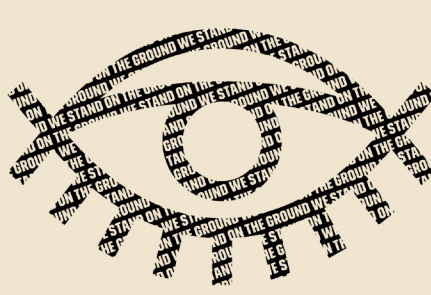


DEAR WHITE AMERICAN THEATER,



Dear White American Theater,

We come together as a community of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) theatremakers, in the legacy of August Wilson's "The Ground on Which I Stand," to let you know exactly what ground we stand on in the wake of our nation's civic unrest.

We see you. We have always seen you. We have watched you pretend not to see us.

We have watched you un-challenge your white privilege, inviting us to traffic in the very racism and patriarchy that festers in our bodies, while we protest against it on your stages. We see you.

We have watched you program play after play, written, directed, cast, choreographed, designed, acted, dramaturged and produced by your rosters of white theatremakers for white audiences, while relegating a token, if any, slot for a BIPOC play. We see you.

We have watched you amplify our voices when we are heralded by the press, but refuse to defend our aesthetic when we are not, allowing our livelihoods to be destroyed by a monolithic and racist critical culture. We see you.

We have watched you inadequately compare us to each other, allowing the failure of entire productions to be attributed to decisions you forced upon us for the comfort of your theater's white patrons. Meanwhile, you continue to deprioritize the broadening of your audiences by building NO relationship with our communities. We see you.

We have watched you harm your BIPOC staff members, asking us to do your emotional labor by writing your Equity, Diversity and Inclusion statements. When we demanded you live up to your own creeds, you covered behind old racist laments of feeling threatened, and then discarded us along with the values you claim to uphold. We see you.

We have watched you discredit the contributions of BIPOC theatres, only to co-opt and annex our work, our scholars, our talent, and our funding. We see you.

We have watched you turn a blind eye as unions refuse to confront their racism and integrate their ranks, muting the authenticity of our culture and only reserving space for us to shine out front on your stages but never behind them. We see you.

We have watched you dangle opportunities like carrots before emerging BIPOC artists, using the power of development, production, and awards to quiet us into obedience at the expense of our art and integrity. We see you.

We have watched you use our BIPOC faces on your brochures, asking us to politely shuffle at your galas, talkbacks, panels, board meetings, and donor dinners, in rooms full of white faces, without being willing to defend the sanctity of our bodies beyond the stages you make us jump through hoops to be considered for. We see you.

We have watched you hustle for local, federal, foundation and private funding on our backs, only to redirect the funds into general operating accounts to cover your deficits from years of fiscal mismanagement. We see you.

We have watched you hire the first BIPOC artists in executive leadership, only to undermine our innovations and vision of creating equitable institutions, by suffocating our efforts with your fear, inadequacy, and mediocrity. We see you.

We have watched you attend one "undoing racism workshop," espousing to funders you are doing the work, without any changes to your programming or leadership. You've been unwilling to even say the words "anti-racism" to your boards out of fear of them divesting from your institutions, prioritizing their privilege over our safety. We see you.

We have watched you promote anti-Blackness again and again. We see you.

We have watched you say things like – I may be white, but I'm a woman. Or, I may be white, but I'm gay. As if oppression isn't multi-layered. We see you.

We have watched you exploit us, shame us, diminish us, and exclude us. We see you.

We have always seen you.

And now you will see us.

We stand on this ground as BIPOC theatremakers, multi-generational, at varied stages in our careers, but fiercely in love with the Theatre. Too much to continue it under abuse. We will wrap the least privileged among us in protection, and fearlessly share our many truths.

About theatres, executive leaders, critics, casting directors, agents, unions, commercial producers, universities and training programs. You are all a part of this house of cards built on white fragility and supremacy. And this is a house that will not stand.

This ends TODAY.

We are about to introduce you...to yourself.

Signed,

The Ground We Stand On

YAHYA ABDUL-MATEEN II
EMIKA ABE
CHRISTOPHER ACEBO
AMELIA ACOSTA-POWELL
WILL ADAMS
KEITH JOSEF ADKINS
UZO ADUBA
SAHEEM ALI
LUIS ALFARO
NYAHALE ALLIE
RAQUEL ALMADAN
CHRISTINA ANDERSON
NICCO ANNAN
NISSY AYA
STORI AYERS
DEDE AYITE
NICHOLAS AVILA
DE'ADRE AZIZA
TRAVIS BALLENGER
TAYLOR BARFIELD
AZIZA BARNES
FRANCOIS BATTISTE
LAWRENCE BENNETT
CHRISTOPHER BERRY
SHELDON BEST
HILARY BETTIS
CECIL BLUTCHER
RAYMOND BOGGAN
ELISA BOCANEGRA
KEITH ARTHUR BOLDEN
FREEDOME BRADLEY
CHARLOTTE BRATHWAITE
PHILLIP JAMES BRANNON
DANIEL BREAKER
NICOLE BREWER
STEVE BROADNAX III
DANIELLE BROOKS
RYAN BROUSSARD
CAMILLE A. BROWN
STERLING K BROWN
DANIEL BRYANT
EMILYA CACHAPERO
KRISTEN ADELE CALHOUN
DARREN CANADY
TATYANA-MARIE CARLO
JOSE CASAS
LOLITA CHAKRABARTI
SYDNEY CHARLES
HOPE CHAVEZ
KIRSTEN CHILDS
KAREN CHILTON
WILSON CHIN
LINDA CHO
JENNA CHRISPONTE
LAP CHI CHU
MIA CHUNG
MARIE CISCO
WARDELL JULIUS CLARK
MICA COLE
GARLIA CORNELIA
RODRICK COVINGTON
BEHZAD DABU
MALCOLM DARRELL
GLENN DAVIS
JOSIAH DAVIS
SHIELA KAY DAVIS
VIOLA DAVIS
ROBIN DE JESUS
SABINE DECATUR
GUADALIS DEL CARMEN
LELAI DESAI
SNEHAL DESAI
TY DEFOE
LYDIA DIAMOND
ANNALISA DIAS
KRISTOFFER DIAZ
NOAH DIAZ
CRYSTAL DICKINSON
KELVIN DINKINS JR.
BRANDON DIRDEN
JASON DIRDEN
TIMOTHY DOUGLAS
COLMAN DOMINGO
BJORN DUPATY
IVYON EDEBIRI
ALAN EDWARDS

CYNTHIA ERIVO
GEORGINA ESCOBAR
EDEN ESPINOSA
LARISSA FASTHORSE
EVELINA FERNANDEZ
LADY DANE EDIDI FIGUEROA
ROBERT BARRY FLEMING
KAMILAH FORBES
INDA CRAIG GALVAN
MAIJA GARCIA
DAWN-LYEN GARDNER
LEAH C. GARDNER
MARCUS GARDLEY
NATAKI GARRETT
PATRICIA GARZA
DEEKSHA GAUR
ADRIANA GAVIRIA
ASMERET GHEBREMICHAEL
SETH GILLIAM
KEELAY GIPSON
ISAAC GOMEZ
MARIA MANUELA GOYANES
DONNETTA LAVINIA GRAYS
CHESTER GREGORY
KIMBERLY HEBERT GREGORY
KATORI HALL
JESSICA HAGEDORN
DEADRIA HARRINGTON
LEAH HARRIS
BRIAN TYREE HENRY
CARMEN HERLIHY
JON MICHAEL HILL
RON HIMES
CHAZ SHERMILL HODGES
SEENA HODGES
WILLIAM HODGSON
ANDRE HOLLAND
IKE HOLTZER
COOPER HOWELL
TIMOTHY HUANG
QUIARA ALEGRIA HUDES
JENNIFER HUDSON
JASMINE HUGHES
KHYON TANDE WHITNEY V. HUNTER
KHIVON HURSEY
CHISA HUTCHISON
DAVID HENRY HWANG
NAOMI HIZUKA
JAMES JAMES
DANIEL K. ISAAC
LESLIE ISHII
KOREY JACKSON
TOUSSAINT JEANLOUIS
SHARIFA JOHKA
CYNTHIA JOHNSON
LESLIE K. JOHNSON
TIFFANY JOHNSON
MILLICENT JOHNNIE
ALBERT JONES
DANIEL ALEXANDER JONES
OMI OSUN JONI L. JONES
MARSHALL JONES III
COOKIE JORDAN
RAJIV JOSEPH
ELIZABETH JUDD
JENNY JUDES
JAMIL JUDE
HANSOL JUNG
TINASHI KAJESE
JOAQUINA KALUKANGO
MIA KATIGBAK
NAMBI E. KELLEY
HAILEY KILGORE
JENNY KOONS
KWAME KWEI-ARMAH
DANIEL KYRI
L'OREAL LAMPLEY
SUTTIRAT LARLARB
SANAA LATHAN
BRYAN JOSEPH LEE
HARUNA LEE
ADRIAN LESTER
ZHAILON LIVINGSTON
JOSE LLANA
KRISTOLYN LLOYD

ERIC LOCKLEY
JEAN "PAPA JEAN" LODESCAR
KAMILAH LONG
SKY LAKOTA LYNCH
MANDI MASNEN
ARNULFO MALDONADO
SANDRA MARQUEZ
JANIO MARRERO
KEN-MATT MARTIN
LEROY MCCLAIN
FORREST MCCLENDON
TARELL ALVIN MCCRANEY
JAMES MCDANIEL
PATRICIA MCGREGOR
DIANNE MCINTYRE
SHEAUN MCKINNEY
NEEL MCNEILL
GRIFFIN MATTHEWS
ALEX MEDA
NIDIA MEDINA
LINDSAY MENDEZ
DAVID MENDIZABAL
NINA ANGELA MERCER
DAYRON MILES
RUTHIE ANN MILES
PATINA MILLER
LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA
LOY MIRANDA
SIMONE MISSICK
SAM MORREALE
CARMEN MORGAN
DOMINIQUE MORISSEAU
TARA MOSES
DAAIMAH MUBASHSHIR
DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE
RAELLE MYRICK-HODGES
MARY KATHRYN NAGLE
BRANDON NASE
MEENA NATARAJAN
J. ALPHONSE NICHOLSON
LYNN NOTTAGE
ANTOINETTE NWANDU
EVREN ODCIKIN
LESLIE ODOM JR.
DIANA OH
SANDRA OH
ROBERT O'HARA
KAREN OLIVO
IAN OLYMPIO
JACOB G. PADRON
JEFFREY PAGE
JIEHAE PARK
SUZAN-LORI PARKS
RALPH PENA
RONEE PENOI
RAD PEREIRA
ROBERTA PEREIRA
JESSE J. PEREZ
LAMAR PERRY
MING PFEIFFER
TYRONE PHILLIPS
WENDELL PIERCE
XAVIER PIERCE
KAREN PITTMAN
GABRIELLE FULTON PONDER
JEREMY POPE
SARAH PORKALOB
BILLY PORTER
PORTIA
LINDA POWELL
WILL POWER
PENNY PUN
BRIAN QUIJADA
LISSA RAE
CLINT RAMOS
SOFIA RAMOS
OTIS RAMSEY-ZOE
CONDOLA RASHAD
CONRAD RICAMORA
CODY RENARD RICHARD
ANDREW RINCÓN
HARRISON DAVID RIVERS
DAVID J. ROBERTS
NICOLETTE ROBINSON
ERIC B. ROBINSON, JR.
STEPHANIE ROLLAND

ANIKA NONI ROSE
ERIKA ROSE
STACEY ROSE
INDHU RUBASINGHAM
ELIZABETH SALINAS
NIKKOLE SALTER
DERRICK SANDERS
JUDE SANDY
SELENE SANTIAGO
SOCORRO SANTIAGO
RUBEN SANTIAGO-HUDSON
TANYA SARACHO
MADELINE SAYET
GEOFFREY JACKSON SCOTT
KIMBERLY SCOTT
SERET SCOTT
OZ SCOTT
HANA SHARIF
HANAH SHARIF
GODFREY SIMMONS
HEATHER ALICIA SIMMS
BRITTON SMITH
JAMIE LINCOLN SMITH
KEITH RANDOLPH SMITH
NATASHA SINHA
AURIN SQUIRE
VERA STARRARD
HAROLD STEWARD
DAVID STEWART
MIKAAL SULAIMAN
PAUL TAZEWEEL
JULIUS TENNON
KYLE VINCENT TERRY
ERIC TING
LIESL TOMMY
BLAIR UNDERWOOD
UNIVERSES:
(MILDRED RUIZ-SAPP & STEVEN SAPP)
CLYDE VALENTIN
JOSE LUIS VALENZUELA
RYAN VASQUEZ
VICTOR VAZQUEZ
NIKKI VERA
REGINA VICTOR
SHAY WAFER
TERESA COLMAN WASH
SHARON WASHINGTON
DARYL WATERS
NICOLE A. WATSON
DANIEL J. WATTS
LOY WEBB
RUTINA WESLEY
REGGIE WHITE
CHRISTIAN DANTE WHITE
LILLIAS WHITE
JOSH WILDER
MARTIN DAMIEN WILKINS
JAMES A. WILLIAMS
LA WILLIAMS
TATIANA WILLIAMS
WALTER WILLIAMS III
MICHELLE WILSON
EMMANUEL WILSON
TRACEY SCOTT WILSON
CHRISTOPHER WINDOM
ANTONIO MICHAEL WOODARD
TAMILLA WOODARD
LAURIE WOOLERY
CHARLES RANDOLPH-WRIGHT
RHIANA YAZZIE
AMITA YAVICH
STEPHANIE YBARRA
LAUREN YEE
TORANGE YEGHIAZARIAN
CHAY YEW
PIRRONNE YOUSEFZADEH
KAREN ZACARIAS

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