Winkler, Amanda Eubanks, and Richard Schoch. "Case Studies: *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*." *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Sir William Davenant and the Duke's Company*. London: The Arden Shakespeare, 2022. 119–142. *Bloomsbury Collections*. Web. 26 Apr. 2023. <<http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781350130609.ch-006>>.

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6

Case Studies: *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*

In 1666 Samuel Pepys went to Lincoln's Inn Fields to see the Duke's Company perform one of his favourite plays, Davenant's adaptation of *Macbeth*. He described it as 'a most excellent play in all respects, but especially in divertisement, though it be a deep tragedy; which is a strange perfection in a tragedy, it being most proper here and suitable'.¹ What did Pepys mean by 'strange perfection'? What particular combination of elements did Davenant create in his popular Shakespeare adaptation that bewitched audiences and proved so lucrative for his company for so many years? This chapter seeks to understand Davenant's 'strange perfection': how it worked in his two most successful adaptations, *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*; how it was taken up by Thomas Betterton and transferred to the new theatre at Dorset Garden; and, finally, how the rival King's Company responded to and critiqued the Duke's Company's aesthetic in the 1670s.

Macbeth

Davenant made many textual changes when he adapted Shakespeare, although most Restoration playgoers would not have noticed. Shakespeare had not been played onstage for

many years, so, quite simply they had no point of comparison. Still, Davenant, a consummate man of the theatre, keenly understood what his audience desired, and it was not an unexpurgated *Macbeth*. Thus, Davenant modernized the language, regularized the meter, avoided mythological or classical allusions, and cut obscure or archaic language. He eschewed metaphors, eliminated any smut, cursing, or blasphemy, and drew sharper distinctions between vice and virtue, focusing particular attention on the ethics of ambition.²

Davenant wasn't afraid to tinker with plot and characters: in *Macbeth* he streamlined the plot and clarified character motivations, reduced the number of roles, and amplified the opportunities for the women in his company. To showcase his actresses, he expanded the role of Lady Macduff, who served as a moral foil for the immoral Lady Macbeth, and increased the number of speaking witches from three to four (some of these roles may have been played by women). He also reduced the number of roles to 'right-size' the play for his company, eliminating ten characters, including the comical Porter.³

And yet it is wrong-headed to think of Davenant's *Macbeth* as simpler or less multivalent than Shakespeare's version. He carefully pruned Shakespeare's poetic language to make space for a complexity accomplished through intermedial rather than textual means. In Davenant's *Macbeth*, the costumes, the changeable scenery, and the 'divertisement' of dancing and music worked together to enrich the drama, a 'strange perfection' that rendered the tragedy whole and complete.⁴

Our chapter on theatrical space and technology examined what little we know about the scenic and technical aspects of *Macbeth* as staged by the Duke's Company in the 1660s and 1670s. In this chapter we focus primarily on how music for *Macbeth* provided 'divertisement', how it functioned with other elements to produce a 'strange perfection'. A few pieces of music by Matthew Locke survive that were used in the 1660s productions of *Macbeth*. These old tunes enjoyed staying power, for they seem to have been carried over, potentially in expanded form, into the 1670s productions at

Dorset Garden. Indeed, one dance from the 1660s score was even transplanted into Richard Leveridge's musical setting from 1702, a setting we discuss in Chapter 7. To explore the intermedial variety of Davenant's adaptation, and how it was taken up and expanded in the 1670s by Betterton, we shall focus on two of the musical witches' scenes in *Macbeth*: Act 2, Scene 5 and Act 3, Scene 8.

In Act 2, Scene 5 Davenant highlighted the slippery nature of music: are the witches funny, horrific, or a bit of both? The Macduffs are likewise unsure what to make of them, for one of them hears strangeness, while the other hears hell. Upon Duncan's murder, an apprehensive Lady Macduff flees the court with her children and servants and arranges to meet her husband on a secluded and barren heath. Shortly after their reunion, the Macduffs are taken aback by the sudden appearance of witches, who extol regicide in their song 'Speak, sister, speak'.⁵ Matthew Locke's early setting of the song does not survive, but the text suggests that it began with recitative dialogue among the witches, followed by a chorus of 'rejoicing' when 'good king's bleed'. This musical interlude provokes divergent reactions from the Macduffs. Although Macduff is terrified by the witches' evil celebration, Lady Macduff gently chastises him, reminding him that he is a courageous warrior: 'This is most strange: but why seem you affraid? / Can you be capable of fears, who have so often caus'd it in your enemies?' Macduff defends himself, explaining 'It was an [*sic*] hellish Song: I cannot dread / Ought that is mortal; but this is something more'.⁶

Davenant revealed 'something more' about the mysterious witches in the second song, 'Let's have a dance'. The music for a dance tune associated with *Macbeth* survives in various publications from the late 1660s and, as Robert Moore has shown, the words of 'Let's have a dance' fit this melody, which potentially allows us to reconstruct what Davenant's audience (and the onstage audience, the Macduffs) heard (see Figure 8).⁷ There is nothing overtly threatening about the sound of this song, although the jig rhythms allude to a longstanding

FIGURE 8 Locke, 'Let's have a dance' reconstruction, opening. Score reconstructed from contemporary sources by Amanda Eubanks Winkler.

connection between witchcraft and sexual profligacy. In the early modern period, a jig could be either a comic song-and-dance full of low and bawdy humour or a dance with a tilting rhythm that complemented its leaping movements.⁸ The audience for Davenant's *Macbeth* would have been aware of the sexual and comical associations with the jig, and these conventions would have shaped impressions of the jaunty tune in a major key tune with dark and violent lyrics: 'Let's have a dance upon the Heath; / We gain more life by *Duncan's* death'.⁹ Thus, through the juxtaposition of music and lyric, the witches are both disturbing and entertaining.

While the offstage audience were probably horrified and enchanted in equal measure by the witches' antics, Davenant's onstage couple also reacted to what they saw and heard, revealing both the Macduffs' admirable courage and their weakness of perception. Lady Macduff remains unperturbed by the witches. Her 'vertue' protects her; she is too good, too 'innocent', to tremble at a silly jig or fall prey to infernal musical manipulation. Her husband approvingly exclaims:

Am I made bold by her? how strong a guard
 Is innocence? if any one would be
 Reputed valiant, let him learn of you;
 Vertue both courage is, and safety too.¹⁰

Sadly for the Macduffs, having a healthy marriage based on mutual respect provides no exemption from tragedy: quite the opposite. Despite Lady Macduff's admonition to her husband that 'Messengers of Darkness never spake / To men, but to deceive them', Macduff still asks the witches to tell his future, engaging in the same folly as Macbeth.¹¹ And while Lady Macduff might accurately understand the sound of the witches' music, she seems to miss the very real menace of their lyrics. She is actually wrong about their powers – they may indulge in comedic and grotesque song and dance, but they accurately foretell the Macduffs' doom. Thus, Lady Macduff's behaviour (and that of her husband) is simultaneously wrong-headed and laudable.

These divergent onstage reactions to the witches' music also foreshadow a fissure in the Macduff's relationship that will reach its apex in the following act. Macduff's downfall comes when he once again fails to listen to his wife and misreads a situation, leading to dire consequences. In Act 3, Lady Macduff warns her husband to resist the siren song of ambition, suggesting that his desire to wrest the throne from Macbeth would make him no better than the usurping tyrant himself. A few scenes later, when preparing to flee the court, Macduff completely misjudges the danger to his wife and children because he erroneously thinks that Macbeth would not be so cruel as to kill the weak and helpless. Lady Macduff, more perceptive in this case than her husband, accurately predicts the slaughter of her family.

Davenant's witches may actually be menacing, they may wield real and dangerous powers, but it is all too easy to be diverted by their charming sounds. Whereas their songs in Act 2 directly participate in the drama as they celebrate the regicide of King Duncan, in Act 3, Scene 8 they show up with little dramatic provocation, simply to provide the 'divertisement' that Restoration audiences craved. Here we see another facet of Davenant's pragmatic and practical approach to adaptation. Rather than writing another completely new musical scene, he stitched together various pre-existing materials. Early in

Macbeth's performance history, scenes from Thomas Middleton's *The Witch* featuring the comical hag Hecate and her tuneful spirits were interpolated into Shakespeare's *Macbeth*: in a sense, Davenant's insertions of song, dance, and spectacle elaborated upon the way *Macbeth* had already been played before the Restoration.¹² Davenant, who may have been unaware that these songs were not by Shakespeare, retains this Jacobean performance tradition by including Hecate's jolly song, 'Hecate, oh come away'.¹³ Because no musical setting from the 1660s or 1670s survives for 'Hecate, oh come away' by Matthew Locke or anyone else, Davenant's witches may have actually sung Robert Johnson's Jacobean setting of the tune.¹⁴ As noted in Chapter 3, spectacle was added to the mix when 'Hecate, oh come away' was performed at Dorset Garden in 1673. There, the sequence combined machine effects with music to cast Hecate as a flighty creature (literally and figuratively) who delegates the hard work of witchery to her minions, while she gallivants with her spirits.

It is difficult to interpret this scene as anything other than a comical diversion from the main plot – a feast for the eye and ear. But for Restoration theatregoers it was precisely these light-hearted moments that contributed to the 'strange perfection' of the tragedy, providing a needed respite from bloodshed, unbridled ambition, and tyranny. But the respite is temporary indeed, as the plot winds its way towards the inevitable, bloody conclusion, a conclusion spurred on, in part, by these highly entertaining witches. Thus, by interpreting all the components of these scenes – visual, auditory, and kinetic – by understanding how music, dance, and drama work together, we begin to understand the complexity of these characters.

The Tempest

We know more about the genesis of the 1667 *Tempest* than the 1664 *Macbeth* because Dryden described his collaboration with Davenant in the preface to the 1670 quarto. According to

Dryden, Davenant instigated key elements of the adaptation. The veteran playwright was the one who suggested adding the role of Hippolito to Shakespeare's play, and he also invented and for the most part wrote 'the Comical parts of the Saylor's'. Davenant also edited his collaborator: Dryden remarked that his 'writing received daily his amendments'. It is possible that Dryden was being deferential to the memory of his esteemed colleague (Davenant had died in 1668), but his regard for Davenant and his theatrical instincts appears sincere. Indeed, Dryden believed that Davenant had not gotten his due; thus, he decided to fully credit his collaborator rather than passing 'by his name with silence in the publication of it [i.e., the play], with the same ingratitude which others have us'd to him'.¹⁵

Davenant does seem to be the controlling voice in this revision. Mongi Raddadi has analysed the language of the revised *Tempest* and identified textual modifications similar to those in Davenant's other Shakespeare adaptations. As with *Macbeth*, oaths and other offensive language have been eliminated, Shakespeare's grammar has been regularized, modernized, and clarified, references to classical deities have been excised, and lengthy speeches have been compressed and stripped of complex syntax and poetic language.¹⁶ Familiar structural changes were also made: Davenant and Dryden added roles for women, inserted more music, and drew connections between Prospero's plight and the recent past of civil war and unlawful usurpation. *The Tempest* also features the parallelisms that Davenant so favoured in *Macbeth*. The lusty new character of Hippolito (likely played by Jane Long in breeches) was a man who had never seen a woman, while Miranda and her sister Dorinda (another new character) were women who had never seen a man. The quartet pairs off romantically, with Hippolito and Dorinda serving as comical foils to the more serious Miranda and Ferdinand. Completing the symmetry of character that Davenant always emphasized, Caliban acquires a sister, Sycorax (in Shakespeare's text, the name was used for Caliban's unseen mother), and Ariel gets a companion, Milcha.

Davenant and Dryden did not completely reinvent the wheel in their *Tempest*, for they retained the texts of some of Shakespeare's songs. In the 1670 quarto, Ariel sings 'Come unto these yellow sands' and 'Full fathom five' with little textual alteration from the First Folio, although the earlier musical settings by Robert Johnson were discarded in favour of new compositions by John Banister.¹⁷ Other songs retained in the 1670 quarto are the rustic number sung by Trincalo, 'I shall no more to sea' and 'The master, the swabber, the gunner, and I', and Caliban's 'No more dams I'll make for fish' and 'We want music, we want mirth'. Actors in Shakespeare's time and in the Restoration may have improvised these songs on the spot; may have used aurally transmitted, simple tunes, passed down from one generation of actor to the next; or, possibly, they sang these lyrics to well-known ballad tunes.

Other scenes, such as the Act 2 Masque of Devils; Ariel's Act 3 song, 'Dry those eyes'; and Ferdinand and Ariel's echo duet later in the same act, 'Go thy way', embroidered upon ideas found in Shakespeare's *Tempest*. As Claude Fretz has shown, the Masque of Devils serves a similar dramatic purpose as Ariel's harpy scene.¹⁸ 'Dry those eyes', sung by Ariel to comfort Alonzo, Antonio, and Gonzalo, is analogous to the magical banquet in Act 3, Scene 3 of Shakespeare's play, and the lyric almost directly quotes from the masque presented by Prospero in Act 4, Scene 1 ('all want shall shun you, Ceres blessing so is on you').¹⁹ 'Go thy way' takes another approach. Avoiding direct textual allusion to Shakespearean source material, it complicates the relationship between Ariel and Ferdinand through an entirely new and charming duet.

A key part of Davenant's adaptation strategy involved altering and expanding roles to showcase the talents of his performers, as we have already noted. 'Go thy way' was crafted to display the skills of Henry Harris (Ferdinand), an actor with proven musical abilities and a reputation as a fine romantic leading man, and Mary ('Moll') Davis, a performer known for her musical and terpsichorean talents as well as her sex appeal, who most likely took the role of Ariel.²⁰ As has been discussed

in the previous chapter, Restoration actors played 'lines': types of roles for which they were known.²¹ In the case of 'Go thy way', the audience's knowledge of the performers would have fostered an erotic interpretation of the dynamic between Ariel and Ferdinand, although it is possible that their relationship had this resonance in Shakespeare's day too, for boy singer-actors were often the objects of desire.²²

Harris and Davis's performance must have been effective, for it piqued the interest of Samuel Pepys. When he saw the play on 7 November 1667, he called 'Go thy way' a 'curious piece of Musique in an Echo of half-sentences, the Echo repeating the former half, while the man goes on to the latter, which is mighty pretty'.²³ He so enjoyed the song that he used his connections to obtain a copy. Pepys had cultivated a friendship with Harris, and he was also acquainted with the composer John Banister. In March 1668, he invited both men to his house for dinner and on 7 May he asked Banister to 'prick me down the notes' to the duet (see Figure 9).²⁴ On the 11th of the same month, he attended the theatre once again, and tried to write down the lyrics during the play without success: 'but when I had done it, having done it, without looking upon my paper, I find I could not read the blacklead'. Luckily, he had an inside source, for 'between two acts, I went out to Mr Harris, and got him to repeat to me the words of the Echo, while I writ them down'.²⁵ Thus, persistence paid off, and Pepys got his song.

Fortunately, this music survives in a printed pamphlet called *The Ariels Songs in the Play call'd the Tempest*, which, in combination with the 1670 quarto, allows us to analyse the scene's dramaturgy.²⁶ When Ferdinand and Ariel enter, the spirit is 'invisible', a stage direction that Davenant and Dryden take from Shakespeare, where Ariel frequently enters unseen by the other characters. It seems likely that Ariel is actually visible, for she leads and entices Ferdinand, and this stage action would have lent the scene a certain *frisson*, if the audience observed Ferdinand fruitlessly seeking the source of the voice. Despite the flirtatious undertones of his interaction

ECCHO Song, 'twixt Ferdinand and Ariel.

Ariel. *Ferdinand.*

G *Go thy way, why shouldst thou stay, where the Winds*

whistle, and where the Serrans creep? Under yonder

Willow Tree fain would I Sleep. Then let me alone, for 'tis time to be gone.

What Cares and Pleasures can be in this life? Within this

What Cares and Pleasures can be in this life? Within this Desert place there

FIGURE 9 Banister, 'Go thy way' from *The Ariels Songs* (1674/5).
© The British Library.

with the spirit, Ferdinand's mood is melancholic. He laments the death of his father, albeit in melodious terms, transmuting his sighs of grief for his father into a 'burthen', a heavy weight and a musical refrain. He then proclaims his desire for death: 'Fain I would go to shades, where / Few would wish to follow me'.²⁷ In keeping with the echo conceit, Ariel repeats Ferdinand's words 'Follow me' – with a twist, making them an imperative – but speech fails to persuade. At this moment, Davenant and Dryden shift to the heightened register of song, as Ferdinand wonders if the spirit will 'answer when I sing', and indeed Ariel does.²⁸ As before, Ariel speaks Ferdinand's own words back to him, but endows them with new meanings.

As with *Macbeth*, music conveys crucial dramatic information, both to those onstage and those in the audience. Ferdinand initially asserts power over the spirit, as he establishes the tune that Ariel must follow; but at the end of the song, Ariel wrests control from his interlocutor and sings a new, independent melody line, promising that 'kind fortune' will smile upon Ferdinand, if only he will follow him. Ferdinand is ravished by what he hears; the song convinces Ferdinand to take Ariel's 'word for once'. 'Lead on Musician', he cries, a testimony to the power of Ariel's, and perhaps Moll Davis's, voice.²⁹ This sequence also demonstrates how the collaboration between the actors, the playwrights, and the composer enriched meaning, in this case through the dramatic device of an invisible/visible musician, a potentially flirtatious dynamic between a musically proficient actor and actress, and a song by John Banister that moves the drama forward, as Ariel shifts from being an echo to having his own persuasive musical rhetoric.

As we have established, in Restoration Shakespeare traces of textual and performative pasts remain in the adapted texts. In a corresponding way, Restoration Shakespeare, far from being static, was itself adapted in later years, decades, and sometimes even centuries. As we discuss in the next chapter, *au courant* composers penned new music for the witches in turn-of-the-century revivals of *Macbeth*. And just seven years after the first performance of *The Tempest*, an adapter, probably

Thomas Shadwell at the prompting of Thomas Betterton, revised the Davenant/Dryden text for Dorset Garden, amplifying the musical and visual components to showcase the possibilities of the new theatre. John Banister's songs for Ariel were retained from the 1667 production, but Shadwell expanded the Masque of Devils and added a brand-new Act 5 extravaganza with machine effects, the Masque of Neptune, briefly described in Chapter 3.

To ascertain how Shadwell and probably Betterton elaborated upon the 1667 *Tempest*, amplifying the multisensory 'divertisement' established by Davenant, we shall focus on the Masque of Devils, which was newly set to music in 1674 by Pelham Humfrey and Pietro Reggio.³⁰ In both the 1667 and 1674 versions of *The Tempest*, a spoken exchange sets up the *raison d'être* for the sung masque: it is designed to prick the conscience of the usurpers. Alonzo, Antonio, and Gonzalo appear, discussing their unhappy situation. Gonzalo encourages his companions to cheer up, for they survived the shipwreck, but Alonzo remains distraught, for he believes his son, Ferdinand, might be dead. He also regrets his and Antonio's respective usurpations of the dukedoms of Mantua and Milan and posits that their lamentable state might be punishment for their crimes.

Anxious speech soon dissolves into horrid sound. In both versions of the masque, the devils initially make their presence known through auditory, not visual, means, but the placement of the devils in 1674 reveals how the Dorset Garden Theatre allowed Shadwell to expand upon the 1667 *Tempest*. The stage directions for Davenant and Dryden's *Tempest* call for 'Musick within' and mention 'A Dialogue within sung in parts'.³¹ In Shadwell's version the devils are located in Dorset Garden's ample substage area, their eerie vocalizations originating in 'hell'.

The lavish score of the 1674 *Tempest* needed experienced musical personnel to execute. Thus, Charles II allowed the participation of singers from the Chapel Royal.³² The involvement of Chapel Royal singers in the Dorset Garden production makes it likely that boys took the high-voiced devil

roles.³³ Even if fluting trebles played some of the devils, they genuinely terrified Alonzo, Antonio, and Gonzalo, judging from the trio's exclamations. These onstage reactions would have potentially guided the offstage audience's emotional response to the infernal creatures. Indeed, it is possible that the youthful devils were meant to be frighten the audience, just as children playing evil characters in horror films frighten audiences today. And yet, boys singing the devils' roles may have also undermined their menace, allowing Restoration audiences to dismiss their threat, allowing them to distance themselves from, even feel moral superiority to, the guilt-ridden usurpers who are so frightened by their music. Just like the witches in *Macbeth*, it's possible that these creatures signified as both humorous and repulsive, an effect produced by the combination of dramatic performance and musical sound.

Theatrical technologies also combine with music and drama in this scene. We have already mentioned the subterranean sounds of the devils as they lurk beneath the stage. The devils actually begin their opening musical number 'Where does the black fiend ambition reside' in this substage 'hell'. After a sung dialogue in which devils individually explicate the cost of ambition ('Who in Earth all others in pleasures excel, / Must feel, the worst torments of Hell'), the creatures rise through the trap(s), and echo these sentiments in homophonic chorus (i.e., sung in block chords), set for maximum audibility and effect.³⁴ This is considerably more impressive than Davenant and Dryden's version, where the fiends simply stroll on, appearing at 'two corners of the Stage'.³⁵

Later in the masque, dance and feats of vocal virtuosity are added to the performance. A devil, most likely played by Pietro Reggio, appears suddenly from a trap and sings an elaborate Italianate song of his own composition, 'Arise, ye subterranean winds'. Reggio's heavily embellished aria would have provided the audience with another kind of pleasure – Humfrey's score is French influenced, but this song showcases the considerable capabilities of an Italian singer and composer. Something of the way this song may have sounded is captured in a manuscript

copied by organist and composer Daniel Henstridge. As Rebecca Herissone has argued, it appears that Henstridge notated what he heard when Reggio performed, including ornaments not found in other sources and a phonetic transcription of the singer's Italian-accented English (see Figure 10).³⁶

'Arise, ye subterranean winds' also aligns dramatic purpose with a performer's talents, for the devil/Reggio uses the power of his voice to instigate a spectacle: two infernal winds appear through trapdoors and ten more enter to perform a dance. The music for this dance, written by another Italian immigrant, Giovanni Battista Draghi, does not survive; however, the winds certainly would have used a grotesque and menacing musical and gestural language, for the scene concludes with them driving Alonzo, Antonio, and Gonzalo offstage.

Notably, the denouement of the masque at Dorset Garden was far more elaborate than its analogue in the 1667 *Tempest*, which included neither Reggio's virtuosic song nor any trapdoor effects. Instead, dancers probably performed to an instrumental version of the devil's concluding chorus 'Around, around we pace', in keeping with typical English theatrical practice.³⁷ By expanding the masque, inserting a new song, trapdoor effects, and a custom-fitted dance, Shadwell and his collaborators built upon Davenant and Dryden's sturdy scaffolding. This dramaturgical model would serve Betterton

FIGURE 10 Reggio, 'Arise, ye subterranean winds', Lbl Add. MS 29397, fol. 78v (inv). © The British Library.

and the Duke's Company well as they developed the genre of dramattick opera.

Burlesques of *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*

The popular appeal of the visually and musically elaborate Shakespeare adaptations pioneered by Davenant at Lincoln's Inn Fields, and then extended by Betterton at the new theatre in Dorset Garden, is further documented by contemporary satires of the Duke's Company's productions, two of which relate to the case studies for this chapter. In the 1670s, as its audiences declined, the King's Company staged the earliest known Shakespeare parodies: *The Mock-Tempest* (1675) and a farcical version of Elkanah Settle's *The Empress of Morocco* (1673) whose epilogue mocked the witches in Davenant's *Macbeth*. Both burlesques were written by Thomas Duffett, sometime milliner in the New Exchange, and later dismissed by Langbaine as a 'Wit of the third-rate'.³⁸ His burlesques are unembarrassed comic distortions of Shakespeare's (adapted) dramatic narrative, treating serious subjects in a ludicrous manner: e.g., Prospero is not the exiled Duke of Milan but the Keeper of Bridewell prison, the notorious workhouse for London prostitutes. Even so, F.J. Furnivall was wrong when he regretted, two centuries later, that '[a]s pearls before swine, so were Shakspeare's plays in the eyes of the hog Duffett'.³⁹ Understood in their Restoration context, Duffett's ribald plays are not parodies of Shakespeare as canonized in the First Folio so much as parodies of how Shakespeare was adapted and staged by Davenant's successors in the Duke's Company.⁴⁰

In 1672, the King's Company, after its theatre in Bridges Street was destroyed by fire, relocated to the smaller theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields that had been used by the Duke's Company from 1661 to 1671, before it moved to the new and larger theatre at Dorset Garden. At Dorset Garden, the Duke's Company enjoyed vastly superior resources, including elaborate perspectival scenery and stage machines of the kind

formerly seen only in court masques. Making a virtue of a necessity, the King's Company realized that while it could not duplicate the rival company's production style – the fire had also destroyed the King's Company's accumulated stock of costumes and scenery – it could certainly parody their style. Such parody was a disingenuous revenge – though no less effective for that – because the King's Company envied the box-office success that its rival enjoyed. Thus, the first burlesque of Davenant's adaptation of Shakespeare was performed in the very theatre where that adaptation had been first staged, a theatre whose construction had been overseen by Davenant himself. The mocking irony would have been unmistakable to any reasonably well-informed spectator.

In December 1673, the King's Company satirized the elaborate witches' scenes in Davenant's *Macbeth*, then being performed at the Dorset Garden theatre in a production famously described by John Downes as 'being drest in all it's [*sic*] Finery, as new Cloath's, new Scenes, Machines, as flyings for the Witches; with all the Singing and Dancing in it'.⁴¹ All that 'Finery' was ridiculed in Duffett's 'Epilogue Spoken by Hecate and three Witches'. In the customary inversion of parody, the witches are not supernatural beings but contemporary London prostitutes who crack jokes about tricking and robbing their clients. The comic sketch begins conventionally, with special effects of thunder and lightning to herald the entrance of Hecate and the witches. Yet as the stage directions indicate, the boom of thunder and the flash of lightning were produced not behind the 'Painted Tiffany' (silk or fine fabric used for scenic effects) that seduced spectators at Dorset Garden, but 'openly, by the most excellent way of Mustard-bowl, and Salt-Peter'.⁴² In this vignette, Thunder and Lightning were emblematic characters played by Cardell Goodman and Nathaniel Kew. Mocking the elaborate hidden technology at Dorset Garden, the burlesque resorts to more primitive but openly displayed techniques which it presents in a laughable manner: Goodman as Thunder beats a wooden bowl while Kew as Lightning sets off a flash in a pan of gunpowder.

At Dorset Garden, Hecate descends in an extravagant 'Machine' operated by unseen stagehands.⁴³ In Duffett's version, the 'Glorious Charriot' that carries Hecate down to the stage turns out to be a homespun 'large Wicker Basket'. In a clear dig at the extended musical and vocal set pieces in Davenant's version of Shakespeare's tragedy, the witches' chorus of mewling cats is listed alongside the company's musicians in the *dramatis personae*, a snide reference to the witches' second song in Davenant's *Macbeth*: 'Sometimes like brinded Cats we shew, / Having no musick but our mew'.⁴⁴

Confined to a small and under-equipped temporary home in Lincoln's Inn Fields, the King's Company opted to perform several meta-theatrical parodies, knowing that its audience would appreciate the topical caricature. The resulting parodies were always selective, taking aim primarily at the scenic extravaganzas mounted at Dorset Garden: 'the garnish'd Dishes [that] delight your Eyes, / And give you nought but Vermine in disguise', as Duffett tartly remarked in a 1673 prologue for the King's Company.⁴⁵ As Judith Milhous has helpfully observed, '[n]o ordinary play' staged by the Duke's Company in this period was ever satirized by the King's Company.⁴⁶ And so, the *Macbeth* burlesque sets up a particular fault line in the sensibilities of Restoration theatre audiences, acknowledging that its simple production values can 'hardly please' those who 'adore the Ghosts and Devils yonder' – that is, at Dorset Garden – where rival actors 'roar like Drum in battle' yet somehow never manage to make 'Plot and Language' clear.

Duffett's decision to write a *Macbeth* parody might have been inspired by the satiric epilogue that John Dryden had composed in July 1673 for the King's Company's performance of Jonson's *Epicoene* during its annual summer residency in Oxford. Facetiously explaining why 'our Poetic train' seeks 'refuge' from the 'infected Town', Dryden inventories the theatrical plague that has gripped London: French actors ('Hot *Monsieurs*'), Italian comedians ('Stout *Scaramoucha*'), and the Duke's Company's machine-driven *Macbeth*: 'But when all fail'd, to strike the Stage quite Dumb, / Those wicked Engines

call'd Machines are come. / Thunder and Lightning now for Wit are Play'd, / And shortly Scenes in *Lapländ* will be Lay'd'.⁴⁷ Despite having successfully collaborated with Davenant and the Duke's Company on the first adaptation of *The Tempest* less than a decade earlier, Dryden now openly criticized the company (then under Betterton's leadership) for promoting theatrical gimmickry at the expense of dramatic poetry.

The King's Company had a vested interest in satirizing the Duke's Company, but it was hardly alone in taking a dim view of theatrical spectacle at Dorset Garden. In the same year that Duffett's *Macbeth* parody was first performed, an anonymous writer lamented in a theatrical epilogue that

Now empty shows must want of sense supply,
Angels shall dance, and Macbeths Witches fly:
You shall have storms, thunder & lightning too

...

Damn'd Plays shall be adorn'd with mighty Scenes
And Fustian shall be spoke in huge Machines.⁴⁸

In this epilogue, Davenant's most successful and most enduring Shakespeare adaptations – *Henry VIII*, *Macbeth*, and *The Tempest* – are ridiculed in just a few lines. Dancing angels appeared in the vision of Queen Katharine in *Henry VIII*, a staple in the Duke's Company's repertoire and first performed in 1663. So memorable was that moment in the blockbuster production that the playwright Bayes in George Villiers' satire *The Rehearsal* (1672) upbraids his hapless actors by telling them that 'you Dance worse than the Angels in *Harry the Eighth*'.⁴⁹ He continues the insult by likening their stumbling movements to the 'fat Spirits in *The Tempest*, egad'. When Villiers' first drafted the play around 1664 he based the character Bayes partly on Davenant, which certainly explains the precision of Villiers' theatrical satire. Next in line for attack are the flying witches in *Macbeth*, a well-documented novelty in the Dorset Garden production. The last allusion combines the extravagant storm depicted in the opening scene of

Shadwell's reworking of the Dryden-Davenant adaptation of *The Tempest* with the customary thunder and lightning that accompanied the witches in *Macbeth*. This anonymous epilogue mocking the 'empty shows' produced by the Duke's Company suggests that such criticism was less a disingenuous harangue issued by a marketplace rival seeking to gain advantage and more a topic of lively debate and dissent within the small theatrical world of Restoration London.

After moving to its rebuilt theatre in Drury Lane in March 1674, the King's Company continued to satirize the Duke's Company's elaboration production values, notably through Duffett's other Shakespeare burlesque, *The Mock-Tempest*. Langbaine, although he held Duffett in low esteem, nevertheless understood the precise inter-theatrical 'Design' of his burlesque: 'to draw the Town from the Duke's Theatre, who for a considerable time had frequented the admirable revis'd Comedy call'd *The Tempest*' – that is, Shadwell's popular operatic treatment of Dryden and Davenant's version of *The Tempest*.⁵⁰ Indeed, rivalry between the patent companies is written into Duffett's script. As we noted in Chapter 3, Shadwell's lengthy description of the opening scene calls for a 'tempestuous Sea in perpetual Agitation' with 'several Spirits in horrid Shapes, flying down amongst the sailors, then rising and crossing in the Air'.⁵¹ Duffett infamously reimagined Alonzo's ship overtaken by surging waves as a brothel in modern-day London besieged by lusty clients – Alonzo and the noblemen – who 'clime the Walls like Cats'.⁵² As with Thunder and Lightning in the earlier *Macbeth* parody, the actors play not just their characters but also comic personifications of scenic effects. Thus, the burlesque begins not with the howling winds and crashing waves indicated in Shadwell's script, but with 'breaking Doors' and 'breaking Windowes', while the drunken lords cry not 'Ahoy, ahoy' but 'Whore, a Whore'.⁵³ The horrid spirits are not flying devils but the City Watch, London's official guardsmen charged with keeping the peace, a responsibility that extends to quelling boisterous rabbles. Mocking the 'shower of Fire' in the Duke's Company's

production that descends upon the sailors as they abandon their sinking ship, Duffett's burlesque calls for a shower of 'Fire, Apples, [and] Nuts' that rains down on the 'Rabble' apprentices who seek to overtake the 'Wenches'.⁵⁴

With unerring comic precision, Duffett's play ridicules the two scenes (one serious, one comic) with vanishing banquet tables in the Duke's Company's production of *The Tempest*. First comes the aristocratic serious scene, when two spirits bring in 'a Table furnish'd with Meat and Fruit' to tempt Alonzo, Antonio and Gonzalo. As the men reach hungrily for the food, 'Two Spirits descend and flie away with the Table (3.3)'.⁵⁵ The low comedy counterpart occurs in the next act, when Caliban calls forth music for Trinculo and his fellow mariners. 'A Table rises', followed by the entrance of 'four Spirits' who place 'Wine and Meat' on the table, and then dance upon it. When they stop dancing, the 'Bottles vanish, and the Table sinks agen (4.2)'.⁵⁶ *The Mock-Tempest* conflates these two scenes into one hyperbolic comic episode. In the burlesque, Prospero and Ariel conspire to deceive Alonzo and his entourage in a scene that openly spoofs the Duke's Company's spectacular production of *The Tempest*:

PROSPERO

[. . .] Well, *Ariel* go let a Table be brought to them furnish'd with the most sumptuous Cates, but when they try to eat, let two great Babboons be let down with ropes to snatch it away.

ARIEL

O Sir *Punchanello* did that at the Play-house.

PROSPERO

Did he so – then bend thy ayry ear . . . Then do as I commanded, but make hast least the Conjurers to'ther [*sic*] House steal the Invention – thou know'st they snatch at all Ingenious tricks.

ARIEL

I fly most Potent Sir.

Exit ARIEL *flying*.⁵⁷

Ariel rejects Prospero's initial idea that two baboons could descend to the stage on ropes and then carry the banquet table offstage, shrewdly noting that 'Sir *Punchanello* did that at the Play-house'. As Andrew Walkling has helpfully observed, burlesque Ariel seems to be alluding to either the puppeteer Anthony Devoto (elsewhere referred to by Duffett as 'Author Punch') or to the troupe of Italian comedians based in Paris who visited London in the spring and summer of 1673, or even both.⁵⁸ From 1667 to 1675, Devoto performed *commedia dell'arte* style drolls and interludes at a booth theatre in Charing Cross. The Italian troupe, led by Tiberio Fiorilli ('Scaramouche'), came to England likely at the invitation of Charles II, before whom they performed on 29 May 1673, the king's birthday. Although not known for their use of stage machines, the troupe often used stage traps and favoured striking scenic effects. This context of contemporary harlequinade performances enables us to understand Duffett's first line of satiric attack. The Duke's Company, in its never-ending pursuit of novelty, is not original, but embarrassingly derivative, reduced to mimicking the eye-catching tricks of Italian puppeteers and *commedia* troupes. Their approach to performing Shakespeare is to plagiarize from Italian clowns. Thus, burlesque Prospero taunts the Duke's Company by commanding Ariel to execute the whispered plan quickly, lest the 'Conjurers' at the rival theatre, who 'snatch at all Ingenious tricks' because they can design none of their own, decide to 'steal [his] Invention'.

Yet the satire has barely commenced, because the eventual banquet scene in *The Mock-Tempest* is a *tour de force* of comic inter-theatricality. As Duffett's stage directions indicate, two devils on wires descend to the stage with a table laden with food and drink. As the shipwrecked men reach for the food, Gonzalo and Antonio 'are snatch'd up into the Air' by the devils, while Alonzo 'sinks with the Table out of sight'.⁵⁹ This is a theatrical moment of out-Heroding Herod. The King's Company's burlesque mocks the Duke's Company's astounding stage effects not by diminishing them (as with old-fashioned

Thunder and Lightning in the earlier *Macbeth* parody) but by expanding them: the Devils take the surprised Gonzalo and Antonio with them as they fly away.

We can be sure that the extended comic rebuke of the Duke's Company was not lost on the King's Company's audience at Drury Lane. Theatregoers in Restoration London, having only two companies from which to choose, freely attended performances at both playhouses. Precisely because they were familiar with the various productions staged by the rival companies, they would have immediately understood – and enjoyed – the humorous topicality of Duffett's script. The King's Company was so confident that its audience would understand *The Mock-Tempest* that three months after the first performance it published the doggerel lyrics of the production's songs as an obvious parody of the published libretto for the Duke's Company's semi-operatic version of *The Tempest* that was being sold to Dorset Garden audiences.⁶⁰ Burlesque is perhaps the most ephemeral of all dramatic texts, given that its intelligibility depends upon a prior understanding of its equally ephemeral precursor text. Today, the satiric allusions in *The Mock-Tempest* and the parody of *Macbeth* need to be explained through theatre history scholarship. But the original audience possessed the first-hand experience and knowledge that made any exegesis redundant. In short, they got the joke.

The satiric edge of Duffett's play was so pointed that John Dryden, who had written the adaptation of *The Tempest* with Davenant, defended himself in verse nearly a decade after the burlesque was first performed:

The dull Burlesque appear'd with impudence,
And pleas'd by Novelty, in Spite of Sence.

...

The dullest Scriblers some Admirers found,
And the Mock-Tempest was a while renown'd:
But this low stuff the Town at last despised,
And scorn'd the Folly that they once had pris'd.⁶¹

Montague Summers cited this diatribe against ‘dull Burlesque’ as evidence that Duffett’s plays were ineffectual even in their original context.⁶² But surely the opposite inference is more persuasive: Dryden’s indictment of *The Mock-Tempest* well after its premiere – and after Duffett’s theatrical career had ended – tells us that ‘dull Burlesque’ remained quite sharp. Dryden’s retrospective attack on burlesques did not focus on their cutting parody of theatrical spectacle because he himself was suspicious of extravagant stage machinery, as evidenced in his 1673 epilogue written for the King’s Company in Oxford (see above). Rather, he reserved his invective for what he regarded as the burlesque’s deplorable desecration of poetic beauty: ‘Disguis’d Apollo chang’d to Harlequin’. In blaming the burlesque simply for being a burlesque – a low treatment of a high subject – Dryden avoided confronting a critical point that animated *The Mock-Tempest*: the real travesty of Shakespeare was that the Duke’s Company buried his plays under the weight of scenes and machines, thus giving audiences superficial novelties instead of dramatic substance.

In this chapter we have looked in-depth at some of the Duke’s Company’s most successful Shakespeare productions: Davenant’s *Macbeth*, Davenant and Dryden’s *The Tempest*, and Shadwell’s embellishment of the Davenant-Dryden version of *The Tempest*. We have focused on these productions not just because they were popular and held the stage well into the eighteenth century – for *The Tempest*, even longer – but because they represented the fulfilment of the intermedial performance style that Davenant first pioneered at Lincoln’s Inn Fields in the 1660s. The fact that most Restoration adaptations of Shakespeare, including those staged by the Duke’s Company, were not as elaborate or successful as *Macbeth* and *The Tempest* does not detract from the significance of those productions but rather emphasizes it through their singularity. These particular productions exemplify the theatrical aesthetic of Restoration Shakespeare that began (but did not end) with Sir William Davenant in its most adventurous, its most innovative, and its most

consequential incarnation. Like any ground-breaking artistic experiment, these productions provoked strong negative reactions from within the theatrical profession itself. As we have seen, such reactions took the quintessentially metatheatrical form of burlesque. Duffett's parodies of Shakespeare are not just doggerel mockeries but critical enunciations in their own right, an instance of the Restoration theatre bluntly commenting on itself. We cannot appraise the unusual significance of the Dorset Garden productions of *Macbeth* and *The Tempest* without recognizing the extreme reactions these productions incited: on the one hand, enthusiastic audiences in season after season; on the other hand, ferocious attacks mounted by the rival King's Company. When it came to Davenant's vision for how Shakespeare could be performed, a vision that was enlarged by his managerial successor Thomas Betterton, it was impossible to stay neutral.