



2014/15 Season

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

music dance theater

Radio Play  
+  
Graphic Art  
+  
Live Foley Sound  
=  
The Intergalactic Nemesis Book 2  
Robot Planet Rising

Page 1 -  
Intergalctic  
Nemesis  
Book 2

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Friday, March 6, 2015  
Zellerbach Hall, University of California Berkeley

## How to use this Guide

We invite you to challenge yourself and your students to think with the curiosity and passion of the arts. This engagement guide is organized around 4 key artistic practices (as identified by the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards at <http://nccas.wikispaces.com/>)



**Investigating:** Questioning, exploring and challenging.

**Imagining:** Opening the door to what's possible, and even to what seems impossible.

**Creating:** Marking artistic choices with a work of art in mind.

**Connecting:** Reflecting on both process and product and making connections to other aspects of life and study.

You'll be able to link on specific subjects that you or your students may want more information about. The body of the Engagement Guide invites exploration before and after the performance, giving each student tools to make personal and meaningful connections during the show.

**Artistic Literacy:** Having enough knowledge and understanding of an art form to participate in it authentically—that's what we mean by artistic literacy. We think that means something different than knowing the names of all the different instruments musicians might play, or being able to reproduce the exact melodies you might hear during a show, though those things are also fun and interesting and relevant. To us at Cal Performances, artistic literacy means you and your students will have a significant glimpse into the artistic process and will have a chance to try to solve the problems the artists aim to solve creatively. It means that the next time you see a performance, you'll be able to use these same insights to connect with a work of art through the artist's process and that this will deepen your experience as an audience member.

The artistically literate student audience comes to understand that every artist draws from a core set of concepts skillfully chosen and applied in performance to create a work of art both unique to the artist, and connected to other works of art.

And along the way, we hope that students of all ages—and their teachers and adult mentors—will be inspired to experiment with artistic decision-making and creativity themselves.

## Enjoy the show!

*Rica*

Rica Anderson, Education Programs Manager

*Sabrina*

Sabrina Klein, Director of Academic Engagement

# Your ★ STARRING Role in the Theater



As an audience member, you are a STAR, too! You play an important role in the performance community. The artists need YOU in order to give you their best work.

## S.T.A.R. Audiences

**S = Support** the artists by being attentive and focusing on the performers.

**T = Tune in:** listen and watch for understanding (and for The Nile Project, keep your ears and eyes open for how the artists are listening to and supporting each other).

**A = Appreciate** the performers by clapping at the right time. For example, when a scene or dance ends, or when the stage lights fade to dark.

**R = Respect** the performers and other audience members. At a performance, you, the others in the audience and the artists are sharing this experience together and are part of a performance community. Think about ways you can best support the community's performance experience.

We know you will be a STAR today and will help you classmates shine too!

# About Intergalactic Nemesis

*The Intergalactic Nemesis* is a one-of-a-kind theatrical experience that mashes up radio drama with comic books. Three actors voice dozens of characters; one Foley artist creates hundreds of sound effects; one keyboardist performs a score of thousands (yes, thousands) of notes; while on a two-story high screen we project more than 1,250 individual full-color, hand-drawn, his-res, blow-your-mind comic book images to tell the story visually. LIVE.

The stage show is adapted from the stage play by **Jason Neulander** and Chad Nichols, which was adapted from the radio drama by Ray Patrick Colgan, Jessica Reisman, Julia Edwards, and Lisa D'Amour, based originally on an idea by Ray Patrick Colgan. The show ties into a seven-issue comic book series of the same name written by Neulander with art from **Tim Doyle**. The show has been featured on [NPR's All Things Considered](#).

## The Story Line

The year is 1933. When the robot emissary Elbee-Dee-Oh disappears in deep space, it's up to Molly Sloan to rescue him. If only it were that simple. Because at that same time, and unbeknownst to her, her former fiancé Dr. Lawrence Webster has miraculously arrived on Robonovia, the Cerebretron is malfunctioning, Timmy has only just begun to master his telekinetic powers, a sinister robot named Alphatron is up to something terribly nefarious, and the duplicitous Soviet spy Natasha Zorokov has followed Dr. Webster through the Galactascope. Will it all get sorted out? Or is there another, more evil, thread to this complex tapestry.

## The Artists



### Jason Neulanders.

Jason Neulander is a writer, director, and producer based in Austin, Texas. He founded the Salvage Vanguard Theater in 1994, and served as Artistic Director until 2008, during which

time he directed and produced more than fifty world premiere plays, musicals, and operas. The Austin American-Statesman noted: "Neulander aims to change the world. ... Unlike most of his artistic compatriots, he is winning." In 2004, 2005, and 2007 he was voted "Best Theatre Director" in the *Austin Chronicle* "Best of Austin" readers' polls, with works staged at Salvage Vanguard Theater in Austin; The Playwrights' Center in Minneapolis; Portland Center Stage; The Guthrie; The Public Theater, and more.

### Timothy Paul Doyle, Graphic

**Artist.** Tim Doyle is an illustrator and print-maker working out of Austin, Texas. He began painting and showing in galleries in 2001. In 2009, he launched his own company – Nakatomi Inc, and built a screen printing studio, Nakatomi Print Labs, with artist Clint Wilson.



Doyle has produced art for Creature Design, The Astor Theatre, ABC's Lost Poster project, Mattel's He-Man art show in LA, has had artwork used by Lucasfilm/ILM, Hasbro, IDW, and just signed on to do comic book covers for DC and Dark Horse. Doyle has had 3 sold-out solo art shows at the SpokeArt Gallery in San Francisco, which featured his UnReal Estate Series of prints.

# Cal Performances in the Classroom Study Guide

If you have photos or lesson plans to share, please let us know! Use #intergalacticnemesisatcal

## Intergalactic Nemesis Book 2: Robot Planet Rising

### How does the juxtaposition of visual images and sound (sounds effects, voices and music) work together to tell a story?

Stories can be more than words. As we follow characters through their adventures, we conjure up the images as well as sounds of their actions and the environment around them. In Robot Planet Rising, instead of a fully staged production that creates theatrical illusion through lighting, set and backdrop and blocking (actors movement) the artists show four separate elements on stage – actors downstage right at microphones give voice to all the characters, graphic novel images are projected onto a large screen behind them, a Foley artist center stage creates all the sound effects and a musician behind the actors adds to the evocative soundscape. The essential ingredient, our imagination, seizes on the juxtaposition of visuals and sound presented onstage and brings the story fully to life in our minds.





*The Intergalactic Nemesis* combines comic book visuals with live actors, musicians and a Foley artist in order to theatrically bring to life a science-fiction radio play. This dynamic production effectively borrows from both theater and radio conventions to heighten the audience experience.

## Theater Conventions

We all know that what happens on stage is not real. Yet when we watch a play, we willingly suspend our disbelief. We let ourselves pretend that the characters are real people and not actors, and that the events we see are actually happening. As part of this relationship between the actors and the audience, playwrights and directors make use of certain theater conventions. The following are common techniques that help to tell the story and engage the audience.

➔ Keep an eye out for where you see these theatrical conventions and think about how they make the story come alive.

### DOUBLING

Actors take on more than one role. In *The Intergalactic Nemesis*, each actor plays at least two, and sometimes three, roles. They use costumes, posture, and changes in their voices to create different characters.

### FREEZING

When certain characters become motionless during a scene, they are not part of the action even though the audience can still see them. This may happen when we are meant to be inside a character's memory or imagination "taking a moment out of time." You can use this method to talk with young people about how quickly the human mind works, how we can remember a whole story in the blink of an eye.

### DIRECT ADDRESS

Actors may tell their thoughts directly to the audience. This is a way in which the actor can communicate what s/he is thinking, acting both as a character and as a narrator who gives us important background information and provides his/her own commentary on the action.

### NON-CONFORMIST CASTING

We often assume that actors will be cast in the characterization that they are meant to portray. However, characters are sometimes represented by actors of a different gender, race and age. This has often been the norm throughout the history of dramatic arts — for example, all women characters were portrayed by men on Shakespearean (in England), Kabukian (in Japan) and early Christian (throughout Europe) stages. Today, non-conformist casting, while not the norm or required, can serve several purposes: The actor who may not visually fit the part but is most capable of carrying a complex role is cast; in a small company, "doubling" is required; or, a director or playwright may make the choice to intentionally select an actor to explore society's conceptions about race, gender, sexual orientation and age.

### TREATMENT OF TIME

In the few minutes between scenes, any amount of time—even years—can pass. Time can be compressed and "put in fast-forward." Another commonly-used technique is flashback, in which a character remembers events from the past. These memories are so vivid that we actually relive the event with the character.

# Radio Drama Conventions

Radio requires us to listen differently that we might do in our everyday lives. The power of radio is that it asks us to use our imaginations to create the physical attributes of the characters, to design the environment and to turn a sound into a meaningful piece of information about where the characters are or what is happening to them. So radio drama conventions add to theatrical conventions in a couple of ways.

## VOICE ACTING

Radio drama has different needs than conventional dramas. While actors do not need to be in costume or even look like their characters, they must have a large and varied vocal range with which to create many characters. This is called voice acting. Voice actors are often used for animated movies and television shows, video games, books on tape, radio drama and comedies, dubbed foreign language films, puppet shows, amusement park rides and more.

## FOLEY ARTIST OR SOUND EFFECTS ARTIST

Because we can't see what's going on in a radio drama, a sound effects artist, or Foley artist creates the atmospheric sounds that make a production more believable. Foley artists are also used to create sound effects for film, television, and sometimes stage productions. The items that a Foley artist uses to reproduce environmental sounds like thunder and fire are often quite surprising. During *The Intergalactic Nemesis* the audience will be able to see the Foley artist onstage making all the sound effects for the performance.



Check out [this video](#) of a radio interview with Jason Neulander giving foley tips.

## SOME COMMON FOLEY TRICKS

Here are some ways that Foley artists use common objects to imitate certain sounds.

- Corn starch in a leather pouch makes the sound of snow crunching.
- A pair of gloves sounds like bird wings flapping.
- An arrow or thin stick makes a whooshing sound.
- An old chair can make a creaking sound.
- A water-soaked rusty hinge makes a creaking sound when placed against different surfaces. Each different surface changes the sound.
- A heavy staple gun combined with other small metal sounds can make realistic gun noises.
- A metal rake makes a fence sound (it can also make a metallic screech when dragged across a piece of metal).
- Audio tape balled up sounds like grass or brush when walked on.
- Gelatin and hand soap make squishing noises
- Coconut shells cut in half and stuffed with padding make horse hoof noises.
- Cellophane creates crackling fire effect sounds.
- A heavy phone book can make body-punching sounds.
- Celery or frozen romaine lettuce can create bone or head injury noises.



# Graphic Novel Conventions

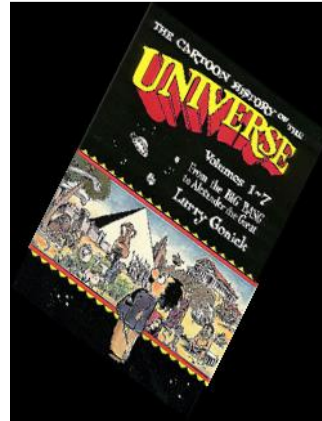
Adapted from Scholastic.com  
(<http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/colateral.jsp?id=1399>)

## Beginnings

The term “graphic novel” was first popularized by Will Eisner to distinguish his book *A Contract with God* (1978) from collections of newspaper comic strips. He described graphic novels as consisting of “sequential art”—a series of illustrations which, when viewed in order, tell a story. The graphic novel form became familiar to the public in the late 1980s after the commercial successes of the first volume of Art Spiegelman’s *Maus*, Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons’s *Watchmen*, and Frank Miller’s *The Dark Knight Returns*. At the beginning of the 21st century, the Book Industry Study Group added “graphic novel” as a category in book stores.

## Graphic Storytelling through History

Although today’s graphic novels are a recent phenomenon, this basic way of storytelling has been used in various forms for centuries—early cave drawings, hieroglyphics, and medieval tapestries like the famous Bayeux Tapestry can be thought of as stories told in pictures. The term “graphic novel” is now generally used to describe any book in a comic format that resembles a novel in length and narrative development.



## Examples of Graphic Novels

- *Maus: A Survivor’s Tale — My Father Bleeds History* by Art Spiegelman
- *The Sandman: Dream Country* by Neil Gaiman and Charles Vess
- *Jimmy Corrigan, the Smartest Kid on Earth* by Chris Ware
- *The Cartoon History of the Universe* by Larry Gonick
- *Digger* by Ursula Vernon
- *Ghost World* by Daniel Clowes
- *One! Hundred! Demons!* by Lynda Barry
- *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi
- *Stuck Rubber Baby* by Howard Cruse
- *Blankets* by Craig Thompson





# AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

Literacy & Visual Art (Grades 4-12)

## **Examining Graphic Novels**

Studying a graphic novel can bring media literacy into the curriculum in any subject area as students examine the medium itself.

Students can explore such questions as:

- How color affects emotions
- How pictures can stereotype people
- How angles of viewing affect perception
- How realism or lack of it makes a message work.

**In place of an essay**, ask students to respond to literary works, history lessons or current events by creating graphic novels to demonstrate their understanding of the material. Students are encouraged to think analytically about characters, events and themes to expand their critical thinking when they crystallize a books' significant points and characters, or recreate an historical event, in a few short scenes to fit in a comic strip or cartoon square.

**Alternatively, blank-out the text in a graphic novel** or comic strip and ask students to fill in new dialogue. Starter questions to consider include:

- What's the relationship between characters?
- How old are they? What are they wearing?
- What time of day is it?
- What posture is each character assuming?

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Literacy, Theater & Visual Art (Gr 3-12)

## **Discuss**

While it is important to discuss the students' perception of the production, encourage them to notice the basic elements of the performance **before** interpreting it. By taking the time to share what they saw and heard onstage before moving to what they thought and felt about the performance, students will begin to understand the choices the artists made and be more open to the fullest possibilities of interpretation.

## **Questions for class discussion and reflection:**

How would you describe this performance to someone who hasn't seen it?

- What did the music sound like?
- What were the graphic images used?
- How were special effects executed?

- What did the lighting look like?

- How were the actors used?

How was the performance similar to or different from what you expected?

Which forms of communication seemed to have the biggest impact on you?

- Pictures?                      - Colors?
- Lighting?                      - Vocal work?
- Sound effects?              - Music?

What were your feelings during the performance? How did this performance compare to reading a graphic novel?

## **Write it Down**

Now that students have had a chance to examine and discuss the play, invite them to write a review of *The Intergalactic Nemesis*. Like a critic who writes for a newspaper, their job is to review the performance for the public. They should identify important elements of a review, including the name of the theater and performance, the staging, lighting, sound, graphic image and acting choices, plus their opinions about these and other artistic elements.

Ask students to consider the messages about the human condition the artists are trying to convey through the performance. Were the messages specific or universal? Were the artists successful? Have them bring their own personal experience to their perception of the performance.

## **Research**

In groups, ask students to research the ways radio drama and graphic storytelling have been used in the past and present their findings to the class.

## **Create a Visual Interpretation**

Using any available materials, have students create a visual interpretation of the performance, or a moment from the show.

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For information on supporting our Education and Community Programs, contact, Sarah Sobey  
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## **About Cal Performances and Cal Performances in the Classroom**

The mission of Cal Performances is to inspire, nurture and sustain a lifelong appreciation for the performing arts. Cal Performances, the performing arts presenter of the University of California, Berkeley, fulfills this mission by presenting, producing and commissioning outstanding artists, both renowned and emerging, to serve the University and the broader public through performances and education and community programs. Cal Performances celebrates over 100 years on the UC Berkeley Campus.

Our Cal Performances Classroom programs cultivate an appreciation for and understanding of the performing arts amongst our youngest audiences. Workshops and classroom visits prepare students for deeper engagement when they experience hour-long, daytime performances by the same world-class artists who perform as part of the main season. We're proud to be an integral part of the academic year for teachers and students throughout the Bay area.