

## CITADEL THEATRE: Declared Actions Regarding Anti-Oppression and Inclusion

*Canadian Theatre Agreement, Article 10* Last Updated: August 31, 2024

We wish to acknowledge that the land on which we live and work is Treaty No. 6 territory and a traditional meeting ground and home of the First Nations, including both the treaty signatories – Cree, Saulteaux, Nakota Sioux, Stony and Cree-Iroquois – as well as other Indigenous peoples, such as the Blackfoot and Métis, who occupy this land. We extend our appreciation for the opportunity to live, create and perform on this territory.

In the spirit of a shared commitment to sectoral change, and to foster the development of safe, respectful, and responsible work environments in the performing arts, Citadel Theatre is building anti-racism, inclusion and anti-oppression into the heart of all our policies, practices and programming. We recognize that this work will never be finished. Please let us know if you have any questions about this document, or our ongoing initiatives.

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### WHAT WE BELIEVE – ORGANIZATIONAL STATEMENT

The Citadel Theatre is in the heart of amiskwaciwâskahikan ᐱᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ (Edmonton, AB), and we are proud to call Treaty 6 territory home. As a regional theatre, it is integral that we ensure that the stories we tell, as well as the composition of our artists, board, staff, students and audience are reflective of the diverse lived experiences in this dynamic city.

We commit to dismantling the systems of oppression that our organization has benefited from. We acknowledge our privilege as one of the largest arts organizations in Alberta, and one of the largest regional theatres in Canada; it is our responsibility to enshrine this commitment at the heart of our company. We pledge to be held accountable to this ongoing work with transparency and in dialogue with communities and all stakeholders.

We believe this work requires immediate and ongoing action and constant reflection. We will continue to build an anti-racism and anti-oppression intersectional framework through training, paid consultation, internal analysis, the engagement of an Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee, a commitment to Edmonton's 35//50 Initiative and significant policy changes and accountability throughout the entire organization.

We are proud to be part of our city's vibrant theatre community and commit to working together with our colleagues to exchange knowledge and ensure lasting systemic change at the Citadel and throughout the arts community. We welcome and celebrate all voices, all bodies, and all experiences.

This is a living statement that was crafted by Citadel Theatre's Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee. If you have any questions, please contact [EDICCommittee@citadeltheatre.com](mailto:EDICCommittee@citadeltheatre.com).

## CITADEL THEATRE ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIONS (as of August 2024)

### **Governance of Organization:**

- *Sept 2016:* The Citadel sees a shift in artistic and executive leadership. Diversity, accessibility and equity increases within the organization.
- *Feb 2017:* Christine Sokaymoh Frederick becomes the first Indigenous Associate Artist at the Citadel.
- *May 2020:* The Citadel formally pledges to incorporate anti-racist practices into everyday operations.
- *Sept 2020:* The Citadel adopts the [35//50 Initiative](#), aiming to have our organization be comprised of a minimum 35% BIPOC and 50% women and non-binary people by the 2024/25 season.
- *Fall 2020:* Board takes steps to meet 35//50 commitment on board composition, meets target by Fall 2021.
- *Feb 2021:* Board creates a new “Culture & Community” committee – meeting monthly on EDI initiatives.
- *July 2021:* The Board posts open call for new Members, the first public call in the Citadel’s history.
- *Nov 2021:* The Board of Directors now meets the 35//50 Commitment on board composition.

### **Education of Citadel Board, Staff and Team Members:**

- *Feb 2021:* The Citadel begins regular bi-weekly EDI Resource Share to staff.
- *June 2021:* Fifty members of Citadel Theatre’s staff, production teams, Board and EDI Committee undertake the first annual Anti-Racism Training with Norquest College’s Colbourne Institute for Inclusive Leadership.
- *Feb - Mar 2022:* The Citadel Theatre’s staff, production teams, instructors, Board and EDI Committee participate in Indigenous Cultural Awareness training workshops, led by Elder Russell Auger.

### **Organizational Change:**

- *Jan 2018:* The Board of Directors and management of the Citadel Theatre identify through informal reports that former and current staff held negative sentiments about their past experiences with the organization. It was determined that action was required to gather more information about the complaints and underlying issues.
- *March 2018:* Artistic Director Daryl Cloran writes an [open letter](#) to the community, acknowledging the historical issues reported and invited community members to come forward to share their experiences and concerns through a professionally guided and confidential disclosure process. The Citadel Theatre retains Wade King, who is an experienced human rights and disclosure advisor to create and manage a Third-Party Safe Disclosure Intake process. Wade continues to manage Citadel Theatre’s Third-Party Safe Disclosure Program.
- *June 2020:* Citadel Theatre hires 3 diverse artists: Helen Belay, Tai Amy Grauman, and Mieko Ouchi as Associate Artists. With their input, organizational data collection begins. Associates meet with senior management in all departments to gain greater understanding of current systems; conversations begin around where change can happen. They create new initiatives focusing on increased representation by marginalized artists including the RBC Horizon Emerging Artist Mentorship Program, *Horizon Lab: Where Are Your Stories?* and the Horizon Series LIVE!.
- *Aug 2020:* During *Horizon Lab: Where Are Your Stories?* patrons donate to a newly created BIPOC Fund, which the Citadel’s BIPOC artists & team members can access to further artistic, production or administrative skills.

## *Organizational Change Cont'd*

- *Oct 2020:* Associate Artist Mieko Ouchi becomes Associate Artistic Director at Citadel Theatre.
- *April 2021:* The Citadel's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee is created, composed of Board Directors, senior leadership, multi-departmental staff as well as community members with representation of 50%+ BIPOC/disabled artists. The Committee meets monthly.
- *May 2021:* The Citadel's Anti-Racism Statement - "What We Believe" - is built.
- *June 2021:* The EDI Committee builds a formal framework to support the BIPOC Fund.
- *August 2021:* The Citadel releases first Article 10, "Declared Actions Regarding Anti-Oppression and Inclusion".
- *Sept 2021:* Citadel begins building multi-person panels to facilitate multiple people at interviews and auditions to ensure a variety of perspectives and to mitigate bias.
- *July 2022:* Two-year term for Associate Artists Helen Belay and Tai Amy Grauman is completed. New Associate Artist Kristi Hansen begins two-year term.
- *January 2022:* Citadel Theatre introduces its Heart & Hub Program, providing support to smaller arts organizations through waived, discounted or at-cost rental space and sharing production-related resources including accessibility equipment (sensory kits, touch tour mannequins, teleprompter) and other project materials.

## **Programming:**

- *Aug 2020:* *Horizon Lab: Where Are Your Stories?* is produced, featuring 4 teams of BIPOC artists and disabled artists performing short original pieces on the Shoctor Stage.
- *Fall 2020 to Fall 2021:* Horizon Series LIVE! Begins, with three mainstage productions by diverse playwrights & adaptors: *A Brimful of Asha*, a Métis adaptation *Mary's Wedding*, and *Heaven*.
- *Sept 2020:* The Citadel commits to have two main stage productions per year by BIPOC or Disabled playwrights and for casting and artistic teams over each season reflect our 35//50 commitments.
- *2021:* The Citadel Theatre continues offering The Exchange Series, refocusing topics to discuss matters related to the organization's stated values including *Anti-Fat Bias In Creative Process* (May 2021, Action Responses available [here](#)) and *Trans Artists, Voices, and Perspectives in Theatre* (June 2021 with Theatre Alberta). The Exchange features rotating topics, keynote speakers, discussion panels, roundtable sessions, and Edmonton's performing arts community.

## **Production:**

- *Oct 2018:* Creation of the Family Lending Library ensuring traveling artists have easy access to materials to best host young family members while on contract in Edmonton.
- *Oct 2020:* RBC Horizon Emerging Artist Mentorship Program begins, to support 4 BIPOC artists in underrepresented areas in the 2020/21 Season by diverse professional mentors.
- *Feb 2021:* Citadel Theatre Stage Managers attend the *Practicing Equity: Anti-racist Stage Management* professional development session with Narda E. Alcorn.
- *July 2021:* The Citadel commits to cultural consultants on productions where culture & identity are centered.
- *Aug 2021:* All Citadel Theatre audition postings begin including rehearsal and venue accessibility information and opportunities for artists to self-identify specific access needs to remove any real or perceived barriers. The Citadel starts providing warm-up room access for all auditions, including prep readers and accompanists.

## *Production Cont'd*

- *July - Aug 2021:* The Citadel launches a region wide casting call for “Tim” in *A Christmas Carol*, seeking a youth actor with lived experience of disability and/or chronic illness for our production.
- *Dec 2021:* The Citadel releases [Statement](#) on Representation, in recognition of International Day of Persons with Disabilities, announcing the casting of the first disabled child actor to play “Tim” in *A Christmas Carol* (introducing Elias Martin as “Tim” in our 2022 production of *A Christmas Carol*).
- *Jan 2022:* Citadel Theatre formalizes support to artists working in our building that require family space for new parents with infants.
- *July 2022:* The Citadel revises the call for the RBC Horizon Emerging Artist Mentorship Program, to support Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC), as well as D/deaf, D/disabled, and Mad (folks who have been labelled as mentally ill or who live with mental illness) artists and theatre workers in underrepresented areas in the 2022/23 Season by diverse professional mentors.
- *Sept 2023:* The Citadel explores different approaches to a reduced work week for artists including five-day rehearsal and performance weeks for select productions.

## **Accessibility:**

- *Jan 2018:* The Citadel begins incorporating ASL in public and industry events, online and in-person.
- *Fall 2018:* The Citadel joins the YEG Performing Arts Accessibility Ad Hoc Group. Citadel Theatre staff members serve as administrators for the group Fall 2018 - Spring 2021, supporting grant writing and research phases on [audience accessibility](#) and [creating inclusive pathways to professional theatre](#).
- *Feb 2019:* The Citadel hosts Deaf Culture Training with Brenda Hillcox for all staff.
- *Mar 2019:* The Citadel hosts ASL training with Brenda Hillcox for front-facing staff and contractors.
- *Mar - May 2019:* The Citadel produces an ASL/spoken English adaptation of *The Tempest*, featuring a mix of Deaf and hearing artists. We hosted our first tactile lobby tour, with costume, set and prop replicas.
- *Summer 2019:* The Citadel undertakes 2 separate accessibility audits of the facility.
- *Oct 2019:* The Citadel hosts Disability Awareness & Sensitivity Training with Alison Neumann and Roxanne Ulanicki.
- *Dec 2019:* The Citadel renovates Shoctor backstage to increase accessibility. One dressing room (with 2 washrooms, including showers) and two hallway washrooms are renovated to accommodate disabled theatre artists.
- *Jan 2020:* The Citadel launches pilot program to increase accessible seating options in Shoctor Theatre.
- *Jan 2020:* The Citadel is awarded a grant for audio description gear on behalf of Edmonton theatre community.
- *Aug 2020:* The Citadel installs a T-Coil Hearing Loop in the Shoctor Theatre.
- *Dec 2020:* The Citadel mandates closed captioning on all video collateral released by the organization.
- *Spring-Summer 2021:* The Citadel provides ASL Interpretation on all sessions of our 2021 Dramaturgy Lab.
- *Summer 2021:* Staff begins work on a major renovation plan to add accessibility upgrades to deficient spaces (including Bentley washrooms, FTS washrooms, Maclab lobby washrooms, Maclab backstage, and elevator/lift access to FTS and Maclab backstage).
- *Spring 2022:* A new universally accessible washroom is added to the Main Floor Box Office Concourse.
- *Aug 2022:* Box Office lobby and Shoctor Theatre lobby install new seating options for all body types added to increase comfort and independence for building users.

### *Accessibility Cont'd*

- *Sept 2022*: The Shoctor Theatre has major renovation to seating area to create a barrier-free access row, which tripled available accessible seating options, and now provides additional style of flex seating to better welcome patrons of all body types.
- *2022/23*: The Citadel provides ASL Interpretation on all sessions of our 2022/23 Playwrights Lab.
- *Jan 2023*: Citadel staff completes Deaf Culture Training with Amorena Bartlett.
- *March 2023*: Citadel staff completes Disability Awareness & Sensitivity Training with Creating Accessible Neighbourhoods (CAN).
- *April 2023*: The Citadel hosts Audio Description training from Inside Out Theatre (Calgary, AB) for staff and Edmonton theatre artists to create a local team of trained audio describers.
- *May 2023*: The Citadel hosts Relaxed Performance training from Inside Out Theatre (Calgary, AB) for staff and Edmonton theatre artists to create a local team of Relaxed Performance activators.
- *November 2023*: The Citadel releases a new Accessibility section of the website with 3D Tour, photo set, pathway videos, and detailed information for patrons to best prepare for their visit to the Citadel. ([Acknowledgements](#))
- *March 2023*: The Citadel hosts its first Relaxed Performance for *The Sound of Music* and adds sensory kits (designed and built by Brooke Leifso) to all Front of House stations.
- *Jul 2024*: Citadel Theatre hires its first Accessibility Coordinator, a role dedicated to improving accessibility for audiences and artists.

### **Accountability - Evaluation of Progress and Communication with the Wider Community:**

- *Sept 2019*: The Citadel Theatre introduced Exit Surveys for all artists and crew members upon the conclusion of each production. These anonymous surveys are gathered and reviewed by the Board of Directors' Community & Culture Committee, ensuring transparency and accountability in workplace practices at the Citadel Theatre. The initiative aims to continuously enhance both the creative process and the working environment for everyone involved.
- *Sept 2020*: The Citadel releases our [2020 Inclusivity and Diversity Report](#), a comprehensive statistical look at Citadel staff, artists and boards over the past 10+ years including planned actions moving forward.
- *Oct 2020*: The Citadel hosts an online [Community Forum](#) to discuss and to receive feedback from the public.
- *Feb - July 2021*: In collaboration with an Inclusive Practices Consultant and the EDI Committee, The Citadel creates and circulates a Reporting Survey to gather demographic data about all staff and theatre workers we engage with.
- *2021-2022*: Citadel undergoes an organizational review of the Data Collection Process to make improvements.
- *Apr 2023*: The Citadel releases our 2021 Inclusivity and Diversity Report, with findings from our 2020/21 Season and an update on the work done over the last season to ensure equity within the organization.
- *January 2024*: The Citadel releases 2022 & 2023 Inclusivity and Diversity Reports with findings from 2021/22 and 2022/23 seasons, along with update on data survey process.

## **CITADEL THEATRE EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY (EDI) COMMITTEE**

The EDI Committee is composed of Citadel staff (representing a variety of departments), Board Members (from the Boards' Culture and Community Committee), Executive Leadership (the Executive Director and Artistic Director) and Citadel community members with specific lived experiences (artists, teaching artists, former employees, etc.).

The EDI Committee:

- consults on EDI related policies, practices and communications at the Citadel.
- makes recommendations to the Executive Director, Artistic Director and Board of Directors.
- oversees the Citadel's BIPOC Fund, making decisions about how the funding is distributed.
- shares EDI updates/initiatives within the Citadel so staff and artists know that we are here,
- acts as a touchpoint for Citadel community to:
  - pose questions about best practices in EDI,
  - share ideas in support of EDI within the Citadel,
  - find pathways toward appropriate resources or resolutions.

If you have any questions about the EDI Committee or any EDI Initiatives at Citadel Theatre, please contact [EDICommittee@citadeltheatre.com](mailto:EDICommittee@citadeltheatre.com).