



A New Brain



Taming of the Shrew



In the Blood

Talon Beeson – Director

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Personal Statement

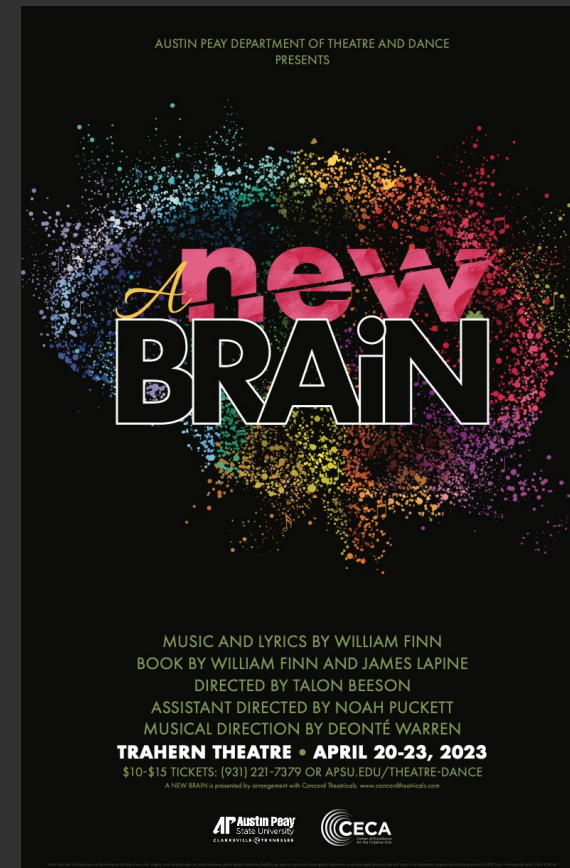
As a performer myself, I believe in actor and story centered direction. Every rehearsal process starts with music/table work and then viewpoints work to discover the physical and impulse based world of the character. I create with stage pictures in mind and allow the actors to organically find the journey through score and script. With a fondness for musicals, I tend to serve as my own choreographer in all but the most dance-heavy of shows. I believe it is my job, and all of our jobs, to make sure that everyone has a seat at the table. All voices should be heard and all stories should be told. I do not believe that there is a true difference in straight plays or musical theatre. When I direct a show, this enables me to approach the work from a place of honesty and reality. The world is always real, we may be living in a cartoon... but it must be real to the players.



Talon Beeson

A New Brain – 2023 APSU – Director/Choreographer

- This work by William Finn is one of my favorite pieces. Usually this show takes place before, during, and after a coma. However, I decided to place the entire show in the coma. Everything felt a bit off, a Salvador Dali dream of a musical where the characters tormented and encouraged Gordon to realize what is really important in life. There were no written words on stage, instead jumbled symbols. The set itself was alive as keyboards came out of walls, doors appeared out of nowhere, and Mr. Bungee had his own drawer. I also encouraged my performers to embrace their gender identity; allowing the performer playing Roger, whose real world pronouns are She/They, to embrace that identity on stage. The performer playing Richard (They/Them) was also encouraged to embrace identity. This was, under my direction, also brought into the costume design for the characters. This production was nominated for Broadway World Regional awards for: Best Director, Best Musical Direction (Deonté Warren) and Best Musical.



A New Brain – 2023 APSU – Director/Choreographer



Heart and Music



The Surgery

A New Brain – 2023 APSU – Director/Choreographer



Mothers Gonna
Make Things Fine



Calamari



Be Polite to
Everybody

A New Brain – 2023 APSU – Director/Choreographer



Poor, Unsuccessful
And Fat

Sailing



Craniotomy

A New Brain – 2023 APSU – Director/Choreographer

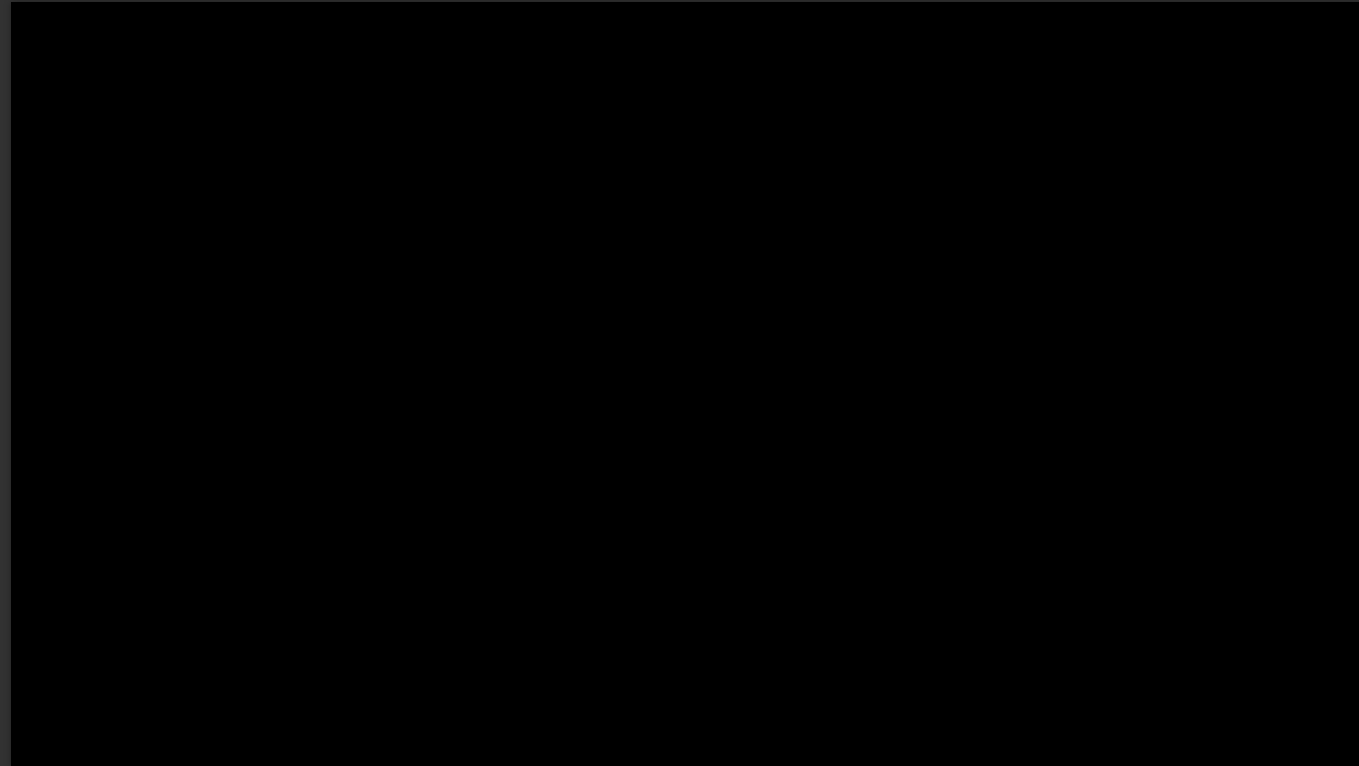


Mr. Bungee



Yes Song

A New Brain – 2023 APSU – Director/Choreographer



Star Spangled Girl – 2022 Roxy Regional Theatre – Director/Fight Choreographer

I was hired by Roxy Regional Theatre in Clarksville, TN, to direct this Neil Simon piece. As I prepped the play, I found myself a bit put off by the antiquated sexism in the script. I decided to use the style of a '60s sitcom to point this out, and ultimately subvert it as Sophie turns the tables on the guys and becomes victorious. I took the sitcom angle literally and put a camera and cameraman on stage constantly changing angles; a laugh track that starts out encouraging the boys' misogynistic behavior and eventually shifts to supporting Sophie; and 60's commercials between each scene. The fight/chase scene was one of the more gratifying moments to choreograph. Using fight choreo and Three Stooges style slapstick I created a "fight ballet" reminiscent of looney tunes.



Star Spangled Girl – 2022 Roxy Regional Theatre – Director/Fight Choreographer



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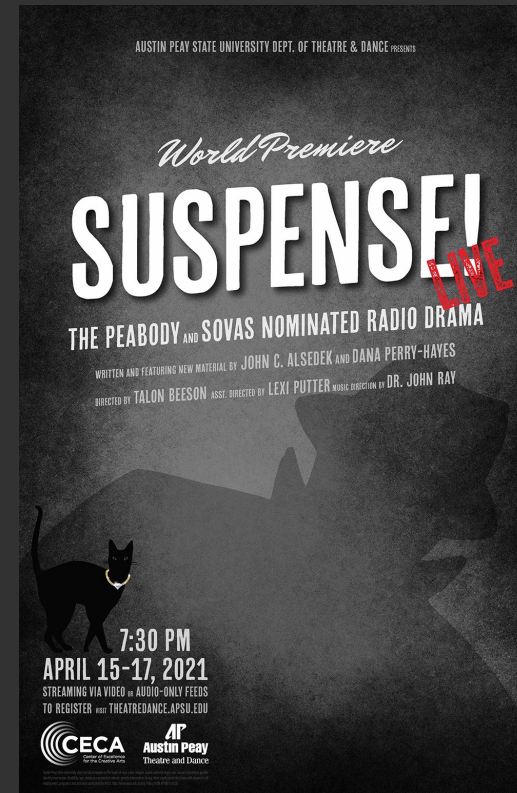
Fight Ballet



Cameraman

Suspense! Live! – 2021 – APSU/Blue Hours Productions – Director/Choreographer

- In 2021 when we were still in COVID protocols, I decided that I wanted to do more than just stage a show with masks on. I wanted to provide students with an opportunity to do something that they would be able to do professionally when they left school. I reached out to John Alsedek, the writer/director of the Peabody and SOVAS Award nominated syndicated radio drama *Suspense!* to see if we could mount a live version of the show. He agreed and wrote new material for the stage. Using this format, we were able to maintain social distancing and stream the show in both video and audio format. I put several songs in the show and, due to a colleague having a stint in the hospital, ended up handling most of the vocal music direction myself. John was so impressed with the production that he cast the students in two episodes of the final season of the show, which I directed.



Suspense! Live! – 2021 – APSU/Blue Hours Productions – Director/Choreographer



Suspense! Live! – 2021 – APSU/Blue Hours Productions – Director/Choreographer



Songs for a New World – 2020 – APSU

- While I am not credited as the director or music director of this production, due to a colleague taking ill and being admitted to the hospital, I had to step into both roles the week before shooting. This project was a green screen rendition of the show that was shot in the recording studio I built at APSU. It allowed us to observe COVID protocols while giving students a unique experience.



Songs for a New World
Music and Lyrics by Jason Robert Brown
Originally Produced by the WPA Theatre, New York City, 1995 (Kyle Renick, Artistic Director)
Original Orchestration by Brian Besterman and Jason Robert Brown

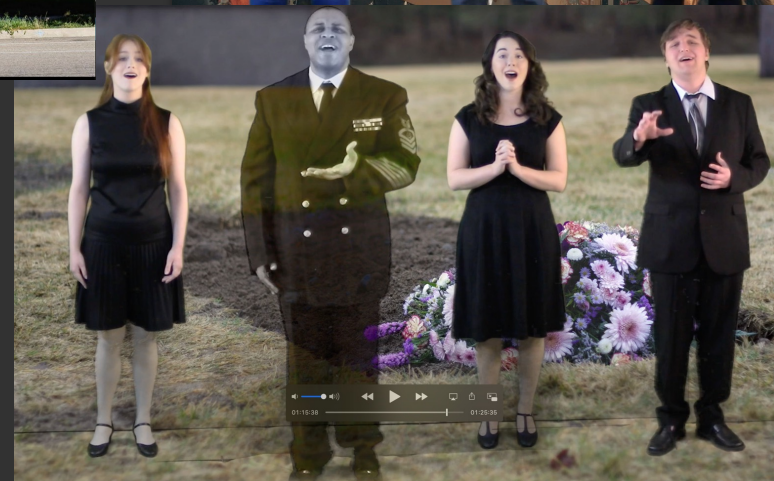
AP
Austin Peay
Theatre and Dance

Live Streaming
March 5 & 6 at 7:30 pm
showtix4u.com/stream
Access code: SON1575762

CECA
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SONGS FOR A NEW WORLD is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.mtishows.com

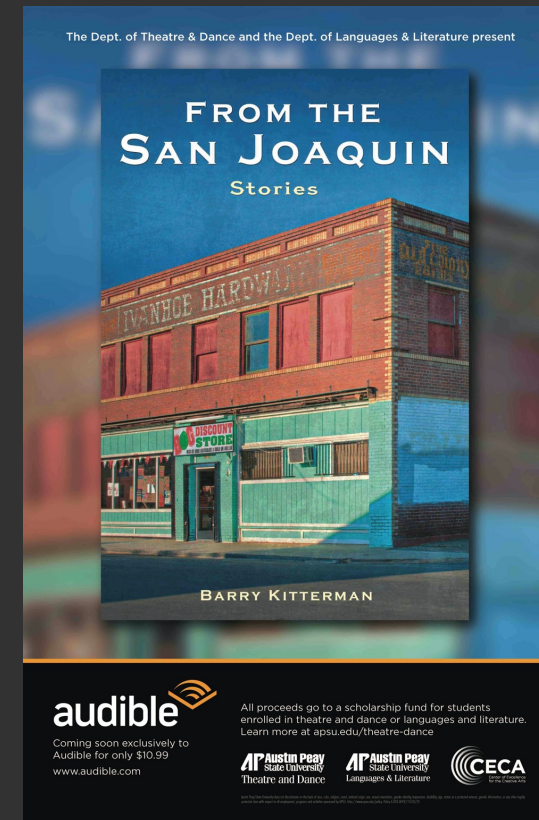
Songs for a New World – 2020 – APSU



From the San Joaquin – 2020– APSU/Audible - Director

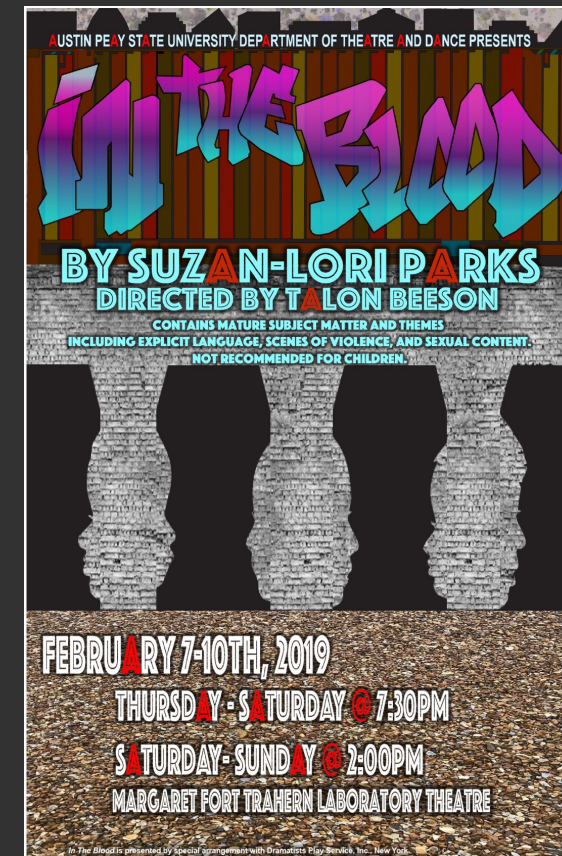
- As we came back on campus from COVID lockdown, I looked for opportunities to give our students real world entertainment experience instead of just mounting shows with masks on like I had seen other schools do. So I partnered with another faculty member (novelist Barry Kitterman) to produce an audiobook version of a collection of his short stories. Casting the production with all students, and one story read by the author himself, this audiobook is still available on Audible. All proceeds go to a scholarship fund for the Dept. of Theatre and Dance. Audiobook available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/5n6n8djj>



In the Blood – 2018 – APSU - Director

- After a few years at APSU, I noticed that the dept. had not done any plays/musicals by writers of color since long before I had started. As someone whose mission revolves around bringing diverse voices to the table, I brought this to the attention of the rest of the faculty. While it is in no way my place to tell this story, I realized that if I didn't propose and direct this show, it would not happen. I took on the challenge, but before I cast the show, I made it clear that the majority black cast would take the lead in the production. I would be there to guide stage pictures, but the stories needed to come from the cast, not a middle-aged white male such as myself. In addition, I brought on several black voices to serve as counselors for the show. Several times during the process, the production staff and I left the room and the cast was with the counselors alone to openly discuss the process. I wanted to make sure everyone's voice was heard and all were comfortable. I also served as an advisor for a student choreographer on the show. I am, very proud of the production as we were nominated for several Broadway World regional awards including Best Play, Best Director, and Best Actress.



In the Blood – 2018 – APSU - Director



In the Blood – 2018 – APSU - Director



Taming of the Shrew – 2017 – APSU - Director

- Shortly after starting at APSU, I was given the opportunity to take on a project I had dreamt of for a while. I had always wanted to do a feminist reimagining of *Taming of the Shrew*. As the years stewing on the project went by, I decided that I wanted to do it in a Roy Lichtenstein/Jack Kirby inspired romance comic book world. To accomplish this, I collaborated with the APSU Dept. of Art and Design professor and Dreamworks animator, Scott Raymond, to create motion comic bookends for the show. Using the Christopher Sly scenes in the Shakespeare edition, and the closing Sly scene from a quarto, Scott and I created black and white early Peter Laird/Kevin Eastman (TMNT) style bumpers to contrast with the colorful Jack Kirby world that was revealed on stage. This show was nominated for quite a few Broadway World Regional Awards including: Best Play, Best Actor, Best Set, Best Costumes, and Best Director.



Taming of the Shrew – 2017 – APSU - Director

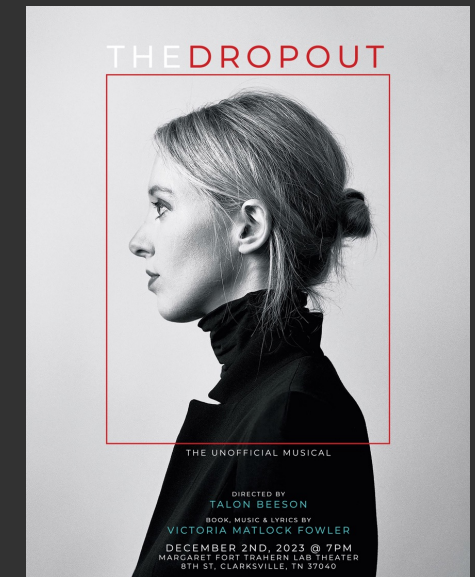


Taming of the Shrew – 2017 – APSU - Director



Upcoming Projects

- I am currently in rehearsals for a new musical written by Victoria Matlock-Fowler (*Wicked* - Broadway) and featuring Deonté Warren (*Aladdin* - Broadway). I am directing/choreographing/vocal directing this staged reading of the first act. With an abbreviated rehearsal schedule, we are fully staging three numbers and staging the rest at rotating music stands.
- At the end of November, I am holding auditions for a collaboration between Farm Theatre NYC/APSU of a new play called *The Ruminants* by Dipti Bramhandkar. This play will receive it's world premiere at APSU in February.



Talon Beeson - Director

- Questions? Feel free to reach out!
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