

## Review

*Julius Caesar* — Pigeon Creek Shakespeare Company at Howmet Playhouse August 29  
By Fran Schattenberg

Announcements at beginning and after intermission are clever, informative, and delightful.

Costuming excellent and set clear characterizations that strengthened a powerful script.

Cast movements were very effective throughout, adding to the visual understanding of the script.

*Julius Caesar* speaks on its own authority, of course, and can be an actor's heaven if the actor does the part well. And in this production there were three actors who were absolutely stunning throughout. They took their parts by the throat and never let them rest as they took the audience into some of the most intricate by-play by drama characters in the history of theatre.

Kathleen Bode/Julius Caesar spoke entirely too fast the entire time and whatever part. And in the speed, the character of Caesar was diminished.

Heather Folkvord/Brutus is an acting treasure. Clear pronunciation and projection so every word was understandable even to the back row alone made her an audience favorite. But, of course, more so than that was her dramatic understanding of those words that she so clearly articulated. She can do anything: devious planning, recognition of her honor and love of Caesar, tender and/or anguished soliloquy, argue, turn on allies, and create political arguments for treason. Because of Folkvord's acting ability, each of these acting demands were jewels.

Katherine Mayberry/Caius Cassius could write the definition for successful conspiracy planning. Likewise, her clear pronunciation and projection enabled the audience to hear every one of her arguments against Caesar as Cassius moves others into treason and political takeover. Her desperation underlay every motion, every vocal tone and projection, so she helped build the tension and terror of treason to the denouement. And she maintained that through the entire play.

A remarkable actor in her own unique and startling way is Sarah Stark/Marcus Antony. She captured the essence of this wily, self-centered, devious, treacherous, arrogant coward who waits for the winning hand. Her stage movements are right in time with all of these personality traits so their intensity is increased to high voltage. Her vocal and tonal control are remarkable as she shifts from dramatic situation to situation. Nothing fazes her, she conquers it all.

A note about the all female version of *Julius Caesar*. Forget special buzz word references to gender. The Pigeon Creek actors *were* the characters in Shakespeare's play, and the audience had no concern as to their gender, it was irrelevant in the view of excellent acting as noted above. Keep this version, it is wonderful.