Welcome to Center Theatre Group and Chavez Ravine by Culture Clash, a true Los Angeles story about land, people, power, home and baseball.

Chavez Ravine is the story of the land that sits below Dodger Stadium, but is also the story of something larger — it’s about people and their homes; about the power structure in a big city hoping to become even bigger; and about how a community fights for something they believe in, even when the odds are against them.

Culture Clash’s deep commitment to the political possibilities of theatre and the use of humor as a weapon to change the world, challenges us as an audience to laugh, to think and then hopefully, when we leave the theatre, to stand up for what we believe in.

Before we tell you more, take a moment and think about combining theatre, comedy and politics. Do you believe art and humor can help change the world? And think about your very favorite place in California. Do you know the history of that place? Did you ever wonder who lived on that land in the past?

Theatre raises questions and challenges audience members to discover their own answers. See what questions this information raises for you and what questions and answers the performance provides. Thank you so much for joining us for Chavez Ravine. We look forward to seeing you at the theatre.

“I wanna tell you about a place very close to my heart…”

— Henry, Chavez Ravine

“…. a place most people know as Chavez Ravine, but to the familias who lived here, these were neighborhoods.”

— Henry, Chavez Ravine
文化和喜剧的融合

“我们的使命是在城市中创造出新的艺术和政治，提醒我们记住这个古老形式的力量。” — 文化冲突

文化和喜剧

文化冲突的小团体 — 四个演员和一个舞台 — 演出多样的角色，重新演出旧的故事，讲述新的人生。

1. 在开始的时候，为文化冲突，洛杉矶的市 — 代表了威尔逊和文化冲突 — 认为这片土地的最好用途是建造一个现代化，清洁，安全的住宅区。国家和公共利益，也会受益。
2. 其他城市官员认为这片土地应该用于公共住房，就像在洛杉矶，深受欢迎的住宅区一样。
3. 三个城市官员认为这片土地应该用于公共住房，就像在洛杉矶，深受欢迎的住宅区一样。

“威尔逊：美国政府让城市拥有土地时，是什么让它变贵的。” — 文化冲突

“玛利亚：这不仅仅是为了我们的公共利益。” — 文化冲突

“我反对所有的公共利益。” — 文化冲突

“我不会是唯一一个反对的。” — 文化冲突

“战争是我们的敌人，但不是我们的精神.” — 在我们进行的过程中，我们创建了一个文化抵抗。 — 文化冲突

“他们保护了我们的家园。” — 文化冲突

“温斯顿，我不能理解。” — 文化冲突

“我不能理解。” — 文化冲突

“在下次的会议中，我们继续战斗。” — 文化冲突

“在我们战斗的时刻，我们庆祝。” — 文化冲突

“我们战斗的时刻，我们庆祝。” — 文化冲突

“胜利。” — 文化冲突
“THESE ARE SACRED LANDS YOU’RE PITCHING ON…”

— Maria, Chavez Ravine

“The land of Chavez Ravine had been put to many uses over the centuries. A cattle ranch, a dairy farm, two brickyards, a Jewish cemetery, a Chinese cemetery.”

— Don Normark, Chavez Ravine, 1949—A Los Angeles Story

1509 to present
1910–1959 Homes and neighborhoods that made up Chavez Ravine
1910– City Brick Company
1902— Sanatorium for tuberculosis patients
1893— Los Angeles’ first arboretum
1890— Los Angeles City Oil Field
1886— Elysian Park
1855— Los Angeles’ first Jewish cemetery
1848— U.S. purchases the land with the rest of L.A. from Mexico in Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo
1844— Cavalry Catholic Cemetery
1844— Cattle ranch, property of Julian Chavez
1821— Mexican Territory
1781— Spanish Colonies

Tonga Indian Village

Despite its controversial history, many Los Angeles Dodger fans think the stadium is one of the best things to ever happen in the city. Attendance records support this — in 2014, nearly 4 million people came to see games, making Dodger Stadium the number one most-visited stadium in major league baseball.

But Los Angeles is not the first city to call the Dodgers their own. They were originally the Brooklyn Dodgers, affectionately referred to as “Dem Bums!” Their name is a permanent reminder of their New York past. Historically, Brooklyn had been known for its web of trolley tracks and fast moving trolley cars. Neighborhood residents were known as “trolley dodgers” because of the daily effort it took to avoid being hit.

Since the founding of the team in the late 1800s, the Dodgers were deeply beloved by Brooklynites. When it was announced in 1952 that the Dodgers were headed to the west coast, Brooklyn fans were heartbroken. Even today, there are Brooklyn Dodger fans that long for the days when the team still played at Ebbets Field.

Whether you’re a fan or not, it’s hard to separate the Dodgers from Los Angeles. The team, their blue and white uniforms, and the sweeping cursive letters that make Dodger Stadium famous are fixtures of Los Angeles life. From fans and families to schools and businesses, Dodger blue can be found everywhere.

The Dodgers organization is committed to giving back to the city that has been their home since 1958. The Los Angeles Dodgers Foundation has several programs dedicated to addressing the educational and athletic needs of Los Angeles youth. In partnership with the Jackie Robinson Foundation, Team 42 provides college scholarships to minority students in the county and surrounding area. The Dodgers Dreamfields build baseball and softball fields throughout the city. And the Dodgers Community Fund focuses on health, education, and overall health in elementary schools serving low-income communities.

Why do you think a sports team can bring a city together?

Many Latino families in Los Angeles felt deep bitterness towards the Dodgers in the wake of the battle for Chavez Ravine. Things began to change when Fernando Valenzuela, a 19-year-old pitcher from Elmhurst, New York, joined the team in 1980. He dominated the sport immediately, becoming the only player in Major League baseball history to win the Cy Young Award, the Silver Slugger Award, Rookie of the Year, and World Championship.

His rise to status was a bridge between the history of Chavez Ravine and the Los Angeles Dodgers. When he played, many Latinos came to see games at Dodger Stadium. With his mastery on the pitcher’s mound, he gave everyone somebody to root for. Although too modest to take credit for it, his presence on the team helped pave the way of the ethnic and cultural tensions that still linger from the fight for Chavez Ravine.

“What has been more powerful than sports to unify a people and to raise the hopes of, and pride in, a people?”

— Fernando Valenzuela
INTERVIEW WITH

CULTURE CLASH

and Center Theatre Group Teaching Artist Marcos Nájera

Marcos: We are catching you three gentlemen right in the middle of a workshop for your show Chavez Ravine. What happens at a workshop?

Herbert Siguenza: It’s a new work, a workshop is very important because you are developing the work. But this work is older. We wrote it in 2003. So we are re-writing it 10 years later. And a lot of things have changed among us as performers, as writers, as men. So we don’t want to do a revival of the work as it is. It’s just out of style you know? We feel that society has changed, we’ve changed, and we want to reflect a little more about who’s going on now. When we remount a work we are constantly changing it, making a fresh for us and the audience.

Marcos: Cool. It makes me think about students who are into sports. They have to practice playing football or baseball before the game—is this workshop kind of the same thing? Is this writing practice for you guys before your story hits the stage?

Herbert: It’s football. You get called in August. And you just are practicing, practicing, drills, you know, reading plays, and getting the quarterback set and getting the coaches and everything. It’s the same thing.

Marcos: While we are talking, Richard, we’ve got you pouring away at your computer keyboard. What ridiculous are you trying to solve man?

Richard Montoya: This is the guts of a play. It’s got to be broken down. Broken apart. We say “breaking the piñata open.” Every little piece of candy has to be examined. This is the work. The audience and the applause is far away. This is extremely vulnerable and everything is laid out and characters start fighting for their life on stage, you know? If it doesn’t have something important to say, you have to get rid of it. You have to defend every, every moment of the play.

Marcos: What is the story of Chavez Ravine? Love the original play 10 years ago and loved it, but what is if for you?

Herbert: It’s a multi-faceted story. It’s not just one. It’s the story of a city. Los Angeles. The power structure. It’s a story about a family that lived on a hill called Chavez Ravine. It’s a story about an architect. It’s a story about a city planner named Frank Wilkinson. It’s the story about a baseball team, the Brooklyn Dodgers, moving to Los Angeles. So it’s epic. It’s a Los Angeles story and it’s very complicated. That’s why we love this story.

Marcos: What does the fictional character of Maria represent in the real community?

Ric: She’s a composite of Dolores Huerta when she was young and Gloria Molina. We interviewed her and listened to her activism and how she got to where she is. It’s based off of real women and some of the women are the center of the story, the main story—like they threw tomatoes over the stadium wall—when the first ball got pitched. And these young activists grew up and became Maria. She is these women de poder (power) of Chavez Ravine.

Marcos: Does it surprise you that so many Latinos love love love the Dodgers? And that’s there’s such a huge Latino base?

Herbert: Oh yeah, like no other city. A lot has to do with Fernando Valenzuela—and he’s in the play. Fernando Valenzuela brought Latinos back to the stadium. Many Latinos were still angry about the Chavez Ravine residents and did not come to the stadium until ‘El Toro’ was pitching, you know, because they started seeing representation of them and so yes, the Dodgers is a Latino team. It really is. And going back to the “bad guy” question— I think the Ramirez Grants is the bad guys? (Laughs)

Ric: When you think of the bad guy in the story, it really is the back-room deals.

Marcos: So the bad guy in this story isn’t just one person?

Ric: It’s back-room deals. It’s shadowy figures. It’s people in power. It’s the press—back then. If you want to find a bad guy in this story and even hate the Dodgers. But it’s not that easy.

Marcos: (hinting) Just so you know, I look good in a dress, Herbert.

Ric: Oh yeah, like no other city. A lot has to do with Fernando Valenzuela—and he’s in the play. Fernando Valenzuela brought Latinos back to the stadium. Many Latinos were still angry about the Chavez Ravine residents and did not come to the stadium until ‘El Toro’ was pitching, you know, because they started seeing representation of them and so yes, the Dodgers is a Latino team. It really is. And going back to the “bad guy” question— I think the Ramirez Grants is the bad guys? (Laughs)

Ric: When you think of the bad guy in the story, it really is the back-room deals.

Marcos: So when I walk out of this room, what will you do when the show opens?

Herbert: Do you know, I want to let you get back to your work in the rehearsal room. But it’s not that easy. Just the fact that we used their stories. In the middle part of our career, we started traveling the nation gathering people’s stories. Latino and non-Latino, recent immigrants or people that lived here. That really informed us as artists, as Americans and as all that.

Richard: You know, things morph and you start out doing one thing, and we were very much into sketch comedy and that turns into something else. Hopefully, we’ve become better storytellers—as long as we have that desire and something important to say, we’ll find ways, new ways to keep saying it.

Marcos: So when I walk out of this rehearsal room, what’s the first thing you’ll work on?

Herbert: We are getting the script ready for designers. That’s really important. We are going to read this version that we put together last week. And you know, we still have to cast our Maria. That’s a really beautiful, juicy role.

Marcos: (hinting) Just so you know, I look good in a dress, Herbert.

Culture Clash: JAL!
“Memory can’t be flattened. Memory is history singing in tune with the stars.”
—Manazar Gamboa, from Chavez Ravine

Center Theatre Group Education and Community Partnerships

Center Theatre Group’s mission is to serve the diverse audiences of Los Angeles by producing and presenting theatre of the highest caliber, by nurturing new artists, by attracting new audiences, and by developing youth outreach and education programs. This mission is based on the belief that the art of theatre is a cultural force with the capacity to transform the lives of individuals and society at large.

Education and Community Partnerships
Theatre is an enduring and powerful tool for communicating ideas, stories, emotions and beliefs that fuel the imagination, imagination and creative spirit. Center Theatre Group believes that stimulating awareness, creativity, dialogue and an inquisitive mind is integral to the growth and well-being of the individual and the community; and that nurturing a lifelong appreciation of the arts leads inextricably to an engaged and enlightened society.

Additional support for Education and Community Partnerships is provided by The Sheri and Les Bilzerian Family Foundation, the Employees Community Fund of Boeing California, The Louis L. Berick Foundation, The Sascha Brastoff Foundation, The Eli and Edythe L. Broad Foundation, Brookside Fund, the Brostein Foundation of California, Diana Buchhantz & Vladimir & Arau Buchhantz Foundations, the Carol and James Collins Foundation, the Culver City Education Foundation, the James A. Doolittle Foundation, the Joseph Drown Foundation, the Firebird Family Foundation, the Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation, The Franks Charitable Foundation, the Lawrence P. Frank Foundation, the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation, The Green Foundation, The William Randolph Hearst Education Foundation, HUB International Insurance Services, Reneet & Meyer Luskin, the Music Center Fund for the Performing Arts, the Kenneth T. & Eileen L. Norris Foundation, the Rosenthal Family Foundation, Laura & James Rosewald & Orsino Foundation, Sony Pictures Entertainment and Dwight Stuart Youth Fund.

REFERENCES


SPECIAL THANKS

Education and Community Partnerships receives generous support from Eva & Marc Stern, the Artists & Educators Forum and Center Theatre Group’s Corporate Circle.

Center Theatre Group

Center Theatre Group’s education and community partnership programs advance the organization’s mission in three key ways:

**Audience**: Inspiring current and future audiences to discover the growth and well-being of the individual and the community; and that nurturing a lifelong appreciation of the arts leads inextricably to an engaged and enlightened society.

**Artists**: Investing in the training, support and development of emerging young artists and young arts professionals who are the future of our field; and

**Arts Education Leadership**: Contributing to the community-wide efforts to improve the quality and scope of arts education in Los Angeles.

""Memory can’t be flattened. Memory is history singing in tune with the stars..."" —Manazar Gamboa, from Chavez Ravine

Center Theatre Group

“Memory can’t be flattened. Memory is history singing in tune with the stars...” —Manazar Gamboa, from Chavez Ravine