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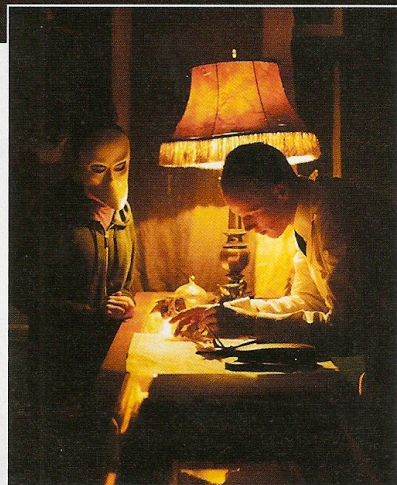




Guests wear masks as they happen upon actors throughout "The McKittrick Hotel." This page: Tori Sparks as Lady Macbeth. Insets, left to right: John Sorensen-Jolink as Macduff; Macbeth and his lady.

Sleep No More

A most intriguing theatrical event, based on *Macbeth*, is haunting Manhattan





An actor storms past you and hurls himself on a billiards table. An actress in her misty bedroom drops her robe at your feet then slips a negligee over her body. Where are you?

Good question. And one that audiences at *Sleep No More* have been asking for a year since its debut on the far west side of New York's Chelsea neighborhood.

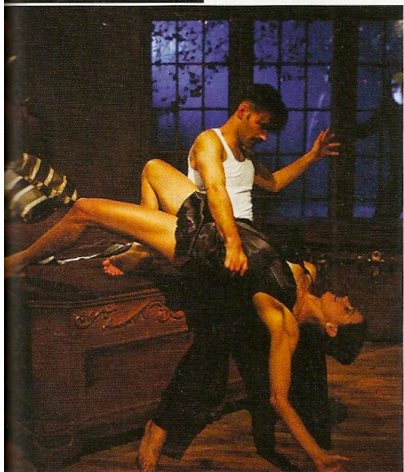
Sleep No More, from Britain's Punchdrunk Theater Company, is "immersive theater"—right down to the bathtubs that permeate the space and the characters actually utilize—and the audience moves in the same space as the actors.

That space is a warren of old warehouses refashioned as The McKittrick Hotel, a conceit borrowing its name from Hitchcock's *Vertigo*. The year is 1938, and the setting, costumes and cocktails (there is a bar!) adhere to the zeitgeist of the 1930s and the cinematic spirit of film noir.

The drama is loosely based on Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, but you might have a hard time figuring that out. Inside the hotel, you are turned loose to ramble for a couple of hours (or as long as you choose) through elaborately and phantasmagorically decorated rooms, 100 in all, and witness whatever bits and pieces of dramatic action that you happen upon. Audience members may not speak and must wear masks. Everywhere the light is dimly dramatic, and mist generators maintain a perpetual fog.

More than anything, *Sleep No More* is a ballet, meticulously choreographed, sometimes violently so. Like the audience, actors do not speak but interact in breathtaking, often dangerous swoops and gestures (most of the cast are trained dancers). The action is scored by an ever-present, dark, orchestral soundtrack, like those of the great Hollywood thrillers of the era.

It's hard to know what to make of *Sleep No More*, but here's a start: Don't try to analyze it; just take a walk through it and enjoy the ride. Also, whatever you do, don't miss this unforgettable experience. 866-811-4111; sleepnomore.nyc.com —Greg G. Weber



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