

PRT Celebrates Diversity & What We Have in Common

By: Kevin Foster

In honor of Black History Month, I recently interviewed our Producing Artistic Director, Teresa Stirling Forsyth, who facilitates all manner of policymaking for Placer Rep operations and for the board of directors, as its President.

KF: How do you go about setting Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) policy at Placer Rep?



Placer Repertory Theater



TSF: First, I like to keep it simple. We seek a single, simple statement that sums up our perspective as an organization and includes the basic tenets necessary to achieve the statement.

In the case of EDI, our public statement is “Treat Others as you wish to be treated.” And the basic tenets are:

1. Be inclusive
2. Be considerate
3. Be respectful
4. Choose your words carefully
5. Don't harass
6. Make differences into strengths.

The statement and tenets, in operation together, function as our public EDI statement. However, we have a full EDCI policy that includes a goal:

“As a socially responsible company, we seek authentic representation of all voices in our community, and actively perform outreach to encourage all ethnicities and gender identities to participate,”

and a full description of the principles behind each tenet, which delineate appropriate and inappropriate mindsets & conduct, provide accountability, and the steps to remedy inappropriate or unacceptable behavior. The ‘C’ in our full EDCI policy refers to conduct. In this way, should two people have differing perspectives on intent or mindset, we can shift the conversation to concrete instances of conduct to find common ground and agreement as to what constitutes appropriate behaviors that create equity, diversity and inclusion.

KF: Placer County is about 85% Caucasian. How do you achieve equity, diversity and inclusion?

TSF: That’s a great question, because EDI is not only about ethnicity, but also about gender identity and being differently enabled. With regards to “disability” and gender identity, being a professional performing arts and cultural entity, we don’t have to work hard to achieve inclusion. In the U.S., 26% of the population identifies as having one or more “disabilities,” and only 5.6% of the population identifies as LGBTQ+.

However, in a recent Placer Rep production for example, 50% of the cast was LGBTQ+, and 67% were differently enabled. With regards to ethnicity, as an organization, we encourage all ethnicities and gender identities to work with us. We hire “locals first,” but also engage with out of county talent to help meet our diversity goals. The county composition includes only 1.4% African American, 0.9% Native American, 5.9% Asian, 0.2% Pacific Islander, and 1.4% Hispanics/Latinos, among others. Technically, to be “representative” of the population in our county, we need only to include one ethnically diverse performer for every ten that we hire. I prefer to think of that as a minimum requirement and therefore, set loftier goals of inclusion. We actively perform outreach and marketing, both in and outside Placer County, to find talented artists and technicians of every ethnicity to encourage them to work with us. We also partner with various organizations, profile diverse artists and groups, and are friends with organizations, with a high percentage of ethnic diversity, providing us access to diverse talent.

Frankly, I find diversity exciting. In both my personal and professional experience, and in studies I've read, it has been proven repeatedly that to maximize creativity and innovation, a group needs diverse thinking and diverse experiences.

KF: Can you provide an example of some of the diverse groups or individual artists you've worked with or have profiled on ColLABoration LAB?

TSF: We've profiled the Dream Theatre who serve the differently enabled, we've hosted Ohana Dance (Pacific Islanders) as a presenter twice and have promoted their upcoming events via Facebook as a friend, we've profiled Maidu Independent Theater, Brenda Wong Aoki (solo performance artist), Lynn Nottage (African American two-time Pulitzer Prize winner for Drama), Larissa FastHorse (2020 MacArthur 'Genius' Grant Recipient for Playwrighting), Luiz Valdez (Teatro Campesino), and have both cast in shows and hosted on the LAB performers who are Middle Eastern, South Asian, African American, Native American, Pacific Islander, Chinese, Japanese and Latinx.

KF: Any plans for the near future that you can share?

TSF: I am working on several ideas – new works, new partnerships, new programs. But also, we are actively seeking company members, board members and advisory committee members from diverse backgrounds to enhance Placer Rep and better serve the county.

KF: You heard it here first. If you're interested in a board or advisory committee position to broaden Placer Rep's horizons, you should reach out! Email Board@PlacerRep.org to express your interest in serving.



Did you hear? Placer Rep WON five Regional awards in 2021!

Interactive & Immersive Theater is Here!

January 2022 ushered in the third season of CollABoration LAB and the 2022 theme “Windows to the World,” which examines *perspective* each month in a variety of ways. On January’s LAB, we were “Looking within” thematically, as we incubated a new song by Matthew Kaiser, and explored the perspective of Carlos “Chuck” Gurley, a recent devotee to oil painting. “Gazing Out,” is the theme for the February 23 LAB at 7 PM, held at 401-B Vernon Street in Roseville. Register for FREE on [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com) and our Outreach Director will email you more information. The line-up is set approximately one week in advance, so be sure to register early if you plan to present.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/collaboration-lab-tickets-242572710507>

The Writers Workshop in January focused on theatrical works and provided not only feedback for the submissions, but new tools and processes to support writers. February 27 at 3 p.m. is the next Writers Workshop. Attendees need not submit any work; writers, actors, and directors are all welcome. If you wish to have your work read by professional actors this month, register via Eventbrite.com ideally two weeks prior to the workshop. This allows the facilitator time to read the works, select the pieces and hire the professional actors to read. FMI & Syllabus:

[Eventbrite.com https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-writers-workshop-masterclass-680-tickets-242585227947](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-writers-workshop-masterclass-680-tickets-242585227947)



Placer Repertory Theater Presents

CollABoration

A FREE OPEN MIC and creative LAB for the Arts, Culture and Humanities

Fourth Wednesday of each month @ 7 p.m.
Live in Person & Live-Streamed via Zoom

FMI: [eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com) Or email Outreach@PlacerRep.org to reserve your performance slot, seat or get the zoom link.

FMI: click on image

Next LAB:
February 23, 7:00 PM



THE WRITERS WORKSHOP

- Hear professional actors read your work
- Receive peer feedback
- Workshop your writing with the facilitator.
- Networking & performance opportunities.

Professional Growth: Continuing Education, Masterclass #680
Facilitator: T.S. Forsyth

FMI: click on image

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February 27, 3:00 PM

For the inaugural performance of our pilot program --*Rifts in Time: Interactive Adventure Theater* (IAT) -- the professional actors, playwright/game master and participating audience went back to London 1888 where we found ourselves in the middle of the Jack the Ripper true history. And OOPS! We accidentally brought back Zora, a "half-caste street urchin," with us to the time bubble, causing the rips in the time fabric to enlarge and intensify. We need to get her back to her timeline, but meanwhile for Sunday, February 27 at 7 p.m., we shall find ourselves sucked through to another historical period. WITH YOUR HELP, CAN WE HEAL THESE RIFTS IN TIME? The IAT pilot program is held in Roseville. FMI / to reserve your seat for FREE: [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com).



Placer Repertory Theater Pilot Program PlacerRep.org

Rifts in Time

Interactive Adventure Theater

IMPROV ROLE-PLAYING GAME YOU PARTICIPATE

IMMERSIVE THEATER FMI: [eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com)

**New Digital Short in the Works:
Subscribe to our YouTube Channel**

Byline: Teresa Stirling Forsyth

As an artistic director, I look through many reels and video auditions, and sit through numerous live auditions throughout the year. In 2021 I saw the reel of an area actor, Sarina Krastev, that intrigued me. Finally, our schedules allowed us to meet recently and discuss a project. I will be writing a monologue for Sarina which may be used in part or in whole (dependent upon length) as a custom audition piece for her. The piece will also be shot in our green screen studio and made into a digital short solo performance piece to be released on our YouTube Channel.



We highly recommend you subscribe to our YouTube channel, as we will be producing more works in the coming months. Your subscription will alert you each time we post new videos. To see our current video offerings and subscribe to our channel, visit YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbqv3KDf9kOvwJbBa13kvOw>

ACPC & CAC Grants Due in Feb, March

By: Kathryn Carner

Grant applications for the Arts Council of Placer County's community grants for projects/programs/events occurring in April through June 2022 are due no later than February 25. FMI:

<https://www.placerarts.org/community-grants/>



The California Arts Council Cycle A grant applications are due no later than March 9, 2022. Remember that you must first create an account on their grants management system before you can apply for a grant. FMI:

<https://arts.ca.gov/grants/grant-programs/>

New Lorraine Hansberry Biography

By: Kevin Foster

Lorraine Hansberry: The Life Behind 'A Raisin in the Sun,' is a new biography by Charles J. Shields. American Theatre Magazine has an informative article with excerpts from this new biography at the link, below:

<https://www.americantheatre.org/2022/01/12/when-lorraine-met-loyd-and-a-raisin-in-the-sun-got-raised/>

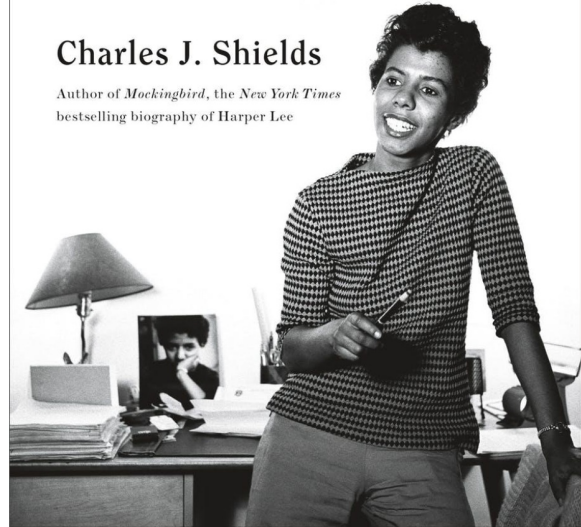


LORRAINE HANSBERRY

**THE LIFE BEHIND
A RAISIN IN THE SUN**

Charles J. Shields

*Author of *Mockingbird*, the *New York Times*
bestselling biography of Harper Lee*



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