

GOBLIN:MACBETH

ENRICHMENT GUIDE



A Spontaneous Theatre Creation by Rebecca Northan and Bruce Horak with Ellis Lalonde
***Goblin:Macbeth* was first produced by The Shakespeare Company, and Hit & Myth Productions**

We wish to acknowledge that the land on which we gather is Treaty No. 6 territory and a traditional meeting ground and home of the First Nations, including both the treaty signatories – Cree, Saulteaux, Nakota Sioux, Stony and Cree-Iroquois – as well as other Indigenous peoples, such as the Blackfoot and Métis, who occupied this land. We extend our appreciation for the opportunity to live, create and perform on this territory.

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THEATRE ETIQUETTE

Going to the theatre is an engaging and interactive experience. We want you to be an active participant when you see our shows; laugh when it's funny, cry when it's sad, gasp when it's shocking, and enjoy the experience as much as possible. But we want you to do this in the most respectful way possible, for both the performers and your fellow audience members. To ensure the most positive experience, please review the following information prior to arriving.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE THEATRE:

- No outside food or beverages. Only beverages purchased in the lobby and placed in a Citadel Sippy and bottled water will be allowed in the theatre. Unwrapped ice cream bars may be taken into the theatre. Please enjoy all other snacks in the lobby.
- Cameras and other recording devices (please note that taking photographs or other recordings in the theatre is strictly prohibited by law).

BASIC COURTESY:

- Please turn OFF and put away all electronic devices such as cell phones, iPods, video game systems, etc. prior to entering the theatre.
- Do not place your feet on the seat in front of you.
- The actors onstage can see and hear the audience during the performance – it is important that audience members not talk, move around, or fidget during the performance, as this can be distracting for the actors, as well as fellow audience members.
- There is no dress code at the Citadel Theatre, but we respectfully request that patrons refrain from wearing hats in the theatre.
- For the safety of those with allergies, please refrain from using perfumes or scented products before coming to the theatre.
- Please do not place backpacks or other bags in the aisle in front of your feet, as this may impair the ability of persons to exit the row in an emergency.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR:

Citadel Theatre representatives watch carefully during performances for inappropriate behaviour, especially behaviour that could endanger an actor or audience member.

Inappropriate behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

- Talking in the audience
- The use of laser pointers or other light or sound-emitting devices
- Interfering with an actor or the performance (tripping, throwing items on or near the stage, etc.)

Audience members identified as engaging in this type of behaviour will be removed from the theatre during the performance or at intermission.

CHARACTERS

KRAGVA
MOOG
WUG

SYNOPSIS

When three Goblins come across a copy of the Complete Works of William Shakespeare, they decide to take over the stage, choosing the bloodiest play they can find, *Macbeth*. Blending comedy, fantasy and tragedy, in an unpredictably interactive and exciting theatrical experience, the goblins present a uniquely fresh take on a Shakespearean classic.

TERMS AT A GLANCE

This section defines and offers context for some of the key terms used throughout the production.

Accurse: curse or declare to be evil or anathema or threaten with divine punishment.

Acheron: (Greek mythology) a river in Hades across which the souls of the dead were carried by Charon.

Alarum: an automatic signal (usually a sound) warning of danger.

Apparition: a ghostly appearing figure.

Beguile: to help time pass pleasantly.

Cauldron: a very large pot that is used for boiling.

Charnel house: a vault or building where corpses or bones are deposited.

Estate: all the money and property owned by a particular person, especially at death.

Equivocator: a respondent who avoids giving a clear direct answer.

Glamis: Macbeth is told by the Witches that he will hold three titles: Thane of Glamis, Thane of Cawdor, and King. A thane is a landowning nobleman in a feudal system, in this case within the system of King Duncan. Macbeth is mentioned as holding the title, Thane of Glamis. Glamis, a village in Eastern Scotland, is a place where Macbeth ruled over.

Harbinger: a person or thing that announces or signals the approach of another.

Heath: an area of land that is not used for growing crops, where grass and other small plants grow, but where there are few trees or bushes.

Hecate: (Greek mythology) Greek goddess of fertility who later became associated with Persephone as goddess of the underworld and protector of witches.

Hell-kite: someone who is a very fierce fighter.

Hie: to move fast.

Hurlyburly: a hubbub or commotion.

“I” Statements: An “I-statement” focuses on your own feelings and experiences. It does not focus on your perspective of what the other person has done or failed to do.

Inverness: a city in the Scottish Highlands.

Macbeth: King of Scotland (died in 1057).

Minion: a servile or fawning dependent.

Missives: an official, formal, or long letter.

Norway: a Scandinavian country encompassing mountains, glaciers and deep coastal fjords.

Parley: to hold conference with the an opposing side to discuss terms.

Parricide: the killing of a parent or other near relative.

Scone: A village in central Scotland that was the traditional place for Scottish kings to be crowned.

Scotland: one of the four countries that make up the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; located on the northern part of the island of Great Britain; famous for bagpipes and plaids and kilts.

Sheathe: enclose with a protective covering.

Sirrah: formerly a contemptuous term of address to an inferior man or boy; often used in anger.

Slumbry: inclined to or marked by drowsiness.

Stableness: the quality or attribute of being firm and steadfast.

Thane: a feudal lord or baron.

Tolkien: John Ronald Reuel Tolkien was an English writer and philologist. He was the author of the high fantasy works *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*.

Treasonous: constituting or having the characteristic of betrayal.

Unsex: remove the qualities typical of one's sex.

Wassail: a hot, mulled punch often associated with Yuletide, often drunk from a wassail bowl.

Weird sister: any of the three goddesses of destiny.

William Shakespeare: William Shakespeare was an English playwright, poet and actor. He is widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world's pre-eminent dramatist. He is often called England's national poet and the "Bard of Avon".

“Yes, and...”: a collaborative technique that acknowledges what someone is saying and builds on it, regardless of whether you agree with them. It's a technique used in improvisation.

THEMES

RECREATING SHAKESPEARE THROUGH MASK AND CLOWN/BOUFFON

“Do you think anyone cares about this stuff? Maybe that’s why it’s being cut from the curriculum.” –KRAVVA, *Goblin:Macbeth*



Goblin:Macbeth
Tarragon Theatre 2024
Photos by Jae Yang

Goblin:Macbeth, created by Rebecca Northan and Bruce Horak with Ellis Lalonde, is an adaptation of the classic Shakespearean play, *Macbeth*, using the elements of improvisation, mask, and clown to tell this classic tale with a twist. In this play-within-a-play, three goblin creatures discover *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* and decide to perform *Macbeth*, playing multiple roles each. The classic Shakespeare text is delivered by these three goblins while wearing life-like masks and features moments of Goblin “improvisation” (which is actually, for the most part, scripted) through the methods of mask and clown to breathe fresh life into this classic text.

MASK

The Mask method is a theatrical practice that involves performers wearing masks to enhance character work and convey heightened emotions. Masks can be used literally or symbolically. Mask work is a centuries-old theatre practice that transcends nations and eras. From the exaggerated visages of commedia dell'arte to the spiritually significant faces of Japanese Noh, the art of masking enhances character work and storytelling by enabling actors to explore a spectrum of emotions and narratives.

In *Goblin:Macbeth*, the performers are not just physically wearing masks, they are IN mask. Being “in mask” means that the performer’s senses are tuned into what the mask/character is experiencing with the audience, which can lead to moments of improvisation depending on how the audience is reacting and/or responding to the performance.

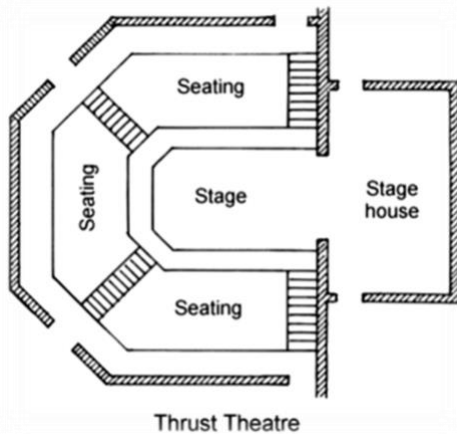
CLOWN/BOUFFON

Similar to the Mask method, clowning is often referred to as a state of being which is called “being in clown.” Clowning is a state of playfulness and of being in play. Listening and being receptive is central to this approach; not to come on stage with an idea, a plan or a pre-conceived scenario.

The buffoon is the more intelligent and darker cousin of the clown, but unlike the clown, whom we laugh at, buffoons form a gang and laugh at us.

PRODUCTION ELEMENTS

THRUST STAGE



The layout of the Rice Theatre at the Citadel for *Goblin:Macbeth*

The thrust stage configuration is one of the oldest in theatre history. It refers to a stage (or performance space) that extends forward into the audience. A thrust stage is especially effective for drawing in the audience and actively connecting them with the action onstage. Thrust stages were used in Spain's Golden Age of theatre (which started in 1570), and were called *corrales*, as well as in the traditional Noh theatre of Japan. This design was also popular in London during the Elizabethan era, and is the layout of the famous Globe Theatre where many of Shakespeare's plays were performed. Between the 17th and 20th century's proscenium stages (which only expose the front of the stage to the audience) dominated theatre across the world, as the popular movement of staging focused on creating and maintaining illusion.

However, in the 20th century theatre started moving back to performances that focused on actor-audience contact, which brought the thrust stage back to popularity. Still, thrust stages are most often used for concert-style performances, rather than traditional theatre.

GOBLIN:MACBETH MASK DESIGN BY COMPOSITE EFFECTS

Several years ago, a friend drew *Goblin:Macbeth's* co-creator Rebecca Northan's attention to the latex and silicone creations by a U.S. company called [Composite Effects](#) who designed and created masks whose mouths and cheeks move with every word and expression of the wearer. Northan knew she wanted to use these masks in her work one day and implemented the masks in *Goblin:Macbeth's* inaugural production with Calgary's Shakespeare Company in 2021.



Goblin:Macbeth
Tarragon Theatre 2024
Photos by Jae Yang

Composite Effects began as a two-person crew in 2006 whose goal was to build masks to show emotion and become a second-skin. The use of silicone masks can replace the need to spend hours in a makeup chair. Sometimes performers will sit for six hours or more getting their makeup done, but as opposed to make up, silicone masks can transform you in seconds and provide a high level of realism and detail without spending hours in the make-up chair.

INTERVIEW WITH *GOBLIN:MACBETH* CO-CREATOR, REBECCA NORTHAN

1. As a Theatre Creator, can you speak to how improvisation informs your creation process?

It really depends on the project. Spontaneous Theatre puts as much value on script and structure as it does on the freedom and play of improvisation. Ultimately, I think that a solid background in improvisation teaches you to think differently; it opens your mind up to possibilities.

In *Goblin:Macbeth*, there are only a few spots where improvisation happens unless something in the audience surprises us and pulls us off in a new direction. We give ourselves full permission to follow an impulse, which is also important to the mask work, but we always return to Shakespeare's text.

2. How does your relationship to the audience inform your work?

We talk about the audience constantly! We are always tuned in to what's happening out there. What do they need? Recently, I read a post by a prominent Canadian playwright who suggested that we should never think about the audience, not worry about pleasing them, and do our work for ourselves. We couldn't disagree MORE! Our improvisation and clown training has taught us to treat the audience like your favourite house guests! Be an excellent host, anticipate their needs, look for ways to surprise and delight, and give them a good time. We recognize that we couldn't do what we do without them!

3. Do you have a favourite audience interaction from the touring of *Goblin:Macbeth*?

Watching how people respond when they see the Goblins for the first time is always a treat. Some people light up, some back away, others get quite flirtatious!



Rebecca Northan
Goblin:Macbeth Co-Creator

HISTORY & CONTEXT

MACBETH AND SHAKESPEAREAN ADAPTATIONS



Macbeth
Image credit: Johann Heinrich
Füssli

The history of Macbeth includes the real-life King of Scotland, the events of Shakespeare's play, and the play's reception:

The Real Macbeth

Macbethad mac Findláech, also known as the Red King, was the King of Scotland from 1040 until his death in 1057. He ruled during the Kingdom of Alba period of Scottish history. Some sources say he may have been a grandson of King Malcolm II.

Shakespeare's play

Macbeth is a tragedy written by William Shakespeare in the early 17th century. The play is loosely based on the life of Macbeth, but the events in the play differ from the real-life history. In the play, Macbeth is a Scottish general who is told by three witches that he will become King. He murders the King and takes the throne, but is consumed by guilt and paranoia, leading him to commit more murders. The play was first performed in 1606 for King James I, who was a patron of the theatre.

Reception

Macbeth was very popular during its time and was a favorite of diarist Samuel Pepys. The play has been adapted into film, television, opera, novels, and comics. Some believe the play is cursed and actors avoid mentioning its title aloud, instead calling it "The Scottish Play".

SHAKESPEREAN ADAPTATIONS

Shakespeare's plays are often adapted for a number of reasons, including:

Keeping his work relevant

Adaptations help keep Shakespeare's work relevant and accessible to a wide range of people. His themes and characters are often thought to be timeless and to resonate with audiences across time and culture.

Making Shakespeare more accessible

Adaptations can help make Shakespeare's work more accessible to audiences who might find the original texts intimidating.

Expanding the boundaries of genre and language

Adaptations have crossed boundaries of genre and language, including novels, short stories, young adult novels, comics, and graphic novels.



Third World Bunfight's
adaptation of Verdi's opera,
Macbeth, set in the Great
Lakes region of Central Africa

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

Participation as an audience member at the Citadel Theatre aligns with the Alberta Education Curriculum.

Drama (Junior High)

GOAL I- To acquire knowledge of self and others through participation in and reflection on dramatic experience.

Objectives- The Student will:

- Strengthen their powers of concentration.
- Extend the ability to think imaginatively and creatively.
- Extend the ability to explore, control and express emotions.
- Extend the ability to explore meaning through abstract concepts.
- Develop the ability to offer and accept constructive criticism.

GOAL II- To develop an appreciation for drama and theatre as a process and art form.

Objectives- The Student will:

- Develop awareness of various conventions of theatre.
- Develop awareness of drama and theatre by viewing as great a variety of theatrical presentations as possible.
- Develop the ability to analyze and assess the process and the art.
- Develop recognition of and respect for excellence in drama and theatre.

Drama (10-20-30)

GOAL I- To acquire knowledge of self and others through participation in and reflection on dramatic experience.

Objectives- The Student will:

- Extend their ability to concentrate.
- Extend understanding of, acceptance of, and empathy for others.
- Demonstrate respect for others — their rights, ideas, abilities and differences.
- Demonstrate the ability to offer, accept, and reflect upon constructive criticism.

GOAL II- To develop competency in communication skills through participation in and exploration of various dramatic disciplines.

Objectives- The Student will:

- Demonstrate understanding of integration of disciplines to enrich a theatrical presentation.

GOAL III- To develop an appreciation of drama and theatre as a process and art form.

Objectives- The Student will:

- Explore various conventions and traditions of theatre.
- Broaden knowledge of theatre by viewing as great a variety of theatrical presentations as possible.
- Demonstrate the ability to critically assess the process of art.
- Demonstrate recognition of and respect for excellence in drama and theatre.
- Develop an awareness of aesthetics in visual and performing arts.

REFERENCES

Compositereffects.com, accessed on December 17, 2024.

<[Silicone Masks 101](#)>

Zhibit.org, accessed on December 30, 2024.

<[Mask Theatre](#)>

Backstage.com, accessed on December 30, 2024.

<[Mask in Theatre: The History and Power of Hiding Actors' Faces](#)>

Bonange, Jean-Bernard. "[Clowning and the Imagination](#)" *Nose to Nose: Discovering the Clown Within*. Accessed December 30, 2024.

Petalily.com, accessed on January 3, 2025.

<[Bouffon, Satire, Dark Clown](#)>

Smith, Janet. "[Goblin:Macbeth strikes a hit combo of eerie masks, improv comedy, and Shakespearean finesse](#)" *Stir | Arts & Culture | Vancouver*. Accessed December 17, 2024.

FURTHER READING & RESOURCES

[How do you get someone to care about Shakespeare? Two words: *Goblin Macbeth*](#)

[Spontaneous Theatre](#)

[How to Put On and Take Off your CFX Silicone Mask](#)

[An introduction to *MACBETH*, scripted, designed and directed by Brett Bailey, and composed after the Verdi by Fabrizio Cassol](#)

[Macbeth \(2010\) Starring Patrick Stewart and Kate Fleetwood. Directed by Rupert Goold for the Chichester Festival Theatre in 2007](#)

GOVERNMENT AND FOUNDATION FUNDERS

