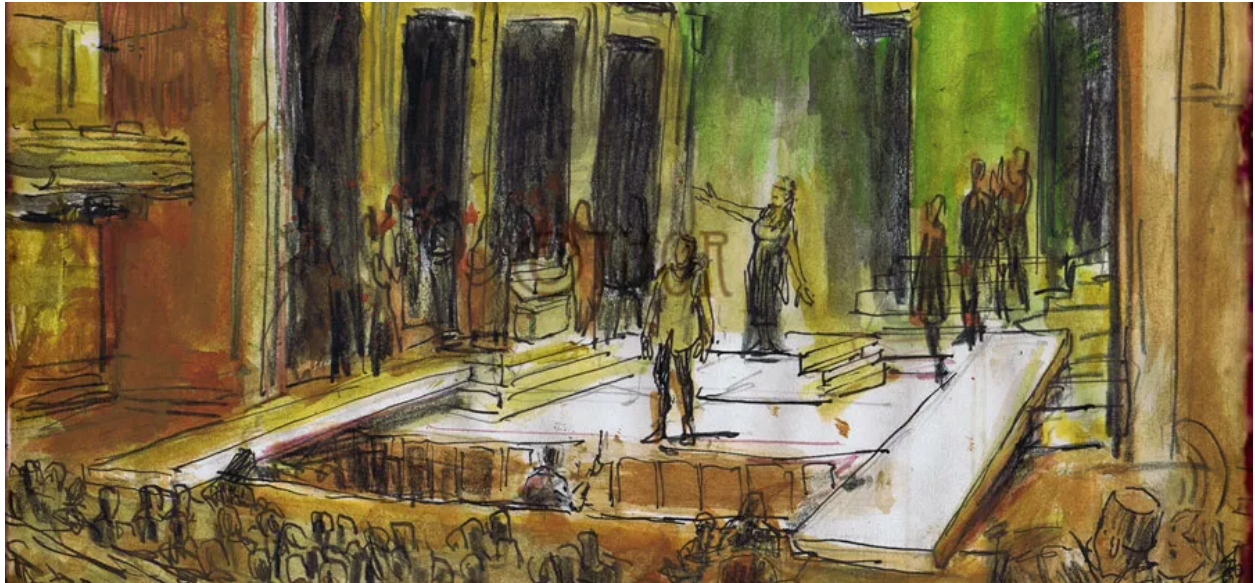


Tab 1

Stage, Page, and Scholar:

Three Ways to Play Shakespeare's Macbeth



WHAT: Shakespeare is one of the most influential playwrights in modern history and is seen as “the father of English” by many literary scholars and historians. In addition to being a fascinating figure for academics, Shakespeare’s plays have also inspired directors and actors to create adaptations and deliver award winning performances. To capture the multitude of ways people interact with and experience The Bard’s plays, your final assessment is an invitation to consider his work from the perspective of three different Shakespearean “fandoms”—literary scholars, directors, and actors. Your final portfolio will require you to form an interpretation of a key scene, design its staging, and act it out alone or with a partner.

HOW: Over the course of the play you have been introduced to philosophical arguments (fate vs. free will), psychoanalytic perspectives (the role of lack/desire), and gendered readings (the impact of gender roles) related to Macbeth. The goal of the project is to understand the play from the perspective of a literary scholar, director, and actor and take up the tools and practices used by those communities to create a portfolio. You have also analyzed a variety of stage productions of Macbeth, paying close attention to the choices of setting, staging, and scenery.

Finally, we have studied several performances of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth that portray the characters in wildly different ways. The goal of the project is to understand the play from the perspective of three communities who engage with Bill’s works: literary scholars, directors, and actors. You will take up the tools and practices used by those communities to create a portfolio containing an interpretation of a key scene, a storyboard planning how you intend to stage and film that scene, and finally a video of you performing that scene. To do that you will complete the following three phases:

I. Interpreting like a literary scholar:

- Pick a scene that you have found interesting or compelling
- Select a literary lens that you can use to **theorize** about the scene's deeper meaning(s)
 - Philosophical/Ethical
 - Psychoanalytic
 - Gender
- Annotate your chosen scene using your selected lens
- Write a short literary essay offering your interpretation

II. Staging like a director/set designer:

- Consider the staging and set design of your scene and gather necessary materials. Focus on using aesthetics that add deeper meaning to your scene.
- Consider key props and costumes for your character(s). Be sure your choices have a deeper meaning that add depth to your portrayal of your character.
- **MAKE SURE YOUR AESTHETIC CHOICES REFLECT YOUR INTERPRETATION OF YOUR CHARACTER!**

III. Performing like a Shakespearean actor:

- Perform your scene by yourself or with a friend. Consider how you can use gesture, vocalics, facial expressions, etc. to bring your character to life
- Consider different camera angles you might use to bring out the emotions or character dynamics within your scene.
- **MAKE SURE YOUR AESTHETIC CHOICES REFLECT YOUR INTERPRETATION OF YOUR CHARACTER!**

Scene Options

Act 1, Scene 3 - Macbeth Meets the Witches (Lines 45-78) *The pivotal moment where Macbeth first encounters the witches and receives the prophecy. Their words "All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter!" plant the seed of ambition. Great for exploring fate vs. free will and the power of suggestion. Works well for one or multiple performers.*

Act 1, Scene 5 - Lady Macbeth's "Unsex Me Here" (Lines 36-52) *Lady Macbeth reads Macbeth's letter and calls upon dark spirits to strip her of femininity. Shows her strength, ambition, and rejection of gender norms. The "unsex me here" speech is one of the play's most powerful soliloquies. Perfect for gender analysis.*

Act 1, Scene 7 - Macbeth's First Soliloquy (Lines 1-28) *Macbeth contemplates killing Duncan, weighing morality against ambition. "If it were done when 'tis done..." Shows his initial hesitation and moral awareness. Excellent for philosophical/ethical analysis of consequence and loyalty.*

Act 2, Scene 1 - Dagger Soliloquy (Lines 33-64) *The famous "Is this a dagger" speech shows Macbeth's psychological state just before Duncan's murder. Rich in imagery of hallucination and guilt. Strong choice for exploring the psychology of murder and moral decay.*

Act 2, Scene 2 - After Duncan's Murder (Lines 19-74) *Immediate aftermath of Duncan's murder. Shows stark contrast between Macbeth's guilt ("Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood...") and Lady Macbeth's pragmatism. Intense dialogue reveals their different reactions to violence.*

Act 3, Scene 1 - "To be thus is nothing" (Lines 47-73) *Macbeth, now king, reveals his fears about Banquo's prophecy. Shows his descent from reluctant murderer to tyrant. This soliloquy marks a turning point in his character development.*

Act 3, Scene 4 - Banquet Scene with Ghost (Lines 39-120) *Macbeth sees Banquo's ghost during a formal banquet. Complex scene showing public facade vs. private guilt. Lady Macbeth tries to maintain control as Macbeth loses his composure. Rich in psychological drama.*

Act 4, Scene 1 - Witches' Cauldron (Lines 10-38) *The famous "Double, double toil and trouble" scene. Atmospheric and supernatural, showing the witches' dark magic. Can be performed as a powerful solo piece or with multiple actors.*

Act 5, Scene 1 - Lady Macbeth's Sleepwalking (Lines 31-69) *Lady Macbeth's final appearance reveals her descent into madness. "Out, damned spot!" shows her guilt manifesting physically. Works well for all three analytical lenses - psychological, philosophical, and gender.*

Act 5, Scene 5 - "Tomorrow and Tomorrow" (Lines 17-28) *Macbeth's nihilistic response to Lady Macbeth's death. A profound meditation on life's meaninglessness. Though brief, it's one of Shakespeare's most quoted passages. Shows complete transformation from noble warrior to despairing tyrant.*