

# WORKING TITLE PLAYWRIGHTS

## THANK YOU

Name	Role
Edward Brown, Laura Chomiuk, Andrea Ghez, Stephen Zepf	Professors of Physics and Astronomy
Prakash Agrawal, Neil Patel	Planets & Telescopes Partners
<a href="#">Janelle Lawrence</a>	Musical Theatre Mentor
Alexis McKay	Original Stage Manager
Daniela Cobb*	SPT0615-JD
<a href="#">Minka Wiltz</a> *	Singularity
<a href="#">Vallea E. Woodbury</a>	Gravity
<a href="#">Jason-Jamal Ligon</a>	Cartwheel
<a href="#">Skye Passmore</a>	Whirlpool
Abby Holland	Triangulum
Daniel Sakamoto-Wengel	Andromeda
<a href="#">Evan Phillips</a>	Milky Way
Isake Akanke	Monday Night Development Workshops
Jeff Hathcoat	Readers*
Kate Jacoby	
Bryan Montemayor	
Lee Osorio <sup>2</sup>	
Mary Lynn Owen	
Sofia Palmero	
Lau'rie Roach	
Parris Sarter <sup>2</sup>	
Imani Vaughn-Jones <sup>2</sup>	



## DEVELOPMENT

Date	Type	Site	Specifics
2017	Idea	Michigan State	Edwin Loh's AST 308 Galaxies and Cosmology
2020 8-15	Writing	Working Title Playwrights	Addae Moon's Master Class, "Generating Story Idea"
2020 10-5	Reading	Working Title Playwrights	Monday Night Critique Sessions #1-3
2020 12-7	Reading	Working Title Playwrights	Monday Night Critique Sessions #17
2021 2-1	Reading	Working Title Playwrights	Monday Night Development Workshops #6-8

## SYNOPSIS

An astrophysics epic, ELLIPSES centers on the Galaxy family and their quest to undo the Big Bang, after a member sets it off. This coming-of-age musical follows a teenager and their dog running away from home. SPT0615-JD and Gravity, a tidal force, journey to the Edge of our Universe. The story explores the Big Crunch Theory and Hubble's Law, which states that Galaxies must distance from the Center. They are like human beings, as we want to get out and explore. The analogy is expressed through these cosmic personifications. The set has a Dome Home to represent the Center, the stage is space, and the fourth wall is the Edge. The Universe is told through the relative experience.

The teenage Galaxies begin their routine by scoping out the Edge ("[Bounce](#)"). Their parent calls them up for supper. Singularity nurtures them and their tidal dogs, but a child is missing at the table ("[Crunch](#)"). JD still looks out, tangentially wanting to go to the Edge ("[Cutting Edge](#)"). However, Singularity speaks of its perils and sends them to bed ("[Fixed Stars](#)"). Letting JD out of bed, Triangulum outlines their family values ("[Anomaly is Everything](#)"). Eager for a voyage anyways, JD finds Singularity's Big Bang Taser stashed under the rug, and deems the fabric of spacetime to be just as sturdy ("[Zilch](#)"). Later, Singularity assesses their children's black-hole hearts ("[Luminous](#)"). With this being the final straw, JD strikes their parent with the Big Bang Taser. Singularity goes lifeless. In the chaos, Gravity discreetly picks up Singularity's dislodged eye. Then, JD flees with Gravity to the Edge, but the Edge keeps distancing. It is like a rolled-up rug that JD keeps rolling away ("[Big Bang](#)").

Triangulum decides to journey out to the Edge with Andromeda. They instruct Cartwheel and Whirlpool to babysit Milky Way and feed the dogs. However, Cartwheel and Whirlpool heads out as well. Elsewhere, JD and Gravity are on an adventure ("[Verse](#)"). Soon, Cartwheel and Whirlpool decide to return home ("[Time is Relative](#)"). They come to find that Milky Way is missing and the dogs are unfed and upset ("[Spaghetti Horizon](#)"). Isolated and alone, Milky Way speaks to their planetary friends ("[Warp, Waves, and Wrinkles](#)"). Eventually, Triangulum and Andromeda find Milky Way in an exhausted state ("[Globular](#)"). Apparently, the Solar System has developed into a swelling. Despite Triangulum's objections, Andromeda comes to the aid of Milky Way. As a response, Milky Way becomes a Quasar ("[Fabric](#)").



A trillion years pass, and JD and Gravity are still traversing space. They find time to play fetch, and Gravity catches on JD's fugue. Through a stellar speech, Gravity explains that the point of return is far-fetched. When retrieving a star, Gravity accidentally fetches over Singularity's eye ("[Far-Fetched](#)").

From the Center, Singularity awakens ("[Point](#)").

In the following act, Singularity's backstory is evaluated as they ran away from their own Universe ("[Heat Death](#)"). Presently, JD and Gravity discuss their history as they know how to communicate. Soon, most siblings have clustered together ("[Bounce Back](#)"). They reach JD and Gravity, and take them in. JD dreams to do what their parent did ("[Apparent](#)"). Triangulum threatens to stop JD from doing so and Whirlpool destroys JD's scope ("[The Scope of Things](#)"). However, Gravity calls a wave of tidal forces to their location and they escape ("[Big Rip](#)"). Singularity comes to their rescue ("[It's About Spacetime](#)").

An eternity passes, and JD is lost more than ever without their scope. They have hit a wall while looking for the Edge. Gravity believes that one can overcome by relaxing ("[Parallax](#)"). In that spirit, the Edge unveils ("[Tangent](#)"). Surrounded by spectacles that reminds them of family, JD decides to head back and take the Edge with them. Gravity feels betrayed as they fought hard for the wide-open space, only for it to be a singularity again. They run away and JD is left returning home alone ("[...](#)"). JD tries to give back Singularity's eye when they return. However, Singularity cannot forgive JD. JD jumps off the Ellipse ("[Shed Light](#)"). In these millennia of grief, the siblings hold each other close ("[\\*](#)"). Singularity takes in their eye, restoring their depth perception. Singularity looks beyond. JD sheds light in an ellipse full of Galaxies. ("[Hearts in the Right Place](#)").

All of a sudden in JD's honor, Gravity returns with a wolfpack. The Galaxies and the tidal forces end time in this epic showdown ("[The Spaghettification of Zenith](#)"). When all is lost, Singularity and their Galaxies pray at their table in the Center of our Universe as the tidal forces consume them ("[Big Crunch](#)"). In the darkness, a bang is seen and heard again ("[Big Bounce](#)").

The supermassive heart of the story is the Big Bang Theory and finding oneself after it, as an anomaly and a family.



## CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

○ Androgyny and Astronomy ○

Character	Nature	Identity
<u>SINGULARITY</u> The relativistically impossible single parent. Singularity wants to keep the oneness of the Universe.	Super Infinite Black Hole	Adult
<u>GRAVITY</u> A tidal dog. Gravity wants to ground the wide-open space.	Tidal Force	Any
<u>SPT0615-JD</u> The distant galactic sibling. JD wants to shed light and be apparent to the lightless.	Embryonic Galaxy	Young Adult
<u>CARTWHEEL</u> The aerobic galactic sibling. Cartwheel wants to earn their ring.	Ring Galaxy	Teenager
<u>WHIRLPOOL</u> The anaerobic galactic sibling. Whirlpool wants to spiral into risk control.	Grand-Design Spiral Galaxy	Teenager
<u>TRIANGULUM</u> The jingoistic galactic sibling. Triangulum wants to be the role model.	Spiral Galaxy	Teenager
<u>ANDROMEDA</u> The scenic galactic sibling. Andromeda wants to find the pearl in this universal oyster.	Spiral Galaxy	Teenager
<u>MILKY WAY</u> The angelic galactic sibling. Milky Way wants to make themselves useful.	Barred Spiral Galaxy	Preteen

### Ensembles

<u>TIDALS</u>	<u>SOLAR SYSTEMS</u>	<u>MULTIPLICITIES</u>
	Sun (Singularity)	Invariant
	Earth (ensemble)	Fix
	Jupiter (Whirlpool)	Abell*
	Saturn (Cartwheel)	
	Uranus (Triangulum)	
	Eris (JD)	
	Oort Cloud (Andromeda)	

### BRIGHT IDEA\*

<u>ABELL 2261</u>	Elliptical Galaxy	Onlooker
An anomalous galactic sweetheart beyond the Edge of the Universe. Abell is JD's timely loved one in the audience. They may not have a heart or a supermassive black hole, much like the Multiplicities.		



## **TIDALS**

Tidals are tidal forces personified as canines. Over the course of the story, the dogs evolve into wolves.

The barks and woofs of Tidals are uttered by barking: "Force." Their howls are uttered by howling: "Fall." Singularity and most Galaxies cannot converse with the Tidals. Along JD's and Gravity's voyage to the Edge of the Universe, JD eventually understands the tidal language.

## **SOLAR SYSTEMS**

Solar Systems are celestial bodies that speak to Milky Way when they wander the Universe alone. They are like imaginary friends, before these planetary friends physically come to life as puppets and dancers. During the first act, they speak for several billion years (quarter-hour staging time) before the Sun becomes a red giant (zit). Any set of cast members may voice the general Solar System. The principal casts are marked in parentheses for convenient doubling.

## **MULTIPLICITIES**

Multiplicities are coupled Galaxies seated in the audience of the theatre. Invariant and Fix are Singularity's parents. Singularity was born and raised by them in another universe. In that Universe, Galaxies do not have a heart and are constantly shedding light. Singularity was an anomaly there, as they hold light within their inescapable heart. Big Bang Tasers are produced by these Multiplicities, as they are laws of physics enforcers in a universe made up entirely of electricity. In "Heat Death," the Multiplicities cry out for Singularity, after Singularity runs away to our Universe.

# MUSICAL NUMBERS

♯	Page	Title	Characters	◦Present but unvocal
1.	16	<a href="#">Bounce</a>	JD   CARTWHEEL   WHIRLPOOL   TRIANGULUM ANDROMEDA   MILKY WAY   SINGULARITY	
2.	24	<a href="#">Crunch</a>	SINGULARITY   CARTWHEEL   WHIRLPOOL   TRIANGULUM ANDROMEDA   MILKY WAY   JD   GRAVITY   <i>tidals</i>	
3.	25	<a href="#">Cutting Edge</a>	JD   CARTWHEEL   WHIRLPOOL   TRIANGULUM ANDROMEDA   MILKY WAY   GRAVITY   SINGULARITY	
4.	33	<a href="#">Fixed Stars</a>	SINGULARITY   WHIRLPOOL   JD   CARTWHEEL TRIANGULUM   ANDROMEDA   MILKY WAY	
5.	40	<a href="#">Anomaly is Everything</a>	TRIANGULUM   JD	
6.	43	<a href="#">Zilch</a>	JD   <i>tidals</i>	
7.	48	<a href="#">Luminous</a>	SINGULARITY   JD   CARTWHEEL   WHIRLPOOL TRIANGULUM   ANDROMEDA   MILKY WAY	
8.	50	<a href="#">Big Bang</a>	JD   SINGULARITY   GRAVITY   WHIRLPOOL   CARTWHEEL TRIANGULUM   ANDROMEDA   MILKY WAY   <i>tidals</i>	
9.	64	<a href="#">Verse</a>	JD   GRAVITY	
10.	74	<a href="#">Time is Relative</a>	CARTWHEEL   WHIRLPOOL	
11.	83	<a href="#">Spaghetti Horizon</a>	CARTWHEEL   WHIRLPOOL   <i>tidals</i>   SINGULARITY	
12.	90	<a href="#">Warp, Waves, and Wrinkles</a>	MILKY WAY   solar systems	
13.	96	<a href="#">Globular</a>	ANDROMEDA   TRIANGULUM	
14.	99	<a href="#">Fabric</a>	TRIANGULUM   ANDROMEDA   MILKY WAY   <i>tidals</i>	
15.	107	<a href="#">Far-Fetched</a>	GRAVITY   JD	
16.	112	<a href="#">Point</a>	SINGULARITY   multiplicities   <i>tidals</i>	
17.	116	<a href="#">Heat Death</a>	SINGULARITY   multiplicities	
18.	130	<a href="#">Bounce Back</a>	CARTWHEEL   WHIRLPOOL   TRIANGULUM   ANDROMEDA MILKY WAY	
19.	149	<a href="#">Apparent</a>	JD   ABELL	
20.	153	<a href="#">The Scope of Things</a>	TRIANGULUM   CARTWHEEL   WHIRLPOOL   MILKY WAY JD   GRAVITY   ANDROMEDA	
21.	156	<a href="#">Big Rip</a>	JD   GRAVITY   CARTWHEEL   WHIRLPOOL   TRIANGULUM ANDROMEDA   MILKY WAY   <i>tidals</i>	
22.	159	<a href="#">It's About Spacetime</a>	SINGULARITY   CARTWHEEL   WHIRLPOOL   TRIANGULUM ANDROMEDA   MILKY WAY	
23.	164	<a href="#">Parallax</a>	GRAVITY   JD	
24.	167	<a href="#">Tangent</a>	JD   GRAVITY	
25.	172	<a href="#">...</a>	GRAVITY   <i>tidals</i>   JD	



♯	Page	Title	Characters	◦Present but unvocal
26.	181	<a href="#">Shed Light</a>	JD   SINGULARITY   GRAVITY   TRIANGULUM CARTWHEEL   WHIRLPOOL   ANDROMEDA   MILKY WAY	
27.	185	<a href="#">*</a>	WHIRLPOOL   ANDROMEDA   CARTWHEEL   MILKY WAY TRIANGULUM   SINGULARITY	
28.	187	<a href="#">Hearts in the Right Place</a>	JD   SINGULARITY   TRIANGULUM   ANDROMEDA MILKY WAY   WHIRLPOOL   CARTWHEEL   ABELL multiplicities	
29.	188	<a href="#">(The Spaghetification of) Zenith</a>	GRAVITY   SINGULARITY   CARTWHEEL   WHIRLPOOL   TRIANGULUM   ANDROMEDA   MILKY WAY   tidals	
30.	196	<a href="#">Big Crunch</a>	SINGULARITY   WHIRLPOOL   CARTWHEEL   TRIANGULUM ANDROMEDA   MILKY WAY   tidals	
31.	199	<a href="#">Big Bounce</a>	COMPANY	
		<a href="#">Able</a>	ABELL	

## MUSICAL CHARACTERIZATIONS

SINGULARITY| The hums are the longing melodies in “Heat Death”:  
D3-5 B2-4 C#3-5 G#2-4 E2-4 F#2-4 G#2-4 F#2-4

TRIANGULUM| Associative Instruments: Triangle, Handbell

MILKY WAY| Associative Instrument: Cowbell (may be attached to  
Milky Way’s physicality or personality)

CARTWHEEL| Associative Instruments: Jingle Ring Tambourine,  
Jingle Bell

ABELL| Leitmotif from “Able” whenever Abell is focused upon.  
“Able” is in the second phrase in “Hearts in the Right Place.”



## SCENES

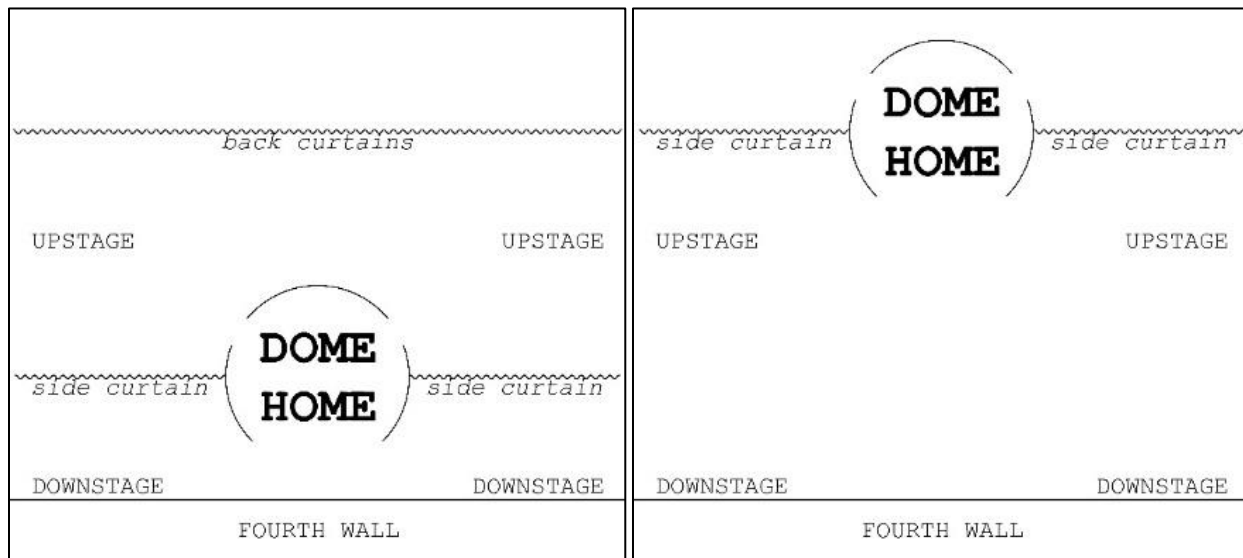
Act	Page	Location	SET props
Ii	15	The Center of the Universe	DOME HOME RUG(dark) SEATS(7) TABLE balls Big Bang Taser dishes knapsack monoculars(2) snow globe whoopie cushion
Iii	64	The Fabric of Spacetime	FIELD EQUATIONS (including $f = ma$ , $v = H_0 D$ , $\Delta t = (\Delta t_0) / \sqrt{1 - v^2 / c^2}$ ) knapsack magnolia flowers(2) monoculars(2)
Iiii	83	The Center of the Universe	DOME HOME RUG SEATS(6) TABLE Singularity's body glasses on the rug
Iiv	85	The Fabric of Spacetime	balls knapsack monoculars(2) dishes eyeball
Iv	112	The Center of the Universe	DOME HOME SEATS(1) TABLE RUG glasses on the rug
Iii	116	Singularity's Past Universe	DOME HOME Big Bang Taser fabric(dark)
Iiii	126	The Fabric of Spacetime	balls eyeball knapsack
Iiiii	141	The Continuum Checkpoint	3 DOMES[left: doghouse, central: sleeping quarters, right: command post] balls knapsack snow globe
Iiiv	161	The Fabric of Spacetime	FIELD EQUATIONS (including $d = 1 / p$ ) balls
Iiv	167	The Edge of the Universe	ENCHANTED AND SOFT UNIVERSE balls
Iivi	174	The Center of the Universe	DOME HOME RUG SEATS(6) TABLE Big Bang Taser mirror snow globe
III	199	A Fresh Universe	DOME HOME RUG SEATS(6) TABLE balls knapsack snow globe

## SETTINGS

## THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE

## Pre-Big Bang & Big Bounce

## Post-Big Bang



## OUR UNIVERSE (the stage)

