

Apartment sales slump

As a predictable reaction to the Asian economic crisis and growing interest rates...

One source said the apartment market had slipped into a recession and that the industry was unlikely to recover until the end of the year. The Auckland City Council has also expressed concern over the slow start to the new year.

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However, some sources on the City Council remain optimistic for the future. They say that the Auckland City Council has also expressed concern over the slow start to the new year.

Tepid Tempest

Despite San Trubridge's use of underwater effects during the play...

Trubridge says that the play is a fresh approach to a classic, whose set is usually confined to a stage rooted upon dry land. The stage design is both innovative and effective...

The Auckland University-based production of the play is a true masterpiece. The production of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* is the ultimate test of a director's skill...



Fresh approach to Shakespeare's Classic

The Stage 2 production of *The Tempest* at the YMCA Tepid Baths, Shakespeare in a swimming pool provides theatre goers with a fresh approach to a classic, whose set is usually confined to a stage rooted upon dry land. The stage design is both innovative and effective, with the actors/actresses making ample use of the tepid water which surrounds Prospero's metal island.

Such a majestic setting is made complete through the professional use of lighting accompanied by the fabulous acoustics of the venue. Some unusual casting choices mean performances are disappointingly varied. However outstanding performances by Jeremy Reagan (Stephano), who provides superb comic relief and the Neo-Nazi, apple-pierced Donovan King (Caliban) who is truly monstrous burling, farting, sneering and groping himself on cue.

Other noteworthy performances by David Passmore (Antonio), Peter McVey (Gonzalo) and Fiona McCallum, Meredith Sumner and Amber Sainsbury (Nymphs) more than evened out the variations. The themes of good and evil, sin / atonement / reconciliation are emphasised in this tragicomedy. However an unremorseful Antonio's delightful seizure of Prospero's staff concludes the play on a more tragic note. Please note that some form of wet weather gear will be required if you intend to sit in the front row.

Gina Butler

By TIFFANY LAWSON

Auckland's Tepid Baths will echo to the sounds of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* when actors perform the play in a swimming pool.

The production is the brainchild of Sam Trubridge, a member of Auckland theatre company Stage 2 Productions, which is performing the play in association with the YMCA, who manage the baths. The unique venue will be able to seat about 112 each night.

Scenes in the play are performed both in and out of the water as the story revolves around a ship wrecked on a desert island, represented by a platform in the centre of the swimming pool.

The cast of 15 has been involved in workshops and rehearsals since December to prepare for opening night tonight.

Mr Trubridge says the show follows traditional Shakespeare, although some characters are changed to give them more relevance to today's society.

"In Auckland there is a serious lack of quality theatre, student theatre and theatre spaces," says Mr Trubridge.

Stage 2 Productions was formed last year by a group of fine arts students who aim to solve this problem.

The *Tempest* is organised and performed by students with the exception of one Canadian actor. It runs until April 12.



UNDERWATER PLAY: Sam Trubridge and members of new theatre company Stage 2 Productions stage *The Tempest* at the Tepid Baths.

The Tempest Stage 2 Productions Tepid Baths

The *Tempest* is the second performance from Stage 2 Productions and the first directed by Sam Trubridge. The cast and crew are all University students, Stage 2 Productions having its base in the 1997 Stage II Theatre Studies paper.

The play follows the story of Prospero (Tim Fisher), the ousted Duke of Milan, in his attempts at revenge on those who wronged him. Complete with nymphs, spirits and magic, Prospero sets to work on his evil brother Antonio (David Passmore) and his companions who are shipwrecked on his shore.

Performed in the Tepid Baths, there is a minimum of staging, a bare, raised platform as Prospero's island, complete with patchwork-sail background. The unique movement allowed by this aquatic setting when combined with the superb lighting effects transforms some scenes into a moving canvas - with the dynamic nature of the sea, full of movement and power, being contrasted sharply against the static form of the island. Special mention must be made of the lighting (Paul Evans), the dizzying reflections and strong use of colour, promoting the eerie and supernatural feel of the play.

The acting is varied in quality, hinting at the inexperience of some actors and the difficulty of working in this setting. But despite these difficulties, several parts are strongly played, including Caliban (Donovan King) and Prince Ferdinand (Lana Hunter),

who are two unique character interpretations made by Sam Trubridge. Caliban, one of the villains, is cast as a modern-day skin-head complete with shaved head, jackboots and swastika. Together with Stefano (Jeremy Reagan), the drunken butler and Trinculo, the jester (Mathieu Apers), they provide the rough and rowdy Shakespearean humour. Hunter's Prince brings a touch of femininity to this masculine role that is both skilful and subtle.



These changes, along with some other more inconspicuous ones, lend themselves to a performance that fits nicely this watery location. Part of this play's appeal is the way it has been adapted to its setting instead of being radically altered, leaving it open for both those who enjoy traditional Shakespeare and those who like more modern and experimental styles.

Baird Firmston