefully, make others laugh along the way. I'm inspired by so many different kinds of people. I love being on set because I admire watching experts do what they're best at: whether it's the DP framing up a shot, the script supervisor marking up a script, a grip adjusting a light. Watching people do what they're best at is a joy. I'm also inspired by anyone who authentically commits to their own brand, no matter what people think of them.

12. If you had any advice to give to the young child that you were on the playground, what would you say to him?

Make stuff. Be proactive. I can trace every positive career milestone back to something I proactively created to propel myself forward. Also, as a young actor, I was on set for the show *Psych*, and I asked James Roday Rodriguez what his secret was to entertainment success. He gave me the best advice I've ever received: "Do good work and be a good dude." I think that advice is applicable to literally everything in life. Also, especially in the current climate of our world, I think it's important we lead with empathy in everything we do.

Photographer: ADAM HENDERSHOTT | Production Design: LINDSEY FERGUSON
Stylist: FLORA RONZONE | Grooming & Makeup: MONIQUE LUCERO

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Ben Giroux

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BEN GIROUX UX

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Portrait Of The Month (Mars 2022)

BEN GIROUX

DERRIÈRE LA VOIX STAR DE LA NOUVELLE SÉRIE ANIMÉE
DE NICKELODEON "BIG NATE" SUR PARAMOUNT+

Ben Giroux est un acteur, producteur et réalisateur américain que vous avez vu dans plus de 100 épisodes télévisés, y compris des apparitions dans NCIS, Bones, House, Psych, Anger Management et bien d'autres.

Ben Giroux est actuellement la voix principale de la nouvelle série animée de Nickelodeon "Big Nate" actuellement diffusée sur Paramount +

Portrait

Social Media

INTERVIEW





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