

# E I N S T E I N

by Daryl Henry

FADE IN:

## EXT. SWISS ALPS - SUNRISE

Accompanied by the opening bars of the second movement of Mozart's *5th violin Concerto*, the CAMERA explores the majesty of Europe's tallest mountains from the air, gliding steadily northward, eventually descending on:

## EXT. ZURICH HILLSIDE - DAY

Where a handsome, awkward BOY of 16 climbs a cobbled street wearing an undersized suit and oversized tie.

## EXT. SWISS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY - DAY

The boy confronts the somber granite facade, takes a deep breath and enters.

## INT. SWISSTECH LECTURE HALL - DAY

The tiered classroom is empty. The boy plods up the steps and takes a seat in the middle. After a moment an austere PROFESSOR enters, squints up through pince-nez.

PROFESSOR

You must be Einstein.

HERMANN MINKOWSKI, 31, an incisive mathematician with a comprehensive mustache, holds out a sheaf of papers. Einstein descends the stairs, takes the papers.

MINKOWSKI

This would all be unnecessary if you'd graduated from high school. Why didn't you graduate from high school?

EINSTEIN

It was Prussian. I didn't like it.

MINKOWSKI

What makes you think you'll like university better?

EINSTEIN

I'm not sure I will.

Minkowski sighs.

MINKOWSKI

Well, if by some miracle you pass this, you may be permitted to find out.

(CONTINUED)

Minkowski exits. Einstein climbs back to his seat, turns to the first page. Mozart's violin concerto resumes as he begins filling in the blanks, then the margins, then the backs of the pages with a flurry of illegible words and numbers.

BRING UP TITLE:

## " S P A C E   A N D   T I M E "

### EXT. ALPINE MOUNTAINSIDE - DAY

Leading the Einstein family on an afternoon hike is HERMANN, 48, an imperious electrical engineer. His stalwart wife PAULINE, 38, follows behind. Fourteen-year-old MAJA ambles along in front of her brother Albert, who trails the family, his thoughts far away.

Hermann stops to examine a striated rock face.

HERMANN  
Albert, come here. Are these  
particular strata igneous or  
sedimentary?

EINSTEIN  
Oh, papa, how should I know?

HERMANN  
(to Pauline)  
It must have been one of the  
questions on the entrance exam.

Einstein glumly tries to brush past his father on the narrow trail, but he loses his footing and staggers toward the cliff edge. Only Maja's quick lunge saves him from a precipitous fall.

HERMANN (CONT'D)  
(scowling)  
What do you intend to do now?

He looks up at his father, his heart still pounding.

EINSTEIN  
Thank the stars I didn't fall.

Einstein slumps against the unidentified strata.

HERMANN  
I *mean* with regard to your education.

MAJA  
He's going to pass the exam next  
time, Papa. Aren't you, Albie?

(CONTINUED)

HERMANN

Well, are you?

EINSTEIN

If they don't change the questions.

DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. SWISS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY - DAY**

Einstein, a year older at 17, sits on the steps overdressed and underconfident, clutching a violin case, watching his fellow first-year STUDENTS file into the gray building.

A keen-eyed GIRL passes him, limping slightly. MILEVA MARIC, 21, is a Serbian farm girl, moody and passionate. Among her books is a sheaf of piano music. Einstein, intrigued, stares at her. Flattered, she hesitates.

MILEVA

You're awfully young to be a student here.

EINSTEIN

You're awfully old.

MILEVA

Don't be impertinent. What are you studying?

EINSTEIN

(smug)

I'm going to be a teacher.

MILEVA

Really? What do you intend to inflict upon your poor students?

EINSTEIN

An explanation of god's design.

MILEVA

(turns to go)

Immodest, too.

EINSTEIN

Wait. Is that a musical score you've got there?

(no response)

Perhaps we could play together sometime?

Laughing, she continues through the tall oak doors.