Calgary Opera Study Guide *Macbeth*

Composed by Giuseppe Verdi with Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave and revisions by Andrea Maffei

Calgary Opera's Students Only Dress Rehearsal at the Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium

Matinée Final Dress Rehearsal Thursday, April 20th, 2023, 2:00PM

We acknowledge that together we live, work and play on the traditional territories of the peoples of Treaty 7 region, which includes the Blackfoot First Nation tribes of Siksika, Kainai and Piikani, the Tsuut'ina, the Iyarhe Nakoda First Nation tribes of Bearspaw, Chiniki and Wesley and the Region 3 Métis Nation of Alberta.

Hello educators, students and families,

Welcome to our final mainstage production of the year, also our first Matinée final dress rehearsal, of Giuseppe Verdi's *Macbeth*.

This is the first time this opera has been performed by Calgary Opera in our 50 year history! Needless to say, we are very excited to present this classic opera that is also a classic Shakespeare play, read and adored by millions since it was first written in the early 1600's. Although it is the shortest of Shakespeare's tragedies, *Macbeth* no less deals with the primal human desires and values that were explored in all of Shakespeare's tragic plays—revenge, love, ambition, hatred and power.

Verdi does the play justice by adapting it for the most dramatic of art forms, opera. This new production of this work takes the story one step further, with technological enhancements that further enhance the supernatural theme. Though the biggest difference between the original play and the opera is the role that Lady Macbeth takes in encouraging the murderous path to the throne, Verdi held true to the original work.

As I mentioned, this is our first matinée dress rehearsal. We've done this to encourage high school students in Calgary and area to attend the performance. While reading the original play as a part of the Alberta ELA curriculum allows one to delve into the vocabulary, rhyme and rhythm of the work, seeing it performed opens the door to deeper understanding, allowing students to vicariously experience the thoughts and motivations of the characters as the story unrolls. The performing arts are another way into literary works that for some is the most tangible way of learning, for others, a welcome addition.

My hope is that you, as an audience member, experience this story in a new way that brings you closer to the work *and* sparks an interest in opera.

See you at the Jubilee,

Patricia Kesler

Education and Community Engagement Manager

Thank you to our generous Education and Community Engagement supporters in the 2022/23 Season:

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Stalinski Family Fund

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Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium (S.A.J.A.)

The Venue

Calgary Opera performs their three mainstage operas of the season at the Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium. There is a sister auditorium in Edmonton called the Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium. Together they make up the Alberta Jubilee Auditoria which were gifted to Alberta's citizens in 1957 as premiere performing arts venues from the Alberta government. In 2004 they underwent extensive renovations to improve the seating, acoustics and audience experience. Calgary Opera is one of the resident companies of the Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium along with Alberta Ballet.

Generally speaking there is no concession service available for dress rehearsals but there are water fountains and washrooms on every floor.

Seating

There are approximately 2400 seats in the theatre, including the main floor as well as first and second floor balconies and terraces. During our dress rehearsal performances, usually the first floor balcony and terraces are open, with overflow coming down onto the back of the main floor.

For this rehearsal the tickets are assigned, please check your ticket to see where you are seated. Signs and staff in the Jubilee will help direct you to the appropriate seats.

Accessibility

There are many accessible seats available on the main floor and first floor balcony for those with reduced mobility, as well as removable seats that allow for wheelchair patrons and their companions. There is an elevator and escalator in the north lobby which takes patrons up to the first floor. There is only stair access to the second floor from the first floor.

There is accessible parking located close to the main doors of the Jubilee Auditorium

For more information on seating, accessibility, parking or the venue please visit:

https://jubileeauditorium.com/calgary

Car parking

There is paid parking at $7 per spot surrounding the auditorium as well as a drop off and pick up area outside of the main and north doors. Please see next page for bus pickup, dropoff and parking.

Transit

Calgary Transit C-Train or LRT has a station at the Jubilee Auditorium along the Red Line called the SB SAIT/AUARTS/Jubilee stop. From the stop there is immediate access to the building that leads to the Jubilee.

S.A.J.A.—Bus loops

Arriving by Bus and Bus Parking

Busses have two options if they are planning to park and stay:

1. Parking in the North Surface lot and pay via credit card at one of the machines or the Calgary Parking Authority app for 2 parking spaces $7/parking space for a total of $14.
2. There is limited bus parking along Jubilee Crescent as well, see map below. Busses can park along this area but cannot block the road and it is not guaranteed as it is a public road.

Option 3 is choosing not to stay:

3. If the bus driver decides to stop and drop rather than park and stay, leave and then return closer to the estimated end of show.

Students can be dropped off at either one of the “bus loops” at the Main Doors or North Doors as seen on the map above. The North Doors are the busiest entrances for pickups/drop-offs. If there is a significant lineup of busses at one of the entrance, drive around to the other entrance.

SYNOPSIS

Composed by Giuseppe Verdi with Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave and Revisions by Andrea Maffei
First performed at Teatro Della Pergola in Florence, 1847; Revised Version at the Théatre Lyrique de Paris, 1865
Sung in Italian with English titles projected above the stage
Run time is approximately 3 hours

ACT 1

Place: Scotland, in the northernmost region of what is now the United Kingdom.
Time: 11th Century
Macbeth and Banquo, leaders of the Scottish army, meet a group of witches who prophesy the future. They address Macbeth as Thane of Cawdor and King of Scotland, and tell Banquo that he will be the father of kings. The two men try to learn more, but the witches vanish. Messengers arrive with news that Duncan, the current king of Scotland, has made Macbeth Thane of Cawdor. The first part of the witches' prediction has come true.
In Macbeth's castle, Lady Macbeth reads a letter from her husband telling her of the events that have just transpired. A servant announces that Duncan will soon arrive at the castle. Lady Macbeth quickly realizes her ambitions. Macbeth enters and she tells him that they must kill the king. Duncan arrives and Macbeth has a vision of a dagger. He then commits the murder, but when the deed is done he tells his wife how the act had frightened him. She insists that Macbeth finds more courage. Banquo and Macduff, a nobleman, discover the king murdered. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth pretend to be horrified and join the others in condemning the murder.

ACT 2

Macbeth has become king, but his obsession and paranoia over maintaining power haunts him. Duncan's son, Malcolm, is suspected of having killed his father and has fled to England. Macbeth remains concerned about the second part of the prophecy, and that Banquo's children will rule. Macbeth and his wife plan to kill both Banquo and his son, Fleanzio. As Macbeth leaves to prepare the double murder, Lady Macbeth hopes that it will finally make the throne secure.
Outside the castle, assassins wait for Banquo who has just warned his son of strange forebodings. Banquo is killed, but Fleanzio escapes.
Lady Macbeth welcomes the court to the banquet hall and sings a drinking song, while Macbeth receives news that Banquo is dead and his son has escaped. Right before Macbeth takes Banquo's seat at the table, Macbeth has a terrifying vision of the dead man accusing him. His wife is unable to calm her unsettled husband, and the courtiers wonder about the king's strange behavior. Macduff vows to leave the country, which is now ruled by criminals.

SYNOPSIS continued

SYNOPSIS cont.

ACT 3

The witches gather again, and Macbeth visits them, demanding more prophecies. Apparitions warn him to beware of Macduff and assure him that “no man of woman born” can harm him, and that he will be invincible until Birnam Wood marches on his castle. In another vision, he sees a procession of future kings, followed by Banquo. Horrified, Macbeth collapses. The witches disappear and his wife finds him. They resolve to kill Macduff and his family.

ACT 4

On the Scottish border, Macduff has joined the refugees. His wife and children have been killed. Malcolm appears with British troops and leads them to invade Scotland.

Lady Macbeth is sleepwalking, haunted by the horrors of what she and her husband have done.

Macbeth awaits the arrival of his enemies and realizes that he will never live to a peaceful old age. Messengers bring news that Lady Macbeth has died, and that Birnam Wood appears to be moving. English soldiers appear, camouflaged with its branches. Macduff confronts Macbeth and tells him that he was not born naturally but had a Caesarean birth. He kills Macbeth and proclaims Malcolm king of Scotland.

Our Production & Technological Enhancements

Verdi’s haunting interpretation of Shakespeare’s classical tale *Macbeth* is performed at Calgary Opera for the first time in the company’s 50-year history. *Macbeth* is filled with massive choruses as well as vivid ensemble pieces, and the score bristles with fiendish energy.

This new production, directed by Rachel Peake, will feature projections and technological enhancements to bring the supernatural elements of medieval Scotland to life. This entirely new production was built for this inaugural Calgary Opera performance and features all new sets, costumes and lighting design.

Calgary Opera consulted with Base Holograms, an immersive entertainment company, to discuss the use of projections in its production that would give the feel of the ghosts and visions that Macbeth sees as he looses his grip on reality and succumbs to the guilt and grief of his actions. These technological enhancements will give the feel of floating ghostly apparitions and will greatly intensify the otherworldly atmosphere of the opera.

We hope you love this spooky and immersive new production of this classic play and opera!

Character Study

MACBETH—A strong Scottish general and the Thane of Glamis ("Thane" is a Scottish title of nobility, and Glamis is a village in eastern Scotland). Macbeth, along with his fellow general Banquo, encounter witches who give prophecies stating that Macbeth will be crowned Thane of Cawdor, then King of Scotland. When the first half of the prophesy comes true, Macbeth's immorality and strong prodding from his wife lead him to the conclusion that, to speed things along, he should murder the beloved King Duncan. Once he starts down this treacherous path, there is no stopping him. So much villainy leads the people of Scotland to rebel against him and he becomes hated as a tyrant. Although in the beginning of the opera he is seen considering right from wrong, by the end he easily orders those who threaten to unseat him murdered. Ultimately, he cannot justify his evil deeds to himself and suffers the guilt and mental consequences of his actions.

LADY MACBETH– The true master mind of all of the evil planning in this opera (although less so in the original play) Lady Macbeth is a deeply ambitious woman who scolds Macbeth for being too emotional and weak. Although she begins the play with a clear goal of Macbeth becoming King, and all that is required to make that happen, by the end of the opera she falls into an even deeper mental anguish than her husband, taking her own life in an effort to escape the guilt.

THE WITCHES—It is not clear where the witches supernatural prophetic abilities come from, and through their careful wording, they lead Macbeth to believe, albeit blindly, that is he invincible. They delight in creating mischief and discord. They are not good nor evil, but exist in a place where their words hold incredible power to persuade and destroy, depending upon the nature of the listener.

BANCO– Banco serves as the moral opposite to Macbeth. He too is a noble and strong Scottish general who hears the tempting prophesies of the witches. To him they promise that he will be father to a long line of rulers of Scotland, though will not be a ruler himself. He too has ambitious thoughts but decides not to act on them. He chooses every righteous path and it can be assumed that the prophecy eventually comes to pass with the escape of his son Fleanzio from the double murder attempt ordered by Macbeth. Banquo is murdered and his ghost comes back to haunt Macbeth, who is unravelling due to guilt.

MACDUFF– A Scottish nobleman who, from the beginning, distrusts Macbeth. As the atrocities unfold, he joins and eventually becomes leader of the discontented and displaced of Scotland who seek to overthrow Macbeth. Macbeth is warned in a new prophecy that Macduff seeks to destroy him, so he orders Macduff, his wife and children all murdered. Macduff is gone from the castle when the murderers arrive and is the only one to survive, which grieves him later. The witches also tell Macbeth that he can not be killed by any man born of a woman, however Macduff was taken from the womb of his mother prematurely, assumedly by Caesarean section, which he reveals to Macbeth right before he kills him. He is becomes the hero of Scotland.

MALCOLM– The son of Duncan, who should rightfully be on the throne after his father's death. He flees immediately following the murder, scared that he is next and it is assumed that he must then be the murderer. In the beginning he doubts his power and ability but in the end it is he who rouses the army of England to fight Macbeth and comes up with the plan to use branches and leaves from the trees of Birnam wood to disguise the advance of the army on Macbeth's castle. (continued on next page)

Character Study cont.

(MALCOLM cont.) The prophesy of the witches tell Macbeth that he will not be overtaken until Birnam wood comes to his castle at Dunsinane, which Malcolm makes come true. When Macbeth is killed, Malcolm takes his rightful place on the throne, to the joy and relief of all of Scotland.

KING DUNCAN—Although in the opera Duncan is an non-speaking role and in the play he is only alive at the very beginning, his existence stands in the way of Macbeth becoming king. Duncan is beloved by the Scottish people and is a just and kind king. His son, Malcolm, when he eventually takes the throne after Macbeth's death, resumes Duncan's noble rule.

Verdi, Politics and Versions of *Macbeth*

When Verdi first approached the opera subject of *Macbeth*, the story was over 200 years old, although to that point the play had never been performed in Italy. Italy in the late 18th and early 19th centuries was a series of small kingdoms, duchies, republics and states controlled largely by the Catholic Church, Austria, and France. The Italian people were not a unified whole. Napoleon had been controlling and reorganizing parts of Italy in the early 1800's but when he fell in 1815, the idea of The Risorgimento started to take shape. This was the concept that all of Italy would unite together, under its own Italian rule, a "resurgence" of a unified Italy. As the movement grew the people of the various parts of Italy started to see themselves as Italian, all. Into this political landscape first came Verdi's *Nabucco* in 1842, with its chorus "Va, pensiero" becoming the unofficial anthem for Italian freedom fighters. You can listen to it here: https://youtu.be/XttF0vg0MGo Verdi was a strong supporter of the Risorgimento and let his politics be known. His music and he himself were one of the emblems of a united and strong Italy.

Following closely behind, with an 1847 premiere, was Verdi's original version of *Macbeth* with libretto by Francesco Maria Piave. The opera premiered at Teatro della Pergola in Florence, Italy on March 14th of that year. Later, in 1865, he had some of the libretto for *Macbeth* re-written to further enhance the dramatic and emotional story, particularly the love and power dynamic between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. The revised opera had its second premiere at the Theatre Lyrique du Paris on April 19th, 1865.

According to an OPERAWIRE article on the "5 Major Differences Between Both Versions of Verdi's *Macbeth*" written by David Salazar in 2017, these are the main differences: (Read the entire article here https://operawire.com/5-major-differences-between-both-version-of-verdis-macbeth/)

1. Lady Macbeth's original aria "Trionfai! Securi alfine" was replaced with the more emotionally evil "La Luce Langue". Hear them both here: Trionfai! Securi alfine https://youtu.be/3Lh_Y2rcsso La Luce Langue https://youtu.be/hAhzioIH6no
2. A ballet section was added to the second edition, which is logical because it was premiering Paris and French audiences expected ballet in their opera performances. Nowadays, this ballet section is mostly cut, even though it's the 1865 version which is predominantly performed.
3. The end of act III was re-written to have Macbeth and his wife come together, finally on the same page, to have Macduff and his family killed, and all enemies to Macbeth on the throne be killed. It is a short but powerful duet which lays bare the evil and treachery they intend to enact in order to keep themselves in power. In the original, the scene ended with Macbeth's interaction with the witches.
4. The act IV chorus piece, "Patria Oppressa", was added to the 1865 version. The chorus part in the original 1847 version was not as emotional, and was reminiscent of other famous Verdi chorus pieces. "Patria Oppressa" was chilling and set the tone for the wickedness to follow through to the end of the opera. Hear it here: https://youtu.be/u_8ehQuIHlM
5. The entire final scene was edited. Verdi chose to go, as shown, in a more emotional, dark direction with these revisions. Macbeth's vocal lines are changed, in his battle call and everything right up to the final hopeful group piece.

William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare was born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon. He was son to a successful business man and town mayor, William, and his mother, Mary, was the daughter of a landowner. It seems that the Shakespeare family was well off and were likely able to pay for a good education for the young William.

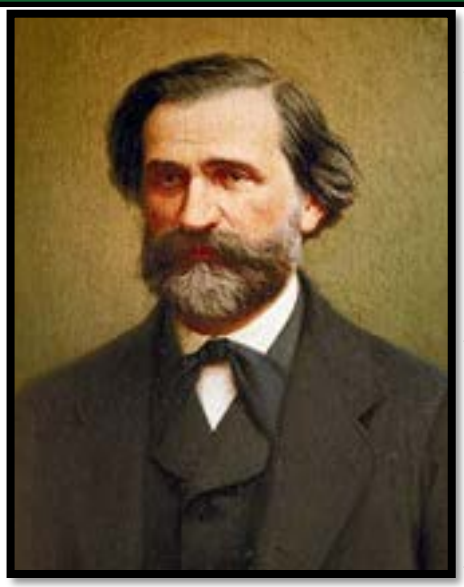
In 1582 William, at the tender age of 18, married Anne Hathaway, an older woman, and together they had three children, Susanna, Hamnet and Judith. Their son Hamnet died at the age of only 11.

Shakespeare had made some intelligent financial decisions in his early adult years and, due to some wise purchases, including a purchase of land around Stratford that doubled in value, he was able to take time to write and act. It appears that after his marriage he spent most of his time doing these exact things, with the bulk of his 154 sonnets having been written in the 1590's, along with his early plays such as *Much Ado about Nothing*, *A Midsummer's Night Dream* and *Henry V*.

By the early 17th C he was writing more serious works, his tragedies such as *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth* and *King Lear*. His tragedies are known to centre around a fatal flaw of the main character and are always an insightful look at the basest elements of humanity such as greed, jealousy, fear, and hatred. Shakespeare was an astute student of the human condition. He was fortunate as an artist to receive praise for his work during his lifetime and was highly celebrated for his writing skill.

Shakespeare's cause of death is not confirmed, but it is known that he died in 1616 at the age of 52. The cause could have been typhus, which was in outbreak at the time. He is buried at Holy Trinity Church in Stratford, England.

Composer Giuseppi Verdi



Giuseppe Fortunino Francesco Verdi was born October 9 or 10, 1813 in Roncole, near Busseto, duchy of Parma, Italy, and was the leading Italian opera composer in the 19th century.

Verdi was born into a poor farming family. When he was young his father wanted to give him the best possible education so arranged music lessons from the age of 4, bought him a spinet (a type of small upright piano) and by the age of 9, Verdi was filling in for the organist at the local church. At the age of 10 Verdi moved to the nearby city of Busseto to further his studies. There he began composing music for the church and was noticed by local businessman and merchant Antonio Barezzi. Barezzi was passionate about music and took Verdi under his wing, bringing him into his home and encouraging his further musical education in Milan.

Milan in the early-to mid-1800s was the intellectual and operatic centre of Italy and Verdi was exposed to literature, politics and lots of opera. After working hard to develop his first compositions, in March of 1839 Verdi succeeded in having one of his early operas, *Oberto, conte di San Bonifacio*, produced at the famous La Scala opera house (*Teatro alla Scala*). As simple as the piece was, it garnered enough success to tour within Italy and gained him notoriety and commissions for further works.

He married the daughter of his early benefactor Mr. Barezzi, Margherita, who died in 1840. They had two children together, both of whom died within a few years of their mother. Grief-stricken and alone, Verdi saw his following opera, *Un giorno di regno,* booed off of the stage at La Scala, an injury he would never forget. Verdi fell into a deep depression that affected his personality and outlook to the end of his days.

Fortunately, he was still creating work from the depths of despair and released *Nabucco* in 1842 to wild success. This catapulted him into the forefront of Italian music, making him famous not only in Italy, but all around the world. Within a decade, *Nabucco* was performed as far away as Buenos Aires, Argentina and is still performed worldwide to this day.

Following *Nabucco,* Verdi set himself a standard of creating two new operas per year. He was attempting to earn enough money to retire early to the peaceful farming life in Sant'Agata, a village close to Roncole, where he was born. This was an incredibly difficult pace to keep, considering that the task of creating an opera in those times included finding the funding for the piece, hiring the singers, attending the early rehearsals and conducting the first 3 performances. He managed to maintain this frantic pace although none of the operas composed at that time are still performed today, with the exception of *Ernani,* created in 1844. For subject matter he mined all of the great authors of the day including Victor Hugo, Lord Byron, Friedrich von Schiller, Voltaire and, later, even Shakespeare. Notably, in 1846, Verdi began writing his first Shakespearean adaptation, *Macbeth*, which premieres in 1847 at La Fenice in Teatro de al Pergola in Florence.

Also in 1847, he met again the prima donna Giuseppina Strepponi who had played Abigaille in his *Nabucco.* She became his second wife but it was widely known that he treated her poorly, refusing to allow her to travel with him and leaving her in Sant'Agata. It is widely believed that the dramatic characteristics that he gave to the heroines in his operas were influenced by Strepponi, evidenced in his most endearing operas that were composed at the time; *Rigoletto* (1851), *Il trovatore* (1853), and *La Traviata* (1853).

Nevertheless, as the years wore on he became more

Verdi, continued

bitter, battled with those around him, and fought any editing or substitutions in his operas. When he happened upon the idea of adapting Victor Hugo's *Le roi s'amuse* into an opera, *Rigoletto*, he came up against the most vociferous and unrelenting censors yet. Hugo's piece had been banned in Paris after opening night because of its unsavoury depiction of royalty, but Verdi wouldn't stand down and he and his librettist Francesco Maria Piave finally had their opera shown to great success.

Verdi had become an international celebrity and, from 1855 to 1870, he turned his sights towards mastering pieces for the Parisian public. The appetite in France was for long, spectacular dramas with heavy subject matter that included a section of ballet. He was attempting to rival Giacomo Meyerbeer, the one composer who was better known than he at the time. Verdi honed his craft, and while many operas from this time are forgotten, his *Simon Boccanegra*(1857) and *Un ballo in maschera*(1859) are still favourites.

In 1862 Verdi represented all Italian musicians at the London Exhibition. This was a sure sign of his fame, and signified that Verdi was *the* face of Italian music for all the world. In the same year, he was commissioned to create an opera in St. Petersburg and used the opportunity to test ideas he had been working on. Verdi wanted to create a sweeping saga that spanned years and different locales, a story that explored both the highs and the lows in society and life. He succeeded in doing this with *La forza del destino(1862),* a classic to this day.

In 1867, for the Paris Opera, he wrote *Don Carlos*. The opera was so successful that public opinion held that he had finally surpassed Giacomo Meyerbeer as greatest opera writer of the time. One more famous commission, this time by the Khedive of Egypt to celebrate the opening of Cairo's new opera house in 1869, led him to create *Aida.* With *Aida*, Verdi had achieved his most emotionally compelling and mature piece to date.

When another famous opera writer of the time, Gioachino Rossini, died in 1868, Verdi suggested that he and his contemporaries create a requiem mass in his honour. Verdi's increasingly cynical and unforgiving personality fuelled the collapse of the project and cost him his relationship with one of his closest friends, Angelo Mariani. There was a rumour going around that Verdi was in love with Mariani's fiancée, the soprano Teresa Stolz. The alleged affair continued for years and Verdi and Stolz remained in contact until his death where she attended his deathbed.

After 1873 Verdi took retirement on a farm in Sant'Agata. He focused his extreme energy and diligence on farming and became a very wealthy landowner. He also became a charitable donor and founded the *Casa di Riposo per Musicisti*, a home in Milan for aged musicians that still operates today as *Casa Verdi,* also where he and his wife are buried.

Determined not to allow his most profitable composer to stagnate in Sant'Agata for the rest of his days, Verdi's agent, Giulio Ricordi, convinced the prominent poet Arrigo Boito to write a libretto based on Shakespeare's *Othello*. Verdi couldn't resist the libretto which he considered far superior to any he had worked from before. *Otello*, the opera, was written when Verdi was 74 years old and was a huge success.

After *Otello*, Verdi returned to his home in Sant'Agata, and though he stated he would never compose again, Ricordi and Boito convinced him one last time to compose the music to an opera based on another of Shakespeare's plays, this time a comedy, *Falstaff.* It was the final opera of Verdi's career and opened at La Scala in 1893 to major accolades,

finally avenging the cruel dismissal of his *Un giorno di regno* 50 years before.

Verdi's wife, Giuseppina, died in 1897 after a long illness and he, weakening slowly, died four years later on January 27th, 1901 in Milan, Italy.

Librettist Francesco Maria Piave

Italian librettist Francesco Maria Piave was born in Murano, Italy on May 18, 1810. He is best known for his multiple librettos written for Verdi operas.

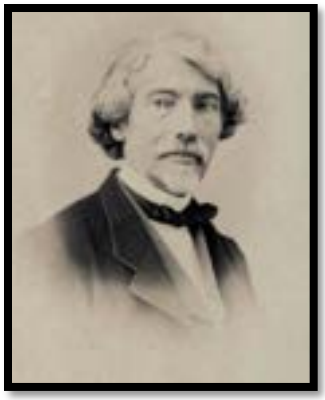
Piave was the son of a glassmaker. In his youth he studied for the clergy, eventually finding work as a proof reader. As a young man he moved to Rome where he found his place in the city's artistic and literary circles. There he met the librettist Jacopo Ferretti. Ferretti had a great influence on him, and when he returned to Venice he began writing librettos himself. His first libretto *Don Marzio,* completed in 1842 for Pacini, was never performed. He went on to write five more libretti for Pacini. He began working with Verdi in 1844 on *Ernani*, and, finding each other satisfactory, the pair continued on working together over the next 18 years with *I due Foscari*, the first version of *Macbeth*, *Il Corsaro*, *Stiffelio*, *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Aroldo* and finally *La forze del destino* in 1862.

Throughout his career, Piave wrote librettos for several composers, but none had the same longevity and popularity as those that he wrote with Verdi. As well as being a librettist, he worked as a poet and a stage director for *La Fenice* theatre in Venice. In 1859 he moved to Milan to work as a stage director at the renowned opera house, La Scala, which he attained through Verdi's influence.

In 1867 he suffered a massive stroke that left him unable to move or speak for 9 years until his death in Milan on March 5, 1876. At the time of the stroke he was writing a libretto for Ponchielli that remained unfinished. During those final years, Verdi and his wife, Giuseppina Strepponi, often cared for the bedridden Piave. Verdi paid for his funeral costs when he passed away.

Francesco Maria Piave is credited with having written over 40 libretti over the course of his life.

1865 Revisions Librettist Andrea Maffei



Andrea Maffei, born 1798 in Trentino, Italy was an Italian poet, translator and librettist. He was a popular character in Italian cultural circles of the 19th century. He lived in various places in Italy including Verona, Venice and Milan, where he married Contessa Clara Spinelli. They were married for 15 years and separated by mutual consent in 1846. In addition to being an artist and person of culture, Maffei was made a senator of the Kingdom of Italy in 1879 and participated in Italian political life. In later years he often lived in Riva del Garda where he organized and put on display his rich art collection and where the local Liceo classico (classical high school) was named after him.

His other works as a librettist were, equally for Giuseppe Verdi, *I masnadieri*, and for Pietro Mascagni the texts for *Il Re a Napoli in Cremona* in 1885 and *Guglielmo Ratcliff* in 1895. He died in 1885.

CAST

Cast

Macbeth	Giuseppe Altomare
Lady Macbeth	Vittoria Yeo
Banco	Robert Pomakov
Macduff	Andrew Haji
Malcolm	Elias Theocharidis*
Lady in Waiting	Juliana Krajčovič*
A Doctor/Servant of Macbeth	Branden Olsen*
First Apparition/Assassin/Herald	Connor Hoppenbrouwers*
Second Apparition	Child (Cantaré Children's Chorus)
Third Apparition	Child (Cantaré Children's Chorus)
Fleanzio	Child (Cantaré Children's Chorus)
Duncan	Chorus – non-speaking role

*McPhee Artist Development artists

Chorus

Sopranos:

Gretchen Castronuovo, Madison Craig, Naomi Derksen, Anna Draper, Alyssa Durnie, Jessica Horkas, Shannon Maynes, Erin Moore, Charlotte Schmidtke, Melissa Wang-Jackson

Mezzo-Sopranos:

Eva Knight, Cristina Lanz, Sarah Nearing, Eswina Ngai, Sandy Nolette, Anna Pompeeva, Stephania Romaniuk, Carla Ross, Olena Simsek, Rosemary Van Dyk

Tenors:

Akesh Aheer, Ben Coburger, Matthew Cooper, Don Edie, Christopher Gazzard, Troy Lewis, Tom McDonald, Stuart Miller, Oliver Munar, David Ng

Baritones:

Adam Arnold, Allen Crowley†, Mike Johnson, Brenden Lengsfeld, Paul Lloyd, Stuart Lloyd,

Kristian Lo†, Kal Macdonald†, Oliver Peplowski, Richard Taylor-Kerr†,

†Bass-Baritone

CAST

Macbeth—Giuseppe Altomare: After graduating in political science, Giuseppe Altomare began his musical studies at the Hochschule Mozarteum in Salzburg with M° R. Knoll. He then specialized with Iris Adami Corradetti, M° Pier Miranda Ferraro, M° Franco Corelli, M° Aldo Danieli, M° Carlo Bergonzi and M° Silvano Carroli.

His international career began as the title role in *Gianni Schicchi* at the 39th Puccini Festival in Torre del Lago. He has interpreted all the major baritone roles, debuting more than 56 leading roles so far.

Among the many Directors of note Giuseppe has worked with are included Giuseppe di Stefano, Filippo Crivelli, Henning Brockhaus and Franco Zeffirelli. He has also worked with noted Conductors Gianandrea Gavazzeni, Angelo Campori, Bruno Bartoletti, Zubin Mehta and Riccardo Muti. This is Giuseppe's premiere with Calgary Opera.

Lady Macbeth—Vittoria Yeo: Born in Seoul, South Korea, Vittoria began her musical studies in her hometown and graduated opera singing from Seokyeong University. She then moved to Italy and continued her studies there. Vittoria began her international career with her debut at the Salzburg Festival in 2015 under the musical direction of Riccardo Muti.

She is known for her powerful portrayals of Lady Macbeth, as well as Cio cio-San in *Madama Butterfly*, Liù in *Turandot* and more. She has performed at at the Dante Aligheri Theatre in Ravenna, a the Stockholm Konzerthause, la Fenice in Venice, at the Verona Arena, the Daegu Opera Festival in Korea, the Rome opera house and many more. This is Vittoria's premiere with Calgary Opera.

Banco—Robert Pomakov : In the 2021-2022 season, Canadian bass Robert Pomakov made his debut at Opernhaus Zürich as Fernando in *Il Trovatore* and returns to the roster of the Metropolitan Opera to cover Monterone in *Rigoletto*, the Grand Inquisitor in *Don Carlos*, and the Bonze in *Madama Butterfly*. Highlights of past seasons include performances with the Canadian Opera Company as Alberich in *Götterdämmerung,* Bartolo in *Le nozze di Figaro*, and Hobson in *Peter Grimes* opposite Ben Heppner. Mr. Pomakov was decorated with the Simeon, the First Honorary Medal from the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria, and with a diploma from the Minister of Culture for his achievements in opera's art and special merit to Bulgarian culture.

Macduff—Andrew Haji: Canadian tenor Andrew Haji has become one of the most sought-after voices on both operatic and concert stages. Winner of the Grand Prix at the 50th International Vocal Competition in 's-Hertogenbosch and the Montréal International Music Competition's Oratorio Prize, Haji recently debuted with the Edinburgh Festival in Handel's *Saul* and performed Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy* with the Orchestra of St. Luke's at Carnegie Hall. Andrew has also recently appeared with the Canadian Opera Company for digital productions of Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* and Mozart's *Requiem*, with Edmonton Opera and Orchestre Philharmonique et Chœur des Mélomanes for *La Bohème*, and with Calgary Opera and the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony for *La Traviata*. Concert highlights have included Mozart's *Requiem* with the National Arts Centre Orchestra, Bach's *Mass in G* with the Handel & Haydn Society, and Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* with the Milwaukee Symphony. Andrew is a frequent performing artist at Calgary Opera and we are happy to have him back for *Macbeth*.

CAST

Malcolm—Elias Theocharidis: Of Greek and Italian descent, tenor **ELIAS THEOCHARIDIS** has been noted as "…raw… and exuberant". Elias!s most recent roles include Don José in Peter Brook!s *La Tragédie de Carmen*, Don Ottavio in Mozart!s *Don Giovanni*, Mr. Rushworth in the Canadian Premiere of Jonathan Dove!s *Mansfield Park* and Nemorino in Donizetti!s *L!elisir d!amore*. This Season, Elias joins Calgary Opera's McPhee Artist Development Program. He performs Malcolm in Verdi's *Macbeth* and Bénédict in Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédict.* In 2019, he was the tenor soloist in Mozart!s Requiem with the Toronto Sinfonietta under Matthew Jaskiewicz. He grew up in an artistic Mediterranean-Canadian family in Toronto, coming from a long line of Broadway performers, classically trained pianists, folk singers, ballroom dancers, fashion models and disc jockeys. Elias found his artistic path in opera and classical music, and as a freelance graphic designer and audio/visual content creator.

Lady in Waiting—Juliana Krajčovič: Ottawa-born Slovak-Canadian soprano Juliana Krajčovič is a returning McPhee Artist with Calgary Opera having recently completed her Master of Music in Opera at the University of Toronto. Past engagements include Annina in *La Traviata*, Bat/Princess in *L'Enfant et les Sortileges* (Calgary Opera) Dr. Ruth in *Escape Room*, Susanna in *Il segreto di Susanna*, Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Mrs. Norris in *Mansfield Park* (UofT Opera), Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* (University of Ottawa), Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin*, Suor Angelica in *Suor Angelica*, Magda in *The Consul*, and Euridice in *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Shooting Stars' Operatic Showcase). Concert performances include Webern's *6 Lieder nach Gedichten von Georg Trakl*, Crumb's *Madrigals Book IV* (UofO's CME), and Soprano Soloist in Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* (UOSO). As the winner of the ORMTA Young Artist Competition in 2018, Juliana completed a recital tour of Ontario. Other prizes include Finalist Prize in the 2019 Brian Law Competition, Richard Bradshaw Graduate Fellowship in Opera.

Doctor/Servant of Macbeth—Branden Olson: Branden Olsen is a rising Canadian bass-baritone, pedagogical clinician, and conductor of exceptional promise. In 2021 Branden won first place (voice) at the Federation of Canadian Music Festivals National Competition. He has a master's in voice performance and choral conducting and recently conducted the Atlantic Boychoir at the Cornwall International Male Choral Festival. Branden is excited to join the McPhee artists at Calgary Opera.

First Apparition/Assasin/Herald—Connor Hoppenbrouwers: Baritone Connor Hoppenbrouwers has gained a reputation for the power and beauty behind his voice. Born in Edmonton Alberta, Connor started his vocal career under the tutelage of John Tessier and later went on to study with J.Patrick Raftery. Prominent roles for Connor include Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with the University of British Columbia Opera Workshop (2021), Papageno in *Die Zauberflote* with The University of Alberta Opera Workshop (2019) also as a soloist with The Alberta Baroque Ensemble. An avid musician Connor performs regularly with orchestra and jazz bands as a double bassist.

Director Rachel Peake

Rachel is currently Associate Artistic Director of the Arts Club Theatre and from 2017-2020 she was Associate Artistic Director of the Citadel Theatre. Select Previous Directing Credits Include: *9 to 5: the Musical*, *The Garneau Block* (Citadel Theatre), *The Marriage of Figaro* (Edmonton Opera); *La Voix Humaine, La Cenerentola*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Stickboy* (Vancouver Opera); *A Christmas Carol* (Gateway Theatre); *Trout Stanley* (Persephone Theatre); *Green Lake*, *After Jerusalem* (Solo Collective); *Miss Caledonia* (Western Canada Theatre); *Angels in America* (Studio 58). Rachel is a three-time recipient of the Jessie Richardson Award and a graduate of the UofA and Studio 58.

Recently Ms. Peake gave an interview to Livewire Calgary about directing *Macbeth*, which is a Calgary Opera premiere.

On why there's a long history of bad luck when one says the name of the work, *Macbeth*, in the theatre: "You're not allowed to say Macbeth in a theatre, because the magic that the witches used is apparently based on real black arts. So there's a real history of the real and the theatrical blending over in terms of the scary themes of the play."

On the difference between the opera and the play: " ...using Verdi's operatic take on Macbeth captured the essence of the original play, but was more focused on the psychological elements of the story...I think for people who know and love the Shakespeare play, they're going to see that distillation (of Macbeth's character to its psychological elements), with this beautiful addition of this huge chorus and music. "

To read the entire interview, please go here: https://livewirecalgary.com/2023/03/15/new-scary-and-wonderful-macbeth-comes-to-jubilee-for-50th-anniversary-of-calgary-opera/

Conductor Jonathan Brandani

JONATHAN BRANDANI is Artistic Director of Calgary Opera.

Recent engagements include opera productions and concert appearances at the Bregenzer Festspiele in Austria (with the Wiener Symphoniker and the Symphonieorchester Voralberg), the Danish Royal Opera House Copenhagen (with soprano Angela Gheorghiu), Teatro Comunale di Bologna (Italy), Théatre Royal de Wallonie-Liège (Belgium), Orchestra Filarmonica Toscanini in Parma (Italy), Orchestra del Teatro Lirico di Cagliari (Italy).

He conducted at the Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf (Germany), at Palau de les Arts di Valencia (Spain), at the Wexford Festival (Ireland) and the Donizetti Festival in Bergamo (Italy). From 2014 to 2019 he has been Associate Conductor of Minnesota Opera (USA), and from 2017 to 2020 he has been Principal Guest Conductor of Daegu Opera House (South Korea), where his performances of *Aida* were awarded with the critics' Grand Prix.

Upcoming engagements will include Gothenborg Opera (Sweden), Meininger Hofkapelle (Germany), Teatro Nuovo (New York), The Atlanta Opera and Calgary Opera.

After his degree in Piano, Jonathan graduated in Conducting at the *Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst* in Vienna (Austria) and at Yale University (USA).

Artistic Team

Set, Projections, Lighting Designer—Scott Reid: Scott Reid has been designing for theatre, opera and dance for over 30 years. He is a set, lighting and projection designer. Although based in Calgary, Scott's designs, have been seen across North America. He has enjoyed designing for such diverse projects as theatre for young audiences touring shows, new plays, as well as large-scale operas and ballets. Each show brings its own challenges and this is what makes it interesting.

Scott earned both his BFA and MFA in design at the University of Alberta. He has been a member of the theatre arts faculty of the Banff Centre in both the ballet and opera programs and enjoys being a mentor to emerging designers.

Scott's design work has been nominated for awards across Canada.

Costume Designer—Heather Moore: Heather is a film and theatre professional based out of Calgary Alberta. Her work as a feature film Costume Supervisor or Assistant Designer has taken her to locations around the world.

She is a member IATSE 212 and works as Assistant Designer, Costume Set Supervisor, Costume Supervisor in film. In theatre she is a member of Canadian Actors Equity and works as a Director/Dramaturge/Stage Manager. She is a writer/director/producer and founding member of Ghost River Theatre.

Heather is currently the Head of Wardrobe at Calgary Opera and returns to film in between Opera productions.

Fight Directors J-P Fournier Laryssa Yanchak (both seen at right with Calgary Opera McPhee Artists) **Jean-Pierre (J-P.) Fournier** is an actor, fight director, director, stunt co-ordinator, theatre/film/television consultant, teacher; Maître d'Armes of *Fight Directors Canada; Fellow* of the British Academy of Dramatic Combat, Senior member of the International Order of the Sword & Pen. Graduate U.of A. Directing and Acting programs.

Laryssa:Specializing in Fight Direction, Choreography, Instruction and coaching in the world of Theatrical Combat. Laryssa is Canada's first woman to be credited as Fight Master through the internationally recognized association of Fight Directors Canada. She is a member of both the CAEA and ACTRA, and is Canada's first woman to have received a professionally recognised award for Fight Direction.

Assistant Stage Manager—Kate Pallesen: Kate is a graduate of the University of Lethbridge's BFA in Theatre Production and has made Calgary her artistic home. She is delighted to return to Calgary Opera once again. Select stage management credits include: Se Pa Ra Ti Sm (Swallow-a-Bicycle Theatre), bliss: the birthday party play (Verb Theatre), La Bohème, Christmas at the Opera (Calgary Opera), Ghost Opera (Old Trout Puppet Workshop/Calgary Opera), The Thin Man, The Drowning Girls (Vertigo Theatre), The Outsiders (Storybook Theatre). She would like to thank her family, friends, and fiancé Derek for all of their love

Assistant Stage Manager—Tim Yakimec: Tim has enjoyed stage managing various productions ranging from grand opera to performance art with children's theatre. Some of his favorite challenging productions include: Filumena, Robert Lepage's Bluebeard's Castle / Erwartung, Turandot, Of Mice and Men, Rigoletto, Tales of Hoffman. Tim has stage anaged for Edmonton's Citadel Theatre, Hawaii Opera Theatre, Opera Hong Kong, Toronto's Canstage, West, and The Atlantic Theatre Festival (Wolfville, Nova Scotia), Production Stage Manager for the 2005 Queen's Commonwealth Visit. After retiring as General Director of Edmonton Opera, he feels privileged to return backstage. Recent work has been with Theatre Baddeck, Theatre Network and the Mayfield Theatre. Last with Calgary Opera's production of Rigoletto (1998), Tim is thrilled to be part of this amazing opera- Macbeth!

Artistic Team

Stage Manager– Shelby-Jai Flick: Shelby-Jai has worked in stage management across Canada, in addition to work with multiple national sports organizations ahead of the 2016 Olympic Games. Select theatre credits include Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, The Nutcracker, La Fille mal gardée, The Sleeping Beauty and The Seagull (National Ballet of Canada); The Two Gentlemen of Verona, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, Julius Caesar, The Importance of Being Earnest (Stratford Festival); Mimi (or a Poisoner's Comedy), Courageous, If We Were Birds(Tarragon Theatre); in addition to work with The Wrecking Ball (Toronto), a collective of Canadian and international theatre artists.

Chorus Master—Mark Morash: Mark Morash is a conductor and pianist originally from Halifax, Canada and is currently Calgary Opera's Interim Music Director. Most recently, he was Director of Musical Studies for the Opera Center of San Francisco Opera. There, he conducted for the Merola Opera Program, the Adler Fellow Showcase and Western Opera Theater. He also led performances of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *La Serva Padrona* and *Trouble in Tahiti* for Opera Santa Barbara, *Rigoletto* for Opera Colorado, and *Don Giovanni* and *The Turn of the Screw* for the Lincoln Theater in Yountville, CA. San Francisco Opera Center performances have included *Gianni Schicchi*, Argento's *Postcard from Morocco*, *The Barber of Seville*, *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Albert Herring*, *Così fan tutte*, *Die Fledermaus*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and Pasatieri's *The Seagull*. Recent performances include conducting debuts with Canada's Manitoba Chamber Orchestra as well as with Hawaii Opera Theater leading Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

Head Coach/Assistant Chorus Master—Emily Hamper: Over a career of more than 25 years, Emily Hamper has earned an excellent reputation for her exceptional skills as a vocal coach and accompanist. She has worked as rehearsal pianist, coach, and assistant conductor for opera companies and organizations nationally and abroad, and has collaborated with many of Canada's most notable singers in concerts and recitals. Emily is an alumna of the prestigious Merola Opera Program at the San Francisco Opera, and winner of the Best Collaborative Pianist prize at the Eckhardt-Grammatté Competition. Emily is passionate about training young opera singers. She has been a faculty member of Dolora Zajick's Institute for Young Dramatic Voices since 2014, and was MusicDirector of Opera at Wilfrid Laurier University from 2019 - 2022. In 2015, she co-founded the Stratford Summer Music Vocal Academy, an élite training program for aspiring singers and pianists. Now based in Calgary, Emily is delighted to join the music staff at Calgary Opera.

Repetiteur—Evan Mounce: Calgary-based pianist and vocal coach Evan Mounce is in demand as a leader and collaborator. Evan is Assistant Chorus Master of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, newly appointed Répétiteur with Calgary Opera, and Director of Music at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. As a vocal coach Evan has worked with KD Lang, preparing her for her 25th anniversary tour of Ingenue. Recent collaborations include work with Luminous Voices, Spiritus Chamber Choir, and Edmonton Opera. With his wife Laura Brandt, Evan has presented numerous recitals including for the Mountain View International Festival of Song and Chamber Music, the ProArts Recital Series, and together they have performed on two river cruises from Budapest to Amsterdam as ambassadors of Calgary Opera.

Head of Makeup:	Gail Kennedy
Head of Wigs and Hair:	Franca Vaccaro
Head of Props:	Kate Greggersen
Director of Production:	Bonni Baynton
Technical Director:	Cody Stadel
Assistant Technical Director:	Brett Johnson

Who's Who Behind the Scenes

Pulling It Together

It takes a lot of people to produce an opera! An opera production not only involves soloists, chorus and orchestra, but many other people involved in planning, working behind the scenes, in the auditorium and marketing the performance. Here are some of the roles with brief descriptions:

CONDUCTOR:	Leads the musicians (instrumentalists and vocalists) in the musical interpretation and performance of an opera.
RÉPETITEUR:	Pianist who plays for rehearsals before orchestra rehearsals begin, the repetiteur plays a the full score for the opera that has been reduced to a single piano part
CHORUS MASTER:	Musically prepares the chorus for performance
CHORUS:	A group of singers, singing together, who sometimes portray servants, party guests or other characters in groups to support the storyline
SUPERNUMERARY:	Someone who performs on stage without singing, supporting the story
STAGE DIRECTOR:	Prepares the opera for production by arranging the details of the stage settings and effects and instructs the performers in the movements and interpretation of their characters
SET DESIGNER:	Designs the background and furnishings of the stage
LIGHTING DESIGNER:	Designs and coordinates the light changes that help create opera's overall effect
COSTUME DESIGNER:	Designs and makes costumes for all performers
WIG AND HAIR DESIGNER:	Oversees hair and wig designs for the performers
MAKEUP ARTIST:	Responsible for applying makeup for all performers
DRESSERS:	Fit and alter costumes for performers
PRODUCTION MANAGER:	In charge of all aspects of technical production
STAGE MANAGER:	The person in charge of the technical aspects of the entire opera, including light changes, sound effects, entrances, etc.
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER:	Assist stage manager with specific responsibilities
STAGE CREW:	Moves scenery and stage props
ELECTRICIAN:	Responsible for setting stage lights and electrical installations
CARPENTER:	Responsible for building and putting together the set
TITLE OPERATOR:	Operates computer for translations projected above the stage
PROPERTY (PROPS) MASTER:	Responsible for purchasing, acquiring and or manufacturing any props needed for a production
FRONT OF HOUSE MANAGER:	In charge of auditorium seating, lobby, ushers
MARKETING DIRECTOR:	Responsible for marketing the opera to the public
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR:	Responsible for acquiring opera donors
GENERAL DIRECTOR & CEO	Responsible for all aspects of managing an opera company

Opera Terminology

ACT: A portion of an opera designated by the composer, which has a dramatic structure of its own, not unl ike a chapter in a novel

ARIA: Italian for an 'air' or 'song'. The big number where the singer expresses feelings and shows off the voice

BEL CANTO: Italian for "beautiful singing", refers to a style of opera that developed in Italy and was characterized by a small but dynamic vocal range requiring much vocal control

BUFFA/O: From the Italian for 'buffoon.' A singer of comic roles (basso-buffo) or a comic opera (opera-buffa)

BRAVO: Literally, a form of applause when shouted by members of the audience at the end of an especially pleasing performance. Strictly speaking, "bravo" is for a single man, "brava" for a woman, and "bravi" for a group of performers

CHORUS: A group of singers, singing together, who sometimes portray servants, party guests or other unnamed characters who usually comment on the action and help to support the storyline

COMPOSER: The person who writes the music for the opera

DIVA: A famous female opera singer, sometimes used to denote one who is demanding or difficult

DUET: An extended musical passage performed by two singers. They may or may not sing simultaneously or on the same musical line

DRESS REHEARSAL: A final working rehearsal where all characters are in full costume with full set and live musical accompaniment

ENCORE: Literally, French for "again"- Is shouted from the audience after a particularly well sung passage or, more commonly, at the end of a well-done performance

ENSEMBLE: Principal singers singing mostly together, expressing similar or different opinions and emotions

LIBRETTIST: The person who writes the text for the opera, known as the Libretto

LIBRETTO: Italian for "little book", the written text of the opera without music

MAESTRO: The conductor of the orchestra

OPERA COMIQUE: A French genre of opera, contains spoken dialogue and arias. Need not be funny or shallow, can be dramatic as well

OVERTURE: An orchestral piece at the beginning of the opera, a musical introduction to the opera

PREMIERE: Opening night of a performance, the first public performance in the theatre

OPERA SERIA: "Serious" opera, a term developed in Italy to refer to operas from the 17th century with themes of my thology, ancient history and no comedic elements

OPERETTA: A short opera usually of a light and amusing character, often with patriotic themes

RECITATIVE: Speech-singing where the singer chants the words in rhythm of free speech, used to further the plot or set up an aria

SUPERNUMERARIES: Extra, small, supporting roles in the opera in which the characters do not sing, such as people in a crowd

SITZPROBE: The first rehearsal where the orchestra and singers rehearse together with the purpose of focusing attention on integrating the two groups

Voice Types in Opera

(Opera Terminology continued)

THROUGH-COMPOSED: A piece of music that has no repetition of musical passages throughout, but has different music for each ensuing section

TOI TOI TOI: An expression used in the performing arts to wish the performers a good performance which exists be cause of the superstition that to wish a performer good luck is actually bad luck

TRAGÉDIE LYRIQUE: A completely sung tragic opera, developed by French librettists, in which the music plays a cen tral role, with a heroic and tragic storyline

VERISMO: An artistic style from 19th Century Italy that dealt with themes of common people and daily lives set in a dramatic style

Voice Types in Opera

SOPRANO	The highest female voice
MEZZO-SOPRANO	Female voice between Soprano and Contralto
CONTRALTO	The lowest female voice and darkest in timbre
TENOR	The most common and higher pitched male voice
COUNTER TENOR	Higher than a tenor. The voice range is that of a male singer who can sing higher than a soprano or mezzo-soprano and is rare
BARITONE	Male voice between Tenor and Bass
BASS	The lowest male voice

Further distinctions in voice types:

COLORATURA	Typically a voice with a very high range with the ability to sing complicated passages with great agility, usually associated with soprano
DRAMATIC	A heavy, powerful voice with a steely timbre, associated with all of the voice types
LYRIC	An average size voice, but capable of singing long beautiful phrases, associated with all voice types
HELDEN	A German term referring to a powerful voice capable of singing very demanding roles, mostly associated with tenor voices and often with Wagnerian roles
FALSETTO	The upper part of a voice, more often used in reference to male voices
SPINTO	A somewhat more powerful voice than that of a lyric, but not as heavy as a dramatic, Spinto is capable of large musical climaxes without straining, usually applied to both soprano and tenor

To see a descriptive video of the main voice types, watch this video by the Royal Opera House in London, England as they present "An Introduction to Opera's Voice Types": https://youtu.be/hLfvkwTnJVM

What to Listen For

Macbeth was, stylistically, a huge musical leap from Verdi's previous works. In *Macbeth* there are very few famous arias, one doesn't leave the opera humming a tune. Instead Verdi focused on the overall feeling and colour of the piece. It is a somber but powerful work and the music reflects this throughout.

Popular at both the original Florence premiere, then the revised Paris premiere in 1865, the Italians called this opera "L'opera senza amore", opera without love. Although the allegiance, and perhaps love, between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth is put on display, one wonders if the spark that makes the relationship work is the possibility of power, and then keeping that power at all costs.

Despite the lack of big hits, there is a building from beginning to end punctuated by emotional scenes that develop the story to it's bloody yet hopeful finale.

Here are some musical moments of note:

'Vieni, t'affretta' Lady Macbeth's aria at the end of Act I. She has just received the letter from Macbeth in which he describes the witches prophesies and tells her that the first one, that he shall be named Thane of Cawdor, has just come to pass. We see her initial reaction to the possibility of him being King, and she Queen, and she lays bare her excitement and her naked ambition for the throne. We see the beginning of the influence she is going to have on Macbeth in pushing him to do whatever is necessary to be King. Sung here by Anna Netrebko in the final dress rehearsal at the Met in 2014.
https://youtu.be/_ogsDRwTxoQ

'Una macchia è qui tuttora' Lady Macbeth's big aria in which she is sleepwalking, clearly grappling subconsciously with her lust for power and the guilt of being the driving force behind Macbeth's bloody trail to the throne. She is trying to wash her hands clean of the blood that is on them but cannot. In the English play, this is the famous 'out damn spot' scene. A doctor and lady in waiting are listening to her. See this brilliant piece here sung by Shirley Verrett in 1978 at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan, Italy.
https://youtu.be/EsO6cihxCWE

The act IV chorus piece, 'Patria Oppressa' , was added to the 1865 version. The chorus part that was in the original 1847 version was not as emotional, and was reminiscent of other famous Verdi chorus pieces. The title is literally translated as 'Oppressed land of ours'. It is the discontented song sung by the displaced (because of Macbeth's evil actions) of Scotland . This chorus piece sets the tone for the conclusion of the opera as one of murder and somber times. Here performed by the Opera Australia chorus in their 2011 production.
https://youtu.be/61JHvKBFBNk

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