

RIT College of Liberal Arts presents

SOMNIUM

Conceived and Directed by Omen Sade



The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, part of the Rubenstein Arts Access Program, is generously funded by

David M. Rubenstein.

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This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for a response by a regional KCACTF representative, and selected students and faculty are invited to participate in KCACTF programs involving scholarships, internships, grants and awards for actors, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, designers, stage managers and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for invitation to the KCACTF regional festival and may also be considered for national awards recognizing outstanding achievement in production, design, direction and performance.

Last year more than 1,500 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.

The Theatre Arts Program in the College of Liberal Arts
proudly presents

SOMNIUM

Conceived and Directed by Omen Sade

**Director of Photography &
Stage Manager**

Sydney Lewandowski

Assistant Director

Kelsey Beers

Production Manager

Andy Head

ASL Coach

Hayden Orr

Virtual Scenic Designer

Elizabeth Goins

Projection Designer

Dan Roach

Costume Designer

Amanda Doherty

Sound Designer

Mike DiGiulio

Lighting Designer

Erin Bennett

Choreographer

Marc Holland

Director's Note

SOMNIUM premiered at the 2016 Rochester Fringe Festival. In its original form, five actors were confined to a tiny wooden stage for an hour, using simple wooden objects to tell the story of a voyage into the mystery of the human subconscious. A live musician to the side of the stage, some basic lighting cues, and that was it.

When Andy Head first asked me to direct **SOMNIUM** at RIT I was excited to recreate this physical theater experience with RIT students and to even add in some new design elements. Of course, life had other plans. As we came to terms with new realities of a world ravaged by a global pandemic, Andy and I discussed whether to postpone the production or to try and adapt a physical theater piece for the new unexplored digital theater landscape. We came to the conclusion that, at a time that all of us are on a voyage into the unknown, the story of a voyage into the greatest unknown of all, our own minds, could not be more timely.

Fundamental to the concept of **SOMNIUM** is the idea of the adaptation of dreams into dramatic content. This was not a unique idea. Artists have been adapting dreams for millennia. Notably, in the 19th century, Akira Kurosawa adapted his own dreams into a series of short films, which were highly inspiring to me. While in the original **SOMNIUM** the actors adapted their own dreams into narrative movement sequences, in this version the dreams were adapted by an army of computer science students into interactive 3D "Play-scapes".

If **SOMNIUM** were being produced at a different institution, it would no doubt look much different. However, we found ourselves uniquely placed here at the Rochester Institute of Technology to explore the relationship between theater and digital technology.

SOMNIUM @ RIT is the result of that exploration.

Drawing on the incredible knowledge base at RIT, a team was assembled from the worlds of theater, game design, 3D environments, videography, virtual reality, digital scenery, ASL performance, music, and dance. As we met the challenges of this unusual process, the team innovated, pushed out of their comfort zones, learned new skills and new technologies, and adapted known technologies to new purposes. I cannot thank the team enough for their extraordinary work on this project.

Director's Note (cont'd)

SOMNIUM @ RIT is, above all, an experiment. A good experiment poses more questions than it answers. When faced with existential threats, theater has always adapted to survive. Sometimes this adaptation results in the innovation of new artistic forms. I do not know if we have achieved anything so lofty. I do believe that the discoveries made by this amazing team of artists will help all of us to push deeper into the unknown.

It is also my hope that **SOMNIUM** will ride again, in other forms. The ocean of the human mind is vast. Who knows what treasures and mysteries we may yet find.

Omen Sade.

"My brain is only a receiver, in the Universe there is a core from which we obtain knowledge, strength, and inspiration. I have not penetrated into the secrets of this core, but I know that it exists."

-Nikola Tesla

Setting of **SOMNIUM**:

Time: The story of **SOMNIUM** unfolds in a Retro-Futuristic time period. Perhaps we are in an idealized 2020, as it might have looked like from the imagination of someone in the 1950's.

Space: We start on the west coast of the United States, visit CERN Laboratories in Switzerland, and finally, voyage into the collective dream-space of humanity.

Running Time:

The length of **SOMNIUM** depends on how the player chooses to engage. At least 45 minutes.

Cast

Professor Alfred Canus	Jack Boushie
Captain Lockspeare	J.T. Blake
Dr. Jessica Flores	Carmen Ibis Lopez
Major Gunnar Jedburgh	Dom Melchiorre
Margaret Mackay	Serena Rush
CERN Receptionist & Voice of Mackay	Emi Knappe
The Dreamweaver	Hayden Orr

Production Personnel

Writer and Director	Omen Sade
Director of Photography and Stage Manager	Sydney Lewandowski*
Assistant Director	Kelsey Beers
Assistant Stage Managers	Zach Kroesen and Mac McCluskey
Production Manager	Andy Head
ASL Coach	Hayden Orr
Virtual Scenic Designer	Elizabeth Goins
Projection Designer	Dan Roach

* Indicates that student is currently enrolled in Theatre Ensemble.

Production Personnel (cont'd)

Costume Designer	Amanda Doherty
Sound Designer	Mike DiGiulio*
Lighting Designer	Erin Bennett
Choreographer	Marc Holland
Stagecraft Manager	Joe Hamilton
Properties Designer	Ryan Keely
CLA Finance and Marketing	Ben Willmott
NTID Finance	Denise Morgan
Rehearsal Interpreters	Cath. Richardson Kiwitt and Cynthia Collward
Performance Interpreters	Darla Guajardo and Lola Johnston
VR Consultant	Joe Geigel
Captioning Subsystem/VR Experience	Yancarlos Diaz
Videography Consultant	Chris Frisina
Videographer	Liam Coleman
Co-Writer for Scene 19	Jason A. Weisburd
Costume Shop Workers	Destanie Overly*, Sarah Poirier, Abigail Smith*, Anne Taylor, Jacqui Thompson*

* Indicates that student is currently enrolled in Theatre Ensemble.

Production Personnel (cont'd)

Scene Shop Workers Courtney Boyer, Benji Dow,
..... Alex Lairson, Steven Meyer,
..... Katie Richer*, Brian Zabawa*,
..... and Malcolm Zale

Level Designers Jorge Cabezas, Lauren Casale,
..... Ben Clisby, Kyra Cruse,
..... Yancarlos Diaz, Kayleigh East,
..... Jared Feeley, Chris Fogle,
..... Long Hoang, Stephen Hoffman,
..... Joseph Hong, Darius James,
..... Sijal Jaradat, Samar Karnani,
..... Conor Keegan, Jacob Lapietra,
..... Adrian Pyatt, Kris Schnupp,
..... William Steele, Nuha Syed,
..... Zachary Talis, Zachary Tartamella,
..... John Vance, Lance Williams,
..... Nate Williams, Daniyah Wong,
..... Yu Yan, Skyler Zartman

Graphic Designer Hannah Ni

** Indicates that student is currently enrolled in Theatre Ensemble.*

Director Bio

Omen Sade (Director)

Omen Sade is a NYC based physical theater artist and educator. He conceived and created **SOMNIUM** as a devised physical theater piece in 2016, and presented it at the Rochester Fringe Festival that same year. Omen is a founding member of BDP Productions, with whom he co-writes and performs physically dynamic adaptations of classic literature. As an educator and movement choreographer, Omen has worked in New York City at Hunter College, Circle in the Square Theater, St. Ann's School, and Broadway Classrooms. He is the Education Director of the Pre-College Theater LAB at the Summer Theater of New Canaan, CT. Omen earned his BA in Theater and Social Change from Sarah Lawrence College in 2007, and trained at the International Jacques Lecoq Theater School in Paris from 2012-2014.

Cast Bios

Jack Boushie (Professor Alfred Canus)

Jack Boushie is from Connecticut. Having participated in theatre all throughout high school, he is excited to continue here at RIT. Jack is an animation student at RIT and hopes to pursue a career in the movie industry.

J.T. Blake (Captain Lockspeare)

J.T. Blake is originally from Lewes, Delaware. They are a Film and Animation major at RIT. They have been in many school and community theater productions, but this is their first time being a part of a large scale production! They have performed in *Beauty and the Beast*, *Legally Blonde*, and *The Addams Family*. Besides acting, they love writing, drawing, watching movies, and playing video games. They are very excited to jump into the film and animation industry, and their dream is to either write for video games, or voice act in them! J.T. looks forward to being in future shows, and hopefully producing some of their own!

Carmen Ibis Lopez (Dr. Jessica Flores)

Carmen Ibis Lopez was raised in Rochester NY, but originally is from Cuba. This will be her last semester as a museum studies major at RIT. **SOMNIUM** is her first acting role, but she looks forward to getting more involved with the performing arts industry.

Dom Melchiorre (Major Gunnar Jedburgh)

Hi! My name is Dom Melchiorre. I'm a 3rd-year Robotics and Manufacturing Engineering Technology student from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I've been doing shows since 2012, and I'm doing my immersion in Theatre Arts while I complete my degree. I was in the RIT play *Al-Pollo* back in the spring of 2019. I'm super excited to be a part of this brand new and immersive style of storytelling. As you may have heard, the show borrows heavily from the actual dreams of the cast and crew, which gives it an authentic feel unlike any show I've ever done or seen. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped me in my acting journey so far. This includes my family, my friends, the CYO crew back home, the *Al-Pollo* cast and crew, and the **SOMNIUM** cast and crew! I hope you all enjoy the show as much as I've enjoyed being a part of it.

Cast Bios (cont'd)

Hayden Orr (The Dreamweaver)

Hayden Orr grew up performing and working on the West Coast. He describes himself as a typical Portlander who spends most of his free time studying and creating art or reading literature. He has performed in various ASL Poetry competitions in the Northwest before deciding to go into theatre. Hayden is a graduate of Vancouver School of Art and Academics where he studied physical theatre, traditional theatre, and dance. Some of his productions include *Guys and Dolls*, *Little Women*, *The Boyfriends*, and Vital Force's *The Inevitable Consequence of Gravity, or There Once Was a Fish*. He also has worked with many physical theatre and physical-based performance companies including Imago, Vital Force, and PTC.

Serena Rush (Margaret Mackay)

Serena Rush is from Silver Spring, Maryland. She is a 1st-year Psychology student at RIT! She will also be in *Spoon River Anthology* later this semester. She has been in different productions such as *The Wiz*, *Pirates of Penzance*, *Snow White*, and *Robin Hood*. She is so excited to be working with amazing people at RIT/NTID to give you all this new and exciting experience! She would like to thank so many people, the **SOMNIUM** cast and crew, Audrey G. (her best friend) for all of the supportive FaceTime calls and text messages that make her day, Audrey M. (her roommate) for being supportive through the weird Zoom rehearsals, all of her friends on campus, and lastly, her mom who helped her tremendously in navigating through the first semester here at RIT! Hope you all enjoy it!

Emi Knape (CERN Receptionist/Voice of Mackay)

Emi Knape is from Cave Creek, AZ and is studying Media Arts & Technology here at RIT. Emi has been doing theater pretty much her whole life (favorite role being Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), and is so excited to have the opportunity to be part of a show/experience as unique as **SOMNIUM**. Emi would like to thank the cast and crew of **SOMNIUM** for their constant hard-work and energy, Ryan Christman for cheering her on from 2,267.4 miles away, and finally, her suitemates and PJ for their continuous support and good vibes :)

Stage Management Bios

Sydney Lewandowski (Stage Manager)

Sydney Lewandowski is a 3rd-year Visual Media major here at RIT. She is very excited to be working on another show here at RIT. Previously she was an ASM for the RIT/NTID *Cabaret* performance, RIT Players performance of *The Drowsy Chaperone*, RIT/NTID performance of *I and You*, and lastly CO-LA's performance of *Bent*. She would love to thank her friends and family for all the support, the cast for being so wonderful, the ASM's for dealing with her craziness, and lastly Omen for always being so upbeat and such a joy to work with during this crazy time in the world!

Mac McCluskey (Assistant Stage Manager)

Mac McCluskey is a 1st-year Biology major from Saint Paul, Minnesota. They have previously stage managed for productions at the high school level such as *Chicago*, *Into the Woods*, *Sherlock Holmes* and the *Baker Street Irregulars*, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* and more! They would like to thank the cast and crew for making a wonderful show happen during the strangest of times!

Zach Kroesen (Assistant Stage Manager)

Zach Kroesen is a 1st-year Software Engineering student locally from Rochester, New York. Prior to his acceptance at RIT, he was the Stage Manager for his high school's drama program, Spotlight Theatre at Rush-Henrietta. Productions he managed include *#PresentTense*, *Seussical*, *Anne of Green Gables*, and *Bye Bye Birdie*. He would like to thank the cast and crew for getting together and putting on a very unique performance despite the challenges we all faced.

Assistant Director Bio

Kelsey Beers (Assistant Director)

Kelsey Beers is a 3rd-year ASL-English Interpretation and Psychology double major at RIT/NTID. Kelsey is thrilled to be a part of the behind the scenes team for the first time in a while. When Kelsey is not finishing her mountains of homework, she is spending time with her cat Noodle, or napping. Special thanks to everyone who has supported her through this rough online semester. Enjoy **SOMNIUM**!

Special Thanks:

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NTID Department of Performing Arts

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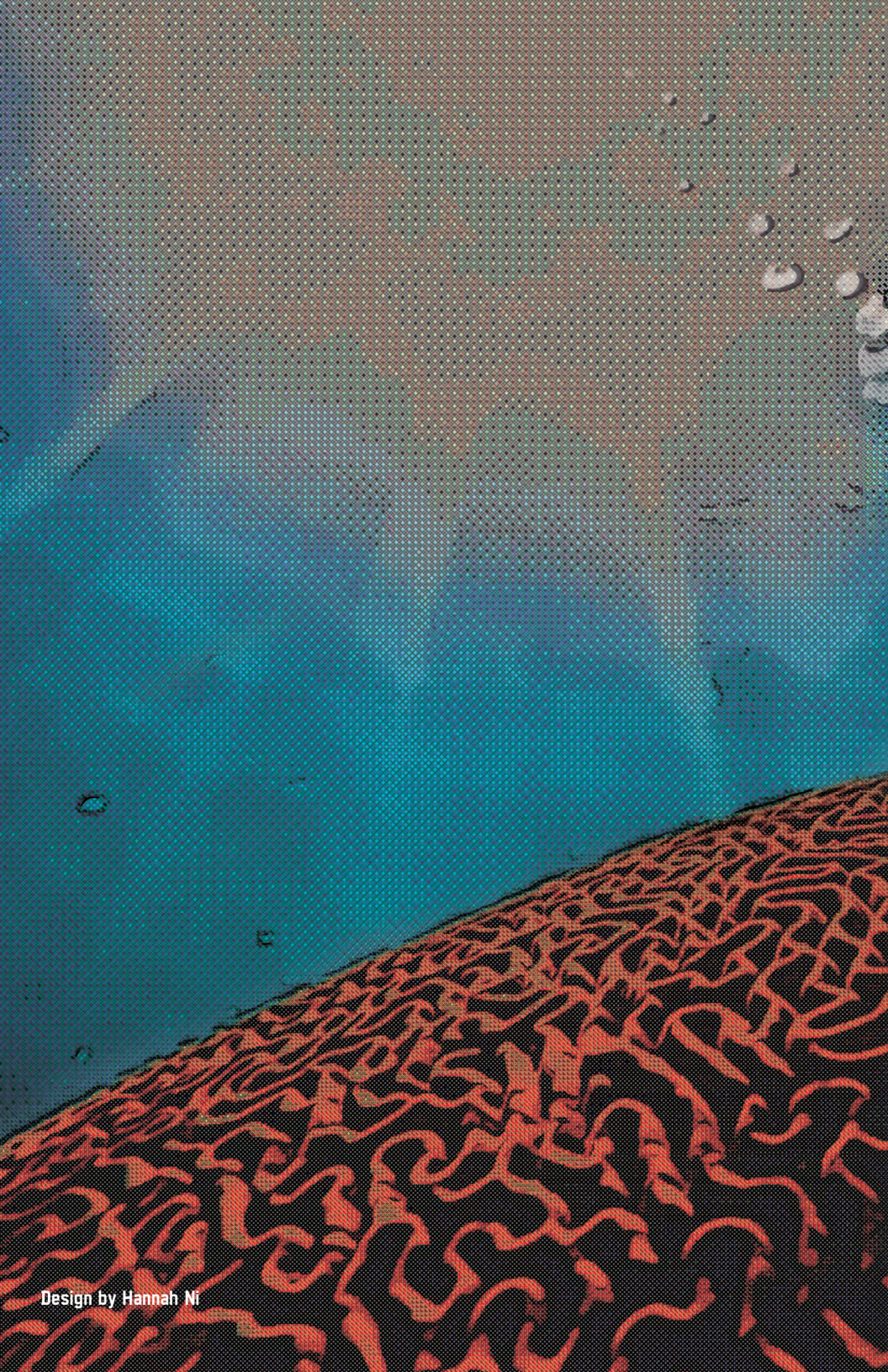
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Design by Hannah NI