

SYDNEY
THEATRE
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EDUCATION

ON CUE



The Tempest

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Cover: Richard Roxburgh. Photo: Andrew Cohen

Compiled by Kelly Young

The activities and resources contained in this document are designed for educators as the starting point for developing more comprehensive lessons for this production. Kelly Young is the Education Manager for Sydney Theatre Company. You can contact Kelly on kyoung@sydneytheatre.com.au

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ABOUT *ON CUE* & STC

ABOUT *ON CUE*

STC Ed has a suite of resources located on our website to enrich and strengthen teaching and learning surrounding the plays in the STC season.

Each school show will be accompanied by an *On Cue* e-publication which will feature essential information for teachers and students, such as curriculum links, information about the playwright, synopsis, character analysis, thematic analysis and suggested learning experiences.

For more in-depth digital resources surrounding productions, please visit the STC Ed page on our website: sydneytheatre.com.au/education

Such resources include:

- Director documentaries
- Design sketchbooks

STC acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora nation who are the traditional custodians of the land on which the Company gathers. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and we extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with whom we work and with whom we share stories.

ABOUT SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY

In 1980, STC's first Artistic Director Richard Wherrett defined STC's mission as to provide "first class theatrical entertainment for the people of Sydney – theatre that is grand, vulgar, intelligent, challenging and fun."

Just over 40 years later, that ethos still rings true.

STC offers a diverse program of distinctive theatre of vision and scale at its harbourside home venue, The Wharf; Roslyn Packer Theatre at Walsh Bay; and Sydney Opera House, as a resident theatre company.

STC has a proud heritage as a creative hub and incubator for Australian theatre and theatre-makers, developing and producing eclectic Australian works, interpretations of classic repertoire and great international writing. STC strives to create theatre experiences that reflect Sydney's distinctive personality and engage audiences.

Strongly committed to engagement in the community, STC's Education and Communities programs aim to inspire theatre appreciation and participation not only in theatres but also in schools, community halls; wherever people get together. STC offers an innovative School Drama™ program; partners with groups in metropolitan Sydney. Through these partnerships and initiatives, STC plays a part in ensuring a creative, forward-thinking and sociable future by engaging with young people, students and teachers.

The theatre careers of many of Australia's internationally renowned artists have been launched and fostered at STC, including Mel Gibson, Judy Davis, Hugo Weaving, Toni Collette, Rose Byrne, Benedict Andrews and Cate Blanchett.

STC often collaborates with international artists and companies and, in recent years, the Company's international profile has grown significantly with productions touring extensively to great acclaim.

STC is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its principal arts investment, development and advisory body; and by the New South Wales Government through Create NSW.

sydneytheatre.com.au

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS



SUITABLE FOR

Students in Years 10 – 12

CURRICULUM LINKS

English Stage 5 & 6

- Shakespearean Drama
- HSC English Advanced Module A: Textual Conversations

Drama Stage 5 & 6

- Dramatic Forms and Performance Styles: Shakespeare

THEMES AND IDEAS

- The place of humans in the natural world
- Magic and illusion
- Power and colonisation

CAST & CREATIVES

The Tempest

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

ARIEL

PETER CARROLL

ANTONIO

JASON CHONG

SEBASTIAN

CHANTELLE JAMIESON

ALONSO

MANDY MCELHINNEY

FERDINAND

SHIV PALEKAR

PROSPERO

RICHARD ROXBURGH

MIRANDA

CLAUDE SCOTT-MITCHELL

CALIBAN

GUY SIMON

STEPHANO

AARON TSINDOS

GONZALO

MEGAN WILDING

TRINCULO

SUSIE YOUSSEF

UNDERSTUDIES

DANIELLE KING

IAN MICHAEL

NICOLE MILINKOVIC

DIRECTOR

KIP WILLIAMS

SET DESIGNER

JACOB NASH

COSTUME DESIGNER

ELIZABETH GADSBY

LIGHTING DESIGNER

NICK SCHLIEPER

COMPOSER & SOUND DESIGNER

STEFAN GREGORY

DRAMATURG

SHARI SEBBENS

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

JESSICA ARTHUR

FIGHT & MOVEMENT DIRECTOR

NIGEL POULTON

ASSOCIATE FIGHT & MOVEMENT

DIRECTOR

TIM DASHWOOD

INTIMACY COORDINATOR

CHLOË DALLIMORE

VOICE & TEXT COACH

CHARMIAN GRADWELL

DESIGN ASSOCIATE (LIGHTING)

KATE BALDWIN

DESIGN ASSOCIATE (SOUND)

BRENDON BONEY

DESIGN ASSOCIATE (SET &

COSTUME)

JAMES LEW

PRODUCTION MANAGER

JOE FLETCHER

STAGE MANAGER

MINKA STEVENS

DEPUTY STAGE MANAGER

KHYM SCOTT

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

SEAN PROUDE

COSTUME COORDINATOR

SAMANTHA PERKINS

BACKSTAGE WARDROBE SUPERVISOR

SIMONE EDWARDS

DRESSER

ZOE LAWSON

MAKE-UP & WIG STYLIST

LINDSEY CHAPMAN

COSTUME MAINTENANCE

NYOK KIM CHANG

LIGHTING SUPERVISOR

ALEX MAIR

LIGHTING OPERATOR

ANASTASIA MOWEN

HEAD LIGHTING TECHNICIAN

AMY ROBERTSON

SOUND SUPERVISOR

ANTHONY LORENZ

QLAB SOUND PROGRAMMER

JESSICA DUNN

SOUND PROGRAMMER/OPERATOR

AL BREMNER

SOUND TECHNICIAN

ROSE MULCARE

STAGING SUPERVISOR

CHRIS FLEMING

HEAD MECHANIST

KANE MOTT

HEAD FLY OPERATOR

SEAN WAITE

REVOLVE OPERATOR

ZACHARY WHITE

REHEARSAL PHOTOGRAPHER

DANIEL BOUD

2 HRS, NO INTERVAL

THIS PRODUCTION OPENED AT ROSLYN PACKER THEATRE,
SYDNEY ON 19TH NOVEMBER 2022



DIRECTOR'S NOTE: KIP WILLIAMS

It feels almost impossible to try and encapsulate all that *The Tempest* is about. Its themes cover power, possession, nature, mortality, love, family, colonialism, art, magic, rage, shame, greed, revenge – the list goes on. In approaching this work, we have distilled these themes into a story about the importance of letting go – of what we can control, and what we can't. As the story unfolds, we often witness the tension between the intellectual choice of letting go and the emotional reality of doing so, along with the challenges and blindspots that come with seeking to reckon with the past whilst looking to remedy the world for the future.

The late plays of Shakespeare, of which *The Tempest* is the best example, are a continuing source of fascination and puzzlement for theatre-makers and academics alike. Of course, all of Shakespeare's major plays are deeply philosophical, but the late romances – as these last plays are sometimes called – dive headfirst into the world of the psyche, dreams, and the supernatural. They were also Shakespeare's most ambitious plays in terms of production design when they were originally staged in the early 1600s. Nature is a pivotal character in any reading of *The Tempest*, and in our production we have sought to bring this aspect of the text to the very fore. Jacob Nash's exquisite set design places the human figure in tension with nature, and in turn juxtaposes the finite quality of a human life with the eternal presence and power of the natural world. The island will outlast all the characters on stage. At the top of the play, Prospero's power has risen to the point where he controls nature. He uses magic to do so, and therein lies one of the great challenges of any production of this play – how do you express Prospero's magic? Jacob and I, along with our brilliant creative team – Elizabeth Gadsby, Nick Schlieper, Stefan Gregory, and Shari Sebbens – have found our answer in the natural elements. Fire, smoke, wind, water, wood, and, indeed, light are all interwoven in a myriad of ways to generate magic and the supernatural on our stage. I want to give a huge thanks to our production teams, especially Alex Stuart and the props team, for their genius in bringing these magical elements to life.

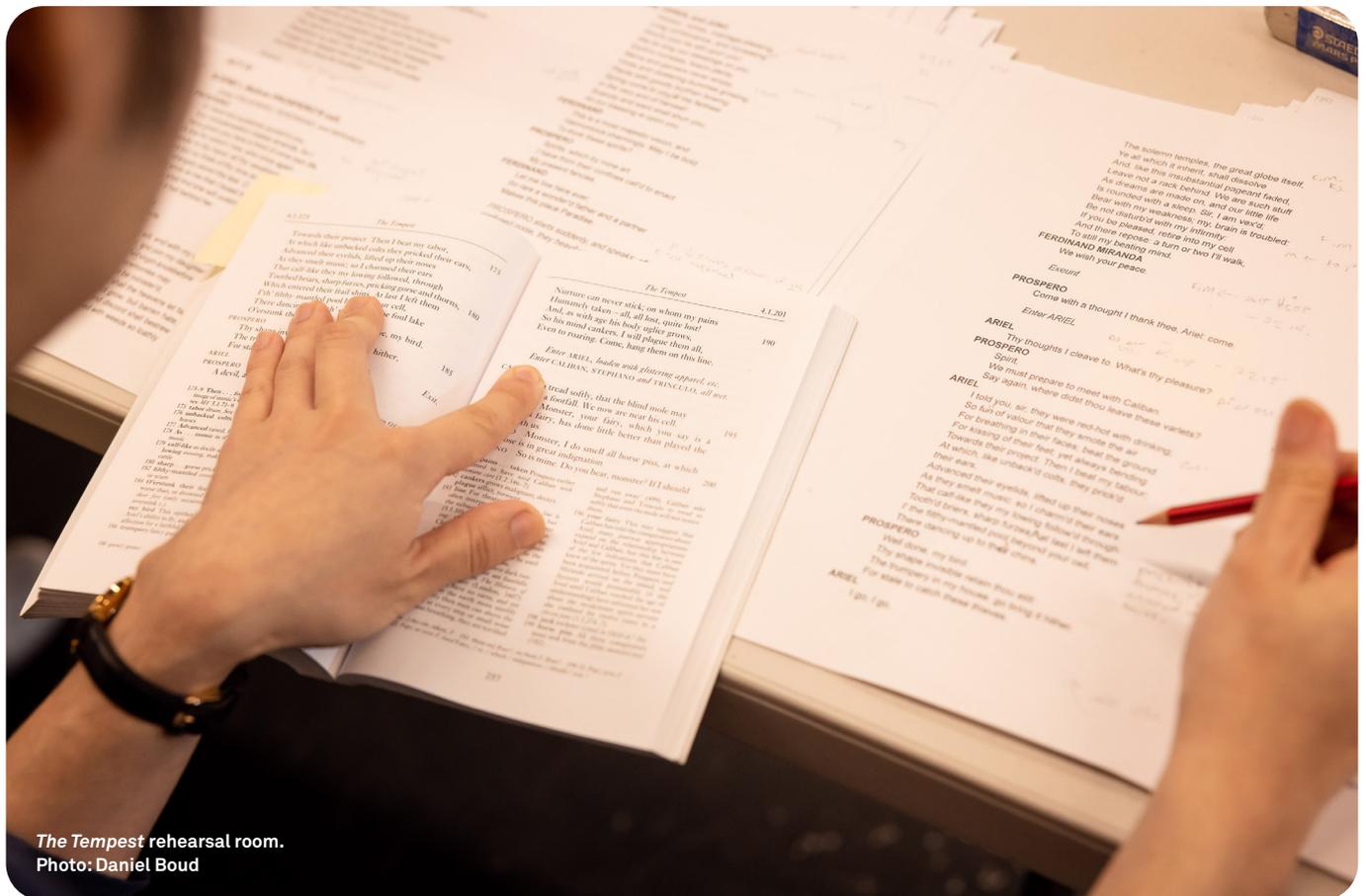
The Tempest is considered by many experts to be Shakespeare's final play. To date, we have no way of verifying this assertion but in reading the script one discovers so many echoes and references to characters and plotlines

from previous plays. It's as if this play is a culmination of all the Shakespearean voices, relationships and ideas that have come before. These echoes coalesce into a work that feels both summative of what has proceeded and expansive in its reach for a new way of thinking. In grappling with this text for our contemporary context, and with a focus on sharing this story with audiences on Aboriginal land, the creative team and I decided to lean into the apparent intertextual elements this late work, drawing links to other characters and speeches that have allowed us to both amplify and reframe certain elements of this play. Keen Shakespeare fans will notice that we have added moments of text from *Pericles*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Hamlet*, and most notably *Richard II*. In adding these 'interpolations', we aim to more deeply interrogate certain elements of the play; whether it be the framing philosophy voiced by King Alonso in the opening storm ("Wind, rain, and thunder, remember, earthly man is but a substance that must yield to you"), the agency that Miranda – the play's only female character – has in the story, or the characterisation and agency of Caliban and the colonial overtones of his relationship with Prospero. The latter aspect has had the most profound reshaping in our production, with a shift made to the back third of Caliban's trajectory. The expansion of the text to literally encompass Shakespeare's catalogue, not only feels true to the existing echoes in the play of works that have come before and informed its creation, but also acts as an invitation to think afresh and more deeply about all the characters of this play, and how they may resonate within our contemporary context.

I could not be more thrilled with the team that has come together for this production. I've had the great pleasure of directing the wonderful Peter Carroll, Jason Chong and Guy Simon in the past and am overjoyed to be in the rehearsal room with them again. I have also been long admiring the work of the other members of this cast – Chantelle Jamieson, Mandy McElhinney, Shiv Palekar, Claude Scott-Mitchell, Aaron Tsindos, Megan Wilding and Susie Youssef – and now have the great honour to be working with them and watching them transport this work into a new realm. And, of course, it has been a supreme gift to work with the great Richard Roxburgh on this special play. Rox and I have been talking together about this work for some years, and I am so thrilled to be finally bringing it to life with him

DIRECTOR'S NOTE: KIP WILLIAMS (cont.)

and our amazing collaborators. I am so grateful to all the wonderful artists, along with our brilliant crew, production teams and administrative staff for the generosity they have shown in sharing their talents and their perspectives on this mammoth of a play. The rehearsal period has been so joyful and lively and challenging and rewarding, and we are thrilled to share this story with you, one that we hope resonates with you deeply in light of the years we have lived through recently, of where we stand today, and of the future we look to forge together.



The Tempest rehearsal room.
Photo: Daniel Boud

SYNOPSIS

Sailing home from a wedding abroad, Antonio (the Duke of Milan), Alonso (the King of Naples) and their entourages are caught in a wild and terrifying storm. Amongst the rolling thunder, driving rain and forked lighting, the passengers of the ship are tossed into the sea.

The powerful magician Prospero watches on from a nearby island, with his daughter Miranda and his mystical attendant Ariel by his side. As the storm, a result of Prospero's magic, separates and scatters the castaways

around the island, he launches a plan to seek revenge and regain a title lost to him many years prior. At the same time, the island's first inhabitant, Caliban, launches his own attempt to regain control.

As these two plans converge and a young romance blooms, the lonely island plays host to a fantasia of magic and mystery in which each player will learn the transient nature of power and face their own mortality.



Richard Roxburgh in rehearsals for *The Tempest*. Photo: Daniel Boud

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

The characters have been selected with particular reference to English (Advanced) Module A: Textual Conversations.

PROSPERO

Prospero is the dethroned Duke of Milan who, with his daughter Miranda, lives on an unnamed island. Prospero wants to win his Dukedom back from his brother, Alonso, who ruthlessly stole Prospero's position from him. Prospero spends the majority of the play conniving to marry his daughter, Miranda, to Ferdinand, the son of the King of Naples, so that the two families can be joined and Prospero can take back his position and status. Prospero, helped by his trusted advisor, Gonzalo, had to flee Milan to save his life and landed on an island in his small boat. The island is already inhabited at the time of Prospero's arrival. With the help of the magic of the element spirit, Ariel, Prospero controls the island, the weather and its original inhabitants, enslaving them for his own purposes.

GONZALO

Gonzalo is a trusted advisor to Prospero, having served him faithfully when Prospero was the Duke of Milan. Gonzalo helped Prospero and Miranda to escape from Alonso's successful attempt to dethrone Prospero, organising the process of leaving Milan. Gonzalo packed Prospero's books, food and clothing into a small boat on which they fled to safety.



Shiv Palekar and Richard Roxburgh in rehearsals for *The Tempest*. Photo: Daniel Boud

CHARACTER ANALYSIS *(cont.)*

MIRANDA

Miranda is the daughter of Prospero and she has been raised on the island by her father since she was a baby. At the beginning of *The Tempest* she is a teenager with no real memory of her mother, or other people from her past, relying on Prospero's version of history to understand her origins. Miranda is the only female character (of the human kind) on the island and traditionally, she exhibits stereotypically feminine characteristics, such as gentleness, kindness and purity. In Williams' version, Miranda is self-reflective, feisty and deeply committed to exploring the world. When she meets Ferdinand, the audience sees a more energetic, physical and plainly spoken woman.

FERDINAND

Ferdinand is the son of Alonso, Duke of Naples, who has been shipwrecked on the island by Prospero's magical machinations. Ferdinand is well-versed in the world of power and status, having been brought up in the wealthy Court of Naples as the heir to his father Alonso. Ferdinand is smooth and experienced with women, using the beautiful language of courtly love when he meets Miranda for the first time.

ARIEL

Ariel is a spiritual or magical being who is unable to be categorised by gender and material form. Ariel has been imprisoned on the island in a tree by the owner, Sycorax, who is also Caliban's mother. Ariel is released from the tree by Prospero and, as a result, is enslaved until Ariel is able to fulfill tasks created for them. Ariel is a source of great power for Prospero because Prospero co-opts Ariel's magic as his own.

CALIBAN

Caliban is the original owner of the island, having inherited it from his mother, the witch Sycorax, upon her death. Prospero's invasion of the island results in Caliban being enslaved by Prospero and his young daughter, Miranda. Caliban struggles against Prospero's hegemony in which his language, history and agency are taken from him as part of the process of colonisation.



Megan Wilding, Mandy McElhinney and Jason Chong in rehearsals for *The Tempest*. Photo: Daniel Boud

PRE-TEACHING: FEUDALISM, CAPITALISM AND COLONISATION

The information and activities included below are designed to explore preconditions that gave rise to the Elizabethan Period – the context of *The Tempest*. These preconditions created the impetus for the transition between Feudal Europe and early capitalism.

The discussion below relies on a Marxist and Post Colonial reading of Shakespeare's context and values to begin a classroom conversation about *The Tempest*.

FROM FEUDALISM TO CAPITALISM

The Tempest was written and performed in 1611 and is thought to have been one of Shakespeare's last works. It was written in the first half of the reign of James I (1603 – 1625), who had inherited the throne from Elizabeth I (1558 – 1603).

Feudalism had been the dominant mode of social, cultural and economic organisation in Europe from the 5th Century AD, built from the ruins of the Roman system of slavery after the fall of the Roman Empire. The chaos left by the retreating Romans meant that European landlords provided small parcels of land for the peasants, in exchange for their labour on larger estates held by the landlords and protection from various invading powers. In addition, there were 'Commons' that were held for the community, in which all people were able to hunt and collect plant-based food, all of which added to the ability of the peasants to support themselves.

Whilst it was onerous, Feudalism provided some measure of protection to peasants in the form of their own small piece of land that they were able to develop and pass down through generations to male heirs. The Commons also provided some food security to the peasants if their subsistence crops were ruined or failed. The nature of subsistence farming and the addition of the Commons meant that the division of labour between men and women was less restrictive – with all members of a family contributing to the process of supporting themselves.

1. HOW TO CREATE A LABOUR FORCE

By the 14th Century, the Feudal System was deeply divided, with the peasants and their landlords in conflict, struggling over taxes, the compulsion to serve in the army and the threat to, and ultimate loss of access to, The Commons. This struggle resulted in the move to the payment of wages, rather than bartering in kind, and allowed peasants to sell their labour, surplus food and other goods at market prices. This loosened the grip of the Feudal landlords.

The emergence of the Black Death, which resulted in the disproportionate deaths of peasants and skilled labour, caused a far-reaching labour shortage. Thus the peasants had, for the first time, an advantage over their landlords, refusing to pay their rent and work for free. Additionally, the labour shortage meant that wages skyrocketed and peasants felt empowered to challenge the Feudal System. By the 15th Century, serfdom in Medieval England had almost completely disappeared, replaced by free farmers and other workers, who were able to command a significant wage.

This is a pivotal point in history, in which the transition to capitalism was gathering force. Capitalism required a huge amount of capital – both labour and resources – in order to make the transition from one economic system to another. Certain groups in society, such as women and First Nations people in colonised lands, bore the brunt of this violent process – a process designed to extract wealth and labour for the benefit of the ruling classes.

2. "CONQUEST, ENSLAVEMENT, ROBBERY AND MURDER" (MARX, K. VOL. 1 (1909) PG. 785)

Shakespeare's context was shaped by the violent, regressive response of the ruling classes to the increasing power of working people. The response was an attempt to retain control and build resources to strengthen the emergent capitalist economy. It was directed, not only at European working people who faced punitive measures to break their power, but particularly at women and at the First Nations people of colonised lands.

PRE-TEACHING: FEUDALISM, CAPITALISM AND COLONISATION

A. European Women: Creating Difference in the Labour Force

The process of creating division amongst the newly waged peasants in order to drive down the cost and control of their labour was based on the following strategies:

- Land was privatised, causing inflation and food scarcity.
- The Commons were enclosed (known as The Enclosures) in which access to hunting and plant-based food was removed.
- Harsh punishment of the homeless, the establishment of the Poor House and, in some parts of Europe, the reinstatement of Serfdom

European peasant women experienced the brutal forces of misogyny in an attempt by ruling classes to divide resistance to the forces of privatisation with the aim of creating a disciplined working class. Women's already limited access to paid work was curtailed, their skills devalued, with the result a further decline in wages in comparison to men. Up until this point in time, women had access to knowledge about reproductive control through the role of the midwife but this period saw the erosion of this role, partially as a result of witch hunts. Infanticide was punishable by death. In some countries, rape was decriminalised. Prostitution became socially unacceptable and therefore very dangerous for women, who had no protections under the law. At the same time, societal narratives advocated for large families and marriage became the only acceptable way to raise a family (Federici, 2004).

B. Colonisation: The Development of Global Capital

During this period the devastating process of European colonisation was also underway. The theft of land, colonisation, coerced labour and slavery provided the accumulated wealth for the Industrial Revolution that occurred 150 years later in Europe.

Beginning with the invasion of America by the Spanish, the process of subjugating and dehumanising First Nations people would become an integral process of

colonisation by the ruling forces of Europe. Grosfoguel (2013) has argued that in the "Long 16th Century", there were four important and interlinked genocides and "epistemocides" that formed the basis of the modern, global, racist, and misogynist world order (pg. 86). These genocides and epistemocides (Conquest of Al-Andalus, Conquest of the Americas, the African Slave Trade and Medieval Witch Hunts) unleashed destructive, violent forces designed to take land, created a global labour force, generated a racist system of assigning human value, and attempted to destroy the knowledges of First Nations people and women.

Classroom Activities

1. Watch the 'What was Feudalism?' video below from History Hub.
[youtube.com/watch?v=OfXholnOS9E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OfXholnOS9E)
2. a. Working in groups, students should research the Conquest of Al Andalus, the Conquest of the Americas, the African Slave Trade and Medieval Witch Hunts. Questions for each group to consider are:
 - What did the event involve? Did the First Nations people lose their land? How did they support themselves after the genocide?
 - What were the religious ideas that were used to justify these genocides?
 - What happened to the religious beliefs that had existed prior to the genocide?
 - Did women have a different experience of the genocides? What was it? What was destroyed as a result?
- b. Groups to report back on their findings.
- c. Make a class list of the similarities and differences of the events. Can the class see any patterns in the strategies used? Can the class identify the similarities in the benefits to Europe's ruling classes?
- d. Refer back to the History Hub clip on Feudalism from YouTube. Discuss the gaps in the knowledge in the clip. Why might this information have been left out?

PRE-TEACHING: SHAKESPEARE

The content below is designed to be taught within the context of the 'Feudalism, Capitalism and Colonisation' on pages 11 – 12.

WOMEN IN ELIZABETHAN/JACOBEAN ENGLAND

As noted previously, working women in Shakespeare's England were living through some of the most misogynistic disciplinary forces in history (Federici, 2004). Women in Elizabethan England experienced life differently from men as a result of the patriarchal structures that formed the basis of society. In this system, men were the beneficiaries of economic, social and cultural privilege in relation to women. For example, women were unable to attend university. Once married, women were (generally) not able to retain independent wealth and own property independently. Domestic violence was often socially accepted, as a woman was expected to submit to the authority of her husband.

It is important to note that women's experiences varied greatly, and largely depended on the class to which they belonged. For example, Shakespeare's context was dominated by the rule of two Queens – Mary I and Elizabeth I. Women from the ruling aristocracy were able to retain and run huge landed estates, generating enormous wealth that they managed on their own (Rackin, 2005).

The position of European women during this period of time was a complex and often difficult one. Depending on the forces of geography, race and class, women were increasingly confined by patriarchy, as the global gender hierarchy was established across the globe by European ruling classes. The decline of Feudalism and shift to capitalism, with its drive to accumulate labour power and wealth, meant that in Europe, peasant women were in the process of losing ground to jobs that had traditionally been available to them. Across the globe, women were also coerced into authoritarian forms of labour as part of the colonial process. This process was magnified by the global racial/ethnic hierarchy that privileged European women over First Nations women (Federici, 2004).

THE GREAT CHAIN OF BEING

The Great Chain of Being was a metaphor widely used by those in Shakespearean England to explain the order of the universe. This concept of the universe was based on the notion that everything has a place, defined by God. This metaphor was a hierarchical one and permeated Europeans' perceptions of their experience and place in the world (Lovejoy, 2009).

Originating from Ancient Greek philosophical thought, The Great Chain of Being became fused with Medieval theology that tried to combine within it a sense of a Christian God (Lovejoy, 2009). Rocks, as the most basic form of matter, are at the bottom of the hierarchy and an object's place in the chain was determined by its composition of matter and spirit. Matter was considered to be less developed than the spirit, hence God was at the top of the chain. Underneath God were the angels and below them was the monarch or the pope, depending on the country. The human chain progressed downward through what we now view as social class. At each level of The Great Chain of Being, women were below men and the further from Europe a person was, the lower they were in the chain.

It is worth noting that Shakespeare's context, with its focus on invasion and colonisation, saw The Great Chain of Being co-opted and changed. Feudal notions of religious racism shifted to a racialised understanding of concepts of 'inferiority' after 1492 when Columbus, expecting to find India, came across America and categorised the many American First Nations groups as one racial group. Rather than religious notions of inferiority melting away, the medieval concepts of religious discrimination became entangled with the emergent racial constructs generated by the conquest of the Americas (Grosfoguel, 2013). From this position, the idea of the racialised 'savage' was included into The Great Chain of Being, providing a racist justification for colonisation.

PRE-TEACHING: SHAKESPEARE

HUMANISM

Emerging as a philosophical approach to understanding humans in the world, based on science and scientific method, Humanism emerged in the Renaissance. The English Renaissance begins at the beginning of the Tudor Period (1485) and is thought to have receded by 1649, at the end of the rule of Charles I. It placed the human being at the centre of philosophical thought, rather than God. Humanism focuses on the importance of freedom, democracy, equality, dignity, education and rational thought as the way to maximise human potential and create for each individual a happy and fulfilled life. It was argued that, if each individual were able to maximise their potential, society would benefit.

Christian Humanism is a unique hybrid of Christian beliefs and Humanist thought. The view of the Christian Humanist can be seen in Shakespeare's works, particularly *The Tempest*. The character of Prospero appears to combine the values of Christianity, with its focus on God, morality and virtue, and the values of Humanism where people, particularly men, seek to lead rational, thoughtful lives to achieve their own version of fulfillment.

One of the criticisms of Humanism and its application to human thought is that, generated by Europeans and applied to a global context, Humanism and Christian Humanism are entangled by the forces explored previously, such as colonisation. Like The Great Chain of Being, Humanism and Christian Humanism, considered within the context of the emergence of global capitalism, became the justification for the assumption that Western knowledge should be privileged above all other systems of knowledge, including those of First Nations peoples, based on the primacy given to scientific theory, notions of rationality and the importance of the material world.

Classroom Activities

Working as a class, place each word listed below four times against the following four binaries:

Binaries

- Feminine/Masculine
- Colonised/Coloniser
- Magic/Reason
- Material/Supernatural

Word List

Nature, reason, logic, emotion, writing, thinking, fear, power, reading, learning, island, water, boat, curse, disease, storm, punish, authority, theatre, power, revenge, chaos, words, flesh, leaky, language, control, unity, magic, story, occult, alchemy, marriage, death, supremacy, cave, clothing, charm, order, spirit, disorder, history, books, library, director, servant, sing, music, witch, ownership, legitimacy, mimicry, civilised.

Once the words have been placed into each binary, discuss the reasons why the class has made these decisions. What assumptions and values are being enacted here? What connection might these words and their binary connotations have with each other?

THEMES & IDEAS

All references to *The Tempest* are based on the following edition of the work: *The Tempest*. Shakespeare, W. (1968). New Penguin Shakespeare, London, UK.

These notes take a postcolonial and postfeminist approach to *The Tempest*, challenging ingrained binary oppositions found in traditional readings of *The Tempest*. These resources also acknowledge the Advanced English Syllabus Module A: Textual Conversations, and are designed to support learning in this subject area.

The notes below are reflective of *The Tempest* as a text about the colonial and patriarchal process of control, authority and domination and the connection between linguistic and colonial oppression.

KNOWLEDGE, POWER AND AUTHORITY IN *THE TEMPEST*

Gender

The Tempest examines the construction of power based on gender and knowledge, with European elites accumulating capital, patriarchal power and the wealth of invaded lands in the attempt to consolidate and generate Western power. Shakespeare places Prospero, a representation of an Enlightenment man, at the centre of the narrative, within which he weaves the knowledge and narrative of the 'play within the play'. Having escaped Milan with his books, salvaged for him by Gonzalo, Prospero is the embodiment of the rational tradition of Western Europe. The audience immediately recognises Prospero as a man who knows the world 'objectively' from his experience of learning and as a result, feels rightfully able to exert control over it.

"Knowing that I loved my books, he [Gonzalo] furnished me
From mine own library with volumes that
I prize above my Dukedom" (Act 1, Sc. 2, pg. 69)

Shipwrecked on the island, the authority of Prospero's library, books and learning cast a long shadow over the creation and exercise of power. This is symbolic of a male space from which women and their knowledge are excluded. The salvaged books imported from Europe into a new land are an imposition on all who experience their power, with Miranda, Caliban and Ariel excluded from the generation of their own knowledge, stories and history.

Prospero has taken on the responsibility of educating his daughter, Miranda, into European constructions of knowledge, based on the books that he values so highly. In many ways, *The Tempest* is a play about teaching – Prospero has been Miranda's teacher for 12 years, inscribing on her the values of patriarchal Europe. In Act 1, Sc. 2, the audience sees Prospero's attempts to erase Miranda's early memories by insisting that Miranda listen to his version of their history and place it into the context of the reproduction of the family.

"Dost thou attend me?" (Act 1, Sc. 2, pg. 64 – 65)
"I pray thee mark me." (Act 1, Sc. 2, pg. 66)

In STC's version, however, Miranda demands to know about herself, her father and his motives. Prospero's constant and continuous repetition of his questions to Miranda are not met with passivity.

Miranda must, as she enters her teenage years, preserve her chastity to ensure that she remains a virgin in order to marry well and continue Prospero's patriarchal power. Prospero uses Miranda as a valuable commodity – a gift for exchange between patriarchal families as they consolidate their future political power and privilege. Prospero, with his focus on the preservation of his family's power and privilege, reinforces this patriarchal view of the world:

"Thy mother was a piece of virtue, and
she said that thou wast my daughter; and thy father
Was Duke of Milan; and his only heir
and princess, no worse issued" (Act 1, Sc.2, pg. 65)

THEMES & IDEAS *(cont.)*

It would appear on the surface that Miranda has been constructed by Shakespeare as an idealised woman – young, marriageable, well-connected and chaste. She is the ultimate construction of a woman at the centre of the reproduction of the family and thence, the reproduction of patriarchy and capital.

As Miranda moves through the learning Prospero has set for her, the audience witnesses Miranda making progress in her thinking outside the prescribed structures laid down by Prospero. As the character develops, the audience is able to watch her challenge the control of Prospero, creating a space for herself as an emergent adult woman. Miranda's proposal of marriage to Ferdinand, her immediate physical attraction for him and her upfront questioning "Do you love me?" (Act 3, Sc. 1, pg. 103) suggests a complexity in her character.

Williams' production, with its focus on Miranda and Prospero's relationship and Prospero's love for his daughter seeks to redress traditional imbalances in patriarchal power structures. The audience sees Miranda learning to expand her view of the world and her place within it, supported by her father. Prospero's love for his daughter changes him, moving him away from revenge to forgiveness.



Guy Simon in rehearsals for *The Tempest*. Photo: Daniel Boud

Colonialism

The Tempest is an allegory for the colonial process in which a European invasion results in the destruction of First Nations languages, histories and knowledge and then seeks to consolidate power through the transfer of resources.

Prospero is the embodiment of the colonial process, coercing Caliban and Ariel into his vision for the island. Not only is Prospero determined to exert his patriarchal power and authority over Miranda, he also extends this over the island, its resources (for example, moving timber in Act 3, Sc. 1) and its inhabitants through the process of physical enslavement and the destruction of knowledge, language and culture.

The process of the destruction of language and traditional knowledge is a key part of colonisation and is explored in *The Tempest*. STC's production emphasises that Caliban is the original owner of the land, and therefore an object of Prospero's fear. Prospero's explanation of Caliban's role on the island speaks to the colonisation process:

"...He does make our fire,
Fetch in our wood and serves in offices
That profit us...
Thou earth, thou, speak!" (Act 1, Sc. 2, pg. 75)

Prospero's continuous command that Caliban "speak" (Act 1, Sc. 2, pg. 75) references the colonial process in which the invader attempts to destroy traditional languages and culture. STC's audience, rather than the traditional reading of a colonised subject in which Caliban struggles with his new language, sees Williams reframe Caliban's response as a challenge to the colonial invader, speaking his truth to Prospero. Rather than a lack of intelligence or ability, Caliban is able to identify his inner conflict about his traditional knowledge and his understanding of Prospero's knowledge as the result of an enforced process – and one which, by the end of the play, has been harnessed by Caliban to challenge Prospero's narrative about himself.

THEMES & IDEAS *(cont.)*

The inclusion of the following dialogue included into Act 5, Sc. 1, of *The Tempest*, from Shakespeare's *Richard II*, Act 3, Sc. 2, speaks to Caliban's connection with country and ancestors:

“Needs must I like it well: I weep for joy
To sit upon my country once again.
Dear earth, I salute thee with my hand,
Though rebels wound thee with their horses' hoofs:
As a long departed mother with her child
Plays fondly with her tears and smiles in meeting,
So, weeping, smiling, greet I thee, my earth,
And do thee favours with my loving hands.”

Caliban, bereft of hope after his failed attempt to assassinate Prospero, calls to Country – the land of his mother, Sycorax, for connection in his grief.

Caliban's call, adapted from *Richard II*, Act 3 Sc. 2, and performed in *The Tempest*, is the shift of narrative and language that brings the process of contrition to the eavesdropping Prospero and provides a power base for Caliban that cannot be challenged or removed:

“Dear earth, I salute thee with my hand,
Though rebels wound thee with their horses' hoofs...
So, weeping, smiling, greet I thee, my earth,
And do thee favours with my loving hands.”

Prospero's final soliloquy, the Epilogue in Act 5, when read with Williams' directorial choices, suggests that, stripped of traditional ways of thinking, learning, and connecting with the world, Prospero has lost traditional sources and trappings of power:

“Now my charms are all o'erthrown,
And what strength I have's mine own,
Which is most faint now: 'tis true,
I must be confined by you,
Or sent to Naples.” (*The Tempest*, Epilogue)

Without the power of the West, faced with his own culpability in generating and maintaining harmful ways of being in the world, Prospero is left on the island to ponder the wreckage of his choices, alone and bereft.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Gender

1. Using knowledge of the play, make a list of the times that Prospero insists that Miranda listen to his teaching and agree with his ideological position about knowledge, history and power.
2. Using knowledge of the play, make a list of the times that Miranda makes unauthorised progress in her learning. That is, how does she move from a blank slate to a woman who is able to think for herself?
3. Consider the actor playing Prospero. He has a cloak and staff as props that the audience reads as symbols of his power. Students go into role as Prospero to explore the relationship with these props.
 - Explore the physicality of Prospero as he holds these two props when they *symbolise* his power. How does this change the way that he prepares to throw them away?
 - Explore the physicality of Prospero as he holds these props that are the *source* of his power. How does this change the way he prepares to throw them away?
 - In Williams' production, the character of Prospero breaks the staff and removes the cloak in an act of apology. What does this symbolise?

Colonialism

1. Using knowledge of the play, make a list of the times that Prospero insists that Caliban and Ariel do the following:
 - Accept Prospero's narrative of their history and their place on the island.
 - Speak to Prospero using Prospero's language and mimic his ideological position about knowledge, language and culture.
 - In each case, how does this impact their status?
2. Students take on the role of Caliban, Ariel and Prospero. The actor playing Prospero should have the props of staff and cloak to demonstrate Prospero's perception of himself in relationship to Caliban and Ariel. Discuss the meaning of each of the props for Prospero and what they might signify for Caliban and Ariel.

THEMES & IDEAS *(cont.)*

3. Using the following excerpt, explore the different ways that Prospero and Caliban might respond to each other.

“Hag-seed, hence!
Fetch us in fuel – and be quick, thou’rt best,
To answer other business. Shrug’st thou, malice?
If thou neglect’st, or doest unwillingly,
what I command, I’ll rack thee with old cramps,
Fill all thy bones with aches, make thee roar,
That beasts shall tremble at thy din.”
(Act 1, Sc. 2, pg. 77)

Consider:

The Elements of Drama (for example; space, focus, tension, atmosphere, symbol) and the Elements of Production (set, props, lighting, sound and costume) are used to bring dialogue to life on the stage. The relationship between Caliban, Ariel and Prospero is a complex one. The director and actors’ choices about how to use these Elements can suggest a depth in the relationship beyond the dialogue. With this in mind:

- How does Prospero use his physicality to communicate his perceptions of himself?
How do the other two characters do the same?
 - How might Caliban listen to Prospero’s dialogue above and, without saying a word, communicate his resistance to it?
 - What do the props represent to Caliban and Ariel? How might they respond to them? In particular, how might Ariel feel about the cloak and staff, given that their power is much greater than Prospero’s? How could Ariel show this to the audience?
4. Consider Ariel’s response in this moment is to sing of arrival on the island and the imposition of Western social behaviours. The actor playing Ariel could try this moment in the following ways:
- Overtly cheerful
 - Cheekily
 - Sadly
 - Gently
- How might these approaches to the previous interaction between Prospero and Caliban be created on the stage in a way that suggests resistance to Prospero’s authoritarian regime?



THEMES & IDEAS *(cont.)*

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AUTHORITY, NATURE AND THE SUPERNATURAL

Sycorax, First Nations Knowledges and Coloniality

Sycorax, Caliban's mother, is an important but unseen character in *The Tempest*, as she represents matriarchal power, located in her land, body and magic. Sycorax's maternal link with Caliban establishes his direct connection and ownership of the island. There is a profound connection to the elements of the island to which they are deeply intertwined. Shakespearean audiences, immersed in their understanding of The Great Chain of Being, understood that Sycorax's magic and power, generated through her connection with matter/materiality in nature, is generated in a 'lower' form than those who have been shipwrecked on the island.

Sycorax, then, is a fearsome object for Prospero, and by extension the racist and patriarchal forces of capitalism, as he attempts to justify the invasion and colonisation of the island for his own power and wealth. Sycorax's history, knowledge and language is a direct challenge to the fictions of colonialism in which the First Nations people of the globe require liberation from godlessness and backwardness. Her knowledge, magical power, racial identity and failure to adhere to Western constructs generates fear, loathing and envy in those who are seeking to take from her.

Prospero's approach to Sycorax and Caliban is a textbook approach to the imperialist drive to invade, conquer and enslave for material benefit, using not only physical power but also the power of narrative, the construction of knowledge and perception. Prospero's construction of Sycorax as a racial and gendered 'other', is the first strategy in challenging the legitimacy of Caliban's ownership of the island.

Prospero's control of the historical narrative of Sycorax's life and Caliban's presence on the island, much like his control of Miranda's history, is designed to generate and retain a hegemonic narrative. Unlike Miranda, however, Sycorax's traditional narrative of the land, magic and language contains within it the seeds of change and rebellion, making the discrediting and destruction of her narrative even more important for Prospero.

Ariel, First Nations Knowledges and Coloniality

The spirit, Ariel, is also an original inhabitant of the island. Imprisoned in a tree branch by Sycorax and freed by Prospero, Ariel is indentured to Prospero and his magic. This act by Prospero is weaponised and used for his own benefit. Ariel, as a spirit, cannot be seen or heard by anyone other than Prospero and provides Prospero with what appears to be godlike, omniscient powers. These powers are the result of an enforced power imbalance exploited by Prospero and used for his own benefit to retain personal power.

Whilst referred to as a 'he' in the original Shakespearean text, Ariel is not a unified subject in the tradition of the Enlightenment. Ariel's gender is blurred and their size and voice ambiguous, making the character one that might be easily dominated by Prospero. In STC's production, the role of Ariel is played by Peter Carroll. Placed into the magic of the Australian land and emerging from Jacob Nash's symbolic image of Country, the audience is able to see Ariel's connection with and power over the elements of the land.



Peter Carroll in rehearsals for *The Tempest*. Photo: Daniel Boud

THEMES & IDEAS (cont.)

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Sycorax, First Nations Knowledges and Coloniality

1. Working in groups, ask students to write down as much information as they can about Sycorax from *The Tempest*. Students should also include the source of this information – is it Prospero or Caliban?
2. From this investigation, the group is to write and perform a soliloquy as Sycorax, challenging Prospero's discourse about her identity and, as a result, the realities of what such a discourse says about Prospero.
3. As the group writes Sycorax's soliloquy, they should design a costume that best suits what they know about her and how she might envisage herself in and on her island. Each group should present to the class and explain why they have made their design choices and how these choices challenge the status of Prospero and his understanding of himself.

Ariel, First Nations Knowledges and Coloniality

1. In groups, place the images of the set of STC's production of *The Tempest* in the centre of each group; these can be found on page 21. Each group should brainstorm descriptive words and phrases that come to mind when they look at Jacob Nash's set.
 - Imagine the character of Ariel emerging out of the set. What does each group imagine a spirit that emerges from this world might look like? Design this costume and present to the class, justifying your choices.
2. Ariel and their connection to nature is incredibly important for the audience's understanding of Prospero's power over the island and its inhabitants. In the theatre, casting is an important part of the process of creating meaning. As a group:
 - Imagine that you are Kip Williams and the STC's Casting Director. How would you cast the entire production if you were taking a postcolonial approach to *The Tempest*? How would you cast the production if you were taking a postfeminist approach?
 - Consider the Masque in Act 4. Again, taking on the role of the Casting Director, who would you cast in the Masque? How might you recontextualise the Masque from a postcolonial or postfeminist perspective?

THEMES & IDEAS (cont.)



Top: Set design for *The Tempest*.

Bottom: Richard Roxburgh, Shiv Palekar and Claude Scott-Mitchell in rehearsals for *The Tempest*

Photos: Daniel Boud

THEMES & IDEAS (cont.)

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: WILLIAMS' PRODUCTION OF *THE TEMPEST*

The Character of Gonzalo

Williams' production of *The Tempest* explores the role of Gonzalo. In Shakespeare's context, Gonzalo represented the Christian Humanist voice of compassion and virtue, extended to all human beings. Influenced by thinkers of the period, including Montaigne. Shakespeare's Gonzalo challenges any clear division between Europeans and First Nations people. Instead, the thinking of the period, captured by Shakespeare, seems to suggest that the individual is responsible for their own behaviour.

STC's production explores a contemporary Australian construction of Gonzalo's values. The casting of Megan Wilding, a First Nations actor, in the role of Gonzalo, speaking the following dialogue, challenges the original meaning intended by Shakespeare. The dialogue is now a lament for lost culture, language and Land.

"I' the Commonwealth would by contraries
Execute all things; for no kind of traffic
Would I admit; no name of magistrate;
Letters should not be known; riches, poverty,
And use of service none; contract, succession,
Bourn, bound of land, tilth, vineyard, none;
No use of metal, corn or wine, or oil;
No occupation; all souls idle, all;
And children, too, but innocent and pure;
No sovereignty – " (*The Tempest*, Act 2, Sc. 1, pg.88)

1. Why might Williams have cast Megan Wilding, a First Nations actor, in the role of Gonzalo? How does dramatic irony work to create meaning in this moment?

The End of *The Tempest*

In Williams' production of *The Tempest*, the relationship between Prospero and Caliban concludes on a very different note than in Shakespeare's original text. The final exchange between Prospero and Caliban has been changed in STC's production and is included on page 23.

1. Using the extracts on page 23 and working in pairs, stage one of the two final moments between Caliban and Prospero. At least one pair is to work on the extracts below in which Caliban responds to Prospero. The class can mix and match the different endings and discuss the following questions:

- What does the original interaction between Caliban and Prospero communicate to the audience about the position of Caliban and First Nations people?
- Make a list of the ways in which Williams' changes to the final interaction have changed the way that First Nations people have been positioned in the discourse generated by the play?
- Make a list of the symbolic meaning generated by Caliban cutting a wound in the palm of Prospero. Why might Williams have included this image in the production?

2. Williams has used the same original text in his final interaction between Caliban and Prospero. Both are Caliban's dialogue but they have been rearranged and the order of the dialogue has been reversed. This change is below. How has this change altered the meaning of the play?

Original Text (Caliban)	Williams' adaptation (Caliban)
<i>Ay, that I will; and I'll be wise hereafter, And seek for grace.</i>	<i>Seek for thy grace. For I'll be wiser thereafter.</i>

3. In the same groups, students should discuss and determine the meaning of the staff (sceptre) and cloak that Prospero discards at the end of the STC production of *The Tempest*. Imagine that the character of Caliban picks up two items in their place – two items that might represent the wisdom, learning and status of a First Nations culture. How might this change the meaning of these final moments?
4. The final stage directions for STC's production are as follows:

The storm returns. Prospero alone in the storm.

As a class students should discuss the following questions:

- What is Williams saying about the relationship between revenge and redemption in this final image? Will Prospero be able to leave the island? Why?
- Knowing what you know about the historical forces behind *The Tempest*, write an extended response that answers the following question:

Williams' final image of Prospero reflects a context and values that is removed from Shakespeare's.

To what extent do you agree with this statement?

THEMES & IDEAS (cont.)

The End of *The Tempest* text comparison

Original Text	Williams' adaptation
<p>PROSPERO: <i>Mark the badges of these men, my lords, Then say if they be true. This misshapen knave, His mother was a witch, and one so strong That could control the moon, make flows and ebbs, And deal in her command without her power. These three have robbed me, and this demi-devil – For he's a bastard one – had plotted with them To take my life. Two of these fellows you Must know and own. This thing of darkness I Acknowledge mine.</i></p> <p><i>He is as disproportionate in his manners As in his shape. – Go sirrah, to my cell; There to return what's mine; and as you look To have my pardon, trim it handsomely.</i></p> <p>Act 5, Sc. 1, pg. 267 – 292</p>	<p>PROSPERO: <i>Go sirrahs, to my cell; There to return what's mine; and as you look To have my pardon, trim it handsomely.</i></p> <p><i>Give me your pardon, sir: I've done you wrong What I have done, That has your nature, honour and your land Roughly betrayed, I here proclaim was wrong. Now mark me, how I will undo myself; I take this heavy cloak from off my back And this wieldy sceptre I do break, The pride of royal sway from out my heart; With mine own hands I give away my books, With mine own tongue deny my sacred state, With mine own breath release all duty's rites: All pomp and majesty I do forswear; Make me, that nothing have, with nothing grieved.</i></p> <p>Hamlet Act 5, Sc. 1</p>
<p>CALIBAN: <i>Ay, that I will; and I'll be wise hereafter, And seek for grace. What a thrice double ass Was I to take this drunkard for a god, And worship this dull fool!</i></p> <p>Act 5, Sc. 1, pg. 295 – 298</p>	<p><i>A pause. Caliban picks up the broken staff, slowly walks behind Prospero and knocks his legs. Prospero falls to the ground. We think Caliban is about to kill him. Instead he grips Prospero's hand and, with the broken staff, slowly cuts a wound in his palm.</i></p> <p>CALIBAN: <i>This sceptre shows the force of temporal power, The attribute to awe and majesty, Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings; But mercy is above this sceptred sway; It is enthroned in the heart of kings; It is an attribute of the Gods themselves; And earthly power doth then show likest God's When mercy seasons justice.</i></p> <p><i>Seek for thy grace. For I'll be wiser thereafter.</i></p> <p>Exit CALIBAN</p> <p>Merchant of Venice Act 4, Sc. 1</p>

FORM, STYLE & CONVENTIONS

Williams has chosen to fuse a number of theatrical styles with literary references to other Shakespearean texts, including *Pericles* and *Richard II*.

THE PLAY WITHIN A PLAY

The Tempest is in conversation with itself, with Shakespeare including a 'play within a play' in which the narratives speak to each other. Prospero, with the power of Ariel's magic, controls the narrative of *The Tempest* and creates opportunities within which he is able to direct the discourse for those on the island. Prospero is able to start and end narratives at will, including ending his own stage managed dream sequence in the Masque (Act 4). He controls the historical narratives of others and insists that the spoken language of the narrative occurs on his terms. On a metatheatrical level, Prospero is a symbol of the power of imperialism and the process by which the European elite were able to shape global structures for their own benefit.

ELIZABETHAN THEATRICAL STYLE AND SOLILOQUY

Elizabethan Theatre is a heightened version of human experience, created by the technological constraints of the Elizabethan period and the conventions of dialogue in which poetry, seen as an elevated form of communication, was blended with prose, replicating social and cultural beliefs about status and how it was communicated.

Acting in Shakespearean Theatre is exaggerated, in order to communicate the narrative to large outdoor audiences and also to create a more intense emotional experience for the audience. This means that the acting, elements of production and narrative are 'larger than life' so that the emotions generated in the audience are felt more keenly, particularly in the absence of elaborate sets, costume, lighting and sound. The audience was required to imagine the world being created by the playwright through the language written by the playwright.

A common feature of Elizabethan Theatre is the soliloquy, which is a device by which the audience is made aware of the inner thoughts of the character. This occurs when the actor speaks their thoughts out loud, either by themselves or without others around them but importantly, the thoughts are never heard by others.

THEATRE OF THE ABSURD

Theatre of the Absurd emerged after World War Two as a theatrical response to the existential crisis generated by Hiroshima and the Holocaust. Built on the philosophy that human life is meaningless, Absurd Theatre seeks to explore the ways in which human beings spend their lives, trying to find meaning in sex, violence, exercising power over others and the indulgence of their senses.

Williams has connected his vision for *The Tempest* and the use of the conventions of Theatre of the Absurd. Williams' island, a mythical place, reflects the meaninglessness of the human desire to dominate, control and destroy. Prospero, like many Absurd characters, is left on his own to reflect on the loneliness of human experience. This loneliness, like that of many Absurd characters, is generated by Prospero's lack of awareness of himself, his place in the universe and the human impulse for violence and destruction.



Aaron Tsindos in rehearsals for *The Tempest*. Photo: Daniel Boud

THE ELEMENTS OF PRODUCTION

SET DESIGN

Designer Jacob Nash has worked with Director Kip Williams to explore the relationship between nature and human beings by focusing on the elements – earth, wind, fire and water. Nash has used Australian references in his designs, including rock, wood and colour to suggest a colonial past in which questions of land ownership and human behaviour can be examined.

Central to the set is an enormous rock that represents Aboriginal Land. Designer Nash has placed this rock on a revolve in the centre of the stage, symbolising the centrality of Aboriginal Land as the site of invasion and colonial struggle. Around the rock is a glossy black floor, representing the Aboriginal people and their connection to their land. Nash and Williams, by placing the arrival of the characters after the shipwreck on the rock as it revolves, clearly indicates invasion and the process of colonisation.

Nash has chosen to include tree branches that are able to be flown in and out of the space. These branches appear as the European arrivals on the island move further inland. Brown-grey in colour, they are suggestive of ghost gums and evoke the landscape of Central Australia. None of the branches have leaves, however, suggesting that the health of the environment is immediately compromised by the appearance of Europeans.

The magic of *The Tempest* is symbolised by the use of fire, suddenly appearing for the audience on the wood of the set. Nash's vision to include fire suggests the depth, breadth and reach of the power of the land. Prospero's staff is also made of the same wood, indicating that his magic has been co-opted from stolen land, and is destructive in its use.

Australia, also an island, is surrounded by water like the island of *The Tempest*. The storm, created by Ariel at Prospero's request, is created by the use of dry ice through which the survivors will emerge at the start of the performance. The power of the ocean and the importance of First Nations peoples' relationship with it, is symbolised through the pervasive nature of the mist on the stage, which interacts with the elements of the land and is dispersed throughout the air.

COSTUME DESIGN

STC's production pays homage to Shakespeare's context through the use of traditional shapes, textures and colours whilst suggesting a timelessness that speaks to all humanity. Elizabeth Gadsby's vision for the costume design was to locate the characters of the past but blur the specificity of a particular historical period in order to explore the mythic nature of the island and the human experiences that occur within. Gadsby has played with colour palette and loose silhouettes to locate the costumes in an indistinct past, with textures used to suggest the status of the characters. For example, Prospero's magic cloak has a traditional, Elizabethan shape, and the King of Naples' coat is the only coat of a significant length, reflecting power and privilege. The performance of power is important to the world of the play and Gadsby uses detail and adornment to comment on the character's perceptions and use of power.

Gadsby has also sought to reflect the differences between traditional constructions of character and those explored by Williams in STC's production. Gadsby has designed contemporary costume for Miranda, in which the contemporary agency we see in Williams' production, can be seen in a more androgynous shape, with trousers and equipped to perform physical work on an island.

Gadsby, like Williams, has also been influenced by the existential work of Samuel Beckett. Beckett's work questions human experience by creating mythical characters that explore human interactions in a space that lacks the specificity of time and place. The island is undefined by time and space whilst suggesting that the action of *The Tempest*, whilst occurring centuries ago, is a lived experience for First Nations Australians.

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