

# 'A New Brain' opens in a new venue tonight

## Blackfriars puts on humorous spins on a deadly serious subject with "A New Brian"

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Blackfriars Theatre artistic director John Haldoupis saw *A New Brain*, William Finn's autobiographical musical about recovering from brain surgery, when it debuted at The Lincoln Center. "It's one of my all-time favorite shows."

So, of course, he's been wondering when and with what cast Blackfriars would do the show. With the company's move to its new theater at 795 E. Main St., the timing was right. And as a testament to the strong script and score written by James Lapine and Finn, Haldoupis says he has one of the strongest casts he's put together in 30 years.

"It's very fresh and very contemporary," Haldoupis says. Plus, while it doesn't pull any punches, the musical approaches a very serious situation with humor. The result is "life-affirming," especially to anyone who has faced a health crisis. Finn, a Tony Award winner for *Falsetto* and *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, was eating out at a restaurant when he literally collapsed into his meal.

The easy way out would be to write a story where the main character says he found that family and friends were most important. But in a very honest way, he struggles with what would happen if he lost his ability to create art.

The show opens at 8 p.m. today and repeats at 2 p.m. Sunday and then various times through May 22. Tickets are \$27 on weekends, \$25 on weekdays, with discounts for seniors and students. Call (585) 454-1260 or go to [www.blackfriars.org](http://www.blackfriars.org).