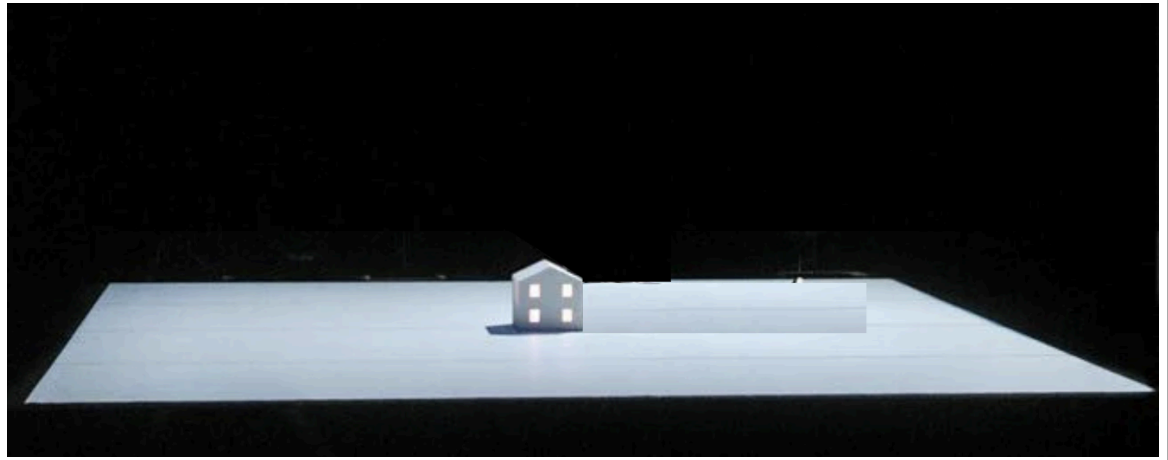
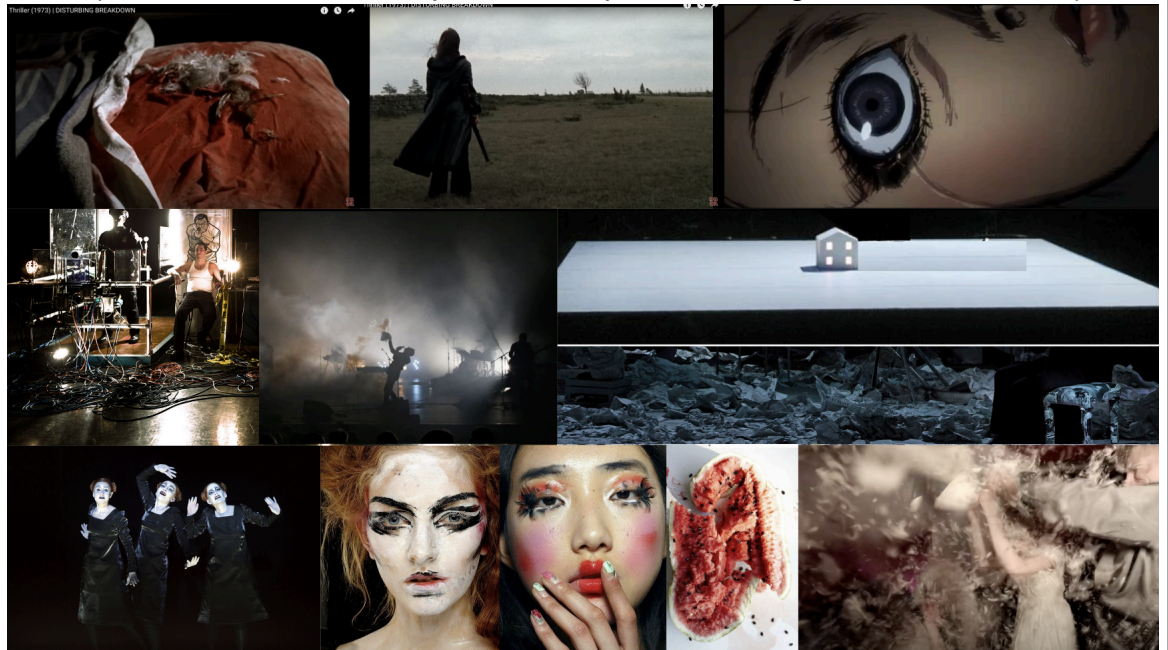


Synopsis	<p>In the dog days of 1892, Lizzie Borden took an ax...and, well, you know the rest. Muckraking journalists made her a bicoastal media sensation overnight. An all-out spectacle, the show's provocative delivery oozes attitude and simmering tension with a kinetic urgency that hums under the surface. Using a gasoline-soaked rock score, and based on the historical record, LIZZIE explores the strange alchemy leading up to the murders, Lizzie's controversial acquittal of all charges, and the creation of a new American myth.</p>
Concept	<p><a href="#">Lizzie creator Tim Maner said</a>: "I'm really interested in creating theatre that has elements of spectacle ... Lizzie in her parricide kills off the old 19th Century world, and it is her generation which embarks on the 20th Century. The rebellious new generation killing off the old, is a core part of the mythology of rock in America."</p> <p>I'm really interested in how we can make an exploitation cinema/revenge flick inspired opera that speaks to Maner's vision. Simultaneously pulpy and high art. Controlled and uncontrolled.</p> <p>Being that most of Lizzie Borden's story is based on legend, rumors, whispers immortalized in the children's rhythm "Lizze Borden took an axe...", I want to create a mythology or fairy tale-esque dreamscape version of history that rejects realism/literalism in its retelling (read: this is not a historical docu-drama or ordinary period piece) and embraces simulacrum.</p>
The Vehicle	<p>Lizzie as a musical is 95% sung-through with short underscored scenes - very much in line with a rock opera.</p> <p>We will perform at Broadway Performance Hall - a proscenium style stage - as a nod to the formalism of opera while subverting this formality with our avant garde and punk twists.</p> <p>For our set, we'd like to remove the cyc, leaving only the side masking drapes to create a hollow industrial feel (supportive of a 90s rock n' roll vibe).</p> <p>In Act 1, the acting space will be represented with a 20'x20' minimalist white square including a 2'x2' white dollhouse version of the Borden house set center stage representing the primitive nature of the Borden house reimagined as somewhat avant garde. The size and bareness of the stage being utilized to interrogate negative space and represent the bleak isolation of the Borden household. During Act 2, with the addition of crumpled newspapers flooding the square, the stage will take on the look of a dirty birdcage extending the metaphor of Lizzie as the "white bird" and exploring the costs of revenge and freedom.</p> <p>"People say you can't wash away the mud of this world with pure white snow. You need asura snow - stained fiery red." – Lady Snowblood</p>



## The Look

The end product aims to capture the intersection between low-brow elements (the revenge narrative, violence, punk, eroticism, horror) and modern highbrow forms (modern dance, Shakespearean-esque drama, high fashion aesthetic).







## ACT ONE - Victoriana Adjacent w/ Punk Accents



## ACT ONE - Somebody Will Do Something

Emma, Alice & Bridget



Over the top of  
the black dresses

Reveal when she  
removes her dress

Lizzie





## ACT TWO - White Suits / Girl Gang

Lizzie, Emma, & Bridget



No jackets



Sheer shirts?



Alice remains  
in 1892

Possible Variation?



The Backbone

[Lizzie Cast Recording](#)

### Key Themes

Mythology of Lizzie Borden

Media sensationalism

House as oppressive figure (locked doors, patriarchal values, old ideas)

White bird metaphor

Gender

The Grounding  
Tenets

Guiding features within:

- Juxtaposition of high and low: opera, rock n' roll, & exploitation cinema
- Sensationalism: Pulp, Mythology, Fairy Tale, Graphic Novel
- Exploitation cinema: eroticism, violence, revenge, horror & spectator gratuity
- Hints at German Expressionism
- Exploration of highly controlled vs. uncontrolled physicalities
- Exploration of vocal control: sound (both musical and elocution - accent, tone, speed, volume, pitch, breath)

Elements to explore:

- Mood
  - Stark Minimalism
    - Isolation
    - Primitive reimagined as avant garde
    - White: formal, aseptic, severe, stark, cold, somber, unfriendly
  - Weather Patterns
    - Stifling heat
    - Electrical storm
  - Oppressive Colorations

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Idealistic language dialogue (ASMR approach to diction)</li> </ul>
Spiritual Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Exploitation Cinema – Rape/Revenge Flicks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lady Snowblood</li> <li>○ Thriller: A Cruel Picture</li> <li>○ Ms. 45</li> <li>○ Kill Bill</li> <li>○ Death Proof</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Shakespeare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Macbeth</li> <li>○ Throne of Blood (Kurosawa's version of Macbeth)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <a href="#">Robert Wilson/Tom Waits/William S. Burroughs - The Black Rider</a></li> </ul>
Mood Board	<a href="https://www.pinterest.com/pullmanvspaxton/mood-lizzie/">https://www.pinterest.com/pullmanvspaxton/mood-lizzie/</a>
Short list of Sources	<p>Adler, Gabriela Schalow, "Our Beloved Lizzie; Constructing an American Legend" (1995). Open Access Dissertations. Paper 494.  <a href="https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/oa_diss/494">https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/oa_diss/494</a></p> <p>Clover Carol J. <i>Men Women and Chain Saws : Gender in the Modern Horror Film</i>. Princeton University Press 1992. (I have a digital copy if you want it)</p> <p>Heller-Nicholas, Alexandra. <i>Rape-Revenge Films : A Critical Study</i>. McFarland 2011. (I have a digital copy if you want it)</p> <p><a href="#">The Borden Tragedy: A Memoir of the Famous Double Murder</a></p> <p><a href="#">A private disgrace; : Lincoln, Victoria, 1904-1981 : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive</a> (great for all the innuendos, rumors and folklore)</p> <p><a href="#">TRIAL OF LIZZIE BORDEN</a> (great initial transcript version)</p> <p><a href="#">The Lizzie Borden sourcebook : Kent, David, 1923- : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive</a> (really gives an unvarnished view of the incidents from the eyes of the public as represented by the voice of the press)</p>

## Character Descriptions

	Original Description from Authors
Lizzie	<p>(high belt: F#3-F#5, belt to A5 if possible) is damaged, twisted. She can turn on a dime from fragile, broken, stoic and obedient to conniving, sinister, furious and terrifying.</p> <p>She is transformed through an act of unspeakable transgression, turning her own historical infamy into an ascension to legend.</p>

Emma	<p>(alto/mezzo with strong rock belt: F#3-D5) is the older sister, eclipsed by the younger. She must content herself by playing a motherly Lady Macbeth to Lizzie, dripping her own hatreds into Lizzie's ears over the years, stoking the fires of Lizzie's rage, disappearing when the deeds must be done, and suffering with guilt afterwards.</p> <p>Emma is a woman who has come to see that every opportunity for happiness has passed her by. She's furious, but she's also desperately sad.</p>
Bridget	<p>(contralto/low alto: F3 with E3 pick-up/ghost-notes in one number) – Eb5 (E5 opt. in one ad lib.) is the Borden's Irish maid. She may be a Banshee, called to wail at the Borden's door. She always seems to know what is going to happen, does things one step before anyone else. She's put upon, angry, and as resentful of the Borden sisters as she is of the parents.</p> <p>Bridget is the Sex Pistols rock and roll nihilist; ready to fuck things up because she knows that's the only way anything is ever going to get better.</p>
Alice	<p>(high mezzo lyric/mix/belt: G3 with F#3 pick-up/ghost-notes in one number- A5 legit soprano) is the Borden's next door neighbor. She is a luscious pear, the sensuous mother sister- lover which is sorely lacking in Lizzie's life. She appears to Lizzie in her greatest moments of need and attempts to lead her away from a path of destruction and toward one of love, truth, and affection.</p> <p>Lizzie may have true feelings of affection for her, or she may be using Alice's feelings to build an alibi.</p>