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The We Players' Macbeth at San Francisco's Golden Gate Extended to October 13

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Shakespeare's Macbeth, We Players

Rating: ★★★★★

Text by Diane LeBow, photography by John Montgomery

“Blood will have blood” is the rallying cry beside the [Golden Gate Bridge](#) during the We Players' latest production. The sounds of crashing waves, whistling winds, as well as the incoming fog transported us to the coast of Scotland and the machinations of an 11th century Scottish king. Yes, there we were, the audience, climbing the curved stone staircases and wandering along the Civil War era corridors of the fortress of Fort Point in the northwest corner of San Francisco, while above us soared the San Francisco icon.

Fort Point and the Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco

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The Tragedy of Macbeth, one of [Shakespeare's](#) four great tragedies, written in 1606, resonates with us today, with its story of a man who turns from a noble and brave soldier to a man possessed by uncontrollable ambition and violent actions. Shakespeare's comprehension of the psychological underpinnings of human behavior and a human being's ability to use reason to justify the most horrible actions continue to ring true today.

San Francisco-based We Players has been producing unique site-integrated performances since 2000. Such performances have the audience following the action and actors as they move from scene to scene. We were bundled up against San Francisco's winter-in-summer weather as we moved in order to watch the action from high up on the upper tiers of the fort, then inside Civil War era soldiers' quarters, or down in the central courtyard as the three witches stir their brew, Lady Macbeth urges her husband on to multiple murders while duels and battles occur all around us.

San Francisco Magazine honored We Players with the “Best of the Bay” award, saying “We Players didn’t just break the fourth wall, it toppled the whole playhouse.” Their mission is to create art that transforms public spaces in an effort to create participatory theatre, remember history, build community, and inspire personal relationship with place. Former productions included *Twelfth Night* aboard historic ships at Hyde Street Pier, *The Odyssey* on Angel Island, and *Hamlet* on Alcatraz Island.

Artistic Director Ava Roy says “We’re challenging audiences to expand their awareness and perspectives...We want you to experience the show with all of your senses activated...We’re not just watching the actors and listening to the story--we’re feeling the wind, the sun, the rain.”

This production of *Macbeth* by the We Players is another grand accomplishment of co-directors, Ava Roy and John Hadden and their superb cast of actors. Roy also takes the stage as Lady Macbeth; Mackenzie Drae as Macbeth; Benjamin Stowe as Macduff; James Udom as young prince Malcolm; Lauren D. Chavez as Lady Macduff; and Julie Douglas, Maria Leigh, and Caroline Parsons as three definitely “Weird” sisters (i.e. the witches who tell Macbeth his future and set the plot in action). Old English *wyrd* meant “fate” or “destiny,” which later turned into “fortune teller” and finally today’s meaning of “strange.”

This production of *The We Players* is in partnership with the National Park Service/Golden Gate National Recreation Area at Fort Point. This unique Civil War era fortress which is located beneath the Golden Gate Bridge was built during the Gold Rush and completed in 1861. With its beautiful masonry work, lighthouse, spectacular location on the sea, and interesting exhibits about life as part of a Civil War garrison, Fort Point is now preserved as a national monument and museum and can be visited throughout the year. www.nps.gov/fopo/.

Macbeth runs September 5-October 6, 2013. Ticket prices are \$45-60 at www.weplayers.org or call 415-547-0189. Group sales and educational opportunities are available.

Coming up in Spring 2014 will be Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* at the San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park.

“Something wicked this way comes...”

“Welcome into the tornado of *Macbeth*. Tread carefully,” cautions Lady Macbeth/co-director Roy. Don’t miss this powerful theatrical experience from 11th century Scotland by San Francisco’s Golden Gate.

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SUGGESTED LINKS

- **Fun with Shakespeare on San Francisco's Hyde Street Pier through October 7**
- **An Outing in Provence, France, right here in San Francisco**
- **Sonoma Valley: Broadway under the Stars, Jack London, wineries, and more**
- **Castle of Love: an authentic medieval Italian castle and winery in Napa Valley**