Watch Free Performances of *Julius Caesar* at Calderwood Pavilion

Students in the Huntington-Codman Summer Theatre Institute will take part in two free shows Thursday and Friday.

By Yiqing Shao | Arts & Entertainment | July 23, 2014 4:45 pm

*Shakespeare on the Common* isn’t the only free Shakespeare you can find this week. While the Commonwealth Shakespeare Company brings *Twelfth Night* to life on the Common, another group of theater enthusiasts will offer two free performances of *Julius Caesar* this Thursday and Friday nights.

The Huntington-Codman Summer Theatre Institute—a collaboration between the Huntington Theatre Company and Dorchester’s Codman Academy Charter Public School—is hosting the free performances, which will take place at the Calderwood Pavilion at the BCA and star Boston high schoolers from Dorchester, Hyde Park, Mattapan, and Roxbury.

The Summer Theatre Institute is a four-week program that teaches students from the Codman Academy—ranging from rising sophomores to recent graduates—about the entire theatrical process. The program began in 2006 with a presentation of *Romeo and Juliet*, and the performances this year of *Julius Caesar* are the first non-comedy play the program has staged since then.

Shakespeare’s play, *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*, tells the story about the conspiracy against Roman dictator Julius Caesar in 44 BC. You know the famous line: “Et tu, Brute?”

The Summer Theatre Institute version of the play will be set in the 1970s. “Shakespeare’s work can be incredibly powerful when teenagers and young adults are able to explore his poetry and storytelling, especially when the cast can relate the events of the story to their own lives,” says director Meg O’Brien in a press release.

“We’re taking Caesar’s story and placing it in a time in America when there was massive political unrest around Vietnam. This is an incredible example of a time in our brief history when society came together to stand up for what they believed was right, and stand against the war, and the politicians who put us there. There are some very eerie similarities between the Vietnam protests and the time of unrest leading to Caesar’s death.”

In other words, show up on Thursday or Friday nights to see two very serious stories brought to life—and then death, it’s a tragedy after all—on stage by a group of talented young Boston residents.