


## How Much Fun are the Troubies? Let Me Count the Ways.

 Leigh Kennicott [Reviews](#) - [Theater](#)



Cast. Photo by Ed Krieger.

The Troubies are at it again, and they've invaded the El Portal in NoHo to celebrate their 25th Anniversary with Shakespeare's immortal tale of political intrigue, Julius Caesar, er, Weezer. It's in for a short run, so try not to miss it!

Teaming an unlikely rock group (Weezer) with a play that doesn't lend itself to musical interpretation, this version seems geared to entice a non-Shakespearean crowd with very well-done Shakespearean riffs by the talented, yet demented cast. For sheer fun, this is the show that will make traditionalists happy, while the rest of the crowd keep tapping their feet. I'd relate the plot, but if you took English lit in high school, you've read the play; and, if not, the Troubie version is pretty self-explanatory.

Founder Matt Walker conceived, directs, and performs as the upstanding Cassius, supporting a cast almost too numerous to mention (but I will anyway). Troubie Rick Batalla as Luscious, er,

Lucius, maintains the absurdity while Rob Nagle hews to Shakespearean high standards as Brutus. The others --- Morgan Rusler, Michael Sulprizio, Beth Kennedy, Cloie Wyatt Taylor, Suzanne Jolie Narbonne --- welcome into their midst such luminaries as Joseph Leo Bwarie, Victoria Hoffman, Matt Merchant, Dave C. Wright, and the amazing Andy Robinson as Caesar. Whew! I think that's everybody.

To bring the show to life, Walker enlisted Nadine Ellis to help with choreography; with Troubie stalwart Christopher Scott Murillo for the versatile set, and Halei Parker's great and sometimes funny costumes. Fabulous sound (Daniel Tator) and indispensable lighting (Bo Tindell) round out the production.

But the glory must go to the unobtrusive, superb five-piece band, Ryan Whyman, Derick Finely, Mikala Schmitz, Mike Abraham, and Blake Estrada who back Weezer for a post-show jam on opening night. Who knew how well Shakespeare rocked?

*Julius Wheezer continues a short run through May 19th at the El Portal Theatre, 5269 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood, 91405, Friday at 8:00 pm; Saturday at 4:00 pm and 8:00 pm and Sunday at 4:00 pm. Tickets, \$50.00 to \$65.00, available online at [www.elportaltheatre.com](http://www.elportaltheatre.com) or by calling the box office at (818) 508-4200 or (866) 811-4111.*