

Portland Center Stage at

THE ARMORY
PRESENTS

Constellations

By Nick Payne

Directed by Chris Coleman

May 13 – June 11, 2017

On the U.S. Bank Main Stage

Artistic Director | Chris Coleman

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Scenic Designer

Jason Sherwood

Costume Designer

Eva Steingrueber-Fagan

Lighting Designer

William C. Kirkham

Sound Designer

Casi Pacilio

Dialect Coach

Mary McDonald-Lewis

Fight Director

John Armour

Consulting Dramaturg

Barbara Hort, Ph.D.

Stage Manager

Kelsey Daye Lutz

Production Assistant

Kristen Mun

Casting

Rose Riordan and Brandon Woolley

Dana Green.....Marianne

Silas Weir Mitchell.....Roland

Originally produced on Broadway by Manhattan Theatre Club, Lynne Meadow, Artistic Director, Barry Grove, Executive Producer, and The Royal Court Theatre by special arrangement with Ambassador Theatre Group and Dodgers on December 16, 2014. *Constellations* is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York.

Performed without intermission.

The Actors and Stage Manager employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

A LETTER FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

“We all live both sides of every story.” An old friend made this statement to me shortly after my 40th birthday, while I was bemoaning some aspect of a struggling relationship. It felt like she had tossed a pebble into a still pond and the waves continued to ripple outward for months afterward. “Is that so?” “I hope so.” And then: “I’m not sure I want to live both sides in all the stories I’ve played a part.”

Nick Payne found inspiration for *Constellations* from a documentary hosted by the famous physicist Brian Greene, whom I first knew as the author of *The Elegant Universe*. The documentary, *The Fabric of the Cosmos*, explored the basic components of time, space, quantum physics and, in its fourth installment, the multiverse.

Depending on where you stand in the world of theoretical physics, the concept of multiple universes is either science fiction or the theory that makes everything else fit together. Greene is a believer and makes a persuasive case.

For Payne, the notion that one version of him could be sitting at his computer writing a play and another could be engaged in something completely different in another time/space dimension was a bit like that pebble in the pond: it stayed with him, rippling farther and farther out.

In his gem of a story, what seems at first a random series of viewpoints eventually reveals a structure as elegant and musical as

the universe itself. And like any good storyteller, Payne finds a way to make the “game” of his fascination resonate with more depth and emotional truth the deeper into it we burrow.

It’s a great path to wend our way together into the final days of spring here in the Northwest. As you head home, I hope it has you glancing at the prism of your own story from new angles.

-Chris Coleman

FEATURE | EVERY ME AND EVERY YOU: LOVE IN THE MULTIVERSE

By Benjamin Fainstein, Literary Manager

“You and I have been happy; we haven’t been happy just once, we’ve been happy a thousand times.”

-F. Scott to Zelda Fitzgerald¹

All’s fair in love and theoretical physics, as the saying goes. Or at least that’s the way the saying could go, in a slightly alternate reality from the one we know where “all’s fair in love and war” is a common refrain. But what if ours were the alternate reality — or not the only universe at all? What if there were an infinite number of versions of you, nearly identical but distinguishable by minute

¹ Fitzgerald, F. Scott, Zelda Fitzgerald, and Cathy W. Barks & Jackson R. Bryer. *Dear Scott, Dearest Zelda: The Love Letters of F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2003.

variations? Or what if you — the quintessential you — existed in other realities but lived a different life based on choices you made? These questions form the basis of the theory of the “multiverse,” a field of scientific inquiry that explores the evidence of, and astronomical potential for, the existence of universes parallel to our own. Cosmologist Max Tegmark has synthesized the prominent theories and proposed a four-tiered vision of how the multiverse may function, based on different possibilities of how atomic matter could arrange itself in conjunction with astrophysical forces like gravity and electromagnetism.

Multiverse Level I works under the assumption that the universe occupies infinite and ever-expanding space. There are, therefore, distances beyond which our science can measure. Anything could be occurring in those outer reaches, including a universe that acts as a mirror to our own, in which variations in the arrangement of matter follow the same laws of physics as ours but feature certain differences, such as the presence or absence of a mole on your wrist or the precise hue of the sky.

Level II explores the possibility that our universe is merely one of many universes, each operating with spatial limitations: a set of separate, contained bubbles floating in shared, infinite space but never making contact with one another. In this calculation, according to Tegmark, “other bubbles exist out there, disconnected from ours. They nucleate like raindrops in a cloud. During nucleation, variations in quantum fields endow each bubble with properties that distinguish it from other bubbles.”² So in Level II

² Tegmark, Max. “Parallel Universes.” *Scientific American*. May 2003: 45. Print.

thinking, other universes could function according to similar laws of physics or operate according to rules completely foreign to us. The science behind Level III centers around a property of quantum mechanics called ergodicity, which dictates that the way everything occurs is only one possible way that everything *could occur*. Tegmark uses the example of rolling a six-sided die: every time the die is cast, there are five sides that don't end up on top. In other words, there are potential outcomes the roller will never experience. But in quantum mechanics, all sides of the die come up every time it's rolled. Therefore, multiple realities must exist, with distinct chains of events. Following the logic, there are versions of ourselves present in these universes that we will never access, because we can perceive only one side of the die at a time. Furthermore, in this model, the idea that free will and linear time create the shape of our lives is rendered an illusory perception that we have developed due to our inability to access our parallel lives. If there are an infinite number of universes, there is one in which every possible sequence of events must occur; therefore, time is not the way we perceive change but is merely a way to arrange parallel realities next to one another. Drawn to its full conclusion, in Level III, we have no actual control over the outcome of our lives.

Level IV is the most abstract vision of the multiverse. In Tegmark's words, it "opens up the full realm of possibility. Universes can differ not just in location, cosmological properties or quantum state but also in the laws of physics. Existing outside of space and time, they are almost impossible to visualize; the best one can do is to think of them abstractly, as static sculptures that represent the mathematical structure of the physical laws that govern them."³ In Level IV, universes could morph in and out of their physical and temporal

³ Ibid., p. 50.

properties; our experience of reality could possibly be one in which we never meet with other universes, one in which we are changed by a brief encounter with another universe, one in which we clash violently with another universe, or one in which we melt harmoniously with another at any given time, without warning. That sounds eerily familiar to the way a lot of people talk about falling in love.

In *Constellations*, Nick Payne draws a parallel between these mind-blowing questions of cosmology and the mind-blowing experience of trying to steer your way through a romantic relationship. What becomes of us, of our choices, of morality, and especially of the ways we forge connections with others, if we are indeed only one of infinite versions of ourselves drifting in the vacuous uncertainty of a perplexing multiverse? And furthermore, how can we ever be sure we know someone if we can't even be sure that the person standing in front of us is the "real" them? *Constellations*' Roland and Marianne unknowingly journey across the multiverse and back to find out, and it is that unknowing — the utter inability to answer the questions posed above with either scientific or romantic certainty — that creates their tender drama. As Roland says: "honeybees have an unfailing clarity of purpose ... I'm jealous. If only we could understand why it is that we're here and what it is that we're meant to spend our lives doing." But then again, what sort of adventure would we be left with if we knew?

FEATURE | COSMIC LOVE

By Benjamin Fainstein, Literary Manager

*Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-brow'd night,
Give me my Romeo; and, when he shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine
That all the world will be in love with night
And pay no worship to the garish sun.
-Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, Act III, Scene 2*

So goes the infatuated Juliet's shimmering, if not a bit macabre, entreaty to the night sky moments before her perfect romance takes a turn toward the tragic. The wish to transform a lover into a constellation is not unique to Shakespeare. Nor is the link Juliet makes in this soliloquy between earthly love and cosmic magnificence. For millennia, storytellers the world over have riffed on the idea that true love might be "written in the stars." While Romeo and Juliet may arguably hold the title for the most famous "star-cross'd lovers" in the Anglo-European literary canon, theirs is hardly history's only rocky romance with astral aspirations. In *Constellations*, Nick Payne's Marianne and Roland join their ranks. Here are a handful of other celestial paramours to consider while you watch the couple navigate their relationship across the space-time continuum.

The Weaver and the Cowherd

Zhinü, a weaver and daughter of a goddess, fell deeply in love with a young cowherd named Niulang. Their love was forbidden, so they

married in secret. When their transgression was discovered, Zhinü's mother forced her to return to the sky. Niulang underwent a quest to the heavens, but his mother-in-law punished the pair by creating an impassable astral river between them. A flock of magpies took pity on the couple, and once a year the birds unite to form a bridge so that they may spend a single night together. Zhinü embodies the star we call Vega, Niulang became the star we call Altair, and the bridge of the magpies forms part of the Cygnus constellation. Variations of the myth abound East Asian mythological traditions, and each year the Chinese festival of Qixi celebrates the couple's undying love.

Artemis and Orion

The hero Orion appears in many cultures, from Hindu legend to Greek mythology. There are numerous variations on the story of how he became a constellation, but among the most poignant is the version that tells of the love between Orion, a formidable hunter, and the fierce goddess of the hunt, Artemis. After Artemis confessed her love for Orion to her brother Apollo, he became jealous and tricked her into a shooting contest, wherein she unwittingly guided an arrow through the head of her beloved. The grieving goddess then placed Orion among the stars as a reminder to mortals that while earthly love may be fleeting, its splendor is eternal.

Waupee and the Star Maiden

Shawnee lore tells of Waupee the White Hawk, a hunter who came upon a sisterhood of star maidens. Waupee watched them dance and fell in love with the youngest. Desperate to wed the stellar maiden, Waupee transformed himself into a mouse until he could get close enough to capture her. Once he had, she remained on earth, and they

bonded in happy matrimony. But as years passed, she yearned for her star family and left Waupee, with their young son, to return to the heavens. The loss devastated Waupee, so the Star Chief invited the hunter to ascend to the star world. To celebrate their happiness, the family was transformed into majestic white hawks, and it is said they still fly together between the worlds of the earth and sky.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Dana Green

Marianne

Dana Green is delighted to be back at The Armory where she was last seen in *Great Expectations*. Her other credits at The Armory include Emilia in *Othello*, Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and JAW 2014. Other Portland credits include work with Coho Productions (*db*), Third Rail Repertory Theatre (*Gidion's Knot*, *The Realistic Joneses*) and Profile Theatre (Drammy Award for *Dead Man's Cell Phone*). She has spent four seasons with the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, where some of her favorite roles included Isabella in *Measure for Measure*, Carol Cutrere in *Orpheus Descending*, and Viola in *Twelfth Night*. She has performed at numerous regional theaters including The Old Globe (Craig Noel Award for *Other Desert Cities*), South Coast Repertory, Yale Repertory Theatre (Connecticut Critics Circle nomination for *All's Well That Ends Well*), Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, California Shakespeare Theatre, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Asolo Repertory Theatre, Court Theatre, Meadow Brook Theatre and Shakespeare Festival of Dallas. Television credits include *Early Edition*, *Grimm* and *The Librarians*.

Silas Weir Mitchell

Roland

Prior to playing Monroe on NBC's *Grimm*, Mr. Mitchell was most widely known for his recurring role on the tautly paced FOX drama *Prison Break*, starring as lead actor Wentworth Miller's deeply unstable cellmate, Charles "Haywire" Patoshik. He is also known for the role of Donny Jones, (another) ex-con and friend of the title character played by Jason Lee in the NBC comedy *My Name Is Earl*. Other TV includes *NYPD Blue*, *The X-Files*, *ER*, *Cold Case*, *The Mentalist*, *24*, *Law & Order: SVU*, *The Closer*, all the *CSI*'s, *Burn Notice*, *Dexter*, *Monk*, *Six Feet Under*, *The Shield*, *Portlandia*. Films include: *The Patriot*, *Inferno*, *Rat Race*, *The Whole Ten Yards*. After graduating from Brown University with degrees in both theater arts and religious studies, Silas went on to earn his M.F.A. at the University of California, San Diego. Silas has directed and acted in many plays off Broadway in NYC and also in LA, where he was the artistic director of The MET Theatre for many years. He is delighted to be back on stage at The Armory.

CREATIVE TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

Nick Payne

Playwright

Nick Payne's plays include *If There is I Haven't Found it Yet* (Bush Theatre and Roundabout Theatre Company, New York), *Wanderlust* (Royal Court Theatre), Sophocles' *Electra* (Gate Theatre), *One Day When We Were Young* (Paines Plough/Sheffield Theatres and Shoreditch Town Hall), *Lay Down Your Cross* (Hampstead Theatre), *Constellations* (Royal Court Theatre and Duke of York's Theatre, winner of the 2012 London Evening Standard Theatre Award for Best Play and nominated for the 2013 Olivier Award for

Best New Play), and *The Same Deep Water as Me* (Donmar Warehouse). Nick is the recipient of the 2009 George Devine Award for Most Promising Playwright and the 2012 Harold Pinter Playwright's Award.

Chris Coleman

Director

Chris joined Portland Center Stage at The Armory as artistic director in 2000. Before coming to Portland, Chris was the artistic director at Actor's Express in Atlanta, a company he co-founded in the basement of an old church in 1988. Chris returned to Atlanta in 2015 to direct the world premiere of *Edward Foote* at Alliance Theatre (Suzi Bass Award for Best Direction, Best Production and Best World Premiere). Other recent directing credits include the Off-Broadway debut of *Threesome* at 59E59 Theaters; a production that had its world premiere at The Armory. Favorite directing assignments for The Armory include *Astoria: Part One* (which he also adapted), *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Three Days of Rain*, *Threesome*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Clybourne Park*, *Shakespeare's Amazing Cymbeline* (which he also adapted), *Anna Karenina*, *Oklahoma!*, *Snow Falling on Cedars*, *Crazy Enough*, *King Lear*, *Outrage* and *The Devils*. Chris has directed at theaters across the country, including Actor's Theater of Louisville, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, ACT Theatre (Seattle), The Alliance, Dallas Theatre Center, Pittsburgh Public Theatre, New York Theatre Workshop and Center Stage (Baltimore). A native Atlantan, Chris holds a B.F.A. from Baylor University and an M.F.A. from Carnegie Mellon. He is currently the board president for the Cultural Advocacy Coalition. Chris and his husband, Rodney Hicks – who is appearing in the new musical *Come From Away*, which opened on Broadway in March – are the proud parents of an 18-lb Jack

Russell/Lab mix, and a 110-lb English Blockhead Yellow Lab. For the past three years, Chris has had the honor of serving as the director for the Oregon Leadership Summit.

Jason Sherwood
Scenic Designer

Jason Sherwood is an award-winning scenic and environment designer of theatrical productions and events. He recently designed the stage adaptation of *Frozen* for Disney Creative Entertainment. His Off-Broadway design for the new musical *The View UpStairs* was profiled in *The New York Times* for his creation of gay and queer immersive nightlife spaces for theatrical audiences. Other recent credits include designs for New York Theatre Workshop, The Old Globe, Signature Theatre, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, 5th Avenue Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Goodspeed Musicals, Alliance Theatre, Studio Theatre, Ford's Theatre and Kansas City Repertory Theatre. He is an NYU graduate, a repeat guest artist at Yale, a Henry Hewes Design Award nominee, and was named a “Designer to Watch” by *Live Design Magazine*. Follow him on Instagram: @JasonSherwoodDesign.

Eva Steingrueber-Fagan
Costume Designer

Eva is very excited to make her design debut at Portland Center Stage at The Armory. For the last six years, Eva has been one of the cutter/drapers for The Armory’s costume shop, where she enjoys the collaborative process of bringing a designer’s vision to the stage. Before moving to Portland, Eva worked in Los Angeles creating costumes for movies and television. While in Los Angeles, Eva designed costumes for Kafka’s *The Trial* (Company of Angels) and co-designed costumes for *Miss Desmond Behind Bars* (Court

Theatre in West Hollywood, Garland Award for Costume Design). Eva is originally from Augsburg, Germany, and has a background in fashion design. While in Germany, she earned her master's degree in art education from the University of Augsburg, completed a dressmaker's apprenticeship, and won the Young Fashion Designers Award from the City of Munich for her collaboration in fashion design.

William C. Kirkham

Lighting Designer

William C. Kirkham is thrilled to return to The Armory. Recent credits include: *The Oregon Trail*, *Little Shop of Horrors* (The Armory); *Moby Dick* (Alliance Theatre); *Julius Caesar*, *Murder for Two* (Utah Shakespeare Festival); *Moby Dick*, *The Little Prince* – 2014 Jeff Award for Lighting Design (Lookingglass Theatre Company); *Life and Limb* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); *United Flight 232* (The House Theatre of Chicago); *Stupid F**king Bird*, *Antigonick* (Sideshow Theatre Company); *Three Sisters*, *The Tennessee Williams Project* (The Hypocrites); *Gidion's Knot*, *From Prague* (Contemporary American Theater Festival); *Wonderful Life* (ArtsWest Playhouse); *Bud Not Buddy*, *A Year with Frog and Toad* (Chicago Children's Theatre); *Pete, or the return of Peter Pan*, *Girls Who Wear Glasses* (Childsplay). William earned his M.F.A. in stage design at Northwestern University and is a proud member of USA Local 829. wckirkham.com

Casi Pacilio

Sound Designer

Casi's home base is The Armory, where recent credits include *Lauren Weedman Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, *Wild and Reckless*, *His Eye is on the Sparrow*, *The Oregon Trail*, *Little Shop of*

Horrors, A Streetcar Named Desire, Great Expectations, Ain't Misbehavin', Three Days of Rain; A Small Fire and Chinglish with composer Jana Crenshaw; and ten seasons of JAW. National shows: Holcombe Waller's *Surfacing* and *Wayfinders*; *Left Hand of Darkness, My Mind is Like an Open Meadow* (Drammy Award, 2011), *Something's Got Ahold Of My Heart* and *PEP TALK* for Hand2Mouth Theatre. Other credits include Squonk Opera's *Bigsmorgasbord-WunderWerk* (Broadway, PS122, national and international tours); *I Am My Own Wife, I Think I Like Girls* (La Jolla Playhouse); *Playland, 10 Fingers* and *Lips Together, Teeth Apart* (City Theatre, PA). Film credits include *Creation of Destiny, Out of Our Time* and *A Powerful Thang*. Imagineer/maker of the Eat Me Machine, a dessert vending machine.

Jana Crenshaw

Composer

Jana Crenshaw (aka Jana Losey) is a singer-songwriter and composer originally from Lawrenceville, PA, pop. 600. Though her beginnings are small-town, Crenshaw has toured extensively, performing first with an avante-garde musical troupe, and most recently with her solo material, under her maiden name, Jana Losey. After a hiatus from music, Jana moved to Portland in 2008, composing music for: The Armory (*Futura, A Small Fire, Chinglish, Other Desert Cities, Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*), Portland Playhouse (*Left Hand of Darkness* by Ursula K LeGuin/Hand2Mouth), Liminal (*Our Town*), CoHo Productions (*Note to Self*), and performing in a devised piece called *Please Validate Your Identity* as part of Portland's Fertile Ground Festival. Jana is currently writing a third-grade musical, working on a new solo album, writing a solo theater piece, and hoping to be composing and performing more and more! janacrenshaw.com

Mary McDonald-Lewis

Dialect Coach

Mary McDonald-Lewis has been a professional artist since 1979. She resides in Portland, Oregon, and is an international dialect coach for film, television and stage. She also works as a voice actor, on-camera actor, stage actor and director. *Constellations* is MaryMac's 29th show with Portland Center Stage at The Armory, and you can also hear her work at Artists Repertory Theatre, where she is a resident artist, voice and text director. She is deeply grateful to the patrons and audience members of The Armory, whose support allows the theater to provide her services to the actors. MaryMac loves what she does, and she thanks Finnegan, Sullivan and Flynn for always wagging their tails when she comes home.

John Armour

Fight Director

John is an actor and fight director who has been choreographing violence for more than 25 years. He is based in Portland, where he choreographs for many local theater companies and teaches throughout the region at colleges, high schools and middle schools. John's work has been seen regularly on stage at The Armory, Portland Opera, Artists Repertory Theatre, Oregon Children's Theatre, Miracle Theatre and many others. John's work has twice been recognized within the Portland theater community for Best Fight Design.

Barbara Hort, Ph.D.

Consulting Dramaturg

Barbara Hort, Ph.D., has maintained a private practice in Portland for over 25 years, working primarily from the psychological perspective developed by the Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Jung. At the

invitation of Chris Coleman, Dr. Hort has served as a dramaturg on The Armory productions of *Sweeney Todd*, *Clybourne Park*, the 2013 JAW festival, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Othello*, *Dreamgirls*, *Threesome*, *Three Days of Rain*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Astoria: Part One* and now, *Constellations*, providing material on the psychological dynamics of the play that can be used by the artists who are creating the performance.

Kristen Mun

Stage Manager

Kristen Mun is originally from Hawaii and graduated from Southern Oregon University with a B.F.A. in stage management. This is her fourth season at The Armory, where previous credits include: production assistant on *His Eye is on the Sparrow*, *The Santaland Diaries* (2015 and 2016), *Hold These Truths*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Each and Every Thing*, *Forever*, *Three Days of Rain*, *Threesome*, *LIZZIE* and *Fiddler on the Roof*. Outside of Portland, she has worked at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Idaho Repertory Theatre and Actors Theater of Louisville. Outside of stage managing, Kristen is a fight choreographer and stage combat teacher. She is forever grateful to Adam and her family for their love and support.

SPONSOR STATEMENTS

Don and Mary Blair

We saw this play on Broadway in the winter of 2015 and fell in love with it on both an emotional and intellectual level. We vividly remember leaving the theater and immediately recalling all those “what if” moments from our own relationship when a missed phone call or cancelled plans might have significantly changed our lives.

We admire playwrights like Nick Payne who can make an audience feel as well as think, and we are proud to support a contemporary play that intelligently speaks to the randomness, complexity and beauty that is modern love and life.

Dr. Barbara Hort

What is real, and what is true? What is within our capacity to choose, and do our choices matter anyway? Are there strict limits to our options, or are they more numerous than we can comprehend? And in this kaleidoscope of option and uncertainty, are there any constants upon which we can depend? If you are willing to follow the characters of *Constellations* through their looking-glass journey, you may find an inkling of the answers to these timeless (and timely) questions. Down the rabbit hole and bon voyage!

Hilary Krane and Kelly Bulkeley

We are continually thrilled, amazed and stimulated by boundless artistic creativity that emerges in every show at The Armory. Theater provides a magical space where people can dream together, and The Armory provides Portland with a wonderful venue for shared reveries. We are eager to see *Constellations*, a rare theatrical foray into science fiction that explores the infinite interplay of eros and the cosmos.

Ronni Lacroute

Having originally discovered Nick Payne's playwriting in London, I was thrilled when Portland Center Stage at The Armory announced this year's production of *Constellations*. Who else has explored the multiple possibilities of a relationship through the device of string theory and quantum mechanics? Applying the principles of physics to the analysis of human behavior opens up endless possibilities,

leading to a fascinating and quite original exploration, which I am very happy to support.

Drs. Ann Smith Sehdev and Paul Sehdev

We jump at any chance to support Chris in his artistic endeavors. His ability to take a piece which we think we know and turn it into something unique and topical is truly genius. We are thrilled to have you join us for *Constellations* and encourage you to get your season tickets for next year. Don't miss out!

LEAD CORPORATE CHAMPION

Umpqua Bank

Actors take chances. Sometimes they work. Sometimes they don't. But none of these actors would be on stage tonight without taking chances. It's part of growth, and we're all made to grow. That's why we're such a proud supporter of Portland Center Stage. Let this performance inspire you to take the chances that power your own growth.