

AA306: Shakespeare: text and performance
AA306/VCR 4: Shakespeare on Screen

Producer: Jenny Bardwell

Contributor(s) in clip:

Stephen Regan

Kiernan Ryan

Clip transcript: AA306 MacBeth 2

Stephen Regan:

... it also seems to be working in an interesting political level that it's very much a version for its time it's being referred to as a parable about fascism Macbeth showing very obvious signs of being the dictator and fears of dictatorship in the 40's being very prominent.

Kiernan Ryan:

That's certainly true I mean you can see this is the same film made this is the film made by the same director who made Citizen Kane, which of course is infatuated it has a love hate relationship with these authoritarian quasi fascist male figures of authority who are at one and the same breadth colossal extraordinary mysterious and at the same and at the same time terrifying in their tyranny and ultimate insanity, and I think you get some of the remarkable wonderful shots I think, some of the best shots in the whole movie

[Extract: Macbeth, 1948, directed by Orson Welles: Macbeth on throne, huge cast around, below, him]

are those when the camera is way up behind him and he's seated on his throne yeah, and you're looking down as if from a great height as if he was on a mountain, at some poor servile menial whom he's addressing, and you simply see him silhouetted from behind, and that expansion that dilation of scale and perspective really is quite magnificent and I think it captures precisely both at the same time the romantic heroic idealisation of the figure and at the same time what is terrible and inhuman and monstrous you know about what Macbeth has turned himself into by giving into the credo of 'for mine own good all causes shall give way'.