

RED LADDER THEATRE COMPANY

Red Ladder Theatre Company is a nationally acclaimed, award-winning social justice theatre company. Formed in 1992, **Red Ladder** works with a wide range of disenfranchised populations within the community, using the tools and techniques of improvisational theatre to help its participants develop positive life-skills.

The **Red Ladder** company is made up of a troupe of multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, professional actors who are committed to serving the community in positive ways through the art form of theatre. These talented individuals, who possess a wealth of experience and training, are uniquely suited to serve the broadly diverse spectrum of participants within our community, nurturing life-skills critical to the healthy development of youth, and fostering life-long learning by allowing its participants to re-ignite their creativity.

Red Ladder is founded on the understanding that the most essential component of a healthy individual is the creative spirit, and when a person's creative impulses are revered, encouraged and nurtured, positive change occurs. By working with the professional actors in the company, participants are encouraged to engage their imaginations and envision the broadest possible range of possibilities for themselves.

Often the neglected or disenfranchised members of the community, **Red Ladder's** participants span a wide range of ages, experiences and abilities, with backgrounds that often include racial segregation, economic hardship, teen pregnancy, developmental disability, homelessness or incarceration. The company fills the void where the resources to nurture life-skills critical to the healthy development of children and enrichment programs for struggling adults are not available.

By working with the professional actors in the company, participants are encouraged to explore the issues that affect their daily lives. By applying the tools and techniques of improvisational theatre, participants develop the ability to make positive choices, solve problems creatively, focus on tasks, and work collaboratively. Through their workshops, **Red Ladder** helps participants to understand that by employing their creativity and believing in their own imaginations, they have the power to accomplish anything.

Red Ladder focuses on strong social issues — issues central to the lives of their participants — in workshops that explore and celebrate the artistic process. **Red Ladder** encourages participants to try on alternate modes of behavior, so that when they're presented with problems in their daily lives they have the tools with which to utilize a different perspective and make difficult choices. Participants realize that they have options — that there is more than one possibility for them.

*We say of **Red Ladder** that it is "a rehearsal for a healthy life."*



Connecting with the Community

Red Ladder has a long-standing track record of serving the community through collaborative relationships, many of which have grown, over time, to committed partnerships.

Some of our organizational and agency partners have included:

Salinas Valley State Prison | Elmwood Correctional Facility's Inmate Literacy Program | Santa Clara County Juvenile Hall | Women's Residential Center | Mid-Peninsula Housing Consortium | Harold Holden Ranch for Boys | Muriel Wright Center for Girls | Morgan Autism Center | HOPE Rehabilitation Services | Xilinx's Educational Ecosystem | the Mexican American Community Services Agency | The Bill Wilson Center for Homeless and Runaway Youth | the City of San Jose's Office of Cultural Affairs.

Curriculum Development

Red Ladder has become a leader in performing arts curriculum development. The company was deemed a Demonstration Project by the California Arts Council, and has compiled a broad range of activities that meet the State of California's Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) Standards, and are in line with the newly adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Further, Red Ladder successfully executes curriculum based on the Studio Thinking Framework/Studio Habits of Mind with its participants.

Professional Development

For years, **Red Ladder** has executed professional development workshops for artists and educators. Hundreds of individuals have been trained through workshops that the company has conducted at the Marion Cilker Conference for Arts Education ("The Arts Really Teach"), the annual Arts in Your Classroom conference, the Santa Clara County Office of Education's Artspiration initiative, the Bay Area California Arts Project, Arts Express, the South Bay Arts Education Collaborative, and workshops that the company has offered directly to participants. As a part of this training, the company has developed a theatre arts activities handbook for use by other practitioners.

National Recognition

Because of **Red Ladder's** innovative techniques, the company has been asked to make presentations and conduct workshops at several conferences including:

- Making Art Making Change—Arts for Social Justice Youth Conference
- National Service Learning Conference
- America's Promise -- Silicon Valley
- CYZGY (the National Conference of Idealism for City Year's corps members)
- TeenWorks - the California State Youth Leadership Summit
- The Art of Peacemaking – Conflict Resolution Conference
- The Creativity at the Core Summer Institute

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