

THE ENCHANTED ISLAND

January 21, 2012

Music by George Frideric Handel, Antonio Vivaldi, Jean-Philippe Rameau, and others

Conductor **William Christie**

Devised and Written by
Jeremy Sams

Production **Phelim McDermott**

Associate Director &
Set Designer **Julian Crouch**

Costume Designer **Kevin Pollard**

Lighting Designer **Brian MacDevitt**

Choreographer **Graciela Daniele**

Animation & Projection Design

59 Productions

Live in HD Host **Deborah Voigt**

Ariel **Danielle de Niese**

Miranda **Lisette Oropesa**

Sycorax **Joyce DiDonato**

Prospero **David Daniels**

Ferdinand

Anthony Roth Costanzo

Neptune **Plácido Domingo**

Caliban **Luca Pisaroni**

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ACT I Prospero, exiled Duke of Milan, lives on a remote island with his daughter Miranda. Having once consorted with the sorceress Sycorax, who ruled the island, he has banished her to the dark side of the island, stealing her sprite servant Ariel and enslaving her son Caliban. Sixteen years later, the aging Prospero conceives a plan to ensure Miranda's happiness and end his exile. He commands Ariel to cause a storm to shipwreck a passing vessel that carries the King of Naples and Prince Ferdinand, whom Prospero has destined for Miranda. In return, he promises Ariel his freedom. Caliban, who has overheard Prospero, tells Sycorax of the plan. She tells Caliban to steal a crucial ingredient for a magic potion from Prospero, resolving to restore her powers, regain control over the island, and make Caliban king.

Ariel's spell goes wrong, causing two pairs of honeymooning lovers—Helena and Demetrius, Hermia and Lysander—to be cast ashore on the island. Trying to find Ferdinand and set matters right with further spells, Ariel only sows more confusion: first Demetrius and Miranda fall in love, then Miranda and Lysander. Sycorax, meanwhile, decides to give Helena to Caliban as his future queen and casts a spell of her own to make Helena fall in love with him.

Ariel, realizing that Ferdinand must still be out at sea, calls upon Neptune for help, and the god, at first furious, agrees to scour the seas. Prospero contemplates the chaos he has wrought and despairs of ever achieving his dream.

INTERMISSION

ACT II Sycorax exults in her revived powers and the certainty that she will soon have her revenge on Prospero. Lysander and Demetrius, under the power of Ariel's spell, both fail to recognize their respective brides, pursuing Helena and Miranda instead. Hermia finds Helena and the two bemoan the fickleness of men. Helena then takes off after Demetrius, spurning Caliban, who is crushed. Caliban rushes to Sycorax for consolation, but she explains that hearts that love can always be broken.

Caliban, in his fury, steals Prospero's book of magic and conjures a dream of himself as a potentate of the world. When his fantasy spins out of control, Prospero intervenes and restores order. Meanwhile, Neptune has found Ferdinand's ship and sent it toward the island. Ferdinand, like Miranda, has been dreaming of an elusive someone.

Ariel sets about putting matters right, making the five mismatched lovers fall asleep side by side, then ensuring that, when they awaken, the honeymooners will be paired with their proper mates. With Miranda, they make their way to the shore to see Ferdinand and his father, the king, arrive, greeted by Prospero. Ferdinand reads the pardon ending Prospero's exile and, seeing Miranda, falls in love instantly—no spell required.

Sycorax enters and challenges Prospero. When he rebuffs her, Neptune appears and takes her part, berating Prospero for victimizing others as he himself was once victimized. Ashamed, Prospero begs forgiveness of Sycorax and gives the island back to her and her son. Neptune extols the virtues of mercy and Sycorax grants Prospero forgiveness. All join to celebrate a new day of joy, peace, and love.

Production a gift of Dr. David G. Knott and Ms. Françoise Girard

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