

Artist Statement ○○○ ELLIPSES

My theatrical Big Bang happened when I saw *Turandot* after visiting Space Camp. To me, the performing arts and science are inseparable. My teachers made them more visible and indivisible. I wrote math songs that had them saying: “You should be a musical writer.” Still, I continued to study science so that I can faithfully create ionic lyrics and break Earth with rocky choreography. I uncover truths by writing fables. Years ago, a play development organization in Atlanta read my opera about particles going to college in an accelerator. They made me the head of their program where we devised a completely new musical on a macroscale. Our singularity of perspectives birthed the universal musical starring the Galaxy family and their dog Gravity titled: ELLIPSES.

In the 2020s, ELLIPSES has had four table reads, three workshops, and a public concert reading. The focus of the latest draft is to explore the liminality of elliptical spaces. In the story, ellipses are three stages representing childhood, teenhood, and adulthood. Milky Way transitions from child to teen, JD transitions from teen to adult, and Singularity transitions into the great beyond. I seek opportunities for periodic readings and responses from performers portraying these roles which help bring out coming-of-age themes that audiences can intuitively sense. I hope teens and adults depart with an understanding – on a grander scale – that galaxy formations are truly human development and a growing family. **We are all Galaxies.** I particularly strive to polish JD’s goal of being apparent, shedding light, and making themselves clear. As for the dog Gravity in the tale’s situation, I am unearthing clarity in their character motivation: a relentless pursuit of *killing time*.

Whatever the Universe sends goes to our development by supporting: a) ongoing collaborations with artists devoted to Black-Asian Queer performance art; b) theatre concerts for expert feedback and audience reactions; and c) the creation of studio recordings with string players and established vocalists; new pop compositions such as “Far-Fetched”; grander reorchestrations of “Luminous”, “Tangent”, etc. A national performing arts organization gave me a complementary call after ELLIPSES did not advance as one of their two annual grantee selections. The committee noted the story as being “a cultural touchstone that would soar with professional quality demos.”

Everything the Universe throws at us helps ELLIPSES be the cultural, musical, and universal touchstone that it knows it is. From the Galaxy family and their dog Gravity: Thank you for your consideration and spacetime.

And speaking of dogs: “Force!” I loved *T.U.F.F. Puppy* and I am beyond grateful that this year’s Relentless Award is dedicated to the cartoon’s composer, Adam Schlesinger. In his spirit, I look to be the champion of nerd musicals in my own right.