

**ON JANUARY 19th, MEMBERS OF THE THEATER COMMUNITY ACROSS THE COUNTRY
WILL LIGHT A LIGHT AND MAKE A PLEDGE
TO LAUNCH**

THE GHOSTLIGHT PROJECT



On January 19, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. in each time zone across the country, members of the theater community - from Broadway to regional theaters to high schools and colleges and community theaters - will come together to launch The Ghostlight Project.

Gathering outside of theaters on the eve of the Presidential Inauguration, people will join in a collective, simultaneous action, together creating "light" for challenging times ahead. Inspired by the tradition of leaving a "ghost light" on in a darkened theater, artists and communities will make or renew a pledge to stand for and protect the values of inclusion, participation, and compassion for everyone--regardless of race, class, religion, country of origin, immigration status, (dis)ability, age, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

January 19th is a moment of gathering within a larger resistance to intolerance at all levels. We aim to create brave spaces that will serve as lights in the coming years. We aim to activate a network of people across the country working to support vulnerable communities. This is not a substitution for protests or direct action, but rather a pledge for continued vigilance and increased advocacy.

We define "a brave space" as a space where:

- It is safe to be who you are, regardless of race, class, religion, country of origin, immigration status, (dis)ability, age, gender identity, or sexual orientation.
- Diverse opinions, dissent, and argument are not only tolerated, but invited.
- Active listening and courageous exchange are fundamental values.
- Collective action, activism, and community engagement, both within and outside the walls of the theater, are cultivated, encouraged, and supported.

The event on January 19th marks the initiation for some artists and theaters, and marks another step for others with a long history of fighting for social justice and equity. As the participants all have varied backgrounds, so too is it up to each institution and individual to determine what ongoing action will best serve their institution and community.

INITIATING ACTION: January 19, 2017

On January 19, 2017 at 5:30pm across time zones, we will gather in front of theaters and art spaces across the country. This collective action will signify an ongoing commitment to social justice in the coming years, taking a variety of forms and actions for individual artists and institutions.

ONGOING ACTIONS

The Ghostlight Project will be a resource for theaters, arts communities, and individuals to identify and create meaningful action steps, or to continue in the social justice work already underway. Here are some initial suggestions to serve as inspiration for those interested in additional action:

INDIVIDUALS:

- Rally a team of actors, staff, and artists to make monthly donations (through platforms like Charity Navigator) to organizations supporting people within vulnerable communities.
- Create a volunteer team of colleagues and fellow artists to do a monthly "Service Monday."
- Become an expert on a topic, state, or key issue vulnerable in the next six months. Be a resource hub for that issue, sharing your knowledge and expertise with others to become more informed.
- Make daily or weekly calls to local and state representatives regarding issues important to you.
- Create a fellow artist phone tree to call elected officials.
- Connect people with organizations and nonprofits supporting various issues. Become a resource for sharing and disseminating information.

INSTITUTIONS:

Pledge that you want to be a place of diversity and inclusion.

Acknowledge if this hasn't historically been true.

Listen to the communities and organizations you want to support. What are their concerns and needs?

- Build (or strengthen) a one-on-one relationship with a single organization to whom you can devote time, human resources, and resource resources. Offer tickets, talkbacks, and tours, and give them space to get to know you as deeply as possible, and so they can make informed decisions and asks. Re-envision what true partnership and collaboration might look like together.
- Schedule meetings with organizations your theater has interfaced with through outreach and education programs to hear how they might be interested in partnering with your theater down the road. What are their needs within the current landscape?
- Share knowledge of social justice actions, programs, and initiatives your institution has created and sustained that others may learn from.
- Connect with social justice and POC-focused theaters to amplify and magnify collective efforts.
- Set benchmarks/be knowledgeable about the demographics of your board, staff, and audiences. Get a demographic breakdown of your city and set a goal that in X years, you will match it.
- Offer space for meetings, events, fundraisers, and trainings to social justice organizations.
- Host community meals for staff, community members, and neighbors to build connections.
- Connect with institutions in your neighborhood. Visit the mosque down the street every week. Visit the LGBTQIA club at the nearest high school and empower them to tell their stories.

These are some ideas and we welcome more. Please share what YOU are doing with us via email (wearetheghostlightproject@gmail.com) or via our [Facebook Group](#).

Many of you already serve as models for people newer to community engagement.

We need not be uniform, but should be united as a field in championing our values.

DO SOMETHING and continue to work daily/weekly/monthly for social justice in your world.