

Macbeth

Directed by
Brian B Crowe

Know-the-Show
Audience Guide
researched and written by
the Education Department of





In this Guide

– About the Playwright, William Shakespeare	2
– Shakespeare’s London.....	3
– Shakespeare’s Verse.	4
– <i>Macbeth</i> , an Introduction..	5
– <i>Macbeth</i> , a Short Synopsis.....	6
– Who’s Who in the Play	8
– Sources and History.....	9
– “The Scottish Play”	10
– In this Production	11
– Commentary and Criticism	12
– Interesting Links.....	13
– Bibliography and Additional Resources.....	14

This production of *Macbeth* is generously sponsored in part by:

SUZANNE B. ENGEL

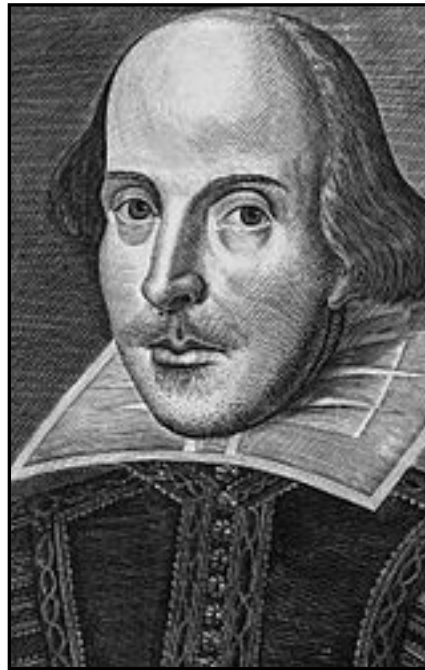


William Shakespeare

About the Playwright

William Shakespeare, widely recognized as the greatest English dramatist, was born on April 23, 1564. He was the third of eight children born to John Shakespeare and Mary Arden of Stratford-on-Avon in Warwickshire, England. Shakespeare's father was a prominent local merchant, and Shakespeare's childhood, though little is known about it for certain, appears to have been quite normal. In fact, it seems that the young Shakespeare was allowed considerable leisure time because his writing contains extensive knowledge of hunting and hawking. In 1582 he married Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a farmer. She was eight years his senior, and the match was considered unconventional.

It is believed that Shakespeare left Stratford-on-Avon and went to London around 1588. By 1592 he was a successful actor and playwright. He wrote approximately 38 plays, two epic poems, and over 150 sonnets. His work was immensely popular, appealing to members of all social spheres including Queen Elizabeth I and King James I. While they were well-liked, Shakespeare's plays were not considered by his educated contemporaries to be exceptional. By 1608, Shakespeare's involvement with theatre began to dwindle, and he spent more



The famous Droeshout portrait of William Shakespeare, 1623

time at his country home in Stratford. He died in 1616.

Most of Shakespeare's plays found their first major publication in 1623, seven years after Shakespeare's death, when two of his fellow actors put the plays together in the First Folio. Other early printings of Shakespeare's plays were called quartos, a printer's term referring to the format in which the publication was laid out. These quartos and the First Folio texts are the sources of all modern printings of Shakespeare's plays.

A MAN OF MANY WORDS

Shakespeare used over **20,000 different words** in his plays and poems. Of these, 8.5% (1,700 words) had never been seen in print before Shakespeare used them.

To give you a sense of just how extraordinary this is, consider that the King James Bible uses only 8,000 different words. Homer is credited with using approximately 9,000 different words in his works. Milton is estimated at using 10,000 different words in his works.



William Shakespeare

Shakespeare's London

London, in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, was a bustling urban center filled with a wide variety of people and cultures. Although most life centered around making a living or going to church, the main source of diversion for Londoners was the theatre. It was a form of entertainment accessible to people of all classes. The rich and the poor, the aristocrats and the beggars all met at the theatre. Though often appealing the church or the monarchy, theatre at this time did experience a freedom that was unknown in previous generations. Evidence of this can be found in the numerous bawdy and pagan references found in Shakespeare's plays. This relative artistic license and freedom of expression made theatre extremely unpopular among certain members of society, and it was later banned entirely by the Puritans. Not until the reign of Charles II (1660-1685) was the theatre restored to the status it held in Shakespeare's day.

The Globe Theatre, the resident playhouse for Shakespeare's company of actors, was easily accessible to Londoners and an active social center. Actors and performers were also regularly brought to court or to private homes to entertain. Despite their social popularity, actors maintained a relatively low status, sometimes no better than a common beggar or rogue. Most performers were forced to earn a living doing trade work. The aristocracy's desire for entertainment, however, did spur the development of numerous new theatre pieces.

Often a nobleman would become a patron to an artist or

company of actors, providing for their financial needs and sheltering them to some degree from official sanctions. In return, the company would adopt the name of the patron. Shakespeare's acting company was originally named "Lord Chamberlain's Men" after their patron, Henry Carey, Lord Chamberlain. Later, under the patronage of King James I, they were known as "The King's Men," an unprecedented honor at the time.

Despite the flourishing of the arts at this time, London was sometimes a desolate place. Outbreaks of the Black Plague (the bubonic plague) frequently erupted, killing thousands of citizens. Theatres, shops, and the government were all shut down during these times in hopes of preventing the spread of the disease. Elizabethans were unaware that the disease was being spread by the flea and rat populations, which well outnumbered the human population of London at that time.

HEARING A PLAY

The Elizabethans were an audience of listeners. They would say, "I'm going to hear a play," not "I'm going to see a play." The Elizabethan audience would pick up on words and their various meanings that we wouldn't.

Marjorie Garber





William Shakespeare

Shakespeare's Verse

Shakespeare's plays are written predominantly in "blank verse," a poetic form preferred by English dramatists in the 16th and early 17th centuries. It is a very flexible medium, which, like the human speech pattern, is capable of a wide range of tones and inflections. The lines, which are usually unrhymed, are divided into five "feet," each of which is a two-syllable unit known as an "iamb." Each iamb is made up of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable. Blank verse is technically defined as unrhymed iambic pentameter.

Here is a selection of blank verse from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with the stressed syllables in bold type:

Theseus: To you, your father should be as a god;
 One that compos'd your beauties, yea, and one
 To whom you are but as a form in wax
 By him imprinted, and within his pow'r
 To leave the figure, or disfigure it.
 Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

Hermia: So is Lysander.

Theseus: In himself he is;
 But in this kind, wanting your father's voice,
 The other must be held the worthier.

In this short selection, you can see a variety of speech tones indicated by the verse. The regularity of the rhythmic pattern and the use of full lines to complete his thoughts give Theseus a sense of calm and authority. Hermia's brief response, which breaks the iambic pattern, is only a fraction of a line, suggesting that she is impassioned and saying only a portion of what she is thinking. Theseus, however, completes her line and restores the iambic pattern, indicating his authority and the fact that he is, at this point in the play, literally overbearing her will.

Notice that while the blank verse pattern is generally iambic, even in this short passage there are instances where the pattern of stress is broken. The play would quickly become monotonous if the characters truly spoke in nothing but perfect iambic pentameter—fortunately for audiences, Shakespeare's rhythms often become jagged and jarring to reflect the tension and conflict among his characters.

Trying to determine where the rhythm of a line is regular or irregular provides important clues for the actor trying to understand what the character is thinking or feeling. As in real life, choosing to change the stress-bearing syllable may radically alter the meaning of what is being said.

Other clues are provided by word order and punctuation. There were few established rules for either in Shakespeare's time, so he was free to experiment with unusual syntax. As in our daily speech, the sentence structure (as indicated by both word order and punctuation) helps the reader or listener understand both the literal meaning of the sentence and the emphasis. A comma may indicate a new portion of the same idea, while a dash breaks into the sentence to insert a new idea, and a period suggests the completion of one idea and the start of another. Editors of Shakespeare over the years have quarreled bitterly about what punctuation the Bard "meant" to use or "should" have used. As an actor or reader of Shakespeare, it is up to you to decide if a comma, dash, or period makes the meaning of the line most clear.

THE HEART OF THE POETRY

The alternating unstressed-stressed pattern of blank verse has often been compared to the rhythm of the human heartbeat. When a character in Shakespeare is agitated, confused or upset, the rhythm of their verse often alters, much in the same way a heartbeat alters under similar conditions.





Macbeth

An Introduction

Like all of Shakespeare's tragedies, *Macbeth* is a character-driven play. Unlike the others, however, *Macbeth* contains no sub-plots, little comic relief, and no extravagant detail. This places a constant, searing focus upon the title character and his motivations. The play, narrating Macbeth's swift rise and fall from power in Scotland, can be simultaneously viewed as a fictionalized history play, a tale of a man trapped by fate, and a cautionary tale of the consequences of unchecked ambition.

As with *King Lear*, Shakespeare looked to early medieval European history for his plot when penning *Macbeth*. He chose the career of a Scottish king recounted in Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, a storehouse of plots to which Shakespeare and his contemporaries often turned. The historical Macbeth was a contemporary of Edward the Confessor, king of England from 1042 to 1066 CE.

One can interpret *Macbeth* as a play that depicts the demise of a man who chooses "evil as his good." The witches promise Macbeth that he will be king, yet he, driven by his wife, believes that his *only* path to the crown is through the murder of King Duncan. With Duncan dead, Macbeth is crowned king and the prophesy is fulfilled. Once enthroned, however, Macbeth continues on a path of murder fueled by his paranoia and determination to hold on to the throne.

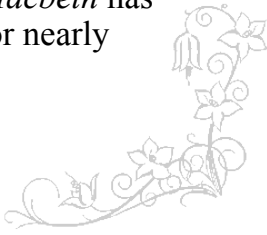
Macbeth murders Banquo in an attempt to prevent the prophesy that Banquo will be the "root and father of many kings" from coming true. He incorrectly interprets the prophesy to mean that Banquo's young son Fleance will be the immediate instrument of his downfall. Fearful of traitors within the Scottish nobility, Macbeth also places spies in the homes of the thanes. When he hears that Macduff

has fled to England to gain forces to overthrow him, Macbeth has Macduff's castle destroyed and his family slaughtered.

A warrior by training, Macbeth seems well suited for the bloody path on which he has embarked. Lady Macbeth, on the other hand, believes that the murder of Duncan is a singular sacrifice, which will usher them into a life of royal ease and splendor. Macbeth understands that the bloody path on which they have embarked is only the beginning of a long road on which "blood will have blood."

Despite his violent deeds, Shakespeare does not paint Macbeth as a simple villain. When we are introduced to the protagonist, he is a valiant and honorable general returning from a war in which he has nobly defended his country and his king from both foreign invasion and domestic treachery. After the visitation from the three witches he resolves that "If chance will have (him) King... chance may crown (him) without (his) stir" despite his "black and deep desires." It is Lady Macbeth that insists that they must murder Duncan to gain the crown. Macbeth struggles with this option, but finally decides that his will be a bloody path to the crown, and once he embarks, Macbeth does not turn back. Even at Macbeth's darkest, however, Shakespeare gives us a glimpse of the man he once was. When a messenger announces that his wife is dead, he ponders the futility of his life with insight and eloquence in the famous "Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow" speech.

Regardless of the various possible interpretations of *Macbeth*, the themes of ambition, corruption, destiny, sex and power presented in the play are quite tangible even today. Modern audiences can relate to the feelings of lust, power and ambition that drive Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Though we may not match the extreme lengths to which they go, the desires that drive them are, on a basic level, all too human. This may be one of the many reasons why *Macbeth* has remained one of Shakespeare's most popular tragedies for nearly four centuries.





Macbeth

A Short Synopsis

At the opening of the play, King Duncan's forces are attempting to defend Scotland from Norwegian invaders and trying to suppress a treasonous attack from one of their own, the Thane of Cawdor. Duncan receives word that Scotland has won the battles, in large part due to the skill and command of Macbeth. Duncan orders the execution of the existing Thane of Cawdor, and sends men to present Macbeth with the title.

Meanwhile, returning from the battlefield, Macbeth and Banquo encounter three witches who greet Macbeth with Thane of Glamis (his present title), Thane of Cawdor, and "King that shall be." When challenged, they add that Banquo, though he will not be a king, will be the father of future kings, and then they vanish. Neither of the men are sure what to make of their encounter until they are greeted by the King's messenger, who tells Macbeth that he has been given the title of Thane of Cawdor. Macbeth's hopes are raised that the witches might be truthful in their prediction that he will be King. When they arrive at the King's camp, however, Duncan names his eldest son, Malcolm, heir to the Scottish throne, and Macbeth sees this as an obstacle in his way to the crown.

In the Macbeth household, Lady Macbeth receives word from her husband regarding the witches' prophetic greetings. When Macbeth returns and announces that King Duncan will be their guest for the evening, Lady Macbeth suggests that they murder the visiting monarch. Though Macbeth is reluctant at first, he eventually agrees to her plan; Lady Macbeth will get the guards drunk and Macbeth

will murder the King. That evening, as he awaits his wife's signal, Macbeth encounters a mysterious spectral dagger which points him in the direction of the murder. Once the murder is accomplished, the Macbeths rush off to bed, so as not to raise suspicion. Upon the discovery of the assassination, Macbeth kills Duncan's guards for their supposed guilt, and Duncan's son, Malcolm, fearing for his life, flees to England. With Duncan and Malcolm both out of the way, Macbeth is crowned King of Scotland.

On the afternoon of Macbeth's coronation, the new King plots the death of his dear friend, Banquo, in hopes of nullifying the witches' prophesy that Banquo's children will be kings. He sends murderers to kill Banquo and his son, Fleance. At the coronation banquet, Macbeth is overcome with fear at the sight of Banquo's ghost. None of his guests can see the spirit, and Lady Macbeth attempts to pass the new King's peculiar behavior off as the effects of an illness. After the guests leave, Macbeth vows to seek out the witches to discover more about his future.

In the witches' lair, Macbeth is given what seems to be contradictory information about his future. He is told to beware Macduff, but that he himself can not be harmed by anyone born of woman. He is also told that he will never be defeated until the woods of Birnam advance on his castle. As the witches vanish, Macbeth is brought word from one of his soldiers that Macduff has fled to England. At this news, Macbeth orders the death of Macduff's family and servants, and the destruction of his home.

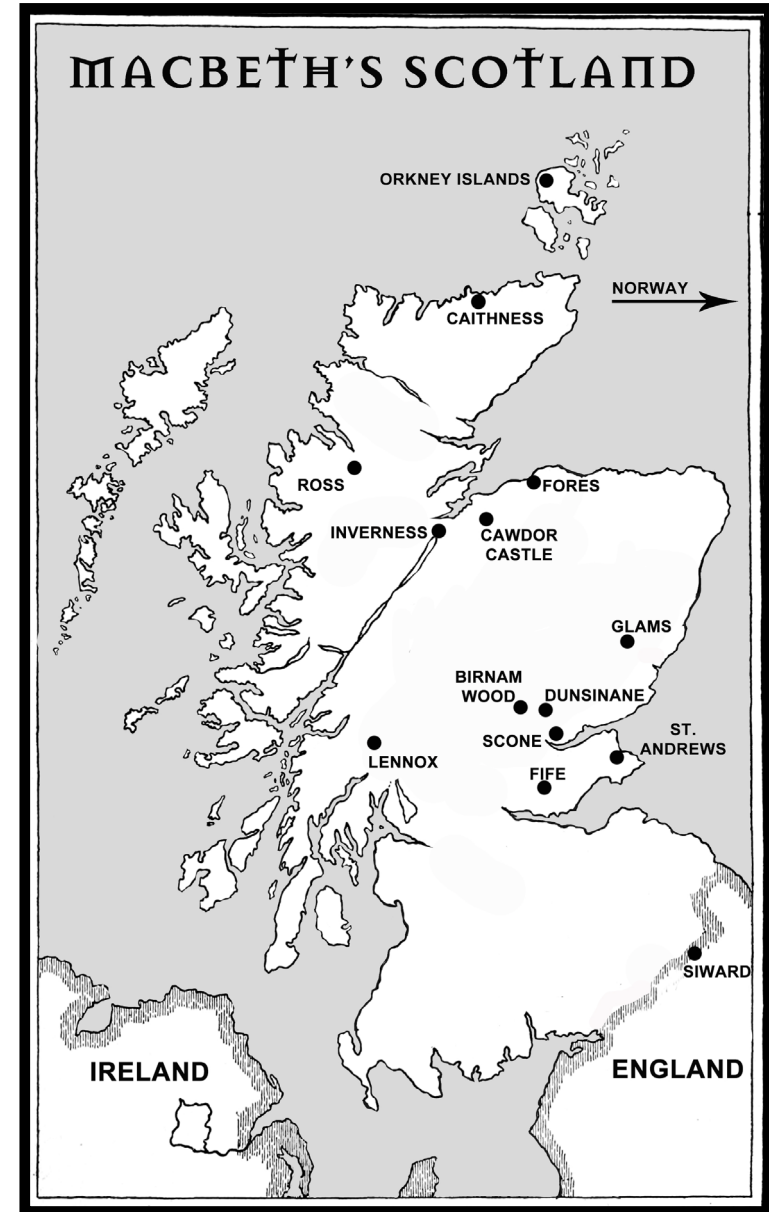


Ross appears in Fife at the Macduff family home and unsuccessfully attempts to quell Lady Macduff's anger that her husband has travelled to England in the hopes of drumming up English support against the reign of Macbeth, who grows more tyrannical with each passing day. Shortly after Ross' departure, Macbeth's murderers arrive and put everyone they can find to the sword. The entire family, save Macduff himself, are murdered in cold blood.

In England, Macduff lobbies Malcolm to take Scotland back from Macbeth. Malcolm, unsure if he can trust Macduff, tests his loyalty. When satisfied that Macduff is not a spy for Macbeth, Malcolm announces that he has already gained the support of the English army, and is preparing to advance on Scotland.

Meanwhile, back in Dunsinane castle, Lady Macbeth is observed sleepwalking and re-enacting the murder of Duncan. Macbeth finds himself more and more alone as those around him defect and ally themselves with Malcolm. As Malcolm's forces arrive at Birnam Wood, the young prince orders them to cut down limbs from the trees. They will then carry the limbs before them as they march on Macbeth's castle. Malcolm hopes this will disguise the size of their army. It will also make the woods appear to march toward Dunsinane castle, just as the witches predicted.

On the eve of the great battle, Macbeth is told that Lady Macbeth has died. Alone, he ponders the meaning of his existence. A messenger brings him word that Birnam Wood has begun to move toward Dunsinane. Determined to beat the fate the witches said awaited him, he goes to battle. On the battlefield, he encounters Macduff. As Macbeth gloats that "none of woman born" can harm him, Macduff tells him that he was not born of woman, but rather had been delivered via caesarian-section. They fight and Macbeth is killed. Malcolm is crowned the new and rightful King of Scotland.



Who's Who in the Play

Duncan– The rightful King of Scotland and father to Malcolm. Murdered by the Macbeths while a guest in their home.

Malcolm– King Duncan's son and the rightful heir to the throne of Scotland. Flees to England after his father's murder.

Macbeth– Initially the Thane of Glamis, then Thane of Cawdor, after murdering the rightful King, Duncan, Macbeth becomes King of Scotland.

Lady Macbeth– Macbeth's wife and "partner in greatness". She prods Macbeth into the murder of King Duncan.

Banquo– A Scottish nobleman and friend to Macbeth. He is with Macbeth when they meet the Weird Sisters, and their prophecy places his heirs upon the throne.

Fleance– Banquo's young son.

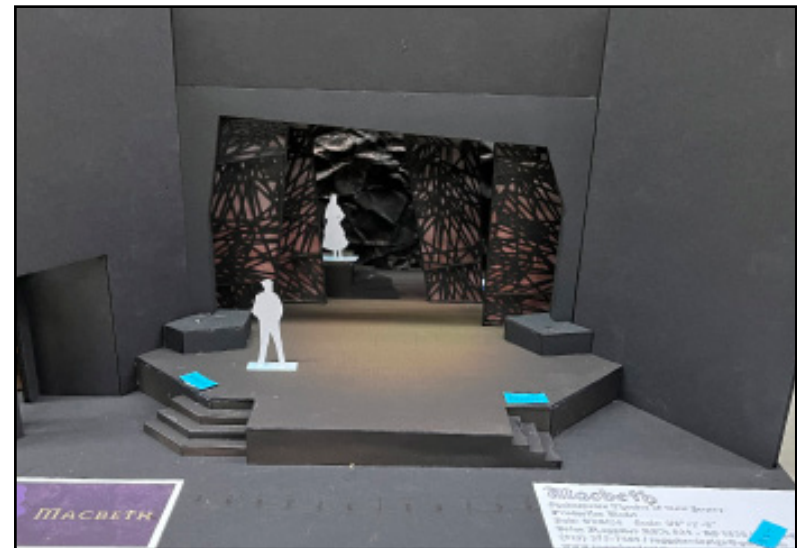
Macduff– A nobleman of Scotland, loyal to the murdered King, who inspires Prince Malcolm to return and fight for his birthright.

Ross– A Scottish nobleman who remains in Scotland after Macduff departs for England.

Lennox– A Scottish nobleman.

Siward– Uncle to Malcolm; general of the English forces.

The Weird Sisters– The three "witches" who predict the futures of Banquo and Macbeth.



Scenic model by Brian Ruggaber





Macbeth

Sources & History

Shakespeare's primary source for *Macbeth* was the 1587 second edition of Raphael Holinshed's extensive and massively popular *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*. This collection of oral history and popular legend was one of the best-selling books of Shakespeare's day, and a source for many playwrights and poets.

Holinshed's account of the 11th-century Scottish history depicts Duncan as a weak king, whose murder by Macbeth was a popular coup carried out with the support of Banquo and many other Scottish chieftains. Shakespeare departed from this account, not only because his new king was a descendant of Banquo, but also to create a taut tragedy in which the lines between good and evil are more clearly drawn. The prophecy of three witches features in Holinshed, who solemnly assures his readers that "everything came to pass as they had spoken." Another tale in the Scottish section of Holinshed, that of the murder of King Duff, was used by Shakespeare in creating the character of Lady Macbeth, who urges her husband to murder a guest in their home.

It is assumed because of the subject matter that the play was performed at court for King James, who had himself authored a book on witches, around 1606. The play was certainly performed again at the Globe in 1611, but was not printed until 1623 as part of the First Folio. There are many questions about this text—the fact that *Macbeth* is so much shorter than any other Shakespearean tragedy has caused some to speculate that sections are missing from the Folio text, while other passages, such as the Hecate scene, seem almost certainly to have been added at some point by another writer.

In the 1660s, when the public theatres reopened, *Macbeth* was revised by Sir William Davenant as a baroque opera, complete with singing, dancing witches. This version remained popular through the mid-18th century when David Garrick, and later J.P. Kemble, returned to Shakespeare's text and the psychological journey of its main characters.

Since the middle of the 20th century, *Macbeth* has been perhaps the most widely-read and widely-adapted of Shakespeare's tragedies. One remarkable production

was staged in 1936 by Harlem's Negro Theater Project, directed by a then-20-year-old unknown named Orson Welles. The production set the play in 19th-century Haiti, complete with all the trappings of voodoo. Known to this day as "The Voodoo Macbeth," the production was accompanied by unprecedented publicity. On opening night, more than 10,000 people stood in line on Seventh Avenue hoping to get scalped tickets and disrupting traffic for ten blocks.

Another director who made his name in the world of film, Ingmar Bergman, directed a 1948 production whose principal scenic element was a huge tree in whose branches the witches cavorted and from which human corpses and cattle carcasses swung. The eerie, violent world of *Macbeth* seems to cast a particular spell over filmmakers. In 1957, Akira Kurosawa adapted the play in his film *Throne of Blood*, transporting the story to medieval Japan, with the principal characters depicted as Samurai warriors. Roman Polanski's 1971 film retained the medieval Scottish setting, but amped up the violence and sexuality of the play.

Other film adaptations have included *Men of Respect* (1991), in which Macbeth is a Mafia hitman, Mike Battaglia (played by John Turturro), and *Scotland, PA* (2001) in which Macbeth is a disgruntled employee at a small-town diner, Duncan's Cafe, pursued by cop Lieutenant McDuff (played by Christopher Walken) after he murders his boss and takes ownership of the restaurant. *Macbeth* continues to be a staple of theatres around the world, and the roles of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth remain among the most prestigious and coveted for actors.

THE BEST OF THE BARD

The following phrases and sayings have their origin in *Macbeth*:

"Fair is foul, and foul is fair"

"the milk of human kindness"

"blood will have blood"

"double, double, toil and trouble"

"By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes"

"one fell swoop"

"what's done is done"

"what's done cannot be undone"



Macbeth

“The Scottish Play”

Many actors to this day are very superstitious about saying “Macbeth” or quoting from the play in a theatre. Supposedly, this is a guarantee of bad luck (or even deadly mishap).

One popular legend about the origins of the “curse” holds that Shakespeare based his depiction of the witches on actual black magic rituals that he had spied on; even quoting directly from their incantations. While this seems pretty absurd, it is true that theatre lore is replete with tales of disasters large and small that have occurred during or around performances of *Macbeth*.

- In 1849, a bitter rivalry between the American actor Edwin Forrest and the British actor John Macready boiled over into a riot outside the theatre where Macready was appearing in *Macbeth*. Thirty-one people were killed.
- In 1934, a production at London’s Old Vic went through four different lead actors in a week: one caught laryngitis, another the flu, and a third was fired.
- The next production at the Old Vic, in 1937, starring Laurence Olivier, had its director nearly die in a taxi accident, its star narrowly dodge a falling sandbag, and its opening night delayed when the set could not be made to fit on the stage. Shortly thereafter, the founder of the theatre, Lillian Bayliss, died suddenly.
- Eighteen years later, the Old Vic was holding opening night for yet another *Macbeth* when the portrait of Bayliss in the lobby fell from the wall and shattered.
- The curse could cross oceans as well: a 1938 production at Canada’s Stratford Festival saw an old man run over by his own car in the parking lot, Lady Macbeth’s car crashing through a storefront, and Macduff falling off a horse.

While these spooky stories have a certain mystique, more practical-minded persons might argue that many of the injuries and illnesses associated with

the “curse” could have a more prosaic explanation. The leading role is a grueling one, in a play that builds with headlong momentum toward a climactic swordfight. Most productions since Shakespeare’s time have been dimly lit to create an eerie atmosphere, and often employ fog, fire, and other potential hazards. With this in mind, it’s a bit easier to understand why *Macbeth* may have more than its share of onstage and backstage accidents.

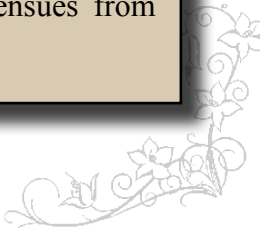
*Source: “The Friendly Shakespeare” by Norrie Epstein

A LITTLE TOO TOPICAL?

Royal assassination was on English minds at the time in which Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth*. Around the time Shakespeare began writing the play, England was rocked by the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot, a plan orchestrated by a group of extreme Catholics intent on ridding England of its Protestant king and his sympathizers. They planned to blow up the Houses of Parliament on the opening day of the legislative session in November 1605.

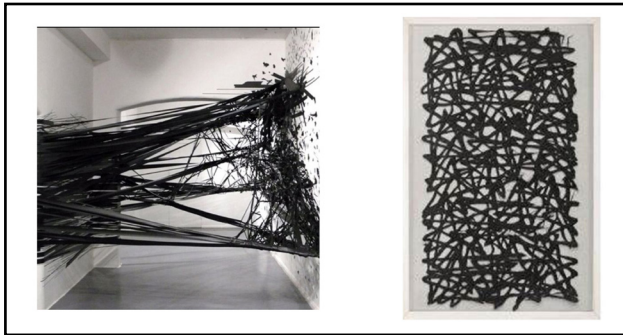
The plan was thwarted, however, when Guy Fawkes, the man appointed to ignite the explosives, was caught on the eve of the parliamentary session waiting beneath the House of Lords with a lantern in his hand and several slow-burning matches in his pocket. After Fawkes’ arrest, the other conspirators were eventually captured, charged with treason, convicted and hanged. Guy Fawkes Day is still celebrated in Britain every November 5th as a commemoration of the day in 1605 when his plan was foiled and the English government and royal family were saved.

When watching *Macbeth*, audiences in Shakespeare’s day would have no doubt keenly understood the national turmoil that ensues from Duncan’s murder.



In This Production

Scenic inspiration and set model by Brian Ruggaber, Scenic Designer, and selected costume inspirations by Rodrigo Muñoz Costume Designer, for the 2024 Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey production of, *Macbeth*, directed by Brian B. Crowe.



Commentary & Criticism

“*Macbeth* is a tale told by a genius, full of soundness and fury, and signifying many things.”

James Thurber

“In the world of *Macbeth* there is no margin left for love, or friendship; not even for desire... Lust, too, has been poisoned with the thought of murder.”

Jan Kott

Shakespeare Our Contemporary

“*Macbeth* is a play about the eclipse of evil; when it ends, virtue and justice are restored, the time is free, the ‘weal’ once more made gentle.”

Frank Kermode

“It is certainly indicative that there are only two plays in which the word ‘love’ occurs so seldom as in *Macbeth*, and no play in which ‘fear’ occurs so often; indeed, it occurs twice or thrice as often as in most other plays”

Caroline Spurgeon

Shakespeare’s Imagery

“‘Fair is foul, and foul is fair,’ say the witches. In their world, nonhuman and antihuman, everything is equivocal — literally double-voiced... The word ‘double,’ too, is a sign of equivocation, of the fatal split in *Macbeth*, appearing again and again throughout the play, eleven times in all, always in negative connotations.”

Marjorie Garber

Shakespeare After All

“The play is less about legitimacy and usurpation than about the divided self... The drama of *Macbeth* is really a matter between Macbeth and his ambition, Macbeth and the witches and his wife and his hallucinations and his own tortured soul, the drama of prophecies and riddles, and how he understands them, and what he decides to do about them, and how they, in themselves, constitute retribution.”

Stephen Orgel

Introduction to the Pelican edition of Macbeth



Ray Fisher as Macbeth in The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey's 2024 production (Photo by Avery Brunkus)



Interesting Links & Sources



The Witches of Scotland

<https://rse.org.uk/resource/witches-of-scotland/>



The Real Duncan and Macbeth

<https://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/HistoryofScotland/Duncan-MacBeth/>



King James and his “Daemonologie”

<https://www.nls.uk/learning-zone/literature-and-language/themes-in-focus/witches/source-1/>



The Clan Macbeth

<https://www.cosca.scot/findclan/macbeth>





Bibliography

- THE ANNOTATED SHAKESPEARE, Introductions, Notes, and
Bibliography by A.L Rowe
- THE ARDEN SHAKESPEARE: MACBETH, edited by Kenneth Muir
- ASIMOV'S GUIDE TO SHAKESPEARE by Isaac Asimov
- THE COMPLETE IDIOT'S GUIDE TO SHAKESPEARE,
by Laurie Rozakis
- FREEING SHAKESPEARE'S VOICE by Kristin Linklater
- THE FRIENDLY SHAKESPEARE by Norrie Epstein
- THE MIRACLE OF LANGUAGE by Richard Lederer
- THE NEW CAMBRIDGE SHAKESPEARE: MACBETH,
edited by A.R. Braunmuller
- THE PELICAN SHAKESPEARE: MACBETH, edited by Stephen Orgel
- SHAKESPEARE A TO Z by Charles Boyce
- SHAKESPEARE AFTER ALL, by Marjorie Garber
- SHAKESPEARE FOR BEGINNERS by Brandon Toropov
- SHAKESPEARE FOR DUMMIES by Doyle, Lischner, and Dench
- SHAKESPEARE'S IMAGERY by Caroline Spurgeon
- SHAKESPEARE IN PERFORMANCE,
Consultant Editors Keith Parsons and Pamela Mason
- SHAKESPEARE: THE INVENTION OF THE HUMAN
by Harold Bloom
- SHAKESPEARE OUR CONTEMPORARY by Jan Kott
- THEATRE: A WAY OF SEEING, Third Edition by Milly S. Barranger
- THE ESSENTIAL SHAKESPEARE HANDBOOK,
by Leslie Dunton-Downer and Alan Riding
- SHAKESPEARE SET FREE, edited by Peggy O'Brien
- SHAKING HANDS WITH SHAKESPEARE,
by Alison Wedell Schumacher



Ray Fisher and Erin Partin in The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey's 2024 production of Macbeth (Photo by Avery Brunkus)

