



Accountability Report – February 5, 2021

Action Items we have implemented in the past three months.

BOARD

1. The Board and Staff participated in a 2-hour training led by Elizabeth Carter focusing on white supremacy culture and harms that Shakespeare has caused BIPOC communities.
2. The Board's Anti-Racism Committee, which includes BIPOC board members, and whose purpose is to provide anti-racist training for the board, has been sharing resources and ideas for further board training with the full board.
3. The Board has formed an Artistic Director Search Committee, which includes a BIPOC board member and a BIPOC staff member, to begin the process of hiring a new Artistic Director for the company.

COMPANY

1. We have made initial contact with the Coast Miwok Tribal Council, asking for advice about how to best acknowledge and educate people about the history of the land on which our theatres sit, and offering to share resources. We are actively looking for further opportunities to partner with Coast Miwok and other indigenous people.
2. We continue to work to create a comprehensive plan for cultural competency and anti-racist training for staff, board, artistic and production company, front of house staff, Teaching Artists in Schools, and Teaching Artists for Shakespeare for Social Justice. Elizabeth Carter recommended San Francisco Shakespeare Festival's Company Culture training. We are grateful to San Francisco Shakespeare Festival for sharing some of their Company Culture training resources with us. We are also grateful to Michael Bobbitt for sharing his anti-racist training resources with us through the Shakespeare Theatre Association. Both are informing our work.
3. Working cooperatively, the Staff updated and the Board approved the company's Values Statement. We examined and refined our Values through an anti-racist lens. We added sections about Social Justice and Shakespeare.
4. We have adopted an Employee Handbook that includes a No Tolerance Policy for harassment or discrimination towards artists, students, audience, and others participating in MSC programs, as well as a robust policy on How

To File A Complaint that includes a variety of avenues for reporting, including to the BIPOC Alliance Council and/or anonymously. We are working to identify resources outside the organization to assist with conflict resolution.

5. We put a prominent link to the Accountability section of our website on our home page.

ON STAGE

1. Inspired by We See You White American Theatre, our founding Artistic Director, Robert Currier, announced he plans to step aside to create an opportunity for new artistic leadership. The Board formed a Search Committee and is in the process of determining how best to conduct the search. The company is currently advertising for the position and accepting applications. A job description can be found on the website.
2. We launched the sixth season of the Returned Citizens Theatre Troupe program, which pays actors who have survived incarceration to tell stories of importance through theatre, including examinations of how race and racism have impacted their lives.
3. We continue to convene bi-weekly Returned Citizens Virtual Check-ins, asking Returned Artists to advise how they would like to see this program develop and how MSC can best support them, providing creative self-expression opportunities to increase well-being, and announcing opportunities for paid part-time project work with MSC. We are providing part-time employment for more than a dozen Returned Artists, most of whom are BIPOC. Investing in Returned Artists strengthens their peer support network, gives them a platform for sharing their stories, and gives them extra income.
4. Staff member Alejandra Wahl shared with us a language guide created by Underground Scholars, a POC formerly-incarcerated-led institution. With that knowledge, our Returned Artists group discussed the name "Returned Citizens Theatre Troupe," considered alternative names, voted, and are keeping the name "Returned Citizens Theatre Troupe." Although people who have survived incarceration are not afforded all the rights of citizens, the name is aspirational, and a reminder that all people should be treated as citizens. The Underground Scholars work has also informed our general language practices, reminding us to put people first when speaking of people who are incarcerated, people who have survived incarceration, and people who are impacted by incarceration.

EDUCATION

1. We are very close to launching our 2021 virtual Play Power program of Creative Dramatics lessons for grades K through 5. The program will be

offered for free to schools. Lessons for grades K through 3 are provided with Spanish subtitles. As previously reported, 7 of the 9 Teaching Artists hired are BIPOC.

2. We engaged Ben Chau-Chiu to direct the 2021 Teen Touring Company, and Jourdan Olivier-Verde and Makha Mthembu to contribute to our upcoming "Hamlet" project for schools. All are BIPOC actors and Teaching Artists.
3. We are in the process of creating a virtual Will Power program for middle and high schools, focusing on "Hamlet" which will examine the play and its themes from diverse perspectives, including themes that are intersectional with the Black Lives Matters movement. Our work will be informed by the powerful Public Theatre's Brave New Shakespeare challenge and other BIPOC pedagogical materials.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

1. Through social media and email, we have shared opportunities for public education, advocacy and support of organizations working to remediate California State prisons in a time of COVID-19. 82% of people incarcerated in California are BIPOC.
2. We created a Success Stories page on our website to uplift people who have participated in our prison programs and who are survivors of incarceration. Visit Success Stories and learn how you can support these artists and their organizations. Returned Artist Juan Carlos Meza was the paid consultant for the development of Success Stories.
3. Since March, we have provided Alternative Programming to 13 CA state prisons and Alameda Juvenile Hall. Inspired in part by the creative prompts included in these workbooks, artists who are incarcerated have written a rich plethora of works, from sonnets to fully developed plays. Many of these works directly respond to the events and injustices of 2020, and examine race, privilege, loss, and hope through their eyes. Visit Creative Writing from Inside to be informed, revived, and inspired by the work of these artists.
4. We hired actors who have survived incarceration, most of whom are BIPOC, to film creative performances of Creative Writing from inside. By sending these performances back into the institution to be aired on the institutional channels, we hope to 1) reach the original artists so that they may feel pride at seeing their works fully, professionally realized by their peers, and 2) demonstrate to everyone that the creative expression of people who are incarcerated and survivors of incarceration is not only important, but valued, and worthy of respect, study, and attention.
5. We hired actors who have survived incarceration to work with MSC Teaching Artists in prisons to build a repository of contemporary monologues centering BIPOC narratives, in order to deepen our celebration of the

multiplicity of human experience. We have begun using this writing in our programming for Shakespeare in Prison.

6. We are seeking advice from actors who are incarcerated about how to strengthen and improve our programming in carceral institutions. We have asked for honest feedback about their experiences with our teaching artists and in our programs, and will use their responses to help us further refine our anti-racist Teaching Artist training.