

Equity 2020:

Aggressive.

Inclusive.

Responsive.



Spring 2017 | Volume 102 | Issue 2

Equity NEWS

Actors' Equity Association

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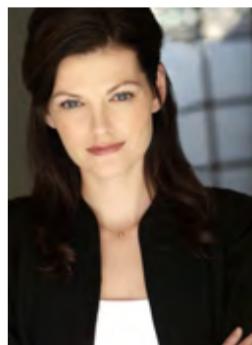
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From the President *Aggressive. Inclusive. Responsive: Here's to 2020*

Last month, when President Trump proposed eliminating the National Endowment for the Arts, we were there on day one in Washington, D.C. fighting back. Equity

took the lead in pushing back against defunding the arts.

That was no accident. With a new President elected last November came a lot of uncertainty and change. And with that, we began a process of listening to you about what you want your union to look like now and in the future, and what the union can do to better serve you. We held listening sessions around the country, from St. Louis to the Twin Cities to Seattle.

We know that these are challenging times for all unions and for those who work in the theatre. We also know that we can't do everything overnight. We want to have realistic goals. Our vision, based on *your* feedback, is called *Equity 2020*—a three-year timeline to create a more **aggressive, inclusive and responsive** union.

What does that mean? We know the recovery since the recession has been uneven and that members want us to be aggressive in creating new work opportunities. In everything we do we will ask, "How does this help grow the number of Equity theaters around the country? How does this help us grow the number of workweeks for our members?"

We will be more inclusive. We heard you loud and clear – you want us to improve our communications efforts. We will rethink how we communicate and how we use our platforms to engage with you, wherever you are.

We will be more responsive. One of the things we heard in the feedback process is that you want a more regular conversation about what we're doing and why. We will give you new ways to offer feedback on our work and programs, and we will use that feedback to guide us as we make decisions on what works and what doesn't.

Hopefully you've already started to notice some progress. Our work to protect the National Endowment for the Arts didn't end at the National Press Club – we've had members and

elected leaders lobbying members of Congress on Capitol Hill, collected thousands of signatures on our petition to save the NEA, and launched a social media campaign, #OrganizeForTheArts.

As you may have seen, we've also started doing more video. And we're at work revamping and improving our public website, which will roll out later this year.

And, with this issue, we're taking a huge step forward on our work to help #ChangeTheStage. Our diversity study is historic and important. Here's the reality – we've all known at some level that there simply aren't enough roles for women or people of color. Now we have the data to quantify the problem. This has been a challenge years in the making, and one that goes beyond just Equity. Our role in releasing the study is not to find fault, but to find solutions, by serving as a catalyst and creating conversation across the industry.

I'm excited to report that our work is only beginning with the release of our diversity study. We will continue to push for those conversations as Equity hires our first-ever Diversity Director, who will be armed with our new data as he or she helps us #ChangeTheStage.

Equity has delivered for you for more than 100 years. In this issue of *Equity News* alone, we report adding work weeks in theaters across the country, from Colorado and Missouri to Nebraska and Los Angeles. We will continue to fight to expand opportunities for you, and *Equity 2020* will help us to do that work better. You will be hearing much more about it in the very near future!

Kate Shindle

From the Executive Director *#ChangeTheStage: It Starts With Actors' Equity*



This issue of *Equity News* is groundbreaking for our union. We have spent months researching the makeup of our membership and who is getting hired. This research started by looking at gender parity in hiring. It then expanded more broadly to include the entire membership. The results, empirical and difficult to confront, show that institutional hiring bias exists in our industry. Something that we instinctively knew was true is proven out and now we are publishing that data.

We are publishing this data not to place blame, but to start an overdue conversation about how we move forward as an industry to make sure the stage is more inclusive. This work matters—not just for Equity and our membership, but to ensure that live theatre remains relevant for the next generation of artists and audiences.

Nationally, between 2013 and 2015 our members were offered 29,788 principal (in a play) contracts in new productions. Almost 60 percent of those contracts went to men, leaving only 40 percent of those contracts to go to women. These same women, on average, made about \$10 less per week during that time period because they were more frequently hired on lower paying contracts.

These percentages are even more troubling for members of color. Examining new principal contracts in a musical offered nationally during the same time period, we've found that 71 percent of the contracts went to Caucasian members. Less than 8 percent of those contracts were worked by African American members, slightly more than 2 percent were worked by members identifying as Hispanic/Latinx and 1.5 percent of the contracts went to members who are Asian American.

You can read the study further on page 8. Equity has a long history of promoting diversity and fostering inclusion within our community. We have been negotiating equal opportunity language into every contract we've negotiated for decades. What this study shows us is that we CAN-NOT negotiate our way out of an institutionalized industry problem.

By publishing this study we are stepping out and stepping up. We intend to be leaders in this area. We have already announced that Equity is in the midst of hiring its first ever Diversity Director, who will help us create the strategies to lead – both inside Equity and out. And we are not

stopping there. We are looking for other partners in the industry to step up and join us.

We need to #ChangeTheStage – and part of that is ensuring that women, people of color, people with disabilities, the LGBTQI community and members who are disadvantaged and disenfranchised have access to opportunities: to perform, to write, to design, to direct, to program and to produce. Only then can the work begin to make real and sustainable change happen.

I hope you'll join us.

Mary McColl

HELP US #ChangeTheStage

This issue explores, in depth, the challenges we face in moving our industry forward in a commitment to inclusion. One easy way you can help us achieve fairness in casting is to ensure your information is up-to-date in the Member Portal. We ask members to voluntarily self-identify by race and disability status in order to gather the most accurate statistical data we can. Put simply, when you self-identify, you help us fight on behalf of you and your union brothers and sisters. All use of this data is confidential; the data you provide to your union will never be shared with an employer or any other outside entity.

Here's how you do it:

1. Visit <https://members.actorsequity.org/> and log in.
2. Click on "My Account" on the menu at the top of the screen.
3. Click on "Profile" from that drop-down menu.
4. Scroll to the bottom of the left-hand column (marked "My Information") to find drop-down menus for sharing your race and disability status.

Organize for the ARTS

House and Senate Fund National Endowment for the Arts for 2017



“The arts are not a frill or a luxury or some kind of extended vanity project. The arts are part of who we are as a nation, and the arts put our nation to work.”

- President Kate Shindle

In early May, the House and Senate voted to fully fund the National Endowment for the Arts for the remainder of the fiscal year. That means the NEA will be funded through September.

This was an important and early win in our fight to ensure funding for the NEA. And it didn't happen by accident.

When Equity got word of President Trump's intention to present a federal budget calling for the complete elimination of the National Endowment for the Arts (as well as other vital and necessary agencies), the union did what unions do best – organize.

The #OrganizeForTheArts campaign kicked off on the very day Trump released his budget. That morning, we were on the scene in Washington, D.C., leading the charge with a press conference at the National Press Club, at which [President Kate Shindle made the case for not only retaining, but strengthening the NEA.](#)

The NEA's \$148 million budget funds programming in more than 16,000 communities across the United States and in every single Congressional district. The budget generates a huge matching investment – \$1 of NEA direct funding leverages as much as \$9 in private and other public funds, creating hundreds of millions of dollars of investment in local communities.

That same day, thousands of Equity Members added their name to our petition addressed to Congress, sending

a united message that cutting the NEA is unacceptable.

[One week later, a delegation of leaders from Actors' Equity Association joined a group of activists organized by Americans for the Arts to personally call on their representatives to fully fund the NEA.](#)

Members came to Washington, D.C. from across all three regions to speak with legislators from their home districts. Participants included Adam Green (New York), Roy Gross (Washington, D.C.), Marjorie Horne (New York), Kim Huber (Los Angeles), Dev Kennedy (Chicago), Kellie Overbey (New York), Robert Stanton (New York) and Peggy Thorp (Detroit), and Eastern Regional Director Tom Carpenter.

The following Monday, hundreds of Equity Members turned out for the Rally to Save the Arts on the steps of New York City Hall, organized by City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and City Council Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer. Members Jelani Remy, Ciara Renée and L. Steven Taylor gave speeches and performances, and our [Executive Director Mary McColl motivated the crowd to keep fighting and keep us organizing.](#)

The fight is far from over. Congress will soon start taking up the process to create a budget for 2018. Equity will need your help to remind Congress how the NEA supports middle class arts jobs all across the country.

Stay tuned.



“Eliminating the NEA will hurt all of us. The NEA supports art in cities and town all across the country: more than 16,000 communities and every Congressional District.”

- Executive Director Mary McColl



March 16, 2017

President Trump announces his proposed budget, which will eliminate the National Endowment for the Arts along with several other arts-driven programs.

That morning, Equity was prepared.

President Kate Shindle delivers an impassioned press conference imploring Trump to preserve and strengthen the NEA.

That afternoon, Equity sent an email to the membership encouraging members to stand with Equity to show support for the NEA and help us #OrganizeForTheArts.

With a petition attached to the email, Equity rapidly collects over 25,000 signatures of members and non-members demanding that this administration save the NEA.

March 20-21, 2017

A group of Equity Councillors, members and staff travel to Washington, D.C. for the annual Arts Advocacy Day. While on the Hill, Equity meets with congressional representatives to show our steadfast support of the NEA and other important arts-funding programming.

April 3, 2017

With a backdrop of Equity and #OrganizeForTheArts signs, Executive Director Mary McColl delivers a fiery speech citing how important the NEA is to not only the arts, but the nation's economy. She challenges Trump to fund the program.

April 24, 2017

Twin Cities Liaison Committee sponsors a community discussion to consider action to save the NEA (at the NEA-funded Mixed Blood Theatre).

LOOKING AT HIRING BIASES BY THE NUMBERS

Data Compiled By Russell Lehrer | Graphics by Nick DeSantis | Special thanks to Doug Beebe, Tom Kaub and Sherry Xu

The following pages represent a historic moment. For the first time in our 104-year history, we have the technical ability to take an empirical look at potential hiring biases within our industry.

To perform the study, we compiled new weekly employment opportunities on all contracts that began performances between Jan. 1, 2013, through Dec. 31, 2015. Weekly employment opportunities excluded per-performance contracts with no guaranteed employment. And by focusing on new employment opportunities, we analyzed the opening night casts during that window, excluding all replacement contracts as well as any shows that opened prior to 2013.

The results of this study – some two years in the making – shows that even in the year 2017 there are stark and pervasive barriers to employment in our industry for women and people of color – across all Equity contracts.

For example, we have learned that nationally over the course of 2013 to 2015, most principal contracts went to Caucasian members, accounting for 71 percent. Asian Americans: barely 2 percent. African Americans: 7.56 percent. As you'll read on the following pages, these numbers are consistent with other contracts and opportunities offered to our members.

Equally troubling is the appearance of hiring bias when it comes to gender: Our membership is evenly divided between women and men. Consistently across all the on-stage contracts examined in this study, men were offered close to 60 percent of the on-stage contracts. For example Men were offered 61 percent of national principal contracts.

This study also shows that the problem goes beyond the stage and extends into the booth. The overwhelming majority (74 percent) of national stage management contracts went to Caucasians. In fact, stage management was the least ethnically diverse cohort in Equity's employment categories.

While women were more likely than men to receive stage manager contracts, they reported lower earnings. Women were employed on agreements with lower minimums, negotiated lower overscales and earned lower average contractual salaries than men.

The data that follows comes in response to a resolution passed by Equity's National Council in September 2015 and represents only highlights of Council's report due to space limitations.

For years Equity has fought at the bargaining table to include language to improve diversity and inclusion. While this effort is important, this study demonstrates that Equity cannot solve this problem at the bargaining table alone.

This study raises questions about how we measure progress. Last season, shows like *The Color Purple*, *Shuffle Along*, *On Your Feet* and *Hamilton* made it seem like diversity issues on Broadway were solved. But, how do we move, as an industry, to a place where there are more roles for women and people of color in all productions?

Given long-term demographic changes in our nation, this problem is one that should concern us all – how can our industry reach the nation if it doesn't represent the nation?

The good news is that there are some signs of progress. A number of Equity theaters are taking steps to #ChangeTheStage. A few of those stories are highlighted in this report. One lesson from those stories is the need to think about diversity and inclusion across all aspects of production.

Equity is in the midst of hiring its first-ever Diversity Director, a role that will help to further Equity's goals of inclusion and diversity both within the organization and the greater theatre community. Ultimately, this study is just the start of what needs to be an industry-wide conversation about how we can work together to #ChangeTheStage.

What is a hiring bias?

While an employer has a right to employ people based on many factors for which she/he may express a preference, there are eight legislatively protected areas where such hiring biases should never occur:

There are **8** protected areas where hiring biases could occur

- 1 Age
- 2 Gender and Gender Identity
- 3 Race/Ethnicity
- 4 Disability
- 5 Religion
- 6 National Origin
- 7 Sexual Orientation*
- 8 Veteran Status

Equity's comprehensive database allows the union to track bias factors of age, gender and gender identity, race/ethnicity and disability, which are the focus of this study. Equity also supports its members when evidence of discrimination based on religion, national origin, sexual orientation or veteran status exists.

* Some state laws offer explicit protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. There is no explicit federal law protecting against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

OUR MEMBERSHIP

Like the U.S. population, which is 50.8 percent female (according to the 2010 U.S. Census), the Equity membership is almost evenly divided, female/male. Equity has historically asked its members to self-identify as either female or male, but plans to expand the options to reflect the full spectrum of our members' gender identity.

Women represent 49.5 percent of Equity's total membership, with an average age of 46.7 years old.

Men represent 50.5 percent of Equity's total membership, with an average age of 48.3 years old.

Of Equity's 50,920 members, the average age of the membership is **47.6 years old.**

Western Region

- Has 13,809 members, or 27.1 percent of the total membership
- Average age: 50.3
- 49.6 percent of members are women (average age of 49.2); 50.4 percent are men (average age of 51.5).

Central Region

- Has 4,918 members, or 9.7 percent of the total membership
- Average age: 48.4
- 49 percent of members are women (average of 47.3); 51 percent are men (average age of 49.2).

Eastern Region

- Has 32,193 members, or 63.2 percent of the total membership
- Average age: 46.2
- 49.6 percent of members are women (average of 45.6); 50.4 percent are men (average age of 46.8).

National Racial/Ethnic Distribution

Equity has a proud, diverse membership. Currently, we are working with the National Equal Employment Opportunity Committee to redefine and broaden our race and ethnicity self-identification options for members. The following percentages are the race/ethnicity distribution of our membership as of Sept. 1, 2016.

7.5%	<0.1%	2.2%	68%
African American	American Indian	Asian	Caucasian
2.5%	0.2%	3.6%	16%
Hispanic or Latino	Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	Not Provided

16 percent of our members choose to not self-identify their race or ethnicity. We encourage you to share this sensitive information with us so we may serve you better. Your personal information is never shared with employers.

Throughout the study presented in *Equity News*, we looked at eight different employment cross-sections, nationally. We present the analysis of Principal (in both a play and musical), Chorus and Stage Manager contracts worked by our members between 2013-2015. We then applied those same three years and contract categories to the LORT Agreement. Note that all Equity membership data presented in this report reflects the union's membership numbers as of Sept. 1, 2016.

National Disability Distribution

We are committed to expanding representation of and increasing opportunities for our diverse membership. We began asking members to self-identify as having a disability in 2012, and we are working with members of the community to expand that identification. We are aware that many members choose not to self-identify for any number of reasons. Currently only 219 members self-identify as having a disability of some kind, and we know those numbers are not representative of the actual population of our membership.

There are two ways of defining disability. Under the narrow legal definition, a disability is an impairment which prevents a person from performing tasks essential to his or her daily life. The broader definition includes a wider degree of impairments already included under the narrow definition (e.g. low vision, or hard of hearing), as well as other diagnoses (e.g. fibromyalgia, or HIV) which impact but do not necessarily prevent a person from performing essential tasks. If you self identify with either of these definitions, tell us so that we can better understand the biases in your community.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Equity typically analyzes our data in terms of workweeks; this weighs contracts by their length and is appropriate for most analysis. For this study, however, we didn't, and for very specific reasons. We looked instead at initial work opportunities, regardless of contract length and only for new employment. In order to quantify potential bias we presented data about:

- Weekly employment opportunities | Meaning no casual or daily employment
- Shows opening during 2013-2015 | Meaning no existing or long-running employment
- Cast and salary information as of opening night | Meaning no replacement employment

It was determined that this narrowing of the work experience of our membership would give a fuller picture of the bias. The casting of one production of *Gypsy*, for example, running for three weeks, would be given the same weight in terms of bias as another production that runs for two years. And the initial cast of that long-running production would represent the producer's initial choice for the roles in order to not mask bias by a more inclusive replacement casting practice (though laudable and to be encouraged).

Also not included in the report were star-salaried contracts (defined as members who negotiated \$10,000 or more of overscale per week), as these numbers would not reflect the experience of the majority of the membership and would skew the data. Choosing the three complete years contained in our expanded database available at the time of the research was hoped to give as complete a picture as possible that was not tied to any one season's specific productions to the degree possible.

During the three years studied, there were 63,603 unique, new weekly work opportunities for members, excluding star contracts. The average contractual salary for these opportunities (across all contract types and responsibilities) was \$746, which included an average of \$92.72 of overscale.



CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

There's already a great number of Equity theaters that are working hard to diversify their stages, programming, educational outreach and professional staff. In their own words, here are how they are working to #ChangeTheStage:

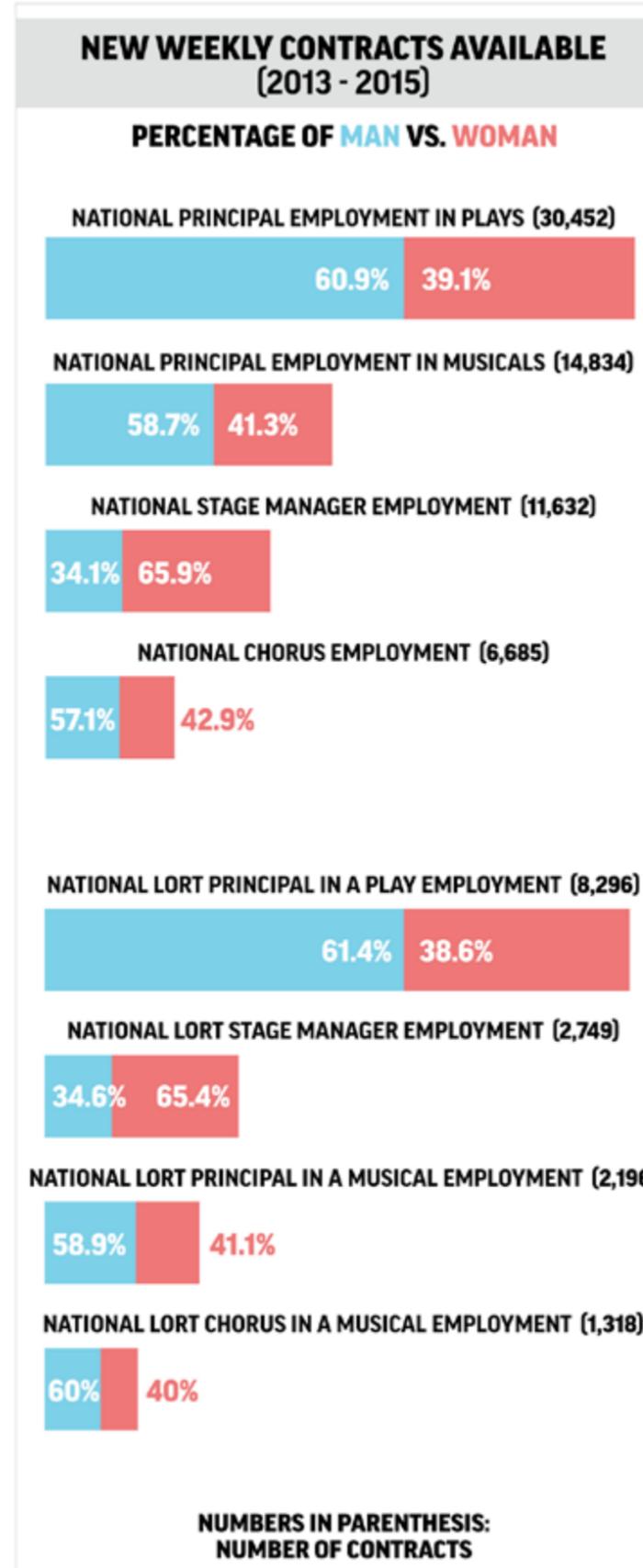
"One of Milwaukee Rep's core values is *inclusion*, where we explore and celebrate the broad diversity of our region and commit to nurturing an inclusive ethos that is welcoming and inspirational to all. One of the ways we put that into action is by making a conscious effort to have 50 percent of the actors on our stages throughout the season be people of color."

- Mark Clements

Artistic Director of Milwaukee Repertory Theatre | Milwaukee, Wis.

Equity members Nathaniel Stampley (right) and Michael J. Farina in Milwaukee Repertory Theatre's *Man of La Mancha*. Photo by Michael Brosilow

EXAMINING GENDER DISPARITIES



In this study, we examined four specific contract types offered to our members nationally. We researched principal employment in plays, principal employment in musicals, chorus employment and stage management employment across the nation. From there, we took those same contract categories and applied it to those opportunities that were offered on a LORT Agreement, Equity's second largest contract. For the Council report, all contracts were analyzed and showed that these national and LORT figures are typical and representative.

To the left is an infographic displaying the distribution of new work opportunities that went to men and women over the course of 2013-2015.

One of the important aspects we wanted to investigate was, similar to our membership, if the work was being divided evenly. It's not. What we have discovered is that our industry is hiring more men—sometimes up to 20 percent more—than women.

In every on-stage category of employment, more than 50 percent of the contracts were offered to men. Between 2013-2015, women made up only 39.1 percent of contracts worked in principal employment in plays. For LORT contracts in the same category, women were offered 38.6 percent of the available contracts. The closest women come to equaling men on stage is in national chorus employment, with 42.9 percent compared to the 57.1 percent of the work going to men. Only in stage management do we see a reverse of this trend.

This disparity is also found in the wage gap discovered between men and women working on contracts presented in this study. Though all of our members, through our negotiations, are guaranteed the same minimum salary, the disparity is also found in the wage gap between male and female Equity members. This wage gap is because women are more frequently hired on lower paying, lower minimum contracts.

Let's examine national stage manager employment, which demonstrates the most clear view of potential bias since the opportunities are not tied to textual influence. In the three years examined for this study (2013-2015), there were 11,632 new stage management opportunities offered to our members. As reported above, 65.9 percent went to women and 34.1 percent to men. Our data shows that while women may have had more work opportunities than men, they worked on contracts with lower average minimum salaries. And what's more, women garnered less overscale, leaving them with a contractual salary that was lower than roughly \$98.

When looking at national LORT principal in a musical employment, not only did women only represent 41.1 percent of the contracts, but women were employed on lower category contracts than men, with average minimums of \$735.65 compared to \$749.47. Women also negotiated slightly less overscale than men, earning contractually less than men by about \$15.

In several situations, women have been able to negotiate the same average overscale, but still earn less salary — as seen in national principal in a play employment where women are earning about \$10 less. When examining national LORT employment on a chorus contract, we found that not only did a majority of the work opportunity go to men, but the wage gap demonstrates disparity as well.

POSSIBLE EMPLOYMENT BIAS

Throughout this report, we will present three key numbers, which serve as the benchmarks we look at to show evidence of hiring bias. The ability to get a contract, the minimum salary of those contracts and the ability to negotiate overscale. Please note: For this study, we considered contract minimums and overscale.



“Olney Theatre must reflect the diverse community around us; it’s one of my top priorities. That’s why it’s important to me to have diverse casting not just in highly visible roles, like E. Faye Butler as Mrs. Lovett in *Sweeney Todd* and Brittany Campbell as Eliza in *My Fair Lady*, but throughout our ensembles. We’re also aiming for a minimum of one-third of all writers, directors and choreographers in each season to be women or artists of color, and that includes our classic programming. On the administrative and Board side, we’ve formed an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee to make recommendations in everything from hiring to workplace environment. What we’ve learned is that this work can only succeed if the entire institution is committed to it, at every level.”

- Jason Loewith
Artistic Director of Olney Theatre Center | Olney, MD

David Benoit as Sweeney and E. Faye Butler as Mrs. Lovett in *Sweeney Todd*. Photo by Stan Barouh

EXAMINING RACIAL DISPARITIES

We didn’t only discover gender disparity. This study proved out an embarrassing truth within our industry: a major lack of diversity on stage. A majority of all new contract opportunities offered to Equity members went to Caucasian actors and stage managers. And as you previously read, most of the work went to Caucasian men. In some instances Caucasian members garnered over 70 percent of contracts offered, as seen in the national principal employment in musicals. In that same category, African Americans received only 7.56 percent of the work, those who identify as Hispanic or Latino had 2.23 percent of those contracts and Asian Americans received a mere 1.57 percent.

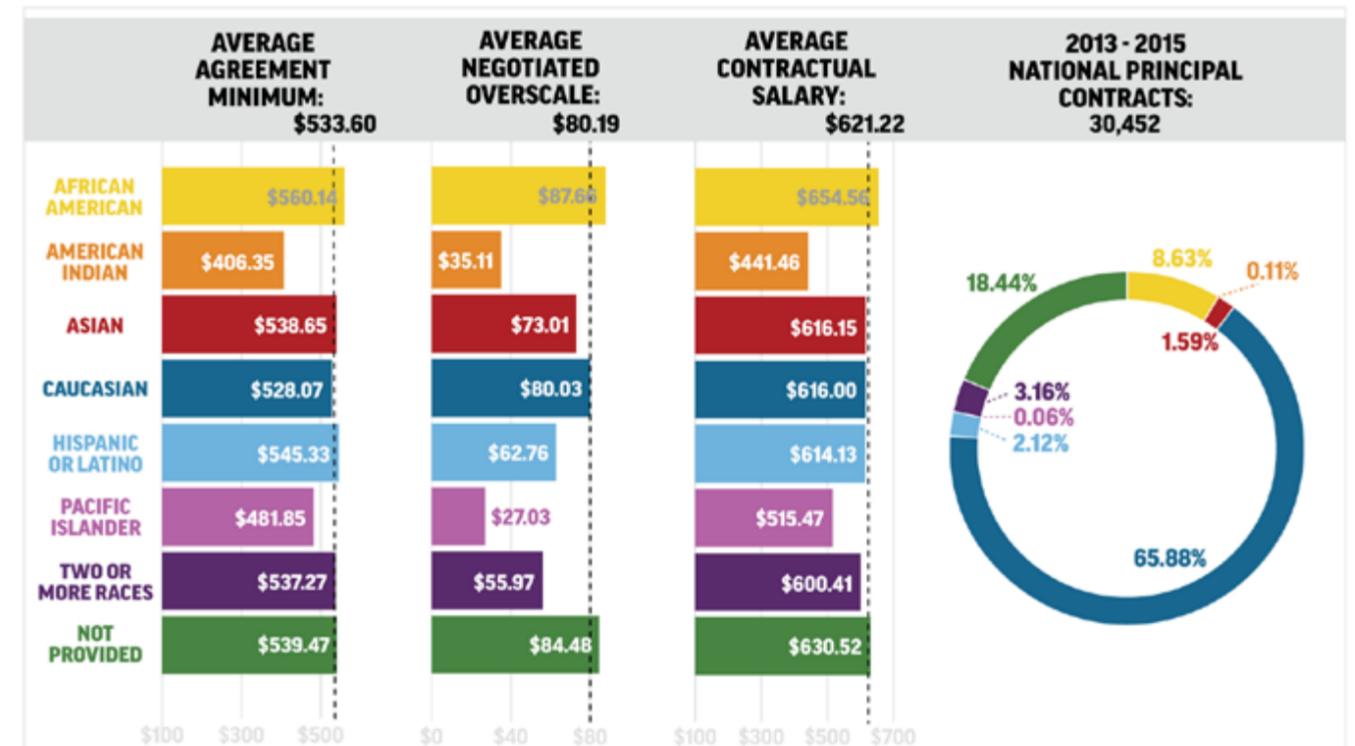
These numbers are disheartening and consistent throughout all of our research.

What’s additionally troubling, however, is what’s in the unknown. As we stated earlier in this study, 16 percent of our membership have not identified their race/ethnic background. That means, for this research, there can be anywhere up to almost 20 percent of employment in any single analysis we cannot quantify. That’s a wide margin of uncertainty that, if members identified themselves to Equity, we could quantify to help further complete this research and define the problems we face.

The following four charts display, in-depth, the amount of new work offered to members, average overscale negotiated on those contracts and the average contractual salary. Note that these graphs consider all of Equity’s available contracts, from Production to Casino to Small Professional Theatre to Bay Area Theatre Agreement. Further, the information presented contains a wide range of minimum salaries, opportunities for negotiating overscale, the possible existence of non-union performers within the production and, within any one contract type, various tiers or categories.

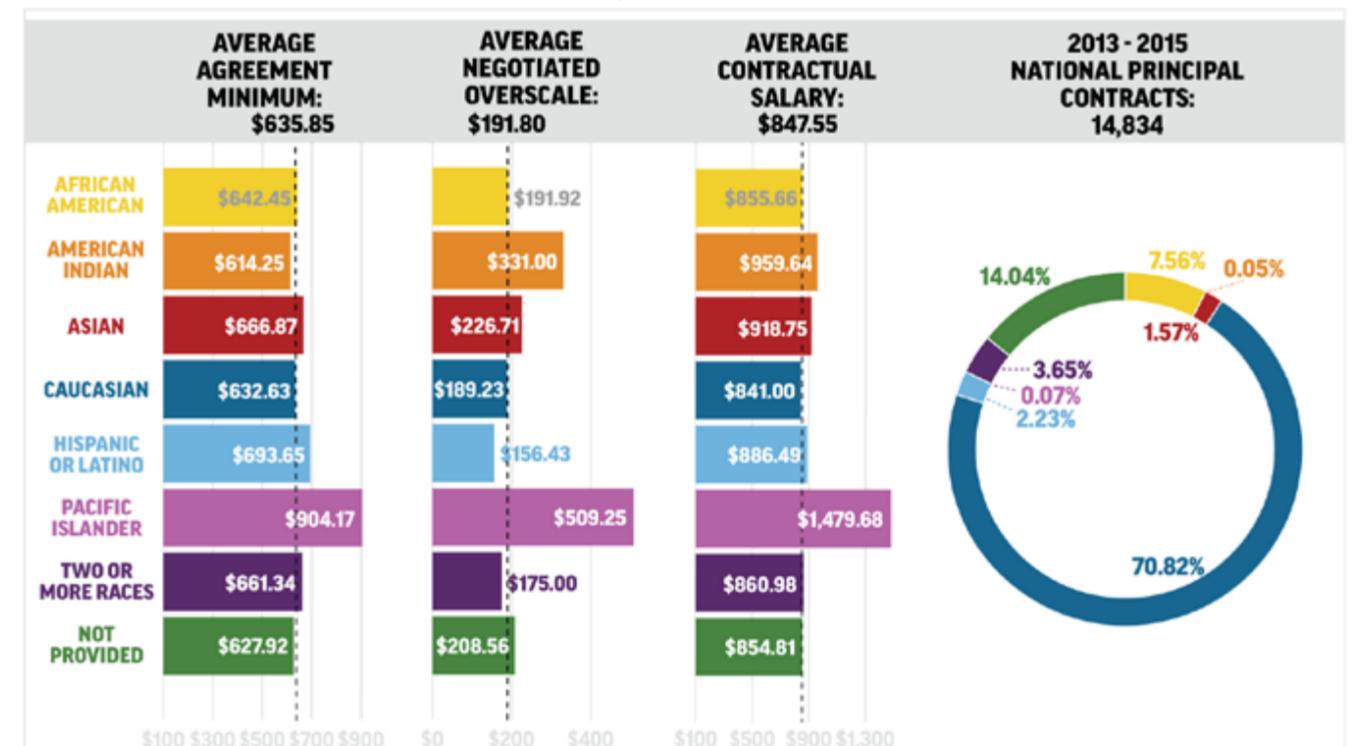
National Principal Employment in Plays

During 2013-2015, there were 30,452 unique, new work opportunities for weekly employment on a Principal Contract in plays.



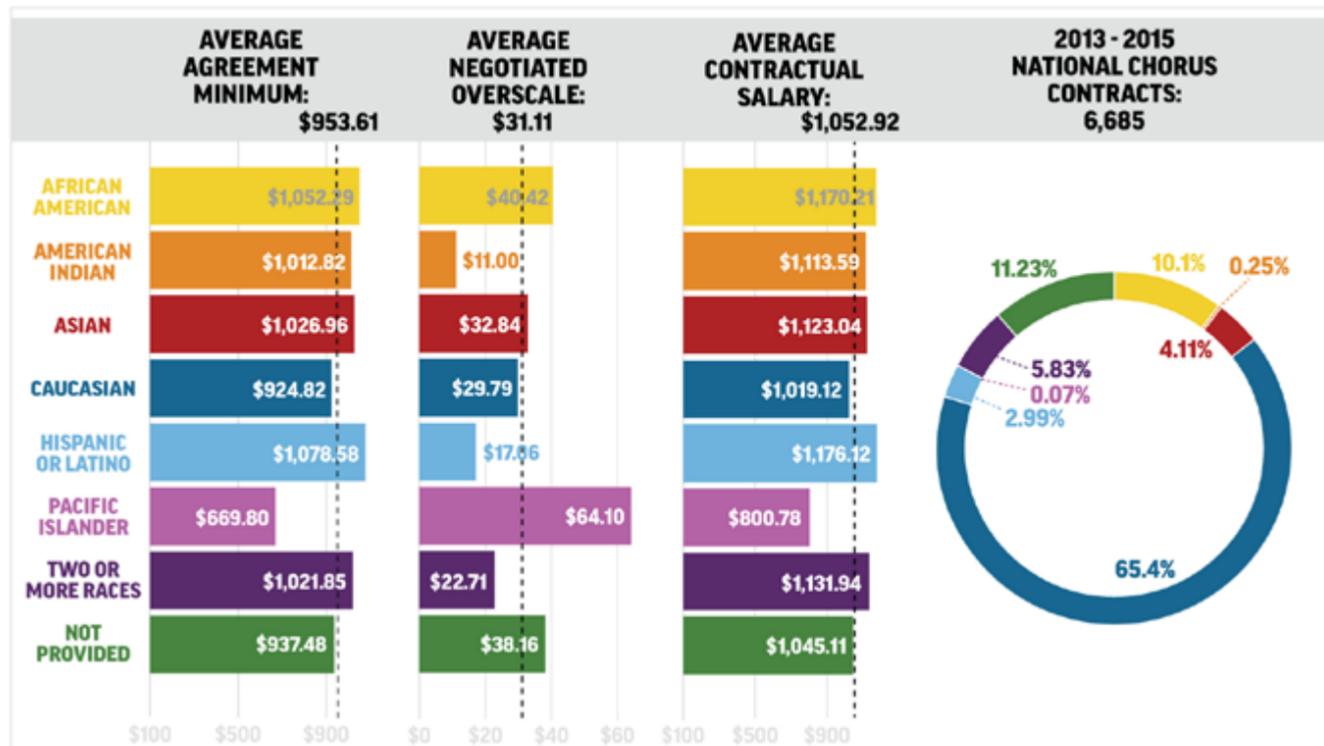
National Principal Employment in Musicals

Between 2013-15, there were 14,834 new Principal Contracts offered on musicals.



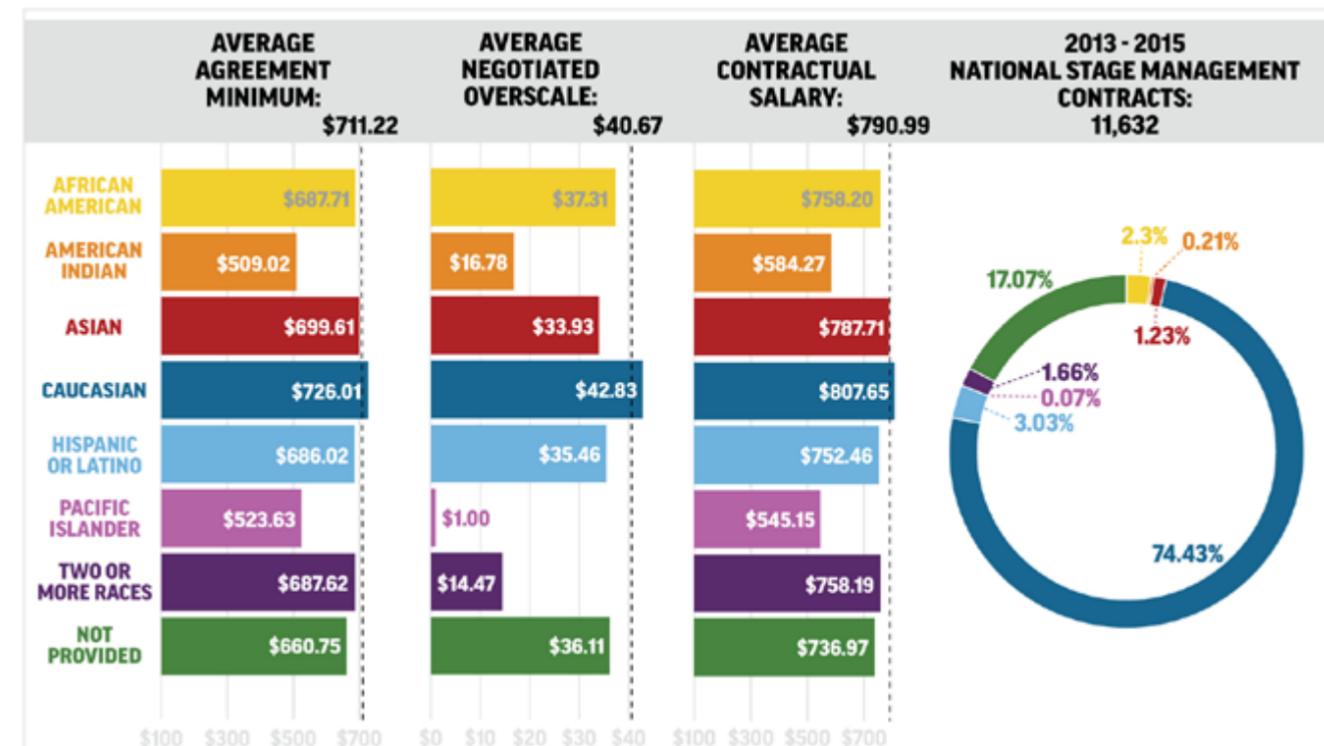
National Chorus Employment

There were 6,685 new opportunities for Chorus Contracts, spanning all contract types, between 2013-15.



National Stage Management Employment

This cross section of our membership is the least racially and ethnically diverse employment category. In the three years of this study, there were 11,632 new opportunities offered. These work opportunities include both stage managers and assistant stage managers who have different minimums and opportunities for overscale, as the principal studies included members working on the full range of available contracts below star salary.



Deonna Bouye, Carla Duren, Brittany Bellizeare and Caroline Strang in the Guthrie Theater's production of Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*. Photo by Dan Norman

CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

"We believe that in order to be effective in equity, diversity and inclusion, one of the **Guthrie Theater's** core values, we must take the long view by building awareness, creating a vision, defining our actions and evaluating the initiatives we put into place. One important step we've taken is committing to hiring a diverse and inclusive cast and creative team for every single Guthrie production. We seek a diverse and qualified slate of designers and technicians, and enlist our human resources team and other resources to ensure we achieve that goal."

- **David Stewart**
Director of Production of Guthrie Theater | Minneapolis, Minn.

"**Theater Breaking Through Barriers** is the only Off-Broadway theater company dedicated to promoting and advancing the work of actors, directors and writers with disabilities. Because we've been around since 1979, we're certainly the oldest theater company in NYC doing this kind of work. Our company also offers, as of this year, a theater management apprenticeship program specifically for arts professionals with disabilities. We also do educational outreach, offering after school programs taught by several of our core company members who are also teaching artists."

- **Nicholas Viselli**
Artistic Director of Theater Breaking Through Barriers | New York, NY

"Our core mission at **Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe** is to produce professional theatre that promotes and celebrates the African American experience, to attract diverse audiences, to support and develop African American artists and to build the self-esteem of African American youth. Our professional productions and Young Artist Program offer artists of color the opportunity to hone their skills and gain the tools they need for career success; our 'Stage of Discovery' summer camp—which we offer free of charge—helps under-served youth to discover and nurture their talents as well."

- **Nate Jacobs**, Founder and Artistic Director of Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe | Sarasota, Fla.

"**Dallas Theater Center** strives to create art that is reflective of our city and is committed as an organization to create an equitable, diverse, and inclusive environment for our patrons, staff, board, and artists. This includes our artistic programming and educational efforts, as well as staff and board members. As a part of DTC's strategic planning, we have an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion task force committee made up of staff and board members who meet regularly to develop strategies and goals to continue our journey of becoming a more reflective organization of the city we serve. By representing the city of Dallas both on the stage and behind-the-scenes, DTC becomes a theater for all of Dallas."

- **Kevin Moriarty**, Artistic Director of Dallas Theater Center | Dallas, Texas

"**Curious Theatre** is very proud to be representing the broad spectrum of voices in our Denver community by consciously selecting plays by playwrights of color, including recent series by Tarell Alvin McCraney and Quiara Allegría Hudes, which vastly expand the opportunities for diversity in performers. With our commitment to diverse casting, we are thrilled that 50 percent of the actors on our stage this season are people of color."

- **Katie Maltais**, Managing Director of Curious Theatre | Denver, Colo.

Antonio Mercado, Gabriella Cavallero and Thony Mena in **Curious Theatre's** *Elliot: A Soldier's Fugue*. Photo by Dan Norman



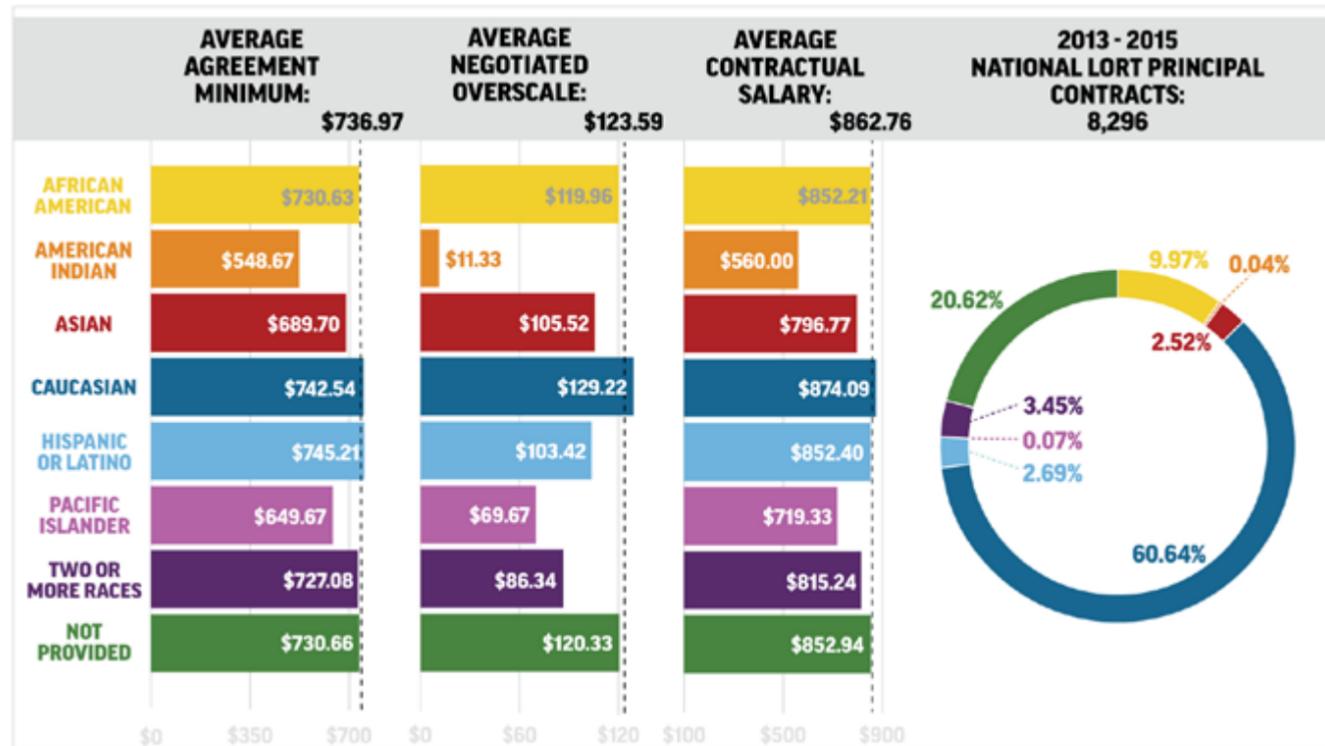
CASE STUDY: LORT EMPLOYMENT

The previous analysis contains all of our available contracts, with a wide range of minimum salaries, opportunities for negotiating overscale, the possible existence of non-Equity performers in the production and, within any one contract type, various tiers or categories as well.

In order to examine the situation within a narrower view, we conducted an analysis of the national LORT Agreement. The LORT Agreement is used across the country with its own categories and various minimums. For the majority of our membership, LORT theaters represent a sizable portion of their union careers. The following data utilizes the same template as the national numbers previously shared for comparison. But note that with smaller sample sizes, we expect and see greater variance, particularly in the racial and ethnic hiring and earning statistics, which become more dependent on seasonal influences such as titles produced. Single diversely staged productions, whether diverse based on text or artistic vision, can strongly influence smaller subsets. The LORT analysis is representative of what we've discovered across all contracts.

National LORT Principal in a Play Employment

Between 2013-15, there were 8,296 work opportunities under the LORT Agreement for principal actors in non-musical productions.



"Our associate artist program offers a deep dive to artists of diverse backgrounds here at **Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park**. They have a seat at the table—directing, participating in season planning, interacting with board and staff and leading various community engagement projects. And their productions inevitably bring more diverse actors to our stages. For example, KJ Sanchez just directed *Jane Eyre* with an African-American Jane (Margaret Ivey.) That's the new normal for us."

- Blake Robison

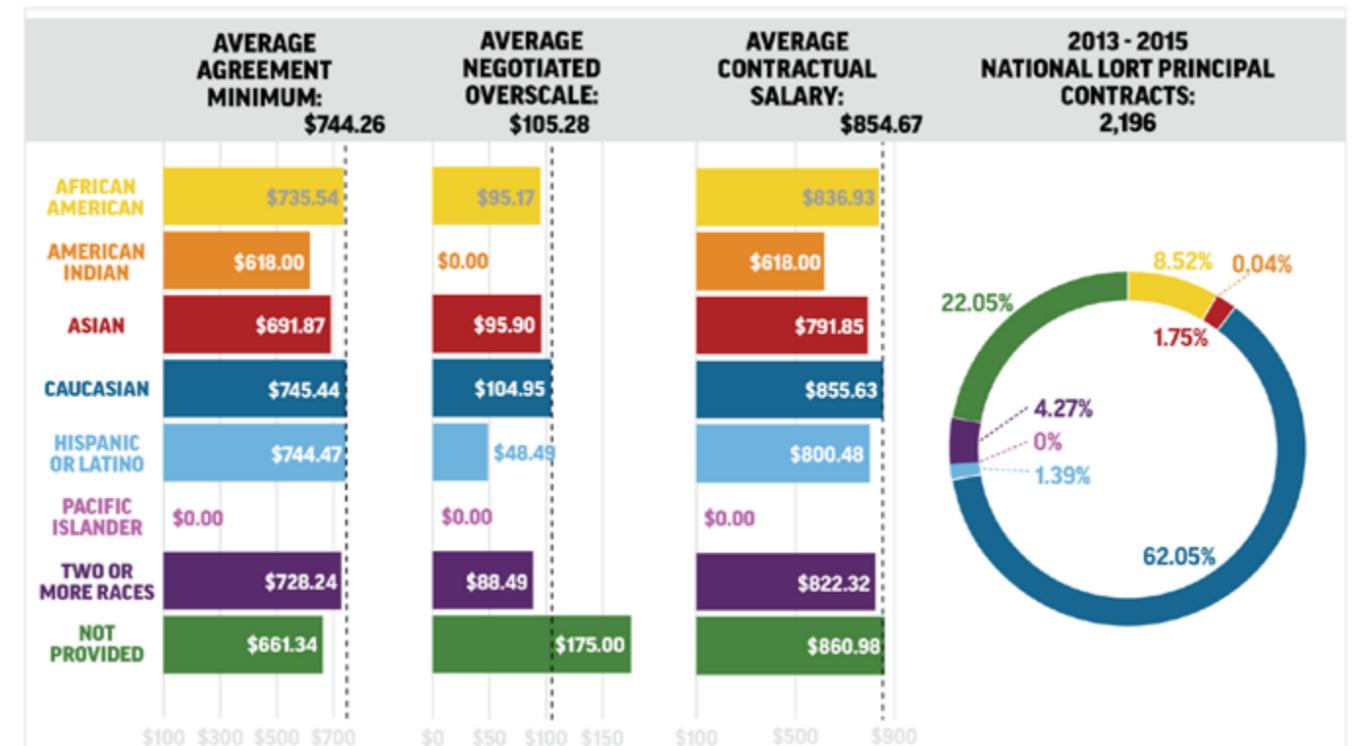
Artistic Director of Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park | Cincinnati, Ohio

Michael C. Sharon and Margaret Ivey in the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park's production of *Jane Eyre*. Photo by Mikki Schaffner



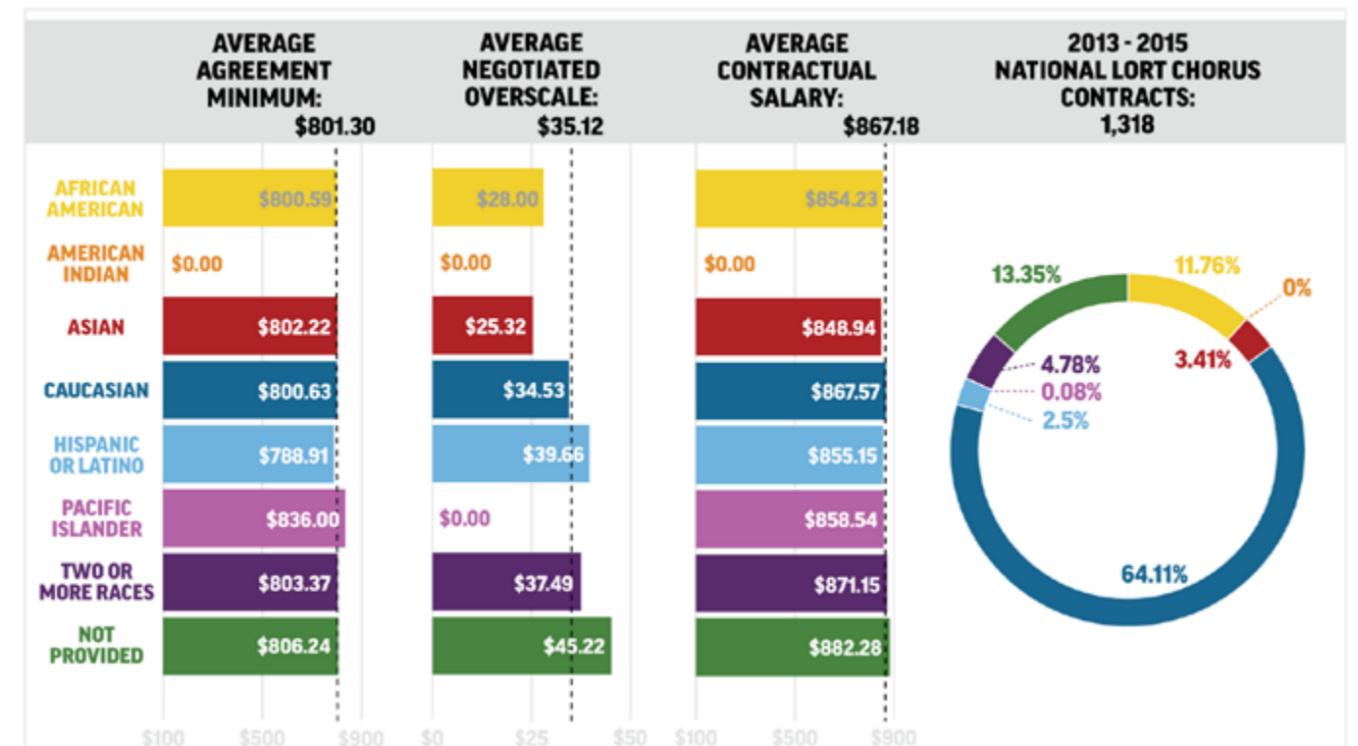
National LORT Principal in a Musical Employment

With a quarter of the contractual opportunities compared to non-musicals, there were 2,196 Principal LORT Contracts offered in musicals between 2013-15. Analyzing this employment by race/ethnicity:



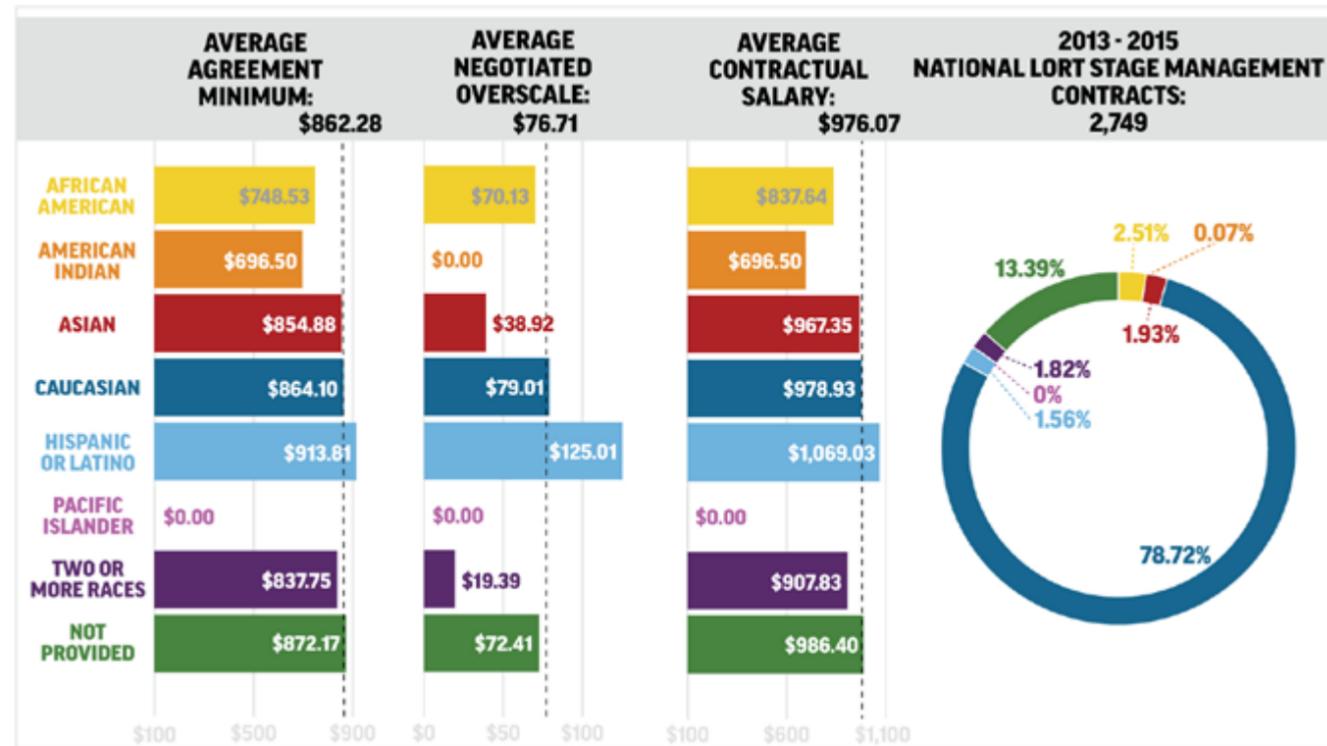
National LORT Chorus in a Musical Employment

There were 1,318 chorus work opportunities on LORT contracts during the three years of the study. Please note that the financial figures are higher than averages for Principals on LORT Musicals because chorus employment was, on average, at LORT theaters with higher categories and minimums.



National LORT Stage Manager Employment

Between 2013-15, there were 2,749 stage management work opportunities, including assistant management, on LORT contracts.



Cue the Lights: The Samuel J. Friedman Health Center for the Performing Arts Opens

The Actors Fund unveils a new health center for Actors' Equity members and the entire entertainment community.

Created by The Actors Fund in partnership with Mount Sinai, The Samuel J. Friedman Health Center for the Performing Arts is a thrilling addition to the many services provided by The Actors Fund for all Actors' Equity members! The new health center is designed to serve the health and wellness needs of the performing arts and entertainment community in New York City.

The Friedman Health Center offers primary and specialty care with extended hours that are sensitive to entertainment industry work schedules. The Health Center accepts most marketplace plans, commercial and union insurances, Medicare and workers' compensation.

Actors' Equity leadership was there on March 2, 2017, for a special sneak preview and ribbon cutting ceremony. The facility opened on March 6, 2017, at The Actors Fund's main offices at 729 Seventh Avenue in Times Square.

The center is staffed by primary care providers and specialists available on a rotating basis. Personalized health insurance counseling, guidance and enrollment support is available on site through The Actors Fund's Artists Health Insurance Resource Center.

The Actors Fund's Al Hirschfeld Free Health Clinic, formerly located at The Actors Fund's Dorothy Ross Friedman Residence on 57th and 10th Avenue in

Manhattan, is no longer in operation. However, The Friedman Health Center

their health insurance coverage. This is a real win for our performing arts and entertainment community."

To make an appointment at The Friedman Health Center for the Performing Arts, please call 212.489.1939. For hours and additional updates, visit actorsfund.org/HealthCenter.

The Actors Fund's Artists Health Insurance Resource Center (AHIRC) will continue to provide free and unbiased health insurance counseling to Actors' Equity members across the country. Members with questions on finding affordable health insurance or in need of guidance and enrollment support can visit www.actorsfund.org/AHIRC or call the



will continue to work with Actors' Equity members who are uninsured to find solutions for their health and wellness needs. Some members may be eligible for care at The Friedman Health Center at a discounted rate.

"Providing access to quality, affordable health care is central to our mission," said Joe Benincasa, President and CEO of The Actors Fund. "The Friedman Health Center not only provides Equity members with access to Mount Sinai, one of the best health care systems in the city, but also provides for continuity of care for any members who experience regular changes in

regional AHIRC office nearest them (New York City: 917.281.5975; Los Angeles: 855.491.3357). The Actors Fund also offers free weekly seminars in New York and Los Angeles on finding health insurance as well as many online tutorials.

The Friedman Health Center is run in partnership with The Actors Fund and Mount Sinai, with major funding provided by The Gerald J. and Dorothy R. Friedman New York Foundation for Medical Research, Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, SAG-AFTRA Motion Picture Players Welfare Fund and the Booth Ferris Foundation.

CHANGE THE STAGE

Consider this study our call to action. It's time for us, as a union and as a leader within our community, to shine a light on the hiring practices within our industry. The numbers we've presented are unacceptable. We've now seen on a macro and micro level both gender and racial and ethnic disparity when it comes to who is getting contracts and what they are paid.

With this study in hand, we now have a powerful platform to demand positive, forward-thinking change and ask for others to help us lead the charge. We cannot solely rely on contractual language encouraging diverse hiring practices to fix this. It won't work alone. It hasn't worked. This is an industry epidemic that has roots in every aspect of professional theatre. This goes beyond actors and stage managers; we need partners who can help to not just change the stage, but rather to help change the industry.

For Equity, it starts with the members. It's important that we have a fully-realized portrait of the over 50,000 artists who make up this union. For those who haven't self-identified, help us by self-identifying in the Member Portal. Remember, your information is completely confidential and will never be shared with anyone—it's for the union's own internal purposes. We rely on you as much as you rely on us.

Stay informed and get active with us. Watch for emails, posts in the Member Portal and videos speaking to how Equity is taking on this very serious problem. If we send a petition, sign your name; if we ask for feedback, we want to hear from you.

Take this fight outside. Publicly, that is. Get social with this. Use #ChangeTheStage and let your followers and colleagues know that you support positive change within our industry. Now, together, we must stand up and in solidarity foster inclusion and promote diversity on and off stage.



(a)

Equity Works

Theatre News & Notes



(b)



(c)

Boulder, Colo. – Local Theater Company, which has employed up to 13 members on an LOA Agreement in the past, is happy to be transitioning onto an SPT Agreement. (Photo c)

Carmel, Calif. – For its 2017 season, Pacific Repertory Theatre will continue operation under a LOA/LORT and GAA-II, with four additional contracts plus 3% salary increase.

Carmel, Ind. – The Actors Theatre of Indiana will be operating under the Theatre for Young Audience Agreement during its 2017-2018 season. This is in addition to its SPT season, which the company has been producing under since 2005.

Chicago, Ill. – AstonRep Theatre has begun the process of transitioning into a full CAT (Chicago Area Theatre) house on the Tier N Transitional plan, bringing with it 27 workweeks.

Detroit, Mich. – Central Region staff presented the Detroit Repertory Theatre and its Artistic/Managing Director, Bruce E. Milan, with a 60th Anniversary proclamation.

Iowa City, Iowa – Iowa Summer Repertory, which shuttered in 2012 due to flood damage, returns this summer with one production under the URTA Agreement. Welcome back!

Jackson, Wyo. – Off Square Theatre, which has consistently employed members under the Guest Artist and LOA Agreements since 2007, is transitioning to an SPT Agreement.

Los Angeles, Calif. – The Theater @ Boston Court, the Latino Theatre Company and producer Daniel Wilner, are the latest seasonal agreements on the 99-Seat Theatre Agreement. The Latino Theatre Company is also utilizing the SPT Agreement.

Los Angeles, Calif. – Ebony Repertory Theatre will mount *Five Guys Named Moe* under LOA/LORT at 100% Equity contract ratio, generating 66 workweeks.

Los Angeles, Calif. – Independent Shakespeare Co. will operate its Griffith Park Shakespeare Festival, which is free to the public, under a LOA/LORT for its 2017 and 2018 seasons with 13 union contracts in the first year, increasing to 14 contracts in the second. Additionally, there will be a 9% salary increase over the two years of the Agreement. (Photo a)

Kansas City, Mo. – Musical Theater Heritage, a transitional SPT, is moving into phase two of its transitional program. This will generate an additional 40 workweeks over the next two years.

Lincoln, Neb. – Nebraska Repertory Theatre has restarted its Equity contract under the SPT Agreement. After financial constraints stopped the company from producing, the theater is thrilled to start its Equity season this September, garnering members 70 additional workweeks. (Photo b)

Minneapolis, Minn. – Welcome Trademark Theater to the Equity family. The company will operate as a transitional SPT 4 beginning this spring, accruing 54 new workweeks. Additionally, PRIME Productions will join the Equity family as a transitional SPT 1 this spring.

New York, NY – Park Avenue Armory is producing its show *The Hairy Ape* on a LORT A Agreement, with 17 Equity contracts. (Photo d)

Portland, Ore. – Equity is proud to announce that Portland is the union's newest Area Liaison City. Welcome to the family!

Santa Monica, Calif. – The Morgan-Wixson Theatre will be operating its production of *Company* on an SPT Agreement.

Second Thought Theatre (Dallas, Texas) and the Sierra Repertory Theatre (Sonora, Calif.) will be utilizing new Seasonal SPT Agreement.

St. Louis, Mo. – Insight Theatre, a transitional SPT, has negotiated with Equity an increase to its contract requirements for this season, giving our members an extra 36 workweeks.

Thousand Oaks, Calif. – Kingsmen Shakespeare Co. will continue operating under a two-season LOA/LORT at standard LORT D ratios and a 6% increase in salary over the term of the Agreement.

Tracking What You're Owed

Staff achieved terms for a televised live performance in Boston. A total payment of \$1,200 was recovered for eight members.

As part of the clearance process, staff in the Eastern Region identified underpayment of accrued vacation to 31 actors employed at eight different theaters totaling \$7,244.

A call from a member in the east brought Equity's attention to a situation in which the required Daylight Day of Rest had been invaded for the cast. Staff's efforts resulted in payments of double overtime, totaling \$1,640.

Terms were negotiated with New Hope Productions (COST) to transfer its production of *Buddy* to play a five-week engagement in Philadelphia immediately following its three-week run at Bucks County Playhouse, resulting in eight additional workweeks and a higher salary for members.

Eastern Region staff negotiated a one-year extension of the Westport Country Playhouse (COST Special) Agreement. Sig-

nificant increases of over 5% were achieved to the minimum salary terms in all contract types, which will result in an additional \$84,175 in minimum salary.

Staff in the Central Region recovered \$350 in pay shortages for a members working on an SPT. Additionally, staff discovered and recovered \$300 in tech week shortages for a stage manager and an assistant stage manager.

Two members were paid a total of \$2,311 after it was discovered they did not receive their salary increases. Central Region staff also settled two open claims that will result in six members getting an additional \$2,250 each in compensation.

Staff in the Western Region recovered \$443.52 in pension and \$1,320 in health for two members who were working on an MBAT Agreement. Additionally, the staff has garnered a total of \$3,484 in unpaid vacation accruals for members.



(d)

Pictured:

(a) Kalean Ung and Thom Rivera in *The Tempest* at Independent Shakespeare Co. Photo by Grettel Cortes

(b) Virginia Smith in Nebraska Repertory Theatre's production of *Wit*. Photo by Doug Smith

(c) Jada Suzanne Dixon and Timothy McCracken in Local Theater Company's world premiere production of *The Firestorm*. Photo by George Lange

(d) The cast of Park Avenue Armory's *The Hairy Ape*. Photo by Stephanie Berger, Courtesy of Park Avenue Armory

(index page) Members Lorenzo González and David Melville in the Independent Shakespeare Co.'s production of *The Tempest*. Photo by Grettel Cortes

Tree O'Halloran
Member since 1984

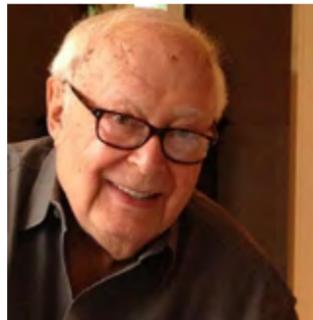


When I mentor young stage managers, one of the most frequently asked questions I hear is “How do I get my Equity card?” Usually I tell young people that my story isn’t much help. I was just in the right place at the right time. It’s only recently that I’ve realized that the true answer for almost all of us is “Right place, right time and hard work!”

In love with all things theatre from a very young age, I discovered stage management while in college. I had fortunately landed at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, a state university with a small undergraduate theatre program and a resident LORT theater. (My mother was under the impression that I was going there for the excellent journalism school.) I remember clearly the Equity stage manager telling my freshman class “My job is about communication.” Sign me up! And so my four years of college became my four-year intensive internship; assisting on all the PlayMakers Repertory Company productions and stage managing the department shows, while being mentored by experienced and remarkable Equity SMs. After my junior year, and thanks to the support of my mentor and professor, I secured a prized summer internship at the Williamstown Theater Festival. Then in December 1984, PlayMakers needed an additional union stage manager for its three-show rep. My hard work paid off. Half-way through my senior year of college, I signed my first Equity contract as stage manager for *Cloud Nine* and assistant stage manager for *Measure for Measure*.

Right place, right time, and a whole lot of hard work.

It was an extraordinary and heady feeling. I was no longer looking for a job. I had a career, a real grownup career that would include health care, a pension and a minimum living wage. I could point to my Equity membership when family and friends asked what I was going to do when I got out of college. The legitimacy that union membership offered helped them all to understand that stage management was more than my extracurricular activity while pursuing a college degree. Williamstown was eager to have me return in a professional role, and the staff at PlayMakers now treated me as a colleague rather than a student. I could say that I was a professional stage manager, and I proudly added those three validating letters — AEA — to the top of my résumé.



Richard Seff
Member since 1946

Seventy-one years ago this summer, I was an apprentice actor at the Newport Casino Theatre in Rhode Island. It was an Equity stock company with a solid reputation, and I was thrilled to be invited to play bits, to understudy and to play the occasional supporting role—in other words, to be used as an apprentice, “as cast.” The Equity rule in those days allowed an actor to appear in three productions at no salary before he was required to join the union as a full fledged member. I was to be in residence in Newport for eight weeks that summer of 1946.

I had thought of myself as a stage actor long before this break came my way. I had worked the summer of my 16th year for \$10/weekend at a small theater in Cedarhurst, Long Island, and I’d been appearing as Horace in *The Little Foxes* as a student at New York University when by sheer chance a Warner Brothers talent scout (Arnold Hosquith) saw the play and decided I should meet his boss, Zelma Brokov. She looked me over and said that she could offer me a term contract at Warner’s starting at \$75/week, but that I’d be better off getting a little “seasoning” because there wasn’t much her studio could do with a 17-year-old city kid. She made a phone call to the manager of the Casino Theatre; I had an interview and bingo, I was off to Rhode Island on July 1st.

When my three plays were up, I was summoned to the boss’ office, and together we took a walk around the property. She told me how much she liked me, and she went on to say there were several plum roles coming up that I could be right for. I could have them if I agreed, and she would pay me Equity minimum (it was \$46 at the time) for the next five weeks. But I would return the money to her, as she couldn’t pay me what she’d have to pay a seasoned actor when I was just a beginner. I was shocked, delighted, miffed, upset, perplexed, and I told her I’d think about it. I was so green I didn’t even realize there was an Equity Deputy in the resident company. I did not want to join the union and then immediately break one of its basic rules. So I called Equity in New York and spilled the beans, asking what I should do. The next thing I knew I was back in the manager’s office. “I don’t know how you did it,” said the boss, “but I am informed by the union that I must pay you, and I’ll do it, for I certainly don’t intend to job in actors to play five small roles. Congratulations, and welcome to the professional theatre!”

The biggest plum of all came when one of the roles offered was “George Bigelow,” the other juvenile in *What A Life*, which is the first play I ever saw on Broadway. I still have that first contract, the one where I am to play “as cast,” which meant the world to me. Equity was there from the start, and I am grateful to this day to it for starting my theatrical life off on the right foot.

Everyman Theatre



Photo by CB Photography

Equity member Bruce Randolph Nelson in the company’s current production of *Great Expectations*.

We asked the staff at the Everyman Theatre to tell us about themselves. This is what they had to say:

“If you want to start a theater company, do it in Baltimore,” a trusted colleague and fellow artistic director told Vincent Lancisi, fresh out of graduate school, 26 years ago.

And he did just that.

Everyman Theatre came to life in the winter of 1990 when its first show, *The Runner Stumbles*, was produced in an old church. In fact, those involved still remember that the church was so frigid they handed out blankets to audience members.

From the beginning, Everyman’s core mission has been to produce theatre that was affordable and accessible to everyone, and to support and feature a resident company of professional actors and artists. Even in the early days and first productions, it was vital to Lancisi and his team that the company offer a number of Equity contracts to cast members.

“It’s always been my goal to provide meaningful work to the professional actor,” said Lancisi. “Our resident compa-

ny is made up of a dozen local Equity actors who are featured in roles throughout our season. I want these actors to be able to stay here in the Baltimore region and perform extraordinary roles throughout our season, and then also be able to own homes, raise families and take their kids to soccer practice.”

For the first few years, Everyman performed in various locations throughout Baltimore City. In 1994, the company settled into a rented former bowling alley that was turned into a performance space. Throughout the late ‘90s and early 2000s, subscription numbers began to grow and a string of popular, and critically acclaimed productions, including *Amadeus*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *The Crucible* and the wildly successful *Proof*, proved that Everyman had become a mainstay in the Baltimore theatre scene.

In the early 2000s, many of the theater’s current familiar faces were asked by Lancisi to join the company, includ-

(Continued on page 27)

Howdy, Austin/San Antonio



Photo by Jessica Attie

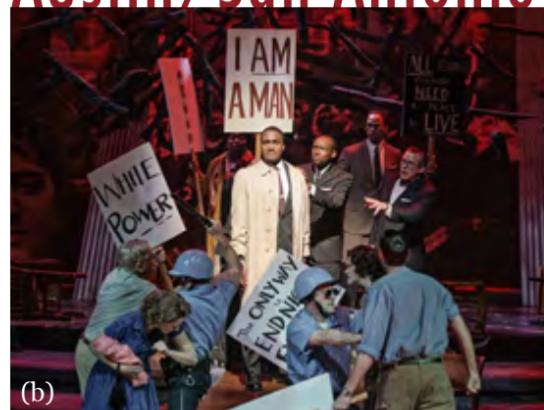


Photo by KirkTuck.com (and index photo)



Photo by Bret Brookshire



Photo by Karla Ent

Photos: (a) Member Carla Nickerson in the U.S. premiere of *Mouthful* at the Mary Moody Northen Theatre. (b) Member Cecil Washington, Jr. as Martin Luther King, Jr. and cast in ZACH Theatre's production of *The Great Society*. (c) Equity actors Erik Mathew, André Martin and Philip R. Goodwin in *The Invention of Love* at Austin Shakespeare. (d) Member Christina Stroup, EMC Leslie Ann Leal, member Lauren DeFilippo and Lilly Lane Stafford in TexARTS' *The Marvelous Wonderettes*. Index page: The cast of ZACH Theatre's *The Great Society*.

Come for the theatre; stay for the Alamo (and the BBQ). Get to know Actors' Equity's liaison cities, Austin and San Antonio. A vibrant cultural region, the Austin/San Antonio area boasts a small but growing theatre scene—getting stronger with the help of Equity's liaison committee. Below, members of the committee tell us what to do, where to eat and what's best about living and working in the region.

Working in the Region

On rewarding experiences working in the region

The opportunity to work on new pieces is a great experience that isn't always available elsewhere. Theaters are driven to develop interesting and thought-provoking work. The scene is as eclectic and diverse as the city itself! You can see anything from Broadway tours, dance, experimental shows to theatre for young audiences, bilingual productions, and more.

On starting out in the area

We wish we knew that there can be limited opportunity for members. There are not a lot of options for companies with low budgets or smaller start-up companies that want to work with us. But, we are consistently seeking to try and increase the opportunities for Equity members here!

On getting involved

Find other ways to be involved in the local community. Become a member of the B Iden Payne Committee (Austin's "Tony Awards"); it provides the opportunity to see a lot of shows and meet a lot of people in the theatrical community that one may not otherwise have the chance to meet.

Around Town

On where to eat (on or off the tourist's radar)

In San Antonio, the River Walk or Mi Tierra. In Austin, stand in line all day for Franklin's BBQ, or Threadgills, Matt's El Rancho or Torchy's Tacos.

On where you might be working

Classic Theatre of San Antonio, Opera San Antonio, The Majestic, ZACH Theatre, Austin Playhouse, Austin Shakespeare Festival, TexARTS, and Mary Moody Northen Theatre at SEU.

On going for a run

South Town/River Walk and La Villita Historic Art Village or, in Austin, the trails at Lady Bird Lake.

On what you won't find anywhere else

The Alamo, the River Walk, Tower of the Americas, Town Lake and Barton Springs (a MUST).

In Memoriam

"Were I to die and go to heaven and find it populated by actors, I would not be unhappy."
— Playwright Ben Hecht

Emelise Aleandri	Miguel Ferrer	Catherine Lacy	Patricia Ripley
Mel Allen	Carrie Fisher	Dick Latessa	David Rosenbaum
Ken Ayers	Charles Forster	Laryssa Lauret	Glenn Richard Rothenberger
Paul Backer	Bernard Fox	Kate Leslie	Larry O. Roupe
Barbara Allyn Bennet	Zsa Zsa Gabor	Linda Lowry	June Russell
David Horton Black	Rita Gam	Vincent Lynne-O'Brien	Robert Stephen Ryan
Virginia A. Brown	Dick Gautier	Joseph Mascolo	Oran Sandel
Susan Burke	Kevin S. Geer	Tricia McCauley	William Sarkees
Jeanne-Louise Campbell	Byron Grant	George Moore	Nicola Sheara
Laurie Carlos	Ernie Green	Mary Tyler Moore	Frank Silvano
Carolee	Geraldine Hanning	Audrey Morgan	Cliffe De Simone
William W. Christopher	Steven Edward Hart	Milton Moss	George Soviak
Irwin Corey	Keith E. Hefner	Douglas Nelson	Priscilla Stampa
Ben Cotey	Arthur Heller	Ted Nolan	Carolyn Sullivan-Zinn
Hank De Luca	Richard G. Hermany *	Fred Ochs	Jim Swanson
Vito D'erasmo	Candice J. Hincks	John O'Creagh	Barbara J. Tarbuck
Alice Drummond	Booker Hinton	John Peakes	Beryl Taylor
Jan Eddy	Henry Holden	Roberta Peters	Alan W. Thicke
Ellerine	Richard Hoyt	Jack Poggi	Raymond Thorne
M. Douglas Ericksen	George S. Irving *	Marge Randolph	Robert Stanley Tucker
Frank Evans	Cortland Jessup	Allen Raymon	James Van Wart
Ellen Faison	Roger Keller	Ann Reid	Martin Waldron
Roger Fawcett	Connie Kunkle	Debbie Reynolds	Fritz Weaver

*Denotes Equity Councillor

Reported between Dec. 1, 2016, and Feb. 28, 2017

The Equity Polls are Open!

On Tuesday, April 25, 2017, ballots were distributed by Global Election Services to all paid-up members.

Please take this time to visit the Member Portal, where you will be able to see the official 2017 Equity Election Calendar; how to vote; eligible candidates; candidate statement videos and written candidate statements.

Note: All ballots must be received by 5 p.m. ET on Wednesday, May 24, 2017.

Get Active with Equity

Join a committee! At Equity, member involvement is crucial and there are numerous ways for you to get active! Committees range from national to regional. To join a committee in your region, call the Governance Department at 212-869-8530, ext. 327.

Want more headlines?

Make sure to check out the Equity News Center located in the Member Portal. It's regularly updated with important news from your union, stories from liaison area and features about the industry. Additionally, you will find Sandra Karas' Tax Blog, videos and information regarding Equity's latest campaigns, contract negotiations and events in your region.

Visit members.actorsequity.org for more.

Council Resolutions Posted

Resolutions passed from Equity's National Council can now be found in the Equity News Center. Recently published are the resolutions from the General Membership Meeting from Jan. 9, 2017, as well as resolutions from more recent Council meetings.

Spirit: A Celebration of Diversity

This year, Equity honored Ron Himes, Esther Grisham Grimm and Emjoy Gavino with the Kathryn V. Lamkey ("Kathy") Award during its 14th annual *Spirit, A Celebration of Diversity* ceremony on March 24, 2017, at the Chicago Shakespeare Theater on Navy Pier.

The event is presented annually by the National Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Committee. The Kathy, as named after longtime Central Regional director, Kathryn V. Lamkey, is intended to honor theater companies, individuals, producers and organizations



Photo and index page photo by Paul Peterson

that provide ongoing opportunities for underrepresented members in the Central Region. This year's recipients have demonstrated a dedication to the tenets of this award. Himes is the founder and producing director of the St. Louis Black Repertory Theater; Grimm is the executive director of 3Arts; and Gavino, whose husband accepted the award on her behalf, is the founder of the Chicago Inclusion Project.

"The spirit of diversity was truly flowing in the room," said 1st Vice Chair of the EEO Committee E. Faye Butler. "The recipients are truly trailblazers this year: Ester Grimm, for all the work she does to support artists in achieving their dreams that make a difference in the community; Ron Himes, who for over 30 years,

has maintained a theatre that allows artists to express their culture and spiritual works in a safe and nurturing environment; Emjoy Gavino, who in a short span of time put her energy into asking the questions many diverse artists are afraid to ask and finding solutions. Bravo to all our amazing recipients."

The St. Louis Black Repertory Theater, founded in 1976, is the largest professional African American theater company in the nation. The company is committed to producing shows by primarily African American and third-world playwrights. The mission of the Chicago Inclusion Project is "to encourage inclusive theater experiences that illuminate our shared human story by bringing together Chicago artists and audiences normally separated by physical ability, gender identity and ethnic background, providing inspiration and resources for the Chicago community to embrace inclusive programming in the arts."

3Arts, according to its website, "works to sustain and promote artists in the Chicago metropolitan area. Our focus on women artists, artists of color and artists with disabilities stems from the need for a diversity of voices and visions to be supported if our city is to prosper and inspire."

Member Robert Schleifer, a deaf actor and former recipient of a 3Arts grant, proudly presented the award to Grimm as an ASL interpreter read his comments aloud to the audience.

"Each year the Spirit Awards celebrate diversity, inclusion and community in such an inspiring and joyous way," said Christine Toy Johnson, chair of the EEO Committee. "Thank you to our members in the Central Region for making this evening one of the crowning jewels of our events, and to all the honorees for their great contributions to the theatre."

Area Liaison Hotline System

Call 877-AEA-1913
Equity has a national toll-free hotline system for members who live in area liaison and office cities.

Each area liaison area has its own extension, where members can access news and information in their region.

- (1) Dial 877-AEA-1913.
- (2) Dial your area extension:

- 810 Albany
- 811 Atlanta
- 812 Austin/San Antonio
- 813 Boston
- 814 Buffalo/Rochester
- 815 Chicago
- 816 Cincinnati/Louisville
- 817 Cleveland
- 818 Dallas/Fort Worth
- 819 Denver
- 820 Detroit
- 821 Florida – Central
- 822 Florida – South
- 823 Houston
- 824 Kansas City
- 825 Las Vegas
- 826 Los Angeles
- 827 Milwaukee/Madison
- 828 Minneapolis/St. Paul
- 829 Nashville
- 830 New Orleans
- 831 New York
- 832 Philadelphia
- 833 Phoenix/Tucson
- 834 Pittsburgh
- 876 Portland
- 835 San Diego
- 836 San Francisco
- 837 Seattle
- 838 St. Louis
- 839 Washington D.C./Baltimore

Theater Spotlight - (Continued from page 23)

ing Equity members Megan Anderson, Deborah Hazlett and Bruce Randolph Nelson.

"Being a member of the Everyman company is really like being a member of a family," said Nelson, who has been featured in numerous productions, including *I Am My Own Wife* and *Red*. "We have our ups and our downs. We laugh, we push each other. We have a short-hand between each other. We're able to just glance at each other onstage and know what the other needs. This familiarity is such a gift. It makes us the best artists and storytellers we can be."

In the mid-2000s, the theater realized it had outgrown its rented space. Through a generous donation from Bank of America and the Harold A. Dawson Trust, Everyman built a new home. Over the span of six years, the company completed a successful \$18 million capital campaign. In January 2013, Everyman celebrated the grand opening with the record-breaking production of *August: Osage County*.

Now in its fourth year in its space, the theater has remained committed to its core value of providing theatre that is affordable and accessible to everyone. For more than 15 years now, Everyman has offered its flagship "High School Matinee Program." With an emphasis on repeat exposure, this initiative offers hundreds of Baltimore City Public School students the opportunity to see five productions throughout a school year. Each production is accompanied by a pre-show workshop, an interactive play guide to supplement the students' learning and a post-show classroom discussion with the artists—all free of charge to the students, teachers and schools. The theater also offers "Pay What You Can" performances for every production, \$10 student tickets, senior discounts and more. In 2014, in conjunction with its production of *Tribes*, the organization became one of the first in the nation to provide personal, handheld closed captioning devices at every performance.

"We are committed to embodying the promise of our name – Everyman Theatre," said Lancisi. "My ultimate goal is to allow everyone to be able to experience live theatre at Everyman Theatre at any time."

The theater celebrated its 25th anniversary last year. During this anniversary year, the company produced "The Great American Rep," a feat featuring American classics *Death of a Salesman* and *A Streetcar Named Desire* performed with the same cast (largely made up of resident company members) in rotating repertory.

Also during the anniversary year, the theater launched its new Community Engagement Initiative, which aims to expand and deepen the theater's existing community-based work and more closely connect the Greater Baltimore community through the work seen on Everyman's stage.

"It's such an exciting time to be a part of the Everyman family," said Lancisi. "Now we're looking towards the future and all that is to come in the next 25 years."

Contents page photo:

Everyman Theatre company members Danny Gavigan and Megan Anderson *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Photo by CB Photography.

members.actorsequity.org

CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

"In 2016, **Profile Theatre** launched its Diversity and Inclusion Initiative, committing to exclusively presenting the works of women and people of color for three years. This has meant not only more artists of color and women writing and directing the plays, but more diverse stories with more diverse casts. The first season of this initiative, focusing on the work of Tanya Barfield, featured ten actors of color, or 66 percent of our total casts. Our second season, centered on the work of Quiara Alegria Hudes, has 18 actors of color out of a total of 21 in the season. These stories more accurately reflect our city, country and world and help us dream into being the inclusive society we want. As a result, we have seen our audience diversify in both age and ethnic make-up; our community contacts increase by about 100 percent, further embedding us in the community we serve; and our traditional audience engage in a spectrum of conversations that increased empathy and understanding in multiple directions, particularly along age, race, sexual orientation and class.

- Josh Hecht

Artistic Director of Profile Theatre | Portland, Ore.

"The cultural landscape of America is vast and diverse, so that should always be reflected on our stage at **Arena Stage**. Sometimes casting has specific requirements, so choices are dictated to a certain extent, but often there is flexibility to think about the world of the play and find what fits.

When we re-opened Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater with *Okla-homa!*, I made a choice to really represent the varied populations that lived in the frontier—it was not only white but hugely diverse. Frontiers usually are. I have to attribute part of our success to having a diverse audience all see themselves in the story. Quite frankly, I've always cast with a strong eye towards diversity since my early days over 38 years ago in Alaska when I started Perseverance Theatre.

Of course, having a diversity of writers that represent our American communities is a big factor in ensuring we cast actors of all cultural backgrounds. We can't have a discussion on diversity in casting without saying that our field needs to strive for a diversity of playwright voices. And I mean the whole field."

- Molly Smith

Artistic Director of Arena Stage | Washington, D.C.



Isabel Keating and Marg Helgenberger in *The Little Foxes* at Arena Stage. Photo by C. Stanley Photography

Contents page photo:

Tina Stafford, Margaret Ivey and Rebecca Hirota in Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park's *Jane Eyre*. Photo by Mikki Schaffner.

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Welcome to our newest members!



A national New Member Reception was held on March 27, 2017. New member events are held throughout the year. These fun, informational gatherings are sponsored by the National Membership Education Committee.

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