



ASTRA supports Black Lives Matter

Posted by Bob Evans

Fellow creatives, supporters of the arts, and KC loved ones:

Our nation has reached a boiling point. The United States' original sin of slavery, coupled with decades of oppression and police brutality of black and brown folks have brought us to our moment of reckoning. More than a week of demonstrations internationally have shed light on this ancient problem, brought to a head by the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and so many more.

But it's not enough.

We must continue to untangle racism as the insidious and ever-changing system it is: starting first in our own families and communities. This is a widespread and deep change that must come from inside of every one of us, especially those of us who are white and continue to benefit from the system at large. It is our duty to stand in solidarity with our black and brown friends, listen to their pain, and fight for their liberation. This is a matter of life and death.

This is why Astra Theatre Company says loudly and unapologetically that **Black Lives Matter**. We will continue to strive to support artists of color in front of and behind the scenes to bring about a more complete world view in our productions that would otherwise be missing. Our mission has always included: Astra seeks to produce transformative, truthful theatre that is as vibrant and diverse as Kansas City itself.

We have also compiled a list of resources to use as a starting point to untangle our own complicit roles in racism and how we can better align ourselves with the struggle for freedom and protection of Black Lives. This is by no means a full list, but rather a jumping off point.

We at Astra Theatre Company are always here to be in the work of unlearning and educating ourselves and creating safe spaces for all to engage in these discussions. Should you need someone to have these difficult conversations with, know that we are here for you.

In solidarity,

Astra Theatre Company

Taylor Harlow, *Artistic Director*

Elizabeth Reese, *Literary Manager*

Brooke Lacy, *Marketing Director*

Emma Marston, *Education Director*

Anthony Fortino, *Finance Director*

Britton Erskine, *Board Member*

Taylor Avazpour, *Board Member*

Kelly Reilly, *Board Member*

Recommended readings and resources:

1. Link to a Masterdoc of donation guide and racism education resources:

<https://linktr.ee/NationalResourcesList>

2. White Fragility by Robin DiAngelo

3. The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by Michelle Alexander

4. 13th: Documentary on Netflix

5. So You Want to Talk About Race by Ijeoma Oluo