Fact Sheet

CENTER THEATRE GROUP
AHMANSON THEATRE | MARK TAPER FORUM | KIRK DOUGLAS THEATRE
Michael Ritchie, Artistic Director | Stephen D. Rountree, Managing Director | Douglas C. Baker, Producing Director
Gordon Davidson, Founding Artistic Director

Founded in 1967, Center Theatre Group, a non-profit organization, is one of the largest and most active theatre companies in the nation, programming seasons year-round at the 1,600 to 2,066-seat Ahmanson Theatre and the 736-seat Mark Taper Forum at the Music Center of Los Angeles, as well as the 317-seat Kirk Douglas Theatre in downtown Culver City.

With the Ahmanson, the Taper and the Douglas, Center Theatre Group has a combined total of 45,000-plus season ticket holders, and a total audience exceeding 700,000 a year.

Center Theatre Group's mission is to provide Los Angeles, national and international audiences with the greatest range of theatrical entertainment possible from one theatre company, from groundbreaking new works to explosive productions of the classics to hit Broadway plays and musicals.

Center Theatre Group believes that the art of theatre is a cultural force with the capacity to transform the lives of individuals and society at large.

Michael Ritchie has been the Artistic Director of Center Theatre Group since 2005. In his 12 seasons at Center Theatre Group's helm, Ritchie selected over 200 productions for the three theatres, including 41 world premieres and nine U.S. premieres.

Prior to Ritchie, Founding Artistic Director Gordon Davidson led the Taper for 38 years, the Ahmanson for 16 years and produced the inaugural season at the Kirk Douglas Theatre.

Ahmanson Theatre

At the Ahmanson Theatre, Center Theatre Group presents a wide range of dramas, musicals, comedies and classic revivals. In Michael Ritchie’s first season, the U.S. premiere of the musical “The Drowsy Chaperone” and the world premiere of the John Kander/Fred Ebb/Rupert Holmes musical “Curtains” were presented at the Ahmanson; both moved to Broadway in consecutive seasons and received a combined total of 21 Tony Award nominations. Other world premiere musicals at the Ahmanson in the last few
seasons include “Minsky’s” and two musicals that moved to Broadway – “9 to 5: The Musical” and “Leap of Faith” (which received a 2012 Tony Award nomination for Best Musical).

The Ahmanson season often presents touring productions of blockbuster Broadway musicals and dramas such as “War Horse,” “August: Osage County,” “Next to Normal,” “American Idiot,” “Fela!,” “Mary Poppins,” “Jersey Boys,” “Avenue Q,” “The Color Purple,” “Spring Awakening,” “Monty Python’s Spamalot,” Edward Albee’s “Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?” and “Matilda.”

Thirteen plays by Neil Simon (six of them world premieres, including the Tony Award-winning “Biloxi Blues”) have been presented at the Ahmanson, as well as the works of leading American playwrights such as Wendy Wasserstein, August Wilson, A.R. Gurney, Terrence McNally, John Guare and Arthur Miller.

Other Ahmanson highlights include the original Broadway cast in Yasmina Reza’s “God of Carnage,” which broke all Center Theatre Group box office records for a play; Angela Lansbury in “Blithe Spirit”; Cicely Tyson, Vanessa Williams and Blair Underwood in “The Trip to Bountiful”; the renowned Kennedy Center production of “Follies” with most of the original Broadway cast; “The Scottsboro Boys”; Baz Luhrmann’s production of Puccini’s “La Bohème”; Matthew Bourne’s “Swan Lake,” “Cinderella,” “The Car Man,” “Play Without Words” and “Edward Scissorhands”; Tony Kushner’s musical “Caroline, or Change”; and Sidney Kingsley’s “Dead End.”

In addition to “Curtains,” “The Drowsy Chaperone,” “9 to 5: The Musical” and “Leap of Faith,” the Ahmanson has been represented on Broadway as a co-producer of the revival of Peter Shaffer’s “Amadeus”; Matthew Bourne’s “Swan Lake”; August Wilson’s “The Piano Lesson,” “Two Trains Running” and “Seven Guitars”; Frank Loesser’s “The Most Happy Fella”; and “Smokey Joe’s Cafe.”

**Mark Taper Forum**

As one of the top resident theatres in the country, the Mark Taper Forum has developed an impressive number of Pulitzer Prize-winning plays, including Mark Medoff’s “Children of a Lesser God,” Michael Cristofer’s “The Shadow Box,” Robert Schenkkan’s “The Kentucky Cycle” and Tony Kushner’s “Angels in America,” Part One – “Millennium Approaches,” and has earned a number of distinguished honors including a Tony Award for Theatrical Excellence (in 1977 – the second resident theatre in the country to receive this award). Two Taper plays, “The Kentucky Cycle” and “Angels in America,” were the first to receive the Pulitzer Prize without initially having a New York production. And in the 1994 Tony Awards, three out of the four plays nominated for Best Play were Taper plays (Anna Deavere Smith’s “Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992” and “The

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Kentucky Cycle” were nominated with “Angels in America,” Part Two – “Perestroika,” which won the award).

More recent Taper productions include the world premieres of Jordan Harrison’s “Marjorie Prime,” which was named a 2015 Pulitzer Prize finalist; Jason Robert Brown’s musical “13” and Lisa Loomer’s “Distracted,” both of which were presented on Broadway; David Henry Hwang’s “Yellow Face,” which moved to The Public Theater in New York; “Water & Power” by Richard Montoya for Culture Clash; and Randy Newman’s “Harps & Angels.”

Other highlights of the past few seasons include “Clybourne Park,” which won the 2012 Tony Award for Best Play, and for which CTG was a producer of its Broadway presentation; a new production of David Mamet’s “Oleanna,” which moved to Broadway; Ayad Akhtar’s “Disgraced”; Suzan-Lori Parks’ “Father Comes Home From the Wars (Parts 1, 2, & 3)”; the first major U.S. revival of “Bent” since its Broadway premiere in 1979; the Donmar Warehouse productions of the musical “Parade” and the drama “Red” with Alfred Molina and Jonathan Groff; a startling production of Martin McDonagh’s “The Lieutenant of Inishmore” with Chris Pine; hysterically funny productions of “Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike” and “Buyer & Cellar”; the continuance of Center Theatre Group’s relationship with Deaf West Theatre with a new production of the musical “Pippin”; the American premieres of David Hare’s “Stuff Happens” and Joshua Sobol’s “iWitness”; the West Coast premieres of Luis Alfaro’s “Electricidad” and David Mamet’s “Romance”; August Wilson’s “Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom,” “Joe Turner’s Come and Gone,” “Radio Golf,” “Gem of the Ocean,” “King Hedley II” and “Jitney”; and the revival of Rodgers and Hammerstein’s “Flower Drum Song” with a new book by David Henry Hwang.

During the 2007-2008 season, the Taper underwent a major interior renovation and much-needed updating of its technical capabilities and audience amenities. The theatre’s lobby more than doubled in size, and new technology and space improvements brought the theatre to 21st century state-of-the-art standards.

Kirk Douglas Theatre

The Kirk Douglas Theatre is the newest member of Center Theatre Group’s family of theatres. In 2002 Center Theatre Group began the process of transforming a historic 1940s movie house in the heart of Culver City into an intimate theatre venue.

The theatre, which was named for its major donor, film icon and philanthropist Kirk Douglas, opened in October 2004 and in its short history has already had three works move to Broadway: the world premieres of Alex Timbers’ and Michael Friedman’s musical “Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson” and Rajiv Joseph’s dark comedy “Bengal Tiger
at the Baghdad Zoo,” and the revival of William Inge's “Come Back, Little Sheba.”
“Bengal Tiger” was also named a 2010 Pulitzer Prize finalist.

Other world premieres at the Douglas include Jennifer Haley’s “The Nether”
(which was subsequently produced in London and New York), Marco Ramirez’s “The Royale,”
Eric Rosen’s and Matt Sax’s musical “Venice” and Lisa Kron’s “The Wake”
(both of which moved to The Public Theater in New York), David Mamet’s farce “Keep
Your Pantheon,” the CTG/Deaf West Theatre musical “Sleeping Beauty Wakes,” Jon
Robin Baitz’s “The Paris Letter” and his political satire “Vicuña,” Nancy Keystone’s
“Apollo Part 1: Lebensraum” and Douglas Steinberg’s “Nighthawks.”

Other productions of note are “Endgame” with renowned Beckett interpreters Alan
Mandell and Barry McGovern, Young Jean Lee’s “Straight White Men,” the Gate Theatre
Dublin production of “Krapp’s Last Tape” with John Hurt, the Druid and Atlantic Theater
Company production of Martin McDonagh’s “The Cripple of Inishmaan,” Danai Gurira’s
“Eclipsed” and “The Convert” (the latter was commissioned by CTG), “No Child …” by
Nilaja Sun, The Civilians’ “This Beautiful City,” Douglas Carter Beane’s “The Little Dog
Laughed” and the American premiere of David Greig’s “Pyrenees.”

In 2009 a new program was created called DouglasPlus, which provides the
flexibility to explore new work and push boundaries through fully and minimally staged
events, workshops and readings, and traditional and non-traditional performance
configurations. DouglasPlus programming has included short runs of productions such as
Rude Mechs’ “The Method Gun” and “I’ve Never Been So Happy”; Luis Alfaro’s “St.
Jude”; Roger Guenveur Smith’s “Juan and John” and “Rodney King”; Trieu Tran’s
“Uncle Ho to Uncle Sam”; “The Behavior of Broadus” by Burglars of Hamm
(commissioned by Center Theatre Group); Timothy Crouch’s “The Author”; Dael
Orlandersmith’s “Forever,” “Stoop Stories” and “Bones”; Michael Sargent’s “The
Projectionist”; and Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen’s “How To Be a Rock Critic,” as well
as workshops of “Next Stop Amazingland” (created by Geoff Sobelle, Trey Lyford and
Steve Cuiffo), Melissa James Gibson’s and Michael Friedman’s “Post Office” and
readings of Jessica Goldberg’s “Just War” and Kate Fodor’s “Rx.”

A popular feature of the Kirk Douglas Theatre is The Lounge, where patrons can
enjoy a cocktail before and after the show in the comfortable lobby of the theatre, and
chat with the well-informed and engaging staff. Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages
may be taken into the seating area.

Patrons are encouraged to come early and explore the interactive displays and
activities in The Lounge that are specially crafted for most of the productions. Past
productions have included experiences as diverse as a punching bag in the historic ticket
booth outside the theatre (for “The Royale”), a recording and listening station where
patrons can record memories of pivotal moments in their lives (for “Krapp’s Last Tape”)

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and a series of citizenship tests that patrons could take to win prizes (for “American Night: The Ballad of Juan José”).

**Center Theatre Group’s Education and Community Partnerships Program**

Center Theatre Group’s Education and Community Partnerships department is one of the most active theatre education programs in the country, reaching over 20,000 students, teachers and community members from over 130 schools throughout Southern California each year. The focus of Center Theatre Group’s education programs is to inspire current and future audiences to discover theatre and its connection to their lives, to invest in the training, support and development of emerging, young and early career artists and arts professionals, and to contribute to the community-wide efforts to improve the quality and scope of arts education in Los Angeles. Center Theatre Group’s Education and Community Partnerships department manages programs that include extensive theatre arts programming in classrooms, enrichment and networking opportunities for theatre teachers and theatre arts training for high school students. In addition, Center Theatre Group provides first-rate theatre experiences for youth in which students are brought to all three theatres for special youth matinees.

**Center Theatre Group’s Artistic Development Program**

The Artistic Development Program fosters the development and production of new work in all theatrical styles and forms, ensuring that a variety of theatrical experiences will be available on Center Theatre Group’s stages and beyond. Under the program, Center Theatre Group commissions local, national and international playwrights, as well as ensembles and artistic collaborators, and then works closely with them to create new plays, musicals and other boundary-breaking theatrical works. Center Theatre Group also partners with other Los Angeles companies to present and co-produce work, and develop large-scale plays, spectacles and musicals in collaboration with other resident theatre companies and independent producers.

**Center Theatre Group’s Community Programs**

Center Theatre Group has many community programs that are designed to make the theatre-going experience accessible, informative and pleasurable for all. Each theatre will have low cost tickets ($25) available for all productions, and these tickets will be available for sale at the time a show goes on sale.

Center Theatre Group’s Access program (formerly called Project D.A.T.E.) provides special services for disabled communities: for deaf audiences, summaries
of the play or musical are mailed in advance, pre-show seminars, performances and post-show discussions (all with ASL interpreters) are scheduled, and open captioning is available (only at the Ahmanson Theatre Access performances); and for blind patrons, audience members have the option of hearing audio description of the performance through headsets (which are offered free of charge) as experienced audio describers guide the patrons through the production, describing sets, costumes and the onstage action.

Regularly-scheduled, post-show discussions, Stage Talks, are held for every show and can include guest speakers, actors, designers and director from the production.

The Taper, the Ahmanson and the Douglas are all wheelchair accessible and provide Sennheiser Sound System headsets for the hard of hearing.

Center Theatre Group Season Tickets

A Center Theatre Group season ticket guarantees the best seat in the house. Season ticket holders are offered free ticket exchange, free replacement of lost tickets, priority ticket offers to non-subscription events and other season ticket-holder perks. Center Theatre Group’s Design Your Own package gives audience members the opportunity to make their own selection of four or more productions at any of the three theatres. Passport is a theatre membership that provides flexibility in the purchase of tickets to every show at Center Theatre Group’s three theatres for up to 50% off the single ticket price.

Center Theatre Group’s: Phone Numbers, Website and Social Media

To Purchase Tickets by Phone (213) 628-2772
Season Ticket Services (213) 972-4444
Center Theatre Group Voice Mail (213) 972-7353
Publicity Office (213) 972-7376
Publicity Office Email CTGMedia@CenterTheatreGroup.org
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