

Resource Guide

Shobana Jeyasingh Dance

WINDOW INTO THE TEMPEST:
EXPLORING THE MAKING OF *We Caliban*



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Shobana
Jeyasingh
Dance

Written by Jennifer Irons and Kimberley Harvey for Shobana Jeyasingh Dance © 2026
With contributions by the Window into the Tempest Artists and the *We Caliban* Creative Team.

SECTION 1

WHY WINDOW INTO THE TEMPEST

***Window into the Tempest* (WIT) was developed in response to ongoing structural barriers faced by early-career artists in the dance sector, particularly those from the Global Majority and other underrepresented backgrounds.**

These barriers include:

- limited access to professional performance opportunities
- diminished professional networks following the Covid-19 pandemic
- reduced opportunities to work with professional companies while still studying, or in the earlier stages of an artist's career
- the centralisation of opportunities in London
- the prevalence of unpaid or underpaid work
- caring responsibilities

In response to these challenges, Shobana Jeyasingh Dance has developed a national engagement programme that runs alongside the 2025–26 tour of *We Caliban*. *Window into the Tempest* is designed to create meaningful, paid, artist-centred opportunities across the UK, decentralising access to professional practice and opening pathways into the sector.

WIT offers participants:

- direct engagement with a touring contemporary dance company
- access to professional choreographic and dramaturgical processes
- opportunities to perform as part of curtain raisers
- workshops and masterclasses led by company artists
- space to build networks beyond London-based structures



RESOURCE GUIDE

This resource guide accompanies WIT's workshops, curtain raisers and masterclasses. It is intended as both a window and a toolkit: offering insight into the making of *We Caliban* while equipping participants with creative, compositional and collaborative tools they can apply within their own practice.

Crucially, WIT is a co-creation project. The tasks, themes and approaches in this guide are informed by the creation process of *We Caliban*. Some activities come directly from that process, while others are inspired by it, offering participants an entry point into the questions, materials and methodologies that shaped the work.

By sharing process as well as product, *Window into the Tempest* aims to deepen participants' experience of *We Caliban* and longer-term artistic development, confidence and sustainability within the dance and cultural sectors.

This guide aims to:

- situate *We Caliban* within its artistic, historical and political context
- share Shobana Jeyasingh's choreographic approach and hallmarks
- share the perspectives of the collaborators whose disciplines cohere with one another in the creation of the work
- provide detailed creative tasks that develop skills in making, composing and collaborating

Who this guide is for:

- university dance and theatre students
- recent graduates
- early-career artists
- anyone interested in choreographic process, interdisciplinary collaboration and contemporary performance-making

This guide is not a set of instructions to be followed precisely. It is an invitation to try, make, translate and adapt.

SECTION 2

SHOBANA JEYASINGH: ARTISTIC VISION

For over three decades, Shobana Jeyasingh has created choreography recognised for its rigour, clarity of intention and conceptual boldness. Her practice brings together deep research, physical precision and intellectual complexity, grounded in an unshakeable commitment to contemporary relevance.

Working across dance, music, film, architecture and emerging technologies, Shobana describes herself as a “composer of space”, shaping how bodies, rhythm, attention and architecture meet. Movement is never isolated from its context; it is shaped by history, language, power structures and lived experience.

This resource captures how Shobana’s approach informed the making of *We Caliban*, and how the same principles underpin the *Window into the Tempest* tasks.



NOTE FROM SHOBANA JEYASINGH

I enjoyed studying *The Tempest* as a student. The fantastical plot, played out in an island of disputed location, its poetry and its magus prince Prospero, who renounces both political and supernatural powers and asks for grace instead, makes *The Tempest* a brilliant and moving play to read and savour.



On stage I have often found it static since most of the dramatic action is recounted retrospectively and what we see live is a cast of characters in thrall to Prospero's magical manoeuvring and seemingly lacking in active human agency.

The exception to this domination is Caliban (generally thought of as a play on the word cannibal, which was newly minted during the time of colonial exploration which Shakespeare lived through), the native of the island.

Caliban is described as a "savage and deformed slave" in the cast list and is treated as such. He is accused of violating the honour of Prospero's daughter Miranda. However, Shakespeare also gives him another non-visual character through perfectly formed poetic lines that match any spoken by his master Prospero.

We Caliban explores this unseen but faintly heard Caliban in the play as well as imagining the scenes that are recounted but un-staged.

What was Caliban's community like before Prospero, the Duke of Milan, and his daughter arrived? Did he really attempt to dishonour Miranda or was it an encounter such as that described by EM Forster in his book *A Passage to India*, where a similar mysterious accusation was made by the Englishwoman Adela Quested of her friend Dr Aziz within a disorienting atmosphere of the Marabar caves? Could Caliban have had his own language when Miranda tried to teach him hers? What of Caliban and his fellows after Prospero leaves their island?

These are some of the questions that prompted the making of *We Caliban*. The answers to these questions lay partly in Shakespeare's inspirational lines and his imaginative ability to stand both in and outside his own times but also in historical texts such as -

- Queen Elisabeth I's letters patent to Sir Walter Raleigh, written in 1584.
- The Journal of Columbus (1492) where he re-named all the rivers, capes and mountains that he encountered in what he mistakenly thought was India.
- Charles Grant's *Observations on the state of society among the Asiatic subjects to Great-Britain, particularly with respect to morals, and on the means of improving it* (1792):

“The generality however of those who have written concerning Hindustan, appear to have concurred in affirming what foreign residents there have as generally thought, nay, what the natives themselves freely acknowledge of each other, that they are a people exceedingly depraved.”

- T B Macaulay's memorandum on *The Indian Education Act in 1835*:

“I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia.”



Watch a video with Shobana talking about the making of *We Caliban*

[https://youtu.be/_qH_rTvI10Q?si=D6uCs9T4L5bTHbQZ]

BACKGROUND AND ARTISTIC CONCEPT

***We Caliban* is inspired by William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, written at a moment when Europe was beginning to establish itself as a colonial and naval power.**

Summary of *The Tempest*:

Prospero, the rightful Duke of Milan, is overthrown by his brother Antonio and cast adrift at sea with his young daughter Miranda. They survive and live on a remote island, where Prospero uses magic to control both the island and its inhabitants. Years later, he conjures a storm to shipwreck his enemies on the island, orchestrating events that lead to reconciliation, the restoration of his dukedom, and Miranda's engagement to Ferdinand, the Prince of Naples. Prospero ultimately renounces his magic and leaves the island.

Premise of *We Caliban*:

The Tempest centres a European nobleman who asserts authority over an island and its inhabitants. Its themes of power, subjugation, control of land and language, and treatment of the "other" continue to resonate today.

We Caliban offers a nuanced exploration of colonial experience and cultural integration by shifting perspective. Rather than retelling the dominant narrative of Prospero, the work invites us to see the story from Caliban's perspective, and to consider alternative interpretations of what is spoken of but never shown in the play.

Shakespeare's text acts as a template for a parallel, abstract and impressionistic work, informed by international research, intercultural discourse and lived experience.

“The message I would like to point to is one of integration rather than division.”

Shobana Jeyasingh

STRUCTURE AND CHARACTERS

***We Caliban* is structured in three acts.**

1

Act 1 imagines Caliban's world as a pre-colonial, pre-industrial society with a communal sense of self and confidence in its own cultural achievements.

2

Act 2 engages with three central themes from *The Tempest*:

- Power and how it is exercised: Prospero achieves control not through physical force but through strategy, magic and manipulation.
- Language as colonial control: Miranda's attempt to teach Caliban her language reflects a documented colonial belief in cultural superiority, exemplified by texts such as Macaulay's *Minute on Education (1835)*.
- Prejudice and accusation: Caliban is accused of assaulting Miranda, yet the scene is never shown. *We Caliban* offers a possible alternative interpretation of this encounter.

3

Act 3 explores the aftermath of colonisation and the loss of connection.

Caliban is represented both as an individual and as a collective presence; sometimes embodied by one dancer, sometimes by the group.

“You have to learn to live in an equitable way with all this history. The first step is accepting that there are other versions of the history we've been told.”

Shobana Jeyasingh

SECTION 3

DRAMATURGY IN *We Caliban*

Dramaturgy in *We Caliban* supports the shaping of meaning across movement, text, sound and design. Unlike a play, there is no fixed script or traditional narrative, dramaturgy here responds to dance as a non-narrative, emotional and visual language.

The dramaturg's role includes:

- acting as an “eye of the audience”
- supporting clarity, coherence and thematic focus
- holding political and historical context alongside physical material
- encouraging dialogue across disciplines
- allowing complexity, ambiguity and contradiction to remain present

Key dramaturgical principles:

Choosing your centre: whose perspective is foregrounded, and what shifts when marginalised voices are centred.

Working dialogically: allowing movement, text, sound and design to converse rather than illustrate each other.

Embracing complexity: resisting simple answers or moral binaries. Considering the audience journey: what is felt, questioned and carried away.

SECTION 4

SHOBANA JEYASINGH'S CHOREOGRAPHIC HALLMARKS

These hallmarks can help you identify some of the characteristics of Shobana's composition and choreography within a task and offer transferable tools for your own practice.

Deep, multifaceted research

Research shapes tasks, structure, movement logic and dramaturgy. It is not background information but an active creative force.

Layered task design

Tasks are built in stages, adding complexity and constraint to generate movement that is specific, rigorous and intentional.

Contributions from the room

Dancers' ideas, movement, histories and instincts actively reshape the material.

Composer of space

Spatial pathways, formations, rhythm and architecture are treated as compositional elements.

Fracturing

Movement is interrupted, "glitched" or re-routed to disrupt rhythm and expectation. Clear preparation precedes each fracture.

Unusual use of space

Groupings and formations create tension, narrative and dissonance.

5

SECTION 5

MOVEMENT VOCABULARY

Common qualities across *We Caliban* and WIT include:

Dynamics and quality:

Incisive

Strong

Weighted

Low to the ground

Alertness of the body

Sharp rhythmic clarity

Sudden collapses or fractures

A body that moves without freedom, there is a tension, restraint or weight that affects and influences the quality of movement.



Rhythm:

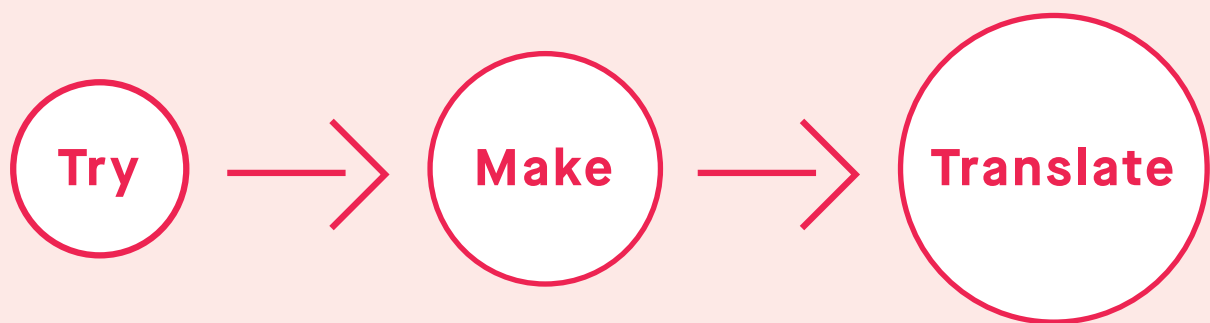
Acceleration, interruption, syncopation and silence.

Ensemble work:

Attention to timing, proximity, counterpoint and interdependence.

Body percussion:

Breath, slaps, taps and percussive shifts generated by the body itself.



Try the task simply

Make material with clarity

Translate it to your own body, culture and spatial relationship

SECTION 6

MAJOR THEMES

Power Play

How power is asserted, resisted and internalised through language, knowledge, space and rhythm.

Interconnectedness

How individual actions ripple through collectives and histories.

Encounters

Arriving, meeting, colliding and parting – and the intentions carried into each.

Identity

Identity as fluid, contested and shaped by personal and political histories.

Environment / Nature

The island as a grounding force; movement shaped by landscape, texture and weight.

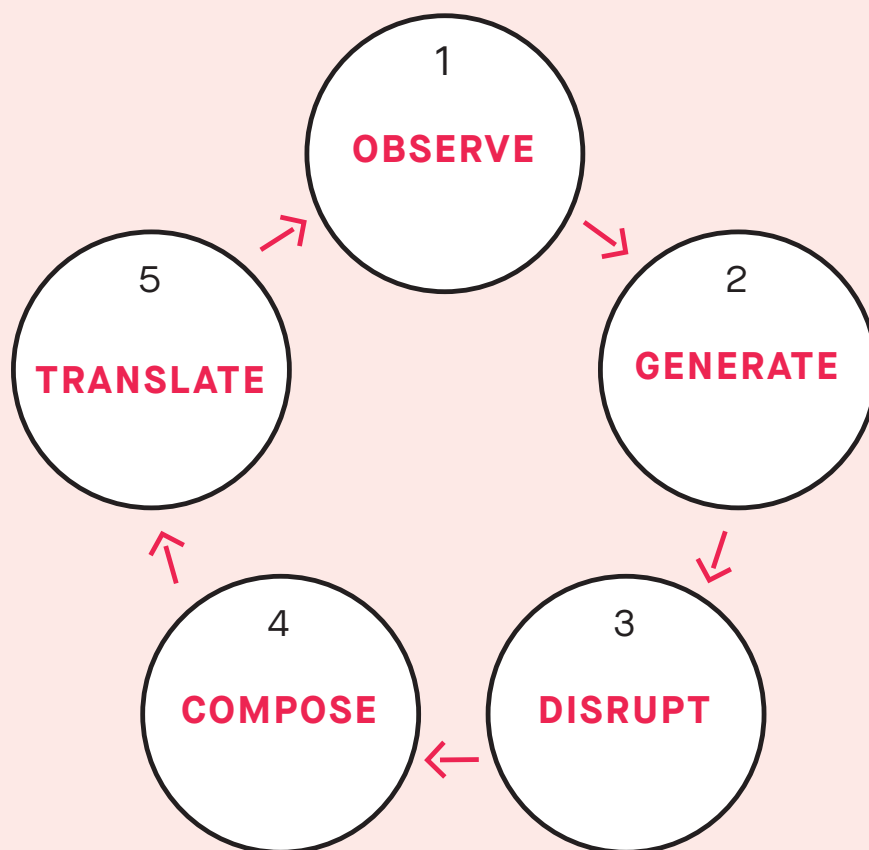


SECTION 7

**CREATIVE TASKS FROM
WINDOW INTO THE TEMPEST
- QUICK REFERENCE**

The creative tasks in this guide are designed as frameworks, not fixed exercises. They reflect and are inspired by material that was generated, shaped and re-shaped during the making of *We Caliban*. Tasks can be entered at different points, extended over time, or combined with one another.

Think of each task as moving through the same core cycle:



On the following pages the process is broken down.

STARTING POINT >

ATTENTION AND MATERIAL

You begin with something concrete:

- an image
- a word or piece of text
- a partner
- a sound or vocal quality
- a spatial situation

This stage is about *noticing* rather than inventing.

Key questions:

What is already here?

What do I see, hear or feel without interpretation?

LAYER 1

1

OBSERVE / LISTEN / NOTICE

Stay close to the source.

- Observe posture, gaze, weight, texture
- Listen to vocal rhythm or tone
- Notice distance, proximity, timing

**This layer establishes
clarity and specificity.**

LAYER 2

2

MAP / TRANSLATE INTO THE BODY

Material is translated into movement.

- Choose a small number of actions or qualities
- Map them onto the body clearly
- Avoid decoration or excess

**This layer generates
raw movement material.**

LAYER 3

3

COUNTERPOINT AND DISRUPTION

Introduce contrast.

- Change rhythm, pace or direction
- Place movements in unexpected orders
- Create tension between elements

**This layer introduces
complexity and friction.**

LAYER 4

4

FRACTURE (GLITCH)

Interrupt the flow.

- Fragment body parts
- Cut phrases short
- Re-route pathways
- Allow preparation before the break

**This layer destabilises expectation
and opens new meaning.**

LAYER 5

5

COMPOSITION IN SPACE AND TIME

**Shape how material exists
with others.**

- Decide where it happens in space
- Consider proximity, groupings, unison and counterpoint
- Set moments, transitions or shared structures

**This layer treats space,
timing and relationship as
compositional tools.**

LAYER 6

6

VOICE / TEXT / INTENTION (OPTIONAL)

Add another register.

- Whispered text
- Breath or sound
- Spoken words
- A clear internal intention

**Voice does not illustrate movement;
it affects texture and rhythm.**

TRANSLATION

TRY → MAKE → TRANSLATE

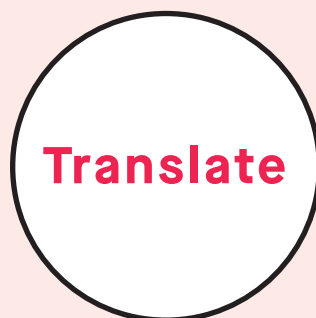
The final stage is not fixing, **but adapting.**



Try the task simply



Make material with clarity



Translate it to:
different bodies
different scales
different groupings
different cultural or personal contexts

Material is allowed to change.

KEY PRINCIPLES TO HOLD THROUGHOUT

- **Tasks are layered, not linear**
- **Complexity comes from accumulation, not speed**
- **Contributions from those in the room reshape the work**
 - **There is no single “correct” outcome**
 - **Ambiguity and contradiction are welcome**

This process mirrors how *We Caliban* was made:
through research, dialogue, disruption, and careful
composition over time.

These tasks are intentionally open. Precision comes not from copying an outcome, but from attention, intention and choice.



7A

IMAGE OBSERVATION AND TRANSLATION TASK

This task draws directly on the visual research used in the creation of *We Caliban*. It focuses on close observation, physical translation and disruption.

Begin by choosing a still image from the *We Caliban* creative process. Spend time looking carefully rather than quickly. This stage is about observation, not interpretation.

Notice:

The posture of the body or bodies in the image.
Where the gaze is directed, or where it is withheld.
How weight is distributed or implied.
The texture of gesture — for example, whether it appears soft, held, abrupt, suspended or strained.
Avoid assigning narrative meaning at this stage.
Stay with what you can physically see.

Next, map what you have observed onto your own body.

Choose three to five movement ideas drawn directly from the image. These may come from posture, weight shifts, gestures, angles, or the overall physical tone. Focus on clarity and specificity rather than decoration. Allow the image to shape how the movement feels rather than how it looks.

Once the movement material is established, introduce counterpoint. Begin to disrupt the rhythm of the phrase. This might involve contrasting fast and slow sections, inserting pauses, accelerating unexpectedly, or reordering the movements. Think about contrast and juxtaposition rather than smooth continuity.

Then introduce fragmentation, sometimes referred to as a “glitch”. Interrupt the flow of movement by cutting actions short, isolating body parts, or re-routing pathways. Allow a clear preparation before each fracture so the interruption feels intentional rather than accidental.

Finally, layer in text. Choose a single word linked to a theme or text from *We Caliban*. Perform the movement phrase while whispering this word. Allow the texture, rhythm, volume and breath of the voice to influence the movement quality, rather than illustrating the meaning of the word directly. Notice how the addition of voice shifts the physical and emotional reading of the material.

QUICK REFERENCE: IMAGE OBSERVATION & TRANSLATION

SOURCE

Still image from *We Caliban* process



OBSERVE

Posture
Gaze
Weight
Texture of gesture



MAP ONTO YOUR BODY

Select 3–5 movements or qualities
Translate posture, weight and texture



COUNTERPOINT

Disrupt rhythm
Contrast pace or order
Juxtapose movement ideas



FRACTURE (GLITCH)

Fragment body parts
Interrupt pathways
Insert pauses or re-routing
Prepare clearly before the break



TEXT (OPTIONAL)

Whisper a word linked to theme or text
Let rhythm, volume and breath affect movement



COMPOSE

Sequence the material
Shape timing and spatial placement



7B

IDENTITY TASK

This task explores identity as layered, sensory and in motion. It begins with language and moves through multiple translations before arriving in the body.

You may begin with a conversation, either internally or with others, reflecting on questions such as: What is important to you? How might someone else describe you? What experiences or ideas provoke a strong emotional response?

Next, take a tool for jotting down thoughts — paper, notebook or digital device. Begin with the prompt “I am...” and write continuously for a short period without editing or judging what appears. Allow thoughts to spill out freely. This is a process of free writing.

Return to what you have written or drawn and select material that stands out to you. If writing, this might mean highlighting one word or phrase from each line. If drawing, you might circle particular shapes or marks. The more material you select, the longer your movement phrase may become.

Using your selected words or ideas, translate them through a series of sensory stages. For each chosen thought, describe it first as an emotion. Then describe that emotion as a smell. Describe that smell as a sound. Finally, describe that sound as an action.

For example:

A chosen thought might become an emotion such as enthusiasm.

That emotion might become the smell of a peeled orange.

That smell might become a sound – sharp, fizzing, sudden.

That sound might translate into an action such as a quick zip or burst.

Chosen thought	Sunshine		
Describe it as an emotion	Enthusiastic		
Describe that emotion as a smell	Peeled Orange		
Describe that smell as a sound	Fwazp		
Describe that sound as an action	Zip		

Create one movement for each action. Link these movements together into a sequence, paying attention to rhythm, transitions and changes of level or direction.

Optionally, perform the sequence while speaking the original chosen word or phrase. Notice how the voice alters timing, breath and physical emphasis.

As an extension, begin to layer choreographic tools such as pauses, glitches, rhythmic shifts, changes of quality, or spatial reorientation. Allow identity to emerge as something unstable, shifting and multifaceted rather than fixed.

QUICK REFERENCE: IDENTITY TASK – WORD TO MOVEMENT

SOURCE

Personal reflection / conversation



FREE WRITE

Prompt: "I am..."

Write continuously without editing



SELECT MATERIAL

Highlight or circle words that stand out
More selections = longer phrase



SENSORY TRANSLATION

Word → Emotion

Emotion → Smell

Smell → Sound

Sound → Action



MAP TO MOVEMENT

Create one movement per action



LINK AND SHAPE

Connect movements into a sequence
Consider rhythm and transitions



VOICE / FRACTURE (OPTIONAL)

Speak the original word

Add pauses, glitches or rhythmic shifts



7C

ENCOUNTERS TASK 1 — DUETS

This task explores encounters as physical conversations shaped by power, proximity and timing.

Work in pairs and begin by travelling across the space. Treat the interaction as a conversation rather than a set phrase.

One person offers a movement, action or clear intention. The second person responds with a grab, swipe or pull of attention — an attempt to be near. The first person moves away. Explore different responses: moving sharply away, melting out of reach, hesitating, or delaying the reaction.

Consider how you relate to the initial offer. Notice how you arrive into the encounter and how you leave it. Pay attention to rhythm, rate and pace, as well as the use of gaze and which body parts lead or follow.

As the task develops, allow contact to happen. Explore what occurs when both partners move towards each other at the same time. This may result in collision, negotiation, avoidance, or shared direction. Notice how power shifts through timing and proximity rather than force.

QUICK REFERENCE: ENCOUNTERS DUETS — OFFER & RESPONSE

SOURCE

Partner and shared space



TRAVEL

Move across the space together



OFFER

Partner A offers a movement, action or intention



RESPONSE

Partner B responds (grab, swipe, draw close)
Partner A moves away



VARIATION

Change reaction quality
Sharp / hesitant / melting / delayed



CONTACT (OPTIONAL)

Allow physical contact
Explore simultaneous movement towards each other



COMPOSE

Decide how you arrive and leave
Shape rhythm, gaze and proximity



7D

ENCOUNTERS TASK 2 — ARRIVING, MEETING, LEAVING

This task develops a shared structure that can expand from duet work into group choreography.

Partners begin on opposite sides of the space. From a distance, they make eye contact — a moment of noticing. They then walk towards each other and arrive at a shared point. As they meet, they offer a single point of contact. While maintaining this contact, both partners take a deep inhale. On the exhale, they release the contact and shift away from each other.

Repeat the structure. This time, on the exhale, maintain the point of contact and shift together through space before releasing. Allow this to become a small shared journey. Explore following, resisting, or negotiating the offered initiative.

Introduce a performative intention for the meeting. Each person chooses an intention such as curiosity, seeking connection, hesitation, defensiveness or openness. This intention shapes movement quality, pace, gaze and the amount of time spent in contact. Repeat the structure with different intentions and notice how the material changes. Further layers may include introducing multiple points of contact using different body parts, adding choreographic tools such as glitches, textural shifts or voice, or setting four to five shared moments that travel through space.

This material can be expanded into group work, with multiple encounters unfolding simultaneously, and proximity rather than force.

QUICK REFERENCE: ENCOUNTERS — ARRIVING, MEETING, LEAVING

SOURCE

Two bodies in space



NOTICE

Make eye contact from a distance



ARRIVE

Walk towards a shared point



LAYER 1 — CONTACT & BREATH

Offer one point of contact

Inhale together

Exhale and release



LAYER 2 — SHARED TRAVEL

Maintain contact on the exhale

Shift together through space

Release and separate



LAYER 3 — INTENTION

Choose an intention (curiosity, hesitation, defence)

Let it shape pace, gaze and quality



LAYER 4 — EXPANSION

Add more contact points

Introduce texture, glitch or voice



DEVELOP

Set multiple shared moments

Expand into group work



7E

GAZE TASK — CONDUCTOR AND ORCHESTRA

This task explores leadership, attention, ensemble and spatial composition.

Position three or more dancers together in close proximity, facing the same direction. The formation may be informal, such as a clump, or more structured, such as a triangle or diamond.

One person stands at the front as the conductor, using a hand, arm or prop such as a stick. The dancers follow the air pathway created by the conductor using their gaze and upper body only. Follow not only the spatial pathway but also the dynamic quality — whether the movement is fluid, staccato, sustained or abrupt.

In the next layer, dancers continue to follow the conductor's pathway and dynamic intention, but now they may travel, turn and change formation. This may involve weaving around and through one another, negotiating space and proximity while maintaining shared attention.

An additional layer asks dancers to end the task in unusual groupings — for example, a small flock separated from the rest, or a soloist isolated while the ensemble remains together. The conductor may play with rate (the gaps between actions) and pace (the speed of actions). Additional constraints can be added, such as requiring contact, using specific body parts, or allowing the conductor to travel, increasing the challenge for the ensemble.

QUICK REFERENCE: GAZE — CONDUCTOR & ORCHESTRA

SOURCE

Ensemble and a single leader



FORMATION

Group stands in close proximity facing the same way



CONDUCT

One person leads using arm, hand or prop



FOLLOW

Dancers track the air pathway with gaze and upper body
Match spatial path and dynamic quality



TRAVEL & SHIFT

Continue following while traveling
Change formation and orientation



SPATIAL OUTCOME

Resolve into unusual groupings
Solo / cluster / fragmented ensemble



EXTENSIONS

Alter rate and pace
Add constraints
(contact, body parts, moving conductor)



7F

REP AND TEXTURE TASK

This task works with translation rather than replication, using text and movement from the *We Caliban* process.

Begin by listening to a recorded text used during the creation of *We Caliban*. As you listen, write down words that describe the quality and texture of the voice. These may include descriptive terms such as staccato, rough, powerful, fragile, dense or suspended.

Next, learn the adapted company phrase derived from the same text. Focus on rhythm, weight and intention rather than accuracy alone. Working individually, create a short solo phrase that explores one or two of your chosen texture words, alongside selected movements or gestures from the learned phrase. Layer in a pause, a glitch and a change in rhythm. Allow these disruptions to reshape the phrase rather than decorate it.

Finally, either juxtapose these individual phrases side by side, or work in pairs or trios to teach and combine material into a longer sequence. Notice how texture, rhythm and intention shift as material moves between bodies.

QUICK REFERENCE: REP PHRASE — TEXTURE & TRANSLATION

SOURCE

Recorded text and company phrase



LISTEN

Notice voice quality and texture
Write descriptive words



LEARN PHRASE

Learn the adapted company movement phrase
Focus on rhythm, weight and intention



SELECT TEXTURE

Choose one or two descriptive words



TRANSLATE

Create a short solo using:
– chosen texture words
– fragments of the phrase



FRACTURE

Add pause, glitch or rhythmic change



COMPOSE

Juxtapose solos
Teach and combine phrases in pairs or trios

SECTION 8**WINDOW INTO THE TEMPEST ARTISTS**

The *Window into the Tempest* team is made up of 5 dance artists from across the UK. They have designed, created and delivered the project nationally, shaping its vision, methodology and impact. Working across multiple locations and contexts, they bring the work into dialogue with communities through their artistic practice, care and expertise, ensuring the project is responsive, bold and co-created with the participants.

**DIVIJA MELALLY**

Divija Melally is a movement artist trained in contemporary dance and Bharatanatyam, invested in taking movement and art to different spaces through performance, choreography and facilitation. Her creative practice revolves around exploring the amalgamation of contemporary dance and Bharatanatyam with text and theatre.

DORKA ZÁTONYI

Budapest-born and Cardiff-based, Dorka is a freelance contemporary dance artist, whose work explores self-expression and cultural identity. A Falmouth University graduate, she teaches across ages from early years to older adults. Her performance credits include Ransack Dance Company's Explore project, Groundwork Scratch, and selection for the 2025 Brussels Dance Contest.





JO RHODES

Jo is an independent dance artist passionate about co-creation, creativity and choreography, health, education, equity, the power of the youth voice and partnership working. She collaborates across multiple art forms to bring agency and authenticity to the voice of participants through issue-based work.

JATIE TUCKER

Jatie is a dance mover maker and mentor whose career spans stage and screen. Most recently they have been in post as head of contemporary dance at Italia Conti as well as developing a portfolio of mentorship across secondary further SEND and higher education.



NATALIE JOHNS

Natalie Johns is a freelance dance artist based in Winchester. Her artistic practice is rooted in collaboration and narrative-driven performance, using dance as a catalyst for storytelling and as a powerful tool for positive social change.



SECTION 9

INSIGHTS FROM THE CREATIVE TEAM

We Caliban

MUSIC — Thierry Pécou

Thierry Pécou is a contemporary composer whose work spans chamber, orchestral, choral and operatic music. He has a long-standing interest in dialogue between written composition and oral traditions, and by sustained engagement with non-European cultures. Although he has composed extensively for concert and operatic settings, *We Caliban* offered a rare and renewing opportunity to compose for dance. His collaboration with Shobana grew out of an earlier operatic project and was grounded in a shared sensibility: a curiosity about history, power and perspective, and a desire to question dominant European narratives. From the outset, he approached the score as an element that could deepen feeling, complexity and resonance across the work.

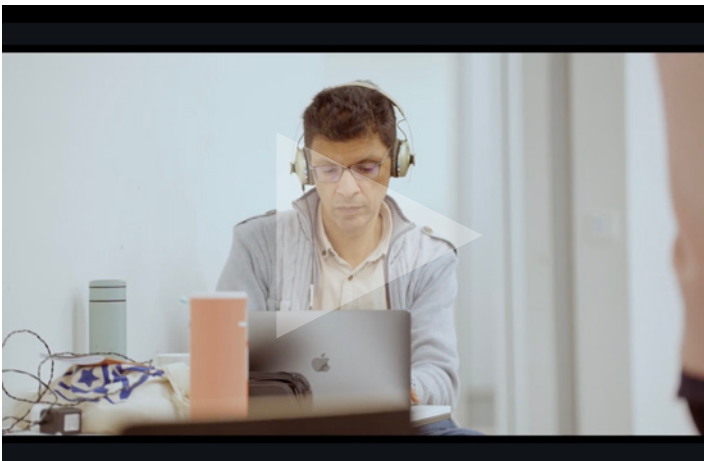


How the music developed

- The project began with a shared interest in reframing *The Tempest* from Caliban's perspective, which strongly aligned with Thierry's own artistic concerns around colonial history and cultural power.
- Early ideas considered drawing on specific musical traditions, but this approach was gradually set aside in favour of a more abstract musical language shaped by the needs of the choreography.
- The score was developed through close dialogue with Shobana, responding to her ideas, the evolving movement material, and the emotional and conceptual tone of each section.
- A key compositional principle was that the music should not say the same thing as the dancers, but instead offer something complementary — enhancing atmosphere, feeling and intensity without duplicating gesture.
- The decision to use recorded music rather than live musicians opened new

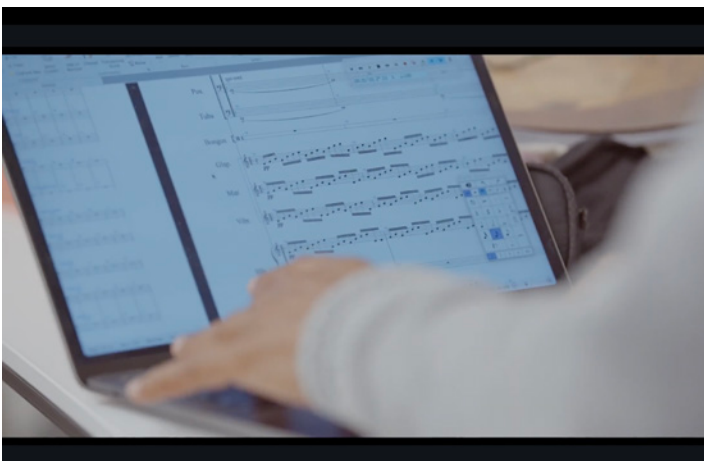
compositional territory, leading Pécou to create a “virtual orchestra” combining orchestral textures with electronic and electroacoustic elements.

- This allowed for sounds and rhythms that exceed human performance, producing moments that feel expansive, unstable or deliberately non-human.
- Spoken texts — drawn from Shakespeare and colonial sources — were woven into the score both as intelligible language and as sonic material, layered and overlapped to create dense textures.
- Language was treated as sound as well as meaning, contributing to what Pécou describes as a “tempest of words”, reflecting the role of language as a force of power within the work.
- The music was developed in conversation with projections, lighting and choreography, functioning not as a glue but as a source that allows multiple elements to resonate together.
- Being involved from the early stages of the process, and later working in the studio with the dancers, allowed for continual refinement through testing, feedback and adjustment.



Watch a video with Thierry talking about the music for *We Caliban*

[https://youtu.be/xP_hXyQWDMw?si=45xqOMi1z2B7tsQD]



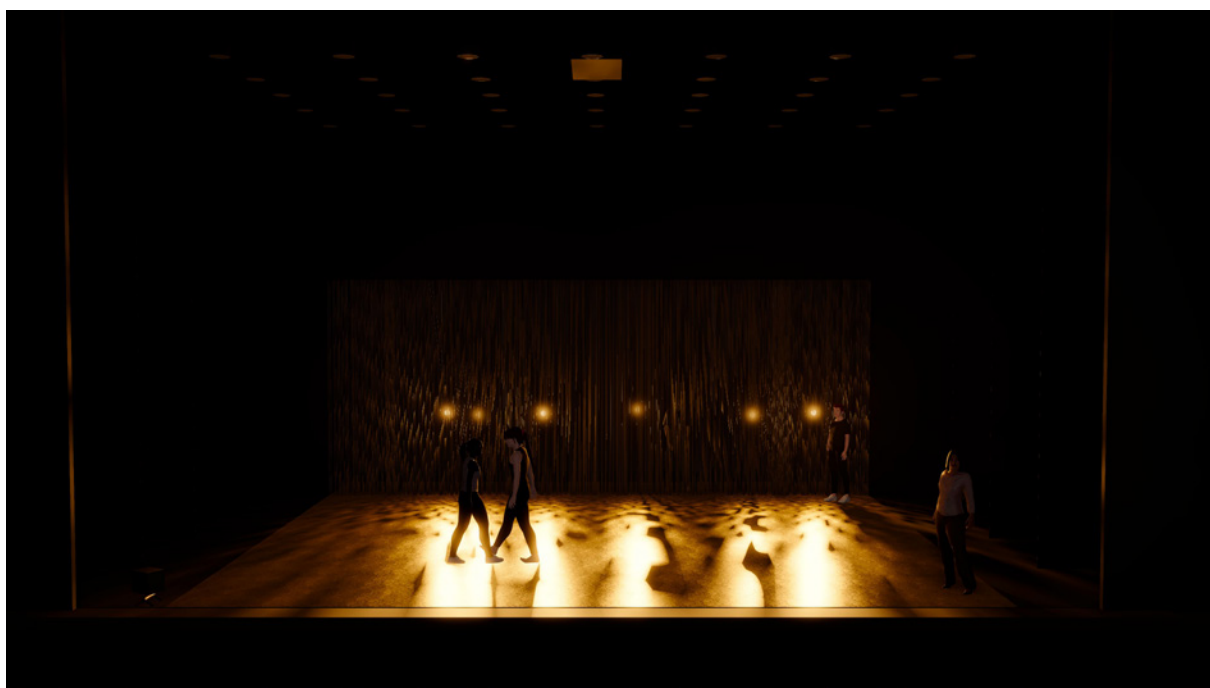
Score excerpts / Studio setup

LIGHTING DESIGN — Floriaan Ganzevoort

Floriaan Ganzevoort is a lighting designer working across theatre, music, dance and a wide range of performance spaces. He studied Theatre Studies at the University of Amsterdam, specialising in light as a dramaturgical means, and this foundation continues to shape his practice. As a result of his dramaturgical background, the light he designs is always strongly connected to the content of the piece. He specialises on the sequence of light images and the timing thereof.



In *We Caliban*, lighting is used to actively shape the atmosphere, perception of space and emotional temperature of the work. Working closely with Shobana Jeyasingh from the early stages of creation, Floriaan's lighting responds to the physicality of the dancers, the architecture of the set, and the conceptual undercurrents of the piece, helping to frame shifts in power, environment and collective presence. It works carefully to balance with projection, costume and set, allowing each element to remain legible while contributing to a unified whole.



Lighting design sketch for upstage fixtures on pendants. Rendering and design: Floriaan Ganzevoort

How the lighting design developed

- Lighting was developed in direct response to Shobana Jeyasingh's choreographic structure and compositional use of space.
- Floriaan worked closely with set designer Mayou Trikerioti to ensure the gold floor and backdrop responded dynamically to light, shifting in tone, depth and reflection.
- The lighting design supports the contrast between grounded, weighted movement and more ethereal, unstable moments in the work.
- Changes in light are used to signal shifts in power, perspective and collective focus rather than narrative action.
- Close collaboration with projection designer Will Duke ensured that light and projection could coexist without overpowering one another, maintaining clarity across surfaces and bodies.
- Lighting helps articulate ensemble groupings, isolations and unusual spatial formations, reinforcing Shobana's compositional approach.
- The lights you see on the render are hung on pendulums, so that they can move freely. These lights are interacted with by the dancers causing them to swing. This swinging of the lights could be seen as the aftermath of the storm.
- Rhythm, pause and transition in the lighting mirror the choreographic principles of fracture, interruption and control found in the movement and score.



Lighting design sketches for upstage fixtures on pendants. Rendering and design: Floriaan Ganzevoort

SET DESIGN — Mayou Trikerioti

Mayou Trikerioti works across theatre and film, with a practice that sits between storytelling, architecture and material exploration. In *We Caliban*, her role was to help create the world in which the choreography could exist in a space that holds both performers and audience. She describes beginning each new project as arriving on a new island: before making anything, you must first listen to the land.



Shakespeare's *The Tempest* formed the starting point, but the design was shaped through Shobana's perspective, responding to the specific questions and ideas she was exploring. Mayou's process is deeply research-led, drawing on installation art, painting, photography, music and video, allowing fragments from different disciplines to collide. Design ideas emerged through conversation, trial and refinement, always with the understanding that the design exists to serve the work as a whole rather than to stand alone.



Set collage *We Caliban*. Design: Mayou Trikerioti

How the set design developed

- An early instinct that the floor should be golden emerged at the very start of the process and remained central throughout.
 - Gold was explored as both material and metaphor: fertile land, abundance, knowledge, and the history of exploration and extraction.
 - The island was imagined as grounded, rich and self-sufficient, a place that does not need to be colonised, while the world around it remained lighter, shifting and unstable.
 - Extensive material testing focused on how surfaces respond to projection, wind, movement and change during the piece.
 - The backdrop was developed to move with wind, mutate during the performance, receive projection, and create entrances and exits.
 - The set was developed in close dialogue with projection and lighting, ensuring it could transform visually and atmospherically as the choreography unfolded.
-

COSTUME DESIGN — Mayou Trikerioti

Costume design in *We Caliban* developed alongside the set but focused specifically on how bodies move through, inhabit and respond to the world of the piece. Mayou approached the costumes as flexible and changeable rather than fixed, supporting the idea that identity, power and history are not stable. Rather than try to define characters in a literal way, the costumes are designed to allow transformation, between individuals and the collective, between grounded and ethereal states.

How the costume design developed

- Research extended beyond theatre, drawing in visual and conceptual references from multiple art forms.
- Costumes were designed in relationship to the gold floor as well as a sense of displacement – the colour purple was chosen as “not recognisable in time and place”.
- Fabric choices prioritised movement, texture and how materials behave in air and light.
- Designs were continually adjusted in response to rehearsals and conversations with Shobana and the dancers.
- Costumes support both individual presence and collective identity, allowing Caliban to be represented by one body or many.
- Practical considerations such as structure, movement, touring durability and budget were integrated without losing conceptual clarity.



Rehearsal work *We Caliban*. Design: Mayou Trikerioti

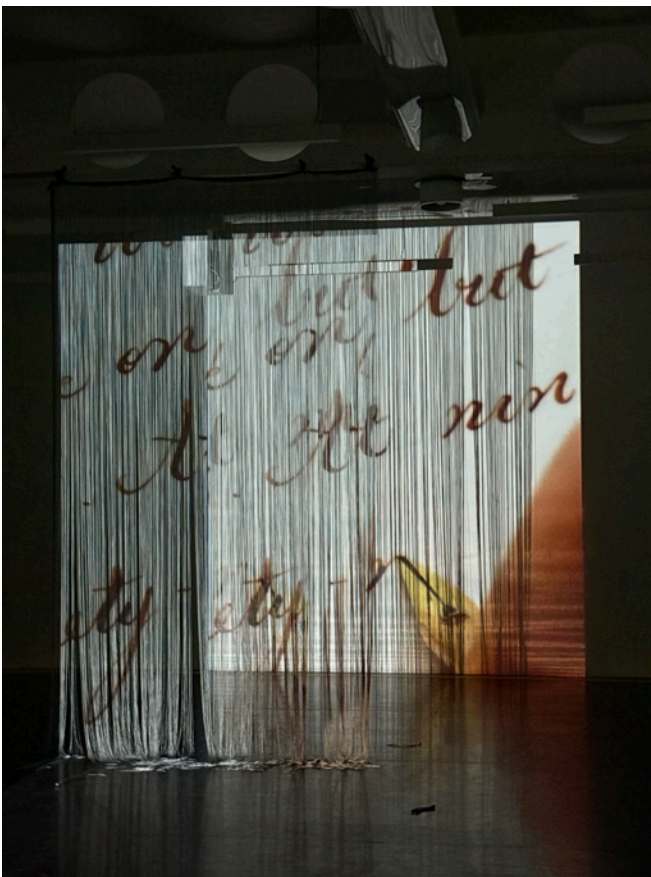
Watch a video with Mayou and Will talking about the set, costume and projection designs for *We Caliban*

[https://youtu.be/M9CpKeU4oTM?si=YONMtOR_3sBvuOzf]



PROJECTION DESIGN — Will Duke

Will Duke is the projection designer for *We Caliban*. His practice is based on conversation, observation and responsiveness, particularly within devised dance where material is created live in the studio rather than from a fixed script. For *We Caliban*, projection developed through ongoing dialogue with Shobana Jeyasingh, regular visits to rehearsals, and close collaboration with the wider design team. Rather than illustrating the choreography, projection was conceived as a dramaturgical layer supporting Shobana's idea of the work as "a bit like an essay", and offering context, framing and historical reference.



Projection design by Will Duke

Watch a video with Mayou and Will talking about the set, costume and projection designs for *We Caliban*

[https://youtu.be/M9CpKeU4oTM?si=YONMtOR_3sBvuOzf]



How the projection design developed

- The process began with Shobana's conceptual aims of the work and its reframing of *The Tempest* through Caliban's perspective.
- Early development focused on understanding the set as a projection surface, particularly the string curtain designed by Mayou Trikerioti.
- Material tests were carried out to explore how projection behaves on the curtain, including density, colour and movement.
- Projections were developed to carry historical context, colonial imagery and textual material beyond Shakespeare's play.
- The technical process involved continuous iteration: testing ideas, receiving feedback, adjusting, and refining over time.
- Working with animator Hayley Egan and programmer Abu Mensah enabled him to stay responsive in the room.
- Close collaboration with lighting designer Floriaan Ganzevoort allowed projection and lighting to work together, especially on and behind the curtain.
- Experimental approaches emerged through this collaboration, including filming the moving curtain and projecting it back onto itself to create the illusion of motion.

DRAMATURGY — Uzma Hameed

Uzma Hameed is a writer with a background in Kathak dance, theatre-making and visual performance. Her practice sits at the intersection of movement, text and critical inquiry. As a dramaturg she works as a creative collaborator, working with choreographers to articulate concept and intention, clarify meaning and explore how a work reads from the audience's perspective. In *We Caliban*, she supported Shobana in responding to the thematic and political territory of *The Tempest*, particularly its long-standing significance within postcolonial thought. Central to her approach is a belief in dance as a powerful language in its own right, and one that can hold ambiguity, emotion and resistance without relying on text.



How the dramaturgy developed

- The process began with shared research into *The Tempest*, its historical context, and its afterlives within colonial and postcolonial discourse, treating the play as a site of inquiry rather than a script to be adapted.
- A key focus was on what sits outside the dominant narrative of the play: moments that are spoken about but never shown, voices that are marginalised, and histories that are assumed rather than examined.
- Particular attention was given to the accusation made against Caliban. It's an event that never appears on stage in Shakespeare's text, but was a way to question how power, violence and truth are constructed through language.
- The team explored other texts such as *A Passage to India* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*, tracing recurring colonial narratives in which racialised bodies are accused, silenced or punished through unexamined authority.
- The idea of "what comes before" became central: imagining the island not as an empty or uncivilised space, but as a place with its own history, culture and complexity prior to Prospero's arrival.
- Education and language emerged as key themes, particularly how teaching a dominant language can function as a form of control, and how that same language can later be reclaimed as resistance.
- Dance was understood as especially suited to this enquiry: a form that predates text, resists fixed meaning, and can express what cannot easily be spoken.

- Throughout rehearsals, Uzma acted as a critical outside eye, testing how clearly intentions were landing, identifying where ideas needed sharpening, and supporting the choreographic material to carry layered meanings.
- Dramaturgy developed in dialogue with all creative elements, inviting each discipline to bring its own way of thinking (visual, sonic, spatial) into the shared exploration of the work's themes.



Uzma (left) observing rehearsals with Rehearsal Director Catarina Carvalho (right)

SECTION 10

USING THIS GUIDE

Use this guide as:

- Inspiration for generating movement
- Structure for rehearsals and workshops
- A reflective tool to deepen compositional choices
- A collaborative framework
- A creative toolkit you can adapt and extend



SECTION 11

Primary historical sources

Shakespeare, W. *The Tempest*.

Queen Elizabeth I. *Letters Patent to Sir Walter Raleigh (1584)*.

Columbus, C. *The Journal of the First Voyage (1492)*.

Records in which Columbus renames rivers, capes and mountains encountered in lands he mistakenly believed to be India.

Grant, C. *Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects to Great Britain, Particularly with Respect to Morals, and on the Means of Improving It (1792)*.

SECTION 12

CREDITS *We Caliban*

12

CREATIVE TEAM

Concept, Choreography & Direction: Shobana Jeyasingh
Text Consultant: Priyamvada Gopal
Dramaturg: Uzma Hameed
Composer: Thierry Pécou (By arrangement with Schott Music, Mainz)
Sound Designer: Fred DeFaye
Set & Costume Designer: Mayou Trikerioti
Video & Projection Designer: William Duke
Lighting Designer: Floriaan Ganzevoort

PRODUCING TEAM

Executive Producer: Ghislaine Granger
Touring Line Producer and Company Manager: Florent Trioux
Line Producer: Madeleine Wilson (2025)
General Manager: Kirsten Ho (2025)

TECHNICAL TEAM & SUPPORT STAFF

Production Manager: Simon Sturgess (2025)
Stage Manager: Sally McKenna
Company Stage Manager: Pat Shiels (2025)
Rehearsal Director: Catarina Carvalho
Touring Head of Sound: Luis Gustavo Silva Navarro
Touring Head of Lighting and Video: Rachel Luff
Video Animator: Hayley Egan
Video Programmer: Abu Mensah
Video Programmer (Snape Maltings): Chris Humphries
Costume Supervisor: Yasmin R Estanislao
Props: Claire Sanderson

DANCERS

Tanisha Addicott, Gabriel Ciulli, Julia Costa (2025), Natnael Dawit (2025),
George Gregory (2026), Harry Ondrak-Wright (2026), Oliver Mahar,
Tabitha O'Sullivan, Raúl Reinoso Acanda, Holly Vallis

VOICE ARTISTS

Ankur Bahl, Rachel Donovan, Patrick Driver, Anne Warthmann, soprano

ENGAGEMENT TEAM

Engagement Associate: Jennifer Irons (2025)
Engagement Associate: Alice Odin (2026)
Engagement Producer: Kimberley Harvey (2025)
Engagement Artists: Divija Melally, Jo Rhodes, Jatie Tucker,
Natalie Watson, Dorka Zàtonyi
Evaluator: Kirsten Hutton

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PR Consultants: Martha Oakes PR - Martha Oakes, Sue Lancashire

Photography: Foteini Christofilopoulou, Chris Nash

Videography: Gary Tanner (Art Director), Wayne Bently, Paul Craythorne, Nina Oyens

Dance Floor painted by Richard Nutbourne Scenic Studio

Lighting equipment supplied by Encore

Video Equipment supplied by Stage Sound Services

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO

R&D Dancers: Catarina Carvalho, Alanah Corbridge, Rhys Dennis, Mirabel Huang-Smith, Dane Hurst, Fern Kershaw, Jason Kittelberger, Ellie Peacock, Mickael Marso Riviere, Dominic Rocca, Fukiko Takase

R&D Photography & Videography: Foteini Christofilopoulou, Ben Harvey, Takao Komaru

Window into the Tempest Resource Guide Photography: Foteini Christofilopoulou

Window into the Tempest Films: Gary Tanner

Co-produced by Sadler's Wells, with kind support from DanceEast and DANSOX.

With thanks to:

Arts Council England

Deborah Loeb Brice Donor Advised Fund at CAF;

Cockayne Grants for the Arts and the London Community Foundation;

the Mila Charitable Organisation; Oak Foundation; the Doris Pacey Charitable Foundation;

Garfield Weston Foundation; and our Creative and Apsara Circle supporters

PARTNERS AND FUNDERS *WINDOW INTO THE TEMPEST*

With thanks to our engagement partners on the 2025–26 Pilot: York Theatre Royal, York St John University, Ascension Dance, Warwick Arts Centre, Hall for Cornwall, Falmouth University and Sadler's Wells. *Window into the Tempest* is funded by Arts Council England, with generous support from the Oak Foundation and the Mila Charitable Organisation, Garfield Weston Foundation, and Creative and Apsara Circle supporters.

Shobana
Jeyasingh
Dance



Supported using public funding by
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