

Saturday Bloody Saturday: "Coriolanus," at Lincoln Park through July 21

Written by Thom White
Monday, 15 July 2013 06:00

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It's always a pleasure to be able to laud the chorus members of a production, and that's certainly appropriate for Genesis Guild's presentation of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*; the crowd scenes involving the Roman citizens – a group made up of 15 actors – are some of the most dynamic moments in co-directors Bryan Woods' and Don Wooten's production. Usually seen angrily protesting something, there's a palpable energy in these performers' collective presence as the group storms the stage and creates a general hubbub in the background, adding more realism than would be on display had they merely stood in place and interjected occasional comments. Stirring things up beginning with the opening scene, and appearing multiple times throughout the course of the play, this charismatic group sets the stage for what proves to be an entertaining evening.

Coriolanus begins with the townspeople rioting about food being withheld from them following a victory over the Tarquin kings, with Tyler Henning's arrogant Caius Marcius the focus of their blame. Then enters Earl Strupp's calm, respectable Roman senator Menenius – a characterization the actor notably maintains throughout the course of the play – whose demeanor is in beautiful, stark contrast to the riotous crowd. Wholly unlike Menenius, Caius Marcius is contemptible, earning the crowd's ire for his disdainful treatment of them, and Henning is stunning in the role; he exudes a sincere confidence bordering on cockiness, and is aided by a voice that booms with arrogant authority even when his back is to the audience.

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