



Such Stuff As Dreams Are Made On

An immersive adventure through Shakespeare's final play
Adapted from William Shakespeare's The Tempest by Sarah Heenan

Co-directors

Sarah Heenan and Charlotte Price

Associate Director

Samuel Hunt

Producer

Clare Harding

KEY DATES

Workshop: Wednesday 4th November
Auditions: Monday 9th Wednesday 11th and Friday 13th November
Recalls: Sunday 15th November

Show dates: March/April 2016 – the production may run up to 2 weeks with the run taking place some time between 14th March and 1st May 2016. Dates to be announced as soon as they are confirmed.

NB: Due to the unique nature of the production and rehearsal requirements, actors will be required to be flexible for the month leading up to the run. If you have vacation plans or hard commitments between 7th March and 1st May 2016 it may not be possible for you to be in this show.

Voice auditions: Monday 16th November

Voice recording dates

Rehearsal Sunday 29th November 3pm – 7pm (BHG)
Session 1 10:30am-1pm, Saturday 5th December (Soho)
Session 2 10:30am-1pm, Saturday 12th December (Soho)

NB: Voice Actors must be available for both studio recording dates and the rehearsal day.

THE PLAY

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

Such Stuff As Dreams Are Made On is a fully immersive site-specific non-linear narrative piece.

What does that mean? The audience can go anywhere and do anything (with a few clearly set rules for everyone's safety) in a place that is part of the story that we are telling. Non-linear means that it doesn't matter what the audience see and do and when, it will all create a story of some sort. If the audience really wants to see the plot of The Tempest in the correct order, that is possible, but audiences will be encouraged to wander around the story behind the play, its themes, some of the other works that The Tempest inspired and what the characters are up to when they are not 'on stage' in the Shakespeare play.

Site-specific work involves connecting the story that you are telling to the space in which you are performing it. Shakespeare, Sedos and The Tempest have strong connections to London, and once we have confirmed our venue we will work together to find a reason why the story belongs to that space and a justification for everything we do in it.

There are three unusual things about this production:

1. **The Venue:** We will select a venue in central London in which we can build the world of Such Stuff together as a company.
2. **The Rehearsal Process:** This style of production has never been attempted with an amateur cast before, this will be a one-off experience to try your hand at this type of work.
3. **The Soundtrack:** Such Stuff will be held together by the central thread of a pre-recorded radio play version of The Tempest. The actors cast in roles you know from The Tempest may not be speaking the words attributed to them. In terms of immersive theatre, combining original text and action in this way has never been attempted.

*"Though this island seem to be desert . . . uninhabitable, and almost
inaccessible"*

And then there's The Island. The Island is as much a character as anyone we cast. We want our audience to feel like they have been shipwrecked there, the characters will respond to the island in different ways and reveal its story to anyone curious enough to try to find it out.

"Be not afeard, The isle is full of noises, sounds and sweet smells"

One of the challenges in performing immersive theatre is that text sometimes gets lost when it is not being delivered directly to an audience all sitting in one place. Some companies use headsets to ensure the words or script are heard, some use dance and physical theatre, some use mobile phone apps, some use artistic installations or myriad combinations of those effects. Such Stuff will be using

a central soundtrack of the radio play of *The Tempest* so the actors will have something to assist them with timing and narrative flow. The voice playing your character may not be your own. While you may need to perform some Shakespeare live in front of the actual audience, that won't be the be-all and end-all of your role.

If cast, we will play to your strengths, if you're a great Shakespearean with a beautiful voice, we won't expect you to spend your rehearsals leaping around in tights unless you're great at that too. If you're a great physical performer who isn't so bothered with text work, we will get you to use your physicality rather than spend hours drilling speeches and meaning with you. That said, everyone will be encouraged to have a go at a bit of everything.

This play has a long rehearsal period in order to build the world of the play and to allow you time to create your characters. Please consider the rehearsal and research commitments and the flexibility required around the performance dates and get-in period in March or April

SUCH STUFF: THE "RADIO PLAY"

During the research period, we will be recording an hour-long edited version of key scenes from *The Tempest* with an ensemble radio cast to form the core soundtrack of *Such Stuff*. If cast in the 'live cast', you may be invited to this recording session. However, we are also opening the recording roles out to people not necessarily playing the roles in the space. This is not a reflection of the acting abilities of the live cast, we just want to create a very specific style of traditional British Shakespearean performance for the soundtrack so that we can play with that in the live space.

THE STORY OF THE TEMPEST

Shakespeare's *The Tempest* is supposedly his final play, written in around 1610 and performed, possibly for the first time in public, in Blackfriars Theatre, a mere stone's throw from The Bridewell. The play tells the story of an exiled duke (Prospero) and his daughter (Miranda) who have been stranded on a mysterious island by his brother (Antonio) for 12 years. The island is inhabited by earthy (Caliban) and unearthly (Ariel) creatures and Prospero controls them both through the art of his magic. As the play begins, Prospero creates a storm, the tempest of the play's title, which wrecks a ship carrying his brother and King Alonso of Naples, his son, Ferdinand – among others – and brings them to the shores of their island. Prospero has a plan to split Ferdinand from his father and make him fall in love with Miranda. Caliban, meanwhile, falls in with the king's jester (Trinculo) and his butler (Stefano) who ply him with wine and together plot to overthrow Prospero and take the island for themselves. Ariel, acting as Prospero's magical agent, flits between the lost royals (who are also plotting between themselves), the 'drunks' and the young lovers.

The Tempest is a tale of power, loss, humanity, love, the self and above all... magic... specifically the magic of theatrical illusion – the play refers to itself and its players several times. It is often thought that Prospero's final speech asking the audience to release him by 'giving hands' (clapping) is Shakespeare's farewell to his life in the theatre.

*But release me from my bands
With the help of your good hands:*

For our production of Such Stuff we will be concentrating on the stories of Prospero, Miranda, Ferdinand, Caliban, Stefano, Trinculo and Ariel with additional characters found in other versions of The Tempest and also William Shakespeare himself.

WHAT IS IMMERSIVE THEATRE?

There are hundreds of immersive productions springing up all over the world in the unlikeliest of locations. On the whole, immersive means that the cast is brought closer to the audience and the space used is not a traditional proscenium arch or black box theatre. Many immersive productions guide the audience quite carefully so that they don't miss any of the action so in reality what they are producing is more an advanced form of promenade theatre or theatre in the round. Such Stuff will go several steps further than this.

Examples of theatre companies that have used similar styles of performance and space are Palimpsest, RIFT, dreamthinkspeak, Shunt, Fuel, Punchdrunk and You Me Bum Bum Train so if you haven't been to an immersive show if you look up those companies you might find something useful.

Fully immersive theatre happens when the audience is able to make their own choices about where they go and what they do and see and when; they are not told which room to go in or what to look at, they are completely free to explore the performance space and be where they want to be when they want to be, they may miss some of the action, but they will find their own unique path through the story, so the experience of watching the play becomes dreamlike. As a result the actors, the space and the story have to be fully realised for the entire duration of the experience. Every single role in this play will be equal with the same amount of research, rehearsal work and stage time. Every performance will be different while performed within a tight framework to give the actors security.

Site-specific theatre goes a step further, it strongly connects the work to the space in which it is performed.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

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

The short answer is that we are looking for everything. We are completely open in how we cast this production. We will be casting some beautiful verse speakers with gorgeous voices, we will be casting some people who never have to speak a word if they don't want to, we will be casting people who love to dance, we will be casting people with no dance ability whatsoever. The key skills of any performer in this show will be imagination, expressiveness, adaptability, a love of getting really stuck into a character and a willingness to try, to fail, to enjoy and learn from the failures in the safe space of the rehearsal room and then create something really special.

If there is one thing we will be looking for in auditions it is movement, in all senses of the word – how you move as an actor, how you move the people watching you and, most importantly, how your performance moves and progresses in the time we spend with you. In the auditions if we can see you try something new and fail spectacularly we will be more interested in how you deal with that than we will in seeing you being absolutely perfect in every way from the moment you first get in front of us. The most successful at auditions will be those who can connect with each other and the panel, who show a desire to try to do something new.

If you've ever been in a show and wished you had had more time to explore your character or felt that their story had more of a life to it than the stage time it was given, this is the show for you.

It is also important to point out that for all of the emphasis on teamwork and collaboration, you will also need a degree of autonomy. As the show is so huge, and spread out in different spaces, there will be times where you will be rehearsing your pieces alone while we are running. We will make sure as a directing and stage management team that we see everything and work on everything, but being a self-motivated performer willing to perfect and hone their work even without a director's eyes constantly on you will be a key skill.

HOW WILL REHEARSALS WORK?

We are starting rehearsals a few weeks earlier than usual; this is to allow for a period of research and experiment for the entire team. The early rehearsals will build confidence in research methods, devising and physical theatre work and experiment with how to play to an audience that could be anywhere at any time.

In January and February, rehearsals will be planned much in the same way as a normal show with weekday rehearsals dedicated to a few characters and a full ensemble call once a week on Sundays to learn large set pieces of staging and to make sure everyone knows and sees what everyone else is working on. The difference in this phase is that as well as being guided by the directing team you will also be talking to the designers working on your character's story to build a world designed from your work.

WHY ARE THE PERFORMANCE DATES AND VENUE NOT CONFIRMED?

We are in discussions regarding possible venues. If we were to confirm the venue and exact performance dates at this point in time, within 6 months that venue may not be available. If the venue is large, we can do fewer performances, if it is small we will need to do more. We have dates that we are aiming towards, which is why we are asking prospective auditionees to be flexible over performance dates in March and April 2016. This is a once-in-a-lifetime type of show so we're hoping people are prepared to give us a little more flexibility in their availabilities than usual!

DO I NEED TO READ THE TEMPEST?

You should certainly familiarise yourself with the synopsis of the play and its characters if you can. The full text is available online. Given the nature of our production, unusually for a play, we would encourage you to watch any filmed version you can find, the 1992 Shakespeare's Animated Tales version is particularly lovely. If you can find it, Prospero's Books by Peter Greenaway has been one of our starting points in creating Such Stuff. The 50s sci-fi film, Forbidden Planet, is based on The Tempest and a Tempest storyline features in Neil Gaiman's The Sandman.

CAST BREAKDOWN

"Hell is empty and all the devils are here!"

Prospero

(M) 35+

An authoritarian figure with a powerful stage presence, good verse-speaking skills and ability to command the space.

Miranda

(F) playing age 15-25

Miranda is an intriguing mix of subservient and meek with the added feral quality of having been brought up on an island from the age of 3. Miranda has only ever had her father and Caliban to speak to. She cannot see the spirits of the island, only feel their influence. We are looking for an actor who can really get into the character and play several different aspects of the role. Ideally some dancing/movement ability.

Mystery female character

(F) playing age 30+

If you can turn on a sixpence and be timid and terrifying, this incredible female role will be pivotal to the show. As a result we can't tell you too much about it! Ideally suited to a performer with a great acting range, speaking voice and commanding stage presence.

Ferdinand

(M) playing age 15-25. Young, bewildered and sincere. Able to make anyone fall in love with him at first sight, not just a girl who has never seen a boy before. Ideally some dancing/movement ability.

Ariel

Mixed ages and genders

There will be four Ariels, each representing a different element. We need at least two of the Ariels to be strong singers with confident voices.

Pur – Fire will be a dynamic male or female physical performer

Hudor – Water may also be male but older, depending on cast numbers he may take the intriguing role of the Boatswain from The Tempest

Aer – Air will be female, possibly with acrobatic skills

Ge – Earth also female, possibly a strong singing voice

Each Ariel will have very different back stories so these roles will be great for anyone really wanting to get stuck into the research and experiment side of the show. Ariels will be great at working in a tight group but compelling as individuals. Ariels will form the connection between the audience and the play so should be good at breaking the fourth wall while still remaining aloof and magical.

Caliban

(M) any age

A strong physical performer, sensitive to his surroundings, Caliban loves his island and is not necessarily always the villain and the coward Prospero makes him out to be. This will be a wonderful role to realise, having lots of fun with The Drunks and really getting into the back story of Caliban.

Stefano

(M) any age

The king's butler with ideas above his station. Stefano and Trinculo (collectively known as The Drunks) will be the light relief for the audience, they will be haunted by the spirits of the island, but on the whole, they will be having a lot of fun and great at ad-libbing and putting the audience at ease. If our venue has a bar as part of the set, they will spend some of their time in that space.

Trinculo

(M/F) any age

A jester, Stefano's companion, see Stefano. We will probably be looking at someone with excellent verbatim lip-synching skills and would also be interested in anyone with mime experience or clowning skills. Ideally we would like a strong physical contrast to Stefano.

Shakespeare

(M) 30-55

We can't reveal Shakespeare's function in the play unless you are cast, but this will be a beautiful role for someone prepared to do the research and work on us with the story. As writer of The Tempest, Shakespeare should be the most powerful and important person in Such Stuff, but is he creating the island, or has the island trapped him too?

Willingness to grow facial hair may help.

HOW TO TAKE PART

WORKSHOP

Date: Wednesday 4th November 2015

Time: 7-9pm

Location: City Library, 1 Brewers Hall Garden, EC2V 5BX

Format:

The co-directors will explain their vision for the play and give you a chance to work with some of the rehearsal methods we will be using.

Please wear clothing you are comfortable moving in.

If you are planning on attending the workshop please email Clare at suchstuff16@gmail.com so we have an idea of numbers.

AUDITIONS

Dates: Monday 9th, Wednesday 11th and Friday 13th November 2015

Time: 6:45pm for 7pm start

Location: City Library, 1 Brewers Hall Garden, EC2V 5BX

Format: A group session for 2-2.5 hours

Please wear clothing you are comfortable moving in.

Please read through the scenes that we send you when we confirm your audition slot so that you are familiar with the text.

VOICE AUDITIONS

Date: Monday 16th November, 7pm – 9pm

If you would like to audition for a part in the 'radio play' and do not want to be considered for the core cast, please book a 5-minute slot at this audition.

Prepare: Two contrasting speeches by two different characters (gender irrelevant) from The Tempest, approx. 1 minute each, free choice. To be read only, no staging or memorising required, we will then direct you briefly.

If you cannot make the radio play rehearsal date (29th November 3pm – 7pm) and the two recording studio days on 5th and 12th December (10:30 – 1pm) unfortunately, we cannot consider you for a voice role.

RECALLS

Date: Sunday 15th November 2015

Time: 11am – 4pm

Location: City Library, 1 Brewers Hall Garden, EC2V 5BX

BOOKING AN AUDITION

To book an audition please email Clare at suchstuff16@gmail.co.uk, specifying a first and second choice audition slot and if you are interested in any particular parts.

If you are unable to make the advertised audition dates, and wish to audition, please get in touch and we will do our best to accommodate your availability.

AUDITION RESTRICTIONS

2016 is one of (if not the) the busiest seasons Sedos has ever committed to, with 10 individual productions. Because of overlapping rehearsal and production dates it will not be possible for you to be cast in Such Stuff as well as the following Sedos productions: Pornography, I Love You You're Perfect Now Change, Reefer Madness. For non-Sedos productions it is inadvisable for you to be cast in any show which will be rehearsing or performing between January and early May 2016.

AUDITION, PARTICIPATION AND MEMBERSHIP FEES

Sedos is one of London's pre-eminent amateur theatre societies with the aim of producing quality amateur theatre to the best artistic quality possible. In the nature of amateur theatre performers are not paid – not even expenses. To perform in Such Stuff you must be a member of Sedos (membership is currently £30 per year) and pay a participation fee of £30. There is a £5 audition fee for non-Sedos members. If you are cast in the show, your audition fee will be deducted from your participation fee.

BACKSTAGE HELP

If you are not interested in auditioning, but are interested in helping out backstage, in any capacity (from crewing to building scenery, sewing costumes and front of house) we will be holding a production team meet up on the 18th of November, 7pm at 1 Brewers Hall Gardens, EC2V 5DX. Please contact Clare at suchstuff16@gmail.com if you are planning on attending, or would like to be involved but cannot attend.

REHEARSALS

It is planned that rehearsals will start in late November and be on Monday and Wednesday evenings and Sunday daytime. Where possible all rehearsals will be held at C1 Brewers Hall Gardens, if for any reason this is not possible then rehearsals will be held at a venue in Zone 1.