



BOOK

- Arguably the most important aspect of the musical!
 - The music ain't enough to save a book musical. Except:
 - Concept musicals
 - Jukebox musicals
- We are only going to focus on writing original musicals
 - Permissions and rights for adaptations are a whole 'nother topic
- The demographic of our class are novelists, playwrights, and poets
 - Assumption: Everyone in our class understands basic storytelling structure, characters, chapters/scenes, dialogue, genre, themes, etc.
 - Disclaimer: Musical writers, especially those who take on many roles like David, need refresher classes on the basic storytelling due to mental dilution and not enough headspace

BOOK (CONT.)

- Character-Driven Musical (plot supports the characters) [streets]
 - The audience focuses on the conflict that pushes the musical
 - The supporting characters should have as much depth as the lead(s)
 - Protagonist and antagonist are the most driven
- Plot-Driven Musical (characters support the plot) [freeway]
 - The audience focuses on the characters in the world of the musical
- 3-Act Breakdown with an intermission in between Act I and II
- Motifs must plant a seed and be watered
 - Leitmotifs often come with a melodic phrase and/or theatrical element

BOOK OF MUSICAL VS BOOK OF NOVEL

WHAT MUSICALS ADD TO/SUBTRACT FROM NOVELS:



What is added?

- Collaborations
 - Music
- “Show not tell” characterizations
 - Self-respect

What is subtracted?

- Time
- Sweet silence
- Unlimited intermissions
- Familial respect (and society's)

FIRST 2 MUSICAL PLOT POINTS

1. OPENING NUMBER



2. INCITING INCIDENT



OPENING NUMBER

- The worldbuilding song; it lays down to you the:
 - Character(s)
 - Setting(s)
 - Most of the time, it starts at stasis
 - Musicality & Theatricality
 - Tone
 - Genre(s) of music
 - Choreography
 - Anthem









DON'T WORRY!

- Opening numbers are almost always written last... (adaptations may vary this fact)
 - Like storytellers of any medium, you do not truly know your story until many drafts later
 - Composers want to have a finale and reprise that is set in stone and not constantly reworked
 - Composers also want to compile the score into a comprehensive mix

INCITING INCIDENT

- Inciting incidents must establish clear goals for the hero (and the audience)
- The inciting incident launches a series of trials that comprise the rising action of the book
- If the story is “once upon a time something happened”, then the inciting incident is the “something” that kickstarts the story
 - It is not always that simple
- Theatre troupe: “Once upon a time, a theatre is about to be bulldozed. Then the community came together.” (often fiction)

UGH, CAPITALISM. BUT HELP IS PRETTY SOCIALIZED

Musicals take years of effort.
You should be open with the
story you want to tell.
There are helpers around.

TAGLINES

ARAGON • BOLEYN • SEYMOUR • CLEVES • HOWARD • PARR

SIX

DIVORCED • BEHEADED
LIVE IN CONCERT!



SYNOPSSES

- “(The protagonist) wants something (the story goal) and goes after it against all odds and obstacles (the antagonist and the conflict).”
- Example: Simba wants to be the King of the Pride Lands and goes after it by taking down his uncle Scar and their pack of hyenas.
- Say no more and have interested artists ask for more details
 - If you answer that what the artist is asking of is missing, they may know other artists who fill the void



LIP

SES

- Tagline: The whole Universe is a family drama.
- David's Synopsis: Spend an eternity in the family musical of epic proportions. ELLIPSES is the cosmology mythology that stars Singularity and their Galaxy children and follows their quest to undo the Big Bang, after their family dog Gravity sets it off.

We hope this year's yearbook appreciates your
commitment to a better tomorrow today.

ALIPSE

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THESE STUDENTS WERE THE MOST
 Popular



Most Popular



Most Popular



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- Ruly Synopsis: JD (the protagonist) wants to become an independent adult and a(p)parent (*one of* the story goals), so JD incapacitates their parent Singularity to escape and venture out with their dog Gravity against their siblings' wishes (~~the antagonists and the conflict~~).

We hope that these names representing persons
 commemorating all students contributions hereby.

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BREAKOUT: HOW HAVE YOUR LAW BREAKER BROKEN THE WORLD/STASIS?

➤ Present your team's inciting incident at 2:10PM Eastern

- Novelist: Write a synopsis then write a tagline, based on your team's inciting incident.
- Playwright: Write a sample of the stage directions happening within your team's inciting incident.
- Poet: Write the inner monologue of your team's protagonist.



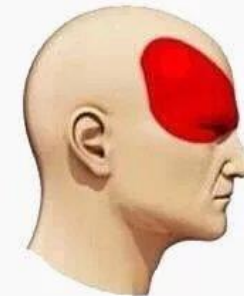
BREAKIN: TO SONG!

HOW TO NOT MAKE MORE PEOPLE HATE MUSICALS

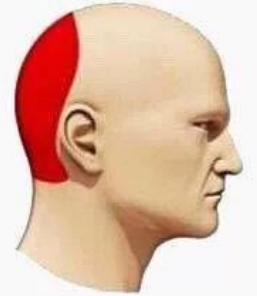
- Actually...
- David Quang Pham is not qualified to teach how to or how not to *break into song*
- Nor does he care if he annoys the masses
- Okay, maybe he does but he pretends not to
- It is just too fun to break out into song
- He is not nearly a musical writer as he is an opera one

Types of Headaches

Migraine



Hypertension



Stress



Watching a cartoon and the characters start to sing and do a musical



WHAT'S THE POINT OF A THEATRICAL SONG?

- 🎵 establishes the setting
- 🎵 creates the mood and ambiance
- 🎵 conveys a strong emotional undertone
- 🎵 develops the character
- 🎵 expresses the conflict
- 🎵 provides comic relief
- 🎵 gives an anthem
- 🎵 pushes the plot



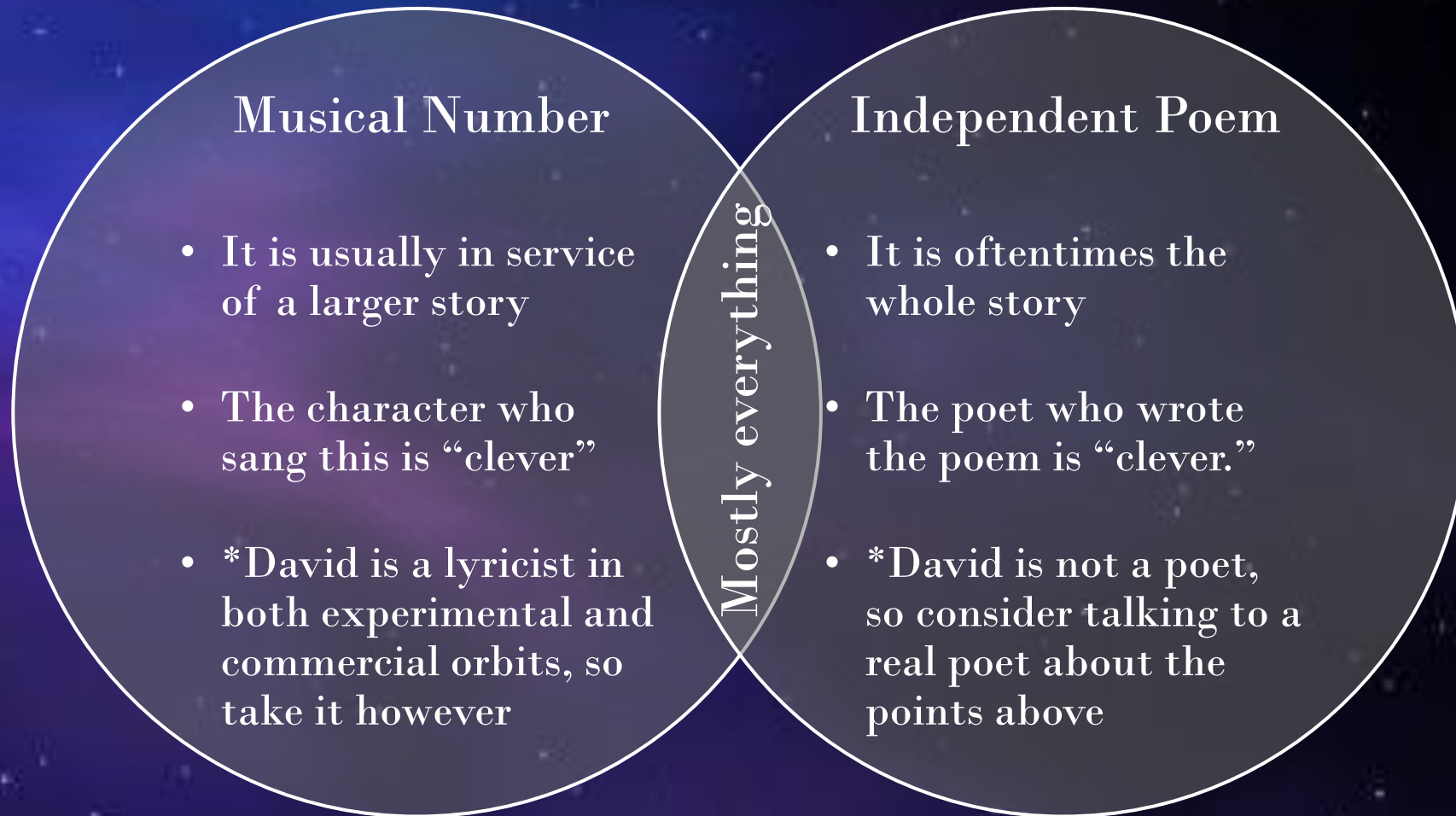




LYRICS

- Musical considerations:
 - Action
 - Argument and (Single) Thesis
 - Diction and Rhetoric
 - Rhyme
 - Verse
- David's beliefs: Lyrics are lyrics through the ears of the beholder and an extension of the beholder's life.
- David and many composer's skillset: Any initial lyrics will do. Don't worry too much about the first draft of a song. It will be a back-and-forth relationship builder between the composer and lyricist.

WORDS OF SONG AND WORDS OF POEM



PHYS-LYRICS

- Where do we begin...? “Valence” sung by Quark from TOUR
 - “Spin is an odd magnetic property encompassing quantum electromagnetism theo— really, we should 'dress the matter here. I need to eigenstate the up-down observable. You're always in my space?
Spacetime fabrication brings about limitations, so let's move to state formation, mixed valence within femtoseconds, hear with holes in scantrons. Think of inside-outside your matters, you'll figure out your charge and your configuration. There's something to being noble, guess.
I'll stop with surveillance when this basic unit just quits taking energy!

They'll get electrons.
They'll group the elements.
They'll configurate.”



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present

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KEEP IN MIND THE VOCALISTS

- Ease in pronunciation, articulation, or in flow
- Placement of vowel sounds and consonants to facilitate such ease
- Coordination of sound with range
- Regard for how the performer must use their tongue, teeth, and breath; affected by personal experiences from but not limited to:
 - Age
 - Diet
 - Health
 - Upbringing

ASTRO-LYRICS

- “Warp, Waves, and Wrinkles” sung for Milky Way from ELLIPSES
 - “Milky Way’s on their **own**.
All **alone**.
Know that **for** us at **home**.
You’re the **only way forward**,
through **warp**, **waves**, and **wrinkles**.”



Working Title: The program is approaching process
 commencing at various institutions locally

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“WARD, WAVES, AND WRINKLES”

- Structure: AABACACA
- Where does Milky Way start and where do they end up?
 - What incites the change?
 - Where does the change happen?
 - What changes lyrically, musically after the change?
 - What is Milky Way feeling at the beginning vs the end?
 - How does the music support the journey?
 - What is the emotional undertone?



MUSIC SHOULD (DE)MEAN THE LYRICS

- David's favorite type of songs: irony or double entendre songs
 - “Class” from CHICAGO (irony)
 - “I Know Things Now” from INTO THE WOODS (irony)
 - “Big Blonde and Beautiful” from HAIRSPRAY (double entendre)
 - “Anomaly is Everything” from ELLIPSES (irony)
 - “Time is Relative” from ELLIPSES (double entendre)
- These sorts of irony and double entendre are easier for viewers to pick up from musicals compared to other storytelling mediums due to contrarian accompanying music and performances



Come, friends, who plough the sea
Ra, ra, ra, ra

“I WANT” SONG

- Just as the name states, the song is about your protagonist’s or main characters’ wants
- The “I Want” song clarifies the hero’s goals for the audience and points the way forward (the journey to attain the super-objective)
- Like any story, you want the hero to get what they want; you push the audience’s wants, too

BETELGEUSE
BETELGEUSE



PROLOGUE/INVISIBLE



vevo







“I WANT” SONG

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- The “I Want” song clarifies the hero’s goals for the audience and points the way forward (the journey to attain the super-objective)
- Like any story, you want the hero to get what they want; you push the audience’s wants, too
- Even not-so-heroic characters have “I Want” songs
 - Easiest way to give depth to even supporting characters



“I WANT” SONGS



- “I want adventure in the great wide somewhere.” – “**Belle (Reprise)**” by Belle from BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
- “Oh, I just can't wait to be king!” – “**I Just Can't Wait to Be King**” by Simba from LION KING
- “Soon as I get home.” – “**Soon As I Get Home**” by Dorothy from THE WIZ
- “And home's what Vanessa's runnin' away from...” – “**It Won't Be Long Now**” for Vanessa from IN THE HEIGHTS
- “Bring me no ring... Unless he's a matchless match.” – “**Matchmaker, Matchmaker**” by the five daughters from FIDDLER ON THE ROOF
- “My future is an ellipse where my legacy is able to be the adult in the room...” – “**Cutting Edge**” by SPT0615-JD from ELLIPSES



I WANT YOU TO WANT!

Well, then how's anyone
supposed to sympathize with
you, [Law Breaker's name]?

BREAKOUT: WHY DOES YOUR LAW BREAKER WANT?

➤ Present your team's story and "I Want" poem at 3:30PM Eastern

- Novelist: Revise your synopsis. If you have time, write the plot summary up to the inciting incident.
- Playwright: Write the stage directions and scene leading up to the "I Want" poem.
- Poet: Write the "I Want" poem that the protagonist would monologue, whether alone or in a crowded world.

WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?

- Find your community!
 - Harlem Writers United



WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?

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 - Harlem Writers United
 - Working Title Playwrights

WORKING TITLE
PLAYWRIGHTS

WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?

- Find your community!
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 - Working Title Playwrights
- Share your work!
 - Musical Theatre Factory



**MUSICAL
THEATRE
FACTORY**

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 - Musical Theatre Factory
 - Nuyorican Poets Café



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- Get a mentor!



WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?

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 - Working Title Playwrights
- Share your work!
 - Musical Theatre Factory
 - Nuyorican Poets Café
- Get a mentor!
 - David Quang Pham is here because of mentor Janelle Lawrence





*Jordan Ealey



Kait [They/Them] TL...



Daniel Sakamoto-W...



Amber Bradshaw Sh...



David Quang Pham (...)



*Parris -SING...



*M...



*SPT0615-JD



Aliyah Curry



Vallea Woodbury



* WHIRLPOOL



*CARTWHEEL



Lexi McKay



*TRIANGULUM



stage directions



Liz Dooley

CONNECT!



*Jordan Ealey



Kait [They/Them] TL...



Daniel Sakamoto-W...



Amber Bradshaw Sh...



David Quang Pham



*Chris -S... HARIT...



*MILKY W...



*0615-0

THANK YOU, HARLEM!



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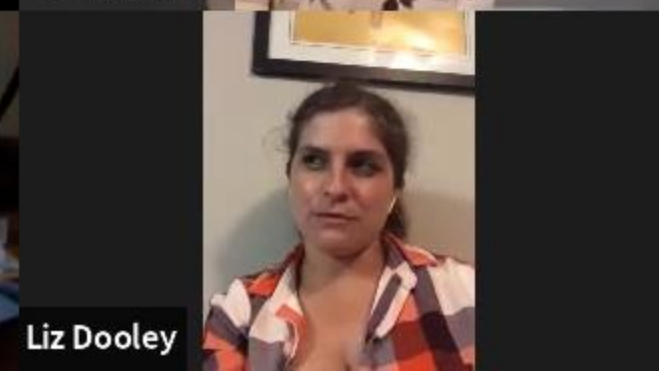
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stage directions



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