

Adventure Cabaret

The Black Hole of Nostalgia

Scen: Interstellar space. A mysterious dark object appears, slowly spinning.

Announcer [over the loudspeaker system, deeply serious]: The Black Hole of Nostalgia is a terrifying object that sucks in and destroys every original idea and effort that drifts too close.

An actor in nostalgic bejewelled cowboy attire stands in the middle of the stage, looking quite charming and friendly, but with a stiff smile. She slowly begins waving her arms and rippling her body, gathering in and consuming invisible objects, humming and singing random bits of far too well known music and phrases and references, while occasionally and spasmodically executing cliché dance moves and gestures.

Other actors drift on stage, beginning to circle her slowly. They are dressed in surprising attire, are saying unusual words, referring to unusual ideas, singing unusual music, and moving in unusual ways.

On the screen, a collage of nostalgia flashes and pulses: the Mona Lisa, Norman Rockwell paintings, Rocky and Bullwinkle, and much more. On the audio system, a messy collage of auditory nostalgia burbles and buzzes and thrums, gradually increasing in volume, and gradually transitioning from charm to mortal threat.

The actors begin circling the Black Hole of Nostalgia a bit faster now, while also slowly spinning. Gradually it becomes clear that they are being drawn inexorably toward the Black Hole of Nostalgia.

The actors begin to realize what is happening to them, and become terrified of being sucked into the The Black Hole of Nostalgia and destroyed. Their attempts to stay alive become desperate. They begin to cry, and plead for their lives, unable to resist the terrifying pull and destructive power of The Black Hole of Nostalgia. They call out "Help me! Save me!" to the audience. "I don't want to die!"

The Black Hole of Nostalgia is now a horrible Medusa, waving her body violently, reaching out with snakelike arms to snatch the other actors, and moving her mouth as though she wants to chew up and swallow every one them. All the while, she emits bursts of stock phrases, snippets of old and too well known commercials, clichés phrases from Shakespeare and the Bible, riffs from top 40 songs, screaming them at the other actors.

Just as it looks as though the Black Hole of Nostalgia is going to consume everything and everyone, just as the actors are beginning to spin rapidly into her all consuming orbit, just as the loudspeaker audio reaches a terrifying volume and the actors are shrieking for their lives, suddenly the screen goes blank, all sound stops, and the entire cast stops moving.

Complete silence. Confusion. Relaxation. Smiles, except from The Black Hole of Nostalgia, who appears angry and disappointed.

Slowly the actors turn to The Black Hole of Nostalgia, gradually recognizing the freedom that has been theirs all along.

"Buzz off, Black Hole of Nostalgia!"

"We want better than mindless repetition and endless resynthesis."

"We can do whatever we want!"

"We don't need you."

"We never did."

They greet each other, begin to converse together happily, completely ignoring The Black Hole of Nostalgia.

The Black Hole of Nostalgia puts her head down, despondent. She wanders toward side of the stage, shaking her head sadly, slowly spinning, hugging herself for comfort, whimpering, and wiping away a lonely tear. She now appears small and pitiful.

Just as she is about to fully exit the stage, she turns toward the other actors longingly, arms outstretched, mouth moving spastically, tongue flicking out, still wanting to consume them, and utters a final hideous shriek. She wanders off, a sad and shriveled husk, while the other actors converse happily.