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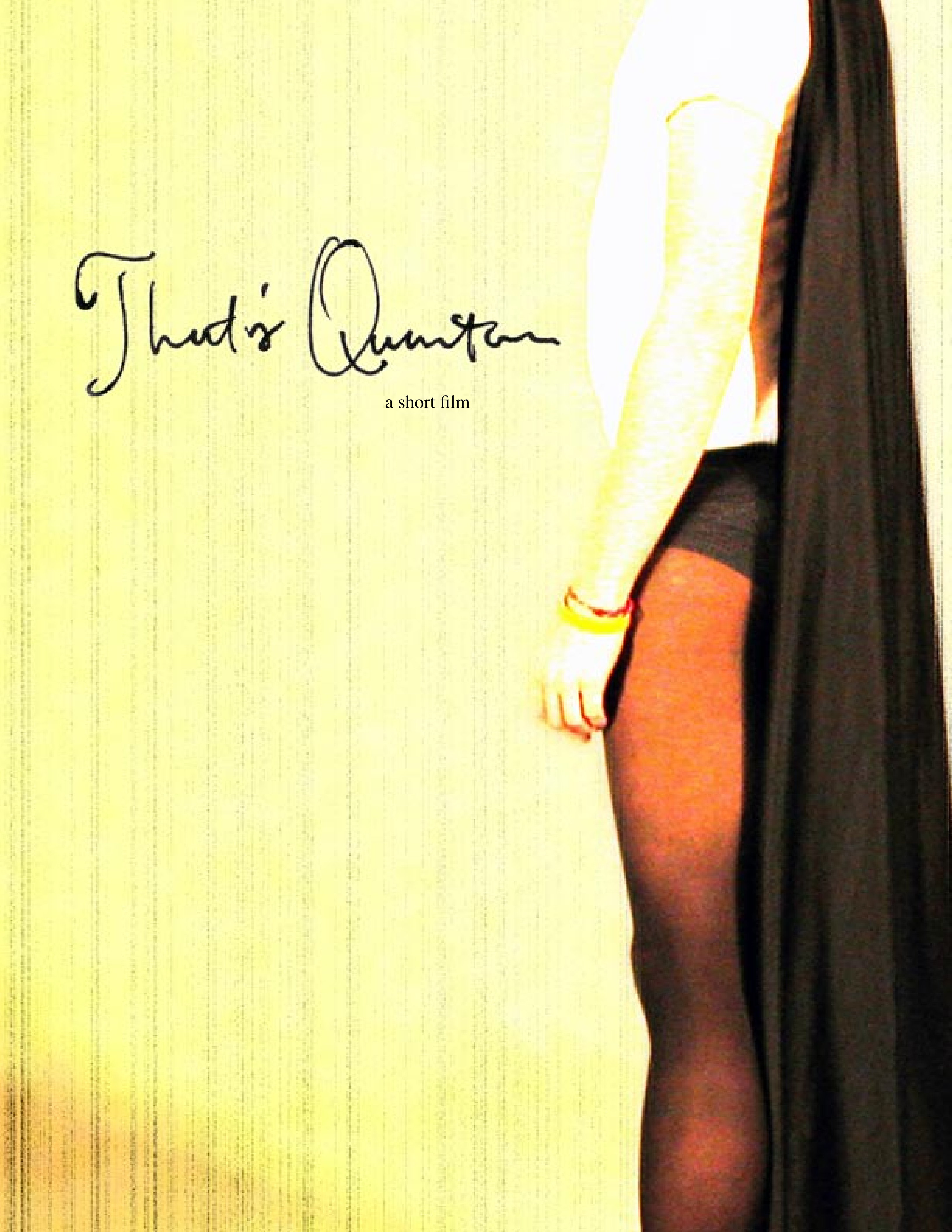

That's Quinton
a short film

M MAGAZINE

ISSUE ONE

M Theory?
MCAD?
Minneapolis?

A Publication of the BS: Visualization Program,
Minneapolis College of Art and Design

contents

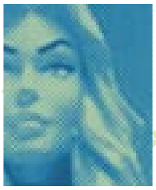
>notes from the Mteam

We'd been through the drill before - our classes in the B.S. Visualization program at Minneapolis College of Art and Design are divided into teams and given different semester-long assignments. Visualizing Physics class was no different. This time, the class was divided into four groups and given Physics topics to communicate to the general public – General Relativity, Special Relativity, Quantum Mechanics, and String Theory. By the luck of the draw, we ended up with String Theory.

From the beginning, this seemed like a deceptively simple task. We had no idea how much research, reading, and learning we would do by the end of the semester. Here is the result of many hours of hardwork, frustration, writing, re-writing and design. There are still so many people and ideas we would like to include, but our time was limited. Eight weeks just wasn't enough time to do everything.

Currently, we are still at the prototype stage. We should be printing soon. If you are interested in a copy, please send all inquiries to Leigh Simmons, lsimmons@mcad.edu.

We would like to offer special thanks to Antonella Del Rosso at CERN, Susan Dahl, Reidar Hahn, Fred Ulrich and Mike Perricone at Fermilab, Alan Chodos at the American Physical Society, and most of all, Dr. Mikhail Shifman at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Shifman was not only an amazing interview subject, but an invaluable resource as well.

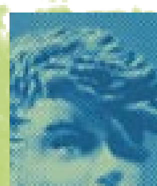


Ashley Becker
Freshman BS: Visualization
Writer
abecker@mcad.edu

Courtney Davis
Sophomore BS: Visualization
Illustrator
Writer
cdavis@mcad.edu

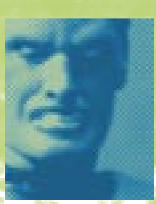
Jesse Gadola
Freshman BS: Visualization
Writer
jgadola@mcad.edu

Leigh Simmons
Sophmore BS: Visualization
Publisher
Creative Director
Lay-Out Designer
Digital Illustrator
Web Site Designer
Writer
lsimmons@mcad.edu



Katy Smith
Freshman BS: Visualization
Writer
Website Programmer
ksmith101@mcad.edu

Lester Shen
Instructor - Visualizing Physics
Associate Dean
BS: Visualization
lshen@mcad.edu

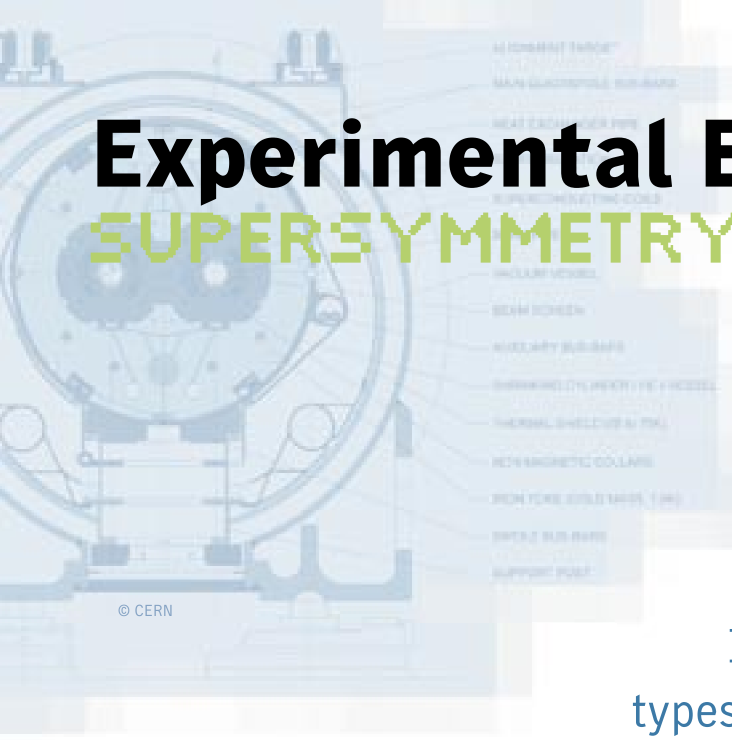


Erik Lundgren
Junior BS: Visualization
Team Mentor

Pete Border
Instructor - Visualizing Physics
Senior Research Associate
University of Minnesota
border@physics.umn.edu

Created in Adobe InDesign CS, Adobe Photoshop CS, Adobe Illustrator CS. Type: Shuriken Boy, Spektrogothic Regular, Spektrogothic Black, Spekteogothic Medium, Spektrogothic Bold, Panzer, Pushkin, American Typewriter Condensed Light, UPF Silkscreen Remix


E=sr²
explore the future.



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Experimental Evidence > in search of SUPERSYMMETRY

by Leigh Simmons

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Bosons, the "force" particles, were named after Satyendra Nath Bose. Fermions, the "matter" particles, were named after Enrico Fermi. So who's name goes on their respective superpartners ?

To keep things from getting confusing, scientists have decided on a naming convention.

A superpartner to a fermion will get an "s" prefix. For Example:

Electron ---► Selectron

Quark ---► Squark

A boson's superpartner, on the otherhand, will have a suffix of "ino."

Photon ---► Photino

Higg's Boson ---► Higgsino

Imagine a world that contains only two types of people – Blue and Green. Blue people like to assemble into large crowds, sometimes standing on top of other Blues. They hate being alone. Green people, on the other hand, prefer to keep a friendly distance from other Greens. These two types of people have nothing in common, it seems. Until one day, when scientists from both groups realize that some equations point to a bizarre and startling new idea: when a Blue person enters the world, there is also a hidden, massively heavy Green person, and vice versa.

The scientists call these unseen opposites "superpartners." The math looks great, but there's no experimental proof. The only way to get that proof is to take billions of Blue people, and slam them together at almost impossible speeds. These collisions break the Blue people into bits, and at a high enough energy, should briefly produce a Green superpartner, also known as an S-Green.

Perhaps this seems like a plot to another absurd sci-fi story or an incomprehensible animé film. However, enter the world of high-energy physics, and superpartners to fundamental particles – the bits that make up atoms – just might exist. The theory is called supersymmetry, or SUSY, and has engrossed physicists worldwide for more than thirty years. In fact, Ed Witten, a leading string theorist, calls the search for SUSY "one of the biggest adventures of all."

To understand supersymmetry, we must first understand what scientists call the Standard Model of particle physics. According to the Standard Model, there are two basic types of particles – fermions and bosons. Generally, fermions make up matter. Electrons are a good example. Because Fermions have an internal spin of - 1/2, they obey the Pauli exclusion principle. In other words, like the green People, they cannot occupy the same space. Bosons, on the other hand, are generally the particles that distribute the forces. Think gravity or light. Because bosons spin differently than fermions (some of them do not spin at all), they are free to clump together just like the Blue people love to do. The laser operates on this principle by concentrating untold billions of photons, the carrier particle of the electromagnetic force, part of which is the light we see.

So what exactly is supersymmetry? In very simple terms, SUSY says that for every fermion, there is a massively heavy boson counterpart, or superpartner, and vice versa. Physicists discovered supersymmetry back in the 1970s while studying string theory equations and Poincaré algebra. In fact, even though SUSY

> “Supersymmetry, if it holds in nature, is part of the quantum structure of space and time.”
>
> *- Ed Witten*

exists independently of string theory, having real evidence of SUSY may indicate that experimental validation of superstring theories is possible.

So far, scientists have not been able to observe SUSY in nature. The superpartners are too heavy and do not last long enough to measure. The only way to measure them is to actually create them. Unfortunately, the particle accelerators currently in existence don’t have enough power to produce the heavy SUSY particles. That might change when the LHC, or Large Hadron Collider, at CERN in Switzerland goes online in 2007.

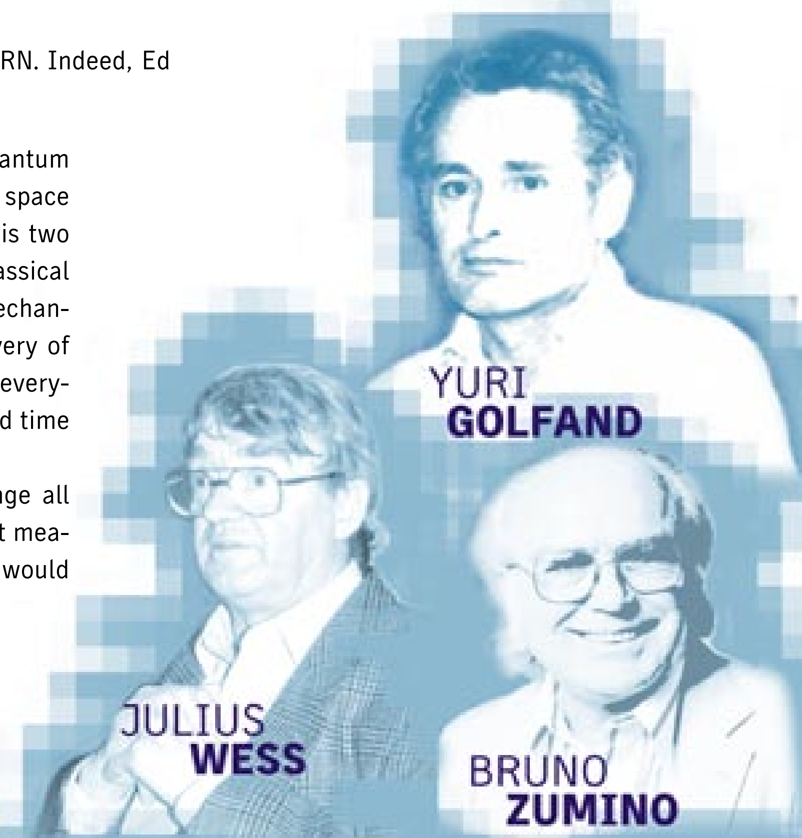
The implications are staggering if SUSY is found at CERN. Indeed, Ed Witten said it best:

> “Supersymmetry, if it holds in nature, is part of the quantum structure of space and time. In everyday life, we measure space and time by numbers, “It is now three o’clock, the elevation is two hundred meters above sea level,” and so on. Numbers are classical concepts, known to humans since long before Quantum Mechanics was developed in the early twentieth century. The discovery of Quantum Mechanics changed our uunderstanding of almost everything in physics, but our basic way of thinking about space and time has not yet been affected.
>
> Showing that nature is supersymmetric would change all that, by revealing a quantum dimension of space and time, not measurable by ordinary numbers. ... Discovery of supersymmetry would be one of the real milestones in physics.”

NEAR SIMULTANEOUS DISCOVERY

Believe it or not, three teams of scientists discovered supersymmetry independently. The first team, Yuri Golfand and Likhtman in Moscow discovered supersymmetry in 1971. Then in 1972, Volkov and Akulov in the city of Kharkov came across SUSY. In 1973, the team of Julius Wess and Bruno Zumino discovered SUSY while at CERN in Switzerland.

Because of the isolation of the Soviets from the West, it was a while before the world was aware that Golfand and Likhtman were the first to glimpse the supersymmetrical world.



Photos from the collection of Dr. Mikail Shifman

Elementary Stuff, Really

by Katy Smith

I've been a freelance Journalist working in New York City for about two years now. When most people think of any "freelance" occupations, the first words that come to mind are usually ones like "artsy," and "cutting-edge." After you've been at it for even a few months, you find that the more accurate terms sound more like "cold," and "starving." I was usually hired to write stories for independent magazines and small, underground newspapers in The Big Apple that often concerned reviews for new, bizarre forms of barely-listenable music that the group swears is the "hottest thing in Europe."

When the phone rang and echoed off the walls of my enormous drafty apartment, the first thing I thought was, "oh, Gods, here we go again... another pretentious Independent film or ear-bleeding album to sit through." I barely managed to crawl across the room from my mattress and pick up the phone. I held the earpiece a good six inches away from my head; my temples were pounding from a night on the town with the press team from my last assignment, and it showed in my voice.

" 'ello? Yuh, this's Jonathan... Scientist... mmhm. Lemme getta pen. Got it. No, no. Be quiet. Let me alone... I need sufficient sleep and a slew of painkillers before I tackle a story of this kind... yes, thank you, goodbye."

This was going to be a completely different assignment. On the opposite end of the line was editor from "Scientastic Monthly," a locally run pamphlet that was distributed in high schools. "Funducation," he called it. He explained that he wanted me to interview a New York professor named Leonard Susskind, who had recently come upon a scientific breakthrough. I blearily took down the information;

"PROF. LEONARD SUSSKIND, 6:30. PEARL OYSTER BAR, RUBBER BAND THEORY. $35"

Leonard Susskind, the discoverer of string theory, is the proud son of a New York plumber.

A few hours of uncomfortable slumber later, and the notes hardly made sense to me at all. I wondered if the transaction had been some sort of audial hallucination, brought on by a combination of gin and a lack of sleep. This kind of thing had happened before, but with far more disastrous consequences than being stood up by imaginary men of science. I decided to chance the meeting with this Susskind character... if he did show, I'd have a cool thirty-five bucks burning yet another hole in my Levi's after the article was written.

I caught a glimpse of my reflection at the bar when it was too late in the game to do anything about it. My hair was a mess; flattened on one side where I had slept on it, jutting out madly on the other. A half-Einstein. I had slept in my clothes that I had worn the night -- no, two nights -- before, and my puffy, squinted eyes had dark circles hanging beneath them like great purple pendulums. I looked like a junkie; a madman. I pictured a clean-cut elderly gent with a neatly trimmed beard and pressed suit giving this approaching freak a hearty spray of mace. I sat at the bar ordered a Pabst from the tap, almost hoping that he wouldn't show.

6:45. I thought I was in the clear until I felt a tap on my shoulder that gave me such a start I nearly threw the bottom half of my beer all over the man who sat had next to me.

"Are you Jonathan? The journalist?" he asked me, gesturing toward the creased press badge on my jacket that was usually worn only to get the best seats at concerts and sporting events rather than proof that I was doing legit work. "Yeah, I am. Call me Johnny. You the scientist? Leonard Susskind?" I asked dubiously after checking my notebook again. He looked like he was only a few years older than me, and had the appearance that he'd been to Hell and back, forgotten his notes, and went back for a second trip. At the question, he scoffed.

"A scientist in name, yes, though recently I've been having doubts," he sighed and ordered a scotch.

I realized that I had come completely unprepared. I had been so used

My hair was a mess; flattened on one side where I had slept on it, jutting out madly on the other. A half-Einstein.

to assignments where I could show up with merely a pencil and paper and wing it, but I had nothing to get this boulder rolling. I checked my information again, scouring for the topic. I scored the big one.

"Tell me about this theory," I blurted. Susskind knew exactly what I was talking about; his eyes seemed to light up, but his face fell more deeply into a scowl.

"Yes. My theory that just got rejected from that pompous journal, the Physcal Review Letters?" he asked bitterly. I felt a surprising amount of tension radiating from the man, and I hunched a bit behind my notebook, carefully writing the word "rejected" on the blank page.

“Your guess is as good as mine,” I replied with a shrug. Leonard took a deep breath, his eyebrows furrowing. Before he could speak, I quickly cut in. “Just give me the basics… I’m no grad student.”

“It started out simple,” he began, “a good friend of mine, Hector Rubenstein, gave me a mathematic formula.” Leonard snatched the pen from my hand, and scrawled an abstract series of numbers and symbols on the napkin that was set beneath his glass of scotch.

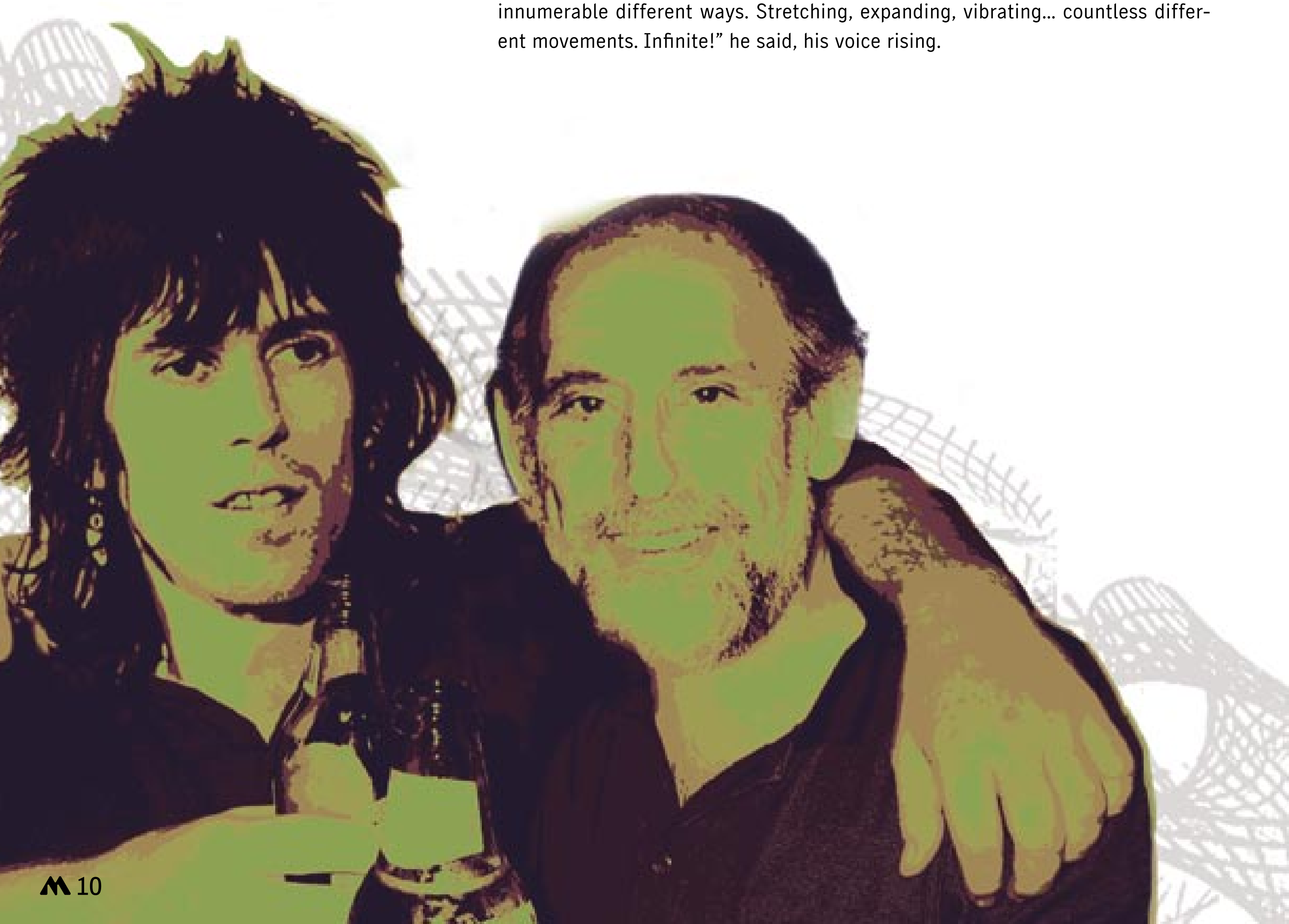
“See?” he continued, handing me back my pen, “a mathematical formula so simple, I thought to myself, ‘I can figure this out. I just need some time to dissect it; investigate it’.” I stared down at the napkin, feeling like the Greenwich Village Idiot. I nodded.

To our knowledge, Leonard Susskind never hung out with Keith Richads. Perhaps in another dimension.

“Elementary stuff, really,” I said with playful sarcasm. Leonard seemed not to hear me.

“I spent three months sneaking in and out of my attic, spending as much time as I could trying to figure out what this mathematical puzzle meant; and I knew that it was going to be something very important,” he continued, his eyes becoming wild and excited. He answered my next question before it even formed in my throat.

“The formula basically is a description. It describes particles that are like elastic bands. Either circular or straight… and these ‘particles’ can move in innumerable different ways. Stretching, expanding, vibrating… countless different movements. Infinite!” he said, his voice rising.



As my hand scrambled across the notebook to keep up with Susskind, I began to feel the effects of the night before again. I jammed my hand into my pocket and choked down two aspirin with the suds that were left in the bottom of my glass.

"And what does this mean for science?" I asked, and then rephrased my question, "rather, what does this mean for a twenty-something journalist working for his next trip to McDonald's?" Leonard grinned.

"What it means for science is a bridge between General Relativity and Quantum Mechanics--"

"And for the journalist?"

"It means that these little loops and strings of oscillating energy is what you are made of. Hell, you, this bartop, your beer glass, even this damn sun giving us the torture of another New York summer," he exclaimed. I squinted my eyes, and everything began to fall into place. The pain in my skull seemed to vanish.

"So, what you're saying is that everything is made up of these... 'elastic bands'?" I asked. My first thought was that the city was getting to this man; that he was cracked. I kept a poker face as I continued taking my notes. Who knew what this man was capable of if he truly was the nut that I assumed him to be? Leonard raised his eyebrows at me, abruptly falling silent.

"Yes," he began evenly, projecting an image of complete level-headedness to counter what he knew I was thinking.

"You see, Quantum Mechanics, in short, is a set of mathematical formulas that pin down the existence of microscopic things. Atoms, subatomic particles, quarks -- everything that matter is made of. Follow?" he asked. I straightened up on my stool and gave him complete, undivided attention. By Gods, I felt like I was back in high school Physics.

"Yes sir," I responded reflexively. Leonard nodded.

"And General Relativity is the mathematics that describe and explain enormous things; say the planets, galaxies... the whole encompassing universe, really," Leonard explained, taking a drink of his scotch that was no doubt watered down from the ice that had melted during his recitation. I took the chance to cut in.

"And you said that your theory makes a bridge between these two -- the microscopic and the massive?" I asked, starting to be reeled in by the concept that began to sound far more sane than I had thought just moments before.

"Up until now, Quantum Mechanics and General Relativity had worked incredibly well individually... but when you put them together, they clashed completely. Sparks flew; the mathematics collapsed and nothing agreed..."

"Like Mick Jagger and Keith Richard?" I quipped, citing music references to help me explain scientific theories. Leonard shrugged.

Gonzo Journalism requires the writer to insert themselves into the narrative. The late Hunter S. Thompson made this style of writing famous.

"Like Mick Jagger and Keith Richard?" I quipped, citing music references to help me explain scientific theories.

"Sure," he said, "or they were like puzzle pieces that wouldn't fit together. This 'Rubber Band Theory' acts like the fitting piece between the two. It basically implies that everything -- everything," he emphasized, staring me right in the eyes, "is made of these quivering bands. Each one of the infinite vibrations creates a new form of matter." My eyes widened, my pulse and brain racing each other toward the finish line that was this new, radical, magnificent breakthrough. It all began to come together; Rubber bands, The Rolling Stones, bad indie films, newspapers--

"All made of 'elastic' energy vibrations?" I thought aloud. Susskind chuckled and ordered me another Pabst.

"You've got it. The mathematics say it all; the theory fits perfectly." I was sure that my jaw had dropped to rest on the formica countertop.

"The answer to the ultimate question of Life, The Universe, and Everything... the real-life 42," I mumbled, sipping the suds from the top of my beer. "Pure Douglas Adams. Hitchhiker's Guide," I muttered, my mind still reeling.

"Something like that, yes," Leonard said quietly. We sat in silence for a moment.

The situation portrayed in this story is fictitious. However, we wish it had happened.

"Lenny!" I suddenly exclaimed, now feeling like the madman myself as I grasped him by the shoulders and gave him a bit of a shake, "you're a genius -- absolutely goddamn brilliant! You need to get this thing out in the world -- this is huge!" I notice that I was attracting the attention of the other patrons. I lowered my voice. "I can't believe that journal rejected the idea."

"I can't, either," he said with a shrug, "after two months of writing the papers that I sent in, I thought that there were going to be headlines calling me the next Newton." Instead of bitterness, this time his voice held undertones of disappointment. He paused in thought, and I looked downward to study my nearly illegible notes. Leonard stood up and left a five dollar bill on the counter. "Thanks for hearing me out. Give me a call when the article is finished. I'd like to look it over," he said, checking his watch. "I need to get home and change -- I have some kids to teach in an hour."

As he walked out the door of the bar, I picked up my notebook -- my mass of infinite vibrating energy strings that took on the shape of a notebook -- and started for the door.

"Me too," I said to myself, paying the tender and leaving with a half-full glass of Pabst fizzing on the bartop.

The End... or is it?

SCIENCE & ART

$$R_{\mu\nu} - 1/2 R g_{\mu\nu} = 8\pi G T_{\mu\nu}$$

Gravity & Dalí

Dalí's painting, "Moment of Explosion", demonstrates stretching, twisting, and warping similar to the way gravity is explained within the theory of General Relativity. The equation represents how gravity warps and curves in relation to spacetime.

www.ScienceofyourArt.com

A Conversation

> Dr. Mikhail Shifman

by Leigh Simmons

Dr. Shifman can be found at the William I. Fine Institute of Theoretical Physics at the University of Minnesota.

Sure, the directions seem easy. The map seems self-explanatory. But Ashley and I somehow manage to get lost between the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and the University of Minnesota. Not only are we lost, but we are completely out of our element. Our project requires us to venture from the world of artists and designers into the unfamiliar territory of particle physics and renowned physicists – two worlds that rarely collide.

After thirty minutes of circuitous driving, we finally make our way across the bridge to the East bank. Fortunately, once on campus, the Tate Physics Building is easy for us to locate. Stepping inside, we scurry past the students clumped together, heads bowed over heavy books. We pinpoint the elevator and then ascend to the fourth floor, the home of the William I. Fine Theoretical Physics Institute. Wait, no. We're in the Astronomy department. Five minutes, a stairwell, two corridors, and a different elevator later, and we find ourselves in the place we were supposed to be some forty minutes earlier – the office of Dr. Mikhail Shifman.

Never mind the movies, this is not the lair of a mad scientist bent on world destruction. Far from it. The office is homey and situated conveniently close to the coffee machine. On the wall, among other things, is a certificate of U.S. citizenship signed by President Clinton. Dr. Shifman, a lively man with kind eyes and pleasant Russian accent, is dressed in a crisp yellow button-down shirt and khakis. Not surprisingly, like famed Russian writer Vladimir Nabokov, his command of English is far better than the majority of native speakers.

From the start, it's apparent that Dr. Shifman finds great joy in physics. He completely lacks the hunched, irritated look of someone who struggles in to work just for the paycheck. My teammate and I are greeted by a friendly smile, and a firm handshake. He offers us coffee and puts us at ease.

We start the session by looking over some illustrations of physics properties that Dr. Shifman has collected over the years. He takes time to explain to us why these are accurate visual explanations, not just pretty pictures. And he does it well. He radiates the easy air of someone who thrives on teaching others the subjects he's passionate about. "This is a visualization of a D-brane," he says, indicating what looked like the background of an early '90s rave flyer, a picture comprised of psychedelic striations on a black background. "You've heard of D-branes?" We nod in agreement, having spent weeks pouring over every book we had access to and every online article we could understand about string theory and its offshoots.

When I mention the supersymmetry article to be included in the magazine, Dr. Shifman responds excitedly. "This I can help you with," he says getting more animated. He steps to the bookshelf and extracts a paperback, *The Supersymmetric World: The Beginnings of the Theory* – a book he edited with Dr. Gordon Kane at the University of Michigan containing reminesences and technical articles from the pioneers of supersymmetry.

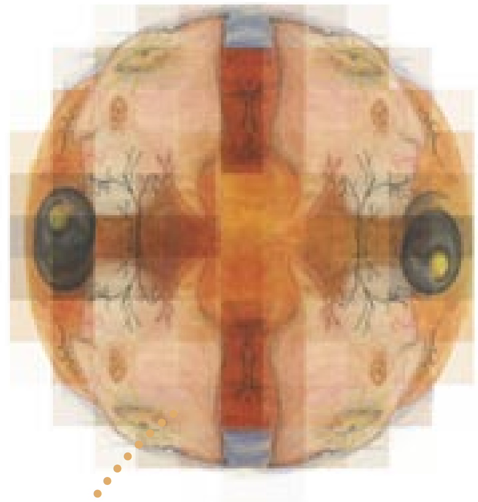
While Dr. Shifman is not a string theorist, his work deals with products of string theory, like the afore-mentioned D-branes – a kind of membrane structure – and supersymmetry. Beyond that, he earned his doctorate at the Institute of Theoretical and Experimental Physics in Moscow in 1976, was elected a Fellow in the American Physical Society in 1997, was named a joint-winner of thr Sakurai Prize with Arkady Vainshtein and Valentine Zakharov in 1999, and was one of the most cited Soviet physicists during 1973-1988. Who better to answer the multitude of questions we have about this fascinating, but complex subject?

After a mind-expanding mini-lecture on supersymmetry, ask questions we did. Reminding myself that there is no such thing as a dumb question, I ask "Michio Kaku said in his book *Hyperspace* that our brains are incapable of perceiving extra dimensions. If that's true, then what's the point?" Dr. Shifman smiles, and says "We can see what we can experience. It's like if you are born

> "This is a visualization of a D-brane," he says, indicating what looked like the background of an early '90s rave flyer...

blind, you develop some kind of a substitute through touch and hearing and so on. It's the same with extra dimensions. Nobody can claim they actually see them. When you're working and playing with extra dimensional expressions, you develop some kind of intuition which is a substitute for seeing."

We step out of Dr. Shifman's office, eyes open, feeling like we are finally on the right track to some understanding of Quantum Mechanics and String Theory, not to mention having a whole new appreciation of "the spirit of Physics". Now if only we could find our parking space...



The American Physical Society, or APS, is the professional society of physicists in the USA with over 43,000 members. Only five or six thousand have been elected Fellows to date.

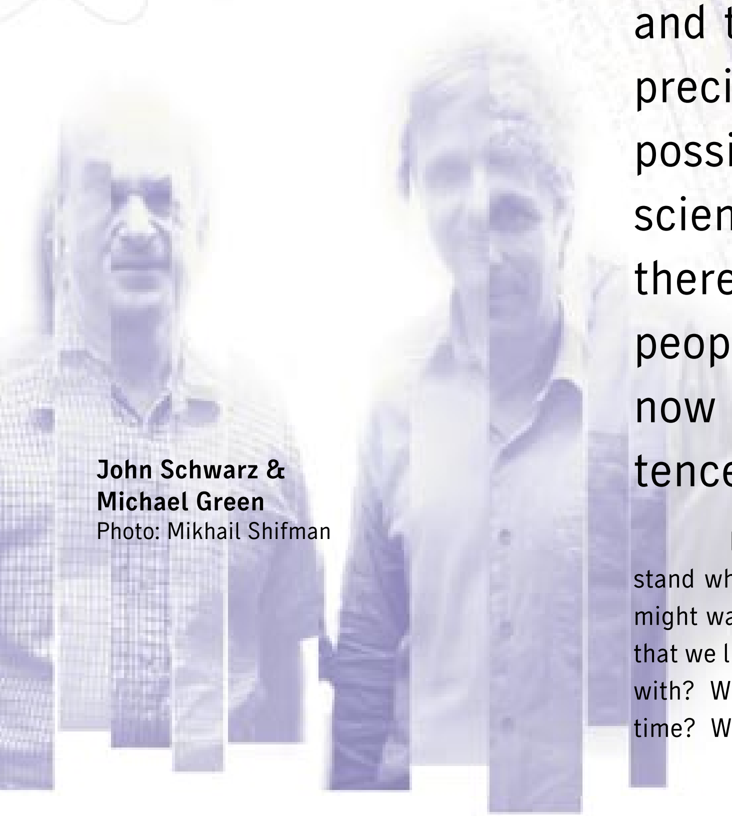
According to Alan Chodos, Executive Secretary of APS, "To be elected a Fellow is a significant recognition of achievement by the physics community... Election to Fellowship is an indication that one's peers have recognized the value of one's research achievements."

STRING THEORY

All Tied Up?

By Ashley Becker

Science has become such a part of our everyday lives that we don't even see it as anything miraculous anymore. Think about it. You have a headache, you take an aspirin and the headache is gone. You forget to appreciate that it was science that made this possible. We, the general public, leave it for scientists to find the answers, even before there seems to be a problem. After all, what people thought was impossible years ago is now part of the fabric of our everyday existence, like cell phones and computers.



John Schwarz & Michael Green
Photo: Mikhail Shifman

Most people don't realize that you don't need to be a scientist to understand what's going on around you, and that there may be some things you just might want to know. For example, what if I told you that there was a possibility that we live in a world of eleven dimensions instead of the four we are so familiar with? What endless possibilities could there be once we cross the dimension of time? Would you be intrigued to find out more about science now?

The world we live in, or is it?

Eleven dimensions? Parallel universes? A world made up of little tiny strings? These strings are so small that if an atom were scaled up to the size of the solar system, a string would only amount to the size of a tree on earth. This idea, known as String Theory, can only be considered a theory in progress at this point. However, if String Theory proves to be true, one of science's greatest conflicts could be resolved. String Theory is said to be the missing link that will connect the two fundamental pillars of Physics: General Relativity and Quantum Mechanics.

These strings are so small that if an atom were scaled up to the size of the solar system, a string would only amount to the size of a tree on earth.

General Relativity: beyond our world.

General Relativity explains how things work on a large level – like gravity, planets, stars, and galaxies. When Albert Einstein published the theory of General Relativity in 1915, he explained gravity as a function of geometry – a result of curvatures in space-time. Space-time, as Einstein described, can be thought of as a trampoline with the weight of massive objects – such as the sun – creating an indentation in thesurface of the "trampoline". When this indentation from the sun creates a massive "downhill" curvaure in the space-time fabric, objects like earth are inclined to stay within the sun's gravitational influence. Thanks to Einstein's theory of general relativity, we have a greater understanding of gravity.

Albert Einstein

Quantum Mechanics: beyond the atom.

Quantum Mechanics explains how things work on a subatomic level. If a person were to shrink down smaller than an atom, and even smaller than protons, the fabric of space-time would become unstable and chaotic. This describes the quantum world, where nothing is where or what it was a moment ago, and nothing is defined as anything more than a probability. Because there is a probability for everything in the quantum world, it is possible for things to jump through walls and even more bizarre possibilities. Space-time becomes very distorted.

(continued)

String Theory: let's be friends.

It is clear that these two theories, General Relativity and Quantum Mechanics, describe very different worlds. Shouldn't they be the same? Don't we live in just one world? Actually, scientists can calculate to great accuracy using both theories and both are valid in describing the wolrd we live in. The problem arises when these theories need to be used together, like when studying black holes or studying the Big Bang. If there were a way to unify these two theories, such mysteries could be broached. String Theory just may be the answer-the next step before black holes and other mysteries are to be understood.

Friends? I don't even know you!

To understand strings as physicists describe them, picture a guitar string that has just been plucked. The way the guitar string vibrates when it is plucked is similar to the way a string moves. By varying the tension on different guitar strings, different musical notes are created. This is also an example of how strings differ from each other. Each string has its own vibration depending on the amount of tension impacted upon it. Some strings may vibrate faster than others, and some are different shapes and sizes. Now imagine that these strings are so small, that they fit within the quarks and electrons of an atom. It is proposed that these many different strings are the building blocks of our entire universe.

Theodor Kaluza

Before string theory: Kaluza & Klein.

In 1919, a physicist by the name of Theodor Kaluza suggested something mind-boggling. Before Kaluza, everyone knew of the four dimensions that can be distinguished by our senses: length, width, height and time. Mathematicians and scientists also knew that additional dimensions could be described using mathematical equations. What Kaluza suggested, was the idea of a fifth spacial dimension. He proposed that the universe has one more dimension that we cannot see.

So, if Kaluza was right, where is this hidden dimension? Another physicist, by the name of Oscar Klein had an idea about how multiple dimensions could be possible. Klein suggested that extra dimensions are simply different than the four we are familiar with. These extra dimensions are long and tiny, so they can fit together when they are coiled up. Kaluza and Klein's ideas became collectively known as the Kaluza-Klein Theory. Their theory suggests that there are a few tiny, curled up dimensions at every small point in space-time and that the extra undefined dimensions exist all around us. The only difference between each dimension is their shape.

How the theory came to be string: Susskind, Schwartz, & Green.

Physicist Leonard Susskind first described the idea of String Theory in 1970. The young physicist was looking at an equation originally created to describe the strong nuclear force, when he found that it described an elastic, string-like particle that could wiggle. From this, a new theory developed and with more investigation, it gained more support in the physics world.

Scientists thought that if strings can describe gravity at the quantum level, it must be the key to unifying the four forces – gravity, the strong nuclear force, the weak nuclear force, and electromagnetism.

In 1973, a physicist by the name of John Schwartz found that String Theory predicted a mass-less particle, later named the graviton. A graviton theoretically transmits gravity at the quantum level. Scientists thought that if strings can describe gravity at the quantum level, it must be the key to unifying the four forces – gravity, the strong nuclear force, the weak nuclear force, and electromagnetism. Then in 1984, Schwartz, with his partner Michael Green, worked out all the inconsistencies within String Theory. They found that strings could describe all four forces.

Too many solutions?

By 1985, scientists had constructed five different versions of String Theory. Each theory involved vibrating strings, but the mathematical details were different in every one. Then, at a conference in 1995, physicist Ed Witten proposed that the five theories were just five different ways of looking at one single theory. He called this one theory "M" Theory. "M" theory requires 11 dimensions. Dimensions, as Witten explained, equal "Degrees of Freedom." "Degrees of Freedom" means that strings are free to move between the eleven dimensions and parallel universes.

These extra dimensions allow strings to stretch into something like a membrane. A membrane can be imagined as a long, stretched-out piece of elastic. Membranes can run parallel to each other. With enough energy, strings could grow into an enormous membrane as large as a universe. This means that there could be another parallel universe right next to the one we are living on!

(continued)

Ed Witten
Photo: Mikhail Shifman

Finding Strings

If String Theory is able to resolve the inconsistency between quantum mechanics and general relativity, it could truly be the called the “theory of everything.” The problem is that strings are much too small to see with our current technology. Financing is also a problem. If it were possible to build a machine powerful enough to observe strings, it could cost billions of dollars. Because of this, physicists are in search of more clever methods to test the theory. So far, the theory can only be explored through complex mathematics.

THE LHC & The Tevatron

Photo: Maximilien Brice, ©CERN Geneva

Large Hadron Collider @CERN
Geneva, Switzerland

The LHC, or Large Hadron Collider, is currently under construction – costing roughly 2.5 billion dollars. When completed, it will measure approxiamately 17 miles in circumference, and will be capable of firing protons at amazing speeds. Once this behemoth is fired up in 2007, you can bet that we’ll be hearing more about String Theory, supersymmetry, and quite possibly, new amazing discoveries. **http://www.cern.ch**

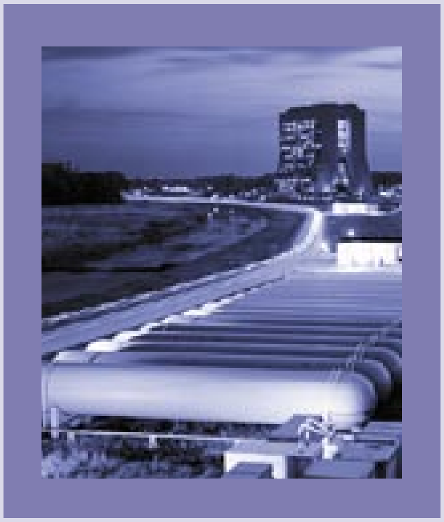


Photo: Fred Ulrich

Tevatron @Fermilab
Batavia, Illinois

The Tevatron is currently the most powerful accelerator in the world rating in at 4 miles in circumference. Sure, the LHC will be bigger and more powerful when complete. However, that’s still two years away. There’s still lots to learn at the Tevatron. Besides, “Tevatron” is by far the coolest name of any collider past, present, or future. **http://www.fnal.gov**

Quiz > Test your knowledge of String Theory

1) Why do we need String Theory?

a) To resolve the conflict between Quantum Mechanics and Special Relativity.
b) To find the Real Life "42"
c) Why not
d) To resolve the conflict between general relativity and Quantum mechanics

2) String Theory is also known as the Theory of ___?

a) Creation
b) Parallel Dimensions
c) Everything
d) Underwater Basket Weaving

3) The smallest unit of all forces and matter are tiny ___?

a) Atoms
b) Strings
c) Protons
d) Spartikles

4) String Theory requires how many dimensions?

a) 10
b) 26
c) 11
d) All of the Above

5) What do these extra dimensions allow strings to do?

a) Travel between dimensions.
b) Stretch into membranes.
c) Grow as large as a universe.
d) All of the above.

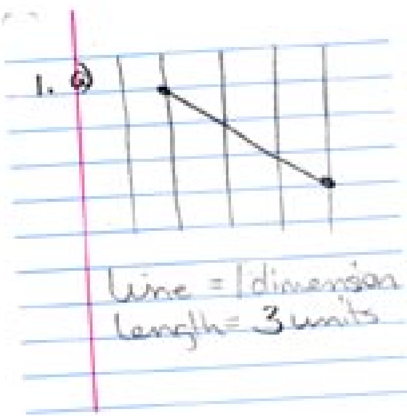
6) There are two types of strings. What are they?

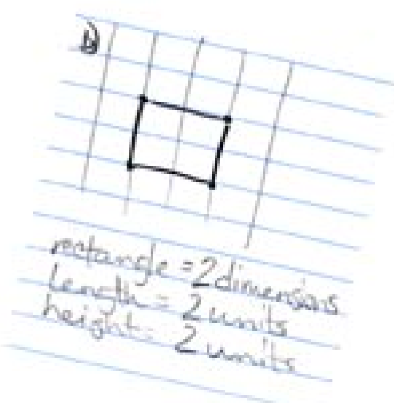
a)
b)

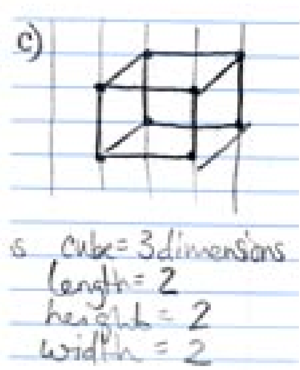
CORRECT ANSWERS: 1A, 2C, 3B, 4D, 5D, OPEN LOOP, CLOSED LOOP

Dealing with Dimensions

by Courtney Davis







Let's begin with what we know. As many of us remember from fourth grade geometry class, a square has a length and a width. These are two dimensions; therefore, a square is 2-dimensional. By at least the sixth grade, we all became familiar with the third dimension, height, and could then draw a cube. So, we can be certain that length, width, and height make up the three spatial dimensions. If time is a fourth dimension, where do these crazy string theorists find six more dimensions?

The truth is, it is difficult for most of us--including many string theorists--to imagine a world made up of extra spatial dimensions, but the idea of string theory is impossible without them. The mathematics behind the theories depends on at least 10 dimensions, 11 in the unifying "M-theory". If this is even possible, what could these extra dimensions possibly be or mean, and where are they? Is this a concept so abstract that humankind is simply unable understand? And, just how outrageous is the idea of extra dimensions?

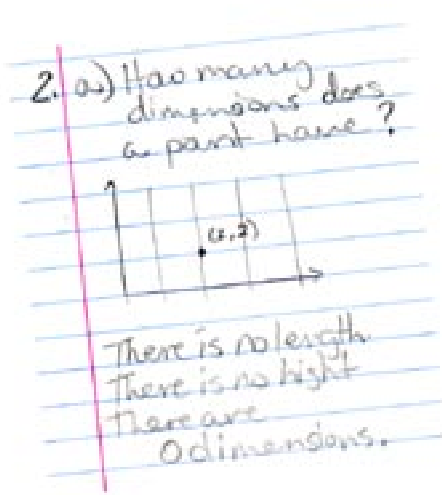
For some, the idea of extra dimensions is not so absurd. In fact, mathematicians use extra dimensions all the time to solve complex equations, which may have no solution otherwise. When it is propose that these dimensions actually exist, however, the idea becomes absurd again. This is evident as early as the turn of the 20th century, when mathematician Theodor Kaluza, propose that there may be a fourth special dimension. According to Kaluza in 1919, this fourth dimension might be the missing link between general relativity and electromagnetic theory1. This idea proved to be radical for the time2, yet only several years later, another mathematician named Oskar Klein, supported and elaborated on Kaluza's idea. Oskar stated that space was made of extended dimensions, which are those three special dimensions we are familiar with, as well as curled-up dimensions3. In Klein's idea, these curled up dimensions can be thought of as a circle, nestled deep within the extended dimensions4. The Kaluza-Klein theory of curled-up dimensions did not prove to unite the theory of general relativity and the electromagnetic theory, but the idea of extra dimensions left a huge door open for today's string theorists.

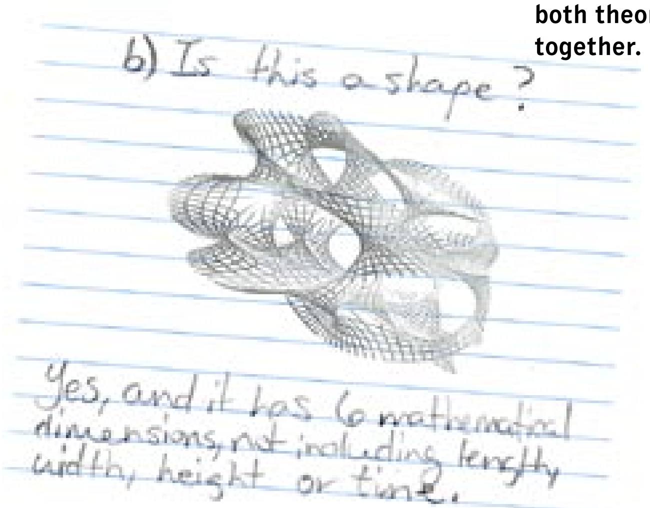
Accepting the Kaluza-Klein theory of a fourth spatial dimension (a fifth dimension when time is considered), means that at least five more dimensions are hidden somewhere according to string theorists. Consider now, that the fourth spatial dimension is a sphere instead of a circle5. This adds three more dimensions, since we all agree that a sphere is three-dimensional. We are now up to six special dimensions. Is there a shape that has more than three dimensions? Conveniently for string theory, such six-dimensional geometrical shapes have been described. The mathematicians behind this finding are Eugenio Calabi of the University of Pennsylvania and Shing-Tung Yau of Harvard6. When these

In fact, mathematicians use extra dimensions all the time to solve complex equations, which may have no solution otherwise.

six-dimensional Calabi-Yau shapes take the place of the spheres inside the curled-up space dimensions, ten dimensions become possible. However, this only brings us back to our first question,

How can we live in a world of extra dimensions that we cannot see or comprehend?

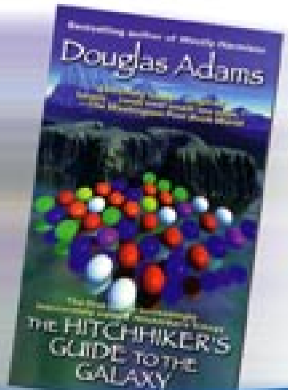




Bosonic string theory, the origional version of string theory requires 26 space-time dimensions, including 25 spatial dimensions and one dimension of time. Superstring theory explains particles and forces as supersymmetric, vibrating strings. There are 5 superstring theories, each requiring 10 dimensions. More recently, it has been said that the M theory unifies the versions of superstring theories. The theory states that they are all different versions of the same thing, however "M theory" requires 11 dimensions.

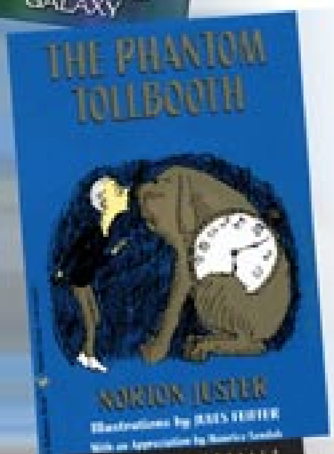
The need for string theory arrived mainly from the conflict between quantum mechanics, or how the world works as we know it on a microscopic level, and general relativity, or the large scale, including gravity, planets, stars and the galaxy. This conflict really becomes a problem when it comes to areas, such as blackholes, where both theories must be used together.

Reviews > Science Ideas Made Simple(r)



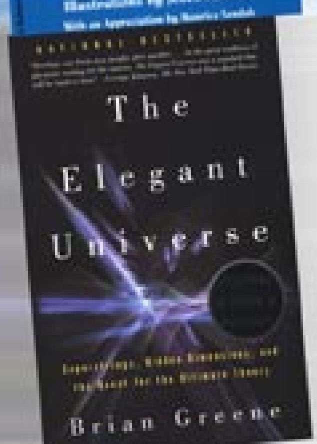
The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy > Douglas Adams

For instructions on hailing alien starships, explanations as to why putting small fish into your ear may be a wonderful idea, and the answer to the ultimate question of Life, the Universe, and Everything, look no further than this wholly remarkable book. After Arthur Dent's home planet Earth is destroyed in favor of an intergalactic freeway, he and his friend Ford Prefect (originally from the planet Betelgeuse, and not from Guildford as he told Arthur) embark on deep-space escapades with the ex-hippie President of the Universe and his girlfriend, a terminally miserable robot, and the ever-informative Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. Adams creates a hilarious science-fiction story while incorporating an undercurrent of scientific thought that poses the String-Theory-esque idea of 42.



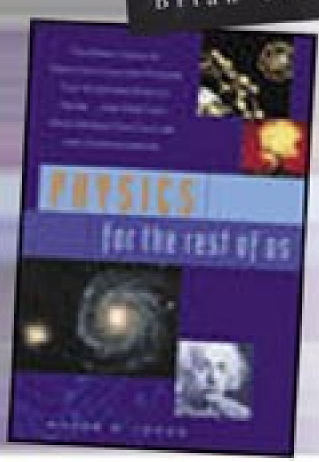
The Phantom Tollbooth > Norton Juster

Juster tells the story of Milo, a young, unmotivated boy who can't seem to see the point in doing anything. When a mysterious gift package appears in his room containing a tollbooth, Milo pays the toll and drives his toy car past the booth into a world of sharp and fuzzy logic (not to mention sharp and fuzzy characters). Milo meets a dog named Tock who is -- quite literally -- a watchdog with a clock face for his midection. Tock and Milo travel together across the lands of Dictionopolis and the Mountains of Ignorance on a mission to save the twin princesses Ryme and Reason. After meeting the Spelling Bee, the Dodecahedron, and the Whether Man, english and mathematics take on a whole new meaning for Milo -- and it certainly isn't pointless.



The Elegant Universe > Brian Greene

Atoms and galaxies made of the same building blocks? Unseen dimensions existing on different planes just inches away from our fingers? This in-depth exploration of String Theory contains these implications and many more as Greene takes the reader into a new, exciting world of science. The concepts of String Theory are explained through diagrams and vast visualizations in order to make the ideas easy to understand in a world so intimidated by the laws of physics.The accompanying NOVA miniseries also contains a visual conception of String Theory and what this daring new discovery could mean for both science and our universe as we see it.



Physics For the Rest of Us > Roger S. Jones

Physics for the Rest of Us is exactly that -- a book that successfully explains the hard-to-grasp concepts of Special and General Relativity, and Quantum Mechanics. This book tells how these parts of physics were discovered and why they work in context with how our world works. In alternate chapters, the book takes a philosophical turn and begins to compare science with other facets of life such as myth, humanities, and religion. Jones weaves a tapestry of science and philosophy that proves to be an extremely effective way of teaching physics to, well, the rest of us.

Quiz > What Kind of String Are You?

1) If your friend started to talk to you about 11 dimensions and parallel universes, you would:

a) Immediately take them to the nearest psych ward.
b) Begin to argue with them, until you are satisfied.
c) Be a little weirded out, but willing to listen to their thoughts.
d) Agree with them, and join in on the conversation.

2) What would you wear to a string theory convention:

a) Formal wear; fancy dress or tux.
b) A casual, but clean, pair of jeans and shirt.
c) The cleanest clothes you could find on the floor.
d) Your custom-made string theory costume.

3) If you were offered a chance to live in another parallel universe tomorrow, what would you say:

a) “Hell no. God Bless the U.S.A.”
b) “I would have to have more time to think about it.”
c) “Maybe in my next lifetime.”
d) “Hell yeah! What do you want me to bring you for a souvenir?”

4) If you were asked to present your newly developed theory at the next string theory convention, how would you present it?

a) With a straightforward PowerPoint presentation, lecture and Q & A.
b) With numerous scientific models and white board drawings.
c) Just you and a microphone, a one-man show.
d) With song and dance, like a musical.

Scoring:
A = 1 point **B = 2 points** **C = 3 points** **D = 4 points**

IF YOU SCORED:
4 – 8 points: You are an Open-looped string. The ends of these strings are tied down to our 3D membrane. Matter and light are made out of open-ended strings.

You require security, and don’t like things to be spontaneous. You have a preferred routine and dislike change. You are also very intellectual. When making decisions, you are very analytical. You are a left-brained person. Your friends feel you are a very reliable, responsible, and trustworthy person. You are the one they come to for advice, because they trust your opinion.

9 - 16 points: You are a Closed looped string. One kind of closed looped string is responsible for gravity, a graviton. With closed loops, gravitons are free to roam in other dimensions, diluting the strength of gravity and making it seem weaker than the other forces in nature.

You are a very outgoing and spontaneous person. You love to stand out in a crowd, and are up for almost anything. You enjoy change, and love to try new things. When making decisions, you rely on your emotions, and are very creative. You are a right-brained person. You are free spirited and live by the moment.

Men of String Theory

WHO
ARE THEY?

Illustrations and Text by Coutney Davis

There are many men and women all around the world whose research focuses on or is related to elements of string theory. This is not a complete list by any means, but here are a few who've made huge contributions. Read about these amazing men to learn more about string theory's biggest fans.

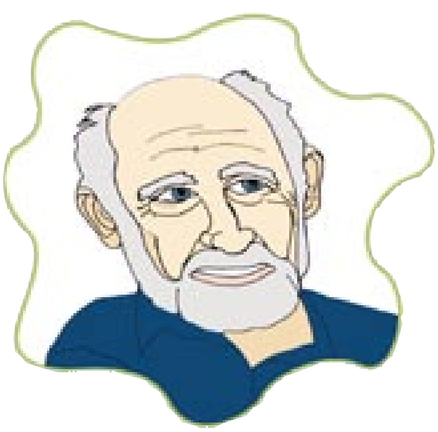
Gabriele Veneziano

Gabriele Veneziano

Gabriele Veneziano is an Italian theoretical physicist at CERN, where he has been researching since 1977.

His Claim to fame

It is said that Veneziano was the father of string theory in the late 1960's. Recently, Veneziano received the Heineman Prize of the American Physical Society and the Institute of Physics for his theories on string theory. In 1999, Veneziano was awarded the Pomeranchuk Prize for his outstanding contribution to the various areas of quantum field theory and theory of strings. In the 60's string theory was deemed a failure, so, like other string theorists, Veneziano was not supported for his time spent on string theory. Veneziano eventually shifted his attention to quantum chromodynamics, a field where he left major contributions. When string theory became popular again in the 1980's, Veneziano was quick to apply the theory to black holes and the study of space and time.



Leonard Susskind

Leonard Susskind

Leonard Susskind has been a professor of Physics at Stanford University since 1978. He is also a member of the National Academy of Science and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. His current research includes ideas on Theoretical Particle Physics and Theoretical Gravitational Physics.

His Claim to Fame

Susskind has written many articles for the general public, like Green, including an award winning article on black holes in the Scientific American, the "Anthropic Landscape of String theory" in the New Scientist & an article on the status of String theory in Physics World. Susskind has received many prizes, including the science of writing price of the American Institute of Physics for his Scientific American article on black holes.

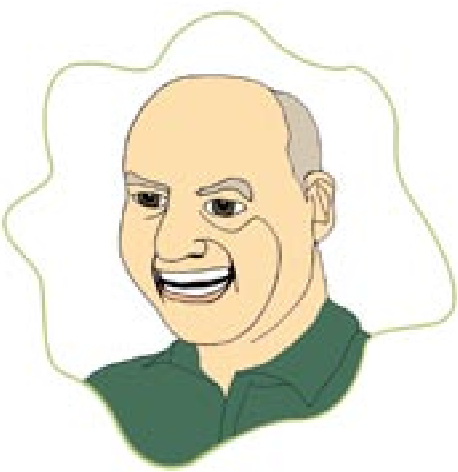
Ed Witten

Ed Witten

Ed Witten is currently a professor at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey. He has been working on string theory since the mid-eighties. Ed Witten's work focuses on high energy theoretical physics, mathematics, and string theory.

His Claim to Fame

Ed Witten is said to be the premier theoretical physicist of our time. Ed Witten is a menber of the National Academy of Sciences and is known for his many contributions to particle physics and string theory. Witten's outstanding achievements have earned him the Fields Medal, mathematics' highest prize, as well as the Dirac Medal and the MacArthur Prize.



John Schwarz

John Schwarz

John Schwarz, another string theorist is currently a physics professor at California Institute of Technology, commonly known as Caltech. Caltech is a leading research university and has a strong emphasis on the natural sciences and engineering

His Claim to fame

For Schwarz, it all started back in the sad days of drafts and send offs to Vietnam. At that time, string theory was beginning as a field in physics. Eventually, however, the trend to study particle physics ended and Schwarz along with a small crew were left who were still interested in the potential impact of string theory, Schwarz's research interests currently include Elementary Particle Theory, Supersymmetry and Superstring theory. Schwarz is continually researching and publishing his findings. His major studies have been done in collaboration with his colleague Michael Green.

Theodor Kaluza

Theodor Kaluza & Oscar Klein

Theodor Kaluza was a German scientist who worked to unify Einstein's theory of gravity and Maxwell's theory of light in 1919. Kaluza's work lead him to believe there may actually be more spacial dimensions than we know of. Oscar Klein (not shown) was an assistant professor at the University of Michigan. In 1926, he worked on the idea that extra dimensions may be physically possible. Both Theodor Kaluza and Oscar Klein's independent ideas became commonly known as the Kaluza-Klein theory.

Kaluza-Klein Claim to Fame

The Kaluza-Klein theory was considered ridiculous and strange at the time. It wasn't until several years later that Einstein considered the theory seriously. Today, string theorists find the Kaluza-Klein idea remarkable.

Sources > Article Citations

Experimental Evidence: In Search of Supersymmetry (pg. 6-7)

Kane, Gordon, and Mikhail Shifman, *The Supersymmetic World: The Beginnings of the Theory.* Singapore: World Scientific, 2000.

Shifman, Mikhail, Interview with Leigh Simmons. Digital Recording, 14 April, 2005. Private collection of Leigh Simmons, Minneapolis.

Wikipedia.org. *Supersymmetry* [updated 29 March 2005; cited 28 April 2005]. Available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/supersymmetry.

A Conversation: Dr. Mikhail Shifman (pg. 8-9)

Shifman, Mikhail, Interview with Leigh Simmons. Digital Recording, 14 April, 2005. Private collection of Leigh Simmons, Minneapolis.

String Theory: All Tied Up? (pg. 16-20)

Coming Soon.

Dealing with Dimensions (pg. 22-23)

Coming Soon.

Men of String Theory (pg. 26-27)

Coming Soon.

Ads > The Other Visualizing Physics Projects

That's Quantum (pg. 2) - A short film detailing Quantum Man's quest to learn about Quantum Mechanics. Created by Eric Drommerhausen, Rhea O'Connor, Angie Doerr, Jared May and Chad Novak. Ad design by Eric Drommerhausen.

E=sr² (pg. 5) - An interactive CD-ROM and board game prototype that teaches the principles of Special Relativity. Created by Jeremy Beckman, Elyse Lacosse, Nick Steffens, Justin Wagle and Cynthia Ratsabouth. Ad design by Elyse LaCosse.

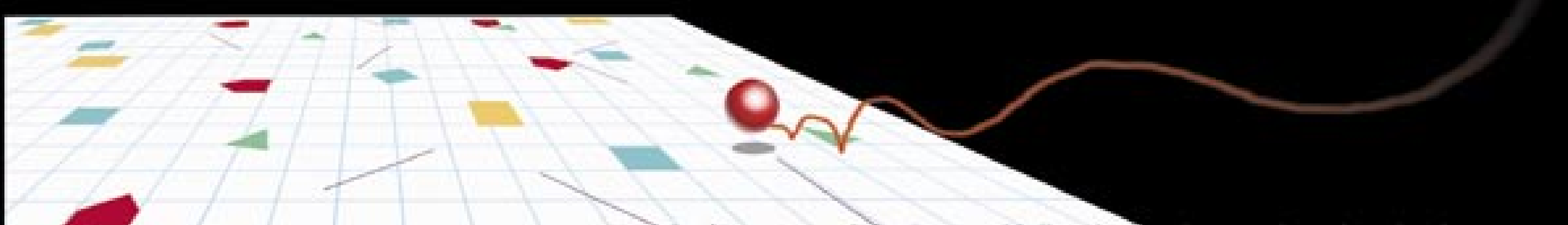
Gravity & Dali (pg. 13) - Part of an ad campaign designed to raise interest in science by showing how science ideas influence art. Created by Molly Crain, Mara Castillo, Josh Van Patter, and Nicole Mckeown. Ad designed by Molly Crain.

Absolute Theory (back cover) - A string theory spoof of an Absolut™ vodka ad. Ad designed by Jesse Gadola.

Illustration inspired by

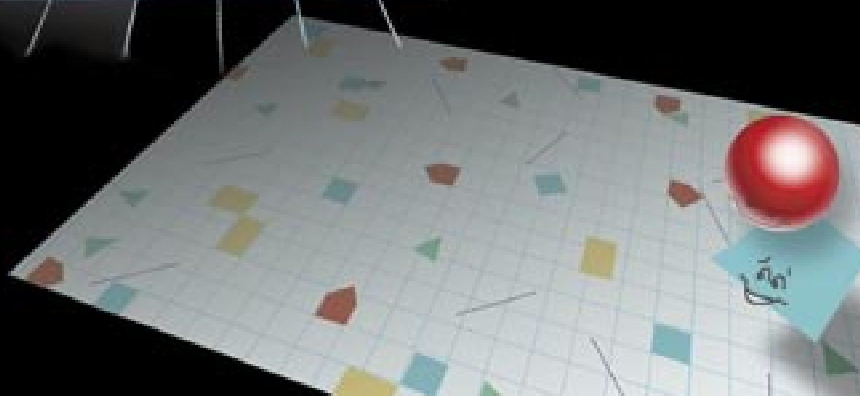
Flatland: a romance of many dimensions

Original text by Edwin A. Abot 1884
Illustrations and text by Courtney Davis



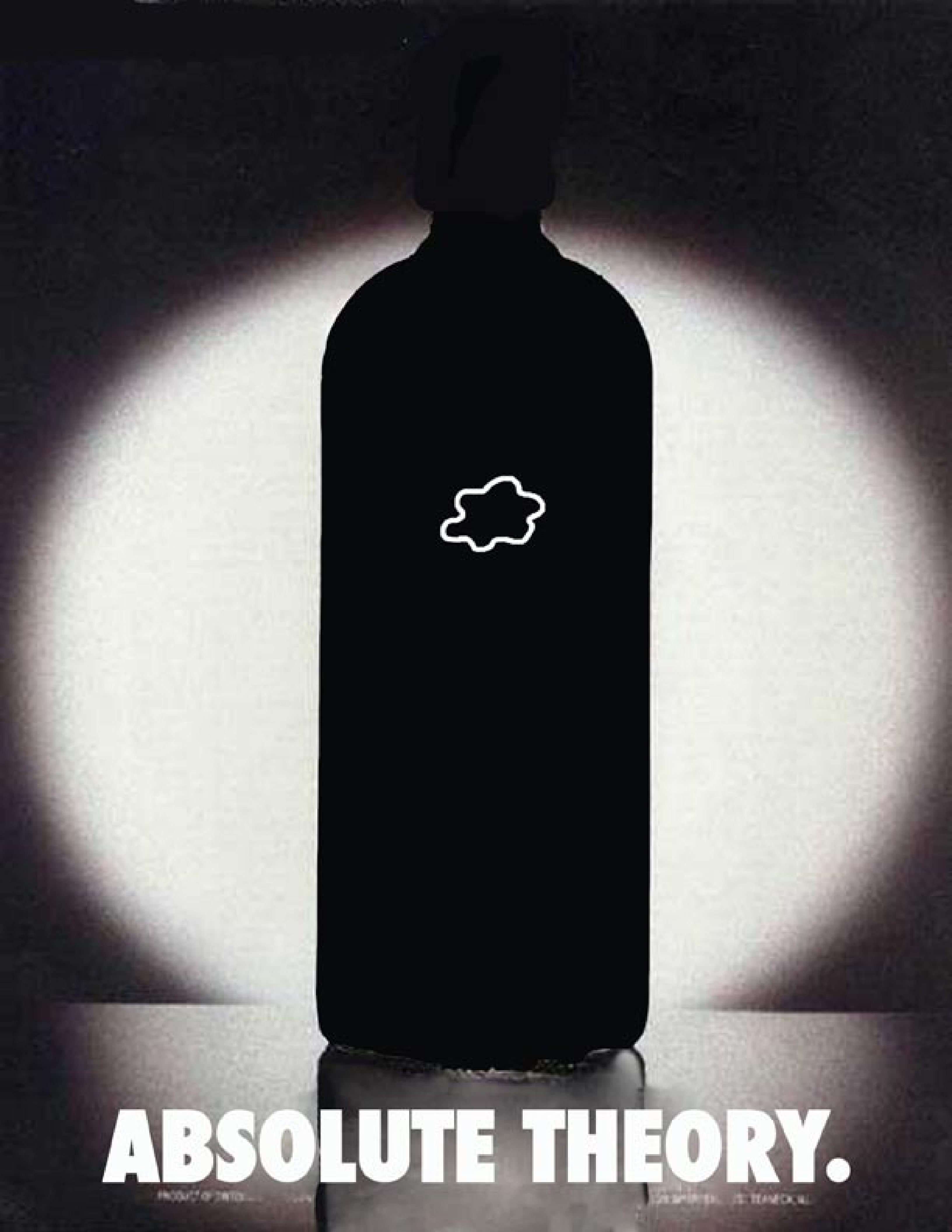
It was just an average day for Square in Flatland. He said hello to his friends as usual, watching their lines change length and brightness as they passed by. He was about to indulge in a mid-morning game of tic-tack-toe when a stranger came into town, and spoke directly to him. "Hello Square, my name is Sphere, and I'm from a land of three dimensions! I noticed that you don't move a whole lot. Would you like me to show you how to bounce up and down and move like me in three dimensions?" Square knew this tourist must be crazy. Three dimensions? That's simply bogus! However, Square was intrigued by his new friend.

Square wanted to show Sphere that he could bounce up and down too, but all he could do was slide back and forth.



So, to show Square a new view, Sphere took Square up above flatland, where Square could see his friends the way Sphere could, as shapes! Finally, Square understood that he was 2-dimentional and Sphere was three-dimensional. So, Square turned to Sphere and said, "Let's find the land of four dimensions!" But, Sphere did not understand, for he could not imagine a world with more than three-dimensions.

Are you a sphere, or do you dare to think like a square...


ABSOLUTE THEORY.