

Enriching the Humanities Through Opera

Title: Production Design Adaptation

Grade Level: 9-12th

Length: 45 minutes

Literary Work: *Macbeth* (William Shakespeare)

Opera: *Macbeth* (Giuseppe Verdi, composer; Francesco Maria Piave, librettist)

Inquiry Question: How does stage and visual design aid in storytelling?

Lesson Focus: Students will use critical thinking, creativity, social-emotional learning, and collaboration while exploring stage design and the visual world of storytelling in opera.

Prior Knowledge: Students have read *Macbeth* (Shakespeare), analyzed characters and can name the Who, What, When, and Where, participated in the Exploring Story Adaptation lesson, and created an opera adaptation pitch.

Materials: Copies of *Macbeth* (Shakespeare), presentation slides (includes *Macbeth* short opera synopsis with photography and video examples), libretto excerpts of key scenes, opera synopsis handout, completed opera adaptation pitch worksheets (from Exploring Story Adaptation lesson), production design definitions handout, elements of design definitions handout, costume design worksheet, set design worksheet, production design questionnaire, student laptops/tablets, interactive board, paper, pens/pencils, and colored pencils.

Key Vocabulary: Production Design (set design, props, costume design, lighting design, projection design, and hair/makeup design), Elements of Design (color, line, texture, shape, texture, form, space, value, and pattern), and Overture.

Definitions

- **Production Design:** The process of creating the visual aesthetic and environment for a film, television show, commercial, or other forms of media. It involves creating sets, props, as well as costumes, projections, and other visual elements that help bring the story to life and immerse the audience in the narrative. The Production Designer is responsible for overseeing the creation of these elements, working closely with the director, producers, and other key creatives to ensure that the visual style of the production aligns with the overall vision and tone of the project.
 - **Set Design:** The art and practice of creating the physical environment in a theatrical production, film, television show, or other visual medium. This includes scenic elements and design layout for sets, lighting, props, and furniture to bring the story or concept to life. It involves arranging these

elements in a way that enhances the audience's visual and aesthetic experience. Set design may also involve creating technical elements such as sound systems, special effects, and rigging to support the production. Set designers work closely with other production team members to create a cohesive and visually appealing environment complementing the production's overall vision.

- Props: A term commonly used in live performance and film production to refer to objects or items used on stage or on set to enhance the performance or scene. Props can include anything from furniture, decorations, weapons, hand-held objects, and more. Props are used to add realism and detail to a production and help bring the world of the play or film to life for the audience.
- Costume Design: The process of creating costumes and outfits for characters in theatre, film, television, or other visual media. It involves researching the time period, setting, and character traits to develop pieces that help bring the character to life. Costume designers work closely with directors, actors, and other production team members to ensure that the costumes accurately reflect the vision of the production. This can involve sourcing or creating garments, accessories, and props, as well as coordinating fittings and alterations. Costume design plays a crucial role in storytelling and character development, helping to enhance the overall visual and emotional impact of a production.
- Lighting Design: Refers to the art and practice of creating and controlling the lighting for a performance. This includes designing the placement and intensity of the lights and using different colors and effects to enhance the performance's mood and atmosphere. Lighting designers play a crucial role in enhancing the storytelling and emotional impact of the production, helping to set the stage, highlight performers, create a sense of place and time, and evoke different emotions in the audience. It is an integral part of the overall visual and artistic design of the production.
- Projection Design: The art of creating and manipulating projected images and videos to enhance the visual elements of a live event, such as a concert, theater production, dance performance, or installation. It involves using specialized software and hardware to project images, videos, or other visual content onto a surface, such as a screen, wall, or even the audience itself.
- Hair and Makeup Design: Refers to the planning and execution of hairstyles and makeup looks for performers and actors. This creative process involves analyzing the characters or themes in the performance, researching historical or cultural references, and designing hair and makeup that enhances the overall aesthetic and storytelling of the production. Hair and makeup designers work closely with directors, costume designers, and performers to create a cohesive and visually impactful presentation on stage or screen.

- **Elements of Design:** The basic components or building blocks that make up a visual composition. These elements include color, line, shape, texture, form, space, value, and pattern. Each element plays a critical role in creating a successful design and influencing how the viewer perceives and interacts with the artwork. By manipulating and combining these elements, designers can create visually appealing and cohesive compositions that effectively communicate their intended message or evoke a specific emotional response.
 - **Color:** The visual sensation produced by the reflection or absorption of light. Colors can be categorized as primary (red, blue, yellow), secondary (orange, green, purple), or tertiary (colors created by mixing primary and secondary colors).
 - **Line:** The path of a moving point, created by a pencil or brush. Lines can be straight, curved, thick, thin, or dotted, and can be used to create shapes, patterns, and textures.
 - **Shape:** A two-dimensional object with a defined boundary. Shapes can be geometric (such as squares, circles, and triangles) or organic (such as leaves, flowers, and animals).
 - **Texture:** The surface quality of an object, which can be visual or tactile. Textures can be smooth, rough, shiny, matte, or any combination thereof.
 - **Form:** A three-dimensional object that is geometric or free form. Like shape, form has length and width, but also has depth.
 - **Space:** The area around, within, or between objects. Space can be positive (the actual objects in a composition) or negative (the empty or empty areas).
 - **Value:** Refers to the lightness or darkness of a color. It is a critical aspect of visual communication, as it can greatly affect the mood, contrast, and overall aesthetic.
 - **Pattern:** A repeated decorative design or motif. Patterns can be created through the repetition of lines, shapes, colors, or textures.
- **Overture:** A musical composition that is typically played at the beginning of a performance, such as a concert, opera, or ballet. It is usually a short, instrumental piece that sets the story and characters as well as the tone and mood for the rest of the performance, often including themes and motifs that will be repeated throughout.

Objective(s): At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Respond to the musical and storytelling elements of opera to develop criteria for visual artistic choices.
- Refine an adaptation pitch to demonstrate critical understanding of the visual elements of production design and opera to tell a story.
- Create visual representations of set and costume designs based on the students' opera adaptation pitches.

Assessment: Evaluate the production design questionnaire, which explains the choices in set and costume design visual representations created by each group, looking for evidence of critical thinking, creativity, and their ability to successfully communicate their adaptation pitches.

Assessment Rubric

4: Displays exceptional critical thinking and creativity in stage and costume design choices. Clearly and effectively communicates adaptation pitch. Uses at least three elements of design in a highly impactful way.

3: Demonstrates critical thinking and creativity in stage and costume design choices. Effectively communicates adaptation pitch. Uses at least three elements of design.

2: Shows some evidence of critical thinking and creativity in stage and costume design choices. Partially communicates adaptation pitch. Uses at least two elements of design.

1: Does not demonstrate critical thinking or creativity in stage and costume design choices. Does not effectively communicate adaptation pitch. Uses less than three elements of design.

Learning Standards:

Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone)

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5: Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

National Core Arts Standards

VA:Cr1.1.IIa. Use multiple approaches to begin creative endeavors.

VA:Cn10.1.IIIa. Synthesize knowledge of social, cultural, historical, and personal life with art-making approaches to create meaningful works of art or design.

MU:Cn11.0.T.Ia. Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.

TH:Re7.1.I.a. Respond to what is seen, felt, and heard in a drama/theatre work to develop criteria for artistic choice.

TH:Cr1.1.I.a. Apply basic research to construct ideas about the visual composition of a drama/theatre work.

TH:Cr.2-II.a. Refine a dramatic concept to demonstrate a critical understanding of historical and cultural influences of original ideas applied to a drama/theatre work.

Procedure:

Introduction/Hook (5 minutes):

- Begin with a multi-sensory listening activity of the overture (prelude) from the opera *Macbeth*.
 - [PBS LearningMedia™](#): Macbeth | Act I | The Metropolitan Opera 2:39 – 5:47
 - As they listen, ask students to use their senses and invite them to write down any colors, mood, spaces/places, textures, foods, etc. they can associate with the music.
 - Have students share their findings as a class or with partners.
 - An example of a finding could be a student sees the color green which reminds them of the smell of fresh cut grass and the feel of grass under their feet.
 - Ask students to ponder how this all relates to storytelling.

Main Narrative/Sequence (10 minutes):

- Discuss how artistic processes often begin this way and inspiration comes from many different sources, often our own experiences, perspectives, and prior knowledge and research.
- Define Production Design as the visual world of the opera - enhancing the storytelling, context, emotional experience, and communicates mood.
 - Display the elements of production design and definitions, including:
 - Set design, costume design, props, lighting design, projection design, and hair/makeup design.
 - Creative team: collaboration of designers
- Show examples of set designs from multiple productions of the opera. (Found in presentation slides.)
 - When highlighting the multiple ways the opera has been designed, discuss color, costume, props, sets, location, etc.
- Introduce/define Elements of Design and discuss their use in provided examples.
- Explain we will be curating design ideas for our opera adaptation pitches we created in the Exploring Story Adaptation lesson.
 - Reference this lesson's introductory listening activity and ask students to consider all that was discussed when designing their adaptations: color, mood, textures, spaces/places, etc.
 - Students should use at least three elements of design in their work.
- Encourage students to find inspiration through the literary work, opera libretto, and research on their computers and/or tablets, but to be mindful of intellectual property laws.

Activity/Practice (20 minutes):

- Students collaborate to visually represent set designs and costume designs using their opera adaptation pitches. Instructor may choose one pitch for the whole class to adapt or have students work with their group's pitch from the Exploring Story Adaptation lesson.

- Students break out into their Exploring Story Adaptation lesson groups or may choose to work independently.
- Pass out groups' previously completed opera adaptation pitch worksheets.
- Each group or independent student should receive a production design questionnaire to fill out and help guide the process.
- Students can be assigned designer roles within their groups.
- Students may use the set design and costume design worksheets to sketch out their designs or create collages using magazine cuts. Students may also choose to engage with the worksheets digitally by adding images.

OR

- Students may use a school district approved AI image creator to craft mood/concept boards.

Present/Share (8 minutes):

- Willing groups share their set and costume design sketches with the class using the questionnaire as a guideline for presentation.

Reflection (2 minutes):

- Ask students to reflect on the process of refining their opera adaptation pitches by developing set and costume designs in collaboration with their group or independently. Ask and discuss:
 - “How has your experience with adapting a story visually change your perspective on storytelling or your approach to developing ideas?”

Extension/Follow-up/Next steps:

- Discuss the connections to professions in the opera industry and to other artforms, such as fashion, architecture, etc., and other music genres. Delve deeper into how designers get inspiration – how do they research and find imagery that connects to the storyline.
- Students can take their set and costume designs to the next level and create set models, involving scale, and use recycled materials and fabrics to make costumes.

***Macbeth* (1847)**

Giuseppe Verdi, composer; Francesco Maria Piave, librettist

Giuseppe Verdi's opera *Macbeth*, inspired by William Shakespeare's play of the same name, was first performed in 1847. It marked one of Verdi's early ventures into the realm of opera based on literary sources, showcasing his growing interest in dramatic storytelling. The opera features a libretto written by Francesco Maria Piave, who adapted Shakespeare's dark themes of ambition, power, and guilt into a lyrical format that suited the operatic style. Verdi's composition captures the psychological depth and intensity of the characters, particularly the tormented Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, making it a pivotal work in his oeuvre and a significant contribution to the opera repertoire.

Short Synopsis

The opera *Macbeth*, based on Shakespeare's play, tells the story of a Scottish nobleman who rises to power through a series of murders to maintain his hold on the throne. After encountering witches who predict his future, Macbeth becomes consumed by ambition and, with the encouragement of his wife, Lady Macbeth, murders King Duncan and seizes the throne. However, his reign is plagued by paranoia, violence, and corruption, leading to his and Lady Macbeth's downfall as they become increasingly tyrannical and consumed by guilt.

MACBETH OPERA SYNOPSIS

Giuseppe Verdi, composer; Francesco Maria Piave, librettist

ACT I *Scotland.*

Macbeth and Banquo, leaders of the Scottish army, meet a group of witches who foretell the future. They address Macbeth as Thane of Cawdor and King of Scotland and tell Banquo that he will be the father of kings. The two men try to learn more, but the witches vanish. Messengers arrive with news that Duncan, the current king of Scotland, has made Macbeth Thane of Cawdor. The first part of the witches' prediction has come true.

In Macbeth's castle, Lady Macbeth reads a letter from her husband telling her of the events that have just transpired. She resolves to follow her ambitions. A servant announces that Duncan will soon arrive at the castle, and when Macbeth enters, she tells him that they must kill the king. Duncan arrives. Macbeth has a vision of a dagger, then leaves to commit the murder. On his return, he tells his wife how the act has frightened him, and she tells him that he needs more courage. They both leave as Banquo enters with Macduff, a nobleman, who discovers the murder. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth pretend to be horrified and join the others in condemning the murder.

ACT II

Macbeth has become king. Duncan's son, Malcolm, is suspected of having killed his father and has fled to England. Worried about the prophecy that Banquo's children will rule, Macbeth and his wife now plan to kill him and his son, Fleance, as well. As Macbeth leaves to prepare the double murder, Lady Macbeth hopes that it will finally make the throne secure.

Outside the castle, assassins wait for Banquo, who appears with his son, warning him of strange forebodings. Banquo is killed, but Fleance escapes.

Lady Macbeth welcomes the court to the banquet hall and sings a drinking song, while Macbeth receives news that Banquo is dead, and his son has escaped. About to take Banquo's seat at the table, Macbeth has a terrifying vision of the dead man accusing him. His wife is unable to calm her unsettled husband, and the courtiers wonder about the king's strange behavior. Macduff vows to leave the country, which is now ruled by criminals.

ACT III

The witches gather again, and Macbeth visits them, demanding more prophecies. Apparitions warn him to beware of Macduff and assure him that "no man of woman born" can harm him, and that he will be invincible until Birnam Wood marches on his castle. In another vision, he sees a procession of future kings, followed by Banquo.

Horrified, Macbeth collapses. The witches disappear and his wife finds him. They resolve to kill Macduff and his family.

ACT IV

On the Scottish border, Macduff has joined the refugees. His wife and children have been killed. Malcolm appears with British troops and leads them to invade Scotland.

Lady Macbeth is sleepwalking, haunted by the horrors of what she and her husband have done.

Macbeth awaits the arrival of his enemies and realizes that he will never live to a peaceful old age. Messengers bring news that Lady Macbeth has died, and that Birnam Wood appears to be moving. English soldiers appear, camouflaged with its branches. Macduff confronts Macbeth and tells him that he was not born naturally but had a Caesarean birth. He kills Macbeth and proclaims Malcolm king of Scotland.

Synopsis courtesy of the Metropolitan Opera.

Key Scenes in Verdi's *Macbeth*

Video excerpts and timestamps are pulled from the Metropolitan Opera on Demand and PBS LearningMedia™. Performance Date: Oct. 11, 2014

KEY SCENE #1: Act II, Scene 6 & 7: Tu di sangue hai brutto il volto (You have blood on your face)

[Met Opera on Demand](#): Track #21. ACT II: Si colmi il calice
02:00 – 04:46

OR

[PBS LearningMedia™](#): Macbeth | Act II | The Metropolitan Opera
19:20 – 24:09

After Lady Macbeth entertains her courtiers with a drinking song at the banquet, Macbeth receives news of Banquo's death from his assassin. As Macbeth is about to take Banquo's seat at the table, he is suddenly overcome by a chilling apparition of the dead Banquo, who confronts him. Lady Macbeth attempts to soothe him in vain, and the king's erratic behavior begins to raise eyebrows among the courtiers, who exchange uneasy glances at the strange display.

Libretto Excerpt

MACBETH
(sottovoce)
Tu di sangue hai brutto il volto.

MACBETH
(in a quiet voice)
You have blood on your face.

SICARIO
È di Banco.

ASSASSIN
It is Banquo's.

MACBETH
Il vero ascolto?

MACBETH
Is this the truth?

SICARIO
Sì.

ASSASSIN
Yes.

MACBETH
Ma il figlio?

MACBETH
What about his son?

SICARIO
Ne sfuggì

ASSASSIN
He fled!

MACBETH
Cielo! e Banco?

MACBETH
Heavens! But Banquo?

SICARIO
Egli morì
(Macbeth fa cenno al Sicario, che parte)

ASSASSIN
He is dead.
(Macbeth dismisses the assassin, who leaves)

LADY MACBETH
(avvicinandosi a Macbeth)
Che ti scosta, o re mio sposo,
Dalla gioia del banchetto?

LADY MACBETH
(drawing closer to Macbeth)
My royal husband, what has drawn you
away from the delights of the banquet?

MACBETH
Banco falla! il valoroso
Chiuderebbe io serto eletto
A quant'avvi di piú degno
Nell'intero nostro regno.

MACBETH
Banquo is not here. That courageous man
who would complete the chosen circle of
the most worthy in all our kingdom.

LADY MACBETH
Venir disse, e ci mancò.

LADY MACBETH
He said he would be here but he has failed
us.

MACBETH
In sua vece io sederò.
(Macbeth va per sedere.
Lo spettro di Banco, veduto solo da lui, ne
occupa il posto)
Di voi chi ciò fece?

MACBETH
I shall sit in his place.
(Macbeth goes to sit down, but Banquo's
ghost, which only he can see, is in his
place)
Which of you has done this?

TUTTI
Che parli?

ALL
What?

MACBETH
(allo spettro)
Non dirmi, non dirmi ch'io fossi!
Le ciocche cruenta non scuotermi incontro.

MACBETH
(to the ghost)
Do not say that it was I!
Do not shake your bloody locks at me!

TUTTI
(sorgono)
Macbetto è soffrente!
Partiamo.

ALL
(getting up)
Macbeth is ill.
Let us go.

LADY MACBETH
Restate! Gli è morbo fugace.
(piano a Macbeth)
E un uomo voi siete?

LADY MACBETH
Stay! His sickness is passing.
(softly, to Macbeth)
Are you a man?

MACBETH
Lo sono, ed audace

MACBETH
I am, and a bold man if I can

S'io guardo tal cosa che
al dimone istesso
Porrebbe spavento ... là... là nol ravvisi?
(allo spettro)
Oh, poi che le chiome scollar t'è concesso,
Favella! il sepolcro può render gli uccisi?
(L'ombra sparisce.)

LADY MACBETH
(piano a Macbeth)
Voi siete demente!

MACBETH
Quest'occhi l'han visto.

LADY MACBETH
(forte.)
Sedete, o mio sposo!
Ogni ospite è tristo.
Svegliate la gioia!

MACBETH
Ciascun mi perdoni:
Il brindisi lieto di nuovo risuoni,
Né Banco obliate,
che lungi è tuttor.

LADY MACBETH
Si colmi il calice
Di vino eletto;
Nasca il diletto,
Muoia il dolor.
Da noi s'involino
Gli odi e gli sdegni,
Folleggi e regni
Qui solo amor.
Giustiamo il balsamo
D'ogni ferita,
Che nova vita
Ridona al cor.
Vuotiam per l'inclito
Banco i bicchieri!
Fior de' guerrieri,
Di Scozia onor.

look at such a thing which might frighten
the devil himself.
There ... there ... can't you see it?
(to the ghost)
Since you can nod your head, tell me, can
the dead come back from the grave?
(The ghost vanishes.)

LADY MACBETH
(softly, to Macbeth)
You are mad!

MACBETH
I saw him with my own eyes.

LADY MACBETH
(strongly.)
Sit down, my husband!
All our guests are unhappy.
Re-awaken enjoyment!

MACBETH
Forgive me, everyone.
Let the cheering toast be sung again,
and let us not forget Banquo
who is not with us.

LADY MACBETH
Fill the cup
with choicest wine.
Give life to pleasure
and death to sorrow.
Let hate and scorn
fly from us
and let love alone
reign here.
Let us savor the balm
for every wound,
which gives new life
to the heart.
Let us empty our glasses
to illustrious Banquo!
The flower of warriors,
The pride of Scotland.

KEY SCENE #2: Act III, Scene 2: Finché appelli, silenti m'attendete (Wait for me in silence until I call)

Met Opera on Demand: Track #25. ACT III: Che fate voi, misteriose donne? & #26. ACT III: Fuggi, regal fantasima!
#25. 01:22 – 07:16 into #26. 00:00 – 00:30

OR

PBS LearningMedia™: Macbeth | Act III | The Metropolitan Opera
06:10 – 12:35

Macbeth visits the witches and demands more prophecies. The witches reveal three apparitions to him.

Libretto Excerpt

STREGHE

Dalle basse e dall'alte regioni,
Spirti erranti, salite, scendete!

(Scoppia un fulmine e sorge da terra un capo coperto d'elmo.)

MACBETH

Dimmi, o spirito...

STREGHE

T'ha letto nel cuore;
Taci, e n'odi le voci segrete.

APPARIZIONE

O Macbetto! Macbetto! Macbetto!
Da Macduff ti guarda prudente!

MACBETH

Tu m'afforzi l'ascolto sospetto!
Solo un motto...
(L'apparizione sparisce.)

WITCHES

Wandering spirits, arise from the depths,
descend from the heights.

(There is a flash of lightning and a head wearing a helmet appears from out of the ground.)

MACBETH

Tell me, spirit...

WITCHES

He has read what is in your heart
Stay quiet and hear his secret words.

APPARITION

O Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!
Beware Macduff!

MACBETH

You confirm my suspicions at what I have
heard! Just one word...
(The apparition vanishes.)

STREGHE

Richieste non vuole.
Ecco un altro di lui più possente.
(*Tuono: apparisce un fanciullo
insanguinato.*)
Taci, e n'odi le occulte parole.

APPARIZIONE

O Macbetto! Macbetto! Macbetto!
Esser puoi sanguinario, feroce:
Nessun nato di donna ti nuoce.
(*Sparisce*)

MACBETH

O Macduffo, tua vita perdono
(*feroce.*)
No! morrai! sul regale mio petto
Doppio usbergo sarà la tua morte!
(*Tuoni e lampi: sorge un fanciullo
coronato che porta un arboscello.*)
Ma che avvisa quel lampo, quel tuono?

Un fanciullo col serto dei Re!

STREGHE

Taci, ed odi.

APPARIZIONE

Sta' d'animo forte:
Glorioso, invincibil sarai
Fin che il bosco di Birna vedrai
Ravviarsi, e venir con te.
(*Sparisce*)

MACBETH

Lieto augurio! Per magica possa
Selva alcuna giammai non fu mossa.
(*alle Streghe*)
Or mi dite: salire al mio soglio
La progenie di Banco dovrà?

STREGHE

Non cercarlo!

MACBETH

Lo voglio! lo voglio,
o su di voi la mia spada cadrà!

WITCHES

He will not hear questions.
Here is another, more powerful.
(*Lightning: a bloodstained child appears.*)

Stay quiet and hear his mysterious words.

APPARITION

O Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!
You may be bloody and fierce:
no man born of woman will harm you.
(*It disappears.*)

MACBETH

O Macduff, I forgive you your life.
(*fiercely.*)
No, you will die. Your death
will be a double shield on my royal breast!
(*Thunder and lightning. A child appears
wearing a crown and carrying a sapling.*)
But what does this thunder and lightning
mean?
A child with a king's crown!

WITCHES

Be quiet and listen.

APPARITION

Be strong:
you will be glorious and invincible
until you see Birnam wood
come marching towards you.
(*It disappears*)

MACBETH

Oh, what a cheering prophecy! No wood
was ever moved by magic power.
(*To the witches*)
Now tell me: will the descendants
of Banquo ever mount the throne?

WITCHES

Do not ask!

MACBETH

I must know!
Or else my sword will fall on you!

(La caldaia cala sotterra)
La caldaia è sparita! perché
(suono sotterraneo di cornamusa)
Qual concerto! Parlate! Che v'è

STREGHE
I. Apparite!
II. Apparite!
III. Apparite!

TUTTE
Poi qual nebbia di nuovo sparite.

(Otto Re passano l'uno dopo l'altro. Da ultimo viene Banco con uno specchio in mano.)

(The cauldron sinks into the ground)
The cauldron has disappeared! Why?
(underground sound of bagpipes)
What is this music? Speak! What is it?

WITCHES
I. Appear!
II. Appear!
III. Appear!

ALL
Then like mist vanish again.

(Eight kings pass by, one after the other. Lastly comes Banquo, carrying a mirror in his hand.)

KEY SCENE #3: Act IV, Scene 6-10: E' morta la Regina! (The Queen is dead!)

[Met Opera on Demand](#): Track #36. ACT IV: Ella è morta!
00:00 – 03:57

OR

[PBS LearningMedia™](#): Macbeth | Act IV | The Metropolitan Opera
34:16 – 38:13

As news arrives that Lady Macbeth has died, Macbeth is given word that Birnam Wood is moving, and English soldiers emerge. Macduff confronts Macbeth and reveals that he was not born naturally but had a Caesarean birth. This vulnerability makes him immune to Macbeth's invincibility prophecy. Macbeth meets his tragic demise and with the end to his reign, paves the way for Malcolm's ascension to the throne.

Libretto Excerpt

GRIDA INTERNE
Ella è morta!

MACBETH
Qual gemito?

DAMA
È morta la Regina!

DISTANT VOICES
She is dead!

MACBETH
What is that crying?

GENTLEWOMAN
The Queen is dead!

MACBETH

La vita... che importa?...
È il racconto d'un povero idiota;
Vento e suono che nulla dinota!

CORO

(Coro di guerrieri e Macbeth.)

Sire! Ah, Sire!

MACBETH

Che fu?...quali nuove?

CORO

La foresta di Birna si muove!

MACBETH

M'hai deluso, presago infernale!...
Qui l'usbergo, la spada, il pugnale!
Prodi, all'armi! La morte o la gloria.

CORO

Dunque all'armi! Sì morte o vittoria.

MACDUFF

Via le fronde, e mano all'armi!
Mi seguite!

TUTTI

All'armi! all'armi!

MACDUFF

Carnefice de' figli miei, t'ho giunto.

MACBETH

Fuggi! Nato di donna
Uccidermi non può.

MACDUFF

Nato non son; strappato
Fui dal seno materno.

MACBETH

Cielo!
*(Brandiscono le spade e disperatamente
battendosi, escono di scena.)*

MACBETH

Life...what does it matter?...
It is the tale of a poor fool:
wind and sound signifying nothing.

CHORUS

(Soldiers enter.)

Sire! Ah, Sire!

MACBETH

What is it? What news?

CHORUS

Birnam Wood is moving!

MACBETH

You have deceived me, hellish prophecy!...
Bring my shield, my sword, my dagger!
My valiant men, to arms! Death or victory!

CHORUS

To arms then! Death or victory!

MACDUFF

Throw away the branches and take up your
arms! Follow me!

ALL

To arms!

MACDUFF

I have you, butcher of my children!

MACBETH

Away! No man born of woman
can kill me.

MACDUFF

I was not born. I was plucked
from my mother's womb.

MACBETH

Oh God!
*(They brandish their swords and exit,
battling desperately.)*

CORO

(entrando in scena)

Infausto giorno!

Preghiam per figli nostri!

Cessa il fragor!

VOCI INTERNE

Vittoria!

DONNE

Vittoria

CHORUS

(entering)

Unhappy day!

Let us pray for our sons!

The clash of arms has stopped.

DISTANT CHORUS

Victory!

WOMEN'S CHORUS

Victory!

Libretto excerpts courtesy of [Opera Folio](#).