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George Hartpence and John Bergeron in Actors'Net's production of JULIUS CAESAR.

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Caesar Demands Your Attendance at Actors'NET: JULIUS CAESAR

Posted by Wren Workman

I was lucky enough to be able to see the Actors'NET production of JULIUS CAESAR during a limited preview. What I saw was not a preview, but a show that was ready to go and fantastic to watch even for a jaded "You changed it!" Shakespeare fan like me. Aaron Wexler (Director) pulled together a fantastic cast and his vision was executed beautifully. His take of JULIUS SHAKESPEARE is evocative of modern Washington D.C., and if society was as okay with murder as Shakespeare was, then I'm certain this could have played out on the evening news during any election this century.

The moment you walk into the theater you get to see the beautiful set (Ken Junkins) with a wonderful marble design that really makes use of the stage at the Heritage Center. Lighting (Andrena Wishnie) really helped set the mood for the storms and murders of the show.

George Hartpence (Julius Caesar) was very well cast, his Caesar was, charismatic, confident and commanding. He spoke with a cool and calming voice. Hartpence is a long time Shakespearean actor and it shows in all the best ways. In his moments on stage you can believe him to be the symbol of hope that Marc Antony speaks of.

John Bergeron (Marc Antony) had great characterization and affectation to his voice. He was inspiring as well as exciting at different times, and at some both. His booming voice served to echo the strength of his character in all meanings of the phrase.

Jim Ludovci (Marcus Brutus) is a character we can see transform. From a man filled with doubt at the start of the play, into a man passionate about beliefs that were once not his own.

John Pinto (Caius Cassius) seemed to be playing Cassius as equal parts Karl Rove and Jesse Jackson and it worked, His slightly southern accent did shift a few times into an almost french accent but other than that he was a very believable scheming dishonest mastermind.

Maryalice Rubins-Topoleski (Octavia) was courageous as a gender-swapped Octavius. She brought a very different light and quickly corrupted innocence to the role. I wished to see her and Bergeron continue the play into the eventual fall of the second triumvirate, but sadly, that was not in the script.

Both Carol Thompson (Calpurnia) and Kyla Mostello Donnely (Portia) played different sides of the same coin. That of pleading and loving wives, it worked well, the two characters can often be portrayed exactly the same but each woman added her own style to her respective character.

The rest of the cast all did a great job as well, with lots of little character moments happening in the background.



Kyla Marie Mostello and Jim Ludovici in a scene from JULIUS CAESAR.

While some people broke character, and others looked as if they'd never held a weapon in their life at different moments on the stage, they still did a great job. Of particular note for non leads was John Helmke, who stood and moved with confidence and never broke character for a moment on stage.

All Shakespeare fans young and old can enjoy Actors'NET's take on JULIUS CAESAR, so if your a fan good acting, Shakespeare, or even just non musicals, make the time to catch it while you can.

JULIUS CAESAR

by William Shakespeare

Directed by Aaron Wexler

April 25 - May 11, 2014

The Actors' NET of Bucks County

at The Heritage Center Theatre

635 North Delmorr Avenue (Route 32),

Morrisville, PA

Reservations at 215-295-3694 or actorsnet@aol.com

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Wren Workman

Wren Workman has been involved in theater for twenty years as both cast and crew for various shows. As a performer Wren has worked with multiple local and community theaters including: The King of Prussia Players, The Newtown Arts Company and The Stagecrafters. Wren is a former board member for the Newtown Arts Company in Newtown, Pennsylvania. Wren has Asperger's Syndrome and fully believes that his involvement in the arts has helped him better understand people as a result. Wren gives all his thanks and love to his wife, his friends and his family for supporting him in all of his endeavors.

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