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The 2019-20 Board of the SMA

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The Stage Managers Association strongly condemns the violence, racism, and systematic oppression that has caused professional members of our industry, and citizens of this country to be disrespected and to be prevented from living and thriving as citizens of the United States. We condemn in the strongest terms the unimaginable murders of Breonna Taylor, Philandro Castile, Michael Brown, Sandra Bland, Walter Scott, George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, and countless others. Black Lives Matter. At this moment I call for a moment of silence in memory of those who have lost their lives, needlessly and undeservedly to this violence.

As the SMA we moved too slowly to address this systemic oppression of the members in our community within our industry. This we can and this we will work very hard to change. We call upon all stage managers to pledge to respect everyone in the room and everyone at the table. To read, to listen and to learn so that we can understand individually how to help make the rehearsal room and the performance stage a place for joyful creation, with mutual respect and collaboration for all people working together in the artistic process.

Specific Actions to be taken by and for the working team of the SMA include but are not limited to:

- 1) Re-imagining of an SMA initiative working for Equity in our profession. This will manifest as a newly formed Council for Equity and Advocacy which will invite members of the SMA to join with members of our industry who are not currently members, to develop strategies and action steps to address the inequity in our industry and also advocate for change throughout the operations of the SMA.
- 2) Intentionally making room to include more diverse voices, on our board, on our Executive Committee and in our associated leadership corps of Vice Regional Representatives and Committee Chairs.
- 3) The Board has approved a significant budget for the leadership team of the SMA comprised of over 40 individuals to take part in Unconscious Bias Training and Anti-Racism training.

There will be more steps in the coming months, but for now, I can say, we have been slow to bring these important issues to the forefront of our organization. I take this responsibility on myself. We can and must do better. We will. We invite your input, support but more importantly, your participation.

The Stage Managers' Association of the United States
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