



**MARIN
SHAKESPEARE
COMPANY**

SEPTEMBER 12, 2025
FOREST MEADOWS AMPHITHEATRE



THE
TEMPEST

MAINSTAGE STUDENT MATINEE 2025

DISCOVERY GUIDE

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**MARIN
SHAKESPEARE
COMPANY**

PLAYING FOR GOOD

ON STAGE | EDUCATION | SOCIAL JUSTICE

514 FOURTH STREET
SAN RAFAEL, CA 94901
WWW.MARINSHAKESPEARE.ORG

WELCOME!

September 2025

Dear Educators, Students, and Audiences,

Welcome to *The Tempest*, adapted and directed by M. Graham Smith. This is Marin Shakespeare Company's first student matinee performance of a summer season production since before the pandemic, so welcome back! Student matinees are a vital part of our mission at Marin Shakespeare Company. As MSC Artistic Director Jon Tracy says,

"Our goal is to create an experience that's vibrant, immediate, and unforgettable—a production that not only honors Shakespeare's work but speaks directly to the next generation, inspiring them to see themselves within these enduring stories."

The Tempest, one of Shakespeare's final plays, is at once a magical comedy and a profound culmination of his life's work. Blending tragedy, romance, humor, and some of his most evocative language, the play shimmers with depth and wonder. Director M. Graham Smith unravels its rich fabric, inviting us to reflect on the power of reconciliation and the magic of forgiveness, all while preserving the awe and spectacle that make the play unforgettable. We are also asked to consider the questions at the heart of the play. In his Director's Note, Smith writes,

"When a cataclysm severs us from the past—whether it be a storm, a betrayal, or a societal rupture—what kind of future will we create? What values will guide us? Will we repeat the harm that shaped us, or will we build something better, not for ourselves, but for those who come next?"

Thank you for joining us for this performance. And remember, theatre is not stagnant and plays are not written to be read. You are part of a living art form. You, as the audience, have a role to play that is just as important as any actor, designer, or even the director. Each performance is shaped by the dynamic of the audience, by your responses and energy, so engage and participate fully! Don't be afraid to laugh out loud, clap when a moment hits you, cry if you are moved, and listen closely with your ears, your heart, and your whole self. Observe how all the parts of the performance come together to tell this story, in this moment, just for you.

This Discovery Guide was compiled to enhance your experience with the production, and I hope the information, activities, and resources inside will challenge you to engage with the play in new ways and inspire you to dig deeper into the works of William Shakespeare.

If you have any questions, want to discuss the contents of this guide or our production, are looking for more ideas about bringing Shakespeare, poetry, and literature alive in your classroom, or are curious how Shakespeare can help you engage with current events and social issues, I would love to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Elana Kepner (she/her), Education Director
education@marinshakespeare.org, 415.499.4487

CAST

(in alphabetical order)

Jordan Covington

Stevie DeMott

DeAnna Driscoll*

John Eleby

Madelyn Garfinkel

Anna Ishida*

Anthony Jefferson

Jahfari Maddo

Adam Mendez Jr.

Iyanu Olukotun

Kevin Rolston

Stacy Ross*

Chris Steele

Anna Takayo*

CREATIVE TEAM

Director, Adaptor: M. Graham Smith[^]

Assistant Directors: Lane Richard, Sophie Shoemaker

Stage Manager: Kaitlin Weinstein*

Assistant Stage Manager: Dianne Harrison*

Set Designer: Nina Ball**

Lighting Designer: Jon Tracy

Sound Designer: Ray Archie

Costume Designer: Bethany Deal Flores

Prop/Puppetry Artisan: Peter Parish

Fight Director: Dave Maier

Intimacy Director: Jeunée Simon

Kaleidoscope Dramaturg: Philippa Kelly

Dramaturg Support: Aejay Antonis Marquis, Nick Musleh

MARIN SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

Artistic Director: Jon Tracy

Managing Director: Lesley Currier

Business Manager: Noah Rojas-Domke

Education Director: Elana Kepner

Production Manager: Leontyne Mbele-Mbong

Technical Director: Jackson Currier

Shakespeare for Social Justice Director: Suraya Susana Keating

Associate Artists: Aejay Antonis Marquis, Cathleen Riddley, Elena Wright, Joey Pagaduan, Michael Torres, Nick Musleh, Nina Ball, Stevie DeMott

*Member, Actors Equity Association, **Member, Local USA 829

[^]Member, Stage Directors and Choreographers Society

MAGIC, REVENGE & FORGIVENESS

A Conversation on *The Tempest*

Elana Kepner, Marin Shakespeare's Education Director, had the opportunity to sit down with M. Graham Smith, Director and Adaptor of *The Tempest* to talk about the production. An excerpt of their conversation is below, edited for clarity and length.

Elana Kepner: I'd love to start by returning to something you said on the first day of rehearsal for *The Tempest* about forgiveness, which really struck me. Can you elaborate on that and talk about how it applies to the characters in the play, and Shakespeare's late plays in general?

M. Graham Smith: A lot of Shakespeare's tragedies are about leaders who start off by making one bad decision. That sets off a chain reaction of more bad decisions to try and fix the first one, and the consequences get worse and worse. It's a tragedy because they don't see the opportunity to do something different.

In Shakespeare's late plays, they almost follow that same pattern—except the leader is given the opportunity to change course. In *The Tempest*, Prospero is seeking revenge for the wrong done to her by her brother and by the King of Naples. She has them trapped in her power. But at the last moment, she makes a different choice. Instead of continuing down the revenge path, she forgives both her brother and Alonso, the King of Naples. She gives up her magical powers and resumes a more or less mortal life.

Forgiveness is one of the most amazing magic tricks in the world, because it releases both the person who committed the wrong and the person who has been wronged. Carrying around a grudge is really heavy. Letting go of that allows Prospero to regain her humanity and regain a set of possibilities she couldn't access if she stayed focused on revenge.

EK: Was there a particular inspiration or image that shaped your vision for this production?

MGS: As a young person, I was really interested in magic. I became curious about the ways Prospero is or isn't a magician, and what magic meant in Shakespeare's time. I learned that the word *tempest*, in addition to meaning a storm, also means the moment in a magic trick or in an alchemical reaction when one thing transforms into another. It's the moment when the handkerchief gets pulled away and something else is there, or when lead turns into gold. I was really interested in this idea of *tempest* as transformation.



Sea Venture in the Storm, William Harrington (1959)

I also saw a painting of a ship in a storm that made me think about how life can be divided into “before” and “after” certain events. The storm in *The Tempest* creates that kind of transformation for every character.

EK: How do you think that Miranda, Ariel, and Caliban specifically help Prospero change?

MGS: That's a great question. As for Miranda, Prospero says at the very beginning, “Everything I've done, I've done for thee.” I think there's one possible future for Miranda, where she gets on board with her mother's revenge plot and carries it forward in the way that Hamlet does, ending in tragedy. But I think there's a stronger magic at work in the play. Miranda meets Ferdinand. Love magic is stronger. I think Prospero recognizes that if she can lay down the baggage of this revenge plot, Miranda's future will be full of a lot more happiness, opportunity, and prosperity.

Ariel, in a weird way, teaches Prospero how to be human. Ariel is attempting to grasp these complex notions of human emotion and justice with a sense of empathy that Prospero is lacking, up until that point. That's the turning point, when Ariel says, “I would, if I were human,” and Prospero makes the greater choice in virtue, not vengeance, reversing all the charms.



In rehearsal, Anna very quickly said, "Can I get down there and play with them?" I was like, yeah, that's more interesting. So we still have that image up there to remind people what the Neapolitans are seeing, but, by the end, we've dropped a lot of the storm and loudness, so it's almost like she's whispering in their ears. That's where the madness comes from. They're driven mad by guilt, by conscience. That was something we discovered in rehearsal.

EK: *If there's something that you want the audience, especially the young people, to take away in terms of an idea or question, what do you hope that it will be?*

MGS: I'd like them to think about their own capacity to change and transform. Are we exactly who we think we are, or do we have the capacity to see the world and ourselves differently?

Also, in this play, there is an experience of awe and wonder that has to do with being on a remote island that's beautiful, wild, weird, magical, and also magic itself. But those experiences exist everywhere. I wonder if the students could come away identifying something in their lives that brings them wonder and awe, a source for creativity, joy, patience—all important virtues.

EK: *This production got me thinking about how the younger generation can avoid repeating the cycle of harm from the previous generation.*

MGS: I love that. Ferdinand and Miranda have inherited, come to their marriage, ostensibly going to be king and queen of both lands. How are they going to take what they've inherited and do better? That's the question all young people are being asked now. How are they gonna fix all these things the previous generations refused to fix? What does it mean for Miranda and Ferdinand, and this new generation, to take the helm?

MGS (cont.): Caliban is an interesting question. Prospero has enslaved Caliban, and then Caliban plots to assassinate Prospero with two drunken fools. Then Caliban seems genuinely repentant in a way that is convincing to Prospero. In a full-circle moment, another layer of forgiveness, Prospero leaves Caliban with the island. It's the beginning of another cycle.

EK: *What was the biggest challenge of this production?*

MGS: I think our challenge was always, how do we create spectacle and illusion in an outdoor space? Like in the first scene of the play, it's about three and a half minutes long, but we spent so much time trying to figure that out so the audience would be really impressed by an illusion that happens in broad daylight. It's all about actors' choices, choreography, sweat, sound design, and scenic design to make the ship feel like it was breaking in two.

EK: *Was there a moment in rehearsal that surprised you or an actor's choice that made you change how you thought about the scene?*

MGS: Initially, I had planned the harpy as a large-scale illusion, reliant on big sound design and puppet design with Anna Ishida [the actor who plays Ariel] on top of that cliff, menacing the three Neapolitans.



M. Graham Smith (Director, Adaptor) is a freelance Director, Educator, and Producer. Recent directing credits: World Premieres of Obie winner Christopher Chen's *Home Invasion*, Kevin Rolston's *Deal with the Dragon* (Magic Theatre & Edinburgh Fringe), The Mortification of Fovea Munson (*The Kennedy Center*); *Father/Daughter* (Aurora); *White Chip*, *Pickleball at B Street*, *You for Me for You* (Crowded Fire), and *White* (Shotgun). In development: *FDR's Very Happy Hour for The Perelman Center for the Arts*, centering *d/Disability and Access* in an immersive environment. He teaches at A.C.T. and Berkeley Rep. He's a graduate of Wesleyan University where he directed the first workshop of *In The Heights*.

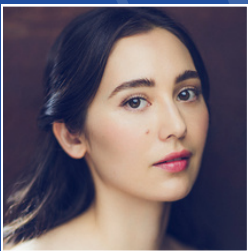
WHO'S WHO IN THE TEMPEST

THE INHABITANTS OF THE ISLAND



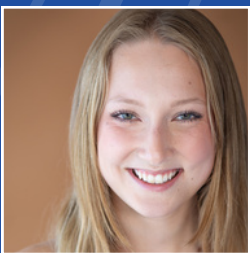
PROSPERO (Stacy Ross*) The rightful Duke of Milan. Prospero is a powerful magician who uses her command of the supernatural to orchestrate events on the island and seek justice. She is both a loving mother to Miranda and a controlling figure, working to restore her position and secure a future for her daughter.

ARIEL (Anna Ishida*) A spirit of air and Prospero's loyal servant. Ariel is ethereal, swift, and eager for freedom. Though bound to Prospero, Ariel performs magical tasks with grace and precision, anticipating eventual release.



MIRANDA (Anna Takayo*) Prospero's teenage daughter. Miranda has lived most of her life in isolation on the island. Compassionate, curious, and innocent, she quickly falls in love with Ferdinand and represents hope for reconciliation and renewal.

CALIBAN (Chris Steele) One of the island's original inhabitants, Caliban is the son of the witch Sycorax. He resents Prospero's control and colonization of the island. Despite his monstrous appearance, Caliban speaks in poetic, vivid language that reveals both his connection to the island and his complex inner life.



FLORA (Madelyn Garfinkel) A goddess that Prospero invokes to preside over a special ceremony.

VARIOUS MAGICAL CREATURES & ANIMALS

Jordan Covington, Stevie Demott, Madelyn Garfinkel, Anthony Jefferson,
Jafari Maddo, Iyanu Olukotun

These puppeteers operate puppets in magical moments throughout the play.

ABOARD THE SHIP



ALONSO (John Eleby) The King of Naples. Alonso is grief-stricken over the apparent loss of his son. His journey on the island is one of remorse and eventual reconciliation, especially with Prospero.

FERDINAND (Jordan Covington) The son of Alonso, King of Naples. Ferdinand is shipwrecked on the island and falls in love with Miranda. Noble, patient, and devoted, he represents the younger generation's potential for harmony and renewal.



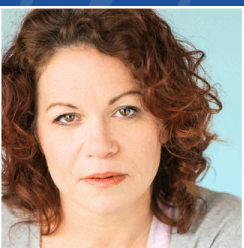
ANTONIO (DeAnna Driscoll*) Prospero's treacherous brother who usurped the dukedom of Milan. Ambitious and unrepentant, Antonio continues scheming even when confronted with his past crimes.

SEBASTIAN (Adam Mendez Jr.) Alonso's brother. Sebastian is easily tempted to betrayal and nearly commits regicide. His actions mirror Antonio's, showcasing the persistent threat of corruption and ambition.



GONZALO (Kevin Rolston) A kind and honest courtier, Gonzalo helped Prospero and Miranda escape Milan and survive their exile. On the island, he serves as a voice of optimism, wisdom, and moral clarity.

STEPHANO (Stevie DeMott) A drunken butler, Stephano dreams of ruling the island after being worshipped by Caliban. Like Trinculo, he adds humor to the play while highlighting the absurdity of colonial ambitions.



TRINCULO (DeAnna Driscoll*) A jester shipwrecked on the island, Trinculo provides comic relief through his drunken antics and bumbling schemes. He joins Caliban and Stephano in a foolish plot to overthrow Prospero.

ADRIAN (Iyanu Olukotun) A lord in Alonso's company, Adrian is polite and optimistic, often trying to keep the peace among the nobles.



THE BOATSWAIN (Anthony Jefferson) A blunt, capable crew member of the ship.

THE SHIPMASTER (Jafari Maddo) The ship's captain, who helps coordinate the ship's response to the tempest.



*Member, Actors Equity Association,

ABOUT THE PLAY

Sources

The Wreck of the Sea Venture (Dabney Herndon Maury, 1896)

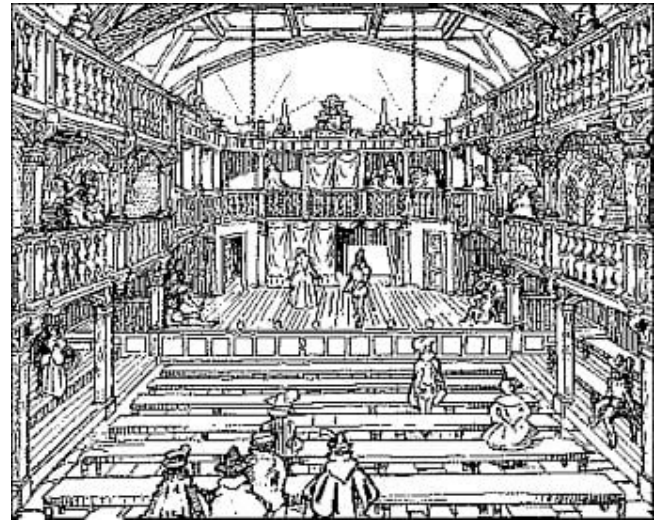
When Shakespeare wrote *The Tempest* around 1610–1611, he was nearing the end of his career. Unlike many of his other plays, this one doesn't have a single clear source text. Instead, Shakespeare gathered ideas from travel stories, myths, and real-world events, then wove them into something entirely new.

One big inspiration likely came from reports of a shipwreck in 1609. A group of English settlers heading to Virginia aboard the *Sea Venture*, were caught in a storm and wrecked on the island of Bermuda. They survived and eventually made it to Jamestown, and their adventure was written about in pamphlets and news reports back in England. Readers were fascinated by tales of strange storms, mysterious islands, and the clash between Europeans and the inhabitants of these new lands. Shakespeare likely borrowed from these accounts when imagining Prospero's storm and the enchanted island.

Shakespeare also drew on European myths and books about magic. Prospero, the exiled duke who controls the island with his spells, echoes stories about powerful magicians and scholars of the Renaissance. Some critics see him as a reflection of real-life figures like John Dee, a famous astrologer and advisor to Queen Elizabeth I. The character of Caliban, often described as half-human and connected to the land, may have been influenced by colonial descriptions of "new world" people, filtered through European prejudice and imagination.

Performance History

The very first performance of *The Tempest* probably took place at court before King James I in 1611. Subsequent performances took place at Blackfriars Theatre, an indoor performance space that Shakespeare's acting company, the King's Men, had begun to utilize. Performances at Blackfriars were full of spectacle, with music, costumes, and even stage machinery to create effects like thunder and lightning. Later, the play appeared in Shakespeare's First Folio in 1623, ensuring it wasn't lost to history.



Blackfriars Theatre

As theatre tastes changed, so did *The Tempest*. In the 1660s, after Shakespeare's time, a writer named William Davenant and the poet John Dryden rewrote the play, adding new characters and turning it into a love story with extra songs. For more than 100 years, audiences often saw this altered version rather than Shakespeare's original. In the 18th and 19th centuries, productions often emphasized spectacle, with grand storm scenes and elaborate costumes for Ariel's magical appearances.

In the 20th century, directors began experimenting with *The Tempest* in new ways. Some productions highlighted its themes of colonialism, asking audiences to think about Prospero as a colonizer and Caliban as a figure of resistance. Others focused on Ariel's desire for freedom or the father-daughter relationship between Prospero and Miranda.

Today, *The Tempest* is one of Shakespeare's most frequently performed plays around the world. It has been staged in traditional theatres, on outdoor stages, in schools, and even adapted into films, ballets, and operas. Its mix of magic, music, comedy, and deep questions about forgiveness and freedom makes it endlessly adaptable.

From shipwreck stories in Bermuda to high-tech stage productions today, *The Tempest* continues to remind us of the power of imagination, and the stormy but hopeful journey of reconciliation.

**Now would I give a thousand furlongs of sea
for an acre of barren ground**

GONZALO (ACT 1, SCENE 1)

Act I: A fierce storm strikes a ship at sea. Onboard are Alonso (King of Naples), his son Ferdinand, and others. They fear for their lives as the ship is torn apart. Meanwhile, we learn the storm was created by Prospero, a powerful magician and the rightful Duke of Milan. She lives on the island with her daughter Miranda, and she caused the tempest using magic and the help of her spirit servant, Ariel. Prospero tells Miranda how they were betrayed by her brother, Antonio, and set adrift at sea years ago. Prospero reveals that their enemies are now shipwrecked on the island.

Misery acquaints a man with strange bedfellows.

TRICULO (ACT 2, SCENE 2)

Act II: The shipwrecked nobles wander the island. Alonso fears his son Ferdinand is dead. Antonio and Sebastian, the king's brother, plot to kill Alonso and take the throne, but Ariel foils their plan. Meanwhile, the jester Trinculo and the drunk Stephano meet Caliban, Prospero's bitter servant. Caliban convinces them to help overthrow Prospero.

**We are such stuff/
As dreams are made on,
and our little life/
Is rounded with a sleep.**

PROSPERO (ACT 4, SCENE 1)

Act IV: Prospero blesses Miranda and Ferdinand's upcoming marriage with a magical pageant performed by spirits. Suddenly, Prospero remembers Caliban's plot and prepares to confront the would-be rebels. Ariel sets traps that humiliate Caliban and his new masters.

**O brave new world /
That has such people in't!**

MIRANDA (ACT 5, SCENE 1)

THE TEMPEST

THE STORY OF THE PLAY

**If by your art, my
dearest father, you
have /
Put the wild waters
in this roar, allay
them.**

MIRANDA (ACT 1, SCENE 2)

Act III: Ferdinand is alive and has fallen in love with Miranda. Prospero secretly watches and approves of their love. Elsewhere, Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo bumble through their plan to kill Prospero, drunk and distracted. Ariel leads them astray with magic. Antonio and Sebastian still want to commit murder but are stopped again by Ariel's tricks.

**The rarer action is /
In virtue than in
vengeance.**

PROSPERO (ACT 5, SCENE 1)

Act V: Prospero finally confronts his enemies. He forgives them and reveals himself as the true Duke of Milan. Ferdinand is reunited with his father, and Miranda meets the other nobles. Caliban realizes he was foolish to trust Stephano. Prospero frees Ariel and sets off for Naples with Miranda and the rest of the castaways, leaving the island in the care of Caliban.

**Then to the elements
Be free, and fare thou well!**

PROSPERO (ACT 5, SCENE 1)

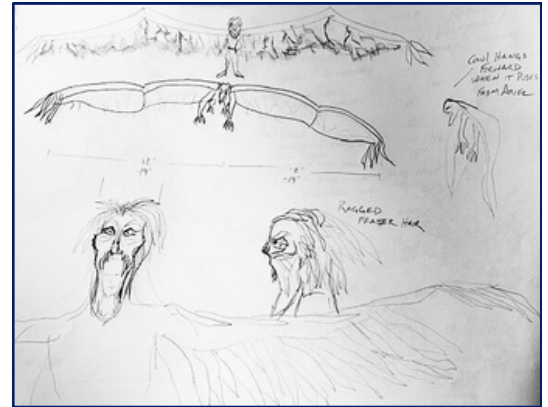
BRINGING MAGIC TO LIFE

PUPPETS IN *THE TEMPEST*

When Shakespeare wrote *The Tempest*, he filled it with storms, spirits, monsters, and magic, things that can be tricky to bring to life on stage. For this production, puppet designer Peter Parish used creativity, research, and a lot of experimentation to make the impossible feel real. His giant puppets, including harpy wings that fill the stage, shimmering wedding spirits, and snarling dogs, help transform the play into something spectacular.

FROM SCRIPT TO SKETCH

Parish began by digging into Shakespeare's text. "Research is always a huge part of any design," he explains, whether that's exploring myths, cultural traditions, or even the natural world. Originally, the wedding spirits in *The Tempest* were gods and goddesses, but this production took a different approach: "I suggested that these spirits that attend the wedding be representations of the elements—Water, Fire, Earth and Air." Although one design (Earth) was eventually cut, the elemental spirits became an important part of the show's magic.



Sketch of Harpy: Peter Parish, 2025



Anna Ishida as Ariel, Anna Takayo as Miranda, Madeline Garfinkle as Flora, Jordan Covington as Ferdinand

INSPIRATION FROM SURREALISM

The designs didn't just come from Shakespeare. Parish also looked to art history, especially the surrealist painter Salvador Dalí. "Some of his large sculptural pieces using found objects—and his extended and flowing designs—really inspired my designs," he says. Dalí's spindly-legged elephants and melting clocks encouraged Parish to dream up strange, otherworldly forms for his puppets.

BUILDING GIANTS

Turning a sketch into a stage-ready puppet is a long process. "My first sketches are always rather quick, gestural sketches. I start with shapes and energy," Parish says. From there, he figures out how an actor will fit inside or around the puppet, and what part of it should draw the audience's attention. For example, he says, "The focus of the harpy began in a magnificent presence to embrace as much of the stage as possible, so it became all about the wings. The hellhounds, however, were all about the mouths, with a secondary focus coming from glowing eyes."



Sketch of Elemental Spirits: Peter Parish, 2025



Anna Ishida as Ariel, Photo: Jay Yamada, 2025

MATERIALS THAT MOVE

The materials used for each puppet mattered just as much as the design. The harpy's wings, for example, are made from silk: "A beautiful, lightweight fabric that moves brilliantly with or without wind, and can take color and projected light just as well." For the hellhounds, Parish used paper and papier-mâché so that their movements would sound like "dead palm leaves." The wedding spirits, built from rattan reeds, were first covered in silk but later switched to craft foam, which was easier to control.

MAKING PUPPETS COME ALIVE

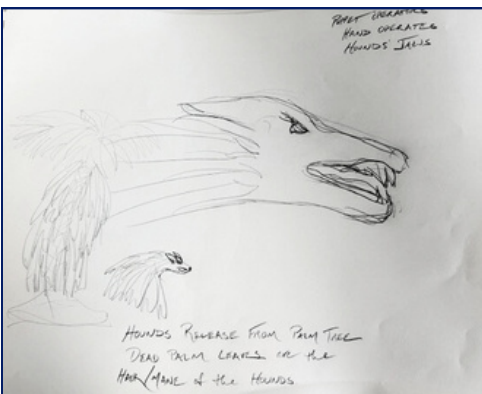
Of course, a puppet isn't magic until it's in the hands of a performer. Parish says it's all about focus: "It's much like creating a character to act on stage—you want to react to what is happening at all times. Not just lifeless bodies on the stage, but full of life and breath."

WHY PUPPETS?

For Parish, puppets offer possibilities that costumes and sets can't. "A puppet can do anything, and you can do anything to a puppet." They can fly, vanish, or be destroyed without harm to an actor. In *The Tempest*, where the story is full of storms and transformations, puppets provide the perfect way to make the supernatural feel real. "In this production there is magic happening on stage, larger-than-life characters that appear and disappear. What better tactic than using puppets?"



Photo: Jay Yamada, 2025



ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Peter Parish has been teaching art and drama since 1996 and designing sets, lights, masks, puppets, and sound for theater companies around the Bay Area since 2000. Peter's creative and engineering tendencies led him to creating worlds on the stage and eventually to attain his Masters in Stage Design and Lighting from The Lir, National Academy of Dramatic Arts at Trinity College Dublin, Ireland. Currently, Peter is teaching and mentoring the student designers at Tamalpais High School's Conservatory Theater Ensemble. Peter's design work can also be seen at College of Marin, and other school campuses, Marin Shakespeare, and Mercury Theater in Petaluma.

Sketch of Hound Puppets: Peter Parish, 2025

THE MAN, THE MYTH, THE LEGEND

Let's talk about the dude himself: William Shakespeare. He was born on April 23rd, 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, England, a small town on the Avon River. His dad was a glove maker and his mom came from a pretty wealthy family. But young Will was always more interested in writing than in gloves (can you blame him?).

In 1582, when he was just 18, Will married Anne Hathaway (not that one). They had 3 children, Susanna, and twins Hamnet and Judith.

Shakespeare went off the grid for a bit after his twins were born in 1585. Historians can only guess what he was up to during these “lost years.” He may have been on the run from the law for deer poaching, working as a Latin and Greek tutor, acting with a traveling theatre troupe, serving in the military, or just helping out with the family business in Stratford.

By 1592, we know Shakespeare, now in his early 20s, had moved to London and started acting and writing plays for a theatre company called the Lord Chamberlain's Men. Eventually, he became a part-owner of the company and they even built a new theatre called the Globe. Talk about a power move. He also performed for Queen Elizabeth I herself and may have even written plays at her request.

Shakespeare had a prolific career as a playwright and poet, with 38 (or more) comedies, tragedies, and histories to his name, as well as 154 sonnets, 2 epic poems, and a handful of other bits of verse. And this is just the writing we know about! Some scholars think there are Shakespeare plays and other works lost to history. Imagine that garage sale find!

Shakespeare continued to write and act until he retired to Stratford in 1613, shortly before the Globe Theatre burned down during a performance of *Henry VIII*. William Shakespeare died on April 23, 1616, meaning he died on his 52nd birthday. Iconic, right?



Now, you might be thinking, "Okay, but why should I care about this dead White dude?" Well, let me tell you: Shakespeare was a trailblazer. He wrote plays that dealt with all sorts of topics, from love and jealousy to power and betrayal. He liked to mix comedy, drama, the supernatural, political commentary, a crude joke or two, and lots of sword fights. And he created characters that were so complex and deeply human that people still study them today. He is also credited with inventing so many words and phrases we still use, like “eyeball,” “gloomy,” “swagger,” “break the ice” and “wild goose chase.”

More than 400 years after his death, Shakespeare continues to be the most-produced playwright in the world. His plays have been translated into over 100 languages, including French, Japanese, Arabic, and even Klingon, the fictional language spoken by the alien species in the Star Trek franchise.

So there you have it, folks. William Shakespeare: word-smith, playwright, poet, actor, businessman, student of the human condition, and total icon.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: THE PERFORMANCE

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Before the performance:

- What do you already know about the story of *The Tempest*? What are you curious to learn about?
- How do you think watching a live performance differs from reading or watching a film adaptation?
- What do you think are some of the key themes and ideas in *The Tempest*?
- What role do you think theater plays in our society? Why do you think people still perform plays that are hundreds of years old?
- What do you think are some of the challenges of performing a play like *The Tempest*? How do you think actors and directors approach bringing such an iconic story to life?

After the performance

- How did the live performance compare to your expectations? What surprised you the most?
- How did the actors and director approach the story and characters of *The Tempest*? What creative choices did they make?
- If you have read the play, what some of the changes the director made in adapting the text? Why do you think those changes were made?
- How did the live performance differ from reading or watching a film adaptation of *The Tempest*?
- What themes and ideas from the play stood out to you the most? How do you think the actors and directors conveyed these themes on stage?
- What was your favorite scene or moment from the play? Why did it resonate with you?
- What did you learn about theater by watching a live performance? How did it deepen your understanding and appreciation of the play?
- What did you learn about Shakespeare's language by watching a live performance?
- What questions are you left with? What do you wonder about?

ISLAND IMPROV

EXPLORING POWER

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Grade Levels: 5-9

Duration: 50–60 minutes

Materials: Audio of a storm

Objectives:

- Introduce key characters and plot points of *The Tempest*
- Explore ideas of power and control through movement and improvisation
- Encourage collaboration and storytelling through physical theater

Warm-Up (10 minutes)

- Play storm sounds/music as students walk around the space like shipwrecked sailors.
- At random intervals, call out “Lightning!” and students freeze in a dramatic pose.
- Add new prompts like “Wind!” (spin), “Wave!” (fall), “Magic!” (float or freeze dramatically). Prompt the students as the “What might the storm have done to your body?” “How would you move if you were under Prospero’s spell?”

Power Pass Exploration (20 minutes)

- In a circle, one student starts with the invisible “power object,” and chooses how to pass it (angrily, sneakily, magically, lovingly). The next person must accept it in a matching energy and transform it for their pass.
- After a few rounds, briefly introduce the characters of Prospero, Ariel, Caliban, Miranda, Ferdinand. Have each student choose a role or assign roles and repeat. Prompt the students: “How would Caliban hold power differently than Miranda?”, “What if Ariel was the one in charge?”

Island Tableaux (20 minutes)

- Divide into groups of 4–5. Give each group a moment from *The Tempest*
 - Prospero summoning the storm
 - Ariel asking for freedom
 - Caliban cursing Prospero
 - Ferdinand and Miranda falling in love
- Ask the groups to create a tableau (a frozen stage picture) of their moment with all the students in the group. Then ask them to add simple movement to animate the picture, with a single line from the play or a made-up modern line. Encourage students to use their whole bodies and use different levels and facial expressions.
- Share with the class, who guesses what’s happening.

Reflection (5 minutes)

- Observations, thoughts, questions?
- Which character would you want to be?
- What do you think it would feel like to be trapped on Prospero’s island?
- What is one word you would use to describe today’s class?

POWER PLAY

COLONIZATION, IDENTITY, AND FREEDOM

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Grade Levels: 8-12

Duration: 50–60 minutes

Materials: Ball or other passable object, printouts of short scenes and monologues from *The Tempest*

Objectives:

- Examine complex character dynamics
- Connect *The Tempest* to real-world ideas of power and colonialism
- Use debate and performance to analyze choices

Warm-up (5 minutes)

- Stand in a circle. Toss a ball or pass an object while each student finishes the sentence: "Freedom is..." (e.g., "being alone," "not having homework," "having a voice")
- Write a few responses on the board.
- Then ask the class, "What does *The Tempest* say about freedom?"

Close Reading (10–15 minutes)

- Divide the class into pairs or small group. Have each group choose a scene or monologue from the provided selections. Some recommended text:
 - Ariel asks for freedom (Act 1, Scene 2)
 - Caliban curses Prospero (Act 1, Scene 2)
 - Prospero forgives (Act 5, Scene 1)
 - Miranda sees humans for the first time ("O brave new world...")(Act 5, Scene 1)
 - Prospero releases Ariel (Act 5, Scene 1)
- Guiding questions:
 - Who has power in this moment?
 - What does this character want?
 - How do we feel about the power dynamics here?
 - Do any lines feel manipulative, beautiful, cruel, or inspiring?
 - How can you use your body and your voice to show these power dynamics?
- Ask the groups to underline lines and paraphrase to make sure they know that they are saying. Have them assign roles and perform a short excerpt using physical and vocal choices to highlight the power dynamics.

The Trial of Prospero (15–20 minutes): "Trial of Prospero"

Setup: Prospero is on trial for her actions on the island. Is she a just ruler or a colonizer?

- Assign roles: Prospero, Caliban, Ariel, Miranda, defense, prosecution, jury. Feel free to add other characters from the play or other witnesses for the defense/prosecution.
- Have them take 3 minutes to prepare 2 arguments or lines of testimony in character groups. (Members of the jury should be assigned to a character group) Offer bonus points for groups that use quotes from the play to support their argument.
- Begin a 10-minute structured trial with each character giving their testimony and the lawyers (and the jury) asking questions.
- Ask the jury to vote and explain their decision.

Wrap-Up Discussion (5–10 minutes):

- What surprised you about your character's choices?
- What connections can you make to modern stories of power and control?
- How does the play feel different depending on whose voice we center?
- What is one thing you still wonder about?

THE TEMPEST IN 15 MINUTES

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Grade Levels: 5-12

Time: 40-45 mins

Materials: Cards with quotes

The Fifteen-Minute Play is a plot summary intermingled with quotations from the play. It is typically used to introduce students to the play or to prepare them to see a production. You can alter it as you see fit, invent a version of your own for a different play, or have your students create one. Try to keep it as short and simple as possible.

- Create cards for the quotations with the corresponding numbers, shown below in bold. The cards should be large enough for three to five people to read simultaneously.
- Divide the class into groups and distribute the cards. Each group may have multiple cards.
- Give the groups five to ten minutes to prepare dramatic renditions of their line(s). They can read the line(s) as a chorus, individually, or in sub-groups, but everyone must speak part of the text. Encourage students to physicalize/dramatize the line(s) in some way. Using props is acceptable, but not necessary.
- When the rehearsal period is over, ask everyone to stand in a circle.
- The leader (you, or a student) stands in the circle, too, and reads aloud the script of the story, calling out the numbers of quotations where indicated and pausing for the group responsible for that quotation to step quickly into the center and perform it. The leader should keep a quick, steady pace - the activity is much more fun when it moves right along.

.....

The Tempest opens with the crash of thunder and a ship caught in a magical storm. Everyone's panicking, yelling at the sailors—especially the nobles. One of them screams: **[1. ALL LOST! TO PRAYERS, TO PRAYERS! ALL LOST!]**

But surprise—no one actually dies. The storm was fake! It was conjured by Prospero, a powerful magician who lives on the island with her teenage daughter Miranda, who is horrified by the shipwreck. Prospero calms her: **[2. I HAVE DONE NOTHING BUT IN CARE OF THEE.]**

Prospero finally tells her the truth: she used to be the Duke of Milan, but was preoccupied by her magical studies **[3. MY LIBRARY / WAS DUKEDOM LARGE ENOUGH.]** and neglected her official duties. Prospero put her sneaky brother, Antonio, in charge, but with the help of Alonso, the King of Naples, Antonio stole her title and set her adrift at sea. Now, years later, the very people who betrayed her are shipwrecked on her island.

The storm was created with the help of Ariel, a magical spirit who serves Prospero but longs for freedom. **[4. REMEMBER I HAVE DONE THEE WORTHY SERVICE.]** She sends Ariel to keep the castaways scattered and confused. **[5. IS THERE MORE TOIL?]**

Elsewhere on the island, we meet Caliban, the original inhabitant of the island, now Prospero's bitter servant. He believes the island belongs to him, and he's had enough of Prospero's rule. **[6. THIS ISLAND'S MINE, BY SYCORAX MY MOTHER.]**

Meanwhile, Prince Ferdinand, son of King Alonso one of the castaways, meets Miranda. Boom—instant love. She says: **[7. I MIGHT CALL HIM / A THING DIVINE]** He says: **[8. O YOU, WONDER!]**

They're awkward and adorable. Prospero pretends to be mad but is secretly thrilled:

[9. THEY ARE BOTH IN EITHER'S POW'R.]

Elsewhere on the island, Caliban meets up with two shipwrecked fools: Stephano (a drunk butler) and Trinculo (a jester). Caliban offers to serve them if they help kill Prospero. His motto? **[10. BAN, BAN, CALIBAN / HAS A NEW MASTER: GET A NEW MAN!]**

Back in the jungle, Antonio and Sebastian, King Alonso's brother, are plotting too. They want to kill Alonso and steal his crown. **[11. WHAT'S PAST IS PROLOGUE.]** But Ariel, in the guise of a terrifying harpy, stops them just in time: **[13. YOU ARE THREE MEN OF SIN.]**

Then Prospero puts on a magical show for Miranda and Ferdinand to celebrate their engagement, with dancing goddesses and spirits. It's beautiful, but suddenly she remembers Caliban's murder plot and stops the fun: **[12. OUR REVELS NOW ARE ENDED.]**

Caliban and the fools sneak into Prospero's cell but are distracted by some fancy clothes. Ariel chases them off with magical hounds. **[13. LET THEM BE HUNTED SOUNDLY.]**

Finally, Prospero gathers everyone. She reveals herself to the stunned nobles and forgives them. **[14. THE RARER ACTION IS / IN VIRTUE THAN IN VENGEANCE.]** The King restores her Dukedom.

Ferdinand is reunited with his father, Miranda meets the rest of the royal party, and says: **[15. O BRAVE NEW WORLD / THAT HAS SUCH PEOPLE IN'T!]**

Even Caliban has a change of heart: **[16. I'LL BE WISE HEREAFTER AND SEEK FOR GRACE.]**

Prospero frees Ariel, **[17. THEN TO THE ELEMENTS / BE FREE, AND FARE THOU WELL!]** and sets off for Naples with Miranda and the rest of the castaways, leaving the island in the care of Caliban.

ADAPTING SHAKESPEARE

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Grade Level: 5-12

Duration: 60 minutes

Materials: Copies of *The Tempest* or scenes from the play*

This lesson can easily be adapted for another Shakespeare play.

Introduction (10-15 mins):

- Define adaptation. In literature, an adaptation is a reinterpretation of the original text into a new form or medium in order to highlight specific themes, shift perspective and inspire interest in old stories. Shakespeare himself adapted much older stories to create his plays. *The Forbidden Planet*, a 1956 sci-fi film, transforms the island to remote planet Altair IV, Prospero to marooned scientist Dr. Edward Morbius and Ariel to Robby the Robot. *West Side Story* is an adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* which highlights the conflict between the White gangs and Puerto Rican immigrants in the 1950s in Manhattan's West Side using song, dance and contemporary dialogue to tell the story.
- If you haven't read *The Tempest* in class, take some time to go over the plot or read through the summary in this guide. Discuss the main themes.
- Look briefly at the scenes the students can choose from and make sure everyone has a basic understanding of what is happening in these moments in the play.
- Discuss the importance of setting in literature and drama and how it influences the tone, characters, and action.
- Brainstorm some possible alternative settings for *The Tempest* as a class. These could be contemporary, historical, or imaginary. What issues and themes can these settings bring to the forefront? Some examples: a remote Arctic outpost, an alien planet, a futuristic dystopian society, etc.

Adapt a Scene (25-30 mins)

Students will choose a new setting for *The Tempest* and adapt one scene or monologue from the play.

- Divide the class into pairs or small groups. Each group will pick a setting and then a scene to adapt.
- Taking into account how their new setting affects the dialogue, the characters, and other elements of the play, like costumes and props, ask each group or pair to rewrite their scene or monologue. Encourage creativity and out-of-the-box thinking. The adaptation doesn't need to be word-for-word or even have the same characters and plot. How can they be inspired by the original text while still making it their own?

Presentations (10-15 minutes)

- Give the groups the opportunity to describe their new setting before performing their scene.
- Discuss: How did creating an adaptation deepen their understanding of the original play? Which aspects of adaptation are easy and which are difficult?

**Recommended text for this lesson: Act 1, Scene 1 (The Shipwreck), Act 2, Scene 2 (Caliban and the Clowns), Act 3, Scene 1 (Ferdinand and Miranda)*

WHAT IS IN A MEME?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Grade Levels: 5-12

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: Memes

Introduction (5 Minutes)

- Share a few of your favorite internet memes, including memes related to *The Tempest* (some are included below) and others.
- Discuss the images in the memes and what makes them “meme-able”: open to many interpretations, simple storytelling, symbols of shared meaning, etc.

Make a *Tempest* Meme (20 minutes)

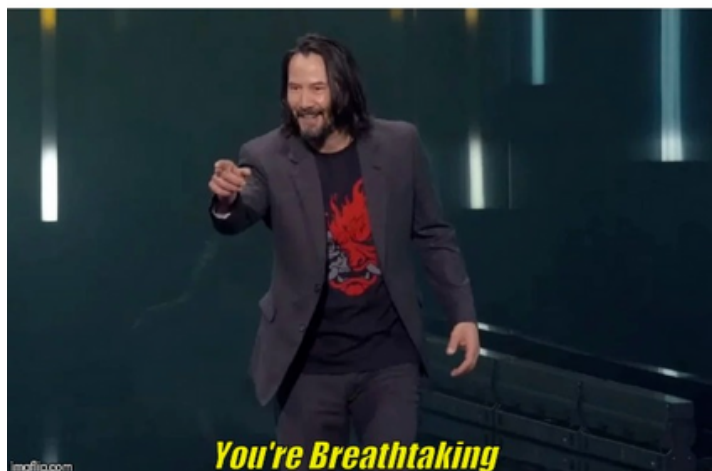
- Display the blank memes on the following pages (or pick other popular meme templates from imgflip.com/memegenerator). In groups, partners, or individually, ask the students to choose one of the images and generate the text to turn it into a meme related to the themes or characters in *The Tempest*. Give them 5-10 minutes to craft their text.
- Ask each group/student to present their text for their meme. Discuss their choice of image and text. What about the image inspired them or reminded them of an element of the play? Is this new meme funny and does it make sense to the other students? How do memes relate to subtext?
- Extension: Use the meme generator on imgflip.com/memegenerator to add the text to the image and share the new memes. *Share your meme with us by emailing Education Director Elana Kepner at education@marinshakespeare.org and you may see them featured on IG for #mememonday!*

The Tempest Memes



More *Tempest* Memes

MIRANDA SEEING LITERALLY ANY
MAN WHO ISN'T HER FATHER OR HALF-DEMON



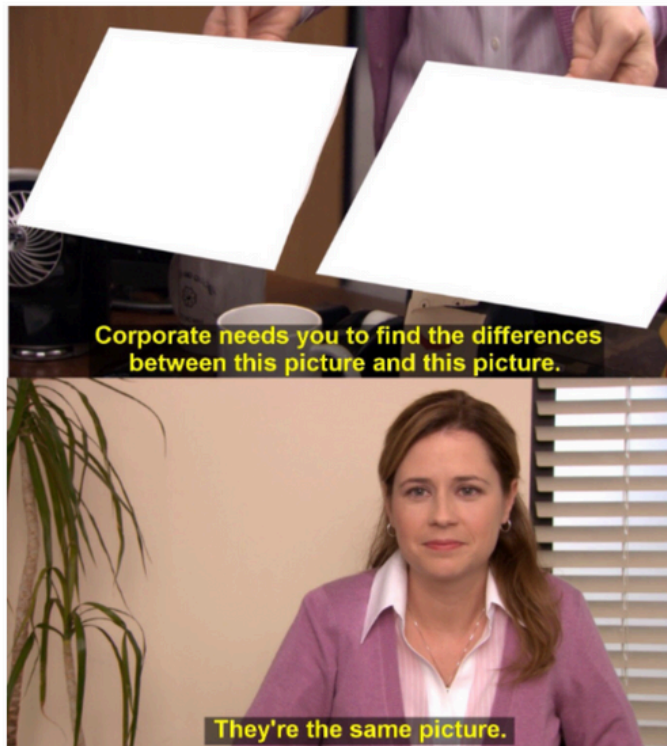
PROSPERO WHEN ARIEL SAYS
ANYTHING ABOUT HIS FREEDOM



Meme Templates



More Meme Templates





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