

## About The Group Rep at the Lonny Chapman Theatre

The acting company began May 1973 with a rag-tag group of 11 actors performing scenes for audiences in a laundromat-turned 36 seat theatre on Van Ness Boulevard. When Lonny Chapman first entered that theatre, the magic began. Here was an Artistic Director searching for a theatre and a theatre company searching for an Artistic Director. The match was perfect and the Group Repertory Theatre was born with Lonny Chapman at the helm. This partnership continued until his passing in 2007.

The first show, "Round Dance," an adaptation of Schnitzler's "La Ronde," was an immediate hit and the Group Rep was on its way. By 1974, with the growth in the number of productions, additional company members, as well as having acquired its professional status with Equity, Chapman suggested that a bigger space was needed. A new 58-seat venue was rented on Magnolia which began playing to sold out houses. The Group Rep's growth and success required yet a larger venue. In 1980, Chapman secured the current Burbank and Vineland location, which was renovated into its present configuration.

In 1999, Lonny was honored when the theatre's name officially became the "Lonny Chapman Theatre," home to the Group Repertory Theatre members.

The Group Rep is a permanent company of actors, directors, writers and technicians. The company has produced well over 200 productions including more than 37 World Premieres. We now have more than 80 active company members, from those with notable careers to those building new careers. The company has been home to untold numbers - many of whom continue successful careers in the Industry today. The Group Rep looks forward to welcoming new passionate artists to its distinguished roster.

In addition to professional stage productions, The Group Rep gives back to the community with its Annual Foster Children's Holiday Party. Its Participating Actor and Technical Associates (PATA) program provides internship opportunities for aspiring artists in the creative and technical fields. Past graduates of the Group Rep's PATA program include such notables as Sean Penn and Jennifer Tilly.

In April of 2009, the theatre group approached Ernest A. Figueroa to come onboard as its new Artistic Director. Mr. Figueroa brings a wealth of experience and passion to the company, as well as an appreciation and admiration for the legacy he has inherited. His own special gifts will blend the past with the future to craft and lead the theatre into his new and exciting vision.

We continue to strive to fulfill the vision of Lonny Chapman. First, to entertain, then to illuminate the human condition – and to never be boring. The audience, play and actor have equal parts in this exciting venture.

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The Group Rep is a non-profit 501(c) (3) company.