

Playwriting PA 040

Saturday 11-2 TACIT House

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This class is open to Caltech students and Caltech community to develop their own plays/screenplays/monologues while participating in weekly readings of original plays with the playwrights of the scheduled readings. The tangible skills in this process include an approach to play critique, an introduction to the technique and craft of playwriting and the original scripting of their own ideas or adaptation into playwriting/screenwriting format. Students meet every Saturday for readings and with instructor in times to be arranged for instruction, feedback and consultation.

1. Stolen by Helen Horowitz April 14

STOLEN is the story of HERBERT MATTER, a photographer, as he befriends the painter JACKSON POLLOCK. Brought together by simple liking, mutual love of art, and ambition, the two men represent different artistic poles—craftsmanship and romantic creation. The play takes place in New York in the 1940s and 1950s and from the outset, Herbert is deeply implicated in Jackson's life, helping him get established in the art world, smoothing the way, showing him his new photographic techniques.

What is stolen? Herbert believes it is his innovations and ideas, not so much stolen by Jackson, for they were willingly offered, but received unacknowledged. As Jackson's fame grows, he denies that Herbert's photography and conversation have influenced his work, representing himself as a lone artist. As Jackson loses hold of himself, he hurts others deeply. Cast aside, Herbert feels betrayed and, in a moment of weakness, seeks to settle the score.

2. Dark Matters By Oliver Mayer April 21

Two rival particle physicists happen upon the same Theory of Everything for different reasons and with differing results. The stakes are high -- unimaginable amounts of money, celebrity, and the fruition of a lifetime's search in the realm of supersymmetry. A play about the unknown duende of dark matter, told through love, sex, and the songs of Leonard Cohen and Donna Summer.

3. Mate: the Untouchable Bobby Fischer by Lolly Ward April 28

In 1960, young chess phenomenon Bobby Fischer travels to Buenos Aires to compete in a tournament. Fischer becomes intimate with a woman for the first time, thrusting the genius into a new realm where the body triumphs over the mind. Fischer must battle for control or face the destruction of his life's ambition.

After achieving the title of World Champion in 1972, Fischer disappears from professional chess. From rich and admired to homeless and jailed, he succumbs to paranoia. He finds salvation in a Hungarian girl who wants to lure him back into the spotlight.

4. Commedia by James Ragan May 5

The play is a contemporary commedia dell'arte, based on a 16th Century art form which relies on improvisation and an impromptu action called the *lazzo*. *Lazzis* are the tools of each actor's imagination, and should be generously encouraged, allowing for as much boldness of action, bawdy innuendo, and self-indulgent virtuosity, as can be laughingly endured.. Commedia dell'arte also allows for ancillary characters to evolve such as dancers, acrobats, shadows and mime. Principle character and place names should be changed to reflect the local and national identities. Love, lust, avarice, and deceit are the timeless themes, and the modern world of fated absurdity, the stage.

5. *I Saw it on the Television, The Pons/Fleischman Affair* by George Morgan May 12

This is the story of Drs. Martin Fleischmann and Stanley Pons, and a behind the scenes exploration and media storm over so-called "cold fusion." The conflicting claims and counter claims made by scientists and researchers around the world created one of the hottest firestorms of controversy in modern science history.

6. *The God Particle Complex* by Chris Bell and Joshua Zeller May 19

The GPC takes place at CERN, the European Organization of Nuclear Research, inside the tunnel that holds the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) and is a tragic comedy about high energy research, and the particle physicists who dedicate their lives to it.

Sven, a maintenance man, welcomes the audience to CERN and shares with them an understanding of the facility, the Large Hadron Collider experiment, and it's search for the theoretical subatomic particle; the Higgs Boson. All the while, two scientists enact the description of how the LHC works to discover new subatomic particles.

The scientists go to their offices to hear the long awaited press conference from the president of CERN, who definitively announces to the world that the Higgs Boson does not exist. One of the pair despairs over the news as the other scientist sees only possibility and opportunity.

They walk the tunnel of the LHC. The merits and controversies surrounding the experiment are pulled into question. As they explore the facility, they encounter a mysterious visitor who reveals all in a life changing way.

This play incorporates puppetry, dance, and multimedia to dazzle while informing; everything you need to know about the LHC but were afraid to ask.

7. *Forum Theatre: Scripting Play & Power Instead of Playing the Script* May 26-May 27

Sanjoy Ganguly and Sima Ganguly will conduct an exciting workshop with participant actors helping them to script an improvised play. The games and exercises in the workshop will act as social metaphors. Through games the participant actors will relate to their realities and will relate to themselves. Thus actors will find oppression; all of us will try to understand various dimensions of the oppressor and oppressed characters. The ideology of the oppressor will be understood through techniques. After the scenes are scripted, the Forum play will be structured. Some rehearsal of Forum will be included.

Participants will also likely offer some short presentation of their work at the conclusion of the workshop.

8 Playwriting class presents their work for public reading June 2