

**Living Document of BIPOC Experiences in Bay Area Theater Companies**  
**BIPOC EQUITY ACTION PLAN**  
**PHASE ONE: Demands Towards Realizing True Equity**  
**Launched: Summer 2020**

## **OVERVIEW**

**In the face of injustice, our duty as active participants of society is to fiercely call for change; our responsibility as artists and creatives is surely no different.** As activists, organizers, and community members call for racial reckoning and a nationwide Uprising, sparked in earnest in late May 2020 due to the murder of George Floyd and countless other Black people, the discussion of white supremacy, anti-Blackness, and anti-racism has spread with urgency from city halls to kitchen tables, from virtual classrooms to the streets. These challenges are hardly new and communities of color have been organizing around these issues for generations; yet this moment calls on all of us to see how the violent and racist roots of this country permeate the very institutions promising us safety, well-being, and livelihood. In the midst of a global pandemic, paired with compounding crises of democracy, income inequality, and climate change, the racialized lines of inequitable treatment, resources, behavior, access, and more for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) across countless sectors are finally entering the mainstream conversation. **Against this historical and ongoing backdrop, BIPOC theatremakers formed a multi-generational, multi-disciplinary national collective “to address the scope and pervasiveness of anti-Blackness and racism in the American theater.”**<sup>[1]</sup> In their own words: “What began as a conversation between 3 theatremakers concerned about the devaluation and violence against Black bodies in the world, quickly evolved into a Zoom call with 30 people, discussing the way racism and white supremacy have also shaped and corrupted our theater institutions, ranging from the universities to not-for-profit and commercial houses.” Together over 300 theatremakers contributed to their testimonial letter, “DEAR WHITE AMERICAN THEATER,” published on June 8, 2020.

**Catalyzed by the nationwide movement and rooted in ongoing regional conversations about racism and white supremacy in theater spaces, a Bay Area-based community document was created, entitled “Living Document: POC Experiences in Bay Area Theater Co.”** Published on June 9, 2020, this document garnered nearly 600 testimonials within 72 hours. The Living Document sought to chronicle the extent of racist behaviors and culture of white supremacy within the Bay Area theater industry, while protecting BIPOC artists and creatives with anonymity. By collecting and sharing these painful experiences, the Living Document hopes to highlight central ongoing issues within our industry and call for a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive theater community that fully affirms and celebrates all artists, especially BIPOC artists who have too long been silent out of fear of retribution.<sup>[2]</sup>

**Each testimonial offered stands on its own without judgement; yet in aggregate, we see distressing patterns of the insidious ways white supremacy, capitalism, misogyny, cis-hetero patriarchy, and anti-Blackness function within the very industry that promises to celebrate difference, creativity, and storytelling.** The behaviors named in the testimonials range from casting to production, from costumes to directing, and collectively call into question every aspect of our industry. While painful and uncomfortable, we recognize the deep harm, mistrust, and violence our BIPOC artists have borne for merely existing.

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## **THE EQUITY ACTION PLAN**

**In response to the distressing testimonials of our BIPOC artists and creatives in the theater family, we demand that theater institutions take immediate action to stop harmful behaviors and practices and build a diverse, equitable, and inclusive theater industry.**

**This document, the *BIPOC Equity Action Plan*, serves as an actionable supplement to the Living Document and represents those demands.** By delivering these materials as a package, we are handing theater companies our current best thinking on clear actions to take with urgency to demonstrate a true commitment to a diverse, equitable, and inclusive theater ecosystem. Our team has taken on the labor of inviting, synthesizing, analyzing testimonials, and also of brainstorming, structuring, and organizing the demands listed here. We offer these demands alongside the top-line themes and takeaways we heard from the Living Document testimonials. These demands are non-exhaustive and incomplete; now each theater company must do the work of infusing these demands into their sites of change.

**Failure to comply from these set of demands will result in a regional activation to boycott your company.** Black and Brown collectives and (White) Allied artists as well as patrons will divest from participation, effective immediately. A regional petition specific to companies will be generated for the entire nation and industry to amplify and sign in support. PW/O must engage with *The Living Document: Action Plan* within ten business days upon publication of this document (7.26.2020) addressing the BIPOC coalition’s demands of producing strategic actionable plans in confronting White Supremacy and their process in cultivating an equitable environment.

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## SUMMARIZED THEMES & TAKEAWAYS FROM TESTIMONIALS

In order to understand the demands we name, here are top-line themes we heard from the testimonials:<sup>[3]</sup>

- **Anti-Blackness pervades our industry in countless insidious ways**, spanning language; casting; racist caricatures; and the relentless policing, tokenizing, and stereotyping of Black people.
- **BIPOC artists who also self-identify as womxn, non-binary, trans, gender non-conforming, young, and/or disabled experience intersecting vulnerabilities and particularly harmful behavior.**
- **Harmful behavior, practices, and biases persist in many parts of our community.** This includes well-intentioned liberal white straight and queer folks, as well as BIPOC artists with internalized white supremacist attitudes.
- **Powerful gatekeepers with hateful, racist language, behaviors, and attitudes experience little to no accountability or consequences for their actions, perpetuating harm to more and more BIPOC artists over time and driving BIPOC artists out of their spaces.** Choosing to protect racist gatekeepers to preserve ticket sales prioritizes box office revenue over the safety, well-being, and success of BIPOC artists.
- **Producing racist shows, producing shows with racist characters, and directing BIPOC or white artists to adopt racist characteristics continues to this day.** BIPOC shows written by white people are often steeped in racist, inaccurate, and offensive assumptions about BIPOC people, cultures, and communities. Rather than celebrating the authentic experiences of BIPOC stories, these pieces at best reduce BIPOC characters to laugh lines, scenery, and lazy tropes.
- **Mounting BIPOC shows without culturally competent expertise on the production team can unintentionally create more harm.** We should also state that BIPOC stories can be joyful and celebratory; BIPOC pieces should not serve solely as trauma porn for white guilt and white audiences. Hire for the culturally competent expertise needed; compensate BIPOC creatives for this labor.
- **Agreeing to hire a cultural consultant or a dramaturg of color when needed - and then not following through - is misleading and dangerous, especially for BIPOC creatives involved.** This decision to forgo cultural competency either: (1) ensures that the production will lack authenticity and likely cause harm, or (2) forces BIPOC creatives and artists to serve as uncompensated and unrecognized “cultural consultants,” on top of their actual jobs, out of a desperate attempt to minimize harm. BIPOC artists and creatives are likely already receiving less compensation than white peers.
- **Whitewashing BIPOC characters is an insult to the caliber and quantity of BIPOC artists and creatives in the region, as well as to the historic under-representation of BIPOC characters and roles.** Decisions to cast white actors in BIPOC roles in the Bay Area continues to this day, often couched under excuses like prioritizing “talent” over “race”: this framing creates a false choice that distracts from the underlying issue. Especially in a region bursting with talented BIPOC creatives, why do white-led theater companies insist on casting white performers in BIPOC roles?
- **BIPOC artists feel held to higher expectations and narrower parameters of acceptable achievement: missing these unspoken rules slightly incurs heavy repercussions.** In this document, BIPOC artists describe the enormous pressure and flawed expectation to represent entire racial categories and, sometimes, to represent all BIPOC artists. Failure to see BIPOC artists as entire individuals and holding BIPOC artists to superhuman expectations sets BIPOC artists up to fail and then weather white disappointment, frustration, and rage.
- **BIPOC artists and creatives are often relegated solely to roles or productions that specifically identify a BIPOC character.** This document names multiple instances of white casting directors refusing to consider BIPOC artists in roles not specifically labeled as BIPOC. This narrow-mindedness in casting is packaged under coded euphemisms like “traditional,” “realistic,” “historically accurate,” and “believable.” For an industry founded on make believe, the inability to imagine BIPOC creatives embodying substantial, complicated, and fully realized characters on stage reveals an implicit decision to perpetuate whiteness.
- **BIPOC artists and creatives are not monolithic and not interchangeable.** Inappropriate casting decisions harm BIPOC artists, inhibit a potentially collaborative, innovative process, and detract from the overall quality of the artistic production.
- **BIPOC productions are sometimes treated as “niche” or a “checkbox,” then receive fewer resources and less funding than other productions; BIPOC creatives and artists are sometimes treated as mere bodies to add color on a stage, while receiving less direction, less support, and fewer resources.**
- **Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work is complex, ongoing, and requires intentional follow-through; performative statements and gestures alone are insufficient and insulting.** Claiming to hold

DEI values when a company or individual's actions prove otherwise creates hurt, harm, mistrust, and erodes credibility. Hiring BIPOC artists and creatives without thought or commitment to equity and inclusion is mere tokenization. BIPOC artists and creatives deserve decision-making power, job security, and active participation; we require specific recruitment, dedicated resources, intentional investment, and consistent support.

- **White liberal misunderstanding, resentment, and rage exist in the Bay Area theater community.** Without consistent, intentional work on these issues, even white allies will continue centering whiteness in BIPOC stories and productions, while perpetuating harm.
- **We will always be able to find excuses to justify the status quo and defend our current failings.** Simply put: *How committed are we really to DEI work? How truly willing are we to do the work required to change our industry?*

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**In response to these testimonials, we offer these demands as a starting point for achieving our broader goal: a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive theater community that fully affirms and celebrates all artists, especially BIPOC artists.**

### **SUMMARY OF DEMANDS**

- **Acknowledge structures and histories of harm** to better inform forward progress
- **End harmful practices, programs, and contracts** with individuals with a history of problematic and racist behaviors
- **Offer transparency** into finances and decision-making to build trust and increase accountability
- **Build, resource, and sustain intentional pipelines** into and throughout the industry, focused on diversifying the field
- **Diversify programming and content** to celebrate under-represented artists
- **Intentionally recruit, meaningfully include, gainfully employ, and actively support BIPOC artists**, ranging from content creation to consulting to designing to performing
- **Intentionally recruit, meaningfully include, gainfully employ, and actively support BIPOC staff, administrators, and decision-makers**
- **Ensure Board demographics, values, and decisions reflect the demographics of the communities they serve** and the overall region, with specific attention to racial, ethnic, gender, and other identifiers
- **Resource and invest in historically marginalized communities**, who are historically excluded from white theater spaces and stages

To assist implementation of these recommendations, we have outlined specific strategies and tactics for each item. We have sorted these strategies and tactics based on our estimations of the kinds of decision-making power and spheres of influence each artist offers. Please note that these are non-exhaustive lists of players: we each possess power and influence in this sector and we each have much work to do.

Here is how we sectioned the kinds of players in this sector best poised to take action, in terms of structures of power:

- (1) Managers of Influence and Leadership (M),
- (2) Pedestals of Influence (P), and
- (3) Accessories of Influence (A)

**Managers of Influence:** individuals who internally keep and uphold the structure of White Supremacy within the institution.

- *Roles include: Artistic Directors, Executive Directors, Board Members, Artistic Staff, Development Directors, Managing Directors, and Major Donors*

**Pedestals of Influence:** individuals who externally implement and execute visions and institutional standards of White Supremacy

- *Roles include: Marketing Directors, Casting Directors, Producers, Production Directors and Managers, Front of House Staff, Box Office Staff*

**Accessories of Influence:** individuals who perpetuate (un/knowingly) standards of White Supremacy inside, outside, and around the institution

- *Roles include: Creative Staff / Team (Stage Management, Technicians, Designers), Community Engagement Staff, Teaching Artists, Volunteers, Donors, Actors, Patrons*

The benchmarks begin with a demand for the release of each company's annual fiscal report as well as the publication of their commitments to establishing an anti-racist ethos and action plans set to a clear timeline towards realizing equitable goals. We are living in a time of Revolution. As an industry our actions are being measured with an eye towards equity and justice. It is time for you to decide which side YOU are on.

### **Opportunities for Region-wide Collaboration**

Some of the best solutions for the BIPOC experiences named in the *Living Document* may not be practicable or feasible for smaller theater companies. In cases where this is the case, we encourage administrators and decision-makers to see the entire Bay Area region as an entire regional arts ecosystem, infused with a spirit of collaboration and collective care. Examples that may be best offered at the regional scale, rather than individual theater company level, include: (1) offering a third-party human resources service for all Bay Area regional artists and creatives to use, in order to access guidance, support, and next steps where needed; (2) building regional accountability and transparency on forward progress; and (3) convening consistently to develop shared sense of commitments, challenges, and learnings.

### **Closing**

Finally, we celebrate the courage and love from BIPOC artists who have contributed to this effort. This work is challenging, this work is ongoing, this work is messy. Yet infusing all these unpaid hours of labor is the unwavering commitment of BIPOC artists towards demanding and creating a theater community where other BIPOC artists will not experience what we have endured. Thank you for your offerings. We also celebrate and welcome the courage and allyship of non-BIPOC artists and decision-makers in this work. This work will take all of us.

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## **KEY DEMANDS**

### **Acknowledge structures and histories of harm to better inform forward progress**

- Generate an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement Statement with consultation and blessings from Indigenous stakeholders. **M**
- Contribute to the Shuumi Land Tax on behalf of your PWI/O, annually. **M**
- Initiate practice of sharing Mission and Vision Statements and company's history of upholding cultures of White Supremacy to all guest artists. **A**
- Readjust Mission, Vision, and Value statements reflecting all actions and changes. **A**
- Provide anti-racist and anti-bias training to all departments annually. **P**
- Reconfigure culture of interactions from company members to artists leaning towards respect. **P**

### **End harmful practices, programs, and contracts with individuals with a history of problematic and racist behaviors**

- Release Staff Members within the company who have a history of problematic, racist, and prejudiced behaviors. **M**
- Create a No Tolerance Policy for harassment, prejudice, and discrimination towards all Black and Brown artists in the space. **M**
- Abolish unpaid artistic internship program. **M**

- Develop a post-mortem system for all shows' teams. **A**
- Create a code of conduct of intervention for the protection of BIPOC during public relation events. **P**
- Train staff to moderate culturally competent post-performance discussions. **P**
- Design transparent dialogue and communication between Casting-to-Artist pre-audition, post-audition, and post-callback. **P**

#### **Offer transparency into finances and decision-making to build trust and increase accountability**

- Publish a thorough plan of actions marked within a timeline with a commitment to creating an equitable, just, and anti-racist theater.
- Partner with an external HR company to address internal complaints as a form of true accountability.
- Make public your annual fiscal report: 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20.

#### **Build, resource, and sustain intentional pipelines into and throughout the industry, focused on diversifying the field**

- Create an artistic mentorship program that is well compensated based on the region's cost of living. **M**
- Cultivate a pathway for fellows and interns to become staff members within the organization. **M**
- Hire actively and intentionally BIPOC, trans, womxn of color, non-binary and/or disabled administrative staff. **M**
- Establish a Donation Bucket System at the end of all performances to help build resources to fund participation and engagement of historically marginalized communities with the PWI/O. **A**
- Generate post-performance resources for patrons that include, but not limited to: information about the culture and history referenced in the play, ways to support Black and Brown businesses, and ways to engage as a responsible community member. **A**

#### **Diversify content of programming to celebrate under-represented artists**

- Produce plays written by 60% BIPOC, queer, trans, womxn of color, non-binary and/or disabled playwrights in season programming. **M**
- Commission plays by 60% BIPOC, trans, womxn of color, non-binary and/or disabled local playwrights. **M**

#### **Intentionally recruit, meaningfully include, gainfully employ, and actively support under-represented artists, ranging from content creation to consulting to designing to performing**

- Hire Cultural Consultants for ethnically specific shows in the season programming. **M**
- Hire Dramaturgs of Color for culturally-specific shows in the season programming. **M**
- Hire Creative Designers and Technicians to make up 60% BIPOC, trans, womxn of color, and/or non-binary of a production's team. **M**
- Establish Affinity Spaces<sup>[4]</sup> for each show in the season programming. **M**
- Hire culturally competent Design Team (Makeup, Hair, Wig, Lighting, Costume, Props, Scenes) with a strong history in collaborating with Black/Brown artists. **A**
- Provide additional compensation for artists participating in post-performance discussions. **P**

#### **Ensure Board demographics, values, and decisions reflect the demographics of the communities they serve and the overall region, with specific attention to racial, ethnic, gender, and other identifiers**

- Board Membership must at least reflect the demographics of the organization's region. **M**
- Board Membership must undergo go intensive anti-racist training annually. **M**
- Question the Board's Give/Get model that has historically barred participation of the BIPOC community. **M**
- Create a system in Board Membership that value means of support beyond Capitalism. **M**
- Board Membership should include stakeholders that the organization serves. **M**

- Offer Director positions in the company's season to 60% BIPOC, trans, womxn of color, non-binary, and/or disabled artists. <sup>[6]</sup> P
- Hire a BIPOC Casting Associate that is well compensated based on the region's cost of living. P

#### Resource and invest in historically marginalized communities

- Provide equitable resources to historically marginalized groups that range from infrastructure, wealth, and power. <sup>[6]</sup> M
- Create a culture and intentional practice of inviting historically marginalized BIPOC to all open or public artistic events. P
- Establish a budget that provides equitable artist compensations, at all cost. P
- Abolish culture of free artistic labor at all cost. A
- For Non-Union performers: provide a timesheet as a system for equitable hourly wage compensation based on the region's cost of living. A
- Provide Mental Health resources to all guest artists. A
- Launch training and engagement opportunities for Black and Brown youth in the theater. A
- Create a system to offer underserved Black and Brown youth free or reduced-rate tickets to see shows in your organization. A
- Establish local partnership with Black and Brown businesses near the organization / company. A
- Generate a system of Pay-What-You-Can (PWYC) to all Black and Brown patrons. P
- Generate signage for said PWYC system posted and visible at Box Office. P

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### Action Plan Requirement as Demanded by the BIPOC Artistic Coalitions AN EXPANSION OF KEY DEMANDS Launched: Summer 2020

1. All organizations must **explicitly publish** their action plan to address the grievances of the BIPOC artistic community. All organizations must uphold commitments and complete their action plan per the agreed upon timeline. This must be available and easy-to-access by all forms of communication including, but not limited to: social media, email blasts, and company websites as a form of public accountability, or if requested.
  1. An *Accountability Ambassador* within the institution must be appointed to report back to the public quarterly to share the progress, growth, and changes with full transparency internally and externally.
    1. Partnering with an external Human Resources (HR) agency for an effective internal, administrative accountability.
2. Publicize your annual fiscal report dating back from 2017 to present. This practice of accountability for financial reports must be done annually.
  1. Form 990
    1. Information about public funds (city, state, federal)
    2. Amount and/or percentage of operating income
  2. Top 5 Salary of People in the Organization
  3. Salary Range for Artist (Grant Report)
    1. Staff salary



2. Artist fee
3. Independent contractors

#### 4. Budgets Broken Out in Program

1. Marketing
2. Fundraiser
3. Administration
4. Education<sup>[7]</sup>
5. Production
6. Facilities

3. No Tolerance Policy for harassment, prejudice, and discrimination towards Black and Brown people present in the space.

#### 4. **Managers of Influence: Restructuring of Power**

1. Artistic and Executive Directors of the theater company must do their due diligence and commit to actively mentor and nurture the next generation of Leadership in our field. Current ADs and EDs in our field hold and maintain indefinite power until it is convenient for them to retire, often embracing power for generations.
2. Staff members with a history of unchecked problematic and racist behaviors must be terminated to create a safer, just, and equitable environment.
  1. Abolish unpaid Artistic Internship programs. The model of uncompensated labor prohibits BIPOC participation in leadership committees.
  2. Artistic Mentees must be compensated in respect to the region's cost of living. This provides security to Artistic Mentees to participate and prevent situations of fiscal distress.
  3. Artistic Mentee positions must be exclusively offered to BIPOC, trans, womxn of color, non-binary, and/or disabled individuals.
  4. Provide the Artistic Mentees opportunity to showcase creative works throughout season programming at least twice. Works can include -- but not limited to -- a slot to direct a show in the season, staged readings, play development, workshops, or shadowing invited professionals.
    - Effectively market these creative engagements and allow resources of marketing, production, budget, etc to ensure showcase success.
  5. Cultivate a pathway of success for Artistic Mentee to become part of theater company staff membership.
    1. Recommended but not required: Artistic and Executive Directors must abolish tenure culture by establishing a limited term for leadership appointment. This allows for the cultivation of new leadership and vision, new forms of practice in artmaking, and new values within the institution.
3. Create an effective strategy and timeline to hire BIPOC administrative staff to make up at least 60% of demographics within the PWI/O.
  1. First begin to create a culture of inclusion that sets up incoming BIPOC staff for success before hiring.

- Avoid instilling characteristics of White Supremacy within the workplace on Black and brown bodies that can manifest in: perfectionism, sense of urgency, paternalism, objectivity, quantity over quality, etc.
2. Work towards employing BIPOC staff actively and intentionally while providing them all necessary resources to thrive and survive within PWI/O.
    - Starting points: mental health resources, promote the wellbeing of BIPOC staff, affinity groups, avenues to air grievances honoring anonymity.

#### 4. Season Programming:

1. The theater must produce plays that are written by 60% BIPOC, trans, womxn of color, non-binary, and/or disabled playwrights.
2. Pool of commissioned playwrights must be 60% BIPOC, trans, womxn of color, non-binary, and/or disabled local hires.
  - When commissioning plays, BIPOC should be given full autonomy of their own artistic creation.
    1. Avoiding tone policing, erasure of cultural nuances in favor of “universality” and appeasing predominantly white subscription base.
  - Hire local playwrights of color.
3. All shows must respect the identity of characters at all costs as intended by the playwright. The racial identity of BIPOC artists in casting and understudy assignments is not interchangeable.
4. All shows must feature at least 60% BIPOC characters.
5. All shows in the programming written by BIPOC playwrights must have a *Cultural Consultant* capable of delivering factual information about culture, history, language, and/or rituals relevant to the play.
  - *Cultural Consultants* must be paid equitably and have full agency in all creative processes related to development or the production.
6. All shows in the programming written by BIPOC playwrights must have a dramaturg that identifies with and is culturally competent in the world/issues/themes of the play and who will provide intellectual, well-nuanced, and rigorously researched information relevant to the play.
7. All shows must have a creative team of designers and technicians that reflects at least 60% BIPOC, trans, womxn of color, and/or non-binary representation.
8. The company must create an Affinity Space for BIPOC artists for each show in the season.
  - Make available an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for all artists and company members of the production to provide resources and counseling support, if needed.

#### 5. Board Membership:

1. Board Membership must reflect the demographics of the theater company’s region or be visionary in its inclusive practices.



- The Board Membership must be inclusive in its practice of recruitment in regards of sexual orientation, gender and identity expression, age, dis/ability, religion, status, and citizenship.
2. Board Membership within the company must be ethnically and racially equitable and is reflective of their region.
  3. Board Members must undergo intensive anti-racist training requirements.
  4. Create a culture of membership not tied to capitalism.
    - Traditional Board Membership consigns financial contribution annually as a promise to uphold good standing. Dismantle this system.
    - Create a system in the Board Membership that value means of support beyond capitalism / monetary responsibility.
    - Instead provide the opportunity for Board Membership to offer their unique trade, expertise or skill, connection, time and service that are beneficial to the growth of the theater company.
  5. Major Donors should have no artistic influence in the curation of the season programming.
    - Significant monetary contribution should not give an individual power and oversight over the programming of the PWI/O, which often comes at the expense of BIPOC participation.
  6. A third of the Board must be comprised of stakeholders that the organization serves including individual/freelance artists, educators, and community partners to ensure the organizations is anti-racist and focused on its mission.

## 6. The Space:

1. Create an Indigenous Land Acknowledge Statement.
  - A resource guide to creating your Indigenous Land Acknowledgement, [here](#).
  1. Ensure that the Indigenous Land Acknowledgement is made with intention and care, as well as form of consultation from and dialogue with Indigenous stakeholders in the community, to prevent notion of *performativity*.
    1. Indigenous Land Acknowledge has been practiced for generations by cultural practitioners and Native communities, avert from the perfunctory practice and co-opting of this sacred practice; consult with experts and compensate them in full.
  2. Indigenous Land Acknowledgement Statement must be visible in the lobby of your performance space.
  3. Acknowledgment can also be on the performance programs, website and social media. It can also be shared to your patrons at all performances prior to the show, virtually or in-person.
- Paying land taxes to undo centuries of Indigenous erasure.

1. Annually contribute to the Shuumi Land Tax to help Indigenous people in California regain access to stolen land.
2. #OpenYourLobby.
  - Offer your lobby as a resource for protestors with an eye towards safety for everyone involved.
    1. Protests will continue to occur until we are all free. Commit and recommit to participate in organized actions. Statement of solidarity is a start, but actions are necessary and required.
    2. If the organization has no space to provide refuge for protestors, seek other avenues to be involved: offer protest kits, donate monies, and/or other valuable skills and resources available to your company's disposal necessary to the struggle.
  - Continue to find ways to decolonize the use of your space.
    1. Offer your lobby space for cultural and educational gatherings for members of the community during daytime.
    2. Offer your space during Dark Hours to local BIPOC theater companies that don't have a space at a significantly discounted rate. This bridges the space and privilege gap.
    3. Companies that have more than one performance space must agree to allocate an infrastructure resource to historically marginalized groups year-round and must recommit to this pledge annually.

## 5. **Pedestals of Influence: Reframing of Power**

1. Casting Directors, Producers, and Directors:
  1. Refer to some guidelines under *Managers of Influence: Restructuring of Power, section D. Season Programming*.
  2. Actively invite historically marginalized BIPOC artists to general auditions, show-specific productions, and workshops.
  3. Create a culture of care and sensitivity in interacting with BIPOC artists regarding the use of language, physical touch, and adjustment requests in the room.
  4. Abolish the culture of the *transactional* audition process.
    - Artists who are committed to collaborating with theater companies work to prepare their materials to the best of their ability. Artists from out of town spend resources in forms of transportation and time; **honor this**.
    - Get to know the *individual* beyond their artistic work.
      1. Open call practice (distanced or virtual audition, as well as in-person): request five minutes of video submissions of artists' work (contrasting monologues, songs, etc) *and* additional information about the artist.
    - Provide a stipend to compensate the artist's time spent in the waiting room, hallways, and rehearsal spaces during the callbacks process.

1. Create a strict timeline for artists to be at callbacks. Suggested limit: one hour.
5. Casting Directors and associates must create a healthy communication between the theater company and the Artist.
  - Hire and train a BIPOC casting associate with their labor fully compensated and honored.
  - Send out casting decisions and email individuals regardless of offers and/or rejection.
    1. There is nothing more disrespectful than hearing silence from the theater company and to hear the full casting choice & update from a secondhand source.
    2. Respect the Artist's time.
      1. Provide compensation to non-performance related activities: press events, ancillary events, receptions, marketing photoshoots, etc.
6. Commit to offering 60% of Director positions to BIPOC, trans, womxn of color, non-binary, and/or disabled artists.
7. Commit to hiring 60% BIPOC artists (actors, directors, technicians, etc) who live in the Bay Area.
8. Train staff to moderate culturally competent post-performance discussions so as to avoid discomfort for the BIPOC artists present onstage who may be subject to blatant racism, microaggression, harassment, and/or antagonism inflicted by patrons.
  - Additional contract and compensation for artists participating in the post-performance discussions.
2. Front of House and Box Office Staff:
  1. All staff must undergo intensive anti-racist training bi-annually.
  2. Offer Pay-What-You-Can tickets to all performances 10 minutes before curtain for Black and Brown patrons depending on seat availability.
    - Publicize, market, and make clear that this offer exists to all social media and e-blast communications.
      1. Actively create and cultivate partnership with historically marginalized communities.
    - Post a visible signage at the Box Office as a form of transparency.
3. Marketing Directors:
  1. All staffers in the Marketing department must undergo intensive anti-racist and anti-bias training annually.
  2. All staffers must issue a code of conduct or protocols of disruption for the protection of the BIPOC artist with regards to safety from donors and other public relations.

- Provide training to staffers to de-escalate situations, harm reduction, and “safe words” for artists to break free from troublesome circumstances.
3. Provide equitable compensation to the artists in participation of ancillary events, marketing events, receptions, etc.

## 6. **Accessories of Influence: Agents of Change**

### 1. Post Performance Resource:

1. Produce pamphlets to audience members after the show that provides the opportunity for engagement with the performance in the real world. Revoke the culture that Theater serves only as a form of entertainment catered to those who can afford access: Old, White, Elite.
  - Information about culture and history relevant to the show.
  - Information to support Black and Brown businesses around the theater and/or institution.
    1. A 10% discount goes towards the ticket for a show by showing your receipt from these establishments. Create a partnership.
  - Information on ways to engage patrons as a global citizen all tied to the production.

### 2. Education and Community Engagement:

1. Commit to offering FREE tickets of at least 40% of seat capacity (or more) to underserved Black and Brown youth in partnership with local organizations and schools.
  - If the theater has a capacity of 100 seats, provide a space for 40 or more tickets through the entire run of the show.
  - Create a policy for student retention to return and re-engage with the theater company.
2. No Tolerance Policy for harassment, prejudice, and discrimination towards Black and Brown students present in the space.
3. Issue a Donation Bucket System at the end of each performance to donate to local active movements in the region and to help build resources to fund participation and engagement of historically marginalized communities with the PWI/O.. Provide receipts.
4. Create an opportunity to engage the community to the artistic process.
  - Actively invite Black and Brown community members to production meet-and-greet events, first day rehearsals, public readings, and other community engagement functions.
  - Intentionally seek feedback from the Black and Brown community in curating the season program.
    1. What does the community want to see reflected onstage?
5. Launch an initiative to train and engage the next generation of theatermakers.

- Cultivating a safer atmosphere for Black and Brown audience.
- Building Black and Brown audience membership.
- For companies that have Education and Community Programming in place:
  1. Providing classes and workshops with 60% attendance from the Black and Brown community.
  2. Establish a scholarship program.
  3. Apply for grants specifically relegated to community engagement and education. Allocate this resource in the right program with integrity.
  4. Build a network of Black and Brown teaching artists that go to academic spaces and cultural organizations as your ambassador to provide free or reduced-fee workshops, training, and artistic engagement all connected to season productions.

### 3. The Creative Members:

1. Refer to some guidelines under *Managers of Influence: Restructuring of Power, section B*.
2. Most, if not all, of the creative members of a production who are invited guests to your space must be informed about the history and culture of your theater organization.

- Be proactive about sharing your Mission, Vision, and Value Statements.
  1. Adjust your Mission, Vision, and Value Statements that align to the amendments regarding your new commitment to a more equitable and just company.
- Share the history of upholding the culture of White Supremacy within your institutions and the practices and steps you have done and continue to do in order to dismantle White Supremacy.
- Provide external avenues to air grievances with a promise and pledge of confidentiality.

#### 1. Refer to guidelines under *Living Document: Action Plan, section A.1*.

- Provide mental health resources to all of the creative team.
- Provide ways and offer tools to dismantle White Supremacy and prohibit discriminatory practices by sharing books, articles, movies, resources, workshops and programming.
- A post-mortem is necessary for all shows, including an online survey available to all members of the productions.

3. The Design Team must have a history and/or strong background working on BIPOC productions to ensure nuanced choices in optics and technicalities on and offstage.

- Makeup, Hair, and Wig:
  1. Members of this department must be well versed and have a meticulous eye in the art of designing Black hair and care towards all ethnic textures.
- Lighting:

1. Members of this department must be well versed and have a meticulous eye in the art of lighting Black and Brown bodies onstage.

- Costume:

1. Members of this department must prioritize the comfort and safety of Black and Brown bodies with sensitivity and care over aesthetics for the stage.

1. Vigilance and sensitivity in the prevention of exocitism, fetishization, and hypersexualized ideas of bodies.

- Prop, Scenes:

1. Members of this department must have a cultural consultant in the production of these items visible on and off stage.

#### 4. Compensations:

1. Abolish free artistic labor at all costs.

- All artists and employees must be paid in minimum wage based on the city's wage system.

2. Compensate the Artist fairly based on the amount of time contributed to the production and with respect to the cost of living in your region.

- For Non-Equity Actor, Director, Stage Manager contracts:

1. Provide a timesheet for Artists to fill out on a weekly basis as a form of accountability.

- For Non-Equity "Assistant" positions in the Creative Team:

1. Create strict guidelines to protect the artistic assistant from labor exploitation.
2. Provide a fair and equitable stipend in consideration of the cost of living in your region.

- Reimbursement for community-based performance:

1. All materials, including but not limited to: costumes, wigs, props, and other items purchased by the Artist for the performance must be reimbursed in full within seven days of purchase.

1. The Artist must provide a receipt and must be given to the Stage Management Team.

**These Demands are Non-Negotiable.**

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## Living Document of BIPOC Experiences in Bay Area Theater

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[1] We See You, White American Theater. Website. June 2020. <https://www.weseeyouwat.com/about>

[2] [https://docs.google.com/document/d/e/2PACX-1vQhs55mDHqOXFS5zP40yZPRSsPW6L1eI6L\\_jJbQ5bTsjEg-k4XiZBsflyD7AVLwyuXXMTCvZU5RjeVD/pub#ftnt2](https://docs.google.com/document/d/e/2PACX-1vQhs55mDHqOXFS5zP40yZPRSsPW6L1eI6L_jJbQ5bTsjEg-k4XiZBsflyD7AVLwyuXXMTCvZU5RjeVD/pub#ftnt2)

[3] Please reference [SF Living Document](#) for more full text.

[4] Affinity Space or Affinity Group is a designated “safe space” where everyone in the group shares a particular identity. Identities can be based on sexual orientation, gender expression, race, language, nationality, physical or mental ability, socio-economic class, etc.

[5] Only 19% of BIPOC directors were scheduled to direct during the 2019-2020 season in the Bay Area based on the estimated 474 productions programmed this year.

[6] Redistributing and restructuring infrastructural resources (performance space, rehearsal hall, lobby), wealth (allocating equitable assets for production, substantial capital for the artist), and power (administrative, leadership roles).

[7] If an Education Department or Community Programs are in place within PWI/O.