

A black and white photograph of a person running up a set of stairs. The person is seen from behind, wearing a dark t-shirt and shorts. The background is dark and blurred, suggesting a large, empty space like a stadium or arena. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights on the person's back and the stairs.

CHARLES M PEPITON

THEATRE & FILM DIRECTOR

THEATRE

THE SCENT OF A THOUSAND RAINS

ROMEO ∞ JULIET

COMING HOME: A SOLDIER'S PROJECT

WAITING FOR GODOT

BOOK OF HOURS

FILM

WITHOUT THEM I AM LOST

CLIMBING EROS

KOPPMOLL

LAURA, OR SCENES FROM A COMMON WORLD

CLICK ON TITLES & LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION

CHARLES M PEPITON

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I work as Producing Artistic Director at Square Top Theatre and Professor of Theatre & Dance at Gonzaga University in Spokane, WA.

As a director, I create new performance-based work and explore the potential for that work to engage across borders—between people and cultures, between methods and disciplines.

I cultivate projects that place divergent methods, media, aesthetics, and cultures in collaborative environments to create harmonies between seemingly dissonant parts. My work often revolves around questions of memory, place, and pilgrimage.

Directorial work for Square Top Theatre includes: *Without Them I Am Lost*, a feature-length documentary about a Norwegian community clinging to a fragile coastline in a rapidly changing world; *Climbing Eros*, a short documentary filmed in Greece about crossing distance and returning to earth; *Koppmoll*, a short documentary filmed in Norway about home, family, loss, and a nearly forgotten war; *The Scent of a Thousand Rains* by Damon Falke, a performance piece in verse for an actor and a violinist; and *Laura*, or Scenes from a Common World, an experimental film and gallery installation.

Directorial work for Gonzaga University includes: *Romeo ∞ Juliet*, the premiere of *Coming Home: A Soldiers' Project*, a site responsive production of Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, and an original, physical production based on Rilke's *Book of Hours*. [Read more about my teaching here.](#)

I served in the U.S. Peace Corps (China, 2010-12), where I directed cross-cultural productions of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest* at Guizhou University. The latter production was invited to perform as part of the Chinese Universities Shakespeare Festival in Hong Kong.

THE SCENT OF A THOUSAND RAINS

DIRECTED BY CHARLES M PEPITON | WRITTEN BY DAMON FALKE

OCTOBER 2019 & JUNE 2022 | SQUARE TOP THEATRE



*"I wonder if there is an exact moment
When I gave up the idea of permanence."*

The Scent of a Thousand Rains is a love story. The show is based on a book-length poem by Damon Falke and adapted for live performance by the ensemble. A man (Ryan Childers) finds himself alone in an apartment in Budapest. He peers from the window to discover a woman (Tana Bachman-Bland) standing on her balcony. Their unlikely connection sends him on a journey through his memories to reckon with the places and people that have ordered his life. A literary and musical exploration of a life lived in pursuit, the show suggests that perhaps in a life of transience and loss, love and imagination are the only things that remain to us and of us.

The Scent of a Thousand Rains, directed by Charles M Pepiton, is a performance piece in verse for an actor and a violinist. The music for the production was composed and arranged by Tana Bachman-Bland. It sits in the ancient tradition of solo versed performance with live music that connects us to Homer and the oldest forms of live theatre in the Western tradition.

[PERFORMANCE ARCHIVE LINK](#)

ROMEO ∞ JULIET

DIRECTED & ADAPTED BY CHARLES M PEPITON | WRITTEN BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

NOVEMBER 2019 | GONZAGA UNIVERSITY



An original, highly physical, ensemble-based, non-linear restructuring of Shakespeare's tragedy. This adaptation is about how a single event can be two very contradictory yet simultaneous moments. Juliet lives as she dies. She heals as she kills. Einstein tells us, "...all our judgments in which time plays a part are always judgments of simultaneous events," but what if we experienced time not as a line but as a continuous sequential loop? Consider time instead as a Möbius strip with no clear beginning or ending. Time moves at once forward and backward, the past hovering just below the future. What if we were to allow this dawn song to shift itself back into phase?

[PHOTO GALLERY LINK](#)

[VIDEO EXCERPT OF THE PRODUCTION LINK](#)

COMING HOME: A SOLDIER'S PROJECT

DIRECTED BY CHARLES M PEPITON | WRITTEN BY KATHLEEN JEFFS

FEBRUARY 2018 | GONZAGA UNIVERSITY



Coming Home: A Soldiers' Project was a premiere work of documentary theatre devised by the ensemble. The show was created from a decade of oral histories from veterans returning to campus from deployment. It explored the experiences of what it is like to return from war to study at Gonzaga. It is the story of transitions, of place and perception: from service to civilian, how our senses take in and process the new sights and sounds of the university environment. Small moves make big waves – connections are made and unmade. Our construction of the meaning of events, past and present, is made in moments of transition.

[PHOTO GALLERY LINK](#)

[VIDEO EXCERPT OF THE PRODUCTION LINK](#)

WAITING FOR GODOT

DIRECTED BY CHARLES M PEPITON | WRITTEN BY SAMUEL BECKETT

JUNE-SEPTEMBER 2017 | GONZAGA UNIVERSITY



A site-responsive production of *Waiting for Godot*, the show was staged outdoors at the Washington Cracker Building in downtown Spokane, WA. It was set against the railroad tracks and within an original installation by Washington D.C. based artist J.J. McCracken. In this setting, the production humorously raised questions about climate change, consumption, and our collective responsibility to act.

[PHOTO GALLERY LINK](#)

[VIDEO EXCERPT OF THE PRODUCTION LINK](#)

BOOK OF HOURS

DIRECTED BY CHARLES M PEPITON | BASED ON THE POETRY OF RAINER MARIA RILKE

FEBRUARY 2016 | GONZAGA UNIVERSITY



A physical theatre event staged in the round. The show was devised by the ensemble and based on *Book of Hours* by Rainer Maria Rilke. The production represents a collective pilgrimage in response to Rilke's search for fresh, workable metaphors and an understanding of the divine that resonates in our volatile world. *Book of Hours* featured collaborations with Rilke translator Joanna Macy and Alexandra Kazazou & Karol Jarek of Poland's Studio Matejka physical theatre laboratory.

[PHOTO GALLERY LINK](#)

[VIDEO EXCERPT OF THE PRODUCTION LINK](#)

WITHOUT THEM I AM LOST

FEATURE-LENGTH DOCUMENTARY FILM | DIRECTED BY CHARLES M PEPITON

2023 | SQUARE TOP THEATRE



Without Them I Am Lost is a meditation on landscape and the shape of home. The story follows American writer, Damon Falke, as he considers the implications of migrating to the far north of Norway, above the Arctic Circle. The people he finds thrive in this place. They understand the sublime power of nature. Their lives and stories are shaped by it. *Without Them I Am Lost* offers a glimpse into a community clinging to a fragile coastline in a rapidly changing world.

Digital | 73:38

[FULL FILM LINK](#)

Screener Pswd: Bedehus

[TRAILER LINK](#)

[EXTENDED TRAILER LINK](#)

CLIMBING EROS

EXPERIMENTAL DOCUMENTARY | DIRECTED BY CHARLES M PEPITON

2022 | SQUARE TOP THEATRE



Climbing Eros takes place on a Greek island in the Saronic Gulf. The short film explores the stages of pilgrimage through the eyes of director Charles M Pepiton and his young son who walk the island—from the deserted lighthouse on one end to the peak of Mt. Eros—whilst artist Rebekah Wilkins-Pepiton collects botanicals to create inks for painting. Each finds a means to reconcile with loss and return to the earth and to themselves. The film features two meditations written for the film by Damon Falke—one of confession, one of returning to materiality—that knit the threads of hiking and gathering around Jean-Luc Marion's notion that "Loving requires distance and the crossing of distance." The film features an original score composed by Tana Bachman-Bland. Edited by Darrien Mack.

Digital | 16:00

[FULL FILM LINK](#)

Screener Pswd: CrossingDistance

[TRAILER LINK](#)

KOPPMOLL

SHORT DOCUMENTARY | DIRECTED BY CHARLES M PEPITON

2020 | SQUARE TOP THEATRE



Koppmoll is a film that negotiates the border between documenting and storytelling. Filmed in the far north of Norway, we follow the writer Damon Falke as he visits a resident family whose lives have been touched by change and memories of World War II. While considering his own need for place, Falke is introduced to places and stories that speak of home, family, loss, and a nearly forgotten war. *Koppmoll* is about the act of turning over one stone and finding a world where lives and landscapes are inseparable, where history is present. *Koppmoll* is filmed by Wes Kline, written by Damon Falke, edited by Darrien Mack, with translation provided by Kristine Fostervold, and features music by Camilla Ammirati.

Digital | 30:31

[FULL FILM LINK](#)

Screener Pswd: Ettertanker

[TRAILER LINK](#)

[TEASER LINK 1](#)

[TEASER LINK 2](#)

LAURA, OR SCENES FROM A COMMON WORLD

EXPERIMENTAL SHORT FILM & GALLERY INSTALLATION | DIRECTED BY CHARLES M PEPITON

2016 | SQUARE TOP THEATRE



A cinematic poem combining visceral physicality, lyrical poetry, and evocative cinematography to tell the story of one woman's struggle to overcome her wounded past and her steps toward empathy. Inspired by Ovid's Apollo & Daphne myth, Laura struggles to root herself in a foreign land and to embrace the quiet consequence of the common world around her. Featuring contributions by writer Damon Falke, artist/musician Wes Kline, printmaker/producer Rebekah Wilkins-Pepiton, performer Alexandra Kazazou, and movement specialist Daniel Han.

Digital | 36:22

[FULL FILM LINK](#)

Screener Pswd: Metamorphoses

[TRAILER LINK](#)