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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead

An origin story: Commissioning, producing, and performing a
one-act chamber opera revealing the fate of Lady Macbeth

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts

by

Michelle Teresa Rice

2023

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2023

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead

An origin story: Commissioning, producing, and performing a
one-act chamber opera revealing the fate of Lady Macbeth

by

Michelle Teresa Rice

Doctor of Musical Arts

University of California, Los Angeles, 2023

Professor James Bass, Chair

Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth is enrobed in mystery. She is a complex character, very present and real in the world of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, but her astonishing words and actions are left unelucidated by the play's text. Her offstage death near the play's conclusion, communicated with no supporting detail, only serves to encase her inscrutability in an aura of permanence. Actors and audiences alike have been forced to make substantial assumptions about her motivations and her fate for more than four centuries. Lady Macbeth is typically construed as being motivated by an ambitious desire to be queen, as passionately committed to supporting her husband's desire to be king, or as having some innate savagery or an allegiance to evil forces that drives her to pursue evil deeds. These possible bases for her choices seem hollow, insufficient to explain the obsessional intensity of her words and the lighting-quick surety of her actions. To

explore and hopefully reveal more of the origin and object of her enigmatic drive, and to attempt to uncover the end of her story, a new opera about Lady Macbeth was commissioned and serves as the basis for this dissertation.

The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead is a one-act opera for chamber ensemble and soprano about the character of Lady Macbeth, with music composed by Tomàs Peire Serrate and a libretto written by Alejandra Villarreal Martinez. The action of this opera, conceived as taking place within the world of the play, is an extended scene for Lady Macbeth that would occur between the sleepwalking scene in Act V, scene 1, and Seyton's announcement to King Macbeth that, "The queen, my lord, is dead" in Act V, scene 5. This work was commissioned in 2021, developed and produced over a sixteen-month period, and performed in June of 2022.

This dissertation will discuss: the genesis of the idea for the opera; the opera's premise and content of its story; the collaborative process between the composer, the librettist, and myself (as the commissioner of the work); the experience of producing and production-managing the premiere of the opera; the experience of musically and dramatically creating and performing the Lady Macbeth revealed by this composition; the performance considerations for those interested in producing or performing this opera; and the work's inherent value, as a recommendation for its continued life.

Video of the world premiere performance and more information about the collaborators who created the score and the premiere production can be found on the opera's website:

<https://www.thequeenopera.com/>.

This dissertation of Michelle Teresa Rice is approved.

Peter D. Kazaras

Vladimir Chernov

Ian Krouse

Michael J. Hackett III

James Bass, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2023

For Shirliann, Janet, and Roberta,

so full of life.

Thank you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Table of Figures.....	viii
Acknowledgements.....	ix
Biographical Sketch.....	xiv
Chapter 1: <i>The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead</i>	1
Introduction.....	1
Genesis of the Idea.....	3
Avenues of Inquiry.....	7
Chapter 2: The Story in the Work.....	13
Lady Macbeth in History: Gruoch ingen Boite.....	14
The Premise of <i>The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead</i>	17
The Synopsis of <i>The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead</i>	25
Chapter 3: The Story of the Work.....	27
Development of the Libretto.....	28
Development of the Score.....	37
Development of the Character in the Score.....	47
Chapter 4: The Work Onstage: The World Premiere.....	60
Taking On the Roles of Producer and Production Manager.....	61
Taking On the Role of Lady Macbeth née Gruoch.....	65
Performance Considerations for <i>The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead</i>	68

Chapter 5: Looking Inward, Looking Forward.....	76
What Makes This Piece Work?.....	76
This Opera’s Future.....	82
Conclusion.....	83
Appendix A: Tanistry, Gaelic Names, Historical Sources.....	86
Tanistry in 10th- And 11th-Century Scotland.....	86
Medieval Gaelic Names, Bynames, and Alternate Signifiers.....	88
Tanistry in <i>Macbeth</i>	89
Appendix B: <i>The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead</i> , Scores.....	94
Piano Vocal Score.....	95
Full Score.....	142
Appendix C: <i>The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead</i> , Libretto.....	210
Appendix D: <i>The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead</i> , Video of the World Premiere.....	223
Appendix E: <i>The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead</i> , Studio Audio Recording.....	224
Bibliography.....	225

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1. The end of the opera.....	41-42
Figure 2. Leitmotif: “Malcolm’s approaching army” in mm. 1-2 and 444-445.....	44
Figure 3. Leitmotif: “Throne of Alba” in mm. 46 and 48-49.....	45
Figure 4. Leitmotif: “Dagger” in mm. 273-274.....	45
Figure 5. Leitmotif: “Blood” from mm. 540 beat 4 through mm. 541 beat 3.....	46
Figure 6. End of the overture.....	48
Figure 7. Lady Macbeth wakes from her trance.....	49
Figure 8. Lady Macbeth addresses the dagger.....	51
Figure 9. “What, truant!”.....	52
Figure 10. “A fury so full of life”.....	53
Figure 11. Lullaby.....	54
Figure 12. Folk song ostinato.....	55
Figure 13. Pleading with Gille.....	56
Figure 14. Last challenge.....	57
Figure 15. Turning point.....	58
Figure 16: Original and final notation of the laugh.....	70
Figure 17. Strumming effect.....	71
Figure 18. Considerations for the piano reduction.....	72
Figure 19. Duncan’s ghost enters.....	74

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Regarding the opera commission, the scores in Appendix B were composed by Tomàs Peire Serrate with a libretto by Alejandra Villarreal Martinez. The full score will be published in the UCLA Music Library's Contemporary Score Edition, accessible at <https://escholarship.org/uc/uclamusiclib/about>. The studio recording of the opera described in Appendix E enjoyed generous support from The Hugo and Christine Davise Fund for Contemporary Music.

It is not possible to adequately thank Serrate and Martinez for agreeing to take on this project and helping to bring *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead* into existence. There aren't words demonstrative enough to repay their labors and sparks of genius. They gave bounteously of their time, trust, and talents, creating a composition that is both an alluring art object and a uniquely engrossing piece of music theater. I am profoundly honored to be a member of this collaboration.

Producing opera is an act of collective will, a team sport. The opera's successful premiere would not have come to pass without the skill and dedication of several key players. I am indebted to the following people for their direct facilitation of the premiere production: Working with Stephen Karr as conductor and Indre Viskontas as stage director was an exceptional windfall of good fortune for the commission and for me, personally. With Karr and Viskontas acting as guardians of the show's musical and theatrical integrity, the resulting performance was

a thought-provoking, artistically mature presentation. The musicians in the premiere ensemble—Christine Tivolacci, Andrew Leonard, Ben Phelps, Sky Haneul Lee, Leila Nuñez-Fredell, and Joo Lee—expertly rendered Serrate’s score and gave me the gift of mutual excitement about the music. Designers Brandon Baruch, Lex Gernon, Angela Santori, and Linda Muggeridge made the world of the opera lucid and tangible onstage in a way that deftly served both the performers and the audience. From the Herb Alpert School’s music technology office, Luis Henao’s caretaking ensured our successful residence in Schoenberg Hall, and Jose Carrillo’s amiable savvy and dependability were often the adhesive that kept the whole enterprise moving toward completion. In the background of all of this, my faculty advisor Peter Kazaras’s unwavering support consistently buoyed my confidence and helped me find the path forward. I sought his advice and perspective countless times, and he always responded by making his attention, knowledge, and goodwill available to me. His mentorship was essential to my personal success in this endeavor.

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Critically, the premiere was funded by an astonishing group of forty-nine individual donors, many of whom contributed via our crowdfunding campaign, while others made private donations. Some donors were awe-inspiring in the degree of their generosity. There is always a bond between performer and audience, a connection among everyone who desires this art. Having fulfilled the budget through crowdfunding, during the premiere I sincerely felt that my performance was in honor of those who donated. For the gifts of their resources, and for my increased experience of that symbiosis, I am humbled and grateful.

I would like to thank my dissertation committee for helping me to frame this document as a meaningful response to my experience of commissioning, producing, and performing *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead*. From the outset, my committee championed the value of my research, effort, and growth during the execution of this project. Their endorsement of my accomplishment helped me discover what I needed to write, and why. I am particularly thankful to my committee members for their specific contributions: to my committee chair, Director of Choral Studies James Bass, for his opportune and astute guidance in distilling this multifaceted project down to its fundamental ideas, and for his help in refining this document; to Opera UCLA director Peter Kazaras, for his advocacy of me and my work on this project, and for his expertise and authority on all matters related to opera production; to my studio professor, Vladimir Chernov, for his rare understanding of the voice as instrument, for reminding me to always embrace the value of my vantage point as a singing actor, and for speaking directly to my emotional core in every situation; to composition professor Ian Krouse, for his valuable perspective about the unique challenges that writing opera presents to composers, and for charging me to generously share my experience of collaborating on this commission; and to School of Theater, Film & Television professor Michael Hackett, for his evaluation of the merits and potential of the commission, and

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During my doctoral tenure at UCLA, I have benefited from some truly excellent instruction and even more rewarding opportunities. Faculty and lecturers whose passion for learning and performing is infectious make the Herb Alpert School a rewarding place to study. I am truly thankful to the coaches and conductors who bring their open hearts, expansive knowledge, and inestimable intuition to coachings, classes, and rehearsals with UCLA voice students, every day. Before my final dissertation project took shape, my incipient research efforts benefited from the fresh eyes and constructive insights of Katherine Syer, Lucy Yates, and Andrew Sage Mendez-McLeish. I am grateful for their willingness to help me grapple with unwieldy ideas.

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Importantly, for her editing of this dissertation, I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to my friend, Grace Weber Johnson. Johnson consistently and continuously provided immensely helpful feedback on my process, my writing, and my wrestling with the story I've tried to tell. Her knack for perspective was there for me in the moments when I had none. Her invaluable input was the bridge I needed to travel from the beginning to the ending of this document.

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me, even as I commence a new era of my musical career. My work with Delores Ziegler and Douglas Sumi has profoundly changed my singing and my life for the better. The intense support and recognition I unfailingly receive from my mother and sister, Jean Kulbeth and Sharon Rice, is the backbone of much of what I've accomplished. It will ever be a goal of mine to earn the esteem they give me. Finally, I am ineffably thankful for Doug Woolsey, whose partnership in these pursuits exponentially increases their meaning.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Michelle Rice brings to her work a rich timbre and performance intensity. Before a recent change to dramatic soprano repertoire, Rice was hailed as a standout in mezzo repertoire, appearing in such roles as Herodias (*Salome*), Suzuki (*Madama Butterfly*), Flora Bervoix (*La traviata*), Lola (*Cavalleria rusticana*), Carmen and Mercedes (*Carmen*), the Witch and the Mother (*Hansel and Gretel*), Antonia's Mother (*Les contes d'Hoffmann*), Gertude (*Roméo et Juliette*), Marcellina (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Sesto (*La clemenza di Tito*), and Serse and Arsamene (*Serse*), with companies including West Bay Opera, Opera San José, Fresno Grand Opera, Opera Cleveland, Annapolis Opera, Pasadena Opera, New Orleans Opera, and other organizations throughout the United States.

Performances of 20th- and 21st-century repertoire have included the roles of Savitri (*Savitri*), The Mother (*Amahl and the Night Visitors*), Mrs. Olsen (*Street Scene*), the Secretary (*The Consul*), Mère Marie (*Dialogues des Carmélites*), Anna (*Tobias and the Angel*), Jade Boucher (*Dead Man Walking*), Sidia Gruenfeld (*Lost Childhood*), Madre Melchora in the world premiere of Carla Lucero's *Juana* with Opera UCLA, and the role of Kathy Hagen in Terence Blanchard's *Champion: An Opera in Jazz*. Rice created the title role in *Clara*, a 21st-century opera by Robert Convery based on the life of Clara Schumann. Of that performance, the Washington Post declared, "Rice was...reflective and confident in both her singing and acting... [she] excelled at dramatic subtleties and pierced scenes with her presence and clarity of voice—especially compelling during revelatory biographical moments."

Career highlights include performances of Mrs. Grose in Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* at the Kennedy Center conducted by Lorin Maazel, the role of Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*) with

acclaimed film director Jonathan Lynn, and Dominick Argento's Pulitzer Prize-winning monodrama *From the Diary of Virginia Woolf*, performed for the composer.

On the concert stage, Rice has performed the mezzo solos in Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Mozart's *Coronation Mass*, Händel's *Messiah*, Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Schubert's *Mass No. 5*, Schumann's *Das Paradies und die Peri*, Elgar's *The Music Makers*, Carlos Fonseca's *Missa Afro-Brasileira*, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, Musorgsky's *Songs and dances of death*, among others, as well as the soprano solo in Korngold's *Passover Psalm*, with groups including the Berkeley Symphony, Washington Concert Opera, and MidAmerica Productions at Carnegie Hall. Her concert performances have run the gamut from the mezzo solo in a lauded performance of the Verdi *Requiem* with James Morris and Sharon Sweet, to a video presentation of the aria "To this we've come" from Menotti's *The Consul*, featured in the National Museum of American Jewish History's program celebrating Ruth Bader Ginsburg's 88th birthday. Rice's recital programs feature song cycles such as Mohammed Fairouz' *Jeder Mensch* with texts from the diary of Alma Mahler, and Ned Rorem's *Evidence of Things Not Seen*.

Rice is exploring producing new classical works for the voice as an additional creative avenue. In 2021, she commissioned, produced, and performed a video recital of new works for the voice by UCLA student composers called *Song Gallery*. In 2022, she commissioned, fully produced, and performed a one-act chamber opera about Lady Macbeth called *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead*. Rice holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Washington and a Master of Music degree from the University of Maryland.

Chapter 1: *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead*

Introduction

The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead is a one-act chamber opera about the seminal character of Lady Macbeth, scored for one soprano and a chamber ensemble of flute, clarinet, percussion, piano, violin, and cello. Commissioned in 2021 and premiered the following year, the work was composed by Tomàs Peire Serrate to a libretto by Alejandra Villarreal Martinez and features original text, containing only two lines taken from William Shakespeare's 1606 play,¹ one of which is employed as the opera's title. The entire opera consists of one extended scene featuring Lady Macbeth, completely alone. Were this scene to be included in a presentation of *Macbeth*, the stage action of the opera would appear after the sleepwalking scene (5.1)² and before Seyton's announcement of the Queen's death (5.5). The inimitable sleepwalking scene is Lady Macbeth's final appearance onstage in Shakespeare's play. When Lady Macbeth exits for the last time, carrying her pitiful, prophetic candle and apparently exhorting herself "[t]o bed, to bed, to bed!" (5.1.68), her departure foreshadows the imagery of Macbeth's subsequent soliloquy. Her "brief candle" will soon be "out" after lighting her "way to dusty death."³ The opera, *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead*, is an answer to the question: what happens to Lady Macbeth after the sleepwalking scene, and why?

¹ The date of *Macbeth*'s composition is not known for certain, but evidence indicates it was written in the spring and summer of 1606 (Clark and Mason, Introduction to *Macbeth*, 13).

² Shakespeare, William, *Macbeth*, in *The Arden Shakespeare*, 3rd ser., eds. Sandra Clark and Pamela Mason (London: Bloomsbury, 2015). References are to act, scene, and line.

³ Macbeth delivers the "Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow" soliloquy immediately upon hearing, "The Queen, my lord, is dead" (5.5.16). In it, he says, "And all our yesterdays have lighted fools / The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle..." (5.5.21-22).

This project (the commission, composition, premiere production, and dissertation) is a manifestation of my enduring preoccupation with the enigmatic and unfinished story of Lady Macbeth. There is some ambiguous humanity at the heart of this character who is, herself, a composite of unexplained mysteries. And she is, in turn, situated at the heart of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. For more than a decade, the impetus to uncover and comprehend the underlying nature of Lady Macbeth gradually developed in my mind. In 2021, after a successful first experience commissioning new works for another project, this gestating intention materialized as an active inspiration to commission a new opera about Lady Macbeth. Although I was initially unsure what the opera's eventual plot would be, I resolved that the piece would show her humanity, attempt to explicate her unclear motives, and bring the hidden conclusion of her story out of the shadowy wings and onto the lighted stage. This would be accomplished by presenting a scene created to come after the sleepwalking scene. Researching Shakespeare's sources for the character, I crafted a premise for the opera that would combine the biographical details of Lady Macbeth's historical predecessor with Lady Macbeth's words and actions in the play. I proposed this idea—Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth, expanded to include the details of her historical biography, and featured in a scene to follow the sleepwalking scene—to creators who were then motivated to write the piece, and I collaborated with them on their compositions. From the beginning of the partnership, it was my plan to produce and perform a full production of the resulting work as the final required performance of my doctoral degree. With no prior experience producing opera, I sought copious advice and assistance; created a budget and fundraised to finance it; promoted the performance online; hired all necessary musical, direction, design, facilities, technical, and logistic staff required to mount an opera production; and produced, production-managed, and performed the premiere of *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead*. After many

years, my long-standing desire to know more about Lady Macbeth emerged from its chrysalis to become the world premiere of a new opera on June 11, 2022.

Genesis of the Idea

New operas have been gaining prominence in America since the 1980s, and the development and programming of new opera is currently one of the highest priorities at many structurally important institutions within the field.⁴ This industry-wide emphasis has increasingly impacted the opportunities of many working singers, and it certainly helped to shape my performing career both before and since becoming a student in the Herb Alpert School of Music (HASoM). Prior to the premiere of *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead*, I performed several new roles in workshop performances and premiere productions. Earning my doctoral degree in southern California (a region that favors not only new works, but entirely new kinds of opera and music theater) absolutely influenced my decision to commission and perform a new operatic work to fulfill a graduation requirement. But more than that, this pursuit was a natural consequence of my experience and preoccupations.

The idea to create this opera came from the confluence of an old fascination of mine and recent developments in my musical and academic work. Like many people, I have always been enthralled by Shakespeare's language, especially that of *Macbeth*. As the introduction to the Arden Shakespeare's third edition of the play so aptly states, "The language of *Macbeth* provides [Shakespeare's characteristic] linguistic excitement to an extraordinary degree . . . it is compact language, often complex and cryptic, but also memorable . . . [A] host of phrases and expressions that are alive in the popular imagination . . . testify to the intense interest in the English

⁴ Metcalf, "Funding Opera," 21-4; Hernández, "Pandemic Woes"; Metcalf, "How Opera."

language during the period [of its composition] . . .”⁵ The play’s language conspicuously flaunts a density of ideas, punctuated by lexical strikes to the gut at regular intervals. Who doesn’t reflexively share that “intense interest” when reading or listening to a well-delivered performance of “Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow”?

It was Ernest Bloch’s operatic setting⁶ that first centered my attention on Lady Macbeth and made me curious about the depth of her character. As part of my coursework during my Master’s degree, I learned and performed the sleepwalking scene in Bloch’s opera. In the play, the doctor and gentlewoman discuss the queen’s behavior and react to the revelations in her statements. They are the audience’s proxy, observing and interpreting Lady Macbeth’s words and actions and shaping the emotional response to her state of being, while the Lady herself remains a bit distant. However, the French-language libretto of Bloch’s opera, written by playwright Edmond Fleg, makes several economical changes to Shakespeare’s text, including the removal of these minor characters. Bloch used the space created by their absence to allow the orchestra to observe and comment on Lady Macbeth instead. The orchestral introduction to the aria is a dark, foreboding passage, *piuttosto lento*, that presents a clear, cinematic prologue to the “Out, damn’d spot” speech (5.1.35-68). In the aria’s introduction, I hear Castle Dunsinane rising up out of the diseased earth and see its twisted towers stretch up into the night sky. There is a sense of shambling, off-balance footfalls pacing in a gloomy circular room. There is another presence, watching and dreading. The watcher steadfastly approaches the unsteady figure, maybe climbing

⁵ Clark and Mason, 39.

⁶ Bloch’s *Macbeth: Drame Lyrique en Sept Tableaux (Un Prologue et Trois Actes)* is a rich, compelling work that is essentially unknown. It premiered at the Opéra Comique in 1910, but due to complications during its initial run and first few revivals, it has received fewer than 100 performances, globally, since that time (Henig, “A Performance History,” 153-55; 169-70).

the stairs of the tower to find her wandering there.⁷ All of this is suggested, musically, in the twenty-two measures before Lady Macbeth begins to sing, “Encore une tache . . .”⁸ By assigning the role of observer to the orchestra, Bloch gives the audience an opportunity to experience the orchestra’s expressions as their own nonverbal responses to the dramatic situation. A heightened voyeurism is created, as if the music of the aria’s introduction escorts the invisible audience into her room, and even into her thoughts.⁹

Interaction between the orchestra and a character’s psychological state is an effect that is not unique to Bloch’s *Macbeth*, but the intimate impression conveyed by this aria feels distinctly more revealing than other portrayals of Lady Macbeth. Her character is complex, elusive, and sometimes chilling or even frightening, but she was not written, and is often not played, in a way that invites you into her mystery. Listening to the opera and learning Bloch’s sleepwalking scene activated a visceral desire to find out who Lady Macbeth might be—who is that person, stumbling in the night, talking to herself, marooned in a small sphere of cold candlelight, weakly fighting back the pitch? The sound of her, as painted by Bloch, became an object of rumination for me,¹⁰ and I often wondered how I would play Lady Macbeth—perhaps expressly Bloch’s Lady Macbeth—given the chance. The idea of a project that would explore her inner life took root in my imagination over the course of many years.

⁷ Following the aria, the playout sounds like the retreat of the brooding observer, and Lady Macbeth is distinctly left alone when the music transitions away from the sleepwalking scene.

⁸ “Yet here’s a spot . . .” (Bloch, *Macbeth*, piano/vocal score, 291-9).

⁹ Pierre Lalo, a critic reviewing the premiere production in *Le Temps*, wrote, “. . . It is difficult to imagine music more intimately bound up with the poetic text . . . [the characters] stand before us, caught by the music in the very essence of their lives” (Cohen, “Ernest Bloch,” 147).

¹⁰ There appear to be only four extant recordings of the opera, all of them live performances. Two from the 1990s are available on CD, and two from the 1960s are available only on the internet (and sporadically not locatable). The recording that impacts me most features Inge Borkh as Lady Macbeth in a live performance from Geneva in 1968. As of this writing, it can be accessed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S8vNcHA7nd8>. The sleepwalking scene begins at 2:02:46 in the video.

Several recent experiences also set me on the path to this commission. During the fall of 2019, an opera scenes practicum was offered to HASoM composition students. Interested in how this kind of writing is taught to composers, I audited the class. This experience inspired me to actively pursue collaboration with my colleagues. The first fruit of this activity was my second doctoral recital, a program of all new vocal works by HASoM student composers. That recital project was eventually completed in a video format,¹¹ due to UCLA's shift to remote instruction in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, I was also changing fachs, from mezzo-soprano to dramatic soprano, and I dedicated myself to acquiring new repertoire. One of the new characters in my singing life was Verdi's *Lady Macbeth*.

Even accounting for the composers' respective time periods and musical styles, the dissimilarity between Verdi's and Bloch's versions of *Lady Macbeth* is striking. Verdi's musical interpretation of her motivations and state of mind are wholly different from Bloch's, and both composers' readings of the character are necessarily different from what is offered by Shakespeare's text, which has no harmonic structure nor any truly fixed rhythmic information to provide clues for character interpretation. The two most significant musical adaptations of the character merely serve to make an understanding of her more elusive. This is a consequence of how little Shakespeare conveys about *Lady Macbeth* in the play. There are several piquant examples of withheld information, but none more breathtaking than the complete dearth of detail given about her offstage death. The brief line "The Queen, my lord, is dead" is used to conceal much. Working on Verdi's *Lady Macbeth* prodded my old desire to demystify what is at her core. My internalization of both Bloch's and Verdi's interpretations of the character, as well as other external factors, led me to the idea of creating a new operatic work.

¹¹ *Song Gallery, New Songs for the Voice by UCLA Student Composers*, premiered online September 10, 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XYg2RBbf6_Y.

Avenues of Inquiry

At the beginning of the project, the shape and content of this new opera were still forming in my mind, but three ideas were quite clear to me. First, it is both vexing and stimulating that the play does not show the end of Lady Macbeth's character arc. The audience watches her exit in great distress and then, after a few scenes, the king's servant reports that she is dead, with no extrapolation of any kind. This announcement seems to suck the air out of Macbeth, and the forward progress of the play pauses for a moment, on the cusp of the crowning speech of the entire drama.¹² Macbeth's nihilistic soliloquy carries the implication, incidental or not, that in addition to having no detail, Lady Macbeth's death also has no meaning. Essentially, the end of her perplexing story is cut short to set up the real *coup de grâce* for the play's eponymous character: his understanding of his own insignificance.¹³ Aware of my temerity, I nevertheless jauntily decided that Macbeth has had more than four centuries to ponder that lesson, and it would be interesting to create a work in which Lady Macbeth is the arbiter of the relative importance of her own demise. I decided the commission should unveil the circumstances of her death and the thoughts and decisions that precipitate it.

Second, I wanted to elucidate why someone would make the choices Lady Macbeth makes throughout the play. Everything the play tells us about Lady Macbeth is intriguing: She thinks and acts quickly; she does not restrict herself to comparatively moral choices; she is willing to employ dangerous or manipulative tactics that most would not even consider, let alone enact; she is either not afraid or believes that she can control her fear; her past, including a child,

¹² Lowrance describes this soliloquy as, effectively, the end of the play. "...[E]ven for the usually ambivalent conclusions of Shakespeare's tragedies, the ending of *Macbeth* seems particularly *pro forma*, sharply undercut by the realization that Macbeth has voiced, on stage, just a few minutes earlier. It is in this realization, I would argue, that *Macbeth* finds its true conclusion..." (Lowrance, "Modern Ecstasy," 843).

¹³ The irony, of course, is that both the play, *Macbeth*, and the title character's crushing nihilistic realization have been valuable subjects of cultural and artistic inquiry for hundreds of years, all around the world.

is hidden from us; and her goal is for Macbeth to be king. Yet, that clear information is juxtaposed with her last appearance, in which we see her in a dissociative state that ultimately, ostensibly, leads to her suicide. Shakespeare presents this incongruity but does not unpack it, possibly because Lady Macbeth seems to know herself: she openly acknowledges that her scruples are one of the obstacles she will have to surmount, asking the “spirits / That tend on mortal thoughts” to prevent any “compunctious visitings of nature” from interfering with her plans (1.5.40-41, 45). She is driven to pursue her goal for an unstated reason, the importance of which outweighs her fear of possible consequences, even the potentially dire consequences of conspiring to murder a monarch. Lady Macbeth’s unnamed motivation is the prime mover of the whole tragedy, since her inciting Macbeth to commit regicide is what tips the scales of the play toward action.

Some adaptations of the play deal with the question of her motivation. The libretto of Verdi’s *Macbeth* expands the Lady’s relative importance in the overall drama¹⁴ and presents her as having a grandiose lust to rule.¹⁵ Her sleepwalking scene in Verdi’s opera, which is in prose in Shakespeare’s play, is “corrected” to be in rhyming verse and comes across as a “last gorgeous act of assertion” with “outbreaks of open triumph and gloating,” as opposed to an expression of mental dissolution.¹⁶ Other treatments demonize her, attributing her actions either to her

¹⁴ Degrada, “Observations,” 160-4.

¹⁵ Interestingly, though Shakespeare does not state it overtly in the play’s text, Holinshed’s *Chronicles* (Shakespeare’s primary source for *Macbeth*) does describe Lady Macbeth as “verie ambitious, burning in unquenchable desire to beare the name of a queene” (Bullough, *Narrative and Dramatic*, 496). However, Bullough includes language from the account that was Holinshed’s source, written by Hector Boece about 50 years prior. Boece’s text gives a slightly different impression than Holinshed’s. And the main chronicles of Scottish history dating from before Boece do not mention Lady Macbeth at all (Bullough, 434-6).

¹⁶ Barish, “Madness,” 154-5. The receipt of Verdi’s sleepwalking scene as a last glorious *scena* matches my experience of the music, as well, despite the fact that Verdi intended a very different effect. His vision of the scene was modeled after the performance of Adelaide Ristori (Bernstein, “Bewitched,” 37-8). Ristori played Lady Macbeth in the sleepwalking scene as a “bony carcass left bare by a vulture . . . eaten up by the remorse playing on her mind” (Ristori, quoted in Rosen and Porter, *Verdi’s Macbeth*, 362).

inherently evil nature as a “fiend-like queen” (5.9.35) or to her presumed connection with the witches. This view regards her psychological downfall as a necessary corollary of trafficking with evil.¹⁷ Sarah Siddons and Ellen Terry, seminal actors in the role from the late 18th and 19th centuries respectively, introduced their lasting variations of Lady Macbeth. Siddons was so ferocious in the role, “an intense, terrifying force,”¹⁸ that she reshaped the character for a generation.¹⁹ Terry played the character as delicate and imploring.²⁰ Both of these actors portrayed the Lady as hewing too eagerly to her husband’s desire for advancement, only to be undone by her fundamental fragility.²¹ Many of the numerous 20th- and 21st-century film adaptations make use of alternate settings or contexts to contain and make sense of the play and its main characters. These devices run the gamut thematically, in part because the play has been adapted to film so many times. There is so much that is undefined about Lady Macbeth, it is no wonder our idea of her does not stay fixed in one place. However, none of these exegeses ring true for me, especially those that derive their explanations solely from the play’s explicit text. The mystique of Lady Macbeth’s character stems from all that she lacks in the play—a name, a history, clear motives, a child . . .²² Simply mining the text for a deeper understanding would not alter her status as a dramaturgical mystery. The story I wanted to tell in the opera would explain why she chooses and behaves as she does and would have to be found outside of the play.

¹⁷ Leonard, “Lady Macbeth,” 72-3.

¹⁸ Bernstein, 32.

¹⁹ Clark and Mason, 9; 107-8.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 109-10.

²¹ Clark and Mason, 2015; Leonard, 2009.

²² “Shakespeare’s literary art . . . is as much an art of omission as it is of surpassing richness. The plays are greatest where they are most elliptical” (Bloom, *Shakespeare*, 738).

Finally, I wanted the opera to avoid any plot elements that situate Lady Macbeth within the Eve archetype. I am not interested in the trope that women are “the devil’s gateway” and responsible for “all spiritual and material evils which afflict man,”²³ not even interested enough to rail against it.²⁴ This notion, originating among the intelligentsia of the early Catholic church, was still an influential perspective at the time *Macbeth* was written. King James VI/I²⁵ (patron of the King’s Men) reasoned that women are “frailer” than men, which makes it “easier [for them] to be intrapped in the gross snares of the Devill, [and this was proved] by the Serpents deceiving of Eve”²⁶ In a culture obsessed with the discovery and punishment of witchcraft, Jacobean audiences probably considered Lady Macbeth to be a witch, due to her invocation of the spirits and the exact language she uses.²⁷ In a basic sense, both the play and posterity assign culpability for Macbeth’s violent acts to Lady Macbeth,²⁸ aligning her with the Eve paradigm. I was, and I remain, profoundly disinterested in making further contributions to that discussion, having little

²³ From early Christian author Tertullian. In several treatises on, of all things, what attire women should wear, he repeatedly makes the connection between womankind and Eve (Denike, “The Devil’s,” 17; 24).

²⁴ Feminist criticism of Shakespeare emerged as an area of discourse in 1975 with Dusinberre’s book, *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women*. This was followed by a Modern Language Association Special Session on Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare in 1976 (Lenz/Greene/Neely, *The Woman’s Part*, ix; Dusinberre, *Shakespeare*, “Preface to the Second Edition,” 1996). A great deal of excellent scholarship offering contrasting viewpoints has been written in the decades since.

²⁵ King James VI of Scotland (r. 1567-1625) was also crowned King James I of England and Ireland (r. 1603-1625) and was the first Scottish king of England. Macbeth’s line, “. . . some I see / That twofold balls and treble sceptres carry” (4.1.119-120), during the vision of Banquo’s line shown to him by the witches, is a reference to James VI/I.

²⁶ Denike, 12.

²⁷ Spoto, “Jacobean Witchcraft,” 64-6; Callaghan, “Wicked Women,” 359.

²⁸ Malcolm’s naming of Lady Macbeth as a “fiend-like queen” (5.9.35) at the end of the play seems strange. Malcolm most likely would not have known about Lady Macbeth’s complicity in the murder of Duncan; there would not have been time, during the siege and final battle, for the doctor and gentlewoman who witnessed her involuntary confession to report her guilt to anyone who could communicate it to Malcolm so quickly. Why does he say it? It appears as though Malcolm is using the platform of the moment to spin the narrative. It is propaganda. He goes on to suggest that she “. . . as ‘tis thought, by self and violent hands / Took off her life . . .” (5.9.36-37), as though it is a rumor he heard in passing. Death by suicide guarantees her damnation in addition to her death. This entire mention of Lady Macbeth at the end of the play feels opportunistic and conveys more about Malcolm than about Lady Macbeth.

appetite for the apparently-still-titillating mythical connection between supernatural evil and womanhood, famously epitomized by the witches in *Macbeth*, no matter how memorable and enjoyable their language is in the play. I determined that the opera would steadfastly avoid looking at Lady Macbeth through the prism of any pseudo-philosophical status as an Eve-analogue. Instead, this new work would add to the knowledge of Lady Macbeth's obviously complicated humanity.

Searching for the opera's narrative, I studied Lady Macbeth's text in the play and did some freewriting to draw out my thoughts and perceptions. I attempted to puzzle out what she wants, specifically, and the possible reasons why. She makes decisions very rapidly and with heated intensity, but her choices also seem contextually pragmatic.²⁹ My impression is that her desire for the crown is actually a means to some unidentified end. Seeking Duncan's death and Macbeth's coronation are her strategy, but the strategy and the object are not one and the same—there is something underneath. My investigation constantly returned to this hidden goal and the way it colors her behavior. She accelerates to action vehemently and without hesitation, as though she was primed for this agitation beforehand, the unknown source of her disturbance already occupying her thoughts when she receives Macbeth's letter. She does not wish for agency or hope for an outcome; instead she instantly seizes control of her situation and employs the most extreme tactic possible—petitioning the spirits for aid. She does this without considering the consequences or reviewing other options, because she is already mentally prepared to put her design into effect. This singular, obsessive mind state and the urgency with which she pursues her objective are suggestive of someone who is desperate. Beyond any mental fractionation resulting from a guilty conscience, it is that desperation we later see within her, during the

²⁹ Bloch wrote, "Lady Macbeth is [Macbeth's] opposite: he hesitates, she, never. She is the veritable pivot of the drama... her presence... is always decisive" (Henig, 152).

sleepwalking scene. Is this because the execution of her plan did not actually produce the benefit she sought in the first place? Did she discover she was on a false path, only to find herself responsible for the consequences of a failed strategy? The sleepwalking scene feels to me, in part, like a conversation with herself in which she realizes her defeat and the loss of her unspecified objective. Following this grim review, her reported suicide can be another expression of agency and self-determination, characteristically in line with her actions throughout the play leading to that moment.

Many different scenarios could be created, whole cloth, to explain the mysteries surrounding Lady Macbeth. My reflections and preparatory freewriting produced a variety of story germs, but none of them fit the as-yet-amorphous idea gathering in my mind. I had many unanswered questions:

- Why does Lady Macbeth want Duncan killed?
- Why does she want Macbeth crowned?
- What are the exigencies spurring her to seek these outcomes?
- What would she have done next, had Macbeth decided not to commit the murder?
- Would she have killed Duncan herself?
- If not, did she need it to be done by Macbeth? Or by a man? Or by someone with a title?
- If Duncan were not killed, what would that mean for Lady Macbeth?
- If Macbeth were not crowned, how would that impact her?
- What did Macbeth's failure to hold the monarchy signify for her?
- What did she feel responsible for?
- What did she reject responsibility for?
- What did she regret most?
- What are the circumstances of her death?
- Why did she choose it or allow it to happen?
- What did her death accomplish?
- What really led Lady Macbeth to that moment?

Chapter 2: The Story in the Work

Looking for possible answers to my questions regarding Lady Macbeth, I turned to the play's historical sources. Shakespeare's primary source for *Macbeth* was Raphael Holinshed's *Historie of Scotland*, part of a larger work widely known as Holinshed's *Chronicles*.³⁰ The play parallels Holinshed's account of Macbeth closely in its main points, which Shakespeare then embellished with inventions of his own and a few plot devices borrowed from elsewhere in the *Chronicles* and other works.³¹ However, the outline of Lady Macbeth is barely visible in the histories that were available in the early 17th century, and her persona in the play is largely Shakespeare's creation. The historiography of the collective Macbeth-story³² in the sources available to Shakespeare reveals that much of what was received as history was in fact a conflation of folklore, influence, patronage, compilation, and supposition, to say nothing of those works dating from centuries after the events concerned.³³ The current version of the historical record of 11th-century Scotland is an amalgamation and interpretation of all available medieval and early modern records, providing (where possible) a loose chronological narrative of what (probably) happened to Macbeth and his Lady, before they were subsumed into the Macbeth-story that Shakespeare inherited and then amplified. As a result of my research, the

³⁰ Bullough, 447. *Macbeth* is historical fiction, in that it depicts real events and personages from history within a story that contains many fictional components. Even though Holinshed and other probable sources for *Macbeth* do not contain purely factual history, as we conceive of it, these sources are referred to here as the historical record to which Shakespeare had access. Mickel, in his article, "Fictional History and Historical Fiction," eloquently discusses the complex interrelationship between fiction and history writing in medieval Europe, suggesting that, in many fictional-historical works, "fiction employs *believed history*" (italics mine) (Mickel, 79).

³¹ Bullough, 1973.

³² "Macbeth-story" is a term of convenience for the pastiche of historical accounts that constituted the known "history" of Macbeth in the early 17th century (Clark and Mason, 27). Shakespeare accessed the Macbeth-story mainly through Holinshed's *Chronicles* (Bullough, 434).

³³ Aitchison, 1999; Bullough, 1973; Duncan, 2002; Skene, 1867; Woolf, 2007.

premise of *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead* makes use of these glimpses of the historical people on whom Macbeth and Lady Macbeth were based.

Lady Macbeth in History: Gruoch ingen Boite³⁴

The historical woman who would be immortalized by Shakespeare as Lady Macbeth was born Gruoch, daughter of Boite and granddaughter of King Kenneth III of Scotland (r. 997-1005).³⁵ Gruoch was first married to Gille Coemgáin, the *mormaer*³⁶ of Moray, a large and prosperous province in the north.³⁷ Gruoch and Gille had a son, Lulach, who was a potential heir to the crown in the royal line of Kenneth III. Gille was killed in the intrafamilial feud over the rulership of Moray, possibly in retaliation for the death of a previous *mormaer*, Finlay MacRory. Gille was burned to death with fifty of his men, at a time when his wife Gruoch was likely seventeen years old, and Lulach was still a very small child. Macbeth was the son of the murdered Finlay, and he probably participated in the attack on Gille as retribution for his father.

³⁴ Throughout this dissertation, references to Gruoch ingen Boite denote either a young Lady Macbeth or the inner life of Lady Macbeth from the play. For the purposes of this commission, Gruoch and Lady Macbeth are the same person.

³⁵ There is some confusion regarding which historical information pertains to King Kenneth II (r. 971-995), and which belongs to King Kenneth III (r. 997-1005). Modern sources still present conflicting information. Gruoch is variously referred to as the granddaughter of one Kenneth or the other (Clark and Mason, 127; Marshall, *Scottish Queens*, 3; Aitchison, *Macbeth: Man and Myth*, 49). Her descent from Kenneth III is the assessment favored in the premise for this opera.

³⁶ The three ranks of authority in the kindred-based society of feudal Scotland were: *toisech tíaithe* (thane), the lowest rank and a managerial lord over a small to medium tract of land within a larger province, akin to a sheriff; *mormaer*, the ruler of a province; and *rí Alban*, the king of Scots, or *Ard rí Alban*, the high King of Scots (Bannerman, “MacDuff of Fife,” 26).

³⁷ The rulers of Moray were styled as Kings of Alba in some Irish sources, which can be confusing. Moray was a semi-autonomous client kingdom that apparently chafed at its subservient status to the kingdom of Scotland. “Whatever the extent of Moray’s autonomy, it was evidently insufficient for its *mormaers* and yet too great for the Scottish kings” (Aitchison, 32-3). This suggests that the relationship between Macbeth, as *mormaer* of Moray, and Duncan I, as King of Scotland, may have been contentious by default.

On Gille's death, Macbeth took over the rule of Moray³⁸ and, interestingly, married his widow, Gruoch, acknowledging Lulach as his stepson.

In addition to being the *mormaer* of Moray, the historical Macbeth had a substantial claim to the throne of Scotland and a reasonable expectation that he would succeed his cousin Duncan as king. Most scholars agree that Macbeth and King Duncan I (r. 1034-1040) were cousins and grandsons of King Malcolm II (r. 1005-1034). It is possible they were socialized together, as Macbeth may have fostered at Malcolm II's court as a boy after the death of his father Finlay.³⁹ Since Malcolm II had no sons and Scottish succession was patrilineal, as Malcolm II's grandson, Macbeth's claim to the throne would have been at least equal to Duncan's. In the Scottish system of succession by tanistry, which involved the crown alternating between two related royal lines with a common ancestor,⁴⁰ Macbeth's claim may even have been deemed greater than Duncan's, due to the fact that custom required the crown to pass to the most qualified male candidate of sufficient age.⁴¹ Duncan was apparently a young king and did not have a leader's temperament.⁴² He may even have been in poor health, as one account gives him the byname Duncan *an t-Ilgarach*, or Duncan "the Diseased."⁴³ Historical sources up to and

³⁸ In addition to being the *mormaer* of Moray, Macbeth was also the thane of Glamis, but this would have been an insignificant title by comparison (Bannerman, 26-7).

³⁹ Aitchison, 43; Woolf, *From Pictland to Alba*, 247; Duncan, *The Kingship*, 32.

⁴⁰ Information about Scottish tanistry and the line of succession preceding and following King Macbeth (r. 1040-1057) are given in Appendix A.

⁴¹ Aitchison's discussion of the strengths of Macbeth's claim to the Scottish crown includes factors relating to his descent, his alliance by marriage, and his "royal and martial qualities" (Aitchison, 64-5).

⁴² Holinshed reports that Duncan was "soft and gentle of nature" and "had too much of clemencie" to be an ideal king. In fact, the rebel from Act 1 of *Macbeth*, Macdonald (Makdonwald, in Holinshed), went so far as to call Duncan "a faint-hearted milkesop, more meet to governe a sort of idle moonks in some cloister, than to have the rule of such valiant and hardie men of warre as the Scots were" (Bullough, 488-9).

⁴³ From the Prophecy of Berchán (Skene, *Chronicles*, 101). Elsewhere, he was recorded as Duncan "the Gracious" (Stevenson, "The Law," 6). This sobriquet may not have been a compliment; it may have been an ironic reference to the perceived inefficacy of his rule (Aitchison, 55-62; Bullough, 432).

including the early modern histories that Shakespeare consulted all agree on the point that Macbeth was better suited to be king and a leader of soldiers than Duncan. Furthermore, it is almost a certainty that Macbeth's claim to the throne would have been stronger than Duncan's son Malcolm's claim, due to Malcolm's youth.⁴⁴ A third mark in favor of Macbeth's claim was his marital alliance. Gruoch, being descended from Kenneth III, represented the other royal house tied to the Scottish throne. The ascension of Macbeth, married to Gruoch, might have been the equivalent of both lines succeeding at once, since Gruoch already had an eligible male heir in her son, Lulach.

Importantly, it is plausible that Lulach was actually the last surviving heir of Kenneth III's line. Most (or all, depending on the historical source) other eligible male descendants in that lineage died in battle or were murdered during the course of Malcolm II's reign,⁴⁵ as part of Malcolm II's effort to secure the succession for his own descendants. If all of these reported deaths are accepted, Gruoch's great uncle was killed by agents of Kenneth II⁴⁶ (Malcolm II's father), and her grandfather, uncle, father, brother, and nephew were all killed directly or indirectly by Malcolm II to benefit Duncan.⁴⁷ Possibly, the only reason Lulach was not killed is because he was Macbeth's recognized stepson.

⁴⁴ Duncan's son Malcolm (born circa 1031, crowned Malcolm III in 1058) was still a young child at the time of Duncan's death in 1040 and would therefore have been ineligible to directly succeed Duncan. "... [I]f an heir seemed too young or incapable to bear the rigours of leadership in that wild age, a more competent relative could be elected by the nobility" (Bullough, 432).

⁴⁵ Stevenson, 4.

⁴⁶ This earned Kenneth II the title of "Kinslayer." Holinshed reports he was wracked with guilt after ordering the death of his nephew (Gruoch's great uncle), in what was possibly the first attempt to establish patrilineal succession by a Scottish king. Kenneth II was thereafter "most unhappie" and lived with a "giltie conscience." This may have been the basis for Macbeth's ravaged conscience in the play (Bullough, 448; 485; Skene, 96).

⁴⁷ Hunter, "Doubling," 135. The murder of King Duncan in Macbeth's castle was likely based on Holinshed's passage about the death of King Duff (r. 962-966), who was murdered while visiting the castle of one of his lieutenants. The lieutenant's wife badgered her husband to kill Duff as retaliation for the deaths of some kinsmen (Clark and Mason, 86-7; Bullough, 479-84). The regicide in *Macbeth* copies the account of King Duff's murder almost exactly, with the exception of the lieutenant's wife's revenge motive, which is conspicuously omitted.

The Premise of *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead*

During my research into the historical basis of Lady Macbeth and other preliminary work, I decided the character portrayed by the commission should be concordant with the world of the play. Excluding events that occurred after the point in history at which the play begins,⁴⁸ almost all of these historical data can function alongside the story of Lady Macbeth presented by Shakespeare. There are two obvious exceptions. First, while Duncan need not be an old man, he cannot be a young man. He must be old enough that his son, Malcolm, is of sufficient age to be named his heir with no objection from the royal peer group. Second, Macbeth cannot fully acknowledge Lulach as his stepson, or Lulach would have to be more present in the play, given Macbeth's intense focus on legacy. In both of these points, the play's characters must diverge from their historical precursors.

However, the rest of this collection of "facts" is not incompatible with the words and actions that Shakespeare set down for Lady Macbeth and her husband. Rather, the integration of this biographical material begins to render Lady Macbeth in three dimensions and hints at possible answers to my questions about her. In the world of the play, it is possible for Lady Macbeth to be a princess in one of two lineages tied to the Scottish throne, whose male family

⁴⁸ Many of the historical details which Shakespeare chose to exclude actually work against the idea of King Macbeth as a villainous usurper. His challenge of Duncan had some popular support after a too-young Malcolm was named Duncan's tanist, probably because Macbeth's claim was strong, and tradition required the tanist to be old enough to lead. Duncan died in battle against Macbeth's troops during a raid into Moray that occurred as part of their conflict over the succession; in fact, Duncan was likely the aggressor, advancing into Moray to quell unrest. Whatever the case, Duncan was not murdered in secret. For most of Macbeth's 17-year reign, he was viewed as a good king. His people were "injoieing the blisseful benefit of good peace and tranquillitie [and h]e made manie holesome laws and statutes for the publike weale of his subjects" (Bullough, 497-8). Macbeth made a pilgrimage to Rome, and he and Gruoch made land grants to religious orders. During the last years of his rule, he is indeed characterized as becoming more tyrannical. Between 1054 and 1057, Malcolm and a military force made up of English, Norse, and lowland Scots (led by Malcolm's uncle Siward, Earl of Northumberland) made incursions and gained ground in the south. Macbeth was killed by Malcolm in battle in 1057. Lulach briefly succeeded Macbeth before Malcolm III was crowned King of all Scotland in 1058. Bullough conjectures that historically negative narratives about Macbeth and Lulach (Macbeth as usurper, and King Lulach "the Fool") were probably, at least in part, propaganda written in favor of (or at the behest of) Malcolm III during his unusually long reign, rather than wholly accurate descriptions (Bullough, 1973; Aitchison, 1999; Woolf, 2007).

members have all been killed by the head of the rival family, and whose son—fathered by a first husband who was murdered by Macbeth—is a possible heir to the Scottish crown but also a probable target for elimination by the family of the current king, Duncan I.

In addition to combining these historical findings with the story of the play, I employed some fictional ligatures of my own. First, I imagined that Lady Macbeth had been truly in love with her first husband, Gille Coemgáin, and therefore her feelings about being married to Gille's murderer, Macbeth, are conflicted. Second, although the historical Macbeth acknowledged Gruoch's son Lulach as his stepson, the character of Macbeth represented in this commissioned opera did not recognize Lulach, but merely agreed to safeguard the child by sending him away. If Lulach is sent away for his rearing, this lessens any perceived threat to Duncan I's reign from a claimant in the family opposite Duncan's, thus Lulach is "protected." More importantly, Lulach's absence frees Macbeth from daily association with the son of a vanquished foe and leaves Gruoch painfully alone with the "problem" of her son.⁴⁹

I created a detailed sketch of the character I wanted the commission to present by integrating the character of Lady Macbeth as presented in Shakespeare's play, my analysis of that character, much of the available historical information known about Gruoch ingen Boite, and a few narrative inventions. This character study of Lady Macbeth, together with biographical details gleaned from the historical record and adapted to fit the circumstances of the play, became the foundational premise of the opera's libretto.

Premise:

Gruoch ingen Boite, also known as Lady Macbeth, is the ruling Lady of the northern province of Moray and a princess in the long line of kings of House Alpín, rulers of Scotland for 200 years. She

⁴⁹ In L. C. Knights's famous essay "How Many Children Had Lady Macbeth?, An Essay in the Theory and Practice of Shakespeare Criticism," he argued that literary criticism focusing on literal questions of this type takes a superficial and unrewarding approach to this material (Rutter, "Remind Me," 38). Respectfully, I agree to disagree.

is married to Macbeth, the present *mormaer* of Moray, but he is her second husband. She was married first to Gille Coemgáin, who was *mormaer* before Macbeth, and with whom she had a son, Lulach. Gille was burned to death in a raid led by Macbeth, a casualty of Moray's dynastic conflict. Because Gille was Gruoch's first love and the father of her child, his death was immensely traumatic for her. Macbeth had offered to wed her, to restore her honor and status, and protect her.

King Duncan's father, head of the rival royal family, had betrayed tradition in an attempt to guarantee the succession of his descendants and was responsible for the deaths of all the menfolk in Gruoch's family, including her father and brother. Gruoch feared for the life of her son, the last surviving male heir in her royal line. With no remaining familial support, she had no choice but to accept Macbeth. They married and formed an alliance, if at times a grudging one. Macbeth felt it was best to send Lulach away for his upbringing, to guarantee his safety. Though her son was barely out of infancy, Gruoch reluctantly agreed. Over time, she felt the mothering impulse within her turn to ash.

In addition to the rule of Moray, Macbeth confided in Gruoch that he coveted the rule of Scotland. He had hoped he would be selected as successor by the old King Malcolm. It was a private topic Macbeth and Gruoch visited often. Macbeth's ascension was Gruoch's ambition as well, for becoming Queen of All Scots was her best and only answer for the treacherous deaths of her nearest family, and the most decisive way to ensure Lulach did not share their fate. But Duncan, climbing over the graves of her father and brother, had been named and crowned, and Gruoch's resentment settled on the king. Macbeth committed to excelling in military matters on behalf of the ill-fit monarch, expecting that the nobility would esteem Macbeth as the best choice for Duncan's tanist and successor. However, Gruoch and Macbeth knew that to achieve their deserved high positions, they might have to force the issue. (The timeline of the play begins here.)

Despite Macbeth's dedicated and valorous service and obvious fitness for the crown, Duncan names his son Malcolm as heir. Malcolm is barely a man, no better equipped to be king than his sickly father. Malcolm's succession is another withholding of the crown that should have rightly passed to Gruoch's family.

Desperate, Gruoch is bereft again, not only robbed of her opportunity to avenge the deaths of her father and brother by ascending the throne that they had been denied, but also prevented from protecting her son, who is in more danger now than ever before. She decides that Macbeth must be king, by any means necessary.

The premise of the commission also supports, and can be supported by, all of Lady Macbeth's scenes in the play. This premise and the opera libretto based on it, written by Martinez, are both designed to exist in the world of the play and interact with Shakespeare's text. The following lists Lady Macbeth's most significant appearances in *Macbeth*. For each scene, a summary is provided that melds together Lady Macbeth's words and actions in the play with elements of the historical biography of Gruoch ingen Boite. These summaries are offered here to illustrate how the opera's premise fits into a reading of *Macbeth*.

Macbeth, Act 1, scene 5: Lady Macbeth enters reading Macbeth's letter, which describes his encounter with the witches and their prophecies. She invokes the spirits to help her achieve her purpose. When Macbeth arrives, Lady Macbeth excitedly broaches the subject of Duncan's murder.

Lady Macbeth merged with Gruoch ingen Boite:

On reading Macbeth's letter telling of his meeting with the weird sisters and their inspiring prophecies, Lady Macbeth feels as though the old ways have opened a dialogue with *her*, offering "metaphysical aid" to help them achieve their "fate" (1.5.29). The witches' appearance to her husband constitutes an "earnest of success" (1.3.134) for Lady Macbeth, just as being granted the title of Thane of Cawdor does for her husband. The serendipity of Duncan arriving "[u]nder [her] battlements" (1.5.40), on the very day that he upset any chance for Macbeth's peaceful royal ascension, is too propitious to be ignored. She refuses to concede that their window of access to the throne has passed. She accesses normally forbidden cultural knowledge to ask for strength of resolve to avenge her family and protect her son. In a manic rush, feeling "[t]he future in the instant" (1.5.58), she invokes the

“spirits / That tend on mortal thoughts” (1.5.40-41) and those “murdering ministers” (1.5.48) precisely because crimes of murder are the debts she needs to repay.⁵⁰ She asks to be “unsex[ed]” (1.5.41) and that the spirits “[c]ome to [her] woman’s breasts, / And take [her] milk for gall . . .” (1.5.47-48),⁵¹ signifying her willingness to wager all of herself, including her most valuable power of creation, to achieve her wish.

Yet, she also acknowledges her inability to do this violence on her own. Men in her society regularly incite other men to violence in search of the crown, and she seeks that same power. The new title that Duncan bestowed on Macbeth after routing the rebellion makes this an inopportune moment for Macbeth to challenge Duncan openly. Lady Macbeth must convince him to depose Duncan illicitly. She knows he will resist this idea and tries to “screw [her own] courage to the sticking place” (1.7.61).

Conspiring with Macbeth, Lady Macbeth’s eagerness and impatience to engage in their “great business” (1.5.68) telegraphs what she believes she will gain with elevation: an unassailable position, from which “all [their] nights and days to come, / [will be given] solely sovereign sway and masterdom” (1.5.69-70).

Macbeth, Act 1, scene 7: Macbeth has decided not to proceed with their plan to murder Duncan. Through verbal castigation and superior cunning, Lady Macbeth convinces him that they can commit the murder and escape punishment.

Lady Macbeth merged with Gruoch ingen Boite:

As predicted, Macbeth does not share his wife’s appetite for expedience. When Macbeth tells her, “We will proceed no further in this business . . .” (1.7.31), she retaliates. Her recriminations of

⁵⁰ Referring to Macduff’s vengeance on Macbeth at the end of the play, Hunter says, “[*Macbeth*] is a perfect revenge play. Its structure of crime and punishment dramatizes the reflexivity of the revenge motive: Do unto others what they have done unto you; or, in psychoanalytic terms, undo unto others what has been done to you. Revenge is a magical form of undoing in which the original victim exchanges roles with the original aggressor, and repeats the original crime in order to undo it and gain mastery of its psychological and concrete effects” (Hunter, 131-2). Within the premise of this opera, this is exactly what Lady Macbeth is hoping to accomplish.

⁵¹ There is a wealth of scholarship and criticism already written about language and themes in *Macbeth* that feminize Macbeth or masculinize Lady Macbeth; about how masculinity is defined in the play, and the origins and implications of those definitions; and gender and sexuality in the play, generally. Neither the new work discussed in this dissertation, nor the dissertation itself, is focused directly on the gender and/or sexuality analysis of these characters.

Macbeth's indecisiveness and reluctance stem from fear that she will not reach the peak of security that the witches' prophecies have promised to her. Recalling their many private conversations spent tracing possible paths to the throne and rehearsing their ascension in their shared imagination, Lady Macbeth asks:

... What beast was't then
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
... Nor time nor place
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both ...
(1.7.47-52).⁵²

"[T]he nearest way" (1.5.18) is something they have talked about before. In Lady Macbeth's mind, Macbeth made an implicit promise to take any opportunity to transform their hopes into reality, and now he threatens to break that promise by misplacing his nerve at the moment of execution. She excoriates him, but she is not simply disparaging his masculinity. She is also questioning his trustworthiness and commitment to her (and by extension, his commitment to protecting Lulach). She warns that if he abandons his promise, "From this time / Such I account thy love" (1.7.38-39). She has kept her promise to be separated from her son and reminds him of it.

... I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd the nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn
As you have done to this (1.7.54-59).

Conspicuously, she does not name Lulach. His absence is a pain she carries alone.

Macbeth, Act 2, scene 2: Macbeth emerges from the king's chamber after the murder and is immediately hobbled by guilt. Lady Macbeth tries to help (or force) him to recover. She reenters the chamber to place the daggers that Macbeth was supposed to leave behind to frame

⁵² "The most obvious loose end [in *Macbeth*] is Lady Macbeth's surprising exclamation ... [beginning at 1.7.47] ... which must mean that Macbeth had before our play opens suggested murdering Duncan" (Bullough, 423).

the king's attendants for the murder, getting Duncan's blood on her hands in the process. Lady Macbeth coaches her husband on how to appear innocent.

Lady Macbeth merged with Gruoch ingen Boite:

Always, Lady Macbeth has been the unwilling beneficiary of violence, and Macbeth's soldiering has consisted of sanctioned violence. After Duncan's murder, they each find themselves in situations they have never experienced before. Macbeth's mind seems immobilized in a contraction of regret, while Lady Macbeth's clipped and agitated responses are the speech of someone whose mind is moving too quickly to say much.⁵³ Lady Macbeth is astonished that she must take control of their escape; none of their planning included his incapacity after the deed was done. She tries different tactics to jolt him into control of himself and the situation. She appeals to his self-preservation, "These deeds must not be thought / After these ways; so, it will make us mad" (2.2.34-35); prompts his vanity, "Why, worthythane, / You do unbend your noble strength" (2.2.45-46); and as much out of alarm as contempt, she humiliates him, "My hands are of your colour, but I shame / To wear a heart so white" (2.2.65-66). Finally, she must give orders to her husband (the military general) to get them both to safety and move her scheme forward.

Macbeth, Act 3, scene 2: Macbeth expresses anxiety about the insecurity of their position.

Lady Macbeth encourages him to stop dwelling on his worries and attend his guests in good humor. They discuss the witches' prophecy to Banquo, but Macbeth does not disclose how he plans to thwart it.

Lady Macbeth merged with Gruoch ingen Boite:

From this point forward, Lady Macbeth contends with a difficulty she did not anticipate. Her husband was a thane, *mormaer*,⁵⁴ and a

⁵³ Jenkin's account of Sarah Siddons's performance in this scene is a fascinating verbal zoetrope depicting minute details of her countenance and body language (Jenkin, *Mrs. Siddons*, 51-6). It reads as though her agitation was palpable and the rapid changes in her demeanor were quite shocking.

⁵⁴ Etymology and context suggest that early histories may have confused the ranks of thane and *mormaer*, and that confusion was carried forward to Holinshed. The progression of Glamis, to Cawdor, to king, was most likely meant to convey good, better, best. Shakespeare's "thane of Cawdor" probably refers to the higher rank of *mormaer*, which was a greater honor and nearer to the king (Bannerman 26-7; Grant, "Thanes and Thanages," 40-1).

military general, with qualities befitting a king. Now Macbeth appears overcome by fear and perturbation. As his mental fortitude dissipates, Lady Macbeth is frustrated that their accession has not produced the anticipated well-being.

Nought's had, all's spent,
Where our desire is got without content.
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy,
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy (3.2.5-8).

Although conflicted, she hopes that perhaps Macbeth will now recognize Lulach and recall him to Scotland. But first, their rule must take root and become stable. She urges him to put on an aura of kingliness and stop manufacturing instability where there need be none, responding to his mental pacing with, "You must leave this" (3.2.36). They must safeguard their welfare now and solve the problem of Banquo and his sons another time. She says, "But in them nature's copy's not eterne" (3.2.39), knowing she refers to their future deaths, but also highlighting the luxuries the monarchy should grant them: power and time. To dispatch Fleance later, when he is old enough to challenge Macbeth (or Lulach, after him), is something altogether different from the murder of children, a horror she particularly fears because of Lulach's vulnerable position. Macbeth's refusal to divulge his plans unsettles her.

Macbeth, Act 3, scene 4: At banquet with his nobles, Macbeth appears to lose his ability to distinguish what is real from what is imagined and, terrified, speaks to someone who is not actually present. Lady Macbeth attempts to conceal and explain his strange behavior to no avail.

Lady Macbeth merged with Gruoch ingen Boite:

Lady Macbeth focuses on inhabiting her role as queen at the banquet (a role she has trained for all her life) hoping to encourage right behavior in her husband. But Macbeth's calamitous leave-taking of his senses in front of the nobles brings his perilous mental distress indelibly into public view, despite Lady Macbeth's best attempts to correct him or excuse his "strange infirmity" (3.4.84). She now realizes that their position, and therefore her safety and Lulach's, are precarious. At a loss, she encourages Macbeth to heal and advises that he "lack[s] the season of all

natures, sleep” (3.4.139). She fears she cannot be sure of him as an ally any longer and feels exposed.

Macbeth, Act 5, scene 1: Lady Macbeth appears to walk and talk in her sleep. Watched by a doctor and gentlewoman, her words lament terrible deeds of which she should be ignorant, and she compulsively rubs her hands as though washing them.

Lady Macbeth merged with Gruoch ingen Boite:

Disillusioned and bitter, Lady Macbeth avoids the king, and he no longer seeks her counsel. The executions of Lady Macduff and her children were a great and painful shock. She knows her chance to reunite with Lulach has vanished into the air. The spirits that made an overture to her have long since been silent; the window of opportunity for many things has shut, and their enemies will move against them soon. Lady Macbeth begins to have difficulty sleeping. When she does sleep, she has terrible nightmares of Lulach dying in a fire, and of her own hands warm with Duncan’s blood as she smears his unconscious grooms’ faces. She begins to walk the castle at night, avoiding rest and dreams. Delirious and stiff with fatigue, her disobedient mind repetitively circles her pile of unsolvable puzzles, examining the variables, looking for solutions. Lady Macbeth loses track of time, her surroundings, and herself. She speaks the riddles aloud, attempting to master her thoughts and looking for something she may have missed. Even as her legs carry her to bed against her will, she knows the nightmares will propel her to her feet again. This cannot continue.

The extended scene conveyed by the libretto of *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead* would take place after the sleepwalking scene.

The Synopsis of *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead*

The opera’s premise identifies the urgent concern motivating Lady Macbeth’s actions as the need to survive, surmount, and revenge herself against political violence, both for herself and her estranged son. Bolstered by my reflections and research, the character sketch and premise, and this understanding of what drives her to act, I commissioned a libretto that would portray the

last moments of Lady Macbeth's story, answer my questions about her, and elaborate the character as I had come to understand her. The development of the libretto is discussed in the next chapter, and the full libretto text is provided in Appendix C.

The following is the synopsis of the libretto that was included in the world premiere program, composed by our librettist, Alejandra Villarreal Martinez.

Synopsis:

King Macbeth's brief reign is almost at an end. Malcolm's army amasses on the horizon, and they are eager to avenge former King Duncan's murder and restore his son to the throne. Alone in her chambers, Gruoch, Macbeth's wife and consort Queen, contemplates her situation with razor sharp clarity. She knows now that suicide will offer her an easier and more dignified death than Malcolm will. Though she remains unafraid and determined, she finds that she cannot end her life—something from deep within her is making her hesitate. Following the tangled pathways of her mind, Gruoch revisits memories that have been long suppressed, of her own mother, her first husband, and her son. These touchstones of her past life, her life before Macbeth, reveal how much her trauma has transformed her over the years. While grieving the loss of the happier woman she once was, she feels the presence of Duncan's ghost. Gruoch confronts him unapologetically, enraged that he would appear, as if he himself was not also guilty of murder as a means to an end. She dismisses him and turns again to her dilemma, resolving to take control of her fate once and for all.

Chapter 3: The Story of the Work

After contemplating the interiority of Lady Macbeth for many years, I decided to commission an opera about her. The collaboration that resulted in the opera, *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead*, began in February of 2021. Instinctively, I felt that Tomàs Peire Serrate, whom I knew from the opera scenes practicum,⁵⁵ would be the right person to ask about a possible Lady Macbeth project. While conducting my precursory freewriting, reflection, and research, I reached out to Serrate and explained my intention to develop and produce a new opera investigating Lady Macbeth and what happened to her after the sleepwalking scene, describing the intended subject as “some incarnation of Lady Macbeth . . . the last day of her life, the events and hours [leading] up to her death.”⁵⁶ To my great fortune, he responded with interest and enthusiasm. We discussed my freewriting and our thoughts about the subject, and I directed him to recordings of the Bloch, indicating the moments in that composition that most stir my curiosity. Serrate was energized by the idea, pointing out specific motivators for him: the soliloquy aspect,⁵⁷ a dramatic work about a Shakespearean character featuring new text, and the intent to realize the work in a full production. He generously indicated a willingness to begin collaborating immediately, allowing me time to learn about fundraising and opera production while the creative process was already underway. After Serrate committed to the project, I began searching for a librettist.

⁵⁵ During the seminar, I participated in a reading of Serrate’s 14-minute one-act chamber opera, *Redeemer*. <https://www.tomaspeire.com/redeemer>.

⁵⁶ Email to Serrate, February 20, 2021.

⁵⁷ During the previous academic year, Serrate and I discussed collaborating on another of his dramatic works, *Hillary*. For soprano and small ensemble, *Hillary* depicts Hillary Clinton alone on the evening of the 2016 United States presidential election. The work premiered in Spain in 2018. <https://www.tomaspeire.com/hillary>.

Development of the Libretto

The librettist we first worked with was Marella Koch, whom I had also met through the opera scenes practicum. Speaking with Koch, I communicated my ideas about Lady Macbeth, the data I had learned in my research, and what I wanted the commission to avoid. The three of us discussed which aesthetic and theatrical components would make a compelling stage presentation for the subject, given that our vehicle would be new material to follow Shakespeare's sleepwalking scene. We conjectured that heavy use of lighting and projection design could create a dialogue between light and dark onstage, representing the shadows cast by Lady Macbeth's flickering candle. She might interpret those shadows as visitations from spirits come to plague her final hours. We imagined Lady Macbeth having conversations with those spectral guests, whose responses could be voiced by single instruments in the orchestra. We visualized an expressionistic, non-linear product, walking the line between lucidity and confusion. In those early conversations, the lightplay of her candle and the blood on her hands were invested with much significance, as though they were additional characters in the drama. It occurred to me that the diminishing life of her candle could be a visible signal that her time was coming to an end, and she might view the candle's dwindling stature as an embodiment of threat.

I wrote:

I've been thinking about . . . having a [real] burning candle on stage . . . the opportunity to literally see time running out seems too good to pass up . . . maybe Lady M wouldn't watch the flame flicker and die . . . maybe she'd *put* the candle out . . . I had a wild vision of her EATING the low, burning candle end . . . squishy, hot, stinky, melting wax . . . [as if to say] "oh yeah, blow my candle out? how about this!" . . . *she eats the rest of her time*, before it fades out, or before it can be taken from her—aggressive.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Email to Serrate and Koch, April 16, 2021. I did clarify that I was not volunteering, as the performer, to eat wax or put flame in my mouth.

One critical breakthrough resulted from Koch's observation that it would be difficult to show Lady Macbeth's suicide onstage without either heralding it as an expression of her inner strength, or playing into the notion that she was a victim of circumstance. Although I had come to perceive Lady Macbeth's supposed suicide as a gesture of her commitment to self-determination, nevertheless I agreed that any onstage display of self-harm might result in our opera sending a message we did not intend. That was when I realized that an essential part of our story could be that: Lady Macbeth does not commit suicide. If she is determined not to be the victim of her circumstances, and she decides to bring her situation to an end without killing herself, what story could we tell about that?

Shortly after this pivotal conversation, Koch had to withdraw from the project, due to scheduling conflicts resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. After an interval, Stephen Karr (the conductor of the premiere) introduced me to Alejandra Villarreal Martinez, who consented to join the project as our librettist.

When I related to Martinez the story we wanted to tell based on my research, the character study and premise, my questions about Lady Macbeth, and the idea that she does not actually commit suicide, she took to the concept immediately and quickly composed a first document based on my information. This was a prose outline which she referred to as a narrative roadmap. In these pages, the opera had the beginnings of a plot for the first time, which was exhilarating. From the beginning, and throughout the process of developing the libretto, I was able to recognize which narrative elements belonged to and supported the story I wanted to tell, and which ideas did not fit within that story. There were elements in the first roadmap that felt very much in line with my ideas, and other aspects that needed to be adjusted. Martinez was

extremely gracious, allowing me to learn how to give creative feedback while providing such feedback.

Ultimately, she composed two versions of the roadmap and three versions of the libretto. In response to each document, I provided substantial written responses in which I guided the evolution of the narrative. Both versions of the narrative roadmap influenced Serrate's preliminary work, and his feedback about the roadmaps likewise impacted subsequent libretto drafts. When Martinez and I felt the second draft of the libretto had reached a state of relative completeness, in terms of structure and accounting for all necessary dramatic beats, we shared it with Serrate on November 27th, 2021. Over the winter holidays, Martinez and I made cuts and fine-tuned the language in order to create a sleeker, more compact third draft, which the three of us read together on February 1, 2022. Serrate requested that some of the cut language be kept in reserve for his possible use. The final libretto text (a fourth iteration) is essentially the third draft of the libretto with some of the previously cut second-draft language restored.

My primary dramatic objective for the libretto was to arrive at a text that allows modern audiences to enter Lady Macbeth's inner life, without resorting to modern parlance on the one hand, or attempting to use stylized "Shakespearean" English on the other. Composing unfamiliar text for a character created by Shakespeare felt audacious enough, and I feared an attempt to match Shakespeare's voice might have detracted from the potential power of the finished work. However, when Martinez began writing, she felt that a poetic tone, somewhat reminiscent of Shakespearean syntax, gave her the most direct access to the emotional core of the situation. The quality of Martinez's text was undeniably beautiful and full of active dramatic beats to play, and her choice of a poetic style obviously added depth to the subject. Ultimately, rather than objecting, I was grateful that she made this choice. Martinez also invented a diegetic folk song

text for the libretto. This was inspired by the songs in many of Shakespeare’s plays which often reveal the interiority of the characters who sing them. The folk song text, along with the handful of Scottish Gaelic phrases in the libretto, have a different cadence from the rest of the poetry. These moments indicate when Lady Macbeth is at her most vulnerable. Martinez’s decision to include the Gaelic text also contributes a lyricism that is extrinsic to Shakespeare, which creates an allegiance between this commission and the historic person at the center of its story.⁵⁹

Many aspects of the libretto evolved over the course of development. Early on, an abstract mode of storytelling was scuttled in favor of a more direct, naturalistic approach. Also, rather than entering the stage already intending to end her life, the narrative was adjusted so that Lady Macbeth’s impetus to attempt suicide happens onstage. In this way, the audience can witness her belief that suicide is the only recourse that allows her to remain in control. Despite having passed through the gauntlet of the sleepwalking scene, Lady Macbeth retains the same decisive self-possession in this opera that she displayed at the beginning of *Macbeth*. Occasionally our interpretations of Lady Macbeth *née* Gruoch’s biographical information diverged, and Martinez and I had to develop a dramatic solution that resonated for both of us.

From the start, we included meaningful relationships with her first husband and son, as well as an adversarial connection with Duncan. By contrast, Lady Macbeth’s feelings towards Macbeth transformed over the life of the libretto. In early drafts, she was described as taking steps to prevent becoming pregnant with his child, because she possessed a real enmity for Macbeth as Gille’s murderer. However, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are most often portrayed as being in love.⁶⁰ We wanted her to live in the world of the play, which necessarily includes

⁵⁹ Martinez’s remarks about the rationale for her language and style choices in this work, as well as the inspiration for the diegetic song, are paraphrased here from the pre-show talk given the day of the premiere performance, June 11, 2022.

⁶⁰ Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are commonly played as “profoundly in love” and “the happiest married couple in all [of Shakespeare’s] work” (Bloom, 518). Many Ladies Macbeth (e.g., Judi Dench in the 1976 RSC production with

inherited performance practice, so we modified her relationship with Macbeth to leave room for the possibility of their genuine, if complicated, alliance. Still, some of the text in the final libretto references her infertility and hints that it may have been something she deliberately chose:

It was the first I had seen of blood / Since Macbeth had stolen me
From the shores of Moray.
... by my withered womb, / [he] achieves his own extinction.
Gladly I make the exchange, / Though it beggars me.
I will hold court with Death / Whom I welcome /
Alone, unburdened, / Unchained to the unworthy legacy
Of an unwanted child.

This language can be interpreted by a performer in several ways, which was intentional.⁶¹ Rather than harboring a long-term animosity for Macbeth, we decided that Macbeth's inability to levy good judgment and retain the throne, reflecting his surprising "infirm[ity] of purpose" (2.2.53), is the betrayal for which Lady Macbeth most resents him in this opera. Macbeth's failure to rule degrades her just revenge against Duncan and prevents her hoped-for reunion with Lulach.

Many key ingredients of the libretto were Martinez's innovations. In the play, Lady Macbeth lives in a world populated almost exclusively by men, making it difficult to define her within the social strata. In reality, her essential nature would have been calculated in comparison with the women of her society. It is reasonable to imagine that Lady Macbeth's mother would have been a woman of status⁶² and her daughter's primary role model. Martinez restored balance, social context, and a basic measure of Lady Macbeth's humanity by including her mother in the

Ian McKellan) followed in the footsteps of Ellen Terry, playing her as "besotted" with her husband. In other productions (e.g., Goold's 2007/8 production with Patrick Stewart and Kate Fleetwood), Macbeth's "Tomorrow" soliloquy is directed at his wife's body, expressing his desolation at her death (Clark and Mason, 110-6).

⁶¹ In my performance in the premiere, I played this as a reference to amenorrhea brought on by the trauma of Gille's grisly death. As Gille's murderer, Macbeth is therefore the cause of his own childlessness. Infertility is a lack which Gruoch gladly accepts in exchange for not having another child to worry about at this moment, since she cannot protect or even bond with the son she already has, who is essentially lost to her.

⁶² Gruoch's mother would have been the wife or consort of Boite, the son of King Kenneth III. Boite was possibly Malcolm II's tanist, which would have placed his partner in line to be queen.

libretto. In another sagacious turn, Martinez attributes Lady Macbeth's guilty conscience in the sleepwalking scene to a preoccupation with the fate of the king's guards whom she framed (literally, with the victim's blood) for Duncan's murder. Confronting Duncan in the libretto, Lady Macbeth goes on to state her defense: she and Duncan are both guilty of violence in pursuit of power, as a result of their dynastic feud.⁶³ In principle, they are the same, and Duncan's spirit has no right to rebuke her for his death.⁶⁴ Speaking of what she sought to illuminate about the character, Martinez explained that the libretto sidesteps the banality of Lady Macbeth as a villainous or unnatural woman, but not for the purpose of exonerating her or framing her as a victim. The goal was to discover what circumstances might have put Lady Macbeth in a position where she was forced to make these hard decisions and face the consequences.⁶⁵

Some of the linguistic devices that are pervasive in *Macbeth* appear in the libretto. The many references to hands in the opera are a continuation of such references in the play and also evoke the play's theme of "deeds" and "doing."⁶⁶ Gruoch's mother's "brittle fingers" are described as making "tight plaits" of Gruoch's hair; Gille comes to Gruoch with a crown of flowers in his hand, and Malcolm's hand carries a "trembling jack-knife." Gruoch's hands are described as "chas[ing] the shuttle" during loom work; as "cutting arabesques in the air" with her dagger; as being covered with both Duncan's blood and the blood of his scapegoated guards; as

⁶³ Interpreting Lady Macbeth's Scotland as an openly Machiavellian society (Zuckert, "Something Wicked," 2016; Riebling, "Virtue's Sacrifice," 1991) fits easily if one acknowledges her historical biography and the murders of her family members by political rivals. In this context, when she references the "illness" that should accompany a desire for power (1.5.20), or instructs Macbeth to "look like the innocent flower, / But be the serpent under't" (1.5.65-66), she is expressing views that were modeled for her, graphically.

⁶⁴ "Cultural analysis tends to blur the sharp demarcations, even between two such figures apparently totally opposed, and to draw [Duncan and Lady Macbeth] together as participants in and products of the same constellation of social values" (Snyder, "Macbeth," 208).

⁶⁵ Martinez's remarks about what she sought to reveal about the character are paraphrased here from the pre-show talk given the day of the premiere performance, June 11, 2022.

⁶⁶ Clark and Mason, 42-3.

tactilely sensing her shorn hair to be “wiry rope;” and as reaching for “grace” in the moment of her death. Her hands are addressed, through the intermediary of the dagger, as independent and disobedient actors when they fail to carry out the suicide order. And there are several references to the dexterous action of weaving.

The antithesis found throughout *Macbeth*⁶⁷ also occurs in the libretto. Macbeth is described as “bridge and chasm;” Gruoch’s mother was “Too familiar / To be altogether strange;” and Lady Macbeth curses Duncan by wishing for him “A respite brief and sweet enough / To amplify [his] everlasting torment.” The alliteration in *Macbeth* is liberally used in the libretto, too. The Lady references her “fragrant . . . fingers” and “withered womb,” and asks of her mother, “Did I fright your fledgling soul to fly away . . .?” The word repetition featured in the play⁶⁸ emerges in the libretto most noticeably in Martinez’s use of the negative prefix “un-.” Lady Macbeth, other people, and objects are variously described as “uncoupled,” “unlike,” “unburdened,” “unchained,” “unworthy,” “unwanted,” “undone,” “unwoven,” “unlaced,” “unhappy,” “unable,” “unchanged,” and “unraveled.”⁶⁹

Similarly, *Macbeth*’s obsession with time continues into the opera, in which Lady Macbeth repeatedly remarks on the night’s passing hours. Her night is most assuredly “[a]lmost at odds with morning, which is which” (3.4.125), and whether it is still night or already morning is of critical import, since the morning will bring her death. She waits for the sunrise as though a scaffold is already erected for her. She says, “. . . I helped hang that morning star, / Which will judge my husband . . .,” and requests that “Dawn, wait still but a little while . . .” Yet time also absurdly slows when she attempts to kill herself. She asks her knife, “Do you feign wisdom / To

⁶⁷ Duthie, “Antithesis,” 1967.

⁶⁸ McDonald, *Shakespeare’s*, 48-50.

⁶⁹ This calls to mind the line from Act 1, scene 3, “. . . nothing is, but what is not” (1.3.144).

make minutes of seconds / And days of hours?” She broods over the memory of her mother’s lost time, repeatedly noting, “Grace, my mother wanted, / When, arrested at time’s end.” And she seemingly asks time to stop altogether for Lulach, instructing him to “Rest-ever in sleep, / And meet not with Death.” Moments before she arrives at her climactic decision, she says, “The words I so desperately seek / Outrun me, / And I have run out the clock.”

The shape of the libretto is episodic. Lady Macbeth’s thoughts travel around the map of her life’s experiences, stopping to remember and interact with the people and events that impacted her most profoundly. By the end, Lady Macbeth has tried and failed to take her life multiple times; she has considered her role as wife to two husbands; she has reflected on how she was mothered and who she is as a mother; and she has directly prodded the exposed nerve of her pride as queen while confronting her impending (and probably violent) deposition. This wandering mental behavior is similar to the way she behaves in the sleepwalking scene, but she is more lucid here. In the first and last of seven defined episodes in the opera, she is more focused on her present situation. Near the end of the opera, when Lady Macbeth impetuously takes the knife and, instead of attempting suicide again, cuts off her braided hair, Martinez’s dramaturgy is at its keenest. I was elated when Martinez offered the idea. This stage action figuratively parallels the divestiture of her physical crown, and it also serves as a severance from all the roles she has occupied in her life. Cutting off her braid is a prelude to abdicating those identities and electing not to be dominated by them or imprisoned by any unfinished business. She says explicitly that she “was” those versions of herself, and then continues in the present tense, “*Is mise Gruoch* [I am Gruoch] / I alone remain,” followed by the blackout at the end of the opera. In this way, she is seen accepting what is left of herself when these other facets are

stripped away. While the opera does not indicate her escape from Castle Dunsinane in the stage directions, her last words identify her as someone who continues on.

We employed a touch of metatheatre, here, too. In the penultimate stanza, when she says, “Let them say, / The queen, my lord, is dead,” the ambiguity of the introductory imperative clause “let them say” accomplishes a few things. First, it insinuates a plot point, the fulfillment of which is left to the audience’s imagination: she is leaving. Whether she jumps out a window, puts on a disguise and leaves by the below stairs exit, or vanishes into a puff of smoke . . . she has decided not to play the game anymore, and it only benefits her if Malcolm, and Scotland with him, believes she is dead at this moment. (We accepted that not everyone who sees the opera will derive this understanding.) Additionally, this excerpted line from Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* references one of our primary motivating questions—what offstage action was Seyton referring to when he said, “the queen, my lord, is dead”?—as well as the fact that the onstage action of the opera is our answer to that question. Pointing to what Shakespeare chose to keep hidden about Lady Macbeth is also an oblique nod to *Macbeth*’s theme of appearance versus reality. We posited that Lady Macbeth, born as Gruoch ingen Boite, speaking for herself, is the reality in this case, and perhaps as she exits her situation in the play, she also exits the world of the play and the illusory boundaries within which the play confines her.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Lady Macbeth is responsible for representing so many evils in the play. By virtue of her invocation of the spirits, she embodies tension between old world paganism and Christianity. She also constitutes a dangerous subversion of gender and family roles, due to her pursuit of masculine power and her influence over her husband’s decisions. Her apparent childlessness would have reminded early modern English audiences of the anxiety created by Elizabeth I’s childlessness. And her status as an insurrectionist was an offense against both the divine right of kings and the “great chain of being” (Clark and Mason, 2015; Spoto, 2010; Lombardo, “The Great Chain,” 1982).

Development of the Score

Serrate, Martinez, and I began working together in earnest when the second draft of the libretto was finished. From that moment forward, we were running our own race against the clock. The feasibility of producing the commission was constantly in question due to scheduling issues resulting from the pandemic. Furthermore, the threat of a resurgence of the virus, which might prevent the eventual performance from taking place, loomed large over our process. The runway for our project was short, because the culminating performance would satisfy one of my graduation requirements, and there were limited calendar options for our necessary residence in HASoM's main theater. In addition, Serrate is a successful working composer, and mine was not the only score on which he was working. In mid-January of 2022, the performance date was rescheduled from early April to early June to accommodate a slew of COVID-related delays. Even with this adjustment, Serrate was working quickly and feeling the pressure of my deadline.

Prior to our work on *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead*, Serrate and I had not collaborated since 2019. In 2021, UCLA was offering only remote instruction. At the same time, I was changing fachs and repertoire, and I was marginally concerned about commissioning a substantial work for my instrument while in the process of a vocal change, especially since Serrate and I were not able to work together in the same location during quarantine. When UCLA returned to in-person instruction in the Fall quarter of 2021, I sang in the Opera UCLA workshop of a new opera, *Quake*, by HASoM composition faculty member Kay Rhie.⁷¹ Serrate came to the performance and remarked that hearing me sing live, even in a reading with piano, helped to calibrate his ideas for my commission. In response to Martinez's narrative roadmaps, he wrote, "I'm starting to imagine a quite tense, creepy atmosphere, with . . . musical deviations

⁷¹ <https://www.kayrhie.com/works>.

... [leading] toward each different section ...”⁷² While Serrate composed, we constantly mulled over the project in conversation, sharing thoughts about the aspects of the character that intrigued us and discussing the kind of musical behaviors that would express her and the atmosphere around her.

Serrate suggested we meet for an initial readthrough of part of the score, to make sure that he was “moving in the right direction.” On February 24, 2022, I sight-read the first two-thirds of the vocal part. The implied harmonies and textural language were thrilling—I had expected this, based on my exposure to his other compositions—and the melodic writing was full of dramatic sensation. The tessitura gave me some pause, but Serrate insisted that he would make changes, if necessary. My feedback at this stage pertained to the text underlay, especially the density of syllables and certain language sounds set in and above the upper passaggio. I tried to provide general guidelines that would be helpful. After this point, development of the score was continuous and rapid. By March 19th, Serrate had completed almost the entire piano/vocal score. He left the last page of the libretto un-composed, explaining that he wanted to meet with me, Martinez, and our director Indre Viskontas (who had committed to the production the previous fall), to hear everyone’s thoughts about how the last page of text should be handled. That meeting would not take place for another month.

My colleague Stephen Karr, our conductor for the premiere production, helped me prepare the score vocally. We began that process on March 24th. After our first meeting, we each sent Serrate substantial lists of corrections, notational suggestions, and requests for changes.⁷³

⁷² Email from Serrate, September 14, 2021.

⁷³ Many of my requested changes were generated in coachings and rehearsals with Karr. The degree to which I benefited from his help with this cannot be overstated. I recommend that any singer commissioning a work find a conductor who is also a pianist with whom to collaborate during this phase of the project.

My requested changes dealt with the following:

- Reconfigurations of textual rhythms to facilitate enunciation or word stress that felt more idiomatic to me, or to allow more time to execute consonant sounds clearly.
- Somewhat more substantial adjustments to the text underlay and rhythms in the upper passaggio; some syllables were shortened to avoid fatigue, and others were lengthened to increase comfort.
- Requests for pitch-level variance in passaggio-heavy passages, which led to the inclusion of *ossias*—Serrate primarily notated my selected pitches as the main noteheads and his original pitches as the optional notes.
- The one C6 in the score was lengthened to make it easier to execute well.

The heavy use of text in the upper passaggio was a frequent topic of conversation. The process of rehearsing, followed by sending notes to Serrate, occurred many times within a short span.

Throughout, Serrate welcomed our input, and he accommodated our feedback or offered his justification for not doing so, accordingly. Karr and I met eight times before performing a readthrough of the nearly-complete piano/vocal score for Serrate, Martinez, and Viskontas on April 13th.⁷⁴ Except for the last page of the libretto, the piano/vocal score was essentially in its final shape at this point.⁷⁵

On April 25th, Serrate, Martinez, Viskontas, and I met to discuss the musical setting of the last six stanzas of the libretto. The first four of these stanzas are:

⁷⁴ HASoM facilities staff captured an audio recording of this reading, but the data was corrupted somehow. Unfortunately, I did not foresee the need to make a redundant recording. This technological failure later influenced my choices about the video capture of the premiere performance. Karr and I performed and recorded a second reading on April 26th, so that Viskontas and her design team would have an audio recording to reference.

⁷⁵ Viskontas, who attended the reading via Zoom, did not realize the score was not finished yet. When Karr and I reached the end of our performance, she said something to the effect of ‘... the ending doesn’t really work ...,’ to which Serrate replied ‘... that’s because it doesn’t exist yet’ There were many comical moments that resulted from the breakneck speed of development and the fact that members of the creative team were working on the project remotely.

“Cò thusa?”
Once, I was a noble daughter.

“Cò thusa?”
The widow of Gille Coemgáin.

“Cò thusa?”
A wretched orphan’s mother.

You ask again, “Cò thusa?
Art thou the Lady Macbeth,
Consort Queen of Alba?”

The Scottish Gaelic question, “cò thusa?” (“who are you?”), was introduced (and defined) in an aria near the beginning of the work. Near the end of the opera, as Gruoch repeats this question four times, with each answer she signals one of the identities that she now means to relinquish: daughter, wife, mother, and queen. The last reference is assigned the greatest rhetorical emphasis by virtue of its extra line and its position at the end of the sequence of questions. This is followed by the last two stanzas, which anchor the entire work:

Let them say,
The queen, my lord, is dead.

Is mise Gruoch.⁷⁶
I alone remain.

In the meeting, the four of us arrived at consensus fairly easily. The question-and-answer pairs are steps in an almost-hypnotic ritual that has to sequentially increase in energy, building toward her ultimate decision. Then, the action of deciding has to occur in a moment of space after the buildup, an “anti-gravity” moment, in which time suspends while Gruoch makes her choice. Serrate composed an ending to the opera that provides exactly that: a buildup, followed by an essentially *a capella* statement of the last two stanzas. The character experiences and verbalizes

⁷⁶ “I am Gruoch.”

her decision in a moment that does not require strict adherence to meter. These last two vocal statements are flexible and spare, a giant almost-blank canvas in eight bars. The virtually invisible orchestral playout enters under the soprano’s last cycles of phonation and disappears practically before the ear can register it, seeming like nothing so much as a musical sound that “made [itself] air, into which [it] vanished” (1.5.4-5).⁷⁷ (See Figure 1.)

The image displays a musical score for the end of an opera, spanning measures 557 to 560. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with the following parts from top to bottom: B. Cl. (Bass Clarinet), C. (Soprano), Timp. (Timpani), T. t. (Trombones), Pno. (Piano), and Vc. (Violoncello). The tempo is marked 'Tempo ad lib. (♩ = ca. 50)'. Measure 557 begins with a 'P1' box and the instruction 'Tempo ad lib. (♩ = ca. 50)'. The Soprano part in measure 557 is marked 'quasi parlando, conciso' and includes the lyrics 'Let them say, The queen, my lord, is dead.' The instrumental parts for B. Cl., Timp., T. t., Pno., and Vc. all feature a 'pp subtile' dynamic marking. Measure 560 begins with the Soprano part marked 'p sereno' and includes the lyrics 'Is mi - se Gru - oeh. I a - lone re -'. The instrumental parts for B. Cl., Timp., T. t., Pno., and Vc. feature a 'pp' dynamic marking. The Vc. part also includes a 'pizz.' (pizzicato) marking. The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 560.

Figure 1. The end of the opera (continued on the next page)

⁷⁷ I do not know if Serrate intended a correlation to Shakespeare’s text here, but it seems inescapable to me.

Figure 1. The end of the opera (continued)

Serrate shared the complete piano/vocal score, including the end of the opera, on May 7th, before moving on to the full score and then the overture. He described the overture: “I have gathered a few elements of the score and arranged them chronologically [according to] Gruoch’s life. Not too much of the melodic material Michelle will sing, but rather the atmosphere.”⁷⁸ The ensemble parts were completed on May 29th, and the full score with overture and updated parts were completed on June 1st, ten days before the premiere.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Email from Serrate, June 1, 2022.

⁷⁹ The full score and instrument parts were subject to standard engraving-software difficulties, and Serrate and Karr worked on finalizing a correct set of scores and parts until the orchestra reading on June 5th.

The finished opera consists of an overture followed by seven separate dramatic moments that Lady Macbeth experiences. They are not all arias, per se, but they are bounded sections, each with an individuated musical character. Some of them are easily excerptable.⁸⁰ In between these arias and discrete sections of sung monologue, the score transitions very deliberately and non-vocally, giving the soprano and the audience time to breathe, process, detach from the previous section's energy, and turn to meet the next dramatic situation. Within each aria or section, the musical texture vacillates between calm clarity and agitated density, in response to Gruoch's emotional stimuli. The transitional passages that connect these sections are a kind of traveling music for her itinerant thoughts. Each transition between sections includes a repeated measure or measures with an unfixed number of repetitions. Freely repeating material occurs within the sections as well. These repeating bars provide extra time for stage business or vocal recovery, if needed.

Serrate described his compositional process as beginning with reading and internalizing the (second draft of the) very dense libretto over many months. During this time, he was automatically visualizing the performance in the theater space. The more familiar he became with the text, the more the sound of the piece began to take shape. The text inspired several leitmotifs (see Figures 2 through 5). The clear delineations between the separate sections of the libretto, along with the leitmotifs, made it possible to compose the different sections of the score and their connecting passages almost independently of each other. He wanted the opera, as a whole, to begin from a position of complexity, then work toward simplicity (in the form of the diegetic song at the middle of the piece),⁸¹ and then increase in complexity again until the end.

⁸⁰ Early in our collaboration, I expressed a wish that the finished composition contain one or more very excerptable arias, to facilitate keeping the piece in my active singing rotation.

⁸¹ The folk song is at score number VI, "In our hearts." The music for the diegetic song was inspired by folk tunes, but it was composed by Serrate. It is not a preexisting, recovered, or found melody.

Regarding the folk song, he elaborated that he wanted it to be introspective and intense, taking Gruoch back to some essential memory.⁸² The tune was meant to progressively emerge and become recognizable as “a tune” just before vanishing, behaving exactly as memories do.⁸³

II. Do I Sleep?

Gruoch enters her dark chamber slowly, gliding smoothly across the room as if in a dream. She seats herself at her table and lights a candle.

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 48$

5/4

A. Fl. *Breathe when needed, as imperceptible as possible.*

B. Cl. *pp misterioso*
(alternative: Bass Drum instead timpani)

Timp. *pp misterioso*
(G, F#)

T. t. *pp*

Pno. *p misterioso*
* hold slightly the keys and hit with the palm or soft mallet low strings inside the piano

Vln. *pp*

Vc. *pp*

G1

She seems surprised that he does not take the dagger.

un poco parlando, molto ad lib.

444

5/8

Lento, ad lib.

4/4

G. *Are you a man? I*

B. D. *pppp un poco cresc.* *ppp gradually more ominous*
(always keep the 5/8 pattern and tempo, independent from Gruoch)

Susp. Cym. Large

Pno. *pppp un poco cresc.* *ppp gradually more ominous*
(always keep the 5/8 pattern and tempo, independent from Gruoch)
sostenuto pedal
* If possible, keep the resonance from before. Hit inside the piano on low strings and/or metal beam with soft mallet. Alternatively, lowest cluster.

Figure 2. Leitmotif: “Malcolm’s approaching army” in mm. 1-2 and 444-445

⁸² Viskontas points out that nostalgia, such as the feeling produced for Gruoch by singing the diegetic song, can reduce anxiety in times of stress by recalling past, certain times, even though present outcomes are uncertain. Her remarks about the diegetic song are paraphrased here from the pre-show talk given the day of the premiere performance, June 11, 2022.

⁸³ Serrate’s remarks about his compositional process for this work are paraphrased here from the pre-show talk given the day of the premiere performance, June 11, 2022.

4/4 *rit.* (like an echo) **51** (1st time only) **D** 4/4 *rit.*

Fl. *f* *mp* *pp*

B. Cl. *mp* *p*

G. *extend ad lib., sempre dim.*

Susp. Cym. Large *mf* *lc*

Susp. Cym. Small *p* *mf*

Vib. *echoing, irregular ad lib. like vanishing* *lc* *mf sempre dim.*

Pno. *mp* *sempre dim.* *pp* (only last time)

Vln. *flautando (like an echo)* *p* (continue until figure D *sempre dim.*)

Vc. *mp* *p*

Figure 3. Leitmotif: “Throne of Alba” in mm. 46 and 48-49

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 48$ **R**

272 (1st time only, no repeat) *She picks up the dagger once more and walks to the window.*

Fl. (1st time only, no repeat)

Cl. (1st time only, no repeat)

Vib. *p*

Pno. *pp lontano*

Vln. *Alla punta*
Slow movement sul tasto <-> sul pont. ad lib.
pppp ad lib. subtle swells. (1st time only, no repeat)

Vc.

Figure 4. Leitmotif: “Dagger” in mm. 273-274

Figure 5. Leitmotif: “Blood” from mm. 540 beat 4 through mm. 541 beat 3

Ironically, Serrate, Martinez, and I did not have the same views about the finished score’s metadata. Martinez broached the subject of a different title for the piece on more than one occasion. The working title for her narrative roadmap and libretto drafts was *Gruoch*, but she offered several other possible names for the opera. She was particularly interested in *The Night is Long*, which quotes Malcolm’s Act 4, scene 3 line, “The night is long that never finds the day” (4.3.243). All her suggestions were thoughtful and somber, reflecting the seriousness she invested in her treatment of the subject. On this point, however, I followed my instinct. The line “the queen, my lord, is dead” had been an emotional trigger for me for many years, but that was not the primary reason I chose it. Serrate and I agreed that the title of the work should somehow point to its “surprise” ending. Also, as an evocative phrase, *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead* draws

on a useful cross-section of the spirited popular appeal that is normally associated with Lady Macbeth and the otherwise very serious matter of the piece.

In another vein, Serrate and I disagreed about how to refer to the essential classification of the composition. As the commissioner and producer of the project, I exercised naming rights. But as the composer and engraver of the score, he ultimately chose to subtitle the piece as a “Monodrama in One Act,” despite my fervent belief that this work is an opera in every way that matters.

Development of the Character in the Score

Lady Macbeth’s character development is expressed musically in the score. The opera’s dramatic episodes are pieces of a puzzle showing the transformation of Lady Macbeth (back) into Gruoch. This transformation is telegraphed throughout the composition, but the pieces truly snap together at the opera’s climax in the last section. The overture and seven dramatic sections of the composition are:

- I. Overture (mm. 1-57)⁸⁴
- II. Do I sleep? (mm. 1-125)
- III. Cò Thusa (mm. 126-189)
- IV. Grace My Mother Wanted (mm. 190-223)
- V. Mo Chridhe (mm. 224-299)
- VI. In Our Hearts (mm. 300-363)
- VII. Duncan’s Ghost (mm. 364-458)
- VIII. Farewell (mm. 459-565)

The score is designed to offer the soprano a significant degree of free rein over aspects of characterization, featuring several phrases with indications such as *very freely*, *ad lib.*, or that the *notation is approximate*. Other phrases include noteheads that are slashed through and

⁸⁴ The measure numbers in the score begin with mm. 1 at the beginning of number I. Overture, and then start over again at mm. 1 at the beginning of number II. Do I Sleep?

accompanied by markings such as *un poco parlando*. But, beyond these and the many dramatic markings in the score, the vocal part is musically flooded with emotional information.

There are moments in the score that I find especially illuminating for developing the character dramatically. I first become aware of Lady Macbeth at the end of the overture, when the “Blood” leitmotif appears (Figure 5).⁸⁵ This four-beat motif does not begin on the downbeat, and it is paired with other looping figures that also distort the presence of the time signature (see Figure 6). This music sounds to me like Lady Macbeth pacing in a distracted state (i.e., the sleepwalking scene), and the overlapping circular patterns sound like the autonomic movement of her compulsively washing her bloody hands.

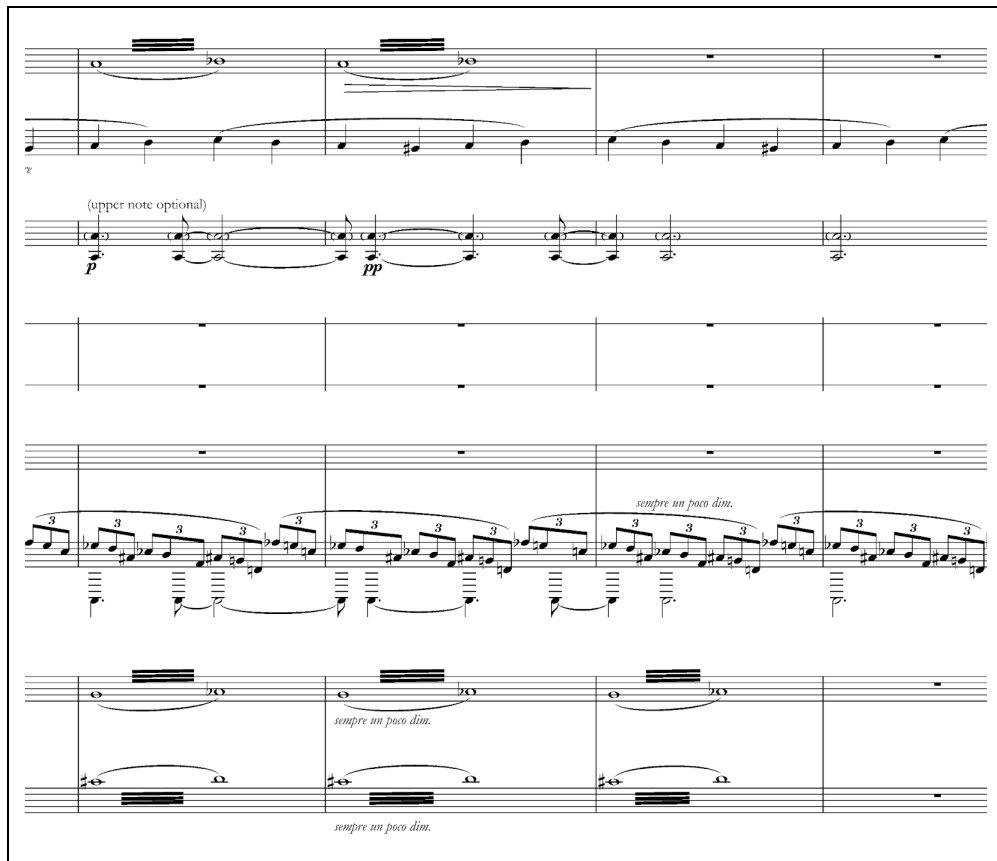


Figure 6. End of the overture

⁸⁵ Serrate described it as the “blood running down [Gruoch’s hands].”

II. Do I sleep? (mm. 1-125)

On the downbeat of this section, there is a quiet but clear transition. The tangled, confused sound of the sleepwalking scene is replaced by the “approaching army” leitmotif (Figure 2). In the ascending chords before Lady Macbeth asks, “Do I sleep?” she gradually wakes from her trance to realize she is in imminent danger. (See Figure 7.)

II. Do I Sleep?

Gruch enters her dark chamber slowly, gliding smoothly across the room as if in a dream. She seats herself at her table and lights a candle.

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 48$

5/4 **4/4** **5/4**

(play with some air sound)

A. Fl. Breathe when needed, as imperceptible as possible. *pp misterioso*

B. Cl. *pp misterioso*

(alternative: Bass Drum instead timpani) (G, F#)

Timp. *pp misterioso*

T. t. *pp* (only 1st time) *pp*

Pno. * hold already the keys and hit with the palm or soft mallet low strings inside the piano. *p misterioso*

Vln. *poco sul tasto* *pp misterioso* *poco sul tasto*

Vc. *pp misterioso*

Figure 7. Lady Macbeth wakes from her trance

Number II is the longest individual episode in the opera. Lady Macbeth is coming back to herself and taking stock of her situation. Several phrases begin in a low register before gathering momentum and ascending in pitch as she reaches the crux of a thought. Her words ricochet

between topics, and her vocalism moves between pitch ranges, dynamics, tempi, and different densities of syllabification. Her thoughts are dancing around the room like the shadows cast by her candle, and her emotional fuse is short.

The first climax of this section occurs at the end of a passage marked *threatening, sempre un poco cresc.* Tension accumulates over six measures that feature angry, percussive strikes on the second eighth note of each beat in the ensemble. In the text, Lady Macbeth refers to the punishment awaiting them because of Macbeth's failure to hold the throne. Her anger and fear propel her into the "Throne of Alba" leitmotif, which acts as the first vocal climax (see Figure 3). This makes it clear that her chief concern at the beginning of the opera is the crown she is about to lose. This idea, in turn, leads her to thoughts of Duncan's dead body. She sings about that personal triumph in hushed, almost sensual tones that betray a macabre fascination with her victory over the murdered king.

Later in the section, accompanied by a return of the sleepwalking scene music from the end of the overture, Lady Macbeth addresses the dagger for the first time (as indicated in the stage directions) and voices her intent to kill herself. There is emotional nakedness in the wide, consonant interval between the voice and the bass of the piano, as she sings "Come, Death." (See Figure 8.) She is suspended in her fear, as her body fills with adrenaline.

-A tempo (♩ = ca. 69) Poco rubato

The image shows a musical score for a vocal line. It consists of four staves. The first staff is a grand staff with two treble clefs and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked '-A tempo (♩ = ca. 69)' and the dynamics are 'p'. The second staff is a vocal line with lyrics: 'Come, Death, and find in me a kins-woman who will suffer no life within her poisoned body.' The dynamics are 'mp'. The third staff is a grand staff with two treble clefs and a key signature of one sharp, featuring a wavy line above the staff and a long horizontal line below it. The fourth staff is a grand staff with two treble clefs and a key signature of one sharp, featuring a wavy line above the staff and a long horizontal line below it with an arrow pointing to the right.

p

mp

Come, Death, and find in me a kins-woman who will suffer no life within her poisoned body.

Figure 8. Lady Macbeth addresses the dagger

But she does not commit suicide, and this results in an outburst unlike anything in the score up to this point. Her exclamation, marked *furiosa*, is one of disdain at her failure to act, but the voice leading also suggests surprise and alarm. The ensemble's jagged, accented lines also communicate panic. (See Figure 9.) Now, her chief concern is loss of self-control.

Figure 9. “What, truant!”

III. Cò Thusa (mm. 126-189) and IV. Grace My Mother Wanted (mm. 190-223)

The next two demarcated sections of the score are musically dissimilar, but they are related dramatically as an antecedent and consequent pair.

Number III, the antecedent, is the first true aria in the score, and the most excerptable aria, overall. We see the first signs of Gruoch within Lady Macbeth, as she talks about her mother. The aria begins with a slow, delicate texture in the ensemble, suggestive of a young Gruoch searching out her mother’s attention. The vocal melody that weaves together with the ensemble is careful, courtly but childlike, and melancholy. Textually and musically, Gruoch ardently acknowledges that unresolved pain from her childhood experiences resulted in her capacity for rage. (See Figure 10.)

The image shows a musical score for a vocal aria. It consists of five staves. The top two staves are for piano accompaniment, with dynamics *f* and *mp* indicated. The third staff is the vocal line, with lyrics: "it yield A fu - ry so full of life?". The dynamic *f con passione* is written above the vocal line. The bottom two staves are for piano accompaniment, with a dynamic *f* indicated. The score is in a key with one sharp (F#) and a common time signature.

Figure 10. "A fury so full of life"

The voice leading in this aria speaks to me honestly and emphatically. The words are occasionally so well suited to the melody that it sounds as though the melody were written first, rather than the other way around. The physical actions described in the text are supported by the voice leading, as well. These features are all the more remarkable, given that the aria is strophic.

In the consequent section, number IV, the tempo initially picks up. The voice begins moving more rapidly in disordered, long lines that skate through a variety of pitches without settling in any one place. Gruoch is deciphering the painful memory she just experienced: the lesson of her mother's death is that she must take control of her own. The tempo slows in response to understanding. The melodic language of Gruoch's dawning clarity, here and elsewhere in the score, involves deliberately delivered text (achieved through slower tempi or longer rhythmic durations) and repeated pitches.

V. Mo Chridhe (mm. 224-299)

The music transitioning into this section is calm and translucent. The melody in the ensemble is reminiscent of a lullaby (see Figure 11).

The musical score for "V. Mo Chridhe" (mm. 224-299) is presented in a standard orchestral format. The score includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), Guitar (G.), Vibraphone (Vib.), Violin (Vln.), and Viola (Vc.). The tempo is marked "224 Calmo" with a quarter note equal to approximately 60 beats per minute. The music is in a key with one flat and a 3/4 time signature. The score features a "poco accel." marking and a "p" (piano) dynamic. The Vibraphone part is marked "p sempre dolce e legato possibile" and the Violin/Viola parts are marked "sempre dmo." (sempre dolce). The Viola part also has a "pizz." (pizzicato) marking.

Figure 11. Lullaby

In the development and stabilization of the lullaby, Lulach clearly arrives in Gruoch's thoughts before she begins to speak. Initial vocal phrases in this section are set in the upper passaggio and require a shimmery thread of tone. Gruoch's feelings for Lulach sound tender, but also fragile, as though thinking of her son makes her feel like she is made of glass and afraid of breaking. Cracks in the glass are "visible" in the vocal phrases that are more erratic. Thinking of Lulach inevitably leads to thoughts of Gille, and memories of her first husband are dangerous because she cannot protect herself from the pain they cause. That danger is heard in the harmonies underneath the phrases that require simultaneous vocal control and emotional fragility, and also in the phrases that flare out, breaking the stillness.

VI. In Our Hearts (mm. 300-363)

The diegetic folk song at the center of the composition is also a potentially excerptable aria.⁸⁶ The irregular descending ostinato that begins the song sounds like waves peacefully lapping on a shore⁸⁷ and creates the psycho-physical sensation of acquiescing to the undertow of memory. (See Figure 12.)

VI. "In Our Hearts"

poco rit. Molto ad lib. U

Tempo rubato, colla voce (♩ = ca.48)

299 To A. Fl.

2/4 5/16 2/4

Fl. molto legato, breathe when needed as imperceptibly as possible

Cl. pp sotto voce sempre colla voce, molto espr. e dolce

She begins to sing. Gruoch little by little remembers a tune while thinking about Gille and her past life. It comes slowly, bittersweet, nostalgic.

Figure 12. Folk song ostinato

Gruoch is opening herself up to the distant but distinct sensations of her youth. When the ostinato gives way to a strumming figure reminiscent of a lute (see Figure 17), the pronouns in the song text change from “we” to “you,” and Gruoch has a sense of immediate proximity to Gille. The tessitura of the folk song then moves up twice in two phrases, charting her increasing desperation to hold on to this recovered moment.

Of course, Gille in this moment is not real, and both the melody and the accompaniment dissolve. This induces a shift back to the sleepwalking music (see Figure 6) now combined with

⁸⁶ Though, like many well-known arias, “In Our Hearts” is not at all representative of the vocal demands of the entire role.

⁸⁷ Moray, the northern province that both of Gruoch’s husbands ruled, was located on the Scottish coastline.

the “Dagger” leitmotif (see Figure 4) as Gruoch realizes she can join Gille by dying. The phrase in which she pleads for his help contains the opera’s only C6. (See Figure 13.)

The musical score for Figure 13, titled "Pleading with Gille", is presented in four systems. The top system shows the vocal line with lyrics "For - sake me not and help me die" and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a "poco accel." marking and dynamic markings of *fp*. The second system continues the vocal line with lyrics "For - sake me not and help me die" and the piano accompaniment, with dynamic markings of *f*, *p*, *mf*, and *p*. The third system shows the piano accompaniment with dynamic markings of *ff*, *p*, *mf*, and *mf*. The fourth system shows the piano accompaniment with dynamic markings of *fp* and *fp*. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Figure 13. Pleading with Gille

VII. Duncan’s Ghost (mm. 364-458)

This section is a musically complex *scena* that conveys a lot of narrative information in a short period of time. Gruoch speaks directly to Duncan almost continuously throughout this episode. Her first statements are measured and presentational, like the salute at the beginning of a duel. This is followed by a tirade of verbal scorn and accusations propelled at Duncan, with densely-set text, for most of five continuous pages. The musical setting of this diatribe is direct;

Gruoch is transparent and blunt, singing vocal phrases that move with speed and force across a wide pitch range. There is so much zeal and coherence in her words, and she has so many arguments ready to deliver with brutal precision, that it is clear she has mentally prepared for this moment. Yet, her invective for Duncan does not feel rehearsed, as much as it feels unleashed. Her maximal self-possession is apparent the last time she challenges Duncan (see Figure 14, in which the “approaching army” leitmotif [Figure 2] can be heard in the background).

Figure 14. Last challenge

VIII. Farewell (mm. 459-565)

The last episode of the score is the second longest section of the work. Gruoch speaks once more to Lulach. The musical content here is almost identical to that of section V, but as it immediately follows Gruoch’s confrontation with Duncan, her statements feel more resolute during this reprise. After her farewell to Lulach, a transitional passage recapitulates music from section II, which serves to bring the opera full circle before the final climax. After the moment that Gruoch severs her braided hair, there is a short passage of music unlike any other in the opera, representing a turning point. (See Figure 15.) The pace of Gruoch’s speech becomes slow

and deliberate, and the melody features repeated pitches, representing Gruoch's moment of realization. The ensemble is comparatively still.

L1 Meditativo ♩ = ca. 54

510 *molto ad lib.*

G. What was once my womanly silken crown, polished by oil and ivory,

arco and lv.

Vib. *p with sustain pedal*

Pno. Pluck strings inside. Alt: play very soft.

(bold with pedal)

Vln. *pp sempre dim. al niente*

Vc. *pp sempre dim. al niente*

Figure 15. Turning point

Martinez's libretto helps to intensify the magic of this moment. Employing assonance across successive lines, she uses several /w/, rhotic /R/, and /u/ sounds in this passage, which bring the lips into a similar position:

What was once / My womanly silken crown,
 Polished by oil and ivory —
How readily it turns / To wiry rope in my hand.
How readily so many years / Come unraveled,
 and how deservingly / These threads await the loom.
Were I to weave them together, / What tapestry would result?

In performance, the repetition of the /u/ position enhanced my sensation of being suspended in this musical moment, physicalizing for me the narrowing of her mental and emotional focus.

Then the ritual (discussed earlier in this chapter, in Development of the Score) begins. The music of the ritual includes the sleepwalking music from the end of the overture, but now it represents the ceremony which culminates in Gruoch's final decision.

These are just a few of the moments in the score in which the character of Lady Macbeth née Gruoch is made real by the music of the composition. Martinez's libretto is dense and layered, full of structural finesse that acts as a vehicle for cutting insight and palpable emotion. The text is challenging to embody, and it must have been even more formidable to set. Serrate's composition is also fortified by a graceful, clever architecture, and within that frame, the music is faithful to the sound of itself in a potent and memorable way. But most importantly, Serrate created a musical work that gives Lady Macbeth (the speaker of Martinez's beautiful text) authentic blood and breath, adrenaline and tears. This music locates the character I envisioned within the libretto and observes her, clearly and empathetically, in the moment. The score is replete with expressions of her cogent, passionate perspective. In the music, every bit as much as in the words, I hear Lady Macbeth's voice.

Chapter 4: The Work Onstage: The World Premiere

From the moment I decided to commission an opera, I planned to perform the commissioned work to satisfy a degree requirement. My hope was for a fully produced performance, with set, lights, costume, and orchestra. In an attempt to prepare for all possible outcomes, I also considered more modest production requirements. But my collaboration with Serrate and Martinez was so fruitful, and the project was so inspiring for each person that became involved, that the planned performance grew in scope to match the collective anticipation of everyone working to bring it about.

The story of the world premiere of *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead* is a story about people saying yes. Serrate and Martinez each said yes, and collaborating with them propelled me into the process of opera production. When I first approached professor Peter Kazaras (Director of Opera UCLA and Distinguished Professor of Music in the Herb Alpert School) to ask for his assistance with this project, he said yes without apparent reservation—no small boon, since he was under no obligation to support an endeavor of this magnitude, and faculty support was required to proceed. Kazaras’s first instruction was to hire a production manager and build a budget. Michelle Magaldi, Production Director for L.A. Opera, surprised me by answering, yes, she would be happy to provide some guidance for the production management of my project. I met with Magaldi and her team once in March and once in May of 2021, and they helped me generate a functional, relevant beginning budget.

Taking On the Roles of Producer and Production Manager

Armed with (and daunted by) my budget, I decided not to hire a production manager, in part to forego the cost of that line item, and also because I knew too little about opera production to delegate effectively. I was the producer, production manager, and sole performer of the commission. These roles are each simple to summarize but difficult to do. Having no prior experience acting as producer or production manager, it surprised me how difficult it was to wear both hats. Occasionally, decisions made regarding budgetary issues or time management would reveal other factors not taken into account and create other problems. There were many such moments of internal dissonance along this learning curve. Furthermore, maintaining my perspective as a performer, while engaged in a constant flurry of logistic activity, was challenging.

In the beginning, due to cost concerns, we considered a piano-only production with no set. Karr felt the piano/vocal score could represent the work beautifully, and Viskontas was confident that lighting and costume design could be effective. At this stage, an angel investor pledged to cover any budgetary gap that could not be satisfied by other means, which allowed me to pursue a complete production design without knowing how much money would eventually be raised. The original budget for a fully-designed production with ensemble was substantial. Because of my inexperience with forecasting production expenses, the budget grew to 138% of initially anticipated costs between December 26, 2021 and June 11, 2022. Almost every category of expense required more money than projected, but the cost of production *design* was where my expectation and reality diverged most significantly.⁸⁸ I attempted to secure grant funding and other institutional support but could not devote sufficient time to that strategy. Friends with

⁸⁸ Our first production concept involved projections, but we opted to move forward with lighting and set design only, to obviate the cost of projection design.

experience in arts development and fundraising offered their assistance with developing a social media, promotion, and crowdfunding strategy. The budget was ultimately paid for by a combination of crowdfunding, my own earnings, and other private donations.

Social media promotion and fundraising campaigns began in the last days of 2021, before the libretto was complete. Early online resources (promotional graphics and text, bios and headshots of the creative team) were deployed while the score was still in early stages and the production had not yet been designed. Halfway through the online run up to the premiere, the opera's website was redesigned with new graphics, this time art-directed by Viskontas. Video interviews with Serrate, Martinez, Karr, Viskontas, and myself were posted on social media.⁸⁹ Press packets were developed and sent to regional Shakespeare organizations. Maintenance of the budget and the fundraising campaign, along with promotion of the opera on social media, occupied a significant amount of my time in the months leading up to the performance. Fundraising continued until the day of the premiere.

During the months preceding the performance, I spent a great deal of time working with Luis Henao and Jose Carrillo from the HASoM music technology office (which oversees Schoenberg Hall, the theater where the opera premiered) working out the details of my theater reservation. They helped me streamline the staffing needs for my project, and educated me about the technical capacities and limitations of the space. Henao and Carrillo went out of their way to help me achieve a robust, professional-quality production. When asked if he would act as our technical director, Carrillo said yes, and his help bridging the gap between my guest designers and the theater was indispensable. He facilitated many simple, elegant solutions to operational puzzles that might have been big problems otherwise. Critically, he helped me devise and

⁸⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLLpD68LFindtGOxtS7CVZVC7H3B8BNhkJ>.

execute a thoughtful, artistic plan for the livestream of the premiere, which became the video record of the work, now available on the opera's website.⁹⁰ Other HASoM staff members gave freely of their limited time to help me secure rehearsal spaces, find up-to-date information about UCLA's COVID protocols for guests, and advertise the production through HASoM's and UCLA's promotional channels. From the Dean's Office to the Schoenberg Hall crew, this project was facilitated and improved by the support of the entire HASoM community.

Throughout all of this, Serrate, Martinez, Karr, Viskontas, and I were developing the score and the production. In addition to conducting, Karr agreed to act as vocal coach and orchestra manager. He selected the excellent musicians who played in the premiere ensemble⁹¹ and handled all aspects of their participation. Viskontas put together a fantastic team of designers and worked with them to create the production concept and aesthetic. The set designer, Lex Gernon, shared a scenic rendering of the set, which featured three pieces of furniture (each supporting a mirror), a big fuzzy rug, and an encircling vertical border made of tree branches standing on end, all in bright red. The line of standing tree branches gave the impression of an enclosed space, which Viskontas identified as the antechamber to Gruoch's bedroom or private apartments.⁹² The tree branches symbolized Birnam Wood closing in on Castle Dunsinane, so that Gruoch is literally hemmed in by the threat of Malcolm's approaching army. The circle of red branches also suggested a heart shape: the splaying branch ends looked like the veins of the heart and, with everything painted a distinct red, the ideas of "heart" and "blood" were clearly suggested. This spectacular design related to the macabre elements of *Macbeth*, but it also

⁹⁰ <https://www.thequeenopera.com/>.

⁹¹ Christine Tivolacci, flute; Andrew Leonard, clarinet; Ben Phelps, percussion; Sky Haneul Lee, piano; Leila Nuñez-Fredell, Violin; Joo Lee, cello.

⁹² By choosing to set the scene in an antechamber instead of in a bedroom, we avoided having to pay for a bed as part of the set design.

showed that Gruoch is at the center of Shakespeare’s play, the beating heart of the drama. Viskontas described the set as positioning her, alone, in her most intimate chamber—the only place where she can truly be, and think for, herself.⁹³ Lighting designer Brandon Baruch played off of the bright red set pieces with different palettes to create a variety of temperatures and to differentiate between the episodes in the score. Also, the lighting design lit the stage from the wings rather than from the front, making tree branches come alive and creating moving shadows, enhancing the set’s sinister presence. Linda Muggeridge’s costume design facilitated hiding blood packs on my person, and the costume felt completely secure while looking free and natural. Possibly the most astonishing design element was Angela Santori’s wig design solution for cutting off Gruoch’s braid on stage. Santori styled a wig with a long braid, which was secured halfway down in a tight bundle that was pre-cut. Each cut end was solidified and glued to a magnet, and then the two ends were reattached magnetically. The “cutting” of the hair was accomplished by taking the bottom part of the braid in one hand and pretending to cut through it with the dagger in my other hand, when in fact, a solid tug on the braid separated the two magnets.⁹⁴

The closer we drew to staging rehearsals, tech week, and the premiere, the faster time began to move. Some choices I made as producer created difficulties that I had to resolve as production manager or performer. Rehearsal pianists were added to the schedule at the last minute; the first several staging rehearsals were conducted without a stage manager, which inhibited my ability to focus on performing in rehearsal; and I nearly missed the opportunity to

⁹³ Viskontas’s remarks about Gruoch’s relationship to the space of the set are paraphrased here from the pre-show talk given the day of the premiere performance, June 11, 2022.

⁹⁴ The “cutting” of the wig was a complete success, but I did spend the entire performance worried that I would prematurely separate the bottom half of the braid, because one of the magnets fell off during my wig and make-up call and had to be reglued.

have the production photodocumented by waiting until very late in the process to engage a production photographer. It was simply a stroke of luck that when I reached out to Taso Papadakis⁹⁵ about photographing our dress rehearsal, he said yes.⁹⁶ The nearer the performance came, the more my ability to wrangle with details began to show some wear and tear.

Production tasks continued to dominate my time until the day of the premiere. Program layout continued throughout tech week, and a snafu at the print shop resulted in my racing around Los Angeles on the day before the performance to have the programs printed somewhere else. Serrate, Martinez, Karr, and Viskontas offered to give a pre-show talk, and those arrangements were confirmed in the hours before the performance. There were precious few moments leading up to the performance in which I could be solely a performer. Sitting down in the wig and make-up chair for my call on the day of the show was the first moment of the entire project during which I stopped being a production manager and producer. Even then, anxiety about unfinished promotion tasks caused me to worry that we were about to perform for only a few guests in an otherwise empty theater. Fortunately, the approximately 520 seats of Schoenberg Hall were largely occupied when the performance began.

Taking On the Role of Lady Macbeth née Gruoch

My experience performing this magnificent work was colored by the breadth and depth of my responsibilities to the project. By the time we began staging rehearsals, the production had taken on a gravity of its own. I was in orbit around it along with everyone else involved.

We had prepared the score musically, but I had not made time to prepare myself dramatically. Possibly borne out of an instinct to self-preserve, this omission might have

⁹⁵ <https://www.tasophotoindustry.com/#/>.

⁹⁶ Production photos from our orchestra dress can be found on the show's website: <https://www.thequeenopera.com/>.

impacted my eventual performance negatively, if it weren't for our excellent director. I counted on rehearsal time to help me step into the character I was to embody, the character that I helped to build. However, I found myself keeping Gruoch at a distance and having difficulty letting go and being "in the scene." During the first staging rehearsal on May 23rd, 2022, I was unaccountably nervous. Viskontas adroitly read the situation and helped me lean on the text, until the words became clear physical stimuli. Slowly, I moved toward inhabiting the character, but it actually took me several rehearsals to close the gap. On June 4th, the day before the orchestra reading and two days before we began tech in the theater, Viskontas was attending rehearsal remotely. In addition to the stage management and music staff, Santori (wig and make-up design) and our livestream director, Staci Mize, were watching the rehearsal. Viskontas was visible in a Zoom window on a laptop which was placed precariously on a music stand facing the rehearsal space. During our first run of the day, I began to lose my composure. There are passages in the score that left me feeling exposed, and in that rehearsal the vulnerability of the character, combined with my acute stress about production-related matters, overwhelmed me. I succumbed to emotion, unable to sing, and called for a break. Approaching the laptop to talk to Viskontas, I was embarrassed and apologetic about breaking down and stopping rehearsal—but she was relieved and happy. She told me that she had worried I wouldn't turn that corner and allow myself to experience the character deeply. She encouraged me to understand that some breaking down of resistance had to happen, no matter how affronted I was by my own loss of control. In truth, after that rehearsal, I was more able to step away from my anxiety about the potential success or failure of the production. With even a moment of personal quiet restored, it was possible to approach the character in earnest.

Ironically, but not surprisingly, after this shift of perspective, I felt more confident about the overall seaworthiness of the production. After many years of being responsible for “only” myself as a singer and actor, moving into the theater space and ceding operational control to others was relaxing and familiar. We ran the show twice each day during our long tech week calls, and it started to gel. At the end of a successful tech week, the show felt ready.

By all reasonable measures, the performance was an unqualified success. At the most basic level, there were no calamities of a musical, logistical, theatrical, or personal nature. I was in my body and communicated freely on stage, accomplishing much of what I wished to, vocally and dramatically. The set, lighting, costume, and (most importantly) wig designs were executed flawlessly, to great effect. We performed Martinez’s and Serrate’s extraordinary composition successfully, and we told the story.

Assessing my performance afterward, I am proud of what I was able to give dramatically. During tech, I was in the middle of that exciting upswing of familiarity with a character in which every discovery feels relevant and intriguing, and that momentum was present in the performance. In future performances of the role, my priority will be to engage more fully with the raw and vulnerable place where Gruoch lives, to achieve a more natural performance, with increased vocal honesty and transparency.

Maestro Karr and the ensemble played the score beautifully. We enjoyed an almost-flawless performance in terms of vertical and expressive ensemble issues—an important feat for the premiere of a complicated score. Vocally, I marshaled my resources rather well, especially considering my apprehension about some of the tessituras in the piece. Throughout my musical preparation and the rehearsal period, the density of syllabically-set text in and above the upper passaggio was a point of contention. Strategic vocal and dramatic preparation was required

to mitigate the potential dangers of constant articulation in that range. Also, the language of the libretto is unusual and propulsive; I needed to not indulge too deeply in my emotional experience of the text when certain vocal onsets demanded special attention. In fact, the moments in which I did lean into the emotionality of the text in performance invariably produced the few phrases that I wish had been executed better. Performing this role again, I would prepare the diction in a way that is targeted to refine my approach to upper middle and upper passaggio singing. Another important goal would be a slimmer *fil di voce* (thread of voice) to facilitate the higher ossia notes that I declined to sing during the premiere.

Performance Considerations for *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead*

The performance considerations for *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead* pertain to demands made of the singer, issues for the ensemble, and theatrical elements that must be addressed in a staged production.

For the soprano:

The role has a pitch range of A3 to C6, with one optional D6 indicated in parentheses. The single C6 and Bb5 in the score are substantial, and the many B5s, A5s, and Ab5s require at least some degree of dramatic and vocal presence. None of the pitches below C4 are marked *forte* or used in dramatic beats that require any kind of vocal “edge,” with the possible exception of one phrase terminating in a Bb3 (in mm. 421), for which multiple interpretations are possible. Many of the lower pitches are set in a way that insinuates *parlando*, or they are specifically marked as such. Except for the absence of a loud dynamic in the lowest notes, each part of the role’s pitch range emerges as a distinct tessitura in different sections of the score. Furthermore,

each tessitura is employed sometimes with heft and sometimes with delicacy. Versatility is a prerequisite. The vocal writing has sustained, *cantabile* sections, but there is also a substantial amount of melodic material that leaps around, passing quickly through different registers. While the piece does not contain coloratura, pitch-related flexibility and agility are a vocal requirement. Stamina is another requirement, as the opera is an extended scene for one singer, lasting almost fifty minutes.

The score does not call for vocal “effects” or extended techniques. There are sequences of words that are notated with crossed noteheads; sometimes single noteheads (i.e., single syllables) are crossed in the middle of a sentence that is otherwise set *without* crossed noteheads. These crossed noteheads are intended to be voiced in a speechlike way,⁹⁷ which is sometimes (but not always) marked in the score. There is also one laugh written into the piece, during the confrontation with Duncan. Originally, the laugh was notated differently than the way it appears in the final version. With Serrate’s permission, during rehearsals I developed an alternate vocal exclamation in place of a laugh, and he subsequently modified the notation to reflect my performance. The original notation is provided here (in Figure 16) for comparison. For this dramatic beat, Serrate encouraged me to do whatever felt visceral and authentic.

⁹⁷ Karr and I confirmed this with Serrate.

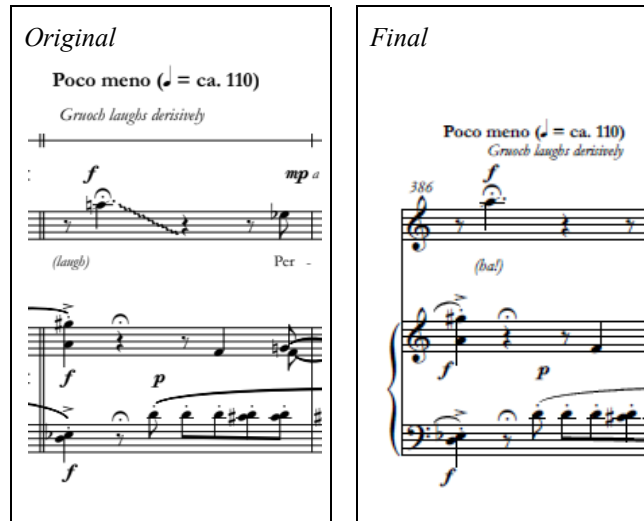


Figure 16. Original and final notation of the laugh

Excepting a few phrases in Scottish Gaelic, the libretto is in English and features vibrant, uncommon words describing a well-known Shakespearean character. Moreover, the performance features only one person singing for quite a long time. For this reason, the role requires excellent diction and dramatic commitment to maintain the audience's interest in the text. The Scottish Gaelic phrases also necessitate special effort and preparation, since Gaelic is not a common lyric language.⁹⁸

For the ensemble:

The score calls for a chamber ensemble consisting of: flute (doubling alto flute); clarinet in Bb (doubling bass clarinet); violin; violoncello; piano; and one percussionist playing timpani, bass drum, snare drum, suspended cymbals, tam-tam, gongs, mark tree, marimba, vibraphone, and crotales. The most obvious ensemble considerations relate to the quantity of percussion instruments involved. A performance space that can hold the ensemble must also facilitate the

⁹⁸ For the premiere production, Martinez contacted Dr. Sheila Kidd, Senior Lecturer in Celtic & Gaelic studies at the University of Glasgow. Dr. Kidd provided a recording of the Scottish Gaelic phrases for our use.

necessary percussion layout in order for performance to be feasible. There are moments in the score that require extremely speedy switching between percussion instruments. According to the percussionist who played the world premiere, Ben Phelps, it is impractical (if not impossible) for one player to play every note in the percussion part in a live performance. Either the part requires some modification, or it should be played by two players. Elsewhere in the ensemble, there are: quick switches of instruments for the flutist; extended passages of abnormal articulation for the string players, or lengthy passages for the clarinet player with no chance to breathe; and passages for the piano that require the removal of the piano’s music rack, so that the pianist can strum the strings to create a dulcimer-esque effect (see Figure 17). This generates the tedious but genuine question of where the pianist should put their sheet music. Essentially, every member of the ensemble is called upon to exhibit virtuosity in some way.

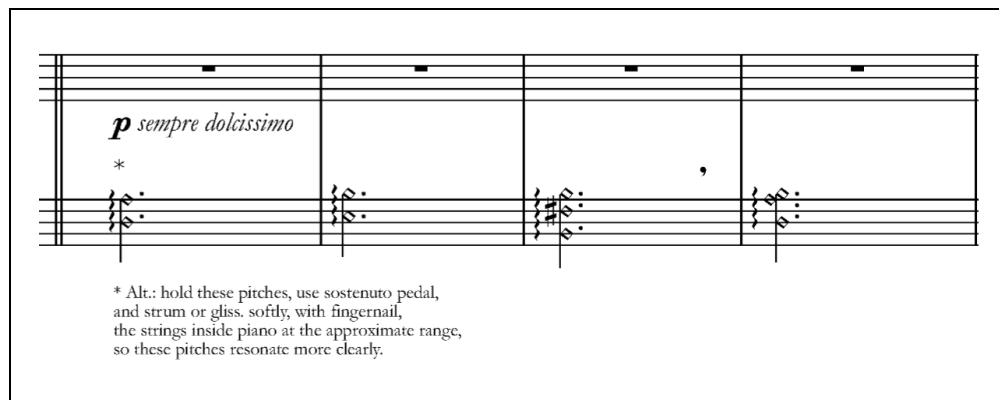


Figure 17. Strumming effect

It would be possible to perform the work with piano using the piano/vocal score, if necessary. Serrate composed the piano/vocal score first. Because of this, according to Karr, all of the leitmotifs and important textural information “hiding in the shadows” of the work were already present in the piano/vocal score before the full score was created, and therefore these details are not in danger of being subsequently lost or diffused by an unsuccessful piano

reduction. The amazing tone colors in the orchestra grow directly out of “the seed of the piano score,” rather than the piano/vocal score being a “pale representation” of the orchestral score, as is often the case.⁹⁹ There are a few systems in the piano score that are not playable as a reduction, due to the independently repeating figures in different instruments in the ensemble. (See Figure 18.)

Figure 18 shows two systems of musical notation. The first system, starting at measure 16, features a treble clef staff with a 3-measure free-cue section marked with a triangle and the number 3. Below it, the piano accompaniment is shown with various annotations: 'Fading out, keeping previous tempo' above a section, 'pp tempo' below a section, and 'At new tempo, repeat independently' above a section. The bass clef staff has 'pp sotto voce' below it. The second system, starting at measure 19, includes a vocal line with lyrics: 'Mal - colm cour-ses for-ward hot and ea-ger to un-cou-ple Mac-duff and Si-ward, that they might tear a - part my bo-dy in mine own'. The piano accompaniment below has annotations: 'fading out (rit. and dim.)' above, 'ppp colla voce' below, '(replacing the previous ostinato)' below, and 'colla voce' below. A 'Ped.' (pedal) line is at the bottom.

Figure 18. Considerations for the piano reduction

⁹⁹ Karr’s remarks about the benefits of this piano/vocal score being composed before the full score are paraphrased here from the pre-show talk given the day of the premiere performance, June 11, 2022.

For the staged production:

The score calls for specific props and physical elements. Possibly, a slimmed-down production could compensate for a set that does not allow Gruoch to sit and write a letter, as instructed by the stage directions. And while it would seem a waste, the show could also be performed without the indicated use of stage blood. At a minimum, though, Gruoch must have a dagger. With that dagger on stage, Gruoch will need someplace to occasionally set it down. The most technical requirement of the score is the stage direction that Gruoch cuts off her hair at the musical climax. (There are probably a few ways, literal and figurative, to accomplish this effect; none of the literal representations are simple to execute, in terms of technical stage business.) Altogether, a production will ideally be able to incorporate a table or desk and a chair (where Gruoch can sit to write a letter, or set down her knife); a dagger, and some way of using it to cut Gruoch's hair at the end of the show; and stage blood.

The score does not explicitly describe a particular onstage effect when Duncan "enters" the room, but it is textually and musically implied (see Figure 19) and will need to be signaled somehow.¹⁰⁰ It would also help the soprano to have an identifiable physical location where Duncan is while Gruoch speaks to him.

¹⁰⁰ In the premiere, we achieved this with light cues.

(Speeding up a lot to a "ghostly-swirl" effect)

A1 VII. Duncan's Ghost ⁴

Fast, but senza misura

ad lib. overblowing breathe when needed.

ord.

4/4 **2/4** **4/4** Lento, ad lib.

361

A. Fl.

B. Cl.

G.

Timp.

Susp. Cym. Large

Susp. Cym. Small

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

Crunch shudders.

L.v.

mp a bit worried

What spi-rit tres

From 2nd time. Ad lib. alternate S/L.

simile ma sempre dim

L.v.

ppp

ppp

ppp

(omit in 1st pass but keep resonance of previous chord)

ppp

Molto ad lib. After one pass, feel free to alter the order of the notes keeping the motion sempre ppp e dim. (una corda)

L.v.

(no attack)

flautando

pp

flautando

pp

Figure 19. Duncan's ghost enters

Supertitles are another major element to consider when mounting a production of this work. If the performer's diction is at a sufficient level of clarity, the sheer number of words in the libretto and its unfamiliar syntax will create a verbally stimulating experience. On the other hand, poor diction would transform sitting through the libretto into a tiring and taxing experience. These obverse outcomes remain equally likely whether or not supertitles are projected. The

language in the libretto is just as jarring to the eyes as it is foreign to the ears. If the libretto were projected in its entirety as supertitles, the audience would necessarily be engaged with reading that strange language throughout the duration of the work, more than watching, listening to, or consuming the story through the medium of live performance. An audience with access to supertitles may walk away having understood more of the text, but less of the story. The alternative would be to use a paraphrase of the libretto as supertitles, but that would essentially guarantee the libretto is not experienced directly at all, as the audience would gravitate toward the language they can read and more easily understand.

As a creative team, we chose not to use supertitles for the premiere production. We did receive some disgruntled feedback, even from our most enthusiastic supporters, about our failure to provide this common tool for accessing the text. Opera audiences expect supertitles, and sometimes such expectations are difficult and possibly unwise to contravene. But this opera has as much to gain from not presenting supertitles as a staging of *Macbeth* would stand to lose by including them. It is possible that the greater value results from presenting this work without a filter, even if some of the text washes over the audience with imperfect comprehension. Viskontas described this choice as giving the audience *permission* not to understand every word and every interaction, and inviting them to embrace the whole experience more.¹⁰¹ In future productions, perhaps a pre-show announcement to that effect would create an alternative expectation for the audience that the performance can then satisfy.

¹⁰¹ Viskontas's remarks about not using supertitles are paraphrased here from the pre-show talk given the day of the premiere performance, June 11, 2022.

Chapter 5: Looking Inward, Looking Forward

What Makes This Piece Work?

The principal reason why this piece works is that it is a compact, compelling piece of theater, long enough to allow you to forget yourself while you are watching it, and short enough that you will be surprised when it ends. The text engrosses and the music insinuates—the piece leaves you with a *mood*. The subject of the work is one of the most well-known and well-used literary and theatrical characters out there, but she is treated in a wholly unfamiliar way. Despite the universality of *Macbeth*, every person who listened to my description of the premise of this opera did a “double take.” Somehow, it seems that comparatively few people have stopped to ponder what happens to Lady Macbeth when she leaves the stage after the sleepwalking scene. But I am certain that one of the reasons so many collaborators said yes to being a part of this project is that they all intuitively understood that *this is a good idea for a story*.

Audiences will intuit it is a good idea, too, though there may be some initial resistance to letting go of assumptions about Lady Macbeth. She is so often characterized as being motivated by ambition or, more to the point, caricatured as “ambitious.” Sometimes the ambition is her own, sometimes, her husband’s, but ambition is the primary thing we are given to understand about her as a literary and cultural persona. In history, Gruoch ingen Boite was the first Scottish queen ever mentioned in any record, but only her lineage and her status as a queen and co-grantor of lands to a religious order were noted. She is not mentioned in the earliest comprehensive chronicles.¹⁰² Boece’s *Scotorum Historiae* was the first work to examine her

¹⁰² There is no mention of either Lady Macbeth (or Banquo) in John of Fordun’s *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* (written sometime before 1385) or in the *Chronicle of Andrew Wyntoun* (1406) (Bullough, 435-6).

directly, describing her role in the conflict between Macbeth and Duncan. Boece¹⁰³ described Lady Macbeth as:

[Macbeth's] wyfe, impacient of lang tarie, as wemen ar to all thing thuhair thai sett thame, gaif him gret artacioun [instigation] to persew the samyn, that scho mycht be ane quene, calland him oft tymes febill cowart and nocht desyrous of honouris, sen he durst nocht assailze the thing with manhede and corage quhilk is offert to him be benevolence of fortune.¹⁰⁴

(Macbeth's wife, impatient of long waiting, as women are to all things where they set themselves, gave him great instigation to pursue the same, that she might be a queen, calling him oft' times feeble coward and not desirous of honors, that he should not assail the thing with his manhood and courage which is offered to him by the benevolence of fortune.)¹⁰⁵

But Boece's work was not published until almost four centuries after Gruoch's death.¹⁰⁶

Holinshed's *Chronicles*, Shakespeare's main source for *Macbeth*, drew heavily on Boece,¹⁰⁷ describing Lady Macbeth as "lay[ing] sore upon [Macbeth] to attempt the thing, as she that was verie ambitious, burning in unquenchable desire to beare the name of a queene."¹⁰⁸ And from there, Shakespeare adapted the "ambitious wives" in Holinshed¹⁰⁹ into the play's "fiend-like queen," painting both her "internal convolutions and . . . outward manifestations . . . with such tempestuous *chiaroscuro* as to make Goneril and Regan seem cardboard figures by

¹⁰³ Boece's Latin text was translated "into the Scottish speech" by John Bellenden (Bullough, 506).

¹⁰⁴ Bullough, 496.

¹⁰⁵ This author's translation.

¹⁰⁶ The *Scotorum Historiae* was published in about 1527 (Bullough, 436). The date of Gruoch ingen Boite's death is not known, but it would have been in or after 1050. In that year, she was listed as *Gruoch filia Bodhe . . . Regina Scottorum* in the charter that granted land to the Culdee religious community (Aitchison, 48; Marshall, 3-4; Lawrie, *Early Scottish Charters*, 5).

¹⁰⁷ Holinshed used Bellenden's translation (Aitchison, 122).

¹⁰⁸ Bullough, 496.

¹⁰⁹ There were, indeed, more than one.

comparison.”¹¹⁰ Meanwhile, historical records suggest that Macbeth was probably an effective king, and maybe even thought of by his contemporaries as a good king.¹¹¹ Despite that, he was reduced by centuries of politicized historical writing to a usurper and tyrant. (History is written by the victors, as they say.) Possibly, Boece’s story of Lady Macbeth’s role in the murder of Duncan and her supposed desire to be queen, arriving in the historical record with no precedent, were also a gesture of political service to Boece’s patron, James V, and not based on history at all.¹¹² I am persuaded that, beginning with Boece, continuing through Holinshed and other chroniclers, and finally culminating with Shakespeare, the idea of Lady Macbeth’s rapacious ambition was invented, whole cloth.

Well, what was invented can be reinvented. I do not read ambition in the urgency and clarity of Lady Macbeth’s text in the play. Her objectives—what she pursues, a crown for her husband, and therefore a crown for herself—these are ends that we view as ambitious. But it feels to me like she is experiencing something else when she speaks, something deep, reactive, and alarming. The undertone of her voice (on the page) sounds like someone responding to an emergency—or a threat. Incorporating historical elements, as we have done for the opera, her entire arc feels like a story about survival. Concern for survival is a language that everyone speaks. This is one of the primary reasons why the story told in this new work has teeth. Furthermore, a single character’s private thoughts and fears about survival are even more narratively attractive than communal anxieties, because there is some measure of relief

¹¹⁰ Bullough, 448.

¹¹¹ Bullough describes that Macbeth was “highly praised by St. Berchan: ‘The liberal king will possess Fortrenn / The red one was fair, yellow, tall; / Pleasant was the youth to me. / Plenteous was Alban east and west, / During the reign of the fierce red one’” (Bullough, 433).

¹¹² Boece dedicated his *Scotorum Historiae* to James V, who would have been pleased with the negative characterization of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth given by the author (Royan, Nicola. “Boece [Boethius], Hector [c. 1465-1536], historian and college head”).

engendered for the audience by recognizing that someone else also struggles, alone. In presenting only one person on the stage, a corresponding increase in intimacy between the one player and the one body of the audience is created. There is a heightened sense, for the audience, of co-experiencing the story that is happening onstage with the performer, creating the audience-as-confidante, because that performer is not sharing the story with a scene partner instead. All of this is amplified by the psychological volume created by the high stakes of survival.

Moreover, Lady Macbeth's mysterious, undefined relationship with the supernatural makes her a fertile subject for adaptation. When Martinez initially joined the project, I explained:

... the piece needs to lean into the audience's long-standing expectation that this is a scary story that's going to come to an awful, scary, gruesome end... the terrain and flavor of the piece can still be foggy and dark, the ground under the castle itself can still be rotten with blood, the feeling of reality should be disturbed... and overrun by a very present sense of *unnatural*.¹¹³

Our opera, like any story that looks closely at *Macbeth*, proposes a possible run-in with the paranormal. Serrate's score does the lion's share of the labor of suggesting this. The music evokes a murky, misty landscape and tells us that *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead* is absolutely a ghost story. This work also draws freely on the seemingly eternal appeal of Shakespeare himself. This is especially true given the poetic style of Martinez's libretto, which helps to keep one of Lady Macbeth's feet planted in "literary" soil. Some of Shakespeare's characters feel so universally familiar that we all feel that we own them, to some degree. New works about these characters would have the same potential for resonating with the public as new works about figures from mythology.

¹¹³ Email to Martinez, August 11, 2021.

The opera can also be viewed as aligned with parallel novels and works that behave like parallel novels. These stories focus on minor characters from major works and recalibrate the lens of the story to show events from the minor characters' points of view. There are several noteworthy parallel novels that have caught the popular imagination: Jean Rhys's 1966 novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, releases the first wife of Mr. Rochester (in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*) from her role as "the madwoman in the attic;" John Gardner's 1971 novel, *Grendel*, makes the monster from the Old English poem *Beowulf* into its existentialist protagonist; and Gregory Maguire's 1995 novel, *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West*, relates a version of the events in L. Frank Baum's classic story told from the Wicked Witch's point of view. Maguire's novel shows how the Witch ended up as she did and how her actions were motivated by very human concerns. All three of these very successful parallel novels have already been adapted for the musical or operatic stage. The common thread between them, telling the untold story of characters who were maligned by the original works in which they appeared, is shown to be a fruitful story mechanic on its own. *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead* shares in the impulse driving these and similar parallel novels. But rather than positioning this opera as parallel to Shakespeare's play, we intentionally developed it as a work of theater in dialogue with its predecessor. Brazen though it may be, I wanted to finish a story that Shakespeare left unfinished.¹¹⁴ The shockingly brief statement announcing her death—"the queen, my lord, is dead"—restricts access to a story at least as interesting as Macbeth's story. I wanted to bring her offstage action back onto the stage.

¹¹⁴ Parallel novels are also sometimes called revisionist parallel novels. In our development of this libretto, we deliberately tried to add rather than revise. The tagline for this project used throughout the fundraising and social media campaigns was, "Picking up where The Bard left off..."

The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead is historical fiction, just as *Macbeth* is. Like all good historical fiction, it bridges a gap between the known and the unknowable. The idea of another scene for Lady Macbeth offers to shed new light on an old mystery and reveal hidden things. This is the aspect of the opera that is most enticing. It occupies a similar space in our imagination as a recovered manuscript or musical autograph found in some attic, or old movie clips and found footage, depicting events that we thought were left on the cutting room floor of history.¹¹⁵ The opera's concept says to the audience, "We will make you a deal: if you suspend your disbelief for fifty minutes, not only will we show you something that you have never seen before . . . we will show you something you were told it was impossible to see before." Then, once the audience is drawn in by the sales pitch, what they will see on the stage is how revelation humanizes Lady Macbeth. Some may feel disappointed that their lurid, macabre expectations were not met. Still others may be delighted to have their ideas turned upside down. I suspect the majority of the audience will have an experience of recognition instead, seeing that the work is about Lady Macbeth's battle for survival.¹¹⁶ As we conceived of it, we took the play, *Macbeth*, and opened up its binding, revealing some story bits about Lady Macbeth that were scribbled in the margin, and we put them on the stage. From the moment it occurred to me, the idea of moving Lady Macbeth's offstage story onto the stage seemed to have an "obvious" quality, an inevitability, as though it is not just a story waiting to be told, but it is a story expecting to be told. Writing of the theater, and of making something new out of something old, Charles

¹¹⁵ Imagine if we could see a director's cut—Shakespeare is the director in this metaphor—of *Macbeth*, or of any of his plays . . . How would they have differed, if the Bard had been able to create whatever he wanted, without any constraints?

¹¹⁶ The impulse for this commission came to me organically and was not inspired by any other parallel works about Lady Macbeth, beyond Verdi's and Bloch's adaptations. But there is a substantial list of works of literature, theater, and film, most of them made in the last few decades, that have tried to extend a helping hand to Lady Macbeth. There is at least one other parallel work in which she does not die at the end of the events depicted in *Macbeth*: David Greig's 2010 play, *Dunsinane*.

Marowitz wrote, “We get what we expect and we expect what we have been led to expect, and it is only when we don’t get what we have been led to expect that we are on the threshold of having an experience.”¹¹⁷ In this sense, *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead* participates in the rituals of opera and theater while providing the genuine experience of unmet expectations.

This Opera’s Future

On June 16th, 2022, Serrate, Martinez, Viskontas, Karr, and I met online to hold a post mortem. We congratulated each other and shared the positive feedback we received, as well as our future hopes and plans for the show. There is a consensus among the team that created the premiere: this work should have a life. We have discussed taking it on tour and entering it into various festivals. The opera is musically and textually challenging, but it is also a gripping piece of music theater that tells an unusual story. Equally important, the resources required to produce it are relatively economical. It requires just one singer and a chamber ensemble; or it could be performed with piano, if necessary. A full production with set, costumes, and lighting design are not categorically required. The action and affect of the piece are well suited to creative video representation. Despite the work’s very specific content, this opera can be light on its feet.

As the commissioner of the opera and the producer of its first production, I will be the vanguard of the effort to have the show mounted elsewhere. This will require my learning about producing opera outside of an academic context, though many lessons will probably carry over. High-quality, one-act, and (potentially) low-budget works of music theater with eye-catching premises could have practical value for many different kinds of presenters. This opera’s subject matter will be an advantage we can lean on—as long as *Macbeth* remains culturally intriguing,

¹¹⁷ Marowitz, *The Marowitz Shakespeare*, 25.

The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead can tap into that intrigue to develop audience interest. Besides, I am motivated by a resolute desire to *perform* the work again. Each additional opportunity to play this character is liable to be more satisfying than the last.

The video of the premiere will remain available on YouTube and the opera's website. In addition, the score was professionally recorded in the Herb Alpert School of Music's Ostin Music Center Recording Studio in March of 2023. When post-production of that recording is complete, the recording will be available on the opera's website and on popular internet streaming services. The score will also be published in an online repository accessible by most universities. The studio recording project was awarded financial support from the Hugo and Christine Davise Fund for Contemporary Music,¹¹⁸ which involves inclusion of the score in the Contemporary Music Score Collection, published by the UCLA Music Library.¹¹⁹

Conclusion

Fundamentally, this entire project has been one elaborate expression of the duty that every actor owes to every role they play: to determine, through research, dramaturgical inquiry, and empathy, what motivates a character to do or say what they do or say. This commission reflects that impulse, followed all the way to one possible end. So, why not simply do the research and prepare the role (in Shakespeare's play or one of the operas)? Why proceed to commission an opera?

Obviously, I wanted to test and, by testing, expand the limits of my capabilities in a multidisciplinary field. I also want to generally encourage contemporary composers to write for the voice, and specifically for my voice type. Beyond that, this undertaking was an expression of

¹¹⁸ <https://www.library.ucla.edu/about/programs/hugo-and-christine-davise-fund-for-contemporary-music/>.

¹¹⁹ <https://escholarship.org/uc/uclamusiclib/about>.

gratitude for the art form itself, and an act of reinvestment in that art form—a renewal of vows, so to speak. The desire to collaborate on new works is intertwined with the basic drive to communicate that undergirds my choice to be a vocal musician and performer in the first place. (I discovered this about myself when producing the video recital of new songs by my student colleagues.) This kind of collaboration makes me feel very close to why I sing. The intrinsic value of direct contact with music in the moment of its genesis was a new experience for me. There is a lot of hidden treasure there.

This project stems from a healthy dose of Shakespeare adoration, as well. Harold Bloom wrote in the opening of his book, *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*, “I have struggled . . . to talk about Shakespeare and not about myself, but I am certain that . . . the plays read me better than I read them . . . [W]e are read by works we cannot resist.”¹²⁰ My choice to create an opera revealing the inner life of Lady Macbeth certainly says as much or more about me than it says about Lady Macbeth, as does the story I chose to tell in this work. I made an attempt to read Lady Macbeth with at least new eyes, if not impartial ones,¹²¹ and if I have engaged in what Bloom characterizes as the dishonest habit of beginning with your own hypothesis about a Shakespeare play and then digging up some obscure “bit of English Renaissance social history” to support my hypothesis,¹²² my only defense is that Shakespeare left me wanting more.

The historiographic implications of how Lady Macbeth has been represented in history and literature by Shakespeare and others are not fundamentally interesting to me. I am interested

¹²⁰ Bloom, xxii. (My underline.)

¹²¹ Paraphrasing T.S. Eliot, Bloom said, “. . . all we can hope for is to be wrong about Shakespeare in a new way” (Bloom, 2; Harding, “T.S. Eliot’s Shakespeare,” 160). With this opera, our “way” was not entirely new, as multiple 20th- and 21st-century novels, plays, and other theatrical works have investigated the historical biography of Shakespeare’s Lady Macbeth. However, I have not found another creative work that investigates what happens to Lady Macbeth between the sleepwalking scene and the report of her death.

¹²² I actually agree with Bloom that “you can bring absolutely anything to Shakespeare and the plays will light it up, far more than what you bring will illuminate the plays” (Bloom, 9).

in Lady Macbeth. Why? The heat and urgency of her striving provoke me. Furthermore, I feel a responsibility to and a kinship with powerful women, being descended from them. A lot of historical women with personal, social, or political power are basically alone, and they are made to carry many sins that do not actually belong at their feet. In my view, Lady Macbeth is one of these, and I was motivated to offer her a chance to speak. This inquiry into the private reality of Lady Macbeth obviously holds great meaning and profundity for me. For many years, she has already had a private room in the house of my imagination. Now, that room is richly furnished.

Appendix A: Tanistry, Gaelic Names, Historical Sources

Tanistry in 10th- And 11th-Century Scotland

Succession in medieval Scotland was achieved through a process called tanistry, a form of elective monarchy in which rule alternated between two or more collateral lines of royal kinship with a shared ancestor. The crown would be transferred from brother to brother, or brother to nephew, or to another more distantly connected male relation if he was the most qualified among a pool of eligible candidates, rather than passing from father to son as in patrilineal primogeniture.¹²³ For each newly crowned king, a tanist (*tànaiste*) was chosen who would ascend the throne upon the king's death. Tanists were almost always the sons of former kings and required to be of age and competent enough to fulfill the role; young royal children were not selected. A king's tanist was likely chosen at the same time the king was crowned and was subject to the assessment of the royal peer group, which consisted of all men descended from the participating lineages who were eligible to rule. This agnatic fraternity also retained the right to remove ineffective or despotic kings, either through deposition or violence.¹²⁴ The record suggests that a tanist not wishing to wait the full, natural lifespan of his predecessor would often find a rationale to depose, challenge, or simply assassinate a monarch in order to accelerate the commencement of his own rule.¹²⁵ The history of tanist succession in Scotland is chock full of short reigns and violent deaths.¹²⁶

¹²³ Clark and Mason, 35.

¹²⁴ Wofford, "Origin Stories," 511.

¹²⁵ Hunter, 135.

¹²⁶ Clark and Mason, 13. "[E]ven Scottish kings who ruled before 1100 were killed by, or in favour of, their immediate successor. Not surprisingly, the average reign length during this period was only twelve years" (Aitchison, 13).

The Scottish process of succession by tanistry is traceable to at least the mid-9th century, if not earlier. By the time history reaches the relevant antecedents of the characters in *Macbeth*, the two ruling collateral lines in Scotland were headed by Kenneth II (Cináed mac Maíl Coluim, r. 971-995) and his brother Dubh (Dubh mac Máel Coluim, r. 962-967), both descended from Malcolm I (Máel Coluim mac Domnall, r. 943-954). Kenneth II attempted to break with tanist succession and restrict the crown to his lineage by murdering eligible successors in Dubh's line. He was unsuccessful, and the throne passed to his nephew, Kenneth III (Cináed mac Duib, r. 997-1005), who was Gruoch ingen Boite's grandfather.

Kenneth II's son, Malcolm II (Máel Coluim mac Cináeda, r. 1005-1034), also attempted to establish patrilineal primogeniture. Malcolm II had no sons, only daughters, so he wished to pass the crown to his grandson, Duncan I (Donnchad mac Crínáin, r. 1034-1040). Malcolm II murdered (or defeated in battle) the eligible inheritors in Kenneth III's line, including potentially one or more of Kenneth III's sons (among them, Gruoch's father, Boite), one or more of Kenneth III's grandsons (among them, Gruoch's brother), and possibly one of Kenneth III's great-grandsons (Gruoch's nephew). Essentially, eligible inheritors in Kenneth III's line were eliminated from the possibility of succession by Malcolm II, who was then succeeded by his grandson, Duncan I.

Malcolm II had two or more daughters. Macbeth was probably a grandson of Malcolm II by another of these daughters, which would make him Duncan I's cousin. Macbeth's marriage to Gruoch, a surviving descendant of Kenneth III's royal line, unified the two lines in a way. Lulach, who succeeded Macbeth briefly, represents the last brief return of Kenneth III's line to the throne before the advent of House Canmore with Malcolm III.

Medieval Gaelic Names, Bynames, and Alternate Signifiers

The following lists the Scottish kings whose reigns relevantly preceded and immediately followed the reign of King Macbeth. Latinized names are followed by the names in medieval Gaelic, historical bynames, and other designations found in the literature.

HOUSE OF ALPÍN

- Kenneth II (r. 971-995): *Cináed mac Mail Coluim*, An Fionnghalach (“The Fratricidal” or “The Kinslayer”)
- Constantine III (r. 995-997): *Causantín mac Cuiléin*, Constantinus Calvus (“Constantine the Bald”)
- Kenneth III (r. ?997-1005): *Cináed mac Duib*, An Donn (“The Chief” or “The Brown[-haired]”)
- Giric (r. ?997-1005): Grim, or Gryme—Mentions of Giric dating from this time (and not dating from the late 9th century, when there was another King Giric) are interpreted by some to be references to Kenneth III. Giric was either Kenneth III’s son with whom Kenneth III co-ruled, or another name for Kenneth III.
- Malcolm II (r. 1005-1034): *Máel Coluim mac Cináeda*, An Forranach (“The Destroyer”), also called *Ard rí Alban*, High King of Scotland

HOUSE OF DUNKELD

- Duncan I (r. 1034-1040): *Donnchad mac Crínáin*, An t-Ilgarach (“The Diseased” or “The Sick”)—also called “the man of many sorrows” (in the *Prophecy of Berchán*) and Duncan “the Gracious”

HOUSE OF MORAY¹²⁷

- Macbeth (r. 1040-1057): *Mac Bethad mac Findlaich*, Rí Deircc (“The Red King”),¹²⁸ also called Makbeth, MakCobey, Machabie, Macbethad, Mac Bethadh, MacBeathadh,

¹²⁷ “The House of Moray” actually refers to the lineage of rulers of the province of Moray, not to a ruling house of Scotland. Yet, Macbeth’s and Lulach’s reigns are usually lumped together with Duncan I’s reign as the beginning of House Dunkeld. That seems too ironic and slightly unfair. Since Kings Macbeth and Lulach were both also *mormaers* of Moray, I have grouped them together here as House of Moray rulers of Scotland.

¹²⁸ Although the “Mac” in Mac Bethad looks like a patronymic prefix, it is not. *Mac Bethad* means “son of life, a righteous man” (Aitchison, 38). “[O]f the rebellious Mormaers of Moray, only Macbeth went on to seize the Scottish kingship, effectively uniting the province of Moray with Scotland south of the Mounth” (Aitchison, 33).

Maccnethath, Machbethu, Maccbetu, Machbet, Macbet, Machabeus, Maccabaeus, Macbeoðen, Mealbaeadðe, Maelbaethe, Magbjóthr¹²⁹

- Lulach (r. 1057-1058): *Lulach mac Gille Coemgáin*, An Tairbith (“The Unfortunate”) and Lulach Fatuus (“The Simple” or “The Foolish”)

HOUSE OF DUNKELD / HOUSE OF CANMORE¹³⁰

- Malcolm III (r. 1058-1093): *Máel Coluim mac Donnchada*, Ceann Mòr (translates to “big head,” but possibly in the sense of “Great Chief”)

The following lists the medieval Gaelic names of the other historical personages discussed in this paper, along with Latinizations and alternate spellings.

- Boite: *Boite mac Cináeda*, Bodhe, Boedhe, Beodhe
- Finlay: *Findláech mac Ruaidrí*, Findlaich, Finnloech, Finlach, Findlay of Moray, Finlay MacRory, Finlaec, Finele, Sinele
- Gille: *Gille Coemgáin*, Gillecomgan, Gillecoemgan
- Gruoch: *Gruoch ingen Boite*, Truoch, Gruach

Tanistry in *Macbeth*

The reassimilation of tanistry into the Macbeth-story is a critical component of our premise for the opera because it indicates a greater degree of complexity and nuance in Gruoch’s and Macbeth’s motives and provides a completely different context for their actions. So it is important to note that tanistry appears in *Macbeth*, as well. When Duncan names his son Malcolm the Prince of Cumberland (1.4.35-40), the impression is created (for modern audiences, at least) that succession by primogeniture was already the law in Scotland during Duncan I’s reign, but that’s not the case. The idea of tanistry continued to influence who wore the Scottish

¹²⁹ Most, but not all of these names are gleaned from Aitchison (Aitchison, 36-9).

¹³⁰ Some sources list House Dunkeld as continuing through the rule of King Alexander III (r. 1249-1286), inclusively. Others begin House Canmore with Malcolm III.

crown until at least the late 12th century.¹³¹ There are clues in the play that Malcolm's elevation to Prince of Cumberland is part of a tanist process. The first clue is that Malcolm's succession is not *assumed* in the first place; Duncan has to publicly name Malcolm the Prince of Cumberland (the title assigned to the Scottish heir apparent).¹³² In fact, Duncan's line, ". . . Sons, kinsmen, thanes, / And you whose places are the nearest, know [that Malcolm will succeed me]" (1.4.35-36), feels as though it is directed at Macbeth, one of Duncan's "nearest."¹³³ Duncan is acknowledging that Macbeth may want or even expect to be named Prince of Cumberland,¹³³ but he is instructing Macbeth to prepare himself instead to accept other "signs of nobleness" (1.4.41). When Macbeth mutters, "The Prince of Cumberland: that is a step / On which I must fall down, or else o'er-leap" (1.4.48-49), it can be read as a response to a political slight.¹³⁴ Both the witches' prophecy that Macbeth will be king, and Macbeth's declaration that "[i]f chance will have me king, why chance may crown me, / Without my stir" (1.3.146-147) muddy the perceptibility of tanistry in this scene.¹³⁵ However, it is not "chance" or any other supernatural

¹³¹ Stevenson, 9-12. The king who succeeded Macbeth was Lulach, a descendant of Kenneth III, not Malcolm II. Later, after Malcolm III died, each of his eligible sons ascended the throne in turn, rather than the crown passing from father to son (Stevenson, 7-8). Tanistry in Scotland was eventually abolished by James VI/I in the early 17th century.

¹³² Clark and Mason, 152.

¹³³ Stevenson speculates that the historical Macbeth may have been Duncan's tanist and clarifies that "tanistry did not consider that any member of the Royal house deserted any pretensions which he might have to succeed to the throne, by serving the *de facto* king" (Stevenson, 5; 8).

¹³⁴ Lowenthal writes that "a series of apparently disparate actions on Duncan's part . . . taken together, display the coherence of a plan . . . to frustrate Macbeth's ambition . . ." (Lowenthal, *Shakespeare*, 186-7).

¹³⁵ Shakespeare had to obscure any historical reference to Macbeth's potentially legitimate claim to the throne. Legitimacy of succession was a sensitive topic in 1606, both for King James VI/I and the English, generally (Clark and Mason, 26). While modern scholars believe that Banquo and his son Fleance were fictions created by Boece and propagated by Holinshed (Bullough, 433-4), James and the House of Stuart traced their line back to Banquo through Fleance's marriage to a Welsh princess. This linked the House of Stuart to King Arthur abstractly, which enhanced the credibility of James's claim (Hunter, 136). In reality, the line of Stuart had other legal connections to the English throne, but James was the Scottish heir to the childless Queen Elizabeth I and the son of the executed traitor, Mary Queen of Scots. Shakespeare could not include anything in the play that might rankle the king (or the public) on the topic of legitimate succession. This is undoubtedly why Banquo is innocent of collusion with Macbeth in the play, while Holinshed described Banquo as a conspirator of Macbeth's (Bullough, 441).

power that crowns Macbeth, it is the nobility. The second indication of tanistry in the play occurs after Duncan's death. Malcolm and Donalbain have already fled and are suspected. Macduff and Ross discuss Macbeth's election, in the context of Malcolm's absence:

ROSS: . . . Then 'tis most like
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.
MACDUFF: He is already named, and gone to Scone
To be invested. (2.4.29-32)

The people doing the "naming" are the royal kin group, who must choose a successor since the previously elected tanist has run off.

The counterposing ideology was also present in Scottish politics at this time, exemplified by the attempts of Kenneth II and Malcolm II to restrict succession to their direct descendants by murdering eligible inheritors from other lineal branches. This waxing interest in primogeniture is also represented in the play multiple times. First, again, when Duncan names his son as heir, he continues his father Malcolm II's design of restricting succession within their single family line. Second, Macbeth's tortured anxiety over not having a lineal heir mirrors that design. Finally, the otherworldly revelation of Banquo's line "stretch[ing] out to th' crack of doom" (4.1.116) signals the ascendancy of primogeniture within the world of the play. In Act 1, Macbeth entirely disregards the idea of primogeniture when Malcolm is named heir, and his ambition to be king (despite Malcolm's naming) seems to be a tanist expression. Upon becoming king, though, Macbeth esteems lineal succession above all else, as a confirmation of legitimacy and right to rule, a right that he is, perforce, lacking. Macbeth represents and vacillates between both traditions, as Scottish kings of that time were beginning to do.

The play seems to focus on succession as its central issue. There is evidence of both systems of succession, but the distinction between them is blurred. Shakespeare takes Duncan's and Macbeth's disparate natures as described by Holinshed ("where the one had too much of

clemencie, and the other of crueltie”)¹³⁶ and surreptitiously makes them more alike. The audience sees Duncan reveling in the expert violence done in his name, citing as “valiant” and “worthy” Macbeth’s action of cleaving a man in two and fixing his severed head upon a battlement (1.2.22-24). Duncan praises as honorable the bleeding “gashes” of the reporting captain only after the report is given, instead of seeing to his wounds first (1.2.41-44).¹³⁷ On the other hand, Macbeth is described as “too full o’ the milk of human kindness” to take power by force (1.5.16-18), and after the murder he wishes, multiple times, that he could restore his life to a time before it was committed. This mixing of Macbeth’s and Duncan’s attributes serves to accentuate the relative legitimacy of their respective claims to the throne. Macbeth was a usurper, a fact which violates the idea of primogeniture. But he was deposed mainly because of his tyrannical behavior. This mechanism of correction via deposition was a feature of tanistry; a feature was categorically disallowed by any system involving primogeniture and the hereditary (divine) right of kings. Wofford, referencing the ending of the play, assesses that:

[Macduff] formulates the unanimity that ostensibly allows the closure of the play with language that invokes a voice vote for the king:

I see thee compassed with thy kingdom’s pearl,
That speak my salutation in their minds;
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine.
Hail, King of Scotland. (5.9.22-25)

Here one voice claims to speak for many, and his salutation calls forth from the assembled nobles an echoing call of “Hail, King of Scotland.” The lines imply that Macduff has thereby instituted Malcolm as king, using his invocatory words to call for Malcolm’s

¹³⁶ Bullough, 488.

¹³⁷ Eugène Ionesco’s 1972 satirical play, *Macbett*, comments hilariously on this:

OFFICER: Who’s won? Was there a winner? You’re in the presence of your king.

DUNCAN: I am your sovereign—the Archduke Duncan.

SOLDIER: Oh, I’m sorry, sir. I’m a bit wounded. I’ve been stabbed and shot.

DUNCAN: It’s no good pretending to faint. Answer me! Was it them or us?

investiture . . . and the others had responded by seconding and voting for that motion . . . Malcolm resists this move, however, creating instead the [anglicized] system of earls and implicitly rejecting their election . . . [In] Malcolm's response, "What's more to do . . . / We will perform in measure, time and place" (5.9.30, 39), [Malcolm's] "we" here is not the assembled group of nobles . . . not the silent unity on which Macduff depends . . . but the royal "we" of imperial power.¹³⁸

On the topic of succession, the play seems intentionally ambiguous, as though it is equivocating¹³⁹ with the audience and obscuring clear messages about legitimacy of succession, at a time when the reigning king's succession was recently hard won.¹⁴⁰ Lemon notes that, "Although the play struggles to assert a model of divine kingship . . . it ultimately challenges the ideological opposition of monarch and traitor by intertwining these roles."¹⁴¹

¹³⁸ Wofford, 521.

¹³⁹ The porter's use of the word "equivocation" (in 2.3) is possibly a reference to Father Henry Garnet, one of the convicted conspirators of the Gunpowder Plot. The doctrine of equivocation, as expounded by this would-be assassin of King James, allowed Catholics to lie under oath to avoid incriminating themselves, as long as they held the truth in their hearts (Clark and Mason, 17-9; Lemon, "Scaffolds of Treason," 26-7).

¹⁴⁰ Clark and Mason, 26.

¹⁴¹ Lemon, 42.

The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead

*Opera / Monodrama in One Act
for soprano and chamber ensemble*

Story by Michelle Rice

Libretto by Alejandra Villarreal Martinez

Music by Tomàs Peire Serrate

Piano / Vocal Score

and

Full Score

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Monodrama in One Act

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I. Overture

♩ = ca. 60

Approximate pitches.
Soft hits inside in the low strings)

pp

5 **A**

ord.

* Alt.: hold these pitches, use sostenuto pedal, and strum or gliss. up, with finger tip and softly, the strings inside piano at the approximate range, so these pitches resonate more clearly.

20 **B** (♩ = ca. 54)

p

24 **C** Largo Ad lib.

mf

p dolce

poco rit.

Pec. clear pedal gradually

29 **D** Poco più mosso (♩ = 58)

p dark, menacing, dangerous

mp

31 *f* **E** *ff*

33 **F** *f* *p* *mp*

poco a poco accel. accel.

36 *mf* *pp* poco rubato (ignore accel.)

G Agitato ♩ = ca. 120

39 *p* *mf* *ff*

Ped.  (low cluster)

H

3

Poco meno mosso (♩ = ca. 100)

poco rit.

mf *p* *pp*

pedal ad lib. very resonant

Senza misura (3 times)

I (♩ = 80)

ppp *fff* *pp sotto voce*

50

poco rit.

54

pp *mp*

Attaca

II. Do I Sleep?

Gruoch enters her dark chamber slowly, gliding smoothly across the room as if in a dream. She seats herself at her table and lights a candle.

1 $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 48$

pp misterioso

with pedal, always resonating

* Alternative: hold silently the keys and hit with the palm low strings inside the piano following the same rhythm.

6 *p a bit hesitant, freely*

Do I sleep? Or have the night - ly tra - vels of this rest - less pil - grim ceased... at

colla voce

(always regular)

9 *a tempo e sempre un poco cresc.*

last? Hate - ful por - tent of dawn you ig - nite and burn a - way the star - ry man - tle

p

pp

(norm.)

13 *f*

which shel - tered me from des - ti - ny.

mp *mf*

(unmeasured)

(♩ = ca. 68)

* free-cue measures.
 The number in the triangle denotes the number of cues.
 (X means TBD /variable)

16

Fading out, keeping previous tempo

pp sempre

At new tempo, repeat independently

pp sotto voce

Ad lib., a bit irregular.
Repeat, l.v., creating a resonant cloud.

A ♩ = ca. 68

19 *poco ad lib.* *mf*

Mal - colm cour-ses for-ward hot and ea-ger to un-cou-ple Mac-duff and Si-ward, that they might tear a - part my bo-dy in mine own

fading out (rit. and dim.)

(each pitch holding voice's notes)

ppp colla voce *pp* *colla voce*

(replacing the previous ostinato)

(fades out)

Ped.

23 with disgust

den. Mal colm

26 with contained fury

Mal - colm... comes to take what I have won to win it from

sempre un poco cresc.

poco rall. ♩ = ca. 58

30 bitterly

me by the same blood-y means doubt - less he he - si - tates not.

poco ad lib.

Ped. 8^{va}

33 **B** *p* *somber* *mf*

By that mea - sure are we dou - bly kin and so too un - like Mac - beth. Yet

poco a poco cresc.

clear resonance slowly

poco a poco accel.

35

Fate mocks my hus - band, makes rea - dy his co - ro - na - tion, and

sfp *pp*

(clear suddenly)

37 *f*

sum-mons forth Mal-corm to a - noint his head in blood. Yes, Fate a -

8 C ♩ = ca. 76

39

bides, and I too for

pp

p threatening, sempre un poco cresc.

poco rit.

Pedal sostenuto (with each new pitch in the r.b.)

42

mf

I helped hang that mor-nig star which will judge my hus - band who could, but for his beg - gar - fear, have

mp

gradually incorporate sustain pedal.

Poco meno, maestoso

45

f somewhat majestic

reigned Al - ban King!

f

mp

pedal ad lib.

extend ad lib., sempre dim.

D rit. ♩ = ca. 52

48

mp gradually angrier

I de-ny it not Nor do I a - void the

p

l.v. echo ad lib. like vanishing (end of echo)

(only last time)

53

mea sure of judg-ment that shall fall on mine own head. I ne-glec-ted how des-perate-ly Mac-beth would o-ver-gorge him-self on

57

blood need-less - ly, stu-pid - ly spilled. That

mp

mf

sempre legato, molto ad lib.

7

8^{me}-----

60 [E] Poco meno (♩ = ca. 58)

morn, ve-ry like this one, I gazed u-pon Dun-can, whose rud-dy vi-gor had all but left him... too star-kly

p dolce

pp

profondo

* Alt.: hold pitch and hit strings inside at the lowest register.

65

red set off a-against the pal-lor of his skin... Was it e-ver as beau-ti-ful as it was wrea-thed'round his head? A

poco rit. . . . *A tempo*

mf

poco rit. a tempo

69 *mp* *mf*

blood-y crown, I thought to claim it then, bath-ing my hands in its in - tox - i - ca - ting li - quor dried up and

p *ppp* *mf*

74 *almost with delight* *half spoken*

fra - grant_ on my fin - gers. It was the first I had seen of blood since Mac

p *pp* *ad lib. repeating in background, always dim.*

sempre legato

77 *Rit. molto liberamente. Colla voce (independently)* *nostalgic* **F** *A tempo*

beth had sto-len me from the shores of Mo - ray. He loved me, in his way, He who was

mf

(end of repetition)

repeat as needed to adjust with voice.

81 *f* **Fast** ♩ = 120 **Lunga**

both bridge and cha-sm. Who was the grea - ter fool?

f *ff* *hold sound and clear gradually*

Ped. _____

G

A tempo (♩ = ca. 69)

accel. . . . 11

85 *mp remembering* *with intensity*

Yes, he loved me, and by my wi - thered womb, a - chieves his

88 A tempo

own ex - tinc - tion. Glad - ly I make the ex - change, though it beg - gars me. I will hold court with

pp sempre

92 *un poco pesante ... e cresc. ...* *Addressing the dagger*

Death whom I wel - come A - lone, un - bur - dened, un chained to the un - wor - thy le - ga - cy of an un - wan - ted child.

97 - A tempo (♩ = ca. 69) *Poco rubato*

Come, Death, and find in me a kins - wo - man who will suf - fer no life with - in her poi - soned bo - dy.

p ominous

100 **H** A tempo

sempre un poco accel.
She raises the dagger to her throat, and stops.

Musical score for measures 100-102. The vocal line begins with a half rest. The piano accompaniment features a triplet in the right hand and a bass line with a cluster of notes in the left hand. Dynamics include *mf* and *p*.

Pesante

rit.

I Agitato (♩ = ca. 92)

f furiosa (could be shorter)

103

Musical score for measures 103-106. The vocal line has lyrics "What, tru - ant!". The piano part is highly rhythmic with triplets and a "lowest cluster" in the left hand. Dynamics include *mf*, *ff*, *sfz secco*, and *f marcato*.

107

Musical score for measures 107-109. The vocal line has lyrics "Will you de - sert your of - fice and de - ny your mis - tress a good death?". The piano part continues with rhythmic patterns.

110

f ma riflessiva

Musical score for measures 110-112. The vocal line has lyrics "Do you feign wis - dom to make mi - nutes of se - conds and". The piano part features a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics include *f* and *f sempre*.

113 *poco a poco dim.*

days of hours? By Mal - colm's sword or mine own dag - ger,

poco a poco dim. **p**

116 **mp**

the out - comes are e - qual in grace.

(no accents) *molto legato e sempre dim.*

pp

*very freely, notation just approximate.
gradually losing voice, to parlando*

J poco rall.

119

Grace, my mo - ther wan - ted, when ar - res - ted at time's end...

pedal can make it gradually blurry

Senza misura

123

Repeat if needed until Gruoch's line is finished.

X **K**

3

14 III. "Cò Thusa"

126 $\text{♩} = 56$
p dolce, un poco rubato

My in - ex - pert hands would chase the shu - tle as my mo - ther taught me, with

pp e sempre dolce

(clean pedal)

pp

130 *poco rit. . . .*

quiet voice o - ver my shoul - der. and brit - tle fin - gers ma - king tight plaits

pp

133 *A tempo*

of my hair. Beau - ty and dis - ci - pline.

mp

pp *p*

136

wo - ven in - to me by a wo - man too fa - mi - liar to be al - to - ge - ther. strange.

139 *mf poco più intenso*

Was it from love that she taught me to bear such pain with a si - lence so preg - nant that a - ny

mp

142 *f con passione*

mo - ment it might yield A fu - ry so full of life? And yet we longed for her touch, my

mp *f* *mp*

146

rage and I. And yet we long for it still, in this hour_ when I am un - done, un - wo - ven, un - laced.

mp

149 *poco rit.*

Grace my mo - ther wan - ted when ar - res - ted at time's end...

f colla voce *mf*

L A tempo

153 *p vulnerabile*

Con-signed to the cap - ti - vi - ty of her bed-cham-ber I, war-den and cham - ber - maid, kept

pp e sempre dolce

pp

157

vi - gil wat-ching the ta - per light flick-er and burn low, re-lect - ed in her half-lid-ded eyes.

ppp

pp

poco rit. A tempo

161

pp

I en-tan-gled our fin - gers Bold-ened in grief, and in - tro-duced my gaze to

164

hers, jaun-diced and grey in ad-van - cing death. "Mo - ther", my voice in-tru - ded on our si-lent me-di-ta - tion. Your

mp

poco rit.

poco accel.

17

168 *Gruoch rises.*

too-lu-cid shock and your croa-king re ply: "Cò thu - sa?" "Who are you?" "Who am I?"

dolce *pp*

172 *A tempo, pochissimo meno* *A tempo (♩ = ca. 56)*

La - dy so nim-bly you slipped your ear-thly bands, I could scarce mark the mo - ment

f *mf* *mp*

175 *sempre un poco cresc.*

of your es-cape. Could you not have en-dured my an - swer? Did I fright your fledg - ling soul to fly a - way?

178 *Ritenu.* *f* *mf* *Ad lib.*

in - to e - ter - ni - ty...

colla voce *f* *mf*

Repeat until approximate point of synchronicity

poco a poco rit. sempre rit. e dim.

183 *p dolce, mezza voce* Optional: This box can be repeated ad lib. always dim., almost losing the voice

Grace, my mother wanted when, arrested at time's end...

pp *sempre dim. possibile*

poco accel. A tempo ♩ = ca. 68

187 A tempo ♩ = ca. 68

pppp *p* (last one only)

N IV. "Grace My Mother Wanted"

190 ♩ = ca. 63 *mf with determination*

By Grace she was for-sworn, her demise met with star-ing eyes, ga-ping, drool-ing

p poco leggero *mf*

193

mouth An a-ni-mal's death a rough, vul-gar death, too clum-sy like a

p

196 **Poco meno** ♩ = ca. 52

stum - ble in the dark - ness. How un - like her was her death.

mf *pp colla voce* *p sub.* *mf*

199 **Come prima** ♩ = ca. 63

Will you for - sake me too, Grace, and shake off my hand just as I step in - to that thres-hold?

p poco leggiero

202 **Meno mosso** (♩ = ca. 52)

— What is a daugh-ter but a be - lo - ved ta-pes-try? What is a mother,

p *p dolce*

205

but an ab - so - lute wea - ver?

mf *p ceremonioso* *pp*

(Last one only)

poco rit.

207 $\text{♩} = 60$
ad lib. un poco parlando

Yet, I he - si - tate. From whence this pause,

ppp sotto voce

209 **A tempo, poco più mosso**

Pe - ti - tioned by a brain that knows too well how to dis - cern be - tween deaths,

pp

rit.

211

Bad and good? Too soon, too has - ty,

pp

Molto ad lib. Senza misura.



213

a re - treat not be - fit - ting the Queen of Al - ba.

ppp dolcissimo

ppp lontano e dim.

Ped. _____

O Molto liberamente
(♩ = ca. 46)

216

ppp molto ad lib.

Emerging

pp poco a poco crescendo, molto ad lib.

clear pedal gradually

220

poco accel.

pedal ad lib.

V. "Mo Chridhe"

224 Calmo ♩ = ca. 60

p dolce, like a lullaby at times

Mo chri-dhe, Lu - lach, my heart, Mo chri-dhe trom s'du - - laich,

p sempre legato e dolce

229 *mp espr.* **Meno mosso**

hea - vy bur - dened I write these words for thee, my son,

pp sotto voce
p

233 **A tempo**

M'eu - dai, my dar - ling lamb, sweet boy,

mp

Ped. *clear pedal gradually*

236 *growing intensity*

Not that they should trou - ble you, For, tru - ly, your heart's ache would

sempre un poco cresc. colla voce
p

pedal ad lib.

239 *poco a poco cresc.* **f** (extend ad lib.) **rit.**

reach my shade and pain me just as sharp-ly as it pains my life.

8va
f

Ped. *clear pedal gradually*

243 *poco accel.* *A tempo*

Mo chri - dhe, Lu - lach, the dear - est gift you - father

mp dolce

pedal ad lib.

247 **P** *mf*

gave - me... My be - lo - ved Gille

p

250

The hour of your death our son searched for you a - mid the a - shes of our home.

mf

253 *poco rit.*

I could not bear to look too long u - pon that ti - ny face un - hap - py child

p dolce

clear pedal gradually

Poco più mosso, tense257 *sempre un poco cresc.*

of a fa - ther too - soon and too - out - ra - geous - ly dis - patched in a

p dark, menacing, dangerous

mp

259 *f*

fien - dish flame.

f *ff*

261 **Q**

Un - hap - py child of a mo - ther re -

f *p*

263

forged and fire - stained, mis - sha - pen and strange, more i - ron than

mp *mf*

265 *rit. molto rit.*

flesh un - a - ble to em-brace and con-sole him. My son,

poco rit.

Meno mosso ♩ = ca. 52

267 *molto ad lib. dolcissimo*

prince of no - thing, prince of the air.

ppp *long ad lib.*

pp dolce, colla voce *p sempre dolce*

♩ = ca. 48

272 *X* *R*

poco rit.

275

p

* Alt.: play these 4 bars with r.h. and follow rhythm with hits inside the piano, on low strings. Use sostenuto pedal.

279 **S** A tempo (♩ = ca. 52)

p introspective

Dawn, Wait still but a lit-tle while, that I might find the re-solve to de-part at last. Lu-lach, my

ppp
pp sotto voce e sempre legato
(ppp)

p e sempre dim.
pedal ad lib.

282

son, rest - e - ver in sleep and meet not with Death in - to whose do - mi - nion sure - foot - ed I am

p poco a poco cresc.
(pp)

284

bound to en - ter where thy king - ly fa - ther re - sides. (oh)

f
poco rit. - - - - -
She raises the dagger slowly.
p

287 **T** A tempo (♩ = ca. 52)

mp nostalgico

Gille, mo ghrádh, the tru - est love I e - ver

p dolce
pp sempre legato

290 *mf* knew, with eyes grey as rain - sha - dow, and a

293 voice like a wel - come knock at my oa - ken door. Ten - - der Gille,

296 *poco rit.* un - changed in death you re - main e - ver *A tempo* (♩ = ca.52) in my me - mo - ry. *pp sempre*

VI. "In Our Hearts"

poco rit. *Molto ad lib.*

299 *progressively lost in memories* How must I seem to you? *freely*

(with pedal, always very resonant)

Tempo rubato, colla voce ($\downarrow = \text{ca. } 48$)

302 U

p molto ad lib., almost whispering

In our hearts a seed we plan - ted of a

ppp

pp sempre colla voce, molto espr. e dolce

p sotto voce

If possible, gliss. inside, mid-low register.
on the strings, soft and not too fast.

Alt.: left hand inside, plucking strings,
while right hand continues.

306

love like climb - ing I - vy that to - ge - ther did en - twine us so to -

$\downarrow = \downarrow$

V

always very soft and delicate
like strumming.
(Sustain pedal following left hand)

310

Allargando ad lib....

A tempo
a bit more tuneful, but still ad lib.

ge - ther we might stay. In my mouth I held a se - cret sweet - er

molto rit. while waiting for the voice

a tempo

314

than the gold - en ho - ney that was yield - ed from the hea - ther grow - ing

rit. **W** **A tempo, ma molto ad lib.**

(Could be a cappella until the end of the tune)

318 *folk-like ad. lib. ornamentation*

wild in fair Mo - ray. In your hand a gift you car - ried of a crown for your be -

(l.v.) *

* Alt.: hold these pitches, use pedal II, and strum or gliss. up, with finger tip and softly, the strings inside piano at the approximate range, so these pitches resonate more clearly.

323

lov - ed that was made of sweet prim - ros - es you had found a - long the way. In our

328 *(Strums in the air, like playing an instrument)*

hearts a seed we plan - ted of a love like climb - ing i - vy that to - ge - ther might yet bind us, e - ven

334 **X** (maybe humming, maybe in an instrument) **X** **Senza misura p parlando quasi**

when you've gone... Who was she Gille? Does she yet live?

Senza misura.
Hold and strum inside, like before, somewhat echoing the tune, always fading out. Repeat as needed.

ppp *pp*

*Alt.: pluck inside the strings

339 Ad lib. ♩ = ca. 66

mp

How well you con - cealed the truth of our con - di - tion, the vi - o - lent

colla voce

pp

mf

ends, which are too of - ten the blood - y in - he - ri - tance of our sta - tion. Would that I could but dis - in - he - rit our

mp

f

Gruoch returns to her dagger.

son! At - ten - ding the hour of our re - u - nion, Gille, my hus - band, mo gràdh,

Opt.: repeat, *sempre dim. al niente e rit.*

mf

mp

mp

Y Poco più mosso ♩ = ca. 72

f

f

poco accel.

res - cue me! For - sake me not and help me die that I might once more re -

f

ff

Once more, she raises the dagger high in the air.

354 *accel.* Z *Agitato* ♩ = ca. 86 *f furiosa*

turn to your em-brace. Are you so cruel? Or am I so weak

358 *molto accel.*

that my hand yet lin - gers cut - ting a - ra-besques in the air?

gradually exaggerate dynamics, ma sempre cresc.

Fast, but senza misura

X X

361 *Grwoch sbrudders.*

ppp *8^{va}*

fast but molto ad lib. After one pass, feel free to alter the order of the notes keeping the motion sempre ppp e dim. (una corda)

l.v.

(no attack)

ppp *fff*

VII. Duncan's Ghost

Poco più mosso (♩ = ca. 100)

ma sempre ad lib.

*With cold certainty**mf confrontational*

A1

Lento, ad lib.

mp a bit worried

364

What spi - rit tres - pas-ses hence? Dun-can! Will you not em-brace your kin?

mp (Lowest cluster) *mf secco* *p*

Pedal II
Alt.: Hit low strings
inside the piano

Peace, I will not twice vi - o - late... our sa - cred rules of hos - pi - ta - li -

p *pp* *mp* *p*

poco accel.

ty. One-hun - dred thou-sand wel-comes, sha-dow-king.

fp *fff*

Hit strings
+ metal beam

Poco più mosso ♩ = ca. 110

*mp with intensity**sempre un poco cresc.*

376

Had you shown for - bear-ance you might yet have en - coun-tered your son. He comes to oc - cu - py my bed-cham-ber,

p *sempre cresc.* *mf*

poco accel.

B1 Agitato ♩ = ca. 120

33

379 *f*

with trem - bling jack-knife in hand. Come, ghost, Look long on my

sfz p *tr*^{1/2} *mf* *f* *mf*

383

hap-py face! Can't you here to wit-ness some a - tom of re-morse

f *p sub* *p colla voce* *mp* *pp*

p espr. *mp*

Poco meno (♩ = ca. 110)
Gruoch laughs derisively

386 *f* *mp a bit condescending* *poco accel.*

(ha!) Per - haps you mis-took my night - ly pa - ces as e - vi-dence of my shame?

f *p* *p* *p*

f *mp*

C1 ♩ = ca. 120

390 *f*

Truth, you'll have cou-sin. My steps are blame - dri-ven but not for thee. Blood is our birth-right,

p *pp* *mp* *p* *mp*

f *p colla voce* *3 mp* *p* *pp* *p*

394 *mf* *Poco meno* ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 110$) *mp*

Dun-can, yours and mine and we would soon-er dye the o-cceans red than wash a-way the sins of our

398 *mf* *f*

clan. Your death and Gille's, Mac-beth's and my own, these are but a

402 *poco accel.* *ff*

con-se-quence of Na-ture of the ebb-ing tides of pros-pe-ri-ty.

poco rit. Poco meno mosso (♩ = ca. 100)

For a moment, Crouch doesn't talk to the ghost directly.

405 (3 times)

p soft, self-conscious

My com - pas - sion ex -

mf *p* *pp*

pedal ad lib. very resonant

408

tends as far as those la - ckeys whom I made to bear the con - se - quence of your death, their

ppp

sempre legato, blurry

411

pas - chal blood yet per - fumes my hands and rou - ses in me hea - vy and

pp sempre

8va

poco rit.

414

sleep - less re - gret.

loco

8va

Ped.

E1 Lento, ad lib.

*Suddenly changing mood,
back to ghost confrontation.*

Poco più mosso (♩ = ca. 100)
A piacere, colla voce

417 *mf incisive* *3* *3* *3*

What pal - pa - ble in - con - ti - nent en - vy! Would'st thou re - coup from me some mea - sure of

p *profondo* *p* *pp* *pp*

poco accel.

Gruoch takes the dagger and holds it by the blade, hilt out, offering it directly to Duncan's ghost. Blood begins to drip from her hand.

420 *3* *ad lib.*

life and re - pay mur - der with mur - der?

ppp *ppp sempre cresc.* *p* *mf*

F1

Agitato ♩ = ca. 120
to the ghost

* Lowest cluster
alt.: Inside the piano
hit palm in lowest register

Alt.: add. metal beam bit
to cluster on strings.

427

Come, then! with my blood quench your fie - ry hate, and

f *mf* *f* *p sub* *p espr.*

431 *3* *3* *3* *mp*

may this i - chor suf - fice to ex - tin - guish hell but for a mo - ment a

p *colla voce* *mp* *f* *pp sub*

mp *pp* *f*

434

res - pite brief and sweet e - nough to am - pli - fy your e - ver - las - ting tor - ment.

437

Come, then! or else be gone and feast ins - tead on that car - ri - on Mac - beth, whose al - rea - dy

441

rot - ted soul_ might sus - tain you bet - ter.

Senza misura

Ped.

Lento, ad lib.

G1

444 **X** **5** *mf* *un poco parlando, molto ad lib.*

Are you a man? Do you yet de - ny your - self?

pppp un poco cresc.

(sostenuto pedal)

* If possible, keep the resonance from before hits inside the piano on the strings and metal beam, otherwise lowest cluster.

447

Mark me, I will show you_ how a wo - man dies_ by her own will.

pochissimo crescendo, like approaching

Senza misura

Lontano ♩ = ca. 46

450 **2/** *parlando ad lib.* *She draws the dagger close, her eyes locked on the ghost. After a moment, she turns away.*

"Nothing more will I say to you"

(alt.: omit this phrase)

pppp

gradually fading out (disappears)

* The 3 parts should feel like in different tempi. Do not synch them and allow irregularities ad lib. Always play very soft, although differentiating the elements. Use the pedal to create a cloud of sound, delicate, unstable.

Play several times the motif very slow, slightly irregular length, like an echo vanishing.

pp sempre, emergendo


Play this very slow, emerging from nothing, gradually replacing the other motif and getting turning into the written melody that follow.

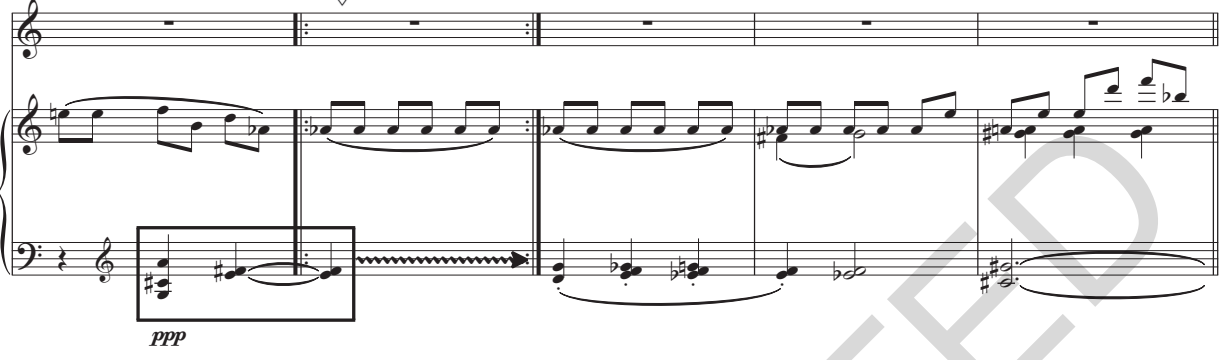
ppppp

pp una corda

gradually vanishing

Keep previous tempo but poco rit. as it fades out.

454  poco accel.



ppp

H1 VIII. Farewell

459 ♩ = ca. 60 *p dolce*

Mo chri-dhe, Lu - lach, Mo chri-dhe trom s'du - laich.



pp sempre legato e dolce

464 *mp espress.* **Meno mosso**


For - give me, for - give your im - per - fect mo - ther,



pp sotto voce *colla voce*

468 **A tempo**

Who loved you in all her best. Who loved you e -



mp

Ped.

clear pedal gradually

V.S.

471

nough to lose you, to per - mit your ba - nish - ment,

p *sempre un poco cresc. colla voce*

p *pedal ad lib.*

474

gi - ven in charge by Mac - beth, your fa - thers' bane.

f *rit.* *p* *un poco rubato ma sempre tranquillo*

mf *p* *pp*

clear pedal gradually

478 *Poco meno mosso* (♩ = ca. 52) *rit.*

Mo chri - dhe, Lu - lach, Mo chri - dhe trom s' du - - laich.

mp dolce *p*

pedal ad lib.

483 **I** Largo (♩ = ca. 42)

J1

The words I so

des-perate-ly seek out-run me, and I have run out the clock. Now I must

poco rit.

move to quell the re-bel-lion that is my life.

♩ = 48

pp dolce

pp always in the background

42

497 (4 times)

K1 $\text{♩} = 70$

sempre un poco accel.

Musical score for measures 497-500. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of three systems. The first system (measures 497-498) features a treble clef with a whole rest and a bass clef with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a *pp* *legato, blurry* marking. A box highlights the first two notes of the bass line. The second system (measures 499-500) continues the bass line with a *pp* dynamic. The key signature changes from one flat to one sharp. A large watermark 'Copyrighted Material' is visible across the page.

Keep the the pattern without changing tempo or dynamics.
Little by little disappearing.

500

Musical score for measures 500-501. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of two systems. The first system (measures 500-501) features a treble clef with a whole rest and a bass clef with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The key signature changes from one sharp to two sharps. The second system (measures 502-503) continues the bass line with a *mf* dynamic. A large watermark 'Copyrighted Material' is visible across the page.

(Ends dim. al niente)

Agitato ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 92$)

accel.

502

Musical score for measures 502-504. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of two systems. The first system (measures 502-503) features a treble clef with a whole rest and a bass clef with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The key signature changes from two sharps to one sharp. The second system (measures 504-505) continues the bass line with a *mf* dynamic. A large watermark 'Copyrighted Material' is visible across the page.

molto accel.

505

Musical score for measures 505-506. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of two systems. The first system (measures 505-506) features a treble clef with a whole rest and a bass clef with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The key signature changes from one sharp to two sharps. The second system (measures 507-508) continues the bass line with a *f* dynamic. A large watermark 'Copyrighted Material' is visible across the page.

507

Musical score for measures 507-508. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of two systems. The first system (measures 507-508) features a treble clef with a whole rest and a bass clef with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The key signature changes from two sharps to one sharp. The second system (measures 509-510) continues the bass line with a *ff* dynamic. A large watermark 'Copyrighted Material' is visible across the page.

Senza misura

L1

Meditativo ♩ = ca. 54

43

509

mf *molto ad lib.*

What was once my wo-man - ly sil - ken crown,

sfz

pp *sempre colla voce*

pp

513

po-lished by oil and i - vo - ry, how rea-di - ly it turns to wi - ry rope in my hand. How

(hold, and let fade)

pp

pp

pp

517

rea - di - ly so ma - ny years come un - ra - veled, and how de - ser - ving -

sempre molto legato

521

ly these threads a - wait the loom. Were I to weave them to - ge - ther,

pochissimo cresc.

525

what ta-pes-try would re - sult?

M1

p sempre legato

ppp molto ad lib.

p

p profondo

529

p mp

532

535 **N1** *p ceremonioso*

"Cò thu - sa?" Once, I was a no - ble daugh - ter.

p

pp *pp*

pp sotto voce

539

"Cò thu - sa?" The wi -

pp

poco a poco cresc.

542

dow of Gille Coem - gain. "Cò thu - sa?"

pp

p

545

a wret - ched or - phan's mo - ther.

pp

O1

Poco più mosso (♩ = 60)

547

You ask a - gain, "Cò thu - - - sa?

mp

549

Art thou the La - dy Mac - beth,

mp

551 *accel.*

Con - sort Queen of Al - - ba?"

mf *f*

molto accel.

554 $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 76$ *Senza Misura*

f *ff*

8va L.v. throughout *8vb*

P1 *Tempo ad lib.* ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 50$)

557 *quasi parlando, conciso*

Let them say, The queen, my lord, is dead. Is mi - se Gru-och.

p serene

pp subtle (l.v.) (l.v.)

Ped. Ped.

562 *Ad lib.* $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 112$ (fades out before the end of the gesture in the ensemble)

I a - lone re - main.

pp

Ped.

Story by Michelle Rice

Libretto by Alejandra Villarreal Martinez

Music by Tomàs Peire Serrate

The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead

*Monodrama in One Act
for soprano and chamber ensemble*

2022

Commissioned by Michelle Rice
Premiered June 11th 2022 in Schoenberg Hall, Los Angeles, CA

Michelle Rice as Gruoch
Christine Tivolacci *flutes*
Andrew Leonard *clarinets*
Leila Nuñez-Fredell *violin*
Joo Lee *cello*
Sky Haneul Lee *piano*
Ben Phelps *percussion*

Conducted by Stephen Karr

Directed by Indre Viskontas

Lex Gernon *scenic design*
Brandon Baruch *lighting design*
Linda Muggeridge *costume design*
Angela Santori *wig and make-up design*
Jose Carrillo *technical direction*
C. Kyle Gladfelter *stage management*
Doug Woolsey, Grace Martino, Julia Johnson, and Mattia Venni
production, promotion and development

Instrumentation

Gruoch, soprano
Flute (doubling Alto Flute)
Clarinet in Bb (doubling Bass Clarinet)
Violin
Violoncello
Piano
Percussion (1 player):

Timpani
Bass Drum, Snare Drum,
2 Suspended Cymbals (large and small)
Tam-tam, 2 Gongs, Mark Tree
Marimba, Vibraphone, Crotales

Score transposed

Duration ca. 45 minutes.

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The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead

Monodrama in One Act

Story by Michelle Rice
Libretto by Alejandra Villarreal Martinez

Music by
Tomàs Peire Serrate

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Michelle Rice, and Alejandra Villarreal Martinez.
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I. Overture

4/4 ♩ = ca. 60 **3/4** **4/4** **3/4** **3/4** senza vibr.

A

A. Fl. *pp* *sotto voce*
B. Cl. *pp* *sotto voce*
Susp. Cym. Small *ppp*
Gong *pp*
Pno. *p* *sempre dolcissimo*
Vln. *ppp*
Vc. *p* *sempre dolcissimo*

Inside, low strings gliss. Lv.
Ad lib. slow circular bowing until B. (moving sul tasto <-> sul pont) (upper note optional)
* Alt.: hold these pitches, use sostenuto pedal, and strum or gliss. softly, with fingernail, the strings inside piano at the approximate range, so these pitches resonate more clearly.
ad lib. subtle dynamic swells *ppp* *p*
pizz. strumming delicately

9 **4/4**

2

B

20 $\frac{4}{4}$ ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 54$)

poco rit. $\frac{3}{4}$ To Fl.

A. Fl. *p* *mf*

B. Cl. *p* *mf*

Timp. (G, F#) *pp* *p* *mf*

B. D. (if possible only) Lv. *p* *mp*

Gong Lv. always *pp* *p* *mp*

T.-t. *pp* *p* *mp*

Pno. *p* *mf*

Vln. ord. *p* *mf*

Ve. arco *p* *mf*

C $\frac{3}{4}$ **Largo Ad lib.** **D** $\frac{4}{4}$ **Poco più mosso** ($\text{♩} = 58$)

27 **Flute** *mf* *f* **150**

B. Cl.

Timp. *p*

Susp. Cym. Large Lv. *pp* *mp*

Vib. *p dolce*

Pno. *p dark, menacing, dangerous* *mp* *f*

Vln. *ppp sempre*

Ve. *ppp sempre*

clear pedal gradually

32 **E** **4/4** **F**

Fl. *ff* *overblowing*

B. Cl. *f* *tr* *ff* *f sonoro* *mf*

Timp. *ff* *sfz* *mp* *lv. sempre*

Pno. *ff* *mp*

Vln. *ff* *mf* *p* *Ricc. sul pont.*

Vc. *ff* *molto sul pont.* *sul pont.* *flautando* *p* *sempre poco diminuendo al niente*

G

poco a poco accel. accel. Agitato ♩ = ca. 120

Fl. *p* *mp* *poco rubato (ignora accel.)*

B. Cl. *p* *pp* *p*

Timp. *pp*

Susp. Cym. Large *pp* *p* *lv.*

Mar. *p*

Pno. *pp sub.* *p*

Vln. *pp* *ord.* *pp* *p*

Vc. *ord.* *pp* *p*

H poco rit.

40

Fl.

B. Cl.

Vib.

Mar.

Pno.

Vln.

Ve.

mf *ff* *ff* *pp* *ff* *ff*

(2nd time only)

Ped. (low cluster)

Poco meno mosso (♩ = ca. 100)

I Senza misura (3 times)

43

Fl.

B. Cl.

Susp. Cym. Large

Susp. Cym. Small

Vib.

Pno.

Vln.

Ve.

To A. Fl.

Alto Flute

Play when ready. Ad lib. overblowing breathe when needed.

ad lib. overblowing breathe when needed.

From 2nd time. Ad lib. alternate S/L.

mf *p* *ppp* *fff* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *pp* *fff* *pp* *fff* *p sub* *fff* *p sub* *fff*

increase bow pressure

increase bow pressure

pedal ad lib. very resonant

J $\text{♩} = 80$
4/4 ord.
 47

A. Fl. *pp*

B. Cl. *pp sotto voce sempre*

Timp. (upper note optional)
p *pp*

Susp. Cym. Large *Lv.*

Susp. Cym. Small *Lv.*

Pno. *p* *sempre un poco dim.*

Vln. flautando *pp* *sempre un poco dim.*

Vc. flautando *pp* *sempre un poco dim.*

poco rit. **2/4**

Slow down to match new Tempo ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 48$)

52

A. Fl.

B. Cl. *mp*

Timp. *Lv.* *p*

Vib. *pp* *mp*

Pno. *pp*

Atacca

II. Do I Sleep?

Gruoch enters her dark chamber slowly, gliding smoothly across the room as if in a dream. She seats herself at her table and lights a candle.

5/4 $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 48$ **4/4** **5/4**

A. Fl. *Breathe when needed, as imperceptible as possible.* *pp misterioso* (play with some air sound)

B. Cl. *pp misterioso*

Timpani (alternative: Bass Drum instead timpani) $\text{♩}(\text{G, F}\#)$ *pp misterioso*

T. - C. *pp* *lv.* (only 1st time) *pp* *lv.*

Piano *p misterioso* * hold silently the keys and hit with the palm or soft mallet low strings inside the piano.

Vln. *poco sul tasto* *pp misterioso*

Vcl. *poco sul tasto* *pp misterioso*

5/4 **4/4** **5/4** **4/4** **5/4**

A. Fl. *colla voce*

B. Cl. *pp a bit hesitant, freely*

G. *Do I sleep? Or have the night-ly tra-vels of this rest-less pil-grim ceased at last? Hate-ful por tent of dawn you ig*

Timpani

Crotchi *arco* *lv.* *pp* *mp*

Piano *p* *lv.* *8^{va}*

Vln.

Vcl.

5/4 ord. **4/4** *Gruoch rises. From outside, a soft haze of pink orange light illuminates the rest of the room.* **5/4**

A. Fl. *pp* *f* *mf*

B. Cl. ord. *pp* *sf*

G. *a tempo e sempre un poco cresc.*
 nite and burn a - way the star - ry man - de which shel - tered me from des - ti - ny.

Timp. *f*

Pno. *pp* (ord.) *f* *mf*

Vln. *pp* poco sul pont. ord. *f* sul tasto flautando *mf*

Vc. *pp* poco sul pont. ord. *f* sul tasto flautando *mf*

5/4 **4/4** ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 68$)

A. Fl. *mf* *p* *pp*

B. Cl. *mf* *p* *pp*

Timp. *p* *pp otto raze*

Susp. Cym. Small *pp* *p*

Pno. *pp sempre, una corda*

Vln. *pp* *p* *pp*

Vc. *pp* *p* *pp*

* free-cue measures.
 The number in the triangle denotes the number of cues.
 (X means TBD / variable)

At new tempo ($\text{♩} = 68$),
 repeat steady, independently.

Ad lib., a bit irregular.
 Repeat, creating a resonant cloud.

Keep previous tempo
 gradually rit. ad lib. always dim.
 until fade out. Asynchronous.
 flautando

Keep previous tempo
 gradually rit. ad lib. always dim.
 until fade out. Asynchronous.
 flautando

Cue end for flute,
 cello, and violin in this order.
 (wait for ending cue)

(Repeat until next cue)

Ped. _____

(wait for ending cue)
 sul pont.

(wait for ending cue)
 sul pont.

19 **A** ♩ = ca. 68

A. Fl. *pp*

B. Cl. *pp colla voce*

G. *poco ad lib.*
 Mal - colm cour - ses for - ward hot and ea - ger to un - cou - ple Mac - duff and Si - ward, that they might tear a - part my bo - dy in mine own
 (fades out)

Timp. (fades out)

Crot. *lv.*

Vib. *lv. sempre* *ad lib. within this measure* *p colla voce* *lv.* *p*

Pno. *fading out (rit. and dim. ad lib.)*

Vln. *sul tasto poco flautando* *pp*

Ve. *pp*

23 **B** $\frac{4}{4}$

A. Fl. *p* *flz.* *pp* *mf* *(flz+trem)* *pp*

B. Cl. *sfz* *mf* *mp* *p*

G. *with disgust* *with contained fury*
 den. Mal - colm Mal - colm...

Timp. *pp*

Gong. *(ad lib.)* *lv.* *ppp* *mp*

T.-t. *scratching with triangle beater* *lv.* *p* *mf*

Pno. *f* *mf* *p* *mp sempre un poco cresc.*

Vln. *ord.* *f* *mf* *p*

Ve. *ord.* *f* *mf* *p*

C ♩ = ca. 76

37 Flute *ord.* *p* *f* *ff* *pp* *norm.* **2/4** *ad lib. bend as possible and "complete" the gliss.* **4/4**

gradually overblowing (harsh multiphonic)

B. Cl. *mf* *f* *ff* *p*

G. *f* *ff* *p*

sum-mons forth Mal-corm to a-noint his head in blood. Yes, Fate a-bides, and I too for

Timp. *pp* *f* *ff* *pp* *mp*

Mar. *pp* *mp*

Pno. *f* *ff* *pp* *p* threatening, *sempre un poco cresc.*

(Tacet right hand, unless needed)

If playing: *Sostenuto pedal (with each new pitch in the r.h.)* arco

Vln. *f* *ff* *pp*

Vc. *f* *ff* *p*

4/4 **5/4** **4/4** **2/4** **4/4**

42 Fl. *mp* *f* *fz.* *poco rit. Poco meno, maestoso*

gradually to

B. Cl. *f*

G. *mf* *f* somewhat majestic

I helped hang that mor-nig star which will judge my hus-band who could, but for his beg-gar-fear, have reigned Al-ban

Susp. Cym. Large

Mar. *p* *mp* *f* (r.h. plays)

Pno. *mp* *f* *pedal ad lib.*

gradually incorporate sustain pedal.

Vln. *mp* *f* arco

Vc. *mp* *f*

46 $\frac{4}{4}$ ord. (like an echo) $\frac{5}{8}$ (1st time only) $\frac{4}{4}$ rit. $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 52$ $\frac{5}{4}$

Fl. *f* *mp* *pp* *p*

B. Cl. *mp* *p* *p*

G. King! I de - ny it not
extend ad lib., sempre dim. *mp gradually angrier*

Susp. Cym. Large *mf* *p* *mf* *L.v.*

Susp. Cym. Small *p* *mf*

Vib. *mf sempre dim.* *echoing, irregular ad lib. like vanishing* *L.v.* (end of echo) *pp*

Pno. *mp* *sempre dim.* *pp* (only last time)

Vln. *flautando (like an echo)* *p* (continue until figure D *sempre dim.*)

Vc. *mp* *p* *pp* sul pont.

52 $\frac{5}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{5}{4}$

Fl. *pp* *mp* *p* *flz.* *air*

B. Cl. *ppp* *mp*

G. Nor do I a - void the mea - sure of judg - ment that shall fall on mine own head. I ne - glec - ted how des - perate - ly Mac - beth would o - ver - gorge him - self on

Pno. *ppp* *flz.*

Vln. *flautando*

Vc. *ord.* *p poco espr.* *mf* *mp* *pp* *p* sul pont. *ord.* *pp* *p* sul tasto

57 $\frac{5}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ **E** Poco meno ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 58$)

B. Cl. *p* *mf* *mp espr., molto ad lib.*

G. blood need-less-ly, stu-pid-ly spilled. That morn, ve-ry like this one, I

Mar. *pp sempre*

Pno. *mf* *p* blurry, with pedal *p* *mp* *pp*

Vln. ord. *p* *mf* *p* *p dolce* *pp*

Ve. *mf* *p* *ppp* *p dolce* *pp*

* hold down keys and hit softly lower strings inside with palm.

==

62 $\frac{5}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ poco rit. A tempo

B. Cl. *pp* *mp* *p*

G. gazed u-pon Dun-can, whose rud-ly vi-gor had all but left him too star-ly red set off a-against the pal-lor of his skin... Was it e-ver as beau-ti-ful as

Mar. *p* *pp* *p*

Pno. *pp* (ord.) *profondo*

Vln. *p* *p*

Ve. *p* *p* *pizz.* *arco* *pp*

68 $\frac{4}{4}$ (ord.) *poco rit. a tempo* $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Fl. *mf* *p* *p* *mp*

B. Cl. *mf* *p* *p*

G. *mf* *mp* *mf*
 it was wreath'd round his head? A blood-y crown, I thought to claim it then, bath-ing my hands in its in - tox - i - ca - ting li - quor drier up and

Crot. *arco* *lv.* *p* *mp* *(lv.)*

Vib. *ppp* *mf*

Pno. *mf* *p* *mf* *(mf)*

Vln. *flaut.* *ord.* *mp* *p*

Vc. *pizz.* *p* *mp* *mf*

74 $\frac{4}{4}$ *Rit. ad lib. Colla voce* **1500**

Fl. *pp sempre* *She picks up her dagger* *poco*

B. Cl. *p* *mp* *p* *To Cl.*

G. *almost with delight* *half spoken* *Rit... molto liberamente. (independently) nostalgic*
 fra - grant onmy fin - gers. It was the first I had seen of blood since Mac beth had sto - len me from the shores of Mo -

Susp. Cyn. Small *lv.* *p* *poco* *mp*

Vib. *ad lib. repeating in background. Irregular rhythm.* *p sempre dim.*

Pno. *(following bass clarinet)* *p*

Vln. *sul pont. slow gliss.* *sul tasto* *sul pont. flaut.* *repeat as needed to adjust with voice.* *p* *pp* *pp*

Vc. *sul tasto* *sul pont.* *sul tasto* *ord.* *slow gliss.* *p* *pp* *pp*

F **A tempo**

78 **5/8** half pitch/
half air **5/4** ord. **Fast** ♩ = 120 **4/4**

Fl. *mp* *p* *mf* *f*

B. Cl. *p* *mf* *f* Clarinet in B♭ To B. Cl.

G. ray. He loved me, in his way, He who was both bridge and cha - sm. Who was the grea-ter fool? *f*

T-t. *p* *f* one long scrape with triangle beater on the outside edge. *lv.*

Pno. *mf* *profondo* *f* *ff* *sfz* with pedal, always resonating Ped.

Vln. *p* *p* *mf* *fp* *f* ord.

Ve. *p* *p* *mf* *fp* *f*

Lunga **G** **A tempo** (♩ = ca. 69) **accel. A tempo** **3/4** **5/4**

84

Fl. *p espr.* *mp* *p* *f*

Cl. *f* Bass Clarinet in B♭

G. Yes, he loved me, and by my wi-thered womb, a-chieves his own ex-tinc-tion. Glad-ly I make the ex *mp remembering* *f* *mf* *with intensity*

Timp. *p sempre sotto voce* *lv.*

Vib. *mp* *mf* *lv.*

Pno. hold sound and clear gradually. (Keep F# held down) *p dolce* *mf* *f* (pedal as needed)

Vln. *p* *mf* *f*

Ve. *p* *mf* *f*

90 **5/4** **4/4**

Fl. *mp* *pp sempre* flz.

B. Cl. *p* *pp*

G. *mp* *un poco pesante ... e cresc. ...*
 change, though it beg-gars me. I will hold court with Death whom I wel- come A-lone, un-bur- dened, un- chained to the un-wor- thy le-ga- cy of an un-

B. D. *pppp* *ad lib. constant slow rubbing*
ad lib. subtle dynamic movement, like a threatening presence (if possible)

T. t. *pp*

Pno. *pp sempre* *pp* *p sempre sotto voce, lontano*

Vln. *p* *pp dolce* *pp* *p* *ppp*
 (IV) flaut. *slow circular bowing (sul tasto <-> sul pont)*

Vc. *pp* *ppp sempre molto legato* *pp* *p*

95 **poco rit.** **A tempo** (♩ = ca. 69) **Poco rubato** **3/4**

Fl. *mp*

B. Cl. *p* *mp* *p*

G. *mp* *Addressing the dagger*
 wan- ted child. Come, Death, and find in me a kins- wo- man who will suf- fer no life with- in her poi- soned bo- dy.

B. D. *pppp*

Pno. *mp*

Vln. *ppp* *slow circular bowing (sul tasto <-> sul pont)*

Vc. *mp* *p espr.* *pp* *p*

H

3 A tempo **4** sempre un poco accel. **5**

100 (ord.) *mf un poco agitato, molto ad lib.* (slight bend) *p*

Fl. *mf un poco agitato, molto ad lib.*

B. Cl. *p*

G. *She raises the dagger to her throat, and stops.*

Susp. Cym. Large *mp*

Pno. *p*

Vln. flaut. *pp* *ord.* *mp*

Ve. *p espr.* *mf*

5 **4** **3**

Pesante **rit.** *She slams the dagger down on her table and addresses it directly.*

103 gradually to **4** overblowing **3**

Fl. *mf* *ff*

B. Cl. *mf* *f* *sfz* *slap tongue*

B. D. *ff secco*

Susp. Cym. Small *p* *mf* *l.v.* *ff* *sfz secco* (Sound should be off here. Mute it if needed)

Pno. *ff* *sfz secco* *8th (lowest cluster)*

Vln. *ord.* *p* *f* *ff*

Ve. *3* *3* *3* *ff*

I Agitato (♩ = ca. 92)

3/4

Fl. *overblowing*
ff marcato

B. Cl. *ff marcato*

G. *f furiosa* (could be shorter)
What, tru - ant! Will you de - sert your of - fice and de - ny your

Timp. *pp* *ff* *f* *mf* *f* *p*

T-t. *mf*

Pno. *f marcato*
ff

Vln. *ff energio* *ff*

Vc. *ff energio* *ff*

109

Fl. *pp* *p*
ord. senza vibr. like whistle tone

B. Cl. *ff*

G. *f ma riflessiva*
mis - tress a good death? Do you feign wis - dom to make mi - nutes of se - conds and

Timp. *fp* *f* *p* *mp* *pp* *fp*

Pno. *f sempre*

Vln. *f* *p* *pp*
sul pont. ord. s.p. ord. s.p. ord.
sul tasto sul pont. s.t. s.p. s.t.

Vc. *f* *p sub* *mf* *p* *mp*

113

Fl. *pp*

B. Cl. *poco a poco dim.*

G. *poco a poco dim.*

Gong

T-t. *mf*

Pno. *poco a poco dim.*

Vln. *p* *ord.* *poco sul pont.* *pp* *pp* Repeat, sempre diminuendo. Gradually more sul pont.

Ve. *mp* *s.p.* *pp* *s.t.* *p* *s.p.* *pp* *s.t.* *p* *pp*

days of hours? By Mal - colm's sword or mine own dag - ger, the out - comes are

117

Fl. *pp* gradually to *air.*

B. Cl. *pp sotto voce* To Cl.

G. *mp* *very freely, notation just approximate, gradually losing voice, to parlando*

Susp. Cym. Large *p* *lx.* *pp*

Mar. *pp* (joining piano as imperceptibly as possible)

Pno. (no accents) *pp* *molto legato e sempre dim.* *una corda*

Vln. As it fades out increase speed ad lib.

Ve. *s.p.* *ppp* circular bowing (sul tasto <-> sul pont.)

e - qual in grace. Grace, my mo - ther wan - ted, when ar -

J poco rall. *She crosses away from her table.* **Senza misura**

Repeat if needed until Gruoch's line is finished.

121

G. res - ted at time's end...

Mar. *ad lib. repeat accel. to trem. speed.* *Keep dim. until end of repetitions.* **ppp sempre**

Pno. **pp sempre dim.** *pedal gradually more blurry* Repeat boxed material until indicated. **3**

K **III. "Cò Thusa"**

125 $\frac{4}{4}$ ♩ = 56

Fl. Clarinet in Bb **pp**

Cl. **pp** *p dolce espr. sempre colla voce* **p**

G. *p dolce, un poco rubato* My in - ex - pert hands would chase the shu - tle as my mo - ther

Mar.

Pno.

Vln. *flaut. poco sul tasto* **pp** *sempre un poco flautando poco vibr.* **p** (flaut.) **pp**

Vc. *p dolce, colla voce* **mp**

129 **poco rit. . .**

Fl. **pp** *p dolce*

Cl. **p**

G. taught me, with quiet voice o - ver my shoul - der, and brit - tle fin - gers ma - king tight plaits **3**

Pno. **pp** (flaut.)

Vln. **p** **pp**

Vc. **p** **pp**

133 *A tempo*

Fl. *pp*

Cl. *pp*

G. *mp*
of my hair. Beau - ty and dis - ci - pline wo - ven in - to me by a wo - man too fa - mi - liar to be al - to - ge - ther

Crot. *p*

Vib. *pp* Ped. *mp*

Pno. *p* Lv.

Vln. (flaut.) *pp*

Ve. *ppp* *p*

138 *5/4* *4/4*

Fl. *p* *mp espr.* *p* *pp*

Cl. *p* *p*

G. *mf poco più intenso*
strange. Was it from love that she taught me to bear such pain with a si - lence so preg - nant that a - ny

Crot. arco *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Pno. *pp* *mp sempre delicato*

Vln. (flaut.) *p* *pp* ord. *pp*

Ve. *mf* *p* *mp*

142 $\frac{4}{4}$

Fl. *f* *mp* *pp sempre colla voce* *p*

Cl. *p* *f* *mf* *pp sempre colla voce* *p*

G. *f con passione*
 mo - ment it might yield A fu - ry so full of life? And yet we longed for her touch, my

Timp. *f*

Crot. *p* *mp*

Vib. *mp*

Pno. *f* *mp sempre dolce*

Vln. *f* *mp* *pp*

Vc. *pp* *f* *p espr.*

146 $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Fl. *pp* *p dolce* *mf* *fp* *pp*

Cl. *pp* *p dolce* *mf* *f* *p*

G. *3* *3* *3* *3*
 rage and I. And yet we long for it still, in this hour when I am un-done, un-wo-ven, un-laced. Grace my mo-ther wan-ted when ar-

Vib. *f*

Pno. *pp* *mf* *f colla voce* *mf*

Vln. *ppp* *p* *mf* *f* *p*

Vc. *f*



151 *poco rit. A tempo*

Fl. *air* *ppp*

Cl. *pp e sempre dolce espr.*

G. *res - ted at time's end... Con - signed to the cap - ti - vi - ty of her bed - cham - ber I, war - den and cham - ber -*

Vib. *p* *pp* *pp*

Pno. *p* *pp* *pp*

Vln. *pp* *pp* *pp* *flaut.*

Ve. *mf espr.* *p* *pp ma sempre espr.*

156

Fl. *p* *mp*

Cl. *mp* *p* *To B. Cl.*

G. *maid, kept vi - gil wat - ching the ta - per light flick - er and burn low, re - flect - ed in her half - lid - ded eyes.*

Susp Cym. Small *pp* *lv.*

Crot. *pp* *lv. sempre* *p*

Vib. *p* *lv.*

Pno. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *Ped. ord.*

Vln. *pp*

Ve. *mp* *p* *pp*

poco rit. . . . A tempo

161

Fl. *p poco espr.* *mp* *p*

B. Cl. *p poco espr.* *mp*

G. 1 en-tan-gled our fin-gers Bold-ened in grief, and in-tro-duced my gaze to hers, jaun-diced and grey in ad-van-cing death. "Mo-ther", my voice in-tru-ded

Crot.

Vib. *mp*

Pno.

Vln. *ppp* *ppp dolcissimo* *pp* *loco*

Vc. *pp* *mp espr. colla voce*

167

Fl. *pp* *p* To Cl.

B. Cl. *p* *mp*

G. on our si-lent me-di-ta-tion. Your too-lu-cid shock and your croa-king re-ply: "Cò thu-sà?" "Who are you?" *Gruoch rises.*

Vib. *dolce*

Pno. *pp*

Vln. flaut. *pp* (flaut.) *pp dolce*

Vc. *p* *mp*

poco accel. A tempo, pochissimo meno

A tempo (♩ = ca. 56)

171

Fl. *p* *f* *mp*

Cl. Clarinet in Bb *mp* *f* *mf*

G. "Who am I?" La - dy so nim-bly you slipped your ear-thly bands, I could scarce mark the mo - ment

Susp. Cym. Large Lv. *pp* *mp*

Pno. *pp* *f* *mf* *mp*

Vln. *ppp* *f* *mp*

Vc. *f* *mp*

175

Fl. *p*

Cl.

G. of your es - cape. Could you not have en - dured my an - swer? Did I fright your fledg - ling soul to fly a - way?

M. tree slowly Lv. *p*

Pno. *pp* *espr.*

Vln. *p* *pp* *espr.*

Vc. *p* *espr.*

24

178 **Ritenu.** $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ flz. ord.

Fl. *f* *p* *pp*

Cl. *f* *p* *pp*

G. *f* *p* *pp* *She returns to her table, and the dagger.*

in - to e - ter - ni - ty...

Timp. *mf* *p* *PPPP*

Pno. *f* *mf*

Vln. *f* *mp* *pp*

Vc. *f* *mf*

182 **Ad lib.** $\frac{4}{4}$ **poco a poco rit.** **sempre rit. e dim.**

Fl. Cl.

G. *p dolce, mezza voce* Grace, my mo - ther want - ed when, ar - res - ted at time's end... Optional: This box can be repeated ad lib. always dim., almost losing the voice

Pno. *p* *ppp*

Vc. *pp poco rubato* *sempre pp e legato*

M

poco accel.

A tempo ♩ = ca. 68

187

5/4

4/4

Fl. *pp* *p*

Cl. *ppp* *pp* *p*

Mar. *pp* *p*

Pno. (last time only) *p*

Vln. pizz. *pp* flautando *p*

Vc. *pp* (pizz.) *mp pp* *mf* *pp* arco

(III/IV)



N

IV. "Grace My Mother Wanted"

190

4/4

♩ = ca. 63

Fl. *p* *mf* *poco sf* *p* *mp*

Cl. *p* *mf*

G. *mf with determination*
 By Grace she was for - sworn, her de - mise met with star - ing eyes, ga - ping, drool - ing mouth An a - ni - mal's

Mar. *p poco leggiero* *p* *mf* *p*

Pno. *mf*

Vln. ord. *p* *mf* *pp* *p*

Vc. *pp* *mp* *p* *mf* sul pont.

194 *flz.* *pp* *mf* *Poco meno* $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 52$ *ord.* *p colla voce* *mp*

Fl. *pp* *mf* *ord.* *p colla voce* *mp*

Cl. *p* *mf* *p* *mf*

G. death a rough, vul-gar death, too clum - sy like a stum - ble in the dark - ness. How un - like her

Mar. *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

Pno. *p* *p*

Vln. *sul pont.* *sfp* *mf* *ord.* *senza vibr.* *pp*

Vc. *flautando* *pp* *f* *ord.* *senza vibr.* *pp*

198 *mf* *p* *pp* *mp* *5/4* *4/4* *Come prima* $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 63$

Fl. *mf* *p* *pp* *mp*

Cl. *p* *mp*

G. was her death. Will you for - sake me too, Grace, and shake off my hand just as I step in - to that thres - hold?

Timp.

Mar. *p sub.* *mf* *p* *mf*

Pno. *mf* *mf*

Vln. *flaut.* *pp* *pp*

Vc. *pizz.* *p* *mf* *arco* *pizz.* *p* *mf*

4/4 **Meno mosso** (♩ = ca. 52) **5/4**

202

Fl. *p* *pp*

Cl. *p* *pp sotto voce* *p*

G. — What is a daugh-ter but a be-lo-ved ta-pes-try? What is a mother, but an ab-so-lute wea-ver?

Timp.

Mar. *p* *mf*

Pno. *p* *mf*

Vln. ord. *p espr.* *mf* *pp* *p*

Vec. *pp* arco *p* poco sul pont. *ord.* *p* *pp*

She once again raises the dagger to her throat, and stops short. She looks at the dagger.

206 **5/4** **4/4** **5/4** poco rit. . . **4/4** **A tempo, poco più mosso**

Fl. (only first time) *mp* *p sotto voce* *pp dolce espr.*

Cl. *mp* *p sotto voce* *pp*

G. — Yet, I he-si-tate. From whence this pause, Pe-ti-tioned by a brain that

Timp. *p*

Mar. *p ceremonioso* *p*

Pno. (Last time only) *mp*

Vln. (sustain for all repeats) *pp dolce espr.*

Vec. *p sempre dim. al niente* *p*

210

Fl. *pp* *p* *rit.*

Cl. *p dolce espr.* *mp* *pp*

G. knows too well how to dis-cern be-tween deaths, Bad and good? Too soon, too has-ty,

Mar. *p dolce espr.* *mp*

Pno. *mf* *p* *mp*

Vln. *p* *pp* flaut.

Vc. *p dolce espr.* *mp*

213

Fl. *pp* (only first time)

Cl. *pp* (only first time)

G. a re-treat not be-fit-ting the Queen of Al-ba.

Mar. *mp* *pp dolcissima* *sempre dim.* (2 times only)

Pno. *p dolce* *PPP lontano e dim.*

Ped.

Vln. *ppp* (sustain for all repeats)

Vc. *ppp* (only first time)

She puts the dagger down and settles at her table to write. Music fading, dreamlike.

30



Molto liberamente
(♩ = ca. 46)

3
4

216

Fl. *p*

Cl. *p*

Vib. *ppp* molto ad lib. *pp* poco a poco crescendo, molto ad lib.

Pno. *pppp* una corda, quasi niente

Vln. *pizz.*

Vcl. *p*



220

Fl. *p* poco accel. *p*

Cl. *p* *p*

Vib. *pizz.*

Vln. *p* *pizz.*

Vcl. *p*



V. "Mo Chridhe"

224 Calmo ♩ = ca. 60

Fl. *pp*

Cl. *pp*

G. *p* dolce, like a lullaby at times
Mo - chri - dhe, Lu - lach, my heart, Mo - chri - dhe trom s'du -

Vib. *p* sempre dolce e legato possibile

Vln. *sempre dim.* *pp*

Vcl. *sempre dim.* *pp*

Meno mosso

228

Fl. *p dolce*

Cl. *pp sotto voce* *p* *colla voce* *p*

G. *mp espr.*
 laich, hea - vy bur - dened I write these words for thee, my son,

Vib. *p* *mp*

Pno. *p*

Vln. arco flaut. *p dolce* *pp*

Vc. arco *p espr.*

A tempo

233

Fl. *mp* *mp* *p* *p sempre espr. colla voce*

Cl. *p* *pp*

G. *pp* *mp* *growing intensity*
 M'eu-dail, my dar-ling lamb, sweet boy, Not that they should trou - ble you, For, tru-ly, your heart's ache would

Timp. Lv. *pp* *mp*

Susp. Cyn. Small Lv. *pp*

Pno. *mf* *p dolce* (joining clarinet imperceptibly) *sempre un poco cresc. colla voce*
 Ped. *pedal ad lib.*

Vln. ord. *ppp*

Vc. *ppp*

239 rit.

Fl. *f* *mf dolce*

Cl. *p* *f* *p*

G. *poco a poco cresc.* *f (extend ad lib.)*
 reach my shade and pain me just as sharp-ly as it pains my life.

Susp. Cym. Large *pp* *p*

Crot. *p* *f*

Vib. *p* *f*

Pno. *f* *clear pedal gradually*

Vln. *p espr.* *f* *pp*

Ve. *mf* *f* *p* *pp* *ord.*

||

244 *poco accel.* *A tempo* *She stops writing, lost in an unpleasant memory.* **4/4**

Fl. *p*

Cl. *mp dolce*

G. Mo - chi - dhe, Lu - lach, the dear - est gift you fa - ther gave - me..

Vib. *mp dolce* *p*

Vln. *p dolce* *mp*

Ve. *p dolce* *mp*

248 $\frac{4}{4}$ **P**

Fl. *p*

Cl. *p*

G. *mf*
My be - lo - - - ved Gille The hour of your death our son searched for you a - mid the

Timp. *pp* *p*

Gong *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*
lv. always lv. always

T-t. *pp*

Pno. *p*

Vln. *p*

Vc. *p*

252 *poco rit.* $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Fl. *mf*

Cl. *mf* To B. Cl.

G. *mf*
a - shes of our home. I could not bear to look too long u - pon that ti - ny face un - hap - py child

Timp. *mf*

B. D. (if possible only) lv. *p* *mp*

Gong *p* *mp*

T-t. *p* *mp*

Vib. *p dolce*

Pno. *mf* Ped. *clear pedal gradually*

Vln. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

257 $\frac{4}{4}$ Poco più mosso, tense

Fl. *mf* *f*

G. *sempre un poco cresc.*
 of a fa - ther too-soon and too-out-ra - geous-ly dis - patched in a fien - dish flame. *f*

Timp. *p*

Susp. Cym. Large *pp* *lv.* *mp*

Pno. *p* dark, menacing, dangerous *f*

260 $\frac{5}{8}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ **Q**

Fl. *ff* *3* *overblowing*

B. Cl. Bass Clarinet in B \flat *f* *ff* *f sanoro* *mf*

G. Un - hap - py child of a mo-ther re- *3*

Timp. *ff* *lv. sempre* *sfz* *mp*

Pno. *ff* *mp*

Vln. *ff* *Ricc. sul pont.* *mf*

Ve. *ff* *sul pont.* *molto sul pont.* *flautando* *p*

263 rit.

Fl. *p*

B. Cl. *p* To Cl.

G. *3*
 forged and fire - stained, mis - sha - pen and strange, more i - ron than flesh un - a - ble to em - brace and con - sole

Timp. *pp*

Susp. Cym. Large *pp*

Pno.

Vln. *mf*

Vc. *sempre poco diminuendo al niente*

molto rit. Meno mosso ♩ = ca. 52 poco rit.

266 $\frac{3}{4}$

Fl. *mp* *ppp*

Cl. *ppp* Clarinet in Bb

G. *mp* *molto ad lib. dolcissimo* *long ad lib.*
 him. My son, prince of no - thing, prince of the air. *ppp*

Susp. Cym. Large *p*

Vib. *p dolce, colla voce* *mp sempre dolce*

Pno.

Vc. *ppp*

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 48$ R poco rit. . . . $\frac{5}{4}$

272 (1st time only, no repeat) *She picks up the dagger once more and walks to the window.*

Fl. *p*

Cl. *p* To B. Cl.

Vib. *p*

Pno. *pp lontano*

Vin. *ppp-pp ad lib. subtle swells.* *pizz. p*

Vc. *p*

* With palm or finger tips, hit strings inside in the lower register. Clatter sound, resonant.
Pcd.

Alla punta
Slow movement sul tasto <-> sul pont. *ad lib.*

S $\frac{5}{4}$ A tempo ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 52$)

279

Fl. *pp sotto voce*

G. *p introspective*
Dawn, Wait still but a lit-tle while, that I might find the re-solveto de-part at last. *p dolce*
Lu lach, my son, rest-e-ver in sleep and meet

Vib. *pp* (optional: motor on slow/8th triplet feel)

Pno. *pp sotto voce e sempre legato*
p e sempre dim.
pedal *ad lib.*

Vin. arco, flaut. *p*

Vc. *mp* *pizz.* *p*

poco rit. **4/4** **3/4**

Fl. 283

G. *f* *She raises the dagger slowly.* *p*

Vib. *p* (motor off) *p*

Pno. *poco a poco cresc.* *pp dolce* *pp*

Vln. (III) *ppp* *p*

Vc.

T **3/4** A tempo (♩ = ca. 52)

Fl. 287

B. Cl. Bass Clarinet in Bb *pp sempre legato*

G. *mp nostalgico*
Gille, mo ghrádh, the tru-est love I e-ver knew, with

Timp. *pp*

Vib. *pp*

Pno. *p* Ped. *p*

Vln. flaut. *pp dolce* *p* *p* arco

Vc. *pp*

291

Fl. *p*

B. Cl. *mf* To Cl.

G. *mf*
eyes grey as rain - sha - dow, and a voice like a wel - come knock at my oa - ken door.

Pno. *mp*
simile, very resonant

Ve. *mp* pizz. *mf*



295

Fl. *pp*

Cl. *pp sempre* Clarinet in Bb *p*

G. Ten - der Gille, un - changed in death you re - main e - ver in my me - mo - ry.

Mar. *pp* *p*

Pno. *pp* *mp*

Vin. *pp* *pp sempre*

Ve. *mp*

poco rit. *A tempo* (♩ = ca.52)

VI. "In Our Hearts"

poco rit.

Molto ad lib.



Tempo rubato, colla voce (♩ = ca.48)

She begins to sing. Grouch little by little remembers a tune while thinking about Gille and her past life. It comes slowly, bittersweet, nostalgic.

299 To A. Fl.

Fl. *molto legato, breathe when needed as imperceptibly as possible*

Cl. *pp sotto voce* *sempre colla voce, molto espr. e dolce.*

G. *progressively lost in memories* *freely* *softly humm ad lib. like looking for the tune.* *p molto ad lib., almost whispering*
 How must I seem to you? In our hearts a seed we

Susp. Cym. Large *pp sempre* *lv. after first repetition.*

Susp. Cym. Small *pp sempre*

Pno. *hold key silently* *p*

Ped. *sostenuto pedal*

Vln. *arco, flaut.*

Vc. *p sotto voce*

305

Cl. *molto rit. colla voce* *(a tempo)*

G. *planned of a love like climbing I - vy that to - ge - ther did en -*

Pno. *p*
Pluck inside, delicate like strumming. If not possible play ord. very soft. (pedal ad lib.)

Vc. *pizz.* *slow strumming, delicate*

309 **6/8** $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$ **Allargando ad lib...** **9/8** **6/8**

Cl. *molto rit. colla voce* *(a tempo)*

G. twine us so to - ge - ther we might stay. In my

Gong *L.v.* *pp* *L.v.* *pp*

Pno.

Ve.

V

312 **6/8** **A tempo**

Cl.

G. *a bit more tuneful, but still ad lib.*
mouth I held a se - cret sweet - er than the gold - en

Pno.

Vln. *pizz. slow strum, mandoline style*
p delicate

Ve.

315 **Alto Flute**

Fl. *p dolce, accompagnando*

Cl.

G. ho - - ney that was yield - ed from the hea - ther grow - ing

Pno.

Vln.

Ve.

(Use Piano, cello, or both for sound balance.)

rit. **W** A tempo, ma molto ad lib.

318

A. Fl. *senza vibr.*
pp sotto voce

Cl. *senza vibr.*
pp sotto voce

G. *folk-like ad lib. ornamentation*
(Could be a cappella until the end of the tune)
wild in fair Mo - ray. In your hand a gift you car - ried of a crown for your be - lov - ed that was made of sweet prim -

Susp. Cym. Large

Crot. *arco lv.*
pp

Pno. *p sempre dolcissimo*
*

Vln. (lv.)

Vc. (lv.)
p sempre dolcissimo

* All: hold these pitches, use sostenuto pedal, and strain it gently up with fingernail and soft; the strings inside piano at the approximate range, so these pitches resonate more clearly.

325

A. Fl.

Cl.

G. *(Strings in the air, like playing an instrument)*
ros - es you had found a - long the way. In our hearts a seed we plan - ted of a love like climb - ing i - vy that to - ge - ther might yet

Pno.

Vc.

Senza misura

333

A. Fl. X V 3/4 4/4

Cl.

G. (maybe humming, maybe in an instrument) *p parlando quasi*
 bind us, e - ven when you've gone... Who was she Gillic? Does

Susp. Cym. Large *ppp* *lv.*

Pno. Pluck strings inside *ppp* *lv.*

Vln. arco flaut. *ppp colla voce* *pp* Keep playing until repetitions are over. Gradually to circular bowing while fading out.

Ve. *ppp* *pp* Senza misura. Repeat ad lib. somewhat echoing the tune, slowly, always fading out. Repeat as needed.

338 4/4 Ad lib. ♩ = ca. 66

A. Fl. *pp* *mp*

G. *mp* *mf*
 she yet live? How well you con-cealed the truth of our con - di - tion, the vi - o - lent ends, which are too of - ten the blood - y in - he - ri - tance of our sta - tion.

Gong always *lv.* *pp*

Pno. ord. *pp* *colla voce* *mp*

Vln. *pp* IV arco ord. poco sul tasto ad lib. very subtle and slow gliss

Ve. pizz.

344

A. Fl.

Cl. Bass Clarinet in Bb

G. *Griuch returns to her dagger.*
 Would that I could but dis-in-herit our son! At-ten-ding the hour of our re-u-nion, Gille, my hus-band, mo grädh,

Timp.

T-t.

Pno.

Vin.

Vc.

Opt: repeat, *sempre dim. al niente e rit.*

arco increase pressure

Y Poco più mosso ♩ = ca. 72 poco accel.

349

A. Fl.

B. Cl.

G. *Once more, she raises the dagger high in the air.*
 res-cue me! For-sake me not and help me die that I might once more re-

S. D.

B. D.

T-t.

Pno.

Vin.

Vc.

ord. IV III

accel. **Z** Agitato ♩ = ca. 86

3/4

354

A. Fl. *mf* *f* *ff marcato* overblowing

B. Cl. *mf* *ff* *ff marcato* (h)

G. *f furiosa*
 turn to your em-brace. Are you so cruel? Or am I so weak

Timp. *mf* *ff* *f*

S. D. *mp* *sf* *sf* *sf* *ff*

Pno. *mp* *f* *ff marcato*

Vln. *mf* *f* *ff energico* sul pont.

Ve. *mp* *f* *ff energico* ord.

358

A. Fl. *mf* *f* *ff* *molto accel.*

B. Cl. *mf* *f* *ff*

G. *f* *ff* *ff*
 that my hand yet lin-gers cut-ting a-ra-besques in the air?

Timp. *mf* *f* *p* *f* *ff*

T.-t. *mf*

Pno. *ff*
gradually exaggerate dynamics, ma sempre cresc.

Vln. *ff*

Ve. *ff*

(Speeding up a lot to a "ghostly-swirl" effect)

A1 VII. Duncan's Ghost

Fast, but senza misura

4/4 ∇ ad lib. overblowing breathe when needed. ∇ 2/4 ∇ ord. 4/4 Lento, ad lib.

A. Fl. *ppp* \leftarrow *fff* \rightarrow *pp*

B. Cl. *ff* *ppp* \leftarrow *fff* \rightarrow *pp* ord.

G. *Gruoch shrudders.* *mp a bit worried*

Tim. *L.v.* *ff* *ppp*

Susp. Cym. Large *pp* \leftarrow *f* \rightarrow *ppp* *simile ma sempre dim* *L.v.*

Susp. Cym. Small *pp* \leftarrow *f* \rightarrow *ppp* *L.v.*

Pno. *fff* *p sub.* \leftarrow *fff* \rightarrow *ppp* *Molto ad lib. After one pass, feel free to alter the order of the notes keeping the motion sempre ppp e dim. (una corda)* *L.v.* *(no attack)*

Vln. *fff* *p sub.* \leftarrow *fff* \rightarrow *pp* *flautando*

Vc. *fff* *p sub.* \leftarrow *fff* \rightarrow *pp* *flautando*

Poco più mosso (♩ = ca. 100) ma sempre ad lib.

Meno mosso

365 *With cold certainty* *mf confrontational* *p* *apparently calm*

G. pas-ses hence? Dun-can! Will you not em-brace your kin? Peace, I will not twice vi - o - late

Tim. *L.v.* *p* *(Mute here if needed)*

T-t. *mp*

Pno. *mp (Lowest cluster)* *mf secco* *p* *pp* *pp* *mp*

Pedal II
Alt.: Hit low strings inside the piano

370 To Fl. poco accel.

A. Fl. *pp* *mp* *p* *f*

B. Cl. *pp < mp* *p* *f* To Cl.

G. our sa - cred rules of hos - pi - ta - li - ty. One-hun-dred thou-sand wel-comes, sha-dow-king.

B. D. *mf* *pp* *ff*

Pno. *mf* *fp* *fff*

Vln. *pizz.* *p* *mp* *p* *f* Hit strings + metal beam

Ve. *p < mp* *p* *f*

Poco più mosso ♩ = ca. 110 poco accel.

376 [Flute] *p sempre cresc.* *mf* *p* *mf* *f* 3/8 3/4

[Clarinet in Bb] *p sempre cresc.* *mf* *p* *mf* *f*

G. *mp with intensity* *sempre un poco cresc.* *mf* *mf* *f*
 Had you shown for-bear-ance you might yet have en - coun-tered your son. He comes to oc - cu - py my bed-cham-ber, with trem - bling jack-knife in hand.

Timp. *p* *f*

Pno. *mp* *sfz p* *tr 1/2*

Vln. *(pizz.)* *p sempre cresc.* *mf* *p* *mf* *f* arco

Ve. *(pizz.)* *p sempre cresc.* *mf*

B1
3 Agitato ♩ = ca. 120
4

4
4

381

Fl. *f* *mf* *f* *p colla voce*

Cl. *f* *mf* *f* *p*

G. Come, ghost, Look long on my hap-py face! Can't you here to wit-ness some

Timp. *p* *mf*

Pno. *f* *mf* *f* *p sub*

Vln. *f* *mf* *f* *p colla voce*

Vc. *mf* *f* *p espr.* *mp*

Poco meno (♩ = ca. 110)

poco accel.

385

Fl. *mp* *f* *p* *mp* *mp*

Cl. *f* *p* *mp* *mp*

G. a - tom of re-morse (but) Per - haps you mis-took my night - ly pa - ces as e - vi-dence of my shame?

Vib. *p* *f* *p* *mp* *p*

Pno. *p* *p sempre*

Vln. *mp* *f* *p* *arco, flaut.* *pp*

Vc. *pp* *f* *mp* *p* *mp*

C1 ♩ = ca. 120

390

Fl. *f* *p* *pp* *mp* *mp* *sf* *p*

Cl. *f* *p* *pp* *mp*

G. *f* Truth, you'll have cou sin. My steps are blame - dri - ven but not for thee. Blood is our birth-right, Dun - can, yours and

Crot. *p* Lv.

Pno. *f* *pp* *mp* Ped.

Vln. *f* pizz.

Ve. *f* pizz. *p* arco *p colla voce* *mp* *p* *p*

Poco meno (♩ = ca. 110)

395

Fl. *mf* *p sub.*

Cl. *mp* *pp* *p* *mf*

G. mine and we would soon - er dye the o - ceans red than wash a - way the sins of our clan. Your death and Gille's, Mac -

Timp. *p* *mf*

Pno. *pp* *mp* *pp* *mf* *f secco* *p* (white keys gliss.)

Vln. *p* arco *leggero*

Ve. *p* arco *leggero* *mf*

400 poco accel.

Fl. *mf* < *p*

Cl. *mf* < *p* *pp* *p* *mf*

G. *mf* *p* *pp* *p* *mf*

Mar. *pp* *p* *mf*

Pno. *mf* *f* *pp sub.* *p* *mf*

Vln. *mf* < *p* *pp* *p* *mf*

Vc. *pp* *p* *mf*

beth's and my own, these are but a con - se - quence of Na - ture of the ebb - ing tides

D1

poco rit. Poco meno mosso (♩ = ca. 100)
(3 times)

404

Fl. *mp* *ff* *p* *pp*

Cl. *ff* *p* *pp*

G. *ff* *p* *pp*

Vib. *pp* *p* *pp*

Mar. *ff*

Pno. *ff* *p*

Vln. *ff* *p* *pp* *ppp*

Vc. *ff* *p* *pp*

For a moment, Gruchó doesn't talk to the ghost directly.
p soft, self-conscious

of pros - pe - ri - ty. My com - pas - sion ex -

(last time only)

pedal ad lib. very resonant

408

Fl.

Cl.

G.

Crot.

Pno.

Vln.

Ve.

pp

p

ppp

arco

pp

pp

ppp

ppp

sempre legato, blurry

ppp sempre

flautando

ppp

p espr.

mp

pp

8va

8va

8va

413

Cl.

G.

Susp. Cym. Large

Susp. Cym. Small

T.-t.

Crot.

Pno.

E1

2/4

4/4

3/4 poco rit.

4/4 Lento, ad lib.

pp *solo voce*

Suddenly changing mood, back to ghost confrontation.

mf incisive

ppp sempre

pp

pp profondo

loco

p

pp

Ped.

Ped.

8va

8va

Lv.

Lv.

Lv.

Poco più mosso (♩ = ca. 100)
A piacere, colla voce

419

Cl. *p* *pp*

G. *ad lib.*
thou re - coup from me some mea - sure of life and re - pay mur - der with mur - der?

B. D. *ppp*

Pno. *pp*

Vln. *pizz.* *mp* *p*

Vc. *pizz.* *mp* *p*

* Lowest cluster: also: Inside the piano hit palm in lowest register

poco accel. **F1** Agitato ♩ = ca. 120

424

Fl. *ppp sempre cresc.* *p* *mf* *f* *mf*

Cl. *ppp sempre cresc.* *p* *mf* *f* *mf*

G. *Gruoch takes the dagger and holds it by the blade, hilt out, offering it directly to Duncan's ghost. Blood begins to drip from her hand.* *to the ghost*
Come, then! with my blood quench your

B. D. *pp* *p* *mf*

Pno. *ppp sempre cresc.* *p* *mf* *f* *mf*

* *Alt.: instead chords, add. metal beam hit to cluster on strings.*

Vln. *arco* *ppp sempre cresc.* *p* *mf* *f* *mf*

Vc. *arco* *ppp sempre cresc.* *p* *mf* *f* *mf*

430 $\frac{5}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Fl. f p mp f

Cl. f p f

G. f p mp f

lyrics: fie - ry hate, and may this i-chor suf- fice to ex-tin- guish hell but for a mo - ment a

Timp. f

Susp. Cym. Small p f *scrape* *scato*

Pno. f p pp

Vln. f

Vec. f mp *espr.* mf pp f

434 $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

Fl. p mp mf *flz.* mf f mf p mf p

Cl. mf f mf p mf p

G. f

lyrics: res- pite brief and sweet e- nough to am- pli - fy your e - ver - las- ting tor - ment. Come, then! or else be gone and

Vib. p mp p

Pno. p

Vln. mf f mf p mf p

Vec. mp f mf *espr.*

Senza misura
Dropout,
just resonance

439 $\frac{4}{4}$

Fl. *mf* *mf* *f* *ff* *sfz*

Cl. *mf* *f* *ff* *sfz*

G. feast ins-tead on that car-ri-on Mac-beth, whose al-rea-dy rot-ter soul might sus-tain you bet-ter.

T-t. scrape *p* Lv. *mf*

Mar. *p* *f* *ff*

Pno. *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *ff* *sfz*

Vln. *mf* *mf* *f* *ff* *sfz*

Vc. *p* *f* *mf* *f* *ff* *sfz*

Ped.

G1

She seems surprised that he does not take the dagger.

Lento, ad lib.

444 $\frac{5}{8}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{5}{8}$ *un poco parlando, molto ad lib.*

G. Are you a man? Do you yet de-ny your self? Mark me, I will show you how a wo-man dies by her own will.

B. D. *pppp un poco cresc.* *ppp gradually more ominous* *pochissimo crescendo, like approaching* Keep previous tempo but poco rit. as it fades out. (disappears)

Susp. Cym. Large

Pno. *pppp un poco cresc.* *ppp gradually more ominous* *pochissimo crescendo, like approaching* Keep previous tempo but poco rit. as it fades out.

sostenuto pedal
* If possible, keep the resonance from before.
Hit inside the piano on low strings and/or metal beam with soft mallet.
Alternatively, lowest cluster.

Senza misura **3** Lontano ♩ = ca. 46
4

450

Fl. *ppp sotto voce*

Cl. *ppp sotto voce*

G. *parlando ad lib.* *She draws the dagger close, her eyes locked on the ghost. After a moment, she turns away.*
"Nothing more will I say to you"
(alt.: omit this phrase)

B. D.

Vib. *pp sempre, emergendo un po'*
Play several times the motif very slow; slightly irregular length, like an echo vanishing.
gradually vanishing

Pno. *pppp lontano, una corda*
(disappears) *diminuendo al niente*

Vln. *con sord. flautando, poco vibr.*
pp lontano, poco espr.

poco accel. To reach new tempo almost seamlessly

454

Fl. *pp*

Cl. *pp*

Vib. (disappears)

Pno. *ppp*

Vln.

H1 VIII. Farewell

♩ = ca. 60

459

Fl.

Cl.

G.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

pp dolce

p dolce

Mo chri - dhe, Lu - lach, Mo chri - dhe trom s'du - - - laich.

pp sempre legato e dolce

ppp

464

Fl.

Cl.

G.

Pno.

Vln.

Vc.

pp *sotto voce*

p dolce

mp espress.

colla voce

For - give me, for - give your im - per - fect mo - ther, Who loved you in all

pp

p

mp

poco sul tasto

pp

p

mp

p

469

Fl.

Cl.

G.

Timp.

Pno.

Vln.

mp

mp

her best. Who loved you e - nough to lose you, to per - mit your ba-nish-ment,

p *mp*

mf

(joining clarinet imperceptibly) *p*

pedal gradually

pedal ad lib.

senza sord. ord.

sempre un poco cresc. colla voce

474

rit.

Fl. *mf* *p*

Cl. *mf* *p*

G. *f* *p*
 gi - ven in charge by Mac - - - beth, your fa - thers' bane.

Crot. *p*

Vib. *mf* *p* *p un poco rubato ma sempre tranquillo*

Pno. *pp*
clear pedal gradually

Vin. *mf* *p*

==

Poco meno mosso (♩ = ca. 52)

478

rit. **4/4**

G. Mo chri - dhe, Lu - lach, Mo chri - dhe trom s'du - - - laich.

Vib. *mp dolc.* *p*

Pno.

Vin. *p*

Ve. *p*

I1

4/4 Largo (♩ = ca. 42)

483

Fl. *pp sempre*

Cl. *pp sempre*

T-t. *pp* (l.v.)

Pno. *pp sempre*

Vln. *pp sempre*

Vc. *pp sempre*



J1

486

Fl. *p*

Cl. *p*

G. *p*

Timp. (l.v. sempre) *p*

Pno. *p*

Vln. *p*

Vc. *p*

The words I so des-perate-ly seek out-run me, and I have run out the clock. Now I must

poco rit.

490

Fl. *mf*

Cl. *mf* To B. Cl.

G. *mf*
move to quell the re - bel - lion that is my life.

Timp.

Vib. *pp dolce*

Pno. *mf* *perdendosi* *pp freely* *8va*

Vln. *mf* *p*

Vec. *mf* *p*

3/4 4/4

||

494

Fl. *p*

B. Cl. Bass Clarinet in B \flat *pp* To Cl.

Timp. *pp always in the background*

♩ = 48

4/4 3/4 (4 times) 4/4

K1

She takes the dagger.

4/4 ♩ = 70 **sempre un poco accel.**

498

Fl. *p*

Cl. (Clarinet in B \flat) *p*

Timp. Keep the the pattern without changing tempo or dynamics.
Little by little disappearing.

Pno. *pp* *sempre legato, blurry*

Vln. *p*

Vc. (IV) *p* (I)

Agitato (♩ = ca. 92) **accel.**

502

Fl. *mf* *f*

Cl. *mf* *f*

Vib. *p* *mf*

Pno. *mp* *p* *mf*

Vln. *mf* *f*

Vc. *mf* *f*

515 Bass Clarinet in B \flat

B. Cl. *pp sempre*

G. *pp* *ord.*
rea - di - ly it turns to wi - ry rope in my hand. How rea - di - ly so ma - ny years come un - ra - veled,

Vib. *pp*

Pno.

Vln. *ppp sempre* circular bowing with minimal bow pressure
flautando

Vc. *pp*

520

B. Cl.

G. and how de - ser - ving - ly these threads a - wait the loom. Were I to

Vln.

Vc.

524 **M1**

B. Cl. *p sempre legato*

G. *pp* *molto ad lib*
weave them to - ge - ther, what ta - pes - try would re - sult?

Timp. *pp*

Crot. *pp* *molto ad lib*
(Play only instead of crotales if needed)

Pno. *ppp* *molto ad lib*

Vln.

Vc. *p* *profondo*

529

B. Cl. *mp*

Timp. *lv.*

T.-t. *lv.* *p*

Vib. *p*

Pno. *ppp*

Vln. (upper voice optional) circular bowing with minimal bow pressure *pp sempre*

Vcl. (upper voice optional) circular bowing with minimal bow pressure *pp sempre*

||

N1

535

Fl. *pp*

B. Cl. *p*

G. *p ceremonioso*
 "Cò thu - sa?" Once, I was a no - ble daugh - ter. "Cò

Timp. (upper note options!) *p*

Pno. *pp sotto voce*

Vln. *pp*

Vcl. *pp*

540

Fl. *pp*

B. Cl.

G. *pp* *p*

thú - sa?" The wi - dow of Gille Coem - gain.

Timp. *pp* *p*

Pno.

Vln. *pp*

Vc.

544

Fl. *pp* *p*

B. Cl. *poco cresc.* *mp*

G. "C'ó thú - sa?" a wret - ched or - phán's mo - ther. You ask a -

lv.

Timp.

Gong *pp sempre*

Vib. *pp* *mp*

Pno.

Vln. *pp*

01 Poco più mosso (♩ = 60)

548

Fl.

B. Cl.

G.

Susp. Cym. Large

Gong

Pno.

Ve.

gain, "Cò thu - - sa? Art thou the La - dy Mac - beth,

short and soft scrape Lv. *p*

pizz. *p*



accel.

551

Fl.

B. Cl.

G.

Crot.

Vib.

Pno.

Vln.

Ve.

Con - sort Queen of Al - - - ba?"

mf

mf

f

mf

mf

♩ = ca. 76 *molto accel.* Senza Misura

554

Fl. *ff*

B. Cl.

Crot. *f* *ff* *lv.*

Pno. *ff* *sfz* *lv.*
Ped. *lv.*

Vln. *ff*

Vc. *f* *ff* *sfz*
IV arco (arco) III IV simile
III (last pizz.)

P1

Tempo ad lib. (♩ = ca. 50)

557

B. Cl. *pp* *subtle*

G. *quasi parlando, coniso*
Let them say, The queen, my lord, is dead.

Timp. *pp* *subtle* *lv.*

T.-t. *pp* *subtle* *lv.*

Pno. *pp* *subtle* *lv.*
Ped. *lv.*

Vc. *pp* *subtle* *lv.*
pizz. *lv.*

560

B. Cl.

G. *p serene*
Is mi - se Gru - och. I a - lone re -

Timp. *pp*

B. D. *pp* l.v.

T.-t. *pp* l.v.

Pno. Ped.

Ve.



Ad lib. ♩ = ca. 112 Blackout

563

Fl. *pp* 5 6

B. Cl. *pp* 5

G. main. (fades out before the end of the gesture in the ensemble)

Susp. Cym. Large *pp* l.v.

Susp. Cym. Small *pp* l.v.

Pno. *pp* 3 3 Ped.

Vln. *pp* 5

Ve. *pp* 3

The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead

*Opera / Monodrama in One Act
for soprano and chamber ensemble*

Story by Michelle Rice

Libretto by Alejandra Villarreal Martinez

Music by Tomàs Peire Serrate

Libretto

THE QUEEN, MY LORD, IS DEAD

Libretto by Alejandra Villarreal Martinez

Gruoch enters her dark chamber slowly, gliding smoothly across the room as if in a dream. She seats herself at her table and lights a candle.

Do I sleep?
Or have the nightly travels
Of this restless pilgrim
Ceased at last?

Hateful portent of dawn,
You ignite and burn away
The starry mantle
Which sheltered me from destiny.

Malcolm courses forward
Hot and eager to uncouple
Macduff and Siward,
That they might
Tear apart my body
In mine own den.

Malcolm comes to take
What I have won —
To win it from me
By the same bloody means —
Doubtless, he hesitates not.

By that measure are we
Doubly-kin
And so too unlike Macbeth.
Yet Fate mocks my husband,
Makes ready his coronation
And summons forth Malcolm
To anoint his head in blood.

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Yes, Fate abides,
And I too,
For I helped hang that morning star,
Which will judge my husband,
Who could, but for his beggar-fear,
Have reigned Alban King!
I deny it not, nor do I avoid
The measure of judgment
That shall fall on mine own head.
I neglected how desperately
Macbeth would overgorge himself on blood
Needlessly, stupidly spilled.

That morn, very like this one,
I gazed upon Duncan,
Whose ruddy vigor had all but left him,
Too starkly red set off
Against the pallor of his skin...

Was it ever as beautiful
As it was wreathed 'round his head?
A bloody crown,
I thought to claim it then,
Bathing my hands
In its intoxicating liquor
Dried up and fragrant on my fingers.

It was the first I had seen of blood
Since Macbeth had stolen me
From the shores of Moray.
He loved me, in his way,
He, who was both bridge and chasm.
Who was the greater fool?

Yes, he loved me,
And by my withered womb,
achieves his own extinction.
Gladly I make the exchange,
Though it beggars me.

I will hold court with Death
Whom I welcome
Alone, unburdened,
Unchained to the unworthy legacy
Of an unwanted child.

Addressing the dagger.

Come, Death,
And find in me a kinswoman
Who will suffer no life
Within her poisoned body.

She raises the dagger to her throat, and stops.

What, truant!
Will you desert your office
And deny your mistress
A good death?
Do you feign wisdom
To make minutes of seconds
And days of hours?

By Malcolm's sword
Or mine own dagger,
The outcomes are equal in grace.
Grace, my mother wanted,
When, arrested at time's end...

My inexpert hands,
Would chase the shuttle
As my mother taught me,
With quiet voice over my shoulder
And brittle fingers making
Tight plaits of my hair.

Beauty and discipline
Woven into me by a woman
Too familiar
To be altogether strange.

Was it from love
That she taught me
To bear such pain
With a silence so pregnant
That any moment, it might yield
A fury so full of life?

And yet we longed for her touch,
My rage and I.
And yet we long for it still,
In this hour when I am undone,
Unwoven, unlaced.

Grace, my mother wanted,
When, arrested at time's end...

Consigned to the captivity
Of her bedchamber
I, warden and chambermaid,
Kept vigil,
Watching the taper-light
Flicker and burn low,
Reflected in her half-lidded eyes.

I entangled our fingers,
Boldened in grief,
And introduced my gaze to hers,
Jaundiced and grey
In advancing death.

"Mother," my voice intruded
On our silent meditation.
Your too-lucid shock
And your croaking reply:
"Cò thusa?"

Gruoch rises.

Who are you?
Who am I?

Lady, so nimbly you slipped
Your earthly bands,
I could scarce mark
The moment of your escape.
Could you not have endured my answer?
Did I fright your fledgling soul
To fly away into eternity?

She returns to her table, and the dagger.

Grace, my mother wanted,
When, arrested at time's end...

By Grace she was forsworn,
Her demise met
With staring eyes,
Gaping, drooling mouth —
An animal's death,
A rough, vulgar death,
Too clumsy,
Like a stumble in the darkness.

How unlike her was her death.
Will you forsake me too, Grace,
And shake off my hand
Just as I step into that threshold?

What is a daughter
But a beloved tapestry?
What is a mother
But an absolute weaver?

Yet, I hesitate.

From whence this pause,
Petitioned by a brain
That knows too well
How to discern between deaths,
Bad and good?
Too soon, too hasty,

A retreat not befitting
The Queen of Alba.

Mo chridhe, Lulach, my heart,
Mo chridhe trom s'dulaich.
Heavy-burdened,
I write these words for thee, my son,
M'eudail, my darling lamb, sweet boy,
Not that they should trouble you,
For, truly, your heart's ache
Would reach my shade,
And pain me just as sharply
As it pains my life.

Mo chridhe, Lulach,
The dearest gift your father gave me...
My beloved Gille,
The hour of your death
Our son searched for you,
Amid the ashes of our home.

I could not bear
To look too long
Upon that tiny face,

Unhappy child
Of a father too-soon and
Too-outrageously dispatched
In fiendish flame.

Unhappy child
Of a mother re-forged
And firestained,
Misshapen and strange,
More iron than flesh,
Unable to embrace and console him.

My son, prince of nothing,
Prince of the air.

Dawn,
Wait still but a little while,
That I might find the resolve
To depart at last.

Lulach, my son,
Rest-ever in sleep,
And meet not with Death,
Into whose dominion
Sure-footed, I am bound to enter...
Where thy kingly father resides.

She raises the dagger slowly.

Oh Gille, mo ghràdh,
The truest love I ever knew,
With eyes grey as rain-shadow,
And a voice like a welcome knock
At my oaken door.

Tender Gille,
Unchanged in death
You remain ever
In my memory.

How must I seem to you?

She begins to sing.

In our hearts a seed we planted
Of a love like climbing ivy
That together did entwine us
So together we might stay.

In my mouth I held a secret
Sweeter than the golden honey
That was yielded from the heather
Growing wild in fair Moray.

In your hand a gift you carried
Of a crown for your beloved
That was made of sweet primroses
You had found along the way.

In our hearts a seed we planted
Of a love like climbing ivy
That together might yet bind us,
Even when you've gone...

Who was she, Gille?
Does she yet live?

How well you concealed
The truth of our condition:
The violent ends,
Which are too often
The bloody inheritance of our station.

Would that I could but
Disinherit our son!

Gruoch returns to her dagger.

Attending the hour
Of our reunion,
Gille, my husband, mo ghràdh,
Rescue me!
Forsake me not
And help me die

Once more, she raises the dagger high in the air.

That I might once more
Return to your embrace.

Are you so cruel?
Or am I so weak
That my hand yet lingers,
Cutting arabesques in the air?

Gruoch shudders.

What spirit
Trespasses hence?

With cold certainty.

Duncan!
Will you not embrace your kin?
Peace, I will not twice-violate
Our sacred rules of hospitality.
One hundred thousand welcomes, shadow-king.

Had you shown forbearance,
You might yet have
Encountered your son.
He comes to occupy my bedchamber,
With trembling jack-knife in hand.

Come, Ghost,
Look long on my happy face!
Cam'st you here to witness
Some atom of remorse?

Gruoch laughs derisively.

Perhaps you mistook my nightly paces
As evidence of my shame?
Truth, you'll have, cousin.
My steps are blame-driven,
But not for thee.

Blood is our birthright, Duncan,
Yours and mine,
And we would sooner dye the oceans red
Than wash away the sins of our clan.
Your death and Gille's,
Macbeth's and my own,
These are but a consequence of Nature,
Of the ebbing tides of prosperity.

For a moment, Gruoch doesn't talk to the ghost directly.

My compassion extends
Only as far as those lackeys,
Whom I made to bear
The consequence of your death,
Their paschal blood
Yet perfumes my hands
And rouses in me
Heavy and sleepless regret.

What palpable, incontinent envy!
Would'st thou recoup from me
Some measure of life
And repay murder with murder?

*Gruoch takes the dagger and holds it by the blade, hilt out, offering it directly to Duncan's ghost.
Blood begins to drip from her hand.*

Come, then!
With my blood, quench your fiery hate,
And may this ichor suffice
To extinguish hell but for a moment —
A respite brief and sweet enough
To amplify your everlasting torment.

Come, then!
Or else begone
And feast instead
On that carrion Macbeth,
Whose already rotted soul
Might sustain you better.

Are you a man?
Do you yet deny yourself?
Mark me,
I will show you
How a woman dies
By her own will.

She draws the dagger close, her eyes locked on the ghost. After a moment, she turns away.

Nothing more will I say to you.

Mo chridhe, Lulach,
Mo chridhe trom s'dulaich.
Forgive me,
Forgive your imperfect mother,
Who loved you in all her best.
Who loved you enough
To lose you,
To permit your banishment,
Given in charge
By Macbeth,
Your father's bane.

Mo chridhe, Lulach,
Mo chridhe trom s'dulaich.
The words I so desperately seek
Outrun me,
And I have run out the clock.
Now I must move
To quell the rebellion
That is my life.

She takes the dagger. In one swift, decisive movement, she cuts her neatly braided hair.

What was once
My womanly silken crown,
Polished by oil and ivory —
How readily it turns
To wiry rope in my hand.

How readily so many years
Come unraveled, and how deservingly
These threads await the loom.
Were I to weave them together,
What tapestry would result?

“Cò thusa?”

Once, I was a noble daughter.

“Cò thusa?”

The widow of Gille Coemgáin.

“Cò thusa?”

A wretched orphan’s mother.

You ask again, “Cò thusa?
Art thou the Lady Macbeth,
Consort Queen of Alba?”

Let them say,
The queen, my lord, is dead.

Is mise Gruoch.
I alone remain.

BLACKOUT

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MATERIAL

Appendix D: *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead*, Video of the World Premiere

The video of the world premiere performance can be found online at the show's website, or on YouTube.

<https://www.thequeenopera.com/>.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMD6HpKY-9Q>.

The audio of the world premiere performance is available as a supplemental file to this dissertation on the ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global database.

Appendix E: *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead*, Studio Audio Recording

On March 11th and 12th of 2023, the score of *The Queen, My Lord, Is Dead* was recorded in the Ostin Music Center Recording Studio, part of the Herb Alpert School of Music, on the University of California Los Angeles campus. The musicians who played the world premiere are also featured on the recording.

Conductor.....Stephen Karr
Gruoch, Macbeth’s Lady.....Michelle Rice, soprano
Flute.....Christine Tivolacci
Clarinet.....Andrew Leonard
Percussion.....Ben Phelps
Piano.....Sky Haneul Lee
Violin.....Leila Nuñez-Fredell
Cello.....Joo Lee

The recording engineer was Steve Kaplan, and the recording was produced by Peter Rutenberg. When post-processing is completed, the recording will be available on the opera’s website, <https://www.thequeenopera.com/>, and available through online streaming services.

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