MelanchoLalaland™
Synopsis of the Opera

ACT 1
1. Intro/Team Melancuria (“The Boardroom”) - In the boardroom of Melancuria, Inc.™, the leading manufacturer of self-pleasuring technologies (“MasturPods™”) and anti-melancholia drugs, we see Booster Kront, the Chief Experiential Engineer, looking at the screen to see hoards of picketing, dissatisfied customers.

He is taking notes on a clipboard, when his co-worker and occasional girlfriend Tess McMichigan enters. “What are you thinking about, Booster?” she asks. We see a succession of grisly, surreal animations that are cluttering Booster’s mind.

Tess turns Booster’s attention to their team meeting, a video conference call with Kenny Longtin, the CEO of Masturmatico, Inc.—Melancuria’s biggest competitor—who has just bought Melancuria in a hostile takeover. Kenny’s first priority is “distilling the essence of eternity” and “selling it to the picketing hoards.”

Tess and Booster exchange their responses to this idea. Tess fills in Booster on Kenny, and Kenny wants to know what’s been going on at Melancuria, Inc. He’s particularly upset at the ‘Eternalizer Flop’, a Melancuria product that failed, and Booster’s Focus Group research behind the project. We watch some members of the Focus Group discuss melancholy, suicide, eternity, and Robert Burton (the author of Anatomy of Melancholy, the 17th century book that was the subject of Booster’s dissertation at University). Tess makes some helpful suggestions on how to move forward, and Kenny appoints her “the new team leader,” replacing Booster. Kenny ends his video transmission and Tess and Booster exit.

2. Dance—Tenebre autem natura mea sunt (“Darkness is also of my Nature”). Booster experiences his brain chemicals in dance form. His light nature is represented by a hyperkinetic dancer in a brightly colored leotard, and his dark nature by a dancer in a dark robe who drags herself across the stage floor. Light pushes Darkness off stage, but Darkness returns as a constantly morphing video background, echoing the statue of the winged Nica. Booster appears on screen and puts on a mask. He drinks Liquid Lover™, which helps him appreciate the contradiction of both his light and dark natures (Gloria Duplex).

3. Love and . . . and . . . (“The Breakup”). In bed with Tess, Booster can’t function because of an adverse reaction to Liquid Lover™, and Tess breaks up with him.

4. Into the Vat! (“Suicide Attempt”). Booster staggers out onto the industrial-looking Melancuria, Inc. factory floor. In a video call with his frenemy Charlie, Booster moans about his lost love, and his hallucinations. He is visited by a choir chanting Latin, and the Ghost of Robert Burton. Charlie is able to see Burton’s Ghost, and wonders what’s up with his pirate’s hat. Burton sings a monologue, “Love Melancholy”, from Anatomy of Melancholy.

Booster’s thoughts turn to suicide, and he decides to jump into the Endorphin Vat.

CURTAIN

INTERMEZZO—Preview of Coming Attractions
5. “Casual (Sex) Friday”—Carol Burkell, an employee of Masturmatico, Inc., locks herself in a supply closet after a horrible office shooting. Tormented by memories and inner voices, she desperately tries to piece together the events of the shooting and the identity of the killer.
ACT 2

6. A[s]SCENT (Intro/Bugs) — The voice of SkyRon™ states that the soul descends below the orbit of the sun, but through the orbit of the moon prepares its ascent. Booster, head spinning, is transformed into a series of bug-like creatures in three different videogame environments. After the third environment, he starts spinning again.

7. The Grey Zone (“Afterlife Bureau”)—In a grey, futuristic boardroom with grey, robed people, Booster floats out and tries to make sense of this apparent afterlife. He is joined by Person 1, who guides him through this setting.

SkyRon™—the press secretary to some unknown deities—discusses Earthly affairs with the other grey beings in this Afterlife Bureau, including what to do about South Florida sinking into the sea. The language they use—like the Boardroom scene in Act I—is bureaucratic and impenetrable. Booster attempts to participate, but is instead forced to watch a couple of incoherent training videos featuring SkyRon™. Person 1 realizes he’s supposed to show Booster “something silly and moralistic”, and clicks his remote toward the screen.

8. Dance of the Maladies—Booster and Person 1 exit the stage, along with a set of blurry, robed figures on the videoscreen. The figures return from behind a screen in black leotards and present a series of human maladies in dance form.

During an interlude, White Urban Zone, the dancers improv in front of a Google Maps Street View image sequence. Finally, the dancers return in monkish robes, and circle a psychedelic mushroom that recaps images from all the previous scenes.

9. Re-entry—Manhattania? (animation). Booster is spinning again, and flies toward the stylized skyline of Manhattania. He approaches the Urban Climber’s Club on the roof of one building, where he meets his spirit guide, Urban Climber Gal. She gestures toward the ropes Booster will use to climb down the building, and back into his reality.

10. The Immutable Truths. Booster does a final bit of spinning—imagining himself as DaVinci’s Vetruvian Man—and arrives on a grand opera stage, joined by Charlie. “Wow, man, you being dead and all, and coming back. You must have some immutable truths to print, share, and pass around!” sings Charlie. Booster tells him The Immutable Truths are within our grasps, but he will instead “ruminate on peoplekind’s timeless maladies”. “Darkness is of your nature, Booster!” replies Charlie.

CURTAIN

11. Closing Credits

SPECIAL FEATURE ON DVD

12. Booster’s Focus Group (three 6 1/2 minute films)