

The Department of Film and Theatre

Newsletter

October 15, 2021

Welcome to our new department newsletter!

We're very excited to start sending out monthly newsletters to celebrate the Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity (RSCA) accomplishments of our faculty and staff. Here we go...

Xavier Burgin

Radio-Television-Film lecturer, [Xavier Burgin](#), was chosen for this year's [ViacomCBS Viewfinder program](#), which is a two-year program dedicated to giving directors chances at TV directing on ViacomCBS shows. Read about it in the [Hollywood Reporter](#)!

Debbie Weber



Costume Shop Manager and Theatre Arts lecturer [Debbie Weber](#) received a 2020-2021 AAD Staff Professional Development Grant to attend online courses through the Hat Academy and purchase materials to practice hat making techniques. During the Summer of 2021, she took several of their classes, including the Millinery Essentials Course: the "Cocktail Hat" class, the "Pillboxes" class, and the "Creative Trims" class. After watching these three classes, she created her own cocktail hat (pictured above). All of the skills she learned can be used when making a wide variety of hats. Debbie looks forward to using these techniques for making headwear for our film and theatre productions as well as teaching these techniques to our costume design students.

Dr. Philippa Kelly



Theatre Arts lecturer, Philippa Kelly, adapted *The Winter's Tale* with Eric Ting at [California Shakespeare Theatre](#) (September 1 - October 3, 2021). She also served as the dramaturg on [PlayGround's](#) Celebration of 20 Women Playwrights festival in San Francisco on September 20.

Dr. Matthew Spangler



Interim Chair, Dr. Matthew Spangler, attended a workshop and staged reading for his new play at the Arts Theatre in London in September. The Arts Theatre is probably best-known for having hosted the first English language production of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* in 1955.

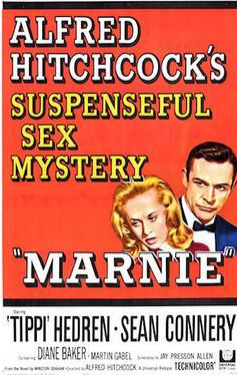
Dr. Spangler then went to Ireland, where he presented at the [Hinterland Festival](#) of Literature & Arts in Kells, where he also serves as Writer in Residence.



Dr. Spangler's play, *The Kite Runner* (adapted from the book by Khaled Hosseini), opened at the Tatar State Drama Theatre in Almet'yevsk, Russia in early October. This production has been translated into the Russian language (pictures below).



Professor Scott Winfield Sublett



Radio-Television-Film professor, Scott Winfield Sublett, has been contributing a series of essays on film and culture to "The New Art Examiner" out of Cornwall, England. Professor Sublett also recently wrote about "[Sex, Pills and Crazy Women in American Cinema.](#)"

Dr. Apryl Berney

Radio-Television-Film lecturer, Dr. Apryl Berney, was the Associate Producer on the digital short, PJ Raval, released in May 2021 "Sugar Pie De Santo Rocks" for the [See Us Unite](#) organization's education campaign. Raval's video is based on Dr. Berney's research and 2018 article "In the Basement: Afro-Asian Teenage Female Alliances in Post-War America," featured in editors Vanita Reddy and Anantha Sudhakar's special edition of Scholar & Feminist Online. Check out the [video!](#)

Scott Cummins

Theatre Arts lecturer, Scott Cummins, directed the play *POOL BOY* by Wendy Hopkins for [Lost Angels Theatre Company](#) in Los Angeles. *POOL BOY* was site-specific production set in the Hollywood Hills during wave #2 of Covid from July 17-August 22.

He also served as the Fight Director for *CODED* by Kirsten Brandt at City Lights Theatre in San Jose.

Dr. Hojeong Lee

Radio-Television-Film professor, Dr. Hojeong Lee, recently published a paper in *Internet Histories*: [Relentless villains or fervent netizens?: The alt-right community in Korea, Ilbe](#)

Professor Andrea Bechert



Heisenberg: The Uncertainty Principle isn't a play about the German physicist, but it adapts his theory to emotions. The theory goes (briefly), if you are looking at an object closely enough, it is impossible to tell in which direction and at what speed it is going. In the play, that principle is applied to the two characters brought together by a random encounter at a train station. Theatre Arts professor, Andrea Bechert, designed a spare, meaningful set on three tiers, with simple open framed furniture pieces to portray the variety of

locations in this play. Thin white lines run through the space, some crossing each other, illustrating the uncertainty of what brings people together. At the Jewel Theatre in Santa Cruz. Great reviews [here](#) and [here!](#)

Equal parts comic book lore, coming-of-age love story and irrepressible tunes, audiences should expect the unexpected in this sensational new indie rock musical, *Lizard Boy*. The fast-moving plot recounts the mysterious event that changed Trevor's life forever, launching him into a life-long search for identity and acceptance. Is he a freak or a hero?

Triple-threat artist Justin Huertas and his original cast take the stage for one fateful night of adventure, music, and love set on the streets of Seattle. Professor Bechert created the Scenic Design for this production, adapted from some of the original production design elements of L.B. Morse. This production at [TheatreWorks](#) has some exciting new elements that previous productions have not included. Check out the [video!](#)



Professor Amy Glazer



Theatre Arts professor, Amy Glazer, spent the summer on pre-production (with alumna Tiana Chan) on casting, production design, script adaptation, location scouting, etc., on her fifth feature film, *Meli*, set in Hawaii in 1978 as Amelia Earhart turns 80. *Meli* is a feminist story about a granddaughter and her grandmother, and breaking the glass ceiling, starring Wendie Malick, Juliet Mills, Maxwell Caulfield, Ray Abruzzo and Alixandra Dove Rothschild.

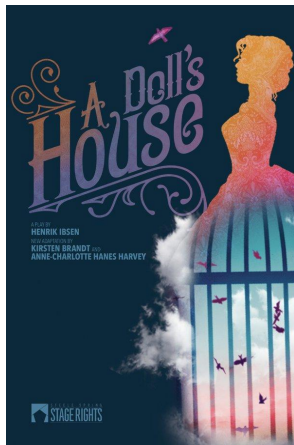
In September, Professor Glazer moved to Oahu for five weeks where she directed the feature film which is now "in the can." This month she began the process of editing and subsequent post-production. Hopefully, the film will be ready for distribution and released by February 2022. Also this February, her last feature film, *Beautiful Dreamer*, is slated to be released on VOD. Both *Meli* and *Beautiful Dreamer* feature actress Wendie Malick. See below for exciting behind-the-scenes (BTS) shots.



Amy has also been working as a talent director and consultant, interfacing with both actors, scientists and linguists locally and internationally to develop a more natural and character based artificial speech. Speech that reflects emotion and can be utilized for both the entertainment industry and business purposes. [Speechmorphing](#) is a personalized speech technology company on a mission to improve human-machine communications. Their products and services deliver natural and emotionally-intelligent voices that broaden the accessibility and speed the proliferation of synthesized speech for real world applications. Speechmorphing works closely with application, device and bot developers to innovate simple yet sophisticated and cost-effective voice solutions for global markets.

Professor Kirsten Brandt

Theatre Arts professor Kirsten Brandt's play about women in the gaming industry, [CODED](#), had its world premiere at City Lights Theatre in September and October, after being closed due to the pandemic in March 2020. The show features SJSU Theatre Arts alumna Jessica Osegueda and SJSU alumnae Stephanie Whigham and Alycia Adame. Missed the live performances? You can still watch the video capture!



Her adaptation of [A Doll's House](#) was recently published by Stage Rights!

Professor Brandt is a Public Voices Fellow and her OpEd "Age-Blind Casting Reinforces Male Privilege" was published in [MS. Magazine](#) in early October.

Upcoming department productions:

MARISOL by Jose Rivera, in the [Hammer Theatre Center](#), November 12-20.

CIRCLE MIRROR TRANSFORMATION by Annie Baker, in the Hal Todd Theatre, December 2-4.