EDM Antigone vs. Sophocles' *Antigone* Study Guide and Discussion Questions

Study Questions for comparison between original Sophocles version and EDM version:

1. In Greek mythology there are a couple of versions of the story about how Tiresias lost his sight. In the EDM version, Tiresias has been given a new backstory – How does this colour our view of him? What does it add to the dramatic tension on stage? Why do you think the producer chose to add this?

2. In the *EDM Antigone* version of the play we see a flashback showing us Antigone and Haemon's relationship from before the action of the play started. Why do you think this production team has chosen to add this part?

3. When Creon makes his big speech near the start, he speaks to an audience. In Sophocles version this is to the elders and council of the city. In the EDM version it is to the general city at large (citizens). Does this difference matter? How would we, as a modern audience, relate to it differently if it was kept the same as the original?

4. There are many translations of *Antigone* and many choose a poetic style for the language. The EDM version a much more modern language style is used, and though it has some rhythm it is not poetry. Compare the conversation between Ismene and Antigone in each version. What differences do you notice? Do they convey the same information? Is one preferable to the other, and if so why?

5. The Greek amphitheatre was configured so that all the action was on a small stage surrounded by a semi-circle of sloped seating looking down on the stage. In the EDM version, there is seating on all 4 sides and the audience look up to the actors' positions. How might this production be different if it were performed in a more traditional setting shaped like a Greek amphitheatre?

6. The EDM production costumes are based on traditional Greek theatre styles, but add a twist in the use of the fabrics. Consider other costumes that might have been chosen. What effect would completely modern dress have? Or a military setting? Or others you can think of? Why do you think the producers chose these costumes, and what does it convey to the audience?

7. There are several deaths by the end of the play. Antigone, Haemon, and Eurydice all choose death.
   ◦ Compare the methods of death in Sophocles original and the EDM version. What is gained/lost by this change?
   ◦ How would it change the play if the characters did not commit suicide, but were killed by another character?

8. In Greek drama, the chorus remained separate from the action, commenting only, and passing judgement or giving perspective. Occasionally they acted as worshippers of a god, or villagers/elders of the town. In the EDM version, how impartial is the chorus? Does it affect their impartiality that the actors in the chorus sometimes play other characters?

9. In the original version of *Antigone* by Sophocles, there is no mention of music and the chorus provide commentary in between scenes of 'action' and dialogue between characters. Over time Greek dramas developed a style wherein the chorus might sing their speeches,

more like the big chorus numbers we are used to in a musical theatre production or film. In the EDM version, large chunks of chorus speeches are replaced with songs/music, often sung by one of the main characters. Consider how this changes the play.

- Just before Haemon's entrance, the chorus has a few speeches in Sophocles version, and the song 'Obcessive Personality' appears in the EDM version. Compare these two sections – where is the focus for each? What is the main point being communicated? Who is the message for?
- Thinking generally about the music vs. the chorus speeches – what does the music add? What would be missing if neither the music nor the chorus speeches was performed?

10. *EDM Antigone* is a Digital Rock Opera, using electronic rock music. The production could have been created in a more traditional Musical Theatre style, or using more Classical (orchestral) style music to complement the classical text (there is a version by composer Felix Mendelssohn). How would it change the production if these other styles were used? What other aspects of the production are working with the electronic music style to create the theatrical experience?

11. *EDM Antigone* makes heavy use of dance as an art form in helping to tell the story. What does this add to the production? How does in the inclusion of dance change the way you relate to the story?

Other Questions related to the play only:

1. The production team might have chosen to alter the play further in other ways. How would it change the play if Ismene did not share the blame? Why does she not also die at the end?

2. In the original *Antigone* says she would not have taken action to bury her brother if she had had children. Why might this be? What other reasons do people give for choices that are either 'with' or 'against' the government?
http://m.sparknotes.com/drama/antigone/context.html

3. Who caused the three deaths at the end of the play? What conclusion do you draw about the message Sophocles wants to convey in this play?

4. One of the most produced adaptations of *Antigone* is that written by French writer Jean Anouilh. He wrote it in response to one man's heroic act against the Nazi regime, knowing he would die as a result. The Spark Notes of this version mention that his production was censored by the Nazi's. Explore why this might be.