

COMMUNITY THEATRE

America's National Theatre

7,000 Theatres

Over a Million Volunteers

Seen live by 83 Million Annually

Community theatres involve more participants, present more performances of more productions, and play to more people than any performing art in the country. They are critical to the cultural life of their communities.

The American Association of Community Theatre (AACT) exists to enable community theatres across the country to become the cornerstones of the creative life of their communities -- to provide quality entertainment, intellectual stimulation, challenge and opportunity, to be worthy contributors to an improved quality of life for the communities they serve.

As a shy young child I did not feel a part of my group of peers. When I joined community theatre, I suddenly became a part of a group of people who accepted me and used my talents. I was able to grow and find my own way in the world.

~ John Kollock
Clarksville, GA

Community theatre has the special power to bring us together, to help our towns become communities.

~ Robert G. Anderson
Starkville, MS

A friend who used to move a lot told me that every time he moved, he would find a community theatre in which to participate. He knew it was a place he would always feel welcome.

~ Shirley Harbin
Detroit, MI

During my career, I've had the privilege to work with tens of thousands of theatrical organizations: I'm most proud of my affiliation with community theatres. By promoting unity, creating an accepting environment for debate, self-expression and interactivity, community theatre is the center piece to the fabric of our society; an unmatched component to the very health of our neighborhoods, towns and cities.

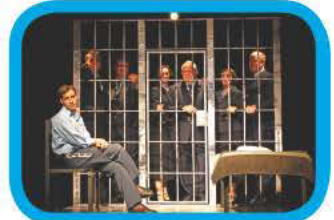
~ Steve Spiegel
Theatrical Rights Worldwide

Community theatre offers the best of every world. There are the creative aspects, the artistic aspects, the business aspects, the social and social services aspects, just a myriad of outlets for every soul who chooses to pursue this activity.

~ Rae Cohen
Newport Beach, CA

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Building People, Building Communities



Every two years, community theatres from around the country come together for a national festival. Pictured from top, left to right: Arlekin Studio, Newton, MA, *The Bear*; Wetumpka Depot Players, Wetumpka, AL, *Second Samuel*; South Bend Civic Theatre, South Bend, IN, *Intimate Apparel*; Starkville Community Theatre, Starkville, MS, *Catfish Moon*; Manatee Players, Bradenton, FL, *Sunday in the Park with George*; Broken Arrow Community Theatre, Broken Arrow, OK, *The Gin Game*; County Seat Theatre Company, Cloquet, MN, *Wiley and the Hairy Man*; Ohlook Performing Arts, Grapevine, TX, *Dog Sees God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead*; Chino Community Theatre, Chino, CA, *Scooter Thomas Makes It to the Top of the World*; Evergreen Players, Evergreen, CO, *Parallel Lives*; Spokane Civic Theatre, Spokane, WA, *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*; SHAPE Performing Arts Centre, Belgium, *Hauptmann*

November 1966, 20 years old. A junior English major at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln, member of Air Force ROTC. I climbed the steps of Lincoln Community Playhouse to audition for A Streetcar Named Desire. A week or so later, I was cast as Stanley Kowalski and requesting permission from my ROTC commander to grow my hair long for the part.

After doing only school and college theatre, I had the wonderful opportunity to work with adults and I was in awe. Roger and Pat Dickeson played Mitch and Blanche - not only were they wonderful actors, but Roger was the President of Nebraska Farmer. I'd never met a company president before, let alone gone to cast parties with one!

An interesting, albeit harrowing, video project was a series I did with Bette Croissant for Child Protective Services. To help train child abuse caseworkers, Bette and I played the roles of parents who were suspected of abuse. There was no script - they interrogated and we answered. Those sessions exhausted us both.

There was a time in my youth when I toyed with acting as a profession. If I'd tried, maybe it would have happened and maybe not. What is true, however, is that I would never have had an opportunity to play Stanley and Lennie and Big Daddy, let alone the other roles I've enjoyed so much. Community theatre gave me that chance and I'll be forever grateful.

For me, community theatre is about building confidence, mentoring, service to my community, another way to achieve a dream. Organizations that provide these results are never at a surplus in our communities.

~ Rod McCullough
Managing Director/Director of Development
Des Moines (IA) Playhouse
AACT Past President

aact
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF COMMUNITY THEATRE
*Improving Communities
One Theatre at a Time*

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