

Saad Khakwani

English 162W

Leila Walker

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Reflection

The aim of our project was to create our own version of the characters in “The Tempest” by giving them a twist in power dynamics while keeping their backstories. We created a painting to clearly depict a visual representation of the characters and an insight of the plot we created using our version of the characters. We collectively thought that a painting would do a great job in grabbing the audience's attention mainly due to the simplicity of it. Not only will the audience enjoy looking at a painting, it will tell a whole story just by a taking a glance, and it can attract a wide spectrum of people.

Throughout the “The Tempest” we come across the underlying theme of freedom and Caliban's urge to obtain it. Although Caliban is Prospero's slave and has no authority or say in anything, we thought it would be interesting if we turned things to a different direction. Along with our depiction of our characters in a painting, we believed it wouldn't be complete without a story to exemplify the switch in power dynamics. The story behind our painting goes as follows; Prospero is not too fond of Alonso so he feeds negative things into Gonzalos head and claims that he will help him become king if Gonzalo works with him. As gullible as Gonzalo is, he believes Prospero and shares all off Alonso's secrets. Meanwhile, Prospero's true intentions are to get back at Alonzo and become king himself due to his selfish nature and desire for power. On the other hand Caliban, Prospero's slave, is in love with Prospero's daughter, Miranda since

they've lived on the island together for so long. In order for Caliban to run away with Miranda, he must overthrow Ferdinand. However one more obstacle still remains in order for Caliban to pursue his love, he must fight Prospero and gain his freedom. This is the general story line we created with respects to the twist in power dynamics that we assigned to the characters. One way we incorporated the story line to the painting was through facial expressions. In the painting, Gonzalo has a smirk on his face which reveals his guilt as he sides with Prospero behind the kings back.

The theme of power dynamics is mainly focused on in our story line of "The Tempest". Although the story line is changed to make sense to the change in power of the characters, the characters are still true to themselves. Just as in "Orlando" by Virginia Woolf, the Oak Tree symbolizes Orlando's entire life. The tree will grow and change in many ways through time, but the roots will always be planted in the same location no matter what is thrown at it. The same can be said for our storyline; the characters represent the oak tree to prove that they are still who they are even though we introduced a change in power dynamics. You may ask, where exactly do we see a twist in power dynamics? There are four major parts in correlation to our storyline. First and foremost, we see Gonzalo turning behind the kings back which in other words is devaluing the importance of the king and giving Gonzalo a stronger approach because generally everyone must listen to and side with the king. Prospero's eagerness for power as king is another example that adds to the underlying theme of power dynamics. We also see that Caliban as a slave is in love with his master's daughter, Miranda, who is clearly of a higher stature. Caliban also must fight Prospero for his freedom which portrays a slave going against his master. All in all, after completing the project, it raised the importance of power dynamics in the text because just with

some minor alterations we had a big change in the the characters actions.

During the process of completing this assignment, I came across several obstacles. As a group, it took a while brainstorming how the characters should be depicted. We had to be very specific, incorporating all their physical features. For example, the posture they hold because at the end of the day the small details add up. Simply by making one character taller with a wider built will make it seem as if it is more powerful or superior. In addition, choosing the correct colors for the painting was a challenge. Since the goal of the painting was to depict a clear image of the characters in the minds of the audience, it was important to set the right image with our color choices. Both physical features and use of colors go hand in hand which is something I didn't realize till we began the painting.