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Findings from the Globe 1999 Season

JULIUS CAESAR

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JULIUS CAESAR
The Red Company, 1999

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JULIUS CAESAR

List of Parts and Doubling

Richard Bremmer	Cassius
Toby Cockerell	Portia / Octavius Caesar / Servant to Antony
Tim Davies	Cinna the Conspirator / Lepidus
Jimmy Gardner	Soothsayer / Clitus / A Poet
Roger Gartland	Caius Ligarius / Cicero / Cinna the Poet
James Gillan	Lucius / Young Cato / Publius
Liam Hourican Caesar	Trebonius / Claudio / Dardanius / A Cobbler / Servant to
Mark Lewis Jones	Mark Antony
Terence Maynard	Metellus Cimber / Varrus / Volumnius / Flavius
Quill Roberts	Artemidorus / Pindarus / A Carpenter
Mike Rudko	Casca / Messala
Danny Sapani	Marcus Brutus
Paul Shelley	Julius Caesar / Strato / The Ghost of Caesar
Ben Walden	Decius Brutus / Murellus / Titinius
Benedict Wong	Lucillius / Calphurnia / Popillius Lena / Servant to Octavius Caesar

The Tiring House Gentlemen appeared as **Servants** and **Soldiers**:

Andrew Jolly
Bryan Paterson
Paul Williams

THE REHEARSAL PROCESS

- MR summed up the first rehearsal (6 April 1999). He spoke of a **common centre** – of the Company, of the production, of the building.
- MR wanted to treat *Julius Caesar* as 5 “mini-plays” – to correspond to the breaks between the Acts that we would use in performance. He also hoped this would help to develop a sense of the **beats** in the play – like the five stressed beats in a line of blank verse. (6 April 1999)

• Feeding

This practice was adopted by MR at the very beginning of rehearsals. Each actor in a scene was teamed with an actor not in the scene, who followed the scene on book, while shadowing the actor in the scene, to prompt them when it was their turn to speak. The “feeders” stayed close to their assigned actor and fed them lines without projection or emphasis. The challenge for the “feeders” was to closely shadow their actor, without impeding them in any way. MR advised the “feeders” to feed *thoughts*, and not necessarily complete *lines* to the actors.

This exercise side-stepped the usual “table work” phase of rehearsal, and got the actors on their feet immediately. Most actors find that the necessity to hold a script while working inhibits their creativity to some extent, and MR wanted to see if these inhibitions might be avoided, working with “feeders” in this way. Working this way also helped the actors to discover a *need* to speak, to have a sense of discovering the words as the need to express arose. In the best situations, the actor might genuinely *not* know what they were about to say, until they spoke – the exercise helped to avoid anticipating lines in advance.

The second phase of this exercise was to run the scene without the help of feeders or scripts, relying solely on what the actor retained in their memory. In most cases, this proved far in excess of what anyone might have imagined. The process of “feeding in” undertaken beforehand meant that the actors had hardly noticed that they were absorbing a great deal of text.

This phase was followed by another run of the same scene, this time with feeders again. Encouraged, the actors would invariably remember yet more text by the time this third phase was reached.

As such, all text work done in the first few weeks of rehearsal was done either with Giles Block as Master of Verse, or by the actors alone, in their own time.

• Improvisation:

Occasionally, MR would ask the actors to pause, hold a moment, and as he prompted the actors using simple, specific questions, the actors would explore a particular moment in more detail, through improvisation.¹ For MR, improvisation is simply a hunt for the need to speak, or act. In performance, actors do not usually enjoy the same freedom to explore. MR believed that improvisational exercises were potentially beneficial to all, but especially to actors whose roles included characters with few lines to speak. Improvisations opened the

¹ See “Antony Feigns Friendship”, below.

door to a greater number of choices for such actors, while helping those choices stay within a feasible scheme of plausibility and appropriateness. However, MR sympathised with those actors with large amounts of text to learn, as he understood their priorities lay with text matters.

- A **Question and Answer** session was held on 19 April 1999, at the end of the first week of rehearsals. MR encouraged each actor to use up to 2 minutes each to ask questions relating to the story or other aspects of the production; alternatively, the 2 minutes might be used to express an opinion or concern they might have. MR promised that he would respond to all questions and comments immediately, or follow through on those requiring a more considered response as soon as possible.

This session brought up many responses to the “feeding” approach adopted by MR for the first week of rehearsals (see below). One actor commented that it was “tempting to learn the lines, but probably more freeing *not* to do so” at this stage. Another commented that it would be easier if feeders fed *entire* lines at a time, rather than sections, or “beats”. MR suggested that it might be helpful for feeders to speak to the actors they were working with, and ask whether whole lines, or part-lines, were preferable.

Other matters dealt with in the Q & A session included **scripts** – one actor found the number of different editions available to him made for endless cross-referencing – **character-relationships** within the play, and the necessary balance between **verse work** and **playing**. MR summed up the session thus:

‘I’m enjoying how immediately the play changes as each actor comes into the scene. I appreciate how creatively the company is working, with sustained concentration and trust. What we must continue to hunt for is the *need to speak*. We come into the scenes with a *need*, and afterwards we *refine* that into the words we speak. Let us not start with the refinement itself.’

- **Audience**

Periodically, MR would invite individual members of the public into a rehearsal to provide the actors with an audience, and to check that the storytelling remained clear and direct. The observers were well used by the actors, and many commented that it was useful to have someone there to direct a soliloquy or an aside to.

- **Replacements**

One of the defining moments for the 1999 Red Company came in late April, when John McEnery had to withdraw from rehearsals because of injuries suffered in a house fire. John’s friend Richard Bremmer was brought in at extremely short notice to replace him; he joined the Company just prior to the Otley Hall retreat – an accident of scheduling that helped to form strong bonds between Richard and his fellow Company members very quickly. This traumatic event ended happily for all, as John returned later in the season to perform the role of Enobarbus in *Antony and Cleopatra*. Richard Bremmer proved a capable and admirable replacement as Cassius.

MAIN FEATURES OF THE PLAY

MR noted Shakespeare's ambivalent treatment of the ideas of **monarchy and tyranny** in *Julius Caesar*. He saw the play at once reinforcing the right of the monarch, while at the same time showing the dangers of tyranny. MR pointed out that these issues were pertinent to Elizabethans at the time.

MR described the role of the **Holy Roman Emperor** as being "the Moon, to the Sun of the Roman spiritual leader"; the role was thus one of "corrective balance". Elizabeth I assumed the title of Empress, seeing herself very much as a corrector of the excesses of the Pope. **Was Elizabeth I therefore a self-styled Holy Roman Empress?** MR thought it might be interesting to keep this possibility in mind when working with original practices.

MR described how the **Roman calendar was adjusted** by Julius Caesar, because at the time it seemed out of sync with the Sun. Because of "inclusive counting", the Romans made crucial errors in otherwise accurate calculations pertaining to their calendar – put simply, they began to have leap years every 3 (not 4) years. Hence, the sun appeared to rise in the same, north-easterly point for three consecutive days in the midsummer; in winter, the same phenomenon occurred to the south-east. Caesar responded by having the calendar readjusted to reflect the solstices more accurately. In the process he had a month named after him; this angered many.

In the 1580's the **Gregorian calendar** was similarly adjusted, putting Elizabeth I in an awkward political situation; a 10-day discrepancy emerged between the calendar of the Catholic Church and that of the Church of England. This parallel between Elizabeth and Caesar intrigued MR.

NOTES ON THE TEXT

- The acting edition of *Julius Caesar* was produced by Giles Block (with the help of Liz Ranft who typed the script). The acting edition was based on the 1623 First Folio version of *Julius Caesar*, with changes to the Folio's punctuation: full stops that occurred within the body of a speech were replaced by commas, or in some cases, colons. Full stops that occurred at the end of a speech were retained. The capitalisation scheme of the Folio version was preserved in the acting edition.

The changes detailed above were an integral part of Giles Block's approach to verse speaking, which was received with unanimous approval over the course of the 1999 season. The changes encourage actors to drive through to the end of a speech (thus maintaining momentum); the changes honour existing (Folio) punctuation marks in so far as they pertain to speaking, and to offering opportunities for the actor to breathe, mid-speech. The goal of these changes was greater clarity, momentum, and audibility of speech. It is generally believed that tremendous advances were made towards these goals, as a result of Giles Block's verse work in 1999.

- **Lines cut from the text**

Mark Rylance and Giles Block were anxious to achieve pace and momentum in performance by means other than cutting the text. The final performance version featured no line cuts from the Folio.

• Lines given to other characters

These occurred exclusively in the scenes featuring the Plebeians. Line numbers are from the Arden 2 edition of *Julius Caesar*

Act III, Scene 2

Line 51: 2 Pleb. to 4. Pleb.
Line 53: 4. Pleb. to 5. Pleb.
Line 55: 2. Pleb. to 4. Pleb.
Line 68: 4. Pleb. to 5. Pleb.
Line 69: 3. Pleb. to 2. Pleb.

Line 140: 4. Pleb. to 5. Pleb.
Line 149: 4. Pleb. to 5. Pleb.
Line 155: 4. Pleb. to 5. Pleb.
Line 157: 2. Pleb. to 3. Pleb.
Line 164: 2. Pleb. to 4. Pleb.
Line 166: 4. Pleb. to 5. Pleb.

Line 203: 4. Pleb. to 5. Pleb.
Line 205: 2. Pleb. to 4. Pleb.
Line 210: 2. Pleb. to 4. Pleb.
Line 234: 3. Pleb. to 4. Pleb.
Line 245: 2. Pleb. to 4. Pleb.
Line 259: 2. Pleb. to 4. Pleb.
Line 261: 4. Pleb. to 5. Pleb.

Act III, Scene 3

Line 9: 2. Pleb. to 3. Pleb.
Line 12: 3. Pleb. to 2. Pleb.
Line 33: 1 Pleb. to 4. Pleb.

• Stage Directions/Entrances and Exits

I-2: Decius' entrance cut - replaced by Cinna.
II-2: *Exit Servant* added (line 47)
III-1: Lepidus entrance cut – replaced by Ligarius. Popilius Lena entrance added.
IV-2: Lucius' entrance cut.
IV-3: Lucius' exit cut (line 141)
V-4: Flavius' entrance cut – replaced by Volumnius

RESEARCH

Research Materials:

- *Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes*, translated by Sir Thomas North (1579); The Life of Julius Caesar
- Plutarch (ibid.); The Life of Marcus Brutus
- Suetonius, *The Historie of Twelve Caesars*, translated by Philemon Holland (1606)
- Ortelius, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (1579) Map of the Roman Empire
- John Polman, account of *The Battaille of Saint Michael* (1582), from *The second part of the booke of Battailles, fought in our age: Taken out of the best authors and writers in sundrie languages. Published for the profit of those that practise arms, and for the pleasure of such as love to be harmlesse hearers of bloudie broiles.* (London, printed for Gabriel Cawood, 1587)
- *Caesar's Revenge* (Anon., 1607)
- William Byrd, *My Ladye Nevells Booke*, (1591) – virginals music of the period.
- Robert Barret, *The Theorike and Practike of Moderne Warres* (London, 1598)
- Jaq Bessell was asked by MR to locate different images of **hellmouths**. MR thought that the battle of Phillippi might be a suitable analogue, and that we might use the discovery space as a kind of hellmouth in the scenes relating to the battle itself. JB found the majority of depictions seemed to be of hell as a cauldron, or a pit. Pictures of carvings at Chartres Cathedral were useful.
- JB brought a number of source materials to a session devoted to the character of **Brutus**. Below are excerpts of material used:

Dante took a particularly dim view of Brutus. Deploring betrayal as the greatest of possible sins, he places Brutus and Cassius together with Judas Iscariot, in Lucifer's mouth for eternity, in the 9th circle (the lowest depths) of the *Inferno* (Canto 34, //28-69)

'The emperor of the realm of grief protuded
 From mid-breast up above the surrounding ice...
 ...How great a marvel it was
 For me to see **three faces** on his head:
 In front there was **a red one**; joined to this,
 Each over the midpoint of the shoulder, he had
 Two others – all three joining at the crown.
 That on the right appeared to be a shade
 Of **whitish yellow**; **the third** had such a mien
As those who come from where the Nile descends....
 He wept from all six eyes, and the tears fell
 Over his three chins mingled with bloody foam.
The teeth of each mouth held a sinner...
...thus he held three of them
In agony. For the one the front mouth gripped,

The teeth were are nothing to the claws, which sliced
 And tore the skin until his back were stripped.
 "That soul," my master said, "who suffers most,
Is Judas Iscariot; head locked inside,
 He flails his legs. **Of the other two**, who twist
 With their heads down, **the black mouth holds** the shade
 Of **Brutus: writhing, but not a word will he scream;**
Cassius is the sinewy one on the other side."...'

Brutus is there, according to Dante, not because he betrayed country or kin, but a benefactor. However, this extreme view of Brutus and Cassius was far from typical. The following extracts are all from **North's translation of Plutarch**:

- ' Marcus Brutus came of that Junius Brutus...(who)...had valiantly put downe the Tarquines from their kingdom of Rome. But that Junius Brutus being of a sower sterne nature, not softened by reason...was so subject to his choller and malice he bare unto the tyrannes, that for their sakes he caused his owne sonnes to be executed. But this Marcus Brutus in contrarie maner...having framed his manners of life by the rules of vertue and studie of Philosophie, and having imployed his wit, which was gentle and constant, in attempting great things: me thinkes he was rightly made and framed unto vertue.'
- '...Marcus Cato the Philosopher was brother unto Servilia M. Brutus mother; whom Brutus studied most to follow of all the other Romanes, bicause he was his Uncle, and afterwards he married his daughter.'
- ' Now touching the Graecian Philosophers, there was no sect nor Philosopher of them, but he heard and liked it: but above all the rest, he loved Platoes sect the best...'
- ' He was properly learned in the Latine tongue, and was able to make long discourse in it, beside he could also plead verie well in Latine. But for the Graeke tongue...in some of his Epistells...he counterfeated that briefe compendious maner of speech of the Lacedaemonians...Brutus manner of letters ...were honored for their briefenes.'
- ' Brutus being but a young stripling went into Cyprus with his Uncle Cato...Afterwards when the Empire of Rome was divided into factions, it was thought then that Brutus woulde take parte with Caesar, bicause Pompey not long before had put his father unto death. But Brutus preferring the respect of his contire and common wealth, before private affection, and perswading himselfe that Pompey had juster cause to enter into armes then Caesar: he then tooke parte with Pompey, though oftentimes meting him before, he thought scorne to speake to him, thinking it a great sinne and offence in him, to speake to the murtherer of his father.'
- 'It is reported that Caesar did not forgette him, and that he gave his Captaines charge before the battell, that they shoulde beware they killed not Brutus in fight, and if he yeilded willinglie unto them, that then they shoulde bring him unto him: but if he resisted, and woulde not be taken, then that they shoulde lette him goe, and doe him no hurte. Some saye he did this for Serviliaes sake, Brutus mother. For when he was a young man, he had bene acquainted with Servilia, who was extreamelie in love with him. And bicause Brutus was borne in that time when their love was hottest, he perswaded him selfe that he begat him.'

From SUETONIUS:

- ‘... Marcus Brutus’s mother Servilia was the woman whom Caesar loved best, and in his first consulship he brought her a pearl worth 60,000 gold pieces. He gave her many presents during the Civil War, as well as knocking down certain valuable estates to her at a public auction for a song. When surprise was expressed at the low price, Cicero made a neat remark: ‘It was even cheaper than you think, because a third (*tertia*) had been discounted.’ Servilia, you see, was also suspected at the time of having prostituted her daughter Tertia to Caesar.’
- ‘Twenty-three dagger thrusts went home as he (Caesar) stood there. Caesar did not utter a sound after Casca’s blow had drawn a groan from him; though some say that when he saw Marcus Brutus about to deliver the second blow, he reproached him in Greek with: “You, too, my son?”’

REHEARSAL SPACES

• Jerwood Space

This was the location for the first week of rehearsals for *Julius Caesar*. The White Company worked in a space connected to the Red Company room by soundproof doors. The White Company stayed on at the Jerwood Space after the Red Company moved to Duthy Hall, during Week 2.

• Duthy Hall

The Red Company moved into the smaller rehearsal room in Duthy Hall on 12 April 1999, at the beginning of the second week of rehearsals for *Julius Caesar*. MR explained that when using this space we would not be able to replicate the dimensions or playing conditions of the Globe stage, but that the intimate space of Duthy Hall might offer an opportunity to explore character and scene dynamics in more detail, until the stage became more freely available. CvK noted the level of reverb in the room, and requested fabric hangings for the walls to improve the acoustics. These were promptly provided and fitted by the stage management team.

• Otley Hall

An Elizabethan mansion in Suffolk, Otley Hall became the setting for a retreat-cum-rehearsal period from 28-30 April, 1999. The Red Company were given a guided tour of the house and its grounds by the current owner, Nicholas Hagger, who also joined in some of the many improvisational games the actors played during their stay. The Company lived communally during their time at Otley, and many assisted JB in catering for the group as a whole. Jim Bisgood led sessions in period military drill in the grounds of Otley Hall.

Using the numerous locations within Otley Hall’s grounds to represent different locations within the play allowed the events of *Julius Caesar* to happen in “real time”. The actors felt

that they were able to get a good sense of their individual “character curves”. The improvisations that the actors created had structure and a definite time element, which all felt was more useful for this particular stage of rehearsals than either “looser” improvisations or sessions spent finessing the text would have been. Playing through the scenes of *Julius Caesar* in order helped to give the actors a sense of structure, while allowing them to improvise, explore and discover aspects of the story outside the text.

The same designations of location helped to save valuable time at Otley Hall. Throughout the day, all actors were constantly playing, regardless of whether they were in the scene from *Julius Caesar* that was being worked on at any given moment. The time at Otley helped Richard Bremmer (replacing the injured John McEney) to get a sense of the play as a whole.

MR’s reaction to the time spent at Otley Hall: ‘I feel that the body, the *heart* of the beast is now in place. The *story* is inside us now. It is up to us now to finesse the *storytelling*’.

ORIGINAL PRACTICES

At the first rehearsal (6 April 1999) Mark Rylance and Jenny Tiramani spoke to the Red Company actors about their shared ideas on the experimentation with original working practices at the Globe.

- MR expressed a hope that taking on board the idea of original working practices in rehearsal might allow the process to reveal some aspect of the play that has been forgotten over time. He stressed the experimental nature of the work, rather than the potential desirability or feasibility of “authenticity” in production. Several actors expressed relief when they heard this. They all supported the idea of the Globe as a forum for **continued learning and experiment**, and believed that this was an effective way to combat the perils of “museum-piece theatre”.

- JT described her work at the Globe, and her commitment to clothing as an *ethic*, not just a “costume”. She reminded the actors that the clothing used by players in the time of Shakespeare was donated as gifts from members of the noble classes. She said that her work involved a different level of attention to detail, compared to the kind of design work in other conventional theatres; she needed to replicate not just a silhouette, but also the feel and weight and character of the original.

- **Relationship between the clothing of the audience and the actors:** MR and JT noted that the Elizabethans were particularly keen on certain “Roman” ethics, and were inclined to make links between that society and their own. For the actors who played *Julius Caesar* in 1599, it is that they wore their own clothing when playing Romans. Some aspects of Roman life made terrific sense to the Elizabethans, said MR, and these aspects survived, when other more alien aspects of Roman culture were de-emphasised.

MR believed that a similar exploration would be fruitful in 1999, and that as well as exploring Rome through an Elizabethan lens, we should look for the links between Rome and our time. JT confirmed that some element of modern dress would be experimented with at times, to establish this kind of connection.

- **Swords:** JT and Lily Mollgaard (Props Manager) selected hunting, dagger-like swords to be used in both *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra*. These were “more Roman” in appearance than the rapiers popular with young men circa 1599. (13 April 1999)
- CvK, JT and JB met with period drum-maker Jim Bisgood on 15 April 1999, to discuss the feasibility of using authentic drums in the production. Sample drums were tested on the Globe stage, and from various points around the auditorium, before a total of four drums were commissioned by CvK.

BRUTUS

- MR asked the actors to write down anything their respective characters said about Brutus. He also asked certain actors whose characters appeared in scenes with Brutus to write down anything that they said *to* Brutus, if it revealed anything significant. MR asked Danny Sapani to prepare a kind of autobiographical or psychological sketch of his character, using evidence from the play as a whole. MR asked JB to assist DS by supplying him with background source material from the accounts of Plutarch and Suetonius². JB read extracts from Plutarch, Suetonius and Dante; the actors volunteered information from the play itself that related to Brutus’ life.

Next, MR asked DS to explore certain lines from the play in which Brutus speaks about himself. To encourage a sense of objectivity, MR encouraged DS to play the lines, rather than simply read them, changing the perspective from first-person to third-person.

DS sat inside a circle of actors who became a kind of “jury of peers”. MR asked each actor to play the lines they had chosen – what their characters say about, or to, Brutus - in any order, and to feel free to repeat these at whatever interval they wished. This process was very revealing, as a multi-faceted Brutus was reflected in the comments and perspectives of those around him. DS was asked to observe and listen, but not respond verbally.

An improvisation around the imagined events of “Brutus’ birthday party” finished this session devoted to Brutus’ character development. It was interesting to note the somewhat triangular relationship between Brutus, Caesar and Mark Antony develop – PS took the role of benevolent patriarch and Mark Lewis-Jones the younger sibling. MR was pleased to see the actors creating such strong and subtle relationships autonomously, within the freeing spirit of play. (April 14, 1999)

SCENES IN REHEARSAL

Act I, Scene 1: Tribunes and Craftsmen

- The **Feast of Lupercal** is celebrated at the start of the play, and MR described the main features of this celebration (later reconstructed at Otley Hall). The Lupercal represented a new start, a time for prophecies, hope for fertility, plenty and a good harvest. Caesar wished to be crowned King on the Feast of Lupercal, to be acknowledged as a second

² See “Research” section, above, for excerpts used.

Romulus. This idea was anathema to Brutus, descended from Tarquin. The play begins, nonetheless, in a spirit of pagan celebration, with a man desiring to be considered a god.

- Flavius and Murellus (Tez Maynard and Ben Walden) entered through the door SR and directly addressed the “commoners” (ultimately, the groundlings and galleries). MR had described the atmosphere that he hoped and expected might be created by the interaction of musicians and actors (playing craftsmen) with the spectators in the yard, but at the early stages of rehearsal this could only be imagined. The Carpenter (Quill Roberts) and Cobbler (Liam Hourican) were aided and abetted with their responses to the Tribunes by other members of the company who happened to be in the rehearsal room at the times the scene was rehearsed, but the proximity of the Craftsmen to the Tribunes did not help TM and BW to imagine a more widespread and far-reaching sense of riotous carnival. The scene was transformed when rehearsals transferred to the Globe stage, as tour groups admirably improvised as plebeian masses! As a prime piece of site-specific theatre, however, the full impact of this scene had to be postponed until the crucially unpredictable element of a large live audience was incorporated.

Act I, Scene 2a: *Caesar Meets the Soothsayer*

- CvK advised the actors that a flourish would herald the entrance of Caesar’s party. The Cobbler’s exit through the yard would be halted by this flourish, and would prompt him to stay to observe Caesar in all his glory. Mark Lewis Jones’ first appearance as Mark Antony would be in guise of the High Priest of the Lupercal – dressed in blood-stained wolfskins – a figure not unlike Pan, both dangerous and fertile or regenerative. Later, Otley Hall offered an ideal environment to explore the possibilities contained in these kinds of rituals. These improvisations were played out privately, without observers, in order to preserve the defining element of secrecy and myth that surrounded the ritual itself.

MLJ was presented with the challenge of communicating these various and antithetical ideas of fertility, danger, Rome’s legacy from Romulus and the wolf as protector of Rome’s flock of citizens, to a contemporary audience, without the benefit of substantial speeches to help him communicate these ideas. As such, the improvisations at Otley Hall proved invaluable.

MR asked the actors to consider the symbols of the feast of Lupercal, in particular the image of the wolf as both predator and protector. He described what he felt was a sense in Shakespeare’s time of European leaders cast in similarly wolfish forms. This problematic image of the predatory guardian permeates every level of the play, so it seemed essential to realise this not just philosophically but physically, at the earliest possible juncture.

The Soothsayer (Jimmy Gardner) would emerge from the ‘presse’ of the yard rather like the craftsmen of the previous scene, it was decided. The Soothsayer’s modern dress would provide a stark contrast to the sartorial excesses of the Lupercal celebrants, that MR hoped would help his discordant note of caution to resonate more strongly.

Act I, Scene 2b: *Cassius Mirrors Brutus*

- Work on this scene began in earnest during the Company's time at Otley Hall. The episode was named "Cassius Mirrors Brutus" because the Company felt that this most aptly summed up Cassius' strategy in persuading Brutus to join the conspirators' cause. Cassius is not able to coerce Brutus in any direct sense – indeed, it seemed as the scene progressed that it revealed a deep-seated need on Cassius' part for affirmation from Brutus. The macho stories of swimming across the Tiber and corresponding jibes at Caesar's infirmity were explored by Richard Bremmer as a means of betraying Cassius' own insecurities. RB noted that Cassius equates honour with strength, and that this scene provides an excellent primer for the showdown in Act IV, *Two Brothers in a Tent* (IV.3a); Brutus' aspersions regarding not only his word, but his military prowess, would really sting Cassius.
- Once the play went into previews, MR amended the blocking for this scene to more accurately reflect the "mirroring" element of Cassius' strategy. He advised RB and DS to play the scene from opposing ends of the stage, forward of the pillars, and to maintain maximum distance, where possible. This not only improved the sightlines tremendously, but encouraged the audience to make appropriate parallels between the two men, as a result of their spatial relationship to one another.

Act I, Scene 2c: *Caesar Suspects Cassius*

- MR helped the actors to develop a strong choral element to the movement of this scene. This was strengthened tremendously by improvisation exercises in the open spaces of Otley Hall. The return of Caesar's party from Antony's victory in the race provided a strong contrast to the intimate exchange between Cassius and Brutus that preceded it. The dialogue between Cassius and Brutus at the start of this section in some ways "narrates" the entrance of this group; RB and DS used the text an altered physicality to shift focus from themselves, to the group as they entered.

Ben Wong (Calphurnia) responded sensitively to the text, timing his movements towards Caesar (Paul Shelley) to help him recover from an earlier fit of epilepsy to complement the expository text spoken by DS:

'The angry spot doth glow of Caesar's brow,
And all the rest, looke like a chidden traine,
Calphurnia's cheek is pale...'

BW devised a means to communicate the plight of Caesar without the need for text, and discovered several hesitant mannerisms as Calphurnia was sent to bring water for her husband, that nicely foreshadowed the later episode (II,2a) *Calphurnia Kneels*. This action underscored and supported the narrative spoken by DS (above).

The scene contains a long aside by Caesar to Antony, against the backdrop of a very public gathering. The group of Lupercal celebrants are largely silent in the scene, but their presence is a theatrically interesting one, and so a challenge presented itself immediately for PS and MLJ in stealing and retaining the focus of this scene. By claiming the area in front of the SL pillar, PS and MLJ were able to reinforce the necessary sense of detachment within the context of a large, public event. Caesar's train of followers occupied the central area of the stage, with Cassius and Brutus off to the side (SR).

Act I, Scene 2d: *Casca Talks of Foolerie*

- Mike Rudko (Casca) was aware from the beginning that the transition from this scene to the next represented something of a transformation in his character's response to his immediate environment. MRu was able to develop the more cynical side of Casca's commentary still further when work transferred to the Globe stage – only with an audience present was the full value of his sneering references to 'the rabblement' with their 'stinking breath' discovered.

The Company played through the events of Casca's commentary during their time at Otley Hall, with the Company taking the part of the 'tag-ragge people'. The arrest of Murellus and Flavius was also enacted, to fill out the context of Casca's speech.

Act I, Scene 3a: *The Disturbed Sky*

- A sound effect of thunder was required for this scene. MR initially thought that the best method might be to employ about five actors in the attic stamping their feet rapidly for several seconds at a time. An assimilation of this was tried for rehearsals in Duthy Hall, but the level of noise produced had to wait until technicals to be finessed.

MR and MRu discussed the change in Casca from the previous scene. In terms of playing time, Casca would be absent from the stage for a matter of minutes from his exit in I,2d until his entrance in I,3a. MRu and Roger Gartland (Cicero) experimented with methods of suggesting a drastic change in climate too. As the rehearsals transferred to the Globe stage it was easier for the actors to imagine exposure to the elements in this way. RG chose to shelter underneath the canopy created by the balcony overhang, and MRu joined him on entering. This tended to narrow the focus of the scene to a tiny portion of the playing area; as a result, Cassius' "long entrance" around the front edge of the stage – putting as much space as possible between himself and the sheltering Casca - appeared suitably exposed and cavalier.

Act I, Scene 3b: *A Bargain*

- MR asked the actors to consider the sense of honour that the conspirators draw upon to inform their decision to kill Caesar. Hence, this meeting between Cassius and Casca need not rely on any element of coercion to provide its drama; rather, the actors should explore a sense of excitement as they pledge to fight tyranny as they see it. MRu and RB rehearsed the scene at some distance from each other; this helped communicate the tentative nature in which MRu chose to have Casca listen to Cassius' complaints, and allowed the focus to be pulled suddenly and dramatically as MRu stepped towards RB to offer his hand (and support) with the words, '...hold, my hand'. As the two men suddenly came together, their complicity seemed magnified by this simple gesture. This basic blocking was retained as the play went into performance.

Act I, Scene 3c: *How to Win Brutus*

- This scene seemed to present many potential hazards: the entrance of Cinna is in darkness, and he is identified 'by his gait'. Cinna cannot initially identify Casca – he thinks he is Metellus Cimber – and Cassius has to hand out several letters and some fairly detailed instructions to Cinna, in a matter of a few lines.

The transition of the play to the stage made sense of a number of these potentially troubling pieces of business: MR suggested that TD enter (as Cinna) the "long way" – that is, through the flanking door SR, and along the front of the stage DS of the pillars, before doubling back to encounter Casca and Cassius sheltering underneath the canopy created by the balcony. The huddle of three men in this tiny portion of the stage was helpful in reinforcing the clandestine nature of their dealings with each other. The sense of suspense was also aided by this huddle, for one instinctively felt that the three could not afford to be seen so close together, and therefore time seemed to be of the essence; Cassius' instructions seemed, therefore, justifiably concise and to the point.

Act II, Scene 1a: *Brutus and Lucius*

- The challenge of this scene in rehearsal was the soliloquy, or rather, how to use it successfully in the rehearsal space. MR favoured as spontaneous an approach as possible, and asked the few observers in the room to space themselves around the room's perimeter, to allow DS to use them as different focal points. Part of the difficulty with Brutus' monologue lies in its rhetorical content that must be made active; it is a dense argument that requires definition, before it can be released fully and spontaneously. DS was quick to point out the way in which the writing helped: the personification of 'conspiracie' allows the actor to dissect the argument more easily, and directs the actor to address 'conspiracie' itself, opening up the speech for the audience beautifully.

DS found that a strong sense of family pride helped to motivate portions of the soliloquy: in a full-cast session devoted to a character-exploration of Brutus, MR reminded DS that Brutus' ancestor, Lucius Julius Brutus, drove the Tarquins from Rome and helped to establish the Roman Republic. DS was keen to take on board the idea of this Republican legacy.

MR also reinforced the notion of the body-politic: Rome, like Brutus, suffers 'The nature of an insurrection'.

As the play went into performance, DS found that the greatest challenge connected with this scene lay in drawing the full focus of the audience after the 5-minute break. A flourish from the trumpeters above heralded the resumption of play, and Brutus' first line – 'What Lucius, ho' – gave him the opportunity to project a long, open vowel as considerable volume – this rang around the auditorium and hushed the groundlings very effectively!

Act II, Scene 1b: *The Rising Son*

- During the time at Otley Hall, this scene was rehearsed in darkness, in the middle of the night. While MLJ led an improvised "revelling" exercise (playing drums, singing songs etc) in one part of the grounds at Otley, elsewhere the actors playing conspirators lurked in the shadows, making their way to their agreed meeting point, to play through this scene.

Time, MR noted, was an important factor in the play, and so it was helpful for the actors to have this sense of clandestine behaviour under the cover of darkness. This would stand them in good stead when the play transferred to the open stage, and it was necessary to transform the daylight into darkness, both in their own imaginations and the audiences'. The conspirators share a preoccupation with time, said MR, as the following exchange illustrates:

Deci. Here lyes the East, doth not the day breake here? (Ben Wa points due West)

Casc. No.

Cin. O pardon, sir, it doth, and yon grey lines,
That fret the clouds, are messengers of day.

Casc. You shall confesse, that you are both deceiv'd,
Heere^o, as I point my sword, the sunne rises,
Which is a great way growing on the South,
Weighing the youthfull season of the yeare,
Some two moneths hence, up higher toward the North
He first presents his fire, and the high East
Stands as the Capitoll, directly heere*.

^o MRu indicated with his weapon a point in the distance which faced due East * MRu continued to point East, and consequently at the approaching DS.

Act II, Scene 1c: *Portia Kneels*

• Toby Cockerell began using rehearsal skirts and corsets as soon as they became available. This helped not only familiarise the actor with the kind of clothing he'd be wearing in performance, but also reinforced in a physical sensation the larger issue of feminine constraint and confinement that MR wished to develop in the relationship between Portia and Brutus. MR encouraged DS and TC to play the scene at some considerable distance from each other, before restricting TC still further, sitting him on a bench and loosely binding his hands behind his back. This prompted TC to make full use of his *words*, as the only available tools to communicate with Brutus, to probe, persuade and reason.

TC asked MR how long he thought Brutus and Portia had been married. MR guessed that this was a young marriage, which prompted TC to decide that Portia had not previously made any such outburst before this episode – a decision that raised the stakes for the actors and helped the scene tremendously.

MR stood behind TC's Portia as she sat on the bench, and asked TC to imagine the presence of Cato, Portia's father, overseeing the events of the scene. MR burdened DS more literally – he asked DS to carry a heavy gas cylinder throughout the duration of the scene, a physical weight as heavy as Brutus' burden of guilt and conscience. DS did so, and put down the load only as he decided to disclose his grievances to Portia, as DS put it, "when he decides not to bear this alone".

(26 April 1999)

Act II, Scene 1d: *A Sick Man*

- RG, playing Caius Ligarius, was very interested in the precise nature of the sickness that afflicted Ligarius. It is described in the text as an 'ague' or intermittent fever, a condition that (during Shakespeare's time) was attributed to an excess of one of the humours, causing excessive heat and a bad case of the shakes. RG worked with a kerchief held to his cheek, finding a physicality that communicated the appropriate affliction, and yet did not interfere with his verse-speaking abilities. It was an interesting experiment in adjusting certain technical elements of "psychologically realistic" acting to suit an open-air theatre. Too much might have been pantomimic or melodramatic; too little might have failed to register on the Globe stage.

MR talked with RG about his illness, and encouraged him to think of the ague as being a result of his deep-seated loathing of Caesar. RG found this a helpful note – it seemed that he was being eaten away from the inside, by a hatred that could only be purged by violent means, he said. The relief he felt at the knowledge that Brutus was joined to the cause seemed to lift him physically as well as psychologically.

Act II, Scene 2a: Calphurnia Kneels

- MR was intrigued by the connection between kneeling and persuasion and effect that kneeling has on Brutus and Caesar respectively.

Calphurnia's dream is expressed in words that conjure up vivid, terrible images. MR directed BWo to direct the speech to the Globe, rather than to PS. Despite the intimate rehearsal space, BWo needed to find a means of persuasion that did not rely on a strong connection with PS. BWo found that the need to express these terrible visions helped to strengthen the resolve behind Calphurnia's words. When rehearsals transferred to the stage, MR placed PS and BWo on the balcony for this scene, and BWo was able to make full use of the space's power in creating potent images in the imagination.

Act II, Scene 2b: Decius Persuades

- MR asked BWa to bear in mind Decius' earlier comments (in "The Rising Son"), when he said of Caesar.

'...when I tell him, he hates flatterers.
He says, he does, being then most flattered,
Let me worke,
For I can give his humour the true bent,
And I will bring him to the Capitoll.'

BWa decided to use persuasion tactics that were only very subtly derisive (of Calphurnia and her influence on Caesar) which seemed to work well. BWa employed no element of coercion, and only rarely engaged with PS face-to-face, preferring to cast his thoughts quite casually out into the open air, and let them work on Caesar's sense of pride almost of their own accord. The onus naturally fell upon PS to "make his own decision", which seemed entirely appropriate for this particular Caesar.

BWa's approach adapted particularly well to the playing conditions at the Globe. He was able to play large portions of the scene with his back to the *frons scenae* and the balcony, and to make effective use of the reactions of the groundlings as he gently "persuaded". He was also able to conceal his own reactions from PS, on the balcony behind him.

Act II, Scene 2c: 8.00 a.m.

- LH (playing Trebonius) voiced concern about his aside: '...and so neere will I be,/That your best friends shall wish I had been further.' LH confessed he found the aside a bit melodramatic, and he felt self-conscious making such a deliberate switch of focus when this scene was run in the rehearsal hall. The intimacy of the rehearsal hall and the absence of an audience made playing asides an exercise in convention at best, and MR sympathised with his concern on this matter. MR reassured him that this unease would disappear once he was able to incorporate the dynamics of the Globe space.

DS was faced with a similar challenge at the end of this scene: 'That like is not the same, O Caesar,/ The heart of Brutus yearnes to thinke upon.' DS also found the transition to the Globe stage made the playing of asides entirely natural.

Act II, Scene 3: Artemidorus' Suite

- It was decided that QR's Artemidorus would be assimilated with his Carpenter character from I-1. This enabled QR to remain in the yard throughout the first Act, dressed in modern clothes. This also presented a challenge to QR: by ascending to the stage for this speech, he reinforced a convention begun in the first scene of the play, but not seen since. QR noted that he had little time to establish a relationship with the audience, but that a relationship of some kind was vital, given the purpose of his speech. QR was anxious that the contents of the speech might be lost as audience members tried to work out whether QR was actually an actor, or a member of the audience. QR also voiced concerns that speculation as to whether he was the same character as the Carpenter of I-1 might distract the audience too much.

MR suggested that the problem might be best solved by the presence of the audience itself: surrounded by a yard full of groundlings, it would be extremely difficult to pick out QR from the crowd, given that he has only one line in the first scene. In practice, only a handful of people standing close enough to the Carpenter in Act I were able to make the connection between Carpenter and Artemidorus.

Act II, Scene 4: Portia in a Narrow Street

- TC and JGi (Portia and Lucius) needed to establish some sense of relative distance in this scene; that Portia's musings might have been overheard by Lucius is a troubling thought for her. MR worked with TC to establish Portia's dire need to put into words the turmoil in her "man's mind". MR encouraged TC to seek help from elements outside his immediate surroundings. The appeal, 'O Constancie, be strong upon my side' began as an internalised plea to Portia's own inner strength; as the play transferred to the stage, this gesture seemed to naturally expand and fly out to the heavens and beyond, as though

Portia were calling on the gods themselves. This helped TC to operate within two distinct realms of private thought and public utterance.

The arrival of the Soothsayer further complicated the issue of establishing a location for the scene: Jimmy Gardner (Soothsayer) needed to suggest that he was arriving from elsewhere, and encountering Portia in a narrow street. Once again, the Globe's unique space seemed to solve the issue: MR chose to have JGa pass by in the yard, along the foot of the stage. The presence of the groundlings impeded his progress, as JGa sought 'a place more void' from which to view Caesar's progress. Speaking to JGa in the yard, from the front of the stage, seemed to establish exactly the uprooted sense in TC's "Portia in a Narrow Street".

Act III, Scene 1: *Then Fall Caesar*

- MR read to the company from Plutarch's account of the assassination of Julius Caesar:

'Metellus at length, taking his gowne with both is handes, pulled it over his necke, which was the signe geven the confederates to sette upon him. Then Casca behinde him strake him in the necke with his sword, howbeit the wound was not great nor mortall, bicause it seemed, the feare of such a develishe attempt did amaze him, and take his strength from him, that he killed him not at the first blowe. But Caesar turning straight unto him, caught hold of his sword, and held it hard: and they both cried out, Caesar in Laatin" O vile traitor Casca, what doest thou? And Casca in Greeke to his brother, Brother, helpe me...They...that had conspired his death, compassed him on everie side with their swordes drawen in their hands, that Caesar turned him no where, but he was stricken at by some, and still had naked swordes in his face, and was hacked and manged amonge them, as a wilde beast taken of hunters. For it was agreed among them, that every man should geve him a wound, bicause all their partes should be in this murther: and then Brutus him selfe gave him one wounde about his privities. Men reporte also, that Caesar did still defende him selfe against the rest, running everie waye with his bodie: but when he sawe Brutus with his sworde drawen in his hande, then he pulled his gowne over his heade, and made no more resistance, and was driven either casually, or purposedly, by the counsell of the conspirators, against the base whereupon Pompeys image stoode, which ran all of a goare bloude, till he was slaine...it is reported, that he had three and twenty woundes upon his body: and divers of the conspirators did hurt them selves, striking one body with so many blowes.'³

A discussion then followed: was it possible and/or desirable to stage the assassination to make it faithful to Plutarch's account? JT suggested we imagine Plutarch's account at one end of a spectrum, the other end of which is a purely "practical" solution, and aim to have the two meet in the middle. (13 April 1999)

- MR asked the actors playing conspirators to concentrate entirely on the imagined picture in front of them, as the conspirators realise that they have indeed succeeded in their plot to kill Caesar. Occasionally, MR would ask the actors to pause, hold a moment, and as he prompted the actors using simple, specific questions, the actors would explore a particular

³ *Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes*, translated by Sir Thomas North (1579); *The Life of Julius Caesar*, in *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare (Vol V): The Roman Plays*, edited by Geoffrey Bullough (London, 1966), 85-86.

moment in more detail, through improvisation. MR asked questions of various actors in the scene, requiring them to respond impulsively and in character:

MR: *Decius, what do you see?*

Ben Walden: I see a tyrant, dead, in front of me, and I see seven free men.

MR: *Trebonius, what do you see?*

Liam Hourican: I see an old man.

MR: *Casca, do you have blood on you?*

Mike Rudko: Yes...the blade sliced instead of sticking.

MR: *Brutus, are you hurt?*

Danny Sapani: I think I have a cut on my hand...I'm trying to look beyond this moment.

MR asked actors not working in the scene to **feed**⁴ those who were. The scene was run a second time without feeders, working with the text as best remembered by the actors. The feeders came back in for a third run through, leaving the actors free to make ever more spontaneous and creative choices.

The conspirators' sense of triumph took a nosedive after Antony entered to shake their hands. They went out soberly, to 'proclaim it in the marketplace'. The scene seemed very pessimistic in its early stages of rehearsal; DS noted that he would have to work hard to take charge of the scene and give it more momentum. BWA remarked that his character's reticence stemmed from an ambivalence towards Brutus: "I find it just as active when I *don't* speak, and I think it is because I don't entirely trust Brutus yet, and he is taking charge".

- The intricate fight choreography for Caesar's assassination was further complicated by Paul Shelley's absence for 4 preview performances. Globe Education actor Graham Christopher was brought in as an understudy for Tim Davies, who would take on the role of Caesar in PS's absence. GC was present in most early rehearsals to understudy TD. TD's own movements in the assassination itself (playing Cinna the Conspirator) had to be kept relatively uncomplicated to (a) allow TD time to observe PS's blocking for this sequence, and (b) aid GC in understudying TD's regular role in this scene. (23 April 1999)

- By the beginning of May, the fight moves were clearly marked. For the first complete run through of the assassination, TK counselled the actors to maintain a "consistent pace minus the energy" of performance. This was a better alternative to a "half-speed" run through, thought TK, since ideas of what "half-speed" might be would differ significantly between actors.

TK continued to finesse the desired impression of "dogs attacking a bear". Surrounded by attackers on all sides, Caesar defended himself in an aggressive, determined manner that forced the assassins to first defend their own positions before looking for the opportunity to score a successful strike at their prey. The entire sequence was repeated at the end of the session at walking pace, with TD as Caesar, and GC as Cinna.

⁴ For a description of this process, see "General Rehearsal Notes", above.

Many of the cuts that Caesar received in this sequence were not made with weapons at all – unarmed actors closed in on Caesar, full of murderous intent, and were passed a dagger or sword by another actor in the midst of a scuffle with the victim. TK highlighted the importance and effect of the “pull away” – the moment when the actor withdraws his weapon – compared to the thrust, or attack itself. TK noted that it was generally convincing for the assailant to run in for the kill at full pelt *without* a weapon, and to pull away in grand style brandishing a weapon he received by sleight of hand from another actor. For the actor to run in with a weapon in full view, and attempt to hide it as it supposedly “goes in”, was less convincing and more predictable. (1 May 1999)

- This sequence was run for the first time on the stage on 6 May 1999. The fight sequence “Then Fall Caesar” was in fairly good shape, but the actual dimensions of the stage meant that certain moves needed to be reworked and adjusted. (The fight sequence in “To Kill a Poet” came to the stage in a less-developed state, and needed more work to fit it into the space. (6 May 1999)
- MRu brought up the issue of stage blood at the put-in rehearsal with Graham Christopher (May 14, 1999). He said that he hoped it would be possible to find a solution that would not damage the expensive clothing, and that would allow the audience to see “real blood”. He, like others, felt it would help to establish the intoxicated mood and momentum needed for the aftermath of the killing itself.

Act III, Scene 1 (b): *Antony Feigns Friendship*

- MR asked MLJ to sit on the floor in the centre of the rehearsal hall, with a crumpled blanket to represent the body of Caesar. The actors playing conspirators sat around the edge of the room, and when prompted by MR, each came up to MLJ and spoke to him, saying in their own words why they were there. Then, MLJ shook each of their hands; the subtext of each individual handshake was thus distinct, and revealed something about the relationships between each conspirator and Mark Antony.

The actors repeated this exercise, this time without words. The strong sense of individual, distinct relationships remained, and the actors managed to communicate a remarkably subtle subtext, without recourse to words.

Act III, Scene 1(c): *Antony's Prophecy*

- MLJ had memorised this soliloquy prior to the start of rehearsals for *Julius Caesar*, and so “feeders” were not necessary from the beginning. MR asked MLJ to explore the range of “revenge options” that he might have open to him, in the wake of Caesar’s death. Over the course of his speech, he was to choose one option from the available choices. This direction enabled MLJ to release Mark Antony’s sense of frustration and helplessness (that redress has not yet been made) more fully, without compromising the angry energy he had discovered by “digging into the pressure”.

MR suggested that MLJ explore the idea that observers in the room represented Rome to him: "Use us; tell us it what will happen to us." After MLJ did so, MR asked for the room to be cleared, so that MLJ could experience his speech in total privacy.

After we re-entered the room, MLJ revealed that he experienced an "overwhelming feeling that there is no *game* being played here; there's no subtext." He added, "On my own, I understood that I *mean* it."
(15 April 1999)

Act III, Scene 2a: *Brutus Speaks*

- Brutus' prose speech to the Plebeians has the quality of a well-rehearsed piece of rhetoric. GB believed that prose in general is a more "masked" way of speaking; DS found that the rhetorical questions in the speech gave him the opportunity to explore various different tactics in speaking. His speech had a strong inspirational element, somewhat in the tradition of Martin Luther King's political speeches. DS appealed to the conscience and the reason of the Plebeians, and one had the sense that he regarded the risks taken up to that point as calculated.

Act III, Scene 2b: *Antony Speaks*

- MLJ began work on this scene addressing an "on stage audience" of Plebeians. MR encouraged the actors playing plebeians to keep their responses to Antony's speech as spontaneous as possible. During the technical rehearsal period MR asked MLJ to explore the possibility of using the yard as an acting space for the episode when Antony shows the holes made in Caesar's mantle to the crowd. For the play's first preview, the actors playing Plebeians heard Antony's speech from the stage, as he spoke from the balcony. MLJ's descended amongst the groundlings with the bloody mantel, and this proved a powerful theatrical statement. Thereafter, unfortunately, he became difficult to see and hear from different parts of the auditorium. MR decided to adjust the blocking slightly, to retain power in Antony's connection with the "real Plebeians".

For the fourth preview performance, MR experimented with only Plebeians on the stage, the rest in the yard. The audience seemed to respond strongly to the Plebeians amongst them, but tended to observe the onstage Plebeians rather than interact with them. MR thought that it might be more effective to place all of the Plebeians in the yard at the beginning of Antony's speech, so that the appropriate dynamic might be set up between speaker and audience. MR asked MLJ to come to the extreme edge of the stage to show the groundlings Caesar's mantel, but to remain sitting on the edge, rather than descend to the yard. By Press Night the series of adjustments in this way had helped to create a clear demarcation between speaker and audience, that was at the same time intimate and inclusive.

Act III, Scene 3: *To Kill a Poet*

- Beginning work on this scene, MR stressed that there should be no physical contact employed until the Fight Director Terry King was brought in. It was decided that the

Plebeians should appear in modern dress, although Cinna the Poet (Roger Gartland) would be dressed in doublet and hose. MR suggested that the actors playing Plebeians (Liam Hourican, Quill Roberts, Tez Maynard, Ben Walden) might try using the yard, once we moved into the space for technicals. MR wanted to explore some of the ways in which Shakespeare takes this play out into his audience; there are references to a landscape that seems to resemble the *immediate* environment of the theatre, MR contended, and so the Plebeians should “look like us”.

MR became interested in the confrontational elements in this scene: he asked that the Plebeians be aware that their actions were being observed, and to *challenge* the audience to *do something about it*.

MR: **“Once Caesar is dead, there is no father any more”**. This scene shows us how quickly society collapses violently in on itself, when left to run wild without government.

The first rehearsal of this scene concluded with an exploration of **distance**. The scene seemed much more taut, more menacing and more effective when some distance was maintained between Cinna and the Plebeians during their brief exchange of words before the violence begins. (April 9, 99)

- MR and the actors in this scene discussed the relationship between language and actions, prior to the arrival of the fight director, Terry King. Tez Maynard saw a fundamental paradox at the heart of the scene: very rarely does a man engaged in violence use violent language at the same time. TM suggested that silences in this scene might be pauses for *action*, rather than for thought.

MR was keen to have the violent action in this scene spill out into the end-of-Act announcement, to belie Brutus’ belief that a violent and bloody action can be contained or controlled, once set in motion.

In preparation for the physical, choreographed movement itself, MR had the actors pause in sustained concentration as they *spoke* their actions: e.g. “Stop. Now, I punch him. Go” – and the scene continued until the next “punch”. (26 April 1999)

- MR was keen to have the Plebeians’ violence occur *below* the text, rather than *over* it. The surprise value of the violence seemed more theatrically valuable this way.

The actors playing Plebeians experimented with a group entrance that involved making Molotov cocktails. Cinna attempted to exit past them without being noticed, but was intercepted by them. MR suggested to the Plebeians that the ability to show gratitude to Caesar by inflicting violence upon his (apparent) enemy might be a liberating, enjoyable experience for them. (1 May 1999)

- The challenge here was to maintain the element of surprise that MR wanted to spring on the audience, as well as a strong element of realism in the fight sequence itself. There had been many discussions along the way about the best way to achieve the delicate balance of extreme violence, macabre wit and social relevance that MR was seeking to explore in this episode (6 May 1999)

- MR asked about the possible inclusion of a sugar-glass bottle for Tez Maynard to attack Cinna the poet. This scene, which had proved problematic in the past seemed to be moving along quite smoothly by this point. The violence included head butts, kidney punches and dousing in petrol. The main concern MR had was that the violence had to be extremely convincing, and that standard stage masking of blows should be avoided and a more imaginative solution sought.(8 May 99)

Act IV, Scene 1: *The Three-Fold World*

- MR recalled Plutarch's account of the newly-formed Triumvirate that this scene shows:

'...these three, Octavius Caesar, Antonius, and Lepidus, made an agreement betweene them selves, and by those articles devided the provinces belonging to the Empire of Rome amonge them selves, and did set up billes of proscrition and outlawry, condemning two hundred of the noblest men of Rome to suffer death, and among that number, Cicero was one.' (Plutarch, *Life of Marcus Brutus*)

These executions were explored in improvisations at Otley Hall, to help the Company get a sense of the scale of the purge initiated by the Triumvirate. These exercises helped to flesh out another side to the story.

When Lepidus exited the scene, his status as a "third wheel" became apparent. The triangular formation that MR had used to block the scene became unbalanced, and Lepidus' empty stool made his absence conspicuous.

MR instructed MLJ to exit a few moments earlier than is indicated in the Folio. MR encouraged TC to reveal his suspicion that his cause is surrounded by "millions of mischiefs" to the audience alone. The ambiguity in the line was rich, and one had a sense that he perceived Antony as a huge potential threat. This note of conflict could then be picked up in later scenes, and be explored in full in the later production of *Antony and Cleopatra*.

Act IV, Scene 2: *Before the Eyes of Armies*

- Cassius and his army needed to use the "long entrance" (around the perimeter of the stage, in front of the stage pillars) to allow Brutus and Lucillius to speak of their entrance as we watch it. The two drummers enlisted from the ranks of the musicians were dressed in the colours of Cassius' and Brutus' respective camps, and each drummer developed their own distinct drum calls. These "duelling drums" helped to reinforce the adversarial quality of the scene.

Act IV, Scene 3a: *Two Brothers in a Tent*

- This scene was the subject of one of the most intense and effective improvisatio exercises at Otley Hall. The Company constructed a makeshift tent in the middle of a nearby field, and RB and DS played through the scene, using partly scripted, partly improvised dialogue. MR was keen for the newly-drafted RB to have the chance to get to grips with this

“lynchpin” scene as soon as possible, and the improvised exercise gave rise to many acting choices that survived in the performances.

- One of the technical challenges was the need to establish change of location. This was achieved by a series of well-choreographed exits:
 - the musicians and standard bearers exited through the flanking doors
 - Lucillius and Titinius turned to face the *frons scenae* and walked towards the flanking doors, pausing in the open doorways to turn 180° to face the audience and come to rest, guarding the doorways
 - Brutus and Cassius turned as if to exit through the central opening at the same pace as Lucillius and Titinius; instead they paused inside the discovery space, turned 180° and walked back through the discovery space to the stage, to sit at the table set centre stage.

The effect created suggested the entrance into a new space, and the noise of the drum retreating through the tiring house, moving away from the stage, helped create this illusion.

Act IV, Scene 3b: A Poet and Two Generals

- The Poet is Shakespeare’s invention. The same episode in Plutarch’s account describes

‘...one Marcus Phaonius, that had bene a friend and follower of Cato while he lived...tooke upon him to counterfeate a Philosopher, not with wisdom and discretion, but with a certaine bedlem and frantick motion: he would needes come into the chamber, though the men offered to keepe him out...This Phaonius at that time, in despite of the doorekeepers, came into the chamber, and with a certaine scoffing and mocking gesture which he counterfeated of purpose, he rehearsed the verses which old Nestor sayd in Homer:

My Lords, I pray you hearken both to mee,
For I have seene moe yeares than suchye thee.

Cassius fel a laughing at him: but Brutus thrust him out of the chamber, and called him dogge, and counterfeate Cynick.’ (*Life of Marcus Brutus*)

The Globe production’s Poet (Jimmy Gardner) counterfeited by setting Shakespeare’s words to the tune of *Danny Boy*. JGa negotiated the business of bursting in on Brutus and Cassius – another challenge to define the daylight, open space - by entering through the central opening, while appearing to talk with BWa and BWo who held their positions at the flanking doors, directing their objections to his presence through the open doors, in the direction of the tiring house. As the sentries darted into the tiring house to intercept him, JGa rushed forward onto the stage.

Act IV, Scene 3c: Grievs and Pledges

- The death of Portia is described by Plutarch thus:

'And for Porcia, Brutus wife: Nicolaus the Philosopher, and Valerius Maximus doe wryte, that she determining to kill her selfe (her parents and frendes carefullie looking to her to kepe her from it) tooke hotte burning coles, and cast them into her mouth, and kept her mouth so close, that she choked her selfe. There was a letter of Brutus found wrytten to his frendes, complayning of their negligence, that his wife being sicke, they would not helpe her, but suffred her to kill her selfe, choosing to dye, rather then to languish in paine.' (*Life of Marcus Brutus*)

Shakespeare apparently reveals the news of Portia's death twice (see below). The choice to leave the Folio edition uncut meant that DS could choose to confide his private grief to Cassius, as well as display a brave, stoic public face when Messala brings him news of the same.

Act IV, Scene 3d: *Close about the Taper*

- MR wanted to investigate the Elizabethan view of the Roman Empire. JB brought in a photographic reproduction of Ortellius' *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, which showed a map of the Roman Empire, dated 1579. Philippi was not marked on the map, but after further research its location was pinpointed. JT then produced a hand-made enlarged copy of the map on vellum, which represented Brutus' battle plan for this scene. This helped DS to spell out the hazards en route to Philippi more clearly.

Act IV, Scene 3e: *A Song and A Ghost*

- JGi and DS discussed the relationship between Lucius and Brutus with MR. MR agreed that Brutus' exchange with Lucius - about a book he mistakenly thought to have lent to him, and his desire to hear music - revealed a great deal about Brutus' grief at Portia's death. Brutus apologises to Lucius for overworking him, and promises that if he lives, he will be kinder to him in the future. MR encouraged DS to explore his thoughts about Portia during his conversation with Lucius, and JGi chose to remain innocent of the rather melancholy undertones of Brutus' words, cheerfully brushing off his service to Brutus as his "duty". This made for a rather poignant moment, both in rehearsal and in performance.

CvK taught JGi to accompany himself on a small harp as he sang the song, and surprisingly the instrument could be heard much more easily inside the Globe auditorium than was the case in the smaller rehearsal hall. CvK wrote in a drone on bagpipes, within, to herald the arrival of Caesar's Ghost; this noise exploded the tranquil atmosphere of Lucius' song.

The sleeping Varrus and Claudio (TM and LH) explored several different ways of registering the nightmarish visitation of the Ghost, from a barely audible whimper, to a violent seizure and loud scream. MR noted that the terror is palpable - in Brutus as well as Claudio and Varrus - but this needed to be tempered with awe and wonder at the horrid apparition. MR preferred the level of groaning and crying that TM had been exploring; the screams he experimented with broke and released the tension perhaps too early, he thought. He suggested that a scream should come as Varrus wakes, and not before. (7 May 1999)

Act V, Scene 1: *The Cross at Philippi*

- MR warned of the temptation to play “general actions” in this scene. He said that it was dangerous to play too many actions that might “bleed into each other”. Instead, he counselled, it might be more effective to play one action at a time, and to take the opportunity to play each action more deeply.

For TC, playing Octavius, it was important to bear in mind not just the level of facetiousness his character was displaying, but exactly to *whom* he was being facetious. The confidence and self-awareness that Octavius must have in order to outface such formidable men as Brutus and Cassius is, said MR, quite extraordinary. Octavius must be aware not only of his own actions, but also of the ramifications and probable consequences of those actions.

- The beginning of the new Act heralded another move into the outdoors, and MR suggested MLJ begin the scene with a focal point out towards the auditorium, rather than on Octavius standing beside him. The space needed to be further expanded to suggest an open field large enough for four generals and their armies to meet. MR devised a pattern of marching using the longest diagonals available on the stage, to allow Brutus and his troops to enter through one flanking door, Cassius and his legion through another, with the two generals meeting in the centre of the stage. At the point when Brutus, Cassius and Antony exchange ‘words before blows’ MR asked the three senior generals to cross-examine each other in a roughly triangular arrangement, that pointedly excluded Octavius (who found himself being talked over). MR was very keen to show the extent to which Octavius was indeed “out of his depth”; that the “peevish schoolboy” draws his sword in impatience should prompt derisory laughter from Brutus and Cassius, and embarrassed annoyance from Antony.

Act V, Scene 1b: *Parting Well Made*

- RB needed to find a means of speaking in confidence to Titinius that was theatrically effective. He chose to deliver the ‘things which do presage’ speech as an aside to Titinius, from the front edge of the stage, in front of the pillar SL. This pulled focus nicely, and gave him the necessary distance from Brutus to perform the speech. The centre-stage farewell to Brutus seemed consequently formal, and the scene closed with a 4-fold “musketeer-style” pledge, which suggested Brutus’ need for a highly-orchestrated, public gesture. The generals exited at speed through the central opening.

Act V, Scene 2: *Ride, Ride Messala*

- To suggest a battle in progress, MR chose to stage a pitched battle inside the discovery space, to be revealed and concealed as the “Fortuna” hanging was pulled open or closed by one of the Tiring House Gentlemen (in battle dress). DS and MRu ran out of the discovery space to deliver their lines over the din of swords against shields, and exited severally at speed.

Act V, Scene 3a: *The Death of Cassius*

- QR felt that the relationship between Pindarus and Cassius was crucial to the specific details of how Pindarus honours his bond and kills Cassius. The text offered only a few concrete clues, and the source material details were not theatrically feasible: ‘...casting his cloak over his head and holding out his bare neck unto Pindarus, he gave him his head to be stricken off. So the head was found severed from the body.’ (*Life of Marcus Brutus*) QR developed a strong physicality that enhanced the text, and deepened the storytelling process. After killing Cassius with a sword in a formal, stylised gesture, Pindarus performed a ritual over the dead body that involved launching Cassius’ spirit towards the heavens. QR commented, ‘My decision to honour the bond, my journey through the killing of Cassius...involves a big journey that the text doesn’t really help you with. So, I’ve introduced this piece of storytelling without words. The fact I appear to send his spirit up to the gods immediately places me somewhere else – it’s a very “un-Roman” thing to do.’

Act V, Scene 3b: *The Death of Titinius*

- In this scene Titinius and Messala have a few lines of dialogue on stage before they discover the body of Cassius. This meant that a long entrance was needed; BWa and MRu entered to pass DS of the SR before turning around to see Cassius’ body.

BWa wanted to find a way of staging the suicide of Titinius that was convincing. He opted to fall on his sword, an illusion made possible by inserting a sword between his armoured breastplate and doublet and sliding the sword upwards. Since this piece of business was relatively intricate and took a few moments to properly prepare, the result had to be powerful. This gesture caused many audiences to gasp in horror.

Act V, Scene 4: *The Death of Young Cato*

- MR wanted to depict Antony’s soldiers as hired mercenaries in this scene. RG and TD played the soldiers as barbarians, speaking in strange dialects, and fighting with spears and nets rather than swords. MR wanted the Soldiers to kill Young Cato in a way that would include the use of the trap. RG devised a way of trapping JGi safely under his net, and it was suggested that this might cause Young Cato to fall into the trap. TD could then stab into the padding on the floor of the trap quite violently, and be in no danger of injuring JGi. In practice the net made it difficult for JGi to fall accurately through the trap door, and so his disappearance risked being slightly comic. The open trap also presented a hazard for actors in the scene that followed, and so MR amended the staging of the death of Young Cato so that JGi was netted and speared on the stage itself.

Act V, Scene 5a: *The Death of Brutus*

- The area in front of the pillars was used to good effect for the confidential requests Brutus makes to both Clitus and Dardanius. The actors treated the open trap as a stream to drink from, until the trap’s use was discontinued (see above). DS discovered that his preferred mode of running on his own sword would be more easily executed if he removed his armour; consequently, Strato (PS) entered carrying it, and collapsed as though exhausted by the task.

Act V, Scene 5b: *This Happy Day*

- TC chose to address the audience as Brutus' followers in the final scene. One obvious challenge was clear the stage quickly at the end of the scene. Brutus' body was carried out by a stretcher made from two cloaks.

MR wanted to provide a subtle context for *Antony and Cleopatra*, in foreshadowing the tensions between Antony and Octavius. The two embraced rather publicly, at the front and centre of the stage as a trumpeter sounded a Last Post. MR asked TC and MLJ to then remain in position, looking straight at each other, for as long as was bearable as others left the stage. This gave the audience a strong sensation that there was "unfinished business" between the two that needed to be settled at a more appropriate time.

THE JIG

- By the mid-sixteenth century the form of the jig was established as a short burlesque comedy, for between two and five characters, to be sung in verse to one or more well-known tunes. Jigs were commonly performed with a great deal of lively dancing. The first reference to a performance of a jig in any stage in London dates from 1582; the earliest printed form of a jig is to be found in the Stationers' Register of 1591. Often performed between the acts of a tragedy, jigs were generally recognised as a way of concluding a more serious form of entertainment.

- The inclusion of a jig at the close of the play was inspired by the famous account by Thomas Platter, a tourist from Basle, Switzerland, who visited London in the autumn of 1599:

'After dinner on the 21st of September, at about two o'clock, I went with my companions over the water, and in the strewn roof-house saw the tragedy of the first Emperor Julius with at least fifteen characters very well acted. At the end of the comedy they danced according to their custom with extreme elegance. Two in men's clothes and two in women's gave this performance, in wonderful combination with each other'.

Accordingly, the jig at the Globe, 400 years later, featured 'two in women's (clothes)', namely Tim Davies and Jimmy Gardner. These actors did not portray women in *Julius Caesar*, but rather donned feminine bonnets and skirts over their regular doublet and hose, specifically for the jig. Toby Cockerell and Ben Wong (Portia and Calphurnia) had both changed to male characters by the end of the play, so the dressing of men as women for the jig was a conscious and discrete event, as well as a nod to Platter. The effect was charming and not a little amusing.

- MR explained that the jig learned for *Julius Caesar* would also be used for *Antony and Cleopatra*. He wanted the jig to be "witty and vigorous" and to involve dancing with virtuosity (for those who felt so inclined) as well as supportive dancing (for less confident dancers). Sue Lefton choreographed the jig. (12 April 1999)

Read Throughs/ Runs of the Play

- **April 22, 1999: Read Through of the Play**

The Company requested a read-through of the entire play, to which MR agreed. Afterwards, MR and GB gave a notes session, summarised below:

- GB cautioned the actors against breaking up the line unnecessarily. Part of the rationale of preparing an acting edition of the play was to encourage actors to drive through to the end of the line, and to help the line make more sense to the listener. Breaking up the line in the middle tended to distract the listener, in most cases, explained GB. MR likened the capital letters (retained from the Folio edition) to “mountains”, and counselled, “to run through the lines as on a flat plain, unless these mountains appear”. This image seemed to help actors “choose” their capitalised words more carefully.

- **April 27, 1999: First read-in rehearsal with Richard Bremmer**

MR put out a full-cast call for a read-through the scenes in the play that pertain to or featured Cassius, so that Richard Bremmer (who replaced the injured John McEnery) could get a sense of the play as a whole, and the level we had reached at that point in rehearsals.

MR gave a quick synopsis of the scenes in between, i.e. scenes that did not feature or pertain to Cassius. RB read confidently and seemed to fit in very well indeed.

- **May 9, 1999: Run-through of Act III**

This run included all fight choreography, which went particularly smoothly. MR noted afterwards that it might be valuable to let Cassius be the first to support Brutus’ idea of “stooping and washing” in Caesar’s blood, in the wake of the assassination. Cassius might persuade others by seconding, suggested MR.

MR also asked the actors playing conspirators to consider more strongly what kind of wounds they had sustained in the struggle to kill Caesar. MR asked RB to consider Cassius’ personal antipathy towards Antony, to explore ways of making this more physically tangible.

MR discussed Brutus’ idea of the merits of a “new Republic” of Rome with DS. He urged DS to explore ways to link his speech to the plebeians more strongly to a clear and undeniable belief in the “rightness” of his cause.

- **May 9, 1999: Run-through of the play at Duthy Hall**

For this run certain costume pieces and props were made available. Ben Wong and Toby Cockerell wore rehearsal skirts, farthingales and corsets. The run began at 10:30am, and it was agreed that the work in the afternoon would focus on issues that became apparent over the course of the run.

Before the run began, MR asked for a moment of silence: he remarked, ‘Our medium is silence, and we come into that to tell our story’.

After the run-through, MR asked the company to be especially aware of the **time** elements in this play:

Caesar is aware of the passage of time, the countdown to the day of his coronation; the conspirators are aware of the passage of time, the countdown to the Day of Assassination, he said. Moreover, MR thought that in both cases, the sense of anticipation might be tremendous.

Technicals

• May 11, 1999: First day of Technicals

- Many of the actors' costumes were ready in full in time for the first day of technicals. The "Fortuna" hanging was hung over the discovery space, and black pelmets dressed the Lords' Rooms. The reduced pillar bases were newly painted.

Musicians and actors were called for a 10:30 start.

The main priorities during technicals were the paging of doors for entrances and exits, plus the logistics of the quick changes. It was decided by the artistic team that the relatively long period of previews would be used to discover which blocking configurations worked most effectively in the space. Technicals also gave us the opportunity to try other elements such as pre-show music, on-stage performance by the musicians and "noises within".

The lightning bolt required for "The Disturbed Skie" (Act I, Scene 3a) needed finessing during technicals. The bolt itself – a large golden hand holding a trident out of which gunpowder "lightning" popped at the appropriate moment – had to be lowered through the trap much further than its own length to make it visible to those seated in the upper galleries. As a result, those in the yard could clearly see the chains that suspended the device from the pulley in the attic. It was decided that this made the lowering of the hand untenable, and it was more desirable to lower only the trident portion of the device. The hand remained invisible to all, and the effect relied upon the explosion, rather than the trident itself.

The same device raised a potential problem with smoke levels in the attic. After careful consideration, MR decided that it was unfeasible to employ actors in the attic to create the sound of thunder by stamping their feet on cue. Though the sound was remarkably effective, the smoke caused by the lightning bolt meant it was better to keep numbers in the attic to a minimum. Two tiring-house gentlemen were employed instead, and created the effect by stamping and by pushing a wooden chair along the floor of the heavens. This proved a more than adequate substitute for the original sound.

Plans to open the window of the attic to reveal tiring-house gentleman Paul Williams clothed as a thunder-god, hammering an anvil, had to be altered slightly. The anvil itself was so large that it impeded the window shutter and prevented it from opening fully on cue. The anvil's weight also meant it could not be moved by PW at the correct time, and so the open window and anvil had to be pre-set from the top of the show. Only after Act III, when the anvil would no longer be required, could the window be closed, it was decided.

• May 12, 1999: Second day of Technicals

- The “Fortuna” hanging was fitted with new wooden rings to facilitate its opening and closing over the discovery space. This was to be pulled open and closed by tiring-house gentleman PW for the battle scenes, to reveal fighting inside the “hellmouth” of the discovery space. Actors periodically emerged from within the discovery space during these scenes to speak, before running back in again to resume fighting. PW would wear armour for this purpose, it was decided. Last minute alterations and additions to clothing were helped by various staff who turned their hand to sewing, supervised by JT.

Act III, Scene 2b (“Antony Speaks”) was rehearsed, to utilise three levels of playing: balcony, stage and yard were all used as playing areas by MLJ during technicals. At an earlier stage in rehearsal, MLJ had expressed a desire to leap from the balcony to the stage floor unaided. Though it was agreed that no ladders or steps could be used to help this descent, technicals confirmed the belief that the only safe way to make such a speedy descent was via the purpose-built stairwell in the tiring house.

The trap was used in Act V, Scene 4 (“The Death of Young Cato”). The means of trapping JG (as Young Cato) with a large net wielded by the Barbarian (RG) was a complicated matter that required a great deal of practice. Some concerns were expressed about the safety of a person dropping through the open trap while caught in a net, but the rehearsals seemed to verify that this was feasible. The trap’s usefulness in the overall production was to be decided over the period of preview performances.

THE PLAY IN PERFORMANCE

• Preview 1: May 13, 1999

MR gave general notes after the first preview of the play. He told the actors that specific character notes would be given throughout the day, on a one-to-one basis. MR told the Company that in general:

- over 95% of the speech could be heard clearly. This was a vast improvement on previous years, said MR.
- the pace needed to be increased, and the Company should aim to trim about 5 minutes off each Act.
- the spirit of Otley Hall might usefully be revived: if an individual actor makes a bold step forward, then the rest should support him and join him.
- reactions to the audience that are written into the script (e.g. ‘Peace, ho!’ from the Plebeians) needed to be tailored to the audience on each specific day. MR said, “If you get a good audience response, record and acknowledge it, so that the audience knows it may join in”.
- the suicides at the close of the play should appear as a flurry – each new death should overwhelm the one that precedes it.
- we should try to preserve the possibility of the story ending differently, and retain some excitement at the prospect of a “new world order”.
- the “surprise factor” in the story should be embraced. Actors needed to remember to trust the work they had done so far, and revel in what MR described as “this end-to-end stuff”.

GB noted that the speaking was indeed very clear, but did not as yet have the same defining bravura boasted by the Jig. He apologised for needing to talk technically about the way to achieve a desired level of spontaneity, but suggested that:

- separating words into a one-word-at-a-time rhythm was dangerous, as it did not increase the significance of the words themselves, and was counter-productive to overall clarity.
- "lightness" in speech is helped by allowing each line to overwhelm the one that precedes it. GB likened the technique to firing an automatic, rather than a musket.

MR noted that the rehearsal process so far might be categorised as one of *definition* – breaking down the text and the events into 'beats' – and that having defined these areas, the Company might play from one area to another more boldly, confident of what lay ahead.

MR described the plot to kill Caesar as something arrived at "only after passive resistance has failed... This is about the preservation of life, because life without liberty is not worth living." He talked with the Company about the contemporary significance of this play: "Repression comes from everywhere, from outside, from within, and it divides us – we feel a pressure to earn money, to accrue material goods – and that is why we are doing this play today. The word *tyrant* will resonate very powerfully with an audience aware of people like Milosevic – let it."

• **Preview 4: 15 May 1999**

This performance took place on a Saturday evening, and many of the groundlings appeared to be quite drunk. These groundlings took an early dislike to Cassius, and booed at him periodically. RB took all this in his stride, but the effect was a generally disconcerting one for all. Some groundlings had brought playtexts with them, and were able to anticipate several of the Plebeians' lines, shouting them out moments before the "real Plebeians" could speak.

In general, the performance became a show about the groundlings, rather than for or with the audience as a whole. The actors had to work very hard to bring the audience back to the story, to divert their attentions away from their own reactions *outside* of the story.

- MR gave a notes session the following day. He observed that such an audience reaction can often be explained by a legacy of exclusion from (or resentment towards) Shakespeare. In these cases, he said, we have to work extra hard to *stay within the story*. MR reassured the Company that it was perfectly normal, perhaps even desirable, for the audience to laugh in places where we did not expect them to laugh; Shakespeare's writing is masterful enough to anticipate even the unexpected, said MR.

MR warned the Company of the dangers of playing to such reactions: such instances lift the players out of the story, and lead to pantomimic acting, he said. MR urged the actors to cling to their belief in the reality and integrity of what they were doing, and to never allow themselves to anticipate and play to those laughs. He said that we must expect them to make fun of what we do, occasionally, and embrace these opportunities to catch the audience with their defences down; that way, the writing might catch them off their guard.

Shakespeare, MR suggested, was not subject to the same Victorian attitudes towards tragedy; his tragedies are less about control and sobriety in grief, and more about allowing antithetical reactions to grief. Each audience would be different, said MR, and though we would enjoy making adjustments to incorporate this vital element of playing, we must always remember that we have a story to tell.

- MR decided that at this point the death of Young Cato should be changed. MR thought that the trap should no longer be used, and that it might be more effective to have Young Cato (JG) speared and netted onstage, in clear view.

MR also wanted to try the scene with a few extra soldiers (plus shields) in the hellmouth that JG and company back out of, onto the stage.

CvK decided to cut the second song sung by JG at the end of the Jig. The Jig seemed to be a natural end to the story itself, and needed no epilogue.

• **Fight rehearsals: Adjustments to *To Kill A Poet* – May 18, 1999**

- MR's request for additional shields and a more "realistic" battle scene in the "hellmouth" discovery space made an extra fight rehearsal desirable.
- TK sought a safer, less painful way to suggest a head-on collision with the pillar for RG's Cinna the Poet. A discussion followed to decide how the pillar should be hit – a gloved hand would make a less sharp sound, hurting RG's hand less.
- MR thought that the relationship the Plebeians had already established with the groundlings made their retiring to the tiring-house to simulate the sounds of a riot strange and overly theatrical. MR suggested that they instead exit out of the yard, onto the Piazza, and begin the riotous noises from there. They should then enter from the Piazza into the yard for "To Kill a Poet", and launch themselves onto the stage from the yard. MR was interested in the idea of the assault on the Poet coming directly from *our* world, from us. The Plebeians should then exit through the yard onto the Piazza, at the close of the scene.