



Rio Puertollano (WD 92)

By Will Hawkes (WD 88)

Rio came to Uppingham in 1992 to spend a year in the Upper 6th year courtesy of an English-Speaking Union scholarship.

Rio relished every second of his Uppingham experience. He took A-levels in English, Art, and Theatre Studies - getting As - and immersed himself in the life of the theatre, acting in a series of productions including West Side Story. He enjoyed his first experiences of rugby, where his stocky figure made him a natural for the front row, and fenced for the school. He was amused and shocked in equal parts by life in West Deyne, content as an outsider to wryly observe the sometimes surreal ups-and-downs of boarding school life.

Rio's parents were doctors from the Philippines and Rio was born in Manila before the family emigrated to the United States. He grew on up Long Island where he had attended the Stony Brook School, and later the family lived in Illinois. After Uppingham, Rio studied Drama at the Southern Methodist University in Dallas and then Yale School of Drama. Back in New York, Rio worked as an actor, taking many roles in television and on the stage. He wrote plays and films, with his work winning awards and being screened internationally, and he was an accomplished photographer. His friends from Uppingham enjoyed keeping up with his successes through social media.

More recently he lived in Staten Island with his father and brother, where he died unexpectedly in November 2023. Rio is remembered as a warm and gentle person, always hopeful and optimistic for the future, with a generous "can do" attitude, a broad smile and a kind heart.