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SF Attends: 'Hamlet' on Alcatraz

Get thee to Alcatraz. We Players artistic director Ava Roy brings the Prince of Denmark to The Rock, with chilling results.

by Naomi Kirsten

There were shades of drama as we waited to board the Alcatraz ferry.

Virtually overnight, the belated San Francisco summer bid the city adieu, and the familiar fog reclaimed center stage, as we knew it inevitably would.

A bus full of students from a nearby university had just pulled into Pier 33 and, as if on cue, began complaining about the sudden cold, lamenting their lack of headgear, wishing they had worn more. By the time we boarded the boat and Alcatraz loomed, it was clear that the next few hours would offer up Shakespeare's tragedy, as well as a virtual incarceration of sorts: Like Al Capone and the countless inmates before us, we would experience a succession of scenes without the means of an exit. There would be some pain. A sense of claustrophobia would be captured in iambic pentameter.