

CARLYLE BROWN & COMPANY

PRELIMINARY CASE FOR SUPPORT

MISSION

Carlyle Brown & Company (CB&Co.) is a professional theater company comprised of culturally and ethnically diverse artists dedicated to producing new theatre works that bring beauty, joy, and insight to multicultural audiences; to shed light on our collective consciousness, and to rouse both our ire and celebration of our common humanity. We believe that live performance is an invitation to imagination, empathy and feeling; that the theater is a place for abstraction, symbolism, and ideas for collective discourse with our audiences. Our greatest fascination is the conflict and tension inherent in an increasingly complex, multicultural world. We believe that this conflict and tension can serve as the catalyst for the creation of great stories, characters, artists, and theatre. We believe that the advancement of theatre is inextricably tied to innovations in dramatic form that inevitably arise when new voices rooted in unfamiliar languages, mythologies and cultures are suddenly heard.



HISTORY & ACHIEVEMENTS

Originally formed in 2002 in Minneapolis by playwright, director and actor Carlyle Brown, CB&Co. presently operates as an informal association of collaborating artists. In its brief history, the company has, in short order, developed an impressive body of work and production history. Its first production in 2002, *The Masks of Othello: A Theatrical Essay*, received rave reviews. In 2003 the company produced the solo show *The Fula from America: An African Journey*, based on the true story of Brown's adventures in West Africa. The production received numerous awards and commendations from the Twin Cities press and has appeared across the country to critical acclaim. In 2004, CB&Co. produced *Talking Masks* featuring Obie Award winning actress Louise Smith in an evening of six short plays about women and the masks they wear. In 2008 the Company produced, *Are You Now or Have You Ever Been...* a multi-media performance work about Harlem Renaissance writer Langston Hughes and the McCarthy hearings on un-American activities in the 1950's, a play from which we expect great things in the future.

A nationally recognized playwright, Carlyle Brown serves as the Artistic Director of CB&Co. and is responsible for overall leadership of the company. Among other achievements and honors, Brown is the recipient of playwriting fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, McKnight Foundation, the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Jerome Foundation, Theatre Communications Group, and the Pew Charitable Trust. Mr. Brown is a core member at the Playwrights' Center in Minneapolis, an alumnus of New Dramatists in New York and a member of the Dramatists Guild. He has received commissions from Arena Stage, the Houston Grand Opera, the Children's Theatre Company, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Actors Theatre of Louisville, and The Goodman Theater. He is the 2006 recipient of The Black Theatre Network's Winona Lee Fletcher Award for outstanding achievement and artistic excellence and a 2008 Guggenheim Fellow. His plays include *The African Company Presents Richard III*, *The Little Tommy Parker*

Celebrated Colored Minstrel Show, Buffalo Hair, The Beggars' Strike, The Negro of Peter the Great and A Big Blue Nail. In 2009, Brown's *Pure Confidence*, about the emotional and economic attachments and complexities of slave and love relationships in the antebellum South, anchored the Americas Off-Broadway Festival at the 59E59th Street Theatre in New York. *Pure Confidence* was subsequently honored with five 2009 Audelco Award nominations for Dramatic Production, Playwright (Carlyle Brown), Best Director (Marion McClinton), Lead Actor (Gavin Lawrence), and Sound Design (C. Andrew Mayer), winning three for Director, Lead Actor, and Sound Design.

Brown's work has attracted outstanding collaborating theatre artists including Obie Award winner and Tony nominated director Marion McClinton, Actor James Williams, Obie Award winning actress Louise Smith, Chris Mulkey, Karen Landry, Gavin Lawrence, Christiana Clark, Noel Raymond, Michael Wangen and Steve Hendrickson.

BUSINESS MODEL & VALUE PROPOSITION

CB&Co. creates new work through both text-based development and ensemble collaboration. With a business model based on organizations such as SITI Company and Ping Chong & Company, the goal of CB&Co. is to work as a producing organization, creating new work that will attract the partnership of outstanding producing and presenting theaters around the country.

The advantage of this business model lies in its economy and practicality. Unencumbered by the need to support a theatre space and produce an annual season for a single stage, CB&Co. is also freed from the administrative time and overhead costs that attend those activities. Rather, as a producing organization, the company is able to focus on the work itself, dedicating its time and resources to the process of making art and providing opportunities for collaborating artists. Based in Minneapolis where there exists an excess of rehearsal and performance space, creating additional infrastructure would be both unnecessary and contrary to the interests of audiences and already existing theatres. Additionally, by being freed from the need to present an annual season for a single space, the company has greater flexibility in terms of its artistic choices, development process and production cycle, and is less likely to rush work into production prematurely.

Organizational leaders expect that the value CB&Co. brings to the field will enable it to grow and thrive:

- **Dedication to New Work & Risk Taking**—CB&Co. is dedicated to the production of new work. While new work is essential to keeping the theatre vibrant, resident theatres cannot afford to dedicate themselves to the effort. In the arts, as in many fields of endeavor, experimentation and innovation tend to come from smaller, nimble organizations that are less constrained by the obligation to support significant operations.
- **Create Opportunities through Partnership**—CB&Co. was founded to create outstanding, engaging, and innovative new works that can naturally speak to and draw multicultural audiences. Resident theatres and presenting and producing organizations throughout the country are hungry for the kind of diverse material and aesthetics that CB&Co. is dedicated to creating.
- **Audience Development**—Most new theatergoers tend to be drawn initially to stories and aesthetics that feel in some way familiar and reflect their own experience. Once that introduction is made, there is a greater likelihood of repeating the experience as well as deepening and expanding interest. By creating stories that are new and diverse, CB&Co.'s work should not only open doors for new, multicultural audiences, but should also expand the knowledge, experience, and tastes of established audiences.

BUSINESS CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS

While the business model itself has proven effective with other ensemble-based organizations, the challenges inherent in this model are significant. Without a dedicated stage or an annual season, it is more difficult to establish the company as a recognizable identity and cultivate and reinforce relationships with audiences. Income streams from operations such as box-office revenue are significantly reduced due to the need to work through producing and presenting partners. Additionally, this income is only realized after the completion of a given production run. Access to marketing information typically gleaned from box-office operations would need to be negotiated with presenting theaters and CB&Co. will need to develop other effective methods for identifying and establishing ongoing relationships with audiences. Finally, significant expertise and effort must be brought to bear in cultivating and negotiating partnerships. This managerial activity and other administrative and overhead costs are not readily fundable through project-based grantmaking common to institutional arts funders. Given the economics of theatrical producing, commercial investors are unlikely to be attracted to exploratory, experimental work intended to appeal to new and diverse audiences. **In order to meet these challenges, the organization must:**

- Create outstanding work that attracts artistic, producing and presenting partners.
- Implement innovative, tested, and effective ways of keeping a diverse and geographically dispersed audience engaged with the organization.
- Attract visionary philanthropic investors who can provide not only project support, but also start-up capital and general operating support necessary to help fund the organization's overall operations.

THREE-YEAR VISION

In three years, CB&Co. aims to:

Intensify Development Efforts

- Produce works presently in development, including *The Entertainers*; a meditation on The Amos' 'n Andy show; *Nobody*, a musical biography of Bert Williams; *Down in Mississippi*, a play with music about the voter registration drive in Mississippi in 1964; and *Abe Lincoln and Uncle Tom*, a fantasy and meditation on the real and figurative intersections between political identity and literary image.
- Create and produce one to two new works of live performance annually.

Expand Touring

- Book and tour *Are You Now, or Have You Ever Been....*
- Establish a robust national network of collaborating producing/presenting theatres as well as individual producers interested in investing in CB&Co. projects to create touring opportunities for other work.

Build Organizational Capacity

- Build and maintain relationships with a nation-wide audience through the use of social network marketing strategies and the delivery of sophisticated content on productions and the social issues that they touch upon. Techniques and tools for these purposes include inbound marketing through social networking channels; website design to include blogs, multi-media content and discussion forums; e-newsletters and play clubs.
- Establish CB&Co. as a "resident company" underneath the umbrella of an established, resident theatre in order to share resources and create additional opportunities for affiliated artists.
- Hire part-time staff to fulfill management, development, and communications functions.

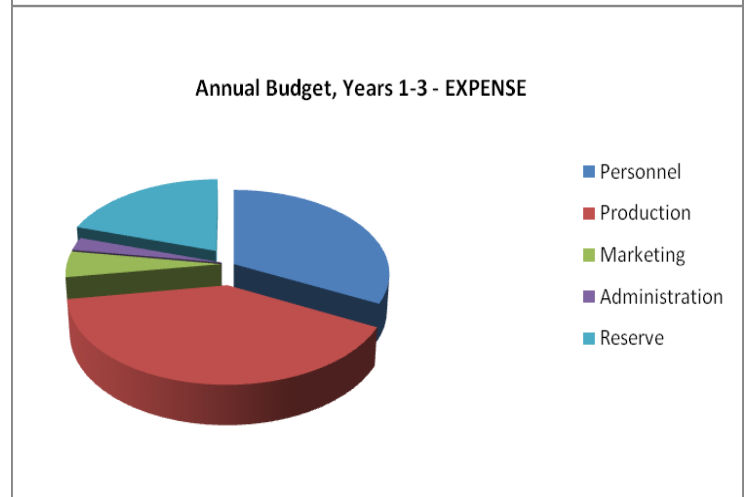
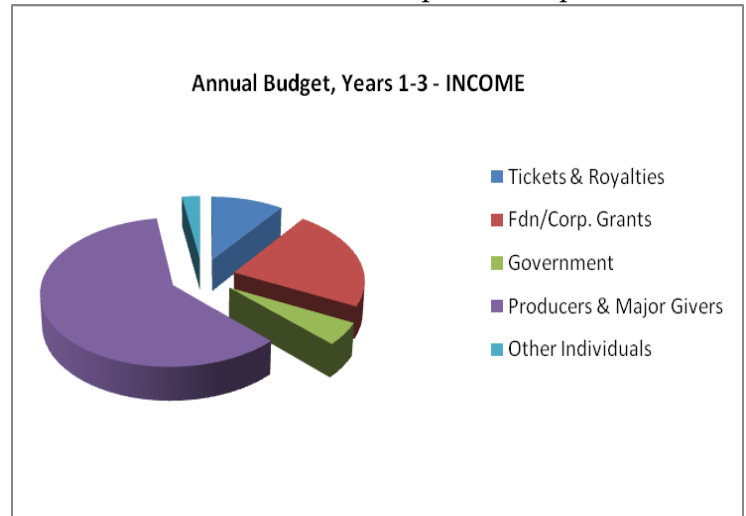
FINANCIAL PLAN & THE ROLE OF PHILANTHROPY

CB&Co. leadership anticipates total expenses of somewhere in the range of \$160,000 to \$200,000 dollars annually over its first three years, or approximately \$450,000 to \$600,000 in total funding for the same period. CB&Co. projects that a little over 10 percent of the funds necessary for operations will come from earned income streams such as ticket sales and royalties. Institutional funders and individual philanthropic investors and producers will be essential to implementing the organizational plan. CB&Co.'s goal is to raise between \$500,000 to \$600,000 through philanthropic contributions during its first three years. Reaching this goal would provide CB&Co. the start-up capital and general operating support necessary to seed and fund ongoing operations, but also maintain sufficient operating reserves that will allow the organization a degree of financial stability, flexibility, and the resources necessary to produce outstanding work.

ANNUAL BUDGET YEARS 1-3

INCOME	Low	High	Average
Tickets & Royalties	20,000	25,000	22,500
Fdn/Corp Grants	50,000	70,000	52,500
Government	10,000	20,000	15,000
Producers & Major Givers	115,000	125,000	127,500
Other Individuals	5,000	10,000	7,500
TOTAL	200,000	250,000	225,000

EXPENSE	Low	High	Average
Personnel	65,000	75,000	70,000
Production	80,000	100,000	90,000
Marketing	10,000	15,000	12,500
Administration	5,000	10,000	7,500
OPERATING EXPENSE	160,000	200,000	180,000
Reserve	40,000	50,000	45,000
TOTAL	200,000	250,000	225,000



RECOMMENDATIONS & GUIDANCE SOUGHT

Artistic and managerial leaders of Carlyle Brown & Co. have entered into a strategic and business planning process to test the assumptions underlying the organization's mission and vision, as well as its financial plans and the feasibility of its fundraising goals. Your candid insights and recommendations relative to the organization's plans are respectfully requested and greatly valued. An organizational representative will be in touch shortly to request a time to discuss this preliminary case for support with you.

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