

Should you ever find yourself in the precarious, yet exhilarating position of having to mount a full production of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's *Jesus Christ Superstar*, you should know up front that the undertaking does not come with a safety net. When you, the director, are presented with the licensed materials for this show, you will quickly discover that many of the scripted hints and suggestions you've come to depend on from previous projects (e.g. indicated locations, stage directions, spoken dialogue, and character descriptions) will not be found here. On the contrary, your "script" is nothing more than a collection of songs and lyrics strung together by Webber's score and the eager suggestions of the musical's die-hard fandom (ironic that a show about the consequences of celebrity is, itself, a celebrity). Nevertheless, the "script" you are presented with does not suffer from a lack of story, meaning, emotional complexity, themes, or dramatic conflict. It is, however, your distinct privilege to interpret and realize these elements in their fullest form with the help of your boldest collaborators. For nearly half a century, *Jesus Christ Superstar* has stunned audiences in more than 42 countries across the globe, and with each new production, new experiments with different aspects of the story have been undertaken, while still maintaining the show's core -the production before you today is but one of these bold experiments. On my first reading, or listening, rather, of the piece, I found *Jesus Christ Superstar* to be intensely political. In its most basic definition, politics are concerned with the process of making decisions that apply to members of a group. As such, they often grapple with what is right, what is wrong, and how to steer the masses towards particular stances on morality. With this theme in mind, I took a close look at the story's key relationships and power dynamics (independent of religious texts), and chose to strip away as much of the performance space as possible in order to highlight the story's key characters and their confrontations with one another, while still preserving a modern flare in order to emphasize its timeliness. I want to wholeheartedly thank the Firehouse Center for the Arts for giving us the freedom to explore this version of the show. Thank you to each member of the creative team for your expertise and contributions to this production and to the cast I extend my deepest gratitude for joining me on this adventurous journey. To my Nana and Papa, who had the privilege to watch the original Broadway production in 1971 from twelve dollar balcony seats, and to my parents, who caught the National Tour in Boston whilst still pregnant with my sister and I -here's hoping something sunk in.