

# Mastering Macbeth

*"What's done cannot be undone" V.i*

The Tragedy of Macbeth is widely acknowledged as one of the theatre's greatest tragedies. The play opens to the end of a massive battle in which Macbeth has just defeated the former Thane who sought to overthrow the king. Macbeth is given a prophecy by three witches, who promise that he will be king. To ensure the infallibility of the prophecy, Lady Macbeth plots the King's murder and Macbeth does the deed. The Macbeths are crowned and are henceforth miserable, haunted by their guilt. The play is about a number of things such as political ambition, murder, love, and fate.

**What's it like to be King and Queen?**



**What brings someone to plot  
the Death of an innocent person?**

Once we were cast, we began research. Shakespearian plays require much more "table work" than most contemporary works. Table work refers to all things that must be done before we start acting. First, you must read the script in its entirety, then break it down to understand the script and the characters. We also researched the time period in which the play was set and written, the playwright, and production history. Like many of Shakespeare's works, most of the play is written in blank verse, which is unrhymed poetry written in iambic pentameter. This means we had to break down each line to understand how they were intended to be said. When the rehearsal process began, we spent four weeks in rehearsal developing characters, relationships, stage pictures, and verisimilitude with the guidance of our director. We were able to move into the theatre two weeks before the show opened. In the theatre we had to adjust to the set pieces, costumes, and lighting. These elements brought it all together and helped us understand who we were. Once we started running the show every night, we really started to have a blast together onstage and off knowing that we had developed that loving relationship that the characters needed by sharing the experience of finding the characters together.

When the curtains went up, we took hold of Shakespeare's story and thrust the audience into his world. The Tragedy of Macbeth was especially resonant for our audience because we live in an age of political ambition, intrigue, and competition. The choices of the people in power affect us and it is often our job to take action—be it kings or a government that we disagree with.

**We all want our own prophesy,  
but what are we willing to do to achieve it?**

**By: Shelby Gilliam and Dominique Rider  
Advised and Directed by: Rick Jones**



**Do people control their lives?**

