Beware the Ides of March

IN SAIR SAIR

by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

In a modern verse translation by

SHISHIR KURUP

Adapted and directed by

REBECCA J. ENNALS

Additional adaptation and translation by the A.C.T. OUT Tour company







WELCOME TO THE SECOND YEAR OF THE A.C.T. OUT TOUR!

Conspiracy, political upheaval, fierce division around a cult of personality, and anxiety over a succession of leadership...are these the issues of ancient Rome? Elizabethan England? Contemporary America? Or all that and more? Julius Caesar, as a historical figure, and *Julius Caesar*, as a play, have each wound their way through centuries, cultures, and curricula because the issues and questions they provoke continue to be problematic and important. As we prepared for this production, I was moved to read an essay by James Baldwin that beautifully captures the resonance and universality of this story. In his 1964 essay titled "Why I Stopped Hating Shakespeare," Baldwin wrote:

"I still remember my shock when I finally heard these lines from the murder scene in *Julius Caesar*. The assassins are washing their hands in Caesar's blood. Cassius says:

Stoop then, and wash. — How many ages hence Shall this our lofty scene be acted over, In states unborn and accents yet unknown!

What I suddenly heard, for the first time, was manifold. It was the voice of lonely, dedicated, deluded Cassius, whose life had never been real for me before—I suddenly seemed to know what this moment meant to him. But beneath and beyond that voice I also heard a note yet more rigorous and impersonal—and contemporary: that 'lofty scene,' in all its blood and necessary folly, its blind and necessary pain, was thrown into a perspective which has never left my mind. Just so, indeed, is the heedless State overthrown by men, who, in order to overthrow it, have had to achieve a desperate single-mindedness. And this single-mindedness, which we think of (why?) as ennobling, also operates, and much more surely, to distort and diminish a man—to distort and diminish us all, even, or perhaps especially, those whose needs and whose energy made the overthrow of the State inevitable, necessary, and just."

As artists and as educators, it is a privilege to shine light on these nuanced issues and sit down for conversations with audiences of all ages, as we grapple with the relevance of *Julius Caesar* today. Thank you for being here, and please consider sticking around after the show to tell us what you think.

-Natalie Greene, Director of Education & Community Programs

A.C.T. PRESENTS

JULIUS CAESAR

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

IN A MODERN VERSE TRANSLATION BY **SHISHIR KURUP**ADAPTED AND DIRECTED BY **REBECCA J. ENNALS**

Additional adaptation and translation by the A.C.T. OUT Tour company

CAST

(In alphabetical order)

Alan Coyne Julius Caesar, Plebeian, Trebonius, Cinna the Poet,

Soldier, Strato, Octavius' Servant

Monique Crawford Brutus, Plebeian

Lauren Dunagan Cassius, Plebeian, Soldier, Volumnius

Shayna Ann Howlett Portia, Murellus, Plebeian, Soothsayer, Lucius, Decius,

Lepidus, Messala

Christian Jimenez Caska, Cobbler, Caesar's Servant, Lucillius

Carolina Morones Calphurnia, Carpenter, Cinna, Octavius, Pindarus,

Clitus

Nic Sommerfeld Mark Antony, Flavius, Metellus Cimber

CREATIVE TEAM

Chris Steele Assistant Director, Dramaturg, Understudy

Sarah Phykitt Scenic and Props Designer

Madeline Berger Costume Designer

Carla Pantoja Fight Director

ADDITIONAL CREDITS ———

Natalie Greene Producer

Rebecca J. Ennals Co-Producer

Anelisa Armijo Montoya Associate Producer

Michael Anderburg Production Manager

Hannah Bailey Stage Manager

Kamaile Alnas-Benson Assistant Stage Manager

Lue Douthit Play On Co-Founder/Director of Research & Practice

Presented in partnership with



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FOUNDATION











SPECIAL THANKS

Elizabeth Halperin, Adam Mendez, Sierra Gonzalez, and all A.C.T. Education & Community Programs team members; Jessie Amoroso and the A.C.T. Costume Department; Amy Dalba, Emma Penny and the A.C.T. General Management team; Urban Alchemy, Jessie Nightchase, and all of the A.C.T. Facilities Team; Shannon R. Davis, Fran Astorga, Kelsey Tremewan, and Peter J. Kuo; plus all of our colleagues and friends at Play On Shakespeare

WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE LAND

As part of our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion at A.C.T., we are in the process of building a meaningful relationship with the local Indigenous community. As part of this we begin by honoring the lands upon which we do our work. We are proud to offer deep gratitude to the tribal band of Ramaytush Ohlone peoples and their lands that cover Northern California and down the Pacific coastline. Prior to the arrival of the Spanish in the 1700s, the Ramaytush Ohlone numbered approximately 1500 persons, and made their life on the sacred lands. Only a few families survived and still remain. Those descendants make up the membership of the Association of Ramaytush Ohlone (ARO) today. We honor the Ohlone as a people, their resilience, and all they have done and continue to do in maintaining sacred and ancestral lands, ceremony, and communities to this day. A.C.T. donates to the Shuumi Land Tax to support the rematriation of these Indigenous lands. For more information on how you can support the Ohlone community, please visit act-sf.org/indigenous-community.

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HISTORY, CONTEXT, & GRATITUDE



A.C.T.'s Education & Community Programs use the tools of theater to inspire empathy, creativity, and positive social change for students, teachers, and community members. Play On Shakespeare is a nonprofit company promoting and creating contemporary modern translations of Shakespeare's plays. Together we have created the A.C.T. OUT Tour, reimagining classic tales in and for our local communities, and taking no-frills, bare-bones, engaging, modern performances on a local tour. In 2024, the inaugural tour was received with great acclaim by public audiences, teachers, and students throughout the Bay Area. We're thrilled that you're here to experience our 2025 A.C.T. OUT Tour performance, and we hope you enjoy the show.

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Between March 18–27, 2025, this production will tour the Bay Area, performing for students and community members in middle schools, high schools, colleges and universities. We will visit many sites in the San Francisco Unified School District, and travel as far as Hayward and San Jose. We are deeply grateful for the teachers, students and administrators who will welcome us to their campus, and to all funders, donors, ticket buyers and supporters who enable us to take the show on the road at no cost to the school and community sites where we perform.





Photos from 2024 A.C.T. OUT Tour of Measure for Measure, photos by Bekah Lynn Photography

A NOTE FROM DIRECTOR REBECCA J. ENNALS



I'm honored to be back for a second year as co-producer and director of the A.C.T. OUT Tour, working with many of the same artists who made our first foray such a success. The enthusiastic reception of *Measure for Measure* was immensely gratifying for so many reasons—not the least of which was to see how audiences, especially students, responded to material that respects their intelligence, acknowledges their experience of the world, and engages them with challenging questions. I'm also extremely grateful for our partners at Play On for their support of this model of small, portable, engagement-focused Shakespeare.

We chose *Julius Caesar* last summer early in what would be a roller coaster ride of an election season. We expected to explore the rise of fascism in a democracy and the

consequences of having a deeply divided state. We had just seen an assassination attempt against a presidential candidate. We did NOT foresee that the assassination of a healthcare CEO would capture the public's attention, raising questions around whether such an act is ever justifiable. We also could not know the outcome of the election...and when we did, it felt right to cast the show in a way that shows female politicians once again forced to reckon with an impenetrable ceiling. A female Brutus's caution about putting herself on the line for her country feels deeply understandable, given the stakes. Cassius's bitterness also hits differently when we hear her being body shamed and told to smile more. The people of Rome seem happy to accept a turn toward fascism as long as it is couched in a fun party, a stimulus check, and a rousing speech. History is cyclical. As I write this, we are in the first few weeks of the new administration—how quickly things can change. Perhaps thinking about the Roman Empire daily is not such a bad idea.

We recognize that Shakespeare's text can be a barrier to access for many, and we're grateful for Shishir's translation that both preserves the speeches and phrases that have become part of our common culture, and gives us updated language to make the action more clear. Play On's incredible work in matching living playwrights with these 400-year-old plays breathes new life into the language, allowing audiences to dive right in. Always, we owe a debt to Michelle Hensley and the work of Ten Thousand Things in Minneapolis, who for the last 30 years have led the way in creating community touring productions. We continue to find great joy in restricting our playground to just a few physical things...and letting the words and the actors do the rest.

WHO'S WHO



ALAN
COYNE
(Julius Caesar
and others)
has previously
been stabbed
as Polonius,
Laertes,
Duncan, Juliet,
and Cinna the
conspirator,

mostly with We Players and the SF Shakespeare Festival. He has worked in non-stabbing capacities with Ferocious Lotus, Aurora Theatre, PLAY Theatre, Lafayette Town Hall Theatre, and Center Rep, among others. His two-person adaptation, 2ELFth NIGHT, appeared at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2019, and a second one, 2EMPEST, at Eclectic Box SF last August. He can be seen this May/June in Yellow Face with Shotgun Players, and this October in Dadaist Teen Musical with Central Works at the Berkeley City Club.



MONIQUE CRAWFORD (Brutus and others) is a multiracial African-Caribbean actor from Fairfield, CA. Crawford is passionate

about telling stories that need to be told, and earned her B.A. in Theatre Arts from CSU Sacramento. Crawford teaches youth theater at Magic Theater and The Hamlin School. Previous works include Measure for Measure (A.C.T.), Richard II (Magic Theater), EDIT ANNIE (Crowded Fire Theater), Mondragola (Central Works), Cinderella (African-American Shakespeare Company), Spell #7, Bulrusher, Eclipsed (Celebration Arts), Romeo & Mother Juliet (The MacBeth Project), Peter and the Starcatcher, In the Heights, The Present, A Doll's House, Stories to be Told (CSUS). (she/her)



LAUREN
DUNAGAN
(Cassius and others) is delighted to be returning to A.C.T. OUT after playing Escalus/
Mariana in last year's Measure

for Measure. Recent Bay Area credits include Accused! (Central Works), The Tempest (Inferno Theatre Company), Pony (Cutting Ball Theatre), Circle Mirror Transformation (Custom Made Theatre), and Macbeth (Berkeley Shakespeare Company). Before moving north, she lived and worked in Los Angeles, where she co-founded Savage Players Theatre Company, producing and performing in The Psychic Life of Savages, The Tinker's Wedding, Lysistrata, and others. Dunagan holds an MFA in Acting from UCLA and a BA in Drama from Stanford University. (she/her)



SHAYNA
ANN
HOWLETT
(Portia,
Decius, and
others) is
thrilled to
return to
the A.C.T.
OUT Tour for
the second

year in a row. Shayna appeared in A.C.T.'s Measure for Measure (The Duke) in 2024. Other credits include Hamlet (Laertes) with Vallejo Shakespeare in the Park; A Midsummer Night's Dream (Titania) with the Foodbank Players; The Comedy of Errors (Antipholus of Ephesus) with Prague Shakespeare Company; Hamlet (Rosencrantz) with the University of California, Berkeley Theater Department; and Dog Sees God (Van's Sister) and 1984

(The Loudspeaker) with Barestage Productions. Follow them @shay.how on Instagram for more updates. (they/them)



CHRISTIAN
JIMENEZ
(Caska and
others) is
a Bay Area
actor and
playwright. He
is a graduate
of the Ruth
Asawa
School of

the Arts Theatre Department.

Jimenez's recent credits include As
You Like It (California Shakespeare
Theater), Inventory: James Baldwin
Abroad (Oakland Public Theatre),
Fantasmitas: Cinco sueños regresando
al sur (San Francisco Youth Theatre),
Measure for Measure (A.C.T. OUT Tour
2024), Citizen (Word for Word & Z
Space), and A Midsummer Night's
Dream (Sausalito Shakes).
@jimenacetosociety (he/him)



CAROLINA
MORONES
(Calphurnia,
Octavius, and
others) is an
actor, bilingual
teaching artist,
movement
director, and
writer. Most
recently she

played the role of Max in A Very Hitchcock Christmas (Playground-SF). Other notable credits include: Citizen (Word for Word, ZSpace); Fade (PCPA's InterPlay); Pericles, Prince of Tyre (San Francisco Shakespeare Festival); Elliot, A Soldier's Fugue (The Pear Theatre); Much Ado Para Nada (Shakespeare in Detroit); She Persisted the Musical (Bay Area Children's Theatre); and The Tenth Muse (Oregon Shakespeare Festival).



NIC
SOMMERFELD
(Mark Antony
and others) is
a San Francisco
based actor
and playwright.
Their most
recent
productions
were Peter Pan

(Panto at the Presidio) and As You Like It with CalShakes. They have also performed with such companies as Cutting Ball Theatre, SF Oasis, Marin Theater Company, Berkeley Playhouse, FaultLine Theatre, San Francisco Playhouse, Killing My Lobster, The Thrillpeddlers, and The San Francisco Shakespeare Festival. When not writing, performing, or crocheting, they frequently perform as their drag king persona, Chester Vanderbox. As Chester, they host Crooners, a monthly cabaret at Stookey's Blue Room. For more info go to nicasommerfeld.com

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

(Playwright) was born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. A writer, actor, and poet, Shakespeare rose to prominence in late-sixteenthcentury London with his Henry VI trilogy, and went on to write some of Western theater's best known works: King Lear, Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and Much Ado about Nothing. His collected writings comprise 154 sonnets, 38 plays, and two narrative poems. Since his death in 1616, Shakespeare has become the world's most produced playwright and his works have been translated into every modern language.

SHISHIR KURUP (Translator) is an actor, writer, director, composer, and Books-On-Tape narrator born in Bombay, India, and raised in Mombasa, Kenya, and the United States. His one-man shows and solo performance pieces Assimilation, Exile: Ruminations on a Reluctant Martyr, and Sharif Don't Like It have been staged nationally and internationally.

REBECCA J. ENNALS (Director)

is a Community Connections Liaison in the Education & Community Programs department at A.C.T., in addition to having stage managed several workshops and productions for the company. Last year, she produced and directed *Measure for* Measure for the inaugural season of the A.C.T. OUT Tour. Rebecca spent 21 seasons on the staff of San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, including 10 seasons as Artistic Director, where she oversaw all aspects of production, education, and artistic programming. She is currently a lecturer in stage management and theater appreciation at U.C. Berkeley. Rebecca holds an M.F.A. from UC Davis and a B.A. from Scripps College and is a graduate of Directors' Lab West. Her favorite creative collaborations are Henry (10) and Eddie (7). (she/her)

CHRIS STEELE (Assistant Director, Dramaturg, Understudy) is a queer transfemme genderfluid performance artist, writer, director, designer, and activist. Their work centers on highlighting queer narratives throughout history and combating bigotry and white supremacy. Her award-winning drag persona Polly Amber Ross can be found on instagram @pollyamberross.

As a producer, Chris specializes in Marketing and Communications, and is the founder of Poltergeist Theatre Project. (they/she)

SARAH PHYKITT (Scenic and Props Designer) is excited to be back working with A.C.T. after a long hiatus. Recently her work could be seen at the Curran Theatre in Golden Girls Live! The Christmas Episodes.

Other recent design credits include West Side Story, Memphis, Into the Woods, Kinky Boots, Rent, and The Prom at Berkeley Playhouse, Torch Song at Marin Theatre, Angels in America for Oakland Theatre Project. Indecent, As You Like It, Nollywood Dreams, and Evita at San Francisco Playhouse. Upcoming projects include

Fly By Night at Hillbarn Theatre, I Am My Own Wife with Oakland Theatre Project, The Curious Incident of the Dog In the Nighttime with SF Playhouse, and The House on Mango Street with Teatro Visión.

MADELINE BERGER (Costume

Designer) is thrilled to be designing with such incredible artists and collaborators at A.C.T.! Madeline is a multifaceted costume designer and wardrobe stylist based in the East Bay with a full-service costume design house. Her work can be seen throughout the greater Bay Area with theaters like Shotgun Players, SFBATCO, City Lights, and Crowded Fire. She is also the founder of Bay Wardrobe Collective, helping provide support and community for all costuming and wardrobe professionals. For more visit madelinebergerdesign.com and baywardrobecollective.org

CARLA PANTOJA (Fight Director)

has spent the last two seasons working at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival as their first female fight director. Based in the SF Bay Area, they have worked as a fight director and/or intimacy director at American Conservatory Theater, TheatreWorks of Silicon Valley, California Shakespeare Theater, The Magic Theater, Crowded Fire, Golden Thread, and the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival to name a few. Carla is the newly appointed Artistic Director of the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival and a proud member of MGT (Making Good Trouble) an anti-racist facilitator group focused on the Bay Area. (she/they)

NATALIE GREENE (Producer) is an artist and educator working at the intersections of performance, consent, and community engagement, and serving as A.C.T.'s Director of Education & Community Programs. As a choreographer and intimacy professional Natalie has worked with Aurora Theater, Cal Shakes, Marin Theater, Portland Center Stage, Shotgun Players, Stanford University and many more. Natalie is on the Board of Directors of the San Francisco Arts Education Project, and has been a faculty member at ODC School, San Francisco State University, and University of San Francisco. Natalie was also the Artistic Director of the award-winning devised theater ensemble Mugwumpin and has performed throughout the world with dance and theater companies including Epiphany Productions. Natalie's research and pedagogy focus on embodied creative experiences that build a culture of

ANELISA ARMIJO MONTOYA

consent. (she/her)

(Associate Producer) is an actor, playwright, and musician from Albuquerque, New Mexico. She is thrilled to be returning as an Associate Producer on the A.C.T. OUT Tour for Julius Caesar! In the past, she has worked with A.C.T. as a Production Assistant, the Assistant Stage Manager/Deck Manager and Prop Designer for the 2022 MFA show *The* Pliant Girls, and as A.C.T.'s School and Community Programs Coordinator and Manager. Intermittently, Armijo Montoya was the Assistant Costume Designer and Wardrobe Supervisor on Much Ado About Nothing (San Francisco Shakespeare Festival). Her most recent acting credit was for Terror-Rama V: The Last Final Chapter (Awesome Theater).

MICHAEL ANDERBURG

(Production Manager) has been supporting A.C.T.'s Education & Community Programs department productions and exhibitions since 2019. He has been the production manager of several mainstage shows for A.C.T. including Poor Yella Rednecks, A Strange Loop, and Private Lives, as well as A.C.T.'s Young Conservatory performances. Before A.C.T. Mike spent 15 years stage managing at Beach Blanket Babylon and designed lights for their last 5 seasons and finalé performance. In the 90s and the 00s Michael directed and designed for numerous local companies including The Phoenix Theater, Theater Rhinoceros, The SF Gav Men's Chorus. Theater First, and First Seen.

HANNAH BAILEY (Stage Manager)

is an SF Bay Area based stage manager. Work at A.C.T. includes A Strange Loop, Big Data, and The Wizard of Oz. Other credits include Ain't Misbehavin' (Musical Theatre West), Wired 360 (Kinetic Light), Lear (Cal Shakes), and Romeo y Juliet (Cal Shakes). Dedicated to making technical theater a more equitable place, she currently serves as the founding chairperson of the Access Backstage committee for the United States Institute for Theatre Technology. She holds a BA in Performance Studies with a minor in Disability Studies from UC Berkeley. (she/her)

KAMAILE ALNAS-BENSON

(Assistant Stage Manager) is a born and raised Bay Area artist with a B.A. in Theater & Performance Studies from UC Berkeley. She is delighted to be making her A.C.T. debut after working backstage at Berkeley Repertory Theater, Oakland Theater Project, and SF Playhouse. Stage management credits include Angels in America, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, Mahabharata, and Cost of Living (Oakland Theater Project). When she is not sending emails, she is avoiding sending emails. (she/her)

PLAY ON (Partner) is a nonprofit company promoting and creating contemporary modern verse translations of Shakespeare's plays that originated out of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Play On Shakespeare has commissioned dozens of contemporary playwrights and translators to translate 39 Shakespeare plays into modern English, with a majority of the commissions being helmed by BIPOC and womxn playwrights. Play On Shakespeare partners with artists and organizations across the globe to deliver and advocate for these translations through theatrical productions, podcasts, and publications. For more information, visit playonshakespeare.org.

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JENNIFER BIELSTEIN

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Abo Jose Greenwald, Prop Shop Supervisor

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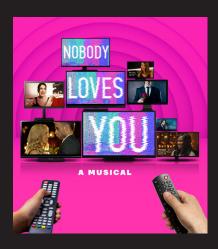
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*denotes a member of the Staff EDI Committee

CHECK OUT WHAT'S COMING UP NEXT AT A.C.T.



BOOK AND LYRICS BY ITAMAR MOSES MUSIC AND LYRICS BY GABY ALTER

CHOREOGRAPHED BY STEPH PAUL

DIRECTED BY
PAM MACKINNON

FEB 28-MAR 30
TONI REMBE THEATER



APRIL 1-13

STRAND THEATER

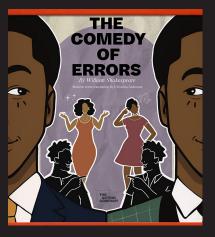
"Eddie's Hamlet is Spectacular."

-Dame Judi Dench



DIRECTED BY **LILI-ANNE BROWN**

APR 15-MAY 4
TONI REMBE THEATER



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
IN A MODERN VERSE

TRANSLATION BY
CHRISTINA ANDERSON

DIRECTED BY

DEVIN BRAIN

APR 22-MAY 3
TONI REMBE THEATER

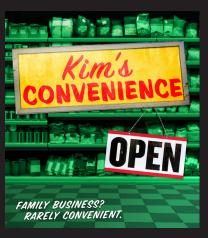
CO-FOUND ERS
AWORLO PREMIERE HIP-HOP MUSICAL

RYAN NICOLE AUSTIN
BEAU LEWIS
ADESHA ADEFELA

CHOREOGRAPHED BY JUEL D. LANE

DIRECTED BY **JAMIL JUDE**

MAY 29-JULY 6
STRAND THEATER



BY INS CHOI DIRECTED BY WEYNI MENGESHA

SEP 18-OCT 19TONI REMBE THEATER

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