



Statement of Commitment

Theatre plays a critical role in the national conversation about social justice and injustice, the desire for equity, and the need for change. As a theatrical company with a commitment to social justice, Marin Shakespeare Company has both the desire and responsibility to create theater, provide an artistic home for Bay Area theater artists and audiences, and produce performances that are inclusive, equitable, and just. We have a responsibility to treat everyone with dignity, respect, and equality at all times.

We have not lived up to that responsibility. We have created art that has been hurtful to Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) artists and audiences, that did not live up to expectations we have of ourselves as individuals and as a company. Because of our biases, blind spots, and culture of white supremacy, we have not worked hard enough to implement practices to ensure diverse participation and inclusion, falling short of the values we are committed to. We deeply apologize. We know we can do better.

Marin Shakespeare Company values equity, inclusivity, and the power of theater to effect change. We commit to being an organization that is actively anti-racist, acknowledging that Social Justice is not just a concept but a verb -- a daily practice that infuses and informs all of our decision-making.

With humility, we share the following commitments, which will be followed by specific actions as we deepen our understanding and implementation of justice.

- We recognize that all art is political. We commit to making artistic choices that recognize and dismantle racism.
- As a theatre with Shakespeare as our inspiration, we know that Shakespeare's words can be a powerful tool for all people to examine aspects of our shared humanity. We also know that Shakespeare's texts contain implicit bias and have been used to promote a culture of white supremacy. We will work to recognize and learn from all these aspects of Shakespeare's works, while also welcoming and uplifting BIPOC voices and authors.

- We will increase BIPOC presence, voices, and ideas in our work, to provide a rich diversity of perspectives, share our resources more equitably, and gain cross-cultural understanding. We commit to attracting and hiring more BIPOC in every area of our operations, and providing leadership opportunities for BIPOC individuals. Through our hiring, training, and personnel practices we will seek to repair damage to BIPOC in the theatre community.
- Our education programs will build deeper and more meaningful relationships with community partners, particularly those serving our BIPOC communities, seeking to understand their goals and priorities so that our resources and tools may better support their needs. We grieve the tragedy of the school to prison pipeline, and believe that theater can help liberate and empower young minds. To that end, we will align our curricula and pedagogy to support teaching an accurate history of the world, this nation, and our community.
- As a theater company with robust Social Justice programs, we will work to bring attention to and support the elimination of mass incarceration, penal slavery sanctioned by the 13th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, and institutionalized racism and violence against BIPOC. We will support the just call for Reparations to American Descendants of Slavery (ADOS).
- We acknowledge that we do not have all the answers, and will create and carry out an ongoing plan to learn from the wisdom of others and educate our staff, board, artists, and teaching artists about racism and anti-racism, committing to cultural competency training and self-reflection, led by different people using different styles of engagement and meeting structure, so that there is a diversity of approaches within this area of growth.
- We acknowledge that the work to support and advance BIPOC is intersectional, and we commit to making Marin Shakespeare Company a place that welcomes all people regardless of race, gender, origin, beliefs, abilities, age, or sexual orientation.
- We acknowledge that American theater has been complicit in the tokenization and exploitation of BIPOC voices, bodies, and stories. We reject tokenization and exploitation and will examine our practices and communications to work to eliminate them in our organization.

- We are in the process of building a Center for Performing Arts, Education, and Social Justice at 514 Fourth Street in downtown San Rafael. We commit to filling this venue with performances, gatherings, and education programs that help to recognize and dismantle racism.
- We commit to ensuring that our performance venues, classrooms, and offices are welcoming, safe environments for BIPOC artists, students, and audiences. We commit to creating mechanisms for staff, artists, audiences, and students to voice their concerns. We will establish clear procedures for acknowledging, repairing, and learning from community concerns. We envision creating rich, creative, joyful environments to share, learn, and grow.

Art and creative expression are human rights. We're listening. We're working. We will follow these words with actions, and we are excited to rise to the challenge set before us. For all of our sakes, and for future generations to come, we can and will do better.

We will be posting updates about our progress on our website. Thank you for keeping us accountable.