



EL LIP SES

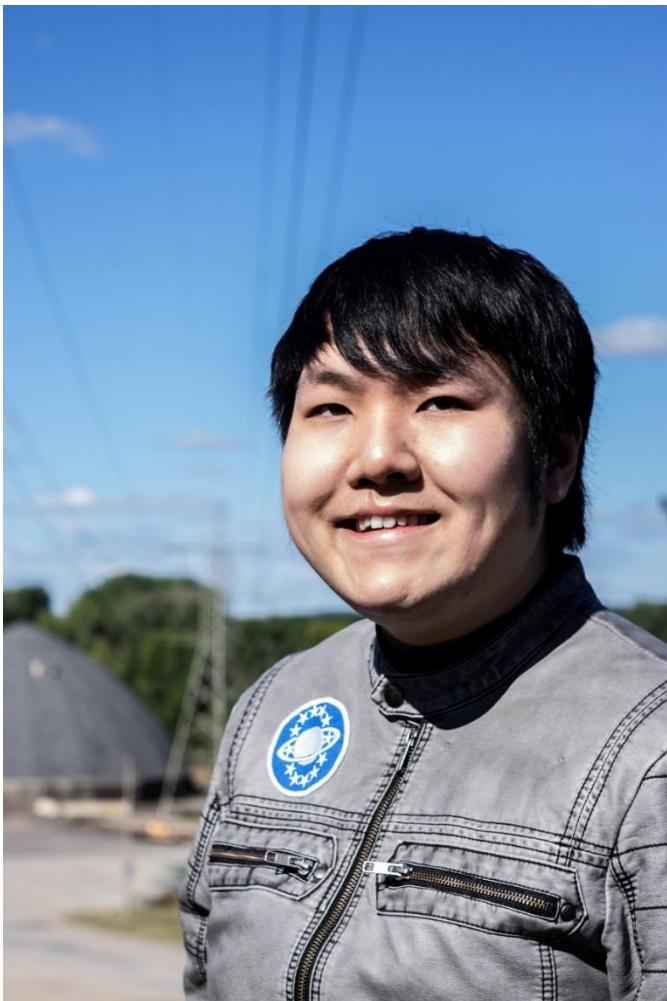
Book, Music, and Lyrics
DAVID QUANG PHAM

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

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DAVID QUANG PHAM (he★him)



David writes love letters to science through musicals.

His astronomical and theatrical interests manifested as a child, with trips to space camp and operas. In middle and high school, he delved into music theory and played the modern sackbut. The nerdy persona remained, and the artistic talents dwelled into his collegiate years. As he was finishing his bachelor's thesis, his sister informed him that his high school calculus teacher had been annually sharing his musical. During his junior year of high school, he wrote MATHLAND for their winter project. He returned to musical writing on the side. Soon, he uncovered his niche: science communication through the human condition.

Now, he is a science dramaturg from Wyoming, Michigan. He is the recipient of the 2020-2021 New Play Development and Dramaturgy Apprenticeship for [Working Title Playwrights](#) in Atlanta. He practices professional new development dramaturgy under LMDA. He is a founding member of the Expert's Theater Company. A member of ΣΠΣ, ASCAP, and the Dramatists Guild, he attained an astrophysics degree with a minor in theatre at Michigan State University.

Since college, he has been working on a particle physics fable. [TOUR](#) revolves around Quark, Lepton, Boson, and Atom. This opera has these subatomic educators collide and compete with one another in the academic Accelerator.

As an artistic scientist, he theorizes that science and art are not two sides of the same coin. Science and art make the coin. He spins this superposition.

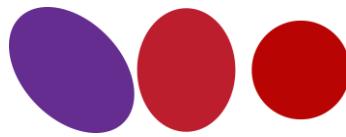


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*All texts highlighted in blue are hyperlinks to files

THANK YOU

Name	Role
Edward Brown, Danny Caballero, Professors of Physics and Astronomy	
Daniel Smith, Denise Troutman	Professors of Theatre or Writing
<u>Janelle Lawrence</u>	Musical Theatre Mentor
<u>Emily McClain</u>	First Reader
<u>Alexis McKay</u>	Originated Fireworks/Stage Manager
<u>Jordan Alexandria Ealey</u>	Originated Hat/Dramaturg
<u>Aliyah Curry</u>	Originated Butterfly/Director
<u>Minka Wiltz*</u>	Originated Singularity
<u>Vallea E. Woodbury</u>	Originated Gravity
<u>Daniela Cobb*</u>	Originated SPT0615-JD
<u>Jason-Jamal Ligon</u>	Originated Cartwheel
<u>Skye Passmore</u>	Originated Whirlpool
<u>Abby Holland</u>	Originated Triangulum
<u>Daniel Sakamoto-Wengel</u>	Originated Andromeda
<u>Evan Phillips</u>	Originated Milky Way

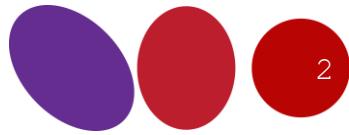
SYNOPSIS

An epic science fantasy, 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 young adult 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 human, as we want to get out. The analogy is expressed through these cosmic personifications. A dome represents the Center, the stage is space, and the fourth wall is the Edge. Our Universe is truly a family drama in play.

The Galaxies begin their routine by scoping out towards the Edge ("[Bounce](#)"). Their parent calls them up for supper. Singularity nurtures them and their tidal dogs, but a child is missing at this family gathering ("[Crunch](#)"). JD remains looking out, tangentially wanting to go to the Edge ("[Cutting Edge](#)"). They see their legacy as apparent. However, Singularity speaks of its perils. In retaliation, Gravity fights Singularity to go outside but ends up getting grounded in the doghouse. As the siblings head off to bed, JD and Milky Way discuss growing up ("[Figure](#)").

After Milky Way goes to bed, JD hears Gravity persuading them to search the rug. JD finds Singularity's Big Bang Taser stashed underneath 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, JD flees with Gravity to the Edge, but the Edge keeps distancing away. It is like a rolled-up rug that JD keeps rolling away ("[Big Bang](#)"). At this start of the Universe, Gravity and JD enjoy themselves ("[Verse](#)").

Meanwhile, the teen Galaxies mourn ("[Rip](#)"). They realize that they must get a move on and undo the Big Bang. Because there is no longer Crunch Time, they may starve without Singularity's care and with the Universe thinning itself out. Triangulum manages to convince the family to bring JD home ("[Anomaly is Everything](#)"). Triangulum decides to journey out to the Edge with Andromeda. They instruct Cartwheel and Whirlpool to babysit Milky Way. However, they leave Milky Way behind. Eventually, they decide to return home to be present for their baby sibling ("[Time is Relative](#)"). But they find that Milky Way has left to wander the Universe alone ("[Big Rip](#)").



Isolated and alone, Milky Way talks to their planetary friends about physically growing up ("[Warp, Waves, and Wrinkles](#)"). Eventually, Triangulum and Andromeda find Milky Way in an exhausted state of adolescence ("[Globular](#)"). The Solar System has developed into a swelling. Andromeda comes to the aid of Milky Way. As a result, Milky Way becomes a Quasar, leading the teen Galaxies to be reunited ("[Fabric](#)").

A trillion years pass, and Gravity and JD 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 ("[Far-Fetched](#)").

From the cosmic beyond, Singularity sings ("[Point](#)").

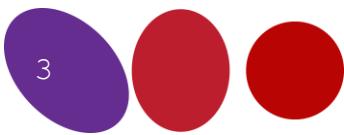
In the following act, Singularity's backstory is presented. Apparently, they themself ran away from their own Universe ("[Heat Death](#)"). An eternity passes, and Gravity and JD hit a wall while looking for the Edge. Gravity believes that one can overcome it by relaxing ("[Parallax](#)"). In that spirit, 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. Gravity wounds JD and JD is left to return home alone, unrolling the Edge ("[...](#)").

JD stumbles upon their siblings' campsite. The teen Galaxies have been caging tidal dogs. JD releases them but is caught ("[Bounce Back](#)"). JD blames Gravity for the Big Bang. The Galaxies believe JD and returns home to heal them ("[Everything](#)").

JD tries to adjust to life as a caretaker but ends up being a dropout ("[Apparent](#)"). In these millennia of grief, Milky Way jolts Singularity back to life ("[Spacetime](#)"). Singularity looks beyond the Edge to find JD shedding light in their Ellipse ("[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 Big Rip 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 in the nothingness, as an anomaly and a family. ELLIPSES answers: "What is 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 and free up the wide-open space.	Tidal Force	Any
<u>SPT0615-JD</u> The distant galactic sibling. JD wants to shed light and be apparent to their lightless legacy.	Embryonic Galaxy	Young Adult
<u>CARTWHEEL</u> The aerobic galactic sibling. Cartwheel wants to earn their ring.	Ring Galaxy	Teen
<u>WHIRLPOOL</u> The anaerobic galactic sibling. Whirlpool wants to spiral into enlightenment.	Grand-Design Spiral Galaxy	Teen
<u>TRIANGULUM</u> The jingoistic galactic sibling. Triangulum wants to be the role model.	Spiral Galaxy	Teen
<u>ANDROMEDA</u> The scenic galactic sibling. Andromeda wants to find the pearl in this universal oyster.	Spiral Galaxy	Teen
<u>MILKY WAY</u> The angelic galactic sibling. Milky Way wants their voice to be all that it's cracked up to be.	Barred Spiral Galaxy	Preteen

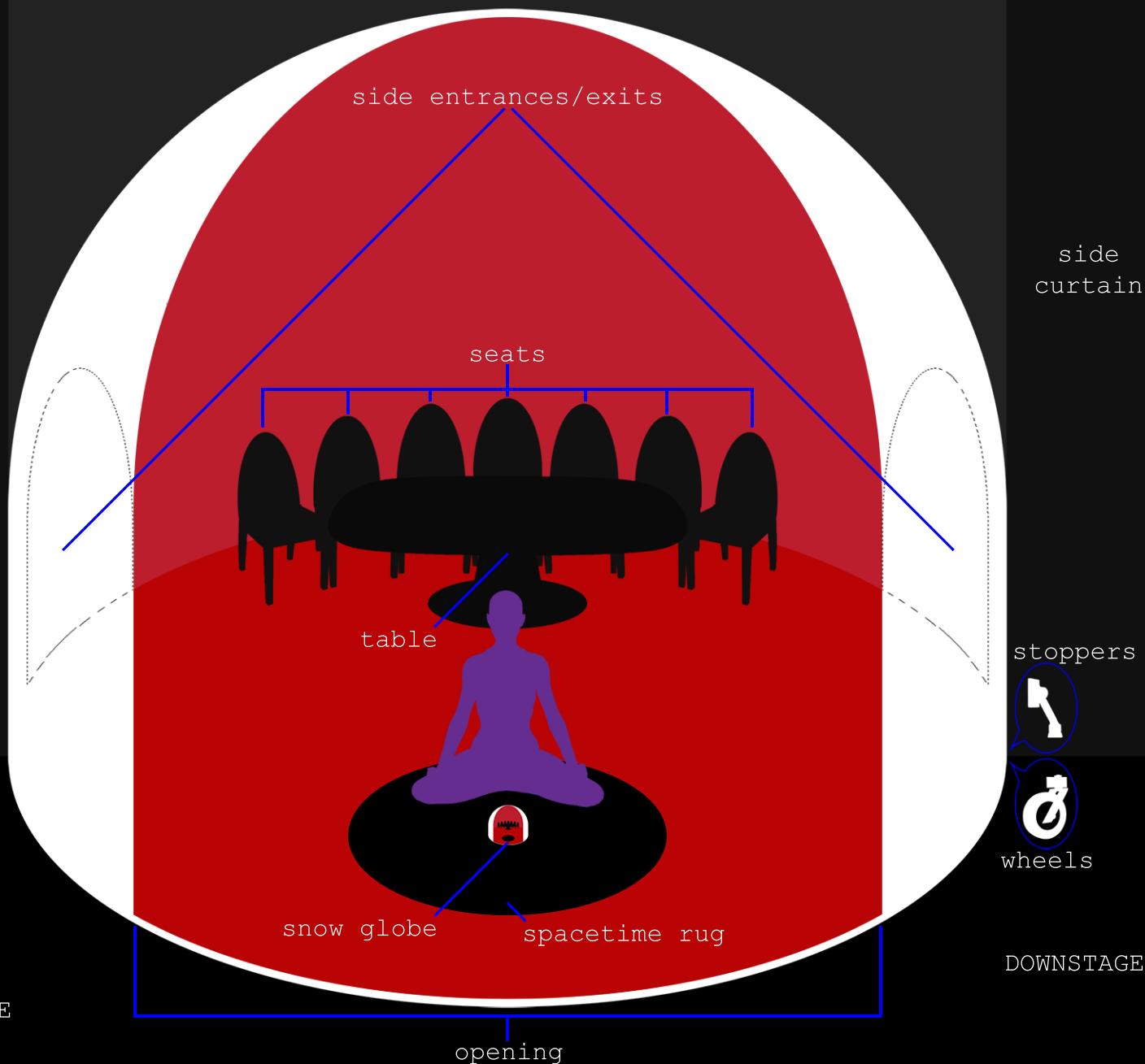
Ensembles

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

BRIGHT IDEA*

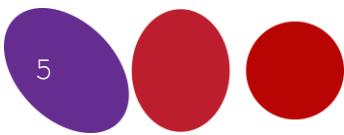
<u>ABELL</u> 2261 An anomalous galactic sweetheart beyond the Edge of the Universe. Abell is JD's timely loved one in the audience. They may not have a heart or a supermassive black hole, much like the Multiplicities.	Elliptical Galaxy	Onlooker
--	-------------------	----------

THE ELLIPSE / DOME HOME



THE EDGE OF THE UNIVERSE

FOURTH WALL



SAMPLE LIBRETTO

SINGULARITY (cont.)

And you... At the center of yours, is supermassive.

(*GRAVITY tiptoes in.*)

GRAVITY

JD. The wisest Galaxy, who's too big for this Ellipse. There's a space for you out there. Force! Your way out. The Edge is yours.

(*SINGULARITY abuses GRAVITY.*)

SINGULARITY

But you, Gravity, are a supermassive pain. Get back in the doghouse! There's no space in our hearts for you.

JD

My heart cannot choose who to take in. However, my heart can choose who to take out.

SINGULARITY

Well taken. There's nothing to take out, but family.

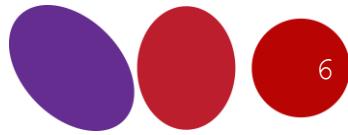
GRAVITY

Nothing is out there for you!

7. BIG BANG

SINGULARITY

YOU ARE A BIG...



(*JD wipes out the Big Bang Taser. They instantly shoot SINGULARITY in the face.*)

(*SINGULARITY gets electrocuted. They melodically shriek and jerk in place.*)

SINGULARITY (cont.)

MISTAKEEEEE! AKE! AKE! AKE! AKE.

[*The light fluctuates within the home. Appliances may short circuit and spark.*]

(*The TIDALs are absent. They repeat.*)

TIDALS

BIG BIG BIG BIG BIG!

SINGULARITY

ACHE... ELLIPSES... BIG BANG...

(*Abruptly falling headfirst onto the rug, crushing the snow globe. They are lifeless.*)

TIDALS

FALL! BIG BIG BIG BIG BIG. BANG! BIG BANG!

[*The lights suddenly fill the stage. The side curtains open to reveal what's upstage.*]

[*It's the beginning of the Universe as we know it.*]

(*The TIDALs freely rush out. They make JD turn to what is outside.*)



DEMOS

○ Animations ○

♪#	Page	Title	Characters	○Present but unvocal
1.	16	Bounce	SINGULARITY GALAXIES	
2.	24	Crunch	SINGULARITY TEEN GALAXIES JD GRAVITY tidals	
3.	25	Cutting Edge	GALAXIES GRAVITY SINGULARITY	
7.	48	Big Bang	SINGULARITY GALAXIES GRAVITY tidals	
10.	61	Anomaly is Everything	TRIANGULUM JD	
11.	72	Time is Relative	CARTWHEEL WHIRLPOOL	
13.	87	Warp, Waves, and Wrinkles	MILKY WAY solar systems	
19.	123	Parallax	GRAVITY JD	

ORCHESTRA



...

CRUNCH

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

DAVID QUANG PHAM

Adagio

SINGULARITY E(add2) A(add2) E G[#]m⁷ C[#]m(add4) B⁶ A⁶ E⁶

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

This musical score is for the vocal part 'SINGULARITY'. It consists of two staves. The top staff is a treble clef staff with a key signature of four sharps (F# major). The bottom staff is also a treble clef staff. The vocal line begins with a half note followed by eighth notes. The lyrics 'Feed that hole in your heart.' are written below the staff, corresponding to the notes. The vocal line continues with quarter notes and eighth notes, with the lyrics 'Give in-to in-ter-nal dark - ness.' written below. The tempo is Adagio.

5 E(add2) A(add2) E G[#]m⁷ A⁶ E⁶ B[%] E[%] E(add2) A(add2) E G[#]m⁷

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

Guitar - - - - | - - - - | - - - - | - - - - | - - - - | - - - - | - - - - | - - - - |

This musical score is for the vocal part 'SINGULARITY' and the guitar part. The vocal line starts with a half note followed by eighth notes. The lyrics 'Shed our light for no one.' are written below the staff. The vocal line continues with quarter notes and eighth notes, with the lyrics 'As it's Crunch Time, Ga-lax- ies.' written below. The guitar part consists of a series of eighth-note chords.

11 E(add2) A(add2) E G[#]m⁷ C[#]m(add4) B⁶ A⁶ E⁶

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

Guitar - - - - | - - - - | - - - - | - - - - | - - - - | - - - - | - - - - | - - - - |

This musical score is for the vocal part 'SINGULARITY' and the guitar part. The vocal line starts with a half note followed by eighth notes. The lyrics 'In black holes, dwell wis-dom.' are written below the staff. The vocal line continues with quarter notes and eighth notes, with the lyrics 'Fed by the sprin-kles of star - dust.' written below. The guitar part consists of a series of eighth-note chords.

15 E(add2) A(add2) E G[#]m⁷ A⁶ E⁶ B[%] E[%]

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

Guitar - - - - | - - - - | - - - - | - - - - | - - - - | - - - - | - - - - | - - - - |

This musical score is for the vocal part 'SINGULARITY' and the guitar part. The vocal line starts with a half note followed by eighth notes. The lyrics 'Crush their dreams in your palm.' are written below the staff. The vocal line continues with quarter notes and eighth notes, with the lyrics 'It is Crunch _____ Time, my ba-bies.' written below. The guitar part consists of a series of eighth-note chords.

19 A⁶ E⁶ B⁶ E⁶ E B⁶ C^{#(sus4)} G^{#(sus4)}

CARTWHEEL WHIRLPOOL TRIANGULUM ANDROMEDA MILKY WAY

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

Guitar

24 E E B⁶ C^{#(sus4)} G^{#(sus4)} C^{#(sus4)} E^(sus4)

SINGULARITY

String

C^{#m(add2)} G^{#m11}

CARTWHEEL WHIRLPOOL TRIANGULUM ANDROMEDA MILKY WAY

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

Guitar

29 E C^{#m(add4)} E E C^{#m(add4)} C^{#m(add2)} E⁶

SINGULARITY

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

CARTWHEEL WHIRLPOOL TRIANGULUM ANDROMEDA MILKY WAY

Guitar

33

SINGULARITY

A⁶ B⁶ F#m¹¹ A⁶ B⁶ E⁶ E^(add2) A^(add2)

our love as a whole. It is Crunch Time, we_be_lieve.

Guitar

CARTWHEEL 38 WHIRLPOOL TRIANGULUM ANDROMEDA MILKY WAY

E WHIRLPOOL B^(add2) B⁶ E E TRIANGULUM B^(add2) E B

It is Crunch Time, Singularity. It is Crunch Time, Singularity.

Guitar

CARTWHEEL 42 CARTWHEEL WHIRLPOOL TRIANGULUM ANDROMEDA MILKY WAY

E CARTWHEEL B^(add2) B⁶ E E B^(add2) E B

It is Crunch Time, Singularity. It is Crunch Time, Singularity.

Guitar

CARTWHEEL 46 MILKY WAY WHIRLPOOL TRIANGULUM ANDROMEDA MILKY WAY

E MILKY WAY B^(add2) B⁶ E E B^(add2) JD is absent. E B

It is Crunch Time, Mommy Sing.

Guitar

SINGULARITY 50

E B^(add2) E B B⁶ E^(add2) B⁶ E⁶

It is Crunch Time, J D? S P T 0 6 1 5 J D?

Guitar

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 11-13	Reading (Preview)	S.I.S.R!	Hosted by Michael Perrie Jr and Lacy Reily
2020 12-7	Reading	Working Title Playwrights	Monday Night Critique Sessions #18
2021 2-1	Reading	Working Title Playwrights	Monday Night Development Workshops #5-7
2021 5-3	Reading	Working Title Playwrights	Monday Night Development Workshops #13
2021 7-15	Concert Reading	Working Title Playwrights	Revue and Reading backed by WTP New Play Development and Dramaturgy Apprenticeship

[Zoom Recording of Readthrough at the Rehearsal on July 11, 2021](#)

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



MINKA WILTZ
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

Periodic Table Reads



University Outreach and Engagement (Target Audience and 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. Their theatre departments will focus on the theories of theatre, while our writer focuses on the laws of physics.

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