The Scottish Play

It is believed that is bad luck to even say ‘Macbeth” during rehearsals or performance if you are backstage. Other terms are used instead such as calling it the Scottish Play, or the Scottish business, or the Glamis comedy.

Some say the rule only applies in an actual theatre, in performance, so it is all right in other situations, like here.

Origins

* The weird sisters are actually casting a spell that will bring evil spirits.
* A cauldron was stolen in an earlier performance from an actual coven and they cursed the play.
* It is a violent play and the possibilities of injuries and deaths are therefore more real.
* Often it is put on by theatres that are in trouble financially and so have fewer resources to make it work, therefore more possibilities of accident.
* Folk lore tells of the first time it was performed and the character playing the main part died.
* Other folk lore accounts say it was Lady Macbeth and she cursed the play.
* Just simply using witches and witchcraft meant that secrets were revealed.
* Some believe the scenes with Hecate, not Shakespeare’s work intensifies the curse.
* Productions are said to be plagued with accidents.
* A real dagger was used instead of a prop.
* It is believed that breaking the taboo calls the ghosts of the three witches to the show and it is they who cause all the mishaps.

Remedies

* When the name of the play is spoken in a theatre, tradition requires the person who spoke it leave, perform traditional cleansing rituals, and be invited back in. The rituals are supposed to ward off the evil that uttering the play's name is feared to bring on.
* The rituals include turning three times, spitting over one's left shoulder, swearing, or reciting a line from another of Shakespeare's plays.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Scottish_Play) Popular lines for this purpose include, "Angels and ministers of grace defend us" ([*Hamlet*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamlet) 1.IV), "If we shadows have offended" ([*A Midsummer Night's Dream*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Midsummer_Night%27s_Dream) 5.ii), and "Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you" ([*The Merchant of Venice*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Merchant_of_Venice), 3.IV).[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Scottish_Play)A more elaborate cleansing ritual involves leaving the theatre, spinning around and brushing oneself off, and saying "Macbeth" three times before entering again. Some production groups insist that the offender may not reenter the theater until he is invited to do so, therefore making it easy to punish frequent offenders by leaving them outside.

Is there any truth?

The fact that it has been parodied as many times as it has indicates surely that there is little truth.