

AERIAL ANIMATION: CONCEPT, PRODUCTION COMPANY, SERIES OF PERFORMANCE VIGNETTES

Overview:

Founded in 2008, *Aerial Animation* is a performance company merging aerial acrobatics, puppetry, animation, and physical theater to create interactive, cause-and-effect performances for stage and screen. As the creator and sole proprietor, I pioneered a unique methodology integrating movement-based storytelling across disciplines. Each project draws on my expertise in physical performance and media arts while collaborating with animators, performers, and creatives to produce visually inspiring narratives that spark positive transformation.

Aerial Animation Performance Vignettes:

Combining digital animation with aerial acrobatics, this modern twist on silent film storytelling is my most renowned work to date. Notable achievements include six internationally televised performances on *America’s Got Talent* and *La France a un Incroyable Talent*, reaching the semifinals. Suspended mid-air, I become puppet-like, performing aerial acrobatics in front of a giant animated story in which I resiliently face adversity. I synchronize my movements with virtuosity and precision to balance illusion with reality, building cause-and-effect relationships with my animated world. Leveraging my televised performances, I developed a seven-minute aerial acrobatic act, which I toured globally for corporate audiences, fostering significant artistic and professional growth.

Nothing Really Matters:

A one-hour, nonverbal solo performance combining *Aerial Animation’s* vignettes with shadow puppetry, object performance, toy theater, and stop-motion animation. Utilizing live-cue software and projection mapping, the show tells a universally resonant story of self-acceptance and inner transformation. Designed for touring, the production features a free-standing aerial rig and a 20-foot projection screen, enabling performances in diverse venues.

Aerial Animation Performance Highlight

Televised Performance

America’s Got Talent - Semi-Finalist

Radio City Music Hall, New York City

La France a un Incroyable Talent - Semi-Finalist

Paris, France

Tonight at the Palladium ITV

Palladium Theater, London

Staged Performances

Cartoon Network

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Coca-Cola

Casablanca, Morocco

Intel - Out Do

Las Vegas, Nevada

Cirque Du Chevron

Houston, Texas

PRODUCTION HIGHLIGHTS

American Repertory Theater, Loeb Drama Center, Boston, MA

The Odyssey

Written by Kate Hamill, Directed by Shana Cooper

Shadow Puppeteer, Actor

2025

Calderwood Pavilion & Boston Public Library, Boston, MA

Library Lion

Written by Eli Bijaoui, Directed by Ran Bechor

Life-Size Lion Puppeteer

2024, 2025

Brimmer and May School, Cambridge, MA

The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe

Screenplay by Mark Johnson, Directed by Bill Jacobs

Puppet Movement Director

2024

Puppet Fabricator of 3 Person Lion

Puffs

Written by Matt Cox, Directed by Andrea Underhill-Curtin

Puppet Movement Director,

2024

Puppet Fabricator of 4 TV Puppets & Snake

Abigail S. Baird

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Connecticut Repertory Theater, Storrs, CT

Nothing Really Matters, MFA Production
Production Manager, Self Devised & Directed
Outside Eye Director Kate Brehm

Solo Performer of Physical Theater, 2024
Aerial Acrobatics & Puppetry
Sound, Set, Costume & Projection Design
2D Digital & Stop-Motion Animator
Shadow & Object Puppet Fabricator

The Metamorphoses

Written by Mary Zimmerman, Directed by Kristine Wold

Actor: Midas’s Daughter, Hunger, Pomona 2022
Aerial Sling & Tissue Performance
Aerial Movement Teacher & Choreographer

She Kills Monsters

Written by Qui Nguyen, Directed by Beth Gardiner

Life-Size Monster Puppeteer 2021

Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry

We Are All In the Dumps with Jack and Guy
Based on the book by Maurice Sendak

Co-Conceptor, Co-Director, 2022, 2023
Puppeteer, Actor, Animator
Toy Theater Puppet Fabricator, Projectionist

Second Congregational Church of Coventry, CT

Nimbus

Directed by Abigail Baird and Morgan Lee

Live-Cued Animation Performer 2021, 2022
2.5D Sculptural Projection Surface Designer
2D Digital Animator, Projectionist

University of Connecticut

Replay

Devised by Genna-Beth Davidson

Puppet & Actor Movement Director 2022

Kinetic Arts Professional Productions, Oakland CA

Beyond the Ring

Directed by Jaron Hollander, A.D. Abigail Baird

Ring Leader, Hand-to-Hand Acrobatics 2022
Clown, Aerial Acrobatics

Salvage

Directed by Jaron Hollander, A.D. Abigail Baird

Toilet Girl, Hand-to-Hand Acrobatics 2015
Clown, Physical Theater

Contemporary Circus Arts Festival, Chicago, IL

Aerial Animation

Hold On Let Go

Aerial Animation 2015
Hand-to-Hand Partner Acrobatics 2014

Etsy, Hudson, NY

Halloween with Edward Gorey

Shadow Puppetry, Digital Animator, 2015
Stop-Motion Animator, Video Editing

Production Company Member / Performer

Cirque de Boheme, Sonoma, CA

2015-2017

The Supper Club Residency, San Francisco, CA

2012-2013

Vau de Vire Society, San Francisco, CA

2012-2013

Sweet Can Productions, San Francisco, CA

2013

Circus Luminous with Wise Fool New Mexico, Santa Fe

2008-2012

PROFESSIONAL ARTS EDUCATOR

With 25 years of experience fostering the growth of emerging artists across diverse ages, abilities, and backgrounds, I bring a dynamic approach to arts education rooted in storytelling through performance and visual arts. My work centers on creative leadership, collaborative project development, and mentorship, emphasizing interdisciplinary exploration and narrative-driven artistic expression. I am dedicated to advancing arts education by developing innovative teaching methodologies that bridge performing and media arts, cultivating the next generation of artists and creators.

Graduate Advising and Assistantship: *While earning my MFA at the University of Connecticut* 2021-2024

Performance and Animation Collaboration: Designed and implemented this 14-week interdisciplinary project uniting students from Advanced Motion Media (DMD 4200) and Acting VI (DRAM 4702)

Concept Development: Independently imagined and presented the project concept to Profs. Lindeman and Carroll

Curriculum Creation: Collaborated with faculty to create a comprehensive syllabus, deadlines, and grading criteria

Workshops and Lectures: Facilitated and led workshops and lectures to support successful project collaborations

Project Facilitation: Guided students through devising, producing, and filming interactive performances with animation

Student Evaluation: Provided in-class feedback to students, participated in grading, and assessed course effectiveness

Invited Lectures

Interactive Media Performance for the Screen: Relating Laban Movement to Disney's 12 Principles of Animation

Mapping Projections & Cause-and-Effect Media Performance: For undergraduate elective art students

Multi-Plane Stop-Motion Animation Technique: Demonstration for Prof. Alison Paul's Stop-and-Go Animation Course

Movement Direction

Aerial Movement Director & Choreographer: *Metamorphoses* by Mary Zimmerman, Connecticut Repertory Theater

Movement Director for Puppets and Actors: *Replay* by Genna-Beth Davidson, Puppet Arts MFA Project

Curriculum Development for Puppet Arts On-Line Certificate Program

Program Design: Organized and developed course content to expand the Online Certificate Program

Course Structure: Categorized offerings into Theory & History, Fabrication, and Performance

Course Materials: Produced syllabi, instructional materials, and reference guides

Creative Director of Educational Programming: *Kinetic Arts Center in Oakland, CA* 2011-2021

Curriculum Development & Program Management: Designed structured programs for all age and skill levels, including youth circus, summer camps, performance troupes, pre-professional training, adult & youth teacher training.

Teacher Recruitment and Training

Recruit, Hire, Train, and Manage Coaches: Implemented interview standards, hired coaches for all disciplines, and established clear communication pathways between coaches, management, parents, and students.

Provided a Two-Session Teacher Training Program: Developed programming to educate circus coaches on class structures, accommodating different learning styles, professional aerial rigging standards, and safe communication systems for physically spotting students with a focus on building trust in a sport requiring extensive physical contact.

Circus Arts Teaching

Subjects: Hand-to-Hand Partner Acrobatics, Hand Balancing, Tumbling, Aerial Trapeze, Tissue, Sling, Lyra, Physical Theater, Clown, Contact Improvisation, Parkour, Stilt Walking, Juggling, Strength Training, and Flexibility

Founded, directed, and taught *Circus Gilly*: An elementary and middle school performance troupe, creating a pathway to the pre-professional high school troupe *Circus Spire*.

Taught *Circus Spire*: High-level coaching to dedicated students interested in pre-professional training

Taught Recreational Youth Classes: Ranging from 10-20 hours per week to students aged 18 months to 80 years

Taught Movement for Actors: at American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T) in San Francisco

Assisted the Company Rigger in Bi-Annual Rigging Checks: Organized and Documented All Rigging Equipment, Ordered New Equipment, and Set Up Rigging Points

Directed Showcases and Pre-Professional Productions: Focusing on Theatrical Storytelling and Performance, Integrating Musicality, Choreography, Collaboration, and Physical Expression of Emotion with Skill and Technique Training.

Kinetic Arts Center Productions

Solo Act Creation for Film of 16 Youth Aerial Performers Directed by Abigail Baird and Individual Performers	Outside Eye Choreographer Videographer, Video Editor	2021
Filmed Performances of 15 Youth Trapeze Acts Directed and Choreographed by Kate Hutchenson	Videographer, Video Editor	2021
<i>Curated A Not So Still Life Circus</i>	Conceptor, Director	2020
<i>Circus Panopticon</i>	Assistant Director, Choreographer	2019
<i>Circus Asturias</i>	Choreographer	2018
<i>Circus Veritas</i>	Choreographer	2017
<i>Circus Odious</i>	Choreographer	2017
<i>Inversion: Circus Disobedience</i>	Choreographer	2016
<i>Inversion: A Disobedient Circus</i>	Choreographer	2014
<i>A Great Minibeast Menagerie</i>	Conceptor, Director	2014
<i>A Silent Circus</i>	Conceptor, Director	2013

Camp Program Director and Circus Arts Coach: *Wise Fool New Mexico, Santa Fe* 2008-2011

Camp Program Director

- Organized Multiple Summer Camps: Running two to six weeks for students 6 to 15 years of age
- Hired Teachers: For subjects including aerial arts, partner acrobatics, clown, stilt walking, and shadow puppetry
- Managed Daily Schedules and Overall Time Management for the Programming
- Facilitated Parent and Coach Communications: Ensuring clear and effective interaction
- Organized End-of-Camp Performances: Showcasing students’ skills and achievements
- Performed Rigging Checks

Facilitated and Taught Workshops: Designed for women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and children in under-served and under-resourced communities. Workshops addressed social isolation, trauma impact, and limited access to sports, arts, and cultural activities while promoting community-building, social justice, accessibility, creativity, and confidence.

Circus Arts Teaching: Weekly classes in hand-to-hand partner acrobatics and counterbalancing, tumbling, aerial tissue, trapeze, sling and lyra, strength training, flexibility, clown, physical theater, shadow puppetry, big head puppetry, large-scale paper mache puppet fabrication.

Additional Directing, Teaching, and Collaborations with Circus, Dance, and Puppetry Schools 2008-2017

<i>Trapeze Arts</i> in Oakland, CA	2011-2017
<i>Athletic Playground</i> in Emeryville, CA	2011-2017
<i>San Francisco Circus Center</i> , San Francisco, CA	2011-2012
<i>Moving People Dance Theater</i> , Santa Fe, NM	2008-2009
<i>New England Center for Circus Arts (Nimble Arts)</i> , Brattleboro, VT	2005-2007