

Mailing Address

Lantern Theater Company
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Theater Address

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High-res cast photos available now at:

www.canarypromo.com/lantern

View the release online: <http://bit.ly/1dfSB8E>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 8, 2014

**Lantern Theater Company Presents Forrest McClendon in
William Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*
Directed by Charles McMahan, February 6 – March 16, 2014**

PHILADELPHIA – [Lantern Theater Company](http://www.lanterntheater.org), critically acclaimed in Philadelphia for their annual Shakespearean offering, presents *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar* as the highlight of their 20th season. Directed by the Lantern's Artistic Director **Charles McMahan** and starring Tony Award-nominated actor **Forrest McClendon** in the title role, the Lantern's production is inspired by the warrior ethos of feudal Japan, calling into question the rights of the ruler against the rights of his people. Performances run **February 6 – March 16, 2014**. [*Full schedule including special events is below.*]

Idealism, envy and power politics collide in one of Shakespeare's best known yet rarely performed tragedies. The popularity behind the powerful Roman leader Julius Caesar (**McClendon**) is breeding suspicion among rivals and friends alike – including senators Cassius (**Joe Guzmán**) and Brutus (**U.R.**) – that Caesar's rise will corrode the freedom of the State. As a conspiracy unfolds, Caesar's disregard to prophetic warnings leads to his tragic fall, sending Rome into a disastrous civil war ignited by Marc Antony (**Jered McLenigan**)'s oft quoted oration.

“What happens when a character with a powerful, personal objective gets into the right place at the right time, and rallies the country behind him?” posits director **Charles McMahan**. “Everyday in every democratic body, legislators are having an encounter with these forces. Especially in a democracy, this play will never get old.”

Influenced by the aesthetic and philosophical similarities of feudal Japan to Shakespeare's Rome, set, costume and sound design will incorporate conceptual elements such as Shoji screen architecture, traditional Japanese warrior clothing and music performed by Philadelphia's Taiko drum band ensemble, [KyoDaiko](http://www.kyodaiko.com). Led by production manager and scenic designer **Meghan Jones**, the creative team includes costume designer **Brian Strachan**, lighting designer **Shon Causer** and sound designer **Mark Valenzuela**, with music by **Christopher Colucci** and fights by **J. Alex Cordaro**.

[The Tragedy of Julius Caesar](http://www.lanterntheater.org) runs **February 6 – March 16, 2014 (press opening: Wednesday, February 12, 7 p.m.)**. Tickets are \$20 – \$38 and are available online at lanterntheater.org or by calling the Lantern Box Office at **(215) 829-0395**. \$10 student rush tickets are available 10 minutes before curtain with valid ID; cash only. Additional discounts

are available for seniors, groups of 10 or more and U.S. military personnel. Lantern Theater Company is located at St. Stephen's Theater, 10th & Ludlow Streets in Center City Philadelphia.

2013/14 Season

Lantern Theater Company will continue its 2013/14 season with the Philadelphia Premiere of Athol Fugard's *The Train Driver*, starring Peter DeLaurier and Frank X, directed by Matt Pfeiffer (April 10 – May 4, 2014); and C.S. Lewis' *The Screwtape Letters*, adapted by Anthony Lawton (May 27 – June 15, 2014).

About the Cast

In the title role of Julius Caesar is **Forrest McClendon**, a Tony Award nominee for his Broadway debut as Mr. Tambo in *The Scottsboro Boys*, a role he first created at the Vineyard and Guthrie theaters. Post-Broadway, Forrest received a Barrymore Award for his reprisal of the role at Philadelphia Theatre Company, and most recently appeared in its critically-acclaimed London premiere at the Young Vic. Forrest has previously performed at the Lantern in 2009's *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead* and 2004's *Death and the King's Horseman*.

Barrymore Award-winner **Joe Guzmán** returns to the Lantern stage for the tenth time as conspiring Roman senator Caius Cassius. Other Lantern productions include *Twelfth Night*, *A Dolls House*, *King Lear*, *Through the Looking Glass*, *Noonday Demons* (also co-directed), *Speed-The-Plow*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Hamlet* and *Lovers and Executioners* (Barrymore Award for Outstanding Supporting Actor). Recent work at other theaters includes *True Story* at Passage Theatre Company, *Inherit the Wind* at Bristol Riverside Theatre, *How I Learned to Drive* at Theatre Horizon, *Cinderella* and *Women in Jep* at the Arden, *Any Wednesday* and *Half and Half* at Montgomery Theater, *Othello* at Folger Shakespeare Theatre, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *Tom Sawyer* at People's Light, *The Light in the Piazza* at Philadelphia Theatre Company and *Skin In Flames* at InterAct Theatre Company.

Caesar's close friend, Marcus Brutus, is played by Philadelphia actor **U.R.** Last seen in the Lantern's 2012 production of *The Island*, he was recently recognized as one of *Philadelphia Weekly's* "Best Stage Performances of 2013" for his role in *Stick Fly* at the Arden and received Barrymore Award nominations for his roles in *The Piano Lesson* and *Blue Door*, also at the Arden. Past Shakespearean roles include Puck, Oberon, Belch, Othello (twice), Don Jon, Macduff, Mercutio, Caliban and Petruchio with Yale Rep and Shakespeare in the Park in Connecticut.

Barrymore Award-winner **Jered McLenigan** (Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Play for *It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play* at the Prince) turns public opinion over the assassination of Caesar as Marc Antony. He has performed at the Lantern in *A Skull in Connemara*, *Henry IV Part I* and *Lady from the Sea*. Other recent performances include *The Woman in Black* (Act II Playhouse, recognized as one of *Philadelphia Weekly's* "Best Stage Performances of 2013"), *Inherit the Wind* (Bristol Riverside Theatre) and *Good People* (Walnut Street Theatre/Fulton Theatre). Other awards include the first Irish Festival Award for Outstanding Ensemble (*Dublin by Lamplight*, Inis Nua Theatre Company) and multiple Barrymore nominations for Outstanding Leading Actor and Ensemble.

The cast also includes **Adam Altman** in his Lantern debut as Murellus. He was recently seen in *Blink*, *The Hand of Gaul* and *The Ching Room* at Inis Nua. Locally, he has also worked with Philadelphia Artists' Collective, Iron Age Theatre, Tiny Dynamite, Delaware Shakespeare Festival, Commonwealth Classic Theatre Company and the Arden, among others. **Mary Lee Bednarek**, as Caesar's wife Calpurnia, returns to the Lantern where she was last seen in *Henry IV Part I*. She has worked with many Philadelphia theaters including Theatre Exile, Azuka Theatre, EgoPo Productions, Act II Playhouse, Flashpoint Theatre Company, New City Stage Company, Simpatico Theatre Project, New Paradise Laboratories, Swim Pony Arts, Luna Theater and Hedgerow Theatre. Brutus' wife, Portia, is played by **Kittson O'Neill**, seen at the Lantern in last season's *New Jerusalem*. Recent performances include *You Are Dead, You Are Here* at HERE Arts in NYC and *Behind the Eye* with Philadelphia's Gas & Electric Arts. She is currently developing *The Body Lautrec* with Aaron Cromie and Mary Tuomanen and has also appeared at Act II Playhouse, People's Light & Theatre, Inis Nua and InterAct, where she is also artistic associate). Philadelphia transplant **Matt Tallman**, in the role of Casca, was last

seen at the Lantern in last season's *The Liar* and *Henry V*. His work in Philadelphia includes *The Temperamentals* and *Much Ado About Nothing* (Mauckingbird Theatre), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Delaware Shakespeare Festival), *Stop Kiss* (Philly Fringe) and *Act a Lady* (Azuka Theatre). The role of Octavius is played by **Bradley K. Wrenn**, a performer, writer, creator and co-artistic director of The Berserker Residents. Wrenn previously appeared at the Lantern as Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Special Events

Presented in conjunction with Julius Caesar. For tickets and additional information: 215-829-0395 or visit www.lanterntheater.org.

Scholars: In Conversation

Friends, Romans, Countrymen: Julius Caesar in the Modern World
Mondays at 7pm: February 24, March 3 and 10, 2014

This three-part series draws on the political intrigues of *Julius Caesar* to catalyze discussions among the region's most dynamic scholars. Panelists and audiences will grapple with the canonization of political leaders, Elizabeth I and the relationship between women and power, the unintended consequences of regime change, and how the past can give us perspective on today's most significant issues. Panelists will be announced shortly.

Tickets: \$10 each or \$25 for the three-part series (\$8 each or \$20 for the three-part series for Lantern subscribers, seniors, students and groups of 10 or more)

Via Vino: A Wine Tour of the Roman Empire **Friday, February 28 at 6:00 p.m.**

Winemaking was serious business in ancient Rome, and wine production in outer territories flourished as the Empire expanded. The **Wine School of Philadelphia's Keith Wallace** and Lantern Associate Artistic Director **Kathryn MacMillan** will lead attendees on a wine tour of the Roman Empire that follows the path of Julius Caesar.

Tasting: \$35 (\$30 for subscribers)

Tasting + 8pm Performance of *Julius Caesar*: \$55

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The Tragedy of Julius Caesar
FACTS

<p>Performances:</p> <p>Thu, 2/6 7 p.m. Fri, 2/7 8 p.m. Sat, 2/8 8 p.m. Sun, 2/9 2 p.m.</p> <p>Tue, 2/11 7 p.m. Wed, 2/12* 7 p.m. Thu, 2/13 7 p.m. Fri, 2/14 DIC 8 p.m. Sat, 2/15 8 p.m. Sun, 2/16 AIC 2 p.m.</p> <p>Wed, 2/19 2 p.m. Wed, 2/19 7 p.m. Thu, 2/20 7 p.m. Fri, 2/21 8 p.m. Sat, 2/22 8 p.m. Sun, 2/23 AIC 2 p.m.</p> <p>Wed, 2/26 7 p.m. Thu, 2/27 7 p.m. Fri, 2/28 OC/ WINE 8 p.m. Sat, 3/1 OC 2 p.m. Sat, 3/1 8 p.m. Sun, 3/2 2 p.m.</p> <p>Fri, 3/7 8 p.m. Sat, 3/8 2 p.m. Sat, 3/8 8 p.m. Sun, 3/9 2 p.m.</p> <p>Fri, 3/14 8 p.m. Sat, 3/15 2 p.m. Sat, 3/15 8 p.m. Sun, 3/16 2 p.m.</p> <p>*Opening Night</p>	<p>Dates: <i>The Tragedy of Julius Caesar</i> February 6 – March 16, 2014 Previews run February 6 – 11 Opening night is Wednesday, February 12, 7 p.m.</p> <p>Theater: Lantern Theater Company At St. Stephen's Theater 10th & Ludlow Streets Philadelphia, PA 19107</p> <p>Prices: Adults: \$20-\$38 Students: \$10-\$28 \$10 student rush tickets available 10 minutes before curtain with valid ID; cash only</p> <p>Special discounts are available for seniors and groups of 10 or more.</p> <p>Tickets: Phone: (215) 829-0395 Online: www.lanterntheater.org</p> <hr/> <p><i>The Tragedy of Julius Caesar</i> By William Shakespeare Directed by Charles McMahan</p> <p>Cast (in alphabetical order)</p> <p>Adam Altman Murellus/Ensemble Mary Lee Bednarek Calpurnia/Ensemble Joe Guzmán Cassius/Ensemble Forrest McClendon Caesar/Ensemble Jered McLenigan Marc Antony/Ensemble Kittson O'Neill Portia/Ensemble Matt Tallman Casca/Ensemble U.R. Brutus/Ensemble Bradley K. Wrenn Octavius/Ensemble</p> <p>Production Team</p> <p>Production Manager & Scenic Designer Meghan Jones Costume Designer Brian Strachan Lighting Designer Shon Causar Sound Designer Mark Valenzuela Music Christopher Colucci Fight Director J. Alex Cordaro Stage Manager Rebecca Smith Assistant Director Joshua L. Browns</p>
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AIC – post-show, Artists: In Conversation (FREE) | DIC – post-show, Directors: In Conversation (FREE) |
 OC – Open Captioned Performance | WINE – Wine Tasting: A Tour of the Roman Empire