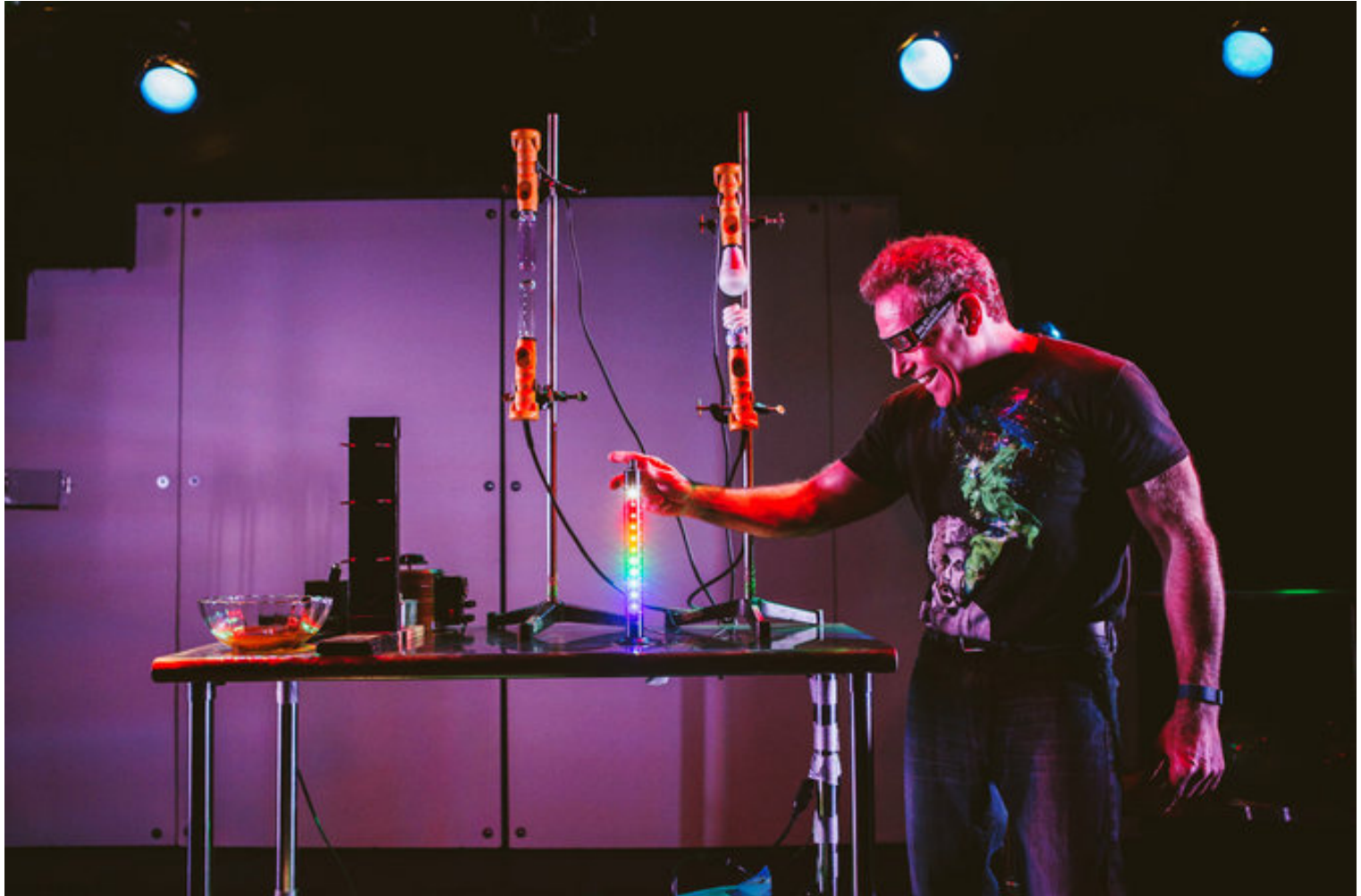


## THEATER

# Review: ‘That Physics Show,’ Where Newton Meets Nitrogen

**THAT PHYSICS SHOW** Off Broadway, History/Science, Play, Solo Performance | Open Run | Elektra Theatre, 673 Eighth Ave.

By LAUREL GRAEBER APRIL 7, 2016



Dave Maiullo demonstrating the properties of light during “That Physics Show.” Donnell Culver

# 'That Physics Show'

Dave Maiullo may have developed the perfect deterrent to theatergoers who text and tweet during plays: threaten to dip their smartphones in liquid nitrogen.

Mr. Maiullo never actually enforced this during a recent performance of "[That Physics Show](#)." But he did immerse other objects, including a hot dog, a banana and some spring blossoms. The results weren't pretty.

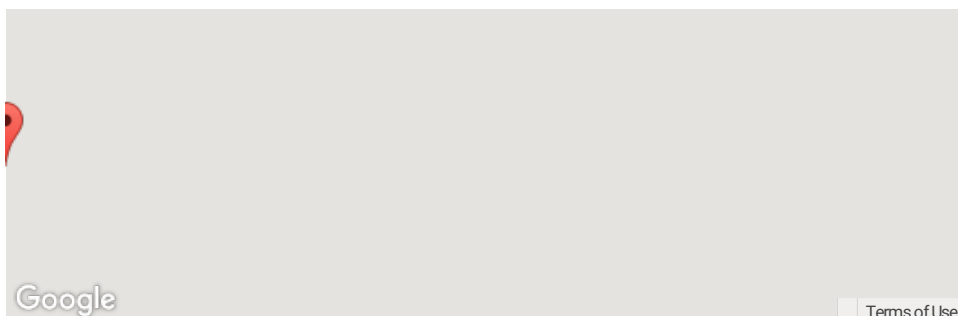
But what Mr. Maiullo does onstage is still extremely cool, and not just because the temperature of liquid nitrogen is more than 300 degrees below zero. As he explains, "Physics is the Supreme Court of the sciences." It determines the laws of the universe, and chemistry and biology have no choice but to fall into line. And like a Supreme Court hearing, physics is often accompanied by pyrotechnics. During the 90 minutes or so of this production, you'll witness electricity (controlled), explosions (minor) and flames (contained, I promise).

I first encountered Mr. Maiullo, who designs [physics demonstrations for Rutgers](#), a dozen years ago, when he assisted in [a presentation at the American Museum of Natural History](#). In this production he largely flies solo, though two assistants — and occasionally an eager young audience member — help. He dedicates his theater piece to demonstrating [Newton's laws](#), which operate every day, but rarely this theatrically. How often do you get to see a child's wagon propelled by a fire extinguisher? Or a pickle become a light bulb?

The most intriguing moments in "That Physics Show," however, are when Mr. Maiullo makes the invisible visible. We can't see sound waves, but using a device called a [flame tube](#), and a recording of Frank Sinatra singing "New York, New York," he translates their movement into a fiery pattern. And while we're not conscious of atmospheric pressure, we can appreciate its force when Mr. Maiullo creates a vacuum in a long cylinder containing a Ping-Pong ball, and then lets air back into the tube: The innocuous-looking little ball becomes a 700-mile-per-hour projectile, able to pierce a row of three empty soda cans.

Mr. Maiullo can go awfully fast himself, and occasionally I wished he had taken more time with his explanations. But, as he reminds you, there won't be a test. "That Physics Show" is like having your really hip uncle teach science class for a day. You may not completely master the lesson, but you'll love the lab.

(Fridays at 7 p.m.; Saturdays at 3 and 7 p.m.; Sundays at noon and 3 p.m.; the Elektra Theater, 300 West 43rd Street, Clinton; 866-811-4111, [thatphysicsshow.com](#).)



**That Physics Show**

**Elektra Theatre**

673 Eighth Ave.  
Midtown West

**Category** Off Broadway, History/Science, Play, Solo Performance

**Credits** Written and performed by David Maiullo

**Cast** David Maiullo

**Preview** February 26, 2016

**Opened** March 9, 2016

**Closing** Open Run

**Upcoming Shows**


Friday	April 22	7:00 PM
Saturday	April 23	3:00 PM
Saturday	April 23	7:00 PM
Sunday	April 24	12:00 PM
Sunday	April 24	3:00 PM


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