

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

ADRIAN SANCHEZ GONZALEZ



Kevin Asselin, *Julius Caesar* Director,  
Shakespeare in the Schools Executive  
Artistic Director

**ONE OF THE GREATEST BENEFITS OF THEATRE IS THE NEUTRAL FORUM IT PROVIDES FOR PRODUCTIVE, ENGAGING CONVERSATIONS.** The theatrical experience offers us a pathway to healthy debate, whether we agree with one another or not. My goal as a director is to always create an experience that encourages robust “windshield conversations”—the conversations that occur when viewers have spent an evening or afternoon at the theatre, and drive home debating certain viewpoints or plot lines. My hope is that we can continue to use theatre as a healthy way to dialogue and listen as we investigate the relevant themes embedded in Shakespeare’s words.

In *Julius Caesar*, Shakespeare never seems to favor a specific viewpoint. Instead, he provides actors and viewers alike with an argumentative platform from which to explore a variety of political and personal viewpoints. He is genius at presenting clear and concise arguments on both sides of the play’s central conflict: under what type of government should Rome exist? Beyond the play’s grand political drama, we are also drawn into the individual conflicts existing within the characters themselves, including the psychological battles that motivate and complicate their personal agendas. Hence, the play provides several points of debate for modern audiences to ponder that remain relevant to today’s world.

It is imperative that we continue to find ways of bringing Shakespeare’s world to life in a manner that is relevant to contemporary audiences, particularly for educational purposes. Our concept this year is focused on the chaos that can occur when individuals with conflicting perspectives are unable to come to a mutual understanding of political and personal viewpoints. In *Julius Caesar*, Shakespeare reminds us that a lack of reason and inability to communicate can play a role in not only the collapse of government, but also the collapse of relationships and the natural world. It is my hope these themes will resonate with our viewers, and serve as a sobering reminder of the need for reasoned dialogue and mutual respect in culturally tumultuous times.



Tom Watson's stage design for *Julius Caesar*

**"IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE CONTINUE TO FIND WAYS OF BRINGING SHAKESPEARE'S WORLD TO LIFE IN A MANNER THAT IS RELEVANT TO CONTEMPORARY AUDIENCES, PARTICULARLY FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES."**