



LIP

SES

Book, Music, and Lyrics
DAVID QUANG PHAM

www.ellipsesplay.com

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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 Eastern and Western art forms. I was raised by parents who often watched Kunqu operas and Kabuki theatre. Naturally, I compose on a pentatonic scale. Six notes are simple, but primitive and folksy instruments can make the song emotionally 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 approach 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>
SINGULARITY The relativistically impossible single parent. Singularity wants to keep all the luminosity within the liminality.	Super Infinite Black Hole	Adult
GRAVITY A tidal dog. Gravity wants to ground and free up the wide-open space.	Tidal Force	Dog
SPT0615-JD Singularity's oldest child. The prophetic galactic sibling. JD wants to make themselves clear to shed light and be apparent to their lightless legacy.	Embryonic Galaxy	Young Adult
CARTWHEEL Singularity's child. The aerobic galactic sibling. Cartwheel wants to earn their ring.	Ring Galaxy	Teen
WHIRLPOOL Singularity's child. The anaerobic galactic sibling. Whirlpool wants to spiral into enlightenment.	Grand-Design Spiral Galaxy	Teen
TRIANGULUM Singularity's child. The jingoistic galactic sibling. Triangulum wants to be the role model.	Spiral Galaxy	Teen
ANDROMEDA Singularity's child. The scenic galactic sibling. Andromeda wants to find the pearl in our oysterous Universe.	Spiral Galaxy	Teen
MILKY WAY Singularity's youngest child. The angelic galactic sibling. Milky Way wants their voice to be all that it is cracked up to be.	Barred Spiral Galaxy	Preteen



DEMOS

- | | | |
|---|--------------------|------|
| 1) “ Bounce ” (Galaxy Family) | | 1:47 |
| ➤ “We Are” Dance Overture | Genre: Pop | |
| 2) “ Crunch ” (Singularity, Teen Galaxies) | | 3:36 |
| ➤ Choral Opening Number | Genre: Opera | |
| 3) “ Cutting Edge ” (SPT0615-JD, Galaxies) | | 5:07 |
| ➤ “I Want” Song | Genre: Pop | |
| 7) “ Big Bang ” (Singularity, Galaxies, Gravity, Tidal) | | 3:46 |
| ➤ Production Number | Genre: Punk | |
| 10) “ Anomaly is Everything ” (Triangulum, Teen Galaxies) | | 4:02 |
| ➤ Uptempo Number | Genre: Pop | |
| 11) “ Time is Relative ” (Cartwheel, Whirlpool) | | 7:38 |
| ➤ Ballad Duet | Genre: Psychedelia | |
| 13) “ Warp, Waves, and Wrinkles ” (Milky Way, Solar System) | | 3:57 |
| ➤ Showstopper | Genre: Opera | |
| 19) “ Parallax ” (Gravity, SPT0615-JD) | | 2:24 |
| ➤ Charm Number | Genre: Pop | |

ORCHESTRA



ELLIPSES

Score

Guitar/Vocal

2. CRUNCH (Singularity, Galaxies)

Music & Lyrics by
David Quang Pham

Adagio

SINGULARITY

pp 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

5 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

pp

SINGULARITY

11 *p* 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

15 E A E G#m A E B E

Crush their dreams in your palm.____ It is Crunch____ Time, my ba - bies.

Guitar

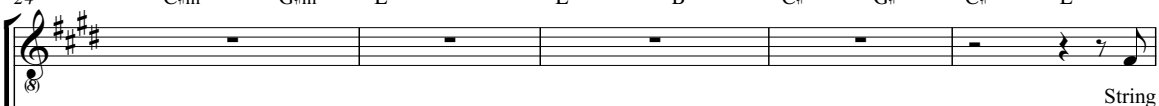
GALAXIES


19 A E B E *p* E B C# G#

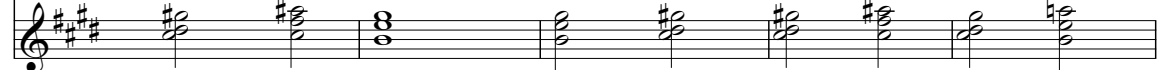
Con - sume____ star sy - stems. Con - sume____ worlds

Guitar

24 C[#]m G[#]m E E B C[#] G[#] C[#] E **Tender**


SINGULARITY 


GALAXIES 

Guitar 



29 E C[#]m E E C[#]m C[#]m E


SINGULARITY 


GALAXIES 

Guitar 

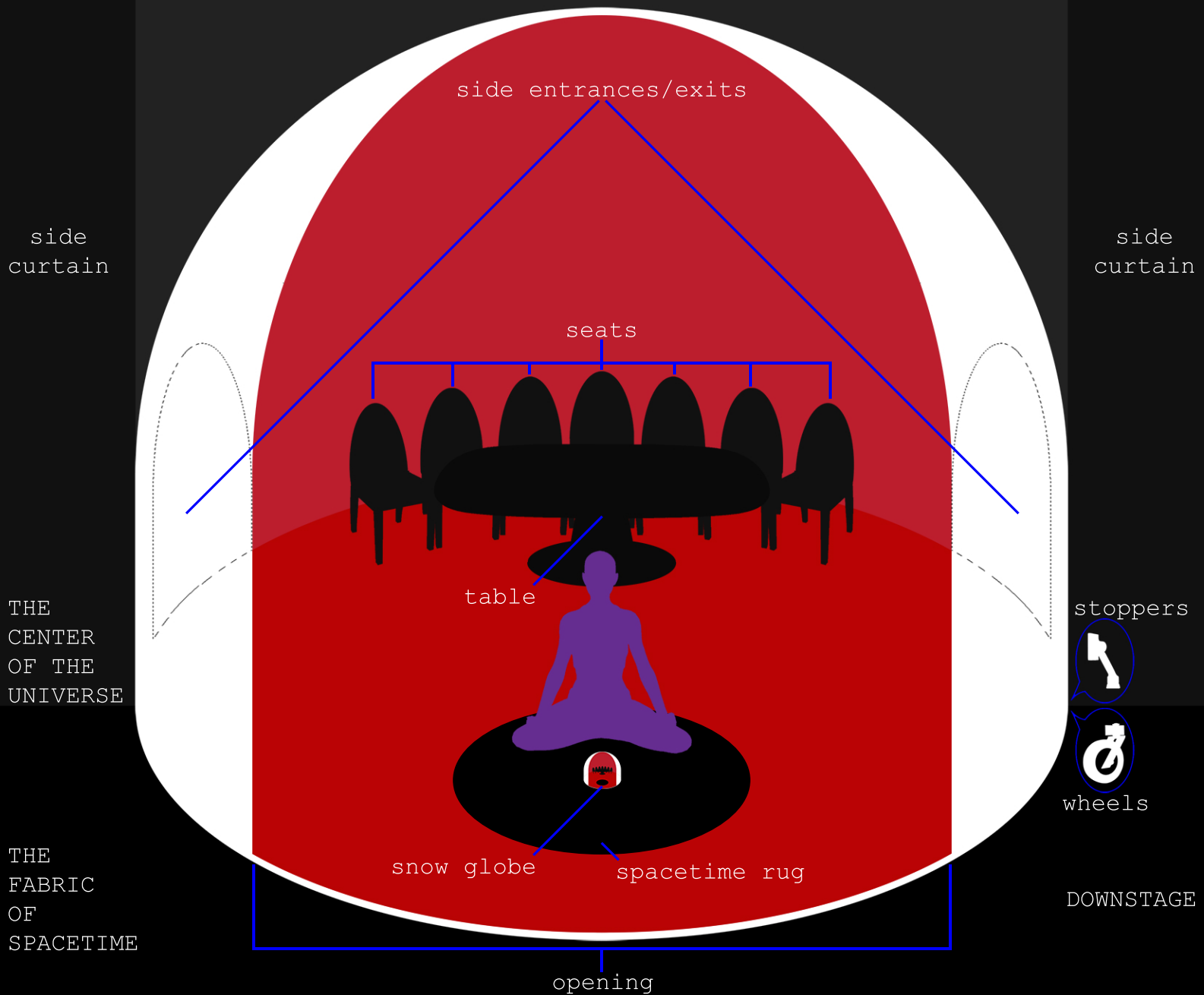


33 A B F[#]m A B E E

SINGULARITY 

Guitar 

THE ELLIPSE / DOME HOME

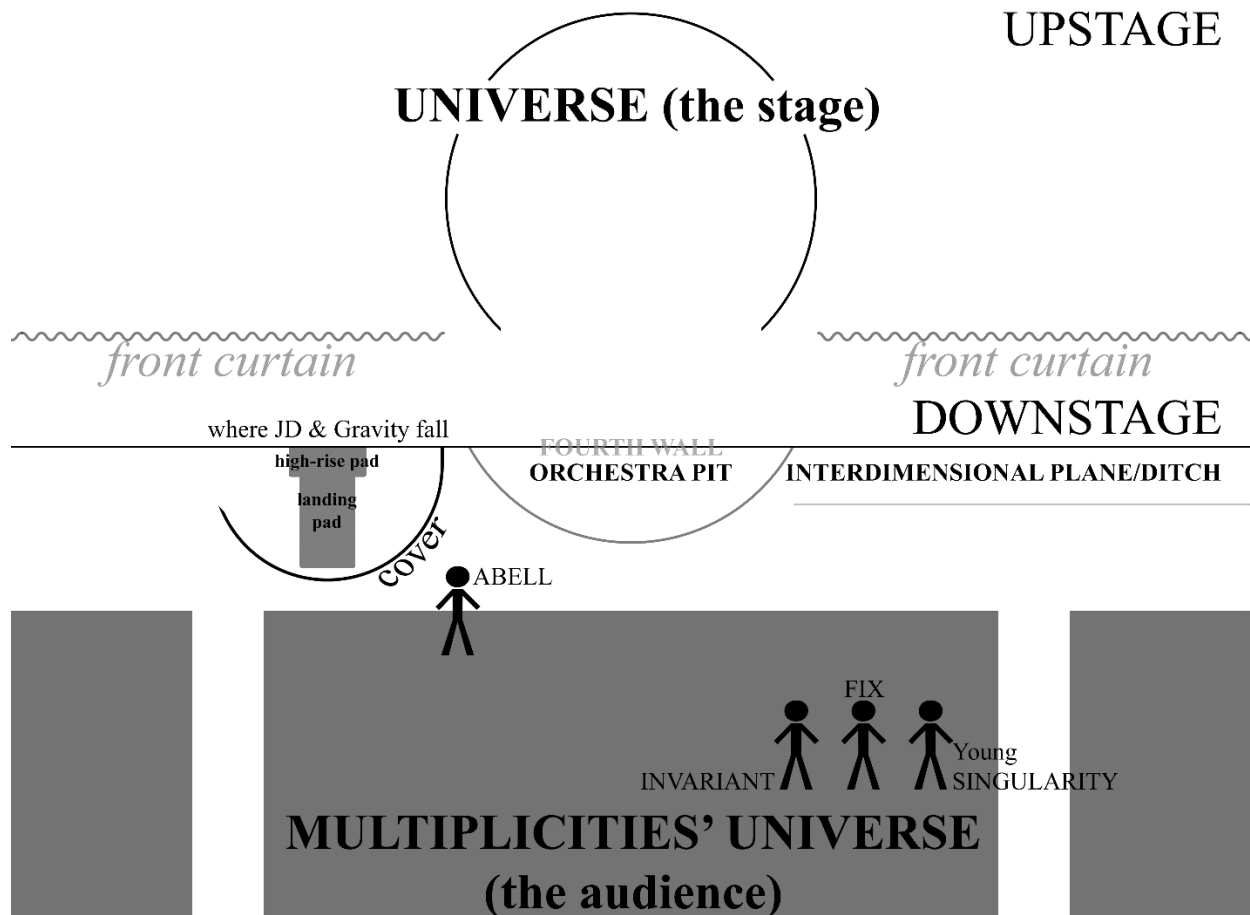




SET DESIGN

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 2021 — February 2022: 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](#)
 - February 27, 2022: How to Write a Musical That Works – Part Three: Reckoning and Resolution [Workshop with Talkback](#)
- 2020 – ongoing: Awards & Others
 - 2022: O'Neill Theater Center National Music Theatre Conference Semifinalist

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

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
ELLIPSESPRAY.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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