William Shakespeare’s MACBETH Director: Israfil Shaheen



Playwright: William Shakespeare

Director: Israfil Shaheen

Group: Department of Theatre and Performance Studies, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Language: Bengali

Duration: 1 hr 30 mins

The Play

The play begins in a military camp, where the Scottish King Duncan hears the news that his generals, Macbeth and Banquo, have defeated two separate invading armies one from Ireland, led by the rebel Macdonald and another from Norway. Macbeth is a brave and loyal Thane to King Duncan. After hearing a prophecy that he will become king himself, Macbeth is overcome by ambition and greed. Bolstered by the prophecy and his wife’s encouragement, he kills King Duncan and takes the

throne. Afterwards, Macbeth's guilt, fear, and paranoia lead him to commit even more murders to secure his power. His confidence in the prophecies eventually leads to his down fall and he is overthrown and killed by those he had wronged.

Director's Note

Border-crossing and timeless author Shakespeare is one of the focal points in my artistic engagement in theatre for the last twenty five years .Working on Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, for me, is questioning about the dynamics of contemporary political power structure in Bangladesh and the globe as well. Since theatrical creation is always a collaborative effort, this production of ***Macbeth*** is also an outcome of a group effort that comes from my colleagues and students (performers) in terms of dramaturgy, scenography, choreography and acting. At the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies in University of Dhaka, my works primarily concentrates on the pedagogy of training the students as performers, and then I try to set the aesthetic criteria for a theatrical production that seeks to generate its meaning in relation to the immediate realities of people. They never give the answers to the vibrant questions of the time, but offer various choices so that audience can think and ponder. This production will also engage the audience in same way.

The Director

Dr. Israfil Shaheen is an internationally acclaimed director based in Bangladesh, and a Professor at the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies, University of Dhaka. He graduated from the National School of Drama (India) in 1991, and obtained PhD on political theatre from the Rabindra Bharati University (Kolkata, India) in 1999. He served the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies as its Chair from 2006 to 2009. He has taught at Rabindra Bharati University in India, conducted numerous workshops, and delivered lectures on acting, improvisation, and ethnographic

research in Bangladesh, India, South Korea, China, Russia, UAE, USA and United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, Poland, France, Czech Republic etc.

The Playwright

William Shakespeare (26 April 1564 – 23 April 1616) was an English poet, playwright and actor, widely regarded as the greatest writer of the English language and the world's greatest dramatist. His plays have been translated into every major living language and are performed more often than those of any other playwright.

The Group

In 1989, a subsidiary course on Theatre was instituted directly under the supervision of the Dean of Arts at the University of Dhaka. A similar course on Music was instituted in 1992, also under the Dean of Arts. These two separate units were brought together in August 1994 and named Department of Theatre and Music.

Now after some administrative and pedagogic transformation the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies sets its educational and artistic criteria that envisions to produce Graduates and Postgraduates through its praxis in context of local, regional and global histories, trends, aesthetics and politics.

Cast & Credits

Witch &Apparition: Tamanna Islam, Farzia Hoque Farin, Adity Chatterjee

Macbeth: Rageeb Nayeem, S M Latiful Khabir

Lady Macbeth: Kirtee Bejoya

Duncan: Syed Al Mehedi Hasan

Malcolm: Moammmad Rafiqul Islam Sabuj

Donalbain: Rageeb Nayeem, S M Latiful Khabir

Banquo: Md. Tariqul Haque

Fleance: Md. Aminur Rahman,

Macduff: Moammmad Moniruzzaman Ripon

Lady Macduff: Tamanna Islam

Son of Macduff: Ahammed Raufur Rahim

Lennox: Md. Aklakuzzaman Anik

Ross: Abdullah Al Zabir

Captain: Md. Shamim Miah

Murderers: Md. Shamim Miah, Md. Aklakuzzaman Anik, Sk .Abdul Kiyum

Doctor: Md. Owali Hossain Amdad

Gentlewomen: Tamanna Islam, Farzia Hoque Farin

Seyton: Md. Sanzidul Islam

Attendants & Soldiers: Syed Al Mehedi Hasan, Md. Aklakuzzaman Anik, Sk. Abdul Kiyum, Md. Owali Hossain Amdad, Md. Shamim Miah, Md. Tariqul Haque, Rageeb Nayeem, S M Latiful Khabir, Md. Sanzidul Islam, Md. Aminur Rahman, Ahammed Raufur Rahim

Set and Light (Redesign): Ashiq Rahman Leeon

Directorial Assistants: Tanvir Nahid Khan, Mohsina Akhter, Amit Chowdhury

Technical Assistant: Shahabuddin Miah

Makeup and Costume Design: Kazi Tamanna Haque Sigma,Ummey Somaiya

Costume Design Supervision: Wahida Mollick

Choreography: Amit Chowdhury

Music: Mohsina Akhter

Music Operation: Rudra Sawjal

Stage Managers: Md. Shamim Miah, Farzia Hoque Farin

Production Manager: Rafiqul Islam Sabuj

Overall Coordination: Ahmedul Kabir

Dramaturge: **Shahman Moishan**

Playwright: **William Shakespeare**

Director: **Israfil Shaheen**

Crossings : Exploring the facets of Lady Macbeth

The Play

Four performers represent the facets of Lady Macbeth, in constant conflict, to create a fluid performance, bringing together elements of Indian classical dance, movement, the original text of Macbeth, Hindustani classical, folk and tribal music.
Crossings mirrors the journey of Lady Macbeth through Shakespeare's original play. She receives a letter from Macbeth telling her of his encounter with three witches who foretell that he will be King. This plants the idea of killing King Duncan in Lady Macbeth's mind to further her husband's

ambition. Battling her own conscience and femininity, she plans and executes a gruesome murder. She is consequently haunted by the images of blood even as she plays a gracious hostess at the coronation banquet where the guests become suspicious of the truth. Bereft of support and company from her equally guilt-ridden husband, her world crumbles towards a lingering death.

Director's Note

Poetry, lyricism, allegory, metaphor, repetition, imagery, rhythm, representation, symbolism – all imbue both Shakespeare and classical dance. Lady Macbeth is arguably Shakespeare's most complex and layered female character. When I watched a Schezuan Opera actress in a riveting solo rendition of the character, I asked – could one interpret Lady Macbeth through Indian classical dance?

We embarked on this remarkable journey in December 2003, with text, music, movement and design responding to each another in a myriad different ways, encountering parallels in Indian mythology and iconography, finding fresh possibilities in rendering both text and dance. The performance, as it stands today, has been distilled through several versions since the first workshop production in April 2004, and presents Lady Macbeth in all her magnificent complexity.

The Director

Vikram Iyengar is a dancer, choreographer, theatre director, performing arts researcher, writer and curator based in Calcutta. He is the co-founder and artistic director of Ranan and project initiator of The Pickle Factory – a hub for dance and movement work. Noted for the conscious bringing together of kathak dance, movement, spoken drama and design, his production work spans choreography for stage and film, dance and theatre explorations, and performance collaborations. His international credits include co-choreography with Helena Waldmann for the Faust Prize nominated Made in Bangladesh. He also works regularly with contemporary choreographer Preethi

Athreya. He was the co-editor of India Theatre Forum's web-based e-Rang from 2009 to 2015, and is a guest lecturer/ presenter at several universities in India and abroad. He is an ARThink South Asia Arts Management Fellow (2013-2014) and Global Fellow of the International Society for the Performing Arts (ISPA), 2017. A member of Kick Start – an international platform for arts entrepreneurs, Vikram is currently one of the four Asian participants in the International Arts Leaders programme of the Australia Arts Council. He was awarded the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar for contemporary dance by the Sangeet Natak Akademi in December 2015.

The Group

Ranan is a kathak-based performance company with the express desire to demystify classical dance and make it accessible and enjoyable for a range of audiences. Its work is committed to sharing the magic of the arts, and spans three areas: practice, production, promotion. The group works with kathak dancers, actors, and designers, creating connections between different performance languages, and keeping kathak at the centre of our experiments.

Cast & Credits

Created With / Performers Anubha Fatehpuria
Dana Roy
Debashree Bhattacharya
Jayati Chakraborty

Original Music and Vocal Nageen Tanvir
Percussion Siddhartha Bhattacharyya
Stage and Costume Design Vikram Iyengar
Lighting Design Sudip Sanyal
Production Amlan Chaudhuri

Concept, Design, Direction Vikram Iyengar