

STUDIO EAST

Training for the Performing Arts

Welcome to our Quarterly Newsletter!

A Letter from Executive Artistic Director, Lani Brockman



Hello All and Happy Spring!

Thanks for taking the time to read this! We've had a wonderful winter season, full of new shows, reimagined classics, and arguably too much snow!

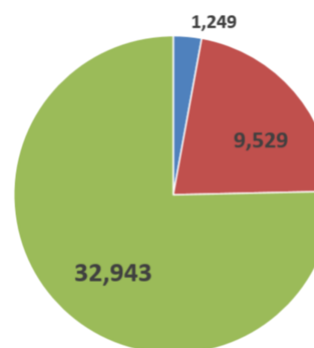
Here are a few highlights from our last quarter:

- In January, we opened the International One Acts, a non-musical production that included three powerful stories, each one featuring a story or legend from another country. Twenty-six young actors brought these three inspiring stories to life over two weekends.
- At the end of January, we debuted *The Little Engine That Could*, a new StoryBook musical in partnership with AAA Washington. Minus a few interruptions from "Snowmageddon," this show had a fabulous run all over Puget Sound, helping kids learn to believe in themselves, as well as being a safe passenger while riding in a car.
- Winter quarter's after school and homeschool classes introduced and continued teaching theater arts to a lot of fun and energetic students. At the same time, our [Summer Camps](#) went live the first week of February, and we already have several full camps. We are anticipating a fantastic summer, so if you haven't had a chance to check out our selection of one and two week camps for ages 4-19, visit our website [here](#).
- March brought with it our annual Shakespeare show, a Hatfield & McCoy version of *Romeo & Juliet*, as well as a brand-new show, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, the prequel to *Peter Pan*. I had the pleasure of directing *Starcatcher* and had an absolute blast working with 22 teen actors who played more than 100 characters.

Coming off Winter Quarter, there is much to look forward to: [Peter Pan](#), the beloved story of the boy who would not grow up, opens May 24, and I am excited to have this musical directed by one of our own, Studio Alum Zach Barr. StoryBook's final show of the season, [The Princess & the Pea](#), is now showing at a theater near you through May 19. And of course there are [Summer Camps](#), [YAPI](#), and auditions for [Les Misérables](#), our Summer Teen Musical. Finally, if you'd like to be one of the first to celebrate next year's Mainstage season, join us for [Curtains Up](#) on May 5th.

Most importantly, thank you for supporting all the many facets of Studio East and StoryBook Theater. May the Arts be with you!

IMPACT NUMBERS Sept '18 - Mar '19 Students and Audiences



Total: 43,721

- Education classes
- Mainstage Production
- StoryBook Theater

SAVE THE DATES:

**Curtains Up - Announcing
the 2019-20 Mainstage
Season on May 5th**

Lani Brockman
Executive Artistic Director



10 Lessons the Arts Teach by Elliot Eisner

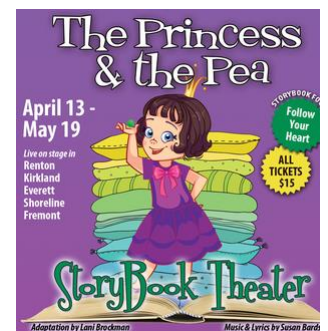
1. The arts teach children to make **good judgments** about qualitative relationships. Unlike much of the curriculum in which correct answers and rules prevail, in the arts, it is judgment rather than rules that prevail.
2. The arts teach children that problems can have **more** than **one** solution and that questions can have more than one answer.
3. The arts celebrate multiple **perspectives**. One of their large lessons is that there are many ways to **see** and **interpret** the world.
4. The arts teach children that in complex forms of problem solving purposes are seldom fixed, but change with circumstance and opportunity. Learning in the arts requires the **ability** and a **willingness** to surrender to the unanticipated possibilities of the work as it unfolds.



Peter Pan the Musical at
Studio East May 24 - June
16



StoryBook Theater
presents *The Princess &
the Pea*
April 13 - May 19



Annual Jest for Funds
Auction - October 5th,
2019



5. The arts make **vivid** the fact that neither words in their literal form nor numbers exhaust what we can **know**. The limits of our language do not define the limits of our **cognition**.

6. The arts teach students that **small differences** can have **large effects**. The arts traffic in subtleties.

7. The arts teach students to think through and within a material. All art forms employ some means through which **images** become **real**.



8. The arts help **children learn** to say what cannot be said. When children are invited to disclose what a work of art helps them **feel**, they must reach into their **poetic capacities** to find the words that will do the job.

9. The **arts enable** us to have **experience** we can have from no other source and through such experience to **discover** the range and variety of what we are capable of **feeling**.

10. The arts' position in the school curriculum symbolizes to the young what adults **believe** is **important**.

SOURCE: Eisner, E. (2002). The Arts and the Creation of Mind, In Chapter 4, What the Arts Teach and How It Shows. (pp. 70-92). Yale University Press.

Recapping a Wonderful Partnership between StoryBook Theater and AAA Washington



As many of you know, StoryBook Theater had the privilege to partner this winter with [AAA Washington](#) on a brand new musical, *The Little Engine That Could*. The goal of both organizations was to empower young audiences to advocate for their safety on the road (and the rails).

The message was communicated clearly to 3-10 year olds through catchy songs like “Chug, Chug, Puff, Puff” and “Thank You, But No Thank You,” and through funny, energetic characters like the Party Train and the Phone Train. In the end, Clown, Dolly and Bear had to decide for themselves which train engine would be best suited to help them safely over the mountain. Although many trains offered their assistance to the Toys, it was the Little Engine who (spoiler alert) was the safest conductor.

In January, Seattle Refined, the afternoon KOMO show, filmed a TV spot on the musical and the unique partnership with AAA. You can read the article and view the segment [HERE](#). We opened the show in Renton and went on to perform in Kirkland, Everett, Fremont and Shoreline through January, February and March.

StoryBook patrons had great things to say about the new musical too:

"I actually think it was my favorite of all I've seen! The music was GREAT (K was singing “chug chug” in the car!). I think the interactive elements are really smart for maintaining engagement, too. And the length felt just right.” – Drama Teacher & Parent

"We are still talking about the glorious performance! We all enjoyed the experience thoroughly! The adults are discussing the beauty of the message ‘Thank you, but no thank you.’” – Kindergarten Teacher

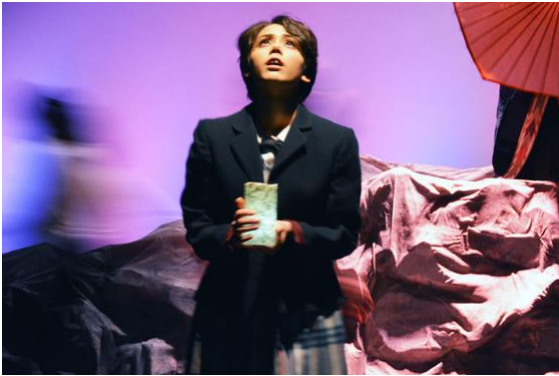
"This was a very professional, entertaining and interactive show for both kids and adults. Our whole family loved it!" – StoryBook Patron

The partnership was a great success, and we look forward to working with more

organizations in the future to create more musicals that help empower our young audiences.



Hanna Tilson speaks on her unique experience participating in the International One Acts



This winter, the Studio presented International One Acts, three short plays, each a meaningful, inspiring and timeless story. *The Falcon* tells of a young girl, Anna, and her difficult choice between what is safe and what her heart might truly desire. In *A Thousand Cranes*, we follow the true story of Sadako Sasaki, a young victim of the Hiroshima atomic bomb disaster. In *The Masque of Beauty & the Beast*, we witness a retelling of the

classic fairy tale through poetic verse.

Every few years, the Studio brings back the One Acts, as they present new challenges for the actors, as well as an opportunity to learn and be inspired by three poignant stories with three strong heroines. Hanna Tilson, 17, played Sadako Sasaki in *A Thousand Cranes*, and for her, the experience of a non-musical was brand new. “*A Thousand Cranes* was a change of pace. It gave me a chance to slow down and focus on acting, plus learn some history along the way,” says Hanna. Whereas the musical productions focus heavily on dancing and singing, the One Acts feature small, intimate casts with a shorter script and focus on the acting.

Specifically, in *A Thousand Cranes*, Hanna says their director, Kim Douthit, made sure the cast knew and understood the true story they were portraying. “*A Thousand Cranes* is a story based on victims of the Hiroshima bombings in WWII. That fact alone extends to many topics that were very eye-opening to learn about,” says Hanna. The main character, Sadako, was just two years old when the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, and she was just 12 years old when she was diagnosed with leukemia, a direct result from radiation. For Hanna, this was not a role that was simply up to her own interpretation. “Sadako was a different case. She was a real person. Not some fictional character I could play with,” Hanna reflects. “I had to respect her and approach her acknowledging the fact that she was a real person with real experiences. I couldn't take it lightly.”



Although Sadako's story met a tragic end, her strength and courage have become a lasting inspiration. “What started off as a quest for a cure for her illness turned into a story of peace and inspiration. A story born of tragedy becomes one of hope,” says director Kim Douthit. Sadako folded cranes in the hopes of a wish granted, and in this, she teaches us to approach the hardest

parts of life with optimism. “Sadako's hope and belief in something bigger than her makes this play as timely today as it was when it was written,” says Annette Bovey, Presenting Show Sponsor.

The Studio looks forward to the next time we can present these One Acts, as they challenge young actors to study history and learn new cultures, opening the door for larger, more meaningful conversations, and inspiring courage in all of us.

**Coming Up Next at Studio East - *Peter Pan*
7 Questions with Studio Alum and *Peter Pan* Director, Zach Barr**



1. What is your history with Studio East?

I have been glad to work with Studio East since 2003 and continue to be involved as an alum.

2. What are you doing and pursuing currently?

I am currently living and working in Chicago, where I am the Literary Associate of Sideshow Theatre Company and a staff writer at arts publication, Scapi Magazine. Recent projects include directing a devised adaptation of *Bicycle Thieves* for the Rhinoceros Theatre Festival, and the online video series *And Now, They Sing*, about lost musicals.

3. What drew you back to direct for the Studio?

After the success of *Urinetown* (2016) at Studio East, Lani gave me an open invitation to return to

direct a mainstage production in the future. Directing for the Studio is very important to me, as a way to give back to another generation of kids, considering all that Studio East gave me when I was a kid. In a way, *Peter Pan* is the type of show I always wanted to act in at Studio East: a fun, ensemble-driven story with lots of opportunities for both laughter and heart.

4. What's exciting for you about bringing this particular script (*Peter Pan*) to life?

Peter Pan is a fantastic story about the difficult process of growing up, and the decisions about what we lose from childhood when we do. It's a unique challenge to build this play about youth alongside actual youth, who are bringing their own experiences to the story. It's also a story with an exceedingly long history – the original play of *Peter Pan* will be 115 years old in December! We are incorporating a project into the rehearsals where the students will look at other adaptations of *Peter Pan* and incorporate those other views on the story into our own. This is also a fabulous musical in itself – there's a reason that families have loved it since 1954. I think this will be a rather high-energy, high-stakes version of the story so many people are familiar with.

Oh, so, so many. We are heavily embracing the theatricality of this story, with many of the transitions and moments of stage magic happening in full view of the audience. Tinkerbell has been entirely redesigned as a puppet, and our world for Neverland has no fourth wall. Be prepared to talk with pirates, lost boys, and warriors when you come to the show! There's also a crocodile, but that's all I'll say about him.

Surprisingly not as difficult as you'd think, with a group this large. We made an early decision to cast the show gender-blind, considering all performers for any role, regardless of gender. I'm very glad we did, since we ended up with a male/female pair of

7. Other comments or thoughts you'd like to include about directing *Peter Pan*?

Studio East and Holly & Shiraz Cupala present

Peter Pan

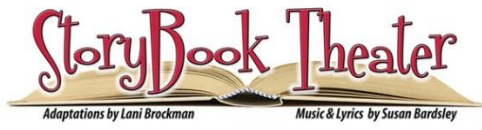
the musical

Directed by
Zach Barr
Music Directed by
David Duvall
Choreographed by
Angela Snyder

May 24 -
June 16, 2019

A Musical Based on the Play by J.M. BARRE [lyrics by GAVIN LEE] and Music by WIMBORNS INOUE & CARLAP
Additional Lyrics by BETTY COMDOR and ADOLPH GREEN | Additional Music by ROLE STYNE | Originally directed, choreographed and adapted by JEROME ROBBERS





Studio East, a non-profit, creates opportunities for young people to discover and explore the performing arts.

Home of StoryBook Theater.

Studio East: Training for the Performing Arts

www.studio-east.org

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