



Audience Preview Guide

Wednesday, October 1, 2019 -

Student Night at the Opera

Friday, October 4, 2019

Sunday, October 6, 2019

Valentine Theatre

Toledo Opera

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The Setting

The opera takes place in Scotland, mid 11th Century.

Act I

- Scene 1: The moors of Scotland
- Scene 2: A hall in Macbeth's castle

Act II

- Scene 1: The throne room
- Scene 2: A park outside Macbeth's castle
- Scene 3: A hall in the castle

Act III

- A dark cavern

Act IV

- Scene 1: Near the Scottish border
- Scene 2: A room in Macbeth's castle
- Scene 3: A hall in Macbeth's castle at Dunsinane

Characters

Macbeth
by Giuseppe Verdi
Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave

Duncano - King of Scotland
Macbeth - a Scottish general, Thane of Glamis
Banco - a brave, noble general
Lady Macbeth - Macbeth's wife
Lady in Waiting - Lady Macbeth's servant
Macduff- a Scottish nobleman
Malcolm - the son of King Duncan
Fleanzio - Banco's son
Doctor
Servant to Macbeth
Assassin
Herald

Synopsis

ACT I

Scene 1. The moors of Scotland

Returning from a victory, Macbeth and Banco are greeted by witches who hail Macbeth not only by his rightful title, Thane of Glamis, but also as Thane of Cawdor and future king. They hail Banco as the father of kings. Messengers greet Macbeth as Thane of Cawdor, explaining that the previous Thane has been executed. Macbeth broods over the other prophecy, but decides not to lift his hand against the king, while Banco reflects that the prophecies could be a trap leading to destruction.

Scene 2: A hall in Macbeth's castle.

Lady Macbeth reads a letter from Macbeth relating these events. She greets with delight the news that King Duncano intends to spend the night at their castle. When Macbeth arrives, she easily convinces him to murder the King. Late at night with the King and his entourage asleep, Macbeth has a hallucination of a dagger in the air before murdering the King and his attendants. He is filled with terror and guilt, and Lady Macbeth derides him, telling him to wash his hands and assume an appearance of innocence. Knocks at the gate herald the arrival of Macduff and Banco. Macduff goes to wake the King but must announce his murder instead. The news provokes cries to heaven for revenge from everyone, including Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

ACT II

Scene 1: The throne room.

Macbeth confesses to his wife that he is brooding over the witches' prophecy that Banco's descendants will be king. He resolves to have him killed. Lady Macbeth relishes the thought that their claim to the throne will soon be unchallenged, even if the cost is more blood.

Scene 2: A park outside Macbeth's castle.

Banco's forebodings are fulfilled when assassins kill him. But his son, Fleanzio, escapes.

Scene 3: A hall in the castle.

A banquet is in progress and Lady Macbeth invites the guests to drink. One of the assassins reports to Macbeth that Banco has been killed, but Fleanzio has escaped. Macbeth muses to his guests that Banco is absent. He is about to take Banco's seat when he is confronted by Banco's ghost, which only he can see. The guests are shocked by the sight of their King's madness. Macduff suspects Macbeth's hand in Banco's murder and decides to flee Scotland.

ACT III

A dark cavern.

The witches are preparing to summon Hecate when Macbeth appears, demanding to know his fate. They summon spirits that tell him first to beware of Macduff, next that he cannot be killed by anyone born of woman, and lastly that he cannot be killed until Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane. When he asks if Banco's children will be kings, he is shown a vision of eight kings with Banco indicating that they are his issue. Macbeth faints and the witches vanish. Lady Macbeth enters and convinces him to kill Fleanzio. He agrees and tells her that he will also have Macduff and his family put to death. They swear bloodshed on anyone who opposes them.

ACT IV

Scene 1: Near the Scottish border.

The refugees of Macbeth's tyranny lament the state of their homeland. Macduff mourns the death of his family. Prince Malcolm orders the soldiers to take branches from Birnam Wood as camouflage and exhorts them to follow him to free Scotland.

Scene 2: A room in Macbeth's castle.

Lady Macbeth walks in her sleep, reliving the murders for which she is culpable, and trying to wash the blood from her hands.

Scene 3: A hall in Macbeth's castle at Dunsinane.

Faced with a stream of desertions, Macbeth takes comfort from the witches' latest prophecies. He is weary of life. News of his wife's death confirms his feelings about the futility of existence. When soldiers announce that Birnam Wood is moving towards his castle, he realizes that the witches have deceived him, but is determined to die fighting.

The scene changes to a plain where the battle rages. On the battlefield, Macbeth confronts Macduff. When Macbeth boasts that none born of woman can kill him, Macduff replies he was born unnaturally, by Caesarean section. He kills the tyrant and hails Prince Malcolm as king as the people join in thanksgiving.

Giuseppe Verdi 1813-1901

The great Italian composer Giuseppe Fortunino Francesco Verdi was born in La Roncole on October 10, 1813. When he was still a child, Verdi's parents moved from Piacenza to Busseto, where the future composer's education was greatly facilitated by visits to the large library belonging to the local Jesuit school. Also in Busseto, Verdi was given his first lessons in composition.



Giuseppe Verdi
1813 - 1901

Displaying considerable talent from a very early age, he was assistant organist at the small local church by the time he was ten. In 1829, at the age of 13, he was an assistant conductor of the Busseto orchestra and an organist at the town church. In 1836, Verdi married Margherita Barezzi, the daughter of his benefactor, Antonio Barezzi.

Verdi went to Milan when he was twenty to continue his studies. He took private lessons in counterpoint while attending operatic performances, as well as concerts of, specifically, German music. Milan's beaumont association convinced him that he should pursue a career as a theatre composer. During the mid 1830s, he attended the Salotto Maffei salons in Milan, hosted by Clara Maffei.

His first successful opera, *Oberto*, opened at La Scala in 1839. However, his next opera, the comedy *Un Giorno di Regno* (King for a Day), was a complete failure. To add tragedy to insult, Verdi lost his wife and two young children to illness within the same year, and the despondent composer resolved to give up music altogether. Fortunately, the manager of La Scala persuaded him to persevere and write his next opera - *Nabucco*, which premiered in 1842 to great acclaim and secured Verdi's

reputation as a major figure in the music world.

Verdi received a commission from Florence's Teatro della Pergola with no particular opera specified. He only started working on *Macbeth* in September 1846, the driving reason for that choice being the availability of a particular singer, the baritone Felice Varesi who would sing the title role

Writing to his librettist Piave, Verdi made it clear how important this subject was to him: "...This tragedy is one of the greatest creations of man... If we can't make something great out of it let us at least try to do something out of the ordinary." Their version follows Shakespeare's play quite closely, but instead of three witches, as in the play, there is a large chorus of witches. The last act begins with an assembly of refugees on the English border, and, in the revised version, ends with a chorus of bards celebrating victory over the tyrant.

As early as 1852, Verdi was asked by Paris to revise *Macbeth* in that city, and again in 1864, Verdi was asked to provide additional music - a ballet and a final chorus - for a production planned at the Théâtre-Lyrique Impérial du Châtelet in Paris. The new version was first performed on April 21, 1865 in a French translation. The opera was given at La Scala in the autumn of 1865.

The Toledo Opera production uses sections from each version, principally from the Paris revision, including Lady Macbeth's dynamic aria *La luce langue* and the Apparition Scene. We retain Macbeth's final aria of remorse, *Mal per me*, before the triumphal final chorus.

Upon his death in 1901, there were scenes of national mourning for the man who was a great musician, philanthropist and patriot to all of Italy. At the funeral, the 28,000 people who lined the streets of Milan broke out softly but spontaneously into "Va pensiero," the great chorus of the Hebrew slaves from *Nabucco* - a song which had become Italy's unofficial national anthem. Verdi was buried with his second wife Giuseppina Strepponi at the Casa di Riposo, a retirement home for elderly musicians that was established by Verdi himself.

Something Wicked This Way Comes

Macbeth is one wicked opera.

Giuseppe Verdi took Shakespeare's roiling brew of dark magic, murder, and madness and shape shifted it into something even more intense - an exploration of tyranny and a mind-bending operatic trip into the disintegration of the human soul.

Shakespeare's Play

The opera follows the play quite closely. Written around 1606, *Macbeth* is absolutely central to our literary heritage - shorthand for savage ambition, guilt, and twisted prophecy. The poetry is so deeply entangled in popular culture that it is practically part of our DNA. We all know bits of it -

- The malign glee of the witches: Double, double toil and trouble, Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.
- Their announcement of Macbeth's arrival: By the pricking of my thumbs, Something wicked this way comes.
- Macbeth's hallucinatory trajectory to murder: Is this a dagger which I see before me?
- His lady, unhinged by the horror of what she has done, her ruthless clarity of purpose turned inside out: Out, damned spot! Out, I say! ... who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him.

We can marvel at this creation - but let's spare a moment to pity the real Macbeth, who should be languishing in comfortable obscurity as just another medieval Scottish king. Instead, his reputation (along with that of his wife) was trashed for posterity by a playwright who prized dramatic excitement above historic accuracy.

Shakespeare also used *Macbeth* to curry favour with a royal patron. That royal patron was James I of England, aka James VI of Scotland. King James loved the arts and one of his first acts on ascending the English throne in 1603 was to grant a royal patent to Shakespeare's acting troupe, thereby increasing the social status, income, and job security of the players. Shakespeare was happy to return the favour with a little flattery.

The witches were sure to go over well with King James, as Garry Wills commented in his book, *Verdi's Shakespeare*: "Shakespeare could count on his audience's absolute belief in witches. His government was still hanging them, and King James had personally interrogated witches, passed laws against them, and written a treatise on them (*Daemonologie*)."

The story of *Macbeth* (witches and all) came from one of Shakespeare's favourite sources, a massive history of Great Britain called *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, (commonly known as *Holinshed's Chronicles*), published in 1587, and itself based on *Scotorum Historiae* (1526-7) by Hector Boece.



Royal Opera House Covent Garden



Sketch of an early production of the opera.

Both Boece and Holinshed portray Banquo as an accomplice in Macbeth's murder of King Duncan. Scholars today believe Banquo was invented by Boece, but at the time he was considered the founder of the Stuart dynasty. Since King James fancied himself a direct descendant of Banquo, it would never do for Banquo to be shown as an assassin. Shakespeare therefore made him a voice of nobility and conscience. He even had the witches show Macbeth a vision of Banquo's descendants—a line of eight kings that culminated in a ruler with "twofold balls and treble scepters" - a reference to King James who was crowned twice - as King of Scotland and then as King of England (there are two scepters for the English crown). Verdi did not feel the need to keep this little detail in the opera.

The play tinkered with history in other respects. Shakespeare's wise old King Duncan was actually killed in battle in 1040 at the age of 39, after a mere six years of apparently incompetent rule. The real Macbeth was

Something Wicked (continued)

Duncan's first cousin, both were grandsons of King Malcolm II, and both had reasonable claims to the throne. By defeating Duncan and seizing power, Macbeth was following established tradition; he was no more and no less brutal than any other ruler of the time.



Dorset Opera Festival

The real Macbeth was not such a bad king either. He was apparently a wise, strong, successful king, presiding over a land that was surprisingly prosperous and peaceful for that bloodthirsty era. He even had the time and money to leave his kingdom for a pilgrimage to Rome — sure sign, say historians, of a stable country and effective leadership. Macbeth ruled Scotland from 1040 to 1057. The action that in the play hurtles through a span of weeks or months in reality covered 17 years between Macbeth's accession and his defeat.

But historical inaccuracy rarely fazes playwrights – or opera composers. A byword for ruthless ambition, Macbeth and his Lady between them are among Shakespeare's most notorious villains – right up there with Richard III, who was similarly maligned by the Bard.

Now, a millennium after Macbeth's death, his fictional doppelgänger still holds sway – and nothing is likely to wash this stain from his reputation!

Verdi's Opera

In 1846, when Verdi received a commission for an opera at Florence's Teatro della Pergola, he contemplated three subjects: Grillparzer's *Die Anfrau* and Schiller's *Die Räuber*, both of which would require a fine tenor, and *Macbeth*, which would need a great baritone. The decision to go with *Macbeth* came down to the availability of a specific baritone – Felice Varesi, for whom Verdi later composed the role of Rigoletto.

These were still the days when operas were composed for the voices at hand and the fluke of a singer's schedule could determine what was written for the stage. Not a note of *Macbeth* was composed until after the singers were engaged (and clearly, in Verdi's mind, Macbeth HAD to be a baritone; tenors need not apply).

Generally speaking, singing a line takes three times as long as speaking it. So although *Macbeth* is Shakespeare's shortest tragedy, it had to be condensed even more for the opera stage.

The librettist, Francesco Maria Piave, set to verse Verdi's own prose synopsis of the play – and put up with endless harangues from the composer. Verdi's letters to Piave went on at great length about the need to keep the work concise: *I beg you to keep your verses short; the shorter they are, the more effective they will be ... there must not be a single superfluous word ... Brevity and sublimity! ... FEW WORDS ... FEW WORDS ... FEW BUT SIGNIFICANT ... CONCISE STYLE! ... FEW WORDS! Understood?*

Shakespeare's already concise play was distilled, boiled down to its essence. Verdi ruthlessly cut out entire scenes and characters. He reduced King Duncan's part to a walk-on.

And when Macbeth is told of his wife's death, his great *Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow* speech was stripped to its last desolate lines: *Life ... is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.*

Even with so much of Shakespeare's addictive poetry cut out, the impact is riveting. For Verdi, the drama was paramount. He was leaving bel canto behind, working toward something gritty, dark, even grotesque.

A control freak about every element of the opera, he coached his singers exhaustively, rehearsed and conducted the performances, and oversaw the lighting, costumes, and scenic effects.

He sent detailed stage and music directions to Varesi, admonishing him, *Study the dramatic situation and the*



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

Something Wicked (continued)

words well; the music will come by itself. In a word, I'd rather you served the poet better than you serve the composer.

In her memoirs, Marianna Barbieri-Nini, the first Lady Macbeth, recalls Verdi's obsessive rehearsals of the magnificent duet that takes place just after the murder of Duncan. *You might think that I exaggerate, but it was rehearsed more than 150 times: to ensure, the Maestro said, that it was closer to speech than to singing ... On the evening of the dress rehearsal ... there we were, ready, in costume, the orchestra in the pit, the chorus on stage – when Verdi beckoned to Varesi and me, called us into the wings and asked us, as a favour ... to rehearse that damned duet again at the piano ... Varesi, fed up with this extraordinary request, tried raising his voice a little, saying: "For God's sake, we've already rehearsed it 150 times!" "In half an hour it'll be 151." We were forced to obey the tyrant. I still remember the threatening looks Varesi shot at him; clenching the hilt of his sword, he seemed about to murder Verdi, as he would later murder Duncan. However, he yielded, resigning himself to his fate. The 151st rehearsal took place while the audience clamoured impatiently in the theatre.*



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Verdi's perfectionism carried on long past the opera's 1847 première. He campaigned unsuccessfully to replace Eugenia Tadolini for the 1848 Naples première because she looked and sounded too beautiful: *Tadolini has a beautiful and attractive appearance; I would like Lady Macbeth to be ugly and evil. Tadolini sings to perfection; I would like the Lady not to sing. Tadolini has a stupendous voice, clear, limpid, powerful; I would like the Lady to have a harsh, stifled, and hollow voice. Tadolini's voice has an angelic quality; I would like the Lady's voice to be diabolical.*

This does not mean Verdi rejected musical beauty (there is plenty in *Macbeth*). But the dramatic truth behind the couple's emotional journey trumped the niceties of an elegant bel canto line.



"What's done cannot be undone."

Later, in 1865, Verdi prepared a revised version of the opera for Paris (the version usually performed today). Among other changes, he added Lady M's show-stopping aria *La luce langue* and the couple's duet at the end of act 3 and revised the profoundly moving *Patria Oppressa* chorus for the Scottish refugees. And he continued to insist on dramatic integrity. When the Paris theatre, trying to give an expensive tenor more to do, proposed letting Macduff sing a stanza of Lady M's Brindisi, Verdi said, no way, insisting: *There are three roles in this opera, and three is all there can be: Lady Macbeth, Macbeth, and the chorus of witches.* (He was overruled for the Paris performance!). What is most astounding in the opera is the psychological journey of the couple. Macbeth, at first the weaker of the two, embarks on a killing spree and instigates a reign of terror that gains terrible momentum.

His lady early in the opera is already a kind of half demon, allied with darkness and hell, goading her husband to kill and then to man up and stop falling apart. With each crime she tells him, *it is done ... it cannot be undone ... it will be forgotten ... the dead cannot return.* But as she relives it all in her final sleepwalking scene and cries, *What's done cannot be undone*, the words are no longer a cue to move on with life, but the ultimate hellish realization that she is alone in terrible isolation with her guilt, destroyed by the implacable, unchangeable horror of what she has done.

As for Macbeth, even as he clings to the belief that victory is possible, before he learns his wife is dead, before he goes through the motions of his final battle, he says *I feel the life drying up in my veins*, sensing already that his legacy will be curses, not compassion, honour, or love.

Macbeth Costume Designs for

Toledo Opera by Ivan Stefanutti

How many of these can you spot in the opera?



Macbeth Costume Designs (continued)



What to Listen For

Historians claim that *Macbeth* was a watershed opera for Verdi. The score of *Macbeth* features little of the melodic abundance that made Verdi famous. In fact, the composer went out of his way to avoid making this score too pretty, insisting that the drama was not served by lyricism. Lady Macbeth, as the true protagonist of the story, has the most commanding of the great solos, and her famous sleepwalking scene in Act IV is a study of guilt unlike any other.

Act I: *Vieni t'affretta!* (Lady Macbeth)

Lady Macbeth reads a letter from her husband, telling of his encounter with a group of witches who have made three prophecies: that Macbeth, Thane of Glamis, will become Thane of Cawdor; that he will be crowned King of Scotland; and that his fellow general, Banquo, will be the father of kings. Ghena Dimitrova sings in this San Carlo Napoli production from 1984.



<https://youtu.be/9a7XrkCmZTw>

Act I: *Gran duetto* (Macbeth and Lady Macbeth)

Macbeth returns home, greeting his lady (Oh donna mia!). In just a few lines of intense recitative, they agree that the murder must be carried out that night. Sprightly martial music announces the arrival of the king, and the Macbeths go to greet him. Piero Cappuccilli (Macbeth) and Shirley Verrett (Lady Macbeth) in this production from Teatro alla Scala.



<http://youtu.be/mjIZdHEdNdY>

Act II: *Perché mi sfuggi - La luce langue* (Macbeth and Lady Macbeth)

Lady Macbeth asks her husband why he is brooding. They've got away with the murder of King Duncan, and the throne is his. But he recalls the witches' prophecy that Banquo would father kings. In a few short words, they agree that Banquo too must die. As Macbeth leaves, Lady Macbeth urges him not to waver in his intent. Kostas Paskalis as Macbeth and Josephine Barstow as Lady Macbeth in this 1972 Glyndebourne production.



<http://youtu.be/RRRRXqx-Uss>

Act II: *Si colmi il calice* (Macbeth, Lady Macbeth and Banquo)

An assassin enters and reports to Macbeth that Banquo is dead but his son has escaped. Pomp and celebration turn into dismay, embarrassment, and horror as Macbeth hallucinates seeing the bloody ghost of Banquo, and Lady M desperately tries to salvage her party. Zeljko Lucic is Macbeth, Maria Guleghina is Lady Macbeth, and John Relyea is Banquo in this 2008 Metropolitan Opera production.



<http://youtu.be/fLV5bGPgsSQ>

Act III: *Macbeth's second encounter with the witches* (Macbeth)

Macbeth returns to the witches to learn more about his destiny. They call up a series of apparitions. The first tells Macbeth to beware of Macduff, the second proclaims that no man of woman born will harm him. The third promises he will be invincible until he sees Birnam Wood moving towards him. But he is still obsessed by the fear that Banquo's descendants will gain the throne. Macbeth's belief in the prophecies will give him an excuse for vengeance and propel him into a reign of terror as he strives to wipe out every threat to his power. Kostas Paskalis is Macbeth in this 1972 Glyndebourne production.



<http://youtu.be/Kv9JbnQCguk>

In Verdi's Time

1813 Giuseppe Fortunino Francesco Verdi born

1814 Napoleon abdicates and is exiled

1816 Rossini's *Barber of Seville* premieres in Rome



Maria Callas
as Lady Macbeth

1818 Handel's *Messiah* premieres in the U.S. in Boston, MA

1820 Charles Macintosh of Scotland begins selling raincoats (Macs)

1822 Frederick Law Olmsted (Central park landscape architect) is born

1824 Beethoven's 9th Symphony premieres in Vienna

1826 3rd U.S. President Thomas Jefferson dies

1828 American dictionary patented by Webster

1829 1st typewriter is patented by William Austin Burt

1830 Donizetti's opera, *Anna Bolena*, premieres in Milan

1832 Louisa May Alcott (American author) is born

1833 Oberlin College, the first truly coeducational college opens

1835 Vincenzo Bellini, Italian composer of *Norma*, dies at age 33

1836 Battle of the Alamo ends after 13 days of fighting killing 257 including Davy Crockett

1837 Queen Victoria ascends the British throne at the age of 18. She rules for 63 years

1839 Georges Bizet, French composer of *Carmen*, is born in Paris

1842 Felix Mendelssohn's 3rd *Scottish* Symphony premieres

1843 *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens is published

1844 Verdi's opera, *Hernani*, premieres in Venice

1847 Giuseppe Verdi's *Macbeth* premieres in Florence

1849 Harriet Tubman first escapes slavery in Maryland

1851 *Rigoletto* premieres in Venice

1854 Florence Nightingale is sent to the Crimean War

1855 Charlotte Brontë, (*Jane Eyre*), dies at 38

1857 Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra* premieres in Venice

1860 Russian playwright Anton Chekhov is born

1864 President Lincoln establishes Thanksgiving as a national holiday

1867 Johann Strauss' *Blue Danube* waltz premieres in Vienna

1869 Mahatma Gandhi born in Porbandar, Kathiawar Agency of British India

1871 Verdi's *Aida* premieres at Teatro alla Scala

1876 Alexander Graham Bell patents the telephone

1879 Gilbert & Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance* premieres

1881 American Red Cross founded by Clara Barton

1884 Statue of Liberty is presented to the U.S. in Paris

1886 Chief Geronimo surrenders ending last major U.S. - Indian war

1888 Vincent van Gogh cuts off his left ear in argument with Paul Gauguin

1891 Henrik Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler* premieres in Oslo

1895 Tchaikovsky's ballet *Swan Lake* premieres in St. Petersburg

1899 Scott Joplin granted copyright for *Maple Leaf Rag*

1901 Verdi dies on July 25



Witches of the Royal Opera House

Pre-Opera Activities

Cross that line, Macbeth!

Purpose

This activity is specifically designed for students who have not had previous in-depth exposure to Shakespeare's play, although any students can benefit from the content explored. As an introduction to the opera, it is designed to get students thinking about the text in ways that relate to their own lives and values, accessing prior knowledge of the themes and issues they will be seeing in the production. It asks students to voice opinions and move around the room to depict those opinions physically.

What to Do

(1) Unroll a big piece of tape (e.g. duct tape) across the floor, so you divide the classroom into two equal spaces. Move all desks to the edges of the room.

(2) Tell the class that today you're going to play a "game" called "Cross that Line." You will read a statement, and the students will need to choose to stand on one side of the line depending on whether they agree or disagree with the statement. After each statement, ask two or three students on each side why they have chosen to stand where they are. You may choose to let students stand on the line if they are undecided.

(3) Ask students to react to the following statements in the course of the game. Have those who agree with the statement stand on one side of the line and those who disagree on the other.

- Human beings have free will.
- Some things that occur are "fated."
- Behind every successful man is an ambitious woman.
- Songs can convey feelings better than words alone.
- People without children are naturally more selfish.
- Killing is always wrong.
- Wives should always support their husbands.
- Ambition is a good quality.
- You can't ever trust people in power.
- Revenge is appropriate when one has been wronged.
- Witches are real.
- It's important to always follow your conscience.
- Crime doesn't pay.
- Crimes will eventually be found out.
- Criminals suffer psychologically from their crimes.
- The ends justify the means.
- Human nature is basically good.
- Human nature is basically evil.

(4) After sharing opinions on these statements, have students return to their desks. Tell them that all of these issues appear in the opera *Macbeth*. Tell them that you might play the game again once they've finished seeing the production to determine whether their opinions have changed.

Post-Opera Activities

Personal Response

1. What surprised you the most about Verdi's opera, *Macbeth*?

2. What struck you as the most important theme in the opera?

Post-Opera Activities

Critical Response

Create Your Own Review of *Macbeth*

Write a review of *Macbeth*. Use the following chart to organize your thoughts. You can be critical, describing what you liked and what you thought needed improvement. In your review mention the plot, the music, the singing and acting, and visual elements such as the scenery and costumes.

Notes for review of Macbeth	
Music	
Plot	
Vocal Artists (quality of voice and acting)	
Scenery and Costumes	
Overall Rating from 1 (low) to 5 (high)	