

Abstract Submitted
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A Staged Reading of the Play: TRANSCENDENCE: Relativity and Its Discontents by Robert Marc Friedman ROBERT MARC FRIEDMAN, University of Oslo — TRANSCENDENCE explores aspects of Einstein's life and his general theory of relativity at the time of the theory's creation and initial reception. While being faithful to historical scholarship, the play creates its own theatrical reality aiming to engage emotions and intellect. Those who strive for transcendence must nevertheless also confront the harsh realities of living in specific time-bound social contexts. Universal constants that anchor physical theory in an objective reality, as Einstein believed, do not readily have equivalents in notions of identity, duty, loyalty, and excellence. In November 1915 after toiling for years in Zurich, Prague, and now Berlin, Einstein achieved his general theory of relativity. When in 1919 British astronomers announced evidence for the bending of starlight by the sun as Einstein had predicted, he soon surprisingly found himself an international celebrity. Expectations arose that he would be called to Stockholm. But the Nobel Committee for Physics refused to acknowledge "speculations" such as Einstein's. The dismissal of relativity entailed principled and biased opposition, and not simply mistakes in evaluation. Several committee members agreed that Einstein must not receive a Prize. Join us for a dramatic staged reading of TRANSCENDENCE, a play by the science historian Robert Marc Friedman (<http://www.hf.uio.no/iakh/english/people/aca/robertfr/index.html>) and directed by James Glossman, Lecturer in Directing and Shakespeare, Johns Hopkins University. After the performance, the playwright, director and actors will be available for a talk-back audience discussion.

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