

# WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S THE TEMPEST



**AUGUST  
22-31**



**TWILIGHT  
THEATRE**

Detailed show dates &  
times at our website.





## Creative Team

Director- Cait McNeal

Stage Manager- Nicole Balog

Assistant Stage Manager- Jake Reid

Technical Director- Joe Soriano

Costume Designer- Michele McNeal

Head of Wardrobe - Sammy Kay Smith

Photographer & Scenic Assistant - Jake Reid

## Cast

Prospero- Michele McNeal

Ariel- Vic Heatherson

Miranda- Jane Plishka

Ferdinand- Zach Manthey

Caliban- Joe Soriano

Stephano- Sarah BenBella

Trinculo- Sam Ost

Alonso- Michael Porter

Gonzalo / Juno- Jess Gray

Antonio- Connor Mast

Sebastian / Ceres- Xaverie Baker

Boatswain / Adrian / Iris- Angela Huff



## SHOW INFORMATION

Years ago Prospero, a powerful sorceress and Duke of Milan was supplanted by her treacherous brother, Antonio. Aided by the King of Naples, Antonio seized power, but not before Prospero and her daughter Miranda escaped by sea, eventually finding safe haven on a remote island.

Now, fate and the sea have brought all those responsible for the coup within reach of Prospero's power. Seeking revenge, she conjures a tempest, causing the ship that carries all of her enemies to wreck upon the shores of the same island where Prospero and Miranda now reside with the sprite Ariel and the strange being called Caliban. Families will be reunited, plots unraveled, and reconciliations made as old enemies and new lovers find one another upon the shores of Prospero's mysterious and magical island.



## Director's Note:

The Tempest has always had a special place in my heart. It was not only responsible for igniting my love of Shakespeare but for theatre in general and therefore, by extension, can be partially credited for all of my theatrical endeavors over the years. At the age of three years old I was lucky enough to be part of Ingenue Theatre Ensemble's production of The Tempest (playing the coveted role of Little Water Sprite) and I think it's safe to say that experience has immeasurably shaped my life and the person that I am today.

The Tempest is, at its heart, a story about family, and a story about change. The familial relationships in The Tempest are complex and dynamic and feel familiar, both in those relationships that we cherish and those that are difficult to navigate.

It is beautiful to me how deeply the themes of family are rooted in the Tempest, as a love of Shakespeare is, in my own family, just as deeply rooted. From that first production, guided by the brilliant creativity of my aunt, who somehow managed to extract amazing performances from a bunch of kids and teenagers; to the countless tales told of Shakespeare done in parks and under the stars, to recollections from my mother, of her and her father running lines for A Midsummer Night's Dream by the pool together, to every audition monologue practiced for an audience of one growing up, and every living room recitation when my mom remembered a favorite monologue which I watched as a child, wide-eyed with awe and immense admiration. It has been an honor and an incredible joy to have the chance to stand at the helm of this ship and steward my own vision of this story to life.

Many people know Tempest as "The last play Shakespeare wrote." and his farewell homage to life in the theatre. I think that his message future generations is a good one. Life confronts us with many changes; and many endings but the choice of how we meet those changes is in our hands. Do we cling to past wrongs and demand retribution or do we instead choose forgiveness and greet the new and the unknown with grace. Do we choose to grow and to learn, and in so doing foster understanding even amidst animosity? What can we teach? What can we learn? And what can we learn even from those we sought to teach. Can we choose to relinquish our hold on power and leave the world a better place for those in whose hands we must inevitably leave it? I believe we can. I believe also; and I think that Mr. Shakespeare would agree; that art and music and theatre are all meaningful ways of leaving this world better than we found it. I hope that you will agree too, and I hope you enjoy The Tempest.





### Michele McNeal- Prospero

Michele is so excited to participate in Twilight Theatre's The Tempest. She has appeared with various theaters around Northeast Ohio. Some of her favorite previous roles include the Nurse (Romeo and Juliet), Sonia (Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike), Lear (Lear), Judge Wargrave (And Then There Were None), Miss Prism (The Importance of Being Earnest), Eulalie Shinn (Music Man) and, at different times, both Mrs. Bennet and Lady Catherine in Pride & Prejudice. Michele is a retired librarian who now also teaches, narrates audiobooks, and designs and constructs costumes. [michelemcneal.com](http://michelemcneal.com)

### Vic Heatherson- Ariel

Vic Heatherson has been in every play she's ever had a role in. From her very first show, to her most recent, to this one you're sitting down for right now, she's done every single one of them.

She, humbly, has but one humble request, and that's if you see a puppy in the audience, to please pet it. That's her puppy; her name is Little and she's never been in anything.



### Jane Plishka- Miranda

Jane Plishka is delighted to be returning for her second production with Twilight Theatre after playing Helena in A Midsummer Night's Dream last year. Some of her other past roles include Alice (Alice in Wonderland), Lydia (Pride and Prejudice) and Katherine/Jaquenetta (Love's Labours Lost). Jane enjoys baking treats to share with friends, as well as cooking, crafting, board games, and playing her hammered dulcimer in her spare time. She has adored working alongside this hilarious cast and is so grateful to be performing with the wonderful people of Twilight Theatre again!





### Zach Manthey-Ferdinand

Zach is delighted to make his Twilight Theatre debut. Zach has been acting for the past several years. He has graced the stage as Laertes in Hamlet at Weathervane Playhouse, Happy Loman in Death of a Salesmen at Western Reserve Playhouse, and a handsome devil in his everyday life.



### Joe Soriano-Caliban

Joe is an actor, director, and combat choreographer that works throughout northeast Ohio including the Youngstown, Akron, Canton, and Cleveland areas. A few of his acting credits include Abram in Romeo & Juliet at Opera Western Reserve; Orsino in Twelfth Night, Rosencrantz in Hamlet, King Ferdinand in Love's Labours Lost, Cornwall in Lear, Iachimo in Cymbeline, Sebastian in The Tempest, Howard in Tame, and Armin in Equivocation at Rubber City Theatre; Mercutio/Friar Lawrence in Shakespeare's R&J at Converge Continuum; Lenox in Macbeth at Shakespeare at the Castle; Horatio in Hamlet at Weathervane Playhouse.

### Sarah BenBella- Stephano

Sara is so excited to be joining Twilight Theatre in their production of The Tempest. They graduated from Kent State with a BA in Theatre Performance in 2018 and are currently pursuing their MFA at Western Illinois University where they are set to graduate in 2026. Some of their favorite recent credits include: Hamlet (Hamlet) with Timucua Arts Foundation, Noises Off (Garry) and Vanya, Sonia, Masha, and Spike (Sonia) at Western Illinois University, A Midsummer Night's Dream (Lysander) with Stone Soup Shakespeare, and they are excitedly preparing for their thesis role in the fall Coriolanus (Coriolanus).







### Sam Ost -Trinculo

Sam Ost (she/her) is thrilled to make a return to the stage after a five year absence. She could not have asked for a more talented, compassionate, and fun cast to be working with.

Previous favorite productions include Julius Caesar (Calpurnia/Lucius), Women Beware Women (Isabella), and Love's Labours Lost (Costard).

### Michael Porter- Alonso

Michael graduated from Kent State in 2021 with a major in Theatre Management and minor in Theatre Performance. You may have seen him in past theatre productions which include: The Eight Reindeer Monologues (Comet) at Avenue Arts, A Midsummer Nights Dream (Lysander) at Orville Community Theatre, The Lion, The Witch, And The Wardrobe (Unicorn) at Players Guild Theatre, and many more!

Outside of theatre, Michael is also an actor for Get Away With Murder Inc. based in Northeast Ohio! He is excited to be performing for the first time with Twilight Theatre, and he would like to thank Joe and Twilight Theatre for this opportunity!



### Jess Gray: Gonzalo / Juno (she/they)\_

This is Jess' first appearance with Twilight Theatre and they are thrilled to be part of a company dedicated to bold, queer storytelling. You may have last seen them in Boom!Theatre's Production of Steven Sondheim's Company. Jess is an alumnus of Kent's theatre program and NYU's Tisch School of Drama where they studied both classical and musical theatre. Jess extends heartfelt thanks to her fellow actors—especially her brilliant scene partners—the endlessly patient director, and her long-suffering, show-widowed fiancé. Apologies to her cats, Puck and Salem, who are certain they've been abandoned. And thank you to you for supporting live theatre and local art.

For Abby, Paula, Phil, and Dad—always.







### Connor Mast- Antonio

Conner is ecstatic to be performing here tonight. Recent credits include: Sweeney Todd (Beedle Bamford), All Shook Up (Chad), and Hair (Hooper Bukowski). Connor is originally from Holmes County Ohio and has been performing for ten years. Some of his favorite projects include: The Little Mermaid (King Triton), Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (Brick Pollitt), Shrek The Musical (Shrek) and Beauty and the Beast (Beast). Connor is now a resident of Akron and has worked in the theatre scene for a few years. Some of his credits include Kinky Boots (Angel), Roger and Hammerstein's Cinderella (Ensemble) Pride and Prejudice (Mr. Hill) and Ragtime (Ensemble). Connor would like to thank his girlfriend and family for supporting his craft.

### Xaverie Baker- Sebastian / Ceres

Xaverie is thrilled to be taking the stage in her second Twilight Theatre production! After receiving training at Upright Citizens Brigade in Los Angeles, Xaverie returned back to Akron to tackle various exciting roles, including Lysander (A Midsummer Night's Dream), Tilly Evans (She Kills Monsters), Mary Warren (The Crucible), Cheryl (Evil Dead: The Musical), Cecily (The Importance of Being Earnest) and more. Off stage, she spends her time writing, reading, hanging out with their cats, singing lots of karaoke, playing New York Times Games, and making bagels. She would like to thank her amazing cast for always making her laugh during rehearsal. We truly hope you enjoy the show!



### Angela Huff- Boatsaiwn/ Adrian/ Iris

Angela is excited to be back at Twilight Theater for another wonderful show! She was in Twilight's production of Midsummer Night's Dream as Francis Flute! Before that she was in ensemble for Millennial Theater Project's production of Sweeney Todd.







### Cait McNeal- Director

Cait has frequently been found in a theater since the age of three when she first started performing. Much later, she added the role of Director to her repertoire with her directorial debut of Roving Rogue Pro's A Midsummer Night's Dream in 2022, followed by The Millennial Theatre Project's Pride and Prejudice in 2023. Previous acting credits include: A Midsummer Night's Dream (Titania), and Romeo and Juliet (Romeo) at Twilight Theatre; The Game's Afoot (Daria Chase) at Roving Rogue Pro; Puffs (Sally) at Broadview Heights Spotlights; Equivocation (Judith), Hamlet (Ophelia), Macbeth (Lady Macbeth), Richard III (Lady Anne), Tis Pity She's A Whore (Anabella), and many others at Rubber City Theater; & Sweeney Todd (Mrs. Lovett) at The Millennial Theatre Project. When not performing on the stage, she is an avid reader & writer, and enjoys storytelling of all kinds. She is forever grateful for the love and support of friends, family, Joe, and her cats. [caitmcneal.com](http://caitmcneal.com) @xcrazy\_caitx

### Jake Reid- ASM / Photographer / Scenic Assistant

Jake has been a high school English teacher for the past nine years with his tenure taking him to rural Alaska, inner city Cleveland, and finally the suburbs of Austintown. Not content to hear the droning of his students reciting Shakespeare, Jake decided it was time for a new chapter of his life, left the teaching profession, and is currently exploring careers in content writing and digital marketing.



### Sammy Kay Smith - Head of Wardrobe

Sammy Kay Smith was secretly raised by Martha Stewart (her mom) and June Clever (her grandma), teaching her sewing and crafting from a young age. Raised with homemade Halloween costumes and dresses for her dolls, it's no wonder she picked up a few things. She's a co-founder of Roving Rogue Productions, and most of her work has been seen with them. Credits include "Sherlock Holmes and the Hound of the Baskervilles," "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," and "The Game's Afoot." She also has a growing costume closet for Rogue's murder mysteries, friend's to raid for shows and ren faires, and historic interpretations she performs in. Sammy Kay can also be found singing, performing, reading, writing, and cuddling her cats, Bonnie and Clyde.





# SPECIAL THANKS



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