

PRE-SHOW IN-THE-KNOW

TITLE

Away by Michael Gow
Directed by Matthew Lutton

CURRICULUM LINKS

HSC English Standard and Advanced,
Area of Study: Discovery set text
Shakespearean intertextuality
Australian Theatre

PLOT SYNOPSIS

ACTS I & II (Sydney)

Sydney, December 1967. Tom and Meg are high school students performing in an end-of-year production of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. After the performance, their respective parents – Harry and Vic, Gwen and Jim – discuss their coming summer holidays together with school headmaster Roy and his wife Coral. The three families prepare for their separate holidays.

ACT III (Away)

Christmas Eve. Roy and Coral have flown to a resort on the Gold Coast. Coral befriends Rick, a young man on his honeymoon.

Christmas morning. Meg, Gwen and Jim have driven to a caravan park by the coast. A group of other campers, with a litany of complaints, confront Jim with a petition on how they want to improve things at the camp ground. A terrible storm blows through.

ACT IV (Away)

Tom, Vic and Harry's camp site by the beach was unaffected by the storm. Meg, Gwen and Jim have joined them there, as has Coral, all just in time for the campers' "amateur night" performances.

ACT V (Sydney)

At summer's end, 1968, a new school year begins. Meg's drama class read from Shakespeare's *King Lear*.

CAST AND CHARACTERS

Marco Chiappi - Jim
Julia Davis - Vic
Wadiah Dona - Harry
Glenn Hazeldine - Roy
Natasha Herbert - Coral
Heather Mitchell - Gwen
Liam Nunan - Tom/Rick
Naomi Rukavina - Meg/Leonie

STYLE

Classic Australian play
5 Act play

RUNNING TIME

1 hour and 40 minutes, no interval

THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR

How mood and atmosphere are created
How the storm is depicted
The use of music and choreography
Symbolism in the set design