

# Shocking Revelations: The Performance of Electricity

Research:



Practice:



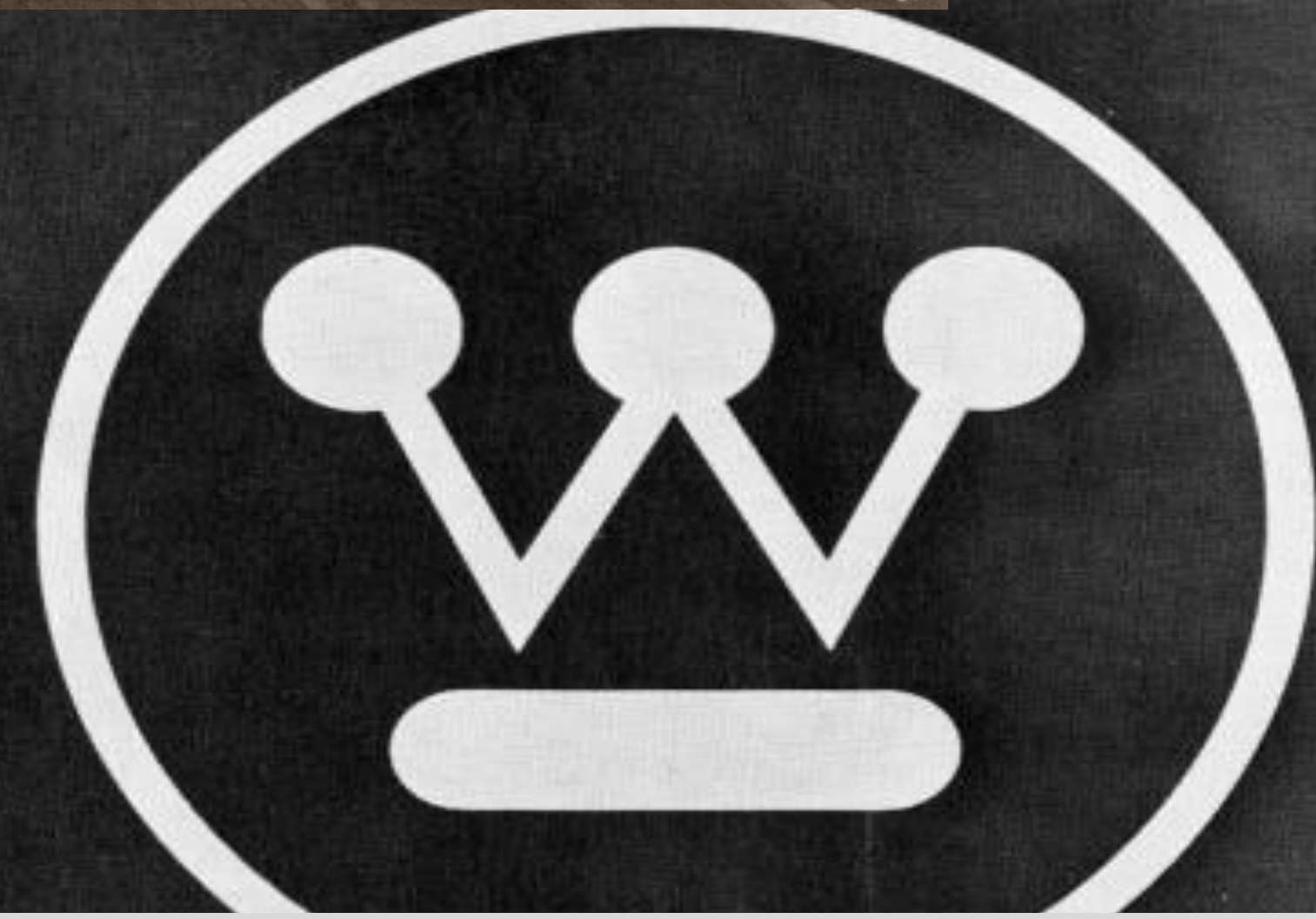
Department of Theatre at Allegheny College

Research Site: Vukovich Center for  
Communication Arts

Research By: Beth Watkins,  
Stephanie Engel, and Nate Freed

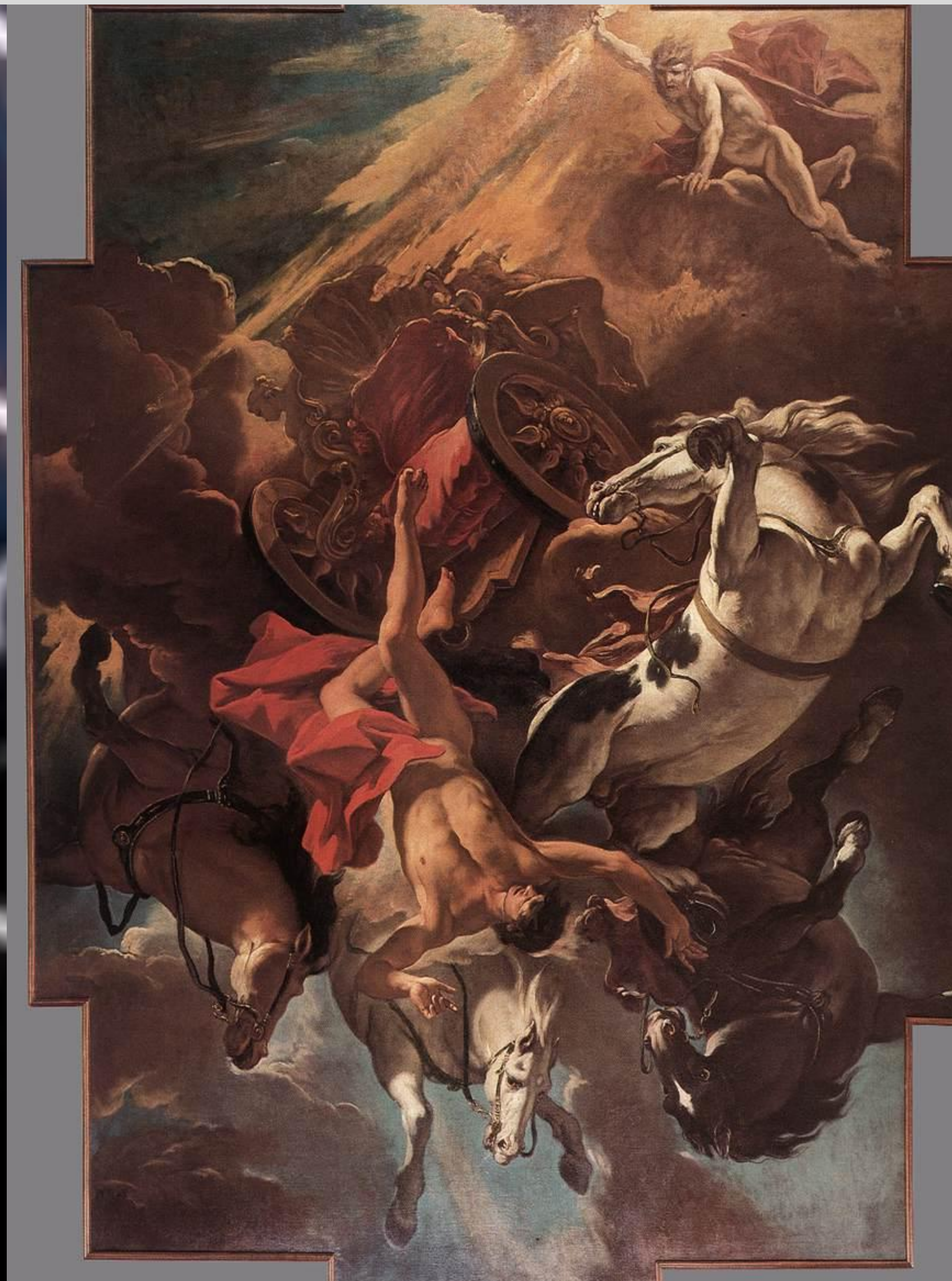
Puppet Consultant: Brian Thummler

The goal of our project was to expand on previous research surrounding electricity and invention during the past three hundred years. This information will be used to form the basis of our next devising project in the Fall of 2015.



During our research program we were tasked with completing bibliographic close reading and annotation of sources relating to:

- Inventions: Lightning Rod and Light Bulb
- Inventors: Edison, Tesla, and Westinghouse
- Myths: Phaethon
- Performers: Loie Fuller
- Scientists: Luigi Galvani and Marie & Pierre Curie



Building on our extensive research, we used the ideas we encountered to explore and develop stories through creative writing and physical theatre workshops.

We also designed and constructed puppets to experiment with certain concepts in performance. We started with basic models in shadow puppetry and moved onto more physical embodiments using metal fabrication and costume design.

## Bibliography:

- Brian, Denis. *The Curies: A Biography of the Most Controversial Family in Science*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons Inc. 2005. Print.
- Fara, Patricia. *An Entertainment for Angels: Electricity in the Enlightenment*. Cambridge Icon Books. 2002. Print.
- Francis, Penny. *Puppetry: A Reader in Theatre Practice*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan. 2012. Print.
- Garellick, Rhonda K. *Electric Salome: Loie Fuller's Performance of Modernism*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 2007. Print.
- Jonnes, Jill. *Empires of Light: Edison, Tesla, Westinghouse, and the Race to Electrify the World*. New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2004. Print.
- Westinghouse*. Dir. Mark Bussler. Incom Entertainment Company. 2008. Video

## Acknowledgements:

Andrew W. Mellon Collaborative Undergraduate Research in the Humanities Grant  
Jim Sumerfield and Lesley Fairman

