

Ways of Reading

As a science-based musical writer, my “I Want” song goes like this: ♪I am made to be a science-based aid. I also would not mind a base in space.♪ Initially, I was a typical scientist.

In May, Simons Center of Geometry and Physics’ Science Playwriting Competition invited me to give feedback. I focused on a play centered on black holes. Though many principles are indeterminate, the lack of research was evident. Regardless of respect for its direction, my “passion” went too far. I supernova’d the prized playwright. The role of scientific consultation was not to state the impossibility due to the determinate laws. The purpose was to provide well-researched theories as tools for the writers to make possibilities.

The following months were full of curious writers reaching out:

- “The real reason I’m reaching out is, believe it or not, that morning before the call I was actually saying to my housemate “I really need an astrophysicist” for another project I’m working on.”
- “Today’s question is that I am struggling to understand the conflict between wave and particle theory, and I am wondering if that is still a thing in modern physics.”
- “As I said I have a character who went to college for Math and AstroPhysics (?) she wanted to be an Astronaut. Never worked out. She’s having a conversation with her grandson. I just want to see if the math reference makes sense.”
- “So I would love your feedback on it. (I even snuck in a little - very little - bit of calculus, and I would like to see if you think it works).”

Yesterday, this was the response to my analysis of a WTP member’s science-based play: “This is incredibly helpful!! How lucky am I to have your eyes on this!”

How may this class help me see all ways of reading? In the required texts, Suzan-Lori Parks’ VENUS is the only work I have read. For obvious reasons, my curiosity (Mariner 2) also lands on Fuchs’ VISIT TO A TINY PLANET. To equate the other resources as curriculums, I always put effort into generality. This would only make science more hospitable.

What sense may this class give me? The ways of listening and communicating, through dialogue and personal response. In my time with WTP, my ears caught the majestic words of Lucy Smith’s CHORUS OF BEARS. Following the reading, I believed myself to be one-dimensional when I could only bring up the dark energy component. However, the dramaturg validated my voice as a scientist. When the facts were raised that “mother” also meant “town” in hieroglyphics, I thought of archaeology-based dramaturgs as considerable. But all that is needed was the will of the playwright to reach out to archaeologists, the passion of the dramaturg to reach out, and the network of theatremakers that reaches out.

In a large group setting, I am rather reserved. An outlier was while volunteering for LMDA. As the bartender at the afterparty, I was stirring up drama with the best stirrers in dramaturgy. The shared interest in new play development and dramaturgy made great chemistry. I strive to share the formulas before a Working Title Playwright sets fire to or divides by zero in their work of science and mathematics. My job is to make the work easily adapted to feedback from scientists.

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My needs are fulfilled and my availability between October 10 and 15 are: 10: 8AM—11PM
11: 8AM—11PM | 12: 4—11PM | 13: 5:30—11PM | 14: 8AM—11PM | 15: 4—7PM