

About Perisphere Theater

Vision Statement

Perisphere Theater aims to create compelling theater that expands the way DC audiences view the **past, the present, and one another**.

Mission Statement

Perisphere Theater is dedicated to performing excellent plays with attention to the clarity of each **playwright's particular style**, allowing each unique voice to resonate through our production choices. We believe that **all great plays**, classical or modern, tragic or comic, have **something to say to people from any time and place**. With evocative design, compelling direction, and vivid and passionate performances, we aim to engage our audience's minds as well as touch their hearts. Perisphere embraces both the diversity and the commonality of human experience, finding creative tension and opportunity in **exploring these aspects of life through the lenses of different time periods**.

Values/Principles

Perisphere Theater has a commitment to:

- Produce moving, thought-provoking productions that raise questions and shed light on human fears and foibles even as they entertain.
- Respect the unique vision and style of the playwright while providing for creative artistic choices in presenting the work.
- Make choices in presentation that arise from the text itself and its historical, social, and emotional context.
- Encourage in people of all ages a love of history, and an understanding of its relevance, through the immediacy of theater performance and outreach programs.

The Inspiration Behind the Name

The **Perisphere** and the **Trylon** were the main symbols of the 1939 New York World's Fair. Subtitled "The World of Tomorrow," the two-season fair was full of energy and optimism.

The Perisphere is a potent **symbol of a particular time, place, and vision**. For this company, it served as an inspiration because it is also a symbol of the tension between progress and the cycle of human history. The nature of a globe is such that you can travel a long distance around it, but once again meet the point at which you started. The cycle of history is constant—human nature remains the same, and the things that excite, move, and terrify us on both global and personal scales differ only superficially from one decade, or century, to the next. The past, as well as the future, is only a moment away.

About Copenhagen

Copenhagen by Michael Frayn



In 1941, German physicist Werner Heisenberg visited his Danish colleague and mentor, Niels Bohr, in Copenhagen. The uncertainty over what really happened at this meeting, uncomfortable and dangerous in the midst of World War II, compels the two men, along with Bohr's wife Margrethe, to revisit their confused versions of the event. Even in the afterlife, they are driven to understand the implications of atomic theory in wartime and the explosive chain reactions of human relationships.

What was Heisenberg's purpose in visiting Bohr at this time? Was he interested, as a German scientist in wartime, in finding out if the Allied forces were working on a bomb? Was he trying to learn his former mentor's scientific opinion on whether nuclear fission was even possible? Was he looking, as a human being, for reasons to tell Hitler that a bomb based on fission was not feasible?

Copenhagen explores all these scenarios and their scientific, moral, and emotional implications. The play's original production led to further debate among historians about this historic meeting, and to the release of letters written by Niels Bohr that had never before been made public. Even after all that, the sense of uncertainty continues.

Show Times and Ticket Information

Nov. 30 to Dec. 11, 2016

[Trinidad Theatre—Logan Fringe Arts Space](#)
1358 Florida Ave. NE, Washington, DC 20002

[Tickets](#): \$25 all shows / PWYC preview Nov. 30
Discounts for students, seniors, and groups

Workshop Scene Participants



John Decker is a proud company member of the Quotidian Theatre Company, where he most recently appeared as Mr. Bardolph in *Lettice and Lovage*. He previously appeared there in *The Veil*, *The Iceman Cometh*, *Shining City*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Seafarer*, *The Trip To Bountiful*, *Dublin Carol*, *The Mollusc*, *Pygmalion*, *Tomorrow*, *The Roads to Home*, *Valentine's Day*, *The Weir* and *A Doll's House*. Favorite roles elsewhere have included Dysart in *Equus* and Freddie in *Noises Off*.

John has also designed and built the scenery for innumerable local productions.



Benjamin McRae is a paragon of uncertainty, rarely exhibiting both speed and direction; he prefers aimless bursts of creative alacrity and unhurried but well-focused endeavors in equal measure. Past work includes *The Little Foxes* (William Marshall) with Rockville Little Theater and *Noises Off* (Gary/Roger), *The Laramie Project* (Greg Pierotti), and *A Tuna Christmas* (various) with groups in upstate New York. While no Schrödinger, he does have two cats named after astronomers (Tycho and Kepler).

About Our Workshops

Perisphere Theater offers educational workshops tailored to **50-minute** class periods for **high school** and **middle school students**. The goals of these workshops is to 1) teach a relevant subject through the lens of a particular play, 2) demonstrate how art is inextricably tied to the historical, scientific, and ethical context in which it was created and 3) spark interest and engagement in the arts in students.

Our workshop teachers include members of our board, Washington D.C.-area writing coaches, retired teachers, and performing artists.

We offer workshops this season related to our production of *Copenhagen*, with options to focus on History and Ethics, Science and Ethics, and History and Writing. Below are the basic outlines for each workshop and the classes that correspond best to each workshop. Future productions will offer additional types of workshops that best correspond to their themes and educational opportunities.

Workshop Outline, History and Ethics Focus (for social studies/history/ethics classes):

- Context of the play: intro (5 min)
- First scene performance (5 min)
- Discussion re: the history (10 min)
- Second scene performance (5 min)
- Discussion re: the ethics (10 min)
- Class activity or further discussion (10 min)

Workshop Outline, Science and Ethics Focus (for science/ethics classes):

- Context of the play: intro (5 min)
- First scene performance (5 min)
- Discussion re: the science (10 min)
- Second scene performance (5 min)
- Discussion re: the ethics (10 min)
- Class activity or further discussion (10 min)

Potential Workshop Outline, History and Writing Focus (for social studies/history/English classes):

- Context of the play: intro (5 min)
- First scene performance (5 min)
- Discussion re: the history (10 min)
- Second scene performance (5 min)
- Class writing prompt (20 min)