

“More than a Wishful Dream”

A Christmas Musical Drama

Wai Tang

A Senior Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for graduation
in the Honors Program
Liberty University
Spring 2014

Acceptance of Senior Honors Thesis

This Senior Honors Thesis is accepted in partial
Fulfillment of the requirements for graduation from the
Honors Program of Liberty University

John D. Kinchen, D.M.A.
Thesis Chair

Stephen Muller, D.Min.
Committee Member

Linda Nell Cooper, M.A.
Committee Member

Brenda Ayres, Ph.D.
Honors Director

Date

Abstract

“More than a Wishful Dream” is a musical drama that explores the Christmas story through the eyes of Joseph. The author hopes to bring a realization that the Christmas story was an event that truly happened by exploring the emotional and cultural realities surrounding the birth of Christ through the musical. This thesis also includes a study on the different elements of playwriting, musical theatre and songwriting. These elements were compiled and incorporated into the musical as part of the thesis. In the musical, Joseph dreams to be great like his forefathers and to save his people from suffering. However, Joseph has to abandon his people’s approval if he is to obey God. In the end, Joseph learns that greatness is not achieved by doing great things, but rather by obeying the God who is great.

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Introduction

“More than a Wishful Dream” is a Christmas musical drama written to present the story of the birth of Jesus Christ through the eyes of Joseph. Drama is fundamental in storytelling and music evokes psychological and emotional responses in a manner words cannot.¹ As such, the author has chosen to use a musical drama to communicate the emotional and cultural realities surrounding the Christmas story. The story for the musical was based on the historical accounts found in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. In addition, the author referenced Jewish culture and the extra-biblical accounts of Joseph and Mary to write additional stories for the musical. Through such a unique perspective, the author desires to convey the historicity of Joseph and Mary and the birth of Christ.

As part of the compositional process of this musical, the author also researched and compiled different elements of effective playwriting, musical theater, and musical composition. Different topics such as creating compelling drama, constructing unforgettable characters, devising effective structure and form, crafting powerful dialogues, combining words with music, and writing proper rhymes and memorable melodies have been studied to aid in the process of writing this musical. A full synopsis, a libretto for three scenes, and a few piano-vocal scores from the musical are also included as part of the paper.

1. William Forde Thompson and Lena Quinto, “Music and Emotion: Psychological Considerations,” in *the Aesthetic Mind: Philosophy and Psychology*, ed. Elisabeth Schellekens, Peter Goldie (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 357.

Elements of Effective Playwriting

Drama

Drama is a fundamental part of musical theatre. Jeffrey Hatcher asserts that drama consists of “people doing things, performing acts, to affect other people and cause other actions...a conflict of people, ideas and wills that must result in a Resolution of the Conflict.”² In other words, drama can be understood as a series of opposing actions resulted from conflicting desires between characters ending when the characters achieve their goal in some way, shape, or form. To have an effective drama, the story must have a strong plot. In his book *the Art & Craft of Playwriting*, Hatcher references G. B. Tennyson pointing out that a good plot “utilizes the notion of cause and effect to shape and arrange events to tell a story.”³ With these few elements in mind, Hatcher reminds his readers that a good play will usually contain a central, suspenseful, and dramatic question that presents conflicting opposing forces.⁴ By arranging conflicts and actions to obscure the character from achieving their goal or answer, one can successfully build sufficient suspense and resolve the conflict at the story’s climatic peak. When Hatcher was asked about how one gets ideas about good plays, he answered, “it’s not the quality of the idea that makes a good play; it’s the quality of the *dramatization* of the idea.”⁵ As such, effective drama is essential in writing a play.

2. Jeffrey Hatcher, *The Art & Craft of Playwriting* (Cincinnati: Story Press, 1996), 12.

3. Ibid., 8.

4. Ibid., 13.

5. Ibid., 67.

Aristotle's theory of drama is often discussed among playwrights like Hatcher and Thomas S. Hirschak. Hirschak acknowledges, "[W]hile today we may disagree with the order of importance that Aristotle poses, most do agree that he sums up the elements thoroughly and effectively."⁶ Aristotle's six elements of drama, in rank of importance, include "plot, character, theme, diction, music and spectacle."⁷ Hatcher and Hirschak provide further explanation of these different elements in their books. However, Paul C. Castagno believes the best playwrights in the past have steered away from these tenets given by Aristotle. In his book *New Playwriting Strategies*, Castagno states, "many playwriting texts, including those written within the past ten years, rehash the core tenets of Aristotle's *Poetics*...[but] there is no doubt that it is time to change the paradigm."⁸ Instead of following the traditional approach, Castagno claims that playwriting is language-based.⁹ Although Castagno's theory of drama is not as time tested as Aristotle's, one should still bear in mind the different approaches to playwriting.

In "More than a Wishful Dream," Joseph desires to save God's people from Roman oppression. However, he also faces a series of conflict such as Roman taxes, Mary's pregnancy, and the census which forced them to return to Bethlehem. These series of obstacles challenged Joseph from fulfilling his desires. However, the story resolves with the worship of the shepherds as a confirmation of the baby's true nature.

6. Thomas S. Hirschak, *Theatre as Human Action: an Introduction to Theatre Arts* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 33.

7. Ibid.

8. Paul C. Castagno, *New Playwriting Strategies: A Language-based Approach to Playwriting* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 1.

9. Ibid.

With that in mind, one can see that the element of drama is prevalent throughout the musical.

Character

Character is one of the elements found in Aristotle's theory of drama. Although he believed in the primacy of plot, most playwrights today believe in the primacy of character instead.¹⁰ When writing a play, Hatcher argues that a playwright must start the writing process with character development instead of plot writing.¹¹ Although audiences often remember the plot of the story the most, the conception of a play begins with character development.¹² Hatcher remarks, "all characters must compel the audience's attention."¹³ To do so, the characters of the story should be sympathetic, easily identifiable with the audience's hopes, dreams and ambitions, and strong in character.¹⁴ Hatcher claims that the most interesting part of a character is what they desire, how desperate they are for it, and what they do to get it.¹⁵ Nancy Kress affirms this point of view in *Characters, Emotions & Viewpoint* by commenting "motivation is the key to fiction. [One] can create fascinating characters, with vivid backstories...but all of them will remain sketches, vignettes, or travelogues unless [the] characters do something. And they won't do anything without motivation."¹⁶ Correspondingly, the audience also learns

10. Hatcher, 21.

11. Ibid, 22.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid., 22-24.

15. Ibid., 24.

16. Nancy Kress, *Characters, Emotion & Viewpoint* (Cincinnati: F+W Publications, 2005), 36.

about the characters in the story through the characters' attempt to achieve something. In addition, it is important for the protagonist to be developed differently from other characters. According to Jan Henson Dow's *Writing the Award-Winning Play*, the protagonist should be likeable, standing out among the other characters.¹⁷ By differentiating the protagonist, the audience will be able to identify and cheer for him or her early on.

Furthermore, David Edgar also proposes a few proper ways in which the audience can learn about the characters in a play. In his book *How Plays Work*, Edgar writes, "characters have beginning, middles and ends. We learn about characters by way of introduction, then through their pursuit of an object, and finally by their success or failure in achieving it."¹⁸ Hatcher further affirms this theory in the context of a musical when he spoke of the importance of using songs or moments which convey the character's intense desires especially during the introduction of a musical. In fact, he referenced Oscar Hammerstein II and states that "the lead character in a musical always has to sing an 'I want Song' within the first twenty minutes of the show."¹⁹ In addition to the "I want songs," there are also the "I am songs."²⁰ These introduce the character and their aspirations or longings. Richard Kislán references Bob Fosse and claims that "the 'I am' song establishes something essential to audience understanding of character and situation...the characters of romantic theater must aspire beyond the position of what

17. Jan Henson Dow and Shannon Michal Dow, *Writing the Award-Winning Play* (Lincoln: iUniverse, 2003), 48.

18. David Edgar, *How Play Works* (London: Nick Hern Books, 2010), 44.

19. Hatcher, 23.

20. Ibid.

they establish in the ‘I am’ song. The ‘I want song’ embodies this aspiration.”²¹ By using these two different songs or moments, playwrights can reveal the character’s personality and desire.

In addition to the elements stated above, Linda Seger’s *Creating Unforgettable Characters* introduces several other important elements to consider when creating a character. To create strong characters, a writer must know enough about the character or do sufficient research before creating the character.²² In addition to research, the writer must know the backstory of the character. Kress argues that one must “have a sense of [the] character’s past. Only then can [one] decide how much past should go into [one’s] story.”²³ On top of that, a writer must define the character consistently and add paradoxes, emotions, values and attitudes to deepen the character and make them more fascinating and compelling.²⁴ By combining these different elements, a writer can create compelling characters that are unforgettable.

“More than a Wishful Dream” is based on the gospel of Matthew, Mark and Luke. As such, the story does not necessarily start with character development. However, the author wrote the plot of the story based on the character development of Joseph, creating the character based on Joseph’s lineage, occupation, and other descriptions found in the Bible. Due to Joseph’s lineage, the author created Joseph to be a character who wants to

21. Richard Kislán, *The Musical: A Look at the American Musical Theater* (Milwaukee, MN: Hal Leonard Corp), 1995, 228.

22. Linda Seger, *Creating Unforgettable Characters* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1990), 21.

23. Kress, 36.

24. Ibid., 46.

make a difference for God like Abraham, King David, King Solomon and so forth. Due to Joseph's occupation as a carpenter, the author shaped him to be a character that is humble and kind. The biblical description also seems to indicate that he was a righteous man. As such, the author made Joseph to be a character who is keen to follow God's rule. With a clearer depiction of Joseph, the author developed the plot based on these factors. Through the characteristics of Joseph mentioned above, the author aimed to capture the audience's attention and evoke their sympathy. The author also wrote an "I want song" titled "To be Counted" to introduce Joseph's longing to make a difference for God in Israel.²⁵ The author included different conflicts and struggles in the plot to reveal Joseph's character and personality too. Therefore, it is clear that character development was essential in the musical.

Dramatic Structure

In *Theatre as Human Action*, Hischak explains that the dramatic structure of most plays includes elements such as inciting incident, point of attack, exposition, complications, climax, and conclusion.²⁶ The following are succinct summaries of the terms as defined in Hischak's book. Inciting incident refers to an event, in the past and prior to the start of the story that incites the plot line. Point of attack is the moment where action begins. Exposition is described as past information mentioned by the characters onstage. Foreshadowing points to the device used to hint or tell the audience that an inevitable event will happen. Complications are obstacles faced by the protagonist. Climax refers to the highest emotional moment of the story resulting from the

25. Hatcher, 23.

26. Hischak, 45-47.

complications. Finally, a play's conclusion is the moment when "some new order or sense of balance is reached after the climax."²⁷ Although not every play or musical includes all of these different elements, they provide a basic structure for playwrights or composers to base their work on. Therefore, it is important to take them into consideration.

The dramatic structure for "More than a Wishful Dream" follows the basic framework of dramatic structure mentioned above. In the musical, the author uses the tax collection as a point of attack to begin the story. Consequently, the author uses prophecies and dreams as an exposition tool and inciting incident. Furthermore, the author employs Mary's pregnancy and Joseph's decree to return to Bethlehem as complications. Lastly, the author uses the birth of Christ as a point of climax, and the worship of the shepherds as a resolution to the story. By following the basic dramatic structure commonly employed by playwrights, the author hopes that the audience will find it easier to follow the storyline of the musical.

Dialogue

Dialogue is also an indispensable part in plays and musicals. According to Gloria Kempton, dialogue brings life to the characters in the story and reveals their motives and conflicting agendas.²⁸ First, dialogue should be authentic to the character.²⁹ To be authentic, writers must know their characters so well that they would know how the

27. Ibid.

28. Gloria Kempton, *Dialogue: Technique and Exercises for Crafting Effective Dialogue* (Cincinnati: F+W Publications, 2004), 4.

29. Kempton, 215.

characters would naturally speak. Second, dialogue should not drive the scene.³⁰ Instead, dialogue should be used by writers to drive the plot in motion by either providing new information to the characters about the conflict, by revealing new obstacles that need to be overcome, by introducing pivotal moments in plots that lead to a character's transformation, by setting up the discussion to remind the character of their goals, or by accelerating the emotion and story movement to add suspense and urgency to the situation.³¹ Third, dialogue should not use linguistic anachronism and inconsistent dictions.³² Fourth, dialogue should be used as text, in which the characters would say what they mean, and subtext, in which the characters would say a text that has an underlying meaning.³³

The writing of "More Than a Wishful Dream" brings the characters to life through realistic and credible dialogue with care that all of the characters have their own natural and unique voice and vocabulary as they converse throughout the musical. The conversations between the characters and the character's prayers to God will also reveal their personality, background, and personal desires. For example, Joseph's dialogue reveals that he simply desires to make a difference for God and to save his people from Roman oppression. However, the villagers in Nazareth will despise him if he obeys God by continuing on with his marriage to Mary. By revealing Joseph's desires and the conflict through dialogue, the author hopes to evoke sympathy from the audience for

30. Ibid., 53.

31. Ibid.

32. Hatcher, 133.

33. Ibid., 138,139.

Joseph and provide the cultural context behind the decisions that Joseph has to make. Hence, it is evident that the elements of effective dialogue are vital in writing the musical.

Elements of Musical Theater

The elements of musical theater are indispensable when writing a musical. As such, the author has studied the types of musical theater and the basic elements of musical theater. The following are summaries of the study conducted.

Types of Musical Theater

Musicals can be roughly categorized into six main types.³⁴ Aaron Frankel explains that these types form a spectrum where one fades into another.³⁵ These six different types are “revue, musical comedy, musical drama, ‘Broadway’ opera, ‘new’ operetta, [and] play-with-music.”³⁶ The following are succinct definition of a few terms according to Frankel.

At one end of the spectrum is revue. Frankel defines “revue” as a “series of separate songs, dances and skits, unified by a point of view, usually comic, and a distinct style of presentation. However, it is not unified by a through-story with developing characters—or book—and book musicals is musical theater’s core.”³⁷ On the other end of the spectrum is play-with-music, which is a form of musical where the plot can sustain

34. Aaron Frankel, *Writing the Broadway Musical*. (New York: Da Capo Press, 2000), 1.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

itself in the absence of music.³⁸ According to Frankel's definition, "More than a Wishful Dream" would most appropriately fall in between the two extremes, under the category of musical drama. In musical drama, the music and the songs of the play and the plot of the story support each other, and the play uses both songs and dialogue to develop characters and plot movement.³⁹ Therefore, "More than a Wishful Dream" would fall under the category of musical drama.

Basic Elements of Musical Theater

Frankel outlines the basic elements of a musical in his book *Writing the Broadway Musical*. These basic elements include the essentials, the story, the spirit, the sound and look, and the style.⁴⁰

Essentials of a musical. Frankel claims that there are four essentials that should be expected of a musical: "[D]oes it eliminate the 'fourth wall?' does it sing? does it dance?...[and] does it do all three?"⁴¹ These four elements differentiate a musical from a regular play. First, a musical eliminates the "fourth wall" between the audience and the actors.⁴² Instead of using the stage as a picture frame to present a "real life" event like a regular play, a musical uses the stage as a "springboard...to present a theater event."⁴³ In "More than a Wishful Dream," the musical does so by singing and speaking to the audience directly. During the first scene of the musical, the Rabbi and the villagers

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid., 2.

40. Ibid., 5-24.

41. Ibid., 6.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

engage the audience by speaking and singing about Nazareth. By doing so, the musical eliminates the fourth wall and presents a theater event.

Second, a musical uses songs during the high points of the story. In a musical, the songs “take over most of the main points of the plot, and make them the high points...since conflict makes drama, it will be show music that will raise its pressure or discharge them.”⁴⁴ In some sense, the critical or emotionally charged moments of the play are what cause characters to explode into songs. In discussing about the process of choreographing and direction in preproduction, Calhoun explains that he would review the script and score, and ask, “Why is this number here, and who’s performing it? What is the purpose? What has to be accomplished by the end of the number?”⁴⁵ He argues that one must have a reason behind every number, or he or she should not do it.⁴⁶ In “More than a Wishful Dream,” the author wrote musical numbers only for the pivotal moments of the musical. In the second scene, Joseph breaks out into the musical number “To be Counted” and reveals his intense desire to be used by God to do something great. This pattern of using musical numbers during the pivotal moments can be found throughout the musical.

Third, a musical contains musical energy that breaks into dance.⁴⁷ However, it is important for one to note the difference between having dance steps and communicating through dance steps. According to Lyn Cramer and Warren Carlyle, a choreographer’s

44. Ibid., 7.

45. Lyn Cramer, *Creating Musical Theater: Conversations with Broadway Directors and Choreographers* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 62.

46. Ibid.

47. Frankel, 8.

job is not just to make up dance steps, but also to communicate a story.⁴⁸ As such, a choreographer will have to know the story first and use dance as a natural outflow of the story.⁴⁹ In “More than a Wishful Dream,” the author utilizes dance at the end of the first musical number to communicate the villagers’ joy and anticipation as they celebrate the promises of God. A musical should have all three of the essentials mentioned.

Story. The story of a musical is a summation of a musical written in a simplified, condensed, and complete sentence with subject, concrete verb, and object.⁵⁰ According to Frankel, the story is what “holds the plot together.”⁵¹ In some sense, the story of a musical is the essence of the plot because “the plot is the working out of the story, its developments in detail.”⁵² With that in mind, Frankel further argues that the greatest control of the story is found in the concrete verb used in the story sentence.⁵³ He states, “above all, concrete verbs help to exclude ‘meaning’ from the story line. What matters is not what the story is about but what makes it happen. Characters in action, which is the only way an audience takes sides, is the only way an audience will care about meanings.”⁵⁴ Therefore, it is important for a musical to have a strong story sentence.

48. Cramer, 74.

49. Ibid.

50. Frankel, 8.

51. Ibid., 9.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid.

After the development of the story, it must be “opened up.”⁵⁵ Frankel explains, “the book of a musical physically opens up its story by rapidly shifting among the most dynamic, diverse locations.”⁵⁶ One can expand a musical’s “theatrical places and dimensions” in terms of location, perspective, and time to open up the story of a musical.⁵⁷ Frankel also comments that these theatrical places should naturally inspire different plot ideas and “provide the spring and space to sing and dance.”⁵⁸ Hence, it is important for one to have a good story sentence, and a way to open up the story.

Spirit, sound and look. As one opens up the story, it should lead to what Frankel calls “externalizing,” which is the “spirit of all musical theater, making it so outer-directed that it embraces an audience.”⁵⁹ To embody such spirit, a musical will need to have an overall sound and look in all aspects of “music and lyrics, dialogue and dance, staging and scenery, and plotting.”⁶⁰ The amount of sound and look caught in essence will naturally establish and give color to the world of a musical and the characters in it as well.⁶¹

Another important aspect of sound and look to consider would be the rhythms and the counter-rhythms. Frankel claims that, “a musical is a literal transcription of rhythms

55. Ibid., 10.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid., 11.

58. Ibid., 14.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid, 17.

61. Ibid, 17-18.

and counter-rhythms. Rapid scene changes will thus be characteristics of musicals.”⁶²

Frankel categorizes these changes into three categories, namely “shifts of locales, shifts between small and large groups within locales, and always sharp shifts of modes.”⁶³ As such, the usage of varied rhythmic impulse and contrast is essential to a musical.

Style. According to Frankel, the style of a musical is the sum total of the basic elements of musicals mentioned above. Frankel notes, “the moment of starting with seed anticipates [style]. The way of crystalizing story concentrates it. Spirit amplifies it, and sound and look embody it. Point of view solidifies it.”⁶⁴ As such, style does not come as the last component of a musical, but rather from the start throughout the entire process. In short, the style of a musical is a combination of the different elements mentioned above.

In “More than a Wishful Dream,” the seed of the musical is to allow the audience to gain a greater appreciation of the Christmas story by communicating that Joseph and Mary were real individuals who experienced the birth of Christ. With that in mind, the story of the musical is about a young Jewish man who obeyed God even in difficult and costly circumstances. The spirit, sound and look of the musical focuses on externalizing the story to the audience through various implements. Lastly, the musical is seen through Joseph’s point of view. By incorporating these different elements of musical theater, the author hopes to use the theater stage as a springboard to present the story in a manner that would communicate the emotional and cultural realities surrounding the birth of Christ.

62. Ibid, 18.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid., 24.

Elements of Effective Songwriting

Besides elements of playwriting and musical theater, elements of effective songwriting are fundamental in musicals too. Lehman Engel observes, “music has its own contribution even if that contribution does not include any specific. Within its own context inside a framework of plot and characters and situations it can and does supply to the audience all kinds of things without which...there is no show.”⁶⁵ Hatcher also argues, “Music is a vital part of the human experience...the playwright who ignores the impact music provides in terms of vitality, melody, mood, and elucidation of character and action ignores what is often the very spirit and soul of a theatrical/dramatic experience.”⁶⁶ As such, the author has researched and compiled the different elements of effective songwriting and musical composition such as melodic motion, tone stability and tendencies, musical scales, melodic contour, melodic developmental techniques, rhythm, lyrics, and rhymes. The following are summations of these elements.

Melody

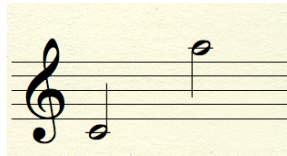
There are several fundamental elements in writing a melody. In *Melody in Songwriting*, Jack Perricone explains that a melody is essentially defined by its pitch and rhythm.⁶⁷ Melodic pitches that move by step, which feel the most comfortable or natural to sing, are considered to have conjunct motion and melodic pitches that move by leap, which give character and a memorable profile to the melody, are considered to have

65. Lehman Engel, *Words with Music: Creating the Broadway Musical Libretto*, rev. Howard Kissel (New York: Applause Theatre & Cinema Books, 2006), 172.

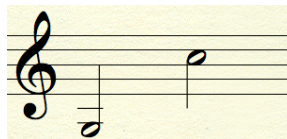
66. Hatcher, 49.

67. Jack Perricone, *Melody in Songwriting: Tools and Techniques for Writing Hit Songs* (Boston: Berklee Press, 2000), 2.

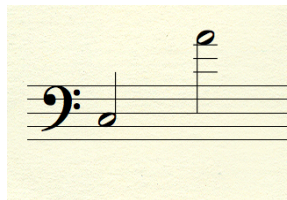
disjunct motion.⁶⁸ A good songwriter should utilize both of these motions to make a melody both memorable and natural to sing. Additionally, songwriters should take note of the breath between phrases and the vocal range of the song.⁶⁹ Frankel writes, “The voice must pause to breath, which requires musical and verbal phrases to rest and regroup by. It can go only so fast, and so far on a breath.”⁷⁰ Therefore, songwriters should ensure that the singers have sufficient breath to sing out phrases that are not too long. The following are the vocal ranges for the four main registers of vocals.⁷¹



Soprano: Middle C to A below High C



Alto: G below Middle C to C above Middle C



Tenor: C below Middle C to A above Middle C

68. Ibid.

69. Perricone, 3.

70. Frankel, 86.

71. Ibid.



Bass: G twice below middle C to Middle C

On top of a note's motion and a vocalist's range, Perricone presents the idea of stable and unstable tones in a major scale. If 1 represents the first note of the major scale, and 7 the seventh note of a major scale, Perricone claims that 1, 5 and 3 are stable tones, and 6, 2, 4, and 7 are unstable tones.⁷² He further comments, "unstable tones tend to resolve in a downward direction to stable tones. Therefore, 2 resolves to 1; 4 resolves to 3; 6 resolves to 5; 7 because it is most unstable and is one half-step away from the tonic, resolve upward to the tonic."⁷³ With that in mind, a songwriter can write independent melody phrases that are either tonally open or closed, depending on whether the last note of the phrase is stable or unstable.⁷⁴

Besides tone tendencies and stability, there are also different musical scales that composers can utilize to gain different harmonic texture and feel. For example, the first song of "More than a Wishful Dream" utilized a Phrygian Dominant scale. According to Benjamin Vizzachero, the Phrygian Dominant scale can be thought of as a "major scale with a flat second, sixth, and seventh" or a "Phrygian scale with a major third."⁷⁵ This

72. Ibid., 9.

73. Ibid.

74. Ibid., 10.

75. Benjamin Vizzachero, "The Phrygian Dominant Scale." *Benjamin's Blag Blog*, September 27, 2012, accessed February 3, 2014, <http://sites.psu.edu/benvizzachero/2012/09/27/the-phrygian-dominant-scale/>.

scale is common used in Middle Eastern or Jewish music.⁷⁶ Therefore, the Phrygian dominant scale was utilized to reflect the cultural setting of the musical. The following is an example of a Phrygian scale in the key of C.



Furthermore, composers should take note of the melodic outline and contour of a melody. Melodies have “structural tones” that form the melody’s outline.⁷⁷ Perricone argues, “the ability to designate the outline of a melody allows [one] to control [their] melody’s contour. [They] may then choose notes that embellish it in interesting, musically satisfying ways.”⁷⁸ To embellish the melodic outline, one can use devices such as repeated tone, neighbor tone, changing tone, scalar patterns, passing tones, anticipation, leaping, or a combination of these devices.⁷⁹ By utilizing structural tones and embellishments, one can choose to write their melody in an ascending contour, descending contour, arch contour, inverted arch contour, or stationary contour.⁸⁰ In his book, Perricone also introduces seventeen melodic developmental techniques—repetition, rhythmic retention, sequence, extension, truncation, inversion, retrograde, diminution, augmentation, segmentation, permutation, interversion, conjunction,

76. Ibid.

77. Perricone, 40.

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid., 41-43.

80. Ibid., 46-47.

ornamentation, thinning, rhythmic displacement, and elision.⁸¹ These melodic developmental techniques can easily add interest and color to one's melody.

A good songwriter must also consider the rhythm of a melody. In Perricone's words, a melody's rhythm is "the skeleton, controlling the basic shape; pitch is the muscle and flesh; arrangement and orchestration provides the clothes, makeup, and accessories. Without the skeleton, everything else collapses, yet few people notice or even think about it!"⁸² Jimmy Kachulis mentions several ways a songwriter can create rhythmic ideas in *Melody*.⁸³ By paying attention to note lengths, phrase lengths and space, phrase beginnings and stressed words, and masculine or feminine phrase endings, a songwriter can use rhythm to effectively "emphasize titles and build intensity."⁸⁴ Moreover, a songwriter can use rhythm to develop ideas by using devices like exact repetition on phrases, varied repetition on phrases, internal repetition in phrases, varied number of phrases and contrasting ideas.⁸⁵ These different techniques and tools can help one craft melodies that are more independent, memorable, and effective.

The author utilized these different techniques and tools of melody writing in "More than a Wishful Dream." For example, the author includes both conjunct and disjunct motion in "To be Counted" to make the melody memorable yet natural to sing. Additionally, adequate rest marks were placed between phrases to allow the singer to

81. Ibid., 79-82.

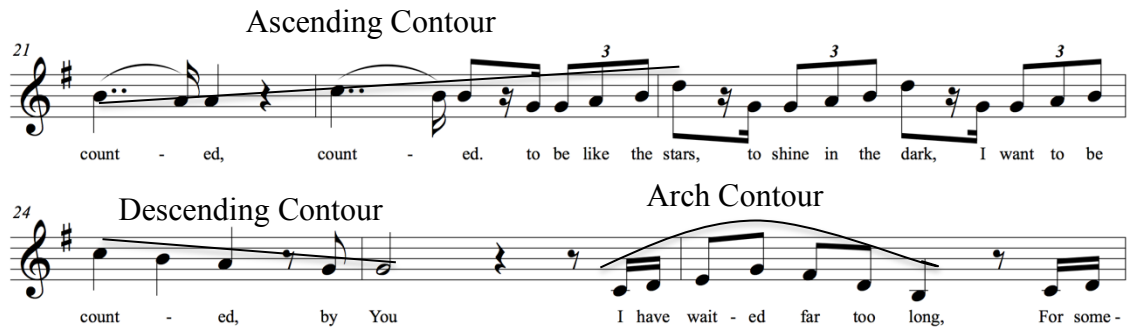
82. Ibid., 15.

83. Jimmy Kachulis, *The Songwriter's Workshop: Melody* (Boston: Berklee Press, 2003), 2-14.

84. Ibid.

85. Ibid., 16-22.

have adequate breath. Also, the vocal range of this song is from a B to a D above an octave, making it a comfortable vocal range for a baritone singer who has a vocal range that is between a bass and a tenor. In addition, the song utilizes different melodic contours. The following is an example of the contours used in six measures of the “To be Counted.”



The author used many other elements of effective melody throughout the song and score for the musical. These different elements of melody writing mentioned above have been an essential tool for composing the music and songs of the musical.

Lyrics

Aside from effective melody, it is important for a musical to have effective lyrics. Pat Pattison’s *Writing Better Lyrics* provides foundational knowledge and technical skills for lyric writing. In his book, Pattison recommends the lyricist to apply the “who, what, when, where, why, how” list in his or her writing.⁸⁶ Pattison also claims that the lyricist should show an image or object before describing about it.⁸⁷ Furthermore, Pattison argues about the idea of prosody in lyric writing. In lyric writing, there are five elements of

86. Pat Pattison, *Writing Better Lyrics* (Cincinnati, OH: Writer’s Digest Books, 2009), Kindle Electronic Edition: Chapter 1, Location 369 of 6152.

87. Ibid., 472 of 6152.

structure.⁸⁸ These five elements of structure are “number of lines, length of lines, rhythm of lines, rhyme scheme, and rhyme type.”⁸⁹ By using these five elements to create motion and emotion, one can create prosody to strengthen the message of the lyric.⁹⁰

To write effective lyrics, one should also pay attention to the structural balance of the lyrics. A song section with an even number of phrases would make the structure feel balanced, but a song section with an odd number of phrases would make it feel unbalanced.⁹¹ According to Pattison, “unbalanced sections create a sense of forward motion, while balanced sections stop the motion.”⁹² By using a combination of balanced and unbalanced section, writers can spotlight important ideas, move from one section to another, or contrast different sections.⁹³ Furthermore, Pattison argues that writers should only put stressed syllables in stressed position of the melody and unstressed syllables in unstressed positions of the melody.⁹⁴ One’s lyric will be more natural to sing by employing such positional technique.

Pattison wrote another book, *Songwriting: Essential Guide to Rhyming* to present several technical tools on lyric rhyming too. According to Pattison, there are three criteria for a perfect rhyme: 1. When the two syllables’ vowel sounds the same. 2. When the

88. Ibid., 3465 of 6152.

89. Ibid.

90. Ibid., 3448 of 6152.

91. Pat Pattison, *Songwriting: Essential Guide to Lyric Form & Structure* (Boston: Berklee Press, 1991), 5.

92. Ibid., 6.

93. Ibid., 6-8

94. Ibid., 23

sounds after the vowels are similar. 3. When the sounds prior to the vowels are different.⁹⁵ Within perfect rhymes, there are also masculine rhymes that end on a stressed syllable, and feminine rhymes that end on an unstressed syllable.⁹⁶ Additionally, there are family rhymes and additive or subtractive rhymes that are considered perfect rhyme substitutes.⁹⁷ Pattison also expounds on other kinds of rhymes like assonance rhymes (vowel only), consonance rhymes (consonant only), partial rhymes (masculine syllable rhymed with accented syllable of feminine figure), and weak-syllable rhymes.⁹⁸ By taking these into consideration, one can expand the possibility of rhyming in writing lyrics.

Aside from rhyming, a good lyricist also must take the openness of the vowel into consideration. Pamela Phillips Oland, in her book *The Art of Writing Great Lyrics* writes, “a songwriter must be aware of whether open vowel sounds are being correctly placed...remember that open vowels are only important in places where the musical note supporting the word needs to be sung out in an open fashion.”⁹⁹ In other words, phrases that require singers to belt should always strive to end with open vowels instead of closed ones.

The author wrote the lyrics of the songs in the musical based on these general guidelines. For example, the author placed all the stressed syllables on the stressed

95. Pattison, *Songwriting: Essential Guide to Rhyming* (Boston: Berklee Press, 1991), 5.

96. Ibid., 7.

97. Ibid., 25.

98. Ibid., 48.

99. Pamela Phillips Oland, *The Art of Writing Great Lyrics* (New York: Allworth Press, 2001), 18.

position of the melody. In the B section or chorus section of “To be Counted,” the word “counted” has its stressed syllable on “count-” instead of “-ed.” As such, the stressed syllable “count-” was placed on the first note of the bar because the first note is the stressed position of the melody. Additionally, the author attempts to retain motion within the chorus section itself by writing a total of ten phrases, and dividing the phrases into two equal different sections. By doing so, the first half of the chorus would feel unstable and incomplete because it had an odd numbered amount of phrases. Hence, the instability of this section propels to chorus section to re-balance itself with the next five phrases.

In short, these different elements of playwriting, musical theater, and songwriting were indispensable in creating “More than a Wishful Dream.” The following section contains a description of the target audience, characters, setting, a list of characters and musical numbers, and a short synopsis of the musical. A libretto for three scenes and the vocal-piano scores were also included at the end of the paper.

The Musical

Target Audience

This musical is written for young families who would attend a church musical.

Characters

Joseph. Based on the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, there are several things that one can discover about Joseph. According to Mark 6:3, Joseph worked as a carpenter. Based on The Voice translation of the text, one can perceive that a carpenter is not someone that was highly regarded in Joseph’s time.¹⁰⁰ In fact, the people became

100. *The Voice* is a bible translation published by the Thomas Nelson Bibles. According to the description found in its webpage, *The Voice* “brings understanding through historical context, cultural commentary, and insights into the lives of Bible authors.” Therefore, *The Voice* translation of the Bible was used to better understand the character of Joseph.

indignant and closed themselves to the message of Jesus because he was the son of a carpenter.¹⁰¹ Therefore, one can assume that Joseph was not highly respected in his society. In spite of that, Joseph was known as a just and righteous man as shown in Matthew 1:19 by his unwillingness to put Mary to shame. Additionally, the genealogy of Joseph reveals that he is a descendant of famous biblical figures like Abraham, Issac, Jacob, King David and King Solomon.

For the purpose of the musical, the author attributes some hypothetical biographical information and characteristics to Joseph. In this musical, he is a thirty-year old man. As a carpenter, he is simple, honest, and hard working.¹⁰² He is also thrifty and crafty in his woodworking. Although he is poor, he lives an honest and simple life. As such, he barely makes enough to pay the Roman taxes. Nonetheless, Joseph struggles with his self-esteem and identity. As a descendant of great figures like Abraham, Issac, Jacob, King David, and King Solomon, he wants to be significant like them. In light of the suffering of the Israelites, he also wants to free his people from the Roman oppression. This desire came from his knowledge that the Israelites were God's special people. As a descendent of a royal lineage, he strictly obeys the Jewish law and customs. According to Mary Fairchild's article, Joseph was a man of conviction, and a man who always wants to do the right thing.¹⁰³ As such, Joseph is often made-fun of in the musical

101. Mark 6:3 (The Voice). Isn't this Jesus, the little boy we used to see in Joseph's carpenter shop? Didn't He grow up to be a carpenter just like His father? Isn't He the son of Mary over there and the brother of James, Joses, Judas, Simon, and their sisters? Who does He think He is?

102. C.M. Kerr, "Joseph, Husband of Mary." *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia Online*, accessed February 2, 2014, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/encyclopedias/isbe/joseph-husband-of-mary.html>.

103. Mary Fairchild, "Joseph – Earthly Father of Jesus." *Christianity.about.com*, accessed February 2, 2014, <http://christianity.about.com/od/newtestamentpeople/p/josephprofile.htm>.

for taking the Jewish faith too seriously and for believing that God would still redeem His people when everyone else's doubted God. Nevertheless, the people of Nazareth like Joseph because he is a respectable man who fears God and possesses a kind and sympathetic heart to help others.

Mary. For the purpose of the musical, the author had also attributed hypothetical biographical information and characteristics to Mary. In the musical, Mary is only thirteen years old.¹⁰⁴ As a young girl in the Jewish culture, Mary longs to be married to an honorable man someday and have children of her own. Through the Gospel of Luke, one can see that Mary was chosen and favored by God. As such, it can be hypothesized that Mary was a humble girl who revered God. In this musical, she also shares the same convictions as Joseph to save Israel. Mary's family is poor, however, Mary's uncle and aunt are respectable people in the synagogue. Therefore, Mary is respected by the people around her. In this musical, Mary cares for other people, especially in her family. In addition, Mary has a cheerful attitude about life. Despite being poor, she often sings about God's promises and his faithfulness to keep them. She is also known for her strong will to stand up to fight for what is right.

104. Mary Fairchild, "Mary – Mother of Jesus." Christianity.about.com, accessed February 2, 2014, <http://christianity.about.com/od/newtestamentpeople/p/marymotherjesus.htm>.

Cast of Characters

Name	Description
Joseph	The lead male character. A thirty-year old man who is strong, honest and handsome. A carpenter by trade.
Mary	The lead female character. A thirteen-year old girl who is known for her humility and devotion to God. She is looking forward to be married.
Rachel	Mary's sister. A very young and innocent child who still clings to her mother.
Jacob	Joseph's father. Appears to be wise and old, but often deep in thought.
Joachim	Mary's father.
Anne	Mary's mother.
Gladius	A Jewish tax collector. Appears to be small but prideful and mean. He is hated by the Jewish community, but is vested with power from the Roman Empire.
Fabius	Gladius' sidekick. Appears to be huge, but slow. Fabius takes orders from Gladius.
Zachariah	Mary's uncle. He is in his old age. He is also a high priest who received a vision and became mute.
Elizabeth	Mary's aunt. Appears to be wise and gentle. She is with child in her old age.
Rabbi	The priest and rabbi of Nazareth
Jonah	Joseph's friend and colleague.
Farmer	A farmer selling produces in Nazareth
Townspeople	10-15 people in the village representing life in Nazareth.

Setting

The musical takes place over the period of a year in various suggested settings in Nazareth and Bethlehem.

Musical Numbers

"Nazareth"	Rabbi & Townspeople
"Taxes"	Gladius
"To Be Counted"	Joseph, Mary
"You Were Once Our Own"	Joseph, Gladius
"Thank You"	Mary, Joseph
"The Time Has Come"	Joseph, Mary, Jacob, Joachim, Villagers
"Things I Would Do"	Joseph, Mary
"May the Will of the Lord Be Done"	Mary, Anne
"Something Great"	Mary, Elizabeth
"What a hypocrite!"	Townspeople
"Traveler's Prayer"	Mary & Joseph
"A Miracle"	Joseph

Synopsis

“More Than a Wishful Dream” is a one-act musical drama. The story begins with the introduction of Nazareth by the Rabbi. The opening number “Nazareth,” introduces Nazareth as a small village.¹⁰⁵ “Nazareth” also introduces the Roman oppression and the prophecy of the coming Messiah. At the end of the number, the villagers join in singing the song and break into a celebration dance as the Rabbi sings about the coming of the Messiah. Right after the dance, a Roman official and soldier storms into the marketplace and declare a tax collection for the city. Consequently, the villagers start to complain and explain their inability to do so. Joachim explains to Gladius, the Roman official that they cannot pay the taxes because the harvest would not be until next month. In the midst of the chaos, the musical breaks into the second number, “Taxes.” Enraged, Gladius orders Fabius to take Rachel as a hostage until Joachim pays his due. Gladius threatens to enslave a family member of any household that fails to pay their due by tomorrow. The scene ends with Gladius and Fabius exiting the village.

The next scene begins with Joseph by a stream. Joseph reads a scripture passage and breaks into singing his prayer through the musical number “To Be Counted,” revealing his desire to save the Israelites and to make a difference for God. At the end of his song, Joseph hears Jonah’s voice shouting in the woods. After finding Jonah, Jonah explains to Joseph what had happened to the village in the marketplace. Jonah begs for Joseph to save Rachel, and Joseph agrees to do so. The scene ends with Joseph going to save Rachel.

¹⁰⁵ Lena Mor, “Nazareth History,” *Holy Land Network*, accessed February 3, 2014, <http://www.holylandnetwork.com/nazareth/nazareth.htm>.

The next scene begins with Joseph bounded in ropes and being dragged to Gladius by Fabius. Gladius and Joseph's conversation reveals that they were once close friends. Their conversation breaks into the musical number "You Were Once Our Own." Joseph pleads for Gladius to repent and come back to his people. But Gladius refuses. Joseph then begs for him to release Rachel, but Gladius denies his request. However, Gladius agrees to trade Rachel for Joseph's donkey. Joseph willingly makes the trade. Gladius orders Fabius to return Rachel and trade her for a donkey. Joseph brings Rachel back to her home.

Joseph approaches Rachel's home and sees Mary waiting by the door. When Rachel sees Mary, she begins to run to her and falls into her embrace. Joseph then begins to walk away, but Mary runs to Joseph and initiates a conversation with him. Mary's gratitude and intense emotion causes her to start singing to Joseph. The scene breaks into the musical number "Thank You." In "Thank You," Mary thanks Joseph for saving her sister. The musical number reveals that Joseph had been helping Mary's family in the past. After the song ends, the scene ends with Joseph walking back to his home.

When Joseph returns back to his home, Jacob notices that the donkey didn't come back with Joseph. Joseph explains to his father what had happened. After hearing Joseph's story, his father reveals a secret that he had kept away from Joseph since his mother's death a year ago. Joseph reveals to Jacob about his mother's vision of Joseph and Mary being together. At the same time, Joachim approaches Mary and proposes a marriage between Joseph and Mary to repay Joseph for saving Rachel. Jacob and Joachim, though in separate locations, break into the musical number, "The Time has Come." In this musical number, Jacob and Joachim both persuade Joseph and Mary to

marry. They agree to do so in honor of their parents. Within the same song, the scene change and jumps into the event where they sign the marriage contract known as the “ketubbah.”¹⁰⁶ The Rabbi pronounces the engagement and the musical numbers ends in a joyous celebration, bringing life back to the village after the dreaded tax collection.

After the engagement, Joseph begins to build his and Mary’s future home. Joseph and Mary go their separate ways as they prepare themselves to be married to each other. Joseph and Mary breaks into the song “Things that I would do” to express their excitement to share a life together. As crafty carpenter, Joseph begins to talk about the wonderful things he would build for his wife. He begins to dream about his life with Mary. Mary, being equally excited, prepares herself to be a wife to Joseph.

The next scene begins with Mary and her mother in conversation. After her mother left Mary’s room, an angel appears and reveals to Mary that she is to be pregnant with God’s child. Mary accepts God’s will for her life and submits to Him. Mary breaks into a musical number, “May the Will of the Lord be done.” However, she becomes fearful of what is about to happen. Since she is to be pregnant before she and Joseph consummate, she knows that she cannot hide her pregnancy for long. After talking to her mother, Anne sends Mary to visit her Uncle Zachariah and Aunt Elizabeth while she figures out what to do.

Mary arrives at Elizabeth’s place. While Mary was with Elizabeth, Elizabeth tells Mary about the miracle of her pregnancy. Elizabeth explains to Mary about Zachariah’s vision in the temple, and believes that God is about to do something great. Elizabeth and

¹⁰⁶ Steve Rudd, “The Three Stage Ritual of Bible Marriages,” *The Interactive Bible*, accessed March 4, 2014, <http://www.bible.ca/marriage/ancient-jewish-three-stage-weddings-and-marriage-customs-ceremony-in-the-bible.htm>.

Mary break into the musical number, “Something Great.” In “Something Great,” Elizabeth and Mary praises God for doing great things among their midst.

Meanwhile at Nazareth, the villagers gossip about Mary’s unfaithfulness to Joseph. However, Joseph remains steadfast in his preparation for Mary, trusting in her faithfulness to him. While they are talking to Joseph about Mary, Mary suddenly walks into the village. Mary confronts Joseph and explains her story to Joseph. In disappointment and disbelief, Joseph begins to sing a number, “What a Hypocrite!” to tell how disappointed he is at Mary. Joseph walks away from the scene and enters his new house.

In his agony and pain, Joseph destroys the furniture that he had been building for Mary. He then cries and breaks into the song, “God I Feel Alone.” At the same time, Mary sings the same song, but from a different place. Mary sings about her pain as she obeys God in this matter. Joseph falls asleep after his decision to divorce Mary quietly because he still loves her and is unwilling to bring judgment upon her. While in his sleep, an angel appears to Joseph and affirms to him that Mary has spoken truth.

Upon finding out the truth, Joseph jolts up from his slumber. When he looks around, the furniture he had destroyed earlier was rebuilt to the way it was. Joseph takes that as a sign from God and runs to Mary. When Joseph finally found Mary at the marketplace, the townspeople were trying to turn Mary in for committing adultery. However, Joseph stops the crowd and tells them that Mary has done no wrong. As a result, the townspeople criticized Joseph for either lying or for consummating their marriage before its time. As such, the townspeople continue a reprise of “What a Hypocrite! What a Lunatic!”

The Rabbi comes back to the scene as a narrator to explain the hardships that Joseph and Mary has to go through despite the truth. The Rabbi also explains that Caesar Augustus has sent a decree for everyone to be registered in his or her hometown. Hence, they have yet to face their toughest challenge. Joseph and Mary have to leave for Bethlehem. The next scene begins with Jacob, Rachel, Joachim and Anne singing “Traveler’s Prayer”. The text for the song is taken from a traditional Jewish prayer before travels. Everyone in the family is worried about Mary because she is to go into labor soon. Joseph tries to request an exception from Gladius because of Mary’s condition. But Gladius denies his request to be excused from the decree. Apparently Gladius had been given special orders to make no exceptions. Without a choice, Mary and Joseph bid farewell to their family and embark on a journey to Bethlehem.

When they arrived at Bethlehem, they saw a sign saying that there is no more room in the inn. They plead to the inn master to make room for them. All of a sudden, Mary goes into labor. In pain, Mary passes out and lies on the floor. In panic, Joseph begins to cry out to God. Out of a sudden, the inn master’s wife, who is a midwife came out and argued with her husband. She then leads them to a manger and told Joseph to stand guard outside by the door. Joseph begins to pray desperately. Joseph breaks into a moment of monologue between him and God. Joseph pleads and sings “A Miracle”. After his prayer, he hears nothing for a while. He becomes afraid that something bad may have happened to Mary. However, when he turned around, he sees Mary embracing the baby. He bows down to the floor and thanked God. A group of shepherd then appears and stood in awe. They spoke to one another and started bows down to the baby. Mary asks Joseph they shall call the baby. Joseph replies, “His name is Jesus.”

The Libretto**SCENE ONE****#1 – Overture****#2 – Nazareth**

(The OVERTURE ends. A spotlight shines on stage center, and the RABBI walks up to the light.)

RABBI

(Greets the audience)

Shalom ladies and gentlemen! Shalom!

(Takes out a scroll from his robe. Slowly unfolds until the scroll is all over the floor. Mumbles as he looks through his scroll.)

Aha! Here it is! Pardon me for taking so long. I have a story that I've been waiting to tell. Listen, listen very closely. Did you know that there was once a man, a man who was...not much special? He had nothing much. No money, no power, no looks, well I guess he did have a donkey, but that didn't last too long either. Yet in the midst of nothingness, he rose and changed the world forever. Come with me...to a place called Nazareth!

(Music Plays—"Nazareth")

TOWNSPEOPLE

COME AND SEE,
OUR VILLAGE AND OUR LAND,
NOT MUCH GLORY,
NOTHING GRAND.
SIMPLE LIVING,
SIMPLE JEWS,
NAZARETH,
A PLACE THAT WE CALL HOME!

RABBI

Two thousand years ago, there was village called Nazareth. It was a small place, unfamiliar to many. But hey! Because we are so small, everyone knows each other and treats one another like family.

(Rabbi turns to the farmer on the street)

Shalom! How much for this dove here?

TOWNSPEOPLE

COME AND SEE,
OUR VILLAGE AND OUR LAND,
NOT MUCH GLORY,
NOTHING GRAND.
SIMPLE LIVING,
SIMPLE JEWS,
NAZARETH,
A PLACE THAT WE CALL HOME!

RABBI

Our lives in Nazareth are simple. It revolves around God. You see, we are the descendants of Father Abraham. God said that we would be as countless as the stars. Through us, everyone on earth will find true blessing. What do I mean by true blessing? Well... I don't know! But I can assure you...It's definitely not the Romans!

FARMER

Here you go Rabbi!

(FARMER hands RABBI a cage with a dove in it)

RABBI

Thank you, my son!

(RABBI takes the box and puts it down on the ground. He reaches into his pocket to get a shekel)

FARMER

(FARMER holds RABBI's hand and stops him from paying)

Rabbi, take it as an offering for the temple.

RABBI

No, a worker's worth his wages. Let me pay you...

FARMER

Please receive my offering Rabbi. Just tell me, Rabbi, it's been four hundred years...Will the Messiah really come?

RABBI

Are you doubting?

FARMER

Not at all teacher! But, it has been a long time since God had spoken.

RABBI

My son, my son. Hear these words from the Prophet Isaiah.

(RABBI)

UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN,
UNTO US A SON IS GIV'N
HE SHALL RULE AND HE SHALL REIGN
LORD OF ALL, YES! HE WILL BE CALLED

WONDERFUL, COUNSELOR,
MIGHTY GOD, OUR PRINCE OF PEACE
WONDERFUL, COUNSELOR,
MIGHTY GOD, OUR PRINCE OF PEACE

TOWNSPEOPLE

WONDERFUL, COUNSELOR,
MIGHTY GOD, OUR PRINCE OF PEACE
WONDERFUL, COUNSELOR,
MIGHTY GOD, OUR PRINCE OF PEACE
WILL COME!

#3 – Taxes

(Out of a sudden, a trumpet sound is blasted. FABIUS walks in with a trumpet in one hand, and a stool on the other. FABIUS, puts the stool on the ground and picks up GLADIUS and places GLADIUS on the stool.)

GLADIUS

Rabbi...Rabbi...Rabbi... how many times must I tell you...Don't draw a crowd talking about your worthless religion.

RABBI

Forgive me Gladius, but we were just celebrating the beautiful sun.

GLADIUS

(lets out a laughter)

Haha! Stop fooling around. Well...even if you are, it wouldn't matter anyway.

TOWNSPEOPLE

(Chaotic gasp and chatter, questioning one another, and asking)

JOACHIM

What do you mean?

GLADIUS

(GLADIUS unfolds a scroll)

(GLADIUS)

To the people of Nazareth, the tax collection for Nazareth will begin tomorrow. Be ready to pay your taxes, All income tax, import tax, travel tax, export tax, sales tax, crop taxes, property tax, benefit tax, emergency tax, and compensation tax will be collected tomorrow. The enforcement will not be lax. Failure to pay will result in the enslavement of one family member until your due is paid.

JOACHIM

(TOWNPEOPLE pushes JOACHIM out from the crowd and forces him to speak to GLADIUS.)

But Gladius, I mean sir... There's no way we can pay! The harvest is not here yet! We are barely surviving on what we have... You're killing us...

GLADIUS

Me? Killing you all? How dare you say such evil things to me? Fabius!

(Music begins to play—Taxes. GLADIUS whispers to FABIUS. FABIUS snatches RACHEL away from her mother. The crowd becomes more chaotic.)

RACHEL

(RACHEL cries and reaches out for JOACHIM and ANNE)

Papa! Mama!

JOACHIM

(JOACHIM tries to snatch RACHEL back, but FABIUS is too strong and big for him. FABIUS hits JOACHIM and pushes him to the ground.)

Ahh! Wait! Gladius! No! What are you trying to do with my daughter?

GLADIUS

Listen carefully, people of Nazareth. This is merely the beginning of what you will experience if you dare defy me or insult me.

YOU'LL GIVE ME ALL I DEMAND
DO NOT DEFY YOUR RULER'S COMMAND.
TOMORROW STARTING AT NOON
YOU'LL PAY YOUR DUE OR SHE'LL BE RUINED

FOR I AM ON YOUR SIDE
DEALING WITH THOSE ON HIGH
SO GIVE ME ALL THAT I ASK!
THEN SHE'LL BE FREE!

(GLADIUS)

I'M GOOD AND PERFECT AND KIND.
I'LL KEEP YOU SAFE AND SECURE.
AS LONG AS YOU WILL OBEY,
YOU CAN LIVE HERE WITHOUT FEAR.

FOR I AM ON YOUR SIDE
DEALING WITH THOSE ON HIGH
SO GIVE ME ALL THAT I ASK!
THEN YOU'LL BE FREE!

(GLADIUS speaks sarcastically)

Oh papa, don't worry, I will take care of your daughter real well. I will give you three days. At the end of three days, she will be going back to Rome with me. You know all the roaming around that happens at Rome don't you?

(GLADIUS lets out an evil laugh. ANNE cries hysterically and holds on to JOACHIM.)

GLADIUS

FABIUS, let's go!

FABIUS

Yes Master! Shall I take this little girl with me?

GLADIUS

Of course you fool! I will give you three days to pay your taxes, people of Nazareth! Three days! Now you can celebrate all you want! Hahahahaha!
FABIUS, blow the horns!

(FABIUS blows the horn to signal their exit. GLADIUS and FABIUS exit the stage, taking RACHEL with them.)

JOACHIM

We will figure out a way. We will save RACHEL.

RABBI

(Starts singing a tag from "Nazareth")

WONDERFUL, COUNSELLOR

RABBI & TOWNSPEOPLE

MIGHTY GOD
OUR PRINCE OF PEACE
WE NEED YOU NOW

SCENE TWO

(RIVERSIDE, JOSEPH lying under the tree, reading a scroll.)

BIBLE NARRATION

Remember who created you, O Jacob? Who shaped you, O Israel? See, you have nothing to fear. I, who made you, will take you back. I have chosen you, named you as My own. When you face stormy seas I will be there with you with endurance and clam; you will not be engulfed in raging rivers. If it seems like you're walking through fire with flames licking at your limbs, keep going; you won't be burned. Because I, the Eternal One, am your God. I am the Holy One of Israel, and I...WILL SAVE YOU!

#4 – To Be Counted**JOSEPH**

(Looking upward to the sky. Bends down on his knees, and pray to God out loud.)

O God, how long more must we wait?...*(pause)*...How long must we wait until the Messiah comes? You are loving and good. You are the Sovereign Lord. But...O God...it's been quiet for four hundred years...Are you still there for us, God? Would you still listen to me if I pray now?

HOW LONG LORD MUST WE WAIT
FOR SALVATION FOR THE SON
YOU HAVE SAID THAT YOU WOULD HEAR OUR CRY
WHEN WE COME TO SEEK YOUR FACE

I WOULD GIVE MY LIFE MY ALL
TO SET MY PEOPLE FREE
LIKE MY FATHERS IN THE PAST
I WILL FOLLOW IN THEIR PATH

I WANT TO BE COUNTED
COUNTED
WITH ALL OF MY HEART
WITH ALL THAT I HAVE
I WANT TO BE USED BY YOU

I WANT TO BE COUNTED
COUNTED
TO BE LIKE THE STARS
TO SHINE IN THE DARK
I WANT TO BE COUNTED BY YOU

(JOSEPH)

I HAVE WAITED FAR TOO LONG
FOR SOMEONE TO TAKE A STAND
TO DEFEND YOUR PEOPLE AND YOUR NAME
LORD YOUR WILL IS MY COMMAND

I'VE NOT MUCH TO OFFER
NO SPECIAL GIFTS OR POW'R
BUT MY HEART IS WILLING
SO USE ME LORD I PRAY

I WANT TO BE COUNTED
COUNTED
WITH ALL OF MY HEART
WITH ALL THAT I HAVE
I WANT TO BE USED BY YOU

I WANT TO BE COUNTED
COUNTED
TO BE LIKE THE STARS
TO SHINE IN THE DARK

(JOSEPH)

I WANT TO BE COUNTED
BY YOU
BY YOU
BY YOU

JONAH

(JONAH comes running and shouting)

Joseph! Joseph! Where are you?

JOSEPH

Jonah! What are you doing here? How did you find me here?

JONAH

(JONAH Pants for breath)

Everyone knows... where you go...after you quarrel... with your
dad...But...that's...that's beside the point...Joseph! Rachel is in trouble! Gladius
came and...

JOSEPH

And what?

JONAH

Gladius came and declared a tax collection. Joachim stood up against him. Gladius took Rachel away as a hostage. If Joachim doesn't pay his taxes in three days, Rachel will be sent to Rome. Who knows what they will do to her in Rome! Joseph, you have to save her! Go to Gladius now!

JOSEPH

Go to Gladius? What can I do?

JONAH

You can talk to him. He was once your friend...Right? Maybe he will listen to you!

JOSEPH

It's not as easy as you think. Gladius has changed over the years. He has...

JONAH

Joseph! You are our only hope! If you don't save her, no one can. Please!

JOSEPH

But...

JONAH

You have always talked about saving Nazareth, changing the world, making a difference. Now is your chance! Joseph, I beg you. Save Rachel!

JOSEPH

Enough Jonah! Please calm down! You know how much I want to save her...I...I will think of something...

JONAH

Thank you Joseph! Thank you!

JOSEPH

Go tell my father I will be back later.

JONAH

I'm counting on you Joseph!

JOSEPH

May the Lord grant me success. Amen.

(JOSEPH and JONAH exits the stage.)

SCENE THREE**#5 – You Were Once Our Own**

(Joseph enters into the scene bounded with ropes. Fabius grabs the roads and drags Joseph to Gladius' room.)

GLADIUS

Fabius! How many times must I tell you to be gentler with our guest? Now, now... who do we have here.... Oh Joseph! My my what a pleasure to have you in here. Fabius! Cut off the ropes and give us some time alone.

FABIUS

Yes, my master!

(FABIUS cuts off JOSEPH's ropes and exits the scene)

GLADIUS

Joseph! I never would dream that an old friend would come and visit me!

JOSEPH

Gladius...

GLADIUS

It has been five years. Five years I have served under that cruel monster, but look at me now...I'm rich, with status, everyone sends me gifts so I would make their lives easier.

JOSEPH

You mean bribe you?

GLADIUS

Oh... it's just a matter of perspective. Joseph, if you would have come with me to Rome you would understand why I do the things I do...Life is different when you set your own traditions and boundaries. So, old friend, tell me what are you here for? I'm sure it's more than just a sentimental meeting.

JOSEPH

Gladius, please let Rachel go.

GLADIUS

You know I can't...

JOSEPH

Of course you can! You're the one who ordered for her to be taken away in the first place.

GLADIUS

Joseph, who do you think you are?

JOSEPH

No... Gladius, who do you think you are?

(Music plays – You Were Once Our Own)

YOU WERE ONE OF US BEFORE
YOU'RE STILL ONE OF US RIGHT NOW
FEEL THE BLOOD THAT'S IN YOUR VEINS.
THEY ARE YOURS FOREVER.

YOU WERE ONCE OUR OWN
OUR OWN BROTHER
COME BACK TO YOUR SENSES
COME BACK TO YOUR OWN
COME BACK TO YOUR OWN
TODAY

GLADIUS

You know I can never return to who I was. I have found my higher calling in life.
Besides, why should I go back to who I was before?

I WAS POOR AND UNREFINED
UNRESPECTED LIKE A SCUM
ALL I WANT IS FOR SOMEONE
TO SHOW ME TRUE LOVE

NOW THAT I AM RICH
NOW THAT I HAVE POW'R
WHY SHOULD GO BACK
SO I'LL BE ALRIGHT
SO NO THANKS
I'LL BE MY OWN

JOSEPH

Gladius, for the sake of your old friend. Even if you don't return to us, please
release Rachel right now.

YOU WERE ONE OF US BEFORE
YOU'RE STILL ONE OF US RIGHT NOW
FEEL THE BLOOD THAT'S IN OUR VEINS.
THEY ARE OURS FOREVER.

YOU WERE ONCE OUR OWN
OUR OWN BROTHER

(JOSEPH)

COME BACK TO YOUR SENSES
RELEASE HER NOW
RELEASE YOUR OWN
RIGHT NOW

GLADIUS

Sorry Joseph, can't do. Unless you're willing to pay for Joachim, but I bet a poor carpenter like you won't have anything anyway. So Joseph, why don't you come and join me instead?

JOSEPH

Gladius, you know that there's a place for you in Nazareth. Nazareth is still your home. But if you're not willing to come back, I am willing to make a trade. I have a donkey. And a donkey is all I have.

GLADIUS

Joseph, it's too late for me. And the donkey is all you have, why would you?

JOSEPH

It's worth a lot. A lot more than what JOACHIM owes you. So please...

GLADIUS

FABIUS! Release RACHEL and bring her in here!

(Rachel's cry becomes more and more audible. When Rachel enters the room, she runs to JOSEPH)

JOSEPH

Thank you Gladius. I know you're still in there...somewhere...someday...

GLADIUS

You're lucky I'm in a good mood today. Now get out of my sight!

Piano Vocal Scores

Piano-Vocal

#2 - Nazareth

Wai Yong Tang

Vocal

Piano

Vox.

Pno.

mp

mf

mp

E

F maj7

4

4

4

Come and see, our vil - lage and our land.

The musical score is written for three parts: Vocal, Piano, and Piano-Vocal. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The Vocal part begins with a whole rest in the first measure, followed by a half note G4 in the second measure, and a half note A4 in the third measure. The Piano part begins with a whole note E4 in the first measure, followed by a half note G4 in the second measure, and a half note A4 in the third measure. The Piano-Vocal part begins with a whole note E4 in the first measure, followed by a half note G4 in the second measure, and a half note A4 in the third measure. The lyrics 'Come and see, our vil - lage and our land.' are written under the Vocal part. The score includes dynamic markings *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The score is numbered 4 in the top left corner of each system.

2

#2 - Nazareth - 2 of 8

7

Vox.

not much glo - ry noth ing grand. Sim - ple liv - ing,

7 F E

Pno.

10

Vox.

sim - ple Jews, Na - za - reth place that we call home.

10 F E

Pno.

13

Vox.

13 *pp* *mp* F

Pno.

#2 - Nazareth - 3 of 8

3

16

Vox.

16

Pno.

19

Vox.

mf

Come and see, our

19

Pno.

mp

mp

22

Vox.

vil - lage and our land. not much glo - ry noth — ing grand.

22

Pno.

E F E

4 #2 - Nazareth - 4 of 8

25

Vox.

Sim - ple liv - ing, sim - ple Jews, Na za reth a

25

Pno.

E F

28

Vox.

place that we call home.

28

Pno.

E F

pp

mp

31

Vox.

31

Pno.

E

Detailed description: The musical score is for a song titled 'More Than a Wishful Dream'. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into measures 25 through 31. The vocal part begins at measure 25 with the lyrics 'Sim - ple liv - ing, sim - ple Jews, Na za reth a'. The piano accompaniment consists of a steady bass line with eighth notes and chords in the right hand. Chords E and F are indicated above the piano part. At measure 28, the vocal line continues with 'place that we call home.' The piano part continues with the same bass line and chords. Dynamics *pp* and *mp* are marked. The score ends at measure 31.

#2 - Nazareth - 5 of 8

5

34

Vox.

Pno.

34

F

E

37

Vox.

mf

Un - to us, a child___ is born. un - to us, a

Pno.

37

F

mp

40

Vox.

Son___ is giv'n. He shall rule and he___ shallreign!

Pno.

40

E

6
43 #2 - Nazareth - 6 of 8

Vox. 

Lord of all, Yes! He will be called, Won - der - ful,

Pno. 

46

Vox. 

Coun - sell - or Might - y God our Prince - of peace.

Pno. 

49

Vox. 

Won - der - ful, Coun - sell - or Might - y God our

Pno. 

#2 - Nazareth - 7 of 8 7

52

Vox. Prince - of peace. Won - der-ful, Coun - sell - or

Pno. D E Bm

55

Vox. Might - y God our Prince - of peace Won - der - ful,

Pno. A m9 D E

58

Vox. Coun - sell - or Might - y God our Prince - of peace. will

Pno. Bm A m9 D

8

#2 - Nazareth - 8 of 8

61

Vox.

come! _____

61

Pno.

E

Piano - Vocal

#3 - Taxes

Wai Yong Tang

The musical score is for the song "Taxes" by Wai Yong Tang. It is written for Piano and Vocal in 4/4 time. The score is divided into three systems. The first system shows the piano introduction with a treble and bass staff. The second system begins with the vocal melody on a treble staff, with lyrics underneath. The piano accompaniment is on a grand staff. The third system continues the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. Chord symbols are provided above the piano staves: Am, Am, and Bb.

Piano

4

You'll give me all I de mand do not de

4

Am

Pno.

7

fy your ru - ler's com - mand. To - mor - row start - ing at

7

Bb

Pno.

#3 - Taxes

20
noon. You'll pay your due or she'll be ru-ined. For

10
Pno. Am

13
I am on your side, deal-ing with those on high, give me all that i

13
Pno. B \flat Bdim Am/C

16
ask, and she'll be free.

16
Pno. A/C \sharp Dm7 G Am

#3 - Taxes 3

20

I'm good and per - fect and kind. I'll

20

E 7(#5) A m

Pno.

23

keep you safe and se - cure. As long as you will o -

23

Bb

Pno.

26

bey, then you can live here with - out fear. For

26

A m

Pno.

4₂₉ #3 - Taxes

I am on your side, deal - ing with those on high, give me all that i

29 B \flat B dim A m/C

Pno.

32

ask, and you'll be free.

32 A/C# D m7 G A m

Pno.

36

36

Pno.

Piano - Vocal

#4 - Counted

Wai Yong Tang

Piano

3

3

6

Pno.

Pno.

How

2 #4 - Counted

9 C D/C G C D/C G/B C D/C Em

long Lord must we wait? for sal - va-tion, for the Son? You have said that You would hear our cry, when we

12 *rit.* C D *a tempo* G C D/C G C D/C G/B

come to seek Your face. I would give my life my all, to — set my peo-ple free. like my

15 C D/C Em *rit.* C D G *a tempo* G D/G

fa-thers in the past. I will foll-ow in their path. I want to be count - ed,

Pno.

#4 - Counted

3

18 C/G G 3 Em7 3 G/D 3 Am7 C D

count - ed. with all of my heart, with all that I have I want to be used by You. I want to be

18

Pno.

21 G D/G C/G 3 Em7 3 G/D 3

count - ed, count - ed. to be like the stars, to shine in the dark, I want to be

21

Pno.

24 Am7 D G C D/C G

count - ed, by You I have wait - ed far too long, For some-

24

Pno.

4 #4 - Counted

27 C D/C G/B C D/C Em C D G

one to take a stand. To de-fend Your peo-ple and Your name, So__ use me Lord I pray.

Pno.

30 Dm C Bbmaj7

I've not much to__ off-er No spe-cial gifts__ or pow'r

Pno.

32 Gm7 Eb D2 C/D D

but my heart is__ will-ing. so use me Lord, I pray. I want to be

Pno.

#4 - Counted

5

35 G D/G C/G G 3 Em7 3 G/D 3

count - ed, count - ed. with all of my heart, with all that I have I want to be

38 Am7 C D G D/G C/G 3

used by You. I want to be count - ed, count - ed. to be like the

41 Em7 3 G/D 3 Am7 D Eb 3

stars, to shine in the dark, I want to be count - ed, by You.

Pno.

6 #4 - Counted

44 Cm6/D D7b9 Eb 3

by You.

Pno.

46 Cm6/D G

by You!

Pno.

Conclusion

Based on the research above, one can conclude there are many different elements that make up a musical drama. In it, the plot and the score work together to tell a story. Drama is essential in telling a story, and music is essential in evoking a psychological connection and an intense emotion that communicates to the heart. Also, the music of the play adds another aesthetic dimension to bring color and life to the musical. A musical theatre then unifies all these different aspects to present the event to the audience. Therefore, all the different elements of playwriting, musical theater, and songwriting must be unified and utilized effectively in a musical.

There are no absolute rules in writing a musical drama. Nevertheless, one who aspires to write a good musical should consider the different guidelines given by experienced playwrights, musical theatre directors, choreographers, composers, and lyricist to understand the fundamental elements of it. “More than a Wishful Dream” is an attempt to incorporate these different components of effective playwriting, musical theatre and songwriting into a Christian-themed musical to present the story of the birth of Christ. The author combined the biblical accounts of Joseph and the possible cultural norms during Joseph’s time to develop the character of Joseph. The author then used Joseph’s ambitions and desires to be great like his forefathers to build the plot line and to compel the audience. Besides that, the author composed the musical score using different elements of effective songwriting. By incorporating the different components of effective playwriting, musical theatre, and songwriting in “More than a Wishful Dream,” the author hopes the audience will comprehend the emotional depth and cultural realities surrounding the Christmas story, and thus experience the birth of Christ as a historical

event that truly happened. Finally, by showing Joseph's determination in obeying in God, the author hopes to show that true greatness is not achieved by doing great things, but rather by obeying the God who is great.

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