2021

EQUITY & JUSTICE REPORT

ENSEMBLE STUDIO THEATRE

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I. INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 2020, as the uprisings unfolded and the demand for change in the country and specifically within American Theater erupted, Ensemble Studio Theatre (EST) made the decision to take stock of its practices and structure. Rather than make narrow or unilateral decisions around hiring and programs, EST reached out to Rebecca KellyG Equity and Justice Consulting (RKG) to gather input from the community and assess institutional barriers to equity to support their decisions on how to move forward. While the call for BIPOC leadership was clear, it was also evident that these calls for change required that the organization itself begin a process of transformation that would support and welcome new individuals and groups who entered the space. There was and remains a desire for this to be a process of depth and longevity beyond a reactive response to the moment.

This report is not a mandate. The decision on how to move forward rests with the people of EST. Rather, this report offers a snapshot of the community's experiences around identity and culture and contains recommendations for achieving equity.

This report also does not offer a silver bullet or quick fix to racism or inequity as it exists within EST. That is not possible. It took hundreds of years for our society to arrive at this point and it will take time and dedication for us to undo these structures within ourselves and institutions. This report is a capacity-building resource with tools to support taking on the deep work of employing these and/or future recommendations. It should also be referenced by future leadership to set priorities and implement changes.

It is the hope of RKG that this report will be a resource for the community to return to when there are questions or ideas around power, identity, and organizational practices for years to come.

Finally, while the emphasis of this report is intentionally on areas of growth, it is crucial to note that the people of EST love this theater. Overwhelmingly, the sentiment that accompanied critical feedback was one of dedication and investment in the health, growth, and longevity of EST.

II. PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

RKG was hired to support EST in its impending leadership transition and in becoming a more anti-racist and equitable organization. The process consisted of two phases:

Phase 1 Discovery: The first phase of this work focused on comprehensive information gathering through a combination of document requests/review, surveys, focus groups, 1:1 meetings, and attendance at various EST events. The first survey was disseminated in October 2020. 257 members of the EST community completed the first survey, which focused on EST's culture. The second survey was distributed in November 2020. 170 members of the EST community participated in the second survey, which focused on understanding how leadership and power operate at EST. Between December 2020 and January 2021, RKG offered and facilitated the following identity-based focus groups:

- **30 and Under:** People of the EST community who are 30 years of age or younger

- **50 and Over:** People of the EST community who are 50 years of age or over

- **BIPOC:** Black, Indigenous and/or other people of color within EST

- **LGBTQIA+:** People of the EST community who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual and others along this spectrum

- **Women:** All people of the EST community who identify as Women

These groups were identified based on perspectives gathered from the community through the surveys and conversations. The purpose of the focus groups was to gather insight and experiences related to bias and identity, EST's organizational culture, and the organization's current relationship to leadership & power. Phase 1 culminated in this report, which offers a synthesis of data collected, along with recommendations on how to build an equitable and inclusive transition team, and possibilities for leadership restructuring.

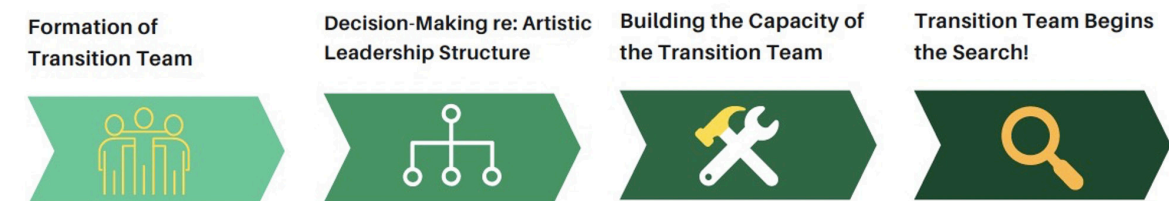## RACIAL EQUITY & JUSTICE AT EST, PHASE 1: DISCOVERY

With Rebecca KellyG Consulting

| Survey 1-Culture | Survey 2- Leadership | Focus Groups | 1:1s | Data Analysis | Report |
| October 2020 | November 2020 | December 2020 | December 2020 | Winter 2020 | Spring 2021 |

Phase 2 Equitable Transitions: Based on information collected and synthesized in this report, EST will form the Transition Team, and make decisions about changes to the Artistic Leadership Structure. RKG will provide this Transition Team with tools and knowledge around equitable hiring and transition processes through a series of trainings. After building the Transition Team's capacity to do this work, the team will launch their hiring process.

RACIAL EQUITY & JUSTICE AT EST, PHASE 2: EQUITABLE TRANSITIONS

With Rebecca KellyG Consulting

| Formation of Transition Team | Decision-Making re: Artistic Leadership Structure | Building the Capacity of the Transition Team | Transition Team Begins the Search! |

Demographic Disclaimer: Surveys were used as a significant part of the data collection process. Participants to the survey were asked two anchoring questions: 1) the identity that best describes them and 2) how they identify on standard forms, such as the U.S. Census. There is a clear gap between the boxes checked on standardized forms and the nuanced responses to the open question of how people self-identify. As you review the information within this report, please note that the standardized categories were used for consistency and effectiveness in data collection. However, those categories are not created or endorsed by RKG. It should also be noted, for this report and in general, that such categories do not account for multiracial individuals or the reality that some people who fall into categories traditionally labeled as BIPOC also identify as or are perceived to be White, which impacts their treatment and life experiences.

Additionally, while the aim of RKG is to be as transparent as possible, it is also important to prioritize the protection and anonymity of survey respondents. Toward that end, if the demographic category has less than 3 members, the responses have been removed. Nevertheless, because we are mindful that this type of exclusion can also feel silencing, we've taken care to include high-level recommendations that include the reflections shared by these smaller respondent categories. Finally, personally identifying information has been redacted from quotes unless express permission for its use was granted by the respondent.

III. GUIDELINES FOR YOUR READING

RKG offers the following guidelines for absorbing the information in this report:

Take It Slow: This report includes statistical analysis, experiences of isolation and tokenization, tools for a deeper understanding of racism, power, and accountability, as well as recommendations for moving forward. To take it all in, allow yourself the space to put it down, pick up, put it down, and then pick it up again. This is important but that does not mean you need to read it under an energy of urgency. Deep listening takes deliberate attention.

Learn from Your Limits: When you read something representing an experience or knowledge that is not your own, recognize that we all live in the paradigms that we know, so what you are reading is a window into a different paradigm, a new perspective, and/or source of knowledge. Allow yourself to learn from that, not resist it.

Perceptions Can Reflect Power: You may find that some perceptions of EST community members run contrary to institutional facts you know about the theater. Recognize that this conflicting perception may reflect a lack of transparency or resource sharing and/or open wounds from prior experiences that have not been addressed. Rather than let such perceptions generate defensiveness, consider why there may be a gap, what the perception tells us about the culture, and how these information gaps can be filled.

Tend to Your Tension: If, as you read about experiences of bias, racism, or isolation, you feel inner resistance, activation, or overwhelm, put it down and take care of yourself. Ask yourself, am I feeling this way because I am disappointed, angry, sad? Am I reminded of other similar experiences? What can my tension tell me about what I want to see changed or stay the same at EST?

Notice Institutional Barriers: As you read, you may come across rules or policies within the organization that seem to limit the reality of a particular idea you have. Change the rules! Explore radical dreaming. If you don't like the rules, work with your community to change them.

The Best Way Forward Can Require Looking Back: This report contains many reflections from the community before RKG recommendations are given. This is intentional. The experiences and opinions of people at EST are crucial to moving forward equitably. This report is, in part, a space for uplifting those experiences and opinions. The recommendations grow from there.

Power for the People: Commonly, there is an idea that one person or entity must come in to rescue a community. This idea is rooted in histories of colonization. The power to identify and meaningfully move on these or any other recommendations is best activated through the people of EST working together as a collective on your own culture and practices.

Sharing is Caring! Remember, the fact that people chose to participate in focus groups, surveys, newsletters, and online forms demonstrates the love and commitment to this theater throughout the community. If people were not deeply invested in EST, they would not take the significant time to offer such thought and consideration to its growth.

IV. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on RKG's review of the EST community and perspectives of the people within EST, she makes a number of recommendations in this report. Key among those recommendations:

1. Form a Transition Team to lead the process of hiring new leadership and similar EST positions in the future

2. Increase BIPOC representation in leadership (AD/ED/Board/Staff), as well as audience, design, production, and casts

3. Employ a shared rotating artistic leadership model with significant BIPOC representation, including, at least, one existing EST Member

4. Engage a full-time Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppression Facilitator with an intersectional lens to create a reporting structure, lead regular workshops/community conversations, and address conflict through a community-centered lens

5. Engage a Human Resources professional not part of EST leadership

6. Create infrastructure for Affinity Groups and institutionalized process for engaging and supporting those groups

7. Assign weighted voting for Members Council Co-Chairs in Board meetings to increase representation of the Membership

8. Establish regular open meetings for people to learn about membership process, socialize, and hear updates on EST business

9. Create a resource available to EST community that outlines pathways to power and entryways into the EST community

10. Uplift BIPOC programs and founding Members, in particular Going to the River and Elizabeth Van Dyke

V. ACCOUNTABILITY IN ACTION

At this moment, EST is engaging in a process of accountability. Due to the punitive and carceral culture that we live in, the term accountability is often linked with punishment rather than an opportunity for growth and transformation. The process of accountability is taking responsibility for our choices and the consequences of those choices. In this process, it is essential to recognize when a person takes actions that do not align with their values that does not make the person "bad," or an organization "irreparably flawed," but rather a human being or group of human beings inherently capable of mistakes. When we engage in the process of accountability to our community we are:

   1. Acknowledging and/or allowing ourselves to be made aware that our actions were out of

   alignment with the values agreed upon by the community;

   2. Holding space to understand the impact of our actions on others within our community;

   3. Taking the necessary steps to repair the harm caused;

   4. Changing behavior to bring our actions into alignment with the community values.

When we recognize that perfection is not a reasonable expectation, then we realize that there will always be a gap between our goals and our actions, however small. In this state of recognition, we can move from shaming and blaming toward determining reasonable and appropriate consequences and course corrections. These consequences and corrections can range from a conversation all the way to removing people from a community, either permanently or temporarily, until they can demonstrate willingness to engage in changed behavior.

This report is, in essence, an accountability assessment examining the following question: how closely aligned are EST's actions with its stated equity-based values? This report also recommends opportunities for repair and course correction where gaps are identified.

With that understanding, keeping in mind EST's values as found in the Mission Statement, which was recently revamped by a team of community members, will be helpful in reviewing this report:

   EST develops and produces original, provocative and authentic new plays. We engage and challenge our audiences in New York City and across the country.

EST is a dynamic community **committed to a collaborative process and dedicated to inclusion across all aspects of identity and perspective,** including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexuality, physical or mental ability, physical or mental health, and recovery.
They **acknowledge and work to end systemic marginalization and oppression at all levels of the organization.**

EST discovers and nurtures new voices and supports artists **throughout their creative lives.**

EST believes that this extraordinary support and their **commitment to inclusivity are essential to yield extraordinary work.**

Particularly relevant are the bold sections of the above referenced values are particularly relevant as places where a clear need for action is required. These areas will be referenced throughout the report.

VI. RACE IDENTITY AND CULTURE AT EST

While it is a common impulse for those made aware of injustice is to act urgently, it's equally important to act thoughtfully. At EST, this requires understanding how the organization currently operates in order to make impactful long-lasting change. This process also requires creating space to breathe and to share and uplift community experiences.

Race, identity, and culture are at the heart of much of the feedback received during RKG's information gathering process. Therefore, while the impacts of race, identity, and culture are interspersed throughout this report, we begin our exploration of the theater with a grounding in those areas.

With that in mind, this section of the report provides an important snapshot of the existing EST culture taken directly from the EST community. It also sets out key concepts related to race and oppression through which to consider the community. These concepts should be at the forefront of EST's actions going forward.

A. THE CENTER OF EST CULTURE

Through RKG's process, a clear picture of the "center" of EST culture emerged. Among other things, we asked the community to share whether they believed artistic and performance opportunities were made equally available across gender, age, sexual orientation, and race. The responses demonstrate that while there are varying levels of comfort across all identities, **individuals who are cis, white, male, straight, and/or under the age of 30 were the most likely to feel at ease with the artistic equity at EST as it currently exists.** By contrast, individuals who fall outside of this identity spectrum consistently expressed feelings of marginalization. Below, is a selection of poignant comments supporting this finding directly from the voices within EST.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

• *"I have been continually surprised at how many white men in their 20s and 30s become members. I have been working as an actor at EST for over [a number of] years, and as a women of color I am still unsure of how to become a member, and I think seeing white male colleagues consistently becoming members while POC aren't, it has subliminally meant that membership isn't a priority for people like me."*

• *"Culturally, I have to adapt to blend in at EST (and every American theatre). I'm used it by now. America likes to put people in categories. For example: pronouns. That's an English language issue. We don't have pronouns that separate men from women in Hawaiian. They're the same word. The same goes for theatre too. We don't have Actor, Director, Playwright. In Hana Keaka (Hawaiian medium theatre), you're a theatre maker. You learn all aspects of storytelling. I have American degrees in acting and directing and I'm not sure what the difference is, other than the assigned hierarchy that comes with each category. You can't fix that, but you could consider it when asking me to fit into a box. I'll still do it, but at least consider it. When you do, maybe you'll voluntarily stop having those ridiculous America's idea of Hawaii "tiki" themed parties. You're above that."*

• *"Scheduling rehearsals, tech weeks, or performances during Jewish holidays is unfair to production staff, cast, and audiences…It was exhausting to experience. "*

• *"I stopped associating with EST due to repeated experiences and observations of misogyny."*

• *"I feel that some aspects of my identity and others are commodified. I have worked with several other trans people at EST, and several BIPOC friends as well."*

• *"EST exercises a very "gay mascot" approach to LGBTQIA+ inclusion and feels tolerated"*

• *"Cishet leaders/staff seem to be open to being corrected or changed, but it is up to LGBTQIA+ folks to ask for those changes, which can be burdensome."*

• *"I have been repeatedly misgendered with no attempts to correct when I have clarified my pronouns and identity."*

• *"How EST focuses its resources, time, productions, budget, encouragement towards writers under 30, at the expense of older writers, especially women [demonstrates bias]. Why doesn't the Playwrights Unit, which has been self-run, and is open to all members, and has managed to keep going for decades, receive no funding? I have heard the leadership dismiss those writers, and the work that is developed there, and it is inexcusable. It is ageism/sexism against older women writers."*

• *"Ageism, conscious or otherwise, can be a problem. Youngblood, rather than the EST membership, has become the primary source for scripts for development on the mainstage…."*

While keeping all of this feeback in heart and mind, racial identity at EST requires specific attention, as it consistently surfaced as one of the key tension points during RKG's information gathering, largely mirroring the national (and international) mass awakening on the impacts of race and racism in society. Therefore, prior to directly sharing EST voices on the topic of race, RKG outlines some of the key ideas and concepts required to place the EST community experiences in context.

B. UNDERSTANDING RACISM

RKG identified a clear lack of clarity around EST goals for combating racism and seeking racial justice. Community members consistently raised questions such as *"do we have target quotas in place," "does reverse racism exist,"* or *"what constitutes racism other than direct acts of aggression?"*

To respond to this confusion, RKG offers two definitions of racism from scholars and premiere thinkers on the concept. Ibram X. Kendhi author of How to Be an Anti-Racist and Isabella Wilkerson author of Caste: *The Origins of Our Discontents.*

Kendi defines racism as the institutional, structural and systemic racial inequities maintained through the marriage of:

1. Policies that produce or sustain racial inequity;

2. Ideas that suggest one racial group is inferior or superior in any way to another racial group.

In Wilkerson's definition of racism, she focuses on the role of hierarchy in maintaining racial injustice. In so doing, Wilkerson defines racism as "the granting or withholding of respect, status, honor, attention, privileges, resources, benefit of the doubt, and human kindness to someone on the basis of their perceived rank or standing in the hierarchy."

As both of these definitions make clear, racism is not limited to actions and words exchanged between people, but rather operates as a system that is upheld by both procedures, interactions, and psychological factors, such as internalizing messages of inferiority or superiority based on race.

Additional concepts that assist in digesting the EST community experience include the following:

Inequality: Unequal access to resources and opportunities.

• Significantly, this definition is not rooted in intention or conscious action(s) but in outcomes.

Equality: Evenly distributed resources and tools.

• While this is often uplifted as a societal goal, it does not address the inherent imbalances created from prior practices of inequality or recognize the specific needs of a wide range of experiences.

Equity: Practices that remedy inequality by providing custom tools relevant to the circumstances that provide everyone the resources they need to thrive.

• Equity is rooted in acknowledging difference and being responsive to those differences among people.

Justice: Restructuring the system to enable equity to freely exist.

• If an institution, organization, or community group is hostile or ill-equipped to support equitable practices, that structure itself must shift or be rearranged. Moving around the parts or people within that structure will   not be sufficient.
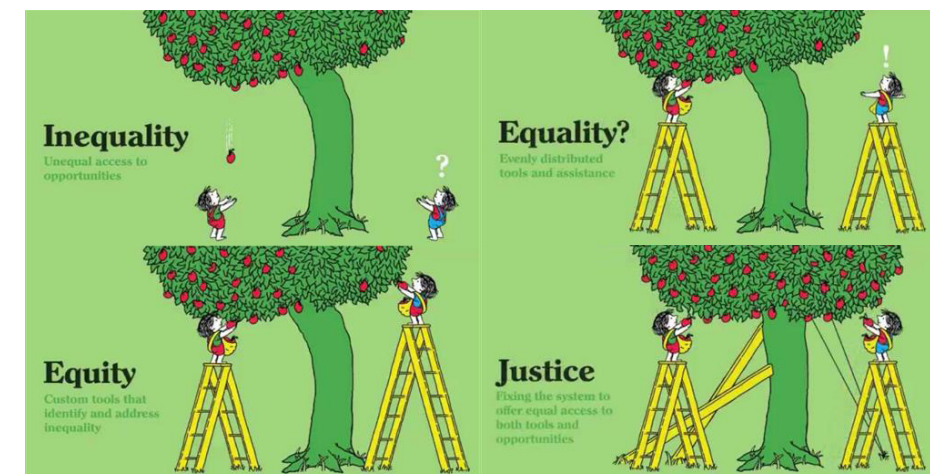

Figure 1 Tony Ruth Equity Series

With these concepts in mind, below are some of the reflections on experiences of race and racism within EST culture quoted directly from the EST community. The new leaders at EST must be comfortable and competent to address the issues raised by their community in order to truly serve the entire community's best interests and align with the organization's anti-racist values.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

The Artistic Experience

• *"The way we do submissions runs on an "equality" mindset that doesn't give space for real equity. EST feels very tokenizing the way it uses Black artists and decisions come from the White board and leadership down when it should come from members specifically centering black member artists"*

• *"In general, we don't have folks of color as dramaturgs, nor in places making the main decisions in terms of casting, hiring, or decision making- so I feel as though there are many blind spots there in terms of not only the importance but in terms of just assuming that it is being done. Also, the audience members we seek out are not, in general racially diverse, so it doesn't seem like an urgent need."*

• *"Blackness and indigeneity is not centered at EST but is tokenized, there is colorism in that mostly hiring lighter skinned, and non-black poc as "equity",...there are layers of oppressive systems working at EST White neurotypical heteropatriarchy being the primary one."*

Decision - Making

• *"Having BIPOC in leadership/decision-making positions, **letting BIPOC define themselves on their own terms rather than in opposition to prevailing Whiteness**, diversifying their audience, facilitating conversations about race in environments with participants of multiple races."*

• *"The Black artistic community shouldn't be siloed off from the powers that make decisions, we should be making the decisions. I don't think that means that White staff members need to lose their jobs, but pay structures and the structure of decision making needs to shifted and decentralized."*

• *"The design and production teams tend to be primarily White (or White-presenting)"*

• *"Our centralization of White leadership and the lack of rigor around truly **making connection with theatre makers of color** or who we vet to get on staff, simply because we don't know them."*

• *"EST needs to focus on 1. having people in power who are BIPOC, 2. increasing BIPOC representation EVERYWHERE in the broader community, including the audience!"*

Accountability

• *"The most vital piece that EST is missing is a reporting structure. **There is no refined process by which moments of racial injustice or inequitable behavior can be reported, and therefore, the organization often lacks accountability.**"*

• *"Often, EST is reacting to racial inequity in hindsight, in response to either an internal or external incident. We need to learn how to get in front of the train, to alter our structures, before we're blindsided. We also have to counteract the natural gatekeeping structures that come from being an organization with a lifetime membership structure. Space needs to be made for voices besides the older, Whiter membership."*

• *"EST's membership, leadership, staff and Board need to reflect the demographics of NYC in terms of BIPOC and LGBTQ people. There needs to be accurate data regarding the current membership, staff and Board so we know where we currently stand in terms of representation. We should report this data publicly and keep reporting it every year."*

Based on surveys, the following racial gap emerges:

Race Gap Analysis

• 87% of Black respondents find there to be racial bias in dramaturgical feedback and 56% believe that racial bias impacts the casting processes at EST.

• 54% of Hispanic respondents at EST have personally experienced racial bias. The same is true for 50% of all Black respondents, and 29% of all Asian respondents

• *Of all identities surveyed, Black respondents were the least likely to know where to turn for institutional support after experiencing incidents of racism/bias.*

C. NEUTRALITY IS NOT ENOUGH

While there is an undeniably strong desire within EST to change the culture to address many of the concerns raised above, there are also voices within the EST community who urge patience and suggest that the problems of racial isolation and power imbalance can resolve themselves with time and good intentions. RKG finds it essential to unequivocally state **that there is no evidence of inaction resolving racism and inequity within this country, organizations, or ourselves.** In fact, reflections on the culture at EST expressly demonstrate that lack of action can lead to feelings of exclusion and instability within EST.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

The Experience of Neutrality

• *"I never felt isolated at EST when I was working on a play. But when I'm not, and I'm just in the room with members, I feel completely out of place. I'm always wondering if I'm welcomed in the room, or if I belong. This is mostly because more than 90% of the people in the room are White, and they are oblivious to the alienating power they have. No one goes out of their way to welcome you. No one declares it a safe space for non-Whites. A lot is presumed by leadership as accomplished when it's not. I've never even seen an antiracist statement from EST until recently. No one cops to being racist, and I'm not saying EST is peopled with racists. What I am saying is that EST is not overtly anti-racist, and locating itself in that "neutral" space of silence perpetuates racism."*

• *"EST is a White institution with a degree of inclusion. It has the foundation of White superiority while at the same time coming from a place of friendliness and warmth. People of color are not discriminated against, nor unwelcome, per se."*

• *"As a person of color I was always aware that I was included at EST under their terms. I had to fit their box. When I did, I was (mostly) there to tell a White person's story. Some of those times I was there to add some diversity to the stage. At this point, EST is allowing space for POC to tell their stories themselves. This is really great progress. The structure wasn't allowing that in the past. My hope is that when a POC artist auditions for the company now and in the future, they aren't met by a seating unit full of White people expecting them to fit into their box. In fact, if they aren't active members who actually know these POC auditioning, they should do their homework first, because we're auditioning you too."*

• *"The most diverse aspect of EST remains the Youngbloods, without them, EST fails on most diversity metrics. All the decision makers at EST (including Youngblood) are White, and while they may claim to have diversity as a goal, it remains a barrier for many artists of color who either don't feel welcomed by the leaders, or else don't see a place within its programming. EST can be especially insular, and while everyone at EST is someone I want to work with, the company must change its organizational structures to make space for, and center BIPOC lives and stories."*

These reflections unscored the importance of deliberate and thoughtful action required to take EST into the future, which the overwhelming majority of EST seeks. In this regard, leadership will play a decisive role in the future culture and practices of EST.

VII. LEADERSHIP AND POWER

This section of the report will first unearth the perspectives and expectations of the EST community concerning leadership. Once the breadth of these reflections is explored, RKG offers responsive recommendations.

A. PERSPECTIVE AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE COMMUNITY

1. EST Membership

The ethos of EST is to be a member-led organization as demonstrated through the mission statement and the name of the theater itself. Membership is designed to be an active and lifetime opportunity. According to EST bylaws, EST should be an artistic home for Members where their work is presented on an ongoing basis (See Appendix B: EST Bylaws). The power intended to be imbued on Members is further reflected in the EST organizational chart:
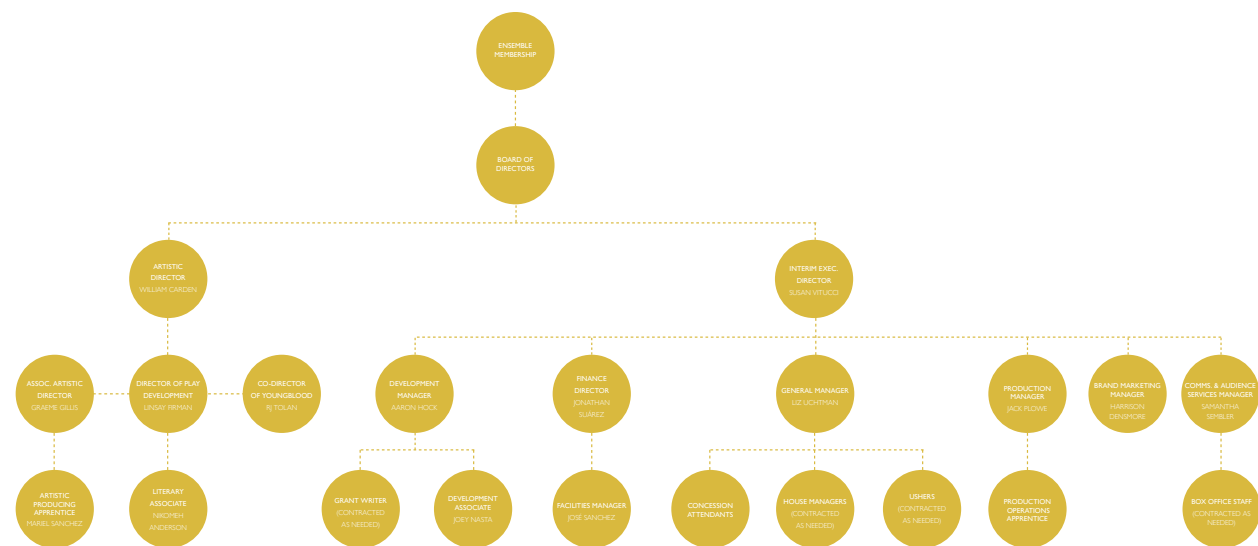
To support the organizational power of the Members, the Members Council was created. Members Council acts on behalf of the membership to advise, facilitate communications and act as an advocate for the membership on all member matters to the Board, Officers, and EST staff (See Appendix B: EST Bylaws

Despite EST's stated Member-oriented focus, RKG found that the majority of Members do not view themselves as a part of leadership or as having power in line with, and certainly not above, the Board of Directors (Board, Artistic Director (AD, or Executive Director (ED.

As an exercise in understanding power, the EST organizational chart was presented to community members in various Focus Groups where participants were asked to share if the chart as written accurately reflected their experience as Members. By and large, the answer was "no". When asked how to reorganize the chart in a way that mirrored their experiences, most participants placed Member Artists below the managerial positions and put the Board, AD, and ED evenly as the top of the organization. Of course, that power distribution is not consistent with EST's stated value of being a Member-led organization.

Additionally, people who identified themselves as Members were asked to share their experiences at EST. Their responses reflect challenges in the areas of transparency, perceived and actual power, as well as suggestions for change. Below, we gather many of these key reflections, which are quoted directly.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

A Need for Transparency

• *"If we are a Membership Theatre, methods for true inclusion of members is necessary."*

• *"It might foster more community to have participation in helping the theatre be a facet of membership, especially for new members who are stepping into the community.*

• *"I think the biggest mystery is expectations. What should I expect from EST as a member? Career support and opportunity? Open access to staff and space? A friendly welcome? And what does EST expect of me? Both those things have always been open to interpretation, despite some clarifying attempts. I think when people have become disenchanted or disconnected from EST, it's in part because those expectations can often be fuzzy on both sides."*

• *"The membership is so large that opportunities for production are few and far between. Also, the Youngblood writers are often favored over EST members. There needs to be greater focus on producing plays written by EST member playwrights."*

• *"Transparency and inclusion. I just don't know what is going on in the theater."*

• *"If one is not traditionally "successful" it is easy to feel unvalued and invisible except when the theatre needs money. The theatre always needs money. Artistic opportunity for and interest in members over 50 is negligible."*

Simultaneously, people also shared the areas of Membership that they found most rewarding. The areas were rooted in community, artistic development, and the benefits of membership, and should be kept in mind and reinforced, when possible, during any overhaul to the membership structure. Below, we gather many of these positive reflections:

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Sense of Community

• *"Access to the space, friendship and collaborations with terrific people, lack of pretension at all levels"*

• *"Being part of a prestigious artistic community"*

• *"Community, a place to share work and get feedback, relationships. memberfest readings"*

• *"Being part of a larger theater ecology, and feeling more comfortable asking for support."*

• *"The community. The Playwrights Unit is my core community."*

• *"The support of other artists, an overall lack of competitiveness"*

• *"I've been a member for close to [X] years. Spent [a number] of those years in Los Angeles. Upon returning to NY 10 years ago, I re-entered the "family" of artists and by just showing up and being willing to play, I found such joy and opportunity-the PEOPLE the fun the "let's put on a show" attitude. Working side by side with writers in close quarters then putting it in front of an audience! MY CONTRIBUTION FEELS VITAL. I feel heard and seen as an artist/actor & colleague. Just head over to W52nd St!"*

• *"That's changed for me. When I was younger, I wanted to prove myself as an artist, so validation was a big part of it. Opportunity. As time goes on, the community means more and more to me, and I realize that's the special thing theatres offer - that togetherness. So I feel lucky to have found one that accepts and welcomes me the way this one still does. So now I guess I'd say acceptance. Togetherness."*

• *"Access to playwrights, actors and directors who are working at a very high level of their craft."*

• *"The connection/pride in being part of a very important company"*

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Artistic Development

• *"The great theatre community, and the opportunity to bring work to be workshopped without censorship or permission"*

• *"Being involved in the development of new works."*

• *"Chance to have my plays produced."*

• *"Being part of developing new work. Watching playwrights, directors and actors develop their voices. Getting to know other member artists and Youngblood artists."*

• *"How I was allowed to explore and realize my vast range, what beautiful friendships ensued"*

• *"The ability to bring in scripts for readings and development."*

• *"It's always been an exciting, no-bullshit place to work.... creative eager community, with interesting material"*

• *"Belonging to a community that shares my artistic goals and values and aesthetic and commitment to excellence"*

• *"The freedom to develop artistically"*

Member Benefits

• *"Priority in auditions, connection to artistic community, special events and facebook groups, access to theatrical space, learning more about the workings of the theater."*

• *"Memberfests, happy hour, playwrights unit, ticket discounts"*

• *"Access to eclectic programming"*

• *"Access to other member artists"*

• *"Opportunities to work together in development and performance"*

2. Access to Leadership

Information on perceptions and experiences with other areas of leaders was also gathered. Review of this information revealed a significant gap within the EST community when it comes to accessing power. We summarize these findings below, which demonstrate a divide in perception on the basis of identity.

For example, here is the breakdown of the EST community as it relates to perceptions of whether the same opportunities for advancement in leadership positions are available to all racial groups:

- Strongly Agree: 12%

- Somewhat Agree: 21%

- Neutral: 27%

- Somewhat Disagree: 28%

- Strongly Disagree: 12%

Based on the above breakdown, while 33% of EST respondents generally agreed that opportunities for advancement are available to all racial groups, 40% disagreed with that proposition, and 27% remained neutral. However, when we consider the racial identity of respondents, we begin to see a fuller picture of the breakdown in these responses.

Race Gap Analysis

• 75% of Black respondents disagree that same opportunities for advancement were available (44% strongly disagree, 31% somewhat disagree).
Black respondents are most likely to disagree with this statement out of all racial groups

• White respondents were the least likely to strongly disagree (only 7%)

RKG also gathered information related to what leadership at EST is perceived to mean, i.e. what do we mean when we say "EST Leadership." As demonstrated below, the EST community as a whole identifies the Artistic Director as the primary source of leadership, followed by the Associate Artistic Director, Executive Director, and Board of Directors. Notably, only half of respondents considered the Members Council as part of "leadership."

(N = 218)

Staff	57%
Board of Directors	78%
Members Council	55%
Members Council Co-Chairs	55%
Artistic Director	94%
Associate Artistic Director	81%
Director of New Play Development	76%
Co-Director of Young Blood	75%
Executive Director	81%
Other (Please Specify)	6%
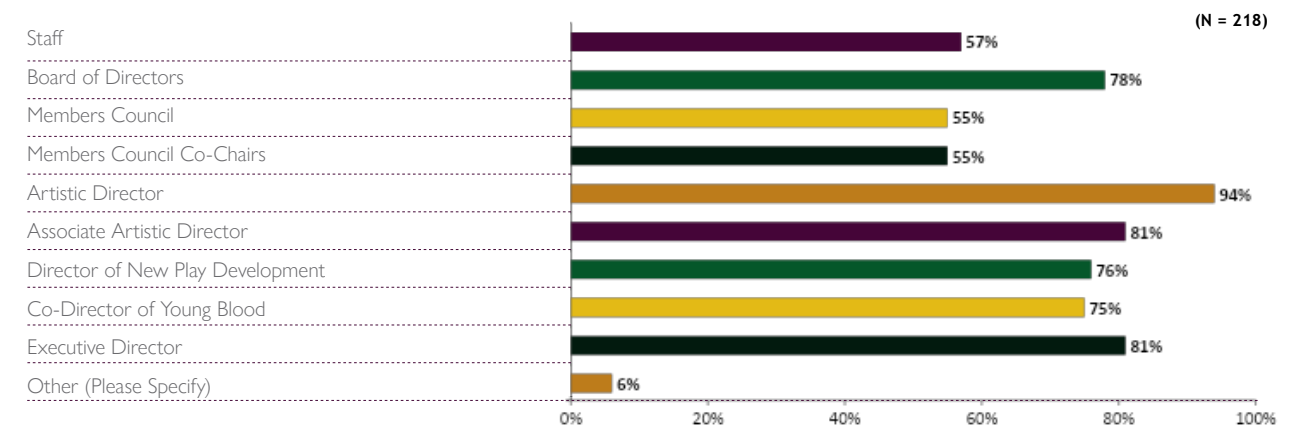
Once again, however, when considering the racial identity of the respondents we found several additional gaps worth noting.

Race Gap Analysis

A higher percentage of respondents of color believe "Staff" to be included among leadership, which reveals an additional perceived and/or actual barrier to direct access to senior leadership:

1. 74% of Black respondents
2. 56% of White respondents
3. 54% of Asian respondents
4. 46% of Hispanic respondents

By contrast, White respondents are the least likely to believe that Members Council or Members Council Co-Chairs are a part of leadership:

White respondents

- 55% for MC
- 57% for MC co-chairs

Hispanic respondents

- 85% for MC
- 85% for MC co-chairs

Black respondents

- 67% for MC
- 67% for MC co-chairs

Asian

- 77% for MC
- 62% for MC Co-Chairs

RKG found it noteworthy that the most racially diverse area of leadership, the Members Council Co-Chairs, are not perceived to be part of EST "leadership" by many of EST's White community members. This perception, along with the majority of the BIPOC community viewing staff as "leadership," creates an additional barrier to institutional leadership for BIPOC community members within EST and reduces their level of institutional access.

3. The Artistic Director

Since its founding, EST's overall artistic vision has been dictated primarily through the role of AD. To date, two people have occupied this position - EST Founder, Curt Dempster, and more recently, Billy Carden. EST is now in the process of selecting a new AD and restructuring the position. In order to move forward with intention, it is also important to look back. In that vein, in order to determine how to equitably restructure the AD role, we've listened to the community, particularly the BIPOC voices, on 1) Prior Experiences and Perceptions with the AD, and 2) Desired Responsibilities, Experiences, and Community Representation for the future of EST's artistic leadership. This feedback will also support creating interview questions that are narrowly tailored to the position rather than replicating generic, and often elitist, job interview questions. The result provides a vision for the AD based on the EST community's desires and outlook on the future.

As a starting point, RKG asked EST respondents to identify which AD roles and responsibilities are most important to them and rank them accordingly. Notably, we found that **the most important desired attribute for the AD role was artistic vision.** Below, we outline our key findings:

<u>COMMUNITY FEEDBACK</u>

<u>EST Community Feedback for AD Role/Responsibilities</u>

• 99% of respondents stated that conceiving, developing, and implementing the artistic vision and focus of EST productions and programming was an important characteristic.

• 95% of respondents stated that making decisions about the ongoing development of the aesthetic values and activities of EST was an important characteristic.

• 94% of respondents stated that representing and advocating for EST in an effort to enhance its image, visibility, and influence across the community was an important characteristic.

•92% of respondents indicated that they want the AD involved in hiring, supervising, and evaluating artistic personnel.

• 72% of respondents indicated that they want the AD involved in Board management, development, and advancement.

We also explored the EST communities' expectations and desires related to the experience of any future candidate for the AD position. As seen below, we again found that **artistic experience was the most important characteristic.** The community also values experience in welcoming new people into the community and engaging in transparent communication.

Additionally, RKG asked for input on the leadership style preference for the next AD. The options offered were Visionary, Democratic, Bureaucratic, and Outcome-Focused. (See Appendix E: Leadship Definitions). The results indicate that the **EST community values artistic leadership that prioritizes innovation and collaborative creation over emphasizing outcomes and faithful adherence to rules and order.**

4. Executive Director

During Curt Dempster's time as AD, various EDs were appointed through a largely informal process and served for various lengths spanning from a few months to several years. After Billy Carden joined as Artistic Director, Paul Slee joined as ED until 2018. Sarah McLellan succeeded Paul. In this case there was a formal search, with a call for applications, and a search committee including members of the Board, Staff and Membership. Sarah served from February 2018 until October 2019. Susan Vitucci then stepped in from the Board as the interim ED and remains in that position currently.

RKG engaged in a similar exercise for the ED role. As with the AD role, we listened to the community, particularly the BIPOC voices, on 1) Prior Experiences and Perceptions with the ED, and 2) Desired Responsibilities, Experiences, and Community Representation for the future of EST's artistic leadership. This feedback will also support creating EST specific interview questions informed by community experiences.

As with the AD, RKG asked EST respondents to identify which ED roles and responsibilities are most important to them and rank them accordingly. **We found that the most important desired element for the ED role was planning and executing of marketing & audience development strategies, as well as implementing the fundraising and financial goals of EST.** By contrast, only a slight majority of respondents stated that executing EST's vision, mission and goals in new play development and production was a critical role. We outline our key findings below:

We also explored the EST communities' expectations and desires related to the experience of any future candidate for the ED position. We found that the **ability to clearly communicate and handle/resolve conflict** were the most important attributes of an ED candidate. Notably, the EST community also values a candidate who stays current on equity issues within the theater community at large.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

EST Community Desires for ED Candidate Experience

90% of respondents stated that the ability to clearly communicate was important.

85% of respondents stated that the ability to handle disagreement and discord was important.

64% of respondents stated that the ability to take responsibility for mistakes was important.

62% of respondents stated that staying up to date on equity issues within the theatre community at large was important.

Additionally, RKG explored the EST communities' preferences for leadership style as it relates to the ED. Although responses on this topic varied, the single largest preference was for the ED to **employ a democratic leadership style, once again indicating an interest in power-sharing.**

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

EST Community Desires for ED Candidate Leadership Style

• *38% of respondents want the next ED to have a democratic leadership style.*

• *18% of respondents want the next ED to have an outcome-focused leadership style.*

• *12% of respondents want the next ED to have a visionary leadership style*

• *11% of respondents want the next ED to have a bureaucratic leadership style.*

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5. Board of Directors

While Board composition was not a core part of the RKG-EST collaboration, we are sharing salient information in support of future remodeling. **The overarching finding was that there is a perceived lack of transparency at EST regarding the Board, both in how someone becomes a Board Member and on what the role of the Board at EST actually is.** We also identified several gaps based on racial identity, as well as an overall perception that there is unequal access to the Board. This lack of transparency as it relates to one of EST's main leadership structures is a clear issue that must be addressed.

STATISTICAL REVIEW

LACK OF TRANSPARENCY RELATED TO THE BOARD

Becoming a Board Member

• 65% of overall respondents indicated that it was not clear to them how someone becomes a member of the EST Board.

　　- Notably, 70% of Black respondents, 46% of Asian and Pacific Islander respondents, and 46% of Hispanic respondents were unclear on the process of becoming a Board member.

　　- By contrast, only 30% of White respondents were unclear on the process of becoming a Board member.

• Many respondents also believe that becoming an EST Board Member is strongly influenced by race. This was particularly true for Black respondents.

　　- *30% of Black respondents indicated their belief that race was a factor in Board Membership.*

　　- *15% of Hispanic respondents indicated their belief that race was a factor in Board Membership.*

　　- *12% of White respondents indicated their belief that race was a factor in Board Membership.*

　　- *8% of Asian respondents indicated their belief that race was a factor in Board Membership.*

Roles and Responsibilities of the Board

• Only 19% of all EST respondents strongly agreed that they understood what kind of power EST's Board of Directors has over the work and the community.

　　- 44% of respondents somewhat agreed

　　- 38% somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed.

• 64% of all EST respondents wished that were greater transparency regarding what takes place during Board meetings.

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COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Access to the Board

Many respondents indicated their perception that gaining access to communicate directly with the EST Board was influenced by a number of factors, including identity:

• 64% believed that relationships with other EST leadership members was a factor

• 19% believed access to money was a factor

• 16% believed that tenure at EST was a factor

• 14% believed age was a factor

• 10% believed race to be a factor

• 8% believed gender to be a factor

Need for Diversity on the Board

• 65% of respondents "strongly agree" that the Board must be more diverse.

• 18% "somewhat agree"

• 16% are "neutral"

• 1% "somewhat disagree"

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Finally, we also gathered additional direct feedback from various people within the EST community related to the EST Board, which are quoted directly:

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COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

The Board

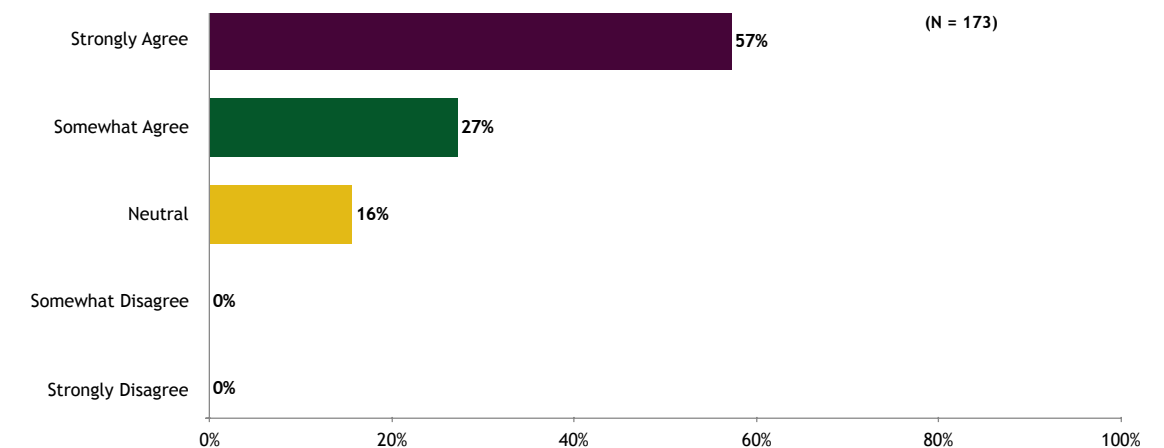*- "I would like to see more racial diversity on the Board."*

- "I appreciated Billy's message about explicitly naming an anti-racism vision for the organization. This needs to manifest at the Board level, both in terms of diversifying its membership and codifying its implementation. Board focus on creatively diversifying funding sources to embolden/expand programs foster the greatest equity. For example, we know that Sloan projects currently pay artists more. Examine ways for programs that most effectively address inequities to pay the most."

- "Many of the Board members are active and visible parts of the EST community, so it's easy to see or speak to them at shows, events, in the lobby. However, communication about Board business does tend to go through channels like Billy, Susan, Aaron, or Members Council, so I'm sure there are impediments and barriers that I don't see."

- "We should be held accountable by the members. But many members don't have access, knowledge, or interaction with the board directly. But institutionally, the members should hold the most power in the institution but I don't believe they're conditioned to truly understand this because of the current culture of the theater."

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6. EST Staff

The RKG-EST collaboration was designed to primarily address leadership in regards to the AD and ED positions; however, it feels important to offer related perspectives on Staff. This is especially the case given, as stated previously, the Staff is viewed as a part of the leadership team by 56% of the EST community, particularly by BIPOC community members. It is also important to note that overall 57% of the community would like to see more racial diversity on staff. Further community feedback is below.

(N = 173)

Strongly Agree — 57%
Somewhat Agree — 27%
Neutral — 16%
Somewhat Disagree — 0%
Strongly Disagree — 0%

• *Staff has always seemed much more accessible, more proactive, and more visible than board.*

• *The EST staff are almost always terrific. But they are overworked and can't always meet the many demands they face with the resources they have*

• *The staff is definitely an important part of representing EST on a consistent basis and certainly the most visible part of our community. But the relationship between the staff and the membership can be unclear at times, and the entitlement that some members act toward the staff with adds to that lack of clarity*

• *I believe that most people who work at EST have to be able to sustain themselves in one of the most expensive cities in the world while working for low wages. This reality in itself creates an obstacle to true diversity.*

• *One strength of the EST staff is its longevity. The senior staff has been there 11-17 years. Junior staff includes two people who've been there more than 4 years, another 7, another 9. That shows a rare dedication to a cause and a community. EST is at times a challenging (and never financially lucrative) place to work. They've helped keep the place alive. The unfortunate side of that is with less turnover, there's less chance to get new people in. That's starting to change, in a healthy way.*

• *Aside for a lot of hiring and promoting within (which I do think is a good thing when people are invested in the theatre and its community), but I also think we bring new people in based on their relationships with the AD, ED, and asst. AD, which limits our ability to meet new potential candidates*

• *I feel the current senior artistic staff (AD, AAD, DoNPD, Co-DYB) is rather clandestine, as they have all held their positions for many years. They are also all White, which cannot be considered acceptable for an artistic institution.*

• *There is currently what feels like an inaccessible power structure unless you already have close relationships with decision makers. And although I have good relationships and have benefitted from them personally. This needs to change to make the community more accessible.*

• *If every person on staff is trying to do more work than they could possibly do calmly and with intentionality, we are never going to move out of siloed decision making and rushed communication. The more the different facets of the theater speak to each other, and the more work is supported by enough people to get it done at a reasonable pace, the more we can take care of everyone's well being, the more we can listen to what everyone needs to feel safe and supported at EST.*

• *The staff works long and hard to keep EST functioning, and they help support my work immensely.*

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

With all of the above feedback directly from the people of EST in mind, RKG prepared recommendations for EST as the organization looks to the future. When considering these recommendations, remember that these are not the only available solutions, nor are they mandates. Ultimately, EST must decide the best path forward as a community. However, the recommendations included in this section are concrete, and provide a jumping off point for EST's consideration.

A. CULTURAL FORTIFICATION

One of the key ingredients for creating an accountable community space is ensuring that there is a place to share and acknowledge harm when oppression makes its way into the group. This space is currently missing at EST, as there is no clear and consistent pathway for community members to share experiences of bias and conflict, such as those shared with RKG during this evaluation process.

As a result, RKG recommends two new staff positions/roles at EST that can fill this gap and support this process: 1) Human Resources and 2) Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppression Facilitator. These roles can exist as separate entities or be combined as one. It is strongly encouraged that the individual(s) in these position(s) are integrated into every aspect of EST work, but do not have other duties within the theater This is necessary so that there is clarity, focus, and capacity for the ongoing work required in these roles, including continuous professional development, skill-building, and time for impromptu one-on-one coaching and support with people at EST.

1. Human Resources

The role of Human Resources (HR) is used to describe both the people who work for a company or organization and the department responsible for managing all matters related to employees. ***It is essential that whoever operates in this role is not otherwise in leadership.*** Allowing for a "third party" neutral perspective that creates a welcoming space to share concerns without requiring community members to go directly to leadership is essential for this role to succeed. If EST lacks capacity for hiring a full time HR professional, there are many providers available for outsourcing HR that support organizations in similar situations (See Appendix K: Resource Sheet Section 7). While many of the recommendations may take time to implement, ***it is strongly encouraged that having an HR position that is outside of leadership is added immediately.***

In many ways, the HR role would function to keep the organization apprised of legal obligations concerning conduct, and structure, ensure equal opportunity employment, keep an ongoing diary of the status of the EST community, and ensure that when issues arise, they can be promptly addressed. This will help avoid a build-up of frustrations and misapprehensions and provide all EST community members with a much-needed venue for asking questions and voicing concerns. In that regard, the HR role can assist EST become a more transparent organization as well.

2. Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppression Facilitator

To the extent the HR role is reactive to the EST community, RKG envisions the Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppression Facilitator role as proactive, designed for someone who facilitates conversations/programs with an anti-racist lens, with an expertise in structural oppression and community building, ideally within the arts administration and theater contexts. It is also essential that this person possess an intersectional lens when responding to racism and other forms of oppression, particularly given the concerns around sexuality and gender that were consistently raised. This position will engage in:

i) <u>Systems Creation</u>

    • Work with leadership and staff to create long-term systems rooted in equity and justice, which can apply to all entry points to the community, such as the submissions/commissions process, auditions, and hiring, membership, etc;

    • Ensure the theater and staff move at the pace of equity and community input rather than urgency;

    • Institute methods for regular debrief and reflection on major programs and activities that create opportunities for reflection and growth.

ii) <u>Productions Work</u>

    • Attend each productions' first meeting or pre-rehearsal meeting in order to:

        - Create an accountability process/community agreement for the cast and crew;

        - Serve as the point person for any concerns or disputes during rehearsals and performance;

        - Provide anti-oppression/anti-racist trainings as necessary;

        - Support challenging of the cis white hetero gaze within all aspects of the production.

iii) <u>Community Meetings and Ongoing Education</u>

    • Lead regularly scheduled meetings at EST to include:

        - Anti-oppression education trainings on a regular basis open to all EST members; and

        - Provide EST community members an opportunity to publicly share any community-based concerns in a facilitated setting.

        - Host community conversations for the NYC arts community to engage in dialogue on equity and the arts

    • Support EST staff in ongoing communication and re-education process.

    • Lend support in representing EST in advocacy work and community building / organizing

iv) <u>Conflict Resolution</u>

    • Ideally, the Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppression Facilitator will also be trained in various methods of conflict resolution, to address issues in staff and the broader community.
(See Appendix K, Section 8: Transformative Justice & Restorative Justice)

<u>B. SHARED LEADERSHIP</u>

In the beginning of this report, we set out the stated values of EST as found in the Mission Statement. Those values directly support the use of a shared leadership model. Consider the following "equation" taken directly from key elements of EST's Mission:

    Collaborative process +
    Inclusion of all aspects of identity and perspective +
    Ending systemic oppression at all level of the organization =
    Shared leadership that is representative of the diversity of the industry and city where EST operates. This is necessary for an alignment of action and values.

While the concept of shared leadership sounds easily achievable, the practice of achieving it takes commitment. As a starting point, it's important to understand that shared leadership is inherently **shared power.** Power commonly operates in several ways:

    • **Power Over:** engaging in domination, control and authority;

    • **Power With:** collective action/agency- building shared understandings, and plans;

    • **Power Within:** inner sense of confidence and ability to affect one's circumstances;

    • **Visible Power:** observable decision-making, formal rules, structures, and procedures that dictate culture;

    • **Hidden Power:** the ability to determine who is at the decision-making table and what is on the agenda - ultimately limiting the scope of discussion/action and the perspectives of those outside of that scope.

In addition to the narrow perspective of visible power in a hierarchical leadership model, having a single leader creates fertile soil for hidden power to flourish regardless of the intentions of whomever is in that role. Sharing power requires moving from 'power over' to 'power with.' This power shift also ignites the 'power within' for others in the community because they are incorporated into the functioning of the organization, free to express their ideas and visions, and assured that their presence has an impact on the direction of the theater. It is important to stay present with how power is operating with the current structure and how it shifts as these models are implemented and/or considered.

    1. Multiple Leaders

On concrete way to implement a shared leadership model is to eliminate the aggregation of power in one leader. At EST, that could mean that rather than appointing one individual as the AD, EST can shift power to multiple people. A benefit of this approach is it allows greater representation of the multitude of experiences at EST and NYC at large, which of course one individual can never accomplish. Notably, this approach was also overwhelmingly preferred within the EST community during RKG's information gathering.

Examples of Multiple Artistic Leaders in Action

Departmental Integration and Expansion: When reflecting on the importance of challenging individualism and paternalism inherent in a single leader, it helps to consider real world examples. To that end, we offer the perspective of P. Carl on how two artistic organizations within Emerson College engage in innovation in power sharing:

The departmental integration referenced in this quote is of particular relevance to EST. The siloed separation of financial decision making, artistic impulses, Membership responsivity, and anti-racist work create splinters in the work and integrity of each of these processes. Creating functioning paths for communication and collaboration is essential.

Rotating Leadership: There are several existing models for this approach in the theater. For example, Soho Repertory Theater in NYC recently began a shared leadership model consisting of naming longtime Soho Rep producer Meropi Peponides as Director of Artistic Development and Production alongside Artistic Director Sarah Benson and Executive Director Cynthia Flowers. Another example is the Wilma Theater (Wilma) in Philadelphia, which has a rotating Lead Artistic Director alongside three Co-Artistic Directors and a Managing Director. Yury Urnov, 2020-21 Season Lead AD of Wilma, describes their process as follows:

This type of rotational structure, or one informed by it, could be beneficial for EST as well, and addresses many of the community concerns over leadership/power at EST. It allows for a larger diversity of perspectives and backgrounds without the instability of a short term fully rotating leadership model, which was a concern raised by several members of EST.

BIPOC Leadership: In addition to employing a structure that includes multiple people engaged in artistic leadership, RKG strongly recommends that the people who occupy this role are as distinct from one another in as many ways as possible in terms of identity and background. Unquestionably, the EST community believes the perspectives reflected by a BIPOC person(s) lived experience and artistic relationships are key. **Critically, 91% of the EST community believe that BIPOC leaders are necessary to respond to our current moment.** This call for change extends to all areas of EST leadership.

Furthermore, RKG found that the EST community desires that future leadership approach the work with an anti-racist lens. RKG agrees with this assessment. In this regard, it must be noted that anti-racist and anti-oppressive perspectives/aspirations **are not** inherent to being a member of the BIPOC community; therefore, these are related but distinct goals for future EST leadership, and must be addressed as such during candidate assessments and interviews with all potential candidates.

Harmonious Work Styles: While the backgrounds and views of artistic leadership should be diverse, it is also important that a team is able to make harmony out of those perspectives and operate collaboratively. For example, through RKG's information gathering process, people shared that in EST collaborations where the AD and ED are not communicating clearly, it creates unclear goals for the theater and unpredictable and unstable processes for achieving those goals emerge. These perspectives and lived experiences from within EST are also backed by research. A study of new variations of dual leadership appeared in Finnish theater in the 1970s, and concluded that:

Simultaneously, while fluidity between leaders based on personality is important, clearly defined roles for artistic leaders (rooted in the mission and goals of theater) are essential for stability and long-term success as well. The EST staff has shared that these clearly defined roles are sometimes lacking, as some community members are unable to find their bearings in terms of their job priorities and function within the organization. To support the process of creating these anchors, particularly as EST reconfigures how leadership functions, RKG suggests that EST staff is involved in determining the boundaries of each role. Further recommendations on accountability anchors are in the Transparency section.

2. Community Contribution

Community input is essential in any healthy organization. This is particularly the case for an organization like EST given its mission of collaboration and emphasis on membership. However, as summarized in the Leadership and Power section of this report, people within the EST community currently do not view themselves as a part of leadership or having a sufficient voice and impact on decisions. To address this concern, some options for deeper input from the community in artistic and cultural leadership include the following:

a.   Establish Affinity Groups

EST should commit to creating an infrastructure and an institutionalized process for affinity groups to weigh in on topics including reflections as they desire in the following areas:

- Artistic Work

     - Perspectives such as feedback on former seasons, proposed future seasons, what various affinity groups see as relevant in the theater at large.

- Community Engagement

     - Feedback and direction on promotion for shows to create a more representative audience;

     - Community programming to support the themes and content of artistic work.

     - Potential strategic partnerships with other organizations and theaters

- Community Gatherings

     - Consider how various Affinity Groups are given space to work together to create and offer programming with financial support from EST

Notably, in August 2020, RKG reached out to a small group of Black EST members to offer support in creating and structuring what is now the Black Affinity Group (BAG). Since that time, BAG has been sharing space and independently offered substantive proposals on the environment and work of EST. (See Appendix F: Black Affinity Group Proposals). This underscores the impact of giving various affinity groups an active platform within the theater. Additional information to support future affinity groups is available in Appendix K, Section 4: Caucus and Affinity Groups

> *"It almost feels that the focus groups could be kept intact to play a role in this process. Perhaps like the Chorus, that hears what's happening, reflects back aspects of the history and the greater wish. That would allow not GROUP THINK, which I personally find potentially damaging. Eventually be wonderful for the focus groups to be as one and hear from each other at this level of our humanity."*
>
> -EST Community Member

b.   Creating a Transition Team for Leadership Transition

Another means of ensuring that EST is a collaborative space is to invite the EST community to help select its own leaders. Entrusting the hiring process to one or a few individuals can result in a number of undesirable outcomes: misalignment of values, community distrust, and inequitable practices (e.g. nepotism). Moreover, when decision-making is limited to a few individuals, those decisions can easily be influenced/limited by biases and personal and professional experiences. Involving the community at large solves for many of these concerns.

There have been numerous calls for transparency and representation in the hiring process at EST. At present, while the common belief is that the Board is responsible for the hiring, there is a lack of clarity around what that hiring process actually entails. Additionally, there are concerns about how the Board can accomplish hiring individuals to represent the diversity of perspectives and backgrounds at EST, when the Board itself lacks that diversity.

> *"Prior hiring has been a cautionary tale: hasty hiring, siloed information, and a feeling for the Staff of instability, never knowing where they stood, if they were in or out of favor."*
>
> *-EST Community Member*

Creating a Transition Team composed of people from a myriad of EST experiences to spearhead the leadership transition process is responsive to these calls for change. Using a Transition Team model for future hiring is also strongly recommended. Below is an outline of suggested Responsibilities, Composition, Formation, and Decision Making of the Transition Team.

i.   Transition Team Responsibilities

As a starting point, RKG gathered input directly from the EST community about how to best incorporate and involve their varied perspectives in the hiring process. Below, is a summary of those responses:

Community Recommendations for Transition Team

100% of respondents indicated that ensuring all job postings are published in a manner that reaches a multitude of potential applicants;

94% of respondents indicated that evaluating potential candidates is an important role for the Transition Team;

94% of respondents also would like to see the Transition Team set the evaluation rubric for assessing candidates;

87% of respondents state that creating and modifying job descriptions was an important aspect of the team's duties;

66% of respondents want the Transition Team to make the final hiring selections.

In addition to the above majority recommendations, RKG gathered additional specific input from the EST community that sheds additional light on aspirations for the Transition Team.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Outreach to Potential Candidates

• *"Searching for good candidates via recommendation by trusted members of community."*

• *"Actively recruiting beyond job postings, particularly amongst the Membership."*

• *"Outreach to BIPOC communities" "publishing in diverse locations" by itself is not enough … under the radar investigation of bipoc candidates take a deeper dive … personal recommendations, phone calls just to identify a good candidate who may not 'believe' a White led organization is serious."*

A Standardized Process

• *"Open dialogue between all members of the Transition Team to form a cohesive policy before and as they move forward and throughout."*

• *"Job descriptions and evaluation rubric are most important, because they essentially determine leadership and organizational structure."*

Communication

• *"Keeping the community informed about the process."*

• *"Transparency / communication with membership."*

• "Transparency with the membership as to protocols, process, rubric, timelines, status, etc."

With the above EST community perspectives in mind, RKG makes the following recommendations regarding the Transition Team's responsibilities:

1. Creating a standardized candidate evaluation rubric, interview questions, and/or activities.

> • This process should be informed by equitable hiring practices and anti-oppression/anti-racist training, which the Team will receive from RKG.

2. Identifying job posting & recruitment strategies.

> • This process should be also be informed by equitable hiring practices and anti-oppression/anti-racist training.
> • This process should also incorporate community requests to publicize job postings in a variety of spaces.

3. Establishing (or building upon) a process to identify internal candidates.

4. Actively and transparently communicating about the hiring process with the EST community.

5. Craft and/or approve job descriptions narrowly tailored to the responsibilities of each position. (See Appendix K)

> •The feedback in this report is a useful starting point for this narrow tailoring.

> •It may be useful for the person who currently holds the position (if that position exists) to serve as a resource for the Team by sharing current duties, challenges, successes, and open work projects.

6. Having a strong voice in the final hiring decisions.

> • **In order for the Transition Team to have a meaningful impact, beyond performative inclusion, its decision(s) must have a determining impact on the outcome of hiring leadership.** While RKG recognizes that EST bylaws currently require the Board engage in hiring and firing, the Board has the ability to defer to community input, particularly Members, as is supported by the EST organizational chart. (See Appendix B: EST Bylaws). For example, the Transition Team could search and narrow candidates to those they approve of and pass those names to the Board for the final selection or choose to defer to the Team's decision entirely. It is highly encouraged that innovation in this area be used, so that the Transition Team has power in this task.

7. Composition of Transition Team

> a.   Number of Team Members

RKG recommends that the Transition Team be composed of 8-12 individuals. Given that this group will be responsible for managing and conducting a significant amount of work, this range will support the division of labor, account for scheduling conflicts, and capture the multitude of perspectives at EST.

> b.   Identities of Team Members

Participants in RKG's information gathering process were consistently vocal about the need for broad representation on the Transition Team. Below, we provide a snapshot of EST voices on this topic:

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

The Need for Representation from all corners of EST

• *"Every group/program of the theater should be represented"*

• *"I think there should be all parts of the organization represented: Staff, membership, youngblood, Board, artists that work here that are non members; also different aspects of the community BIPOC artists, queer artists, trans artist"*

• *"I do think it's important that there is Staff representation. From my knowledge, it seems like there is little communication directly with the Staff when finally picking someone; the Staff hardly gets to interact with the candidates."*

Members Council

• "A rep for the membership - doesn't have to be a co-chair but could be, and a Board rep, are the minimum, as is BIPOC participation within those categories, and hopefully multigenerational as well."

Artists

• "Diverse artist members and Board members with experience in hiring and evaluating arts administrators and an understanding of current best practices in theatre administration; someone versed in NYS labor law; professionals who know outstanding people in like positions in the field including in finance and commercial theatre."

• "Definitely artists! And intergenerational diversity on top of, of course, race and gender."

• "Majority should be active Member artists familiar with institutional structures. Board members should NOT be included unless they are also active participating artists."

BIPOC Voices

• BIPOC EST members present at the theater's founding seem uniquely poised to become members of the Transition Team from their ability to help move the conversation to and through this process.

• I like the idea of a Members Council Co-Chair and BIPOC EST members

• Long-time members (over 10 years) especially BIPOC members, a Board member of at least 5 years,

• Black Affinity Group Members

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c.   RKG Recommendation

In light of these perspectives, in order to ensure equitable representation, RKG recommends that the Transition Team represent every identity within the EST community. During RKG's information gathering, the participants highlighted a particular need to include Black and non-Black POC as well as members of the 50+, trans/cis Women, and LGBTQIA+ communities. RKG endorses these suggestions and also urges EST to consider accessibility and neurodivergence in the process, as well as the composition of the team itself. Additionally, while one person can represent the intersection of theses identities, the goal is to tilt power in favor of those who are currently least represented; therefore, RKG recommends multiple people from these currently underrepresented communities comprise the majority of the Team.

Finally, including Team Members from a variety of EST organizational areas is essential. Organizational areas include, but are not limited to, the following:

> • Founding Member
> • Artist Member
> • Staff
> • Current Youngblood
> • Playwrights Unit
> • Sloan Recipient
> • Artist Non-Member

iii.   Forming the Transition Team

a.   Community Perspectives

RKG asked the community to share their preferences on whether the Transition Team be formed by an appointment or election process. The responses revealed a near equal desires for both of these processes. Some people favored an election as a means of a democratic approach. Others preferred appointments out of concern that the sheer size of the membership could prevent qualified people from getting enough votes to serve on the Team. What was clear from Survey II and from the focus groups is that regardless of what process was chosen, **the selection process must be transparent.**

b.   RKG Recommendation – A Hybrid Model

Given the competing perspectives on appointment versus election, RKG proposes a hybrid model to balance community perspectives. In the hybrid model, the Team consists of both elected individuals and appointed individuals.

Appointees:

In Survey II, we asked respondents to put forth specific proposals of people who should be considered for the Team. The list of possible appointees would be drawn from the people who were recommended the most frequently in response to this question. Appointees, of course, must be asked whether they are interested in joining the Transition Team. Eight people received unprompted mentions at least four or more times. The names of those people are not disclosed in this report to avoid undue pressure. However, should this recommendation be accepted, RKG can contact these individuals to gauge interest, and with permission, share the names of the people with the EST community. It should also be noted that these individuals may make strong internal candidates for artistic leadership.

Electeds:

The remainder of the Team can be identified, voted upon, and chosen through a nomination and election process. Below is a suggested outline for engaging in an election:

1. Preparation

    • Design a Means for Self-Nomination.

        This process should include (at least) the following information:

        - Name
        - Relationship to EST
        - Communities they represent
        - Short Biography
        - Statement of Interest and Intended Goals

2. Public Kick Off

    • Host a meeting to announce the process and circulate the Roles and Responsibilities and nomination forms
    • Publicize the process on social media, website, newsletter, and all venues for EST communication

3. Aggregate and Share Nominees

    • Organize all nominations into a single package to circulate to the community
    • Host a meet and greet with nominees and/or include this within other EST community-wide meetings. Allow for virtual participation.

4. Voting

    • Set up an electronic voting process

5. Share Results

    •Transparency will be critical.

iv.   Transition Team Decision-Making

The Transition Team will be expected to make many significant decisions and on a timeline. Therefore, RKG recommends that once formed the Transition Team create a decision-making protocol to guide their process before engaging in the substantive hiring work. This protocol should be informed by EST's goals for the Team, including the importance of sharing power and collective action. Below are several possible decision-making models.

a. The Nominal Group Technique

The Nominal Group Technique is structured form of brainstorming. The process is as follows:

1. First, the question or issue at hand should be clearly stated so that everyone in the group understands it.

2. Members of the team write down ideas that come to mind in response to the issue.

3. Every member of the group shares one of their ideas. There are no discussions about the presented ideas at this moment.

4. Once everyone has contributed their ideas, the team goes through each one to discuss. If there is consensus on a solution or set of solutions, the issue can be removed from the list, and wording for the solutions can be finalized.

5. At the end of this process, the team has a refined list of possible solutions to the issue identified in step 1.

b. Creating Consensus Methods

Equity and representation require moving away from adversarial majority rule decision making and toward more consensus-based models to ensure that those outside of the majority are given a voice and power in decision-making. Below are two specific consensus methods for incorporating these principles:

1. Group Average Ranking: Each member of the team looks at the available options, and then — privately — makes their own ranked list of those options. This could be 1-10, A to Z, or similar. Once each member has their own list, the lists can be submitted to the group and an average of each of the 'votes' can be taken for each item as a basis for selection.

2. Five Finger Voting: Each major decision is deliberated over the course of two in person meetings. Voting is done by all members using a 5-finger ranking system.

    a. Five=block
    b. Four= conflict and triggers explanation by the participant
    c. Three and Two = level of neutrality
    d. One= Support for the proposal

If the proposal results in too many two and three finger votes, the group revisits the issue. This strategy enables individuals to register their support or disapproval in degrees, while simultaneously fostering the degree of consensus necessary for moving forward respectfully and with acknowledgment of all voices and perspectives. (See Appendix K Section 3: Collective Governance and Decision Making).

C. ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1.   Transparency & Programming

Developing a theater culture where transparency is the standard fosters an environment of trust, grants agency to community members to represent and engage with the organization, and creates a foundation for healthy feedback. When both giving and receiving feedback is seen as a value, it becomes the norm. Throughout the information gathering process transparency was raised as an issue in relation to the culture and future leadership at EST. Recall that 82% of respondents want artistic leadership to "engage in regular and transparent communication." There are two specific areas where transparency was raised frequently: job duties and programming.

"I think EST needs to be more transparent in the work they do. A lot of times I'll just find myself in conversations where I'm completely left in the dust because of "things that happened before my time.""

- EST Member

___Job Descriptions and Duties:___ It was identified during information gathering that not all staff position have job descriptions, including those in leadership. The absence of set duties creates a lack of transparency in two primary ways 1) the community's understanding of the functioning of the organization and 2) communication flow from the staff to the broader community. Without clarity and knowledge of the specific duties for staff positions, it is unclear to people within the organization who to contact about areas of support or questions. It also limits the ability of people within the community to apply or recommend potential candidates.

In response to these concerns, RKG strongly recommends that in addition to this report being used to support the creation of Artistic leadership positions, the information can also be a tool for refining EST job descriptions. This would best be done by consulting the existing staff on their daily activities.

It would also benefit EST to have an online and in person resource listing all the pathways for entering EST, such as Membership, open positions, Youngblood, etc and associating protocols and descriptions of each program/position.

In addition to clearly delineated job functions for the leadership team, RKG recommends mapping out channels for communicating to the broader EST community, as well as intentional partnerships between departments. A model from Sylvia Rivera Law Project offers a useful rubric for EST:

SRLP DECISION-MAKING CHART

TASKS OR FUNCTIONS	Who's Responsible For Initiating This Action?	Whom Should They Consult Before Acting?	Who Should Finally Approve?	Who Do They Need to Tell about the Action?
Position Development, Messaging and Communications				
Keeping/Refining Mission/Vision/Values	Collective Development Team	Total Collective	Total Collective @ retreat	Total Collective @ retreat
Deciding to Take a Position on a issue	Staff	Board	Board	Total Collective
Messaging and Preparing Written Communication Products (where fast turnaround is needed)	Public Education Team	Staff	Staff	Total Collective
Communications Strategy Implementation (external)	Public Education Team	Staff	Public Education Team	Total Collective
Communications Strategy Development (internal)	Collective Development Team	Staff	Collective Development Team @ retreat	Total Collective
Organizational Goal-Setting and Planning				
Develop organizational Goal-Setting and Program Planning Process	Collective Development Team	Staff	Total Collective @ retreat	Total Collective
Teams Work Plan Development	Teams	Team Members	Total Collective @ retreat	Total Collective
Financial Planning				
Implementation of a Fundraising Strategy	Fundraising Development and Finance Team	Staff and Collective @ point people meeting	Board	Total Collective
Monitoring and Reporting about Financial Situation	Fundraising Development and Finance Team	Staff	Board	Total Collective
Developing Organizational Budget	Fundraising Development	Staff	Board	Total Collective
Developing Fundraising Strategy	Fundraising Development and	Staff	Board	Total Collective

Supporting these efforts in communication, EST can host regular open meetings at a consistent time and place to share updates on EST business, open positions, information on Membership and programs, aopportunity for people to meet-and-greet one another. This open meeting process will support the desire for more time to connect, learn about parameters of Membership for those interested and/or unclear, and provide transparent updates on EST operations. Having these meetings at a consistent time and place allows people to plan in advance knowing that, for example, every Tuesday at 2:00pm there will be an open meeting with snacks and updates. To make thses more accessible, these meetings can be recorded/hosted on zoom simultaneously with in-person gathering.

<u>Programming:</u> Many people expressed a lack of knowledge around how programs are created, cancelled, or continued. One program in particular came up frequently - Going to the River. Because of its frequent mentions and relevance in building racial equity, RKG offers a short description of the program based on information gathered during this process.

Going to the River

Going to the River was a program started at EST in 1999 by EST Member Elizabeth Van Dyke, the Producing Artistic Director, to address the lack of opportunity for Black women playwrights. The program originally presented a series reading of plays by Black women that took place over the course of a week once a year. The program helped launch new writers into professional careers and inspired more Black people to become members at EST. In 2009, Elizabeth expanded the scope of the program to include all women playwrights of color. For that year and in 2011, EST presented a festival of short plays by women playwrights of color called The River Crosses Rivers and The River Crosses Rivers II with Co-Artistic Director Jamie Richards. Despite the great success of the series, it is no longer taking place at EST for reasons that are unclear to many within the community.

Community Feedback on Going to the River

• *"We've produced plays written by BIPOC playwrights about BIPOC people. Years ago, we also had an annual festival called "Going to the River", a celebration of African American female playwrights. It was terrific every year, and I still don't know why it was discontinued. "*

• *"We had a program called ' Going to the river ' which sought out and produced plays by African American women. We need more of that kind of thing. In the last ten years or more, I have seen many more people of color performing at EST, as well as seeing and performing in plays written by people of color."*

• *"As the founder and Artistic Director of Going to the River, Elizabeth Van Dyke has singlehandedly changed the cultural landscape of EST's artistic and audience community. She is a powerful force of nature and as a veteran of the NY Theatre scene. "*

• *"I feel that over the years, EST has become more and more inclusive, although there is certainly more room for much more inclusion. The Going to The River Festival is an example of the company expanding its artistic breadth."*

• *"I want to affirm Going to the River and River Crosses River as someone who was vying for a position in the theater. As a director, the ability to work with such notable Black writers came from Elizabeth really pushing for women of color working on the stage. It's hard to see how the institution could have let that go. This should not be a lost history."*

RKG Recommendation: RKG recommends that this program and Elizabeth Van Dyke be uplifted and celebrated as significant within EST history. Additionally, clarity around the continuation or lack thereof for this specific program be made public to resolve ambiguity or questions regarding its existence and importance within EST. To the extent possible, Going to the River and The River Crosses Rivers should be reinstated as there is great community interest and these programs serve to increase BIPOC audience participation and give opportunities for direction, cast, and crew.

In addition to *Going to River,* people also raised that information on programming and process around anti-racist action at EST was often hard to discern. In the interest of transparency, RKG has compiled a short history of these actions included in the Appendix.

2.   Staff Recommendations

Reviewing structure and communication of the EST staff was not within the scope of the RKG-EST partnership, but because of how frequently staff-related comments representation and equity were was raised, RKG offers a short list of recommendations addressing this aspect of EST:

<div style="border:1px solid #999; padding:1em;">

<p align="center">Staff Recommendations</p>

• Significant BIPOC representation, particularly in light of current and future openings

• Clearly defined and public job descriptions to be reviewed regularly with the hired staff person to ensure daily responsibilities are in alignment and discuss any need for change. Any changes made will be updated on the public posting of the job duties

• Intentional collaborative structure for communal decision-making within departments such as is referenced above in the Sylvia Rivera Law Project and in the resources document

• Integrate staff into the community (affinity groups, Members Council, Board, etc) with programming and decision-making

• Publication of decision-making pathways within the office

• Rotate staff attendance at regularly occurring EST Open Meetings as outlined above

• Ongoing mandatory all-staff anti-racist training to ensure accountability around anti-racist goals

• Established and public pipelines to permanent employment that include clear process for assessing success within the position

• Consistent accountability process for harm caused with support from HR and anti-racist coordinator

</div>

IX. CONCLUSION

EST has served as a launching pad for numerous artists and has provided even more with community and an artistic home. Its commitment to collaboration and innovation is self-evident in requesting this report and the eagerness of the people to participate however difficult. In closing, RKG reiterates the aspiration that this report will be a resource for the EST community in the areas of power, identity, and organizational practices for years to come.

SUPPORTING RESOURCES

Full Appendix attached as separate document

SECTION 1: ACCOUNTABILITY

Document: Organizing for Community Accountability
By INCITE!
This resource is an excerpt from a larger toolkit on community accountability put together by INCITE!, a network of radical feminists of color organizing to end state violence and violence in our homes and communities. This particular document provides summary information about what community accountability looks like, whether it is realistic, and where to get additional information.

Webpage: Accountability Mapping Information
By Daria
Daria created Accountability Mapping to support himself and his communities in learning and practicing self-accountability. It synthesizes Transformative Justice principles with practices of Qi Gong and somatic exploration. The course is free to QTBIPOC and there is a sliding scale for all.

Video: What is Accountability?
By The Barnard Center for Research on Women, published in the fall of 2018
In this 5-minute video, anti-violence activists Kiyomi Fujikawa and Shannon Perez-Darby ask and explore the question of how to be accountable to survivors without disposing of those who do harm.

SECTION 2: ACHIEVING RACIAL EQUITY

Document: Ten Lessons for Taking Leadership on Racial Equity
By The Aspen Institute: Roundtable on Community Change
This resource summarizes what The Aspen Institute has learned about how people and institutions can tangibly do the work of identifying and addressing racial inequities.

Document: Anti-Racist Organizational Development
By Dismantling Racism, adapted by Kenneth Jones and Tema Okum based on work done by the Exchange Project of the Peace Development Fund, Grassroots Leadership's Barriers and Bridges program, and the original concept by Bailey Jackson and Rita Hardiman

This is an assessment tool that was developed for organizations aiming to become multi-cultural and anti-racist institutions. The evaluation was developed to evaluate organizations that are either all white, or ones that include both white people and people of color to identify the ways in which an organization might reproduce white privilege and racial oppression.

SECTION 3: COLLECTIVE GOVERNANCE & DECISION-MAKING

Document: From the Bottom Up: Strategies and Practices for Membership-Based Organizations
By Sylvia Rivera Law Project (SRLP) published in May 2013
SRLP is an organization that works to guarantee that all people are free to self-determine their gender identity and expression, regardless of income or race, and without facing harassment, discrimination, or violence. In 2007 members of SRLP formed a committee to find more intentional and equitable ways to organize and engage their member communities. This report contains the key insights they gained about different organizational models of membership.

SECTION 4: CAUCUS AND AFFINITY GROUPS

Webpage: Caucus and Affinity Groups
By Racial Equity Tools
This webpage from Racial Equity Tools explains that caucus work provides spaces for people to do deep work within their own racial groups. It also offers caucus resources for both Black, Indigenous, and Other People of Color (BIPOC) and for white people.

Document: The Role of a Caucus and the Role of a Change Team
By Dismantling Racism, adapted by Kenneth Jones and Tema Okum based on work done by the Exchange Project of the Peace Development Fund, Grassroots Leadership's Barriers and Bridges program, and the original concept by Bailey Jackson and Rita Hardiman
This document outlines the different potential goals and strategies of a change team and a caucus within achieving racial equity.

SECTION 5: EQUITY IN THEATER

Web Series: Talking Back
By Oregon Shakespeare Festival (hosted by Carmen Morgan)
In this six-part web series, artEquity Founder and Executive Director Carmen Morgan explores the growing movement for justice in the theatre field.

Written Principles and Demands: We See You White American Theater
A collective of BIPOC multi-generational, multi-disciplinary, early career, emerging and established artists, theater managers, executives, students, administrators, dramaturges and producers, organizing to address the scope and pervasiveness of anti-Blackness and racism in the American theater.

SECTION 6: SHARED LEADERSHIP MODELS

Article: The Risk of Shared Leadership
By Howlround in August 2015
In this article, HowlRound asks ten rising leaders from Theatre Communication Group's SPARK LEADERSHIP program to examine leadership, vision, diversity, inclusion, and equity.

Interview: Sharing the Load: Adapting to the Pandemic in a Shared Leadership Role
By Howlround in March 2021
In this interview, Meropi Peponides - a theater maker, dramaturg, podcast producer, writer, and co-founder of Radical Evolution - speaks with Yury Urnov, who is one of four co-artistic directors of Wilma theater in Philadelphia.

Study: New Variations of Dual Leadership: Insights from Finnish Theatre (Abridged)
By MMIAM (authored by Mari Järvinen, Heli Ansio, and Pia Houni) in June 2018
This is a study that explores dual leadership as it has existed in Finnish professional theater since 2000.

Announcement: Soho Rep Elevates Meropi Peponides to Leadership Team
By American Theatre, a publication of Theatre Communications Group
This article announces a new shared leadership structure at Soho Rep, naming producer Meropi Peponides to a
directorial position alongside Artistic Director Sarah Benson and Executive Director Cynthia Flowers.

SECTION 7: HUMAN RESOURCES

Examples of Companies for Outsourced HR

TriNet
SHRM
ADP

SECTION 8: TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE & RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Resource List: Conflict Transformation and Restorative Justice
By Racial Equity Tools
This compilation of resources organized by Racial Equity Tools begins with the following paragraph: "Restorative Justice
starts with the question 'What was the harm done to the community? How can a person who created harm give
back?' Transformative Justice asks why the harm was committed, what are the root causes, and what the survivor or
community needs for justice."

X. ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Rebecca KellyG is a multidisciplinary creative, equity and justice consultant, and community justice facilitator rooted in anti-racist practices. As a former civil rights attorney, her approach is informed by structural and institutional understandings of oppression and as an artist and facilitator, her methods are led by heart, inquiry, and intuitive communication. Rebecca is committed to promoting self-love and accountability for collective justice. Select speaking appearances include The United State of Women, UC-Berkeley, Lincoln Center Theatre-LCT3, The Broadway Advocacy Coalition, and the Arts Administrators of Color Network. She holds such honors as The Diversity and International Action Council Adjunct Professor Award for Diversity and Inclusion from Wagner College; George N. Lindsay Civil Rights Legal Fellow with The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law; and American University Washington College of Law MBP Catalyst for Change Award.

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THANK YOU!