

JULIUS CAESAR

THE FAULT, DEAR BRUTUS, IS NOT IN OUR STARS,
BUT IN OURSELVES, THAT WE ARE UNDERLINGS...

PLOT SYNOPSIS

Commoners celebrate Caesar's victory over Pompey and are reprimanded by tribunes. Elsewhere, a soothsayer warns Caesar to beware the Ides of March; Cassius and Brutus discuss their fears of Caesar's growing power; Caesar confides to Antony his distrust of Cassius; and Casca describes the spectacle of Antony thrice offering Caesar a crown (and he thrice refusing it).

Rome is beset by unnatural phenomena as Cassius, Casca and others solidify their resistance to Caesar. Brutus concludes death is the only way to prevent Caesar from becoming a tyrant. His wife, Portia, rebukes him for excluding her from his heavy thoughts. The conspirators arrive and plan to kill Caesar at the Capitol the next day. Caesar's wife, Calpurnia, has ominous dreams and implores Caesar to stay home. He initially agrees but then changes his mind. On his way to the Capitol, Caesar again ignores the soothsayer's warning. The conspirators stab Caesar and proclaim liberty and freedom from tyranny. Brutus promises Antony safety and justification for killing Caesar. Antony makes shows of friendship, but when alone, he swears vengeance.

Brutus appears before the people to explain that he loved Caesar but killed him for the good of Rome. The people cheer him. Antony follows, grieving the loss of his beloved friend, and whips the crowd into a frenzy against the conspirators. The enraged mob rushes off to avenge Caesar's death. Rome is plunged into civil war; Antony and Octavius (Caesar's adopted heir) oppose Brutus' and Cassius' forces. Brutus and Cassius quarrel over honor; they reconcile and Brutus reveals that Portia has killed herself. They receive new information about enemy troop movements and prepare their armies to march separately to Philippi. Alone, Brutus is haunted by Caesar's ghost, who promises he'll return at Philippi.

Confusion and misinformation soon overtake the battle at Philippi. When the dust settles, neither Brutus nor Cassius has survived the day. Antony and Octavius emerge victorious and praise Brutus as "the Noblest Roman of them all."

—Heidi Schmidt, dramaturg

ARTISTIC TEAM

Director Anthony Powell+
Scenic Designer Caitlin Ayer
Costume Designer Clare Henkel^
Lighting Designer Shannon McKinney^
Sound Designer Jason Ducat
Fight Director Christopher DuVal
Assistant Fight Directors Benaiah Anderson, Ava Kostia
Dramaturg Heidi Schmidt
Stage Manager Stacy R. Norwood*
Assistant Stage Manager Miranda Baxter*

CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Flavius, a tribune of the people Erik Fellenstein
Marullus, a tribune of the people Coleman Zeigen
Carpenter Tony Ryan
Cobbler Bob Buckley
Julius Caesar Robert Sicular*
Calpurnia, wife of Caesar Shelly Gaza*
Marcus Brutus, conspirator against Caesar Scott Coopwood*
Caius Cassius, conspirator against Caesar Matthew Schneck*
Casca, conspirator against Caesar Casey Andree
Decius Brutus, conspirator against Caesar Andy Walker
Mark Antony, follower of Caesar Christopher Joel Onken*
Soothsayer Anne Penner
Cinna, conspirator against Caesar Benaiah Anderson
Lucius, servant to Brutus Ian Roy Fraser
Trebonius, conspirator against Caesar David Derringer
Metellus Cimper, conspirator against Caesar Tony Ryan
Portia, wife of Brutus Anne Penner
Caius Ligarius, conspirator against Caesar Sam Sandoe
Publius, senator Bob Buckley
Artemidora, teacher of rhetoric Ayla Sullivan
Popilius Lena, senator Coleman Zeigen
Octavius Caesar, grand-nephew of Caesar Erik Fellenstein
Lepidus, ruler of Rome after the death of Caesar Coleman Zeigen
Lucilius, follower of Brutus and Cassius Tony Ryan
Titinius, follower of Brutus and Cassius Benaiah Anderson
Pindarus, bondman to Cassius Andy Walker
Young Cato, follower of Brutus and Cassius Evan Ector
Strato, follower of Brutus and Cassius Casey Andree
Clitus, follower of Brutus and Cassius David Derringer
Messala, follower of Brutus and Cassius Bob Buckley
Volumnius, follower of Brutus and Cassius Michael Chen
Citizens/Attendants/Soldiers/Messengers Benaiah Anderson, Casey Andree, Bob Buckley, Michael Chen, David Derringer, Evan Ector, Erik Fellenstein, Ian Roy Fraser, Tony Ryan, Sam Sandoe, Ayla Sullivan, Andy Walker, Coleman Zeigen

"MAY YOU LIVE IN INTERESTING TIMES"

There's an old Chinese curse—or at least there purports to be—that goes: "May you live in interesting times." Apocryphal or not, this remains a darkly funny sentiment and seems spookily apt for our own century, especially when one considers all the war, tumult and political terror marking so much of it. "May you live in interesting times" was also one of the very first things to pop into my head after sitting down to re-read *Julius Caesar* in preparation for this summer's production of the play at CSF.

Because the ancient Romans of 44 BC definitely found themselves living in "interesting times." Definitely.

Shakespeare based his script for *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar* primarily on *Plutarch's Lives* and hews pretty closely (at least for him) to the actual historic record. But moment-to-moment, the playwright

seems far more interested in the specific psychology of his troubled, complex characters than he does with those epochal events surrounding the assassination of Caesar. In trying to describe this play to friends and coworkers, I keep falling back on the term "schizophrenic," simply because the whole thing feels to me like an intense little chamber piece masquerading as an epic.

Or maybe like an epic masquerading as an intense little chamber piece. Okay, now even I'm confused ...

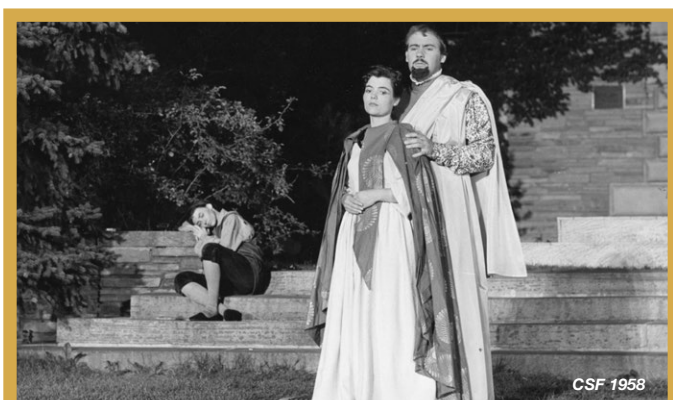
And frankly, the play's title only adds to this sense of disorientation. A great deal of critical ink has been spilled over the years debating the reasons why Shakespeare chose to call his drama *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar* when the character of Marcus Brutus stands out

so clearly as the story's real protagonist. We'll let the scholars duke it out on this one, but in terms of our production, the answer seems pretty straightforward: Since for all intents and purposes Julius Caesar WAS the Roman Republic, then this great leader's violent end is also the end of that particular civic dream.

His personal tragedy mirrors the tragedy of Rome slipping inexorably into civil war and political chaos.

So, yes, Julius Caesar and the ancient Romans of 44 B.C. most assuredly found themselves living in extremely "interesting times." Here's hoping that all of us attending the Festival tonight can help find ways to coexist in far *less* interesting ones.

—Anthony Powell, director





THE MOMENT BEFORE

Shakespeare took it for granted that his audience had sufficient working knowledge of the late Roman Republic and could jump into the story near the end — on the verge of Caesar's assassination.

**For those of us less familiar,
here's a quick refresher:**

In 509 B.C., the patricians (the aristocracy) ejected the monarchy from Rome and instituted a less centralized system of government consisting of a Senate and two consuls, elected annually. Gaius Julius Caesar, born in 100 B.C., rose to power, wealth and military prestige in the provinces of a greatly expanded Roman Republic, positioning himself for a major power play in 59 B.C. That year, he ended a major political rivalry between Crassus and Pompey by establishing a tenuous but effective alliance among the three; solidified the alliance by marrying his daughter to Pompey; and was elected consul. Within a few years, the deaths of both Pompey's wife (Caesar's daughter) and Crassus (in an ill-advised military campaign in modern day Turkey) relieved Pompey of two significant ties to Caesar; in 52 B.C, Pompey switched allegiances by marrying the daughter of Caesar's political enemy Scipio, the new consul.

Caesar was effectively shut out.

Consideration for consul would require him to leave his army behind in the provinces and present himself in Rome, but

entering Rome would dissolve the immunity he enjoyed as a provincial general, leaving him vulnerable to prosecution by political enemies (for what, it hardly mattered). In 49 B.C., the Senate authorized Pompey to raise an army from within Rome and removed all tribunes loyal to Caesar from office.

**Using this as justification,
Caesar crossed the Rubicon with his army
and essentially invaded Rome.**

In the civil war that ensued, Caesar's army chased Pompey's eastward out of Italy, through Greece and into Egypt, where Pompey was promptly killed. Caesar followed, engaged in a dalliance with Egyptian politics (placing Cleopatra on the throne and having a son with her). In the meantime, Pompey's supporters, undeterred by his death, used Caesar's Egyptian distraction to build armies in North Africa (under Scipio) and, later, Spain (under Pompey's sons).

Caesar eventually prevailed militarily and returned to Rome in triumph, but he was weakened by two political blind spots: He perpetually failed to anticipate his enemies' spin on his decisions, and he routinely steamrolled the Senate, giving rise to old Republic fears about the monarchy. In 44 B.C., 60 senators stabbed him to death in a theater built by (and named for) his old ally and enemy, Pompey, and he died at the feet of Pompey's statue.

—Heidi Schmidt, dramaturg