

Macbeth

Audition information pack

Genre/ medium = shakespeare

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Medium

This is a full length theatre production, using William Shakespeares original text.

IMPORTANT As this is a Shakespeare production, using the original text, we are well aware that not everyone will be familiar with all of the language used. One of two early sessions will be set aside to assist with interpreting the script.

Synopsis of production

As with many modern productions of Shakespeare's texts, the drama is transplanted from medieval times. Our adaptation is set in a post- apocalyptic future, combining a post-apocalyptic style with steampunk styles to create a unique world in the future.

The text remains unchanged.

The play focuses on Macbeth, a Scottish general, and his wife, Lady Macbeth. In the beginning of the play, Macbeth is loyal to the Scottish king, Duncan. However, three witches prophesize he will be king; once he learns of that prophecy, his loyalty wanes.

Lady Macbeth convinces her husband that they need to kill Duncan. She helps him devise a plan to frame the guards outside Duncan's chambers for his murder. Initially, Macbeth isn't sure about killing Duncan, but Lady Macbeth convinces him that he must. She helps him to kill the king, but Macbeth feels guilty after. Duncan's guards are accused, and shortly after, Macbeth kills them so that his crime won't be discovered.

Duncan has two sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, who run from Macbeth's castle because they're sure that they will be killed—suspicion has fallen at their feet that they bribed Duncan's guards to kill him, as Malcolm would be the heir to the Scottish throne. With Duncan dead and his sons fled, Macbeth makes himself king. However, he's not in the clear yet. The witches had not only told him that he would be king, but also that Banquo's descendants would have the throne after Macbeth. To secure the kingdom for his own heirs, Macbeth knows he must also destroy Banquo's line.

Banquo is a general in the Scottish army, so he won't be easy to kill. Macbeth sets a trap for him, inviting Banquo to a banquet at his castle and hiring others to kill both Banquo and his son, Fleance. Banquo is caught in the trap and murdered; however, Fleance manages to escape. At the banquet, Macbeth is visited by Banquo's ghost, which causes a scene by taking Macbeth's seat. Macbeth has a fit, and says that Banquo is "crowned" with wounds, which highlights his fear that Banquo's descendants will someday sit on the throne. Macbeth's fit spells trouble because it makes the other lords nervous, though Lady Macbeth is able to pass the event off as Macbeth being sick.

Although the lords believe Lady Macbeth's story, not everyone supports Macbeth. Macduff, one of the Scottish nobles, believes that Macbeth killed Duncan, and so he travels to England to help Malcolm, Duncan's son, reclaim the Scottish crown.

Back in Scotland, Macbeth returns to the witches, intent on finding out what will happen now that he is the king. They give him three pieces of information. First, they warn him to be wary of Macduff. They tell Macbeth that he won't be defeated until Birnam Wood moves to Dunsinane, and that he won't be killed by anyone born of a woman. He believes it impossible for Birnam Wood to move to Dunsinane because forests don't move, but even more so, the prophesy that he won't be killed by anyone born of a woman convinces Macbeth that he can't be killed by anyone at all.

Farther south, in England, Macduff and Malcolm have teamed up to fight against Macbeth. Macbeth punishes Macduff's infidelity by sending men to kill Macduff's wife and children, but this action only makes Macduff want to destroy Macbeth even more. Macduff and Malcolm lead ten thousand English troops into Scotland to march against Macbeth. They use wood from the Birnam forest to disguise themselves as they march toward Dunsinane. When Macbeth hears about this, he remembers the three witches' prophesy and becomes nervous. Macduff is coming for him—a man

they told him to beware of—and Birnam wood is moving to Dunsinane.

When Macbeth and Macduff meet, the witches' prophesy comes true when Macduff kills Macbeth, and returns Malcolm to the Scottish throne.

Equal Opportunities statement

Unless stated in a specific character description, we welcome people of all backgrounds to audition, and to be considered on an equal basis.

Basic Requirements

(stated after misunderstandings in the past)

We cast on ability, quality of audition, enthusiasm & commitment, and looking at good pleasant social / professional skills. Regardless of your previous experience, we look for your enthusiasm and ability to participate in a professional quality production.

You will need to be able to learn your role, including script, cues, and movement/ action etc, as required for the character. You will also be expected to wear provided costume in the productions. Timely attendance at the vast majority of rehearsals, excluding unexpected emergencies, is also a requirement. We rehearse and perfect the show as a team and cannot achieve that if people miss rehearsals on a regular basis.

“Sensitive content inclusions”

We always state upfront what content in the script may cause concern, or offence, or which some people may wish to know in advance.

- Description of and on stage depiction of violence (actors taking on those roles will be expected to attend scheduled training for action scenes)

There are no nude or sexual scenes in this production.

Character list and breakdown

Please note that unless specifically stated on a character, we are completely flexible on ages, racial appearance, etc with the only limitation that we are casting for people aged over 16 only (to the sky- the limit!)

Although the original text has a larger number of male roles, we are flexible about making many of these roles female. We have stated which roles these are (see below) . While we have retained an original description of a character in the breakdown, we are quite happy, for example, to cast Fleance as either the son or daughter of Banquo.

Roles which only appear in part of the show, may also have that actor participating in another role as well, at a further point in the show.

Macbeth (male) - 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 prophecy that he will be made thane of Cawdor comes true. 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 proves himself better suited to the battlefield than to political intrigue, because he lacks the skills necessary to rule without being a tyrant. His response to every problem is violence and murder. Macbeth is never comfortable in his role as a criminal. He is unable to bear the psychological consequences of his atrocities.

Lady Macbeth (female) - Macbeth's wife, a deeply ambitious woman who lusts for power and position. Early in the play she seems to be the stronger and more ruthless of the two, as she urges her husband to kill Duncan and seize the crown. After the bloodshed begins, however, Lady Macbeth falls victim to guilt and madness to an even greater degree than her husband. Her conscience affects her to such an extent that she eventually commits suicide. Interestingly, she and Macbeth are presented as being deeply in love, and many of Lady Macbeth's speeches imply that her influence over her husband is primarily sexual. Their joint alienation from the world, occasioned by their partnership in crime, seems to strengthen the attachment that they feel to each another.

The Three Witches (male or female) - 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 blindly believe in his own immortality. The play leaves the witches' true identity unclear—aside from the fact that they are servants of Hecate, we know little about their place in the cosmos. In some ways they resemble the mythological Fates, who impersonally weave the threads of human destiny. They clearly take a perverse delight in using their knowledge of the future to toy with and destroy human beings.

Banquo (male or female) - The brave, noble general whose children, according to the witches' prophecy, will inherit the Scottish throne. Like Macbeth, Banquo thinks ambitious thoughts, but he does not translate those thoughts into action. In a sense, Banquo's character stands as a rebuke to Macbeth, since he represents 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.

King Duncan (male) - The good King of Scotland whom Macbeth, in his ambition for the crown, murders. Duncan is the model of a virtuous, benevolent, and farsighted ruler. His death symbolizes 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 (male)- A Scottish nobleman hostile to Macbeth's kingship from the start. He eventually becomes a leader of the crusade to unseat Macbeth. The crusade's mission is to place the rightful king, Malcolm, on the throne, but Macduff also desires vengeance for Macbeth's murder of

Macduff's wife and young son.

Malcolm (male) - 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's aid (and the support of England). Prior to this, he appears weak and uncertain of his own power, as when he and Donalbain flee Scotland after their father's murder.

Hecate (female) - The goddess of witchcraft, who helps the three witches work their mischief on Macbeth.

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

Lennox (male or female)- A Scottish nobleman.

Ross (male or female) - A Scottish nobleman.

The Murderers (male or female) - A group of ruffians conscripted by Macbeth to murder Banquo, Fleance (whom they fail to kill), and Macduff's wife and children.

Porter (male or female) - The drunken doorman of Macbeth's castle.

Lady Macduff (female)- 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 Lady Macbeth and the hellish world of Inverness.

Donalbain (male or female) - Duncan's son and Malcolm's younger brother.

Audition process (and how to find us)

NOTE: Once you have read the character list above, please email us on southdevonplayers@gmail.com for audition sides, from the script, for the characters which interest you. Please note that we will also have copies available at rehearsals if needed. We do not expect you to learn the script, but are making the sides available in order to allow interested cast to prepare before the audition day, if they wish. We also welcome people who want to cold-read from the script on the day. (either is fine).

Free tea, coffee, squash and biscuits are on hand for all.

You are more than welcome to audition for more than one role. (in fact, we prefer it). Do note that if you were not selected for one role, but we feel that you would be excellent in another, you may be offered that other role. If you have any specific preferences with regard to types of role, please add them on your audition form so that they can be taken into account.

We are casting the entire production. If you cannot attend the stated audition, please contact us to arrange an audition during the week before.

We do not accept video auditions, or IMDb links, we like to meet you, and for you to meet us. This is also so that we can look at how you work with other actors in scenes where you may be cast together.

Auditions begin at the stated time. We will start with a brief discussion about the production, where you have the opportunity to ask any questions about the production and team. You will also get to meet the admin team, and director .

The auditions will run in reading in groups from script excerpts. We may ask you to read in as well for other roles.

If you are concerned about visiting and meeting new people, you are welcome to bring a friend to the auditions.

Please keep phones switched off at auditions, so as not to distract yourself or others.

Key things that we look for in auditions

- 1) Timely arrival
- 2) Bringing diary, and pen, and completed audition form.
- 3) Reading the script with expression. (you do not need to second guess what we might have in our minds eye,) only read with expression as you interpret it. Expressionless reading, treating the script as a list of words, is something that will take down a lot of marks.
- 4) Being pleasant and civil to everyone. In our team we often have everyone from complete beginners who have never acted before, through to actors who have appeared in named Hollywood roles. We all work together as a pleasant team. We also have a strong ethos of appropriate social behaviour both in our team and when out and about among the public.
- 5) Enthusiasm.

We also will audition everyone who attends , so please be aware this could take any amount of time.

We expect to be able to inform you of your success or otherwise , within a couple of days. We decide on the same day so you are welcome to wait and find out there and then.

Castings, and rehearsals are at
Chestnut Community Centre, 1-3 Poplar Close, Brixham, Devon TQ5 9NJ.

Rehearsals & Times

Rehearsals will commence the following week on the Sunday. In the first rehearsal, which is mandatory for all, we will distribute printed scripts, sort out actors agreements, and have a full-team readthrough.

Due to this production being Shakespeare, there will be two/ three read-through rehearsals, before moving into blocking and action. This is so that we can assist any cast members with language and interpretation of Shakespearian text, as we are aware that many may be new to Shakespeare.

We do expect a high amount of attendance at rehearsals, 75% or above. This is because not only is it important for you to perfect your performance, but other people need to practice with you. Everyone learns at different speeds and in different ways, so even if you have your role perfect, it is still your duty to attend to assist your fellow cast (we are a team!).

Sometimes things happen, and you cannot make it (someone is ill, the car or bus broke down...) in which case it is common courtesy to let us know. If you no-show more than once, or are missing a high percentage of rehearsals, we reserve the right to re-cast the role.

With most of us being professional or aspiring professional actors, we understand that sometimes you may need to be at another performance or film shoot. If this is the case, please let us know as soon as you can in advance.

Attendance at the performances, is of course mandatory.

We love to promote what we are doing – in fact it is necessary in order to get shows out and about, and the audiences in, but please do not share the scripts outside the team without permission, or production/ rehearsal images other than those shown on our public social media. Rehearsals take place at Chestnut Community Centre (where you came to audition) . Doors are always open half an hour before so that you can arrive and get ready for the start!

Wednesday evenings – 6.30pm – 9.30pm
Sunday afternoons – 12.30pm – 5.00pm

Coffee, tea, squash and biscuits are available at all rehearsals. .
The centre has toilets, a small kitchenette with fridge, and outside parking spaces. Free wifi access is also available (please ask committee member for the passcode).

Castings, and rehearsals are at
Chestnut Community Centre, 1-3 Poplar Close, Brixham, Devon TQ5 9NJ.

Performances

These are still in the process of being booked

Brixham Theatre (confirmed) : January 18th 2019 (evening) January 19th (matinee and evening)

Exeter & Plymouth to be confirmed, looking for Friday or Saturday performances later in January 2019 so please keep those free)

Remuneration and expected timelines

Photos, videos, audio recordings (available as soon as possible, still images on ongoing basis)
Watermarked promotional photos and videos used on our public social media can be used for the portfolios and demoreels of those persons in the images. These are made available on an ongoing basis.

We will be hoping to get the theatre show filmed and photographed, with the footage not only being added to our site and social media, but also being available to you. At the very minimum you will have character photos from the theatre show.

Images, and recordings provided for portfolio use, are for the use of those people depicted in them, only.

Other

We are happy to provide references, upon completion of the production, for your ongoing work/ shows/ college & University.

Profit-share: Theatre

Profit shares are the ticket-take for the shows, less the venue hire. This will be made available to the cast, as soon as we have received our money from the theatres/ ticket-sales sites. Sales reports will be available on request once the shows are finished.

About us

The South Devon Players is a collaborative team of dedicated, career-orientated performers, of all ages, who are working on creating careers in theatre and film, and showcasing the very real talent that exists in Torbay and South Devon.

We always welcome new members, who share our professional aims, and who, regardless of previous experience, want to join a lively, friendly, hardworking team of performers, hone old skills & develop new ones, and create professional quality new stage and film productions.

We perform theatre shows in Brixham, around Torbay, and South Devon, based on historical events, classical stories and mythology. We also make period drama films and web-series productions, around Devon and Cornwall. .

The South Devon Players was founded in late 2005 by two Brixham-based performers who were seeking performance opportunities in the Southwest, and performed our first production in the summer of 2006. Since then we have gone from strength to strength, and are now growing rapidly, with awards won and a rapidly increasing member and audience base.

We pride ourselves on creating new ambitious projects, and on the international following that we are developing, as well as on our dedicated, enthusiastic team of performers.

Audition form

Please fill this out and bring to auditions. This remains confidential and is only seen by the director, and casting panel. Contacts are only used to contact you about theatre group show news/updates

Name

Stage name if preferred:

Age (if under 18)

Postal address

Email address

Phone number

Please list any roles you would especially like to be considered for, or write "any".

Role preferences; would you prefer a larger or smaller role, and do you have any other preferences?
(Please note we cannot guarantee that you will get exactly the kind of role you are looking for, but the casting panel will do their best to take your preferences into account).

(tick as appropriate) Do you have any of the following skills:

Dance (please write genre)

Singing

Speciality act (please specify)

Please list any dates between in the next 6 months that you expect to be away.

If under 16, this statement should be signed by a parent.

I (name) hereby give (child name) permission
to appear in this production, if successful at auditions. I will arrange for myself or (name of
designated guardian) to attend with (child name) at all
rehearsals and show performances, and to ensure the safe travel of the child to and from said events.

I do/ do not (delete as appropriate) give permission for (child name) to appear
in cast photos/ film clips for rehearsals and shows, which may be distributed to the press and to
official South Devon Players online sites for the purpose of show/ group publicity.

Signed: (parent or legal guardian)

Contact details if different from above

WHAT PERFORMERS CAN EXPECT FROM US

A strict ethos of professionalism, reliability, positivity, respect, pleasantness, and teamwork. (and love of theatre/ film production)

Promotion online and other media for all productions in which you are involved.

Photographs and video clips of performances.

Clear online information on rehearsals, workshops, other opportunities, etc.

Clear communication (via the internet) from the team. Queries will be answered within 24 hours, Access to our casting agency once you have completed one show or film in a reliable professional manner.

The opportunity to audition for, and perform in theatre and film productions of a professional standard

To have an equal share in all profits (less production costs/ venue hire) from main theatre and film projects that you are involved in, as a speaking role, with us.

The likelihood of invitation to social events among our members (please note that we are not a social club and while we like to socialise and make friends in the team, that it is an added enjoyment., not a reason to run, and attendance is optional.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM PERFORMERS

- The ability and willingness to communicate with regard to rehearsal/ show attendance.
- When agreeing to be in a film or stage production, to keep yourself available for rehearsals and performance dates.
- Excellent timekeeping on any performance, rehearsal or audition. Not showing up, or willfully letting a production down, results in removal from the team. Please be aware that being late or no-showing can result in the production company incurring wasted costs, those will be reimbursed in full to the production company by the person who incurred them .
- The ability to keep details of a production, confidential.
- Professional and pleasant behavior towards all those others with whom you have to work.
- To have relevant literacy, personal and communication skills to complete whatever role that you agree to take,. And the willingness/ ability to learn new skills needed.
- To have the ability to travel to and from wherever you are required to perform, by yourself, either by your own transport, or public transport.
- To declare any earnings made to HMRC within that time required by law.
- To act within the law at all times when you are representing our team.
- To have due regard for health and safety when on set.
- To take full care of any costumes and props, supplied for your role, and to return them in good condition, at the end of the show “run”.
- To keep the internal operation, castings, etc of the the team confidential, unless given express administrative approval from the South Devon Players officers in writing.
- To attend at least 75% of all rehearsals for a production unless notified in advance. If the attendance target is not reached, or you miss more than one rehearsal with no prior notification, you will be considered to not be interested in the production, and your role may be recast without notice.
- To act in accordance with the members rules of conduct for our team as set out on our website www.southdevonplayers.com (“about” tab)
- Helping to keep rehearsal and performance venues tidy after use.
- - To not attend rehearsals, shows or filming under the influence of any behaviour-altering substances (unless a serious medical reason discussed with the director beforehand)
- The development of performance, and communication (verbal/ non-verbal) skills consummate with those required for a professional performance on stage and/or film.