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William Shakespeare's

Tempest

An interpretation by Teatro Vivo

Venues so far: Horniman Museum & Gardens, 100 London Rd, Forest Hill, London, SE23 3PQ

Manor House Gardens, Brightfield Road, Hither Green, London SE12 8QG

Dates: October 4th - October 31st 2010 – four performances in each park

Artistic Vision:

Directed by Teatro Vivo Artistic Director Sophie Austin, this production will seek to enliven and harness the beauty and eerie atmosphere of these green spaces at night. Literally bringing to life Prospero's magical island, we will lead the audience on a dark and foreboding journey through these secret gardens where they will discover spirits and beasts, lovers and kings and experience for themselves how Prospero controls them all.

This will be a promenade production where the audience will be split into four groups. Dispersed during the tempest in scene one, these groups will be escorted to each scene by the spirits of the island who, using contemporary text, will tell of their slavery and of the background to the island and its current inhabitants.

As the audience are led through the park they come across the ship wrecked characters and see their scenes played out using Shakespeare's original text.

The spirits will act as a chorus to each scene using music and sound to create an exotic and unnerving environment.

In the final scene Prospero will invite all the characters and the audience back to his cell where they will be invited to drink and dance before returning to Milan and letting the indigenous spirits of the island reclaim their home.

This is the perfect play to be explored now, outside, amongst the elements. While we are constantly being reminded of our fragile earth and the strains that we put upon her, this staging will enable us to take a fresh look at the power of our planet and the fragility of man. Like Prospero we have harnessed this power and only now are we beginning to realise the damage we have done.

Prospero is preparing to leave his island, to free his slaves and Shakespeare makes it clear the effect his tyranny has had over the likes of Caliban and Ariel. As our audience prepare to leave and the characters prepare to go back to Milan, will the spirits of the island allow them safe voyage?

This staging will invite the audience to experience the darker side of the story and hear Shakespeare's words come to life in a totally unique, thoroughly relevant and interactive way.

Teatro Vivo – Theatre is Alive



Design:

We will be working with the artist Tim Sutton to create the design and light the show. Using the parks as they are, we will tell this story in a simple yet magical way. Performed in the autumn with the elements as our backdrop we will use natural and battery powered lighting; candles, lamps, head torches. Props will be as natural as possible – sail fabric and rope will be used to conjure the boat and costumes will be period with the island spirits earthy yet fantastical.

We have approached the Claire at Manor House Library who is keen for the building to be involved in the project. We are discussing the possibility that the library will become Prospero's cell and this is where we will have a warming glass of wine with the audience at the end. They have also offered us use of their rooms as a dressing room and 'backstage area'.

Logistics:

Set: We aim to use the park as it is – we do not build a stage, but use the natural spaces that the park has to offer to tell our story.

Sound: There will be no amplified sound. Any music will be performed live.

Alcohol: We would like to offer mulled wine as part of the final scene. This will be included in the ticket price and not sold on site.

Ticketing: Tickets will be sold in advance via our website and local businesses. £12 inc wine, £10 without, £5 concession.

Past Experience:

Our interpretations of Twelfth Night and Romeo and Juliet staged in Manor House Gardens were a great success. We rehearsed in the park which allowed park users unprecedented access to our rehearsal process. We performed in all weathers and always sold out as well as encouraging passers by to join the audience.

The cost of staging a one off performance at Manor House Gardens became too much to repeat the process every year. This year the company is 5 years old and we want to celebrate by staging another park show. By taking in 3 other parks we will be reaching a larger audience which we hope will enable us to apply for more funding.

We are yet to secure all the funding needed to stage this event, but we are hopeful and are keen to hear any other suggestions on raising funds to ensure this project can happen.

What happens next:

Let me know what you think!

I would be keen to hear any questions you have about the proposed project, please contact me sophie@teatrovivo.co.uk.

We are in the process of raising funds and getting the necessary licenses from Glendale and Lewisham Council.



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We are also looking for any volunteers who would be interested in getting involved in the creation of such an exciting project!

About Us:

Teatro Vivo are a Lewisham based performance collective who have been creating theatre for 5 years. Made up of professional directors, writers, musicians and actors, we create theatre that breaks free of traditions - we use unusual, non-theatre spaces to bring to life unique interpretations of classic texts and new writing.

Our style of theatre is an all encompassing experience for audiences of all ages and backgrounds. We aim to break down the barriers that traditional theatres put up by inviting audiences to wander through the worlds that we create allowing them their very own experience of the space and the stories told within it. We find this approach attracts audiences who are not traditional or regular theatre goers.

Previous work has included a promenade version of Anton Chekhov's Three Sisters at Manor House Library and Theatre Museum in Covent Garden, Supermarket Shakespeare at supermarkets throughout Lewisham, Hothouse, a devised tango inspired play and two promenade Shakespeare plays performed in Manor House Gardens in 2005/6.

We have created performances in HMV Covent Garden, listed buildings, Libraries, parks, and cafes. Please see the website for further information www.teatrovivo.co.uk