



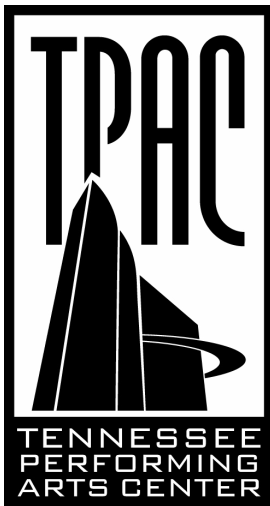
2005-2006 Season for Young People  
Teacher Guidebook

**Nashville Opera**  
presents

# **Surrender Road**

by  
**Marcus  
Hummon**





# Thank You

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# Director's Notes

## John Hoopes

It was almost two years ago that I first heard *Surrender Road* (a new opera by Marcus Hummon). After having the chance to listen to and study this beautiful piece, I have come to the conclusion that the work may be less a standard theatre piece and more of a type of theatrical puzzle box.

Although it tells a straightforward story of two young people that meet accidentally in New York City and fall in love, many of the moods and nuances of the work can be interpreted in different ways depending on the viewer's own perception and life experience.

Is it just a simple love story? Is it a tragedy? Is it a fable? Is it real? Is it in some way...mythic?

And that brings us to the characters of the opera. What are the two leads (Manuel, the boxer, and Emily, the artist) truly seeking as the drama unfolds before us? Love? Salvation? Something else? Something more? Something that is hard to put into mere words?

The music of the piece (which runs the spectrum from popular style to Broadway to Jazz to classical) reveals much to us. Largely, this is because (as with most opera) the story may be told in words but the piece is revealed through music. There is no spoken dialogue in the work. But the music, combined with the lyrics and text of the piece, speaks louder and more clearly than any spoken words ever could. The occasional usage of passages of verbatim Shakespeare text (lengthy quotes from various well-known Shakespeare plays) adds another layer of depth and nuance to the piece that, again, seems to ask more questions than it answers. Through the combination of Marcus's music, his text and lyrics, and the flowing verse of Shakespeare, the often beautiful and dramatic surface of the work may belie the darkness that lurks just below a calm façade.



*Surrender Road*  
is made possible  
by the  
Mary C. Ragland  
Foundation

## Table of Contents

Director's Notes	p.2
Synopsis	pp.3 - 5
The Composer	
Biographical information	p.5
Composer's Notes	p.6
Themes	pp.7 -8
Activities and Discussion	
Understanding Opera	pp.9 -10
Staging a New Work	p.11
Dreams	p.12
Shakespeare	pp.13-14
Shakespeare References	pp.15-19

For more information about TPAC's arts-in-education activities for students, teachers and artists, and the HOT Season for Young People, please visit our website at [www.tpac.org/education](http://www.tpac.org/education).

Please contact Susan Sanders, [ssanders@tpac.org](mailto:ssanders@tpac.org) for questions or comments about our season guidebooks.

Guidebook compiled and edited by Lattie Brown

### \*\*Notes to Teachers:

*Surrender Road* is written and performed in English.

The performance of *Surrender Road* has a few instances of mild profanity during the boxing match scene.

The performance will be accompanied by piano, saxophone and string quartet.

# Synopsis



## ACT I

### Scene 1: The Street

Manuel, a young boxer, walks down the streets of Brooklyn, New York. He is heading to the gym to prepare for his upcoming match.

### Scene 2: The Locker Room at the Gym

While prepping for the fight, Manuel speaks to Willie, his trainer, friend, and father figure. Manuel confides his dream to be a champion just like Willie was years ago. Willie tells Manuel that he loves him as if he were his own son. Vito, a small-time gangster, enters and asks to speak with Manuel alone. After his henchmen escort Willie out of the room, Vito pays off Manuel to take a dive in the fifth round. Manuel objects at first, but after Vito threatens Willie's life, Manuel agrees to take the money and throw the fight.

### Scene 3: The Fight

The boxing match has reached the fifth round, and Manuel is winning the fight. The crowd is in a frenzy. Vito's boss is nervous that Manuel is planning a double-cross, and Willie prays for Manuel's safety.

### Scene 4: The Art Gallery

Emily, a young painter, is nervous before her first big art show in NYC. Her paintings are on display in a gallery owned by the man she is living with, Marco, who is interested in Emily only as long as her career holds promise. At the art show, Emily's work is trashed by the art critics, and Marco politely throws her out. She finds herself out on the streets and climbs high up on the fire escapes seeking the thrill of the circus performers she paints.

### Scene 5: The Bar

After the fight, Manuel drinks with Willie, seeking inspiration from the story of Willie's big knockout, but Willie is trying to convince Manuel to get out of boxing. As the patrons of the bar finish a raucous song about their problems, Manuel storms out of the bar, furious that Willie doesn't think he is good enough to make it in boxing.

### Scene 6: Times Square

Manuel and Emily meet each other while walking through Times Square. The two troubled strangers feel an instant connection they cannot explain. As they ride the bus home to Brooklyn, they share the desires and dreams that have been battered and tested a few hours earlier. They are drawn to each other and find hope and relief in a kiss.

## ACT II

### Scene 1: The Brooklyn Bridge

Emily and Manuel get off the bus and cross the Brooklyn Bridge. Walking in the moonlight, they are captivated with each other and begin to leave their problems behind. Manuel asks Emily to come to a cool little jazz bar he knows.

### Scene 2: The Bar

As Manuel and Emily enter the bar, the lounge singer playfully launches into a song dedicated to Manuel and his “neighborhood”. Manuel is slightly embarrassed, and asks for a slow song so he and Emily can dance.

### Scene 3: The Dance

Manuel and Emily dance.

### Scene 4: Confrontation

Vito and Manuel’s boxing rival from the earlier match, enter the bar. Willie is with them. Manuel overhears the three men talking about the fight. He learns that Willie knew all along about the fall he was forced to take. Betrayed, Manuel confronts him, and Willie is ashamed. Manuel rages that he could have won the fight, and the other boxer immediately challenges Manuel to a bare-fisted rematch. Manuel accepts, and the two men head outside.

### Scene 5: The fight on the Bridge

After just a few minutes of fighting, Manuel is bloody and almost defeated. Emily begs him to stop fighting, but he struggles to continue. Willie tries to convince Manuel to quit by confessing that he was never really a champion; Willie reveals that he only won because his rival was paid to take a fall. Manuel is crushed.

### Scene 6: Dancing

In her despair at seeing Manuel injured and beaten, Emily snaps and begins to climb the rigging of the Brooklyn Bridge. She sees herself finally as the girl on the high-wire she has thought about for so long. The fight stops when Manuel sees Emily. He pleads with her to come down, and when she does not listen, he climbs up after her. He calls to her as she walks out on the guy wires. Just as she begins to reach for him, she slips and falls to her death. Manuel’s anguish at her death and the betrayal of Willie leaves him hopeless, and he leaps off the bridge.

**Students! Send us your review of *Surrender Road*. It is a new work, and your opinions will among the first written about this opera.**

**E-mail them to [karmstead@tpac.org](mailto:karmstead@tpac.org).**

# The Composer



## BIOGRAPHY

Marcus Hummon has a dual career as a writer of theatrical works and as a chart-topping song composer.

To date, he has created six musical productions that have been staged at various venues in his home city of Nashville and beyond. *American Duet* is about race relations and musical identity. It has been performed in 1998, 1999 and 2004 in Music City and is scheduled for its off-Broadway debut in the fall of 2005 with rock star Darius Rucker (Hootie & The Blowfish) to headline. *Francis of Guernica* blends the themes of Pablo Picasso painting his masterpiece with the Spanish civil war, the issue of insanity and the rise of Fascism. Its initial run in 2000 led to a full-scale production by the Tennessee Repertory Theater in 2002.

Hummon's *Warrior* is the story of the tragic Olympic athlete Jim Thorpe. Its 2001 premiere was in the Country Music Hall of Fame's Ford Theater. As a result of its box-office success and educational consciousness raising, the Native American Association of Tennessee gave him its Outstanding Achievement award later that year. Celtic music and suicide are the foundations for *The Piper*. This work premiered in 2004 at the Hartford Conservatory in Connecticut. *Atlanta* is a Civil War musical. It premiered in Nashville in early 2005 and is now being readied for a staging in Los Angeles.

*Surrender Road* is Hummon's first opera. It is sung via Shakespeare's soliloquies accompanied by piano and string quartet. *Surrender Road* is about a day in the life of a boxer. It will be staged by Nashville Opera in late 2005 and has been chosen as a featured new work at Opera America's upcoming national conference in Detroit.

Alongside this theatrical work is one of the most successful songwriting careers in America's capital of songwriting. Hummon moved to Nashville in 1986. Two years later, Michael Martin Murphey became the first to record one of his songs, "Pilgrims on the Way." In 1993, Wynonna scored a major hit with his "Only Love." Alabama had a hit with his baseball song "The Cheap Seats" the following year.

Hummon's debut album, *All in Good Time*, was released in 1995. It contained "One of These Days," which Tim McGraw took to the top of the charts in 1998. Other songwriting successes include Bryan White's "Love Is the Right Place" (1997), Sara Evans' "Born to Fly" (2000), SHeDAISY's "Get Over Yourself" (2002) and the Dixie Chicks' "Ready to Run" and "Cowboy Take Me Away" (both 1999). Rascal Flatts' version of Marcus Hummon's co-written "Bless the Broken Road" has become the biggest country-music hit of 2005 to date. It remained at No. 1 on the charts for six weeks.

The singer-songwriter formed his own label, Velvet Armadillo Records, and has used it to market his CDs *The Sound of One Fan Clapping* (1997), *Looking for the Child* (1999), *Revolution* (2003) and *Nowhere to Go But Up* (2005), as well as recordings of his theatrical works. He has also written a book of poetry, lyrics for the PBS children's cartoon series *Book of Virtues* and songs for his 2001 pop/rock band The Raphaels.

## Why Shakespeare in SURRENDER ROAD? by Marcus Hummon

Why would I employ the lines of Shakespeare in telling the story of Manuel, a down on his luck boxer who meets and falls in love with Emily, a struggling artist, sharing a romantic evening in Brooklyn that ends tragically? There is no firmly logical answer. It is an intuitive leap...but there's an element of predation in this leap.

I am no great scholar of Shakespeare, but I am a lover of his poetry and an even greater lover of his characters. Continually, as I go back to my favorite Shakespeare plays, I am struck by three things above all: the deep humanity with which Shakespeare created his characters, his bittersweet, one might even say, existentialist view of life, and the searing moments of illumination where Shakespeare's characters transcend their plot.

It is the last observation, which drove my need to have my characters in *Surrender Road* suddenly, quote the bard.

It began with the first fight scene. Manny, a journeyman boxer, begins the story believing that this day will be the day that he will be given a shot at the title, where he can win the approval of his father-figure trainer, Willie, an older man whose claim to fame is felling Jack Johnson. Unfortunately, Willie sells Manuel out, and Manny is forced (on threat of Willie's demise, a ruse) to throw the fight. Forced to set aside his dream of a fair fight in order to protect Willie, (he doesn't know Willie's in on the "fix"), Manuel takes a terrible beating, and goes down in the 5<sup>th</sup> round, just as he has been instructed to do.

I couldn't help seeing Manuel's humanity in this moment as beautiful and unique, and so these words kept coming to me:

"What a piece of work is man..."

Something in Hamlet's musing seemed to be the perfect reflection for Willie, Manuel's trainer, as he watched the young man heroically taking a beating. The fact that the two stories, *Surrender Road* and *Hamlet* are entirely different didn't take away from the universality of Hamlet's soliloquy.

Shakespeare did not create his own plots or story-links...he took them from existing, and often well-known sources. It is the life that he breathes into these stories that so engages us today. And so I began to think of several of my favorite Shakespeare passages, and how they could be lifted from their original text, and still survive as moments of illumination on the lips of the totally foreign characters, and new story-lines.

The term, "Shakespearian" has acquired a pejorative meaning. It means "lofty" or "elevated," as his prose is perceived to be. However, Shakespeare's art was virile and democratic, not effete and aristocratic. His genius resides in his portrayal of common folk as well as princes. Shakespeare was himself, a commoner, an actor, a businessman; he became a gentleman through his enormous success as a playwright and theatre shareholder, but he was clearly a man of and for the people. Therefore, I believe that he would have concurred that Manuel's dreams, desires, and tragic circumstances are "Shakespearian" by virtue of their being heartfelt, and real.

Finally, I have always been moved by the melancholic reflection from Jacques in *As You Like It*:

"All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players"

Playwrights, librettists, composers, and storytellers instinctively relate to creating a world for a brief span of time, and then extinguishing the light. Intuitively, we see our lives play before us on the theatrical stage, and experience a death at the play's end. Our characters seem to exercise a kind of free will, but ultimately succumb to the passions and circumstances that "we" have constructed for them. This too, is a connection I feel between Shakespeare's work and the lives of Manuel, Emily, and Willie. These three characters seem compelled towards the play's conclusion.

My last reason for using the bard's lines is simply that I love his words. To put music to his poetry is humbling and thrilling at the same time. I hope it works for you. It works for me.

# Themes

## From the Composer, Marcus Hummon

The main theme in *Surrender Road* is “the power of dreams:” the way in which our dreams direct our actions and choices; the way that we can become so saturated in our fantasies and inner desires that we begin to question our “reality...”that is, dream and reality merge.

Also, dreams work on different levels. On the surface, Manuel’s dream is to fight and win a boxing match pitted against a title contender. On a deeper level, Manny is looking for self-affirmation, and the love and approval of Willie, his father figure. Emily, for her part, appears to dream of selling a painting and becoming a famous artist in New York. However, she dreams more deeply of being the thing she paints, the circus artist, specifically, a trapeze artist.

Another theme is “the nature of love,” particularly, young urgent love. *Surrender Road* tries to capture the magic of love at first sight, the illuminating, yet desperate life unraveling experience that young love can be, and how it can become a tidal wave of emotion that sometimes leaves a tragic wake.

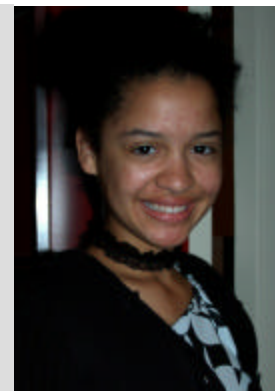
A further theme is the idea that profound human experience is not the birthright of the rich, the famous, the nobility, etc. All the great classic themes: love, betrayal, jealousy, tragedy, comedy, these are highly democratic. A great love is a great love wherever and whenever it occurs

## Special Guidebook Addition for *Surrender Road*

TPAC Education constantly seeks ways to engage students more fully in the arts. We want to help them connect to performances in ways that stretch their own creativity and open up new perspectives for them. We are fortunate to have an exceptional student intern this year, Tosha Schmidt, from a local high school. We’re taking advantage of her point of view as a teenager to find new avenues that will draw young people to the powerful experiences and rewarding learning they can gain from the arts. To that end, Tosha has read the libretto and written a segment about the themes in *Surrender Road* that speak to her. We know her analysis will appeal to both teachers and students, and give students especially a way to relate personally to *Surrender Road*.

### Meet Tosha!

Tosha Schmidt is a senior at Hume-Fogg Academic High School in downtown Nashville. She has lived in Nashville all her life, but eventually wants to move to New York. She assists with, and takes dance classes at Bellevue Dance Center to help her become be a performer after college. Within school she is very active in the performing arts. She is a member of the Blue Notes, is Ursula in the upcoming musical “Bye, Bye Birdie”, and Co-founder and Co-president of the Hume-Fogg Dance Club. The experience she is getting at TPAC is helping her understand about all different aspects of the art she loves, and is preparing her for the career she wants to pursue.





## Isolation

As a teenager, I often find myself in large crowds. At school, at church, or at concerts; I am consistently with a group of people. Sometimes, no matter how many people are around, I have a feeling of loneliness and isolation. It could very well be a part of typical teenage angst, however, not only is it relevant for teenagers; it also applies to all humanity. In *Surrender Road* Emily and Manuel are walking down the street in Times Square. They both have an empty feeling inside even while surrounded by all the hubbub of New York City. They are walking alone not even realizing that their soul mate is on the other side of the street. Both are focused on their isolation. It seems to me that the younger you are the more attached you are to your emotions; it is not so much about your pride as it is your feelings. Most teenagers can relate to feeling isolated from everyone else, even when with their closest friends. Our society is a very hectic one, with all sorts of distractions. It is getting easier to get lost in a crowd.

**“It’s twelve o’clock in Times Square  
Funny how, no one else is here  
The world spinning left to right  
I’d like to turn in back tonight...  
‘Cause I remember when I walked these streets  
Filled with hope; alive with dreams  
Now we’re the last two souls in New York City headed home  
We’re headed back down, Surrender Road...  
No, I’ve never felt so alone  
No, I’ve never felt so alone.”**

**Act I Scene iv**

## Fascination with Tragedy

After a hectic day I come home ready to relax... this means I turn on the television. Immediately I see images of violence in the movies or disaster in the news. Things such as these are terrible yet riveting. We watch the news that is full of dire situations and dismal stories. I personally, cannot take my eyes off when there is a story about the damaging effects of the hurricanes. What is it that spurs our fascination with tragedy? Court T.V., Law and Order, WWF... all are centered on other people’s misfortune. Manuel was a boxer for a living. He fought for others enjoyment. One of his dreams was to be renowned as a champion fighter:

**“I had a dream last night  
I was out on the street  
And everybody knew my name  
‘Hey, Manuel, good luck with the fight tonight’  
‘Give ‘em hell Manny’  
A perfect stranger would say  
And I’d stop and tip my hat  
Just imagine a dream like that”**

**Act I Scene i**

The crowd is indifferent to his safety. His job is to fulfill the audience’s drive for bloodshed, violence, and failure. It is the same with the tightrope walker from the circus. Emily realized that the only reason people were interested in the tight rope act was because they wanted to see her fail:

**“There was this beautiful girl up on the high wire  
She would dance until she fell off the line  
And the people clapped and cried and called.  
You see they came just to see her fall.”**

**Act I Scene iii**

We are all guilty of looking interestingly at a car accident to see in better detail what happened. It is an interesting fascination; you would think we would only want to fill our heads with beautiful or cheery pictures. There is so much drama and devastation in the world, we cannot help but watch; is there a reason why? Are we so focused on the betterment of our own lives that we have to watch the tragedies in others to boost our own feelings? Sometimes the devastating can make us kinder or more appreciative- in that, I am thankful. It’s when seeing violence, such as boxing, spurs us to want more that is frightening.

# Activities- Understanding Opera

*Surrender Road* is unlike many people's idea of opera.

- ? It is written in a contemporary and even popular sounding style of music.
- ? Voices will not necessarily have large operatic vibratos.
- ? The performers sing all the lines, as in classical opera but descriptions of it sometimes seem to place it in the category of rock opera or maybe a sung-through musical like *Phantom of the Opera*.

## So, what makes it an opera?

The music communicates in  
a powerful way.

### Activity I

#### What does the music tell you?

Listen with new ears-

#### Outside of class activity

##### Music only

Ask students to pick a current favorite song.

Ask them to play the song and listen in a new way, concentrating only on the music.

##### Respond to it

Ask students to pay attention to how the music alone makes them feel. Sometimes this is difficult question. Often the most direct way to answer it is to describe what the music makes them want to do.

##### Analyze it

What is the music doing that causes one particular feeling or several different ones at the same time?

Music's effect on us can be difficult to describe in words. Ask students to answer the following questions:

- ? What instruments are used?
- ? What is the tempo (speed) of the music?
- ? How would they describe the rhythm (beat)?
- ? How would they describe the melody (tune)?
- ? How does it change throughout the piece?

Which of the above five elements do you think is most important to the power of the music?

##### Words only

What kind of poem would the song be without the music?

What do students know about the singer's emotions from the way he or she uses their voice?

##### The whole package

How does the music fit with the meaning of the words?

Do words and music work together like the identical strands of a rope, or do they work more like different pieces of a puzzle that come together to make a new picture?

**Ask students to practice this listening technique concentrating on only music or only words and then both, paying attention to how they relate. Ask them to see if they can switch their focus at least once during the song from just feeling it to analyzing it and back to just feeling it again.**

# Activities- Understanding Opera

## (continued) Back in class

Ask students to play a section of the song they worked on and share parts of their musical analysis with the rest of the class.

Was it hard to deliberately change the way you listen to music? Why or why not?  
Do students think this kind of listening will help them get more out of the opera?

Add-on: Teachers bring in your own favorite popular tune (preferably an older one for students to analyze in the same way.

# The story is extreme.

## Activity II- What happens in opera stories?

Give students a copy of the synopsis of *Surrender Road* or read it aloud.

How many extreme elements can they identify in the storyline?

## Web Assignment

Ask students to go to the Metropolitan Opera Web site and browse through the plots of the classic operas presented at the Met.

(<http://www.metoperafamily.org/metopera/discover/stories/>) Ask them

to choose one that seems especially extreme to them. How does it compare to the plotline of *Surrender Road*?

Ask students to go to a news site on the web. (<http://www.cnn.com>, <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/>, or another news site) Are there any current features that have good opera potential? What would students add to the story to make it more extreme for opera?

## Activity III-

**The soul is the center and the source of all these emotions; it's the start of singing.**

**-Jose Carreras**

Opera is all about expressing emotion, emotion that runs the gamut from heartbreakingly tragic to hilariously silly.

In everyday life, people cannot go about

letting their emotions overwhelm them and others, but often the need to control emotions makes people avoid them and be afraid of them. Opera has no such fear! It is an art form that uses the intensity of the human voice, the sublime language of music and the dynamism of the stage to deeply explore what people feel: their desire, despair, elation, shame, sorrow, passion, excitement, rage, grief, love.

Ask students to think about opera singers as vocal athletes on the level of Olympic or professional competitors. In other words, Placido Domingo can do things with his voice that are on par with what Michael Jordan could do in basketball. (Listen to him at <http://www.metoperafamily.org/metopera/history/sounds/> selection 163 from *Otello*)

Opera music is difficult to sing, but more important than their technique is their ability to communicate what a character is feeling from the smallest nuance right up to the most enormous reaction.

## Think about it

Ask students to do a small imagination exercise. Ask them to remember the last time they felt something so strongly they weren't sure what to do about it. Did they show their feelings? Did they talk to anyone about it? Ask them to imagine (even if it makes them laugh at first) how it might sound if an opera singer was SINGING what they really felt and could capture it perfectly?

## Questions

Why do emotions make people feel uncomfortable?

Name some reasons why people might be drawn to the emotions of opera.

# The emotions are larger than life.

# Staging a New Work

## New Work

The director's task in staging a new opera is challenging and exciting. There are many creative decisions to be made regarding the set, the lighting, the costumes, the blocking (setting the movement of the singers on the stage), and other details not specifically described in the composer's libretto (the script). The director and the design team of a new opera have no previous productions from which to get ideas. They are starting from a completely fresh slate.

## Interpretation

First however, the director must interpret the music and the story from the information that the composer has provided, and find his or her own understanding of what is happening in the opera, from the surface down to the deepest level. The director develops a vision of how to translate the world the composer imagined and created into a living performance.

## Artistic Choices

In order to fulfill the vision, the director will oversee big and small choices about the way in which the opera will be performed starting when the company first selects the opera right up to the final dress rehearsal.

Some decisions must occur early in the process and be practically complete before rehearsal begins. Casting, set design (and construction or rental), costume design, preliminary lighting needs, and musical interpretation all fall into this category. Performers have defined the way they will sing much of the score because all opera singers are required to begin rehearsals with the musical part of the role completely learned.

Choices about other vital elements of the production are made once rehearsal begins. Acting choices, lighting design, some scene blocking, character relationships, nuances of musical expression are discovered when the director, the designers, the musicians and the singers all come together as a complete team.

## What kind of story?

One major consideration of John Hoomes' interpretation of *Surrender Road* is to determine what kind of story it is, and he believes that it is not as starkly realistic as it appears from the synopsis. He uses the word "impressionistic" in describing the dramatic tone he is seeking for this production because he interprets it as not only being about dreams, but dreamlike itself.

## Questions

Ask students to read the synopsis and answer the question: if *Surrender Road* is a dream, whose dream is it? \*\*

What movies have students seen that use a dream device to tell the story? (if they can't think of any, suggest *The Wizard of Oz*, *The Matrix*, *Neverland*, *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*)

Often filmmakers don't want audiences to realize immediately that a part of the movie is a dream. What techniques does a filmmaker use to give subtle hints?

What things might be done on stage in an opera production to convey a dreamlike state?

**\*\*The first question above in no way asserts that the production will interpret *Surrender Road* as one character's dream! It is intended merely to encourage students to think about the different ways to approach and interpret stories.**



[www.boxing-gloves.net/](http://www.boxing-gloves.net/)



<http://www.gracemillennium.com/winter00/html/wilso>

# More Discussion about Dreams

## Dream (noun)

Etymology: Middle English *dream*, from Old English *drEam* noise, joy, and Old Norse *draumr* dream; akin to Old High German *troum* dream

1 : a series of thoughts, images, or emotions occurring during sleep -- compare REM SLEEP

2 an experience of waking life having the characteristics of a dream: as a : a visionary creation of the imagination : DAYDREAM b : a state of mind marked by abstraction or release from reality : REVERIE c : an object seen in a dreamlike state : VISION

3 : something notable for its beauty, excellence, or enjoyable quality <the new car is a *dream* to operate>

4 a : a strongly desired goal or purpose <a *dream* of becoming president> b : something that fully satisfies a wish : IDEAL <a meal that was a gourmet's *dream*>

(From The Merriam Webster Dictionary)

## Discussion

Students themselves know a lot about dreams. Ask them to discuss the differences between the types of dream delineated by the second and fourth definitions above.

- ? Do these two kinds of dreams ever intersect?
- ? What is their relationship to reality?
- ? Are both types of dreams necessary?
- ? What literature have students studied that described a dream, or told a story through a dream?

## Following are a selection of quotes about the nature of dreams to spark conversation as a whole class or in small groups.

**Leonardo da Vinci** "Why does the eye see a thing more clearly in dreams than the imagination when awake?"

**W.B. Yeats** "But I, being poor, have only my dreams; I have spread my dreams under your feet; Tread softly because you tread on my dreams."

**Unknown** "When it seems that someone has shattered your dreams.....pick up even the smallest of the pieces and use them to build bigger and better dreams."

**Joseph Campbell** "Myths are public dreams, dreams are private myths."

**Langston Hughes** "Hold fast to dreams for if dreams die, life is a broken winged bird that cannot fly."

**Maya Angelou** "One sees that the brain allows the dreamer to be more bold than he or she ever would be in real time. The dream allows the person to do things, and think things, and go places and be acted upon. The person, in real time, would never do those things. It may be that's a way the brain has of saying, 'Well let me let you come on down and see what really is down here.'"

**Stephen King** "I've always used dreams the way you'd use mirrors to look at something you couldn't see head-on--the way that you use a mirror to look at your hair in the back. To me that's what dreams are supposed to do. I think that dreams are a way that people's minds illustrate the nature of their problems. Or maybe even illustrate the answers to their problems in symbolic language."

Robert Louis Stevenson "I can but give an instance or so of what part is done sleeping and what part awake...and to do this I will first take...Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. I had long been trying to write a story on this subject. For two days I went about wracking my brains for a plot of any sort, and on the second night I dreamed the scene at the window and a scene afterward split in two, in which Hyde, pursued for some crime, took the powder and underwent the change in the presence of his pursuers. All the rest was made awake, and consciously."

**Keith Ellis** "Like the elephant, we are unconscious of our own strength. When it comes to understanding the power we have to make a difference in our own lives, we might as well be asleep. If you want to make your dreams come true, wake up. Wake up to your own strength. Wake up to the role you play in your own destiny. Wake up to the power you have to choose what you think, do, and say."

## Shakespeare's Work- Today's World

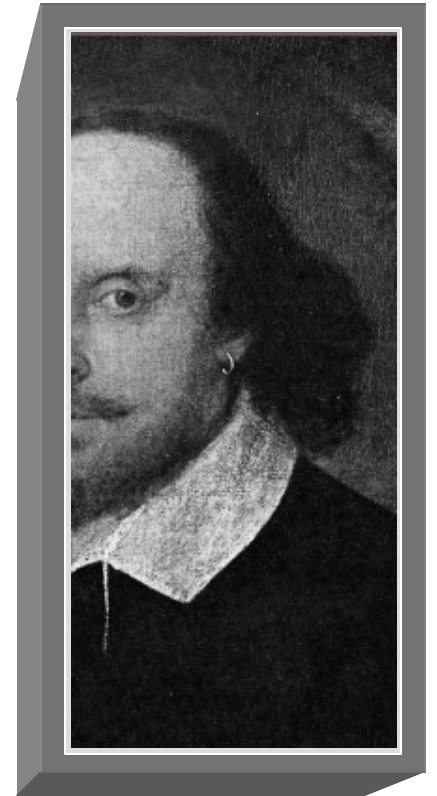
Shakespeare's words are timeless in their beauty, applicability, and power, but people often perceive them as stuffy and antiquated, with no relation to modern life.

The composer has used Shakespeare's text in unusual ways within the present-day setting of the opera. Famous speeches become songs, snatches of poetry become dialogue, and verse is taken out of context to apply to entirely different situations.

*Surrender Road* is highly contemporary in both subject matter and musical expression, so how can it put Shakespeare's voice in the mouths of its characters and still be believable?

### **The Motivation** (teachers use this set-up if you like)

*A national corporation wants to cut the funding it used to provide for Shakespeare performance companies and societies across the country. The corporation claims "People don't care about that old-fashioned language; do you see any TV shows that quote Shakespeare?" This corporation wants to appeal to its target consumers, teenagers, and they think that the teenage demographic cannot relate to Shakespeare's words. To convince the corporation to keep their funding, the groups have hired teenagers to write Shakespeare into current TV shows in imaginative ways to show how relevant and powerful the language can still be.*



### **The Activity**

- ✍ Divide students into discussion groups of four or five members.
- ✍ Assign each group one of the Shakespearean quotes on pages 15-19 in the guidebook (or let them choose one of these quotes.) that Marcus Hummon has used in his storyline. Ask students to discuss the meaning of the quote. Can they say the same thing in modern language? What gets lost in that translation?
- ✍ Ask student to choose a television series that fits with the meaning of the quote.
- ✍ Ask students to brainstorm several different ways that Shakespeare's words could fit within this show and make sense. The quote must have a definite purpose and use in the show: for character development, as a plot device to move the story along, as a clue in a mystery. It needs to be part of the creative world of the show. Encourage students to open themselves up to any kind of expression and to think of lots of different options. The quote can be worked into dialogue if the character has a good reason to say it; the quote could be an influential part of the setting; the quote can be mentioned in a piece of music that underscores part of the action, etc.
- ✍ Ask them to choose one of their ideas and prepare a presentation for the corporation's committee to prove they are wrong about Shakespeare's relevance to contemporary life.

### **The Presentation** (again, teachers use this situation if you like)

*The teenagers are having a practice run of their presentations in front of the Shakespeare companies and societies who have hired them. Before the final production for the corporate board, they must decide what order to place the groups to have the best effect.*

## (continued)

Students must include five elements, but it's up to them how the elements fit in their presentation as long as they include everyone in the group. Let them know that they can be a little unorthodox if they want.

# Activities- Shakespeare

1. The quote itself and the play
2. What it means
3. The name of their show
4. Short intro to the show
5. How the quote works in the show

### Follow-Up:

Do students want to send their ideas to the writers of the shows? Generally, at the bottom of the network web page is a way to contact them. It's a long shot, but you never know!

### EXAMPLE:

1. The quote is from *Romeo and Juliet*:

**ROMEO: Is love a tender thing? It is too rough,  
Too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorn.**

2. It means that love is not nice; it's a real pain.

**3. & 4.** The TV show is *Medium*, about a woman who uses her psychic powers to help catch criminals and save victims. Her family has to put up with all her scary dreams and weird behavior as she tries to figure out what her visions are telling her.

**5.** In this episode, Allison dreams of her husband, Joe, offering her a long-stemmed rose, and repeating the above line of Romeo's over and over, each time with a different tone: sadness, anger, amused irony, challenge. The thorns on the rose get larger and sharper, and she wakes just before they prick her face. She worries that it means something bad is happening in her marriage.

The case she is working on for the District Attorney is failing in court because they can't find the murder weapon. Thinking it is personal, Alison doesn't mention her dream, but all the time the gun is buried in the next-door neighbors' rose garden. She finally makes the connection when the neighbor testifies in court about how sweet the alleged murderer was to his wife, always asking to "borrow a rose" from the neighbor's garden. They dig up the gun and win the case. That night, Alison's husband, not knowing about her dream, brings her roses. She hesitates to take them, but he says, "I stuck my thumb with a thorn; so I pulled all the rest off." She laughs at herself for being afraid of her dream.

Student presentations don't need to be as detailed as this example, but encourage students to flesh out their idea as fully as possible.



## Discussion

After the presentations, discuss the power of Shakespeare's words and how they live on in modern life.

The following sites have some of the most famous quotes that have become part of our vernacular:

<http://absoluteshakespeare.com/trivia/quotes/quotes.htm> (pretty extensive, but leaves out "To thine own self be true" and "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark" from Hamlet!)

<http://www.enotes.com/guides/lit/Authors/S/william-shakespeare.html> (Choose a play and the famous quotes section)

Alternate discussions:

- ? How can one work of visual or performing art or a work of poetry or other literature influence another?
- ? Shakespeare's plays have spawned many adaptations and transformations. Why have artists translated these plays into an opera or a movie or a dance or a symphony?
- ? Do students see a parallel between Marcus Hummon using Shakespeare's words mixed in with his own and rap artists including samples of older music in their new pieces?
- ? What is the difference between referencing or sampling and plagiarism?

# Shakespeare References

The following pages list every Shakespearean reference in *Surrender Road* and the context in which they are used in the opera's story. Shakespearean context is included for most verses, even the most obvious, with the exception of short excerpts that are grouped together in one usage in *Surrender Road*.

Original Context in Shakespeare	Shakespearean Text	Context in <i>Surrender Road</i>
<p><b>The Tempest</b> Act III, scene ii: Caliban explaining the wonders of the island to Stephano and Trinculo~</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>...in dreaming,</b> <b>The clouds methought would open ,and show riches</b> <b>Ready to drop upon me, that, when I wak'd,</b> <b>I cried to dream again.</b></p>	<p>The chorus opens the opera singing these lines referring to the nature of our life dreams.</p>
<p><b>The Tempest</b> Act IV, scene i Prospero to Ferdinand and Miranda after the spirits of Iris, Ceres and Juno danced and sung~</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>...We are such stuff</b> <b>As dreams are made on, and our little life</b> <b>Is rounded with a sleep.</b></p>	<p>Manuel sings as he walks to the boxing arena, full of hope for his success that night.</p>
<p><b>Macbeth</b> Act V, scene v Macbeth after learning that Lady Macbeth has died~</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>...and to -morrow, and to -morrow,</b> <b>Creeps in this petty pace fro m day to day</b> <b>To the last syllable of recorded time,</b> <b>And all our yesterdays have lighted fools</b> <b>The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!</b> <b>Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,</b> <b>That struts and frets his hour upon the stage</b> <b>And then is heard no more. It is a tale</b> <b>Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,</b> <b>Signifying nothing.</b></p>	<p>At Manuel's resistance to throw the fight, Vito sings this famous speech. Vito threatens to harm Willie unless Manuel agrees. After Vito leaves, Manuel sings it as well as he decides whether to take the envelope of money.</p>
<p><b>Hamlet</b> Act II, scene ii Hamlet sharing his thoughts with his friends Rosencrantz and Guildenstern~</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>What a piece of work is a man, how noble in reason,</b> <b>how infinite in faculties; in form and moving how</b> <b>express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in</b> <b>apprehension how like a god: the beauty of the world,</b> <b>the paragon of animals!</b></p>	<p>Willie sings these lines after Manuel has taken the fall and been knocked out in the fight. It is repeated at the end of the opera.</p>
<p><b>A Midsummer Night's Dream</b> Act V, scene i Theseus, the duke, speaking to Hippolyta before the marriage revels on the imaginative powers of lovers, madmen and poets~</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The poet's eye, in fine frenzy rolling,</b> <b>Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to</b> <b>heaven;</b> <b>And as imagination bodies forth</b> <b>The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen</b> <b>Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing</b> <b>A local habitation and a name.</b></p>	<p>Marco, the gallery owner, sings of his belief in Emily's talent, calling her a poet as well as a painter.</p>

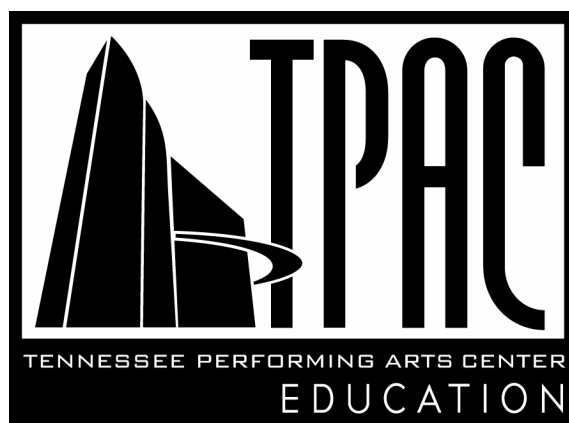


<p><b>Richard II</b> Act II, scene iv Salsbury, speaking of King Richard, who is unaware of the great rebellion against his crown he himself has fueled~</p>	<p><b>I see thy glory like a shooting star, Fall to the base earth from the firmament. Thy sun sets weeping in the lowly west, Witnessing storms to come, woe, and unrest;</b></p>	<p>Emily sings this verse after she has been rejected by the critics and thrown out of her home with Marco.</p>
<p><b>As You Like It</b> Act II, scene vii Jaques, to the old Duke about his observation of the way of the world~</p>	<p><b>All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players.</b></p>	<p>The chorus sings these verses, weaving them in and out of Emily's song described above.</p>
<p><b>Troilus and Cressida</b> Act IV, scene v</p> <p><b>The Merchant of Venice</b> Act III, scene i</p> <p><b>King Henry VI</b> Part I Act V, scene v</p>	<p><b>ULYSSES: Fie, fie upon her! There's language in her eye, her cheek, her lip; Nay, her foot speaks. Her wanton spirits look out At every joint and motive of her body.</b></p> <p><b>SHYLOCK: ...if you prick us do we not bleed? if you tickle us do we not laugh? If you poison us do we not die? And if you wrong us shall we not revenge?</b></p> <p><b>SUFFOLK: For what is wedlock forcèd but a hell, An age of discord and continual strife?</b></p>	<p>After the fight, Willie and Manuel go to a bar. These verses are part of a song sung by the other bar patrons with the recurring line "Let me tell you 'bout my poison."</p>
<p><b>Romeo and Juliet</b> Act 1, scene v Romeo speaking about Juliet the first time he sees her~</p>	<p><b>O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright. It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night As a rich jewel in an Ethiopè's ear— Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear.</b></p>	<p>Manuel, speaking about Emily the first time he sees her.</p>
<p><b>Hamlet</b> Act II, scene ii Hamlet, quoted by Polonius reading to Gertrude the letter that Hamlet has sent to Ophelia~</p>	<p><b>Doubt thou the stars are fire; Doubt that the sun doth move; Doubt truth to be a liar; But never doubt I love.</b></p>	<p>Emily speaking about Manuel when she sees him for the first time.</p>

<p><b>Romeo and Juliet</b> Act I, scene v Romeo and Juliet at the Capulet ball, eleven lines after they have first met~</p>	<p><b>ROMEO: O then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do! They pray; grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.</b></p> <p><b>JULIET: Saints do not move, though grant for prayer's sake.</b></p> <p><b>ROMEO: Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take. Thus from my lips, by thine my sin is purg'd.</b></p> <p><b>JULIET: Then have my lips the sin they have took.</b></p> <p><b>ROMEO: Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urg'd! Give me my sin again.</b></p>	<p>Manuel and Emily, after meeting for the first time and talking on the bus ride home.</p>
<p><b>A Midsummer Night's Dream</b> Act III, scene ii</p> <p><b>Much Ado About Nothing</b> Act III, scene i</p> <p><b>Romeo and Juliet</b> Act I, scene i</p> <p><b>Romeo and Juliet</b> Act I, scene iv</p> <p><b>Much Ado About Nothing</b> Act V, scene i</p> <p><b>Sonnet 151</b></p> <p><b>Romeo and Juliet</b> Act II, scene ii</p> <p><b>Twelfth Night</b> Act 1, scene i</p>	<p><b>PUCK: Cupid is a knavish lad Thus to make poor females mad.</b></p> <p><b>HERO [aside]: If it prove so, then loving goes by haps: Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.</b></p> <p><b>ROMEO: O heavy lightness, serious vanity, Misshapen chaos of well-seeming forms,</b></p> <p><b>ROMEO: Is love a tender thing? It is too rough, Too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorn.</b></p> <p><b>DON PEDRO: What a pretty thing man is when he goes in his doublet and hose and leaves off his wit!</b></p> <p><b>Love is too young to know what conscience is:</b></p> <p><b>ROMEO: And what love can do, that dares love attempt.</b></p> <p><b>ORSINO: If music be the good of love, play on,</b></p>	<p>Manuel and Emily do not want to go home yet, so Manuel takes her to his neighborhood bar. When they enter, Max the bartender welcomes them with a song about Manuel's neighborhood. These verses follow the song, and the composer indicates that they are sung by a beat poet on the difficult nature of love.</p>
<p><b>The Tempest</b> Act III, scene ii Caliban explaining the wonders of the island to Stephano and Trinculo~</p>	<p><b>Be not afeard: the isle is full of noises, Sounds and sweet airs, give delight, and hurt not. Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments Will hum about mine ears; and sometimes voices...</b></p>	<p>Manuel to Emily, as they begin to dance, after Manuel has barked at the beat poet to let music be played for dancing~</p>

<p><b>King Henry IV, Part 2</b> Act V, scene v</p> <p><b>Measure for Measure</b> Act IV scene i</p> <p><b>Julius Caesar</b> Act III, scene i</p>	<p><b>KING: I know thee not, old man.</b></p> <p><b>BOY : Take, o take those lips away That so sweetly were forsworn;</b></p> <p><b>CAESAR: Et tu, Brute?</b></p>	<p>All sung to Willie by Manuel after he has overheard the conversation between Willie, Vito and the contender who won the match and learned that Willie knew about the fixed fight all along.</p>
<p><b>Henry V</b> Act III, scene i King Henry rallying his troops during the first attack on the French~</p>	<p><b>Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more, Or close the wall up with our English dead!</b></p> <p>...</p> <p><b>But when the blast of war blows in our ears, Then imitate the action of the tiger: Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,* Disguise fair nature with hard-favoured rage;</b></p> <p><small>**Conjure up the blood" is used in the opera</small></p>	<p>Manuel and the contender have gone outside to re-fight their match bare-fisted. The crowd sings these lines as they fight.</p>
<p><b>Hamlet</b> Act III, scene i Hamlet, contemplating the purpose of his existence in the face of all the treachery he has discovered~</p>	<p><b>To be, or not to be, that is the question: Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune Or to take arms against a sea of troubles And by opposing end them. To die - to sleep- No more- and by a sleep to say we end The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a consummation Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep- To sleep-perchance to dream : ay, there's the rub, For in that sleep of death what dreams may come, When we have shuffled off this mortal coil, Must give us pause. There's the respect That makes calamity of so long life.</b></p>	<p>Manuel singing up on the rigging after he has tried to rescue Emily, but she has fallen.</p>
<p><b>A Midsummer Night's Dream</b> Act V, scene i Puck, to the audience, at the end of the play~</p>	<p><b>PUCK: If we shadows have offended, Think but this, and all is mended- That you have but slumber'd here While these visions did appear. And this weak and idle theme, No more yielding but a dream, Gentles, do not reprehend. If you pardon, we will mend.</b></p>	<p>The full cast at the end of the opera to the audience.</p>

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