

BILL DANA BIOGRAPHY

Many know Bill Dana as "José Jiménez", a classic character he created on the Steve Allen Show in the 1950's and continued to perform throughout his career, but Dana has also been a successful writer, author, cartoonist, producer, director, recording artist, inventor, and stand-up comedian.

After serving as a decorated combat infantryman in WW II, Bill graduated Emerson College in Boston and entered show business, beginning his career as an NBC page at 30 Rock. His career took a major turn when he began writing for *Don Adams* including the now famous "Would You Believe?" jokes. Hired by Steve Allen to write on the original Steve Allen Tonight Show, he eventually became head writer. His creation of the José Jimenéz character in 1959 resulted in his own NBC show (1963-65).

His comedy albums, as both José and Bill Dana, were top-sellers. He helped launch the careers of comedic greats such as Don Adams, Jackie Mason, Don Knotts, and Jim Nabors. A major career highlight for him was writing the "All In The Family" episode featuring Sammy Davis, Jr., consistently rated in TV Guide's "Top 100 Television Episodes of All Time".

Adopted by the original seven Mercury astronauts, Dana became part of U.S. space history on May 5, 1961, when the first words from Planet Earth spoken to Alan Shepard, America's first man in space were....."OK, José, You're on your way." Bill and José are honored by inclusion in the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum and the Astronaut Hall of Fame. Appearances in Carnegie Hall, Madison Square Garden and The London Paladium are highlights on the way to an honored and show stopping appearance at the John F. Kennedy Inaugural Gala.

The National Hispanic Media Coalition endorsed the José Jiménez character and invited him to sit on their advisory board which he continues to this day.

Bill has recently founded The American Comedy Archives at Emerson College in Boston, and has received Lifetime Achievement Awards from the Pacific Pioneer Broadcasters, The Boston Comedy Festival, The American Comedy Festival, and Emerson College, among others.



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