Irondale Ensemble Project

Date of Incorporation: 1983

Mission/Purpose of Organization: Through the power of the ensemble process, Irondale creates and presents theater, performance, and education programs that challenge traditional assumptions about art, and help us to better understand today’s world. The Irondale Center, our theater, laboratory, and classroom, is a home for ensemble artists of all disciplines and cultures, and a resource for our community.

Organization Overview: The Irondale Ensemble Project was founded by Jim Niesen, Terry Greiss and Barbara Mackenzie-Wood as an experimental/research theater to further investigate the performance and education techniques that they had developed at the Long Wharf Theatre in the late 1970s. It exists today as a company dedicated to the exploring the emerging themes in our society with a permanent ensemble of artists that has developed a distinctive body of work and practices. In 2008, the company moved into the BAM Cultural District in the landmarked Fort Greene area of Brooklyn. Out of the ruins of a nineteenth-century Sunday school in an abolitionist church, we created the Irondale Center. It is a home for our work, a destination for ensemble artists of all disciplines, a venue for the performing arts, a resource for the community, and a rental facility for performances and events.

The classics have always been central to Irondale. As an ensemble company we return to them constantly, they are in our blood. Since our founding we have offered audiences a wide range of productions, including the American premier of Brecht's Conversations in Exile, radical reinterpretations of Buchner, Chekhov, Gogol, Ibsen, Ostrovsky, Sophocles, Shakespeare, and Strindberg, as well as 11 original works created collaboratively by the company. As Lewis Lapham (of Lapham’s Quarterly) said, “The Irondale Ensemble Project is as close as we come these days to the Elizabethan acting companies that once presented Shakespeare’s plays to the Earl of Leicester, Sir Francis Drake and the Virgin Queen of England....What is on offer is the miracle of the word made flesh. I wish you joy in it.”

We are a group of citizen-artists who work together and with other artists, educators, and community institutions, to provide the highest quality professional theater, education and community-engagement programs. Our audience is a fascinating mix of the New York theatre enthusiasts, families and individuals from the diverse Brooklyn Communities that surround our theater, people who have come to us through our award winning education programs—which serve up to 1,000 public school students each year—and many others. In all of our work, we strive to challenge our audiences’ imaginations, provoke discourse, and use the art of theater for teaching and learning. Approximately 1,500 people enjoy our productions or co-productions each year, and 7,500 overall enjoy performances in our facility. As a founding member of the Network of Ensemble Theaters, a national consortium of artist-driven performance companies, Irondale is also engaged with the national discourse around ensemble theater and arts education.

Our special efforts to reach a broader segment of the population move in two directions. We undertake significant outreach efforts to attract underserved audiences from our home Borough while we also offer a subsidized rental rate to emerging and diverse theatre groups that wish to use our theatre space. Companies that have recently presented at Irondale include: The Foundry, Epic and The Civilians.
Irondale Ensemble Project Productions

Julius Caesar (2012)
Color Between the Lines (2012)
Henry V (2011)
Murrow’s Boys (2011)
alice….Alice….ALICE! (2010)
London Cries (2008)
Peter Pan (2008)
The Great American All-Star Traveling War Machine (2008)
EYE OPENERS (2005-2006)
Wasted (2005)
Outside the Law (2004)
Comedy of Errors (2002)
The Murals of Rockefeller Center (2002)
Peter Pan (2001)
In the Jungle of the City (2001)
Brecht on Brecht (2000)
The Pope and the Witch (2000)
The Murals of Rockefeller Center (1999)
Much Ado About Nothing (1999)
Degenerate Art (1998)
The Mother (1997)
The Seagull (1997)
Andrew Carnegie presents The Jew of Malta (1996)
The Bundle (1996)
A Family Affair (1995)
Ghost Sonata (1995)
You Can't Win (1994)
Danton's Death (1994)
St. Joan of the Stockyards (1993)
The Hostage (1992)
Antigone (1992)
Sacrifice (1990)
Ivanov & Russian Vaudevilles (1990)
Happy End (1990)
Outside the Law (1989)
Peter Pan/Flying Underground (1989)
The Threepenny Opera (1988)
The Crowd (1988)
The Inspector General (1988)
Conversations in Exile (1987)
The Uncle Vanya Show (1986)
Ubu (1985)
The Good Woman of Setzuan (1984)
Jason and the Argonauts (1984)
The Jungle (1983)
The Comedy of Errors as performed by The Little Theater of Dubuque, Iowa, circa 1936 (1983)
Irondale Ensemble Project Productions

Color Between the Lines

alice...Alice...ALICE!

Henry V

Peter Pan

Julius Caesar

Morrow’s Boys
Irondale Arts Education Programs