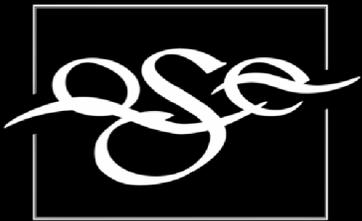


MACBETH IN THE DARK



QUEENSLAND
SHAKESPEARE
ENSEMBLE

Welcome

'When the plague hit London, Shakespeare's company did not sit idle (nor did Shakespeare write King Lear, that's a myth, so don't feel bad that you didn't write a great work of literature in the last four months). Instead, they adapted one of their plays and took it on the road with a smaller cast. Going on the road has not been an option in the current state, so we thought we'd adapt a play and take it to the airwaves instead, and in the process re-awaken a lost art form, the radio play...'

Rob Pensalfini

QSE Artistic Director

Listening Guide

Thank you for downloading *Macbeth in the Dark*. We're looking forward to sharing this experience with you!

Take your seats: Your favourite chair, a bean bag, a hammock on the veranda, a small knoll on a Scottish moor, whatever makes you comfortable.

Please switch your mobile devices off or to **silent**.

And finally, **embrace the Dark:** We invite you to listen in low lighting. Gather your coven and sit around a fire, settle in on your own and light a candle, take your torch under the covers or, if you're feeling really game, turn everything off and find yourself in complete darkness.

*"Stars, hide your fires;
Let not light see my black and deep desires."*

Stay in touch: #MacbethInTheDark #MurderInTheDark #QLDShakespeareEnsemble

DIRECTING FROM A (SAFE) DISTANCE



I keep this quote from director Peter Sellars in front of me these days: "*The virus is our teacher.*" If this is correct, and I think it is, then much has been learned from this time of enforced lockdown/ quarantine/ physical-distancing - call it what you will.

One thing that has resounded emphatically during the past 6 months of empty theatre foyers around the world is that you can't keep performers down. They are gritty, flexible, driven creatures who will find a way to do what they do best. For our little company, the story of creating *Macbeth in the Dark* was one of discovery: how powerful creativity is once it gets unleashed and how ingenious human beings can be when challenged.

QSE approached me early in the lockdown to attempt an audio version of *Macbeth* for their 2020 production. Live performance effectively disappeared once the implications of the Covid-19 lockdown became apparent. So, we would have to work at a distance, and in sound only. Now, sound is incredibly potent in triggering imagination, and I love the phrase, "*the pictures are better on radio,*" told to me years ago when I first began working in that medium. For me as director and for the actors it would mean putting deep focus on the power of the play's words in action - the speaking of the text. With no visual stimuli, the audience needed to be beguiled by the spoken word and its capacity to call up sensations in the hearing. The big challenge lay in working on those imaginary forces.

Everyone was at home; we could never be in the same room. That would be a huge challenge; actors crave the inspiration which comes from the creative collaboration we call rehearsal. We could not record in a sound studio; we would be relying on the equipment we already had - phones and recording apps. In the end, there would not be the togetherness of live performance - the back and forth between actors and audience that creates a particular energy in that particular moment. The prospect of creating this production was charged with hubris or craziness, but I was intrigued. It would be a challenge but one that I was absurdly enthusiastic about. There was just the

chance, given all the elements in the equation - the necessary "spare parts" plus ingenuity and creativity - that we could assemble a creation that would work. I was in.

This was going to be literally a "home-made" production. We would be recording in our bedroom "studios" via our own devices, and rehearsing via Zoom. Our early-stage "table work" was via computer screens. When it came to putting down performances, actors used their phones and sound-recording apps or microphones if they had them. They then uploaded the sound files to a drive in the cloud.

It took several weeks to rehearse and record - often second and third takes before the best results emerged; we learned as we went - there was that ingenuity and creativity again. The actors created their own individual recording "booths" under blankets, wrapped in doonas, inside cupboards, and even, surprisingly, in cars. They performed in the dark, alone, and at a distance with no visual stimuli except their imagination, and the sound of their scene-partner in their ear via Zoom. They found the energy that captured a thought, a reaction, an intention in sound. This was extraordinarily creative.

Once the recordings were completed and re-takes of a missed or spoiled line - passing trains, noisy birds and neighbours were the worst culprits - Dom, our sound engineer assembled the uploaded files. Post-production followed as music composed by members of the ensemble, and sound effects were layered in to the EQ'd dialogue tracks to create atmosphere and sound-scapes. During these weeks I shared the same digital audio workspace with Dominic - he in Brisbane, me in Toowoomba each on our individual screens - finalising the sound-story which you will hear.

The virus has been our teacher across the past 6 months in so many ways; I doubt collectively and individually that we will ever be the same again. One thing I didn't have to learn was that storytellers are vital to our existence. If nothing else, this project has kept our flame burning. We've tended it in the darkness and hope it brings light and warmth to yours.

Right now, I'm looking forward to the day when the company will all be together in the same room. We have a cast-party to enjoy.

With love,

Kate

THE PLAYERS (in order of appearance)

The Witches	<i>Fair is foul, And foul is fair</i>	Ellen Hardisty, Leah Fitzgerald-Quinn, Liliana Macarone
Duncan	King of Scotland	Tom Coyle
Sergeant	Arrives to tell King Duncan and his entourage of the victories of Macbeth	John Siggers
Malcolm	Eldest son of King Duncan	Sarah Doyle
Donalbain	Younger son of King Duncan	Ellen Hardisty
Lennox	A Scottish nobleman	Leah Fitzgerald-Quinn
Ross	A Scottish nobleman	Liliana Macarone
Macbeth	<i>It will have blood; they say, blood will have blood</i>	Rob Pensalfini
Banquo	A Scottish general, and Macbeth's close friend	Angus Thorburn
Lady Macbeth	<i>Come you spirits, That tend on mortal thoughts</i>	Rebecca Murphy
Messenger		Ellen Hardisty
Macduff	A Scottish nobleman	John Siggers
Fleance	Son of Banquo	Ellen Hardisty
Porter	<i>Who's there, i'the name of Beelzebub?</i>	Matt Gaffney
Old Man	Remembers events from 70 yrs ago	Matt Gaffney
The Apparitions	<i>Be bloody, bold, and resolute</i>	Tom Coyle, Matt Gaffney, Leah Fitzgerald-Quinn
The Murderers		Matt Gaffney, Tom Coyle

Lady Macduff

Son

Doctor

Gentlewoman

Seyton

Siward

Son of Macduff

A loyal follower of Macbeth

An English General

Ellen Hardisty

Sarah Doyle

Tom Coyle

Leah Fitzgerald-Quinn

Angus Thorburn

Matt Gaffney

THE CREATIVE & PRODUCTION TEAM

Director

Production Manager

Sound Design/Editor

Musical Director

Original Music

Musicians

Kate Wilson

Kylli Davies

Dom Guilfoyle

Rob Pensalfini

Rob Pensalfini & Liliana Macarone

Rob Pensalfini, Liliana Macarone
& Leah Fitzgerald-Quinn

Train With QSE

20

20



THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED

Mon Sept 28th – Fri Oct 2nd 2020 | 9am-5pm | \$395 (early bird)

Theatre of the Oppressed is a powerful tool for people who want to effect change in their own lives and in their communities.

Delivered over five days this intensive includes fun, energetic, practical group exercises and forms (including Image Theatre, Forum Theatre, and Cop in the Head); plus opportunities to ‘be a joker’ and participate in discussions on TO history, philosophy, and pedagogy.

LEARN MORE

SHAKESPEARE SCENE STUDY

Sat Oct 3rd – Mon Oct 5th | 9am-5pm | \$295 (early bird)

This three-day course will instruct participants in many of the methods used in QSE’s rehearsal room, which contribute to the clarity, energy, and magic of our productions. Each participant will be given a scene to learn in advance of the workshop, and will then work with a scene partner and other participants. This collaborative process will leave no stone unturned in the pursuit of fully embodying Shakespeare’s texts with precision, passion, and presence.

LEARN MORE

Cast & Creative Team



Kylii Davies

Production Manager



Dom Guilfoyle

Sound Design/Editor



Kate Wilson

Director



Tom Coyle

Duncan / Murderer 2 /
Apparition 1 / Doctor



Sarah Doyle

Malcolm / Son (of
Macduff)



Leah Fitzgerald-Quinn

Witch 3 / Lennox /
Apparition 2 /
Gentlewoman/Servant/
Musician



Matt Gaffney

Porter / Old Man /
Murderer 1 / Apparition
3 / Siward



Ellen Hardisty

Witch 1 / Messenger /
Fleance / Donalbain /
Lady Macduff

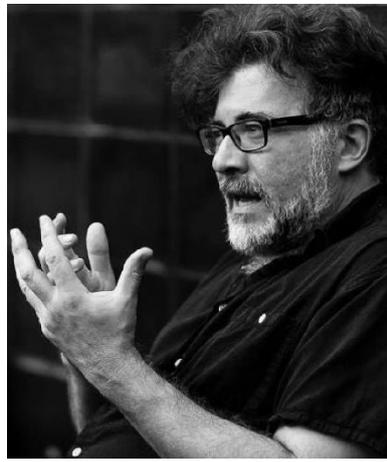


Liliana Macarone

Witch 2 / Ross/
Musician



Rebecca Murphy
Lady Macbeth



Rob Pensalfini
Macbeth/ Musician



John Siggers
Sergeant / Macduff



Angus Thorburn
Banquo / Seyton

About QSE

Since its inception in 2001, the Queensland Shakespeare Ensemble has gained a reputation for energetic, accessible, and unique productions, world-class training, and a commitment to community through projects such as the renowned Shakespeare Prison Project.

Vision

We use Shakespeare as a platform for positive change.

Mission

The Queensland Shakespeare Ensemble exists to bring the language of Shakespeare to communities. QSE strives to strengthen the connections between and within communities by:

*sharing epic and eternal stories with a live audience
creating evocative, engaging experiences in communities
making Shakespeare accessible to all
giving a voice to the marginalised
reflecting the contemporary human condition
developing an Ensemble of Artist managers
inspiring a collaborative artistic and business environment*

SUPPORT QSE

Donate Today

The Queensland Shakespeare Ensemble is an unfunded not-for-profit organisation. Our sustainability is owed much to the sheer spirit of our past and present artists and the generosity of our community. No matter how big or small your contribution is, we thank you for supporting us.

*'But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
And we'll not fail.'*

Help Us Spread the Word

You can also support QSE by: [Signing up to our mailing list](#), tagging us in your social media posts, using the hashtags #MacbethInTheDark and #MurderInTheDark, or sharing our website qldshakespeare.org

2020 Company

CORE ENSEMBLE

Sarah Doyle	Marketing Team
Leah Fitzgerald-Quinn	Shakespeare's Shorts Finance Assistant
Ellen Hardisty	Finance Officer
Liliana Macarone	Shakespeare Beyond Manager
Rebecca Murphy	General Manager Marketing Team
Rob Pensalfini	Artistic Director
John Siggers	Partnerships Manager
Angus Thorburn	Administration/ Training Coordinator

ASSOCIATE ARTIST

Frances Marrington	Education Officer
--------------------	-------------------

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

President: Lisa Durnian
Secretary: Isaac Holtby
Treasurer: Kylii Davies
General Member: Katie Hail-Jares

