

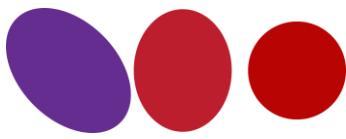


EL LIP SES

Book, Music, and Lyrics  
DAVID QUANG PHAM

[www.ellipsesplay.com](http://www.ellipsesplay.com)  
  [tumblr. @EllipsesPlay](#)

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## DAVID QUANG PHAM (he★him)



A musical theater science communicator who guides scientists to the fourth wall and theatre artists to the fourth dimension. Due to youthful trips to operas and space camp, he now writes love letters to science. His notable musicals personifying quantum mechanics, cosmology, and dimensions are respectively: [TOUR](#) (2020 DUAF finalist), [ELLIPSES](#), and [PARALLEL UNIVERSITY](#).

After completing an astrophysics and theatre education at Michigan State, he studied playwriting as the apprentice of [Working Title Playwrights](#) in Atlanta. He is the Literary Fellow of [Playwrights Foundation](#), San Francisco. Be up to lightspeed at <https://www.scitheatre.org/>

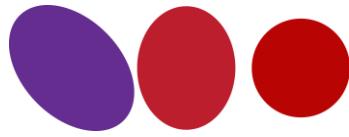
### ARTIST STATEMENT

As a Vietnamese American, I aspire to connect the Eastern and Western art forms. Having grown up in an Asian household, the only things my parents ever watched were Kunqu-like operas and Kabuki-esque theatre. Naturally, I compose on a pentatonic scale. Six notes are simple, yet when the instruments are primitive and folksy, the opera is suddenly elaborate. Our Universe may be minimal and plain, but dark matter makes up the universal plain after all. That nature provides complexity. It is difficult to unravel this traditional fabric of spacetime, but it is a challenge I accept.

As an artful scientist, science spins my creative process. I look for connections in my research. I traverse science communication through the human condition. In a Cyclotron, I felt that the quarks are also attaining a higher degree. At an Observatory, I noticed that the galaxies also felt aimlessly lost in our field. These personifications are amplified by my culture's inherent devotion to humanizing nature. For example, we like to personify wind as ghosts. My mind is astrophysical and astral spiritual. These aspects grant me the spirit of a science writer for musicals and operas.

As a scientific artist and artistic scientist, I make simple things complex and complex things simple. Respectively, that is how I have approached composition and science communication. And when I write fables, I imagine that my friends are the audience. Anyone who has enough curiosity to knock down the gatekeeping, I consider a friend. For any generation, the closest community to that sentiment are college students who are the most inclusive. They may ensure that my composition and science communication are grounded and stay authentic. I believe that universities are best suited to progress the musicals whose goals are to be universal.

Universities continuously expand into the terrain of science, art, and culture. Colleges have the collaborative orbits to assemble physicists from STEM, dramaturgs from the theatre department, and historians from the center of Asian studies. I strive to build community in each University, where these fields intersect and support one another. Not only do I foresee theatre artists and scientists reading these love letters to science but writing these alongside me.



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\*All texts highlighted in blue are hyperlinks

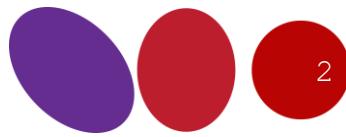
## SYNOPSIS

Spend an eternity in the family musical of epic proportions: ELLIPSES is a cosmology mythology that stars the Galaxy family and their dog Gravity as they face a life-changing event known as the Big Bang. Before the world that we have come to know, there lived a remote family of Galaxies. Singularity is the single parent who locked their six kids in the house. Milky Way is the baby sibling going through galactic puberty. JD is the oldest sibling looking to explore the Universe. This outgrown young adult is perfect for Gravity's manipulation. In a violent altercation, JD strikes down Singularity to run away with Gravity (aka the Big Bang). Without their parent, the teenage Galaxies must fend for themselves in the vastness of the cosmos. The chronology of our Universe is a family drama in play. The heart of its coming-of-age story is self-discovery as an anomaly.

## CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

○ Androgyny Astronomy ○      ○ Casting from historically excluded racial minorities is recommended ○

| <u>Character</u>  | <u>Nature</u>              | <u>Identity</u> |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>SINGULARITY</b><br>The relativistically impossible single parent.<br>Singularity wants to keep all the luminosity within the liminality.           | Super Infinite Black Hole  | Adult           |
| <b>GRAVITY</b><br>A tidal dog.<br>Gravity wants to ground and free up the wide-open space.  | Tidal Force                | Dog             |
| <b>SPT0615-JD</b><br>Singularity's oldest child. The prophetic galactic sibling.<br>JD wants to shed light and be apparent to their lightless legacy. | Embryonic Galaxy           | Young Adult     |
| <b>CARTWHEEL</b><br>Singularity's child. The aerobic galactic sibling.<br>Cartwheel wants to earn their ring.   | Ring Galaxy                | Teen            |
| <b>WHIRLPOOL</b><br>Singularity's child. The anaerobic galactic sibling.<br>Whirlpool wants to spiral into enlightenment.                             | Grand-Design Spiral Galaxy | Teen            |
| <b>TRIANGULUM</b><br>Singularity's child. The jingoistic galactic sibling.<br>Triangulum wants to be the role model.                                  | Spiral Galaxy              | Teen            |
| <b>ANDROMEDA</b><br>Singularity's child. The scenic galactic sibling.<br>Andromeda wants to find the pearl in our oysterous Universe.                 | Spiral Galaxy              | Teen            |
| <b>MILKY WAY</b><br>Singularity's youngest child. The angelic galactic sibling.<br>Milky Way wants their voice to be all that it is cracked up to be. | Barred Spiral Galaxy       | Preteen         |



## DEMOS

|   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1) “ <a href="#">Bounce</a> ” (Galaxy Family)                               | 1:47                    |
| ➤ “We Are” Dance Overture   |                         |
| 2) “ <a href="#">Crunch</a> ” (Singularity, Teen Galaxies)                  | 3:36                    |
| ➤ Choral Opening Number   |                         |
| 3) “ <a href="#">Cutting Edge</a> ” (SPT0615-JD, Galaxies)                  | 5:07                    |
| ➤ “I Want” Song   |                         |
| 7) “ <a href="#">Big Bang</a> ” (Singularity, Galaxies, Gravity, Tidals)    | 4:00                    |
| ➤ Production Number   |                         |
| 10) “ <a href="#">Anomaly is Everything</a> ” (Triangulum, Teen Galaxies)   | 4:02                    |
| ➤ Uptempo Number  |                         |
| 11) “ <a href="#">Time is Relative</a> ” (Cartwheel, Whirlpool)             | 9:19                    |
| ➤ Ballad Duet   |                         |
| 13) “ <a href="#">Warp, Waves, and Wrinkles</a> ” (Milky Way, Solar System) | 3:57                    |
| ➤ Showstopper   |                         |
| 19) “ <a href="#">Parallax</a> ” (Gravity, SPT0615-JD)                      | 2:24                    |
| ➤ Charm Number  |                         |
|   | Genre: Pop              |
|   | Genre: Kunqu Opera      |
|   | Genre: Experimental Pop |
|   | Genre: Metal            |
|   | Genre: Pop              |
|   | Genre: Psychedelic Pop  |
|   | Genre: Kunqu Opera      |
|   | Genre: Pop              |

## ORCHESTRA



...

# <sup>2</sup>**CRUNCH**

*(Singularity, Cartwheel, Whirlpool, Triangulum, Andromeda, Milky Way)*

DAVID QUANG PHAM

Adagio

SINGULARITY      E            A            E            G♯m            C♯m            B            A            E

Feed that hole in your heart.\_\_\_\_\_ Give in-to in-ter-nal dark-ness.\_\_\_\_\_



SINGULARITY      E            A            E            G♯m            A            E            B            E            E            A            E            G♯m

Shed our light for no one.\_\_\_\_\_ As it's Crunch Time, Ga-lax-ies.

Guitar      -      -      -      -      -      -      -      -      -      -      -



SINGULARITY      E            A            E            G♯m            C♯m            B            A            E

In black holes, dwell wis-dom.\_\_\_\_\_ Fed by the sprin-kles of star-dust.\_\_\_\_\_

Guitar      -      -      -      -      -      -      -      -      -      -      -



SINGULARITY      E            A            E            G♯m            A            E            B            E

Crush their dreams in your palm.\_\_\_\_\_ It is Crunch Time, my ba-bies.

Guitar      -      -      -      -      -      -      -      -      -      -      -

2

CARTWHEEL  
WHIRLPOOL  
TRIANGULUM  
ANDROMEDA  
MILKY WAY

19 A E B E E E B C# G#

Con-sume\_\_\_\_ star sy stems. Con-sume\_\_\_\_ worlds

Guitar



SINGULARITY  
CARTWHEEL  
WHIRLPOOL  
TRIANGULUM  
ANDROMEDA  
MILKY WAY

24 E E B C# G# C# E

String

C#m G#m

that teem. Con-sumed\_\_\_\_ by thoughts of\_\_\_\_ fam-i-ly. Fam-i - ly...\_\_\_\_

Guitar



SINGULARITY  
CARTWHEEL  
WHIRLPOOL  
TRIANGULUM  
ANDROMEDA  
MILKY WAY

29 E C#m E E C#m C#m E

by string\_ in theor - y. And fa- bric by space - time fa bric. Hold

Guitar



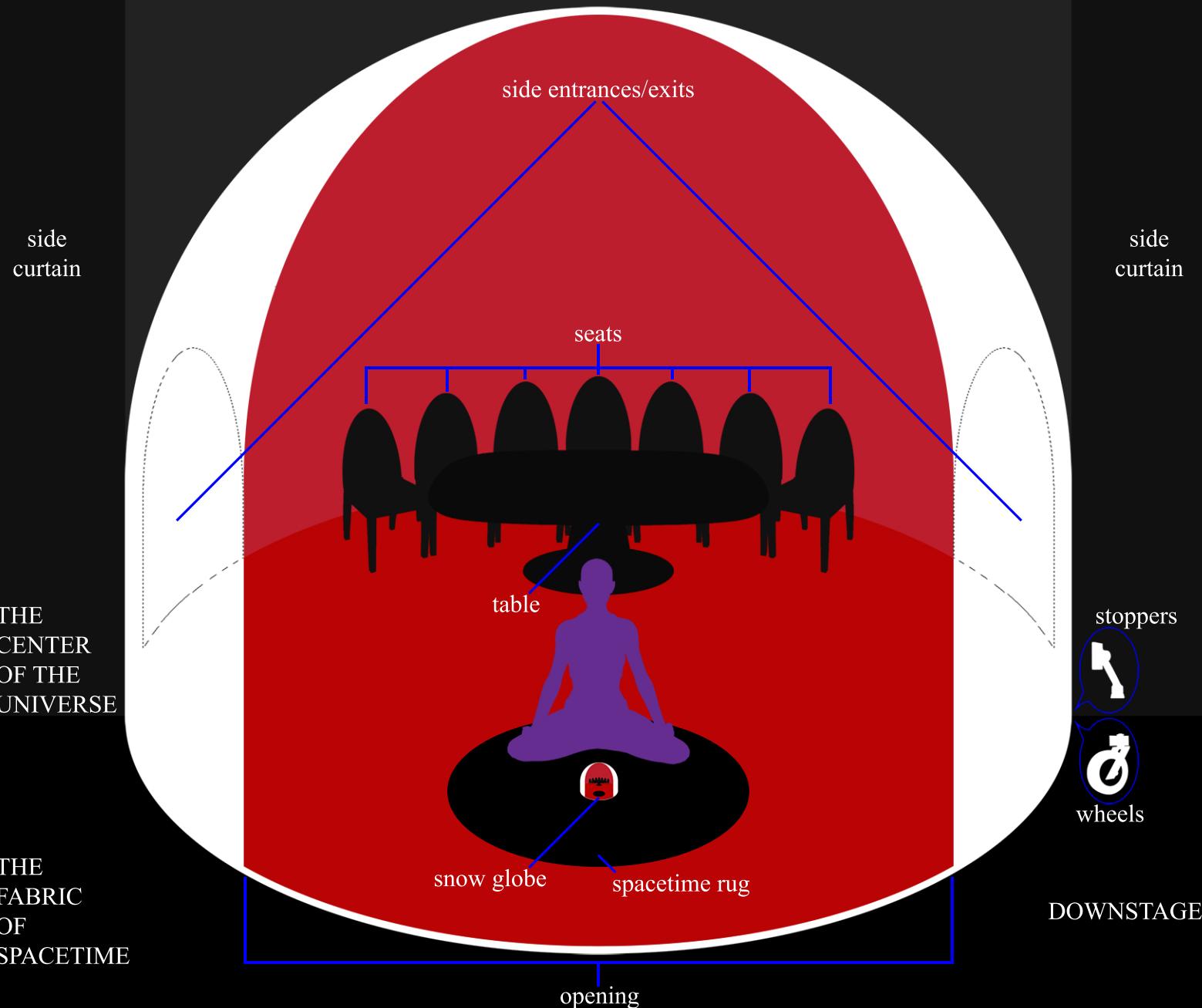
SINGULARITY  
CARTWHEEL  
WHIRLPOOL  
TRIANGULUM  
ANDROMEDA  
MILKY WAY

33 A B F#m A B E E A

our love\_ as a whole. It is Crunch\_\_\_\_ Time, we\_be - lieve.

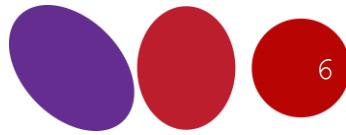
Guitar

# THE ELLIPSES / DOME HOME



THE EDGE OF THE UNIVERSE

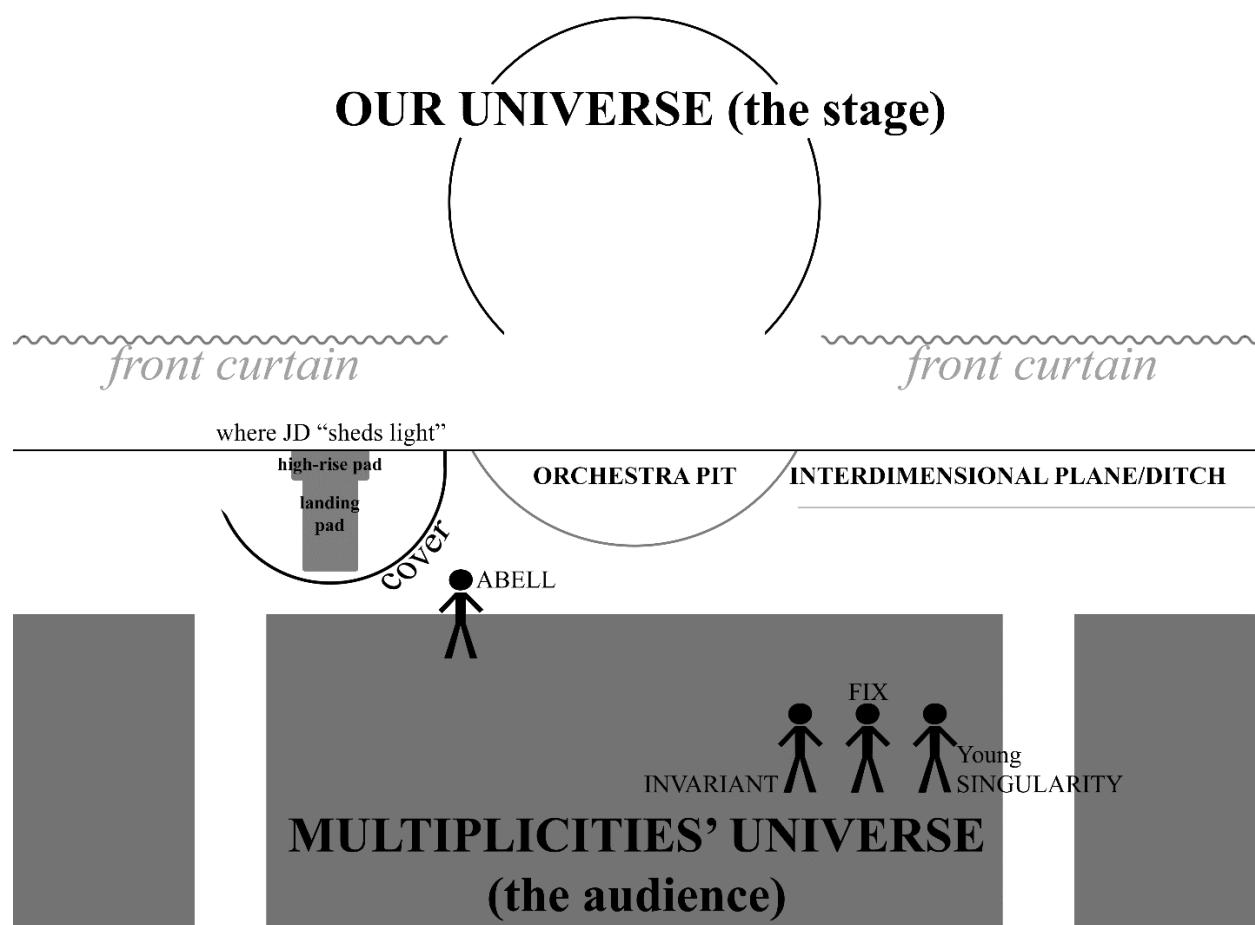
FOURTH WALL



## SET DESIGN

The Ellipse functions as a singularity to Singularity. This is where the Universe will have order and where everything can be accounted for. After the Big Bang, the Ellipse remains symbolic of the legendary “Center of the Universe.”

The inspiration for the Ellipse or the Dome Home is mainly from the worldwide isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic. In geometry, ellipses are ovals. The oval-shaped Galaxies are the occupants of this household. In linguistics, ellipses indicate omissions. This household is remote. The Ellipse may have been more representative of the “alienation effect” prior to the pandemic. The benefit of the post-pandemic era of isolation is that this household is more relatable. Many in Generation Z moved back to their parents to make ends meet in skyrocketing unemployment. It does not help when siblings are returning home, too.



## DEVELOPMENT

- August 2020 — July 2021: Working Title Playwrights New Play Development and Dramaturgy Apprenticeship
  - October 5, 2020: [Reading with Talkback](#) of the first scenes
  - December 7, 2020: [Reading with Talkback](#) of the first scenes of the second act
  - February 1, 2021: [Reading with Talkback](#) of the Big Bang
  - May 3, 2021: [Reading with Talkback](#) of Milky Way's arc
  - July 15, 2021: [Concert Reading with Talkback](#) directed by [Aliyah Curry](#)
- June — October 2021: Theater Resources Unlimited Workshops
  - June 13, 2021: How to Write a Musical That Works – Part One: The World and the Want [Workshop with Talkback](#)
  - October 17, 2021: How to Write a Musical That Works – Part Two: Conflict and Obstacles [Workshop with Talkback](#)
- October 2021: Universities
  - October 19, 2021: [Showcase with Talkback](#) at Durban University of Technology

Working Title Playwrights Apprenticeship presents  
a concert reading of a science musical about family

A LIP SES

Book, Music, and Lyrics by DAVID QUANG PHAM  
Dramaturgy by JORDAN ALEXANDRIA EALEY  
Directed by ALIYAH CURRY  
Managed by ALEXIS MCKAY  
Moderated by AMBER BRADSHAW  
Narrated by SOFIA PALMERO  
Performed by the Star-Studded Cast

ONLINE VIA ZOOM  
THURSDAY, JULY 15, 2021  
SHOW · 6:30PM ET | TALKBACK · 9PM ET  
[ELLIPSESPLAY.COM](#)



PARRIS SARTER  
Singularity



VALLEA E. WOODBURY  
Gravity



DANIELA COBB  
SPT0615-JD



JASON-JAMAL LIGON  
Cartwheel



SKYE PASSMORE  
Whirlpool



ABBY HOLLAND  
Triangulum



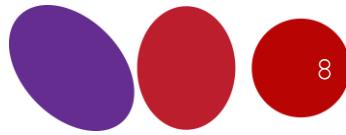
DANIEL SAKAMOTO-WENGEL  
Andromeda



EVAN PHILLIPS  
Milky Way



KAIT RIVAS  
Tidals



# OBJECTIVES

## Quarterly-Semiannual Readings



## High School - University Outreach and Engagement (Target Market)

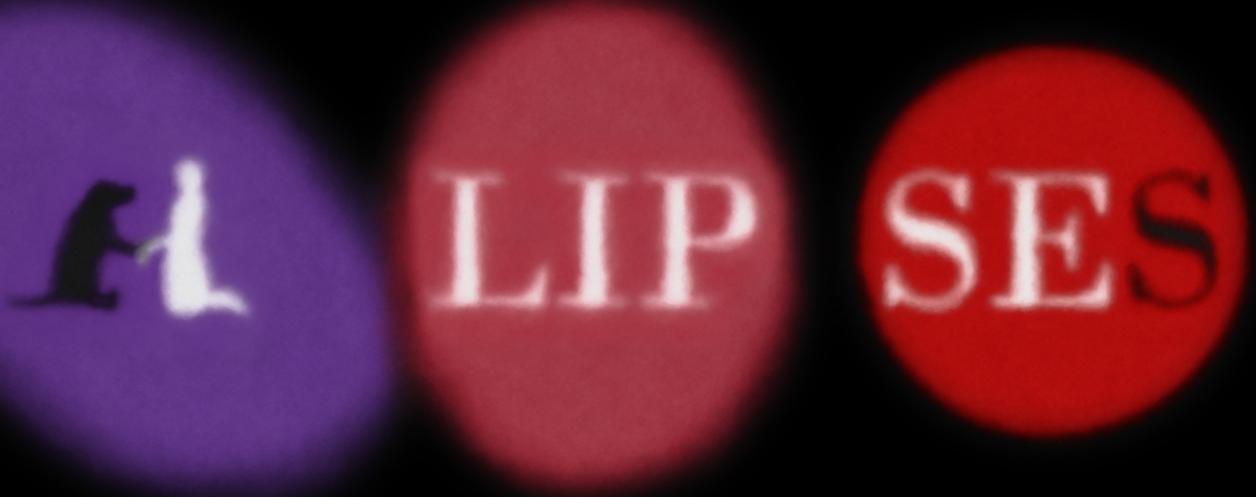


The material is astrophysics. The words on the page do not convey the entropy, the collisions, and the movement of the Galaxies, quite like workshop productions. ELLIPSES strives to have its overall coming-of-age theme be more relatable. The University's theatre departments will focus on the theories of theatre, while our writer focuses on the laws of physics.

ELLIPSES strives to:

- Support the educational needs of theatre students
- Form connections between dramaturgs and scientists
- Encourage fruitful collaborations beyond the classrooms
- *Give teachers and professors a break from lecturing by sending their students off to go see a live science experiment in action*

# AUTHOR'S CONTACT



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