

Act III, Scene III - The Tempest

York College's first fully staged Shakespeare play and the players seem intent on making it memorable run. York College Department of Performing and Fine Arts presents "The Tempest," directed by Tom Marion. April 30, 4 p.m.; May 1, 2 p.m.; May 4, noon; May 7, p.m.; May 8, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Sabrina, Michael and Destiny creep through the imaginary curtain and down the ramp on the patch of Africa that is refuge to Prospero and his crew of spirits called Ariel. The strange, small creatures take their places. Bent and bow-legged, each carries a piece of fruit. King Alonzo, a large, purple figure who had just announced he was the bad guy, stretched his hand high overhead and brings it down on Destiny's orange. She reacts with the slightest cringe. Alonzo steps back and tells her not to be scared, that he's not going to hurt her and he doesn't want to scare her.



York College Department of Performing and Fine Arts presents "The Tempest," directed by Tom Marion. --The strange, small creatures take their places. Bent and bow-legged, each carries a piece of fruit.

The spell is broken. Destiny Kennedy, her brother Michael Kennedy and Sabrina Raouf must go back and try it again. And one more time after that.

That's not exactly how William Shakespeare wrote "The Tempest," but this is York College's first fully staged Shakespeare play and the players seem intent on making it a memorable run.

How fully staged? At York, Shakespeare's story of injustice and retribution – considered his final play and valedictory -- is set in modern day Africa with original music and choreography on a flexible, multi-level set that serves as ship, beach, cave and the realm of Prospero, once king and now avenging master of his exile. The 19-member acting company is bolstered by puppets, mask-wearing dogs, magic figures and eight sprites – the latter courtesy of The Learning Tree Multicultural School in Corona and arts teacher Colette Livingston, a York alumna.

“Remember, this is modern day Africa, where there is war and conflict,” director Tom Marion reminds his actors, large and small. “And in some places there are children soldiers, so one of the actors on stage carries a prop machine gun.” Even the dogs, a common “special effect” used by Shakespeare, are based on the African Basenji, known as the Congo hounddog.

In Shakespeare’s day actors often played more than one role as suited the playwright. Sabrina, Michael and Destiny will take off their masks and creature creepiness in time to will join their classmates running down the Little Theater aisle and on stage for the wedding scene in Act Four.

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