



Macbeth – West Springfield High School

Thunder cracks and a flash of light blinds the spectators. A war drum is heard in the distance as two foes square up, ready for war. The rain is pouring, yet neither side yields in their defense. Finally, one alone stands victorious, holding the head of a violent usurper and returning Scotland from his tyrannical rule. Welcome to the world of Macbeth from West Springfield High School.

Macbeth was first written and performed around 1606 for King James I of England. While the original play is about 3 hours long, this version condenses it to about 80 minutes of actual stage time, making it move quickly. Macbeth and his friend Banquo hear a strange prophecy from a pair of witches, saying that Macbeth will be King of Scotland and Banquo's descendants will be kings as well. However, King Duncan decides to name his son Malcom as his heir. Macbeth, with the help of his wife, will have to find their way to the throne through more devious means, no matter the cost.

The leading couple of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth (played by Daniel Brunson and Afrahna Faruky) performed the roles with a very introspective approach, often in breathy, hushed tones. This approach is a refreshing characterization of the usually loud and extroverted couple. Despite the cutting of many important soliloquies for character development, both still managed to show a progression into madness with the limited chances they got.

The show thrived in ensemble interactions and character development. The comedic Porter, played by Ben Harper, stood out through several funny interactions, elevating the role beyond how the Porter has been portrayed in previous productions. Ross, played by Stella Sutton, through her role as the show's bringer of bad news, did an excellent job in her emotional depth. She was at the edge of tears when announcing that Macduff's wife and children had been killed, and stood out in the background during the show's final confrontation for her show of shock and worry. Finally, every ensemble member did a great job of making scenes more interesting through planned-out interactions, making the stage feel lively.

While not directly a part of the production, their social media presence was incredible. During this show alone, Liz Garcia Di Benedetto, Catherine Flanagan, and their publicity

crew got 2.6 million combined social media views across Instagram and TikTok. To put this in perspective, they got around the same amount of views as the population of the country of Gabon.

Coming back to the show itself, the set team (led by Kay Rogers, Clementine Schweigert, Grace Kihoro, and Bella Bean) executed an incredibly ambitious design. With nine staircases, 425 individually made stones, 6,000 screws, and only one week to put it all together, the set is as impressive as it is larger-than-life. The set also worked with the Special Effects (led by Rebecca Drobnis, Bella Bean, and Alex Reese) to make onstage rainfall. They poked holes in a PVC pipe that hung over the stage, which was then collected in a hidden container backstage, creating a unique effect unlike any other high school show of recent memory.

This show had some well-thought-out parts, from the special effects to the audience interactions, which made it enjoyable tomorrow, tomorrow, and tomorrow. Thank you, West Springfield High!