

Rivendell Pledge

For over 25 years, Rivendell Theatre Ensemble’s mission has been dedicated to advancing women’s lives through the power of theater.

Acknowledging the longstanding racial inequality in American theater, we recognize that the stories presented on our stages have been largely shared through the white women’s lens. We acknowledge that when stories from the Black, Indigenous, People of Color experience have been produced, predominately white artists, supported by a majority white Board of Directors, have been gatekeepers. We acknowledge these obstacles have made it difficult for BIPOC artists to feel safe telling their stories within our walls.

This is not who or what we want to be. We vow to be a place of anti-racism, inclusion, and racial equity, a space where all women’s voices and stories can be shared — authentically, honestly, and without fear. We know that this acknowledgement is a pivotal point for moving forward and that there is much more work to be done. We—the Rivendell Ensemble—pledge to do that work.

Here are five immediate actions we will undertake to weave racial equity into the fabric of Rivendell:

- Hire a woman (or women) from the BIPOC community into a position(s) of leadership through a formal search.
- Designate funding for new play development that specifically amplifies BIPOC women, led by artists from that community that will be launched within Rivendell’s 2021 Season.
- Required participation in Ensemble, Staff and Board anti-racism education beginning September 2020 and continuing long term.
- Commit to provoking, addressing, and advocating for equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout all levels of our organization—from staffing to casting to literary management and play selection.

These are our first steps of what will be an ongoing, consistent, and thoughtful process toward creating an environment where artists and audiences of all races, classes, genders, orientations, abilities, and sizes feel welcome and are seen, heard and treated with dignity. We are engaged in ongoing conversations as an ensemble of what internal and public accountability can look like, as we want our artists and our community to have a process of calling us in when we fall short.

Rivendell is grateful for its evolving relationships with BIPOC artists and welcomes their continuing participation in making our theatre an artistic home that reflects and celebrates all women’s stories. Together, we can and will do the work.

Sincerely,

The Ensemble and Staff of Rivendell Theatre

A collection of approximately 20 handwritten signatures in black ink, arranged in several rows. The signatures are in various styles, some legible and others more stylized. Some names are clearly identifiable, such as 'Eric', 'Jessica Erwin', 'Rebecca Spence', 'Keith', 'Bae Gray', 'Mary M. Cross', and 'Regina Garcia'.