

# “SCREW YOUR COURAGE TO THE STICKING PLACE”

**Macbeth**  
by Thornhill Community Academy  
at The Studio, Alhambra, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024  
appraised by Emily Chattle

Congratulations Thornhill Community Academy for your fantastic reimagining of Macbeth as part of the Spring 24 Shakespeare Schools Festival. It was a thrilling night of theatre, and I'd like to shine a spotlight on some aspects I really loved.

You were buzzing with an infectious energy and enthusiasm for your performance. I loved that you re-imagined the story to set it in a modern day mental health hospital, with the witches represented as nurses and the other characters as patients. You plunged us into this world right from the beginning with the ominous sounds of the life support machine and the nurses reaching out to the audience. You really immersed us into your story, sometimes entering from within the audience and other times really coming downstage, connecting with us all.

Your performances were strong and full of expression, constantly framed by a slick ensemble who moved together beautifully. During the dagger speech, I loved how you all surrounded Macbeth, eerily approaching in the darkness, representing the two sides of his choices - heaven and hell. I also loved the Lady Macbeth speech, where you crept in around the spotlight, revealing your 'bloody' hands with the red gloves. You created an awesome frozen image on stage and your physicalisation and ensemble movement was seamless!

Not only did you change your voices to bring your characters to life, but you also used collective ensemble whispers and songs to mark pivotal moments and immerse us into the story even more. I particularly enjoyed the whole ensemble whisper of "sleep no more" after Macbeth murdered Duncan, it really highlighted Macbeth's guilt. I also loved how you used your voices for the eerie singing of "Oh What a Beautiful Morning" before Duncan was discovered.

All of you acted with the utmost professionalism on your performance day. And of course, this wasn't a production created purely for entertainment. You brought a really important message into your show, and I loved your final speech reminding everyone to "not turn a blind eye to the struggles of those in need". It was incredibly poignant and brave.

This was an immersive, atmospheric, and dynamic production with an enthusiastic and confident cast and crew.

We're thrilled to have reimagined Shakespeare with you this year and have loved being with you on your journey from classroom to stage. We can't wait to work with Thornhill Community Academy again in the next Festival!

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**AN IMMERSIVE, ATMOSPHERIC, AND DYNAMIC PRODUCTION WITH AN ENTHUSIASTIC AND CONFIDENT CAST AND CREW.**