

HAMLET TO HAMILTON

Trailer

EMILY. Welcome, friends. You are listening to [Hamlet to Hamilton: Exploring New Verse Drama](#), a special audio presentation of [Turn to Flesh Productions](#).

[music]

Hamlet 1: To be...

Hamlet 2: To be...

Hamlet 1: ... or not to be?

Hamlet 3: To be or not to be?

Hamlet 1: That is the question.

Hamlet 3: ... or not?

[music]

EMILY. I'm your host, Emily C. A. Snyder, the Artistic Director and co-founder of Turn to Flesh Productions and a verse playwright myself.

Turn to Flesh Productions is a New York company that helps develop new stories in heightened text with vibrant roles for women and those underrepresented in classical art. So basically, we create roles for everybody Shakespeare didn't write for.

In this podcast, we'll be looking at the basics of how to write and perform verse drama; as well as including interviews with other verse playwrights talking about their process; and lastly, we'll be critiquing verse drama plays, both those that may be very well known to the audience and those that may be completely obscure.

I'm excited to start this journey with you and excited to hear what you've been doing in the world of verse drama. As the person who's had a lot of scripts cross my desk in the past eight or so years since Turn to Flesh Productions has been around, I've been thrilled to see scripts come in from Wisconsin to Jerusalem, from England through to our own backyard in New York City, where people are interested and invested in writing in poetical spoken forms. And I think there's a reason for that. I think that verse drama, much like a musical or an opera or a hip-hopera is able to tap into the fundamentals of the human heart in a way that prose drama doesn't give us as direct insight.

In musical theatre, we say that we start singing when the emotion overwhelms us, and when we're even more overwhelmed than that, we start dancing. And the same thing is true for verse drama. There are times when you just need to break out into meter, and sometimes even rhyme, and in this podcast, we're going to be talking about the mechanics of how to write in verse and then how to translate that verse as an actor.

One of the things that's most important to me as we build this podcast, and something that I miss from my years of being a teacher, is the interactivity. There's the old saying that the teacher learns from the students, but that's really true, and a lot of what I've learned as a verse playwright, coming from a background of being a classical actor and director for over 20 years, is that you're going to have insights that I won't have. You're going to take this form and develop it even beyond the tools that I'm really looking forward to giving you.

So what I hope is that you'll drop your insight in the comments, that you'll have questions, suggestions, and that this will become a thriving community. I've been blessed – we've all been blessed – here in New York City to get to know one another and to create an in-person community, and while this time of pause, as I'm recording this in the middle of the 2020 pandemic, something that I hope one day becomes a, “Oh, right, that thing happened.”

But right now, in a curious way, since everything has become digital, the lovely thing is that distance doesn't matter, and so hello. Hello, friend, whoever you are, in Jerusalem and England and India and South America and Australia and wherever you're listening in, hello and welcome. I'm looking forward to meeting you, and I'm looking forward to building this community of people who love poetry and people who love performance.

[music]

EMILY. [*Hamlet to Hamilton: Exploring New Verse Drama*](#) is a weekly podcast available to you from [Turn to Flesh Productions](#) audio division. If you like this work and would like to support it, you can head on over to [turntoflesh.org](#), and from there you can hit the donate button and help this community to thrive, and help bring verse drama a little bit back into the mainstream.

And now, a thousand times good night. Good night. Parting is such sweet sorrow, that I shall continue this podcast 'til it be morrow.

[music]