

WHY THIS PLAY NOW?

Chicago Youth Shakespeare's professional company for young artists begins each new project with the same old question: "Why this play now?" Finding the answers helps to guide our creative process. Below are some of the responses to that question from members of our ensemble cast of *Macbeth*.

Our version of *Macbeth* demonstrates the slippery slope of greed, ambition, and power. It can make our audience understand that our world is a byproduct of our decisions, and too often we act selfishly at the expense of our community.

We live in a time of political conflict and general pandemonium; personal accountability and integrity aren't seen as important. This serves as a cautionary tale.

We have been feeling this hopelessness and desperation for two long years but are constantly trying to find ways to ignore it. Performing *Macbeth* allows us to take time to sit in it. Choosing to feel what we've lost through art will allow us to move on.

This play is relevant today because it shows just how much an unfit ruler and an unstable government can destroy both a country AND a person's psyche. It also deeply explores gender and gender roles, which is another discussion we are still having to this day.

Macbeth encapsulates the aura of fear, conspiracy, and loss we all have been feeling over the last two years. The characters are people whose world changed suddenly and violently, leaving them to try and pick up the pieces amidst a haze of confusion and betrayal.

To me this play really focuses on fate & choice. Right now there is so much uncertainty and so much happening, and I think people are looking for someone to blame. People are dying, and the majority of it is happening because of our choices in this country. It's not fate. We chose how we reacted.

Why this play now? Because we need to deal with the massive amounts of literal/metaphysical blood which has been spilled in the last years as a result of our failures as a society.

The world feels like it's crumbling; but it's all one big cycle going from despair to hope in a constant circle - brighter days are coming and are promised.

This play holds a mirror up to the problems of modern society. Because our reality isn't "bite sized" and all action/reaction consequences aren't splayed out in front of us, we rarely realize the harm we do to each other.

Why this play now? Because people are still like this today. Many have crazy goals, and a lot of ambition, and fight each other for power. Maybe they aren't carrying around swords, but humans battle each other all the time.