

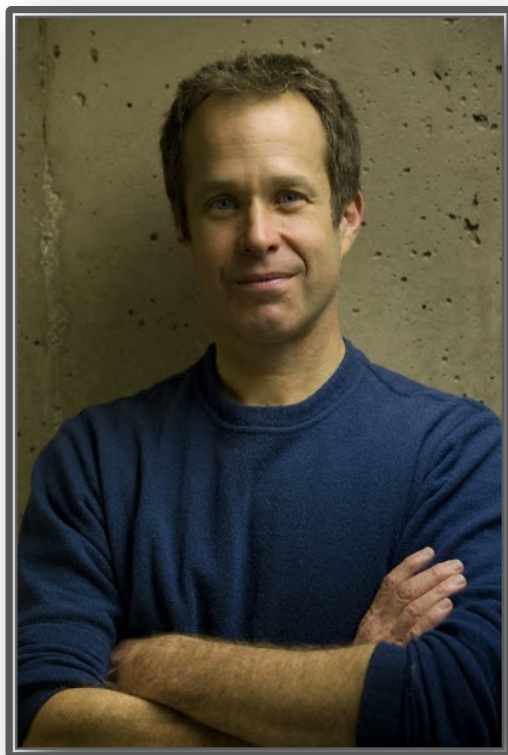
BRIAN STAUFENBIEL
DIRECTOR

Brian Staufenbiel is the creative director for Opera Parallèle where he has directed and spearheaded the conceptual designs of the company's productions since it was founded in 2010. Specializing in multimedia, immersive, and interdisciplinary productions, he actively works across a wide range of artistic disciplines collaborating in film and with media designers, choreographers and dancers, circus and fabric artists, and designer fabricators. His progressive approach to stagecraft has garnered critical acclaim for many of the company's productions, including *Wozzeck*, *Orphée*, *Champion* and *Dead Man Walking*.

Staufenbiel recently directed films for the online festival season of the Sun Valley Music Festival, a film of Dove/Angelis' *Flight* for Seattle Opera, and a graphic novel film of Talbot/Scheer's *Everest* with Opera Parallèle. Other upcoming projects include the premiere of Miguel Zenon's *Golden City Suite* with SF JAZZ, projects with Atlanta Opera and L'Opéra De Montréal, and a documentary about the life of Frederica Von Stade with Paper Wings Films. Staufenbiel will be co-directing, with choreographer Yayoi Kambara, *Ikkai*, a dance installation about Japanese incarceration camps in the United States during World War II.

Staufenbiel enjoys an ongoing relationship with composer Philip Glass, having directed a number of his operas including *In the Penal Colony* for Philip's own festival. The production is currently streaming on a new platform, Philip Glass Days and Night's Festival Presents and was named a New York Times Top Ten pick.

Staufenbiel recently created a new production of *Elektra* for Minnesota Opera. His 2016 production of *Das Rheingold* for Minnesota Opera was reprised at Arizona Opera and at L'Opéra de Montréal and was named a Star Tribune Classical Pick of the Decade. He also recently created a new production of Gordon Getty's *Usher House* and *Canterville Ghost* for the Center of Contemporary Opera in NY and LA Opera. Staufenbiel's interdisciplinary approach to opera extends to his academic activity. He recently left his position after seventeen years as the director of the opera program at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where he has mounted a wide spectrum of award-winning productions ranging from traditional operas to original works by contemporary composers. Staufenbiel holds degrees in Philosophy and Music including a Doctor of Musical Arts from the Eastman School of Music and currently resides in San Francisco.



BRIAN STAUFENBIEL

DIRECTOR

2021

- Director, Production Designer of Jonathan Dove's *Flight*, Seattle Opera (2021)

2020

- Director, Concept Designer of Joby Talbot's *Everest*, Opera Parallèle (2020)
- Director, Concept Designer of Gordon Getty's *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*, Festival Napa Valley (2020)
- Director, Creative Director, New Production of Stewart Wallace's *Harvey Milk* Opera Parallèle (2020)
- Director, Production Designer, Miguel Zenon's *Golden City Suite* at SF Jazz Center (2020)

2019

- Director, Conceptual Design, Strauss' *Elektra*, Minnesota Opera, Minneapolis (2019)
- Director, Dramaturge, Laura Kamisky's *Today it Rains* (Librettist, Mark Campbell and Kim Reed) (commissioned world premiere) Opera Parallèle (OP) American Opera Project (2019)

2018

- Director, Creative Director, New production in Collaboration with Philip Glass of his opera *In the Penal Colony*, Opera Parallèle and Days and Nights Festival, Carmel (2018)
- Director, Conceptual Design, Wagner's *Das Rheingold*, Opera Montreal, Montreal, QB
- Director, Production Concept Designer, Gordon Getty's *Usher House* and *The Canterville Ghost*, LA Opera
- Director, Production Designer, Rachel Portman's *Little Prince*, Opera Parallèle, San Francisco
- Director, Production Concept Designer, Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* and Heggie's *At The Statues Of Venus*, Opera Parallèle, SFJazz Center, San Francisco
- Director, Conceptual Design, Wagner's *Das Rheingold*, Arizona Opera, Phoenix and Tuscan
- Dramaturge, Joby Talbot's *Path of Miracles*, ODC Dance Company, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco

2017

- Director, Production Concept Designer, Gordon Getty's *Usher House* and *The Canterville Ghost*, Center for Contemporary Opera, NYC
- Director, Production Designer, Rachel Portman's *Little Prince*, Opera Parallèle, Fort Mason Center, SF
- Director, Production Designer, Philip Glass's *Les enfants terribles*, Opera Parallèle, SFCM
- Director, Creative Director, Jonathan Dove's *Flight*, Opera Parallèle, YBCA, SF
- Director, Dramaturge, Creative Director, Lembit Beecher's *Sophia's Forest*, (World Premiere) Pew Arts and Heritage Project, Philadelphia

2016

- Director, Conceptual Design, Wagner's *Das Rheingold*, Minnesota Opera, Minneapolis
- Director, Production Designer, Henry Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, UCSC Opera Theatre, Univ of California, Santa Cruz
- Director, Creative Designer, Peter Maxwell Davies's *The Lighthouse*, Opera Parallèle, ZSpace, SF
- Director, Creative Designer, Terence Blanchard's *Champion*, Opera Parallèle, SFJazz Center, SF

2015

- Director, Production Designer, Milhaud's *Médée*, Littlefield Concert Hall, Oakland
- Creative Director, Pratorius's *Amazing Grace*, (Commissioned World Premiere), Opera Parallèle, AAACC, SF
- Director, Creative Director, Luna Pearl Woolf's *Angel Heart*, Festival Del Sole, Napa
- Director/ Production Designer, Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Astoria Music Festival, Astoria, Oregon
- Director, Production Designer, Rachel Portman's *Little Prince*, UCSC Opera Theatre, University of California, Santa Cruz
- Director, Creative Designer, Tarik O'Regan's *Heart of Darkness*, Opera Parallèle, ZSpace, SF
- Director, Creative Designer, Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*, Opera Parallèle, Broad Stage, Santa Monica
- Director, Creative Designer, Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*, Opera Parallèle, YBCA, SF
- Artistic Director, Pratorius's *My Head is Full of Colors*, UCSC Opera Theatre, University of California, Santa Cruz

2014

- Director, Creative Designer, Adam Gorb's *Anyã*, Opera Parallèle, Marines' Memorial Theater, SF
- Director, Production Designer, Kirke Mechem's *Tartuffe*, UCSC Opera Theatre, University of California, Santa Cruz
- Director, Production Designer, Luna Pearl Woolf's *Mélange à Trois (a voiceless opera)* McGill University, Commissioned by Percussionist Krystina Marcoux, Artistic Residency at the Banff Center
- Director, Creative Designer, Weill's *Mahagonny* and Poulenc's *Les Mamelles de Tirésias*, Opera Parallèle, YBCA, SF
- Artistic Director, Chris Pratorius's *My Head is Full of Colors*, (Commissioned World Premiere), Opera Parallèle, SF Public Library, SF

2013

- Director, Production Designer, Luna Pearl Woolf's *Angel Heart*, Cal Performances, Hertz Hall Berkeley and Carnegie Hall, NYC
- Director, Production Designer, Jake Heggie's *At the Statue of Venus*, Opera Parallèle, Fort Mason Center, SF
- Director, David Del Tredici's *Dracula*, BluePrint New Music Series, Caroline H, Hume Hall, SF
- Creative Director, Peter Maxwell Davies's *The Spiders' Revenge*, OP, California Academy of Sciences, SF
- Director, Production Designer, Arnold Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, Nonsemble 6, Stanford Memorial Auditorium, Palo Alto
- Artistic Director, Humperdinck's *Hänsel and Gretel*, UCSC Opera Theatre, University of California, Santa Cruz
- Director, Production Designer, Dante De Silva's *Prince of Madness*, Opera Parallèle's *Graphic Opera Project*, Sol Joseph Recital Hall, SF
- Director, Production Designer, Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, UCSC Opera Theatre, University of California, Santa Cruz
- Director, Production Designer, Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* and Barber's *A Hand of Bridge*, Opera Parallèle, ZSpace, SF
- Director, Production Designer, Menotti's *Chip and His Dog*, UCSC Opera Theatre, University of California, Santa Cruz
- Director, Production Designer, Golijov's *Ainadamar*, Opera Parallèle, YBCA, SF

2012

- Director, Production Designer, Arnold Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, Nonsemble 6, Caroline H, Hume Hall, SF
- Director/ Production Designer, Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Astoria Music Festival, Astoria, Oregon
- Director/ Production Designer, Adamo's *Little Women*, UCSC Opera Theatre, University of California, Santa Cruz
- Director, Production Designer, Harbison's *The Great Gatsby*, Ensemble Parallèle, YBCA, SF
- Artistic Director/Production Designer, Ronald Perera's *The Arabolies of Liberty Street*, UCSC Opera Theatre, University of California, Santa Cruz
- Director, Loesser's *The Most Happy Fella*, Festival Opera, Walnut Creek, California
- Director, Production Designer, Thomson's *Four Saints in Three Acts*, Ensemble Parallèle and MOMA Production, YBCA, SF.
- Director/Production Designer, Britten's *Albert Herring*, UCSC Opera Theatre, University of California, Santa Cruz
- Director, Shearer's *Riddle Me* (World Premiere), UCSC Opera Theatre, University of California, Santa Cruz
- Director, Production Designer, Glass's *Orphée*, Ensemble Parallèle, Herbst Theater, SF
- Director, Production Designer, *Philip Glass – an Opera Installation*, Friday Night at the De Young Museum SF

2010

- Director, Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, Festival Opera, Walnut Creek, California
- Director/Production Designer, Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*, UCSC Opera Theatre, University of California, Santa Cruz
- Director, Production Designer, Berg's *Wozzeck*, Astoria Music Festival, Oregon.
- Director, Production Designer, Berg's *Wozzeck*, Ensemble Parallèle, YBCA, SF

EMPLOYMENT

- Stage Director and Creative Director, Opera Parallèle, San Francisco, CA, 2007-Present
- Freelance Director and Designer, 2007-Present
- Director of Opera Program, Department of Music, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA, 2000-2017
- Voice Instructor, Lecturer, Department of Music, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA, 1997-2014
- Tenor soloist, 1992-2016.

EDUCATION

- Doctor of Musical Arts, in Voice, Performance and Literature, Eastman School of Music, 1997
- Master of Music in Vocal Performance, San José State University, San José, California, 1992
- Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, University of California, Santa Cruz, 1988

BRIAN STAUFENBIEL

DIRECTOR

CRITICAL ACCLAIM

Elektra – Minnesota Opera

"Richard Strauss's Elektra is all about primal screams, death cries, dissonance and angst. Silent movies are soundless, if often loudly emotional, affairs. Minnesota Opera combined the two in a provocative new production. . . Stage director and production designer Brian Staufenbiel put Strauss's opera in a new frame, creating a parallel story that overlaid the familiar opera version of the Greek tragedy. . . Among the brilliant strokes of this production (which included enlisting David Murakami for the video and projection design and Mathew Lefebvre for costumes) was putting the orchestra on stage. . . The orchestra pit was covered to extend the Ordway's modest stage and hold seating for more than one hundred orchestra musicians. Lang, played by actor Justin Cook, introduced the show, telling the audience that this was to be a live shoot for a "new" Lang movie, a sequel to a short feature about the murder of Agamemnon, one of the Greek chieftains in the Trojan War. That movie was quickly screened, looking remarkably authentic as a pre-talkie classic, to provide the backstory. Then the Lang character reminded audience members to turn off their "illuminated devices" and called, "Action!" He and the camera operators, grips and other crew members prowled around the stage and mingled as the opera played out. The singers stepped off stage to relax and have a smoke between scenes. There often were live camera shots projected above the stage, as well as backstage footage of what the audience couldn't see. . . This new take on Elektra makes the characters less mythic and more human. It also adds occasional comic relief, in a tasteful way, and some useful onstage action in an opera that doesn't have much." -Opera News

"a production of Strauss' "Elektra" that was among the most imaginative stagings I've encountered from this company over the decades. Director Brian Staufenbiel and his design team have created . . . a very intriguing approach to an opera that can be relentlessly bleak if stripped down to its essentials. And the execution of this ambitious vision was impeccable..." -Twin Cities

"For the Minnesota Opera's production, stage director Brian Staufenbiel has devised a way to place the heroine's obsessive rage in a context of melodramatic storytelling, using a technology that was just emerging when Elektra premiered in 1909. Staufenbiel places the opera in a silent film studio where the eminent director Fritz Lang is making a grand-scale movie of Elektra, with its jarring score performed by an in-studio orchestra—meaning, on stage, visible to the audience. Performers enter through a gaping mouth cut into a wall of gold filigree, and down an aisle that wends through the orchestra. The pit is filled in to furnish the space from which the director, the cameraman, and other functionaries shoot the film. During some scenes, as we watch the performers live on stage, the camera shows them on a screen cleverly positioned in front of a mammoth studio set, with their tortured faces in close up, mirroring the hyperbolic emotional images silent movies used to compensate for the absence of the human voice. The effect does not diminish the beauty of the voices that rise up to deliver Strauss's powerful score, but rather adds a visual element that draws parallels between the necessary excess of emotion in both media. It is enriching, enthralling and entertaining. . . I found that the inventiveness of the production concept, the stirring grandeur of Strauss's score, the glorious voices of the principals, and the outstanding musicianship of the orchestra combine to make this a stunning production, well worth seeing, and one that will be remembered for a long time to come." -Talkin' Broadway.com

Today it Rains – Opera Parallèle

"Director Brian Staufenbiel gave the opera a fluid staging on Sean Riley's set, which employed a series of moveable pieces. A stack of suitcases in the opening scene at Penn Station, along with a succession of arches and banquettes, were all put to use as elements of the train's interiors" -Opera News

Das Rheingold – Opéra de Montréal

"La production de Das Rheingold présentée en première à [samedi] soir à l'Opéra de Montréal était spectaculaire avec ses impressionnants effets scéniques. / The production of Das Rheingold premiered at [Saturday] night at the Opéra de Montréal was spectacular with its impressive stage effects." -Ludwig van Montréal

"The first time Wagner's Das Rheingold is staged in Montreal is a success. As a whole, this is Opéra de Montréal's best production in the last two and a half years, riveting from beginning to the end." -La Scena Musicale

"Cet Or du Rhin vaut le détour pour les solutions intéressantes apportées par la présence de l'orchestre sur scène, la qualité des projections et la solidité globale de la distribution / This Rheingold is worth the detour for the interesting solutions brought by the presence of the orchestra on stage, the quality of the projections and the overall strength of the distribution"
-Le Devoir

"Cette plongée, dans les abîmes du pouvoir de la convoitise, dont J. R. Tolkien s'inspira fortement pour la création du Seigneur des anneaux est un pur bijou / This dive, in the abysses of the power of lust, from which J. R. Tolkien drew heavily for the creation of the Lord of the Rings, is a pure jewel"
-Le Journal de Montréal

Usher House / The Canterville Ghost

LA Opera

"Stage director Brian Stauffenbiel told Poe's story in a straightforward manner, which lent a solid footing to the unearthly aspects of the story."
-BroadwayWorld.com

Collectively, L.A. Opera's Off Grand presentation of Scare Pair, under the direction of Brian Staufenbiel, was an entertaining hybrid of spooky stories and opera, providing fans of scary stories with an eloquent theatrical experience and fans of opera with a particularly colorful program."
-LA Weekly

Center for Contemporary Opera

"...while director Brian Staufenbiel kept the characters in close proximity, forcing the truth of their relationships to the fore."
- Opera News

Das Rheingold – Arizona Opera

"With equal flashes of imagination and innovation, Arizona Opera's production of DAS RHEINGOLD, under the visionary direction of Brian Staufenbiel, has added technology to this fusion of theatrical elements. The result is the creation of an engaging environment and an enthralling experience ~ reason enough, I daresay, to sit for two and a half uninterrupted hours and embrace the convolutions of plot and the intrigues of its mythical characters! . . . Staufenbiel echoes Wagner's emphasis on fusion with an intelligent and economical exploitation of space. True to Wagner's emphasis on the role of the orchestra, he gives it centrality on the main stage."
-Broadway World

Les Enfants Terribles – Opera Parallèle

"With music director Nicole Paiement conducting Glass's mesmerizing three-piano score and director Brian Staufenbiel employing lean but imaginative stagecraft to present the story of the obsessive Parisian siblings Paul and Lise, the work's visual, musical, dance and spoken-word elements merged in a singular vision."
- Opera News

Das Rheingold – Minnesota Opera

"Under the stage direction and production concept of Brian Staufenbiel, Minnesota Opera's production involves a layered mixture of medieval, steampunk, and retrofuturist imagery, with, for the most part, a light enough touch to avoid overwhelming the audience with dense imagery over Wagner's already dense score." - Twin Cities Art Reader

The Lighthouse – Opera Parallèle

"Creative and stage director and set designer Brian Staufenbiel created a visual equivalent of Davies' score."
- Stark Insider

Champion – Opera Parallèle

"All of these contributions, and many more, were blended into a fluid and theatrically resourceful staging by director Brian Staufenbiel."
- San Francisco Chronicle

Heart of Darkness – Opera Parallèle

"The other is Creative Director Brian Staufenbiel's physically taut production, which inserts the audience members (some of them, anyway) directly into the proceedings."
- San Francisco Chronicle

Dead Man Walking – Opera Parallèle

"And yet this production, which Staufenbiel directed with a nimble blend of realism and shadowy allusion, hardly shied away from the gritty realities of its subject matter."
- San Francisco Chronicle