

And they died happily ever after

Lady+Lord Macbeth

TOM LANOYE

The blood-soaked lust for power and inescapable downfall of the Scottish Macbeths are familiar the world over. In Tom Lanoye's new version, Lady MacBeth comes more clearly into the foreground and an absolute but also tragic love between the MacBeths lies at the root of their calamity. Lady and Lord MacBeth are what we would today call a real power couple, but their love is overshadowed by a great tragedy: they remain childless. So the fact that their friends, Lady and Lord Banquo, can show off their baby Fléance affects the MacBeths deeply in their pain. Don't they too deserve the best? Prompted by soothsayers, Lady MacBeth incites her husband to implement a cruel plan to get King Duncan out of the way. Her suggestion does not fall on deaf ears, jealous as MacBeth is of the recognition and popularity that seem to fall so naturally to Lord Banquo. What at first seems like madness becomes an obsession before ultimately bringing ruin.

Instead of focusing purely on the power game, Lanoye creates more room for the women in the play, especially Lady MacBeth, who struggles with childlessness.

DE VOLKSKRANT

Lanoye's adaptation of the play, one of the icons of theatrical literature, gives a lot more space to the female characters and adds an extra layer. His addition of the unfulfilled desire to have children touches something far deeper: beneath the cruel spiral of violence and acts of desperation, Lady and Lord MacBeth wonder what meaning they can give to their lives. They are prepared to go to any lengths in that quest.

It shimmers, crackles, sparks and blazes between Lady and Lord MacBeth.

THEATERKRANT



AUTHOR



Tom Lanoye (b. 1958) is a literary one-man business, and one of the most popular authors in Flanders and the Netherlands. His theatre work, novels, short stories, novellas, columns, poetry and performances can only be described as exceptional. He established his reputation with the autobiographical coming of age novel *Cardboard Boxes*. His bestselling novel *Speechless* was shortlisted for the most important literary prizes and won the Gouden Uil Readers' Prize. In his magnum opus *The Turntable*, Lanoye places question marks beside important issues concerning the collaborative past of Flanders. In October 2024, Tom Lanoye was awarded the Grand Prize for Literature, a prestigious triennial award recognising authors of significant literary contributions in the Dutch language area. King Philippe and Queen Mathilde of Belgium presented the award at the Royal Palace in Brussels, followed by several speeches and performances. Read the full jury report. *Photo © Arthur Los*

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