FINDING SASQUATCH:

A STUDY OF THE CREATIVE PROCESS THROUGH THE
CREATION AND PRODUCTION OF A NEW MUSICAL

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

In June 2012, I began writing a musical with a friend and long-time collaborator, Matthew Lucas. The show came to be called Sasquatch: The Musical, in obvious homage to its subject, the creature of North American folk mythology. The initial writing period lasted three weeks, with additions and revisions stretching several months, leading to the first production, which I directed at Grove City High School in April 2013 with student actors. Over the next two years Lucas and I co-directed a professional staged reading of the play in New York City in August 2013 and oversaw an abridged production at the West Village Musical Theatre Festival in New York in June 2014. With the help of many collaborators, we re-wrote the script and re-imagined the staging dozens of times during that period. In developing the show we learned an important lesson: creating a new theatre work is an ongoing process and the “finished” product is never set in stone. One does not finish a script, get it scored, and hand it off to be produced by the first willing participants, expecting that the initial vision will remain the same. Rather, the interaction with actors, directors, critics, and audiences, and the resulting realization of dramatic needs and possibilities over time work on that initial vision to mold and shape it. The creation and subsequent production of
Sasquatch: The Musical demonstrate the evolving nature of the creative process as it applies to the theatre.

In order to provide a reference point for topics discussed herein, a detailed synopsis of the musical in its latest form appears in APPENDIX A. The reader may also find the full script and score here, or by clicking the link in Appendix B. Here follows a narrative of the musical’s creation from conception through production. I rely heavily on Allen Cohen and Steven L. Rosenhaus’s informative book, Writing Musical Theatre, among other works, to illustrate the conventions of musical theatre as they have applied (or have not applied) to Sasquatch: The Musical at various stages of its development. At each stage, I will discuss the value of each collaboration and the changes to the musical resulting from those collaborations. Finally, I will compare the creation of other artistically and commercially successful musicals in an attempt to demonstrate the differences between my experience with the creative process and that of others.
CHAPTER II
CREATION OF SASQUATCH: THE MUSICAL

Summer, 2012: Finding Sasquatch

My interest in Sasquatch as a topic of dramatic exploration stretched back to my high school years, when my co-writer Matthew Lucas and I first made a fake documentary video about the mythical beast in the typical Discovery Channel style, complete with dramatic reenactments and “live” Sasquatch hunting scenes. This documentary was accompanied by an eerie, other-worldly musical soundtrack. Our goal was to satirize both the increasingly popular melodramas masquerading as serious films and the idea of lives spent in serious study of what most people write off as simply a classic American folk myth. In their guidebook, Writing Musical Theatre, Allen Cohen and Steven L. Rosenhaus write, “[The union of music and drama] may include spectacle, and often includes dance or choreographed movement; but the unique aspect of musical theatre, whether dramatic or comedic, is the heightening of the emotional impact of a story through music and song” (16). As lifelong musical theatre lovers, it seemed only logical that Lucas and I should take our favorite subject and put it to music. The Sasquatch mystery carries an innate dramatic appeal, and we believed the addition of music could only enhance the absurd comedic effect we most enjoyed about the folk legend. If it made us laugh, we thought, then hopefully others would laugh. Even as
novice writers, we knew, however, that the topic itself wouldn’t be enough to support a full-length musical comedy. We needed a story.

The initial writing was heavily concentrated in a three-week period in June 2012 and extended over the next several months. We knew early on that we wanted to write a book musical with a linear narrative alternating speech and song smoothly (Cohen and Rosenhaus 10). So we began with creating an outline for what could become the story. We created a fictional setting,Spoons, Washington, and mapped out the types of people who might live there, along with the possible conflicts they might realistically have, which would be compounded by the existence of a magical, mythical forest beast. The more we discussed, however, the more clear it became that the type of comedy we both had in mind required a more self-aware style of writing, wherein the characters, both in dialogue and song, seemed to comment on the absurdity of their situation and the inherent comedy in the Sasquatch hunting craze, discussed in detail below. So we turned in the direction of a concept musical “wherein the seams between speech and song are emphasized deliberately to create a disjunctive effect” (Cohen and Rosenhaus 10). We created a first draft of a script based on an outline that focused on Sasquatch as the central protagonist. However, we found the resulting story to lack any emotional content, due partly to the fact that, beyond the comedic effect of having a giant hairy beast on stage, the main character had no appealing traits.

Cohen and Rosenhaus explain the inherent problems with adapting pieces of myth or folklore for the stage, stating that in most stories, “the focus is not on characterization but on incident” (59). We needed a character who not only appeared,
but had a personality. Cohen and Rosenhaus lay out two general requirements for emotional content in musicals. First, “The emotions must be strong enough that it feels appropriate for the characters to sing” (18). Thus it follows that Sasquatch needed to be a sympathetic character; to be present in a way that audiences could identify with him in a human light. We continued to be suspicious, though, that two hours of a big, hairy guy singing would put an audience to sleep. (Our suspicions were confirmed a year later when we saw a show coincidentally titled Sasquatched: the Musical at the New York Musical Theatre Festival. In that work Bigfoot is the central protagonist, and while his first song lamenting his exiled state of existence was enough to engage the audience, his continued lamenting and lack of room to develop left the show dry.) Therefore, we developed the human world – the aforementioned Spoons, WA – around the beast and created the protagonist, Kenneth Henderson. Henderson is a respected member of the scientific community whose skepticism about his deceased father’s chosen profession, cryptozoology, makes him ripe for internal conflict when he is summoned to seek out the truth about Sasquatch and save the small town from tragedy. Henderson’s partnership with Jane Goodall, the local Sasquatch expert, sets up immediate romantic tension, and things began to fall into place for us. Sasquatch himself was relegated to secondary character status, but his unseen presence loomed over the whole first act, creating suspense and mystery appropriate for the Sasquatch myth, and leading to a dramatic payoff with the monster’s entry in act two.

Cohen and Rosenhaus’s second requirement for emotional content in a musical is: “The story must contain enough emotional content for the audience to care about
the characters and be willing to follow them to the end” (18). Here is where Lucas and I found more problems with our script. While Kenneth Henderson’s journey from skeptic to believer and his romantic saga with Jane drove the story for a time, we had trouble finding a strong secondary conflict that served the story and carried the tension to the end. It was all too predictable. Thus, in rewrites during fall 2012, we focused on the secondary characters. We had created simple subplots or stories happening concurrently with the main line of Kenneth and Jane pursuing Sasquatch. Among these were the tough but bone-headed Captain Captainson’s love for Jane and hatred of Kenneth, the simpleton Rachel’s jealousy over that love, and the underdog boy scout, Mikey. We felt Mikey was the most sympathetic character and chose to focus on him.

Initially, Mikey was a minor character providing comic relief while Kenneth and Jane drove the story. His orphan status made him an exile from society and a target of endless bullying by his peers. His story was interesting enough to us that his feature song, “No Parents” was one of the earliest songs to be fully realized. It is probably the catchiest tune of the show and became a favorite among audience members. However, after the first draft, Mikey served no purpose other than unnecessary distraction. In trying to work him more into the central plot, we realized his parallels with Sasquatch. Both Mikey and Sasquatch are underappreciated exiles in a world that does not accept them. Bolstered by the idea that audiences love an underdog story, we crafted an ending that saw Mikey, rather than Kenneth, partner with Sasquatch to bring about a happy ending. This change cemented Mikey as a character with a clear and strong arc.
With the strengthening of Mikey’s character a new problem appeared: Kenneth was supposed to be the protagonist, not Mikey. Everything we had learned about storytelling and every critique by the initial readers of the script clearly stated not to switch protagonists mid-story. One critic wrote, “I wish more of the plot focused on [Mikey]…he ends up being the hero” (Carpenter). The audience, we were warned, would become disengaged if we suddenly switched protagonists. It is here that our comedic style proved useful. In crafting the dialogue and stage directions we tried to make clear the consistent absurdity of the situation and the characters. In the style of Monty Python and Mel Brooks, we tried to include enough anachronism and surprise that the audience would come to accept certain irrational actions as part of the stylistic world of the play. The character of Steve, who is constantly, unreasonably told to shut up, and the poppy seed muffin loving, Excalibur-toting Sasquatch are examples of this type of off-the-wall humor. What’s more, we had followed the popular convention of including a surprise bad guy when the mayor of Spoons, John Mayor turns out to be the villain. Why, we asked ourselves, should there not be a surprise good guy as well? The criticisms and conversations that followed productions over the next two years proved, contrary to standard belief, that we could get away with a hero switch, provided the portrayal of Mikey was convincing. More on the evolution of this portrayal is explained below.

Another challenge in conceptualizing the show was how to make it relevant for today’s audiences and culture. We knew that shows endure because of the universal impact of their stories. But even the most universal Shakespeare plays reflect in very
specific ways their own historical and cultural milieu. Cohen and Rosenhaus distinguish
good musical ideas from bad ones, in part, by what they call “timeliness,” writing,
“There is a certain indefinable flavor of the Zeitgeist that a show must have in order to
be right for the moment and to connect with a large audience” (19). As writers, we had
a head start in that not only was our subject recognizable across cultures – “Sasquatch”
is a typically Canadian term, with “Bigfoot” popular in the United States and “Yeti” more
typical in far-northern America and Europe – but the mythical beast had permeated
popular culture for decades. Its origins in the U.S. are largely attributed to a practical
joke perpetrated by Ray L. Wallace in 1958 when he staged an appearance of the beast.
However Scientific American columnist Michael Shermer reports, “[Bigfoot proponents]
correctly note that...Native American lore about Sasquatch wandering the Pacific
Northwest emerged long before Wallace pulled his prank.” The legend grew in
popularity and intrigue in 1967 with the release of what is now known as the Patterson-
Gimlin film, a short clip filmed by outdoorsmen Bob Gimlin and Roger Patterson outside
Yakima, Washington. The authenticity of this film “has never been disproven” (“The
Patterson-Gimlin Film”).

Sasquatch further permeated pop culture through Hollywood, with films like the
Oscar-nominated Harry and the Hendersons in which a small town family stumbles upon
a giant ape creature and adopts it (“Harry and the Hendersons”). With hit shows like
Finding Bigfoot airing on the Discovery Channel beginning in 2011 and seemingly regular
stories about new Sasquatch sightings around the country, the beast grew ever more
popular in the early 21st century. As of 2014, even central Pennsylvania, an area of the
country typically not associated with the Sasquatch myth, has a formal Sasquatch Association with over 30,000 followers on Facebook and a stated mission of “documenting and collecting evidence to prove the existence of Sasquatch” (Pennsylvania Sasquatch Association). In fact, an entire pseudo-scientific branch has emerged called Cryptozoology, which Shermer defines as “the study of animals whose existence is yet to be proven,” based on the term “cryptids,” a term coined in the 1950s by Belgian zoologist Bernard Heuvelmans (Shermer). He notes that, while anecdotes about possible cryptid sightings in North America do not make sound science, “the tales make gripping narratives” (Shermer).

So Lucas and I began with a subject full of narrative potential. Apart from initial interest, however, lay the challenge of connecting in specific cultural ways with the audience. The earliest and most obvious example of how these connections were incorporated into the show is the character of John Mayor. John Mayor’s name references the pop singer and guitarist John Mayer (born 1977). Mayer’s songs and career are used throughout the show to make numerous puns. While this subtle humor was sure to connect with some discerning audience members of our age, we worried that too often the joke was obscure and wouldn’t be understood. We took a more direct route with the character of Rachel, whose obsession with social media drives the social satire behind her character and leads to her feature song “@Everyone_I_Know,” an obvious critique of the millennial generation’s self-importance and social media use and abuse. While an average 2012 audience member would recognize the humor in
Rachel’s constant use of hashtags and tweets, our worry was that the topical references would not carry over universally or remain timeless.

Others shared this concern. One friend who critiqued an early version of the show wrote in an email how the show reminded her somewhat of *Bye Bye Birdie* in that “hardly anyone will get most of the references because they are so time bound” (Carpenter). She referred to a passing jab at House Speaker John Boehner during Act 1 saying, “already old news if you ask me.” Cohen and Rosenhaus write, “A show that is too dependent upon current events, ideas, and buzzwords, will be out of date by the time it closes, and possibly by the time it opens” (19). With this in mind, we went back to the drawing board and, instead of removing all the pop culture references and puns, we worked on building stronger, more sympathetic characters around them.

Fall 2012: The Hunt Continues

The addition of composer Matt Shervey to the creative team four months after writing began helped to steer the musical numbers and the characters who sang them toward a more fully-realized musical world. Lucas and I had done our “song spotting,” which is to say we “identified the important emotional and structural high points” (Cohen and Rosenhaus 191) and created songs for each of them. We then handed Shervey a collection of melodies and chord progressions from our early writing ranging in style from doo-wop (Mikey’s “No Parents”) to fully orchestral (“Mob and Circumstance”). While the songs and styles were written for maximum comedic effect, they lacked coherence. Shervey’s assumed role was to bring a stylistic and thematic
consistency to our musical mess. One tool he used to do this was what Cohen and Rosenhaus call the “motto theme,” a popular convention often used by Stephen Sondheim in which a key musical phrase appears, in varying forms, at important moments in the show (156). Recognizing that “the opening number is usually the most crucial...because it sets the scene, the tone, and the style of everything to follow” (Cohen and Rosenhaus 202), Shervey chose to work with the climbing melody of the opening number, “Damn You Sasquatch” pictured below:

![Music Staff](image)

**Curse you, Sas-quatich! You’re no fun.**

This simple phrase appears in a minor key after Jane’s climactic Sasquatch encounter ending Act II, and again in true form at the end of the show, with the whole company singing the new lyrics, “Thank you, Sasquatch.” It also appears in various keys during transition music between scenes and in underscoring emotional moments in the show. With this seemingly simple technique, Shervey went a long way in giving the music a clear stylistic voice.

Additionally, the fully-scored music reinforced the sincerity of the characters. Cohen and Rosenhaus mention the necessity of sincerity in songs, suggesting the musical theatre convention that “people sing when their emotions are too strong for speech” (31). Mikey’s lament over not having parents, backed by a full band and backup singers, or Jane’s revealing ballad “I Won’t be Fooled Again,” in which she belts toward a Sasquatch skeleton while the strings hit double forte, become more interesting with full
scores. These songs also become more comedic. The above examples, as well as others in the show, prove Cohen and Rosenhaus’s claim that “the principle of opposition applies to musical theatre” (32). They claim that an audience will feel a certain way about a character if the character displays opposite emotions. When Mikey sings high range notes in doo-wop style, backed by a set of singers and a horn-heavy big band sound reminiscent of the Temptations, the audience, though comprehending Mikey’s pain, is driven to laugh. Jane’s rant against a world that sees things differently than she does is meant to evoke feelings of pride in the audience. In each case, the score helps to achieve the desired effect.

As much as we wanted a polished, finished product, with everything set in stone as quickly as possible, it became clear that with each new collaboration we would need to be willing to adjust and grow as writers, and, in turn, Sasquatch would change.
CHAPTER III

PRODUCTION OF SASQUATCH: THE MUSICAL

Spring 2013: Sasquatch Lives

The first rehearsals for the inaugural production of Sasquatch: The Musical began in January 2013 at Grove City High School in Grove City, PA. I was the director and cast actors based on my interpretation of imagined characters without a full idea of what I wanted – the final draft of the script, including the end of the play, would not be finished until a week after auditions. However, the production process became less about my strict direction of mannerisms and initial concept of character and more about what the student actors’ creativity could offer to the development of the script.

Working with young actors to create a new role presents challenges and opens doors into a new work. In his overview of the methods of Stanislavsky, Jean Benedetti writes, “The script gives us information, a series of suggestions concerning a possible sequence of events in which certain imaginary individuals participate (5). The students acting in the first production of Sasquatch: The Musical did not have the advantage of previous performances or lengthy character studies from which to draw. They had only the script. And the script, being a new work by young authors, had plenty of deficiencies in the “suggestions” it provided, making the physical and mental resources required of the young actors even more important. Benedetti writes, “The essential
factor is belief. If [an actor] believes something to be true and follows the consequences of that belief through, it becomes ‘true’” (5).

As playwrights, the need to clarify the characters on the page so as to suggest characters the actors could believe in became most evident in the case of Kenneth. Mid-way through the rehearsal process, the actor playing Kenneth approached me and asked, “Who is Kenneth?” This came as a surprise given that he already had been rehearsing the role for several weeks. What’s more, we had done a major rewrite just before auditions for the high school production, the goal of which was to clarify Kenneth’s character by refining his dialogue into more proper, academic diction, and adding stage directions. I did my best to fill in the gaps for the actor, but it occurred to me suddenly that the main character, the protagonist whose actions were meant to drive the plot, had no clear identity on the page. Was he a nerdy, socially awkward scientist? Was he a self-involved egotist blinded by his own prejudice? Or was he a good guy just trying to do his best in his field?

Rewriting Kenneth in the months that followed the first production, Lucas and I looked at every line to determine whether Kenneth’s language was consistent with the character we envisioned. Furthermore, we asked ourselves, for the first time, what Kenneth’s goal was in the script, what Stanislavsky would call his “through-line” (Benedetti 8). If we could determine the through-line, we could also find his physical and psychological objectives in each scene. Clarifying these elements of character and action in the writing would make future directing easier, as the actor would be able to find tasks and actions in each scene, creating the character’s physical score. This work
also helped to tighten the writing, since we cut anything that did not help Kenneth reach his goal.

Meanwhile, with some guidance from me, the actor in the high school production settled on a coolly confident, though deeply troubled version of Kenneth, and the audience was able to root for him despite his flaws. This rehearsal episode provides a good example of how a collaborator (in this case, an actor) can shape a role and help to further develop the written work.

One of the clearest examples of how a particular student actor shaped a character is with the role of Mikey. Casting Mikey presented a special challenge as he had been originally visualized – and written – as a very young, small, weak boy with a high voice and prepubescent features. In a high school, this specific demographic is not always available. We considered casting an elementary school aged boy, but the demands of vocal ability and rehearsal schedule made that option unsatisfactory. The student ultimately cast as Mikey was a far cry from the tiny, frail Mikey of our vision. Instead this student – a short, stocky senior with a forward leaning walk, high voice, and quirky mannerisms – created a victimized orphan character who was bullied not because he was small, but because he was different. He had a unique personal style that separated him, not just from the other scout characters with whom he was often onstage, but also from the general high school population of the time. Once this casting choice was made, Mikey became the voice for any group or person snubbed in high school because of differences or perceived shortcomings. Now Mikey the character came off more as a real person than a caricature or a stereotype, and the emotional
impact on the audience took a huge leap. Mikey’s place in the story as underdog protagonist was justified.

One afternoon, mid-rehearsal schedule, my co-author Matthew Lucas happened to be in town for rehearsal. It was the first rehearsal he was able to attend, and he was excited to see the progress the cast had made in bringing the script to life. I was excited to show the work to him, but also nervous that he would not find everything acceptable. Lucas and I tended to see things the same way, but these were young performers, and I knew they had not yet physically or vocally grasped the characters or actions that either of us had envisioned.

Coincidentally, it was also the first rehearsal for the student playing Sasquatch. He was to play a particularly important scene at the top of the second act when Sasquatch finally reveals himself. His character had been an especially difficult one to pull from imagination to paper (as discussed in the previous chapter) and subsequently became one of the hardest characters to play. Lucas and I had spent a lot of time trying to portray him in the script so as to make him a funny, but relatable, character on stage, Playing him required strong body and voice presence, impeccable comedic timing, and a broad vocal range.

As I expected, this rehearsal was rough. The two actors in the scene, playing Sasquatch and Kenneth, were not finding the rhythm of the scene, and it was difficult for them to find the humor in what had been one of the funniest scenes for us to write. The tension surrounding Sasquatch had been building for the entire first act. The audience has been teased with what appears to be a murderous, kidnapping Sasquatch
just before intermission. But the second act now reveals the true Sasquatch as Kenneth awakes in the beast’s secret lair:

  Kenneth (awaking from a dream): Sasquaaaaatch! Oh, it was a dream!
  Ow, my head! Where am I?
  Sasquatch (offstage): Perhaps I can be of some service.
  Kenneth (alarmed): Who’s there? Show yourself!
  Sasquatch (coming on): Do not be alarmed. Do you like poppy seed muffins?

Sasquatch turns out to be a benevolent creature and an all around normal, thought a bit creepy, guy, apart from his magical capabilities, and he sets out to help Kenneth solve the mystery of the town’s missing children and save Jane (see Appendix A, the summary).

After working through the scene several times without any real improvement, we all sat down and talked about dividing the scene into beats, which are units of action that help an actor to understand the underlying rhythmic, physical, and psychological changes in a scene. Lucas and I both thought if the actors could understand the rhythm a bit better, the scene might click. It didn’t. After a short break of standing around and coming up with crazy ideas about the scene and its climactic song “Be the Legend,” Lucas looked up and said, “What if, during Kenneth’s part in the song, Sasquatch came on with ribbons and started dancing?”

The actors loved this idea. I thought first about how distracting it could be to see all that background movement during a part in a song that was important both thematically and for Kenneth’s character development. We tried it anyway. I don’t
know whether it was because of the ridiculousness of a big, hairy Sasquatch dancing or just the sudden change of pace, but the inhibitions of the young actors were freed and the song part of the scene started to work.

About a month after the production, a friend who had seen the show approached me and said he still hadn’t been able to get the image of Sasquatch’s ribbon-dance out of his head. It was his favorite part of the show. I thought back to the production and realized that the action of ribbon dancing had accomplished exactly what the scene required. The quirky dance re-established, in Act 2, the silliness of the situation that we had tried to establish in the beginning of the play; it restored the humorous self-awareness that had been lost in Act 1’s dramatic ending; and it clearly signaled to the audience what to expect from the Sasquatch character. The spectators could sit back and be comfortable with the humorous tone of the show. That tiny “what if” moment in rehearsal had taken a silly suggestion and turned it into an important moment for the show. Once again, collaboration led to growth.

Summer 2013: Sasquatch Goes Pro.

Cohen and Rosenhaus state, “A theatre work truly comes to life only when it is performed on a stage with full production values” (278). While the high school production had given Lucas and I a chance to explore the possibilities for spectacle in the show and to develop the characters with the student actors, we needed a more professional situation to test the musical and comedic potential of the show. In August 2013, four months after the original production, we gathered a group of professional
actors in New York City for a staged reading at the National Comedy Theatre. The actors partially memorized their parts and performed simple staging and movement, accompanied by a single piano. The audience of close to one hundred was composed partly of friends and family, and partly of theatre professionals – actors, writers, etc. – who we knew through various contacts. For the first time, Lucas and I heard our words read and sung by professional performers, and it made a big difference in how the script came to life.

The first big difference between the high school production and the professional staged reading was that we were able to explore the music to its full potential. For the high school production, we had to change keys and simplify melodies to assist the young singers. With trained singers, we heard the vocals with their intended nuances and dynamics. A good example of the value this added to the process is Jane’s early song, “I Won’t be Fooled Again.” In the middle of a serious and introspective ballad, Jane rips a sheet off from a Sasquatch skeleton in her lab and then dances with the skeleton while belting out a powerful love song. It was intended as a joke to bring the audience back to the absurd tone of the play that we had established in the beginning. However, a lower key and simpler melody for the high school Jane had taken away the musical (and comedic) power of the number. With a professional singer belting at the top of her range to a mythological beast, the joke landed forcefully and the scene worked.

The professional production also allowed Lucas and I the freedom to experiment away from small-town linguistic, religious, and moral restrictions. Early on, we had trouble deciding whether to let our “bad boy” impulses run wild, which would inevitably
result in a profanity-packed script with enough dirty jokes to bring it to the edge of gross impropriety, or to keep things toned down. Knowing that our initial audience would be the small town family and friends of my high school students, we chose to reign in our impulses. However, we regretted our self-censorship and worried that we were losing comedy for the sake of propriety.

For the professional reading Lucas and I determined to release the full force of our linguistic imaginations, and we added the “adult” content we had initially cut from the script. We discovered, both in rewrites and ultimately in performance, that this more “adult” material almost always felt forced. The comedy stood up without added obscenity. Jay Thompson, artistic director of the Denver Center Theatre Company, says, “When used gratuitously or simply for shock value, [profanity or cruelty] can actually diminish a performance...But when profanity and cruelty are portrayed for aesthetic ends – most especially to portray life as it really is...the effect can be bracing, humorous, troubling, and revelatory” (qtd. in Moore). Our job became to discern the right moments for “profanity or cruelty.” The opening ensemble number, originally performed as “ Curse You, Sasquatch,” was restored to its original “Damn You, Sasquatch,” and if the New York actors felt more natural with a “damn” or “shit” or “hell” than what was on the page, it was allowed. In Captainson’s song, “Abs,” a revised line “I’ll hit the gym” was restored to its original “I’ll drink a beer.” Ultimately though, Lucas and I found that we didn’t need to indulge our baser instincts to be funny.

Thus, the value of professional actors performing for a more mature audience than a high school theatre provides was not in the permission to go all out in terms of
language and adult-content, but rather in the freedom to try different lines and discover when vulgarity added to the effect and when it was unnecessary. Basically, we found the right words for each moment in the play. In the short play *Mametogram or How to Write Like David Mamet* by Randy Gener, the character Carol insists on simpler language saying, “Transpire? Oh, you mean, happen. For godsakes. Why not just say that?” (qtd. in Gener 13). This applies to the creative process for *Sasquatch*, too, in that we learned to “just say” what we meant rather than trying too hard to color it. I can say that the New York performance location and intended audience shaped the musical as much as any individual actor or critic did.

The New York reading also forced us to look more closely at the subtexts of our words and images, intended and unintended. A comment from one audience member during the discussion following the performance in New York brought to light a problem that both Lucas and I had previously brushed off: the play was sexist. As young male writers, we were naturally inclined to write stronger male characters than female ones. Unconsciously, we had created a male driven world, with two male protagonists, Kenneth and Mikey, a male foil in Captainson, and a male villain in John Mayor, not to mention the male Sasquatch. The strongest female character in the play is Jane, and our intention was for her to be the voice of female strength and independence. She is an intelligent female scientist relentlessly pursuing her goals despite rejection and derision by the townspeople and the scientific community. However, the commenting audience member reminded us that Jane is only important to the story insofar as she
begins leading Kenneth down the path to find Sasquatch, and that mainly was a result of his sexual attraction to her.

Furthermore, when John Mayor captures Jane, it is the male hero who must come to her aid. The sexist situation was worsened by the fact that the only other female lead, Rachel, a social-media obsessed semi-moron, was constantly flaunting her sexuality in front of the overly macho Captainson. Cohen and Rosenhaus write that main characters must all have “charm:” “They do not have to be thoroughly wonderful people, but there must be something about them to which the audience responds” (86). As a solution to the problem of sexism, Lucas and I set out to ensure that each female character, despite her weaknesses, had a charm of her own.

In later rewrite sessions, Lucas and I reflected on Jane’s lines – much in the way we had earlier focused on Kenneth’s text – to create a Jane who, despite becoming attracted to and rescued by Kenneth, did not need Kenneth or any other male presence to give her a sense of identity or self worth. The structure of the play – and the character of Rachel – remained the same. As writers we feel that the issue of sexism in the play has been somewhat resolved, but remains subject to interpretation. Rachel’s character is a comment on the social media reality of our time, a reality which, though demonstrated through a female, permeates a whole generation, not just women, and becomes a running gag in the script. Regardless of the end result, the effect of the criticism was to force us to look deeper into the characters and morals of our story.
Summer 2014: The Festival Circuit

*Sasquatch* lay dormant for ten months after the National Comedy Theatre production, before being accepted into the West Village Musical Theatre Festival in New York City. This festival would be our first opportunity to hand the show off to be interpreted and staged free from our direct influence. A theatre festival, in this case a showcase of many new works, seemed like a great way to explore the creative merits of the show in a collaborative setting. While Lucas and I were able to advise most of the rehearsal process and give notes, the creative and logistical responsibility fell on the show’s director, Sidney Eric Wright, assigned to the task by festival organizers. Composer Matt Shervey was out of the country in graduate school, so the music direction was also in the hands of a new person.

Sidney’s background in choreography led him to create a visual tapestry for the show that was far more like a dance than a book musical. Almost every line had a specific motion attached to it. The effect was two-fold. First, the musical took on a more campy, almost cartoon quality, much more silly and light-hearted than even Lucas and I imagined. The ensemble’s often exaggerated motions were usually descriptive and somewhat obvious, such as when each character mocked pointing and shooting a gun during the line “We will shoot you with a gun” in the opening number. However, far from being redundant, the movement helped to quickly set the time, place, and tone for the audience.

Cohen and Rosenhaus write, “[Choreographers] who understand not only movement but also drama can make movement dramatic, creating dances that help to
tell the story rather than interrupt it” (37). Thus, the second effect of our director’s choreography was a lesson in how much song and movement can – and should – advance the story of a musical. Sidney’s earliest note regarding our first draft of the festival script was to “make sure we’re giving the audience all the information they need and none that they don’t” (Wright). The format of the festival allowed each performance fifteen minutes from lights up to final bows. Calling it a “snapshot” festival, the organizers’ goal was to “cultivate a new generation of composers, lyricists, and book writers willing to innovate and reinvigorate the musical theatre genre” (“West Village Musical Theatre Festival”). They expected creative teams to showcase only their best work, in the hope that collaborative relationships would form and new works would be open to industry professionals. The challenge was to achieve this in five evenings of performing a fifteen-minute piece. So it was important to tell as much story as possible in a short amount of time. The choreography, more than we had previously realized it could, acted as a storytelling asset. Thus, the festival became a valuable contribution to the ongoing collaborative development of Sasquatch, as well as an exercise in tight writing. Sidney’s staging showed us how one song and/or scene can flow into another, eliminating unnecessary dialogue that slows down the story.

A prime example is Captainson’s feature, “Abs.” One of our favorites, and a catchy tune for the audience, the song was always problematic in that, while it cemented the image of Captainson – an important, though secondary character – in the audience’s mind, it did not serve the plot. It was a gag meant to play on drinking song stereotypes using an absurd topic. The solution: following the almost operatic style of
the snapshot festival version, “Abs” was transplanted into the middle of the opening number, “Damn You, Sasquatch.” This way the fifteen minute performance fully introduced Captainson along with the other main characters, got all the company members involved (all townspeople were a part of “Abs”), and acclimated the audience to our type of humor early on.

Another major adjustment in the festival version was the exclusion of Mikey. Though it was a difficult choice to cut the typically favorite character, Sidney was clear early on that his story involved too much to introduce in such a short span. So, Mikey’s part in the plot, along with that of the other scouts, was nixed. We never intended to drop Mikey altogether from the full length version, but doing so for the short version allowed us to see more clearly the power and potential shortcomings of a Kenneth/Jane driven story. Did they, we wondered, have enough of an arc to carry a musical without the secondary story? The answer: no.

Perhaps most importantly, Sidney decided to allow the actors freedom to experiment with the characters they saw on the page. Just as it happened with the first production of high school actors, the vision of the actors greatly influenced the direction of the show. The best example here is the actor who played Kenneth. While the script gave practical information about Kenneth: his age, basic appearance, and overall worldview, his mannerisms as a nerdy though self-important scientist were up for interpretation. The actor in this case brought to Kenneth an almost absurd awkwardness that was at the same time theatrical yet oddly real. Cohen and Rosenhaus note, “All it takes is something appealing in the character, perhaps even despite himself,
or something with which the audience can identify” (86). The Kenneth of the festival performance, with his clumsy physicality contrasting his genius and genuine emotion for Jane, became an appealing character in a way we had never imagined. Collaboration expanded our horizons and created change again.
CHAPTER IV

SASQUATCH AND SOCIETY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE CREATIVE PROCESS

Famous Collaborations

The initial writing of *Sasquatch* and the later rewrites were a mix of writing activities depending largely on Lucas and my mood on a given day. Certain days were dedicated entirely to dialogue, often using improvisation to inspire creation. Other days focused on music. Songwriting tended to be the more enjoyable and fulfilling option, but often depended on a moment of musical inspiration, which often took several agonizing hours to arrive. Dialogue writing was more consistent, but did not yield a satisfying, tightly-wrapped final product at the end of the day. The inconsistency in writing gave rise to concerns about coherence in style and story, and brought up the question of how prolific authors like Hammerstein, Bernstein, and Sondheim went about creating their masterpieces. Was there a more effective, efficient way to write music and lyrics?

Joe Bennett, citing a study of collaboration between songwriters, writes, “Collaborators, indeed all songwriters, consistently state that there are no rules for the songwriting process” (qtd. in Collins). He then goes on, however, to note a number of commonly accepted creative practices, centered around what he calls the “initial
stimulus,” or the idea that something has to come first (Collins). Among these stimuli can be a suggested song title, a chord sequence, a lyric phrase, or a visual image.

One afternoon, early in the writing process, Lucas and I were looking for a song for the character of Captainson (the song “Abs” is discussed in the previous chapter). We knew his song needed to express his utter narcissism and reinforce his love for Jane, the female protagonist, who up until the time of the song had shunned his advances. In thinking of Captainson, one comparison always came to mind: Gaston from Beauty and the Beast. Early in that musical, the men of the village in which part of the story is set accompany Gaston in a rousing anthem all about how strong, brave, and attractive he is. The whole scene takes place in the local tavern. Our scene also happened to take place in a bar. We found the tone of the song.

A major image that Gaston and his cronies focus on is his muscles. We thought we’d do the same with Captainson, but decided to throw a humorous twist on the typical strong arm, big bicep convention, and focus instead on the abs. We had a subject. We scrambled to find every name we could for a person’s abdominal section and put it into lyrical lines. Soon we had a song. The title only came after music and lyrics were on the page, and it seemed then a natural choice: “Abs.” In retrospect, it all seemed to flow logically and organically, yet it wasn’t until we found the “initial stimulus,” as Bennett calls it, that we were able to begin creation. In this particular case, the stimulus was the image of a familiar character from childhood.

Songwriting for successful Broadway productions is no different in the need for initial stimuli, though the stimuli may vary greatly. Adam Markovitz, in an article for
Entertainment Weekly, describes a scene with The Book of Mormon creators, Trey Parker, Scott Lopez, and Matt Stone in which the authors sit staring at a whiteboard with the words “Maggots in my scrotum” scribbled across. He quotes Parker saying, “That’s a potential line for a song” (Markovitz). The authors saw what they believed was a humorous and disturbing image and ran with it until it became a running joke in their musical.

The creation of “Abs” also exemplifies a popular model for contemporary songwriting collaboration, which Bennett calls the “Nashville” model. In this model, two songwriters act as co-writers in a real time, face to face environment, finding and evaluating stimuli. Bennett lists other models as well, including demarcation, involving one artist handing off work to another artist, though not necessarily collaborating directly (such as a lyricist and a composer, traditionally popular in musical theatre). The Jamming model has both artists working simultaneously and improvisationally to create stimuli. Finally, asynchronicity involves co-writers working separately without assigning specific roles (Collins).

While each of these models was a part of the writing process for Sasquatch: The Musical, the Nashville model dominated for Lucas and I, largely due to the fact that most of the initial writing happened with us sitting in the same small space. Another example of this model for us is the creation of the first ensemble number of the show, “Damn You, Sasquatch.” Lucas wanted to achieve humor through irony by having a happy, childlike melody over ominous, angry lyrics. An image in his head was the “Connect Four” game commercials from childhood. The jingle in those commercials was
simple and fun, in unison quarter and eighth notes. Out of this image came the basic melody followed by the first lyric, “Damn you, Sasquatch; you’re no fun.” A version of this phrase is printed on page 12. To this first line I added the concern of the townspeople singing, “Taking kids from everyone” (see Appendix A for a summary). In a matter of minutes we had found a rhyme scheme, a meter, and an initial melodic phrase that came to underlie much of the music of the show.

Oscar Hammerstein, by contrast, practiced the model of demarcation, most famously in his collaboration with Richard Rodgers. Hammerstein’s nephew John Steele Gordon catalogues his collaborative process in the article “My Uncle, Oscar Hammerstein.” According to Gordon, Hammerstein wrote all his lyrics on legal pads before handing them off to a secretary to be typed. They were then sent to Rodgers for him to set them to music without much, if any previous collaboration between the two writers. The success of their partnership, evidenced by such important works as Oklahoma!, South Pacific, and Carousel, is enough to prove the value of the demarcation model.

Yet contemporary models show that demarcation is not the only valid model for musical theatre collaboration. Trey Parker, Scott Lopez, and Matt Stone, creators of The Book of Mormon, as mentioned above, seem to have worked as synchronistically over a long period of time. Stone describes their process of segmented work between episodes of Parker and Stones popular cartoon comedy South Park, during which they wrote down ideas, lost them, and remembered them to share. Stone says, “It was like an oral tradition that we passed on to ourselves” (Markovitz).
Parker and Stone, long-time successful collaborators, each contribute different elements to a work. A.J. Jacobs, after interviewing the authors for Esquire, writes, “[Trey] is the more right-brained of the pair: the writer, the composer. Stone, the son of an economist, excels at story logic and business.” Thus, the demarcation model applies as well, with collaborators contributing independently of each other; yet they work simultaneously and do not necessarily assign roles. The success of The Book of Mormon, evidenced by its nine Tony awards and nearly $40 million in Broadway revenue (Jacobs), demonstrates the validity of their style of collaboration.

While Lucas and I excelled in the Nashville model, demarcation became important as well, especially in the later stages of writing before the first production. He lived in Washington, D.C. and I in western Pennsylvania. We communicated often and for long periods of time via digital video tools like the iPhone’s “facetime” feature; however, the distance and varying schedules between us forced us at times to work independently and then bring ideas together. Often Lucas would create music and leave me to write lyrics, as was the case with much of “Aria of Your Demise,” the villain song in Act 2. Sometimes we agreed to each focus on refining different scenes and then present our new ideas later, such as when he did a full re-write of Act 2, Scene 1, the key moment when Kenneth first meets Sasquatch. In any case, the specific method of collaboration, whether Nashville or demarcation, proved to be less important than the simple existence of the collaboration. Neither he nor I could create the musical on our own, and each time we came together to work, the musical changed.
Music or Lyrics?

One aspect of the writing process with which Lucas and I struggled was where to begin writing songs. We continually asked ourselves whether it was better to write the words we wanted and then set them to a tune, or begin with musical melodies and fill in the lyrics later. We shifted almost daily between the two, creating some inconsistencies in the writing. Most often, we couldn’t begin to write lyrics until we had a melody to set them to, which required at least a basic chord structure for the song. This was the case with “Damn You, Sasquatch,” described above. We created a catchy musical phrase inspired by commercials for the popular 90s children’s game “Connect Four.” We then plugged in the simple, direct lyrics that fit our major opening number.

The most obvious example of the music-first model in Sasquatch is the climactic Act 2 song “Mob and Circumstance.” The music for this comes directly from Edward Elgar’s popular masterpiece, “Pomp and Circumstance.” This is largely meant as a humorous cultural reference: how many students could we get to think about Sasquatch: The Musical while walking across a stage to accept their high school diplomas? Yet Elgar’s music combined with our lyrics also accomplishes everything the scene needs to: gather an angry mob around the Captain and prepare them to charge into the woods in search of vengeance against the Sasquatch. It begins with a horn call, summoning the crowd, and proceeds with a low, proud melody over which the Captain voices the angry mob’s hatred of the Sasquatch. It eventually rises to a chaotic orchestra section in which the mob trains for battle before quieting to a reflective moment as the women bid the warrior men of the town farewell. Finally, the song
climaxes with a speech by Captains over the popular “Graduation March” section of the piece, followed by a loud, triumphant ending wherein the mob sing together before charging off into the woods to hunt the beast.

This music-first model became popular on Broadway in the early 20th century. John Gordon gives two reasons for this, writing, “First, since many early Broadway composers had been European by birth, they were sometimes flummoxed by English stress patterns. Second, the ‘dance craze’ of the 1910s had put a big commercial premium on danceable tunes. It was simply easier to let the composer go first in those circumstances” (“My Uncle”). He goes on, however, to explain that Oscar Hammerstein revived the old European method, when “story and characters became central to the musical” (“My Uncle”). Though Rogers and Hammerstein did not always write lyrics first, this general tendency insured that the focus remained on songs that advanced plot and character.

Their landmark work Oklahoma! proves the value of plot-focused lyrics. Brooks Atkinson, a prominent New York Theatre critic at the time of Oklahoma!’s release called its opener, “Oh What a Beautiful Mornin’” the song that changed the history of American musical theatre (“Oklahoma!”). John Steele Gordon writes the following of his uncle’s musical: “Because it had been written as dramatic logic rather than Broadway musical convention dictated, it liberated the Broadway musical forever from much of that very convention” (“Oklahoma!”). Rogers and Hammerstein’s method of collaboration worked, and Oklahoma! became the longest running Broadway musical in history to that point in time.
Therefore, while our typical practice of putting lyrics to pre-existing tunes may not be universal practice in a post-\textit{Oklahoma!} musical theatre landscape, the focus need not be on the order of creation, but rather on creating within a model of collaboration that best suits the needs of the artists and, especially, the work.

\textbf{Current Theatrical Trends}

Devised theatre, a method currently growing in popularity among theatre companies all over the world, provides a model for how all works of theatre develop. In this format, a director works at the center of a team of collaborators, often beginning with something similar to Bennett’s “initial stimulus” mentioned above, but without a concrete structure or through-line. Essentially, it combines the talents and maximizes the imaginative potential of everyone involved. It is a far cry from the standard script/producer driven model of today’s commercial theatre. However, Professor Clive Barker notes:

Devised theatre has always been there, and we could more easily try to establish at what point the producer took on the power of executive...What has changed, over the last forty years or so, has been a fluctuating activity intending to draw into the creative process all of the various talents of those members of the theatre ensemble who have been disenfranchised by the concentration of power of decision in the hands of a few key members. (qtd. in Bicat and Baldwin 6)

To be clear, \textit{Sasquatch: The Musical} is not a devised piece of theatre. It began with a script and a score, which then drove the initial performance of the musical. But the
changes it underwent during the initial production and subsequent revisions and productionss serve to at least reflect the trend toward more collaborative theatre, if not to justify it entirely. The creation of the musical, given our varied methods of collaboration, the input from dozens of people, from early conceptualizing through professional production, and the clear influence that input had on the development of the musical, suggests that writing for the theatre is a distinctly collaborative process. While the popular methods of collaboration may be constantly changing, the fact is that collaboration remains a constant necessity in the creation of new theatre.
Browsing the licensing agreements for one of the hundreds of show titles offered by theatre publishing giants like Musical Theatre International or R&H Theatricals, one invariably comes across clauses meant to ensure the integrity of a play’s script by forbidding cuts, alterations, or changes. Directors are to put on the show as written. Only with special permission from the authors’ representatives can producing theatres make changes to things like language and dramatic context. Yet how often does the need arise to make a change? How often does a high school theatre director quietly remove that f-word in Noises Off! or tone down Rent at the behest of an administrator or sensitive parent? How often does a community theatre director need to trim down Agamemnon or another classic to keep ahold of an apathetic audience? Perhaps one reason small theatres in the United States continue to produce so much classical Greek drama and Shakespeare is because of the lack of restriction: these public domain plays can be infinitely re-contextualized and modified for length, tone, and language while remaining the universal masterpieces they’ve always been, but nobody pays a fine for copyright infringement.

In any case, it’s clear that theatre works, whether modern or classic, grow through each new performance. They grow because of their nature as human stories
told by human actors in an ever-changing world. For *Sasquatch: The Musical*, the conception, writing, and early productions serve as a microcosm of the nature of theatrical creation: a work changes with each new interaction between and interpretation by writers, actors, directors, and, perhaps most importantly, audiences. The high school production showed Lucas and I the need for characters with clearer objectives and personalities. It also showed us that audiences were open to our senses of humor, even without some of the language we thought would be necessary for the humor to come across. The New York City reading further helped us refine the language the characters in the musical speak. The professional actors and singers were also able to explore the score to its full potential, showing us its strengths and weaknesses. When it came to the West Village Musical Theatre Festival performance, the introduction of new directors gave us a brand new interpretation of the show’s staging. It also provided us with a fresh audience, free from the good and bad prejudices of people Lucas and I already knew. This gave us a truly honest look at our own work from the outside.

As of this writing in summer 2015, the musical remains a work in progress, with possible performances in a number of high schools in the works. Lucas and I found that our style of working together, which we initially believed to be peculiar from the way previously successful theatre collaborators worked, is actually based in, if not completely in line with, proven methods of collaboration. We continue to work in this way in the hope that *Sasquatch: The Musical*, and possible future works, will find its way to future productions and more fascinating collaborations.
WORKS CITED


Wright, Sidney Erik. "15 Minute Thoughts At Last." 21 May 2014. E-mail.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

SYNOPSIS

Act 1

At rise of curtain, we see Kenneth Henderson, a renowned scientist, mourning over his father’s recent death by falling, at his funeral (“Oh Father”). He sings about having felt disconnected from his father, Harry, while Harry was off exploring things Kenneth didn’t believe were worthwhile. He is then approached by John Mayor, the mayor of Spoons, Washington, who asks him to continue the work his father began: searching for the cause of the mysterious disappearance of the children of Spoons. The townspeople attribute it to a legendary creature in the woods, the Sasquatch. John Mayor gives Kenneth his father’s diary, revealing a supposedly ancient prophecy that contains the solution, which only Kenneth can reveal:

When past meets future shall the lost

By unseen beast be found.

A death erased when self be faced;

A savior termless bound.

Kenneth doesn’t believe in his father’s work, or in the mythical beast, but agrees to go to help the children.
When he arrives in Spoons, the townspeople are in an uproar about their missing children (Curse You, Sasquatch”). Kenneth learns of the severity of the problem, and then meets Jane, a young scientist who is to be his partner, having worked with his father before. Jane dislikes Kenneth for his previous publications denouncing her branch of science, cryptozoology, and believes the Sasquatch to be a friendly creature, not the malevolent force the townspeople think. Yet she also agrees to continue working with him out of her need to solve the mystery. Kenneth then meets Captain Frederick T. Captainson, the local authority/sheriff, who we learn is in love with Jane, though Jane constantly rejects his advances. He makes it clear that he is the law in town and will deal with the problem of the Sasquatch the way he sees fit. He comes across Rachel, the first person to have seen Sasquatch and thus, the only authority on his likeness. She loves Captainson, but he rejects her. We then meet a troop of Boy Scouts out to search for the Sasquatch themselves, including Santino, the aggressive, bullying troupe leader, and Mikey, the smallest boy in the group, who is constantly picked on, but who wants to make a difference in the town.

The scene transitions to Jane’s laboratory, where she has collected and studied a lot of evidence surrounding the case of the Sasquatch. She tries to teach the reluctant Kenneth how to look for clues and see the way she does (“Cryptozoology”). Kenneth, softening to her a bit, agrees to help her collect data and leaves to interview the townspeople about their Sasquatch accounts. Jane sings about her need to find proof and get validation for herself (“I won’t be fooled again”).
Soon after, in a local watering hole, Captainson and some men of the town are relaxing when Kenneth enters to ask them some questions. Captainson quickly dismisses him, telling him of his hatred for science. When Kenneth leaves, Captainson laments over Jane not loving him (“Abs”).

Kenneth then approaches the scouts as they drill. He attempts to interview them, but is continually interrupted by Santino, who is working for Captainson against the scientists. When Mikey tries to chime in to help, the boys swarm him until John Mayor enters and breaks it up. The boys run off, leaving Mikey tied up on the ground.

Kenneth and John converse about their progress, and John notes that Kenneth is beginning to follow in his father’s footsteps. They go, leaving Mikey. He frees himself and sings about his plight as an orphan who could do great things if given the chance. (“No Parents”)

Kenneth finally goes to the hair salon to question Rachel and her friends. Rachel’s sister, Belle, who is also Santino’s girlfriend, tells how Rachel tweeted everyone about her Sasquatch sighting. Kenneth presses Rachel for more information until she gives in (“@Everyone_I_Know). Before they go on, a man runs on yelling that another child has been stolen.

The whole town gathers in the square in a panic. John tries to calm them, and Captainson steps up to raise a mob to go into the woods and find and kill the Sasquatch. Jane protests, but Captainson won’t listen. Finally, she yells that she is going into the woods to collect the final evidence that will prove that Sasquatch is real, but is not the cause of the children’s disappearance. Kenneth volunteers to go with her, to
Captinson’s dismay. Before setting off into the woods, he contemplates his changing state of mind (“And So”). He then frees Mikey, whose been tied up by Santino and the other boys again. Mikey volunteers to go into the woods with them. Kenneth won’t allow it, but encourages Mikey, saying there is more to him than others can see.

Kenneth and Jane search the woods for evidence. In the woods they come across the spot where Kenneth’s father was killed. Jane explains that all he wanted was for her to find something. Thinking this meant Kenneth, they fall for each other (“Finding Something Real”) and kiss. Santino, having been spying on the two, runs to tell Captinson, who feels betrayed. He rallies the mob to go into the woods and stop them (“Betrayed”). As the song ends, we see a dark creature run on, push Kenneth into the cave, and kidnap Jane before the lights go out.

Act 2

The lights come up to reveal the Sasquatch in the woods performing a rousing swing number with the Sasquettes, his backup dancers (“Naturally”). As the song ends, the audience sees Kenneth awake suddenly, alone in the cave. He had been dreaming the scene after being knocked unconscious. As he comes to his senses he hears a chorus of sounds, followed by Sasquatch appearing behind him. Kenneth demands to know what Sasquatch has done with Jane and the children, but the Sasquatch eventually persuades him to see the truth: that the Sasquatch is keeper of the prophecy and protector of the woodland realm, and that the people of Spoons have been tricked into hating him by another person out to fulfill the prophecy for his own gain. He gives
Kenneth a magic flutophone that, when played will summon the powers of Sasquatch to his aid. They hatch a plan, and Kenneth departs, his faith renewed.

Back in town, Captainsin and the men relax in the bar (“Abs Reprise”). Mikey, worried, asks for news of Kenneth and Jane, and then runs out to find them himself. Dicke then reminds Captains in that Jane is in danger in the woods. He is reluctant to go, since Jane betrayed him, but realizes it would be a great opportunity to look like a hero for her, and win her love. He summons the townspeople to form a militia to march into the woods and hunt down the Sasquatch (“Mob and Circumstance”).

The scene transitions to the woods, where Jane is tied to a tree and a man dressed in a Sasquatch costume rummages in a box nearby. When the man turns, we see that it is John Mayor! Shocked, Jane demands answers. John explains his master plan to her, and reveals the kidnapped children, whom he has hypnotized into becoming a child army for his purposes. He has been using the Sasquatch as a decoy while he created panic in the town, in order to fulfill the prophecy by returning the children to the town, becoming a hero, and being elected mayor forever. He only needs Jane to lead him to the real Sasquatch to destroy the last of the evidence, so he hypnotizes her as well (“Aria in A minor: Aria of your Demise”).

When Kenneth arrives at John Mayor’s secret lair in the woods, John springs a trap that leaves Kenneth caught and surrounded by the child army. John reveals his plan to the scientist, but Kenneth blows on the magic flute, summoning the Sasquatch, who, in several confusing flashes of light, takes away the children, frees the scientists, and leaves John tied up on the ground. When it’s over, Kenneth has the upper hand.
He discovers John’s Sasquatch suit, but as he holds it over him, the mob from town arrives and sees them, mistaking Kenneth as the kidnapper who abducted John using the suit. John uses the opportunity to get out of trouble, and hypnotizes Jane to up his story. The mob drags Kenneth back to town in an uproar (“Cold Backbone of Night”).

The last person left in the woods is Mikey, who observed the whole thing. He sees Sasquatch’s magic flutophone left on the ground. In a desperate attempt to save Kenneth and Jane, he plays the flutophone.

Sasquatch appears to Mikey in a new place, the world between worlds. He explains to Mikey that they must go back in time and use the butterfly effect, changing one thing in the past, which will subsequently change all events of the future, if he wants to save Kenneth (“Be the Legend Reprise”). While Sasquatch fends off hungry dinosaurs, Mikey kills a butterfly and then goes back to present day Spoons where a celebration is now taking place. He arrives in town to see everyone celebrating Sasquatch’s birthday. Kenneth and Jane are married and are both well-respected scientists. John Mayor is gone. The children are all back. Captainson is an errand boy for Kenneth, and Kenneth’s father is not dead and is running for Mayor. Belle comes on and invites Mikey to prom. Sasquatch congratulates Mikey on becoming a hero and saving the town, and they all live happily ever after (“Thank You, Sasquatch”).
APPENDIX B

HELPFUL LINKS

Access the complete script and score digitally using this link:

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/0BypKAq6uiB0MVFK5RGTvaG5pTDA

Access MIDI files of the piano and vocal parts using this link:

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/0B9TK_QheBn33UtV5IvFA5UTg