

the cherry blossom tree symbolises life and the beauty of it ³, but due to how fleeting cherry blossom season is, it has also come to represent death which Ninagawa intentionally takes and uses it to his advantage changing it to be a metaphor for Macbeth. The cherry blossom tree appears though-out the play lingering in the key moment of his life, it appeared on his white (white represent death as well in Japanese culture) Kimono when he killed Duncan and also when he is challenged by Macduff. This is perfect for symbolising him as his turn as king like the cherry blossom tree will be short lived. with them both dying together when Macduff storms the palace while the cherry tree has started to wilt and die before and during their duel. This comes back to the feeling that Ninagawa has more than just remade the play but in fact enhanced it. By making it for a Japanese audience he is able to let the story tell itself, which allows the play to grow to modern tastes by adding subtlety.

Ninagawa use of lighting further adds to the subtleness. As in the final battle between Macduff and Macbeth the whole scene is lit by the colour of the red moon which is projected onto the back screen until the final blow, where it instantly switches to blue before it fades into a spotlight on Macbeth in his final moment before slowly fade-out to darkness. Ninagawa has done this not only draw attention to Macbeth's death giving it more impact on the audience. the symbolism of using the moons colours also adds to the audience impact as the red moon fills us with subconscious dread like Macbeth as red moon symbolise the death of a king warning him about his impending doom and the blue moon fills us with relax as the moon symbolises good luck which symbolises how Macduff was barely able to survive this battle.

However, I have yet to address how it was viewed by the Japanese audience. Now due to this plays niche nature and the fact that it debuted in the pre-internet days of the 1980s true Japanese audiences' impressions on the play are almost as hard to come by as the physical recording of the play. However, there was one substantial writing on the play I was able to find being Yeeyon IM's article The Pitfalls of Intercultural Discourse: The Case of Yukio Ninagawa. IMs stated "While such an Orientalist charge is well justified in the

³What do Cherry Blossoms represent in Japanese culture? - japan airlines (JAL) (no date) JAPAN AIRLINES (JAL) Official Site. Available at: <https://www.jal.co.jp/in/cn/guide-to-japan/experiences/cherry-blossom/what-do-cherry-blossoms-represent/index.html#:~:text=The%20sakura's%20meaning%20is%20also,reminder%20that%20life%20is%20fleeting.> (Accessed: 03 May 2024).

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