



## **Audio Description Notes for *Macbeth***

### **WELCOME**

Welcome to the Guthrie Theater's production of *Macbeth*. The play was written by William Shakespeare. This production is directed by Joe Dowling.

My name is Alyssa Melby, and I will be your audio describer for this performance, which is approximately 1 hour and 50 minutes with no intermission.

### **OVERVIEW**

The creative team members for this production includes:

- Scenic Designer: Riccardo Hernández
- Costume Designer: Judith Dolan
- Lighting Designer: Philip Rosenberg
- Sound Designer: Peter Morrow
- Composer: Keith Thomas
- Resident Dramaturg: Carla Steen
- Resident Vocal Coach: Keely Wolter
- Movement Coordinator: Joe Chvala
- Fight Director/Intimacy By: Annie Enneking

This production contains strobe lights, loud noises, haze, fog, stage blood, mature themes and strong depictions of stage violence, including the offstage murder of a child, death by suicide and a hanging scene.

### **SYNOPSIS**

When three witches utter a surprising incantation — “All hail Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter” — a soldier and nobleman’s course is forever altered. Macbeth and his ambitious wife seek to kill King Duncan and usurp the throne. The pair is successful, but their satisfaction is fleeting, and the two embark on a perilous path of destruction. Macbeth is soon haunted by the bloodstained ghost of a former enemy, and the crown grows heavy with the weight of his insecurity and paranoia. Shakespeare’s thrilling story of treachery and ambition explores the relationship between power and corruption, revealing the villainy that can emerge when power is sought.

### **STAGING AND PROPS**

The staging of this play uses minimal set dressings, and the fluid, swift shifts between scenes are marked by changes in light and sound.

The floor of the thrust stage is entirely painted black. Along the top of the stage is a 12-inch grate border around the perimeter. Lighting effects and fog emerge from these grates throughout the play. Along the



## **STAGING AND PROPS (continued)**

front edge of the stage are black stairs that span the entire length and are three steps high. Before the play begins, the back of the stage is cloaked in darkness, but the outlines of two floor-to-ceiling walls are slightly visible.

When the play begins, we see that these walls are approximately 20 feet wide and angled back toward a screen at the back of the stage. The walls are a dark metallic gray, with numerous large vertical grooves from top to bottom, like a washboard. At the base of the walls is a three-foot-high pyramid-shaped trim; four square 12-inch grates are spaced evenly across the expanse of each wall. The walls move in and out across the stage throughout the play.

A rectangular trap door lies in the middle of the stage. The table for the feast will emerge on a lift from below this trap door. The table sits parallel to the front of the stage and has benches that seat four. The table is covered in a white tablecloth and laden with silver goblets, platters of fruits and cheese, and gold silverware and cloth napkins. The trap door also becomes a prop itself when smoke rises from it, transforming it into the witches' cauldron.

The screen behind the walls is illuminated at points with a projection of clouds. Two large columns dissect the screen into thirds. When the action of the play moves indoors, a black screen is lowered.

The lighting design of this play relies heavily upon the play of shadows via back and side lighting. This type of lighting provides more angular and sharp profiles of the characters.

## **CAST, CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES**

**Macbeth**, played by **Daniel José Molina**, begins the play as the Thane of Glamis and a captain in King Duncan's army. He wears a futuristic-looking (think Star Wars) uniform: black beret, long-sleeved black shirt, leather jerkin, skin-tight black pants with two zippered pockets on the front hip, and shiny black leather combat boots. Around his waist, his belt holds a dagger sheathed on his left hip and black leather gauntlet gloves tucked in on his right hip. Later, when he returns home, he dons a white cotton tank top and a black kimono robe with red trim. At his coronation, he wears the vestments of the king: a golden doublet over which lays a heavy gorget around his throat bearing a golden cross, a gold shimmery beret, and a black-and-gold striped sash belt around his waist. At the coronation feast, Macbeth wears a trim navy business suit with the jacket unbuttoned over a cream-colored turtleneck.

**Lady Macbeth**, played by **Meghan Kreidler**, first wears a floral silk robe with black edging over a white satin knee-length slip. Her shoulder-length, dark brown, loosely curled hair frames her face. When her royal guests arrive, she greets them in a floor-length red pea coat with a long peak lapel. Next, she wears a wide-legged teal paisley pantsuit, again with a long peak lapel and buttons running down the middle. During the nighttime, she wears a black kimono robe that matches her husband. When Macbeth is crowned, she dons a floor-length, long-sleeved gold lace wrap gown. It has a hood, a plunging peak-lapel neckline and a slit running halfway up the upper thigh.



## CAST, CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES (continued)

**Banquo**, a captain in Duncan's army played by **Peter Christian Hansen**, wears a similar captain uniform to Macbeth, but instead of a leather doublet, he wears a black tactical vest with large cargo pockets. His long hair is pulled back in a ponytail under his beret. After his murder, he haunts Macbeth, bare-chested with an open black leather vest. His long hair has now turned white and is tied halfway back, with pieces stained by blood. A bloody gash crosses his neck.

Like many Shakespearean plays, the rest of the cast portrays multiple roles.

The **Weird Sisters** played by **John Catron**, **Sun Mee Chomet** and **Regina Marie Williams**, are dressed in flowy, piecemeal layers. Each Weird Sister has big hair, either long and straggly, puffy and frizzy, or stringy and ratted. Their long-sleeved overdress and baggy pants are patchworked in earth tones. The sleeves of their overdress extend 12 inches beyond their fingertips, creating circular arcs when their arms wave in the air. They wear leather boots in various shades of brown.

In contrast, King **Duncan**, played by **Bill McCallum**, and his entire army wear futuristic all-black uniforms. The foot soldiers have looser cargo pants tucked into black combat boots, long-sleeved black shirts, black leather gauntlet gloves, utilitarian black tactical vests and black berets atop their heads. They are all in black tight pants tucked into black boots. Duncan is the most highly adorned, with a gorget containing a golden cross around his throat and chest, and a black cape lined with gold fabric tied under his left arm.

The other thanes in the military are noted with a gold family crest on their berets. These thanes include **MacDuff**, played by **John Catron**; **Lennox**, played by **James A. Williams**; and **Ross**, played by **Michelle O'Neill**.

King Duncan's sons, **Malcolm**, played by **Daniel Petzold**, and **Donalbain**, played by **Pierce Brown**, are distinguished by their leather doublets and slightly more gold on their persons.

**Seyton**, Macbeth's armorer, is played by **David Michaeli**. He wears a brown hooded knit sweater over a black cotton kilt with cargo pockets, calf-length brown socks and black boots. He is the only character that wears a kilt.

**Fleance**, Banquo's son, is played by **Pierce Brown**. He wears a knitted hat, denim jeans and a brown cargo coat over a gray hoodie. He carries a flashlight.

The three **murderers** whom Macbeth hires are played by **John Catron**, **Bill McCallum** and **David Michaeli**. They are dressed like older fisherman, wearing a baseball cap, brown bucket hat, heavy cargo coats and brown corduroy slacks.

The **apparitions** that appear in the final prophecy are played by **Pierce Brown**, **Michelle O'Neill** and **Daniel Petzold**. They wear floor-length green velvet robes with white collars. The first two wear black face masks; the third apparition does not.



# GUTHRIE THEATER

## **CAST, CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES (continued)**

**Lady MacDuff**, played by **Sun Mee Chomet**, wears a salmon-colored terrycloth bath robe. Her son wears a white-and-black polka-dot cotton pajama set.

The **doctor**, played by **Regina Marie Williams**, wears a bright orange business shirt, navy pants and a long white doctor's coat.

Lady Macbeth's **gentlewoman**, played by **Sun Mee Chomet**, wears a 1940s-style burgundy dress.