



JULIUS CAESAR: THE MAKING OF A DICTATOR Premieres Tuesdays, April 2–April 16 on PBS and Streaming on PBS.org and the PBS App

Three-Part Series Explores Julius Caesar’s Rise to Power and The Destruction of Roman Democracy

ARLINGTON, VA; Feb. 26, 2024 – **JULIUS CAESAR: THE MAKING OF A DICTATOR** is a new three-part BBC-produced historical docudrama that explores how the nearly five-centuries-old Roman democracy was overthrown in just 16 years. The story of a brazen power grab that saw Julius Caesar consolidate the vast Roman Republic in his own hands, the series is told through the eyes of an expert cast of British and American historians, scholars, and political operatives (including a former head of MI5). Illustrated with artful dramatic moments and packed with contemporary resonances, **JULIUS CAESAR** has all the elements of the best political thrillers, with complex power dynamics playing out for enormous stakes. The series premieres on three consecutive Tuesdays, April 2–April 16, 2024, 9:00-10:00 p.m. ET ([check local listings](#)) on PBS, [PBS.org](#) and the [PBS App](#).

Episode Descriptions:

Episode 1: “High Priest” (April 2, 2024)

The first episode traces Caesar’s ambitious rise as he seeks to become Consul, the highest political position in Rome. He forms dangerous alliances and bends the rules of the Republic, courting the popular vote, exploiting division, and using bribery and intimidation to get his own way. But his unconventional approach to politics and disregard for established customs sets him at odds with the conservative elite within the Senate. And one man — Cato — is determined to bring him down.

Episode 2: “Veni Vidi Vici” (April 9, 2024)

Caesar has brokered an uneasy alliance with the two other most powerful men in the Republic, Pompey and Crassus, and the trio dominate the political system. Caesar leaves Rome to take the governorship of Gaul — modern-day France — to conquer its people and win greater power and prestige. But events beyond his control threaten to unravel his plans and leave him isolated. Backed into a corner, he makes a decision that will change the course of the Republic — and Western history — forever.

Episode 3: “Ides of March” (April 16, 2024)

As Caesar takes control of Rome and consolidates his grip over the Republic, he awards himself ever-greater powers. Appointed dictator for one year to restore peace, he soon extends this to ten years and then becomes “Dictator for Life.” His ambition turned to tyranny, Caesar has become untouchable, and Rome is now essentially a dictatorship. A handful of senators, including some of his closest allies, plot to end his rule in the only way they can: by taking his life. But will that be enough to save the Republic?

About the Expert Participants

Shami Chakrabarti is a politician, barrister, and human rights activist.

Jonathan Evans served as head of MI5, 2003-2013.

Shelley P. Haley is a retired professor of Africana Studies and Classics at Hamilton College, in Clinton, NY.

Tom Holland is a historian, broadcaster and author of *Rubicon: The Last Years of the Roman Republic* and *Dynasty: The Rise and Fall of the House of Caesar*.

Nandini Pandey is a professor of Classics at Johns Hopkins University.

Federico Santangelo is a professor of Ancient History at the University of Newcastle.

Celia Schultz is a professor of Classical Studies at the University of Michigan.

Rory Stewart was a member of Parliament, 2010-2019.

Jeff Tatum is a professor of Classics at the University of Wellington, New Zealand.

Kathryn Tempest is a reader in Classics and Ancient History at the University of Roehampton, UK.

All three episodes of **JULIUS CAESAR: THE MAKING OF A DICTATOR** will be available to stream on all station-branded PBS platforms, including [PBS.org](https://www.pbs.org) and the PBS App, available on iOS, Android, Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, Android TV, Samsung Smart TV, Chromecast and VIZIO.

JULIUS CAESAR: THE MAKING OF A DICTATOR is a BBC Studios Production for PBS and BBC. Series Producer and Director: Emma Frank. Executive Producer: Alexander Leith. Narrated by Janet McTeer. Featuring Andonis James Anthony as Julius Caesar.

About PBS

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