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Grabowski, Brianna Richelle

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2018

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

SANTA CRUZ

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE IN ACADEMIC THEATER

Implemented in BarnStorm 2017-2018

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THEATER ARTS

by

Brianna Grabowski

June 2018

The Thesis of Brianna Grabowski
is approved:

Professor David Lee Cuthbert, Chair

Professor Kate Edmunds

Professor Brandin Barón-Nusbaum

Tyrus Miller
Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

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2018

Table of Contents

Abstract: Professional Practice in Academic Theater	iv
Acknowledgements	v
A Second Opportunity with BarnStorm	1
New York Professionalism & Insights	3
BarnStorm Winter 2018: The <i>Soaps</i> Experiment.....	5
BarnStorm Spring 2018: The Chautauqua Festival	8
The <i>Soaps</i> Experiment Analysis	9
Chautauqua Festival 2018 Analysis.....	12
Important Lessons and Tips for Theater Arts Undergraduates.....	15
Concluding Message.....	21
Bibliography	23
Appendix A – Rough Budget of <i>Next to Normal</i> , Time To Fly Productions LLC 2017	24
Appendix B – <i>Soaps</i> Questionnaire	25
Appendix C – BarnStorm Winter 2018 Spaces, Rehearsals, and Productions	26
Appendix D – Technical Positions in BarnStorm 2017-2018 Season	27
Appendix E – One-Night Performances in BarnStorm.....	28
Appendix F – BarnStorm’s Chautauqua Festival, Previous Systems.....	29
Appendix G – <i>Soaps</i> Questionnaire Data Tables	30

Abstract

Professional Practice in Academic Theater: Implemented in BarnStorm 2017-2018

By Brianna Richelle Grabowski

BarnStorm Theater is a student-run theater company at The University of California, Santa Cruz. The theater functions as a community space where students support one another's production in return for support on theirs. The undergraduate students who participate in BarnStorm are accustomed to the resources readily available in an educational setting. As the Managing Director for the 2017-2018 Season, I implemented a post-academic model for the majority of the productions, moving theory into practical action, so that participants experience the struggles they will face in future projects after graduating.

Over the course of a Stage Management internship in New York City, I witnessed a variety of performance artists rent spaces for their work. My production struggled to find costumes, props, rehearsal spaces, board operators, funding for rehearsal time, and, due to the high cost of renting the venue, shortened tech hours. This experience sparked an appreciation for the UC Santa Cruz Theater Arts Department and BarnStorm amenities; my return to the department served as a reminder of the important resources provided and I hoped to inspire students to take advantage of the resources and opportunities available during their education. Additionally, I adjusted the BarnStorm Course's rehearsal and production processes to simulate a post-educational and pre-professional theater experience in an attempt to prepare students for work after graduation. This thesis serves as a resource for undergraduate students to prepare for post-academic theater.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my friends and family who supported me through my undergraduate and graduate careers at Santa Cruz. The experiences and opportunities I had over the last five years are valuable to my career and I hope to make you proud in my future endeavors.

Thank you to my family for enduring four intense years of undergrad – there was crying, a lot of hard work and time away from home, and excitement for jobs and travel opportunities.

Thank you to my Grandparents, Eleanor and Joseph Grabowski, for financially supporting your nine grandchildren through college.

Many thanks to Alyssa Glenn for being the best co-director, best friend, and editor in my life.

I am thankful for Theater Arts' impeccable resources, Professors, Staff, and hands-on experience for a proper education for all crafts within theatre.

Finally, thank you to all my high school teachers who encouraged me to pursue my dreams of attending Santa Cruz. I wouldn't have accomplished all that I have if it weren't for them.

Special thanks to Mrs. Judy Stagnaro and Mrs. Heather Bolig Richey. Thank you.

“Believe in yourself. Dream. Try. Do Good.”

A Second Opportunity with BarnStorm

The Barn Theater¹ at The University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC) is the home of a student-produced theater company, BarnStorm, and has been led by Theater Arts students since 2004. My initial management position within BarnStorm was as an undergraduate Managing Artistic Director (2016-2017 Season). For the 2017-2018 Season, I returned to manage BarnStorm as the Producing Managing Director as a Masters Candidate. During my first year as Managing Director, I noticed a disinterest in BarnStorm due to dated equipment in the space and students' belief that BarnStorm productions were a lesser experience to those produced in the Theater Arts Department. To combat these views, Alyssa Glenn (Producing-Artistic Director 2016-2017) and I purchased 8 LED instruments and made efforts to clean out the Barn, host community building events, and produce politically motivated and relevant works to re-inspire involvement in BarnStorm. While these motions aided the 2016-2017 Season, to my dismay our efforts did not have the desired effect on the community to propose projects for 2017-2018 or fully utilize the great resource that is BarnStorm.

In returning to BarnStorm for a second year, I introduced a different approach to utilize the structure of the BarnStorm course and provide a lesson to the students. BarnStorm is a hands-on, low-budget experience for students to learn and gain skills to prepare them in many theatrical positions. I aimed to give BarnStorm students an understanding of the struggles of working through the transition between educational theater and professional theater. This season I adjusted the BarnStorm Course's rehearsal and production process to simulate a post-educational theater process that will benefit the students in their careers in theater. My thesis follows how I mirrored professional practice in BarnStorm through Winter and Spring Quarters: I created an experiment with the production *Soaps*, which performed

¹ The Barn Theater was converted from an original Cowell Ranch barn in 1968 and was UCSC's first theater on campus ("The Barn").

twice Winter Quarter, and I made adjustments to Spring Quarter's Chautauqua Festival to further prepare students for post-educational theater.

It is important to expose undergraduate students to the limitations they can expect when they work with a new or professional company once they graduate. When pursuing a career in theater, they likely will not have the resources they are accustomed to in an educational setting, including, but not limited to, designers, sound equipment, lighting equipment, time in the theater, etc. These amenities contribute to financial costs that many individual groups and new theater companies are not able to accommodate. It is beneficial for the students to take advantage of these obstacles while they have advisors to support and guide them.

A copy of my thesis was sent out to BarnStorm's full season company to read so as to help them understand why BarnStorm was structured differently and how to embrace the lessons of their fellow colleagues while preparing for their future artistic endeavors.

New York Professionalism & Insights

During the summer of 2017, I was an intern Stage Manager for a production of *Next to Normal* in New York City with the new theater company, Time to Fly Productions LLC; this was my first professional production outside of educational and community theater. Working with the company and talented cast gave me invaluable exposure to professional theater. From pre-production to performances, the company maintained theater-family vibes and professionalism. Additionally, I learned the challenges of working as a nomadic theater company. My experience will serve as a framework for comparison with BarnStorm's usual practices and those I instated this year.

While working for Time To Fly Productions, I learned the difficulties of working for a new theater company. Starting a new company or project means resources and funds are limited. Time To Fly Productions is an independent company that rents spaces for rehearsals and performances; they do not have a primary location featuring amenities such as offices, copy machines, rehearsal studios, conference rooms, or shops to build/stock productions. Our cast and creative team became our designers shopping for props, costumes, and set pieces. In New York City, where they're based, this means hours before rehearsals are dedicated to traveling around the five boroughs shopping at a variety of stores for costumes and props. As the Stage Manager, it was also my job to carry the props via subway for rehearsals and performances, which is not standard practice in large scale professional theater, or in academic theater.

I noticed the advantages of working in a professional setting, including working with performers who were prepared for every rehearsal, with the occasional request of a pencil for blocking notes. The actors arrived to the first day of rehearsal knowing their score and were able to sing through the entire show, which created time to fix notes. They were off-book² for

² Off-book: having memorized the script, being hands-free to rehearse blocking ideas, and occasionally calling for a line.

rehearsals which allowed for productive scene work³ to take place. We blocked a two-and-a-half hour show in six five-hour rehearsals⁴.

One of the disadvantages and most costly aspects of production for an independent company is the lack of rehearsal space, especially in New York City. Real estate in NYC is unique in that there are few garages, backyards, or large living rooms that can serve as rehearsal spaces. For a low-budget production, feasible rental costs range from \$20-\$80 an hour, depending on the size of the studio and amenities available (“Ripley-Grier Studios Rates & Studios”). *Next to Normal* was fortunate to rehearse in AMDA’s⁵ Rehearsal Studio located at The Ansonia⁶. The cost of rehearsal and performance spaces, salaries, our ticket sale profit, etc. is outlined in Appendix A⁷. While *Next to Normal* only had to rent a venue for three rehearsals, I learned about the financial cost for new theater companies to rent venues.

Although I initially believed our profit of \$5,000 from ticket sales was significant, upon further investigation I came to realize this did not cover production costs. Time To Fly Productions held multiple fundraisers to gain Limited Liability Company status, and later on to produce *Next to Normal*. This taught me about the necessary role of donors to financially support a theater company. Ticket sales almost never cover the cost of producing a theater production, according to the article “Commercial Theaters versus Not-for-Profit Theaters,” only “40 to 60 percent of the budget comes from box office [sales]” for not-for-profit theaters. Companies must have secure funding to pay for every aspect of a show – this is an important part of professional theater that students have the luxury to not worry about.

³ I define productive scene work as when the cast is off-book and are free to move around the stage without a script in their hand. The script is near by to reference and note down blocking, however it isn’t used during the entire rehearsal allowing for characters to engage with one another.

⁴ This is the quickest I have experienced. At UCSC, it takes us between 15-20 3-hour rehearsals.

⁵ The American Musical and Dramatic Academy. AMDA has locations in New York and Los Angeles.

⁶ Connections and networking are key aspects of professional theatre and benefit Time to Fly Productions when AMDA professors and alumni are involved with their productions. AMDA staff can use the space with one guest each and AMDA alumni can use their facilities. There were three AMDA staff members and three alumni. This meant that myself and two other actors were granted access as guests, however my assistant and the musicians could not attend these rehearsals.

⁷ Appendix A – Rough Budget, page 24

BarnStorm Winter 2018 – The Soaps Experiment

Following my summer internship experience in professional theater, I came to further appreciate UCSC's Theater Department. I was driven to return to school and have conversations with undergraduate students and teach them about how fortunate we are to have resources at our disposal. Our tuition provides us rehearsal spaces, dance studios, a computer lab with expensive and necessary software⁸ for designers to learn how to use, utilities for all our spaces, professors and invited lecturers that advise on projects, assignments, career guidance, and venues for undergraduates to create work in.

This year, I wanted to provide perspective on the accessibility and abundance of our resources in order to remind the students of the luxuries provided by the theater department and to inspire them to propose projects and utilize the spaces and resources. The disconnect between student perspectives and what I witnessed during my internship raised the question: *What can I produce or how can I use the Barn to prepare students for the reality of starting a theater career?* I decided to implement a real-world experiment to see how one production reacts to a post-academic system, to provide the students with an opportunity of the challenged they may face after they graduate.

BarnStorm's Winter quarter included more productions in years past, which created an opportune moment for The *Soaps* Experiment. We had two full productions and more one-night performances than past seasons⁹. *Soaps* was a student created project by first-year Daniel Hanna, which entailed an audience member stepping in as the main character while Daniel directed them through the improv-based performance. He did a production of *Soaps* in high school with his drama class and wanted to recreate the concept with eager and trained

⁸ Theater Arts has licenses for WATCHOUT, Pro Tools, QLab, Vector Works, and Lightwright.

⁹ Productions Winter 2018: Improv (Humor Force Five, Someone Always Dies, & both SAD and HFV), *Soaps*, Throwback Theater, To Be Known: One-Woman Show (canceled; actress continued work on the script), Writers Workshop Showcase (canceled; weekly sessions continued), Femmeprov, Loose Lips, The Michael Becker Experience, Shebam!, *Soaps* Pt. 2, Musical Theater Scenes.

performers. To set up my experiment, I proposed that there be two different productions: *Soaps* and *Soaps Pt. 2*. In the following sections, I will recount the processes for *Soaps* and analyze the impact of receiving different resources and support from BarnStorm.

The initial plan involved *Soaps* experiencing two different rehearsal processes for their two productions: *Soaps* in February (control) and *Soaps Pt 2* in March (experiment). *Soaps* used the original script produced by Hanna in high school and had significantly more rehearsal spaces, provided by BarnStorm, and time for the cast to adjust to the space, as there were only one other show rehearsing at that time. *Soaps Pt 2* rehearsed while there were four other productions rehearsing and performing, meaning rehearsal space was limited. The cast developed the script for the second production, which took time away from blocking and character development. Additionally, their process was also affected by only having two rehearsals in the space before performances for *Soaps Pt. 2*. I distributed a questionnaire to collect data, listed in Appendix B¹⁰, to analyze the production processes.

My first expectation was that the cast would favor the experience of *Soaps* over *Soaps Pt 2*. The existence of a script and access to a studio or the theater to rehearse in is beneficial to the rehearsal process; having a space relieves the stress of having to locate a venue and allows more time to be spent on the project. I anticipated the cast would explain that the limited rehearsal spaces and time in the theater for *Soaps Pt 2* impacted their production and that the process was more stressful. I also expected they would feel rushed having only two rehearsals in the theater before their performance.

I hypothesized *Soaps Pt 2* would be the least favored production due to enduring more difficult experiences than *Soaps*. Due to the nature of the show, initial rehearsals involved table work to conceptualize a new script and characters. I didn't believe this to be a problem for the rehearsal process, however they had to find new spaces to meet due to the impacted BarnStorm schedule. I hoped that when it came to the two weeks before their show

¹⁰ Appendix B – Questionnaire, page 25

they would schedule rehearsals outside of normal hours¹¹ to utilize The Barn Theater. Even though spaces are available to reserve for other times, they needed to put in the effort to reschedule rehearsals. Earlier in the quarter¹², there were only two productions using Barn spaces during rehearsal hours, while the final two weekends had five productions. Due to time constraints, availability, and fairness, the final five productions, including *Soaps Pt. 2*, had no more than three rehearsals in the Barn. Even the returning one-night productions¹³ were generally used to having more time to rehearse.

¹¹ The BarnStorm THEA 55A and 55B Course is reserved for Monday-Thursday 7:10-10:00pm and Friday 4:00-7:00pm. We have two spaces available for daily use, The Barn Theater and C100 Rehearsal Studio.

¹² A summarizing production/rehearsal calendar is in Appendix C, page 26, along with technical details located in Appendix D, page 27.

¹³ Information on One-Night Productions and their rehearsal processes is in Appendix E, page 28

BarnStorm Spring 2018 – The Chautauqua Festival

For the Spring 2018 Chautauqua Festival, Tanner Oertel (Artistic Director 2017-2018) and I restructured¹⁴ the course as it has been produced during our undergraduate education. Chautauqua consists of two to three weekends of student-written works. In recent years, the designs and technical elements desired have increased and the original workshop concept has evolved into full productions. Due to the combination of the number of productions in the department as well as having fewer students audition this school year, Tanner and I anticipated that we wouldn't have enough students to fulfill all the positions as previous years had done¹⁵. While it was not our original plan to reshape Chautauqua into workshops, the necessity to do so coincided with my thesis and provided students with the experience and skills I hoped the students would gain from their productions in the Barn.

This season, we produced seven shows over three weekends. Due to the lack of proposals, six of the seven productions were directed by the playwright. Additionally, with less students involved, each company became their own designers and crew, with minor exceptions. A few students contacted me that they were interested in lighting or sound; based on production needs, this led to one production with its own lighting designer and another production having its own sound designer. These design elements were assigned to enhance the audience's understanding of the production. The overall goal to change Chautauqua was for the Directors and Playwrights to experience producing their own work with a small budget and guidance and support from Barn Directors. I believed that because this system for Chautauqua is similar to my internship experience, they would gain knowledge from this new process and be more prepared and educated to move into the professional field.

¹⁴ Appendix F – Previous Chautauqua Systems, page 29

¹⁵ This also meant that Tanner and I became the Performance Stage Managers; two weekends we had one board operator to assist in the booth, while one weekend I ran both the sound and light boards.

The Soaps Experiment Analysis

There were surprises that occurred for *Soaps Pt. 2* that are important to note. Almost half the cast of *Soaps* did not return for the second production due to conflicts. I did not anticipate having less data due to a portion of the cast not returning for part two. They also did not rehearse the week following the *Soaps* performance. The *Soaps Pt. 2* script did not venture away from the original script as much as I assumed. Some members kept the same characters or archetype; they recreated the storyline and added new segments while maintaining a few jokes and scene goals from the previous show. The similarities in the scripts is likely a mix of the time constraint and the success from the first production.

From the responses to the questionnaire¹⁶, I found that several of my expectations came true. Overall, the cast felt additional stress throughout the *Soaps Pt. 2* process due to the lack of rehearsal spaces. They were required to find spaces at Stevenson¹⁷ or use Theater Arts E100¹⁸. This provided Daniel Hanna and the cast with the experience of reserving rehearsal spaces and gave Daniel insight to full production details. Some castmates had trouble adjusting blocking between different spaces, while others were able to understand the content and embody their blocking once in the theater. Many wished to be in the theater more to properly run through the show and agreed that the rehearsal process for *Soaps Pt. 2* was more difficult. This experience taught the students the skills to adapt to their performance space when they have the opportunity to be there. If renting out a theater, they likely couldn't afford to rent the space for a full week of dress rehearsal before their performance. They must have an idea of the performance space during rehearsals and adjust upon arrival for the show.

¹⁶ Located in Appendix G – Data Tables, page 30.

¹⁷ Stevenson College at UC Santa Cruz; Daniel Hanna is a Stevenson Student and had access to reserve spaces around the college for rehearsal.

¹⁸ E100 is a small lecture room in Theater Arts. It includes bleacher seating, a small playing space, and white boards.

Surprisingly, only two out of six returning cast mates favored *Soaps* in February to *Soaps Pt 2* in March. The two cast members who favored the first production were Daniel Hanna and a cast member new to improv. Daniel's preference was based on having the time in the space to direct a cast sufficiently. He further explained his difficulty with *Soaps Pt. 2* due to it being his first experience needing to rehearse outside of the space and adapt to the space quickly; not being able to explore the room for blocking while additionally creating the script with the entire cast was overall extremely stressful. Having this experience in the Barn with support from his cast and Barn Directors benefited him with the skills to create a project in a short time frame. The other castmate who favored the February show stated the existing script was helpful for them as they adjusted to improvisation. The script was a safety net and offered them enough time to explore their character and improve their improv skills in time for the performance.

According to returning cast member responses, a majority of them favored *Soaps Pt. 2* because being more involved with creating the show motivated and connected the cast in comparison to the first production. Additionally, they felt more confident having gone through the first set of performances in *Soaps*; they were more prepared and excited from the first audience's reactions to perform part two. Some even felt they were able to have bigger and more interesting characters when developing the script. The cast did not rehearse outside of the course schedule for extra rehearsal hours and character work for both productions. This could be due to their schedules, not needing the extra time, or not needing smaller group rehearsals. Most of the cast felt prepared for *Soaps Pt. 2* when I expected that most would feel unprepared.

Taking a week off between shows allowed Daniel to recast those who were not returning, however this meant *Soaps Pt. 2* lost a week of rehearsal. The cast endured a more rigorous process, having three weeks of rehearsal rather than four to create a new script, acclimate new cast members, and adjust to rehearsing outside of BarnStorm spaces. However, the different process did not affect the cast's feelings; I assumed the chaos

involved with the process would lead to a dissatisfaction with *Soaps Pt. 2* on their part. If the cast felt rushed and unprepared, I anticipated they would dislike the outcome. However, they enjoyed writing the show and collaborating closer together, resulting in their admiration for *Soaps Pt. 2*. Additionally, *Soaps Pt. 2* did not utilize the Barn Theater and C100 studio outside of rehearsal hours to compensate for the number of productions rehearsing in the evening. Using the day to work one-on-one or in small groups on character work, designs, and smaller scenes is a productive way to get in extra rehearsal time that doesn't require being in the theater. When these extra rehearsals take place, evening rehearsal hours with the entire cast can be used to run the show and finalize content or blocking. The preparedness of the cast came from their experience with the first production and feeling confident that they would do well with the audience. The content was there. They just had to believe in themselves, and they did.

Chautauqua Festival 2018 Analysis

The decision to restructure Chautauqua's course this season compared to past seasons began as a logistical answer to our enrollment problem, however it evolved into creating an educational opportunity for students. By requiring the individual Chautauqua productions to design their set, props, and costumes themselves is something that regularly happens in low-budget theater. However, this is not something most students have experienced throughout BarnStorm and Theater Arts Productions. In most cases this season, the casts became involved in the designs of their productions with the directors leading the focus. The support from the casts helped the first-time directors with the unfamiliar experience. Additionally, as I learned for a second time this year, the casts felt more connected by collaborating with the directors. I am using Weekend Two's productions to highlight the outcome of the course.

Baked Bonanza, Written and Directed by Gwyn Foley, follows two teenage boys who find themselves on a trip to the magical Cannabis Kingdom¹⁹. Gwyn has a history in theater of performing and stage managing on a high school level as well as working in film. As a first time Director, she learned about the different aspects that go into producing a show: the beginning stages of writing the show, experiencing auditions, holding callbacks, leading peers in a rehearsal room, learning about the different areas of design, figuring out what missing pieces need to be decided, all the way to tech, dress, and performances. In a conversation with Gwyn, she stated that she learned, failed, and refocused on new tools that will benefit her in the future. Time management and communicating with peers as a leader were two practical lessons for her. Creating a rehearsal plan to get the show up quickly requires both preparation and practice. Gwyn also learned by trial and error what aspects of rehearsals and production ideas would and would not work. This guided her to have a better understanding for what designers are looking for and how to communicate with them better in the future.

¹⁹ Inspired by *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

When designing the set, props, costumes, and sounds for the production, Gwyn felt stressed out. She felt she was bad at visualizing the end result but gathered input from her cast and felt the audience would understand the concept. In film, Gwyn is used to being realistic by needing all the props and backdrops to be in the film's shot; for this production, she trusted the designs would guide the audience to imagine the rest of the fictional world.

Another Haunted House Story, Written and Directed by Sequoia Schirmer, explores the themes of homophobia through two high school couples' terrifying and revitalizing adventure in an abandoned mental asylum. Throughout the process, Sequoia learned how flexibility is necessary when putting her work on the stage. She had to be willing to cut parts of her original script that would be problematic and adapt the script for practicality. For example, rather than having a furnished home and integrating complicated scene changes, lines were changed to the house being empty. Sequoia designed the show to utilize the aesthetic of the Barn as it is and not create a house to avoid an artificial vision. Having an experienced sound designer was helpful for the production because Sequoia adapted the concept of the show to be minimalistic and the sounds guided the audience to understand the plot. Simple lighting flash effects were used occasionally with the sounds to further mimic the house falling apart. Sequoia began rehearsals with conversations with the cast of the themes of the play; she wasn't afraid to make the villain a relatable character for the audience to identify with. Working with her cast, Sequoia learned that she couldn't force her pre-conceived notions of the characters onto the actors, she had to allow them to explore their characters. This led the cast to feel more involved with the process and care about the outcome as much as Sequoia did.

The change to the Chautauqua course this season provided the students with a new way of learning about different theater processes. Inspiring the students to focus on the script and rehearsals rather than designing full productions taught them valuable lessons in workshop performances. The majority of the directors embraced the low-budget atmosphere of Chautauqua and focused on working with the script. At the end of the day, it is not about

the outcome of the performances, evaluated by designs or audience approval; it is about experiencing a different process by working with a new script. It's a valuable tool to work with limited resources and explore different rehearsal and performance processes. The more students practice through trial and error, the more equipped they will be for professional work. In past years, directors have worked on creating a spectacle, thinking that the audience needs all the elements together to comprehend the story. The Barn is the perfect backdrop that allows the director and audience to imagine the setting and focus on the performance; the aesthetic of the space supports a workshop performance.

Important Lessons and Tips for Theater Arts Undergraduates

Generally, the majority of students have been working on theater in an academic setting where their tuition has paid for the amenities supporting their projects. My experiment, while a struggle to work through, provided them with a experience about what to expect after they graduate or work outside of a university setting. This experiment also taught students first-hand the hours of decision making and planning it takes to get a production up.

Undergraduate students have already taken lessons from the Barn and utilized their new skills in other areas. Ben Chau-Chiu is an undergraduate senior who has directed a play and three quarters of Musical Theater Scenes in the Barn; his experience in BarnStorm is a perfect example of students learning how to take on multiple roles in a production. In an interview for the purpose of this thesis, Ben explained that serving as his own rehearsal stage manager for Musical Theater Scenes²⁰ he learned to schedule and the necessity of time management. While learning these skills and using stage management templates was difficult at first, by his third time directing and managing these skills became second nature. Ben now has a better insight on how to use the space and embody more than one position in a production; these experiences in the Barn provided Ben with tools he can use next season of BarnStorm as the Artistic Director (Grabowski, Brianna).

BarnStorm is an indispensable asset of undergraduate education in Theater Arts at UC Santa Cruz. Masters Candidates and upperclassmen are available to mentor students in new or familiar areas including, but not limited to, stage management, directing, improv, design, electrics, and business management. Often, students begin their theater education in the Barn to learn about post-high school theater processes. After working and learning in the Barn, they are able to work on department productions with an established skill set and experiences. The Barn being available for both undergraduates and graduate students to propose projects and work with one another is a unique aspect of our university campus.

²⁰ Ben was also his own Rehearsal Stage Manager for *Autobahn* which he directed in Fall 2016.

Theater Arts students leave UC Santa Cruz with a resume filled with productions, courses, and relevant skills because of the numerous opportunities available to them every quarter through BarnStorm and the Theater Arts Department.

Dear Theater Arts Undergraduates,

I would like to specify tips on how to make the best of your time in the Theater Arts Department. This is the time for you to brainstorm ideas, workshop projects with your peers, and embrace the faculty and staff to further learn about your focus in theater. The following are tasks I encourage you to complete before you graduate. Our degree at UC Santa Cruz is a Bachelor of Arts, compared to a Bachelor of Fine Arts; translation: you are getting a general Theater Arts education, so you should have a broad understanding of the various areas in Theater. It becomes difficult to learn these skills once you're out of school and don't have the resources; take a quarter off of your typical focus and learn skills in a new area.

- Assist a Set and/or a Costume Designer. You will understand and appreciate the research and analysis that goes into design work; this will help you in your own analysis skills. For actors, you may be rehired upon your appreciation and respect for your Stage Manager, Designers, and crew.
- Assist a Stage Manager. You will learn skills that are applicable to almost any job. You will gain experience in communication building, using and/or creating templates, organization, scheduling, moping the stage (there are wrong ways to do that), notating blocking, attending meetings, and much more. There is a lot of work put into anticipating problems to make sure it doesn't happen. Experience being the first and last person in the room, which includes staying later on a Friday evening to finish reports and send emails in preparation for the next week.
- Practice being your own Stage Manager. Learn how a Stage Manager works and how they maintain all the aspects of production. Ask for templates of calendars, daily

calls, rehearsal reports, performance reports, scheduling conflicts, organization, blocking templates, etc. and practice using them. This will benefit you in the future by understanding the work Stage Managers out into their position. It will help guide you into clearer communication with them and designers.

- I encourage everyone to take the Sound Design Studio and learn how to edit sounds and use QLab. This will become helpful if you need to program a show and helps you communicate with designers when you understand how the programs operate and what they can accomplish.
- Learn how to use a light board, as a TA 50 or asking a friend for advice. There are different kinds of light boards, however they have similarities when it comes to the basics of recording cues. Understand what the master does, how to save the show, how to create a cue, how to start a brand new cue, and understand the basics of focus, addresses, and patches. When in doubt, Youtube has instructional videos.
- Take TA 50 seriously and use it to your benefit. Learn what processes need to happen for different areas of theater. It's easy to think someone else's job is easier or think you already understand it until you have to work it out yourself. You will probably get theater-related work outside your concentration to make money. You are more likely to get hired and rehired if you have different skills, but also if you already have experience. Low-budget productions often require you to take on more than one position; you will find yourself sewing, shopping for designs, using tools, painting, etc. You will have a higher quality production if you have more skills. I *highly* encourage actors to be backstage crew at least once.
- Apply for the Arts Bridge Program. You will get a scholarship to work with a class of middle or high school students. You have the option of creating your own lesson plan. It's a great experience if you want to go into teaching.

- Work in the Barn. You will learn about using a space with older equipment and the issues that sometimes arise with them; electricians and designers get to use equipment they will likely work with in their careers versus the new equipment in the department. Directors get the opportunity to workshop new ideas and have experience using a unique space. The Barn is a supportive environment to learn new concentrations that will benefit you in the future.
- Actively practice theater manners and etiquette. “Early is on time. On time is late. Late is unacceptable.” Being on time really means being early and ready to go. You should arrive to rehearsals warmed up, with a pencil, a full water bottle, and taken care of business before entering the rehearsal room. Be courteous and let people know if you are running late. Think of others and the time you are wasting when you are late. Thank those around you for their time, ideas, skills, and presence. Remember why you got into theater – what inspired you? Be the person to inspire someone else with that same care and knowledge.
- Learn adaptability and flexibility. Get in the habit of rehearsing outside your performance space: visualize the space in your head, tape it out on the floor, and practice immersing yourself into a space without feeling nervous – feel comfortable exploring the space. Some aspects of the show will have to change based on the venue you are in. Touring is a great practice for adjusting your set to fit into different size stages.

The next set of tips is advice on when you begin to you pursue your career and find yourself in unfamiliar territory. At this time, I don't have years of professional experience in the field. I have had conversations with alumni, professors, and staff and these are curated to help advise you on how to handle your new job.

- Never assume anything. Don't be afraid to ask questions if you are uncertain. Get clarification if you think you know how something should be done. Anticipate

problems before they arise – no one will know that you avoided something, but at least it didn't go wrong! If you're with a new company, ask what their processes is. Ask what terms the cast is accustomed to (Standby, Places, Go, etc.) Not everyone responds to the same language you learned to use.

- Be ready to adapt to a venue. You likely won't be rehearsing in your performance venue due to the high rent costs. Work with the environment you have and don't prolong a process by feeling unprepared in the space. When you have the luxury of rehearsing in the venue, focus on blocking that utilizes features unique to the space.
- Be flexible in theater: work comes and goes, Emergencies arise, people have to drop shows, venues fall through, etc. If you're able, you need to be ready to act quick to get your show up and find replacements. Additionally, be prepared for other venues, companies, and groups to use different terms and function differently than you are used to. We all have the same outcome, but everyone has a different way of getting there.
- Fundraising is a skill. It is the key to saving the art form that has been on its death bed since it began. A company cannot get by without the financial stability of donors and/or fundraising. American Theater isn't government supported as other countries experience. Donating to theaters is a tax write off; find rich people. Our careers don't exist without the donors supporting the companies and theaters.
- Be prepared to be your own everything! You may find that you are taking on multiple roles to get the show on its feet.
- Understand the value of your skills. You are smart. You are great at what you do! Remember all you've learned and share your tips with others.
- Read current events in theater and especially in your community. Staying up-to-date and knowing who is who in our industry is helpful and impressive in networking!

- Remember when I brought up manners and etiquette? These are the most important actions you can take. When you are rehearsing one show, you are auditioning for another. If you have a bad attitude, talk out of place, or cause problems, people won't want to work with you again.
- As advised from UCSC Theater Arts Alumni, don't be discouraged if you have to leave theater for a nine-to-five job. You have to financially support yourself, and if that means you need to take a break from theater in order to return, then that's fine. And even if you don't return to working in theater, continue to support your local community theaters and read up on the current news.

Concluding Message

Each of us is fortunate to be a part of this community, and thus each individual should strive to collectively create a supportive environment for their colleagues and fellow community members. It is our right and our responsibility to create the art that is necessary to our lives, to pass on the stories we have learned, and to learn from the stories that we are given.

-BarnStorm Winter 2012 syllabus

I have never appreciated a syllabus as much as when I found this quote, and it has been included in the syllabi for the last two seasons – it embodies what it means to be a member of the BarnStorm Community. It is a reminder to the company to remain inspired, support one another's projects, and take pride in the art that we have the opportunity to create in this space. The collaborations that take place on the Barn stage are a wonderful representation of our students' passion, beliefs, and creativity.

My post-academic simulation of theater in the Barn for the 2017-2018 Season was an important lesson for the students involved. Artists have different definitions of success, but in BarnStorm, learning how to use available resources in low-budget theater and collaborating and exploring new areas counts as success. Students are more aware of the obstacles they can expect once they graduate and begin their careers. At UCSC, we are fortunate to have the resources of staff, programs, funding, stock costumes and props, and more. Their education is an opportunity for students to use these resources and become the artist they strive to be. However, it is also a time to experience different processes to be even more prepared. I hope this experiment helped BarnStorm students realize how blessed they are to have the Barn available to work, learn, propose new works, devise and collaborate in. It is such a rare opportunity that a university provides students with a space that is truly their own, and my hope is that the students don't disregard the Barn, but rather embrace it for the gift that it is. Furthermore, I hope they remember the conversations I had with them explaining and learning from the struggles they encountered, but overcame through practice, and now have tools in their theoretical belt to bring with them to their jobs in the future.

The Barn has versatile lessons to teach students. I encourage future Barn Directors to take a chance and change the course up and provide students with new opportunities. Students are accustomed to the systems that have been in place for years; they have either experienced it themselves or have conversed with their colleagues who have worked in that environment already. Undergraduates would benefit from fresh ideas and different resources to practice with. Every theater production is different, we as artists will experience different systems, theaters, venues, and performance art forms. It'd be great for them to have more of that practice here. This could be done as a production, a workshop series, or one week workshop production, or even other forms.

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Appendix A – Rough Budget for *Next to Normal*, Time To Fly Productions LLC 2017

Rehearsal Spaces: Ripley-Grier Studios and Shelter Studios			
Room per Hour*	Rehearsal Length	Cost 1 Rehearsal	Total: 3 Rehearsals
\$40 / hour	5 hours	\$200	\$600
Note a regular 6 rehearsals a week can cast \$1,200		Note our 9 rehearsals would have costed \$1,800	

*("Ripley-Grier Studios Rates & Studios")

Performance Space: Royal Theater, The Producer's Club			
4 hr Weekend Price*	Friday Tech	2 Performances	Total Venue Cost
\$415	\$415	\$830	\$1,245

*("The Royal Theater")

Ticket Sales: Time To Fly's discretion			
Ticket Prices	Number of Seats	Number of Performances	Ticket Sale Profits
\$50	50	2	\$5,000

Other Rough Production Costs:

- Royalties & scripts = \$1,300
- Costumes & Props = \$300
- UberXL for the Set & Props (to and from Producer's Club) = \$60
- Director/Actor/Musician Pay = \$9,000
- Total: \$10,660
- **Total including Rehearsal/Performance Space: \$12,505**

Notes:

We had 1 Equity Director, 3 Equity Actors, 3 non-equity actors, and 4 non-equity musicians to pay. I do not have access to the contracts, however the minimum Equity Directors and Actors can make on a performance such as this is \$150 per day ("Minimum Salaries – Cabaret Agreement").

The Royal Theater is one of the Producer's Club's smaller venues; it was not maintained and in poor condition.

Appendix B –Soaps Questionnaire

BarnStorm Winter 2018 – Soaps Post Production Questions (February) / (March)

Please specify a one-word answer first (Yes, no, #, etc.). You may add commentary after.

1. How many hours did you put into this production of *Soaps*?
2. Roughly, how many hours did you attend weekly in the first two weeks?
3. Roughly, how many hours did you attend weekly in the last two weeks?
4. Were rehearsals held during, or close to, the BarnStorm course hours?
Monday-Thursday 7-10pm. Friday 4-7pm.
5. How many times were you rehearsing in the Barn Theater?
6. Did you feel prepared for your production?

Extra questions for March Questionnaire:

7. Which production did you feel was better? February / March
8. Explain the differences between February/March and how they have affected your production.
9. Give an emotion you would label the process of both February and March productions.

Appendix C – BarnStorm Winter 2018 Spaces, Rehearsals, and Productions

BarnStorm Winter 2018 Spaces, Rehearsals, and Productions – At a glance							
Week	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	Callbacks				Auditions	Auditions	Callbacks Buttproov SAD Callbacks MTS Auditions Loose Lips Auditions
2		Rehearsing: Soaps & Throwback Theater				SAD Auditions	
3	MTS Auditions	Rehearsing: Soaps & Throwback Theater				Someone Always Dies Improv	
4		Rehearsing: Soaps & Throwback Theater					Humor Force Five Improv
5		Soaps Dress/Tech Rehearsal (Barn) Rehearsing: Throwback Theater (C100)				Soaps	Soaps
6		Rehearsing: Throwback Theater (Soaps took a dark week)					Throwback Theater TECH
7	Throwback Theater TECH	Throwback Theater Dress Rehearsal (Barn) Rehearsing: TT, Soaps, Shebam!				Throwback Theater	Throwback Theater
8	Throwback Theater	Rehearsing: Soaps, Shebam! , Loose Lips, MBE, MTS					Femmeproov
9		Rehearsing: Soaps, Shebam! , Loose Lips, MBE, MTS				Loose Lips	Michael Becker Experience
10	Shebam!	Rehearsing: Soaps & Musical Theater Scenes				Soaps Pt 2	Soaps Pt2
Finals	MTS						

Appendix D: Technical Positions in BarnStorm 2017-2018 Season

Sound Design

As one of the few people in BarnStorm who knows the sound program QLab, I often become the Sound Coordinator for Barn productions. Typically, the casts design and download their songs and I set up the QLab file for their show because we don't have enough designers available.

Set & Properties (Props)

Directors have recently been the set and props designer for their shows. Most Barn productions are minimalistic and use furniture and props from Barn Stock. We had one student this quarter who was able to be the Props Designer for *Throwback Theater*.

Lighting

The Lighting for Barn Productions this season has primarily been designed by Tanner Oertel (Artistic Director) and myself. We only know the basics of the board and patching the system, so we stick to the Barn Rep Plot designed by last year's Producing Artistic Director, Alyssa Glenn. Tanner and I also stay away from using effects as we don't know how to program those. Thankfully, we are fortunate to have 8 LED instruments in the Barn. These have replaced the need to re-hang instruments and replace gels for the color on stage. This further simulates an independent company renting out a space that doesn't have a resident designer available to them, as I experienced in my internship.

Appendix E – One-Night Productions

The returning one-night productions were generally used to having more time in the theater or a studio to rehearse, which is similar to a company renting out a venue for a performance. In the past, they have had varied amounts of time in the Barn, however I have experienced some of the productions not utilizing the space to its potential for their benefit and that is what I focused on when preparing them for the tight schedule leading up to their shows. I anticipated the returning one-nighters would realize they have to be prepared enough to rehearse in the theater; I made it clear they should not use time in the Barn when they are not blocking or memorized.

The returning one-night productions were not affected by having fewer rehearsal spaces; they anticipated limited availability or their group could not meet every evening. I expected there to be more scheduling conflicts, but the five productions rehearsing in the last two weeks of the quarter had opposite schedules. The groups were able to utilize the Barn or C100 when they needed to and did not cancel rehearsals due to the lack of availability.

BarnStorm's reoccurring one-night productions have learned to utilize time on the Barn stage efficiently. Returning groups were prepared to plan what needed to be worked on in the space and what scenes could be easily adapted and worked on outside of the theater. *Soaps* and Musical Theater Scenes learned to focus on blocking when they had the theater, but more importantly they had the experience of rehearsing in a new space and adapting to the Barn stage. The Barn is a unique playing space; if a scene is using the gutter, a platform, the house, or a railing, they need to focus on those areas while they are in the theater. I did not anticipate that all the one-nighters would perform the last two weeks of the quarter; two performances were scheduled for the middle of the quarter, and additionally two workshop performances canceled last minute. The two canceled performances would have created even more conflicts for rehearsal spaces.

Appendix F – BarnStorm’s Chautauqua Festival, Previous Systems

After discussions with alumni, Tanner and I learned that Chautauqua 2014, our first year at UC Santa Cruz, was the first year that incorporated higher production levels for festival productions. This included using designers for all shows, holding weekly sections led by mentors to learn the new area of theater, and requiring actors to take on a time-intensive second job. This provided an educational quarter for the festival company, however, feedback almost every year stated that the actors were overwhelmed taking on leading acting roles as well as learning a new position, like designing; actors had to attend a weekly acting section as well as their section for their second job. Acting sections tended to be repetitive and more time consuming than useful as the quarter progressed. Alyssa Glenn and I (BarnStorm Directors 2016-2017) decided to only hold acting sections the first week of rehearsals to provide new actors with the workshop lessons but also alleviate the time constraint on returning actors. The 2017 Festival maintained students learning an area of design, which maintained the expectation of producing full productions rather than workshop-based performances.

Appendix G – Soaps Questionnaire Data Tables

Updated May 1, 2018
Brianna Grabowski

Soaps Experiment Data Table

Soaps Part One: February							
February Show	Daniel	Jeffrey	Isabel	Kudra	Raymond	Sydney	Average
1. Total Hours	75	50	38	25	38	32	43
2. Weeks 1-2	30	10	10	10	12	12	14
3. Weeks 3-4	45	20	10	15	20	20	21.666667
4. Course Hours?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
5. Times in Barn	9	8	10?	4	7	7	
6. Prepared?	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	

Soaps Part Two: March											
March Show	Original Cast						New Cast Members				Average
	Daniel	Jeffrey	Isabel	Kudra	Raymond	Sydney	Luba	Joel	Pamela	Ananda	
1. Total Hours	75	50	38	35	38	30	20	20	40	30	37.6
2. Weeks 1-2	45	5	10	18	12	10	10	2	5	10	12.7
3. Week 3	30	20	10	20	25	20	20	18	28	25	21.6
4. Course Hours?	No	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
5. Times in Barn	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
6. Prepared?	Yes, but.	No	yes	yes	yes	reasonably	yes	yes	yes	yes	
7. Which better?	Feb	March	Feb	March	March	March					
8. Differences.	Less time. New script. Less time in the Barn.	More interesting character for the	the script had been done before	March script wrote together. Closer cast.	Feb new for all. March was new for half	We got to write the show. More involved.					
9. Emotion Feb	lighthearted	excited	exciting	apathetic	excited	perfect					
9. Emotion March	intense	perfect	uncertainty	passionate	ready	perfect					
10. Not being in Barn.	Only affected Dress	Not knowing exact	less pressure in studio	hard to work in different	new to theater	hard to find spaces					

Soaps P1 & 2: Side by Side													
Feb & March	Daniel		Jeffrey		Isabel		Kudra		Raymond		Sydney		Only those who were in both productions
	Feb	March	Feb	March	Feb	March	Feb	March	Feb	March	Feb	March	
1. Total Hours	75	75	50	50	38	38	25	35	38	38	32	30	
2. Weeks 1-2	30	45	10	5	10	10	10	18	12	12	12	10	
3. Weeks 3-4	45	30	20	20	10	10	15	20	20	25	20	20	
4. Course Hours?	yes	No	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
5. Times in Barn	9	2	8	2	10?	2	4	2	7	2	7	2	
6. Prepared?	yes	Yes, but...	no	No	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	reasonably	
7. Which better?	February was better		March was better		February was better		March was better		March was better		March was better		
8. Differences.	Less time. New script. Not a lot of time in the Barn.		More interesting character for the March		the script had been done before		March script wrote together. Closer cast.		Feb new for all. March was new for half		We got to write the show. More involved.		
9. Emotion Feb	lighthearted		excited		exciting		apathetic		excited		perfect		
9. Emotion March	intense		perfect		uncertainty		passionate		ready		perfect		
10. Not being in Barn.	Only affected Dress		Not knowing exact blocking		less pressure when rehearsing in the studio		harder to work in different spaces every night		new to theater		we had trouble finding spaces		