

## ***Barrington Stage Company Names Alan Paul as Artistic Director***

The nonprofit helped make the Berkshires a destination for culture lovers under Julianne Boyd, who is retiring.



By Matt Stevens

Aug. 3, 2022

The Barrington Stage Company announced Wednesday that Alan Paul, the associate artistic director of the Shakespeare Theater Company in Washington, will become its new artistic director, taking over the nonprofit theater company in Western Massachusetts known for producing notable new musicals and popular revivals and helping turn the Berkshires into a cultural oasis.

Paul, who has worked at Shakespeare Theater Company since 2007, will succeed Julianne Boyd, the Barrington Stage Company's co-founder, who is retiring at the end of the 2022 season after leading the company for 27 years.

Paul's programming for the theater company will begin with the 2023 season, officials said.

"He is an enormous talent, a successful director, a collaborative leader, invested in community and a champion of diversity and inclusion," Marita Glodt, the nonprofit's board president, said in a statement. "He has demonstrated his love of classics, musicals and new works and his extensive knowledge of the theatrical canon. He will honor the past and develop new and exciting programming for our audiences."

In a telephone interview, Paul said he has been a fan and audience member of the Barrington for many summers. "It's an incredible incubator for new plays and musicals by diverse voices," he said. "I come from a classical theater, but musical theater has been what I've done the most — what I love."

Paul added that he was looking forward to the opportunity, as an artistic director, to both reimagine older musicals and continue developing new ones. "I'm most excited about musicals that can push the whole genre forward," he said. "I want to be a part of that."

Asked to cite examples of such work, he pointed to a production of "Camelot" at the Shakespeare Theater Company in which he made some tweaks to the classic musical to focus more narrowly on the theme of democracy. In terms of new musicals, he said he had been inspired by "A Strange Loop," a meta-musical about a Black queer man and his art that won the Tony Award for best musical this year.

"One of my jobs at the theater is going to be to maintain the wonderful audience they have and bring some new people to the Berkshires," he said.

Under Boyd, the company expanded from what was once a modest nonprofit renting space at a high school in Sheffield, Mass., to what is now a five-building operation in Pittsfield, Mass. The company attracts more than 60,000 patrons each year, and it has staged a number of productions that have found success beyond the Berkshires, including "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," a revival of "On the Town" and "American Son," all of which played on Broadway.

Boyd, in her own statement, said she had "connected artistically" with Paul "from the moment I met him."

"I am so proud of the work we've done at B.S.C. in close to three decades," she said, "but it is time for someone to lead the theater in exciting new directions."

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A version of this article appears in print on , Section C, Page 2 of the New York edition with the headline: Barrington Stage Company Selects Its New Artistic Director