



# PLAY-IN-A-DAY

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## A STORY BRIDGE WORKSHOP

*"Story Bridge is one of the most profound, healing, and connecting methodologies for community transformation in the world."*

--- Kathy Minardi, International Education Leader

### Overview

Building a sense of "community" that bridges divides and differences has never been more challenging. The Story Bridge method uses storytelling and theater to create a generative social space to:

- Hold and honor authentic stories from diverse people around challenging topics, and
- Envision, share, and embody emergent stories of co-thriving

Story Bridge is based on a deep truth: the fundamental assets of any community are its stories. Drawing on the social synergy of people sharing and performing each other's diverse stories, Story Bridge flows through *Story, Performance, Affinity, Conversation and Engagement (S.P.A.C.E.)* to create a generative social space across divides. In this space the impossible becomes possible, **and diverse people can cross the Story Bridge to the beloved community they desire.**

The Story Bridge method evolves with the stewardship of Dr. Richard Owen Geer, Dr. Qinghong Wei, a team of artists, scholars, and PEOPLE from diverse communities. Pioneered for more than twenty-five years, it has been practiced in challenging communities throughout

the United States and around the globe, from Eastern Kentucky to People's Republic of China. "Play-in-a-Day" is a daylong Story Bridge workshop in which participants share true life stories in a powerful community building process. Rooted entirely in the experiences of the participants, the workshop culminates in an original performance expressing the truth of these people and this place. Play-in-a-Day is especially powerful to jump start any social campaigns that involve collaboration of diverse people.



## Outcomes

**The community will discover an empowered sense of mission, shared identity, enhanced opportunity and heightened energy in service to the community.**

Beginning by creating a welcoming safe place to which they can bring their whole selves, participants, from 20 to 80 people of diverse ages and backgrounds, will express authentically and be witnessed without judgment. They will share and enact their stories of triumph and challenge. They will deepen in their commitment to one another and the community. From their synergy an evolutionary purpose for the community will emerge and pave the way for deep dialogue, action and planning for a thriving community.

Particularly, community participants will be better able to:

- 1. Authentically communicate their values and beliefs.**
- 2. Develop deep empathy, understanding, and bonds for one another across divides.**
- 3. Build psychological power to collaborate as an integrated creative community.**
- 4. Jump start important social campaigns.**

*"I had high expectations... and they dramatically surpassed them. I walked through town today during lunch and ran into four people in succession that had been present at Story Bridge this weekend, and our greetings were joyful. There was a mutual seeing that was validating of the lasting changes that were brought about this weekend. I am so grateful to you for believing in the healing power of story and its vital place in building a strong and vibrant community."*

--- Workshop participant, Lopez, Washington



## Discover More

- Project Examples:
  - Play-in-a-Day in Lopez, Washington on affordable housing and sustainably agriculture (including project video and report by our client): <https://www.storybridge.space/lopez-community-land-trust>
  - Play-in-a-Day in Central District, Seattle, Washington on inclusive development: <https://www.storybridge.space/central-district-seattle>
- Blogpost by Dr. Sally Fox, a participant in Seattle, Washington: When "I" become "We": <http://www.engagingpresence.com/becomes-letting-stories-connect-us/>
- Website: [www.storybridge.space](http://www.storybridge.space)
- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/storybridgespace](http://www.facebook.com/storybridgespace)

## Approach

The design and implementation of the Play-in-a-Day workshop include the following phases:

## I. Project Design

1. Review information & materials provided by the client related to the project and community, and also conduct independent research.

2. Conduct 3 design meetings (online) with the client and other key collaborators identified by the client and the Story Bridge team.

3. Design detailed workshop activity plan with input from the client to ensure it aligns with project goals.

## II. Workshop Implementation

1. On-site preparation

2. Play-in-a-Day process:

1) Create a welcoming safe space

2) Story gathering

3) Play making

4) Rehearsal

5) Performance

6) Reflection

## III. Project Review

Conduct at least 1 session (online or on-site) to review, reflect and follow up with the client and any collaborators identified by the client.

## Team Profile



### Richard Owen Geer, Ph.D

People Magazine says "Director Richard Geer heals troubled communities with the magic of theatre--and the gift of new hope." American Theatre Magazine calls Geer's work a "gem of cultural democracy." Geer's Story Bridge Method empowers generations and races to play and learn together. Pulitzer award-winning author Studs Terkel called Geer's: "*The most important work being done in theater.*" Geer is the co-author of *Story Bridge: From Alienation to Community Action*. The Story Bridge method empowers communities from Eastern Kentucky to the Peoples Republic of China. Dr. Geer founded more than 40 Story Bridge community performance projects worldwide, one of which is Swamp Gravy, the official Georgia Folklife Play featured in the Cultural Olympiad of the

Atlanta Olympics and performed in the Kennedy Center. Geer's work has been showcased across America, as well as in China, England, Scotland, Brazil and Chile. With artist and urban planner, Dr. Qinghong Wei, Geer lifts the curtain on how enlightened community-based arts programs are shifting consciousness in individuals and groups. According to author Bill Kauth, co-founder of the ManKind Project, their new book, *Open Circle: Story Arts and the Reinvention of Community*, is "a grand gift in a culture starving for community."



### **Qinghong Wei, Ph.D**

Dr. Qinghong Wei is the Executive Director of Community Performance International (CPI). A pioneering scholar and practitioner in community development through arts, her original research on arts and empowerment pathways is a significant contribution to the field. Dr. Wei has over a decade of diverse development planning experience working with governments and communities internationally. She has crafted scores of community development plans for many municipalities and communities in Florida. From 2011 to 2013, Dr. Wei served as the President & CEO of Overseas China Education Foundation with assets of over \$1 million and over 5,000 registered volunteers worldwide. She has co-founded multiple award-winning social innovation programs including pARTicipate of Beijing, China, and the Internet School, the first online education and empowerment program of Rural China. She is the producer, co-director, and playwright of *Songs of Tang Hulu* performed in the Olympic Center in Beijing, China in 2017, co-artistic director of *The Intergenerativity Project* partnering with The Intergenerational Schools in Cleveland Ohio in 2016, and co-director of *Harmony in the Hills*, a youth-driven intergenerational program funded by the U.S. Department of Justice in 2017. Dr. Wei is the co-author of *Open Circle: Story Arts and the Reinvention of Community*.



### **Kevin Iega Jeff**

Iega is the co-founder of Deeply Rooted Dance Theater in Chicago. An accomplished choreographer, director, teacher and performer, Iega was named as one of the Julliard School's 100 most extraordinary alumni. In 1982, Iega founded the internationally acclaimed JUBILATION! Dance Company in New York. In 1994, he served as Artistic Director of Joseph Holmes Chicago Dance Theater and presently is Co-Founder/Artistic

Director of Deeply Rooted Productions in Chicago, IL. Iega's choreography and direction are familiar to audiences worldwide from an international tour of *Gershwin's Porgy and Bess* to Spike Lee's film *She's Gotta Have It*. His intricate and explosive work *Walls* premiered during the 1996 Summer Olympics Festival in Atlanta. His seminal work *Church of Nations* received the award for Best Choreography from the 1996 Black Theater Alliance committee. Iega made his professional debut in the Broadway musical *The Wiz*. He was the principal dancer in the Broadway production, *Com'in Uptown* starring Gregory Hines. With America's premier ballerina Cynthia Gregory, he performed as The Beast in "Beauty and the Beast" in the 1994 Academy Awards Broadcast.

## About Story Bridge & Community Performance International (CPI)

Community Performance International (CPI) is a nonprofit and the leading organization in community building through performing art in the U.S. It is the founding organization of the Story Bridge method. CPI has collaborated with numerous communities and organizations in the U.S. and worldwide to produce performances that use storytelling and theater to build community rapport, aid conflict resolution, and promote collective peace building actions. Featured productions including *Swamp Gravy* of Colquitt, Georgia, *Scrap Mettle SOUL* of Chicago, Illinois, *The Intergenerativity Project* of Cleveland, Ohio, *Harmony in the Hills* of Clay County, Kentucky, *Songs of Tang Hulu* of Beijing, China, and *Un Caminho Sobre O Muro* of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, etc. We have hosted workshops for numerous organizations such as Berea College, Southern California Public Radio, Whidbey Institute, Lopez Community Land Trust, Building Creative Communities Conference, etc.

Our partners include Association of Beloved Communities, Thriving Communities of Seattle, Washington, The Intergenerational School of Cleveland, Ohio, Vibrant Communities of Beijing, China, Berea College, etc. Sponsors of Story Bridge projects include OXFAM, National Endowment to the Arts, the MacArthur Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, U.S. Department of Justice, and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, etc.