

Florida Shakespeare Festival Offers Julio Cesar

Every once in a while a theatre company must dare to break loose from the traditional and thus try to achieve recognition outside its usual sphere of activities. SFTC hopes that this year's production of "Julio Cesar" could well become such a production. A commissioned adaptation by John R. Briggs and R. H. Deschamps of Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" follows closely the original Shakespeare Script but projects the play into 1994.

Using one of the most critical problems facing the Latin American countries today: the area's foreign debt, the adaptation addresses itself to the potential sociological and economical impacts resulting from inability to repay the debt as well difficulties in negotiating new loans. The fact that the Western Powers are more preoccupied with other major problems such as terrorism and those of the Middle-East; the fact that they are more concerned to avoid insolvencies of their own banks should the Latin loans be classified in default; the fact that they are unwilling or unable to confront squarely the problem instead of supplying band-aids inadequate to stop the hemorrhage the Latin countries are experiencing; the fact that huge trade deficits are allowed to occur with certain countries, while most of the products being imported from Latin America are still under quota, thereby crippling their ability to earn the necessary foreign currencies, there is little doubt that political unrest will ensue in most of Latin America.

A projection of the future value of the current Latin debt which now stands at 360 Billion shows that same could easily exceed 1 Trillion Dollars in 10 years. A totally unmanageable amount for the resources of all of Latin America.

It is therefore not so farfetched to consider that the Latin governments will face enormous problems in supplying their people with basic minimum needs. The result of this situation could well cause the overthrow of most

if not all of their democratically elected governments; that the starving Latins will have no alternative but to seek greener pastures which will in turn make it likely that hordes of people will be illegally crossing U.S. borders, with its attendant problems. All these could very well cause the Latin countries to come to the conclusion that their only solution is in uniting themselves under one leader, one banner, becoming then an important bloc rather than a number of independent countries, and at that time cause the Western Powers to take notice.

As, one of the most forceful advocates of cancelling or of rescheduling the foreign debt of this hemisphere, has been the longest lasting revolutionary leader in Latin America, it is not unlikely that they would ask him to become the leader of this new coalition. Two years ago, it would have been inconceivable for any Latin Government to invite this revolutionary to join them in discussing anything, while today he is being actively solicited to participate in addressing the debt problem.

The parallel between the Shakespeare's original script of Julius Caesar and the possible evolution described above, brings us to the opening of the play with the United States in recognition of these developments appoint the first Spanish-American Secretary of State, with the hope that he will be sensitive enough to the situation to find lasting solutions. Through visual projections on 2 giant screens set at the rear of the stage the audience is taken from events in the 1950's through 1994. The public is additionally helped in understanding the projections through "television style reporting" coming over the sound system.

The integrity of the script is maintained, Cassius (KGB) convinces Brutus, Julio's brother and some other conspirators that Cesar has become too ambitious to consider accepting the title of "Supreme Commander" of Latin America, and that in view of his consideration to approach the U.S. for some accommodation of co-

existence between the new bloc and the U.S., and that Cesar must be liquidated; Julio Cesar is thus assassinated; followed by a civil war which pitches the combined forces of Brutus and Cassius against those of the new young leader Anthony who sees solutions in the West and not in the East. At the end of the play a certain hope seems to evolve that we may yet see a solution to this monumental problem.

To stage this production a fictitious country has been created; "Republica de Corba" for which a flag, a national anthem and a coat of arms have been developed. The play is **not a leftist presentation** of the problem. It takes a number of topical events and transform them into a major political change which is directed against the Western powers but rather against their own miseries and need to find solutions, while knowing that their interests are best served with some alliance with the Western powers, which brings about the conspiracy set in motion by a KGB operative, Cassius. It is important that this operation perception be made clear to those in the Latin communities in this area which are to the right of Senator Jesse Helms, not because it is popular to do so here in Miami, but because the situation will probably develop in that direction if it is to become historical.

Julio Cesar is being directed by John R. Briggs of Dallas. John has just completed a very successful and critically acclaimed production of an adaptation of MacBeth set in Feudal Japan. His direction promises an exciting and fast-paced interpretation of the adaptation. To warn Cesar of the pending plans for his assassination, the Soothsayer in the original play has been replaced by a Santera. All the ingredients for a spellbinding production will be present, and we promise you that the Vizcaya will never be the same after opening night.