

.Surrepetition  
A Little Power Play.

m k s | v o l c o f s k y

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Surrepetition was first performed as a staged reading May 8 & 9, 1995 @  
Eugene Lang College, The New School For Social Research, NYC

Directed by Fabiana Santana & the Author

*Cast*

\$ - Jason Baumann  
& - Jasmine Aulcott  
Sam - Rishad Mistri  
Sarah - Hannah Miller

*Running time apprx 1'10"*

## Characters

—

\$	-	A man
&	-	A woman
Sam	-	A man
Sarah	-	A woman

The Paper is NYTimes size;  
“Fiftieth Anniversary Liberation Auschwitz”  
for headline; backpage is something with  
Kate Moss’ ass or some such ad.

The Mirror is square plain clear glass in a  
frame hung way downstage \$’s face height

The Light-Phone is a phone with a small light  
on the mouthpiece; it is used “upside down”,  
earpiece being the (lit) mouthpiece; when in use  
all lights blackout; all that is visible is speaker’s  
mouth; the light-phone is mic’d into PA; an  
intimate whisper occurs.

A single lit candle is attached to the back of  
the Window.

Lighting: The duets are dim, quiet; the quartet is  
hot and loud.

UPPER-CASE WORDS SHOULD BE YELLED  
AT THE CEILING, INHALING BETWEEN  
EACH WORD. Most. Not all. Not final YOU.

(Parenthesized words should be stage whispered)

The PUNCHES are dream-time slow, *at least* half a  
minute to execute.

The author will supply audio for pre- and post-curtain  
AMBIENCE

## Surrepetition

\_\_\_\_\_

\$ (Entering from door stage right, in overcoat, carrying paper, umbrella, wearing gloves. He puts down umbrella + paper, takes off gloves, coat and boots. Walks to fourthwall mirror, looks at his face)

Here we've made a play  
At peace

(He sits in chair downstage right.  
Reads ... Long quiet)

& (Entering upstage left, wearing dress, barefoot)

I gotta go from here to there  
Theres lots happening  
Happens all at once

(Speaks to left hand)

This  
And

(Speaks to right hand)

That

(Speaking each of following ten lines to her fingers, one line to a finger)

World to world  
Ticktock tick  
Sicksock sick  
Sickem in sockem  
Fuckem in frockem  
Lickem in lockem  
Kickem in kockem  
Gotta stoppim  
Nick nack nif nit no nigh nosh nil nuthin  
Hoho

You aint goin nowhere baaaybee  
Just like WHO

Hi

\$

Didint hear you

&

Just gettin up

\$

Not really

&

Oh  
I been here awhile

\$

Yeah

&

& (cont)

Me too  
Doin what

\$

Sitting  
Reading  
Mostly sitting

&

Yeah  
Me too  
Mostly

\$

What

&

What what

\$

Reading what

&

No I wasint I wasint reading at all  
Okay

\$

Yes yes yes no I know me too

&

She stands and looks through her fourth floor window,  
the light falls into the apartment like a body into a frozen  
lake. I will turn and go from here to there. Time will  
be different there than here. I will say What were you  
reading. Stop stroking my head. Please. Stop

\$

Come in sit

&

i WILL  
I'm still waking up  
It's four in the afternoon and it feels like night in here  
Be so quiet

Yes \$

So &  
So

Yes \$  
Yes

There &  
What were you reading

Whats up \$

Yeah &

With you whats up \$

I'm up so what were you reading &

Forget it \$

No come on tell &

Just the paper Whats up \$

I told you I'm up now lets see O &  
O yes  
I forgot about this I heard but I forgot it was today

It doesnt matter \$

I know but it does so sit &  
I'm sitting so sit



& (cont)

Fifty years ago today  
It's like sergeant pepper  
Hitler was a grand rab  
Rabbi  
He married everyone  
It's our golden anniversary today  
Darling

\$

Ha  
Ha  
Ho

&

You know I almost said grand rabbit  
Hitler was a grand rabbit  
Imagine everyone doing the bunnyhop at nuremberg  
Riefenstahl would never a made it

(Bunnyrabbit goosestepping w/closed  
umbrella as rifle)

HIP HOP  
HIP HOP

\$

Sit down

&

HIP HOP HIP HOP HIP HOP

(Opens umbrella)

\$

Now thats bad luck

&

Rains inside all the time  
Didint you know  
Rains and rains and rains  
HIP  
Chshshshshsh  
HOP  
Chshshshshsh  
HIP  
Saaaaaahhhh  
HOP  
Ffffffffffff

& (cont)

HIP drip drip drip  
HOP drop drop drip  
DRIP DROP DRIP DROP DRIP DROP  
(hip) (hop) (hip) (hop)  
(hip)

(Close umbrella)

There is a long pause  
I like this now  
You stroking my head  
The smell of your knee in your pants  
The light falls through the window like wind, a  
voice in wind, calling, from a long, long time gone  
Everything arriving, now  
Everything  
Here is a long, long, pause

(There is)

\$

I was on the subway today

&

Something happened

\$

I'M TELLING

&

Lets act it out

\$

No  
Sit  
If you listen

&

Okay  
I go radio world

\$

*(fiddling with makeup on table)*

&

Thats mine

I know it's yours I'm just looking at it

\$

Just saying

&

What do you mean it's mine Why would you say that  
IT'S MINE  
Whats wrong with you what the fuck are you thinking about  
What am I gonna take it  
Am I

\$

Just slipped thats all

&

Never all

\$

Thats all  
I wanna get back to where we were

&

No  
Thats gone  
I mean we even left where we started before I even got a chance to  
Now I'm supposed to help you get back where you want  
There  
Thats yours  
You do it

\$

Well  
Where were you

&

I was on the subway

\$

And

&

Thats nice

\$

Huh &  
AND \$  
Eh &  
Thanks alot \$  
Thats what they said into the camera at Auschwitz &  
PUT DOWN THE PAPER \$  
Put down the paper  
God  
It's down &  
I'm sitting  
Here  
Could we start over \$  
I dont know &  
Lets start over \$  
Lets &  
I was on the subway today \$  
Something happened &  
I'M TELLING \$

Lets act it out &

No \$  
Sit  
If you listen

&  
BE ANGRY AT ME BUT DONT LEAVE ME

\$  
There was a couple sitting across from me

&  
JUST DONT LEAVE

\$  
The guy was much older than the woman, like fifty twenty

&  
HANG IN THERE

\$  
He looked like a retired hit man

&  
YOU'RE HERE

\$  
His face was mapped with the violence he'd done

&  
I'm listening  
I'm teaching

\$  
He had rough stubble and a thinning ponytail and his eyes were dark and waiting

&  
This is how

\$  
His eyes looked around even while they kissed

I know this is how

&

He had orangish leather shoes and a puffy sheepleather coat that was bland pale and hid his gun

\$

We get here

&

He kept his left hand against his side the whole time

\$

And we can stay

&

His feet were very small

\$

Just this

&

And his fingernails were very, very, tiny  
So, so, tiny

\$

Just this

&

She was blond  
Long and thin and dressed like a mannikin

\$

Just this

&

She had a portfolio between her feet

\$

Just this

&

And stroked his face softly  
Tracing its violence gently

\$

Just this &  
And then would look around the car triumphantly \$  
Brief &  
I knew their story instantly \$  
Just this &  
Like it fell whole into my head \$  
Fading &  
She had been a stripper \$  
Just this &  
He handed her a hundred with a look in his eye \$  
Leaving &  
His left hand against his side \$  
Just this &  
Now he pays for art school \$  
Becoming &

And she strokes his killers hands \$  
Teaching &  
The fingernails so, so, small \$  
Just this &  
They are partners \$  
Listening &  
And so are we \$  
Yes &  
I followed them off the train and they came to your door \$  
Yes &  
I watched and you let them in \$  
Yes &  
And then you closed the door \$  
I stood listening &  
I could hear you  
Standing  
And listening



I could hear you  
Behind the door  
Listening

\$

We are partners

&

We must be partners

\$

I am listening

&

The stories I find lead me to your door

\$

Tell me

&

How can this be

\$

I am listening

&

Just this

\$

I am listening

&

Just this

\$

Just this

&

Are we in love

\$

No  
We are just in the world

&

\$ (Standing)

How you smile saying that

(With left hand he punches her in face,  
knocks her to floor, sits back down,  
lights dimming)

&

(Rising from floor, she picks up Light-  
phone, clicks it “on”; all lights blackout.  
She dials)

Yes

Yes

Yes

I know where you are he says

In the corner on the floor by the bed

I know what you are wearing he says

Just a t shirt and jeans

They are old he says

You have had them almost your whole life he says

You rarely wash them he says

And today they smell strong

Really good and strong

It is three in the afternoon, it has just rained he says

I kneel he says

I put my nose under your arm he says

Oh

So good

He says

My mind begins to grow, to fall away

He says

My nose under your arm

I touch my tongue taste the sweat lick your stubble he says

My fingers feel each of your ribs he says

And you jump inside, with each rib he says

How you jump takes my breath

He says

I lick your neck

I bite your nipples through your t shirt he says

Rubbing the t shirt against your bra he says

And you make a low sound

Oh

He says

Mmm

Your nipples are so hard he says

So sensitive

I bite them

& (cont)

He says  
A little harder each time  
He says  
Til you dont know what hurts  
He says  
And I draw a slow circle round your bellybutton with my tongue he says  
Round and round  
My fingers between your ribs he says  
A cage around you  
He says  
And with my teeth  
Oh  
He says  
Mmm  
He says  
With my teeth  
Smelling how soaked you are  
Smelling you  
Good and unwashed  
No panties  
Soaked he says  
With my teeth he says  
I unzip you  
And your smell pours into me he says  
I drink your smell he says  
Like a drowning man the sea he says  
He says  
Oh my god  
He says  
Oh my god  
You smell so good  
So real  
So good he says  
You are so wet he says  
I have your pants off he says  
You are fully naked now he says  
I am on my knees he says  
My cock out he says  
Your legs are spread  
You are on the end of the bed he says  
Your ass on the edge of the bed, you're on your back he says  
Oh my god he says  
Your cunt is so beautiful he says  
Your cunt is so so beautiful he says  
So wet

& (cont)

So real  
Smell so good  
I love how you spread your legs he says  
Your thighs are so beautiful how your hips begin to move he says  
I just taste you  
Just licking your juice he says  
Mmm  
My god how good he says  
He says  
I am so hard  
Hard like god  
I run two fingers over your cunt softly, get them wet he says  
Now they are inside you  
Now my thumb he says  
And my tongue on your clit  
Pressing he says  
Moving  
My other hand squeezes your nipple he says  
And you are moving he says  
Rocking he says  
Arching he says  
Oh god  
He says  
Now my tongue is deep  
So deep inside you he says  
I can taste the end of everything  
Everything he says  
And you are moving against my mouth he says  
I can feel you opening wider  
Wider he says  
Pressing against me he says  
Afraid to lose me he says  
I squeeze both your nipples harder  
Harder he says  
I can taste the end of everything he says  
Everything  
You are moving  
Moaning  
Fuck me you say he says  
Fuck me  
Fuck me  
Fuck me  
He says  
Oh god  
Mmm

& (cont)

Yes  
You are moving  
Moaning  
Come he says  
Come  
Your belly arches to the sky he says  
You come in a flood  
Moaning he says  
Pressing  
Filling my mouth  
And I come  
I come too he says  
Now  
Mmm  
He says  
And then you're gone

(She clicks the light-phone "off" and places it down; stagelights up, she stands. \$ rises, walks to her and lovingly places bruise makeup on her face. \$ steps back to look at makeup job)

\$

How you smile saying that

(At arms length they, \$ then &, caress eachothers faces, using both arms, one after the other. Dreamtime slow like the punch.  
They turn, full front facing audience and for five full seconds TREMBLE.  
Blackout. Two knocks. Lights up.  
\$ + & sitting in chairs, as earlier)

\$

The stories I find lead me to your door.

&

WHO

SAM

Jay

SARAH

Kay

\$

I'll let them in

&

Wait

Wait

If you do

\$ (Rising towards door)

I'll let them in

(Two knocks)

(& stands, checks her face in mirror frame hung on fourth wall, moves towards door)

&

Wait

Wait

(\$ opens door. SAM and SARAH standing backs to door)

Sarah

Sam

Come in

(SAM and SARAH walk in backwards, turn in towards each other and face &; lights up hot)

This is Sarah

This is Sam

(SAM holds &'s face in his hands, appraising)

SARAH

Perfect

Beautiful

SAM

Exactly  
Nothing better

\$

Wait  
Wait

SAM

Sarah, set up  
It's only ten o'clock and looks like you guys've had already a full day, eh Sarah

SARAH

Yeah babe  
Hey love  
Pick a spot to sit hon  
Don't worry about the light

\$

Wait  
Wait  
I don't like this entrance

SAM

How it feels babe  
Bout to be in every pocket in the American world

\$

Wait  
Wait  
What

SARAH

Hon who's this

&

He's a friend

\$

I'm a friend  
O  
Am I  
Yes yes  
I am ever  
Maybe should I would anyone like some TEA

\$ (cont)

TEA  
ANYONE WANT TEA

(All 3 bow onto floor)

No SAM

Thank you sir SARAH

\$

Sam  
Sarah  
I would prefer if this were not to happen  
Sam  
Sarah  
I would prefer you'd not returned  
Sam  
Sarah  
I would prefer  
Another story

Friend SAM

SARAH  
She's gonna be the first woman on American paper money

SAM  
We are here to draw the official portrait

SARAH  
This basement you live in is the site of history making itself

\$  
I don't

SAM  
No matter

SARAH  
That

SAM  
That



THAT	SARAH
This is the story	SAM
The door opens	SARAH
And this is the story	SAM
You already helped	SARAH
Look up babe See her face Now	SAM
	(All stand)
Thank you sir	SARAH
Sarah Resume	SAM
How much	\$
How much	&
How much will you be	\$
They havent told	&
Sarahs ready	SARAH
Theres nothing I like better than a day at the office	\$

Yes doctor  
I knew their story instantly  
Like a hole fell in my head  
I knew I didnt  
Know I  
Didint  
Know  
Yes doctor  
Tea  
TEA  
TEA  
ANYONE WANT SOME TEA

(All 3 bow onto floor)

SARAH

No

SAM

Thank you

&

Sir

(All up)

(In SARAH's portfolio are sketchpad,  
pencil and two strap-on dildos. She  
hands one to SAM; SARAH + SAM both  
put them on, over their pants)

SAM

Okay  
Sit babe

SARAH

Thats good hon  
Spread your legs a little  
Lemme see your pus-sy

(& lifts her skirt. Chair is 3/4 back to  
house)

Thats fine

(The portrait-drawing is a combination of  
sketching and sex; & refuses kisses but

accepts everything else; during the  
“quartet speech” she meets \$’s eyes  
often)

\$

It’s official  
This is happening  
I DONT THINK THIS SHOULD HAPPEN

SAM

Cmere Romeo  
Tell me a story while they go at it

(SAM sits in chair stage left, the paper  
open and hiding his face and upper body;  
the dildo stands straight up before the  
paper; he speaks from behind the paper)

\$ (Same bunnyrabbit goosestep)

HIP HOP HIP HOP  
Did you know  
HIP HOP HIP HOP  
It’s the fiftieth anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz

(Picks up umbrella)

SAM

So

\$ (Puts umbrella down)

Okay  
I was on a boat once  
Once and only once  
From an island to a mainland  
This was years of years ago  
It was a midnight passage  
The speed of the boat turned the fog to rain  
Up on deck

SAM

ONCE UPON A DECK

SARAH

You asked for a story

SAM

I did

The speed of the boat turned the fog to rain

&

Up on deck  
Through the fog  
In all directions  
I could see distant lights  
Lights from where we'd left  
And lights  
Small  
Very very small lights  
Deep in the fog

\$

The speed of the boat turned to rain

&

From where we were heading

\$

So

SARAH

And just below each small, tiny light  
Just below  
To the left  
Below each  
I could see a dog  
Laying down  
Head up  
Just waiting  
Quietly

\$

Devotedly

&

Loyally

\$

Majestically

&

Waiting

\$

\$ (cont)

The whole entire foghidden white night sky

&

The speed of the boat turned to rain

\$

Was filled with lights  
And a gentle  
Loyal

&

Majestic

\$

Patient  
Dog  
Waited  
At the foot of each light  
For a master  
I knew  
Would never  
Return

SAM

This is the story

\$

There was a woman up on deck  
On the other end of the boat  
Also in the fog

SAM + SARAH

The speed of the boat turned to rain

\$

I could barely see her  
That night  
Below deck  
I dreamed  
I dreamed I was being evicted  
I woke in the dream to my landlords voice  
Showing my apartment to a stranger to rent  
There was a secret, beautiful hidden room in my house  
That I could never find  
That I knew was there but

\$ (cont)

That I could never find  
I followed my landlords voice  
And found myself in this hidden, beautiful room  
I had finally  
Finally  
Found it  
The moment I found it  
I had lost my house  
I handed my keys to my landlord  
Gratefully  
For by following her voice  
I had found this beautiful, hidden room  
It had a stream running through it  
Ceilings too high to see  
And trees  
And light  
And filled my lungs with light  
And I handed her my keys  
I could not see the new tenants face  
But I loved him too  
The woman up on deck was my landlord  
And the man who would live in my house  
Was me  
In the future  
Here  
When I woke it was morning  
Old men and women were pouring vodka into the sea  
Throwing oranges to the fishes  
And singing  
The sky was clear  
And we had made the passage safely  
And I never saw that woman again

SAM

Romeo  
Take a look at your woman  
Shes about to become part of every dirty deal on earth

\$

Theres a movement

SARAH

*(Tears first sketch in half)*

Try to stop it &  
Just gets worse SAM  
Try to let it be \$  
Just continues SARAH  
On its own &  
There was a place SAM  
Where our lives met \$  
Perfect SARAH  
Where we were perfect &  
Where we are meant to be SAM  
Together \$  
But theres this SARAH  
Movement &  
How everything else just SAM  
Pulls that place apart \$

Pulls us away from that place SARAH  
&  
A perfect quiet place  
Because I SAM  
Because she \$  
Have things to do SARAH  
&  
And doing them  
Having them SAM  
Tears us from that place \$  
A place of perfection SARAH  
&  
Where we are not allowed to be  
Because we must live SAM  
Because we have things to do \$  
So we can never stay there SARAH  
&  
Not for long  
And it gets shorter SAM



And shorter	\$	
And then	SARAH	
We just remember it	&	
And that movement	SAM	
That tearing	\$	
Wins	SARAH	
But never	&	
Never	SAM	
That perfect place	\$	
The memory of that perfect place	SARAH	
Never	&	
Never	SAM	
Fades	\$	
No	SARAH	(Finishing)
We are just in	&	

Just in the world

\$

Son

SAM (Lowering paper)

Yes

\$

Thats heartache  
And it's not a memory  
It's the ground beneath your feet

SAM

So what happens next

&

Next babe  
Teller Sair

SAM (Rising)

SARAH

Well hon  
I enjoyed this  
I can tell you we  
I actually  
Will circulate your face amongst the fortune five  
Who will yea or nay it  
Finally  
And who will drop the appropriate politics upon the esteemed heads of the socalled  
American people  
Who will be more than ecstatic  
To hold you close  
Pressed against and upon  
Their fat sweaty asses and overgrown underripe genitalia

\$

I told you  
Open that door  
Everything will change

&

We let the world in

\$

We blew it

\$ (cont)

I  
Tea  
TEA TEA TEA  
ANYONE WANT TEA

(SAM + SARAH bow to floor)

SAM

I am the son of retired doctors

SARAH

And I am the daughter of practicing drunks

SAM

Thank you sir

SARAH

But tea

SAM

Would not be cared for properly

SARAH

Here

(They rise)

\$

What happens next is  
She gets up from that fatal chair  
She walks to me  
She tells me

&

I am going to beat you in your face

\$

Sam steps behind me  
He holds my hands to my sides

SAM

Yes son  
I am

\$

I say to her

\$ (*cont*)

No you wont  
And then she does

(& does)

O my god  
I DO NOT HAVE AN ERECTION

SARAH

Sam

SAM

Yes Sarah

SARAH

We're makin money here

SAM

That is yup  
That whats goin on

\$

Now we all gather in a circle  
A circle but not round  
Sarah will begin  
Sarah chews the portrait wholly  
She will turn to her left  
And she will pass the picture on

(They do, mouth to mouth, not using  
hands. SARAH, &, \$, SAM)

SARAH

Sam

SAM

Mmm

SARAH

You place the portrait at my feet

(He does, bowing, spitting it out)

Thank you

(He rises, back to his place)

\$

Sarah

SARAH

Yes you

\$

I didnt know

(Picks up and opens portrait)

I didnt think they had live people on money

SARAH

No hon  
They dont  
Okay babe  
Think we're set here  
This little power plays just about

(Snatches portrait out \$'s hands)

Done

SAM

Yup Sair  
Lets pack it in  
Here

(SAM tosses her his strap-on, she  
steps out of hers)

\$

Sam

SAM

Yes son

\$

What about

SAM

What abouter

Shes alive \$

I'm alive &

Thats no problem SARAH

It'll take care of itself SAM

Such a magnificent destiny

Could not but think

Itself

Towards its own

Glorious

(Stroking &'s face)

End

The distance

Between us

Grown

(SAM + SARAH begin to move  
backwards towards door)

Grows

Unbearable

Because we love each other SARAH

Grows and grows SAM

We try to close it

Fill it with our fists  
SAM (*cont*)

Its not working babe

You know that

And  
SARAH

You know too  
SAM

We will see you

Very soon

You're on the money babe  
SARAH

And we are so  
SAM

So  
SARAH

Happy  
SAM

Happy  
SARAH

(SAM + SARAH backs to door turn in  
toward each other and out, and closed;  
Lights down slow)

It's almost morning  
&

It's just dusk  
\$

(They move to center, fall to knees  
facing front)

O falling light &

O fading sound \$

O stilling movement &

O silencing air \$

Send us on &

We love you \$

Send us forward &

We love you \$

Send us &

We love you \$

How we are afraid &

To go \$

(They turn on knees facing each other,  
eyes closed, faces very close,  
whisper in unison)

\$ + &

Yisborach  
V'yishtabach  
V'yispo'ar  
V'yisromam  
V'yisnaseh



\$ + & (cont)

V'yis'hador  
V'yisa'ley  
V'yishal'lol  
Sh'meh d'kud'sho b'rich hu  
L'elo l'elo  
Min chol bir'choso  
V'shiroso  
Tushb'choso  
V'nechemoso  
Da'ami'ron b'olmo  
V'imru  
Omain

(Their eyes open. & lovingly places  
bruise makeup on \$'s face. Taking  
turns they kiss each others foreheads)

\$

You're on the money babe

(She rises, puts his boots on, leaves  
through door Stage Right)

I dont know should I sleep  
Or try to wake

(He rises, puts his gloves on his feet,  
picks up light-phone, arrives at mirror;  
Clicks "on" phone; speaks into light;  
facing mirror; all stagelights out)

To where you brought me

You

How could you have brought me here

Here

You

You

YOU

\$ (cont)

And

I dont want to leave

I love

I love

Here

(He clicks light-phone "off". Turns, arrives at window, blows out candle, exits upstage left. Stage right door Two knocks. End.)