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At Sardi's, Carrión Is at a Loss on the Theater

By VIVIAN YEE

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The campaign trail has taken New York City's mayoral candidates all kinds of places — the Atrain, the Harvard Club and a geodesic dome on Rockaway Beach — in their quests for votes.



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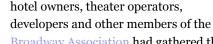
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So it was that Adolfo Carrión Jr. the Independence Party candidate for mayor, found himself sitting under grinning caricatures of Susan Sarandon, Dustin Hoffman, Brooke Shields and other luminaries of the entertainment world at Sardi's, the theater-district mainstay where the



Broadway Association had gathered the other day to hear his campaign pitch.

On stop-and-frisk policing tactics, he had answers. He expounded at length on the need for better neighborhood public schools. He waxed eloquent on his two favorite politicians, Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy.

But as the klieg lights of Lucille Ball's many-toothed smile shined down on him, Mr. Carrión — an avid musician, but apparently not a theatergoer — got tangled up in a seemingly simple question: What is your favorite Broadway show?

"Let's see, O.K., my all-time favorite Broadway show, that's a tough one," he said, giving his head a little shake, as if to dislodge the answer. "There's a few, there's a few. Oh, jeez. I can't pick one."

The moderator, Jennifer Fermino of The Daily News, tried to help. "O.K., so just pick maybe a couple," she suggested.

Those listeners whose attention had not melted into their cellphones looked at him expectantly.

"This was a controversial show, but 'Capeman,' " he said.

Silence. (Based on the life of a teenage murderer, the musical, by Paul Simon and Derek Walcott, lasted for just 68 performances.)

"And then what was the other show that I liked — my family came to see 'Phantom of the Opera'" he offered, gaining momentum. "Which was phenomenal!"

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He was on surer footing addressing other issues of interest to the Midtown West crowd, like the brouhaha over The Associated Press's recent decision to stop reviewing Off Broadway shows. Warmly recalling seeing "In the Heights" when it was still off Broadway (Mr. Carrión counts Luis A. Miranda Jr., a political consultant whose son, Lin-Manuel Miranda, created the show, as a friend) and promising to promote the arts as mayor, he said that he would urge The A.P. to reinstate its reviews.

Before leaving, he beefed up his entertainment bona fides with a nod to Dominic Chianese, who portrayed Uncle Junior on "The Sopranos," and who attended the lunch to honor James Gandolfini, the recently deceased actor who played Tony Soprano.

"Dominic is an old Bronx boy," Mr. Carrión said, citing ties from his days as Bronx borough president. "A dear friend."

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