

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

CHAVEZ RAVINE

REVISITED. REMIXED. REVIVAL.

BY **CULTURE CLASH**

DIRECTED BY **LISA PETERSON**

Jan 27 – Mar 1, 2015
Kirk Douglas Theatre

UCLA



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.

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

— Henry, *Chavez Ravine*

“I was born behind SECOND BASE...”

—Henry, *Chavez Ravine*

Culture Clash’s play *Chavez Ravine* opens in Dodger Stadium, on one of the most important days in baseball history — April 9, 1981. Rookie Fernando Valenzuela is about to throw his first pitch as a starter, the beginning of a truly groundbreaking career. His warm-up is interrupted when ghosts appear to him behind second base. They are the past residents of Chavez Ravine. They want Valenzuela to understand the history of the ground he’s standing on. Going back in time to 1944, they introduce us to the people and community who lived on this land before the stadium was there.

Chavez Ravine by Culture Clash tells the true story of the Mexican-American community that lived in the ravine for generations; of the neighborhoods that once stood where Dodger Stadium’s field, bleachers, and parking lot are now; and how and why they lost their homes.

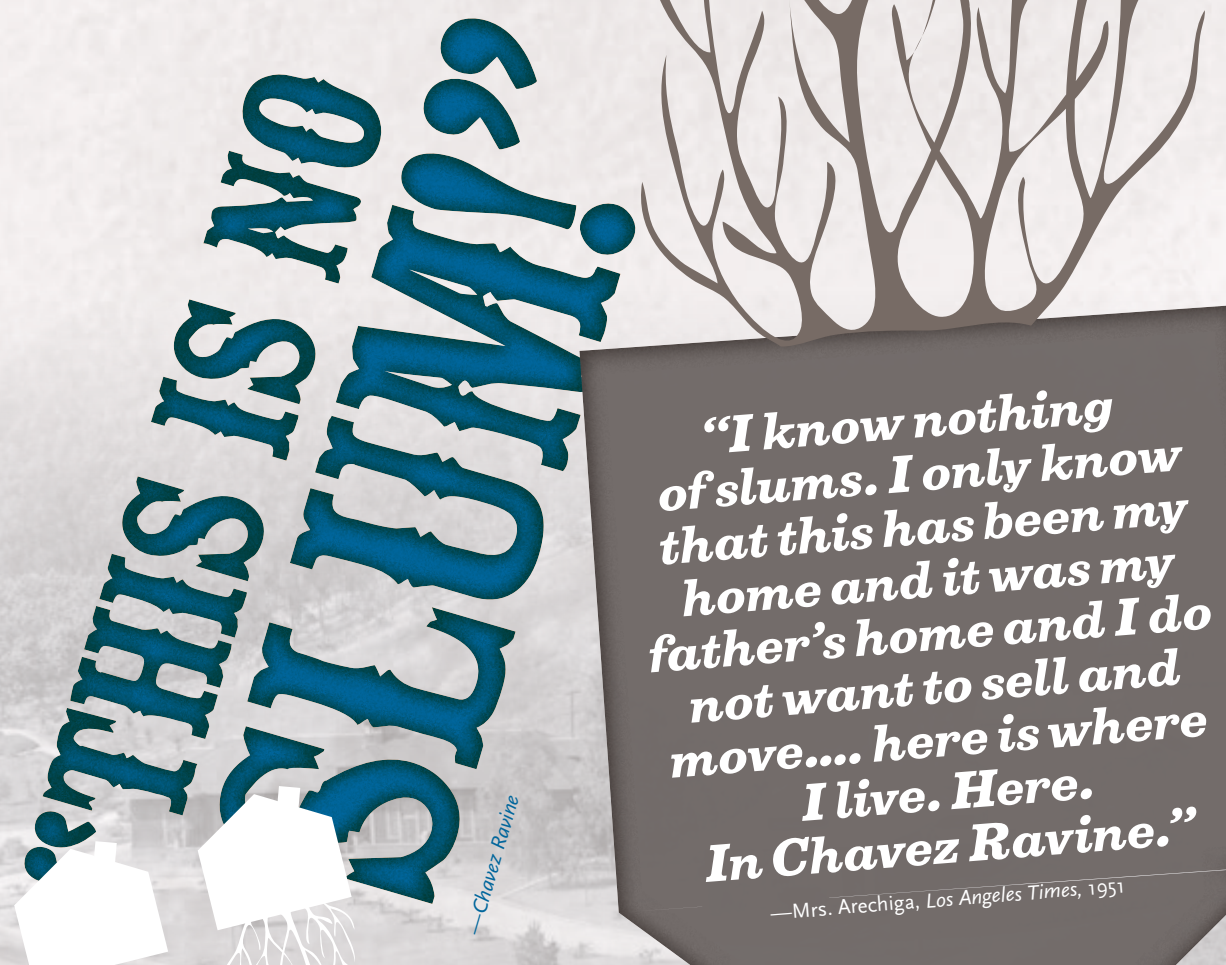
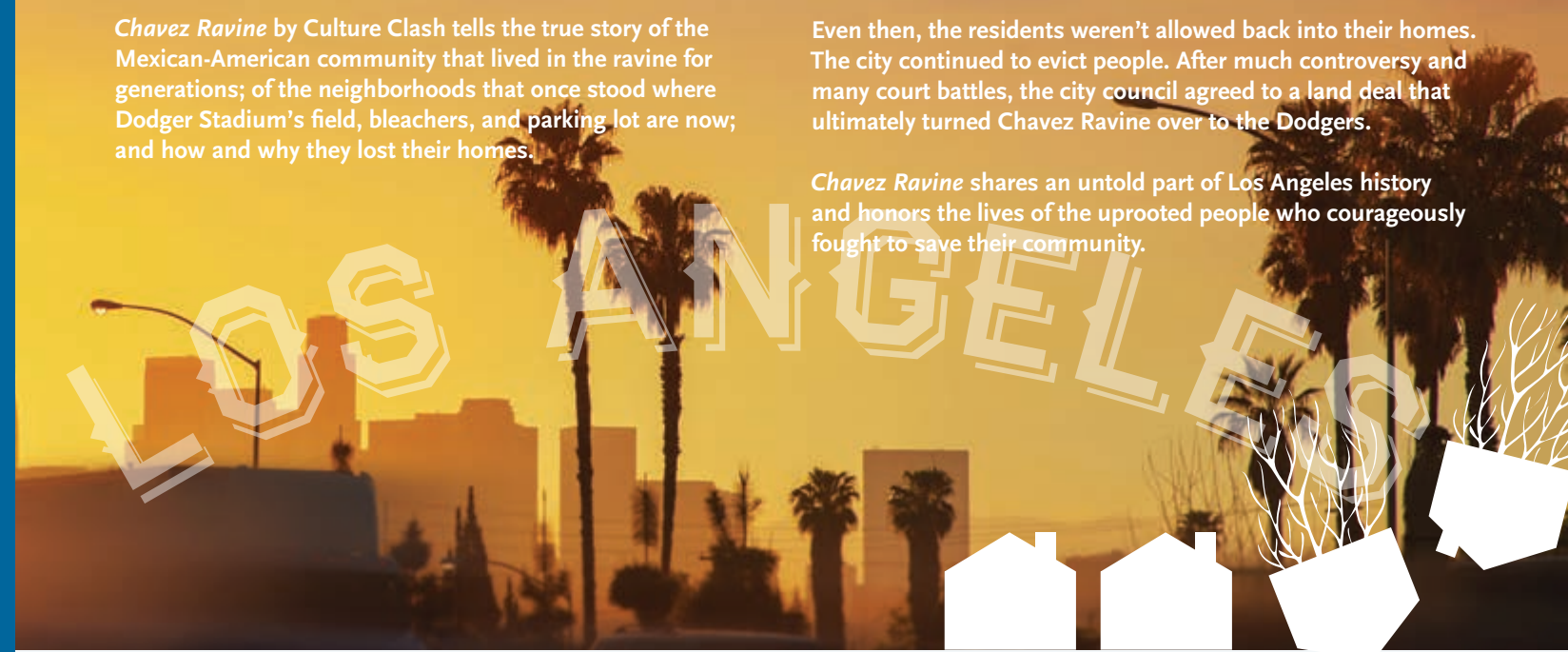
In 1944, many of the residents of Chavez Ravine had been living there for generations. Some of their parents settled in the ravine after fleeing the Mexican Revolution in 1910; others came to the area hoping to give their family a better quality of life. A close-knit community formed, made up of three neighborhoods: La Loma, Bishop and Palo Verde.

In 1949, the National Housing Act gave Los Angeles \$110 million dollars to build affordable public housing. In July, 1950, the 300 families living in Chavez Ravine were notified by the California Housing Authority that they would be forced to sell their homes to the city. They would have to relocate while an affordable housing development was built. The Housing Authority guaranteed that when the project was complete they would have first pick of the new apartments.

But the city broke that promise. The development was attacked by business interests, the Housing Authority was discredited by the accusation that it had been infiltrated by Communists, and eventually the whole project was abandoned.

Even then, the residents weren’t allowed back into their homes. The city continued to evict people. After much controversy and many court battles, the city council agreed to a land deal that ultimately turned Chavez Ravine over to the Dodgers.

Chavez Ravine shares an untold part of Los Angeles history and honors the lives of the uprooted people who courageously fought to save their community.



The battle for Chavez Ravine began because outsiders perceived the area as a slum. City officials focused on health and safety problems — fire hazards, rat infestations, unpaved and unlit roads. They didn’t involve the community in discussions about improvements, deciding independently that the residents would be better off in a new housing development.

Through the play, Culture Clash invites the audience to experience daily life in these neighborhoods. By showing us community gatherings, celebrations, family and friends, we get a glimpse of what the community felt like from the inside and why it was worth fighting for.

What do you think is the perception of your neighborhood by outsiders? What does your neighborhood feel like from the inside? What is one great thing about your neighborhood that only people who live there know about?

Is there a neighborhood in Los Angeles that you have preconceived ideas about? What do you think that neighborhood feels like for the people who live there? What do you think you can’t know about this place as an outsider?

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Center Theatre Group
L.A.’s Theatre Company
A non-profit arts organization
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Mark Taper Forum
Kirk Douglas Theatre

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Richard Montoya,
Herbert Siguenza
and Ric Salinas, 2003
production of *Chavez Ravine* at the Mark Taper Forum. PHOTO BY CRAIG SCHWARTZ.

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CULTURE CLASH

“Our mission is to gleefully mix art and politics and remind ourselves of the power of this ancient form: teatro.” — Culture Clash

Founded in 1984 in San Francisco, Culture Clash is the preeminent Chicano-Latino performance troupe in the United States. Using theatre and comedy to offer razor-sharp social commentary, Richard Montoya, Herbert Siguenza, and Ric Salinas have spent 30 years together (most of their lives!) exploring and telling the often-neglected stories of America. From their early sketch comedy, to their full length plays, Culture Clash has never been afraid of topics that make people uncomfortable — racism, classism, sexism. The history of Chavez Ravine is exactly the sort of story Culture Clash has made it their mission to tell. It gives voice to a community that history silenced, and it challenges people to look at the complex backstory of a beloved symbol of Los Angeles — Dodger Stadium.

Culture Clash’s small ensemble — four actors and an onstage band — plays more than fifty characters, transforming from one to the other using their voices, body language and minimal costumes (a hat, a dress, a false mustache, a bad wig).

The characters they play in *Chavez Ravine* range from real life historical figures to totally imaginary.

A few of the historical figures are:

- **The poet Manazar Gamboa**, who serves as narrator, grew up in Chavez Ravine. His poems about his childhood in the ravine have helped preserve the memory of a neighborhood and way of life that no longer exists.
- **Frank Wilkinson** worked for the Los Angeles Housing Authority in the 1940s and 50s. He was a champion of public housing and believed that Los Angeles had the potential to be the first major city in the United States without any slums.
- **Fernando Valenzuela**, perhaps the most famous Dodger of all time.
- **The characters Señora, Maria, and Henry Ruiz**, are the emotional center of the play. They are based on a combination of the twelve families who stayed in their homes the longest, and who were forcibly evicted moments before bulldozers arrived.
- **Mover, Shaker, and the Watchman** represent a powerful group of Los Angeles businessmen during the 1940s and 50s, who called themselves the Committee of 25. Culture Clash explores these real life masters of back-room politics by playing the characters as if they were villains in an old detective movie. Wearing trench coats and fedoras, hiding in the shadows, talking like tough guys from the 1940s, all they have to do is make a phone call to get their way.

Culture Clash also created characters that combine elements of many people from that time, drawing inspiration from research and interviews with real life residents, business people and politicians.

Public Good

“WILKINSON: The U.S. Government gives cities the power to take private land if and when it’s for the Greater Public Good.

“MARIA: It’s not for our greater good.” — *Chavez Ravine*

“Public good” is the issue at the heart of *Chavez Ravine*. What actions bring about the greater public good? Who defines “good”? And who decides which part of the “public” will benefit? This is the ongoing challenge for any democracy — out of many voices, who gets heard? And how?

The law of Eminent Domain made it legal for the City of Los Angeles to seize the homes and land in Chavez Ravine. Eminent Domain permits a government to purchase personal property, regardless of whether or not it’s for sale, in order to construct projects for public use and public benefit, such as highways, parks, schools, etc. A government has the power and the right to say what the best use of land is, regardless of how it’s already being used and by whom.

1. At the beginning of the battle for Chavez Ravine, the city of Los Angeles — represented by Wilkinson and the Housing Authority — felt the best use of the land was a development that would provide clean, safe, modern homes for more than 3,000 people.
2. The 300 families already living there strongly disagreed, and felt they should be able to stay. These were their homes and, for many, the homes of their parents and grandparents. The neighborhoods’ deep community ties were irreplaceable. A new housing development might have more conveniences, but it would never be the same.
3. Other city officials felt the land would better serve the people of Los Angeles if it weren’t used for housing at all. They wanted to do something that would raise Los Angeles’ profile, make it big league, and knew the land had the potential to do just that, by drawing one of the most popular baseball franchises in the country to the west coast.
4. Powerful business interests felt that building public housing on the land was a wasted financial opportunity, and predicted an influx of money into the city (and their pockets) if the Brooklyn Dodgers became the Los Angeles Dodgers.

What would you have decided to do with the land for the “greatest good”? Why? What does “public good” mean to you? What do you think is good or best for the people you know?



“They took our homes but not our spirit...in the process we helped create a Culture of Resistance.” — Maria, *Chavez Ravine*

“The struggle for Chavez Ravine prepared me for Civil Rights, Cesar and The Farm Workers Union, my labor work with Bert Corona, Justice For Janitors and even organizing the dedicated Service Workers of Dodger Stadium - go Local 11!”

Throughout the play we watch the character of Maria — representing the real life residents of Chavez Ravine — organize community meetings and protests, take on city officials, rally voters, start a neighborhood coalition, file lawsuits — everything in her power to fight first the Los Angeles Housing Authority, then city officials set on bringing the Dodgers to L.A. She and her neighbors stand their ground until they are literally taken off the land.

Although they lost, they made an impact. They fought for what they believed in. The battle for Chavez Ravine helped create a culture of community activism that lives and fights on today.

What can one person do to make this a better world? What can a community do? How do you stand up for what matters most to you?

“AND TODAY... our struggles are vast and... they need the next generation of Marias. Who ever and where ever you come from.” — Maria, *Chavez Ravine*

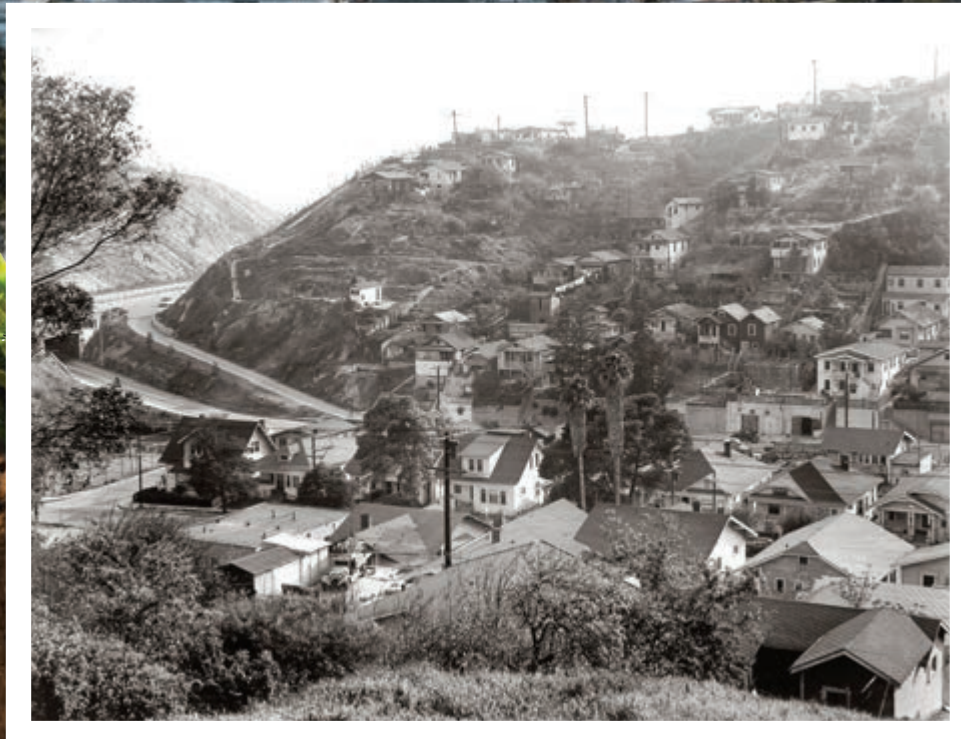
Eileen Galindo, 2003 production of *Chavez Ravine* at the Mark Taper Forum. PHOTO BY CRAIG SCHWARTZ

"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, Chávez Ravine, 1949—A Los Angeles Story.



"So do me a favor, remember Chavez Ravine."

— Maria, Chavez Ravine

"There were dances in the churchyard. Pageants held in the streets. Weddings in which the whole community joyously participated."

— Chavez Ravine resident, quoted in *The Daily Mirror, Los Angeles Times*

Just outside of Downtown Los Angeles, Chavez Ravine was rural, with unpaved roads, flourishing vegetable gardens and livestock. Raised above the city, the homes had some of the most amazing views in Los Angeles — from the forest-like Elysian Park hills immediately to the east, all the way to the Pacific Ocean in the west. Elysian Park, with acres of shady forest, fragrant eucalyptus trees, and quiet groves, was a backyard playground for the neighborhood.

This was the kind of neighborhood rare in Los Angeles today, where everyone knew each other, where residents were surrounded by wide-open green spaces, family and friends. It was more than a neighborhood, more than just a place to live. Chavez Ravine was truly a community. Residents looked out for one another and took care of each other in times of need. They were equally connected to the physical streets and buildings. Many had been born in their homes, homes that were hand built by their parents and grandparents. Leaving Chavez Ravine meant leaving strong bonds — to both people and place — that spanned generations.

Today, 55 years after the last families were forcibly removed from their homes, ex-residents gather annually to commemorate their neighborhood and a way of life that is long gone. The group calls themselves Los Desterrados (The Uprooted) and meet once a year in Elysian Park to picnic and share their childhood memories.

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Our backyard, a hand that touched a still wild river, home for paloma, coyote, and carrizales, the green smell of moss outside my window. Later, barricaded by boulevards, freeways, clouds of high-octane smoke and a ceaseless roar...

—Poem by Manazar Gamboa, from *Chavez Ravine*

🏠 What makes a neighborhood become a community? What do you consider home? Is it a physical building, the neighborhood, or a group of people?

🏠 Have you ever had to move from home? Were you sad to leave? Were you excited to leave? Is there something about that place that you will you always remember?

PHOTOGRAPH BY Don Normark, copyright © 1997, Chávez Ravine, 1949—A Los Angeles Story.

1959 to present
Dodger Stadium

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

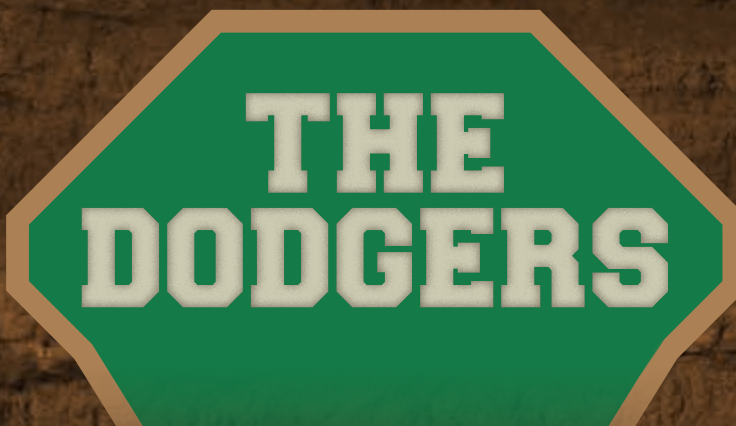
1844 – Cavalry Catholic Cemetery

1844 – Cattle ranch, property of Julian Chavez

1821 – Mexican Territory

1781 – Spanish Colonies

Tongva 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 come to home 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 was 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 1957 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.



"He opened the borders of major league baseball."

— Dylan Hernandez, *Los Angeles Times*



"If I cut my finger, the blood comes out blue, Dodger blue!"

— Nicky Apodaca III *Chavez Ravine 2003*

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 their logo, have come to represent the city itself. Angelinos of all ethnicities, from all neighborhoods, come together to celebrate their team and Los Angeles. Dodgers wins and losses are felt across the city — like in October 2014 when they lost in the playoffs, two games short of their first World Series attempt in 26 years.

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 areas. The Dodgers Dreamfields build baseball and softball fields throughout the city. And the Dodgers "Community of Schools" focuses on school beautification, student enrichment, academic achievement, and overall health in elementary schools serving low-income communities.

🗣️ Are you a Dodgers fan? Why do you root for the Dodgers? 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 Etchohuaquila, Mexico, 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 icon-status was a bridge between the history of Chavez Ravine and the Los Angeles Dodgers. When he played, more 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 ease some of the ethnic and cultural tensions that still lingered from the fight for Chavez Ravine.

"His enduring legacy stems primarily from his unifying, pride-filling performance at the start of his career. This media-crazed period drew support from Latinos all across the U.S. and cemented the pop-cultural potential of Latino stars in American sports."

— Ramón J. Guerra

Herbert Siguenza, 2003 production of *Chavez Ravine* at the Mark Taper Forum. PHOTO BY CRAIG SCHWARTZ.

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INTERVIEW WITH CULTURE CLASH

and Center Theatre Group Teaching Artist Marcos Nájera



L-R: Ric Salinas, Herbert Siguenza, Richard Montoya. PHOTO BY JOHN MALDONADO.

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: If it is 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-visiting 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 is. It's just not our style you know? We feel that society has changed, we've changed, and we want to reflect a little more about what's going on now. When we remount a work we are constantly changing it, making it 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 like football. You get called-in in August. And you just are practicing, practicing, drills, you know, reading plays, and getting the quarterback set and getting the coach and everything. It's the same thing!

Marcos: While we are talking, Richard, we've got you pounding away at your computer keyboard. What riddle 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 them! You have to defend every, every moment of the play.

Marcos: What is the story of *Chavez Ravine*? I saw the original play 10 years ago and loved it, but what is it 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: When the former residents of the Chavez Ravine neighborhood came to see the original show, what did they say?

Ric Salinas: A lot of them were thankful the story was told. Just the fact that we used their stories. In an interview-based process, we were able to tell their story and connect the dots. And they were thankful that we were representing them in a sense. You know, Latinos on stage! A story about them.

L.A. also has this amnesia about history. People forget. Even our own raza forgets. It's a collective amnesia. And what everyone thinks of Chavez Ravine is that the Dodgers came in and they kicked out the residents and built the stadium. And that it was

[Walter] O'Malley, the owner of the Brooklyn Dodgers, that did it. But it wasn't. Like Herbert said, this was a historical, epic journey of a city that was growing up and a community that gets disenfranchised for being Latino/Mexican. Without a voice there's no power in the city. And only those that can get ballots, that can vote, that can do things for their community, get far.

Herbert: A lot of people organized for the fight to preserve Chavez Ravine. And some people call this the beginning of the Chicano Movement here in the city, because those people were really the first community organizers that fought against the city. Eventually, those organizers became the Chicano Moratorium organizers, the UFW (United Farm Workers) organizers, and so on and so on.

Marcos: It built.

Herbert: Yes! It built something.

Marcos: Who's the bad guy in this show? You want to hate the city leaders, but it looks like they were trying to grow the city. And you want to hate the businessmen, but they were trying to make money. So who is the bad guy?

Richard: It's not so black and white and that's the fun of telling this story. Lives were destroyed, homes were lost under this larger idea of the greater good. But it's worth looking at because life is not a Hollywood soundstage. And revisiting [the character in the play] Maria, I think Maria has got to tie it all together, if we are talking about the culture of resistance.

"A lot of people organized for the fight to preserve Chavez Ravine. And some people call this the beginning of the Chicano Movement here in the city."

— Herbert Siguenza

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

— Ric Salinas

"Character is defined by what you do when no one is looking. Character is defined by struggle."

— Richard Montoya

Richard Montoya, 2003 production of *Chavez Ravine* at the Mark Taper Forum. PHOTO BY CRAIG SCHWARTZ.

Marcos: Who 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 that we interviewed—on opening day they threw tomatoes over the stadium [wall] when the first ball got pitched. And these young activists grew up and became Maria. They are these mujeres de poder (women of power).

Marcos: Does it surprise you that so many Latinos love *Los Doyers/The Dodgers*? And that there's such a huge Latino fan 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 incident and did not come to the stadium until "El Toro" was pitching, you know, because they started seeing representation of him and so yes, the Dodgers is a Latino team. It really is. And going back to the "bad guy" question—I think the [San Francisco] Giants are 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. It's the police department. It's the chief of police.

Herbert: There was a gang of 25 men.

Marcos: White guys.

Herbert: White guys—let's put it that way—that basically run the city. It's not like that now. There's brown faces in there now. Maybe it's 50 or 100 faces that run the city now, and some are brown. So we can't lose that fact that the color of power changes, but it's still power. The disenfranchised are still powerless. And I think that's why this play resonates. Because it talks about that. It can be any city. It can be any time. The powerful will always try to grab land or power from the powerless.

Marcos: I thought it was so beautiful that you dedicated your play to the late Los Angeles housing official Frank Wilkinson. But if I'm a kid from East L.A., why should I care about that dude?

Richard: Why care about Che Guevara, why care about Betsy Ross? It's because we must care about people who have integrity and some cojones. You know? It's why we care about [the character] Maria too. Character is defined by what you do when no one is looking. Character is defined by struggle. Frank was a man who was willing to go to jail for what he believed in. He was so earnest and his heart was in the right place.

And that is one thing we do with the play. We don't say the Dodgers kicked out the poor people. Almost a decade goes by. The poor people got swept up in a housing-authority controversy.

Marcos: That's a big idea: "The poor people got swept up in a housing-authority controversy." Because you want so much to find a bad guy in this story and even hate the Dodgers. But it's not that easy.

Ric: There was an event that happened that was one of the first ever televised events. Channel 13 came in. There were 12 families in 1958, they were still living there. And they refused to leave. A lot of people that we interviewed still remember the images of the cops pulling out this woman, her tears and their kids. It's a video that's harrowing. It's terrible. And to this day, you'll talk to not only Latinos, but non-Latinos, and they keep associating Dodgers with that eviction. And that's the biggest misconception people still have.

Herbert: It's the memory of childhood. You know, when you grow up in a community as an adult you go back to see the old playground. You go back for the old memories. These people have nothing left. When I want to go back to my childhood, I go back to San Francisco, you know the Mission has changed but physically—more or less—it still looks the same. But imagine going back and you can't find your house, you can't find your neighbor's house, you can't find the store. It's a stadium. Psychologically, that must be really bizarre.

Richard: In a sense, Chavez Ravine is kind of ghost community. You've got these residents in the original homes—they're gone. So there's something ghostly there. And you have a [public housing] community that was never built.

Marcos: It's eerie.

Richard: Yeah, it is.

Herbert: But the views they would have had! (Laughs)

Marcos: (Laughs) I want to let you get back to your work here in the rehearsal room. But first, I'd like to know what your mission was as a troupe when you started out together 30 years ago and what is your mission now?

Ric: When we first started, we were young guys, just trying to do something artistically. We didn't know each other. We didn't go to school with each other. We met doing a show at La Galeria de La Raza. It's an art gallery in the Mission District of San Francisco. We've always set out to represent the underdog and talk about being Latinos in a big country. And the culture clash within us as Latinos and the dominant culture. And the culture clash within the Latinos ourselves—you know, the Cubans, Salvadoreños, Mexicanos, South Americans, we've always dealt with that.

Herbert: 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 writers too.

Richard: You know, things morph and you start out doing one thing, and we were very much into sketch and that turns into something else. Hopefully, we've become better storytellers—as long as we have that desire and there's 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 this 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: ¡¡Ah!!!

**“Memory can’t
be flattened.
Memory is
history singing
in tune with
the stars...”**

—Manazar Gamboa, from *Chavez Ravine*



PHOTOGRAPH BY Don Normark, copyright © 1997. Chávez Ravine, 1949—A Los Angeles Story.

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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 intellect, 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 life-long appreciation of the arts leads inextricably to an engaged and enlightened society.

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

Audiences: Inspiring current and future audiences to discover theatre and its connection to their lives;

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.

SPECIAL THANKS

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



Additional support for Education and Community Partnerships is provided by The Sheri and Les Biller Family Foundation, the Employees Community Fund of Boeing California, The Louis L. Borick Foundation, The Sascha Brastoff Foundation, The Eli and Edythe L. Broad Foundation, Brookside Fund, the Brotman Foundation of California, Diana Buckhantz & Vladimir & Araxia Buckhantz Foundation, the Carol and James Collins Foundation, the Culver City Education Foundation, the James A. Doolittle Foundation, the Joseph Drown Foundation, the Fineshriber Family Foundation, the Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation, The Friars Charitable Foundation, the Lawrence P. Frank Foundation, The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation, The Green Foundation, the William Randolph Hearst Education Endowment, 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 Rosenwald & Orinoco Foundation, Sony Pictures Entertainment and Dwight Stuart Youth Fund.

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