

5-2013

# Fight or Flight

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FIGHT OR FLIGHT

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Music in Composition

By

Asher Griffith  
University of New Orleans  
Bachelor of Arts in Music, 2011

May 2013  
University of Arkansas

## **ABSTRACT**

*Fight or Flight* is a one-act, science-fiction opera. Outwardly the story of an astronaut who is marooned on the Moon, this dark comedy is an allegorical tale of forced isolation and loss; and of the anxiety and sadness that inevitably result. Musically, this piece began as an experiment in the reverse-engineering of mostly improvisatory methods of musical spoken-word delivery such as rap or slam poetry; this compositional device being a means to the more important end of creating a live musical theatre lacking the flippant sparkle commonly associated with Broadway and the like, but also free of the “intellectual” or “academic” heft often perceived to be inherent in common practice period opera.

This thesis is approved for recommendation  
to the Graduate Council.

Thesis Director:

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