

# OPERA AMERICA

Working Title Playwrights  
David Quang Pham

## ELLIPSES

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*IDEA Opera Grants - 2021-2022*

### *Working Title Playwrights*

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Mr David Quang Pham  
1140 Alger St SW  
Wyoming, MI 49509

O: 616-818-5413

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## Application Form

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### *IDEA Opera Grants*

*Supported by the Charles and Cerise Jacobs Charitable Foundation*

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August 11, 2021: Intent to apply deadline  
September 22, 2021: Application deadline  
October 2021: Adjudication  
November 2021: Notification

For more information, please refer to the grant guidelines [here](#).

Contact Diana Hossack, grantmaking associate, at [DHossack@operaamerica.org](mailto:DHossack@operaamerica.org) for questions.

### *Applicant Information*

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#### **Lead Applicant First Name\***

David Quang

#### **Lead Applicant Last Name\***

Pham

#### **Lead applicant team role\***

Composer

#### **Lead applicant bio\***

*The biography should be narrative and limited to 1,000 characters. The resume should be uploaded as a PDF.*

David Quang Pham (he/him) is a galaxy-class astronomer and songwriter. After completing an astrophysics and theatre education at Michigan State, they studied under Working Title Playwrights' Apprenticeship in Atlanta. This passion for astronomy and theatre manifested from trips to space camp and operas as a kid. He plays the modern sackbut. In high school, he wrote his first musical (MATHLAND) for a Calculus project. He has been drafting musical love letters to science ever since. Janelle Lawrence is his musical mentor. Since college, David has been working on a particle physics opera. TOUR revolves around subatomic educators who collide and compete in the academic Accelerator and is a 2020 Downtown Urban

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Arts Festival finalist. His songs have been performed at Cabaret on the Couch, Musical Theatre Factory, and Play Cafe. He traverses science communication through the human condition.

## Teammate First Name, if applicable

*[Unanswered]*

## Teammate Last Name, if applicable

*[Unanswered]*

## Teammate role

*[Unanswered]*

## Teammate bio

*The biography should be narrative and limited to 1,000 characters. The resume should be uploaded as a PDF.*

## Teammate Email

*[Unanswered]*

## Work Samples

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*Work samples are one of the most important parts of this application. Your work samples represent the artistic merit of your work and the work of your collaborators.*

*If available, you are encouraged to submit excerpts from the work for which you are requesting support. If you do not have samples from that work, please provide samples that demonstrate your ability to write in the genre/style of the proposed work.*

### Composer

*Please provide two work samples for the composer that reflect the best work of the artists involved (audio, video, and/or score or chart samples). Media samples can be Vimeo, YouTube, or SoundCloud links.*

*Although no previous experience with opera is required, we are interested in hearing any vocal music you might have written and if possible, would like to get some sense of your notational skills (e.g., scores, chord charts, or other graphic representation of your music).*

*The total timing of the musical selections should not exceed 20 minutes. Trim samples to the specific excerpt that you would like to be reviewed. If you are not trimming the samples as suggested above, clearly mark the timings in*

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*the notes (e.g., Play from 3'22"–7'49").*

*MIDI recordings are permitted but not recommended. For any questions about work samples, please contact Diana Hossack, grantmaking associate, at [DHossack@operaamerica.org](mailto:DHossack@operaamerica.org).*

## **SAMPLE 1**

### **Sample 1 title\***

"Crunch" · ELLIPSES

### **Sample 1 A/V link\***

<https://www.ellipsesplay.com/music/2-crunch>

### **Sample 1 A/V password (if necessary)**

### **Sample 1 composer\***

David Quang Pham

### **Sample 1 librettist (if applicable)**

David Quang Pham

### **Sample 1 description/annotation\***

Please include roles, voicing, and information about this work sample and credit performing artists (e.g., soprano Sally Singer, bass Bobby Baritone).

If not excerpting, please include timings for guided listening.

Minka Wiltz, Jason-Jamal Ligon, Skye Passmore, Abby Holland, Daniel Sakamoto-Wengel, Evan Hill Phillips

### **Sample 1 score or chart (optional)**

Upload the score/chart below and provide any relevant notes about the score here.

## **SAMPLE 2**

### **Sample 2 title\***

"Warp, Waves, and Wrinkles" · ELLIPSES

### **Sample 2 A/V link\***

[https://www.ellipsesplay.com/music/13-warp\\_waves\\_and\\_wrinkles](https://www.ellipsesplay.com/music/13-warp_waves_and_wrinkles)

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## Sample 2 A/V password (if necessary)

### Sample 2 composer\*

David Quang Pham

## Sample 2 librettist (if applicable)

David Quang Pham

## Sample 2 description/annotation\*

Please include roles, voicing, and information about this work sample and credit performing artists (e.g., soprano Sally Singer, bass Bobby Baritone).

If not excerpting, please include timings for guided listening.

Evan Hill Phillips, Daniel Sakamoto-Wengel, Daniela Cobb, Abby Holland, Jason-Jamal Ligon, Skye Passmore, Minka Wiltz

## Sample 2 score or chart (optional)

Upload the score/chart below and provide any relevant notes about the score here.

### Librettist

*Please attach two writing samples (in PDF format only), limited to 20 pages in total (e.g., you may include one 8-page sample and one 12-page sample). Although no previous experience with opera is required, we are especially interested in seeing any lyrics, poetry, or theater work you may have written.*

### SAMPLE 3

### Sample 3 title\*

"Bounce" — "Crunch" · ELLIPSES

## Sample 3 A/V link

## Sample 3 A/V password (if necessary)

### Sample 3 composer

David Quang Pham

## Sample 3 librettist (if applicable)

David Quang Pham

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## Sample 3 description/annotation

Please include roles, voicing, and information about this work sample and credit performing artists (e.g., soprano Sally Singer, bass Bobby Baritone).

If not excerpting, please provide timings for guided listening.

### SAMPLE 4

#### Sample 4 title

"Warp, Waves, and Wrinkles" · ELLIPSES

#### Sample 4 AV Link

#### Sample 4 A/V passwork (if necessary)

#### Sample 4 composer

David Quang Pham

#### Sample 4 librettist (if applicable)

David Quang Pham

#### Sample 4 upload

Please include roles, voicing, and information about this work sample and credit performing artists (e.g., soprano Sally Singer, bass Bobby Baritone).

If not excerpting, please include timings for guided listening.

## *Personal Statement*

### Personal statement\*

What inspires you creatively? Why have you chosen this subject matter? Why did you choose to tell this story as an opera?

I grew up in an Asian household. All my parents ever watched were Eastern operas and Kabuki-esque theatre. So naturally, I compose on a pentatonic scale. As opposed to an eight-note diatonic scale in Western music, six notes are simple. Yet, if the instruments are primitive and the theme of the story is folksy, the opera is suddenly elaborate. The Universe I live in is minimal; it sounds plain. So, the universal plain is mostly dark matter (silence). That nature provides complexity. It is difficult to unravel this traditional fabric of spacetime. It is a challenge I accepted. I strive to unroll my culture's artistic scroll. As a Vietnamese American, I aspire to connect the Eastern and Western art forms.

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As an artful scientist, I make these connections by writing love letters to science. Science spins my creative process. I look for connections in my research in any branch of physics, particularly as a college student. At the Cyclotron, I felt that the quarks are also trying to attain a higher degree. In the Observatory, I noticed that the galaxies also felt aimlessly lost in our field. And these personifications are amplified and made special by my culture's inherent devotion to humanizing nature. We love to turn wind into ghosts. My mind is astrophysical and astral spiritual. These aspects grant me the spirit of the science musical writer.

## Overview

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### Work title\*

Title or working title of the opera in development

ELLIPSES

*Please update these fields if anything has changed since you submitted the intent to apply.*

### Work summary\*

*Submit a plot summary of the work associated with the application.*

ELLIPSES is an epic science mythology about family, child development, and adulthood. ELLIPSES stars Singularity and their teenage Galaxies and follows their quest to undo the Big Bang, after Gravity (the family dog) sets it off.

Every character is named after a celestial object. Singularity is the single parent who locked their kids in the house. Milky Way is the baby sibling who is going through galactic puberty. SPT0615-JD is the rebellious young adult who wants to leave home to go explore the Universe. JD is sick and tired of being stuck in the house with their family. In a violent altercation, JD shoots Singularity to run away from home with Gravity (aka the Big Bang). Without their parent, the younger siblings are left to fend for themselves in the vastness of the cosmos. These Galaxies spend the rest of time looking for their missing oldest sibling. The supermassive heart of this coming-of-age story is self-discovery in isolation...

### Project activity type\*

Workshop

### If "Other," describe here.

### Project description\*

*Describe the specific activities for which funding will be used.*

ELLIPSES will have its first live workshop. We strive to preview the first half-hour of ELLIPSES up to the Big Bang, viewed by an invited audience, including the University of Maryland. The talkback may be led by their UMD doctoral dramaturg, Ealey.

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The unique sciart blend and spiritual allegory will incentivize a space in Washington D.C.. On February 2021, Chacon's ViOp Productions filmed Musical Monuments, the African American Concert Tradition in collaboration with St. Augustine's Episcopal Church: <https://youtu.be/mj61UdV1cTs>. In partnership with ViOp, a performing company, we plan to hold an event on February 2022, coinciding with Black History Month and Lunar New Year.

An IDEA Opera Grant will help cover the venue rental for two rehearsals and the workshop. It will compensate 16 team members (dramaturg, stage manager, music director, stage director, ten vocalists, and two understudies), and cover the cost of travel and housing for the creative team from New York.

## Proposed project start date\*

*Funding may not be applied to expenses incurred before December 1, 2021.*

01/01/2022

## Proposed project end date\*

*Grant-funded activities must be completed by December 31, 2022.*

03/01/2023

## Creative Team

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*Please name any other creative or performing artists associated with this project, if known at this time (e.g., stage director, music director, lighting designer, dramaturg).*

*You are not required to have a full creative team in place at this time.*

### Creator name

Jay Lucas Chacon

### Creator role

*(e.g., stage director, music director, lighting designer, dramaturg)*

Facilitator

### Creator bio

*You may choose to upload your teammate's resume in PDF format, provide a brief bio (1,000 characters or less), and/or share a link to their website here.*



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Jay is the founder/director of ViOp Productions, a virtual performing company producing work and opportunities through virtual medium, creating opera on film, filmed concerts and online recitals, and virtual readings. He produced and performed with tenor John Riesen in a duet recital Crossing Paths, Rodolfo in a socially distanced film version of La bohème Act 3 by Leoncavallo, The Spirit of Christmas; a holiday special. and as Anatoly in The CHESS Project. Jay also conceived and produced An American's Journey; a monodrama of Aaron Copland's Old American Songs, directed a film of Mascagni's Zanetto, and a recital of African American music featuring soprano Stephanie Ball on location in Washington DC. Upcoming productions with ViOp are The Strong Ones, a series of music videos focusing on mental and emotional health, and ViOp's annual Christmas Special. [<https://www.jaylucaschacon.com>] [<https://www.vioproductions.com/>]

## Creator 2 name

Jordan Alexandria Ealey

## Creator 2 role

*(e.g., stage director, music director, lighting designer, dramaturg)*

Dramaturg

## Creator 2 bio

*You may choose to upload your teammate's resume in PDF format, provide a brief bio (1,000 characters or less), and/or share a link to their website here.*

Jordan Alexandria Ealey (they/she) is a dramaturg, theatre artist, and scholar who divides their time between Atlanta, GA and the Washington, D.C./Baltimore area. As a dramaturg, Jordan specializes in new play and musical development; her work has been seen with places such as Synchronicity Theatre, Theatrical Outfit, Working Title Playwrights, and Hush Harbor Lab. Jordan co-hosts and co-produces Daughters of Lorraine, a podcast on black theatre from a black feminist perspective, which is supported by HowlRound Theatre Commons. A proud artist-scholar, Jordan is pursuing a PhD in Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park, where they research black women-authored musicals from the nineteenth century to the present. Jordan is most passionate about advocating for marginalized theatre artists and hopes to continue to do so in their career.

## Creator 3 name

*[Unanswered]*

## Creator 3 role

*(e.g., stage director, music director, lighting designer, dramaturg)*

*[Unanswered]*

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## Creator 3 bio

*You may choose to upload your teammate's resume in PDF format, provide a brief bio (1,000 characters or less), and/or share a link to their website here.*

## Creator 4 name

### Creator 4 role

*(e.g., stage director, music director, lighting designer, dramaturg)*

## Creator 4 bio

*You may choose to upload your teammate's resume in PDF format, provide a brief bio (1,000 characters or less), and/or share a link to their website here.*

## Work Information

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### Roles\*

*For example, in an opera adaptation of The Avengers, a cast list might look like this: Captain Marvel, Soprano; Black Widow, Mezzo-Soprano; Spiderman, Tenor; Black Panther, Baritone; The Hulk, Bass. For a list of common voice types in opera, please click [here](#). You are welcome to include non-traditional/alternate voice types, and may explain those choices below.*

Singularity, Gravity, SPT0615-JD, Cartwheel, Whirlpool, Triangulum, Andromeda, Milky Way,

### Chorus\*

*If applicable, indicate the number of singers in the chorus by voice type (e.g., Soprano: 4, Alto: 2, Tenor: 6, Bass: 1).*

Mezzo-Soprano—Soprano: 1, Baritone—Tenor: 1

### Instrumentation\*

*Please list the instruments you will utilize in your work (e.g., "I will write for 1 piano, 1 violin, 1 viola, 1 cello, and 1 Iranian santur").*

I have written and will write for 1 piano, etc.

### Provide a scenic breakdown of the opera\*

You may use either a character/scene breakdown, storyboard, or dramaturgical outline that narrates the theatrical arc of the work. Please refer to [this link](#) for examples.

<https://www.ellipsesplay.com/about/ellipses-set.pdf>

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## Libretto (optional)

*Please upload as much of the libretto as is available. A partial or libretto outline is acceptable.*

<https://www.ellipsesplay.com/script>

## Intellectual property\*

*"Existing work" includes items such as a novel, short story, film, or life story. Please select the appropriate choice from the drop down menu below.*

This is my own original work.

## Rights documentation

*If the work is based on an existing work protected by copyright, please attach rights documentation or outline the timeline and process for securing the rights. Rights must be secured by the adjudication of applications. If rights documentation is not available now, please email it to Diana Hossack, grantmaking associate, by October 1, 2021. Otherwise, your application will be deemed incomplete and unable to proceed to the adjudication phase.*

## Project Information

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### Timeline\*

*Provide a timeline for the development of the work, including the activities for which you are requesting funding. An example of a timeline is included below for your reference.*

*January 2021: Creative team meeting with composer, librettist, and dramaturg*

*March 2021: Libretto reading*

*April – October 2021: Revisions to the libretto, completion of excerpts or full piano/vocal score for workshop*

*Late October 2021: Piano/vocal workshop (5 days), recorded by OPERA America videographers (day 6)*

*Post-workshop: Creative design meeting with the stage director, librettist, composer, and media designer*

***This is an example. Your timeline may include other activities.***

January 2022: Creative team meeting with author, stage director, dramaturg

February 2022: 2 rehearsals & 30-minute Workshop

Post-workshop: Creative team meeting with author, stage director, dramaturg

### Budget\*

*IDEA Opera Grants fund up to \$12,500 of your project. Please use the budget worksheet [here](#) to provide your budget. Upload it as an Excel document.*

*This budget worksheet covers many possible expenses and you do not need to complete every line. There are five "Other" lines in each budgetary section to add other expenses.*

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## Total requested funding\*

*Please indicate your total request below. You may request up to \$12,500.*

## Other

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### Is this your first time applying to an OPERA America grant program?\*

Yes

### From which organization did you hear about this grant opportunity?\*

OPERA America

### If Other, please specify.

#### Through which channel?\*

Please select all that apply.

Other

### If Other, please specify.

IDEA was discovered in 2020 before the application deadline and after the LOI deadline.

## Confirmation

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### Lead applicant signature\*

By typing your name below, you acknowledge that the information contained in this application and its attachments is accurate and complete.

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## File Attachment Summary

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### *Applicant File Uploads*

*No files were uploaded*

2021–2022 IDEA Opera Grants Budget Worksheet		
Composer [David Quang Pham]		
Librettist(s) [David Quang Pham]		
ELIGIBLE EXPENSES		
Item	Notes	Cost
Vocalist fees		
Instrumentalist fees		
Music director		
Conductor		
Dramaturg		
Stage director		
Vocal coach		
Sound designer		
Rehearsal venue fees		
Performance venue fees		
Stage manager		
Lighting rental		
Sound equipment rental		
Instrumental cartage		
Graphic design		
Web design		
Printed programs		
Child care		
Elder care		
Research materials		
Transportation for creative personnel		
Transportation for performers		
Housing for creative personnel		
Housing for performers		
Other 1		
Other 2		
Other 3		
Other 4		
Other 5		
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES		
Item	Notes	Cost
Composer commissioning fee		
Librettist commissioning fee		
Living expenses		
General administrative expenses		
Tuition expenses		
Professional development fees		
Fundraising expenses		
Ticket subsidies		
Set, costume or properties construction		
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>

**2021–2022 IDEA Opera Grants Budget Worksheet, Continued**

Composer [David Quang Pham]

Librettist(s) [David Quang Pham]

<b>Eligible Expenses</b>	\$0.00
<b>Ineligible Expenses</b>	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	\$0.00

**INCOME**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Anticipated</b>	<b>Received</b>
OPERA America grant		
Ticket sales (if applicable)		
Other grant 1		
Other grant 2		
Other grant 3		
Individual donation		
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>

<b>Total Expense</b>	\$0.00
<b>Total Income</b>	\$0.00
<b>Net Profit/Loss</b>	\$0.00