

Cut-up, Mash-up, Cento: A Tale of Two Operas and One Picture Book

Inspired by my work on the *Homerocentones*, I will discuss the libretti for *Voces Vergiliana*, a Vergilian cento I composed for an opera that premiered in 1997, and *NERON KAISAR*, a centonizing treatment of "standards" from Greek and Latin lyric poetry, which I put on the lips of the opera's interlocutors as dialogue/recitative, arias, and chorus as if characters spoke in "Classics" to one another naturally in context (the theme being Nero as performer, for whom life imitates art). Scene One of *NERON* premiered in Oxford a few years ago. It's a work in progress, to be completed in the next year or so. Additional information on *NERON KAISAR: A Poetic Opera in Ten Scenes* may be found at: <http://www.neron-kaisar-the-opera.org/2014/10/>

I will also discuss a picture book that I have completed and am currently seeking to publish. This will be my fourth book for young readers on classical themes. It's called *POEM: A Mashup*. Subtitled, *The Art of Poetry for Everyone*, the book is a rhyming cento of popular lines drawn from famous English-language poems on the theme of the *Ars Poetica*. Like the "Love is..." motif of old newspaper comics, the premise of this piece is "Poetry is..." I will provide the prospectus and text for the audience's hopeful amusement.