

that play

a solo macbeth

REVIEWS

ELJNYC.com/Off-Broadway

by Laurie Lawson

April, 2012

Tom Gualtieri is a force (and the only force) to be reckoned with in *THAT PLAY: A Solo Macbeth*. He and co-writer/director Heather Hill have taken Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and turned it on its classic ear, poking holes with witty asides, interactive exercises, and modern drollery. In a mere 90 minutes, the story of the doomed King of Scotland unfolds, complete with battles, witches, ghosts, and a slew of noblemen/women and servants. And the

common thread is the genius of Gualtieri who magnificently portrays every one of them! Man, woman, child, living or dead, he is dauntless in his enactment of The Bard's tragedy. 'Tis a sight to behold.

Part of The Left Out Festival 2012, a celebration of LGBT theatre, all net proceeds will be donated to Bailey House.

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by Karen D'Onofrio

October, 2014

It's enough of a miracle when an actor playing Macbeth in a traditional production can nail that complex character. Tom Gualtieri not only grabs Macbeth by the throat and shakes him down to DNA level, he also portrays the delightful (heavy irony here) Lady Macbeth, the ultimate "power behind the throne"; the three witches, Macduff, Banquo and his apparition, King Duncan, and other characters adding up to a total of nineteen, and one wickedly witty narrator. All this with no props and wearing plain brown modern casual clothes.

Alternately sympathetic, heroic, evil, murderous, brave, and insane, he pauses from time to time to break that fourth wall and make light-hearted comments on what just happened. Then snap! Back into character and on with the play. It is a true miniature of *Macbeth* and, at the same time, a highly entertaining twist on the play.

The original music and sound, plus subtle lighting changes, enhance the atmosphere. There is audience participation at one point. Don't worry. He just passes out note paper. No stage fright involved. But those papers drive home his point: do we all have a bit of Macbeth in us? Or a touch of Lady Macbeth? Perhaps we, too, are capable of evil. Or at least of thinking of evil. It's but a short step from the thought to the deed. We see that in the news every day.

THAT PLAY is a compelling perspective on what is one of Shakespeare's darkest tragedies. No happy ending here. No redemption. But excellent entertainment thanks to the skills of Tom Gualtieri and Heather Hill.

