

## Ears to See: Music in *The Tempest*

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### *Foreword*

This essay tackles Ariel's most celebrated song *Full Fathom Five*, within the map of *The Tempest* as a sort of symphony, in which the language of sounds is dominant not only as a theme but also as a metaphor of the multi-discursivity of the play, to which my critical discourse conforms. Part one of my argument is a recollection of the historical and cultural background of the Stuart dramaturgy, calling for a music more suitable to the close space of theatres like the Blackfriars. Part two, textually based, is an inquiry into Shakespeare's collaboration with contemporary musicians and imitation/recreation of pre-existing scores. All this leading to Shakespeare's alleged collaboration with Robert Johnson for the composition of *Full Fathom Five* as well as to the similarity to tunes by John Dowland: in fact, the core of my argument.

### *Historical background*

In 1608, the King's Men were granted rights to act at the Blackfriars, a theatre in which boy choristers had begun to perform about two

decades earlier. Although Shakespeare's acting company continued to use the Globe in the summer, the new location, indoor and smaller, changed a great deal in the staging of plays written prior to 1608 and imposed new requirements on those composed with the Blackfriars' stage in mind, e.g. *Pericles*, *Measure for Measure*, *Cymbeline*, *The Tempest*. In a recent essay, Mariko Ichikawa has described the architecture of the building, pointing out that it was about half the size of its outdoor counterpart<sup>1</sup>. At the same time, Andrew Gurr has argued that due to the more limited space, Shakespeare had to reduce the number of lines for entrances and exits, and consequently the length of the performance<sup>2</sup>. Undoubtedly the size of the Blackfriars required some sort of negotiation on different levels of the stage production. Music was a crucial element in such negotiation, as proved by the growing success of the court masque in Jacobean culture<sup>3</sup>. *The Tempest* testifies to the popularity of the genre, matching – perhaps challenging – the increasingly experimental role of music brought about by the masque in the verbal and visual paradigms of romantic comedy.

Shakespeare was indifferent to the Aristotelian and Puritan repudiation of music, notably in tragedy. In *Hamlet's* act IV Ophelia sings, in the presence of other people or to herself, over ten song fragments; Desdemona sings the whole tune of *The Willow Song*; in *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, although scanty, music is so

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<sup>1</sup> Mariko Ichikawa, "Continuities and Innovations in Staging", in *Moving Shakespeare Indoors: Performance and Repertoire in the Jacobean House*, eds Andrew Gurr and Farah Karim-Cooper, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp. 79-94.

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Gurr, "The *Tempest's* Tempest at Blackfriars", *Shakespeare Survey*, 41 (1989), pp. 91-102.

<sup>3</sup> It is generally acknowledged that in *The Tempest*, the Masque of Juno and Ceres was written later than 1611 and auspiciously inserted in the play's performance during the revels for the marriage of Princess Elizabeth with the Elector Palatine on November 1, 1613. If need be, such musical episode could easily be removed. Never in the text is one allowed to believe that the apparition was actually staged in the 1611 Blackfriars' production, as is testified by Prospero, who defines the vision "a trick", a "vanity of my art" (IV.i. 40-41). More on the masque in David Lindley, ed., *The Court Masque*, London, Manchester University Press, 1986; Stephen Orgel, *The Illusion of Power*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1975, rpt. 1992; Jerzy Limon, *The Masque of Stuart Culture*, Newark, University of Delaware Press, 1990.

powerful as to acquire a performative role<sup>4</sup>. In the comedies, the presence of music is even more outstanding and culminates in *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*, significantly composed for the Blackfriars. An increasing amount of music therefore marked the Jacobean productions and the life of the Blackfriars area.

Before 1608, a number of professional musicians had written music for plays held at that theatre. The boy actors who therein performed were all trained as choristers, some of them even as instrumentalists. Thanks to their celestial and sophisticated voices, they could provide remarkable renditions. Spectators, in their turn, were used to listening to professionally performed music during the pieces they attended, also as a consequence of the music played during the *entr'acte*, the interval which was necessary to trim the candles in the hall. Yet, at that time music was not only performed *entr'actes*. Concerts unrelated to the plays were given before the beginning of shows, a habit that turned theatres into the historical antecedent of concert halls<sup>5</sup>.

At the Blackfriars, theatregoers had the opportunity to listen to all sorts of music. Composers usually lived nearby, and their careers pivoted around the theatre itself, as in the case of Richard Farrant, Nathaniel Giles, John Dowland, and Robert Johnson. All in all, the Blackfriars area was certainly the musical quintessence of the city – it was, in fact, London's most musical neighbourhood.

Since the audiences were avid consumers of music, it has been recently suggested that Shakespeare's collaboration with Johnson, author of *Full Fathom Five* and *Where the Bee Sucks*, must not have been limited to those pieces only but was rather extended to the whole play as in modern musical theatre show or in film<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Giuliano Pascucci, "Music in Shakespeare's Roman Plays", in *Roman Shakespeare: Intersecting Times, Spaces, Languages*, ed. Daniela Guardamagna, Oxford, Peter Lang, forthcoming.

<sup>5</sup> See John H. Long, ed., *Music in English Renaissance Drama*, Lexington, University of Kentucky Press, 1968; David C. Price, *Patrons and Musicians of the English Renaissance*, Cambridge Studies in Music, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009.

<sup>6</sup> Jonathan Holmes, leading director and founder of the Jericho House, has recently suggested that the play was originally written as a musical or, differently put, it was intended as a masque-like entertainment containing other masques and in which music must have functioned as a film score or as a

According to some scholars, negotiation must have also affected the instruments used in the performance. They maintain that the indoor location encouraged the use of quieter instruments as opposed to the sonic environment of an open theatre, where music had to be louder, practically limited to trumpet flourishes and the like. This notion, first expressed by Andrew Gurr in his seminal 1970 essay *The Shakespearean Stage 1574-1642*<sup>7</sup>, was iterated in Bruce Smith's *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England*<sup>8</sup> and is implicit in Sarah Dustagheer's claim that "a series of loud effects was perhaps unsuitable for such a 'live' space where sound bounced and travelled through the auditorium"<sup>9</sup>. Specifically, the claim is that woodwind replaced brass. Through repetition, such ideas have crystallised and it was only in a 2012 long and detailed essay, that David Mann debunked it by resorting to Linda Austern's studies<sup>10</sup>, among others, thereby showing that the indoor musical tradition was not so very different from the Globe's. It is a fact, however, that thanks to the increasing use of music and of its related activities, music began to be "integral to the dramaturgy"<sup>11</sup>, a necessary ingredient of plot and character development.

Actually, Sarah Dustagheer's claim that loud effects were unsuitable for the narrow space of the Blackfriars calls for reconsideration when it comes to *The Tempest*. What a shocking, tragic and awe-inspiring moment must have been when the enclosed space of the Blackfriars began to reverberate the roaring of the sea and the thunderbolts opening the play with an intensity unattainable in an outdoor theatre. And how soothing and calming must have sounded the abrupt shifting from plain and loud noise to the presumably sophisticated music accompanying the lyrics of *Come Unto These Yellow Sands* and of *Full Fathom Five*.

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character. More on this subject on *The official website of BBC Music Magazine*, available at [www.classical-music.com/news/tempest-early-musical](http://www.classical-music.com/news/tempest-early-musical).

<sup>7</sup> Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage 1574-1642*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1970.

<sup>8</sup> Bruce Smith, *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England*, Chicago-London, University of Chicago Press, 1999.

<sup>9</sup> Sarah Dustagheer, "Acoustic and Visual Practices Indoors", in *Moving Shakespeare Indoors*, eds Gurr and Karim-Cooper, pp. 137-51: 138.

<sup>10</sup> David Mann, "Reinstating Shakespeare's Instrumental Music", *Early Theatre*, 15:12 (2012), pp. 67-91.

<sup>11</sup> Dustagheer, p. 139.

The collaboration with a professional musician such as Robert Johnson, established since the composition of *The Winter's Tale*, and the enclosed acoustic environment revealed new expressive means and possibilities to Shakespeare, who, in *The Tempest*, does not use music to simply unveil traits of the characters' inner life (as Shakespeare does with Desdemona or Ophelia), to affect feelings and passions, or even to highlight a comic relief.

### *The magic of music*

Music in *The Tempest* is ineffable, it comes and goes unannounced, it often springs from an unseen source, thus creating confusion and displacement. Commenting on *Come Unto These Yellow Sands*, the first music piece that Shakespeare utilised in the play (for one of which, unfortunately, we do not possess any written notation), Ferdinand says:

Where shold this Musick be? I' th aire, or th' earth?  
 It sounds no more: and sure it waytes vpon  
 Some God o th' Iland, sitting on a banke,  
 Weeping againe the King my Fathers wracke.  
 This Musicke crept by me vpon the waters  
 Allaying both their fury, and my passion  
 With it's sweet ayre: thence I haue follow'd it  
 (Or it hath drawne me rather) but 'tis gone.  
 No, it begins againe. (I.ii.388-96)<sup>12</sup>

Ferdinand is puzzled. He ignores both the source of and the reason for the music in the scene<sup>13</sup>, and lacks a full understanding of the current event. The same happens when Ariel, resuming his singing,

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<sup>12</sup> All quotations are from *The New Oxford Shakespeare. The Complete Works: Critical Reference Edition*, eds Gary Taylor, John Jowett, Terri Bourus and Gabriel Egan, New York, Oxford University Press, 2016, 2 vols, and from *The New Oxford Shakespeare. The Complete Works: Modern Critical Edition*, eds Gary Taylor, John Jowett, Terri Bourus and Gabriel Egan, New York, Oxford University Press, 2016.

<sup>13</sup> A similar situation occurs in *Antony and Cleopatra* (IV.iii.11-19), in connection with Enobarbus' mysterious death: "SECOND SOLDIER: Peace! What noise? / FIRST SOLDIER: List, list! / SECOND SOLDIER: Hark! / FIRST SOLDIER: Music i' th' air. / THIRD SOLDIER: Under the earth. / [...] FIRST SOLDIER: Peace, I say! / What should this mean?" See, on this, Pascucci.

performs *Full Fathom Five*: in purporting to console Ferdinand of his father's loss, he actually reinforces the *illusion* of his death (I.ii.391).

From the start of the play music acquires a magic aura, a performative power whose origin is unknown to men. Shakespeare and Johnson breathed into this music a magical power, no longer mirroring the harmony of the celestial spheres, nor in accordance with the Greek modal scales (a view still maintained during the Elizabethan era). In *The Tempest*, the magic of music does not need any theoretical justification. Descriptions of musical islands are, in fact, well grounded in the literary tradition of the *mirabilia*: the enchanted rocks off the coast of Sicily described by Circe in the *Odyssey* recur along the routes connecting Naples to the same Tunis from which the characters of *The Tempest* set out on their journey home. In his *De Nuptiis*, Martianus Capella (ca. 410 AD) describes a number of musical islands later borrowed by Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa in his *De Occulta Philosophia* (1531). In Lydia, writes Agrippa, there are "Nymphs Islands [...] A certain stone of Megaris makes a sound like a harpe every time the string of a harpe is struck; so great is the power of music, That it apeaseth the minde"<sup>14</sup> – precisely the effect it induces in Ferdinand, who thinks the music he hears is being played by some god of the island.

In an essay dating back to 1993, French scholar Pierre Iselin argues that music in *The Tempest* is ambivalent and uncanny<sup>15</sup>, mostly deceitful when it seems to reveal reality. Linger on the threshold between reality and imagination, it may cheat the senses (as in the Harpy's banquet and in the masque), and create a fake reality (Alonso's death). Moreover, characters often give themselves away when trying to describe the visions conjured up by the sounds they hear or have heard.

This mechanism of selective hearing is activated in several scenes of *The Tempest*. During the attempted regicide scene (II.i.300) Ariel sings into Gonzalo's ear the song *While You Here Do Snoring Lie*, thus awaking him before the betrayers can hatch their devious

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<sup>14</sup> Henry Cornelius Agrippa, *Three books of Occult Philosophy, or Magick*, vol. I, p. 125, trans. John French, *Early English Books Online TCP*, [https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A26565.0001.001/1:16.24?rgn=div2;view=full\\_text](https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A26565.0001.001/1:16.24?rgn=div2;view=full_text).

<sup>15</sup> Pierre Iselin, "The *Tempest* et ses Musiques: Mythe et Dramaturgie", *Études Anglaises*, 46:4 (1993), pp. 385-97.

plan. In this scene, the performance of music differentiates three levels of perception. For the audience it is meant to wake up the sleepers, while the traitors Sebastian and Antonio maintain they have not heard any music, rather a roar of lions (an image reminiscent of the Age of Iron as portrayed by Cesare Ripa in his *Iconologia*). Finally, the innocent Gonzalo defines the “noise” he has heard as a humming, thus evoking the bees, a symbol of his longed-for Golden Age. In attaching a name to the sound they hear, the characters reveal the moral universe to which they belong. In Pierre Iselin’s words:

The allegorical reading of Ripa thus telescopes Ariel’s discriminating, elective musical process: verbalizing one’s response to music is tantamount to defining the symbolic age one belongs to. The co-existence of ages and their problematic dialogue is the emblematic version of the play’s multi-discursive, polyphonic construction<sup>16</sup>.

The polysemy of this polyphonic pattern is particularly evident in *Full Fathom Five* (I.ii.397-403) when Ariel describes Alonso’s death to a grieving Ferdinand. Together with *Where the Bee Sucks* (I.ii.375-



<sup>16</sup> Pierre Iselin, “My Music for Nothing: Musical Negotiation in *The Tempest*”, *Shakespeare Survey*, 48 (1995), pp. 135-45: 144.

82) this song is the only piece whose original score has survived<sup>17</sup>, thus allowing textual interpretation<sup>18</sup>.

*The sources of Full Fathom Five*

In *Full Fathom Five* selective hearing is crucial. Unlike Prospero's report to Miranda on the events prior to their exile, the event of Alonso's alleged drowning is entrusted to a musical performance. Staging it would be all but easy. No verse could achieve the same result. The magic of the piece induces Ferdinand to believe in the metamorphosis of his father's physical body from nature into a jewel made of pearls and corals, a piece of art meant to turn Alonso's mortality into eternity:

Of his bones are coral made;  
Those are pearls that were his eyes  
Nothing of him that doth fade  
But doth suffer a sea-change  
Into something rich and strange. (I.ii.398-402)

The ambivalence of this passage is that it is uncommitted on whether Alonso still lives; a significant reversal of the Counter-Reformation scenario, in which anamorphosis produces a displacement of sensual glamour to the naked truth of death.

The magic of music is not limited to convincing Ferdinand. On a metatheatrical level, it puts on stage the scene of a world elsewhere, which the eyes cannot see; a musical world with a specific popular tradition, built on imitation and refashioning of the sources.

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<sup>17</sup> The song, as well as *Where the Bee Sucks*, first appeared in print in John Wilson's collection *Cheerful ayres and Ballads First composed for one single Voice and since set for three Voices* published in Oxford in 1660. In Wilson's collection the name of Robert Johnson is appended to both songs, as it is in at least one of their manuscript sources (e.g. MS V.a.411 held at the Folger Shakespeare Library). The misguiding attribution to John Wilson in Manuscript Don.c.57, f. 75r, held at the Bodleian Library (Oxford), is nowadays considered a mistake by the copyist.

<sup>18</sup> I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my friend and teacher Maestro Anna De Martini for her precious comments and advice on the musical issues tackled in this paper.



## Full Fathom Five

Robert Johnson (1583-1633)

Full fa-ther five thy fa-ther lies Of his bones are co-ral made, those are pearls that were his eyes, no-thing of him that doth fade doth but so-ffer a sea-change in-to some-thing rich and strange Sea Nymphs hour-ly ring his knell, Hark! now I hear thee, Hark! now I hear thee, Ding dong bell Ding dong ding dong bell Ding dong ding dong bell Ding dong ding dong bell

The above score notates the melody of the song as found in the manuscript held at The Folger Library, to be accompanied by a bass line. At a time when compositions were usually notated in individual parts, it is difficult to establish whether the melody was accompanied by other voices or by one or more instruments. Nor is it possible to ascertain whether the composer and the playwright wanted the song performed as written or ornamented with embellishments, according to a traditional practice. Nonetheless, other features of the song can be ascertained.

The refrain, “ding dong bell”, first appeared in an old nursery rhyme dated 1580. It was printed in 1609 in the *Pammelia* miscellany by Thomas Ravenscroft in the form of a four-voiced canon which reads:

Jacke boy, ho boy newes,  
 The cat is in the well,  
 Let us ring now for her Knell,  
 Ding dong ding dong bell.

The lyrics of this refrain are echoed in the lines sung by Ariel: “Sea nymphs hourly ring his knell, / Hark now I hear them, ding dong bell” (I.ii.403-4). In *The Tempest*, however, they take on a parodic connotation. “The knell for a drowned cat”, referred to the loss of a king and a father, must have sounded ironical: a tragedy for Ferdinand but a farce to *The Tempest*’s audience, thus providing two different levels of perception.

*Jacke Boy* is not the only antecedent to Ariel’s song. A canon for four male voices titled *Ding Dong Bell* composed by William Stonard in the years when *Jacke Boy* was growing in popularity was another source of inspiration for Shakespeare and Johnson, who drew conspicuously from it.

William Stonard (c1585-1630)

Ding, ding, ding dong bell, ding, ding, dingding, dong bell. Oh cru - el death that

stopped the breath of him I loved so well A - lack and well a-way 'tis a hen - vy day that

e - vil us be - fell

Stonard’s lyrics, too, pay homage to a departed beloved. The piece has the circular pattern structure of a *round*, connecting the last line – “that we may ring his knell” (omitted in the above score) – to the first, “Ding dong bell”. It could be argued that the similarity in the words of the three compositions might result from the common

theme; in the case of Stonard's catch, however, the music too is similar to Johnson's.

In modern terms, the songs are written in two different keys, respectively C major and G major; but in the above sections the melodies overlap:



In Stonard's fragment reported above, the sound of the bell is clearly juxtaposed to a progression of five-note descending scales as in Ariel's song:



This is not the only similarity between Stonard's and Johnson's pieces. Generally speaking, they both tend to strictly revolve around the root note of the key and show a climactic phrase in which a descending third interval is followed by an ascending fourth and a few conjunct degrees. The passages look similar even graphic-wise:

Stonard's



mimics Johnson's



No less than the island of *The Tempest*, this song is full of echoes, both verbal and instrumental.

*Multiple discursiveness*

The song starts with an alliteration on the fricative unvoiced labiodental /f/ “Full fathom five thy father lies” followed by the liquid double /l/. Since the incipit, the phonosymbolism of these words evokes a rarefied ambience in which the presence of water is clearly signaled.

This concept is highlighted by the accompanying music. The dull *ostinato* of Gs, onto which Ariel’s first phrase is juxtaposed, metaphorically reenacts the bottom of the ocean through the iteration of the root note of the key on which the piece is built, i.e. G major. At the same time, the flat and dull repetition of the note is proleptic to the monotonous knell for Alonso in the refrain we’ve discussed above.

Then Alonso’s transformation begins: “nothing of him that doth fade [...] strange” (I.ii.400-1). Musically speaking, here the song begins to fluctuate. After the first phrase, the melodic line changes, even though revolving around the same chords as the previous one. The transformation goes on until Alonso is completely turned into “something rich and strange”, a point in which music reaches its climax by hitting the highest tones of the song’s range (E4 and D4), while poetry follows in its footsteps resorting to rather simple, yet effective, rhetorical figures of speech such as assonance (nymphs / ring) and, again, alliteration (“suffer a sea change”).

Once the metamorphosis is completed and Alonso has been changed from human into an aesthetic object, a new episode begins. The atmosphere of the piece changes too and an element of gaiety is introduced by the ascending melody skillfully obtained through descending third intervals.





such as Thomas Morley or Robert Johnson, who distanced themselves from Dowland's style. In his "Musical Introduction to *The Tempest*" included in the *The New Oxford Shakespeare* edition, John Cunningham claims that *Full Fathom Five* is stylistically similar to songs of the 1610s<sup>22</sup>. In my opinion, it is purposely conventional and reminiscent precisely of John Dowland's style.

Johnson is traditionally considered the author of eighteen songs meant for Shakespeare's company. Some of them have never been reliably attributed to him (e.g. *Hark, Hark the Lark* for *Cymbeline*; *Lawn as White as Driven Snow* written or possibly adapted for *The Winter's Tale* and several others). *Where the Bee Sucks* and *Woods, Rocks and Mountains*, presumably sung in *Cardenio* as well as *Endless Tears*, were nonetheless indubitably composed by Johnson. These pieces are much more elaborate than *Full Fathom Five*, they present madrigalisms and allow or even require ornamentation. Elements which are alien to *Full Fathom Five*, where the melody tends to develop through conjunct degrees, thus allowing little space for melodic diminutions or other sorts of embellishments. On the other hand, the similarity to John Dowland's musical production is striking. For reasons of space, I will limit my argument to a few yet significant examples.

In the *Second Book of Ayres* a remarkable resemblance is provided by song number 17, *A Shepherd in a Shade*:

**A SHEPHERD IN A SHADE**

John Dowland



**Full Fathom Five**

(Robert Johnson)



<sup>22</sup> John Cunningham, "Musical Introduction to *The Tempest*", in *The New Oxford Shakespeare. The Complete Works: Critical Reference Edition*, eds Taylor, Jowett, Bourus and Egan, vol. II, pp. 1524-580: 1524.

The key in which the song is fashioned and the time signature (C major if you will) are the same as Ariel's song; both begin with a prolonged repetition of Gs; apart from their final note, the melodies of the first phrase sound the same; both compositions revolve around two major chords, G major and E major. Perfect cadences (V-I) abound in both pieces.

Something similar to song number 17 occurs in *Faction That Ever Dwells* (18), showing a similar incipit and lack of harmonic variety.

**TIME'S ELDEST SON, OLD AGE**  
(THE FIRST PART)

John Dowland

Time's: old-est son.      Old Age the heir of Ease,      Straght's too, Love's woe.

*Time's Eldest Son*, written about fifteen years before *Full Fathom Five*, is the first of a three-part song illustrating the proper behaviours of young and old men. It bears an even more astonishing resemblance to Ariel's song.

Similarities with Dowland's songs are neither limited to the second book of *ayres* nor to incipits of the pieces. I am not arguing that the most celebrated of the songs in *The Tempest* should be attributed to John Dowland rather than to Robert Johnson. Maybe the similarities shared by the songs herein mentioned are merely accidental. Yet one cannot deny that while composing music for *The Tempest*, Johnson decided to follow the conventional style which he had dismissed while writing music for *Cymbeline* and *The Winter's Tale*, a fact which makes *Full Fathom Five* much closer to John Dowland than to Robert Johnson himself. The multi-discursiveness thus arising is not only a prerogative of the song in performance. The multidimensional composition includes a triple scheme: a homage to the popular tradition, an acknowledgement of John Dowland's style and the creation of an ambivalent narrative for the sake of Ferdinand's supposed orphanhood. The three aspects lead to three different levels of perception: for the erudite audience of the Blackfriars, the reference to the aforementioned nursery rhyme,

so overtly quoted in Ariel's song, must have signified that what Ferdinand perceives as a ritual dirge is also a parody of his loss; the reference to John Dowland could be either a mockery of an old-fashioned style, or a homage to the composer, who, after his return from Denmark, lived in the Blackfriars area and must have participated, at least as a spectator, in musical performances in the theatre. In other words, some generational dialogue between Johnson, Shakespeare, and Dowland is certainly taking place while the audience and the characters are focusing on the possible meaning of the tune they are listening to. Finally, the staging of the king's death through a song creates a sort of musical meta-narrative.

The island looks different to each character and so does music. In its multiverse none of the universes that language and music create for each character prevails over the others. At the centre of the island is a lack of meaning which resists ultimate interpretation. In this respect, the ear is not more reliable than the eye as a cognitive tool. Both music and language suggest meaning, yet they fall short of knowledge<sup>23</sup>.

### *Coda*

A whole cultural environment flows into the sounds of *The Tempest*. Its multi-dimensional discourse launches a new and alluring aesthetics to be developed not only on the early modern stage but in the theatres to come. The established space for the musicians (the historical antecedent of the orchestra pit) is typical of the Blackfriars as well as of the Sam Wanamaker House today. The growing role of music in Shakespeare's final Romances and its interweaving with the plot; the early modern form of masque and anti-masque requiring special effects (e.g., spectacular costumes, singing, dancing, moveable scenery, baroque paintings and decorations) and, above all, the playwright's acknowledged collaboration with lutenist and composer Robert Johnson point to *The Tempest* as a precursor of English Semi-opera or Restoration Spectacular, which

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. Cavell and his idea of Shakespeare's skepticism in Stanley Cavell, *Disowning Knowledge: In Seven Plays of Shakespeare*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition).



in its turn was to evolve, in the United Kingdom, into the form of modern musical theatre rather than into Opera as on the continent.