

Singapore Arts Festival Resource Pack

Tempest: Without A Body

This resource pack contains 3 lessons, each lasts for 60 minutes.

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Introduction

*We invite the community to show their hidden faces – whether they are the minority, the marginalized or the elite.*¹

- Lemi Ponifasio at the MAU Forum, Berlin 2010

Lemi Ponifasio is the founder and director of MAU, an international contemporary dance and theatre company based in New Zealand. Ponifasio was born in the colonised Samoa islands. His work often aims to give voice to lost cultures and perspectives, such as that of the Maori indigenous rights movement in New Zealand.

¹ MAU Forum Berlin 2010 <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTYCGfwViNw>>

PRE-PERFORMANCE

Hearing from the natives

Tempest: Without a Body takes its name from William Shakespeare's last play, *The Tempest*. In the play, Prospero, the deposed Duke of Milan, is exiled to an island where he imposes control over two of the natives – the spirit Ariel and the creature Caliban.

PREPARATION:

Photocopy or project the extracts for students to read.

ACTIVITY:

Observe Prospero's interactions with Ariel and Caliban in the extracts from Shakespeare's play below. 10 min

Now answer the following questions:

A1. What do Ariel and Caliban protest against?		15 min
Ariel protested against	Caliban protested against	

2. What is Prospero's response? How does he respond?	15 min

3. Why do you think Ponifasio chose to use *The Tempest* as his central motif?

10 min

4. What point do you think he is making about colonization?

10 min

Total: 60 min

Extract 1²:

Prospero chides Ariel after the spirit expresses discontent about his servitude.

ARIEL:

I prithee,
Remember I have done thee worthy service;
Told thee no lies, made thee no mistakings, served
Without or grudge or grumblings: thou didst promise
To bate me a full year.

PROSPERO:

Dost thou forget
From what a torment I did free thee?

ARIEL:

No.

PROSPERO:

Thou dost, and think'st it much to tread the ooze
Of the salt deep,
To run upon the sharp wind of the north,
To do me business in the veins o' the earth
When it is baked with frost.

ARIEL:

I do not, sir.

PROSPERO:

Thou liest, malignant thing! Hast thou forgot
The foul witch Sycorax, who with age and envy
Was grown into a hoop? hast thou forgot her?

ARIEL:

No, sir. [...]

² The Complete Works of William Shakespeare
<<http://shakespeare.mit.edu/tempest/full.html>>

PROSPERO:

This blue-eyed hag was hither brought with child
And here was left by the sailors. Thou, my slave,
As thou report'st thyself, wast then her servant;
And, for thou wast a spirit too delicate
To act her earthy and abhorr'd commands,
Refusing her grand hests, she did confine thee,
By help of her more potent ministers
And in her most unmitigable rage,
Into a cloven pine; within which rift
Imprison'd thou didst painfully remain
A dozen years; within which space she died
And left thee there; where thou didst vent thy groans
As fast as mill-wheels strike. Then was this island--
Save for the son that she did litter here,
A freckled whelp hag-born--not honour'd with
A human shape.

ARIEL:

Yes, Caliban her son.

PROSPERO:

Dull thing, I say so; he, that Caliban
Whom now I keep in service. Thou best know'st
What torment I did find thee in; thy groans
Did make wolves howl and penetrate the breasts
Of ever angry bears: it was a torment
To lay upon the damn'd, which Sycorax
Could not again undo: it was mine art,
When I arrived and heard thee, that made gape
The pine and let thee out.

Extract 2:

Prospero and Caliban argue after Caliban rebels against an order to fetch wood.

CALIBAN:

I must eat my dinner.
This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother,
Which thou takest from me. When thou camest first,
Thou strokedst me and madest much of me, wouldst give me
Water with berries in't, and teach me how
To name the bigger light, and how the less,
That burn by day and night: and then I loved thee
And show'd thee all the qualities o' the isle,
The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile:
Cursed be I that did so! All the charms
Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!
For I am all the subjects that you have,
Which first was mine own king: and here you sty me
In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me
The rest o' the island.

PROSPERO:

Thou most lying slave,
Whom stripes may move, not kindness! I have used thee,
Filth as thou art, with human care, and lodged thee
In mine own cell, till thou didst seek to violate
The honour of my child.

CALIBAN:

O ho, O ho! would't had been done!
Thou didst prevent me; I had peopled else
This isle with Calibans.

PROSPERO:

Abhorred slave,
Which any print of goodness wilt not take,
Being capable of all ill! I pitied thee,
Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour
One thing or other: when thou didst not, savage,

Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like
A thing most brutish, I endow'd thy purposes
With words that made them known. But thy vile race,
Though thou didst learn, had that in't which good natures
Could not abide to be with; therefore wast thou
Deservedly confined into this rock,
Who hadst deserved more than a prison.

CALIBAN:

You taught me language; and my profit on't is,
I know how to curse. The red plague rid you
For learning me your language!

DURING THE PERFORMANCE

Forms of protest

Tame Iti is a famous member of the Maori indigenous rights movement. Look out for him in *Tempest: Without a Body* – he is a key performer, easily identifiable by his full facial moko or tattoo. Iti has actively participated in demonstrations against colonial occupation, from protests against the Vietnam War to government takeover of Maori land.

DISCUSSION:

B1. Ponifasio employs a number of performance techniques in his production, try to identify them all. What do you think Ponifasio is trying to convey through the use of each technique? 30 min

Use Annex 1 to answer.

2. Would you consider theatre to be a form of protest? Why or why not? Support your point of view with examples. 10 min

Theatre as a form of protest?	
Yes	No

In groups of 3, present your points. 10 min

3. Consider a global issue that you feel strongly about. If you were to use theatre to express your thoughts about this issue, what technique would you employ? Elaborate your choice. 10 min

Total: 60 min

POST-PERFORMANCE

“A post-9/11 world”

Tempest: Without a Body is described as a “powerful, visually ravishing and apocalyptic response to the sinister escalation of post-9/11 state powers.”³

DISCUSSION:

C1. What comes to your mind when you think about 9/11? Identify the parties who were and are affected.

10 min

2. Research on articles or pictures of the event.

20 min

3. Share your opinion on what you have found.

20 min

4. 9/11 was a terrorist attack that took place in New York City, as executed by Middle Eastern terrorists. In what way might independence movements as far away as New Zealand have been affected by 9/11?

10 min

Total: 60 min

³ Sydney Festival 2010. *Tempest: Without a Body* Media Release, 4 Nov 2009
<<http://2010.sydneyfestival.org.au/uploads/Tempest.pdf>>

ANNEX 1

Techniques	Examples	What is conveyed?
Visual arts		
Oratory		
Dance		
Drama		

ANNEX 2

EXTRACTS FROM THE TEMPEST

While viewing the BBC animated version of The Tempest, do keep in mind that this version is an adaptation of the full play. The following extracts are sections that either do not appear in or were shortened in the film version.

All extracts are from the online portal “The Complete Works of William Shakespeare” (<http://shakespeare.mit.edu/tempest/full.html>).

Extract 1: Prospero explains to Miranda how he was deposed as Duke of Milan.

PROSPERO:

I pray thee, mark me.
I, thus neglecting worldly ends, all dedicated
To closeness and the bettering of my mind
With that which, but by being so retired,
O'er-prized all popular rate, in my false brother
Awaked an evil nature; and my trust,
Like a good parent, did beget of him
A falsehood in its contrary as great
As my trust was; which had indeed no limit,
A confidence sans bound. He being thus lorded,
Not only with what my revenue yielded,
But what my power might else exact, like one
Who having into truth, by telling of it,
Made such a sinner of his memory,
To credit his own lie, he did believe
He was indeed the duke; out o' the substitution
And executing the outward face of royalty,
With all prerogative: hence his ambition growing—
[...]
To have no screen between this part he play'd
And him he play'd it for, he needs will be
Absolute Milan. Me, poor man, my library
Was dukedom large enough: of temporal royalties
He thinks me now incapable; confederates--
So dry he was for sway--wi' the King of Naples

To give him annual tribute, do him homage,
Subject his coronet to his crown and bend
The dukedom yet unbow'd--alas, poor Milan!--
To most ignoble stooping.

(Act I Scene II)

Extract 2: Prospero chides Ariel after the spirit expresses discontent about his servitude.

ARIEL:

I prithee,
Remember I have done thee worthy service;
Told thee no lies, made thee no mistakings, served
Without or grudge or grumblings: thou didst promise
To bate me a full year.

PROSPERO:

Dost thou forget
From what a torment I did free thee?

ARIEL:

No.

PROSPERO:

Thou dost, and think'st it much to tread the ooze
Of the salt deep,
To run upon the sharp wind of the north,
To do me business in the veins o' the earth
When it is baked with frost.

ARIEL:

I do not, sir.

PROSPERO:

Thou liest, malignant thing! Hast thou forgot
The foul witch Sycorax, who with age and envy

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ARIEL:

No, sir. [...]

PROSPERO:

This blue-eyed hag was hither brought with child
And here was left by the sailors. Thou, my slave,
As thou report'st thyself, wast then her servant;
And, for thou wast a spirit too delicate
To act her earthy and abhorr'd commands,
Refusing her grand hests, she did confine thee,
By help of her more potent ministers
And in her most unmitigable rage,
Into a cloven pine; within which rift
Imprison'd thou didst painfully remain
A dozen years; within which space she died
And left thee there; where thou didst vent thy groans
As fast as mill-wheels strike. Then was this island--
Save for the son that she did litter here,
A freckled whelp hag-born--not honour'd with
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ARIEL:

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Dull thing, I say so; he, that Caliban
Whom now I keep in service. Thou best know'st
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Of ever angry bears: it was a torment
To lay upon the damn'd, which Sycorax
Could not again undo: it was mine art,
When I arrived and heard thee, that made gape
The pine and let thee out.

(Act I Scene II)

Annex 3

The Tempest: Prospero's roles

Prospero's role as:	NAPLES (THE MAINLAND)	THE ISLAND
(i) Ruler	<p><i>From film:</i> Easily deposed by his own brother Sebastian and the king.</p> <p><i>From extract:</i> Bookish, preoccupied with study. Caught up in THEORY without being able to practically interact with his people and control the situation – his neglect of the state led to his brother's being able to usurp his position as Duke.</p>	<p>Very aware of the goings-on of every event on the island – Ariel serves to further his omniscient presence. After much study, he is able to practically utilise his magic.</p> <p>A puppeteer! No one who steps onto the island is left free from his grasp. He establishes scenarios and traps for them to walk into and everything runs like clockwork. Aside from forcing his political enemies into submission, he also uses illusions to trick and punish Stephano and Caliban when they plot to take over control of the island.</p>
(ii) Father	Saves daughter. Forced to flee.	Somewhat manipulative and controlling, but ultimately one who seeks the best for his child – a husband who loves her enough to pursue her at all costs – and succeeds in his “matchmaking” of Ferdinand and Miranda.
(iii) Master	Wasn't much of one; was not in a position to be one. Prospero relinquishes control of both Ariel and Caliban when he leaves the island to return to Naples.	<p><i>From film:</i> Quite possibly manipulative. He is a especially harsh towards Caliban but for what appears to be a valid reason: the latter had sought to violate his daughter. Caliban, however, paints a different picture, complaining that Prospero had been kind to him initially only to take what he could gain from him.</p> <p><i>From extract:</i> A rather unflinchingly harsh master. Prospero addresses both Ariel and Caliban as “slave” – both of them are in his debt and he holds them to it accordingly. He does not mince words when rebuking Ariel, calling him “malignant” and “dull” for his ingratitude.</p>

Annex 4

FEEDBACK FORM

Thank you for using this resource pack.
Please give us your feedback.



Name : _____
Occupation : _____
Tel : _____
Email : _____

Name of Resource Pack			
Usefulness of the Resource Pack	Very applicable	Applicable	Not applicable
What did you enjoy most from this Resource Pack?			
Any suggestion on how to improve this Resource Pack?			

Thank you once again!