

THE TEMPEST, 2002

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ENTERTAINMENT

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RICHMOND DRAMA AWARDS

High-lighting the magic and mysticism

TEDDINGTON Theatre Club's production of *The Tempest*, possibly the culmination of Shakespeare's writing career, was not only a careful study of the text but also high-lighted the magicality and mysticism of the piece.

Nick Young made an impressive Prospero with fine stature and clear rounded vowels. His speaking of the verse was faultless and he conveyed the humanity of the character he was portraying. His costume and bearing, until his farewell to his magic, was redolent of an Old Testament prophet.

Ashley Munson gave us a very spritely Ariel. He was extremely lithe and moved about the stage with great care and flexibility. His voice, for the songs was enhanced by a microphone which gave his voice an ethereal quality.

Simon McInerney was a most impressive Caliban and was less of a monster in this production, which made him far more human than in some productions. This more human aspect of this interpretation of the role was assisted in the scenes in which he appeared with John Roth as Stephano and Daniel Gask as Trinculo who brought out the humour in the comic writing of the piece. Both actors, particularly John Roth, spoke their lines clearly and with perfect timing.

Miranda (Catherine Burkill) and Ferdinand (Mitch Peacock), the young lovers, were ideally matched. They worked very well together, moving and speaking with great fluidity.

Barry Evans, as the King of Naples, carried off the aristocracy of the character and was well supported by his followers who emphasised the different characteristics of their roles.

The masque was performed by Sarah Brooks, Gerry de Faoite and Julia Allen, who was in overall charge of the excellent movement of all the players.

Music, composed by Matthew Scott and under the direction of Brian Chapman was a great enhancement to the presentation of *The Tempest*.

The set and lighting gave a timeless feeling of magic to the action.

The direction of the play was by Stephen Oliver who cleverly combined music, movement and drama to make this a most memorable production.

George Hillier