

Moorpark College's Theatre Arts program to livestream online performance of Macbeth

By Audrey Lang

For the first time, Moorpark College's Theatre Arts program will not be holding a live performance for their upcoming production of *Macbeth*. Due to COVID-19 and mandatory distance learning, the production is expected to be filmed, edited and produced to broadcast online.

Theatre Arts Faculty Suzanne Fagan has taken charge in directing and coordinating the whole production. Fagan is facing the new challenges of directing the performance as a film as well as the change in budgeting for the production.

The Theatre Arts program plans to film their production outside where all actors will be wearing masks and practicing social distancing. The production is to be filmed over a span of two weeks in October, then later released to YouTube for free public viewing starting in January.

The dates of filming are still to be determined and may push back the unofficial release date.

Along with the filming process, the audition and rehearsing processes have altered to meet the social distance learning requirements. Auditions were held over Zoom, along with all rehearsals that started Aug. 24. The actors have received additional help from the English Department Chair, Sydney Sims.

"We really get to utilize the expertise of Sydney Sims, who is like our local Shakespeare genius," said Fagan.

Sims has been helping the actors with the pronunciation of the Shakespearean language along with the iambic pentameter. Sims' help has enhanced the actors' performance and ability to tell the story.

This performance takes a modern twist on Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. It includes both the traditional Shakespearean script along with some added improvisation. This twist on Shakespeare's *Macbeth* gives it a sense of present day events along with the traditional play.

"We are not improvising Shakespeare, all Shakespeare is still Shakespeare, but we have added," Fagan stated.

The production takes place in the present day, where COVID-19 has worsened. Out of complete boredom, 10 girls decide to sneak out to the school's Performing Arts Center (PAC) to perform the cursed play. As the night goes on, things become more strange and the girls start to go missing.

The *Macbeth* production portrays a horror-like spin off of the traditional Shakespeare play. It contains all the qualities of the traditional play and much more.

Despite the changes, Fagan hopes, "We now will have a filmed version of *Macbeth* from our Theatre department using it from now on as the *Macbeth*, or Shakespeare component of an Intro to Theatre class for example and making it live on forever in that sort of way."



Photo the Moorpark College PAC courtesy of the VCCCD photo archive.