

'THE TEMPEST' AT THE GLOBE THEATRE OF ROME

directed by Chris Pickles

co-production with Bedouin Shakespeare Company

In occasion of the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare's death in 1616, the Globe Theatre of Rome closes its 2016 season with the last Shakespeare's tragedy, which is considered his farewell to the scene.

Located in the heart of the beautiful Villa Borghese, the Globe Theatre of Rome, known also as Silvano Toti Globe Theatre, is a reproduction of the original Globe Theatre in London and was realized thanks to the Engineer Silvano Toti and the Italian actor Gigi Proietti.

The international nature of the Bedouin Shakespeare Company

Edward Andrews, the Artistic Director of BSC, spent his formative years in Abu Dhabi before returning to the UK to pursue his career as a professional actor. He returned to the Emirates to share his love for Shakespeare and bring his theatre to the youth of that country. In just three years since 2012, his company became a well-known touring theatre company worldwide.

The 'Globe'

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages.

[*As You Like It Act 2, scene 7, 139-143*](#)



The concept of 'globe' is central in Shakespeare's production since his theatre includes everyone, breaking every kind of barriers.

A new kind of scenery breaks the Aristotelian unities of space, action and time: Shakespeare's theatre had no roof and no curtain, which means no boundary lines between the real and the unreal world, the inside and the outside, the spectators and the players.

Indeed the spectators become part of the play, interacting with each others and with the actors on stage. The 'global' nature of Shakespeare's theatre is also due to the focus on universal elements and themes, such as love, ambition, crazyness, war, death, music. Indeed there are very few objects on stage, people and their feelings are the centre of the scene, so they speak a universal language, common to everyone in space and time. That is the reason why Shakespeare's works are the most translated and represented in the world since the XVII century.

Shakespeare's Era: an open approach

Shakespeare lived during the Elizabethan Age, a time of political stability in England. Elizabeth I became the Queen of England in 1558, six years before Shakespeare's birth (1564, Stratford-upon-Avon). During her 45-year reign, London became a very lively cultural and commercial center, apart from becoming a leading military and commercial power in the Western world.

Elizabeth was very open to novelty: she supported Sir Francis Drake, the first sailor to circumnavigate the globe, and funded Sir Walter Raleigh's exploration of the New World, which brought new wealth to her country in the form of tobacco and gold from Latin America.

She was fond of the theatre, and many of England's greatest playwrights were active during her reign such as William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe and Ben Jonson. With her permission, professional

theatres were built in England for the first time. Upon the death of Elizabeth, King James I rose to power in England. A writer himself, he displayed a great love for theater and invited Shakespeare's theater company, Lord Chamberlain's Men, to become the King's Men, and they produced new works under his patronage.

The Tempest plot

Alonso, the king of Naples, is returning from his daughter's wedding in Tunisia. He is accompanied by his son, Ferdinand, his brother, Sebastain, and Antonio, the Duke of Milan. An old Milanese courtier, Gonzalo, is also on board. The ship is wrecked in a storm and all the passengers and crew are thrown into the furious sea.

Prospero, the former Duke of Milan, and his fifteen year-old daughter, Miranda, are watching the shipwreck from an island. He tells her, for the first time, how they came to be on the island. Twelve years before, when he had been Duke of Milan, his brother Antonio, had usurped him, but with Gonzalo's help he had escaped in a small boat with his baby daughter, Miranda, and his library of books about magic. They had ended up on the island and Prospero had turned the only inhabitant, Caliban, a deformed and savage creature, into his slave. There are also spirits on the island. One of them, Ariel, had been imprisoned in a tree trunk by Caliban's mother, the witch, Sycorax, who had then died. Prospero used his magic abilities to rescue him and he made the spirit swear to serve him.

The ship's passengers are cast up on the island unharmed, and even their clothes are not wet or damaged. Alonso believes his son to be dead but Ferdinand has landed on another part of the island. He encounters Miranda and they fall in love at first sight. He is the first man, apart from her father and Caliban that she has ever seen. Prospero puts Ferdinand to work manually, controlling all his movements with magic. Ariel pesters Prospero for his freedom and Prospero promises it once he has done some things for him, regarding the newcomers.

Ariel leads the party towards Prospero's cell. During this journey Antonio and Sebastian plan to kill Alonso so that Sebastian can be king. Two other members of the party, Trinculo, the court jester, and Stephano, a boisterous butler, are also wandering about on the island. Caliban recruits them to help him overthrow Prospero. They all get drunk then set off for Prospero's cell. Ariel reports the plot to Prospero. Prospero has released Ferdinand and given his blessing to the marriage of the two young people. When the three would-be usurpers arrive at his cell they are distracted by some brightly coloured clothes that have been hung out for them, then they are chased away by a band of spirits who have taken on the form of dogs.

Ariel brings the party to the cell. Prospero renounces his magic and reveals himself. He forgives his brother and prepares to return to Milan to resume his dukedom. Miranda and Ferdinand are betrothed. Sailors arrive and announce that the ship hasn't been wrecked after all, and is safely anchored off the island. Ariel is set free. Caliban and the drunken servants are also forgiven. There is a final celebration of their reunion.

(Source: <http://www.nosweatshakespeare.com/play-summary/tempest/>)