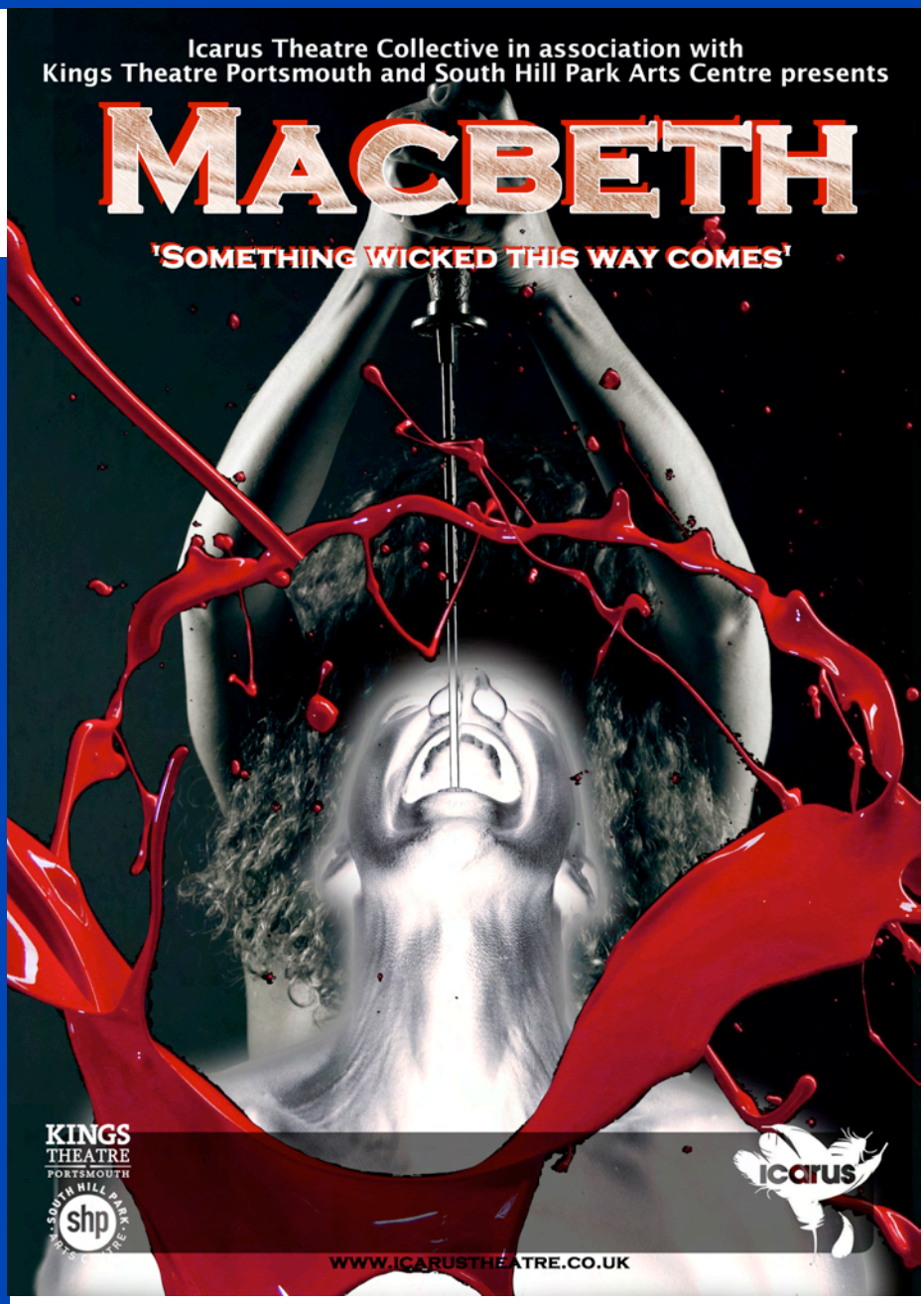
Macbeth Education Pack



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Look out for the activity sections where you have a chance to get your brains working and design your own production of *Macbeth*!

The vicious, barbaric undercurrent in Shakespeare's epic erupts in this kinetic, blood-thirsty production. Victorious on the battlefield, Macbeth's nobility and bravery are rewarded by an indebted king. But with each enemy slaughtered to serve Macbeth's own vaulting ambition, his lust for power takes a deadly turn until he ferociously usurps the kingdom. His reign, baptised in blood, spirals out of control and Macbeth's deeds come back to tear him down.

About the Icarus Theatre Collective

Supported by South Hill Park Arts Centre and Kings Theatre Portsmouth, Icarus Theatre takes its third foray into a national tour of a Shakespeare play.

Icarus began life in 2004. Icarus is unique as a mid-scale theatre company in that it functions as a collective. The Icarus Theatre Collective explores the harsh, brutal side of modern and classical drama, creating a contemporary Theatre of the Absurd while maintaining a cohesive, evocative story. Icarus aims to produce two mid-scale tours and one professional fringe production every year using diverse performance formats that are intellectual, visceral or engaging and always kinetic and dynamic: theatre that moves.

Led by Artistic Director Max Lewendel, Icarus teams artists from the international community with British artists, and experienced artists with promising young professionals, to enable both groups to build rapport and grow as artists.

Previous Productions from the Icarus Theatre Collective:

2004: *The Lesson,* Eugene Ionesco
Coyote Ugly, Lynn Siefert
2005: *Albert's Boy,* James Graham
2007/8: *The Lesson,* revival and international tour
2008: *The Time of your Life,* William Saroyan
2009: *Vincent in Brixton,* Nicholas Wright
Othello, Shakespeare
2010: *Journey's End,* R.C.Sheriff
The Madness of King George III, Alan Bennett
Hamlet, Shakespeare

The Press on the Icarus Theatre Collective:

"Max Lewendel's production succeeds by the strength of its acting and the steadily increasing tension."
-Jeremy Kingston, The Times on *The Lesson*

"It is impossible not to enjoy Icarus Theatre Collective's production of Ionesco's one-act play".
-Francesca Whiting, The Stage on *The Lesson*

"Fringe Theatre at its best."
-Aleks Sierz, The Stage on *Albert's Boy*

"This sexy, steamy drama really hits home, especially after delivering the scorpion sting in its tail".
-Philip Fisher, British Theatre Guide on *Coyote Ugly*

"Icarus Theatre Collective brings vividly to life some of literature's most vibrant language and characters".
- Glenn Meads, What's On Stage

Photos from Icarus' production of *Macbeth*

Photos from Icarus' production of *Macbeth*

Historical Note

As a storyteller Shakespeare owes us nothing by way of recording historical events as fact. But such is his popularity, and so well established are the heroes and villains of his historical plays that his versions of history are often very easy ones to be seduced by. It is for this reason that, in the same way as Richard III has become established as a scheming and deformed child murderer, Macbeth has the reputation for being a conniving and bloodthirsty regicide.

In fact we know very little for sure about Macbeth, not even the proper spelling of his name since spelling at that time was a matter of choice (it had only been two centuries since the establishment of the Julian calendar and would be over eight before the publication of the first dictionary).

Also, the sum total of remaining contemporary documentation of the time would fit comfortably in a small shoebox.

Various conquests, wars and the unhelpful and wilful destruction of a great deal of historical artefacts held by the church at the order of Henry VIII (and if ever there was a villain in history it was him) have all contributed to robbing us of a significant amount of source material without which we as historians begin to tread a dangerous path. Contemporary chroniclers, the Andrew Marrs of their day, from whom Shakespeare drew some of his research (such as the authors of the Anglo-Saxon chronicle) tended to postulate theories without suggesting that they had done so and were not above explaining away other incidents with the suggestion of witchcraft or the anger of God.

So already things are a little difficult.

We do know that Macbeth was born around 1000, the son of Scots nobility (and with a perfectly legitimate claim to the throne according to the laws of the time) and that he came to power around 1040 by 'killing' Duncan in battle (although probably not in single combat), as part of a war of succession.

Macbeth ruled for at least 14 years (possibly 17), and was certainly involved in defending the country from Viking raiders. He was also well travelled and sufficiently secure in his position to be both ratified by the general Scots nobility (or he could never have been crowned) and leave the country for a period on a pilgrimage to Rome. He was defeated in battle by Malcolm Canmore, Duncan's son, in 1054 on the plains near Dundee, although his death took place at Lumphanan in 1057 - hence there is some issue regarding the longevity of his reign.

There are stories and legends which naturally occur when source material is in such short supply but the 'facts' as we know them make up a very brief paragraph. Small wonder perhaps that when seeking a setting for a story which would tell of one of the great kingships of ancient Scotland, Shakespeare chose the events of Macbeth and Duncan as a starting point. It is this starting point that we branch away from in as radical ways as Shakespeare chose to.

In many ways we might argue that Macbeth owes him a debt of thanks for, without this play it is unlikely that we would have heard of him at all. And even a bad reputation is an immorality of sorts - surely one of the principal goals of a medieval high king.

- Anthony Green

Production Style

Icarus' style is a blend of Stanislavskian psychological probing and physical, kinetic performance. We work with Shakespeare's text to uncover the motivations of the characters and translate that onto the stage with the help of physical theatre techniques which allow for a dynamic reinvention of the text.

This production of *Macbeth* uses what has become Icarus' approach to Shakespeare: we utilise the original eleventh century setting, but place our production in a world next to the historical reality. Costumes, set and moral codes from the time very much apply, but ours is a less patriarchal society that allows women to be more powerful, elevating Lady Macbeth in particular.

Photos from Icarus' production of *Macbeth*

Konstantin Stanislavski
(1863- 1938)

"All action on the stage must have an inner justification, be logical, coherent, and real."

Konstantin Stanislavski founded the first acting 'system', co-founded the Moscow Art Theatre in 1897, and was a committed advocate of the naturalist school of thought. Stanislavski questioned the traditional dramatic process, and his approach became one of the most enduring methods of theatre practice to ever develop.

The "Stanislavski Method", was the catalyst for method acting- Stanislavski developed his own unique system of training where actors would research the situation created by the script, break down the text according to their character's motivations and recall their own experiences, thereby causing actions and reactions according to these motivations. The actor could then replay these emotions and experiences in the role of the character in order to achieve a more genuine performance.

His methods have informed modern theatre practice and directors from Katie Mitchell to Max Stafford Clark use techniques that were developed from his initial work.

Above: an artist's rendition of Shakespeare

Below: an artist's rendition of Anne Hathaway

Shakespeare Facts

- The Bard was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire in 1564.
- In his lifetime Shakespeare wrote at least 37 known plays and 154 sonnets.
- By 1592 he was in London working as an actor and a dramatist.
- In 1613, Shakespeare retired from the theatre and returned to Stratford-upon-Avon.
- He died in 1616, on his 52nd birthday.
- The traditional date for both his birth and death is St George's Day, April 23rd.
- Shakespeare was born, married and died in Stratford-upon-Avon.
- Nothing official is known of Shakespeare's early life before his marriage, at the age of 18, in 1582. His bride, Anne Hathaway, was 26 (and three months pregnant).
- Had three children, Judith, Hamnet and Susanna.
- As an actor, he was associated with the parts of kings and old men. His roles may have included the Ghost in *Hamlet* and old Adam in *As You Like It*.
- There is a 'lost' Shakespeare play *Cardenio* which is referenced in contemporary documentation, but the text has never been found.

Shakespeare's Plays

- 1590 *Henry VI, Part I*
- 1590 *Henry VI, Part II*
- 1590 *Henry VI, Part III*
- 1592 *Richard III*
- 1592 *The Comedy of Errors*
- 1593 *Titus Andronicus*
- 1593 *Taming of the Shrew*
- 1594 *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*
- 1594 *Love's Labours Lost*
- 1591-1596 *Romeo and Juliet*
- 1595 *Richard II*
- 1595 *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
- 1596 *King John*
- 1596 *The Merchant of Venice*
- 1597 *Henry IV, Part I*
- 1594-1597 *Love's Labours Won* (A lost play, though some scholars think it might simply be an alternative name for another of the plays, such as *As You Like It*, *Much Ado*, or *All's Well That Ends Well*.)
- 1598 *Henry IV, Part II*
- 1599 *Henry V*
- 1599 *Julius Caesar*
- 1599 *Much Ado About Nothing*
- 1599 *As You Like It*
- 1597-1600 *The Merry Wives of Windsor*
- 1599-1600 *Hamlet*
- 1602 *Twelfth Night*
- 1602 *Troilus and Cressida*
- 1603 *All's Well That Ends Well*
- 1603 *Othello*
- 1603-06 *King Lear*
- 1603-06 *Macbeth*
- 1603 *Measure for Measure*
- 1606 *Antony and Cleopatra*
- 1607 *Coriolanus*
- 1607 *Timon of Athens*
- 1608 *Pericles Prince of Tyre*
- 1609 *Cymbeline*
- 1594-1610 *The Winter's Tale*
- 1611 *The Tempest*

Myths and Rumours

In his poem *To Shakespeare,* Thomas Hardy described how hard it can be to know Shakespeare, given the little information we have about him:

Bright baffling Soul, least capturable of themes,
Thou, who display'dst a life of common-place,
Leaving no intimate word or personal trace
Of high design outside the artistry
Of thy penned dreams.

But there still remains documentary evidence from records that can help us to piece together Shakespeare's life. From these documents, we know that he was baptized on 26th April 1564, though we are not certain of the exact day that he was born. Critics like to speculate that it was on 23rd April, exactly 52 years before his death on St. George's Day 1616. We know that upon his death, Shakespeare left his second best bed to his wife, Anne Hathaway. We also know from documentary evidence that Shakespeare's first recorded performance took place in 1592, though it is generally held that two of his works had been performed prior to this date. His first published play appeared in 1594 and in total he is believed to have written 39 plays, one of which is lost and several of which were co-written. We also know that he composed two narrative poems and 154 sonnets. But when it comes to a detailed account of the life behind these works, everything becomes less clear.

Shakespeare's birthplace in Stratford-upon-Avon

Many believe the sonnets to be reflective of a same-sex relationship between Shakespeare and the elusive W.H. to whom they are dedicated with 'all happinesse and that eternitie promised'. Possibly, this referred to the boy actor, Willie Hughes. Consider the following, addressed to a young attractive male youth in Sonnet 20:

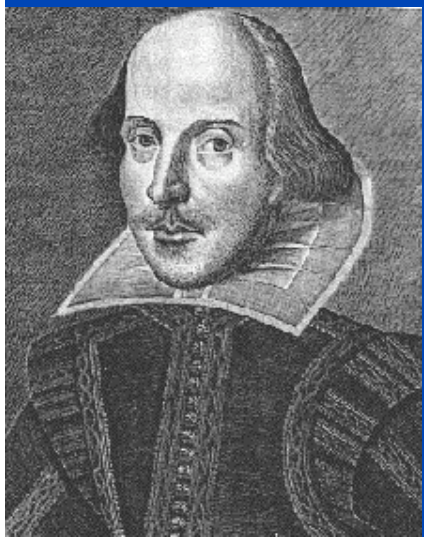
Till Nature, as she wrought thee, fell a-doting,
And by addition me of thee defeated,
By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.
But since she prick'd thee out for women's pleasure,
Mine be thy love and thy love's use their treasure.

There are theories that Shakespeare's father was a covert Catholic, that Shakespeare suffered from syphilis, that he had a limp, that he had to flee Stratford because of an episode involving him illegally hunting a deer, and the list goes on, with some assertions more suspicious than others.

In truth, little is known of Shakespeare's personal life. We know that at eighteen he married a woman eight years his senior and that he had three children by her, including twins, one of whom was named Hamnet. As for the rest, we are left to interpret his 'penned dreams' as we choose. In this sense, he can almost be whatever we want him to be. The poet John Milton was perhaps not wrong to call him *my Shakespeare.*

Above: A statue of Shakespeare at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Stratford, Canada

Below: The Martin Droeshout engraving of Shakespeare for the First Folio of his works, published in 1623



Whatever our critical approach, there remain certain inalienable truths about Shakespeare that are supported by his texts. Shakespearean scholar David Crystal has estimated that Shakespeare invented 1,700 words, almost 10% of his own vocabulary. 850 of those inventions are still in common use.

Words Shakespeare has given us:

- countless
- eventful
- suspicious
- critic/critical
- impartial
- laughable
- lonely
- road
- exposure
- accommodation
- amazement
- apostrophe
- assassination
- bloody
- generous
- gloomy
- submerge

Critical Approaches to Shakespeare

So we might say that when it comes to Shakespeare, *anything goes*. In fact, this might even be an illuminating way of thinking about Shakespeare in the context of twentieth-century criticism.

The critic Roland Barthes argued in an important essay *The Death of the Author* that to give a text an author was to limit its meaning and that as a result of this we should try and separate texts from their authors if we want to understand them.

In some ways this idea echoes the views of an earlier literary movement called New Criticism. New Criticism was an important academic movement that began in the 1920s. Literary critics such as F.R. Leavis established a close reading approach which focused on the multiple meanings in any text, and allowed readers to look into the formal and structural characteristics of texts (a practice called practical criticism, which informs the GCSE and A Level exams of today). This critical approach owed much to T.S. Eliot's argument that writers must surrender themselves and develop an impersonal approach to writing if they are to produce great poetry. Writing about Hamlet in a 1919 essay, Eliot spoke of an 'objective correlative', and argued that a formulaic approach to writing was necessary to induce the right response from a reader or spectator. According to Eliot, Shakespeare fails to achieve this in Hamlet because the emotional response does not match up to action of the play, and so in Eliot's opinion Hamlet is an 'artistic failure'. Barthes' argument was different because he believed that the reason we should disassociate texts from their authors was because nobody can claim to be the sole author of a work; their work is woven out of the fabric of myth and language in any given society that helps to make a text what it is.

This the basis upon which the critic Susan Sontag was able to argue that we shouldn't be looking for meaning in artworks, but for an 'erotics of art'. By this she meant, a way of dressing up art works; of making them have meaning for us (and even sex appeal). If we conclude that Shakespeare's works do not belong to Shakespeare, either because he wrote them impersonally or because they were actually the result of the society and the language that produced them, then we can begin to dress them up and turn them into whatever we want them to be. We all write Shakespeare, rewriting his works every time we read them. We don't have to walk down the lonely road of feeling that there is something we are missing; that we should be reading Shakespeare in a particular way. We rewrite him as we choose.

However, recent shifts in academia have tended towards a new academic movement called New Historicism, which involves a greater emphasis on placing works of literature back into their historical contexts. Stephen Greenblatt wrote on Hamlet that 'nothing comes from nothing' and that the important thing is to know what Shakespeare's inspirations were, given the context in which he wrote.

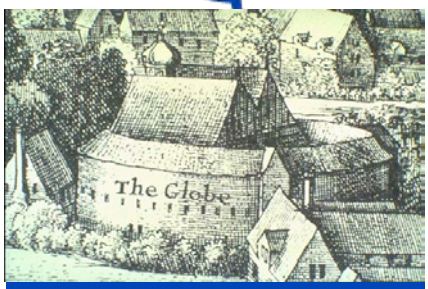
Ultimately, we can read Shakespeare according to our own prejudices and so make him have meaning for us, but it is always important to not lose sight of his original meaning.

Shakespearean Theatre

The British theatre building as we know it evolved in a very specific way. European Theatre, which has its origins in the amphitheatres of Greece, is a theatre of spectacle, large happenings and specific movements to indicate stories to audiences that were often very far away; this progressed into arts such as opera and ballet in which the visual component is very often prevalent. British Theatre has its roots in the troupes of travelling players, who would tour the country performing on village greens. As a result, props and set would be very minimal, meaning performers often gave speeches that were very descriptive to allow the audience to imagine their setting. English Theatre thus developed in the oral tradition giving us playwrights like Marlowe and Shakespeare, for example, in the descriptions of Cyprus in *Othello* or of Troy in *Dido, Queen of Carthage*.

Before the first purpose-built theatres were constructed (The *Red Lion* in 1567 and *The Theatre* in 1576), companies would tour towns and cities performing in inn-yards. Audiences would purchase sitting or standing places, or hire rooms from which to view the stage; the further away from the ground, the more expensive, like the Dress Circle in most current theatres. English Theatre buildings seem to have evolved along the same lines, with the stalls area being similar to the inn yard and the tiers of seating stemming from the rooms and walkways of the inn itself.

Shakespeare's plays were often (though not always) staged in an open-air theatre, during daylight hours. The audience was divided into sitting and standing room, and the "groundlings", who paid only to watch, not to sit, were notorious for their rowdy behavior. The theatre atmosphere was closer to that of a modern-day carnival or sporting event. People sold concessions and even openly solicited clients (the theater was in the same area as the brothels). A show was an afternoon's entertainment, and there were often several intermissions. The audience in a Shakespeare play would have been very closely-packed with no reserved seats. It was on a first come, first served basis. If the paying spectators disapproved of an actor they would pelt him with oranges or just about anything, booing, hissing and shouting. However, they were always ready with their applause and would clap and cheer when they approved. A visit to the theatre in Shakespeare's day was a rousing, noisy and very lively experience.



The most famous Elizabethan playhouse or theatre was the Globe Theatre (1599). It was built by the company with which Shakespeare was associated, which is why its modern-day counterpart is called Shakespeare's Globe.

The original theatre was destroyed by fire on 29th June 1613. A second Globe Theatre was built on the same site by June 1614 and closed, along with all the English theatres, in 1642 during the brief Puritan administration of Oliver Cromwell. However in 1997 a modern reconstruction of the Globe was built; the current Shakespeare's Globe. It sits approximately 230 meters from the site of the original theatre.

The current Globe theatre is a universal resource, dedicated to the discovery of Shakespeare's work and the playhouse that he wrote for, through the connected means of performance and education.

Historical Context and Sources

Macbeth as a Historical Figure: 1005-1057

Macbeth was born around 1005. His mother was Donada, the second daughter of King Malcolm II of Scotland, and his father was Findlay, chieftain of Moray. Macbeth married Gruoch, a widowed grand-daughter of King Kenneth III. Gruoch's brother and her first husband died at the hands of Malcolm's followers headed by another grandson and his successor, King Duncan I. Avenging his wife and disputing the throne, Macbeth brought Duncan's rule to an abrupt end: on 14 August 1040, Duncan was mortally wounded at Pitgaveny, and died at Elgin Castle in Moray. Macbeth was crowned High King of Scots at Scone outside Perth, with his Queen.

What the real Macbeth may have looked like, c. 1040

Macbeth and Duncan

Contrary to Shakespeare's version of the story, Duncan was a young man, probably younger than Macbeth, and Macbeth may have had an equally valid claim to the throne (there was no precedent in the dynasty for inheritance through a female line). Nor is it likely that Macbeth murder Duncan in his bed; there is greater evidence to suggest that he killed him in battle near Elgin in 1040. Macbeth reigned for seventeen years as the king of Scotland (or king of Scots, in the more authentic phrase), and on the whole, he ruled well. Indeed the kingdom was calm enough for him to go on pilgrimage in 1050 to Rome.

Duncan's son, Malcolm, eventually rose against Macbeth and killed him, in a battle at Lumphanan in 1057. Both men were members of the MacAlpin dynasty, and the fact that Macbeth is buried in the holy island of Iona suggests that his contemporaries did not consider him a usurper. Macbeth was immediately succeeded by his stepson, Lulach. But Malcolm killed him too, in an ambush in 1058, before himself being crowned at Scone.

What the real King Duncan I of Scotland may have looked like

Historical Settings

Forres - A royal burgh since 1140, Forres is one of Scotland's oldest towns, and also one of its most attractive. These days the 196 heading east from Nairn to Elgin by-passes Forres. Even if you don't have time to stop, it's worth following the old route of the main road through the town to gain a glimpse of what it has to offer.
It has been claimed that Forres first appears as 'Varis' on a map drawn by Ptolemy two thousand years ago. Slightly more recently, Forres became known to a wider audience as the location of some of the early action Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.
A thousand years ago, Forres was home to a castle, located at the west end of the High Street. This was further strengthened to become a royal residence in the 1100s. Nothing now remains of Forres Castle and its site is now a public park.

Glamis - Glamis Castle was built in the fourteenth century, and has been the home of many royal families. While Shakespeare set *Macbeth* in Glamis Castle, it was not in fact in existence during the eleventh century. However, the site on which the castle was built was the site where Malcolm II was mortally wounded in battle in 1034, and he was brought to the Royal Hunting Lodge (on the site of Castle) where he died.

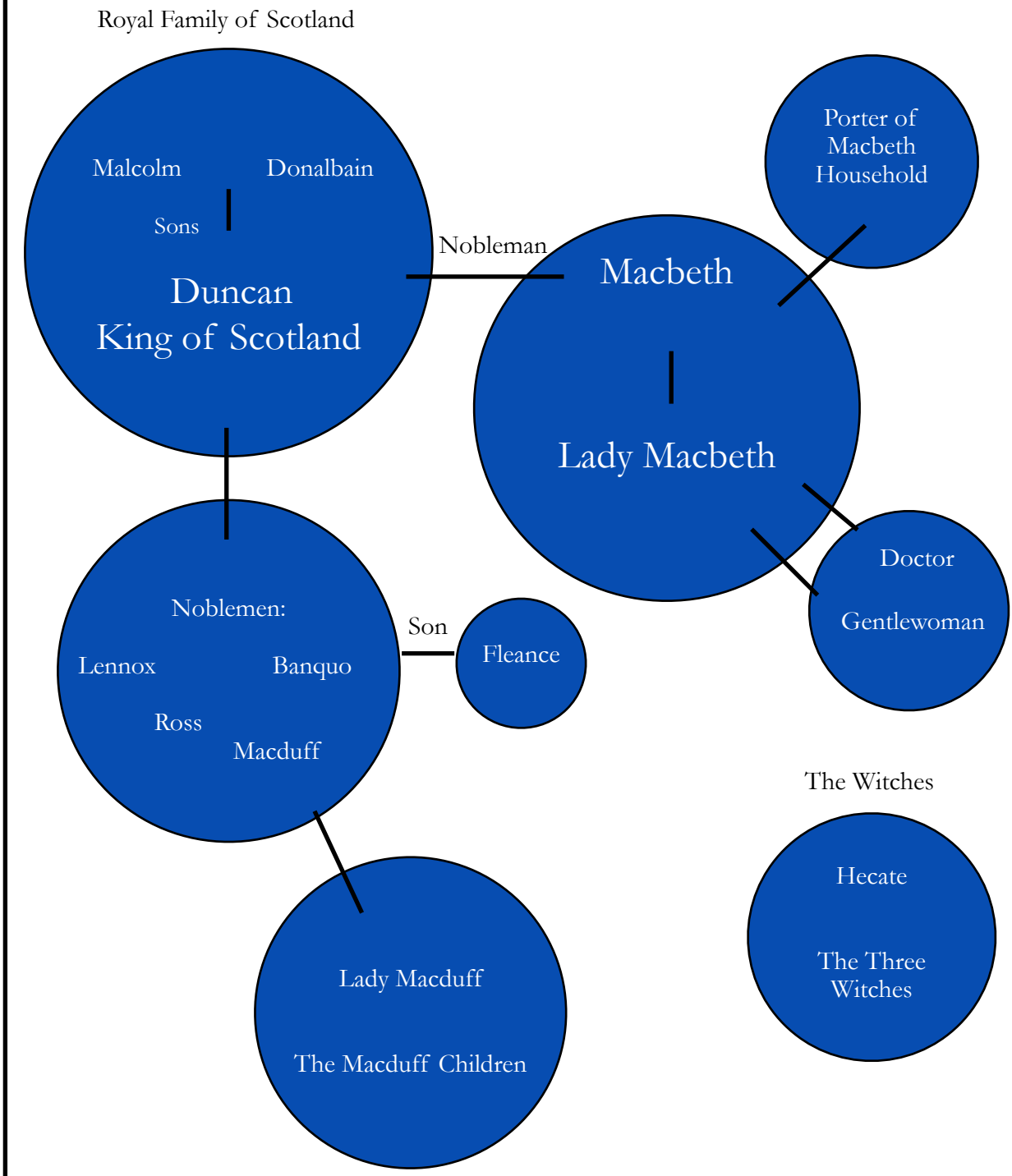
The interior of Glamis Castle today, the modern equivalent of where the banquet scene would have occurred in Shakespeare's play

Cawdor - Pronounced as 'Caladar' in Gaelic, Cawdor is a village and parish in Nairnshire, Scotland. The village is situated five miles south-west of Nairn, and twelve miles from Inverness. Macbeth, in Shakespeare's play, becomes Thane of Cawdor early in the narrative. However, since the oldest part of the are dates to the fourteenth century, and has no known predecessor, Shakespeare's version (and the tradition which came before it) is of extremely tenuous historical authenticity.

Above: Glamis Castle today

Fife - Fife is the home of Macduff and the province of which he is thane. As early as the eleventh century, Fife was the very hub of the Scottish nation, with Dunfermline as the political centre and St Andrews as the ecclesiastical. The villages flourished as active trading ports with the Hanseatic League and the Low Countries. King James VI described Fife as "a beggar's mantle with a fringe of gold". It was the royal burghs along the coast, with their profitable activites of trading, fishing and smuggling, which were the "fringe of gold". It is thought that Fife Castle may have been built here by the Macduff thanes (or Earls) of Fife in the eleventh century, around the time of Macbeth.

Macbeth Character Map



Character Breakdown

Macbeth

An anglicised form of the Old Gaelic personal name MacBeatha translating as 'the son of (mac) life (beatha)' or 'a man of religion'.

Macbeth is a Scottish general and the thane of Glamis who is led to wicked thoughts by the prophecies of the three witches, especially after their prediction that he will be made thane of Cawdor is realised. Macbeth is a brave soldier and a powerful man, but he is not a virtuous one. He is easily tempted into murder to fulfill his ambitions to the throne, and once he commits his first crime and is crowned King of Scotland, he embarks on further atrocities with increasing ease. Ultimately, Macbeth lacks the skills necessary to rule without being a tyrant and also lacks the psychological strength to cope with his actions.

Lady Macbeth

Lady Macbeth is Macbeth's wife, a deeply ambitious woman who lusts for power and position. It is her who persuades her husband to kill Duncan and seize the throne. After the bloodshed begins, however, Lady Macbeth falls victim to guilt and madness to an even greater degree than her husband, eventually committing suicide. Lady Macbeth has a powerful and sexual influence over her husband. Their joint alienation from the world, caused by their partnership in crime, seems to strengthen the attachment that they feel to each another.

Duncan

This name is of Scottish and Gaelic origin meaning brown warrior, derived from Gaelic donn "brown" and cath "warrior". It was a royal name in early Scotland.

Duncan is the good King of Scotland whom Macbeth murders. Duncan is the model of a virtuous, benevolent, and farsighted ruler. His death symbolises the destruction of an order in Scotland that can be restored only when Duncan's line, in the person of Malcolm, once more occupies the throne.

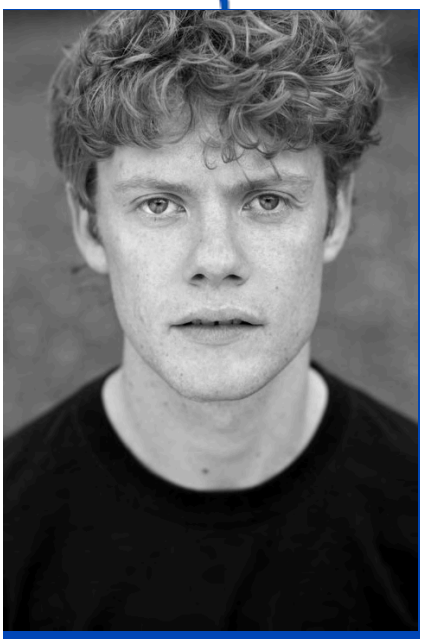
Macduff

The Gaelic word "dubh" meaning "black" is the origin of the name Duff which dates back further than recorded history.

Macduff is a Scottish nobleman who is hostile to Macbeth from the start. Alluded to by the second apparition as an agent of Macbeth's downfall, he loses his wife and children to Macbeth who orders their murders. He becomes a leader of the crusade to unseat Macbeth, fuelled by vengeance for the murder of his family.

Joel Gorf playing Macbeth

Sophie Brooke playing Lady Macbeth



Matthew Bloxham playing Banquo

Costa Chard playing Macduff

Lady Macduff

Lady Macduff is Macduff's wife. The scene in her castle provides our only glimpse of a domestic realm other than that of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. She and her home serve as contrasts to the childless Lady Macbeth and the hellish world of Inverness.

Malcolm

From Scottish Máel Coluim which means "disciple of Saint Columba". This was the name of four kings of Scotland starting in the 10th century, including Malcolm III, who became king after killing Macbeth, the usurper who had murdered his father.

Malcolm is the son of Duncan, whose restoration to the throne signals Scotland's return to order following Macbeth's reign of terror. Malcolm becomes a serious challenge to Macbeth with Macduff and the support of England, where he flees after his father's murder.

Donalbain

Duncan's son and Malcolm's younger brother. Flees to Ireland after the murder of their father.

Rosse

A variant on the Gaelic Scottish name Ross, meaning "headland, cape".

Rosse is a nobleman who fights Macbeth.

Banquo

Banquo is the brave, noble general whose children, according to the witches' prophecy, will inherit the Scottish throne. Like Macbeth, Banquo is ambitious, but he does not translate his thoughts into action. Banquo's character serves as a counterpoint to Macbeth, representing the path Macbeth chose not to take, a path in which ambition need not lead to betrayal and murder. Appropriately, then, it is Banquo's ghost and not Duncan's that haunts Macbeth. In addition to embodying Macbeth's guilt for killing Banquo, the ghost also reminds Macbeth that he did not emulate Banquo's reaction to the witches' prophecy.

Fleance

Fleance is Banquo's son, who survives Macbeth's attempt to murder him. At the end of the play, Fleance's whereabouts are unknown. Presumably he will come to rule Scotland, fulfilling the witches' prophecy that Banquo's sons will sit on the Scottish throne.

Angus

Pronounced ANG-guss. It is of Celtic origin, meaning "one choice". In Celtic mythology, Angus Og is a god of attractive traits such as humour and wisdom.

In the play, a nobleman who fights Macbeth.

The Three Witches

The word 'witch' derives from the Old English nouns wicca (m.) "sorcerer, wizard" and wicce (f.) "sorceress, witch".

The witches in Macbeth *are* three "black and midnight hags" who plot mischief against Macbeth using charms, spells, and prophecies. Their predictions prompt him to murder Duncan, to order the deaths of Banquo and his son, and to believe in his own immortality. The witches are servants of Hecate and in some ways they resemble the mythological Fates, who impersonally weave the threads of human destiny. We have taken this further in our production by allowing the witches to manipulate the action on stage.

Lenox

This name, with the variant spelling Lennox, is of Scottish territorial origin from the district near Dumbarton, now called Lennox but originally recorded as 'Leuenaichs' in 1174, and as 'Levanaux' the following year. The name derives from the Old Gaelic 'lemhan' meaning 'elm', and the locational suffix 'ach',ie. "of the elm(field)".

In the play, a nobleman of Scotland who fights Macbeth.

Hecate

Literally, 'the distant one'. Associated by the Greeks with the moon, Hecate had a beneficient influence over such activities as farming, but she was also a goddess of the dark hours - ghosts and witchcraft fascinated the distant one who dwelt 'on tombs', at places 'where two roads crossed', or 'near the blood of murdered persons'.

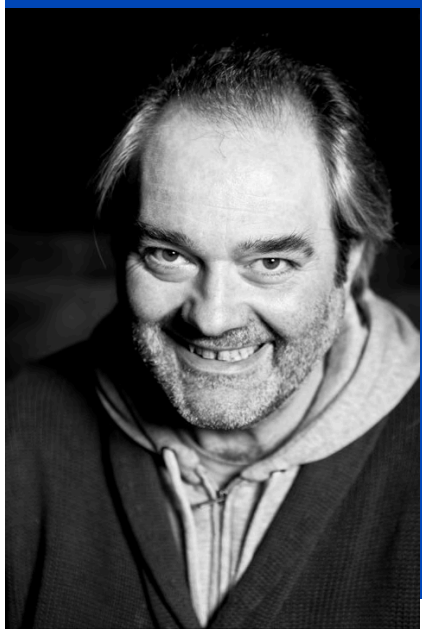
In *Macbeth*, she helps the three witches work their mischief on Macbeth. We first meet her when she belittles the Three Witches for helping an ungrateful Macbeth. She later commands them to tell Macbeth his future according to her will, when next the Three Witches and Macbeth meet.

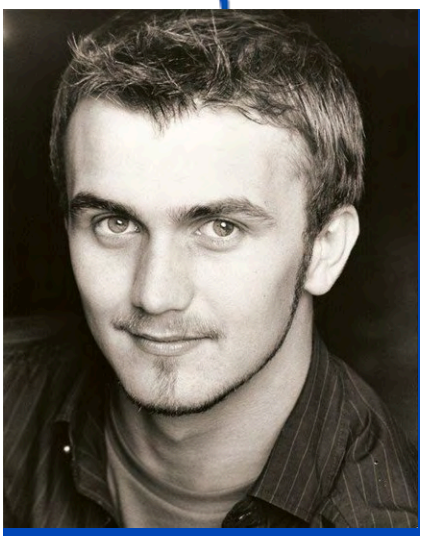
Gentlewoman

A woman of gentle or noble birth or superior social position. Gentlewomen could also be attendants to other women of superior rank. Lady Macbeth's gentlewoman seeks the aid of a doctor when Lady Macbeth begins madly sleepwalking.

Emma Carter playing Lady Macduff

Zachary Holton playing Duncan





Richard Hay playing Malcolm

The Witches

Siward

Literal meaning is 'guard of the coast'. Siward was an important earl of eleventh-century northern England. Siward was probably of Scandinavian origin, perhaps a member of Earl Ulf's kin, and emerged as a powerful regional strongman in England during the reign of Cnut (Canute the Great, 1016-1035). Cnut was a Scandinavian ruler who conquered England in the 1010s, and Siward was one of the many Scandinavians who came to England in the aftermath of that conquest. Siward subsequently rose to become sub-ruler of most of northern England. From 1033 at the latest, Siward was in control of southern Norhumbria, present-day Yorkshire, governing as earl on Cnut's behalf.

Leader of the English army, some ten thousand strong which defeats Macbeth at the end of the play. He loses his son, Young Siward to Macbeth.

Seyton

A lieutenant of Macbeth's.

The Old Man

Though a peripheral character, he is an important one for the play's theme of order. He tells us about the storms in Scotland during Macbeth's reign, representing nature being disrupted by King Duncan's untimely death, underscoring the notion that nature is in order when a land is ruled by its rightful King. He is an example of royalist propaganda.

Activity

Choose a character from *Macbeth* and write a Character Study for them. This can take the form of either a list of facts and questions about the character that works chronologically throughout the play i.e In Act 1, Scene 1, The witches meet on the heath, or can be made up of three separate lists: what the character itself says, what others say about the character and what others say to the character.

Using the information you have built up from your knowledge of the character throughout the play, write two diary entries for them. One for before the play starts and one for when it finishes (it doesn't matter if they are dead at the end!). If you like, these diary entries can form the basis of improvisations of events that happen outside the play.

Act Breakdown

Act I: This Act opens with the three Weird Sisters setting up the entire theme of the play: *Fair is foul and foul is fair.* A war is taking place between Scotland and Norway. Scotland is victorious due to the valiant efforts of Macbeth. The traitorous Thane of Cawdor is captured and executed and King Duncan rewards Macbeth with the title of Thane of Cawdor as a demonstration of his gratitude. Action then shifts to the battleground where the three Weird Sisters confront Macbeth and Banquo, telling Macbeth that he will become Thane of Cawdor and eventually king. Macbeth soon learns of his new title, fulfilling the first part of the prophecy, and sends word to his wife. King Duncan plans on staying the night at Macbeth's home. Lady Macbeth receives the news and begins to plot the death of King Duncan so her husband will be king and she will be queen. Lady Macbeth manipulates Macbeth into following her plans, and he reluctantly agrees to murder Duncan. By the end of Act I, Macbeth is seemingly determined to follow through with the plan.

Act II: Macbeth rediscovers his doubts. Eventually, he talks himself into following through with the murder, under pressure from Lady Macbeth. Macbeth immediately panics in the aftermath however, so Lady Macbeth finishes the rest of the plan by wiping blood on the drunk guards. The next morning, Macduff and Lennox arrive at Macbeth's castle, and Macduff discovers the dead body of King Duncan. All are shocked and Macbeth plays his role to perfection. The guards are immediately suspected and Macbeth kills them "in a fit of sorrow and rage." Malcolm and Donalbain, the King's sons, flee the castle for fear of being blamed for the murder of their father. The king is then buried.

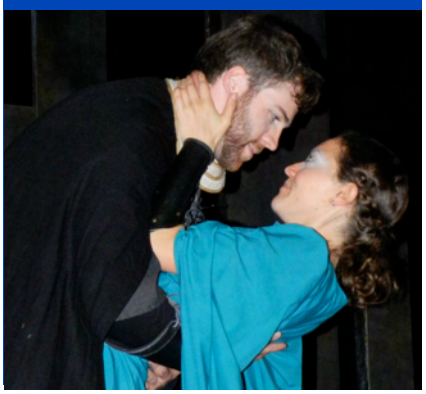
Act III: Banquo begins to suspect Macbeth for the murder of King Duncan and Macbeth in turn feels that Banquo will discover that it was he that killed the King. To prevent this, Macbeth dispatches some men to murder Banquo and his son, Fleance. Banquo is murdered, but Fleance escapes. Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Lenox, Ross, and other lords attend a banquet. The ghost of Banquo presents itself to Macbeth. Macbeth begins to rant and rave, making the other guests uneasy. Lady Macbeth tries to cover up the situation by saying Macbeth is prone to fits. By the end of this Act, we learn that Macduff has not attended the banquet because he has gone to England, looking for aid because he is suspicious of Macbeth.

Act IV: Macbeth confronts the three Weird Sisters and they present him with more prophesies. Their soothsaying leads Macbeth to believe that he cannot be killed by any man, giving him a false sense of security. Just to be sure, he sends murderers to the castle of Macduff (who is in England) to kill his wife, Lady Macduff, and their children. Meanwhile, Macduff is in England begging Malcolm to return to Scotland and seize the throne from Macbeth who has become a tyrant. Malcolm tests Macduff's loyalty to Scotland and himself, and after being satisfied with Macduff's responses, he agrees to wage war against Macbeth. Malcolm's uncle will also aid in the attack.

Act V: Lady Macbeth's guilt about the murders has driven her mad. She sleepwalks nightly, perpetually attempting to get out the "damn'd spot", the blood that she believes stains her hands. In front of the doctor, she confesses to killing Duncan, and says, "who would have thought the old man to have so much blood in him". It is later revealed that Lady Macbeth has killed herself. Macbeth's treachery comes back to haunt him as the Scottish Lords debate his state of mind and conclude that they will help Malcolm and Macduff fight against Macbeth. Macbeth still believes that the prophecy ensures that he cannot be killed by any man born of woman. Macbeth soon confronts Macduff and learns that Macduff was ripped from his mother's womb and not born naturally. Because he was not technically born of woman, he is able to overcome Macbeth, just as Macbeth had conquered the other Thane of Cawdor. Malcolm then becomes the rightful King of Scotland.

Photos from Icarus' production of *Macbeth*

Photos from Icarus' production of *Macbeth*



Themes

Ambition

Macbeth is a play where ambition overtakes morality. Macbeth's ambition, awakened by Lady Macbeth's own desire for power, puts into motion the action of the play. Lust for power motivates Macbeth. However, he discovers power without security is not worth having: "To be thus is nothing, but to be safely thus."

Lady Macbeth, too, finds she cannot enjoy her new position "without content". Macbeth realises that although he could commit crimes with "barefaced power" he still has to consider his public image. When that is damaged beyond repair, he abuses his power by becoming a tyrant.

One of Shakespeare's reasons for writing the play was to illustrate the terrible consequences of murdering a king. The play was first performed in 1605, the year of the Gunpowder Plot, and this theme would have been very politically acceptable to an audience composed of members of James I's court.

Order and Disorder

Only a century earlier, England had suffered under the massive disorder of the Wars of the Roses. Civil disorder was now seen as the ultimate disaster, and also as an ungodly state. In *Macbeth*, Shakespeare reminds his audience of this, as further warning against treachery.

The play begins with disorder as a battle is raging between the Scots and the Norwegians, assisted by some traitors. The "thunder and lightning" of the stage direction symbolises this "hurly-burly", as the witches flippantly refer to the fighting. Order is restored by the "captains, Macbeth and Banquo" who are victorious. At this stage, Macbeth could be seen as a force for good. However, his bloodthirsty brutality in the battle contradicts this impression: in killing Macdonald, he "unseamed him from the nave to the chaps and fixed his head upon our battlements." The order restored is soon seen to be an illusion.

Macbeth's opening words "So foul and fair a day I have not seen" echo the chant of the witches and link Macbeth with the forces of disorder, as does his eagerness to communicate with them, "Tell me more!" Disorder is described in the reign of terror conducted by Macbeth, culminating in the second great battle between Macbeth and the forces of Macduff and Malcolm. With Malcolm's victory, order is truly restored as he is the rightful king.

Revenge

The revenge tragedy genre of English literature generally refers to a body of dramatic works written from the mid-1580s to the early 1640s, comprising the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. Typically, these works feature such themes and devices as a wronged revenge-seeker, ghosts, madness, delay, sinister intrigue, a play-within-the-play, torture, multiple murders, and the realistic depiction of bloody violence onstage, all of which match the description of *Hamlet*.

Nearly all of the major playwrights of the time contributed to this class of drama, including Thomas Kyd, William Shakespeare, John Marston, George Chapman, Thomas Middleton, John Webster and John Ford. Kyd is often credited with initiating the dramatic archetype in *The Spanish Tragedy* (1585-90?) and the so-called *Ur-Hamlet*, Shakespeare is credited with bringing the genre to its artistic maturity with *Hamlet* (c.1600-01), which was quite likely based upon Kyd's work.

It was common in revenge tragedies to delay the act of revenge to the last act, as in *Macbeth*, where the protagonist is finally overwhelmed by the attack of forces led by Macduff and Malcolm, seeking revenge for Duncan's death and the restoration of order.

Production Design

The Director, who has the overall vision of how the show should look and feel will combine with the designers – set, costume, sound and lights - to create the world in which the play is set.

What an actor wears on stage can also affect how they move – when you're used to wearing jeans and a t-shirt every day, suddenly finding yourself in tights and a sword can be a bit of a shock to the system!

The Royal Shakespeare Company often needs to teach male actors how to bow and bend in a doublet and hose, so they don't tear them on stage. Items like shoes, corsets and swords have to be introduced into the rehearsal process as early as possible so the actors can get used to them and make sure they're comfortable and won't hurt themselves, or other people.

Costume Design

It is very important that the set and costume designers work together to create the overall look of the show. During production, there will be regular production meetings so that the creative team can meet with the director and everyone can ensure they are working to one strong vision.

Our costume designer, Lauren Pratt, also had a number of requirements demanded of her costumes designs:

- The costumes need to differentiate when multi-roling actors are playing different parts.
- They need to work with the set to enhance the abstract theme of the supernatural that the director wanted to work with.
- They need to fit in with the time period that the production is set in.
- The costumes need to be durable as they will need to last the length of a nine month tour.
- The costumes need to be easy to clean as a large amount of stage blood is used in the play!

See her initial sketches of the costumes for some of the characters:

Above and below: Lady Macbeth Costume Sketches
Left: Macduff Costume Sketch

These are some initial drawings Mayou made of how she envisaged the set working.

Above left: Macbeth Costume Sketch, Above right: Banquo Costume Sketch

Activity

How much has changed between the sketches and the costumes you have seen on stage? Compare the two and consider why the costume designer, in consultation with the director and actors, might have made changes.

What do you notice about the colour palette used? Why might the costume designer have used these colours?

Design a costume for a character in *Macbeth*. Try to think carefully about the appropriate costume for the character and the era, how it might fit in with an overall design concept and also about practical requirements.

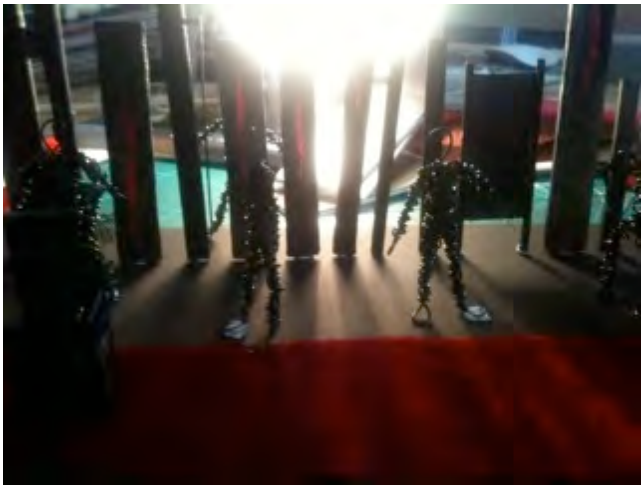
Set Design

Our set designer, Mayou Trik, had to design the set for our production of *Macbeth* to a set of requirements:

- The set needed to be able to show a number of locations.
- It needed to reflect the abstract quality of Icarus' *Macbeth*, rather than be a naturalistic set.
- It needed to highlight the supernatural element of the play, which the director Max sought to enhance.
- It had to be an easily tourable set, suitable for many different sized venues and for being dismantled and stored in a van by the company.

See the sidebar for some images of the set, from initial concept and ideas to the finished build.

Below are images from the making of the model box. The model box is an important way for set designer to communicate with the director and other creatives about how the set will look before it is physically built. This allows the actors too to have a strong picture of what they will be working with.



Activity

Look carefully at the designs above. Do you notice any reccurring themes, colours or motifs in the design? What do you think these are trying to signify?

The set is not naturalistic – does this give us a certain impression of the play?

How would you design a set for *Macbeth*? Using the same setting as our production, research and design a model box for your own production of *Macbeth*. Think carefully about the practical requirements of the set as well as the artistic value.

Shakespearean Language

Shakespearean Verse

Meter - from the Greek word for "measure" - the regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a poem.

Scansion - the process of marking the stressed and unstressed syllables in verse. On a very fundamental level the purpose of writing speech in verse in the first place is not to be "poetic" but to give the language a pulse that makes it easier to speak and hear. The actual sound of lines written in verse can be comprehended more easily by a listener than prose, because in addition to the tones and pitches, rhythmic clues help convey the message. Scansion, despite the imposing sound of the word itself, is just the simple practice of checking the verse to be sure you understand its rhythm.

Ictus and x - a system of notation to identify the stressed and unstressed syllables in meter. Ictus refers to what is commonly known as a slash /, and marks the stressed syllables. The x marks the unstressed syllables. Therefore the notation **x /** would sound like da-DUM.

Foot - a metrical unit composed of stressed and unstressed syllables. The most common form in Shakespeare is the iambic foot (or just iamb), which is represented by **x /**, that is, an unaccented syllable followed by an accented one. Frost's line, "Whose woods these are I think I know" contains four iambs, and is thus an iambic foot. Below are the different forms of stress possible in a foot.

iamb: **x /** . . . . . (adjectival form = iambic)
trochee: / x . . . . . (adjectival form = trochaic)
pyrrhic: **x x** . . . . . (adjectival form = pyrrhic)
spondee: **/ /** . . . . . (adjectival form = spondaic)

Iambic foot - The basic unit of iambic meter is called a foot and consists of a soft stress followed by a sharp one: da-DUM. A good example of an everyday word that acts as an iambic foot is toDAY.

Iambic pentameter - Shakespeare wrote most of his poetry in iambic pentameter, with five units of iambic beat to a line: "But SOFT, what LIGHT through YONder WINdow BREAKS", which follows the rhythm daDUM daDUM daDUM daDUM daDUM. This releases the physical pace and momentum of the verse and illuminates the meaning through the stress. Shakespeare used iambic pentameter as a framework and sometimes added emphasis by putting an important word in an offbeat position.

Shakespearean verse should not be considered archaic or off-putting. Shakespeare's use of iambic pentameter actually is very close to our natural rhythms of speech and can greatly help actors with how lines should be said.

"If you cannot understand my argument, and declare *"It's Greek to me"*, you are quoting Shakespeare.

If you claim to be *more sinned against than sinning*, you are quoting Shakespeare.

If you act *more in sorrow than in anger*, if your *wish is farther to the thought*, if your lost property has *vanished into thin air*, you are quoting Shakespeare.

Blank verse - unrhymed iambic pentameter in poetry. Although blank verse has no rhyme, it does have a definite rhythm created by the careful structuring of iambic feet.

Iambic tetrameter - A number of the songs in Shakespeare's plays are written in iambic tetrameter, with four units of iambic beat to a line (as opposed to five in iambic pentameter): "You SPOTted SNAKES with DOUble TONGUE", which follows the rhythm daDUM daDUM daDUM daDUM.

Rhyming verse - when the last word of each line of verse rhymes, such as, "But in a sieve I'll thither sail, And, like a rat without a tail".

Feminine ending - in meter (poetry), a line of verse that ends with an unstressed syllable.

Elision - the joining together of two syllables in a word by omitting a vowel sound.

Prosody - the study of poetry and verse form, including meter, rhyme and structure.

Prose - the most common form of natural speech and writing. Although sometimes rhythmic in sound, is unlike verse in that it does not have a regular metrical structure or pattern of rhyming line. Different to blank verse, it often induces the speaker to speak more slowly and is often used for lower class characters or when a character breaks down emotionally.

Stanza - grouping of two or more lines of a poem which generally has a set meter and rhyme.

Rhyme Scheme - the sequence in which the rhyme occurs. The first end sound is represented as the letter 'A', the second is 'B', etc. Shakespeare's Sonnet 29 is a good example, following the rhyme scheme of ABAB:

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes (A)
I all alone beweep my outcast state, (B)
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries, (A)
And look upon myself, and curse my fate (B)

Rhyming couplets - two rhyming lines of verses with similar or identical meter.

I will drain him dry as hay.
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his pent-house lid.
He shall live a man forbid.

Trochee - The opposite of iambic meter, trochaic meter has a pattern of **/ x** which would sound like DA-dum: "DOU-ble, DOU-ble, TOIL and TROU-ble/FI-re BURN and CAUL-

If you have ever refused *to budge an inch* **or suffered from** *green-eyed jealousy*, **if you have** *played fast and loose*, **if you have been** *tongue-tied*, *a tower of strength*, *hoodwinked* **or** *in a pickle*, **if you have** *knitted your brows*, *made a virtue of necessity*, **insisted on** *fair play*, *slept not one wink*, *stood on ceremony*, *danced attendance* **(on your** *lord and master***),** *laughed yourself into stitches*, **had** *short shrift*, *cold comfort* **or** *too much of a good thing*, **if you have** *seen better days* **or lived** *in a fool's paradise* **- why, be that as it may,** *the more fool you*, **for it is a** *foregone conclusion* **that you are (***as good luck would have it***) quoting Shakespeare.**

If you think it is *early days* **and clear out** *bag and baggage*, **if you think** *it is high time* **and that** *that is the long and short of it*, **if you believe that** *the game is up* **and that truth** *will out* **even if it involves your** *own flesh and blood*, **if you** *lie low* **till** *the crack of doom* **because you suspect** *foul play*, **if you have** *teeth set on edge* **(***at one fell swoop***)** *without rhyme or reason*, **then -** *to give the devil his due* **- if the** *truth were known* **(for surely you have a** *tongue in your head***) you are quoting Shakespeare.**

Even if you bid me *good riddance* **and** *send me packing*, **if you wish I was** *dead as a door-nail*, **if you think I am an** *eyesore*, **a** *laughing stock*, **the** *devil incarnate*, *a stony-hearted villain*, *bloody-minded* **or a** *blinking idiot*, **then -** *by Jove! O Lord! Tut tut! For goodness' sake! What the dickens! But me no buts! - it is all one to me*, **for you are quoting Shakespeare."**

- Bernard Levin

dron BUB-ble." A trochee is the basic unit of trochaic meter, and is the opposite of an iamb.

Dactyl - a metrical foot consisting of one stressed syllable followed by two unstressed ones, ie. RO-me-o

Anapaest - a metrical foot consisting of two unstressed syllables followed by a stressed one, ie. Twas the NIGHT before CHRISTmas and ALL through the HOUSE.

Rhetorical (Poetic) Devices

Alliteration - the repetition of the same sound or letters at the beginning of words or in stressed syllables. Modern alliteration is predominantly consonantal, but certain literary traditions, such as Old English verse, also alliterate using vowel sounds.

ie. "Fair is foul, and foul is fair"

Ambiguity - when a word or phrase could have more than one meaning, and a sense of uncertainty as to the meaning emerges. Ambiguity is an effective method of creating tension, uncertainty and unease. When the witches prophesise to Banquo that he is "Not so happy, yet much happier", their meaning is uncertain, and therefore the phrase is ambiguous.

Antithesis - a contrast or opposition of ideas; the exact opposite of something.

Assonance - deliberate repetition of identical or similar vowel sounds.

ie. "Weary sev'n nights nine times nine"
The repetition of the 'I' sound is evident here.

Hyperbole - exaggeration for dramatic effect. Can appear in prose, verse, or diologue.

Metaphor - a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable, and the word symbolises the object. Often metaphors are used as comparisons, but unlike a simile, a metaphor would not use like or as. For example, to be 'green with envy' is a metaphor, but to be 'as pure as snow' is a simile.

ie. "Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing."

Oxymoron - an expression that combines words with opposite or unlike meanings to create a striking effect.
ie. "When the battle's lost and won"

Pathetic Fallacy - When a character's state of mind is projected onto their surroundings, or their surroundings encapsulate the atmosphere or mood of the play, informing the action of the text. For example, a storm may be indicative of bad fortune or a tempestuous mood.
ie. "So foul and fair a day I have not seen."

Peripeteia - a sudden and unexpected reversal of fortune in drama, usually tragedy.

Simile - figure of speech in which two essentially unlike things are compared, often in a phrase using 'like' or 'as', such as, "How like the winter hath my absence been" or "So are you to my thoughts as food to life".
ie. "Show'd like a rebel's whore"

Onomatopoeia - when a word's verbal sound resembles the word it is describing, such as 'sizzle' and 'bang'.
ie. "And munch'd, and munch'd, and munch'd"

Paradox - A phrase that seems oppositional or contradictory. a statement that seems to contradict itself but that may be true.
ie. "Such welcome and unwelcome things at once"

Personification - the attribution of human characteristics to animals, plants, objects, natural forces, symbols or abstract ideas.
ie. "Look like th'innocent flower/ But be the serpent under't."
Here Lady Macbeth tells her husband to present himself as innocent (flowers are given the quality of being innocent and benign) but really be like a serpent (an animal with dangerous, sly and poisonous connotations).

Metonymy - a word or phrase associated with somebody of something that can be substituted to represent that person or thing.
ie. "Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!"
Here Lady Macbeth refers to her husband not by name but by the regions of which he is thane, and Glamis and Cawdor come to represent Macbeth himself.

Activity

Select a piece of prose and a piece of verse in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Read each aloud, in partners if possible. What do you notice that the language directs you to do with each? Does one make you speak naturally slower or faster? How does it feel speaking each?

Are there particular characters or events that Shakespeare marks with verse or prose? Why do you think this might be? If verse changes in to prose what might it indicate about a character's mind?

Now go back over the same piece of text and pick out all the poetic devices i.e. imagery, alliteration, enjambement. As you pick them out, see if you can discover the direction Shakespeare is giving through them – re-read the sections and consider why he uses each device when he does. Does it make the actor feel something in particular? Does it drive the rhythm in a particular way?

Notable Productions of *Macbeth*

Above: Welles' "Voodoo Macbeth"

Over the years, directors have approached *Macbeth* in radical and exciting new ways. Here are a few noteworthy examples.

Below: Nunn's film version

1936 – 'Voodoo Macbeth', Orson Welles, Lafayette Theatre, NYC

Twenty year-old Orson Welles, having made a name for himself in radio, put on what is commonly known as the 'Voodoo Macbeth', which incorporated an all-black cast and Voodoo-practicing witches. He set the play on a fictional nineteenth-century island modeled on Haiti, and although the text was performed straight, Welles emphasized his new setting through costumes and the single set of a castle in the jungle. Welles used the Voodoo theme because he believed that a contemporary audience would have found Voodoo more accessible than medieval witchcraft. In a remarkable decision, where many directors cut the character of Hecate, Welles turned her into a central character. He plucked the line "The charm's wound up" out of Act I and gave it to Hecate to say as the final line of the play. Groundbreaking in both its concept and enabling of African-American actors to prove they could handle classical drama, Welles' production had people lining up for ten blocks in each direction of the theatre.

1978 – Trevor Nunn, on film

Trevor Nunn's film version of the play is commonly hailed as the only *Macbeth* worth seeing on film. With Ian McKellan and Judi Dench in the starring roles, Nunn took a very basic approach with a bare set filled with unending fog. Nunn rejected superfluous ornamentation in favour of emphasising language, so the production was entirely carried by its exceptionally strong actors. When a scene change occurred, the adjustment of the lighting was the only indicator. Nunn had created this version of *Macbeth* for the theatre two years earlier, and this film version was very closely based on the original stage production. As the stage version had been performed in the round, Nunn replicated the stage and had the actors performing almost as though they were still onstage. Nunn used the interplay of light and dark to illuminate the actors' faces as they emerged from the shadows enveloping the stage. Although his concept was simple, it was incredibly effective.

2005 – "ShakespeaRe-Told", Mark Brozel, on film

ShakespeRe-Told was a series of films created as a BBC miniseries. The BBC took four of Shakespeare's plays and set them in modern conditions, and *Macbeth* was one of these plays. This version starred James McAvoy as Joe Macbeth and Keeley Hawes as his wife Ella (a modern Lady Macbeth), a couple who work at a restaurant where Macbeth is a chef and Ella a maitre d'. The upscale Glaswegian restaurant is owned by Duncan, who takes all the credit for the restaurant's success when it is Macbeth who deserves the praise. Instead of witches, three binmen predict Macbeth's future. What is perhaps most notable about this particular version is that the writers provided a source for Ella's grief in the form of a child that the couple lost. Other interesting touches include Macbeth perpetually drinking milk by the pint, making him literally "full o' th' milk of human kindness".

Above: ShakespeaRe-Told

2005 – Damian Cruden, Theatre Royal, York

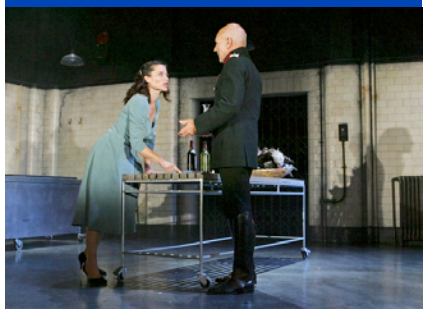
Set in feudal Japan, Cruden's *Macbeth* was a kabuki-style production in which protagonists wielded samurai swords and fought in slow motion. The performance was highly balletic, and Banquo's death scene was portrayed in the form of scarlet ribbons emerging from his body, floating at the hands of ostensibly invisible forces. This Oriental *Macbeth* featured a stage covered entirely in black sand, sliding screens, and witches played by puppets. Spanning less than two hours without an interval, some critics believed "'twere well It were done quickly", but others praised its originality.

Above: Cruden's Oriental *Macbeth*

2007 – Rupert Goold, Gielgud Theatre, London

Rupert Goold's highly acclaimed production of *Macbeth* starred Patrick Stewart and Kate Fleetwood. It was set in a "hellish subterranean kitchen", and its morgue-like set doubled as a military hospital. An interesting feature of the set was its eerie industrial lift through which the actors made their entrances and exits. The production was full of undertones of Stalinist terror, with male characters dressed in Soviet-style military uniforms and Lady Macbeth in a ushanka-like fur hat. The witches transformed from nurses in a field hospital into staff in the Macbeth household, and at one point they even began to rap their spells. The pivotal banquet scene, in which Macbeth has visions of Banquo's bloody body, framed the interval in a unique way. Before the interval, Banquo appeared in physical form, and then halfway through the scene, the interval occurred. When the curtain rose again, the rest of the scene was played out, with Banquo only in Macbeth's imagination. Goold's *Macbeth* resembled a gothic horror film, haunted with sinister music, and many critics extolled it as the perfect production of *Macbeth*.

Below: Goold's 'Hell's Kitchen'



Above: McAnuff's Post-Colonial African *Macbeth*

Below: Bailey's black sheet concept

2009 – Des McAnuff, Stratford Shakespeare Festival, Canada

Celebrated Broadway musical director Des McAnuff's *Macbeth* was full of theatricality. Starring Colm Feore and Yanna Macintosh, the production opened with machine-gun fire, and at one point a jeep even crashed onstage. McAnuff's approach was to set the play in what he called "mythic mid-20th-century Africa". The witches were a trio of village women and Macduff's family was violently slaughtered with machetes. McAnuff gave the production a contemporary, political twist, where Macbeth was reminiscent of Idi Amin, even more significant when considering that Amin once declared himself "the uncrowned King of Scotland". The set made use of functional metal office furniture and a number of static-filled television screens, and at the end of the play Malcolm even held a press conference. The usually colour-blind Stratford made some very colour-specific casting choices, as most of the characters in power were played by white men, and their subjects were played by black men, further encapsulating the production's political atmosphere.

2010 – Lucy Bailey, Shakespeare's Globe, London

Known for the abundance of gore in her Shakespearean productions, and her propensity to choose Shakespeare's bloodiest plays such as *Titus Andronicus* and *Julius Caesar*, Lucy Bailey did not disappoint with an incredibly grisly *Macbeth* set in medieval Scotland as hell on earth. The standing audience at the Globe was covered in a black sheet, with only their heads emerging through it. Before the performance began, the witches ran around under the sheet, cackling and frightening the audience to set the bone-chilling tone of the production. The standing audience members were also taunted with the porter's urine and had dying soldiers rip through the black sheet around them, crying for help during battle scenes. Bailey's inspiration for her production was a 'modern slasher film'. In Bailey's version, Banquo did appear in the banquet scene, covered in blood, and when Macbeth asked, "Is this a dagger which I see before me", there actually was a dagger before him. With unsettling didgeridoo and bagpipe music, the audience was on edge the entire time, completely unable to relax, and was therefore fully complicit in the action of the play.

2011 – Michael Boyd, Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford-upon-Avon

Michael Boyd was given the immense task of christening the newly renovated Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon, and his production of *Macbeth* has not disappointed many. The beautifully designed set takes the form of a ruined Gothic church, the stage cluttered with rubble and broken stained glass. Set roughly in the period of the Reformation, the imagery of the destroyed church evokes ideas of iconoclasm. Similarly to Goold's production, the banquet scene is repeated, once with Banquo crashing in and, in a new take on the scene, exacting his revenge on Macbeth, and once without Banquo at all. The most unorthodox aspect of the production is the use of the witches who take the forms of three ghostly children. Much of the witches' dialogue is cut from this version, and the children make their entrance dramatically suspended from the ceiling as though they had been hanged. The children later reappear in a harrowing murder scene as Macduff's children. With heavy religious undertones, Duncan is presented in a saintly manner, which is contrasted by Macbeth's descent into sin. Boyd's production places an emphasis on psychosis, examining the possibility that the witches may be entirely imagined by Macbeth. This significantly alters the crux of the plot, because, as the Birmingham Post wrote, "The balance between fate and free which lies at the centre of Shakespeare's play is replaced by simple psychosis."

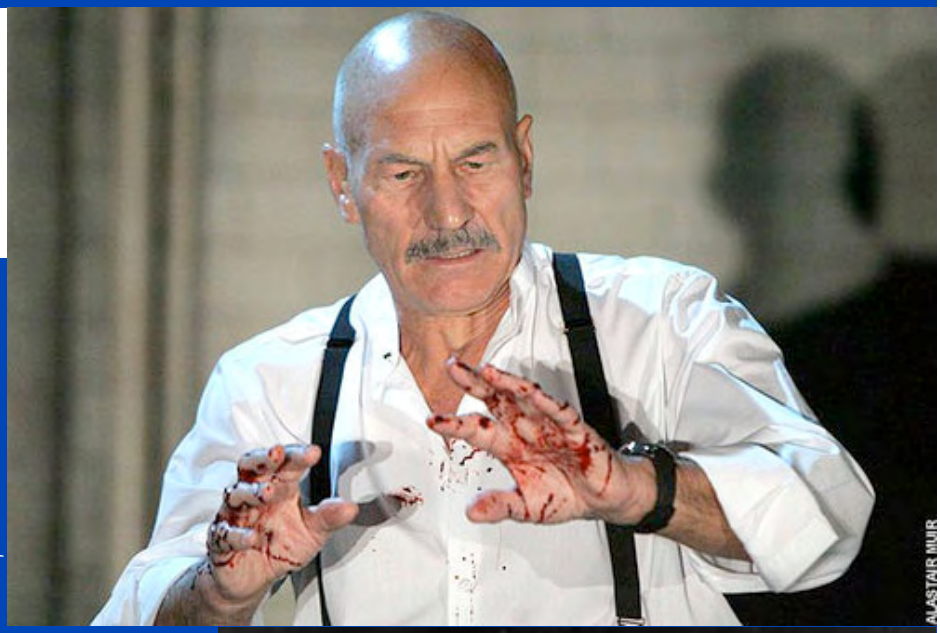
Above: Boyd's RSC *Macbeth*

Below: Punchdrunk's 'Sleep No More'

2011 – 'Sleep No More', Punchdrunk, The McKittrick Hotel, NYC

A huge phenomenon in New York at the moment, British company Punchdrunk's site-specific piece 'Sleep No More', based on the story of Macbeth, takes place in three abandoned warehouses in Harlem. The warehouses have been converted into a 1930's style pleasure palace called the McKittrick Hotel. The 'audience' is allowed into the building in fifteen-minute intervals, and they are set free to wander the space and explore the story. Different rooms hold different moments of the story, and characters move around the building to follow out their role. The audience is forbidden to speak and must wear white Venetian masks. They are encouraged to explore the hotel, which is comprised of over a hundred rooms, to read letters, open trunks, and touch any elements of the set and props that take their fancy. Characters can be found all over the building fighting, committing murders, and washing blood off their hands. The crepuscular lighting makes for an eerie experience during which the audience is entirely entrenched in the storyline themselves. Critics insist that it is easy to miss out on the highlights of the event if you don't follow a particular character, and say that knowledge of the play is helpful to identify the important people to follow. Members of the cast say very little, and the experience is almost more of an art installation than theatre, but the response has been so overwhelming that the recently extended run is entirely sold out.

Notable Actors Who Have Played Macbeth

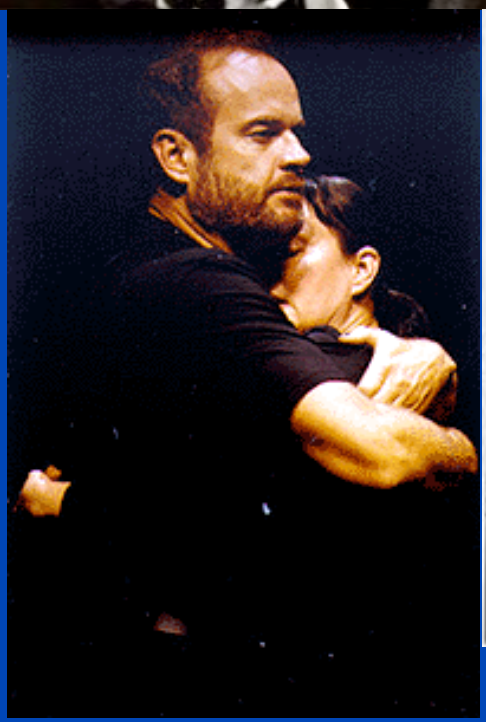


Clockwise from right: Patrick Stewart, Michael Redgrave, John Gielgud

Top: Laurence Olivier

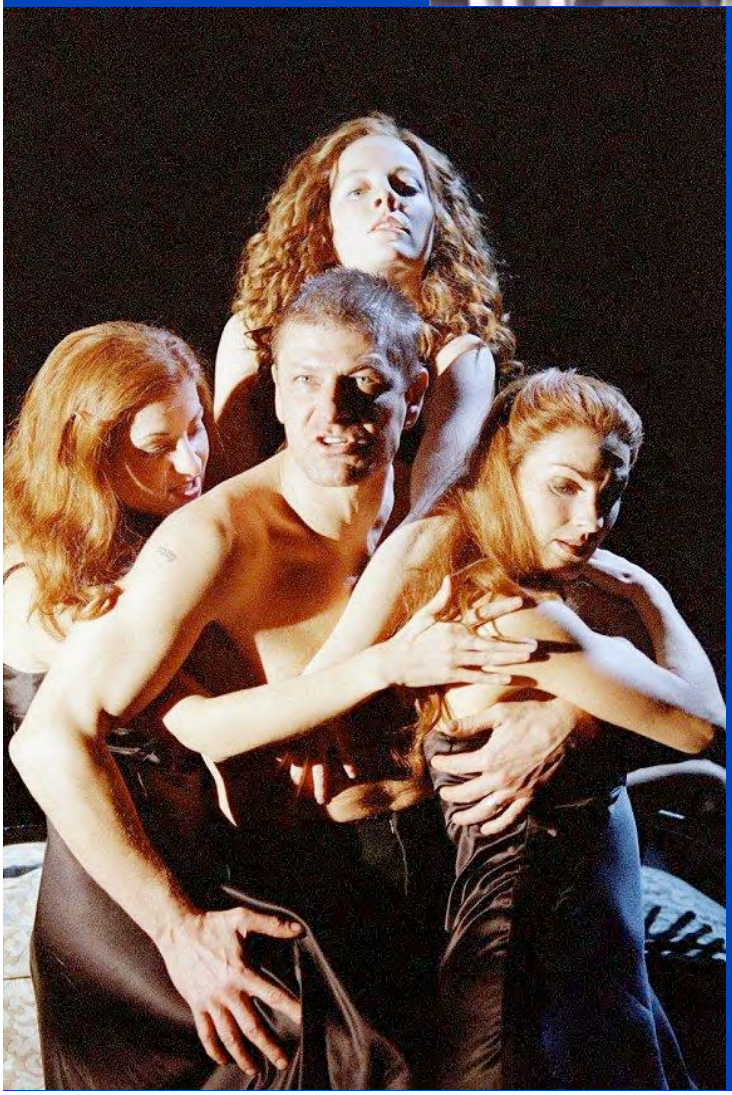
Right: Ian McKellan

Bottom Right: Christopher Plummer



Bottom Left: Kelsey Grammer

Right: Orson Welles



Left: Sean Bean

Photo Credits

- Voodoo *Macbeth*: http://debbipete.tumblr.com/post/172344966/mogadonia-thepublics-voodoo-macbeth-orson
- Nunn Film: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/picturegalleries/celebritynews/8206696/Dame-Judi-Dench-her-theatre-career-in-pictures-as-she-is-voted-greatest-stage-actor.html?image=7
- *Shakespea-Re Told*: http://highlandersyvampiros.blogspot.com/2010/08/shakespeare-told-macbeth-2005.html
- Oriental *Macbeth*: http://www.ald.org.uk/MalcolmRippeth/photo.php?id=624
- Goold's *Macbeth*: http://www.zimbio.com/pictures/bqGgE-JCqxp/Stewart+portrays+Macbeth/PfshDACKvXb/Kate+Fleetwood
- Stratford Festival *Macbeth*: http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/15-1/goosstral.htm
- Bailey's *Macbeth*: http://betweentheacts.wordpress.com/2010/06/01/macbeth-shakespeares-globe-8th-may-2010/
- RSC: http://www.theatrevoice.com/3703/jonathan-slinger-talks-about-his-rsc-macbeth/
- Sleep No More: http://theater.nytimes.com/2011/04/14/theater/reviews/sleep-no-more-is-a-macbeth-in-a-hotel-review.html
- Patrick Stewart: http://uncyclopedia.wikia.com/wiki/File:Patrick-stewart-macbeth.jpg
- Michael Redgrave: http://www.art.co.uk/products/p14021056-sa-i2847998/posters.htm
- John Gielgud: http://www.artflakes.com/en/products/john-gielgud-as-macbeth
- Laurence Olivier: http://www.artflakes.com/en/products/laurence-olivier-as-macbeth
- Ian McKellan: http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/tvandradioblog/2007/jul/09/theweekendstvthesouthbank
- Kelsey Grammer: http://www.theatermania.com/new-york/reviews/06-2000/macbeth-and-macbeth-and-macbeth_855.html
- Christopher Plummer: http://www.hotreview.org/articles/macbethstomorrow.htm
- Orson Welles: http://thisrecording.tumblr.com/post/64910180/orson-welles-as-macbeth
- Sean Bean: http://www.compleatseanbean.com/macbeth-4.html
- Shakespeare's Birthplace: http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Shakespeare's_house.JPG
- Shakespeare Photo: http://www.shakespearefound.org.uk/
- Anne Hathaway Photo: http://www.pbs.org/shakespeare/players/player23.html
- Stanislavski: http://www.kryingsky.com/Stan/Biography/bot.html
- Shakespeare's Globe: http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/theatre/on-stage, http://www.europe.org.uk/index/-/id/432/
- Glamis Castle: http://www.worldtour-of-scotland.com/tour/15aug-dundee.shtml
- Historical Macbeth: http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/macbeth.shtml
- Stratford Statue: http://www.flickr.com/photos/thisgaudygildedstage/sets/72157606434985658/
- Shakespeare Photo: http://shakespeare.mit.edu/
- Glamis Interior: http://www.greatscotland.co.uk/members/glamis_castle/
- Duncan Image: http://www.themortonreport.com/galleries/celebrity/british-monarchy-through-the-ages-the-good-bad-and-the-hemophiliacs/#&panel1-5

Education Workshops 2011-2012

We provide workshops alongside our production of *Macbeth*, touring Autumn 2011 - Spring 2012.

For information on group ticket discounts for students, visit www.icarustheatre.co.uk/shows/macbeth.html and contact the theatre near you for more information.

Building a Shakespearean Character: 'Vaulting ambition'
Through practically exploring the Stanislavskian approach to creating characters in *Macbeth*, students will bring the characters to life themselves, culminating in a greater understanding of how to move Shakespeare from page to stage.

Physicality, Etiquette and Gender: 'I dare do all that may become a man'
In this workshop we will introduce students to elements of Shakespearean etiquette, physicality and gender. We will directly relate this to the text, enabling them to better understand the context in which Shakespeare wrote.

Shakespearean Verse in Performance: 'Trippingly on the Tongue'
This workshop gives students an opportunity to understand verse in the best possible way - by speaking it. Taking a scene from *Macbeth*, we provide an introduction into how actors access the meaning of Shakespearean verse.

Shakespeare the Icarus Way: 'Double, Double, Toil and Trouble'
This workshop gives students the opportunity to workshop one of the witches' scenes exactly as Icarus did. In exploring Icarus' approach to *Macbeth*, students will work practically with both Shakespearean verse and movement work, two of the mainstays of the Icarus style.

Each workshop lasts approximately 90 minutes.
Our education team are able to adapt material to fit your requirements. Each in-school workshop will be led by a professional facilitator and cast member of the *Macbeth* company*.
By arrangement, workshops can sometimes be held in the theatre, on our stage.

Workshop price: from £275
Two workshops: £500

Free show programme to all participants with ticket purchase.

Group ticket discounts available.
For full tour dates and box office details, please see www.icarustheatre.co.uk

*Subject to the performance schedule of the actors.

This education pack was researched and compiled by Bethany Pitts and the Icarus Education Team, including Miztli Cadena, Mary Taylor and Julia Chapman

For more information, please contact the Icarus Theatre Collective:

Bethany Pitts
Education Director

Icarus Theatre Collective
32 Portland Place
London
W1B 1NA
Tel: 0207 998 1562
Email:
beth@icarustheatre.co.uk