

THEATRE@FIRST PRESENTS

A PLAY BY BILL GRAY

ADAPTED BY NEIL MARSH

# CAGE OF LIGHT

## FEATURING

Andy Hicks	as	Commander Allen
Kara Hurvitz	as	The Nochian
Mike Haddad	as	Commodore Innes
Jenn Giorno	as	Carla Reid-Smith
Mary Parker	as	Ensign Wright
Tegan Kehoe	as	The Narrator

with

Pre-recorded Voices	by	Emma Caywood
		Neil Marsh

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Producer	.....	Vickie Wu
Director	.....	Neil Marsh
Stage Manager	.....	Kay Coughlin
Original Soundscape	.....	Neil Marsh
Theme Music	.....	Michael J. Veloso
T@F Graphic Designer	.....	Gilly Rosenthol
T@F Webmaster	.....	Leah Bateman

# CAGE of LIGHT

WRITTEN BY BILL GRAY  
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## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I first heard the original version of *Cage of Light* around 2003. I had made contact with Bill Gray while researching the CBC Radio series *Nightfall* and he suggested that I listen to his 1984 play for its successor series, *Vanishing Point*. As an avid radio play listener, it reminded me a lot of the 1950s series *X Minus One*, and its story of first contact felt both classic and very new. The intense feeling of the story has stuck with me ever since.

Over a year ago, I started considering how *Cage of Light* could be adapted for the stage. Having worked on several shows with Carl Danielson (*Human Contact*, *2010: Our Hideous Future—The Musical!*) and Phoebe Roberts (*Mrs. Hawking*), I saw that science-fiction and fantasy stage productions were not only possible, but popular. With the support of Theatre@First and Arisia, I have been able to develop the script into a staged reading and hope to produce a fully staged version in 2018.

Freed from the limitations of the strictly-timed 28-minute radio version, my first goal was to expand on some of Bill Gray's ideas and clarify things I felt didn't get enough explanation. But the biggest challenge was to address the topic of disability tropes. I'm used to working with old-time radio programs that are steeped in the tropes of their time, and audiences come to see them, in part, as capsules from those eras. But this is a modern story being told in a future setting for an audience that is coming to expect stories that challenge those tropes, or turn them on their heads. I discussed this aspect of the script with some friends with disabilities who were generous with their time and perspective, as well as with friends unfamiliar with the story, and with the cast as they joined the project. I am very thankful for all the people who helped me with this challenge. I think the story—and my ability as a writer—are better for it.

One of the interesting anecdotes about *Cage of Light* is the sound design. At the time, radio play effects were done organically, using live foley, or pulled from pre-recorded sources. Producer Don Kowalchuk wanted a unique sci-fi sounding background for his story, so he brought in FM synthesis expert Barry Truax to compose one. The result was an entirely electronic soundscape: all sound effects, even ones that could have been done in the usual way, were done synthetically. In keeping with that, I have endeavored to create my own original synthetic soundscape for this production. I hesitate to compare myself to Mr. Truax, but I think you'll find it effective.

Thank you for coming. I hope you enjoy what my terrific cast and I have created for you.

—Neil Marsh  
January, 2017

## CAST

**Mike Haddad** (COMMODORE INNES) is pleased to once again be working with Neil on another great radio drama. By day Mike teaches Latin in Lynn. When he's not on one of his many dadventures, he enjoys spending time at the theater, be it in the audience, on the stage, or behind it. His next project is directing *Mourning Becomes Electra* for T@F, which opens in May.

**Jenn Giorno** (CARLA REID-SMITH) is honored to be in her third T@F show, after 2012's *Pride & Prejudice* and 2014's *Proof*. Also previously seen in *Mrs. Hawking* with Chameleon's Dish, she's confused to be in a show wearing clothes from yet another century. Much love to husband John, and to Shaughn, Nuance, Phoebe, and the rest of her friends and family for their support.

**Andy Hicks** (COMMANDER ALLEN) does all kinds of creative and interesting stuff, but has never beaten Super Mario Bros. 3 in his life, and that's always been a bit of a sore spot, honestly. He's convinced that "San Junipero" is the greatest hour of television ever produced. One time he misplaced Doris Kearns Goodwin.

**Kara Hurvitz** (THE NOCHIAN) occasionally does get called a space alien, but 'Nochian' is new. There's a first time for everything, though, and it's a great introduction to T@F! When Kara is not being an alien, she is a combination advocate, educator, and activist. She also makes julienne fries.

**Tegan Kehoe** (NARRATOR) is well on her way to ensuring that her T@F history is as diverse as the rest of her theater history. Other groups near and dear to her heart include The Post-Meridian Radio Players and Chameleon's Dish. In real life, she's a museum curator and writer.

**Mary Parker** (ENSIGN WRIGHT) has never uttered technobabble onstage before. Three cheers for science!

## CREW

**Kay Coughlin** (STAGE MANAGER) has worked with T@F as a technician on many productions including *As You Like It*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and Mary Zimmerman's *Metamorphoses*. She portrayed Maneiac One in the local cult hit *2010: Our Hideous Future - the Musical!* and is the stage manager of *The Slutcracker*. When she is not with her amazing partner, Ian, or working for the man, she is also a spotlight operator and stage manager at OBERON.

**Neil Marsh** (DIRECTOR, SOUND DESIGNER, SCRIPT ADAPTATION) is excited to return to directing after a two year hiatus. This is his first time directing for T@F, where he has worked as a sound designer over the past twelve years. Neil was the founding Artistic Director of The Post-Meridian Radio Players (pmrp.org), where he previously directed many live radio plays.

**Vickie Wu** (PRODUCER) is apparently good at keeping people on task - which is pretty useful in her day job as an overworked chef. She does many things with T@F and is quite pleased with herself about that.

## ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Before his success as an international award-winning movie and TV producer, **Bill Gray** worked as a radio producer during the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's radio drama "renaissance" of the early 1980s. From the Calgary studios he wrote and produced episodes of CBC's acclaimed horror anthology *Nightfall* and later, in Vancouver, wrote host copy for that show's third season, as well as writing this episode for the sci-fi anthology *Vanishing Point*. Bill's other work includes the television pilot *49th & Main*, which he co-produced with former CBC Radio producer and infamous "Smoking Man", William B. Davis. These days Bill can be seen on the Vancouver coffeehouse open-mike circuit performing his own, original songs.

## ABOUT THE PLAY

"Cage of Light" was the fifth episode of the CBC Radio's sci-fi anthology series *Vanishing Point*, created by Bill Lane, which featured modern SF and fantasy stories, often by well-known authors such as Ray Bradbury, Isaac Asimov, John Wyndham, and Jorge Luis Borges. The show ran from 1984 to 1991 under varying subtitles, including an entire season produced by ZBS (famous for *Ruby*, *The Galactic Gumshoe* and *Fourth Tower of Inverness*). You can hear episodes of the series at <https://archive.org/details/VPoint>.

## ABOUT THEATRE@FIRST



Our mission is to work together to provide a fun, friendly, and creative theater experience for cast, crew, and audience alike. We welcome volunteers at all levels of experience, without regard to race, color, religion, ethnicity, ancestry, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, national origin, body type, age or disability. We encourage a supportive environment in which to work, play, grow, and explore new areas of the theatre arts. We offer affordable and eclectic performances to the community, aiming to surprise, delight, entertain, and educate our audiences.

For more information about upcoming shows and other volunteer opportunities, or to join our mailing list, please visit [www.theatreatfirst.org](http://www.theatreatfirst.org).

## SPECIAL THANKS

**Phoebe Roberts** and **Carl Danielson**: for inspiration and for proving, again and again, that sci-fi and fantasy can make for great stage theater.

**Persis Thorndike**: For her unwavering support and encouragement in getting this project off the ground and onto the stage.

**Arisia Tech**: For their usual efficient work and attention to detail.

**Miriam Cooper**, **Kara Hurvitz**, **Tegan Kehoe**, **Kate Orman**, **James Scheffler**, **Kathryn Sullivan**, **Rachael Tannenhaus**, and **Renee Johnson Walsh**: for advice, encouragement, and criticism during the development of the stage script.

Theatre@First Artistic Director **Elizabeth Hunter** for her usual support and miracle-working.

**Michael J. Veloso**: For supplying the perfect theme music for this production. If you like what you heard of it, you can get the entire 2+ minute theme on CD Baby for just \$.99, most of which goes to Theatre@First and Mike. Just use this QR code to get there!

