

Art is not the opposite of nature but is its fulfillment; love and artifice become one and bring forgiveness.

1. Nature creates the human art by which hybrid "gillyvors" are bred, a blending of nature and art (4.4).
2. In the final scene (5.3), the statue is an elaborately authenticated work of art and a representation of Hermione herself.

Readings:

Essential: Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*.

Recommended: BBC-TV video of *The Winter's Tale*; Pafford, introduction to *The Winter's Tale* (New Arden ed.); Frey, *Shakespeare's Vast Romance: A Study of The Winter's Tale* (University of Missouri Press, 1980); Hunter, *Shakespeare and the Comedy of Forgiveness* (Columbia University Press, 1965), chapter 8.

Questions to Consider:

1. Describe the relationships between nature and art in this play.
2. Shakespeare arranges for some very elaborate prose conversations between minor characters in scenes such as 1.1 and 5.2, telling us things he could have directly dramatized for us. Analyze why, describing the effect these passages have.

Lecture Fifteen

Three Kinds of *Tempest*

Scope: A romance like *Cymbeline* and *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest* is special in three ways: it strips down the constituent actions to great simplicity, the leading character has godlike powers, and Caliban is a semi-human creature. These circumstances lead playgoers and scholars to strenuous efforts of interpretation, three of which the lecture explores. The play may deal with the imperialist or colonialist movement of early modern Europe. The play may explore the possibilities for magical or protoscientific power. The play may be a Christian comedy of forgiveness.

Objectives: Upon completion of this lecture, you should be able to:

1. Discuss why *The Tempest* has provoked much allegorical and biographical interpretation.
2. Compare and contrast *The Tempest* with earlier Shakespearean plays, especially the earlier romances.
3. Explain the difficulty a playwright faces when he or she creates an all-powerful character.
4. Describe the early modern concern with magic.
5. Describe the play's connection with imperialist politics.
6. Describe the play's use of Christian notions of forgiveness.

Outline

- I. *The Tempest*, the first play in the First Folio, has often been regarded as a special play.
 - A. It has inspired other works of art and striking adaptations.
 1. The Victorian poet Robert Browning wrote a poem on Caliban.
 2. The twentieth-century poet W. H. Auden wrote a series of poems on characters in the play.
 3. T. S. Eliot's "The Wasteland" is full of quotations from the play.
 4. It has inspired an extraordinary range of adaptations, operas, films.
 - B. Next to the sonnets, *The Tempest* has inspired the most autobiographical speculation.
 1. Some readers have seen Prospero as Shakespeare's self-portrait.
 2. People saw it as his last play, as the final statement about his art—but it was not his last.
 - C. It uses the characteristic plots of comedy, tragedy, and history in especially simplified forms.