

NSR to debut 'Macbeth' performance

[Camila Salcedo](#) | Thursday, November 9, 2017

The Not-So-Royal Shakespeare Company (NSR) will premiere its production of William Shakespeare's "Macbeth" on Thursday in the Washington Hall Lab Theatre.

The NSR has waited a long time for the opportunity to put on "Macbeth." Sophomore Ellis Sargeant, who will perform the role of Malcolm, said director Michael Vaclav, a graduate student, has been preparing for the show for while.



Photo Courtesy of Lydia Costello

Members of the Not-So-Royal Shakespeare Company rehearse for their upcoming production of "Macbeth." The production incorporates a modern soundtrack and premieres Thursday night

"It's a show he's been involved with for a while," Sargeant said. "I have been hearing about this for a year now,"

Vaclav is a second-year graduate student who has been involved with NSR since 2013, his undergraduate sophomore year, for eight of its productions. His deep love for Shakespeare led him to write his senior thesis on the authorship of Macbeth and the identity of the witches.

Senior Abigail Schnell, who plays the title character, said the show is notable for its simplicity.

“It’s bloody, scary, short and easy to follow,” she said. “Don’t be afraid because it’s Shakespeare. ‘Macbeth’ is very colloquial. There’s a pretty big fear factor in the show.”

This eeriness is not only created by the cast, but also by the tech team, which will use low lighting and costumes made of band shirts and military uniforms. Vaclav lauded the cast and crew for its talent.

“They are one of the best groups I have worked with,” he said. “They do really bring the show to life in a fantastic way.”

Several members of the cast said the most important aspect of the tech of this production is the soundtrack.

“The concept of the show itself started with the Guns N’ Roses album ‘Appetite for Destruction,’” Vaclav added.

Sargeant said the soundtrack, which includes works of Led Zeppelin, Queen and Black Sabbath, is more like that of a film than a theater production.

“It’s most prevalent between transitions, but it’s still there in the background of the dialogue,” Sargeant said.

Sophomore Louise Gregory, who stars as Lady Macbeth, said that the “punk rock Macbeth theme” fits the play perfectly.

“The play is so violent, it lends itself to very aggressive music for the soundtrack,” she said.

The haunted feeling of the play was made around Vaclav’s conception of the plot as an “early modern horror movie.” None of the characters knows who they can trust. Vaclav’s special interest in the witches and their identities is reflected in the show, where Schnell said they are portrayed in a “genuinely frightening, other-worldly” way.

Gregory said the show will make Shakespeare accessible for the audience.

“If you’ve ever wanted to get into Shakespeare but get put off by it because you think of people in puffy robes ... it’s Shakespeare but doesn’t feel like Shakespeare,” Gregory said. “Everyone is having a blast.”

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