

Transcription of October 5, 2020 Citadel Theatre Community Forum

Jessie: Hello everyone, and welcome to Citadel Theatre's community forum. My name is Jessie van Rijn, and I'm the producer at Citadel Theatre. Before we begin, we would like to ensure that all attendees are able to participate fully. Please note that the session is being recorded and will be available later this week. For the best sound clarity, please keep your microphone muted. The Forum has ASL interpretation provided by Carmelle and Tracy. Feel free to pin their video on your Zoom, and their feed will become larger for you to view. If you have an updated version of Zoom you can drag and drop the interpreters' video within the Gallery View. We've done that within the Host View, then you can also release the Host View and choose it yourself.

Live closed captioning via *Otter.ai* is available and can be activated clicking on the "Live on Custom Live Streaming Service" button, which should appear in the upper corner of your browser screen and then by clicking on "View Stream on Custom Live Streaming Service" button. This will open up a screen tab in a web page for you to position next to your Zoom window. Given the potential of any technical issues with captioning, we will be releasing a full transcript later this week. And with that I will throw it over to Tai please!

...Tai, just so you know you're muted.

Tai: (*Laughter*) I was fully going and I was muted the whole time! Hi everybody, my name is Tai Amy Grauman and I'm Métis, Cree and Iroquois from Ardrossan, Alberta. My father is Métis, Cree and Iroquois from Saint Paul and Frog Lake, and my mother's Métis/Cree from Cut Knife, Saskatchewan. And I grew up in Ardrossan in the heart of Treaty 6 between the two. And I'm here today to welcome you to my home: Treaty 6. The plains. We call this the land of living skies, the stars, the ponies... And this place is home to the Cree, Saulteaux, Nakota Sioux, Stony and Cree-Iroquois – as well as other Indigenous peoples, such as the Blackfoot and the Métis. And this is my favorite place on earth and I'm really excited to welcome you to this digital space on Treaty 6.

Jessie: Thank you, Daryl and Chantell.

Daryl: Hello everybody, my name is Daryl Cloran. I'm the Artistic Director of the Citadel. My pronouns are he/him. Thank you! Thank you so much for joining us tonight. I know everyone has days full of Zoom, and we appreciate that you're spending your evening on Zoom with us.

I've lived here in Edmonton for four years now, and without question that the best thing about moving to Edmonton has been the chance to become a part of this incredible community of theatre artists. And we at Citadel want to say thank you to the many artists here in Edmonton, who have been generously advocating for change in this community. We want to say thank you to Natércia Napoleão for your tireless, thoughtful online advocacy to theatre companies and training institutions across Edmonton. We want to say thank you to the members of the *35/50 Initiative* for providing a clear path for our community to walk together to implement real, lasting transformation. And thank you to the many other artists and theatre makers who've reached out to us both publicly and privately to advocate for change. It truly feels that we're in this together,

and that together we can change our community and practice to ensure that we're respectfully and proactively representing the diversity of Edmonton.

We'd also like to thank the Citadel's Associate Artists... They're with us this evening! Helen Belay, Tai Amy Grauman, and Mieko Ouchi for their leadership and their hard work on this report, and for all the programming initiatives and systemic change they've led since June. And a big thank you to the consultants who advised on this report, including Kelsie Acton, Chris Dodd, Brooke Leifso, and Dill Prusko. And now over to Chantell for some more thank yous and welcomes.

Chantell: Welcome everyone, I'm Chantell Ghosh, I'm the Executive Director here at the Citadel Theatre. My pronouns are she and her. We have lots of gratitude, lots of thank yous as Daryl was saying. And I want to express our gratitude to our sponsors and our community stakeholders who have supported us through this, and particularly with regard to our team.

Our team has worked through this journey over the last few years, and leading up to this report, and will continue to work on the commitments that we've made. And change on the scale of what we are trying to do requires challenging yourself. Requires the willingness to confront our ways of doing things, and confront our practices. And it's an incredibly humbling and challenging experience, and it requires courage. And I'm really proud of our team here that's taken on that challenge., and has been open to new ways of doing things, and actively seeking new partners and new vendors, and reaching into the community in new ways... And really doing a lot of the heavy lifting around the data of this report and supporting this work in this project. So thank you to our team. Many of you who are on this call and it's so good to see you!

As we know the tone starts from the top, and we have been incredibly supported as leadership by our Board of Governors and by our Board of Directors. Their support of not only the work that we're doing every day, but of embedding the principles of inclusion, and diversity, and equity, and access into the DNA of our theatre, our governance and our processes. So that exists independent of who happens to be in a leadership role at any given time. Especially grateful for our Board of Director chair, Wendy Dupuis is on the call today.

She has been a mindful and passionate supporter of Daryl's work, of my work, of the team that has done... our team work that has been going on. And I know she would like to share a few words on behalf of the Board, welcome Wendy!

Wendy: Thank you Chantell and Daryl. On behalf of the Citadel's Board of Directors, thank you for being a part of this event. I'd like to extend a sincere welcome to each of you, and encourage you to openly share your comments, opinions and recommendations with us tonight.

For the past two years the Citadel leadership and board have worked together to focus more clearly on the safety, inclusivity and diversity of our workplace and how we "show up" as a member of the arts community. Our 35/50 announcement and events like this one are the most recent steps we are taking to listen, act and continually improve, and there is more to come. Soon I'll be able to share the results of some focused recruiting we've had underway for the past year to strengthen the diversity of our board, a step that we had committed to take that is now coming to fruition. I'm proud of what we've done and will continue to do, and I also recognize that there is a lot more work ahead.

To that end, the best sounding board we have is our community. The ideas and feedback we have gathered from previous events like this one have provided some of the most meaningful

inputs to our work. So, thank you for taking the time to be a part of tonight, I will be listening with big ears.

Daryl, I'll turn it back over to you.

Daryl: Thank you very much Wendy. Now Jessie's gonna talk us through how to engage tonight on Zoom together.

Jessie: Sure! So very briefly as you can see we're using Zoom with the meeting format. Sometimes we use Webinar, and sometimes we use Meeting. So now we get to see all of your faces, which is wonderful! We ask that all attendees during the session keep your microphones muted. We're also going to be moderating the microphones --just in case someone forgets to turn theirs off-- we'll be able to turn that off and on back for you later. You're welcome to participate with your video --both on and off-- whatever works best for you. And we invite you to engage for this first section of the event in the Chatbox. You can share greetings, comment on the information being shared, or you can also privately message each other. There will be lots of times for questions --lots of time, pardon me-- for questions and discussion in approximately 20 minutes time. Please write your questions down and share them during the question period. Please don't post them in the Chatbox during the session as we don't want to miss any. However, when we get to the question period if you don't feel comfortable speaking your question aloud, you're welcome to privately DM it to me, and I can share it with the group.

So I'm going to throw it back to Daryl. And if at any point anybody has any technical issues during the presentation, please feel free to send me a private message.

Daryl: Thank you very much, Jessie! It is my pleasure to introduce the Citadel's 3 Associate Artists, Helen Belay, Tai Amy Grauman, and Mieko Ouchi. Together, we're going to speak for about 15 minutes or so to give context about the work that we've been doing at the Citadel, and some background on the report. And then the rest of this evening is going to be open for questions and conversations. So Mieko, over to you!

Mieko: Great, thanks so much Daryl. And it's great to be here with all of you. Thanks so much for joining us tonight. To give everyone context and understanding of how we came to this inclusivity and diversity report, and our gathering today... We wanted to start by saying that this journey actually started 4 years ago in September 2016 when Daryl started his term as Artistic Director, and began to implement his vision of the Citadel as an inclusive, innovative, and international space. Since then the organization has made a series of purposeful steps and changes that have led us directly to today. So we'd like to share a brief timeline of the work done at the organization.

Tai: In February 2017, Daryl appointed Christine Sokaymoh Frederick as a Citadel's Indigenous Associate Artist. The first to hold this position at the Citadel.

Daryl: In October, 2017, the Citadel hosted our first ever "Exchange Event," focusing on diversity and inclusion in the arts. We co-presented this with Alberta Workers' Health Centre, Alberta Aboriginal Arts, Azimuth Theatre, and The Maggie Tree. The event featured a speech by Jovanni Sy, and a panel discussion moderated by Gina Puntil, featuring Nasra, Marian Brant, Hunter Cardinal, Chris Dodd, NIUBOI, Christine Frederick, and Mieko Ouchi.

Mieko: I might just give a moment for our interpreters to catch up on that list of names.

(Laughter.)

Daryl: I feel bad. I'm so sorry!

Mieko: That's okay!

That fall, Daryl also began inviting artists from the community who had been historically involved with pushing for equity, diversity and inclusion, to come and speak with him about how the Citadel might help move things forward. Gina Puntil and myself both met with him --as did many others-- speaking about barriers to full participation experienced by marginalized artists.

In December, 2017, Daryl also invited me to write a newly commissioned family-friendly play for the Banff/Citadel Training Program. And we spoke at length about our shared goals of wanting to further equity, diversity and inclusion with this play and the program. And with that in mind, I began work on the play, *The Silver Arrow*.

Helen: January 2018, Chantell started work as Executive Director. And two months later in March 2018, a public letter addressing past behavior at the Citadel was published, and a third-party disclosure process began, inviting community members to share experiences of workplace harassment and bullying.

Tai: That same month, March 2018, *Children of God* premiered in Edmonton and was the first Indigenous play presented as part of the Citadel subscription season.

Daryl: Later that spring in partnership with the Arts Club Theatre in Vancouver, we commissioned a new play by playwright Kim Senklip Harvey entitled, *Break Horizons*. The Citadel's first commissioned play by an Indigenous artist.

In April 2018, *The Silver Arrow* premiered. The first play the Citadel had commissioned and produced by a female playwright, the production also significantly featured a female protagonist with a disability, and a culturally diverse cast, featuring 8 BIPOC artists in the cast of 16.

Mieko: On May 14th, 2018, a large community conversation was held, bringing artists, staff and Board together to talk about and share past experiences of workplace harassment and bullying at the Citadel. This event was moderated by Wade King, the Director of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights at the UofA.

Tai: And that winter in January 2019, a public report on the learnings and policy changes based on the community conversation and disclosure process was released.

Mieko: A month later, on February 11th, 2019, a second exchange event was held at the Citadel. Following up on the public report released the month before, this time focusing on creating safe and welcoming workspaces. This discussion, which was presented in partnership with my company --Concrete Theatre-- and which I moderated, featured a panel made up of Kelsie Acton, Daryl Cloran, Christine Frederick, Gina Puntil, and Vanessa Sabourin.

Tai: In April 2019 *The Tempest*, a production featuring a cast of deaf and hearing performers -- and performed in spoken English and ASL premiered at the Citadel.

Helen: That same month, a consortium of 40 Edmonton performing arts organizations came together over their shared interest in offering more accessible live performances, and formalized as a group called YEG Performing Arts Accessibility Ad Hoc Group. As a consortium member, the Citadel and producer Jessie van Rijn offered administrative and grant writing assistance. Through grants from the ECF and the EAC, the group launched a study of the current practices within the city, led by consultants Kelsie Acton and Brooke Leifso. The report was released this past July.

Tai: In January 2020, *Cost of Living*, a production and story about characters living with disability featuring two actors with disabilities in lead roles opened at the Citadel. Later that month on January 26th, 2020, a third Citadel Exchange Event was held --this time focusing on representation and access, building the gap in theatre practice. A panel of 4 theatre practitioners: Kristi Hansen, Christopher Imbrosciano, Carly Neis, and Teal Sherer each share their own journey with disability and how they advocate for themselves and others in artistic processes and/or creative spaces.

Daryl: In March, 2020, COVID-19 hit and everything stopped. All of our producing activities were shut down by the pandemic. During this pause, like many theatres, Chantell and I used the time to begin re-examining our strategic planning, and thinking about next steps for our company's continued goals of being inclusive, innovative and international.

At the end of May --after the brutal murder of George Floyd and the response of the incredibly powerful Black Lives Matter movement-- local, provincial national, and international conversations began to open up around systemic racism in all aspects of society. Including theatre and the arts. As these conversations build, work ramped up for an evaluation of the Citadel across all departments through the lens of diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. As well as the inclusion of 3 BIPOC Associate Artists to help drive this process, in collaboration with myself and Chantell and other key staff. Bringing a BIPOC lens to the audit, as well as Citadel's outreach and programming activities.

Tai: On June 2nd, 2020, offers are made to the 3 of us to join the Citadel as Associate Artists. We were asked to work on the audit, which is proposed to take place over summer months, culminating in a fall report and public forum, as well as to work with Daryl to curate a series of community spotlights, community interviews, Industry Sessions, as well as live mainstage work focusing on BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and disabled artists' stories.

Mieko: On June 9th, 2020, our letters of agreement are signed, and the next day a public announcement of our appointment is made. And the three of us begin work here at the Citadel. Our first focus is discussing and launching work on the audit. Major discussions are held around how we can create baseline numbers to properly analyze past practices and policies, and to measure improvement and change. We all agree that creating a data collection project back as far as we could go is the best way to do that. This would also show the generational impact that certain practices had had within the community. So we work together to create a list of all the things we wanted to measure. Including participation by BIPOC, and LGBTQ2S+ folks, people by gender, participation of people who are deaf or disabled, a breakdown by rough age brackets so we can analyze participation by different generations, and a measuring of new and returning people each year to help us analyze and pinpoint areas of access, turnover, and potential barriers that might hold people back.

Helen: Together with Daryl, Jessie, and Wayne, the 3 of us then met with every department at the Citadel to find out how things are being handled now and brainstormed ways we might make

improvements. Each department was taxed with data collection, working towards this report and the public forum. We also met with Wendy Dupuis, the Chair of the Board.

Tai: Later that month, advocates across the country, and in the US, and in our local community like Makram Ayache and Natércia Napoleão write public open letters to theatres asking for transparency and insight into their current practices, and for change to happen. Other Edmonton artists also contacted Citadel team members privately raising these same issues and concerns. Daryl publicly posted on social media about the Citadel's plans and shared that our report and forum was in process, and we provided concrete dates for completion.

Helen: Throughout the summer data begins to come in, and we work as a team with staff to start to create and build the report. Together with Daryl and Chantell and the three of us, we make a presentation to the board about the report and its importance. We speak to why this kind of comprehensive data is needed to move forward and the board agrees and gives us support to the project.

Mieko: Along the way we reached out to many others for help and assistance in specific areas. For example, I spoke with Rebecca Burton at the Playwrights Guild of Canada, and got a breakdown of how the equity in theatre and the PGC record their playwriting demographics, so that our numbers would match and could be compared. Team members also reached out privately to individuals in the community who had previously worked at the Citadel to solicit their feedback and thoughts. We also acknowledged that we were missing key perspectives at the table, who could speak to the experiences of people who identify as neurodiverse, people with disabilities, deaf people and non-binary folks. To address this, the team site paid consultation with four community members, Kelsie Acton, Brooke Leifso, Chris Dodd and Dill Prusko. We hired them to review the entire document using their specific lived experience and expertise. They gave us hugely helpful and constructive feedback, and we want to thank them tonight for their time, energy, and collaboration. Thank you.

Helen: On September 1st, 2020, the 35/50 Initiative YEG announces their generous call to theatres to commit to clear percentages and a 4 season timeline to increase BIPOC participation, which beautifully supports our already developing organizational goals. Along with Daryl, we make a second presentation to the Board about the importance of this community led initiative, and garner their support. The Citadel signs onto the 35/50 commitment publicly on September 10th.

Daryl: On September 21st we completed the report, and shared it with the community through our website and social media. Like previous reports the Citadel announced a follow up public forum to the report, which is where we are right now! We made it! We made it through the history.

(Laughter.)

Before, before we move on to the questions, we'd just like to give just a few more details about the report itself, and the commitments within it. So, Mieko...over to you.

Mieko: Great. So the data that we collected was done anecdotally and through engagement and employment records by our staff, and as accurate to the best of our knowledge. The data collection process revealed some challenges and deficiencies in our methodology, particularly around accurate data collection with regards to disability. Currently, we don't have concrete information on staff or artists who are deaf or hard of hearing, or who experienced disability,

chronic illness, mental illness, or are neurodivergent. We are still in very beginning steps with regards to engaging with deaf and disabled staff and artists and how to appropriately gather data given our desire to also respect individual's right to privacy.

As a first step we will be engaging with an inclusive practices consultant before March 31st, 2021 to review the available data in this report and provide guidance on next steps for proper data collection, reporting, and actions to be included in our 2021 Inclusivity and Diversity Report.

Tai: As the report shows we have seen clear improvements and successes over the past 3 years with new leadership. For example, the increase in BIPOC representation in the acting companies, and the increase in commission to female and BIPOC playwrights. However, there are still many areas that need addressing. For example, BIPOC representation in creative positions such as designers, choreographers, and directors, as well as BIPOC representation in staff, and Board membership.

Helen: In addition to the changes the Citadel commits to in our productions, staff, and Board, we also commit to working with our partners --such as IATSE-- who provide our technical staff, and the American Federation of Musicians, who provide musicians for our productions, to ensure strategies to increase the BIPOC representation in their membership.

Daryl: According to the 2016 census, the population of Edmonton is 43.5% BIPOC. The Citadel endeavors to be the heart and hub of Edmonton's arts community, and it's integral that we ensure that the stories we tell, as well as the composition of our artists, Board, staff, and audience, reflect the dynamic multicultural city we call home.

Mieko: Throughout the report we have committed to actions and measurable goals, and our goals are aligned to the 35/50 Initiative, aiming to have our organization be made up of a minimum of 35% BIPOC and 50% women and non-binary people by the 24/25 season. We are committed to tracking our process, and reporting annually to our community.

Tai: And beyond the metrics and numbers we commit to a change in mindset. We will provide anti-racism training and resources for our staff and Board, and work together to ensure the Citadel is a proactively anti-racist organization.

Helen: We commit to supporting BIPOC, deaf, ,women, and non-binary staff, ensuring that our practices, policies, and workspaces are welcoming and safe. We will work together to champion an inclusive company culture that is free of prejudice, bias, and discrimination.

Daryl: We're proud to be part of our city's vibrant theatre community. I look forward to working hand in hand with our colleagues to create lasting systemic change at the Citadel, and throughout the arts community.

That's it! That's the end of the talking part. We are really excited to have a conversation with you, our community, about the report, and your thoughts. So I'll turn it over to Jessie who will set up the question period for us.

Jessie: Sure, so I'm caveat, this is the first time we've done something like this, and as always with anything online there's the potential for it not going according to plan, but we're going to do our best.

So, first off as everyone's mentioned throughout the remarks, we would like to acknowledge the presence of three of our report reviewers, Chris, Dill, and Brooke. Kelsie unfortunately is currently based in London, England and is sleeping at the moment. They are present and available to answer any questions about report content that they may have been involved in editing or providing feedback on. Chris, Dill, and Brooke... thank you for being with us here tonight.

So, to ask questions or to comment please use the Raise Hand feature. It's available in the Participants Box by clicking on "Participants," and then clicking on the blue "Raise Hand" at the bottom of the box. Participants will be invited to speak in the order that their hands are raised, you will be called upon and you will be asked to unmute your microphone. To ensure all attendees have an opportunity to speak or share, we ask that each speaker use no more than 1-2 minutes of time per question. If you're not able to use a microphone or do not wish to ask your question aloud, you can privately message it to me in the Chat Box. Please state whether or not you would like your name included at.

And then, as we get closer to the end of the session I will let everyone know when we are about to wrap up. So that's my part so... who wants to go first? Raise your hand!

Daryl: Hey Jessie I see on my screen Tarra Carlson...? Raising their hand.

Jessie: Thank you. I'm just having a quick look at this. Tarra, would you like me to ask your questions that are in the Chat Box?

Tarra: Uh no, I can do it myself.

Jessie: Great, then I will let you go forth. Please go forth!

Tarra: Um, as I said to this fine lady... I am a person with autism that stands for all people with disabilities. I am actually an advocate for autism and other invisible disabilities because we are highly marginalized within the disability community itself. The laws that are made today for autism... they never consulted me. Okay, let's put that right there. The problem that I see is that the deaf and the invisible disability communities suffer a great deal of people making decisions for them, rather than actually coming to us and talking to us, we're not that hard! But unfortunately, people take us the wrong way, we're called rude, whatever.

I want to know how the Citadel wishes to interact with us, and allow us to be a part of your crew in a manner of teaching you how to be with us, instead of feeling insulted --or feeling like you would insult us-- just by saying the wrong thing. You know what? I will let you know whether you're saying the wrong thing. It's a matter of engagement. There's a way to engage with me and others like me, then you would say another person. Just like how do you engage with someone that has hard of hearing? There's a different way of doing things. How would you address this within the Citadel? And many of us are on AISH, and can't afford to come to any of your plays. How are you going to address that as well? You claim to be inclusive, diverse, and equality. To date, I have not seen that as such. Many of us want to be a part of you guys, or want to come and watch a show, but we can't afford it. What's going to happen, moving forward? One at a time, please.

Jessie: Alright, thank you. Sorry, I was just typing that up. So I would like to share that Kelsie Acton who is one of our participants as a reviewer does identify as neurodiverse. She's not available to be with us this night, but one thing I can share in terms of being at the Citadel the

last 3 years, is that anytime we look to engage with the community, the desire is “nothing about us without us.” And so Citadel seeks paid consultation with members of the community that we hope to engage, including if we were to take on any projects that we're including and focusing on... those that are neurodiverse. So that's one thing just from my perspective, from the work that I've done at Citadel that we... I have worked a ton with Kelsie, and Brooke, and Chris, and other community members.

And I will throw it over to Daryl, and Mieko, and our associates to follow up with that.

Daryl: Thanks Jessie, and thanks Tarra. Yes. We're all we're always looking learn from people with lived experience about how best we can work together, and how best we can make the Citadel a place where people feel welcome, both on the stage and backstage, but also as audience. And to that, are always looking for ways to increase access for people to come to see our shows, whether that be through reduced ticket prices or Pay What You Can performances. Each time we start another series of performances we look for ways to ensure that there are many points of access. So to your point that's one that we carry with us each time we go into a programming cycle.

Chantell: Maybe I can speak a little bit about removing the financial barrier to access. It's really important to us. We know that there are a wide variety of people in our city who want to participate and want to attend the Citadel, and yet theater can be an expensive experience... So we do have to Pay What You Can performances for every Mainstage, but there's also a lot of other ways that we reach out to communities, and work with different groups, and provide very reduced or free tickets.

And we try to make it as accessible as possible, but we're always open to suggestions of what other groups can we be reaching out to? How can we invite people in? So we do it through our Newcomers Program, we do it through a lot of targeted marketing, and really trying to make sure that, for the most part, for every show you can get a ticket under \$30. That's available, but the Pay What You Can it can be everything from zero... the average ticket price is between \$5 and \$11, depending on the show, but it's what people can afford to give. So we do try and find ways to do that, and we're looking at ways... how do we stretch that out and extend it more broadly? And finding community support for that. So always open to ideas about how do we knock down some of those barriers?

Jessie: One thing I'll add as well is that Citadel is looking to increase our accessibility opportunities for both artists and audience members, and that includes relaxed performances. We have been in consultation with representatives that have done training through the British Council in terms of how to best host those events. And I know that we've got two recently trained representatives of that program in Edmonton now, which is Chris Dodd, and Connor Yuzwenko-Martin. And so the hope is that as we look to add those types of performances when we are back in the theatre, then we will be able to have specific performances that are welcoming and safe. Does that answer your questions, or would you like us to follow up on anything?

Tarra: Um, that pretty much sums it up. My biggest concern is that when you engage with my community, being as autistic as I am, I like being faced head on, like, come to me. Instead of doing surveys and all that... I really hate surveys, maybe some of us like filling things out but I hate them.

(Laughter) I love the person to person engagement. I love being involved with people. I am a leader of a Facebook group called the Alberta Hummingbird Project. Guess what? It's full of people with disabilities. We also have a sister group --also full of people with disabilities. You think I can help?

Jessie: That sounds amazing and for everyone that doesn't know I've already given Tarra my email address and a private DM. So Tarra and anybody else, if you would like to reach out to Citadel about how you can help us connect with the community, or how you think you can help inform some of the work we have coming up, please email me and we'll connect you with the group for sure.

Alright, so we're going to move to the next question. Heath, you are up and then Aroon next after that.

Heath: Hello. Yeah, I noticed that you did recognize them when I had my hand up. Yeah, mine is a quick question about, especially when we start getting back into a more regular times... I have taken several of the programs through the Foote School and I was wondering if there was any direct... I'm looking at being able to make sure that that place is more accessible. Especially for people aspiring to be future actors... and making sure that that place is.

Jessie: Heath, Can you clarify for the group... Do you mean physical accessibility, financial accessibility, or the programming itself? Like the format of the classes, the length of the classes, the number of people in the classes, all of those things?

Heath: Ah, I would say both. Physical accessibility is definitely up there... financial is as well. And especially considering that you're looking into it for your performers. If you've been looking into getting other communities and disability communities more encouraged to know that you're inviting rather than feeling that it's a place that isn't as accessible.

Jessie: Thank you. So, the information I can share is that Citadel Theatre recently undertook a renovation of the second floor Shoctor backstage to increase the accessibility for those that use mobility aids. And so we do have 4 wheelchair accessible washrooms backstage on the Foote Theatre School level now. And we have worked with our FTS for those that have identified as needing access to an elevator. We have made sure that we are connecting the production team, the facilities team, as well as the education department to make sure that physical access is available, and that there's no barriers to attending the classes. I will throw it to Daryl and Chantell in the group in regards to the other questions.

Daryl: Certainly, put the school and all of our education and outreach programming --as part of the Citadel-- is part of our 35/50 commitment. So all of all of our looking at our teaching staff, and the programming that we're offering, and the students --both youth and adult students that we are making the programs accessible to-- will become a big part of the 35/50 commitment that we look at moving forward. Because we know that our training is what's going to set up people for the opportunity to work with us professionally in the future. Chantell you looked like you were about to talk too, and I jumped in, sorry.

Chantell: No, no, no worries. Um, so I think that there's like a couple of things around the physical access to our building which... it's a very old building and, I know there are a lot of challenges. And Jessie has really spearheaded a lot of work on that. And you know, in the last few years after we worked for an audit with our patron experience, with our performer experience... and we're taking these projects kind of in chunks as we get the resources to do

them and funding to do them. So you know even just widening the Shoctor doors so that it can accommodate a variety of mobility aids, which it could not before. They were pretty doors, but they were super narrow and they really created a lot of challenges for people. Then doing the hearing loop, doing the backstage... So as we identify the most urgent needs and the things that we can get funded and supported, we hope to make every space in our building accessible to everyone. That is a prime goal. It's going to take some time, it's a big building, but we are working on it. And you know, we'll regularly refresh what the priorities are based on you what's happening in the building.

In terms of cost access... we are --from the school perspective-- it's basically a cost recovery program. We really do try and keep down our fees. We've faced some challenges this year as we faced additional expenses, having to reduce the class sizes and deal with all the Covid protocols and that kind of thing. But we are going to be actively looking for support in the community to help offset some of those expenses and see that the ways that we can welcome more people into our building. But we do also have options with regard to scholarships and fee abatements, and reductions, and things that... I think we need to work a little bit harder at making those more well-known so that people can take advantage of them.

Jessie: Thank you. Heath, does that answer your questions for tonight?

Heath: Yes, and I just sent you more of my information. I'm also part of CRIPSiE, and...

Jessie: I got that message now. Thank you.

Heath: I will also send you other information to other communities then. Thank you again.

Jessie: Thank you for your time, and please let us know if you have any follow up questions. Aroon? I hope I'm pronouncing that correctly. Please correct me if you'd like. And you've got the floor...

Aroon: Thank you.

Jessie: And Mary you're next. Just so you know!

Aroon: And you did get that right. Thank you. Yeah. Great initiatives, so thanks and congratulations to the Citadel for paving the way. My question is, when you look at major theatres across the country, where do we stand? Are we right at the front in terms of our initiatives? Or... what are others, I guess, curious as to what others are doing? Are we at the front of the line, or in the middle of the pack? Or do we have some catch up to do to get to best practice levels? So...

Jessie: That's amazing. Thank you for that question Aroon. I am going to give that to Daryl and Mieko.

Daryl: The answer is, is, yes to all of the above! So... you know it would be.. it's surprisingly --or maybe not surprisingly-- I would say like, Alberta is really leading some very strong initiatives. Because it's both Edmonton and Calgary, who have artists leading the 35/50 initiative. And we're seeing as part of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres, we're seeing that model spreading across the country very quickly right now as other theaters are looking to Alberta for that model and for a way to have a very concrete step forward.

I'd say, you know, in the few years of programming that I've been here for, and that we've been involved in... we've taken some really, really good steps for regional theatre in Canada, and showed some really strong leadership. But as you know, as it says in the report... there are still lots of places for us to take some big steps and make some big changes.

Mieko? If you had anything to add...

Mieko: Sure! Um... as an Artistic Director at Concrete Theatre, as well as having this position at the Citadel as an Associate Artist, I've been on a number of national Zoom meetings with other artistic directors across the country, and artistic leaders. And we've had so many questions about what's going on in Alberta, and especially about the 35/50, also about this report. And it's been really encouraging to hear people's interest. And we've had great feedback from folks in other cities about the report, which has been really encouraging.

And, you know, I try to tell them that even though this seems like a daunting amount of work to undertake, that I think the process has been incredibly worthwhile. It's really brought the entire Citadel team together in this endeavor, and I think it's the information is going to be incredibly important for the entire organization moving forward... being able to measure improvement, also being able to identify areas where we need to put in extra effort and work. So of course there's so much more to do, and many things to still overcome and work on, but I feel very encouraged by the feedback we've received so far.

Tai: They're both being modest. We are ahead.

Aroon: Excellent.

Tai: Perspective. Yeah, I think, I think Daryl and Mieko are being very generous and modest. But as far as... like especially as far as regional theatres would go I would say this report in this work is leading the way across Canada.

Aroon: That's great! Thank you.

Jessie: Thank you for your question Aroon. Thank you Tai, Mieko, and Daryl.

So Mary, you had put your hand up for a question, but you'd also put it in the Chat Box. So I wanted to give you a chance to ask that question yourself, or if you would like me to ask it for you?

Mary: Um... Yeah, that's exactly my question I don't need to... Yeah.

Jessie: Wonderful. So the question is, "How we, as your audience, will know which programs have BIPOC representation?"

Daryl: Which programs, in the sense of like productions and education and the different offerings that we have at the Citadel? Or...

Mary: Yeah, the question is, basically...I just wanted to know, is there some kind of...? Like you know, when you go for a sandwich you know it's a vegan sandwich because there's a green leaf right? So something like that. Do you have something that states to the community that, "Hey, we have 50/50 representation in terms of BIPOC community?"

Daryl: We actually... we don't. But that's kind of a great idea! I mean certainly like from a programming standpoint, it will often be obvious sort of based on the content of the play or the playwright of the play. But certainly around sort of educational initiatives, or some of the other programming, there's not an obvious way currently to announce it. But I'll look, I look to the team. If anyone has other examples of this... of ways we could approach that?

Chantell: Well I think when we market different programs or a different production... something is going on with the school, or initiatives, we try to share that in the information we share publicly --whether it's on the website or you know in a press release. When it comes to I guess more global information like are we actually doing the things we say we're going to do? You can expect to see a report much like this next year, which will bring in what we've been doing for the upcoming year. Which of course might look a little different than our regular seasons as we're all facing some strange times. But we'll be reporting regularly on it and identifying that in hindsight. But at the time... other than some marketing materials, I do think maybe we need some tools on how do we highlight this further for people? But... maybe not quite the green leaf like for the vegan sandwich, but we'll figure out a way to highlight it! That's a great idea. You want to know what you're eating in your sandwich. You want to know what you're coming to at the Citadel, that's fair!

Mary: No actually, the absence of BIPOC has been very obvious and stark. So we're just looking forward to opportunities where we can see on our stages, you know people from all racial backgrounds and ethnicities. Because there are so many different talents they bring to stage, and they're so diverse, right? So that's what I'm looking for. Actually right from the time I moved to Edmonton I've been hoping to see lots of our black community you know be, within your singing programs, because they have like an amazing range when it comes to like you know the how they perform. So I haven't seen that and that really bothers me.

So I'm really grateful for the step forward. And I'm hoping to see some of that actually reflected in the programs that I have, you know, I've been seeing with the Citadel.

Helen: I do think something that's also worth mentioning is... I believe one of the things we're committing to producing 2 plays that are by BIPOC playwrights. And generally with that, you will see BIPOC characters there for a purpose. So that might be a means of... like your green leaf for now? But... yeah. Thank you Mary.

Mary: Thanks so much for your response. It's very encouraging.

Jessie: Thank you Mary. Okay so, um... I have a couple... Hengameh I've got... you've got your hand raised and then Sue you're next. But before we go to the hands... I do have a couple of private DM questions that folks have asked me to share. And as I mentioned, the Chat Box is very busy, so I'm going to ask this question for Joan Yee. And Joan asks, "The report is an amazing undertaking. I have a question about data collection, how did you identify BIPOC and disabled artists from the historical data set?"

Daryl: For the most part, all of the data collection was anecdotal. So it was done by staff, through employment records, contracts, and by people that had worked alongside the staff or artists. There is a really incredible legacy and history at the Citadel of employees. Some of our managers have worked with us for up to 30-35 years? So there is quite a bit of history. But we know that that data collection process is imperfect, and particularly with regards to deaf and disabled staff members and artists. And so that's, as we renew our data collection annually, which we've committed to over this next year in preparation for next year's data collection... we

will improve our data collection process to provide some opportunities for staff and employees to self-identify should they choose.

Jessie: Joan... if you want to let us know whether or not that answers your question... Oh, she says, "Perfect! Thanks!"

Wonderful. Moving on. So the next... one quick question I wanted to reference was Marcy had put in the "Everyone Chat Box" asking whether or not it's an open group or if it's just staff? And asked how many staff are here or not here? And so just to give you an idea we've currently got 77 participants, and about 15 of us identify as Citadel staff members. And then we also have a couple of Board members, but the rest are community members.

Marcy if that doesn't answer your question, please let me know and I will further... provide some information.

So the next question is, "How can Citadel make Pay What You Can" more accessible than requiring people to stand in line --potentially for hours on one specific day? What if people aren't available on weekends, or that particular weekend?"

Chantell: I can take that one if that's helpful. We are looking at how to shift how we're dealing with "Pay What You Can". One is having people stand in line. Regardless of Covid, is not necessarily the best way to be deciding who gets a ticket... so we're looking at some technological options, some apps that we'd be able to use.

One of the reasons that we had sort of one day that would be for Pay What You Can is because it was an opportunity for our sponsor --we have a sponsor who allows, you know, who supports that work-- and they want an opportunity for their employees to come and volunteer. And they wanted to all come on one day. So as we're shifting and talking about different ways to provide that kind of access and that community outreach, we're looking at technology and we're looking at different things. And we would like to spread it out over... over the run of a show rather than just one day. And also make it more accessible. At the same time, not everyone is super comfortable with technology and apps and such so we're trying to figure out a way to have multiple ways to access those options that, you know, more people can take advantage of. And that's what we're working on through our extended intermission, as we're growing to call it.

Jessie: Thank you. So, Hengameh, and please let me know if I'm pronouncing that alright.

Hengameh: Um... It's pretty good. Hang-oh-me.

Jessie: Thank you. Alright, so the floor is yours.

Hengameh: Oh sorry, I want to say that I really liked the report. There's a ton of rich data on the history and the staff. My question is regards to the audience. So... what has been the typical profile of the Citadel audience? And how is your marketing strategies going to change in this new world? How do you plan to do outreach for new communities, let's say that you haven't done outreach before? So just... if you have any ideas as to the new marketing plan.

Chantell: I will take that one as well. Um, our audience previous... probably 3-5 years ago you would see that 65% of our audience was in that 55 and up range. Predominantly white, predominantly, you know, moneyed. You know, a wealthy class. We have seen a shift in the last 3-4 years through some of our initiatives. We've actually... the biggest group of our theatre

goers are now about a decade younger, which is excellent... you know where we're appealing to new audiences. And we are shifting away from... our audiences start to look a lot more like Edmonton. And that's our goal is that the people in the seats, on the stage, on our staff, actually reflect the community that we're serving. And with marketing what we tend to do, as we're working our season we're building out our program, is we have sort of stacked efforts. So not only do we look at the show that we're doing and community outreach with that... is that where are we spending our advertising dollars? What community groups are we working with to bring new people in and to let them know that we are doing a show that may be more relevant to them. And to really show that as the Citadel we are telling different kinds of stories, and that we're welcoming to our stages. So we advertise in more community types of media, community based... papers, radio stations, programs that appeal to different communities.

We have provided some access through our Newcomer Shows, where we provide free tickets to newcomers to Canada to welcome them to the theatre. And trying to provide supports within that as well to make that an easy and welcoming experience for them. We really try and layer our marketing efforts. Right from the start of when we know we're doing the show, which is usually you know... well in a year in advance, and start to think about 'how,' and really reach into the community. And how do we connect in a way that isn't what we've normally been doing? So that's generally our plan.

Jessie: Thank you. Does that answer your question?

Hengameh: Yes, it does. Thank you very much. It's Excellent.

Jessie: Thank you for asking. Sue you're next, and after Sue I've got a question from the Chat Box.

Sue: Great. Hi everybody! Thank you so much for all this fabulous work. I mean it's a great point of pride for our city to be able to say that we're leaders in, you know, the journey towards true inclusion and diversity. So that's really, really cool. Thank you for all your time and labor on this.

My question is in regards to programming and local artists. Something that I hear a lot of... I've been hearing a lot in the report and in this meeting here is that we want um... the Citadel to be able to reflect the city in which it lives, and I think that's wonderful. And knowing now that there's the opportunity for 2 shows by BIPOC playwrights to be included in programming is brilliant! But something that I've learned over my time as, you know, in my career is that unless you've got a solid foot in the door in professional theatre... You don't necessarily have an opportunity to put your work out there. So pretty much what I'm wondering is, are there going to be any opportunities built into programming, or opportunities built into even education or, you know...? Um... like it Sorry, my brain just got shut down. (*Laughter.*) But is there going to be any opportunity for people to submit shows unsolicited?

The reason I ask is because I feel as though if there's going to be an opportunity for the city to be reflected in the programming, you know, maybe the city could be reflected in the programming in that way! So I'm wondering if there's --and forgive me if I'm ignorant to something that already exists-- but I'm wondering if there's any opportunity in that way? Thank you.

Daryl: Yes, definitely Sue, definitely. Thank you for that question. We like... are always looking for... to build relationships with local playwrights and local producing companies. We're really

interested in building community. So whether we can help work with local companies to feature their work as part of our subscription season to help amplify their reach to our subscribers and our audiences, or whether we're able to work with local playwrights to develop their work for our stage.

I think that it's taken me a couple of years of being here, but as somebody with a great interest in new play development... you know, I looked around Edmonton and kept thinking well you know there's a lot of new play development happening here and it's really exciting. What's the thing that Citadel can bring to artists here that's different? And I think the thing that we can do is that we can help local artists dream on a larger scale.

So where we've tried to point our new play development resources and connections is to help people think about how to develop work for a larger scale. So as an example, commissioning *The Silver Arrow* with Mieko, was to allow a local playwright a chance to dream for a big stage and a large cast, and what that could mean. So looking to build those relationships. But also looking to build... if a local playwright has a really great small show that their company is producing, and if we can get that in the Rice Theatre and help them run it for a longer period and find a larger audience that's of interest to us too.

So it was a long way to say 'yes.' Yes we're very interested in building those relationships.

Helen: And also in the realm of getting your foot in the door, a program that we've just started, which the submission deadline is for today is the RBC Horizon Emerging Artists Program. Where we're taking on emerging artists in several areas of theatre production via playwriting via design so on and so forth. They can build those skills for theatres like the Citadel.

Sue: And that's fabulous! Pretty much I think what I'm asking also is like... is there a formalized process for being able to submit something?

Daryl: There is not. Currently there is not. It very much is... because we have a number of different sort of stages of play development, whether it be sort of our, our lab or commissions, or just giving seed money to develop workshops... Really at this point the best idea is just email the script to myself, or to the Associate Artists, and we all look at it and talk about it together and consider ways to work with that playwright.

Sue: Thank you so much.

Jessie: Thank you, Sue. Alright, the next question comes from Dani. Dani Fernandez, and she asked me to ask this question: "As a female BIPOC artist I am afraid that with the new 35/50 initiative, I will be hired just to fill in a number. What is the Citadel doing to ensure that they are creating genuine relationships with BIPOC folks in our community?"

Daryl: I think we're doing the work building relationships. We're reaching out to BIPOC artists to get to know them, whether it be through productions that we're working with them on, whether it be through workshops and development. As actors, or as playwrights, finding opportunities for us to get to know our local artists.

I think the best example of that most recently was the Horizon Lab Series that we did this summer... curated by our Associate Artists. Maybe I'll throw it over to one of the team to talk about that.

Mieko: I'm happy to say something about that. Um, we really wanted to focus with Horizon Lab on connecting with teams that were already working together, or with artists who we thought were kind of working in similar areas that might really benefit from a collaborative experience. And to connect them more firmly with the Citadel, to get to know them, to give them the opportunity to grow and work on a larger stage. And so that was an incredible experience I think for those artists, and for us too, we learned a ton. And we got to know them, and created relationships that I think will continue forward for sure.

I know I can only speak for myself but I feel like Daryl has been really clear from my... when I first met him, about wanting to make a sincere relationship to me as a diverse artist. And I think that has, you know extended through his work since as time has been here. So I just really want to say I felt the benefit of just that sincere outreach to me, and I've really appreciated it. And definitely, for example, the experience of *The Silver Arrow*, having that chance to create an "A House" show has led now to a second "A House" production that's coming up for me. So I really don't know if I would have had that opportunity without that first outreach and commission from Daryl. So I'm incredibly grateful for that chance.

Jessie: Wonderful, thank you everyone for sharing. She's messaged that she's acknowledged that the Citadel is working towards that, so she thanks us for the effort.

So our next question is coming from the Chat Box. Marcy, you've got the floor for your question. Or quest... you had mentioned.

Marcy: Sorry... Okay, I'm here. My groups. Most of them have disabilities, or lack of funds. And so they asked me to come. So that's why I'm here. And yes, you guys --from what I know-- are doing really, really well. Okay. And I want to thank you for the closed caption. So, thank you very much, because I'm hard of hearing, so that's fantastic!

I do notice like, you have 3 people. Myself, Tarra, and Heath, and we're all here giving you some suggestions that maybe will help you in the future... Like on your path, you mentioned. Um, we're not criticizing, okay? It's just to give you some suggestions. Like for example um... I don't know where my letters went, but for six plus years I've been sending letters, and the lady that I met with --she's not here. But I met with someone from your group for 5 years. Because one thing that I've noticed that hasn't been brought up is that your group is expensive. Okay? It's not for people... I don't even know if I could afford your group to be honest with you. I'm not trying to criticize, but I probably couldn't afford your group. You know? Like for a majority of people in Edmonton, they couldn't afford you. And I don't know if you realize that. Like I... that's not a criticism that's a reality. Okay? I think you need to take a step back and, like, realize that. So that you realize that the majority of people with disabilities are not able to even go to one thing in their entire life to what you have. That's why I kept meeting with someone from your Board. I kept saying, please make one time a year where someone with a disability can afford you. So you guys did. Once. It was in the middle of the dead of winter, and you couldn't fill up the room. So what happened was I got an email --and I still have it-- I got an email, "Please, you can bring all the people from your groups to come."

But the buses weren't running because it was such a dead... I got everything, I keep everything that's good or bad. And it was such a bad storm, the buses weren't running. So of course online members, or wheelchairs, or walkers, or canes, or whatever, didn't come out. So bad on us because we didn't come out.

So, the next time I didn't hear from her again. So I wrote another one, because I get together with my group and say, "What do you want?" So of course, you know, when you're talking about having nice groups where people could join and be part of your group... I think that's wonderful! I really do. But I know for a fact that no one in my groups, okay? And my groups are not just like 10 people. It's a large form, and I can give you numbers. It's a large group throughout all of Alberta, if they have not gone to it, they're not part of your group. Not because they don't want to be. They're not asked, and they can't, because the amount of money that's required. And that to me... That makes me sad.

Okay? Now yes you guys are less expensive than the other group... so like that, gentlemen... Aroon? Whatever his name is, he is right. You guys have come really far and I agree, and like I said in the beginning, that's fantastic! You have come really far and... but I'm just saying, and this is not a criticism. I'm hoping in the future like, definitely the future on a path that you can make it more accessible to people --not just people with disabilities-- people that can't afford that. That is more than just people with disabilities. That's all races and newcomers, you know? There's a lot of people in Edmonton, and Alberta, that can't afford, and would love to be part of your group.

That's all I want, that's the speech I'm supposed to say for all my groups. So thanks. *(Laughter.)*

Jessie: Thank you, Marcy. Thank you so much for taking the time, and for your energy and your labor and sharing that on behalf of your group attendees. And for being with us tonight.

Marcy: Thank you, Jessie.

Jessie: So the one thing... so, so just to reiterate Marcy's question for the group is just about financial accessibility, and removing barriers for performances and what we might be able to do about that. Chantell?

Chantell: I think is... you know, it's really, really important. We want people to be able to come and enjoy the theatre experience and not to be barred from that by financial limitations. So, like I said, we've got our Pay What You Can, which we do every Mainstage. And there's I think 100... and it shifts but it's usually over 100 tickets.

And those are like... no to low cost tickets, but I think we're recognizing that we need to find a different way to do that? Or an additional way to do that. And balance out being able to afford to put on the show... because we do have to sell tickets to be able to... Believe it or not, non-profit theatre is not a big money making venture, so we have to balance that out. But really, how do we open the door and more ways? So I think, you know, as we look at our Pay What You Will or Pay What You Can model, figuring out how do we --not just have it like you said-- it's like a one chance and then one and done. How do we create more opportunities? Maybe spread it out for the run of a show? And that kind of thing and I think that it'll be... I think that that's really, really important.

We've also done some things like remove the cost for companion ticket. So if someone needs to to come with someone to assist them --because you know accessing the theater, especially in the middle of it a Canadian winter-- can be a bit of a challenge. You know, removing that cost barrier of a companion ticket. So we are trying to find a number of ways, and that is something we will continue to do. And like I think looking at our Pay What You Can model is really, really important. How do we do it in a way that's equitable and not take away something that's working for some people, but add to it?

Marcy: Okay, okay. So you're gonna continue to keep trying. Okay, perfect.

Jessie: Yes, always. Marcy that's one thing we can share with you is that we will always be working. This is not... there is no end date, there is no finish line. This is always going to be the work that we're doing, and we really appreciate your time and energy and sharing that with us.

So, just to check in with the list... So I've got one question I'm going to share from the Chat Box that's anonymous, and then next up will be Gina, and then Cynthia. And we will... if anybody else has any questions I really encourage you to use the raise hand function so that I'm able to make sure we get to everyone as we are running very... slowly but quickly out of time. We will also, as mentioned, this will be available recorded within a week or so, and the full transcript will be available.

So the next question I have in the Chat Box... I'm not going to share this person's name. I just have to find it again. There it is! "I'm wondering if there are any initiatives being put in place when it comes to composition when casting shows? With the history of the Citadel and the changes that have been made in the past years, there's an evident pattern of BIPOC representation being paired with female identifying performers on your stages, and a large portion of male identifying performers who are predominantly white presenting. A good example of this would be Christmas Carol this past season, where I've observed not a single male identifying or non-binary, that I'm aware of, BIPOC performer on your stage. And a large majority of the female identifying performers, who were BIPOC. I'm wondering what initiatives are being put in place to source, hire, and cast BIPOC artists across the gender spectrum?"

Daryl: That's a great question. I'll start and then the rest of the team you're welcome to jump in. A lot of the time for us, it's balancing priorities. So balancing the priorities of ensuring representation for BIPOC artists on our stage with balancing the priority of wanting to give as many opportunities as possible to local artists.

And so often, we are experienced thus far in Edmonton is... there is a wealth of incredibly talented BIPOC female artists that we've had an opportunity to work with. And we reach out throughout the city and throughout the community to give opportunities for as many local artists as possible. We don't currently have, have structure in place to ensure, whether it's the representation is male or female. But I think that's a great thing for us to be looking at. We often make a choice. If the choice is to represent a story by a BIPOC playwright, that we think is very important to tell our community, then we'll make the choice to budget that show to ensure that not only can we cast it locally, but we can cast it outside of the community. An example being this past season, *The Color Purple*. That we thought that that story was really important for us to share, and to ensure that our stage had 16 incredible black performers on it. And for that we budgeted to go outside of Edmonton to ensure that there were artists from Edmonton and beyond to make that story happen.

But I'll defer to other members of the team if you have anything.

Kim: Daryl, can I quickly add to that?

Daryl: Yeah.

Kim: As a commissioned playwright for the Citadel and the arts club it's a co-commission... I think that's a really incredible question. Especially when it comes to non-binary roles for BIPOC

people, femmes, masc-presenting... And I think something that an inter-relates to what somebody was saying about meaningful relationships with BIPOC community members, and I think that's something that Daryl has done for a very long time. I know our relationship is one that's lasted years and he constantly invests in and supports. And when you do that, I really offer that it is really important that it's about the quality of the relationship versus the quantity. And what that actually provides. And I'm excited and I feel humbly responsible to ensure that being a guest on Treaty 6, and occupying space as that guest equitably and responsibly, represents the Treaty 6 Territory, and the members of that inter-nation relationship.

And I think that's really important and something that I'd be happy to talk about with the commissioners or other playwrights about. What is it that we need as playwrights to help support, fill, and equitably represent. And I'm just going back right now to make an edit to go from not just one nine non-binary, Indigenous femme, but 2. Because I think... I feel very responsible to ensure that I --when I'm getting these opportunities, and taking up resources, and taking up spaces-- that I'm also helping these reports and us create more responsible statistics and relationships in terms of what that community sees on the stage. And I will say that that's really important to me. And I feel like, as a part of the Citadel family, I'm excited to provide those opportunities.

Daryl: Thanks very much Kim.

Mieko: Um, if I could just add on to that too, Kim. I know for *The Silver Arrow*, from the very beginning when Daryl and I were sort of talking about the commission... it was a stated goal between the two of us to... that the cast included a diverse group of people across race, across ability, across all kinds of things. And in fact, out of that I added a diversity writer to the script. So that moving forward any future productions, would not be allowed to go forward with an all-white cast, and it requires --it's written, embedded in the script that there are characters from different backgrounds and living with disability. And yeah, so I think that that has been something that I've come to as a individual playwright as well and it sounds like you were... you're doing the same. We're on that journey as playwrights. And I think it's our job as playwrights to partner with theatres to encourage this as well. And I think that's, you know, I found a very open and receptive person and Daryl to have that conversation. So...

Kim: And just to add to that too --because I'm really excited about it and it interrelates to the stats-- and I just want to say thanks. Thank you so much for everyone who participated initiated that and executed that. And that... Daryl has been very responsive and the team in terms of where I think also there are gaps in the way that the Citadel is serving Treaty 6, is around the designers. BIPOC designers. And so we're working on initiatives around how we can get mentorship and knowledge-sharing opportunities to ensure that... That was the chart that I gasped when I looked at it! About how white it was. And that really concerns me. And so I just want to make offers to the community now. If you are a BIPOC person and you are interested in design, even have one little notion around it, please get in contact with us and we're really going to try and open space and open opportunities so that design becomes less white-supremacist. And I know that I have a responsibility as an artistic leader to help that, and also beat because we're in relationship with the Citadel to ensure that when we come and take space and hold space that we do it in a way that helped transform those really shocking statistics.

But I'm, I will say that Daryl and team are supporting an initiative that will help right those like racist decision making over 20 or 30 years that stewarded in a lack of BIPOC and diverse members of the design community.

Jessie: Thank you, Kim. Thank you Mieko and Daryl. So the next question we have coming up is Gina! The space is yours.

Gina: Thank you so much. Hey friends! First, I'm echoing a lot of comments here of gratitude for the work and research that has gone on into this report. Greatly appreciated. I have a lot of hope in the outreach to diversify the paid labor that goes... that is within your brick and mortar. That is the Citadel Theatre. One of the areas that I'd like to talk about specifically is a full-time staff leadership positions. The decision makers and who are predominantly white, predominantly able-bodied, and predominantly neurotypical. I was wondering if you might be able to take a moment to address how that fits with the forward drive of this initiative?

Daryl: Thanks Gina. Thank you.

Cynthia: Can I add that my question is sort of similar to Gina's? And can I piggyback on it? Because I feel like your answers might combine. And I'd love to see if Gina's okay with that.

Gina: Go for it! Go for it.

Cynthia: Okay. Thank you, Gina. Because they're very parallel, of course.

I just wanted to speak... well first off I'm very nervous and vulnerable, and I just need to recognize that. So I wrote down my thoughts so that I could get them out because I actually realized I have more of a.. I think comment and a suggestion in line with Gina's question.

Um, I wanted to speak towards, specifically my personal experience of being an actor in the space at Citadel. I've been very fortunate to work at Citadel over the last couple of years. I'm going to use language that I learned recently from Nicole Brewer's anti-racist theatre course about... around harm reduction and harm prevention. And... how having a minority --if there's a minority or a marginalized individual present in the space to ensure that there is representation for that individual in some sort of form of power or leadership in the room. Whether it's for rehearsal halls, but I think that is relevant to other departments as well.

I think, as you said, the, the numbers from your data, obviously, look much better for representation on stage, but that we know that's not where the work stops. I think you're already doing a lot of this work in the initiative, but I too want to see how it'll move on in the future because... actors, especially are obviously in an incredibly vulnerable position when they're working not only by being the face of a production, but also like the constant fear of being hired back and getting worked again. And that's something that we have to live with, and in my personal experience at least when speaking up on a concern, even when it's been received well. I've found the ability to speak up in the first place is terrifying. And that's just something that I want to share.

And I'm really grateful for when it has been received well and acted on. But even if I had had Mieko, or Tai, or Helen in a room that would have made a world of a difference for me to have those people present to speak to because... what ends up happening I feel is emotional labor, that is not paid for, outside the room happens. Um... and that's just a reality that I feel like happens for the actors. And so yeah just going along with the diversity initiatives of ultimately when there is diversity in the space of some sort of minority present that there is representation in leadership. I guess, whether there are minorities in the space or not, I think in leadership

that's something that has to shift. But especially, how are you showing up for more vulnerable people in the room in those situations? I hope I articulated myself well. Thank you, Gina for opening that door for me.

Daryl: Thank you. Thank you both Gina and Cynthia. We really appreciate it.

Yes, the answer, answer is 100% yes to all of that. We, as part of the data report in our commitments going forward, we commit to BIPOC representation in leadership --both in the rehearsal hall and in rehearsal situations-- but also within the organization itself, knowing that that's a mandatory step for us going forward. At present, working with our Associate Artists through that this current initiative, through the data report... also through all of the programming that's happening right now, is our first big step in that direction. But we know to Gina's earlier point, that it's important that it'd be full-time and then it's important that it'd be about decision-making. And we commit to that, as, as we move forward. I don't know if anybody else wants to jump in.

Tai: Um... I can actually add to that. Hi Cynthia, I feel like we've been going like this... it's me, Tai. Um, I just wanted to speak personally from my perspective --I totally, like as an actor too I totally hear where you're coming from-- and what I wanted to say is that in my journey I felt like the Citadel, and Daryl specifically has really... Essentially, they're working to create those people and those positions, and it's just taking a bit of time.

Yeah, like whenever I reach out to Daryl to ask to assist on something he says yes. Like last year I shadowed him for two weeks as an Artistic Director, and watched him plan his seasons on all the big fancy budgets. And so the Citadel is really... what the Citadel team is doing is they're really making that space for those people to grow into those positions so that someday people won't feel that way, in rehearsal halls. Yeah.

Chantell: Maybe I can help with that as well as that, we can see that there are certain areas where it's a little bit easier to move the needle quickly. You know, decisions that you're making from season to season, it's easy to make those changes quickly. We obviously have challenges in areas where we've got, you know, there isn't a position that comes up every year. And we certainly have been trying to move the needle, but it is slow we I think we started at 6% BIPOC in administration when I started, and we're now at 18%. And part of me wants to go, "Yay triple as much!" But still we're only at 18% so we still have so far to go. So, some of the things that we're doing are around looking at the attraction of candidates. Because, you know... is it that we aren't getting the candidates because they don't think it's a great place to come work? They don't think that opportunity is there for them? Is it that that candidate hasn't been... you know maybe mentored, or have that gap-training to feel confident in applying for the role.

So, we know that we need to... This is beyond what's happening in our building. We need to go out to Grant MacEwan, to the university, to the training organizations and say, "We need to provide co-op opportunities, and training opportunities, and rotations..." And we've been doing some of that. Some of it has been totally blown up by Covid, so just as we were starting to get these things in flight.

I'm part of a mutual mentorship program which brings business leaders from the BIPOC communities that are graduating out of schools, and then we're creating a mutual mentorship. So they're learning about, you know, leadership, and business, and I'm learning about their lived experiences, and the challenges they're facing. And those are things that we want to echo and

repeat within the theatre environment. We also have unions that we're working with... so it's a little bit challenging because we're working within the confines of a collective agreement.

So for IATSE for example, I've reached out to their national leadership --the president of the IATSE Union, as well as the local president and said, "You've seen the report. This is our commitment. It's going to impact you. Let's work together on some best practices. Let's work together on some initiatives. Maybe there's already something going on nationally?" And then... where are they getting their candidates? Because sometimes you know we put out a call we need crew, and we want a diverse crew and they're like, "We don't have anyone." I don't know if that's true, as I don't get to see into their roster. But if they don't have anyone... why don't they? And where's that not happening?

So we were I think we're on the demand side of the economic equation here? So we need to go to our partners, our training, our recruiters and see... what can we do to change ourselves to attract those wonderful diverse candidates? How do we help them? How do we make them? How do we make them leadership ready? So that they feel confident, they are set up to be succeed --not to fail-- and that we are getting these candidates coming to us. Because that's the challenge. And you know... where's the gap for us and where are they not getting support from maybe educational or, you know, trade unions and that kinds of thing?

So that's you know that's some of the things that we're working on and those are going to take time. That needle takes a little bit longer, but we've got time. We've made commitments for 2024-2025. So we've got a little bit of runway there, and we can really start putting pressure in the most wonderful, collaborative way on some of our partners and stakeholders to make this happen together.

Jessie: Chantell, the follow up question in the Chat Box is: "How many people are 18%?"

Chantell: How many people...? I'm sorry I don't know off the top of my head right now. *(Laughter.)* With the IATSE team... and the IATSE team stretches,. You know, sometimes we have 250 members in the building when we're doing a number of shows, and *Christmas Carol* is going on, and sometimes we have a smaller group.

But so that's that's that stretches... but when we're talking about administration from, we've got... 88 people usually, in regular times. BC, before Covid. Other permanent staff members... and so that's the 18% we'd be going off that. So gotta get out my calculator. *(Laughter.)*

Jessie: Brooke and Sue... please let us know if that answers your follow up question about that?

Cynthia and Gina, does that answer your question?

Wonderful. Thank you.

Alright, so we are at the very last question. We're running out of time, and we will be sharing a slide at the end of the session that has my email address on it. We will also be dropping it in the Chat Box. If we are not able to get to your question, just running out of time... What you can do is email me and I will make sure to share it with the group, and we will follow up with you after the session, because we understand that there's... that we might have missed a question in the Chat Box, or we might just not be able to get to everyone. Because I have a few in the Chat

Box, and we have a couple of hands up. So I'm going to go to Megan. And Megan, you have the floor.

Megan: Hi everyone. I do want to ensure my question is... relates to backstage people. But I do know that there are other questions and I want to... I'm able to give up a bit of my space if it means that Natércia can have her chance to ask her question. In the interest of time, I don't know if that's okay or not.

Jessie: Ask your... ask, if you'd like to ask your question please go ahead and do so.

Mieko: Okay, I think it'd be great because we haven't heard any questions about that so...yeah.

Megan: Okay, um sure. So this was touched... this has been touched on earlier, and I also did write my things down because I'm very much, not an in front of people talker. So um... I wrote my notes down as well. *(Laughter.)*

So it has been touched on that, but I feel the need to ask because I noticed that the conversation is often focused on performers on stage, and I do know that... we have touched on it a little bit uh for backstage people. And this is also a bit of a follow up to the previous private question that was asked earlier, but I'm wondering, there's a lot of initiative to ensure diversity for performers represented on stage. But I'm curious to know, and how we can ensure and/or as a community members follow up with --and this is also acknowledging that I, myself have had the privilege to work at the Citadel before as a designer.

But I'm curious to know what's being done to ensure diversity as part of your backstage personnel? Crew, designers, stage management, etc. Is their opportunity to find help finance paid associates? Because oftentimes as designers that comes out of our own pocket, unless it's previously negotiated. Are there shadow positions that we created or could be created? Or reaching out to training facilities in the community to create opportunity for people to work backstage? I hope I was coherent as well.

Jessie: You were very coherent. Thank you! I'm gonna throw that to Daryl.

Daryl: Oh yes. Yeah. Thank you Megan! Certainly as far as designers go, we... I think Helen touched on earlier... our newest initiative is our Emerging Artist Program where we're offering residencies through our association with RBC, paid residencies that allow both emerging directors, but also emerging designers, and playwrights to come work with designers here on projects. So to ensure that there is an opportunity for paid, assistant positions for BIPOC designers to be gaining that experience on a larger stage with designers in our space.

Our commitment also is to start to work closely with IATSE to start to build their shared capacity with us to ensure that our backstage crew is also representative of Edmonton. And so, that's got to be a partnership with us and IATSE. I don't know, Chantell... if you want to touch on the relationship with IATSE?

Chantell: Yeah. I mean, obviously we have a close relationship with IATSE. We're probably their largest employer in Edmonton, but we are governed by a collective bargaining agreement, and the rules of how a union sends folks to you when you make a request... you are laid out in that and. And so I think we need to change how that is happening, and making sure that we've got options. As we are hiring in other areas, we have more choice. You know, when we're hiring into more senior roles we have choice. But we also need to make sure that IATSE is

attracting and retaining diverse members, and they are training them, and that they are... they are there to hire and to move up into more senior roles. And so that is going to be a partnership, and it's going to I think mean... some changes to how unions have, you know, generally operated and how that relationship is worked. And we have a good relationship with IATSE so I'm very hopeful we'll be able to make some changes. But I think that will take time.

Tai: It's similar to leadership... playing the long game. Yeah.

Megan: Excellent, thank you.

Jessie: Thank you, Megan. We are at over-time, unfortunately. So Daryl and Chantell, I'll throw it back to you. And I just wanted to say thank you to everyone that joined us tonight, and as I mentioned, I'll emphasize again... my email is in the inbox. Please email me if you have any questions that we were not able to get to tonight.

Daryl: Thanks Jessie. Yeah, just to say thank you everyone. To say thank you, in particular to our ASL interpreters Tracy and Carmelle for their great work. And to thank all of you for taking time out of your evening to join us. And please, please if you do have other questions or thoughts that come up, please consider this the beginning of a conversation. And please reach out to Jessie or to any of us directly. We would be very, very happy to continue this conversation with you. Thank you. Thank you so much.

Jessie: So what we'll do is we'll keep the meeting going for one more minute for anyone that would like to share any parting greetings or anything like that in the Chat Box. Wayne has kindly dropped my email again in the Chat Box.

Email us, please! We're very open to it. Like we mentioned at the top... this session is being recorded and our *Otter.ai* transcript will also be corrected --because it's really terrible with spelling-- and we will release both the transcript and the recording within a week or two, it depends on how long our captioner... or our transcriber takes. But we're hoping within the week... and anybody that RSVPed and got the email for the link tonight, will get a link to that recording so that if you would like to go back and review anything, or if it helps inform a conversation you would like to have with us, we do invite you to watch that. So thanks again, And have a great night! Stay safe!