

production summary

A global phenomenon that has wowed audiences for over 40 years, *Jesus Christ Superstar* is a timeless rock opera set against the backdrop of an extraordinarily well known series of events, with a modern twist and an undeniably powerful score. This musical classic illuminates the transcendent power of the human spirit with a passion that goes straight to the soul. Featuring the amazing music of Andrew Lloyd Webber and lyrics by Tim Rice.

Phénomène mondial qui séduit le public depuis plus de 40 ans, *Jesus Christ Superstar* est un opéra-rock intemporel qui a pour trame une série d'évènements extraordinaires bien connus, présentés avec une approche moderne et une musique absolument puissante. Cette œuvre classique fait la lumière sur le pouvoir transcendant de l'esprit humain avec une passion qui va droit au cœur. En vedette, l'incroyable musique d'Andrew Lloyd Webber et les paroles de Tim Rice.

the 2018 charlottetown festival team

Artistic Director
ADAM BRAZIER

Acting Music Director
CRAIG FAIR

Production Manager
KELLIE D. KNIGHT

Festival Music Director
BOB FOSTER

Associate Artistic Director
MARY FRANCIS MOORE

Technical Director
DOUG MORUM

General Manager of Theatre
DEAN CONSTABLE

Associate Producer
SARAH DENMAN-WOOD

Theatre Administrator
CINDY RILEY

Jesus Christ Superstar Stage Management Team

Production Stage Manager **MATTHEW MacINNIS** Stage Manager **SAMIRA ROSE**

Assistant Stage Managers **AL GADOWSKY / ERIKA MOREY / CHANTAL HAYMAN**

Apprentice Stage Manager **COLE VINCENT**

Superstar backgrounder

JESUS CHRIST SUPER STAR



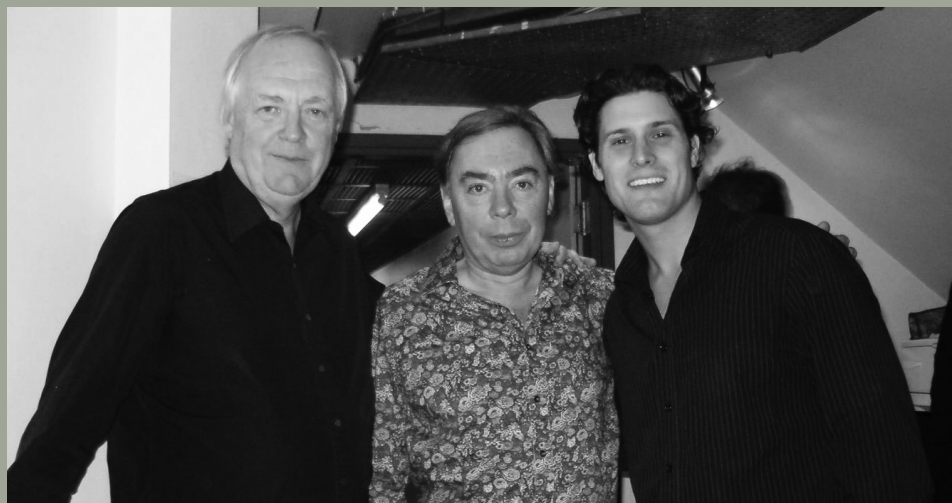
INTERVIEW WITH
DIRECTOR ADAM
BRAZIER

MUSICAL SYNOPSIS

JESUS CHRIST
SUPERSTAR
WHO'S WHO

JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR

If you think about it, the creation of the rock opera *Jesus Christ Superstar* is, in a way, a miracle. When Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice first pitched the idea of a rock opera about the last days of Jesus Christ, there wasn't a producer alive that would go near it. In fact, Tim Rice said their lucky break came when theatrical producers turned *Superstar* down, forcing Lloyd Webber and Rice to record it as a concept album. The record didn't attract much attention in the UK, but it became a number-one hit in America, prompting calls to bring their story to the stage. Since it opened on Broadway in 1971, *Jesus Christ Superstar* has seldom been off the stage, with various productions having played to audiences in more than 40 countries.



Tim Rice, Andrew Lloyd Webber, and Adam Brazier, *The Likes Of Us*, 2005

AN INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR ADAM BRAZIER



Mounting any production brings with it certain challenges. Mounting a production that is already very familiar to your audience can take those challenges to another level.

That was the scenario facing The Charlottetown Festival's Artistic Director Adam Brazier when he chose to bring *Jesus Christ Superstar* to the stage for the 2018 season. Brazier gave a great deal of thought to how he should approach the task before him. *"It's not Godspell, it's not about the message of a prophet or the coming of another Messiah, it's a rock opera about how people in power face the questions and problems posed by the growing popularity of Jesus of Nazareth. I believe the entire narrative can be summed up in Annas' lyric, "What then to do with this Jesus of Nazareth?"*

Brazier focused on the personal relationships and the mob because those were the most exciting and current part of the play for him. He found it fascinating to analyze when the mass becomes the mob, how the energy can turn. *"The themes in this timeless classic remain universal, their resonance today is palpable, as Western civilization wrestles with existential questions about where power is held, where it should be held, and how fame affects the balance. Several themes run through Superstar, not the least of which are man's relationship with his God and the concept of religious doubt. These are existential questions every human must answer for themselves and this play helps engage them that conversation."*

AN INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR ADAM BRAZIER

Jesus Christ Superstar is a very human story about the struggle to be heard. People lived in an oppressed society where power might be seized—or lost—by a select few. Brazier found Pilate to be the most sympathetic character in the play, yet he is the character with the most power. But Pilate finds himself in the unenviable position of having to keep the peace among the various factions.

At the time when the musical is set, there was a common belief in prophecy and the anticipation of a Messiah. When Jesus arrives, he is hailed as the Messiah but the style of his entrance sends a clear message that Jesus was a different kind of man. *“Pilate arrived in Jerusalem with great fanfare, on a horse-drawn chariot with many Roman soldiers at his side. Jesus arrived on a donkey, waved in by palms, and yet Jesus drew a much bigger crowd...”* People feared the attention would upset the Romans, the consequences of which could include a mass slaughter of Jews.

Brazier chose to focus on Jesus the man, and his ability to be completely present in each moment. *“It’s the human aspect that makes Christ exceptional. If you were to remove all supernatural elements and any claim about a Messiah, it is still an astonishing story about a person with incredible integrity who was willing to die for his belief in a greater good.”*

Over the years, *Jesus Christ Superstar* has seen many adaptations and the production of The Charlottetown Festival is no exception. This rock opera is about how the people in power dealt with the problems caused by the growing popularity of Jesus of Nazareth, says Brazier. The set design by Cory Sincennes is reminiscent of the walls of a prison, a world of oppression and fear, a hierarchical system that suggests the concept of gangs. Brazier decided to situate his production in a world that seems both historical and post-apocalyptic, choosing costumes that express more power and social status but reflect the textures of history.

*“Excluding all the supernatural elements and allusions to the Messiah, **Jesus Christ Superstar** is first and foremost the story of an incredibly honest man who was ready to die for his convictions. We observe how power corrupts every faction of society and I hope the audience leaves with a better understanding of the political climate of that time and perhaps a consideration of our own.”*

JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR WHO'S WHO

JESUS CHRIST Beloved by his followers but a source of consternation to both the Romans and the Pharisees.

CAIAPHAS High Priest of the Pharisees | Finds himself in the precarious position of having to please the Roman oppressor who rule his land while at the same time trying to safely guide his own people.

ANNAS High priest | Concerned that Jesus' followers are getting out of control, Annas convinces Caiaphas that Jesus must die. It is also Annas who validates Judas' decision to turn Jesus in to the authorities.

KING HEROD The ruler of Galilee | A morally depraved man who has surrounded himself with a coterie of corrupt officials and hangers-on who are willing to do virtually anything to please him.

PONTIUS PILATE Roman governor | Sentences Jesus to die on the cross.

JUDAS ISCARIOT Apostle | Deeply concerned that Jesus' growing popularity will aggravate the Roman oppressors.

MARY MAGDALENE A former prostitute | Becomes a follower of Jesus and does her best to serve him and to care for him.

PETER Apostle | Devoted to Jesus but betrays him three times, fulfilling a prediction that Jesus had made.

SIMON ZEALOTES Apostle | With a warrior's heart, he tries to convince Jesus to turn his followers against Rome and drive them out of Jerusalem.

MUSICAL SYNOPSIS | ACT I

1. **Overture**

2. ***Heaven on their Minds***

Judas can see that things are going badly awry and that all the good work Jesus has done will soon be swept away.

3. ***What's the Buzz/Strange Thing Mystifying***

The anxious apostles question Jesus on his plans. Judas questions his actions and accuses Jesus of being inconsistent. Judas is admonished by Jesus for failing to understand his greater mission.

4. ***Everything's Alright***

Mary Magdalene tries to calm Jesus with an expensive ointment. Judas accuses her of wasting resources which would be better served helping the poor.

5. ***This Jesus Must Die***

Caiaphas and the priests don't understand how he has managed to inspire people and believe that Jesus poses a threat to their authority.

6. ***Hosanna***

A mass of people surround Jesus as he triumphantly arrives in Jerusalem. Caiaphas challenges Jesus who incites the crowd to cheer louder for him.

7. ***Simon Zealotes/Poor Jerusalem***

Simon tries to convince Jesus that he has the power to motivate the crowds to rebel against the Romans.

8. ***Pilate's Dream***

Pontius Pilate recounts a dream which has been troubling him for many months, a dream in which he is accused of condemning a charismatic man to death.

9. ***The Temple***

The temple has become a marketplace and is full of moneylenders and gambling. In a public rage, Jesus overturns the temple accusing them of abusing a house of prayer. Having caused a scene, Jesus attracts the sick and poor demanding him to heal and save them.

10. ***Everything's Alright*** (Reprise)

Mary Magdalene once again soothes Jesus to sleep.

11. ***I Don't Know How to Love Him***

Mary, who has never known love, shares her conflicting feelings for Jesus, both platonic and romantic.

12. ***Damned for All Time/Blood Money***

Priests want to know where to find Jesus far from the crowds. Judas reveals to them where he will be Thursday night.

MUSICAL SYNOPSIS | ACT II

1. ***The Last Supper***
Jesus gathers his apostles and tells them to remember him when they eat and drink.
2. ***Gethsemane***
Alone in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus reflects on the fate that awaits him over the next three days.
3. ***The Arrest***
The soldiers arrest Jesus and take him to Caiaphas, the High Priest, who finds him guilty and sends him to Pilate for execution.
4. ***Peter's Denial***
As Jesus had predicted, Peter denies knowing him three times.
5. ***Pilate and Christ***
Jesus is brought before Pilate who decides that as he is a Galilean, he should be delivered to King Herod.
6. ***King Herod's Song***
Herod has heard about the many miracles Jesus has performed and he wants Jesus to perform one for him. Jesus sits in silence. Infuriated, King Herod throws Jesus out of his house.
7. ***Could We Start Again, Please?***
With Jesus locked in a cell, Mary and the apostles wish they could turn the clock back and start again.
8. ***Judas' Death***
The priests deny Judas' request to release Jesus. Attacked by guards, Jesus is left half dead. Filled with despair, Judas commits suicide.
9. ***Trial by Pilate***
Once again, Jesus appears before Pilate, who, to appease the crowd, condemns him to be flogged and eventually crucified.
10. ***Superstar***
In his delusion, Jesus is haunted by Judas who asks him how he could have let the situation degenerate to this point.
11. ***Crucifixion***
Jesus is crucified and dies.
12. ***John 19:41***
Jesus' body is removed from the cross. End of Opera.