

MARVEL'S **KATY** CONNECTION



J.C. Colon, a former Katy High School football player turned Disney and Marvel performer, is making a career out of daredevil stunts

Written by Cherri Northcutt | Photography courtesy of Feld Entertainment, Inc.

In the opening sequence of Marvel Universe Live, Thor raises his mighty hammer and shatters the all-powerful Cosmic Cube into three pieces so that it won't fall into the hands of evil super villains like his brother Loki. Fans of Marvel's *Avengers* know all about Thor. What they may not know is that inside that Thor helmet is a hometown boy. J.C. Colon is a 2005 graduate of Katy High School (KHS) and former Katy Tiger football player.

"I loved going to Disneyland as a child and seeing all of the characters," Colon recalls of his childhood growing up in California. He was also a big fan of comics. "My brother and I constantly read comic books. Captain America was my favorite," he adds.

Colon and his family moved to Katy when he was 15. "It was an amazing experience overall," Colon says of his experience at KHS. "It made a great impression on me." Colon got involved in several school and church activities including football and choir and was given the nickname J.C. "I had several mentors in Katy. Coach Gary Joseph taught me a lot about responsibility and my choir teacher John Nance was very strict, but gave me a background in performing."

WORLD OF DISNEY

After graduation, Colon went on to play football at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor. "I really wanted to be an athlete," Colon admits. "I thought I would have a career in football." When a football injury left him with a torn meniscus in his knee, Colon turned to his second love, performing.

"My hobbies were singing, acting, playing the drums, and piano," Colon says. He later got into the college internship program with Disney World in Florida. "I performed at the theme parks in the shows and parades," Colon says. "I played Goofy, Darth Vader, several characters from *Aladdin*, and the Beast from *Beauty and the Beast*." Colon enjoyed his work so much that he left college to work full-time with Disney.

After six years with Disney, working in the parks and on tour for Disney Live, Colon auditioned for Marvel Universe Live. "It was a strenuous process," he says. "We had to learn fight choreography and mime work to perform with a recorded track and make the fighting look real." Once he was hired for the show, Colon knew he had to stay physically fit. "It's a very

physically demanding job, so I have to eat right and keep myself in good shape," he says.

FLYING HIGH

With Marvel Universe Live, there are typically seven shows a week with three shows on Saturday. "Those are the hardest days," Colon says. Lots of time goes into testing the equipment and warming up. The show includes acrobatics, motorcycle stunts, and pyrotechnics. "Safety is the most important thing because we're doing some dangerous stunts," Colon shares. "The biggest thing I have to do is fly." Colon is hooked up to a wire rig so he can "fly" through the air. "It was scary at first, but we have the best crew in the country so I know I'm in good hands," he says. It's that dedication to safety that has kept Colon free of any major injuries on the show. "I've had a few bumps and bruises but nothing serious."

WORLD TRAVELER

"When I was a kid I never thought I would travel to China, Australia, or Brazil," Colon says. "With Marvel Universe Live I've been to five different continents, 18 countries, and

37 states." One of the perks of being on tour is that the cast and crew have a few days off to explore each new city they visit. "My very first tour was in Paris," Colon shares. "It was amazing." His favorite U.S. cities to visit are Washington D.C. and Katy, of course. The tour made a two-week stop in Houston last year at NRG Stadium. "It was great to see old friends and hang out at Midway Barbecue and Katy Mills Mall again," Colon adds.

PLAYING A HERO

Eventually, Colon hopes to transition into doing movie stunts. "That's where I see my career going," he says. "But for now, I love entertaining and making people happy." Colon prefers playing a hero over the villains he's played in the past. "At the end of the show we stand for a curtain call and there are kids in the crowd dressed as Thor," Colon shares. "I give them a nod, and they love it. It's those moments that make me proud of what I do." **KM**

CHERRI NORTHCUTT is a freelance journalist. She has been living in Katy for 15 years with her husband and daughters.



Colon enjoys getting to play heroes on stage like Thor

COLON'S CAST OF CHARACTERS

- The Genie from *Aladdin*
- Darth Vader
- Jafar from *Aladdin*
- Goofy
- Captain Hook
- Thor

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