

8 SIDED FORUM

Rob Nagle is Magnificent in The Antaeus Company's MacBeth



- Posted by [Tennyson E. Stead](#) on July 8, 2012 at 2:56pm in [Quantum Theory](#)

All throughout the MacBeth rehearsal process, Gerard has been telling me how fun it is to watch Rob work and what a lively and thrilling performance his Thane of Glamis has evolved into. I've been excited to see the show for months now.

Last night, I did. What surprised me about the performance was how measured and precise Rob's performance was. While I've never seen him perform before now, I know him to be a man of boundless energy and compelling intuition... but he is also very, very practiced at squeezing those qualities into any character's manner and circumstance so that any dramatic situation, on any scale, suddenly gives the impression of being explosive and unstable. Rob's precision made MacBeth dangerous, and carried a humanity and nuance that few pulp characters do. At every turn Rob was exquisitely in tune with the minutiae of the moment. Things became human to an accidental degree...

...while at the same time, capturing the fervor, genius, and panic of ambition. I've never liked the character of MacBeth, as much as I like his story - until now. In the past, I've been frustrated with his short-sightedness. This time, Rob laid in an arc I can truly identify with, and showed me on no uncertain terms how it's right there on the page. In Rob Nagle's hands, MacBeth is a promethean, Faustian story about needing to explore unknown potential at the expense of everything else. At the same time, Rob brought that arc right back down to Earth by keeping his emotional transitions terrifyingly specific.

Gerard was right. This is a great performance. When Tyler came onto Quantum Theory, I talked about how his Hamlet found the comic beats and the human truths that make his story worth sitting through, while at the same time finding all the conflict that makes it worth telling. Last night, Rob opened up the story of MacBeth in much the same way, and with a more practiced hand than any of us 8 Siders are allowed to have just yet.

Aspiring performers show up in Hollywood, and are jealous of the opportunities others have. In my mind, the only thing worth being jealous of is experience. If new actors stoke their experience with unrelenting stamina and care, then in three or four decades they MIGHT one day be capable of performances like the one I saw last night from Rob Nagle.

Bravo!

Get tickets at <http://antaeus.org/>!