



Repercussion Theatre Presents an All-Female Julius Caesar



SOOTHSAYER:

Beware the ides of March.

M. Cummings; D. Jafarzadeh; H. Gauthier-Frankel; S. Megarry; G. Jain; D. Aziz; L. Parker; T. Brown; D. Kilkeny-Mondoux; D. MacKay; C. Varvaro; W. Setshwaelo.
Photo ©Valérie Baron

Montreal, June 14, 2016 - This summer, for the first time in Repercussion Theatre's 28-year history, it is presenting William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, directed by **Amanda Kellock**, (Artistic Director), for its annual **Shakespeare-in-the-Park (SITP)** tour. From **July 7 to August 3**, Montreal and surrounding area residents can venture out to local parks with blankets, picnic baskets and kids to watch the centuries' old tale presented with the unique spin of an all-female cast.

CAESAR: Let me have men about me that are fat...
Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look.
He thinks too much: such men are dangerous."

Why this play and why all women? Kellock explained, "Our mandate is to produce Shakespeare, so we are bound to the material; I think it's our job to engage with Shakespeare, to discover fresh, engaging approaches to these well-known texts. In Montreal we have so many diverse and incredibly talented female stage actors who are woefully underused so here's a perfect vehicle to try something different and showcase these versatile artists."

CASSIUS: The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

Parents with young children may think *Julius Caesar* too dense for family entertainment but Kellock wholeheartedly disagrees. "Whenever you ask children about a favourite story, they inevitably describe big adventures and monumental battles to defend someone or something of worth; that is the essence of *Julius Caesar*. Both sides of the battle believe in the Republic, its goodness and value to all of Rome's citizens. Caesar has been an asset to Rome to this point in the story but now, the possibility of his becoming supreme ruler creates dissent among his followers. One side doubts that he can be king and remain true to the Republic; the other side is faithfully loyal to him, believing he is capable of putting Rome's interests ahead of his own."



CAESAR: Cowards die many times before their deaths;
The valiant never taste of death but once.

The endurance of Shakespeare's plays allows contemporary theatre practitioners to continually explore today's social, political and personal issues through so-called 'old' words. Casting all the roles with women added another layer to the play's themes of manhood and honour when seen through a female lens. "I like theatre as a tool to ask questions rather than provide answers. With this play, I was fascinated by the political themes but less impressed with how the gender politics were represented. I'm excited for our audiences to discover new significance and depth in these words when women speak them," said Kellock.

MARK ANTONY: Cry "havoc" and let slip the dogs of war!

NEW THIS YEAR: This summer will be the testing ground for an exciting new pilot project. This year, all Montrealers will be able to enjoy every nuance of the Bard's English thanks to a brilliant innovation through a collaboration with [Plank Design](#). For the first time ever, Francophone citizens will be able to follow the text by reading French sub-titles on their own smart phones ... pocket Shakespeare! Repercussion Theatre was chosen from a group of non-profits who answered Plank Design's appeal to local organizations for challenging, hi-tech problems for Plank to solve, and solve it they did with a veritable game changer for SITP audience attendance.

Repercussion has also added a few new park locations this year including Brossard, St. Bruno and a new park in Cote-St-Luc, (due to construction in Pierre Elliot Trudeau Park), and the town of Baie d'Urfé returns to the fold after a short absence. The full schedule can be found online at <http://repercussiontheatre.com/current-production/the-tour/>

BRUTUS: Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more.

Twelve of Montreal's finest actors fill the iconic Roman roles yet for several it is their first SITP tour. **Leni Parker**, as Caesar, and **Danette MacKay**, as the devious Cassius, make inaugural appearances. **Tamara Brown**, **Holly Gauthier-Frankel** and **Warona Setshwaelo** also make their debuts in multiple roles on the travelling stage. **Catherine Varvaro**, equally new to the SITP experience, not only plays the Soothsayer but is the composer and will be performing live percussion throughout. SITP alumnae include **Deena Aziz**, Olivia in the 1994 production of *Twelfth Night*, plays the misled Brutus. **Gitanjali Jain** (Mark Antony) and **Darragh Kilkenny-Mondoux**, are also back for a second consecutive year, having performed in last year's *Twelfth Night*. **Samantha Megarry**, last seen in the 2011 production of *Macbeth*, and **Miriam Cummings**, from 2012's *The Taming of the Shrew*, also return. **Donnub Jafarzadeh**, a Concordia grad relatively new on the local scene, rounds out the illustrious cast.



ALBERT EINSTEIN: "I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones."

Einstein's quote was the inspiration behind Kellock's vision for this interpretation of **Julius Caesar**. "We went with a post-apocalyptic backdrop as a way of making sense of a more bare-bones style of combat. These characters are not fighting mechanized battles with hi-tech drones miles from their targets; they are face to face. It made sense to me that something devastating must have taken place. I also wondered if women went to war, what would that look like?" That esthetic is reflected in the both the set and costume designs, respectively by **Marjolaine Provençal** (*Twelfth Night*, SITP 2015) and **Susana Vera** (*The Taming of the Shrew*, SITP 2011), in their imaginative use of found materials that could have survived a holocaust. **Crystal Chettiar** designs the lighting and, as previously mentioned, **Catherine Varvaro** designed the live sound scape, making use of salvaged and makeshift instruments as well as the set itself. As with most SITP performances, music and singing are essential ingredients and this year is no different. Audiences can expect a variety of surprising musical moments.

Jessica Abdallah is Kellock's Assistant Director but also incorporates her Capoeira martial arts training, which traditionally integrates sound and rhythm with movement, to help choreograph the play's action scenes. **Karen Oberer**, a knowledgeable Shakespearean scholar and dedicated Repercussion volunteer once again contributed the dramaturgical support, as she has done for SITP since 2009. The Stage Manager is **Jacynthe Lalonde**, who is assisted by Apprentice Stage Managers **Kate Hennigar** and **Marina Ho**.

RAIN CANCELLATIONS: Call 514-931-2644, visit the web site at www.repercussiontheatre.com, or follow Repercussion Theatre on Twitter ([@RepercussionMtl](https://twitter.com/RepercussionMtl)) or [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/repercussiontheatre) for rain updates. If some shows are cancelled due to inclement weather, there will be a make-up performance on August 4 at a location to be announced.

TOUR DATES:

Preview:	July 6	7:00pm	Rembrandt Park, Cote-Saint-Luc
Opening:	July 7	7:00pm	Mount-Royal Cemetery
Closing:	Aug. 3	7:00pm	Centre Communautaires Fritz, Baie D'Urfe
Rain Date:	Aug. 4	7:00pm	Location TBC
Tour Dates:			http://bit.ly/1stHhiM

ABOUT REPERCUSSION THEATRE

The mission of Repercussion Theatre is to deliver professional, classically based, visually dynamic theatre that is accessible to all, regardless of income, culture, language, age or education. Repercussion brings the performing arts to people in their communities, reaching new audiences and instilling in them, a lifelong love of theatre. For more information, visit the web site at www.repercussiontheatre.com.