

What people have said about *The Nine Lessons of Caliban* after the performance at Bristol Poetry Festival, September 2010

*"The Nine Lessons of Caliban worked on many levels, not just the spoken word; it spoke visually and resonated with the experience of the performers. This resonance seemed unique to this theatre company; had the piece been devised by those without learning difficulty or physical and mental challenge, many layers would have been missing and Caliban's voice would not have shouted so loud."*

*"I have never heard the words 'I just don't know', spoken with such a cry, a pleading, an exasperation, a matter of factness. The 'dance' of the lovers was unexpected and caught many of us in the audience off guard. Its honesty and simplicity, had it been a trick was a cunning one. I can't remember the last time a performance of poetry haunted me so."*

*"The projection of the text, embellished by the wonderful illustrations was inspired; it allowed the viewer/listener to roll the text around in both eye and ear."*

*"What I patronisingly anticipated to be a nice hour or so of poetry, proved to be inspiring, moving and seeped under my skin. Claire Williamson's guidance and craft shone through, a team effort worthy of any stage."*

*"I just wanted to say again how moving yesterday's performance was. The language was rich and the performers delivered it with depth and emotion."*

Some brief thoughts on the performance of  
THE NINE LESSONS OF CALIBAN  
by the Firebird poets Bristol Poetry Festival, Sunday 19<sup>th</sup>  
September, 3.00PM from Colin Brown,  
Director, The Poetry Can / Bristol Poetry Festival

*The performance, by The Firebird Poets, of The Nine Lessons of Caliban, inspired by Shakespeare's The Tempest was one of the highlights of Bristol Poetry Festival 2011.*

*I could comment most favourably on each element of the production in turn: the poetry, the art work, the projections, the music, the signing, the choreography, the acting... each was very well and very strikingly presented, but it was really how all the individual elements so dynamically, so beautifully and so subtly combined to*

*create an authentically whole performance that will live long in the memory. Such a sense of solidarity between all the performers. But the message of the performance was not a bare and laboured ideological chant but emerged through the unity of the performance itself in a truly, fully human way.*

*This is a very strong, very imaginative, very capable company. How wonderful it would be if the Firebird Poets had the resources to develop a repertoire of several poetry performances like *The Nine Lessons of Caliban*, such a repertoire would surely develop and extend the possibilities of poetic theatre and disability arts in the UK. What a crucible of difference and of beauty they would become.*

**Feedback from performance at Bristol Old Vic for Ferment, January 2011**

*A fabulous production by well rehearsed and dedicated actors. It was moving and I felt humbled.*

*It is Caliban's story and makes the whole play really comprehensible.*

*An introduction to the thoughts and feelings of Caliban, presented in a beautiful way that combines sound and movement.*

*An amazing re-telling of parts of *The Tempest* put over in a way that makes people think. Very emotional and a real eye opener. It is an excellent informative piece of drama.*

*A summary of the different things the cast learnt from their work on *The Tempest* and the meaning of these in their/our lives.*

*A beautiful and moving collaborative performance about some of the challenges of disability told through the story of Caliban. I thought this was excellent, thank you.*

*A creative piece of physical theatre performed by a versatile cast of disabled actors.*

*A poignant and poetic interpretation of human experience highlighted through Caliban's encounters with humanity – particularly relevant to the lives of those people performing the piece.*