

John Kaufmann

Theatre Direction, Education and New Work Development

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Theatre Directing Experience

<i>The Madwoman of Chaillot</i>	University of Iowa Mainstage	2010
<i>MIA BRB</i> (co-director) Developed <i>text-eography</i> , where audience members text ideas directly to dancers.	University of Iowa Department of Dance	2009
<i>Lost Sharks</i> (Premiere)	University of Iowa Theatre	2009
<i>A Dog's Life</i> (Musical)	Riverside Theatre, Iowa City	2009
<i>Richard III</i> (Green Show)	Riverside Shakespeare Festival	2009
<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> (Green Show)	Riverside Shakespeare Festival	2009
<i>Truth and Truth</i>	Iowa New Play Festival	2009
<i>Painless</i> (Premiere)	UI Jakobsen Graduate Conference	2009
<i>Ernie's Incredible Illucinations</i>	Seattle Children's Theatre	2008
<i>A Man's A Man</i>	University of Iowa Theatre	2008
<i>Um, Like America</i> (Premiere)	University of Iowa Theatre	2008
<i>Project Art</i> (live programs for patients and staff)	UI Hospitals and Clinics	2008
<i>We Three</i> (Premiere)	Iowa New Play Festival	2008
<i>And Baby Makes Seven</i>	University of Iowa Theatre	2008
<i>The Collection</i>	University of Iowa Theatre	2007
<i>24-Hour Play</i> (International authors translated)	UI Writer's Program	2007
<i>RnJ</i> (Premiere)	Seattle Children's Theatre	2007
<i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>	Open Circle Theatre, Seattle	2007
<i>noSIGNAL</i> (featuring the band "awesome")	Bumbershoot Festival, Seattle	2006
<i>12 Minutes Max.</i> Invited curator of performance	On The Boards, Seattle	2005
<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	Consolidated Works, Seattle	2004
<i>Giving Notice</i> (writer/director)	NW Actors Studio, Seattle	2003
<i>The Tank Plays</i>	Annex Theatre, Seattle	2002
<i>Oedipus</i> (Theatre in the Park)	Theatre Schmeater, Seattle	1999
<i>Two Girls From Vermont</i> (writer/director)	Summer Festival of the Arts, ME	1998
<i>Alchemist! The Musical</i> (director, co-writer)	Seattle Fringe Festival	1996
<i>The Birds</i> (original music by Larrance Fingerhut)	The Unusual Cabaret	1993
<i>Square One</i>	Theatre UNI, Cedar Falls, Iowa	1992
<i>Funnyhouse of a Negro</i>	Theatre UNI, Cedar Falls, Iowa	1991
The Unusual Cabaret. Founding Company Member, Artistic Director (1995 season)		1990-95
• Produced new work by Jeff Goode, Jonathan Price, Michael Graziano and Mark Hollmann		

Original Conceptions

Starball. Original musical astronomy comedy for the planetarium. Performed in planetariums in Seattle, Philadelphia, Valencia (Spain), New York, Chicago, and Baltimore	Ethereal Mutt, Seattle	2002-2010
Line One. Conceived and directed performance created by actors repeating verbatim what they hear through their cell phones	Annex Theatre, Seattle	2004 and 2006
Date of Birth. Script developed from transcribed recordings made in the hospital delivery room of sister's labor	Open Circle Theatre, Seattle	2006
linger. Original solo performance with music. Developed <i>linger life grid</i> as means of tracking personal happiness	Speakeasy Backroom, On the Boards, Seattle	2000-02
14/48 Theatre Festival	One World Theatre	1997-07
• Involved in 14 separate 2-day festivals between 1997-2007	3 Card Monte	
• Wrote 18 short plays, acted in 8 premieres, directed 2 premieres	Productions, Seattle	
Christmas in Babylon. Script developed using language translation software	The Little Theatre, Seattle	2001
Beyond Belief. Live interviews with children regarding their relationship with Santa Claus	The Little Theatre, Seattle	2000
Surf Theatre: Rabbit Ears. Developed and directed original script created using random television channel surfing	Speakeasy Backroom, Seattle	1998
Raptor Rapture. Wrote and directed performance that moved throughout the <i>Raptors, Hunters of the Sky</i> exhibit.	Pacific Science Center, Seattle	1997

Critical Response

"The second half of the show is a payoff sweet as honey, not only because it features a gleeful reunion of the bee friends but because it contains a swarm of musical numbers."

noSIGNAL review, *Seattle Times*, May 5, 2006

"Line One is utterly, paradoxically, delightful." *Seattle Times*, February 25, 2004

*"The inventor of **linger**, **Starball**, and now **Line One** makes inventive, spontaneous work that is totally, totally entertaining." "Line One has got brains, guts, a wild streak, a great sense of humor... Go see it. You'll be sorry if you don't."* *The Stranger*, February 26, 2004

"Kaufmann paints a picture of the push-and-pull that often occurs between the woman, her medical providers, and whoever else happens to be present."

Date of Birth review, *Seattle Times*, February 3, 2006

"Director/adaptor John Kaufmann and his designers, Jenny Anderson and Webster Crowell, do come up with quite a few ingenious and intriguing production touches."

Antony and Cleopatra review, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, June 24, 2004

"Kaufmann and assistant Dan Dennis manage to turn their geekiness into a show of unassuming playfulness. They also manage to use both improvisational acting and audience interaction to rare advantage."

Starball review, *Seattle Times*, August 20, 2002

"Through original music, live performance, and a healthy soupcon of eccentricity, this bizarre pageant of dreams, stars, and accordion music... is sure to charm your quirky-hip sensibilities with its feel-good weirdness."

Starball, from "the Stranger Suggests" *The Stranger*, August 15, 2002

*"Original, engaging, and really, really funny... **linger** is good. Really good."*

The Stranger, August 30, 2000

Acting

Gary	<i>Creatures from the Pink Lagoon</i>	Feature Film	2007
Lucentio	<i>Taming of the Shrew</i> (Stephanie Shine, dir.)	Seattle Shakespeare	2003
Tony Polar	<i>Valley of the Dolls</i> (Allison Narver, director)	Empty Space Theatre	2002
Cleante	<i>The Miser</i> (Jeff Steitzer, director)	Village Theatre	1998
Salisbury	<i>King John</i> (Dan Savage, director)	Greek Active, Seattle	1997
Luke	<i>Bill Nye the Science Guy</i>	Disney Television	1998
Jeff	<i>70 Scenes of Halloween</i> (Jeff Goode, dir.)	The Unusual Cabaret	1993
Freddie	<i>Reverse Psychology</i>	The Unusual Cabaret	1993
Hertbese	<i>Orphee</i>	The Unusual Cabaret	1992
Bejart	<i>LaBête</i> (Gina Kaufmann, director)	The Unusual Cabaret	1991
Mrs. Peachum	<i>The Threepenny Opera</i>	The Unusual Cabaret	1990
Fortinbras	<i>Fortinbras Gets Drunk</i> (Jay Edelnant, dir.)	Theatre UNI	1993
Dorilant	<i>The Country Wife</i> (Sarah Barker, director)	Theatre UNI	1990

Written Work

<i>Third Day's Child</i>	Screenplay produced in Seattle International Film Festival	2008
<i>Required to Miss</i>	Produced as part of the 11-Minute Play Festival, Iowa City	2008
<i>Blog the Boards</i>	Invited guest blogger for On the Boards theatre discussion "Are there new modes of realism in theatre?"	2006
<i>Green Night</i>	Script produced by Macha Monkey Theatre, Seattle	2005
<i>Two Girls from Vermont</i>	Produced in the New York Fringe Festival	2002
<i>UN Gold Card</i> (Radio sketch)	Produced by KUOW Public Radio as part of <i>Rewind</i>	2002
<i>Absolutron</i> (Radio Play)	Produced by New Waves, KUOW Public Radio, Seattle	2001
<i>Jumping Jupiter</i>	Produced by 14/48 Theatre Festival, Seattle	2000
<i>The Sky from Scratch, Station Vacation, Astronomy or Astrology</i>		1998
	Live planetarium scripts Commissioned and presented by Pacific Science Center, Seattle	
<i>Peeping Tom Theatre</i>	Op Ed Column in <i>Seattle Weekly</i>	1/24/96
<i>Waft in Space</i>	Series aired on <i>Kidstar/Radio Disney</i> , Seattle	1996
<i>The Nosebleed Seats</i>	Weekly opinion column, <i>Northern Iowan</i> Newspaper	1991-93
<i>Alchemist! The Musical</i> (Music by Mark Hollmann)	Premiered at The Unusual Cabaret, Bar Harbor	1992

Other Experience

Cranium Cadoo and Hullabaloo	Producer and game developer	2000-03
Microsoft Executive Retreat	Developed and hosted interactive game shows attended by CEO and top executives	2007-09
Operations Manager	Department of Spiritual Care, Harborview Medical Center	2003-07

Education

- MFA **University of Iowa**, Iowa City, IA. Theatre Directing
- Degree expected in May 2010
 - Current GPA: 4.00
- BA **University of Northern Iowa**, Cedar Falls, IA. Theatre, Performance Emphasis, 1993

Teaching Experience

- University of Iowa.** *Art of the Theatre* course. 2007-10
- Individually developed curriculum for college-level, three credit-hour course.
 - Included units on improvisation, acting, playwriting, collaboration, script analysis and live performance appreciation
 - Taught seven separate sections, teaching one or more each semester
- Seattle Children's Theatre.** 2007-09
- Developed curriculum and taught classes in Physical Comedy, Improvisation, Acting, Creating Character, Shakespeare, Audition
 - 17 total classes taught
 - Class sizes of 8-16 students
 - Led 3 professional development workshops on improvisation, acting and directing.
- Pacific Science Center, Seattle.** 1996-2001
- Presented a total of 626 programs for 18,612 planetarium visitors
 - Planetarium Supervisor 1998-2000
 - Traveled to schools in rural Washington State with Science on Wheels program
 - Commissioned to develop Science Theatre Programs *Raptor Rapture, The Alienators*, and four original live planetarium programs
- Arts Share, University of Iowa** community outreach program 2008-10
- Developed and facilitated workshops on Shakespeare and American Contemporary drama for high schools around the state of Iowa
- Market Street Theatre School, Iowa City.** Lead teacher of 16 week youth acting class 2008-09
- Seattle Academy of Fine Art/Gage Academy.** Improvisation, Original Game Creation 2003-07
- Lowell Elementary School, Seattle.** Eight week 3rd and 4th grade drama program 2006
- Peers Educating Peers Program, Everett, Washington.** Lead Teacher on program 1998-99 that empowered under-privileged youth by creating theatre based on their chosen issues
- McClure Middle School, Seattle.** 12-week after school drama program: *American History* 1997
- Summer Festival of the Arts, SW Harbor, Maine.** Acting teacher and performance program director of 4-week high school drama program 1993

Theatre in Education

Open Door Theatre , Seattle, Washington. Actor and workshop leader in sexual abuse prevention theatre programs	1996-99
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performed in over 100 shows around Washington State • Performed on army bases in Panama and Korea on a US Army grant • Commissioned to write <i>Happy and Safe</i> (with Debra Spangler). Interactive script teaching young audiences about personal safety 	
Journeys to Freedom . Adapted and directed stories of the Underground Railroad for Darwin Turner Action Theatre	2009
High School Thespian Adjudicator , Iowa and Washington State	1991, 2006-07
Lost Luggage . Developed global awareness interactive game played by over 2,000 students at <i>Seattle International Children's Festival</i>	2006
The Perception Project , Education Outreach Program for Open Circle Theatre	2005
Not So Simple and Daring and Truthful , Everett, Washington. Original performances developed from improvisations with at-risk youth	2000-01
The Undersea Trial of Joseph P. Lawnboy , Seattle Public Theatre. Actor in water ecology program	1996

Theatre and Improvisation Workshops

Harborview Medical Center and Providence Medical Center , Seattle. Developed and facilitated <i>Improvisation for the Chaplin</i> workshops for hospital chaplain staff	2004-07
Viewpoints . Led two-day, four-hour workshop for UI Opera Performance students	2009
Rape Victim Advocacy Program, University of Iowa . Improvisation workshop	2009
Seattle Cancer Care Alliance . Led improvisation workshop for staff	2007
Riverside Theatre , Iowa City. Led professional development workshop on playing Shakespeare's language	2009
Upward Bound , Iowa. Drama workshop for under-privileged high school students	2009
Traer Community Foundation Grant Drama Workshops , Traer, Iowa. Two-day workshops for elementary and high school students	2008-09
West High School , Iowa City. Guest teacher for Shakespeare and Audition units	2009
Freehold Theatre , Seattle. Adult Improvisation Workshop	2006
Cooterville , All-Girl Comedy Troupe, Seattle. Improvisation workshop	2006

Presentations and Guest Speaking

<i>The Audience-Centered Planetarium Experience.</i> Paper presented at the International Planetarium Society Conference, Chicago	2009
Henry Art Gallery , University of Washington. “Art dialogue” with Josiah McElheny’s <i>The Last Scattering Surface</i> exhibit, Commissioned Presentation	2008
Hayden Planetarium , New York. Discussion of <i>Starball</i> , <i>Celestial Heights</i> lecture series	2005
Cornell College , Iowa. Audition guest respondent for college acting class	2009
NAIS Conference , Las Vegas. Educational Astronomy Demonstrations for Digitalis	2006
Playback Improvisation performer. Fund raising event for US Representative Jim McDermott, Smith Tower, Seattle	2005
Intiman Theatre , Seattle. Improvisation as part of theatre’s 30 th Anniversary Celebration	2004

Professional Development

SITI Company Summer Intensive , Saratoga Springs, NY. Four week Suzuki and Viewpoints led by Anne Bogart and company members	2002
Viewpoints Master Class with Tina Landau at Seattle Rep Theatre	2008
Augusto Boal’s Forum Theatre Techniques: worked and studied with Karen Mitchell, PhD, Founding Director of SAVE Forum Actors. Developed scenes under her guidance, and attended performance for UI college students	2009
Directors Lab West Participant, Los Angeles	2006
Improvisation Workshop with Matt Smith, Seattle	2005
Child Sexual Abuse Counseling Training , Providence Sexual Assault Unit, Seattle	1996-99
Stand Up Comedy Workshop with Judy Carter, Seattle	1998

Awards

IRAM Award for directing excellence: <i>We Three</i> , Iowa New Play Festival	2008
Outstanding Creativity Staff Award for development of <i>Raptor Rapture</i>	1997
Glen Mazen Award for contributions to the 14/48 Theatre Festival	2003
<i>Stranger</i> Newspaper Genius Award Runner-up (Performance)	2003
<i>Toy of the Year</i> award from the Toy Industry Association, and <i>Best Toy Award</i> from the Oppenheim Toy Portfolio for <i>Cranium Cadoo</i>	2002
Meritorious Acting Achievement: <i>Fortinbras Gets Drunk</i> , ACTF Midwest Region	1993
Most Original Column for <i>The Nosebleed Seats</i> , Northern Iowan Newspaper	1992

Directing Philosophy

My goal as an artist is to make the quest for self-knowledge a joyful and communal experience. I believe that no medium better facilitates this process than live theater, as one is afforded the rare perspective to see his/her inner life projected onto a stage. I strive to create theatre where audience members feel safe enough to open their hearts, but unsettled enough to expand them. A good performance's structure, humor, spectacle and acting all strive to achieve this balance, while inviting the audience into an active dialogue.

My work is personal, playful and each production lives within established rules. When my sister had her first baby a few years ago, I developed a play from audio recordings I made in the delivery room. While writing (with Mark Hollmann) a musical version of *The Alchemist*, I found inspiration in Carl Jung's *Psychology and Alchemy*. This began the influence of Jung, Joseph Campbell and mythic archetypes on my theatre work. Improvisation work and Cranium game development connected me to rules in the theatrical event. I enjoy creating clear parameters within which the actors live and play. In *Antony and Cleopatra*, actors moved differently depending on whether they were moving through the swirls of Egypt or the rigid angularity of Rome. *noSIGNAL* gave the actors bee-like qualities, so our blocking was informed by the "rules of the hive" we established in rehearsal.

In our increasingly mediated world, I believe in what I call "limited radius" theatre: work that celebrates humans gathered in a shared physical space. This theatre embraces the differences between live performance and mass media: where mass media reaches a span of consumers, live theatre offers a depth of experience, and where mass media follows an autocratic model, live theatre offers a democratic event. When such differences are exploited, theatre plays to its strengths and fills a vital need in our society. I seek to create unique, consistent and personal worlds where actors and audience explore their shared humanity within the limited radius of the live event.

References

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