

*"Possibly the closest entity
to a national theatre the
United States may ever have."
- Theater Journal*

Cornerstone Theater Company
708 Traction Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90013

Mission and History of Cornerstone Theater Company

Cornerstone is a multi-ethnic, ensemble-based theater company. We commission and produce new plays, both original works and contemporary adaptations of classics, which combine the artistry of professional and community collaborators. By making theater with and for people of many ages, cultures and levels of theatrical experience, Cornerstone builds bridges between and within diverse communities in our home city of Los Angeles and nationwide.

Co-founded by Alison Carey and Bill Rauch in 1986, Cornerstone at first lived and worked primarily in rural communities, creating 12 epic musical productions in 10 states. In 1991, our first Bridge Show, an adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, brought together over 50 community-based artists who toured 10,000 miles to perform in each other's hometowns.

In 1992, Cornerstone settled in Los Angeles to focus on urban collaborations and began exploring the many definitions of community including age, neighborhood, culture, language, workplace, faith, etc. Each series of projects culminates in a grand-scale Bridge Show that breaks down barriers and brings together diverse participants. We also share our methods with colleagues through commissioned collaborations with established institutions like Arena Stage, The Public Theater and the Mark Taper Forum and through educational programs such as the Cornerstone Institute.

Cornerstone theater company Institute



Mission

The Cornerstone Institute offers multidisciplinary professional training in community-based theater using Cornerstone Theater Company's unique collaborative methodology.



Who are the Teachers?

Institute faculty are experienced members of Cornerstone's Ensemble as well as Guest Artists with expertise in community-based theater and production.

Who are the Students?

Institute students are individuals seeking to study and collaborate with professionals who are well versed in ensemble, community-based theater. Theater experience is helpful but not required. Students must be 18 or older and can be at any stage of their education or career. Applicants may include theater artists of any discipline (performers, writers, directors, designers, administrators, etc.) as well as educators, community organizers, activists, or anyone else interested in the intersection of theater and community.



In the summer of 2004 Cornerstone launched the Institute with a four-week residency in Lost Hills, California, mounting an original play based on the stories and experiences of local residents.

Who is the Community?

Cornerstone seeks to create theater with interesting and interested communities. A community can be defined by geography, occupation, circumstance or culture. Currently we are looking for a rural host community in California's Central Valley for our 2005 residency. We ask the community to support the production with time, energy and sharing of their stories and experiences. We do not ask for money, but we do seek assistance with housing for the incoming artists (faculty and students) who will reside in the community for 4 to 6 weeks. Housing solutions have included residing in school buildings, vacant houses and apartments, and empty restaurants.

For more information on past and future projects, visit our website at www.CornerstoneTheater.org

www.CornerstoneTheater.org/Institute

Institute Summer Program

The Cornerstone Institute Summer Residency Program offers a unique, hands-on collaborative experience creating theater and exploring strategies for community engagement while living with and within a small, diverse rural community. Students learn both through classroom training and hands-on creation of community-specific productions, which combine their own artistry with that of experienced professionals and community collaborators. Classroom training and production experience will combine to provide a thorough understanding of the community collaboration process, from beginning to end.



Institute Intensive

The Cornerstone Institute Intensive is designed to reach individuals in organizations and institutions who cannot commit to a longer residency, by offering a weekend or 2-day program of workshops and discussions that cover material from the Summer Institute. (The 2-day Intensive is available for booking.)

The Cornerstone Institute is supported in part by the James Irvine Foundation and the Wallace Foundation.

Curriculum

Cornerstone Institute offers insight and training in:

- **Community-Based Art:** Overview of community-based artmaking and theater, with an emphasis on Cornerstone Theater Company's contributions to these fields
- **Community:** Lessons and practical applications in defining, discovering and engaging communities
- **Theater:** How working with community impacts and informs all disciplines of theater including acting, directing, playwriting, design, administration, stage management, etc.
- **Ensemble:** Creating and maintaining an ensemble as a core company structure as well as within a production
- **Ongoing Practices:** Mutual mentorship with students and faculty sharing expertise and experience; weekly meetings to discuss Institute progress and concerns; daily involvement in creative problem solving and production



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For detailed current information visit our website
www.CornerstoneTheater.org/Institute

Cornerstone Institute

