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A Critic Calls for— A Third Theater That Is Superb, Gay and Wild

By ROBERT BRUSTEIN

CERTAINLY, the most explosive play thus far turned up by the third theater is Barbara Garson's "MacBird," scheduled to open off-Broadway in November. This work immediately establishes its young author as an extraordinary gifted parodist, for in converting "Macbeth" to her own uses, she demonstrates an unusual ear for Shakespearean verse and an impressive ability to adapt the rhythms and accents of a past age to a modern idiom.

But Mrs. Garson's purpose is hardly esthetic: "MacBird" is a savagely angry work, venting the author's fury, in the most abandoned possible manner, at the past six years of American politics. Imagine a "Macbeth" in which Lyndon Johnson plays the title role, John Kennedy is Duncan and Bobby Kennedy is Macduff, while characters such as the Egg of Head (Adlai Stevenson) enjoy Ham-

let-like soliloquies about whether to leave the new Administration or work for change from within.

The seditious implications of "MacBird" are clear and apparent—it is a work in which all political leaders are seen as calculating, power-hungry and bloody, and nobody comes off well. But although the play is bound to start a storm of protest (not all of it unjustified) and may even be suppressed by some government agency, it will very probably go down as one of the brutally provocative works in the American theater, as well as one of the most grimly amusing.

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