



An audio/video recording of the audience-panelist discussion, pictures & resources from tonight's philosophy symposium will be made available on the archive pages at www.merlinccc.org



Symposium Co-Directors

- **Marisa Diaz-Waian, M.A.** (Founder & Executive Director, *Merlin CCC*)
- **Tim Holmes, M.F.A.** (Local & International Artist)
- **Ross Peter Nelson, M.F.A.** (Playwright & Software Engineer)
- **Pastor Russ Danaher** (Pastor & ADA Coordinator, *Montana Department of Corrections*)



Related AI Events



The AI Project: HumanityXT.inc is a collection of eight 10-min. plays that explores the potential extinction of our sense of humanity – not necessarily from humans, but of what makes us human – through humor, satire, and serious reflection. The AI Project will be performed during the annual Last Chance New Play Fest Thurs. Nov. 9th at 7pm at 130 Neill Ave. followed by an Audience Talk-Back. Additional performances include Sat. Nov. 11th at 7pm & Sun. Nov. 12th at 2pm. For more information visit www.experimentaltheatrecoop.org or check out Last Chance New Play Fest on Facebook.



November 8th

6:30pm – 10pm

@ The Myrna Loy



PHILOSOPHY SYMPOSIUM

VULNERABLE HUMANITY, PREDICTABLE MACHINES

The Symposium



The third in a series of Merlin philosophy symposiums on the human-technology relationship, tonight's symposium features a limited release film – “Marjorie Prime” – followed by an interactive panelist-audience discussion with free-flowing Q & A that explores some of the less obvious ethical implications of the human-technology relationship and promises and perils of artificial intelligence.

Symposium Facilitator

- **Barry Ferst, Ph.D.** (Professor of Philosophy, *Carroll College*)

Symposium Panelists

- **Eric Hall, Ph.D.** (Assistant Professor of Theology & Philosophy, *Carroll College*)
- **Edward Glowienka, Ph.D.** (Assistant Professor of Philosophy, *Carroll College*)
- **Ross Peter Nelson, M.F.A.** (Playwright & Software Engineer)
- **Mark Smillie, Ph.D.** (Professor of Philosophy, *Carroll College*)
- **Nikki Honzel, Ph.D.** (Cognitive Neuroscientist & Assistant Professor of Psychology, *Carroll College*)
- **Edward Gray, MS, LCPC** (Depth Psychotherapist)
- **Alden H. Wright, Ph.D.** (Research & Emeritus Professor, Artificial Intelligence and Technology & Ethics, *University of Montana*)

Film Synopsis

Director Michael Almereyda adapted “Marjorie Prime” from a play by Jordan Harrison. A good portion of the film is a series of conversations between family members and “primes,” all set in a beach house in the near future. At the movie’s heart lies a paradox. Primes seem to have been invented to give comfort and companionship to the bereaved, but the bereaved don’t use them just as vehicles for lovely pipe dreams. They end up saying things to primes that they couldn’t say to the people on whom the primes were modeled. Almereyda’s careful framing, with its reflections and refractions and views of white sand and gray ocean, seem the perfect stage for these characters. The detachment is Chekhovian, meaning he can study these people like a clinician but also have enormous empathy for the ways in which they fail to connect as their lives go by in what seems like a blink. “Marjorie Prime” is not the kind of movie in which we learn the background of prime technology or who invented it, etc. It’s sci-fi as a means of exploring our inner lives.

Film synopsis
adaptation from an
interview with film
critic, David
Edelstein, on
NPR’s *Fresh Air*

