

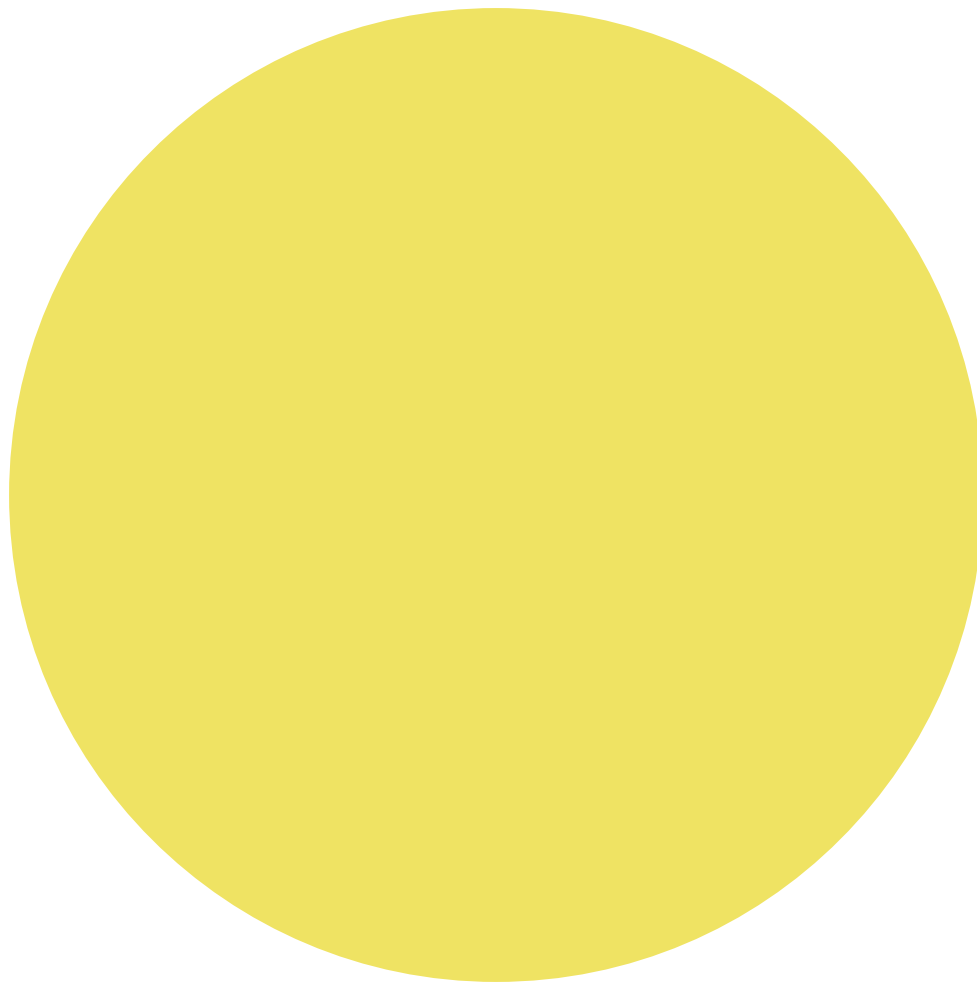
# The Visibility Report

Racial Representation on NYC Stages





# Our Mission

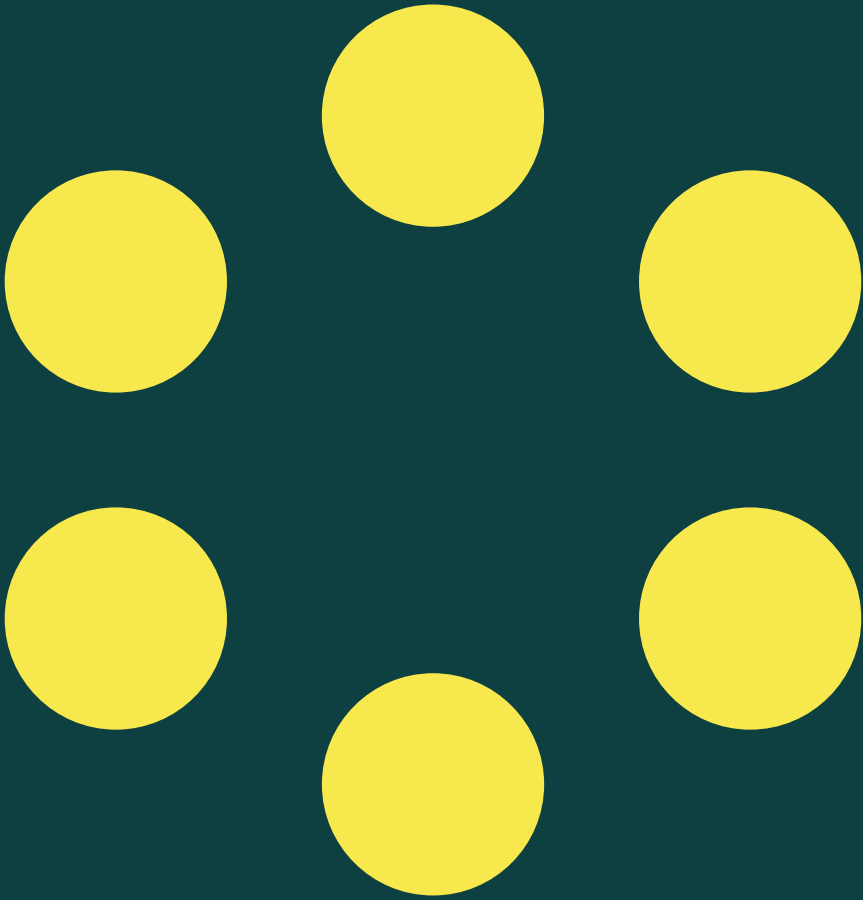


**The mission of the Asian American Performers Action Coalition (AAPAC)**

is to expand the perception of Asian American performers in order to increase their access to and representation on New York City's stages. AAPAC publishes the only publicly

available annual statistics report on racial representation in the NYC area of its kind, and has been a leader in discussions and forums on diversity with artistic institutions and the Broadway community.

[www.aapacnyc.org](http://www.aapacnyc.org)





AAPAC is an Obie Award-winning, volunteer-driven organization with limited resources. If you find these statistics useful, we ask that you make a tax-deductible donation through our fiscal sponsor, Fractured Atlas. Go to [www.fracturedatlas.org](http://www.fracturedatlas.org) and search for AAPAC or go to our direct page:

<https://www.fracturedatlas.org/site/fiscal/profile?id=12552>

We thank you in advance for your donation and support!



**AMERICAN  
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WING**

This report was made possible through the generous support of the American Theatre Wing.

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# Letter from AAPAC

We hope you and your loved ones are well. As we write this, the theatre world remains in stasis. Covid-19 is disproportionately affecting communities of color and BIPOC workers disproportionately make up the essential workers risking their lives as America continues to endure the many far-reaching costs of this pandemic. At the same time, the murder of George Floyd and many others has set off an urgent call to action to end racism within every sector of America.

AAPAC has been committed to highlighting the racism that exists in New York theatre for almost a decade. Our stats have been a chronicle of how centered White lives have been—and continue to be—in our industry. Theatre will come back, and when it does, it can't return to "normal." We have a unique moment to come together as an industry during this pause and to demand better.

The 2017-18 season saw the first Asian American woman playwright produced on Broadway, Young Jean Lee, and a story set entirely in the Middle East, *THE BAND'S VISIT*, which went on to win the Tony Award for Best Musical. Such examples often serve as the poster child of diversity for a particular season, encouraging a false sense of progress. But when we look at the season as a whole, larger patterns of inequities are revealed, deeply entrenched within the system: White actors continued to overrepresent by almost

double their respective population size; writers and directors were almost exclusively White--nearly 80% of writers and 85.5% of directors. White supremacy has been so normalized that inequities aren't even perceived as such. New Yorkers were offered all-White or practically all-White plays (*THREE TALL WOMEN*, *ANGELS IN AMERICA*, *FARINELLI AND THE KING*, 1984, *STRAIGHT WHITE MEN*, *DESCRIBE THE NIGHT*, *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE*, *AMY AND THE ORPHANS* to name a few) again and again and somehow, the industry perceived this as acceptable. The world has changed in a very short period of time and we must awaken to the moment. These numbers are simply not good enough.

With this report, we recognize that in order to uncover and uproot systems of oppression in our industry, we must dig even deeper into the data and look more closely at the systemic issues of control that continue to impact BIPOC representation on and off our stages. To that end, we have added a new Economic Impact section that measures not just racial representation at theatre companies, but actual average dollars earned per week, uncovering the economic inequality that occurs when theatre companies redline BIPOC stories to the smallest stages which in turn result in the smallest paychecks for BIPOC actors. We learned that theatre companies spent \$1.70 on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors and sometimes, at places like



the Roundabout Theatre, as much as \$6.09 for every \$1.

We have also added a more nuanced, intersectional analysis of where obstacles exist within the industry. We are now not only tallying writers and directors, but also looking at how often White directors get to shape stories written by BIPOC writers (on Broadway, it was 100% of the time) and conversely, how often BIPOC directors were given the same fluidity to direct White plays (it only happened 7% of the time across the industry and often, only when the playwright was dead). We are looking at where BIPOC playwrights are being produced and noticing patterns like the increase in Asian writers not necessarily leading to an uptick for Asian American actors because so few of the plays selected had Asian-specific roles. It's one of the reasons Asian American actors were the only underrepresented group to decrease this season, from 7.3% to 6.9%.

We have also instituted letter grades for each theatre company which we hope will help funding agencies assess which theatre companies will actually translate their solidarity statements into tangible, change-making actions. We want to engage more with funders, donors and grant makers to help ensure that their money is going to the theatre companies that are most in line with their values.

A note while we're talking about funding: we want to recognize that our report only looks at the 18 largest non-profit companies in New York—the mainstream theatres that BIPOC artists have traditionally been left out of. But funding, especially during this critical time, desperately needs to be re-allocated to the theatres that have been telling BIPOC stories and nourishing underserved communities all along—theatre companies like Classical Theater of Harlem, National Black Theater, INTAR, Pregones, Noor Theatre Company, Ma-Yi Theater Company, National Asian American Theatre Company, Pan Asian Rep, Yangtze Theatre, and others. Over the years, we have noticed that the largest theatres that take the lion's share of grants and foundation support are almost never the most diverse nor leaders at the forefront of these issues. As an organization, we aim to uncover these

ongoing inequitable practices so that we can collectively change them.

Lastly, we should note that we have focused our report exclusively on racial inequities and will no longer be counting gender or disability statistics (we are, however, working in solidarity with other groups who are focused specifically on those areas). Terminology has been updated in our report as a result of EDI training generously provided to us by Theatre Communications Group (TCG). We have a new title, The Visibility Report: Racial Representation on NYC Stages, and are now being specific in tracking race vs. ethnicity; we are changing "non-traditional casting" to "Inclusive Casting" to better illustrate non-racially specific casting opportunities for BIPOC actors; and we are no longer using the term "minority" which literally means "less than" when in actuality, BIPOC are the global majority, and we must hold space for ourselves as such.

In the first section of our report, we've woven together the data, posed in the form of questions that we hope will highlight where biases continue to persist and where opportunities to increase representation exist. The biggest question is: what, now, are theatre companies and producers going to do with this information to create the change that needs to happen? We hope that our work will continue to be used to tip the theatre industry towards an equitable future—one where BIPOC artists, leaders, administrators, and even patrons, are an equal part of the stage story and accurately reflect the story of America.

More than ever, we demand visibility.

In solidarity,

Pun Bandhu and Julienne Hanzelka Kim,  
co-chairs

On behalf of the AAPAC Steering Committee:  
Pun Bandhu, Cindy Cheung, Angel Desai,  
Christine Toy Johnson, Peter Kim, Julienne  
Hanzelka Kim, Kenneth Lee, Eileen Rivera, and  
Nandita Shenoy.





# Questions + Answers:

What the Numbers Are Telling Us



# Who is Visible? Who is Invisible?

## 61.5%

of all roles on New York City stages went to **White actors** during the 2017–2018 season, making them the **most visible** on stage.

BIPOC faces were markedly less visible.

## 23.2%

Black actors

## 6.9%

Asian American actors

## 6.1%

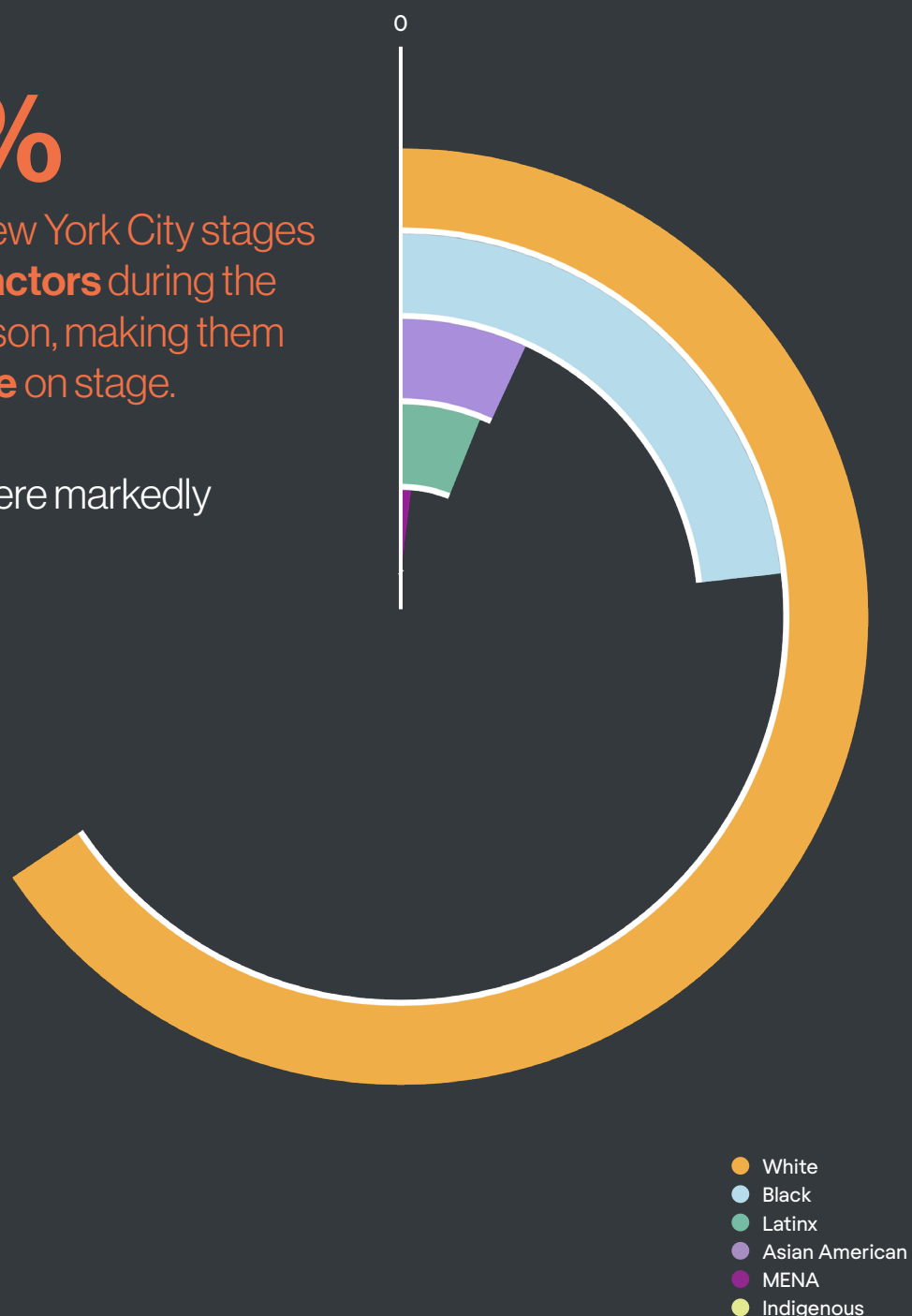
Latinx actors

## 2%

MENA actors

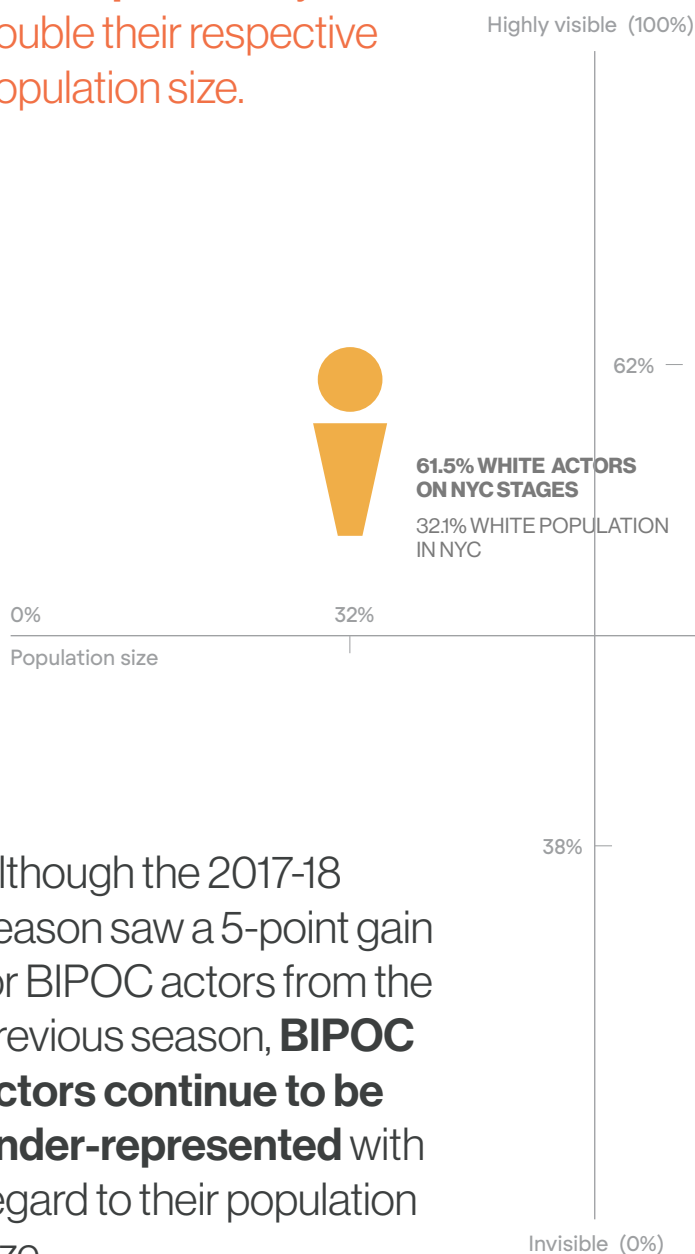
## 0.2%

Indigenous actors



## Visibility Matrix

**White actors continue to be the only race to over-represent** by almost double their respective population size.



Although the 2017-18 season saw a 5-point gain for BIPOC actors from the previous season, **BIPOC actors continue to be under-represented** with regard to their population size.



### SPOTLIGHT:

**Asian Americans were the only group to drop from the previous season**, from 7.3% to 6.9% of all available roles, largely due to the fact that there were **very few stories that centered on the Asian or Asian American experience** this season. Further limiting opportunities, Asian Americans were the group **least likely to be cast in roles that were not racially specific** (see *Do They Really See Us?*, page 14).

**KPOP**, co-produced by Ars Nova Theater, Ma-Yi Theater and The Woodshed Collective, **hired more Asian actors than any other show**, accounting for over 20% of all Asian American actors employed this season, and became one of the biggest hits of the Off-Broadway season.



**38.5% BIPOC REPRESENTATION ON NYC STAGES**  
67.9% BIPOC POPULATION IN NYC

#### NYC POPULATION DATA:

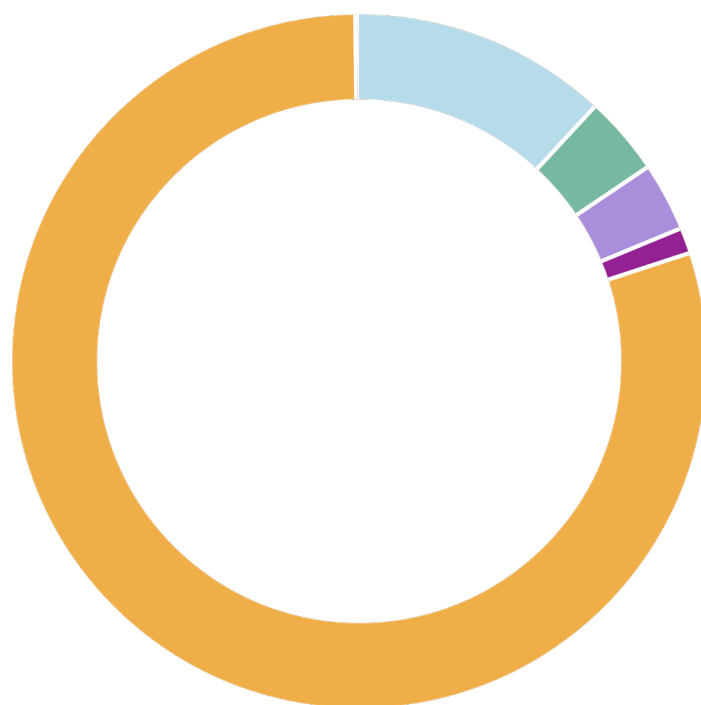
- 32.1%** WHITE ALONE, NOT HISPANIC OR LATINO
- 29.1%** HISPANIC OR LATINO
- 24.3%** BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 13.9%** ASIAN
- 0.4%** AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE
- 0.1%** NATIVE HAWAIIAN AND OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER

Data Source: 2019 Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

# Inclusive Casting: Do They Really See Us?

How Often Are BIPOC  
Actors Hired Regardless  
of Their Race?

**only 20%**  
of all available roles were  
cast with **BIPOC actors**  
**without regard to race.**



● 11.9%  
Black

● 3.2%  
Asian American

● 3.7%  
Latinx

● 1.2%  
MENA

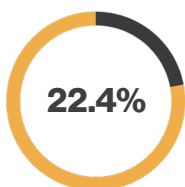
● 0%  
Indigenous

## Inclusive Casting

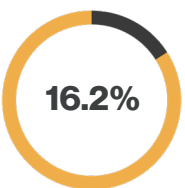
(referred to as “Non-traditional Casting” in previous reports) allows for BIPOC actors to be cast in roles regardless of their race—either because they have been cast in traditionally White roles or have been cast when race is not germane to the role. It can serve as an indicator of an equitable casting process and also, perhaps, as a measure of roles that transcend traditional racial stereotypes. Given the paucity of stories that center on the BIPOC experience, Inclusive Casting is one way to help address the inequity of opportunities for BIPOC actors on NYC stages.

Although 20% is the highest marker in the 12 years for which we have data, it demonstrates a continued low rate of acceptance of BIPOC actors in non-racially specific roles.

**Non-profits** were more likely to cast without regard to race.

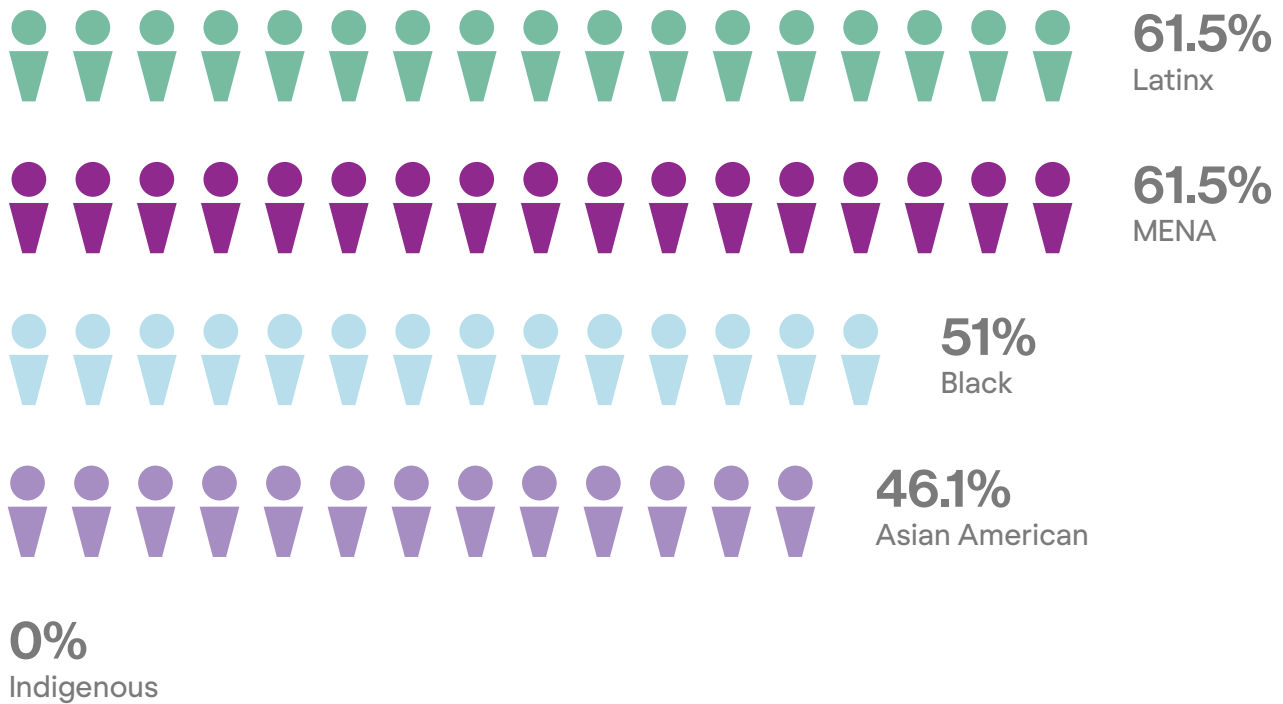


Percentage of roles that went to BIPOC actors in non-racially specific roles **at non-profits.**



Percentage of roles that went to BIPOC actors in non-racially specific roles **on Broadway.**

## How Races Were **Inclusively** Cast



### **Although MENA actors were hired less**

often, when they worked, over 61.5% of them were able to play roles that were not MENA-specific. Latinx actors also played non- racially specific roles 61.5% of the time.

In contrast, Asian American actors played non-Asian characters just 46.1% of the time, making them the group least likely to transcend their race.





## SPOTLIGHT: Highly Visible Examples of Inclusive Casting

On Broadway this season, highly visible examples of Inclusive Casting included Joshua Henry in a Tony-nominated turn as the first Black Billy Bigelow in **RODGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN'S CAROUSEL**; Tony-nominated Asian American actor Ashley Park as Gretchen Wieners, a role played by a White person in the movie version of **MEAN GIRLS**; and the casting of Black actor Noma Dumezweni in the role of Hermione in the play **HARRY POTTER AND THE CURSED CHILD**, a move which caused such a stir worldwide that Potter author J.K. Rowling had to issue a statement that Hermione's skin color was never mentioned in her books: "Idiots were going to idiot. That's the way the world is. Noma was chosen because she was the best actress for the job."

Most of the Inclusive Casting in non-profit theatres happened in revivals of Shakespeare productions such as Shaina Taub and Kwame Kwei-Armah's musical adaptation of **TWELFTH NIGHT** at The Public Theater, but some of the non-profits that also produce on Broadway contributed some high profile examples including Condola Rashad's Tony-nominated turn as the title character in Bernard Shaw's **SAINT JOAN** at Manhattan Theatre Club. The Public and the Vineyard received the highest marks for Inclusive Casting as a percentage of total roles.

Joshua Henry as the first Black Billy Bigelow in **RODGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN'S CAROUSEL**

Ashley Park as Gretchen Wieners in **MEAN GIRLS**, a role played by a white person in the movie version

Noma Dumezweni as Hermione in **HARRY POTTER AND THE CURSED CHILD**

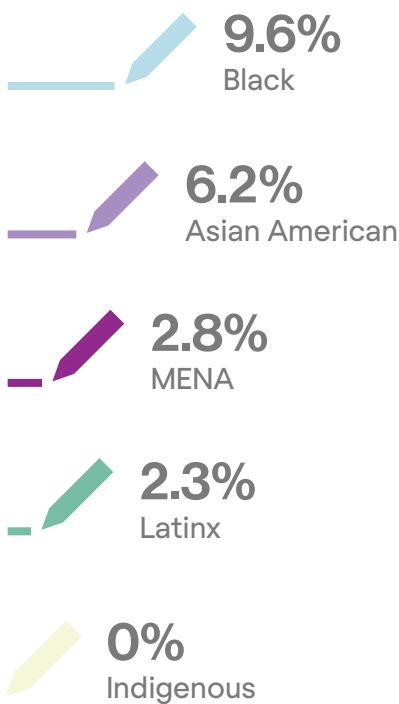
Condola Rashad as the title character in **SAINT JOAN**

Shaina Taub and Kwame Kwei-Armah's musical adaptation of **TWELFTH NIGHT**

# Whose Stories Are Being Told?

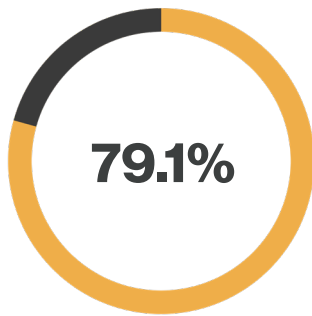


There's no question that the New York theatre industry has **a bias for White writers.**

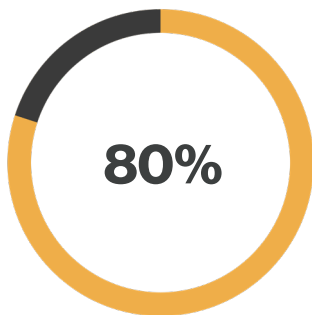


**only 20.8%**

of all NYC theatre productions were written by **BIPOC writers.**



Percentage of White writers  
**at non-profits.**

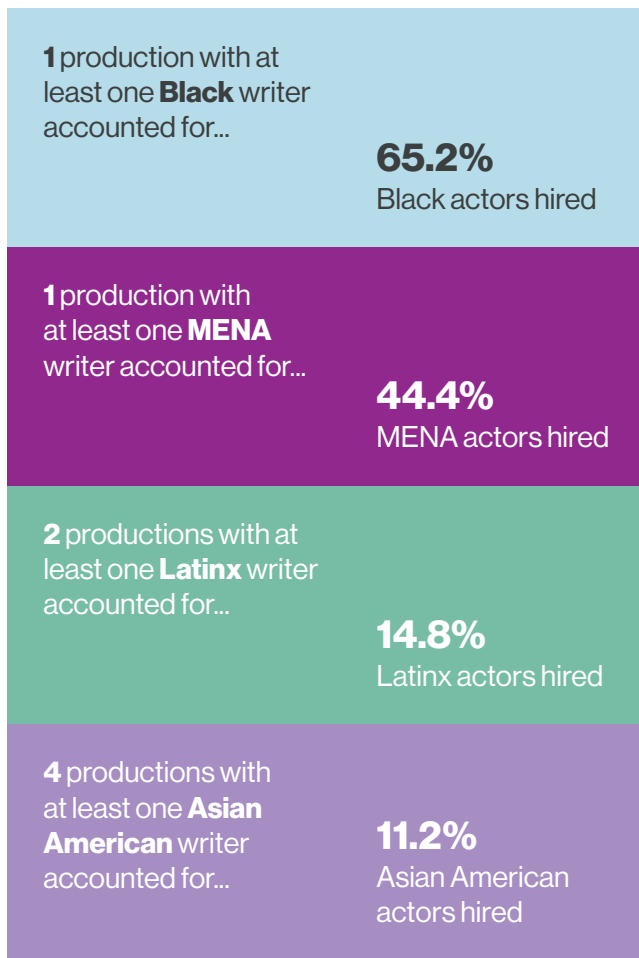


Percentage of White writers  
**on Broadway.**

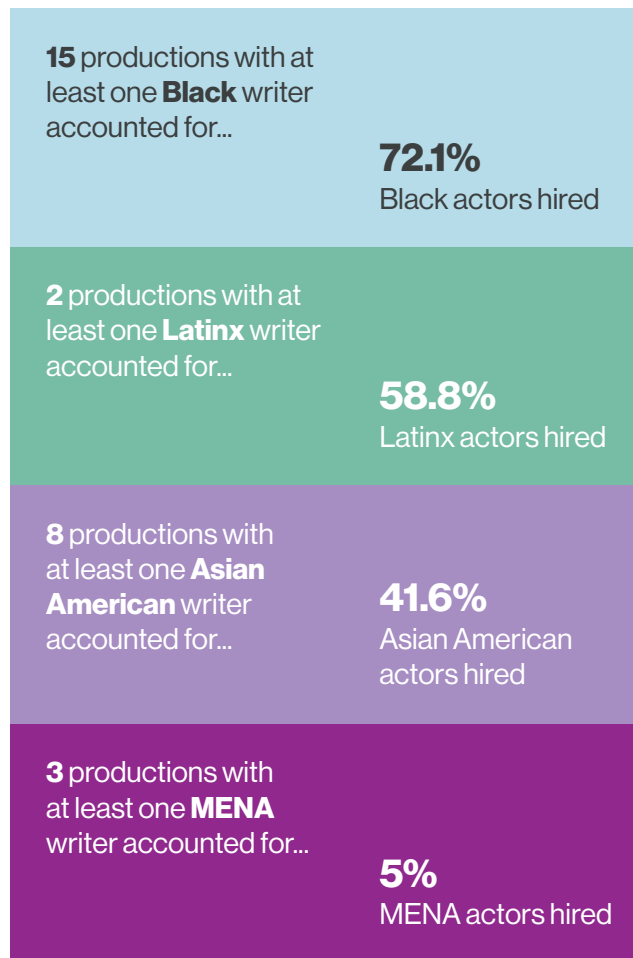
**Whether on Broadway or at non-profits,** the numbers were remarkably consistent—White writers were produced **almost four times more often** than their BIPOC counterparts.

## Do More BIPOC Writers Equal More BIPOC Actors?

### Broadway



### Non-Profits



### Out of shows with at least one BIPOC writer,

32.4% had casts comprising 50% or more White actors—25% in the non-profit sector and a glaring 62.5% in the commercial sector. This means that although credit must be given for producing BIPOC writers, the stories being told were not necessarily borne out of or about the BIPOC experience.

The higher percentage of Black bodies in stories written by Black writers suggests that there may be more acceptance for stories about the Black experience, while other BIPOC writers were more likely to have shows produced that did not center on culturally-specific stories.



## SPOTLIGHT:

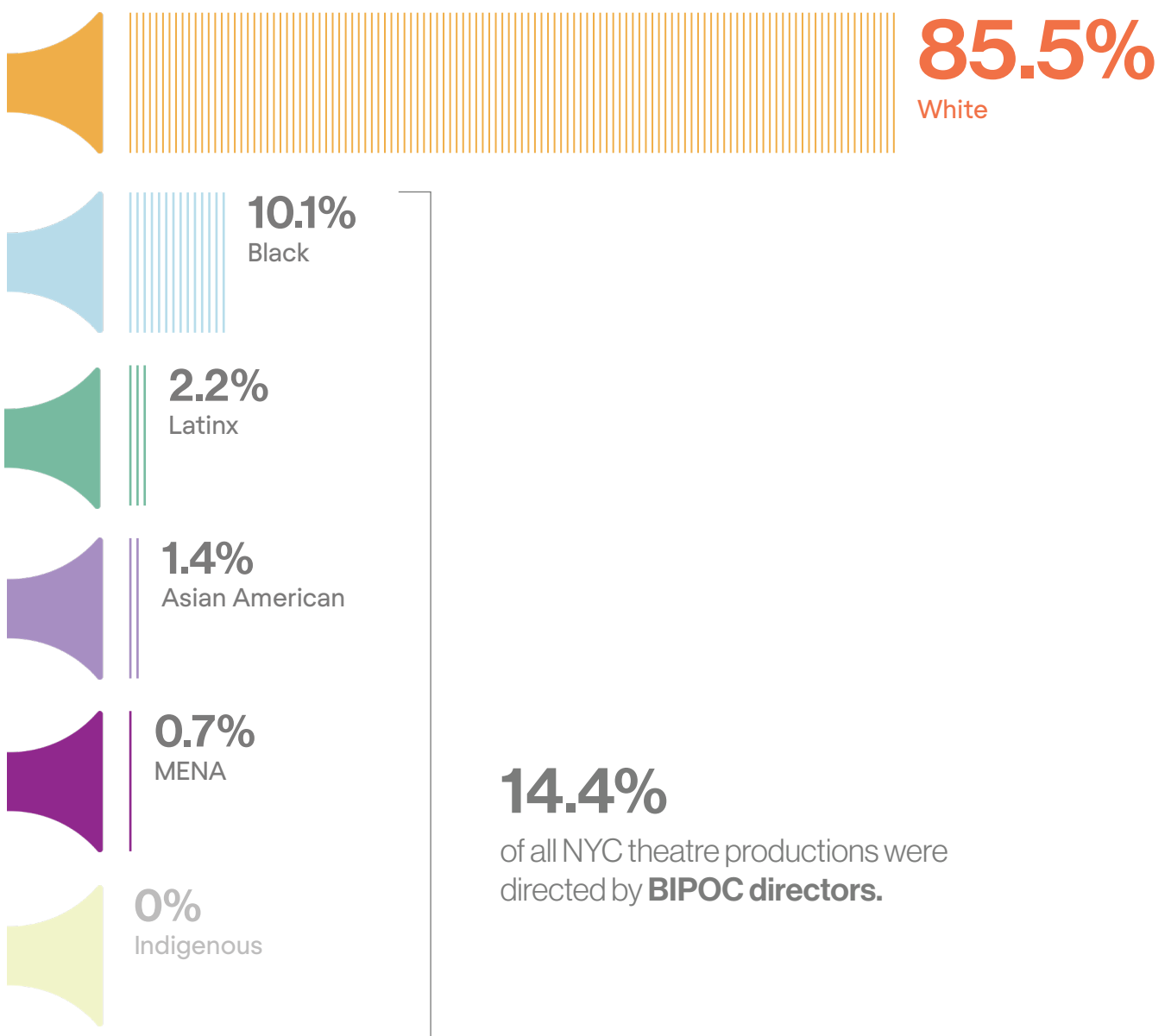
# Is there pressure on BIPOC Writers to center White lives in order to be produced—especially on Broadway?

This was a historic year for Asian American writers on Broadway. For the first time, four shows written by Asian Americans made it to Broadway in the same season: **M. BUTTERFLY** by David Henry Hwang, **JUNK** by Ayad Akhtar, **FROZEN** composed by Robert Lopez, and **STRAIGHT WHITE MEN** by Young Jean Lee. Young Jean Lee is the first woman Asian American playwright to make it to Broadway. Ironically, all four shows had more roles for White actors than any other group. **M. BUTTERFLY** was almost on par; **STRAIGHT WHITE MEN** had no Asian-specific roles at all. It happened less frequently Off-Broadway, but it did happen. Rajiv Joseph's **DESCRIBE THE NIGHT**, for example, had a majority White cast.

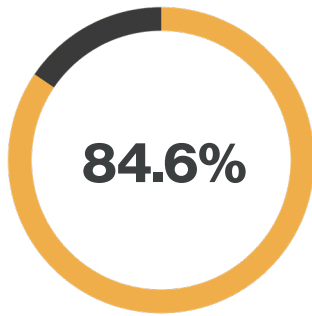
It's important to note that there is no value judgement being made here. BIPOC writers certainly should be able to write non-BIPOC-centric stories. And it could also be argued that all shows written by a BIPOC writer come from a BIPOC perspective. **Still, there was a pattern here that was impossible to ignore and it is fundamentally linked to an analysis of where opportunities exist to increase representation.** It raises the question: Is there pressure on BIPOC writers to center White lives in order to be produced—especially on Broadway? We believe that a robust theatre economy should reward, not devalue difference. It's a question that bears keeping in mind as we move forward: **which stories are more valued and why?**



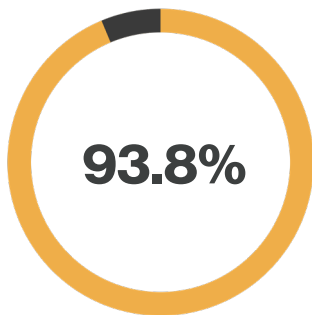
# Who Gets to Shape the Stories?



Note:  
Each sound decibel (|) represents one director.



Percentage of White directors  
**at non-profits.**



Percentage of White directors  
**on Broadway.**

**White directors** clearly get to shape the stories on New York City's stages the majority of the time.

## Who Gets to Direct Stories Written by BIPOC Writers?

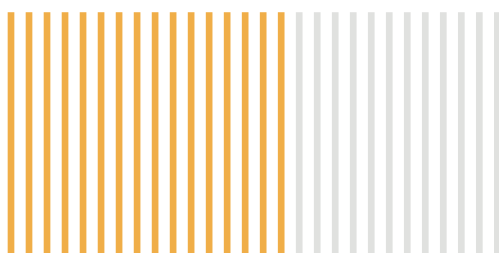


**22 out of 34**

productions written by at least one BIPOC writer were directed by a **White** director.

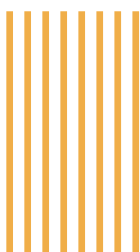
**64.7%**

of BIPOC productions were shaped by a **White** director.



**16 out of 28**

**non-profit** productions written by at least one BIPOC writer were directed by a **White** director.



**8 out of 8**

**Broadway** productions written by at least one BIPOC writer were directed by a **White** director.

### On Broadway,

a full 100% of projects written by BIPOC writers were directed by White directors. White directors also directed stories that took place in a BIPOC culture but were not necessarily written by a BIPOC writer—such as *ONCE ON THIS ISLAND*.

### In the non-profit sector,

57% of projects written by BIPOC writers were directed by White directors.

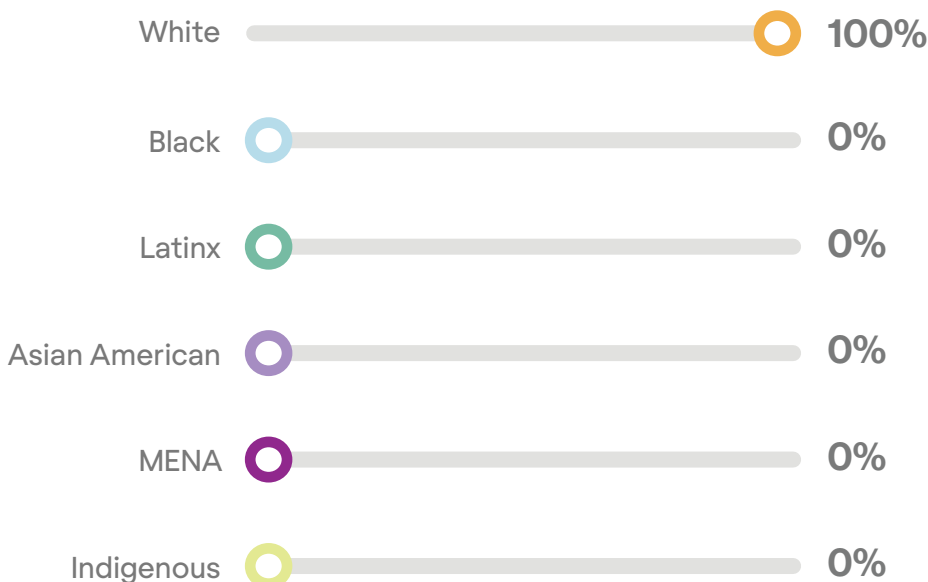
### The opposite,

BIPOC directors being given the same opportunities to direct shows written by a White person, did not happen in equal measure. In fact, it happened only 7% of the time and often when the playwright was dead. BIPOC directors were primarily paired only with BIPOC writers, a clear indication that when directors are first considered for projects, race is primary. Given the paucity of employment opportunities for BIPOC directors and given that creative freedom to shape stories across cultural boundaries are not yet equal, one way of increasing BIPOC director numbers is to give them more opportunities to helm culturally-specific BIPOC stories.

When directors are first considered for projects, **race is primary.**



## Artistic Directors at 18 Theatre Companies



**100%**  
of artistic directors  
were **White**.

## Are Gatekeepers Biased?

### The predominance of White directors

in New York City theatre suggests that there is a blockade for BIPOC directors. This impasse opens up sometimes (but not most of the time, as our research shows) when the story is about a BIPOC culture or when the project is written by a BIPOC writer. This clear, repeated pattern of discriminate access in one situation but not in others is something all BIPOC artists face and leads us to ask the question: Is talent really the standard here? Or are gatekeepers biased?

### On Broadway, the gatekeepers are

producers and theatre owners, but programming is not regulated through any one body and thus it becomes harder to look at sustained patterns and outcomes of decisions over time. In the non-profits, the selection of writers and directors usually falls under the purview of the artistic director. 100% of the artistic directors leading the 18 theatre companies surveyed in our report were White. Many have been in these positions

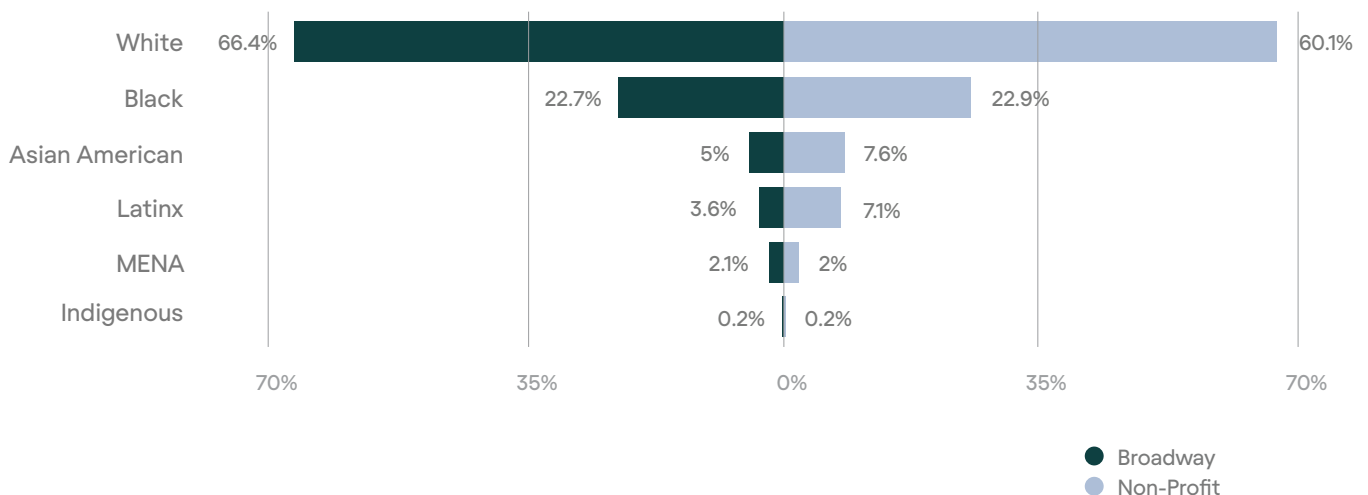
Is **talent** really the  
standard here?

for 20 years or more, further entrenching patterns of behavior that go unchallenged. (The longest tenure in our survey goes to Artistic Director Lynne Meadow who has been the head of the Manhattan Theatre Club for 48 years). If a theatre company is stuck in practices that exclude diverse artists, how can it innovate? How can BIPOC artists gain visibility and opportunity if decision makers don't source for talent outside of their limited circles of influence? Furthermore, what are the implications of a system that only allows for the subjective decisions of one White person to determine which BIPOC stories get selected and who is hired to shape and control those stories?

# Which Sector Is More Likely to Hire BIPOC Artists?

**Broadway hired less BIPOC artists than the non-profits but they are **practically on par.****

## Actors



### For the second season in a row,

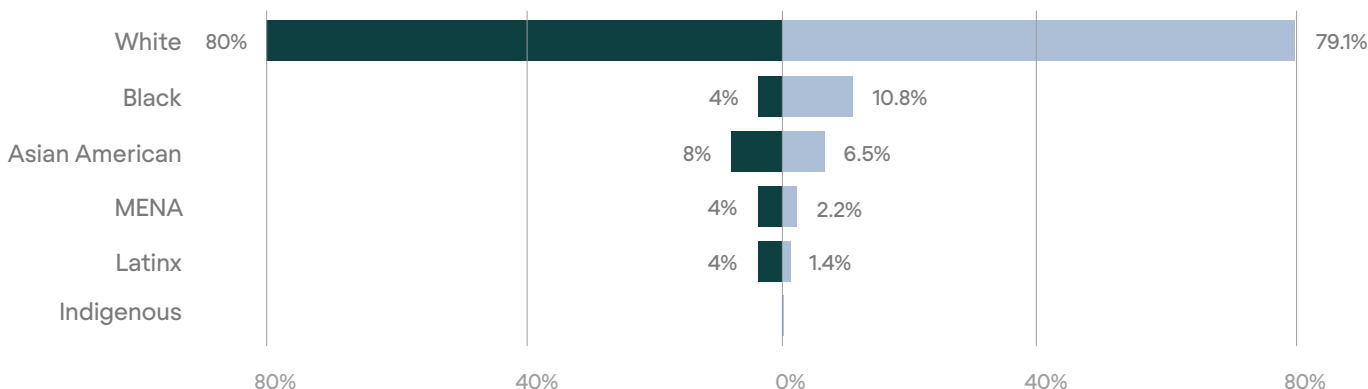
Broadway hired less BIPOC artists than the non-profits. However, the non-profits were not significantly better than Broadway and the numbers from both sectors demonstrate a dominance of White actors, writers and directors. Only six points separated actors between the two sectors. While the non-profits had a greater total number of writers of color (including several BIPOC writers who had not been produced in NYC before), as a percentage of available contracts, both sectors were practically identical when it came to the hiring of BIPOC writers. The biggest differentiator came in the hiring of directors where almost 94% of all Broadway directors were White. This is remarkably consistent with the previous 2016-17 season as well, where Broadway directors were 95% White. It is safe to say that BIPOC directors are

more likely to be hired in the non-profit sector than on Broadway—though with 84.6% White directors, the non-profits don't have much to celebrate either.

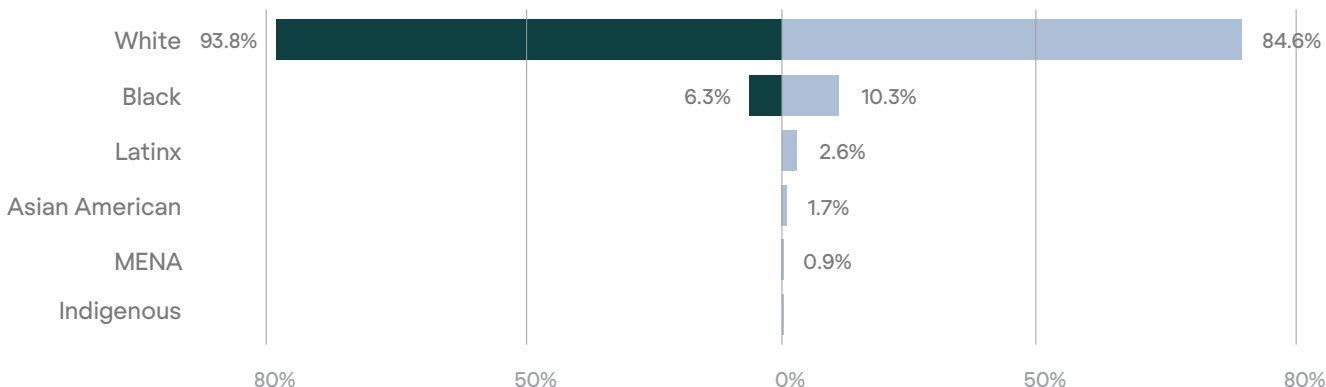
It must be noted that Broadway had the most improvements this season. Broadway hired 4.6% more BIPOC actors than the previous season (but did not best levels set two years earlier in the record breaking 2015-16 season). More dramatically, BIPOC writers on Broadway increased by 15% from the season prior. Asian American writers in particular seem to be having a moment. Not only did they increase in the non-profit sector, jumping up from 2.1% to 6.5% this year, but Asian American writers on Broadway laid claim to 8% of all writer contracts this season when there had been 0% the season prior.

## Both sectors demonstrate a dominance of White actors, writers, and directors.

### Playwrights



### Directors



## What carries greater influence—commercial incentives or a moral imperative?

By separating Broadway from non-profits, we aim to get a better look at the drivers that stimulate racial equality. Which carries greater influence—a commercial incentive to diversify as demographics change and audiences become more diverse, or a moral imperative to reflect the world we live in irrespective of profit motivations? It is clear that both sectors have made progress over the 12 years for which we have data, perhaps

because expectations—and the world—have changed. In this day and age, an all-White show makes a stronger negative political statement than intended, to the extent that no musical produced on Broadway this season had an all-white cast (see Plays vs. Musical section, page 32). The non-profits are doing a better job, but one would expect this, given the fact that non-profit theatre companies must include diversity statements in their mission in order to receive state funding. Because diversity mandates are in place, it's interesting that the non-profits are not more substantially outpacing Broadway. The fact is, the two sectors are practically on par with each other statistically and barriers to entry continue to persist for BIPOC artists. That's the biggest take away here. There is much more room for improvement.

# What is the Economic Impact of Racism?



## The effect of all the exclusionary decisions

highlighted in this report—who gets access and who doesn't—is not a philosophical or academic exercise. This is our livelihood. If there is racism in the industry that we love, it is BIPOC artists who bear the cost, emotionally and financially. With this report, we wanted to dig even deeper, beyond representation numbers since they only tell part of the story. The earnings differential for BIPOC actors vis-à-vis White actors is not just dependent on how many BIPOC actors are hired, but is compounded by the size of the venue in which actors perform. Actors are paid contractual minimum salaries based on the revenue earned at different sized venues. An actor will make less at a 199-seat venue than at a 299-seat venue, even if they are hired by the same company. We found some theatre companies guilty of a process of redlining the most diverse stories to their smallest stages, creating a system of economic inequality

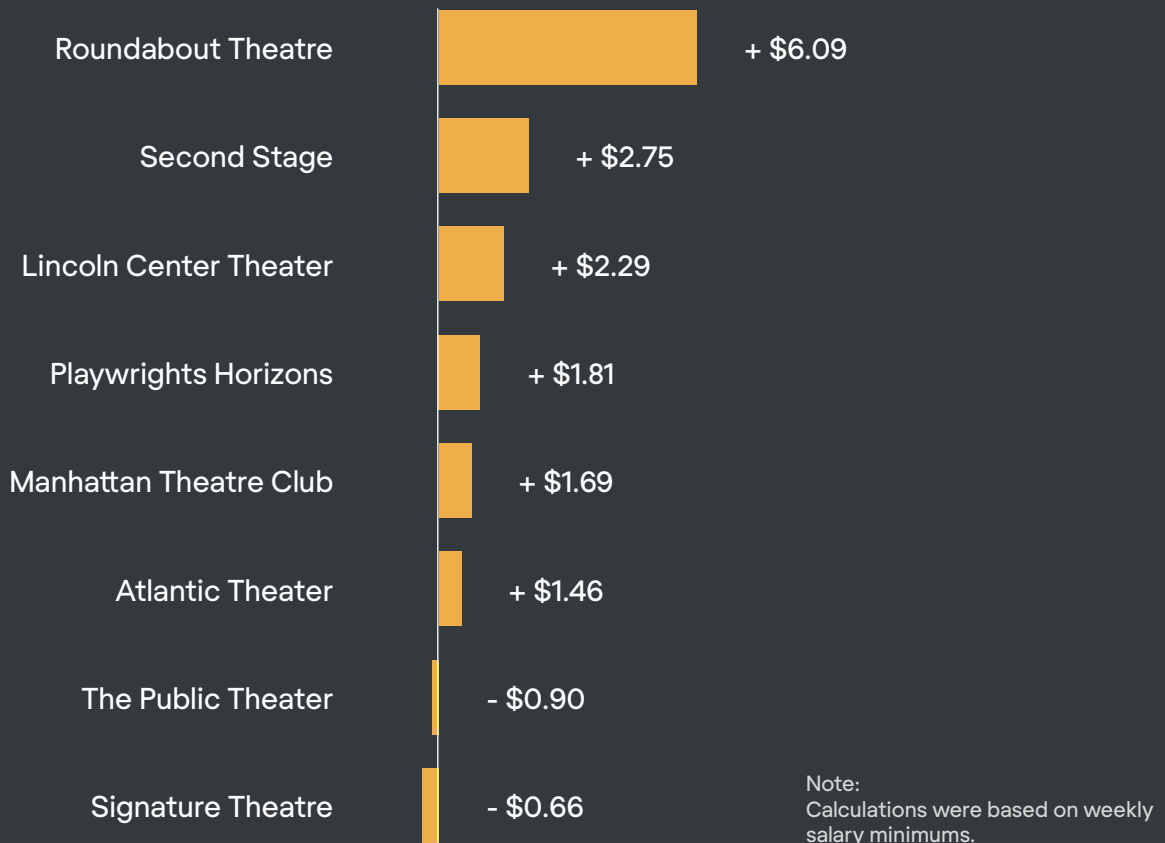
## Are the most **diverse** stories redlined to the **smallest stages**?

Theatre companies spent **\$1.70** on White actors for every **\$1** spent on BIPOC actors.

where BIPOC actors were more likely to find lower-paid work. Using weekly salary minimums as a baseline—acknowledging that actual aggregate income would have to be cumulative and factor in the length of a show's run—we found that in the overall non-profit sector, theatre companies spent \$1.70 on White actors for every \$1 they spent on BIPOC actors. This varied greatly by theatre company.

Note: It is also highly likely that a significant wage gap exists on Broadway where it is general practice for principal actors to negotiate higher-than-minimum contractual salaries but not as common for chorus members to do so. However, as negotiated salaries are not published, it is impossible to discern economic impact for Broadway at this time.

## Dollars Spent on White Actors for Every Dollar Spent on BIPOC Actors at Theatres with Multiple Stages



### SPOTLIGHT: Roundabout Case Study

The Roundabout Theatre Company had the highest wage gap when looking at theatre companies with more than one venue. They dedicated only one out of eight shows, or 12.5% of their season, to a play written by a BIPOC writer — **TOO HEAVY FOR YOUR POCKET** by Jiréh Breon Holder which also had the highest percentage of BIPOC actors in its cast than any other show in their season. The show was **presented in their smallest space**, the Underground Black Box Theatre at the Harold and Miriam Steinberg Center for Theatre. Actors earned an **estimated 36% less than their counterparts** in the larger

Laura Pels Theatre, and **at least 58% less than those working on their Broadway stages**. The compounding effects extended if shows in the larger venues engaged in more performances or had extended runs. When placed in the context of their season as a whole and the nearly exclusive hiring of White actors for shows in their larger venues, this ensured **an estimated total of 6 times the aggregate earnings for White actors at the Roundabout compared to BIPOC actors**. Or put another way, for every \$1 the Roundabout spent on BIPOC actors, they spent an estimated \$6.09 on White actors.



# Broadway

In the 2017-18 season, Broadway increased employment of BIPOC actors by almost 5% from the previous season, but White actors still occupied about 2/3 of Broadway stages, or 66.4% of all available roles. Despite this progress, Asian American actors were the only underrepresented group to decrease year-to-year, dropping almost 2 points to 5% of all Broadway roles. White writers took 80% of all writing jobs, a dramatic improvement from the previous season where they wrote a whopping 95% of stories, but still represented at four times more than any other group combined, pointing to an existing bias within

the industry. BIPOC actors and writers saw more opportunities in musicals than plays on Broadway with only two plays written by BIPOC writers produced commercially and an additional two produced on Broadway by non-profit companies. In a season that took a step forward for BIPOC writers, numbers for Broadway directors barely moved, going from 95% White directors to 93.8%, an indication that increasing BIPOC representation on the stage is perhaps easier than changing who gets to control the process.



# Broadway Actors

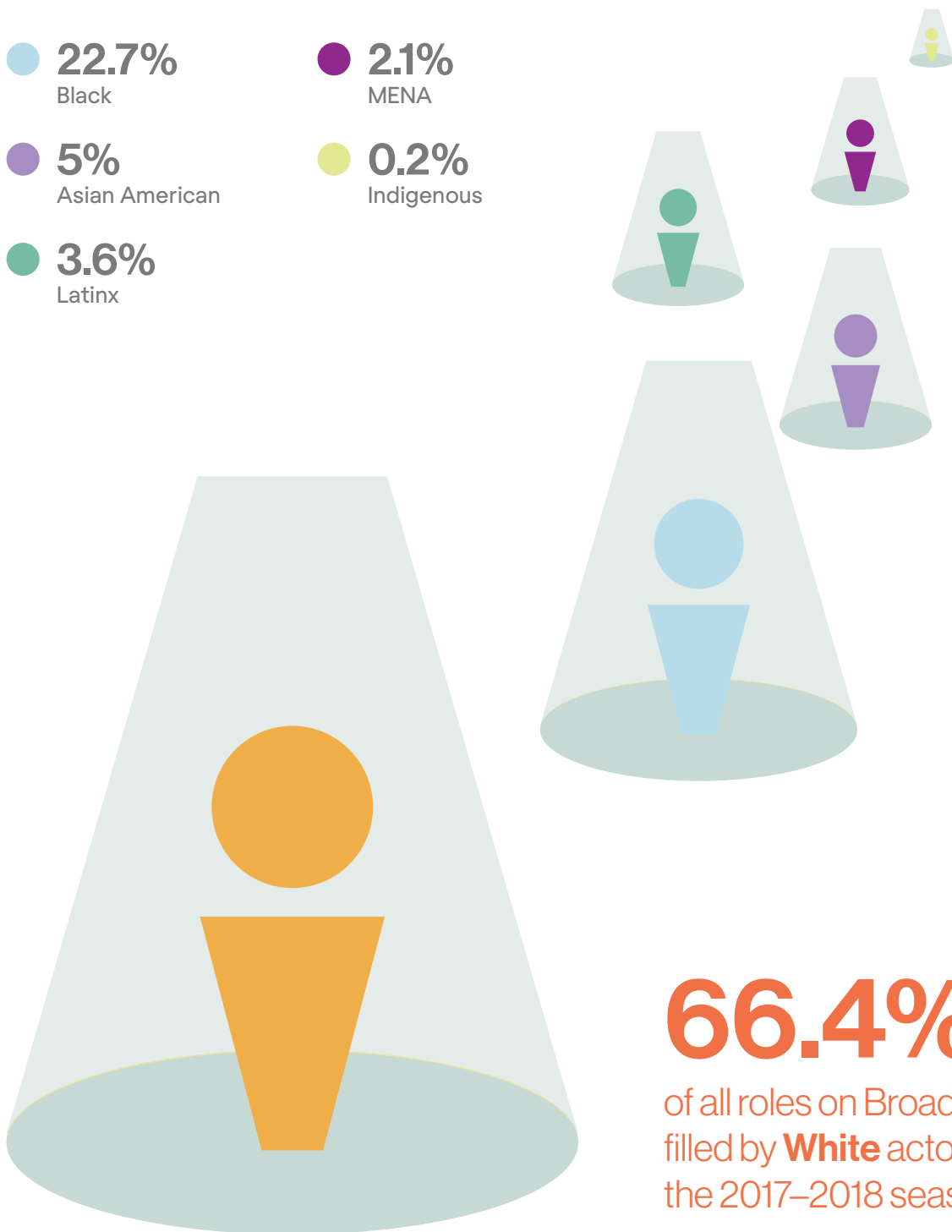
● 22.7%  
Black

● 2.1%  
MENA

● 5%  
Asian American

● 0.2%  
Indigenous

● 3.6%  
Latinx



## 66.4%

of all roles on Broadway were filled by **White** actors during the 2017–2018 season.

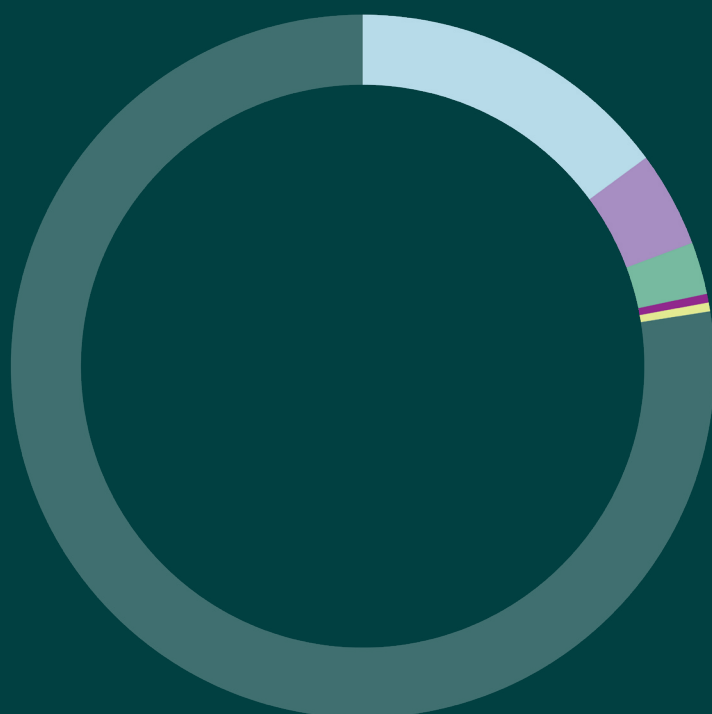
# Plays vs. Musicals

**Musicals** continued to be **more inclusive** than plays.

## only 22.5%

of roles in straight plays were cast with **BIPOC actors**.

**77.5%** were cast with **White actors**.



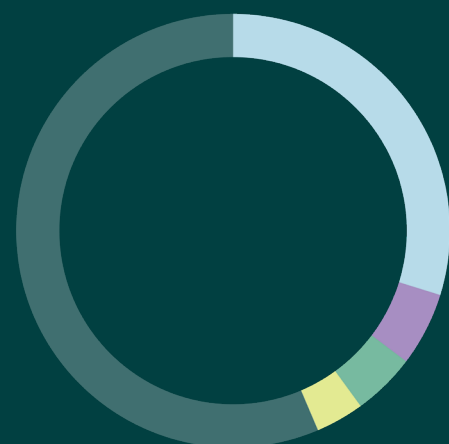
- 14.9% Black
- 4.4% Asian American
- 2.4% Latinx
- 0.4% MENA
- 0.4% Indigenous

Plays

## 43.6%

of roles in musicals were cast with **BIPOC actors**.

**56.4%** were cast with **White actors**.



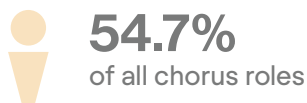
- 29.8% Black
- 5.5% Asian American
- 4.7% Latinx
- 3.6% MENA
- 0% Indigenous

Musicals

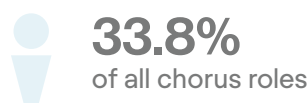
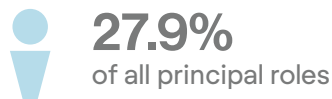


# Principal vs. Chorus

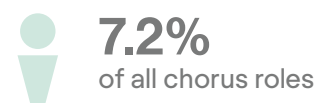
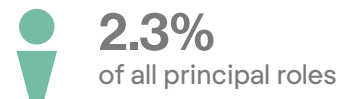
## White actors secured...



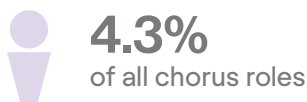
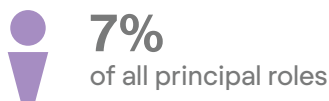
## Black actors secured...



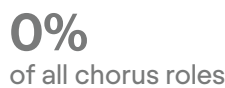
## Latinx actors secured...



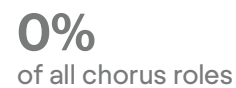
## Asian American actors secured...



## MENA actors secured...



## Indigenous actors secured...



## How Many BIPOC Actors Were Cast as Principals?

In a discussion on visibility, we wondered if there was any benefit to seeing how many BIPOC actors were cast in principal roles in Broadway musicals vs. White actors. We have great respect for our chorus actors—they often have to juggle several tracks doing incredibly physical work—but let’s face it, principal actors get most of the visibility, primarily because chorus roles are not at the center of the stories being told.

Looking at the numbers, White actors dominated Broadway musicals, accounting for 56.4% of all roles—53.5% of all principal roles and 54.7% of all chorus roles—more than any other group combined. Black actors secured

about half as many principal roles as their White counterparts and a higher percentage of them were hired in chorus roles than principal roles.



### SPOTLIGHT:

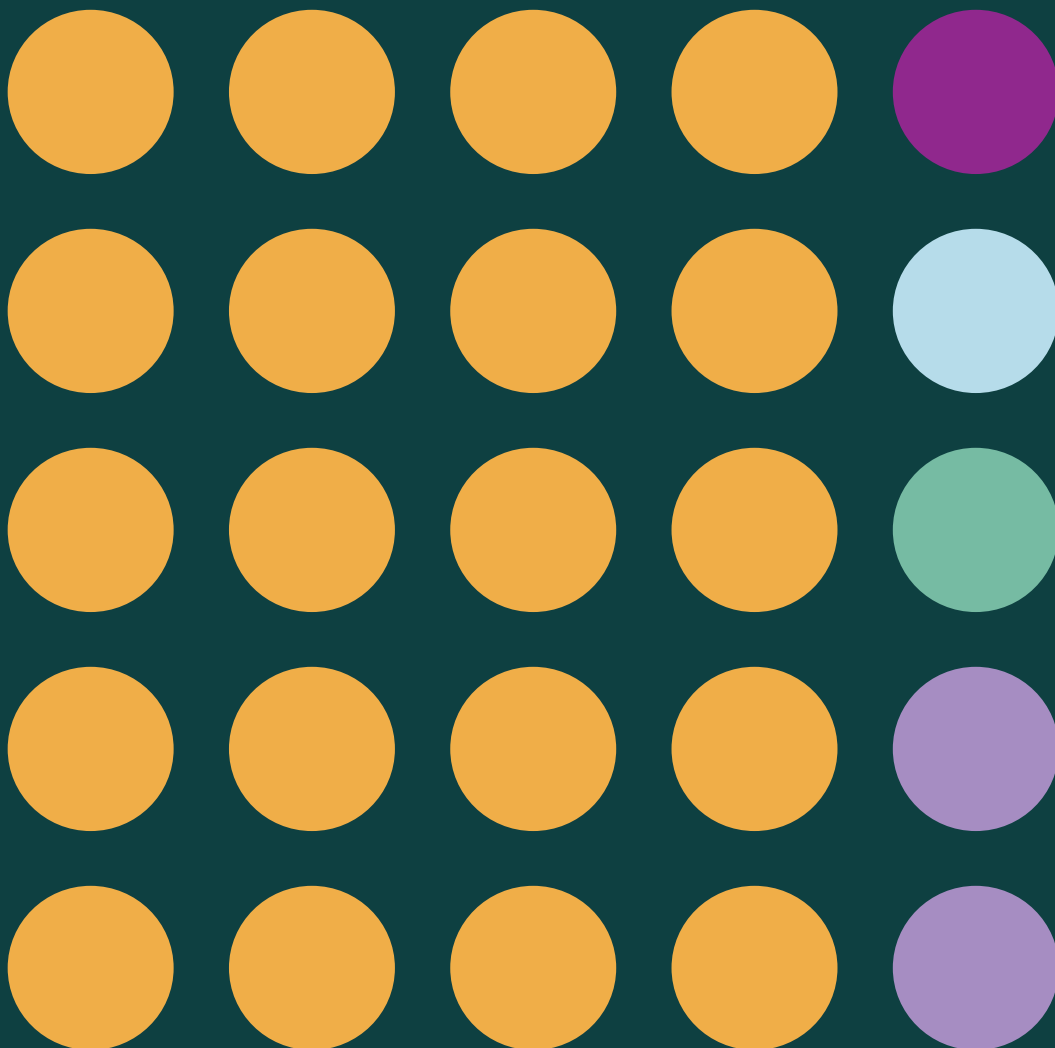
**Only 6 Asian American and 2 Latinx actors were principals** in Broadway musicals, and all 8 of the MENA principal contracts came from **THE BAND’S VISIT**. **Latinx actors were more than three times as likely** to be cast in a chorus role than in a principal role.

# Broadway Writers

Broadway Plays and Musicals Combined

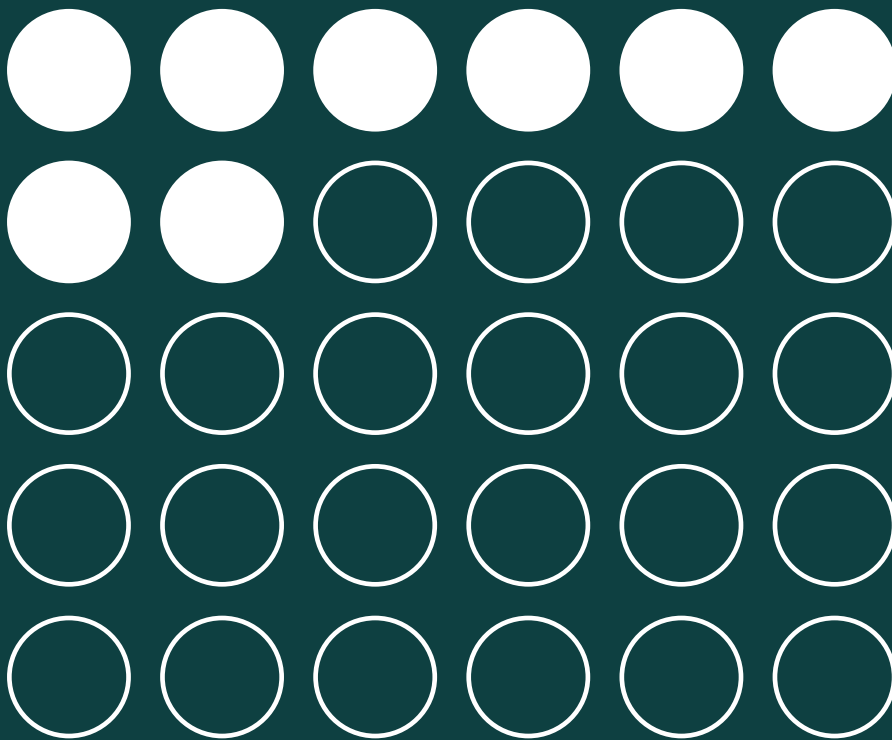
**80%** of all Broadway writers were White.

Productions written by at least one BIPOC writer accounted for **only 20%**.



Note:  
In total, there were 50 Broadway playwrights, librettists, lyricists and/or composers this season. 1 dot = 2 writers.

- White
- Black
- Latinx
- Asian American
- MENA
- Indigenous



**8 out of 30**

Broadway productions were written by at least one **BIPOC** writer.

- Shows written by at least one BIPOC writer
- Shows written by a White writer



**4 out of 20**

Broadway **plays** were written by at least one BIPOC writer.



**4 out of 10**

Broadway **musicals** were written by at least one BIPOC writer.

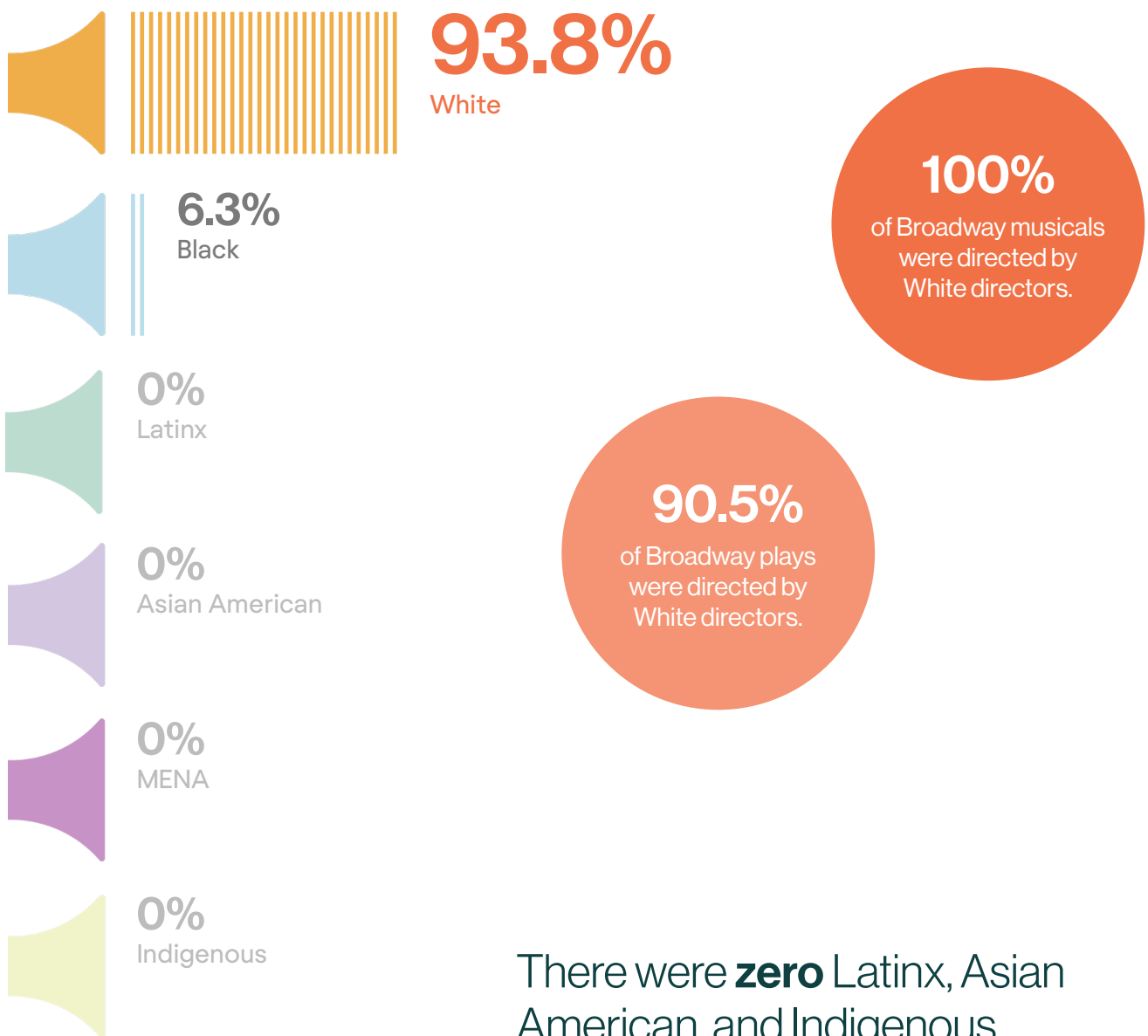
## While BIPOC writers had to

split only 20% of the pie: this represents a dramatic 15% increase from the previous season. Asian American writers accounted for the biggest jump, charging in at 8% where the previous season had seen 0% Asian American writers on Broadway. There was only one show with at least one Black writer on Broadway—*SUMMER, THE DONNA SUMMER MUSICAL*. Meanwhile, the only Latinx play on Broadway this season, *LATIN HISTORY FOR MORONS* by John Leguizamo, was a one-person show that did not move the needle for employment opportunities for Latinx performers.

Similarly, the only Latinx writer who worked on a Broadway musical was Greg Garcia, who contributed to the book of *ESCAPE TO MARGARITAVILLE*, a musical that takes place on a nondescript Caribbean island with a story that centers on a resort populated mostly by White people. MENA stories got a much-needed boost in visibility with the arrival of the Tony Award-winning *THE BAND'S VISIT*, written by MENA writer Itamar Moses and composer David Yazbek. They single handedly increased MENA writers on Broadway up to 4% from 1.4% the season prior.

# Broadway Directors

Broadway Plays and Musicals Combined



There were **zero** Latinx, Asian American, and Indigenous directors represented this season.

Note:  
Each sound decibel (|) represents one director.

# Broadway Plays & Musicals

2017–2018 Season

## Plays

1984 based on the novel by George Orwell; adapted and directed by Robert Icke and Duncan Macmillan

THE TERMS OF MY SURRENDER by Michael Moore; directed by Michael Mayer

M. BUTTERFLY by David Henry Hwang; directed by Julie Taymor

LATIN HISTORY FOR MORONS by John Leguizamo; directed by Tony Taccone

METEOR SHOWER by Steve Martin; directed by Jerry Zaks

THE PARISIAN WOMAN by Beau Willimon; directed by Pam MacKinnon

FARINELLI AND THE KING by Claire van Kampen; directed by John Dove

ANGELS IN AMERICA: MILLENNIUM APPROACHES and PERESTROIKA by Tony Kushner; directed by Marianne Elliot

THREE TALL WOMEN by Edward Albee; directed by Joe Mantello

CHILDREN OF A LESSER GOD by Mark Medoff; directed by Kenny Leon

HARRY POTTER AND THE CURSED CHILD, PARTS I AND II adapted by J. K. Rowling, Jack Thorne and John Tiffany; directed by John Tiffany

THE ICEMAN COMETH by Eugene O'Neill; directed by George C. Wolfe

\*THE CHILDREN by Lucy Kirkwood; directed by James Macdonald

\*SAINT JOAN by Bernard Shaw; directed by Daniel Sullivan

\*TIME AND THE CONWAYS by J.B. Priestley; directed by Rebecca Taichman

\*JOHN LITHGOW: STORIES BY HEART by John Lithgow; directed by Daniel Sullivan

\*TRAVESTIES by Tom Stoppard; directed by Patrick Marber

\*LOBBY HERO by Kenneth Lonergan; directed by Trip Cullman

STRAIGHT WHITE MEN by Young Jean Lee; directed by Anna D. Shapiro

\*JUNK by Ayad Akhtar; directed by Doug Hughes

## Musicals

THE BAND'S VISIT book by Itamar Moses, based on the screenplay by Eran Kolirin; music & lyrics by David Yazbek; directed by David Cromer

ONCE ON THIS ISLAND book and lyrics by Lynn Ahrens; music by Stephen Flaherty; directed by Michael Arden

SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS: THE BROADWAY MUSICAL book by Kyle Jarrow; music and lyrics by various; directed by Tina Landau

ESCAPE TO MARGARITAVILLE book by Greg Garcia and Mike O'Malley; music and lyrics by Jimmy Buffett; directed by Christopher Ashley

FROZEN book by Jennifer Lee, music and lyrics by Robert Lopez and Kristen Anderson-Lopez; directed by Michael Grandage

MEAN GIRLS book by Tina Fey; music by Jeff Richmond and lyrics by Nell Benjamin; directed by Casey Nicholaw

CAROUSEL book and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II; music by Richard Rodgers; directed by Jack O'Brien

SUMMER: THE DONNA SUMMER MUSICAL book by Colman Domingo, Robert Cary and Des McAnuff; music and lyrics by Donna Summer, additional songs by Giorgio Moroder & Paul Jabara; directed by Des McAnuff

\*PRINCE OF BROADWAY book by David Thompson; new songs by Jason Robert Brown; co-directed by Hal Prince and Susan Stroman

\*MY FAIR LADY book and lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner; music by Frederick Loewe; directed by Bartlett Sher

*\*Indicates a production produced on Broadway by a non-profit theatre that was not a commercial transfer.*





# Non-Profits

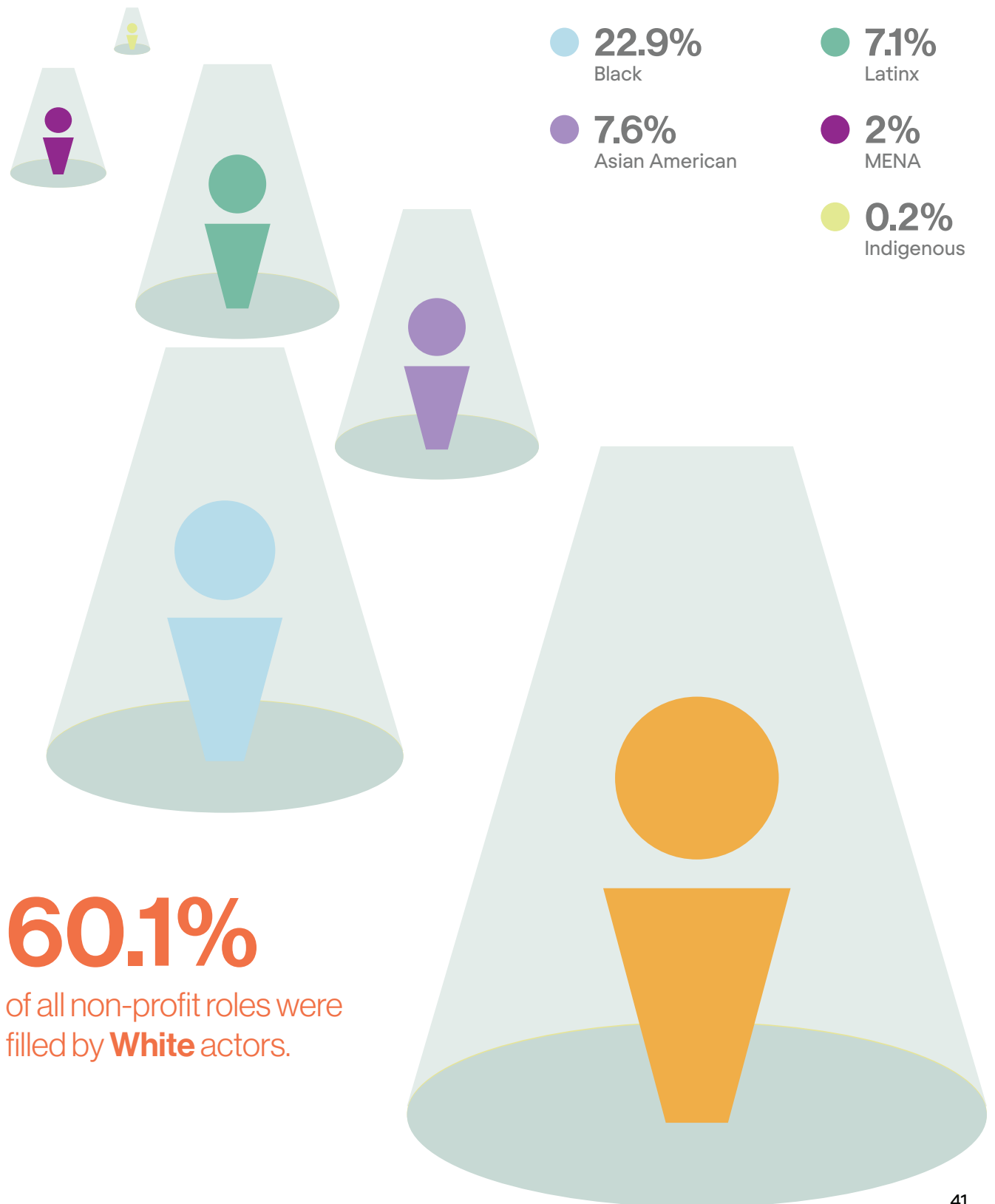
The non-profits have been remarkably consistent across the board, with 2017-18 numbers staying within 2 to 3 points of 2016-17 percentages. Black representation increased by 3% this year, Asian American representation increased by 1%, Latinx stayed the same at 7% and MENA dropped to 2% from 4%, almost entirely due to THE BAND'S VISIT which was at the Atlantic Theater Company the previous season before transferring to Broadway. White actors still dominated, sliding three points to 60.1% of all roles. White writers came in at 79.1% this year compared to 82% last year and White

directors helmed roughly 85% of shows, compared to 84% in the previous season. This year, we have instituted Theatre Grades for each of the non-profits based on their percentages of employment of BIPOC artists as well as for any racial diversity among Artistic Directors (spoiler alert: there is none). What we are finding consistently in our Least and Most Diverse rankings is that the largest theatre companies—that take a disproportionate amount of both public funding and foundational grants—are almost never the most diverse. As an organization, we aim to change that.



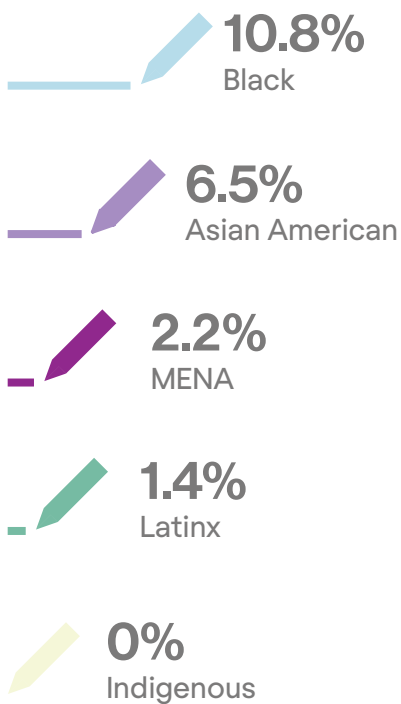


# Non-Profit Actors

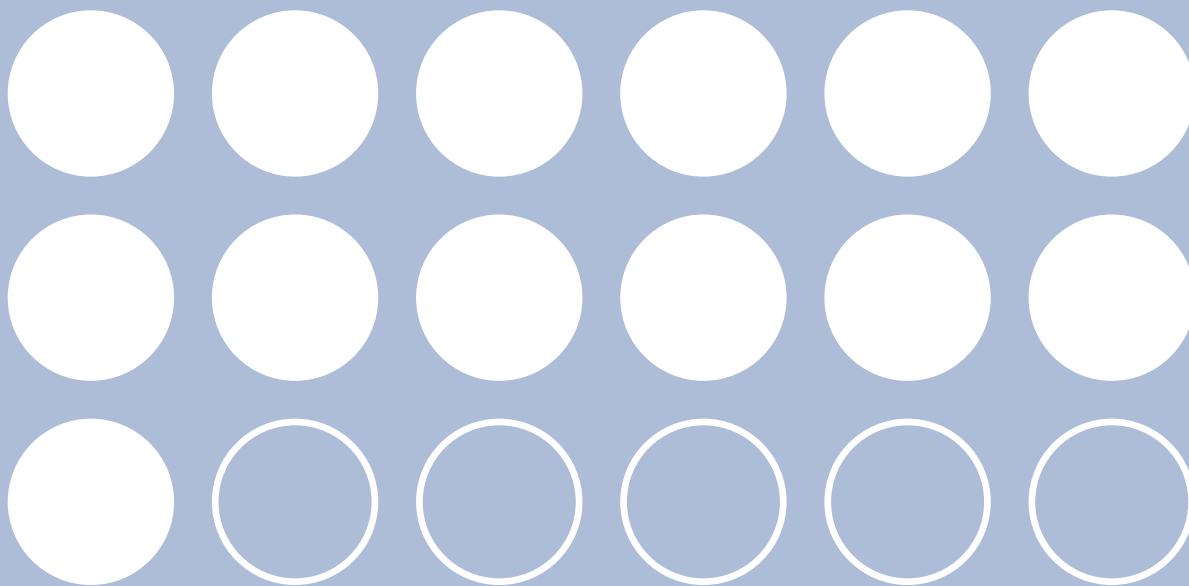


# Non-Profit Writers

**79.1%** of all non-profit writers were White.



BIPOC writers accounted for **only 20.9%**.



# 13 out of 18

non-profits produced at least one show written by a **BIPOC** writer.



# 7 out of those 13

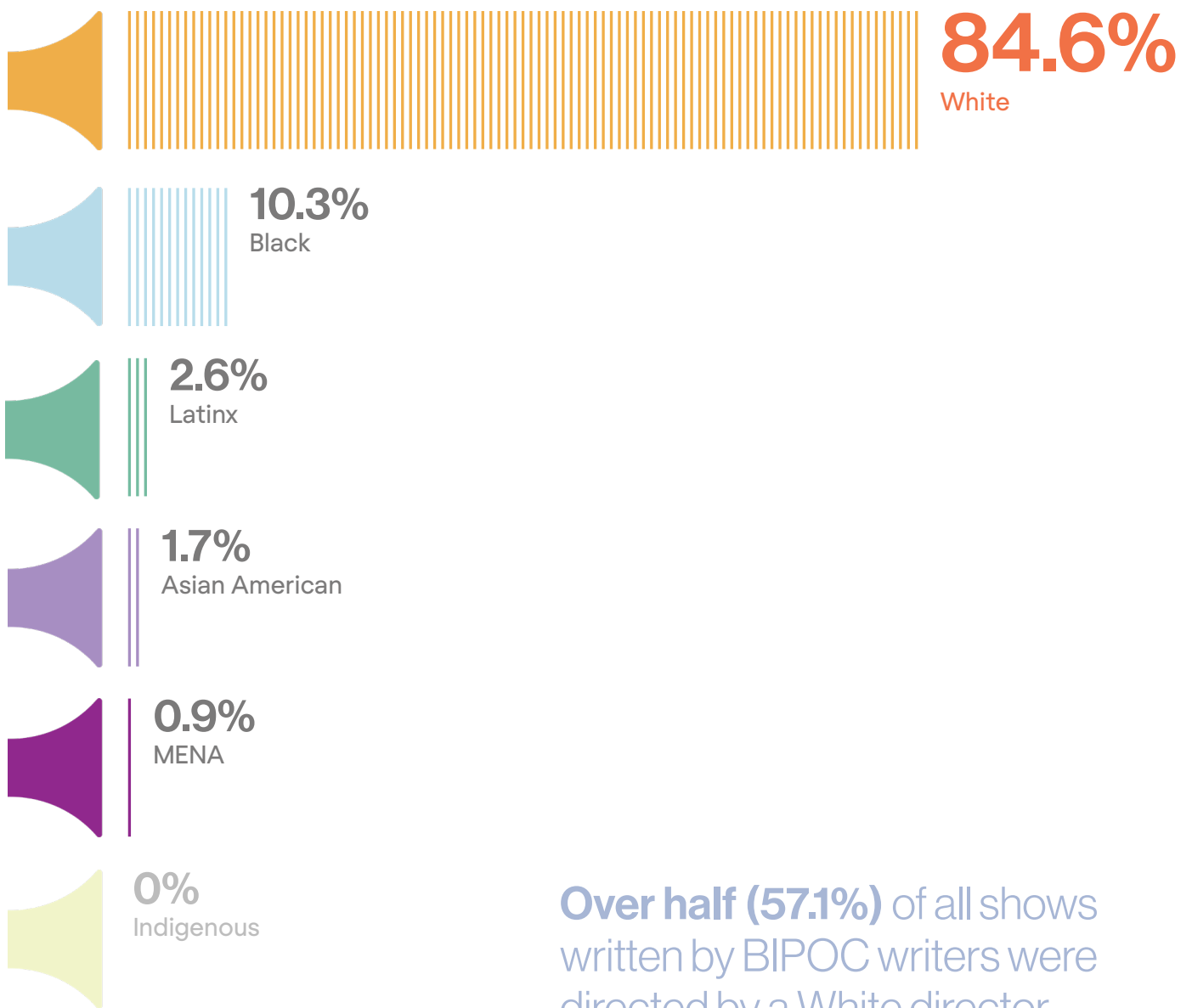
produced more than one show.

- Shows written by at least one BIPOC writer
- Shows written by a White writer

**SPOTLIGHT:**  
Out of all theatre companies in the survey, **Signature Theatre**, under artistic direction of Paige Evans, had the **highest percentage** of its season dedicated to **plays by BIPOC writers** (83% of all productions).



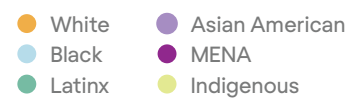
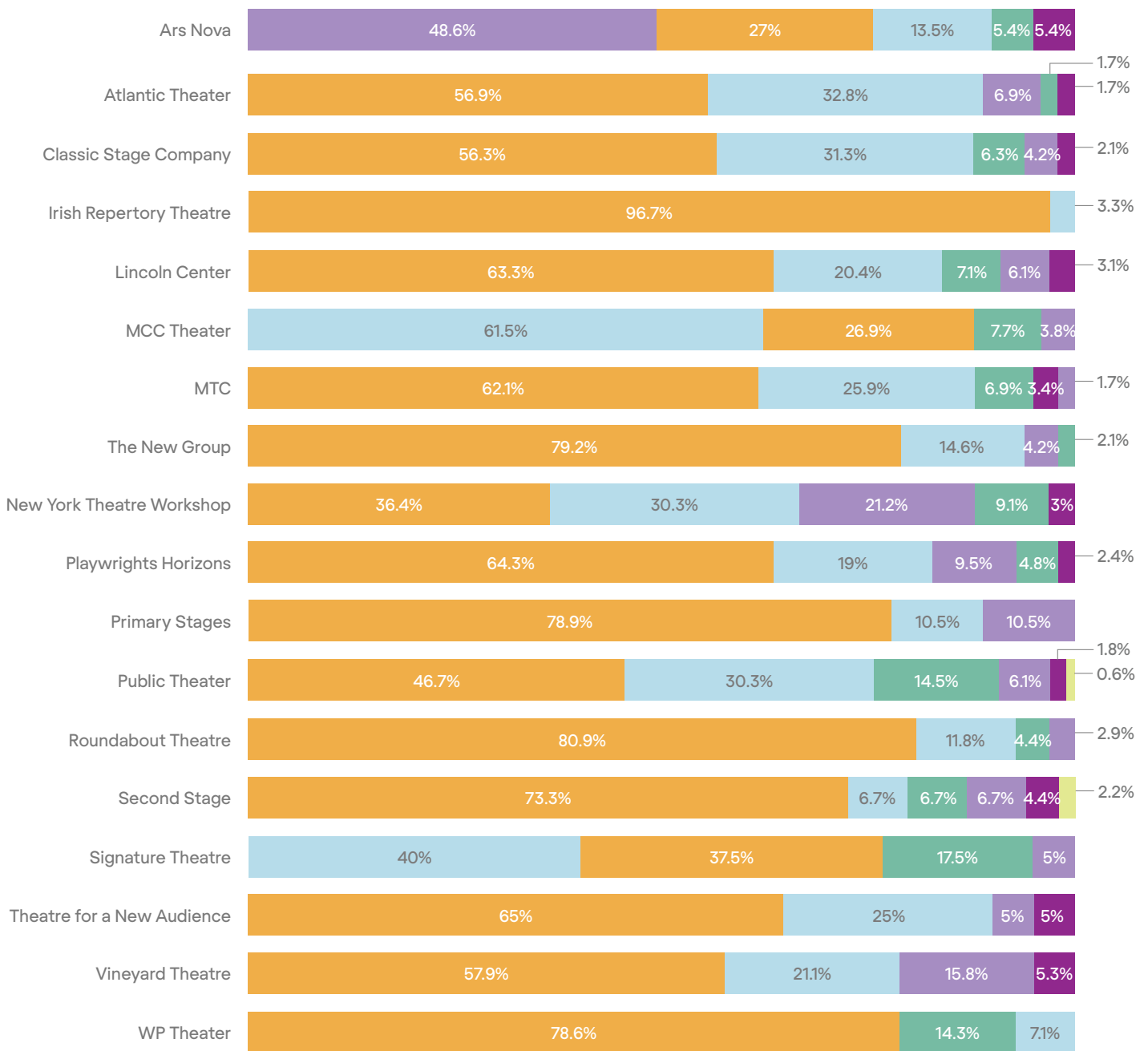
# Non-Profit Directors



Note:  
Each sound decibel (|) represents one director.

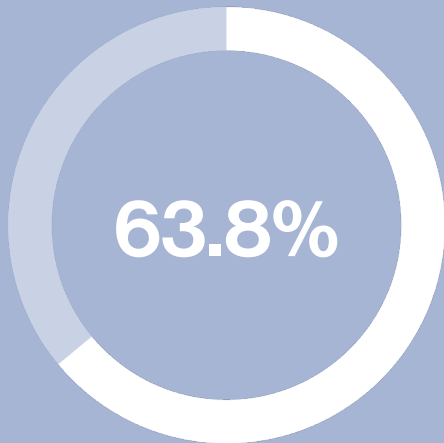
# Non-Profit Theatre Comparison

2017–2018 Season



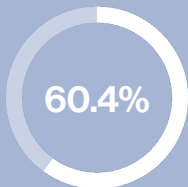
# Most Diverse Theatres

2017–2018 Season



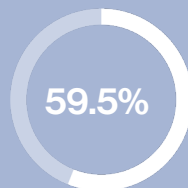
## 1. **Ars Nova**

30 out of 47 positions were BIPOC



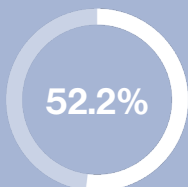
## 2. **Signature Theatre**

32 out of 53 positions were BIPOC



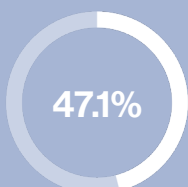
## 3. **MCC Theater**

22 out of 37 positions were BIPOC



## 4. **New York Theatre Workshop**

24 out of 46 positions were BIPOC

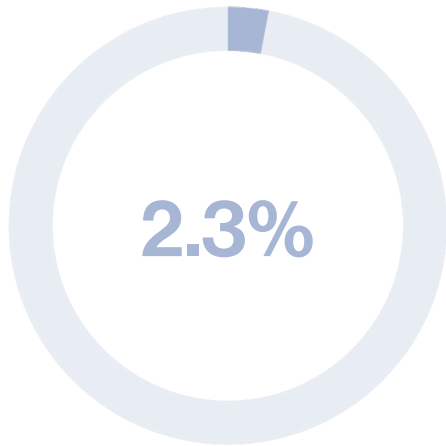


## 5. **The Public Theater**

97 out of 206 positions were BIPOC

# Least Diverse Theatres

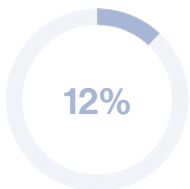
2017–2018 Season



2.3%

## 1. Irish Repertory

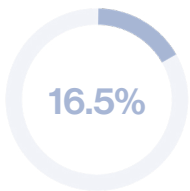
2 out of 87 positions were BIPOC



12%

## 2. WP Theater

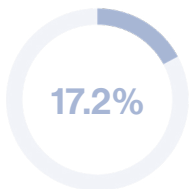
3 out of 25 positions were BIPOC



16.5%

## 3. Roundabout Theatre

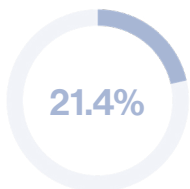
14 out of 85 positions were BIPOC



17.2%

## 4. The New Group

10 out of 58 positions were BIPOC



21.4%

## 5. Primary Stages

6 out of 28 positions were BIPOC

Note:  
Rankings are based on  
percentage of BIPOC  
actors, writers, directors  
and artistic directors.

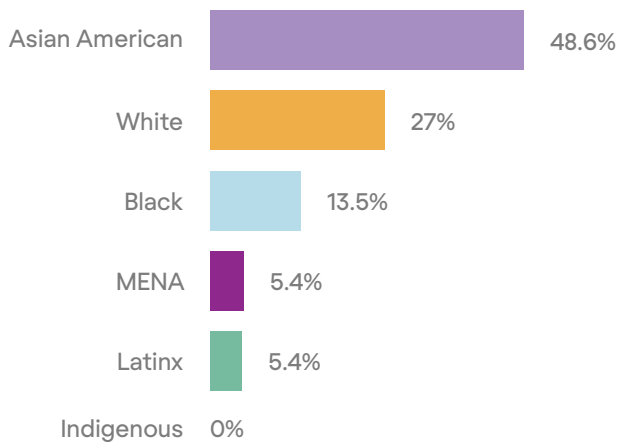
# Ars Nova



KPOP, a co-production with Woodshed Collective and Ma-Yi Theater Company, contributed 20% of all Asian American actor employment within the industry. This production singlehandedly boosted Ars Nova's percentage of BIPOC actors hired this season to 73% of all roles, a huge jump from 33% the season prior, and placed them at the very top of our Most Diverse list for the first time. THE LUCKY ONES had a MENA writer attached which gave them credit for producing 100% of their season with at least one BIPOC writer. 100% of the 2 directors hired this season were White, including the director of KPOP.

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 37



# \$0.37

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly minimums

# 73%

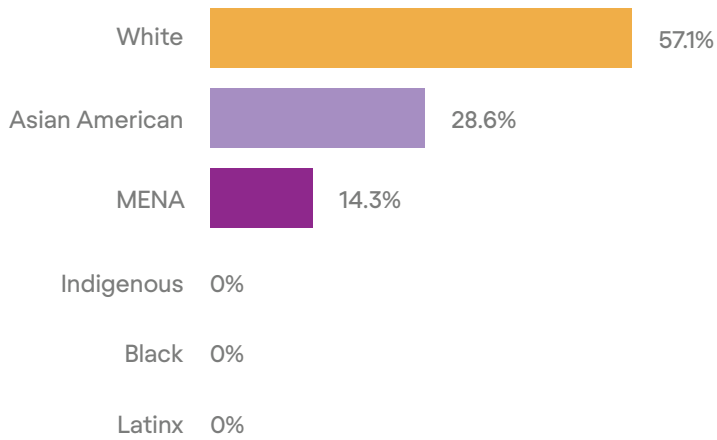
BIPOC actors



Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 7



**42.9%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 2



**0%**  
BIPOC directors

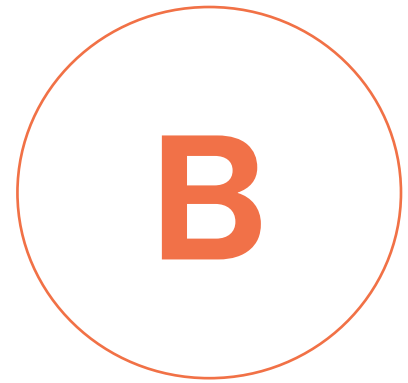
**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 1



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

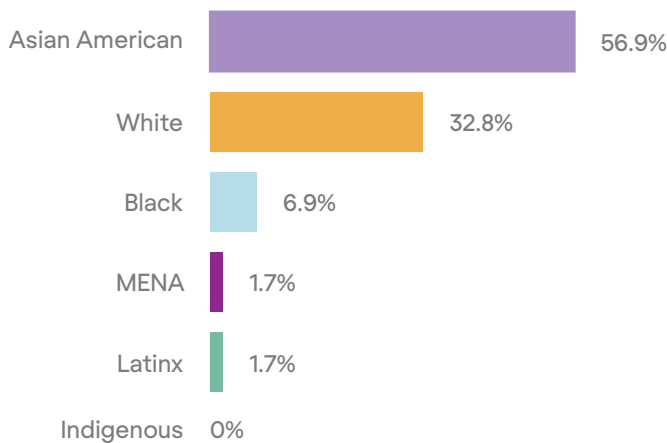
# Atlantic Theater Company



The Atlantic dedicated 50% of their season to shows written by a BIPOC writer. Out of the 6 directors hired, 2 were BIPOC. The only shows presented in their smaller Stage 2 space were ones about BIPOC cultures with majority BIPOC casts, creating some income inequality. The third show written by a BIPOC writer, DESCRIBE THE NIGHT, was a story about Russians. The production hired predominantly White actors and was presented on their mainstage. That said, there was evidence of Inclusive Casting throughout their season, including in this show. All told, the Atlantic hired 43% BIPOC actors, a significant drop from 54% last season, knocking them off the Most Diverse list.

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **58**



**\$1.46**

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

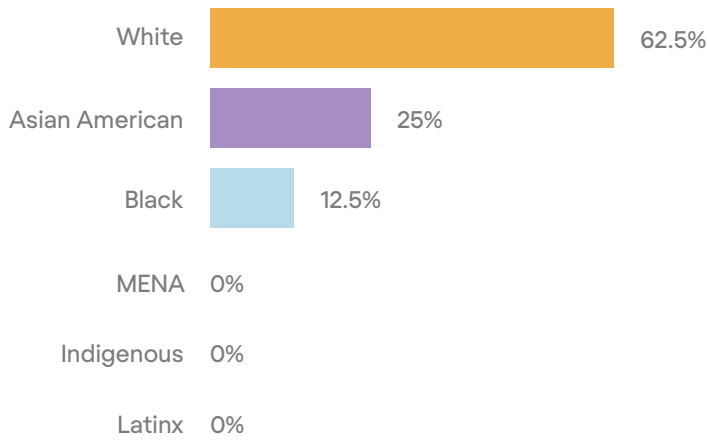
**43.1%**

BIPOC actors

Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

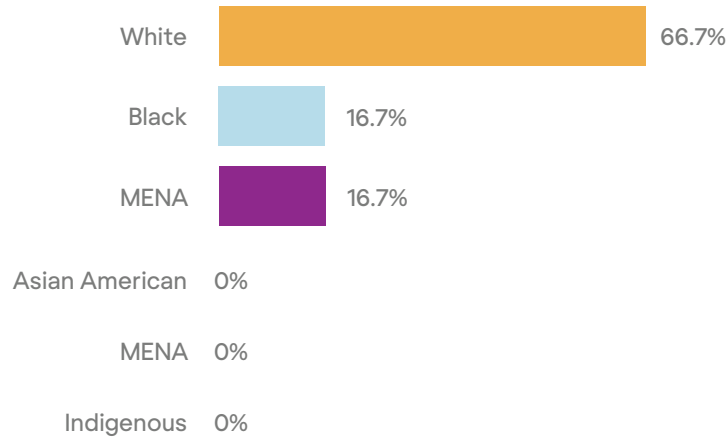
TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 8



**37.5%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 6



**33.3%**  
BIPOC directors

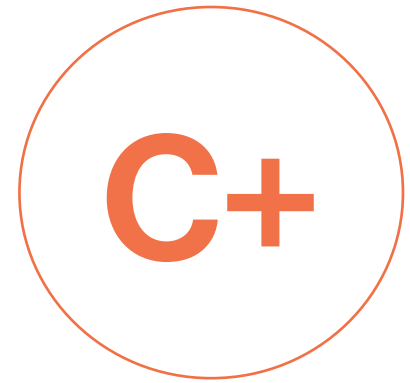
**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 1



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

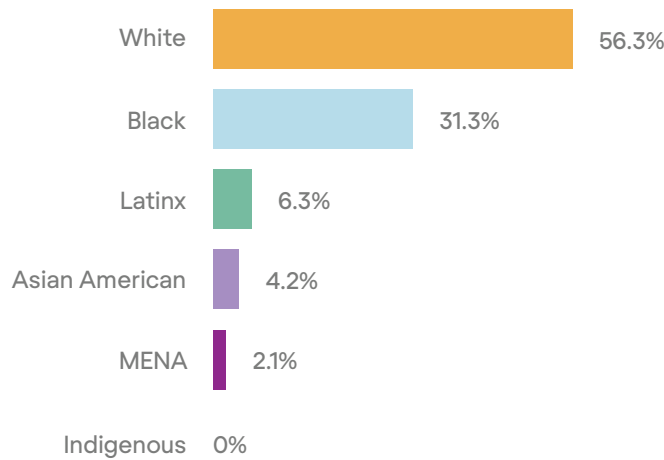
# Classic Stage Company



Scottish artistic director John Doyle began his inaugural tenure at CSC this year. His revival of Oscar Hammerstein II's CARMEN JONES, re-imagined with an all-Black cast, contributed heavily to a season that cast 43.8% of its roles with BIPOC actors, an uptick of 4 points from the season prior. Areas that needed improvement included scant representation from Latinx, Asian American, MENA or Indigenous actors, a season with no BIPOC writers at all and 100% White, male directors.

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 48



# \$1.29

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

# 43.8%

BIPOC actors

Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 6



**0%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 6



**0%**  
BIPOC directors

**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 1



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

# Irish Repertory Theatre

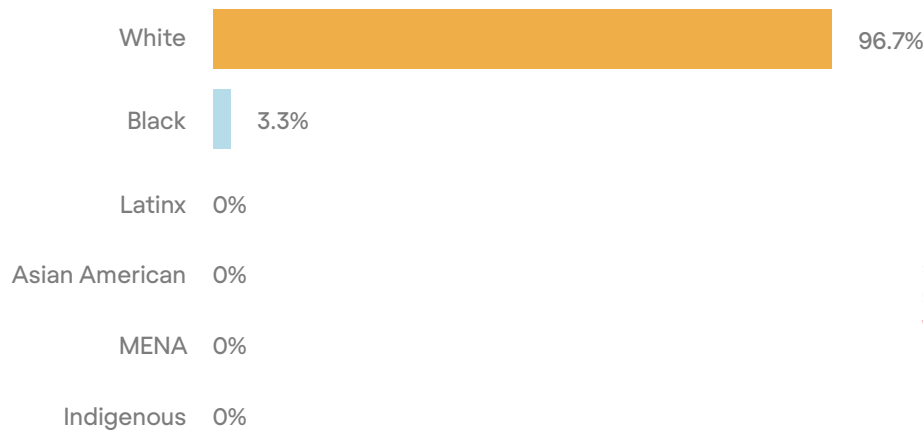


The Irish Rep is dedicated to the Irish American experience, and most of their productions are directed by their two co-founders, Charlotte Moore and Ciarán O' Reilly. In the past, they have managed to incorporate BIPOC actors, filling 20% of their roles with Black actors in the 2016-17 season. But with only 2 out of 87 roles going to BIPOC actors this year, they have landed on our Least Diverse list two years in a row, this time topping the list. Implementing more Inclusive Casting would be one way to increase BIPOC representation.

---

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **60**



**\$29.00**

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

**3.3%**

BIPOC actors

Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 16



**0%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 10



**0%**  
BIPOC directors

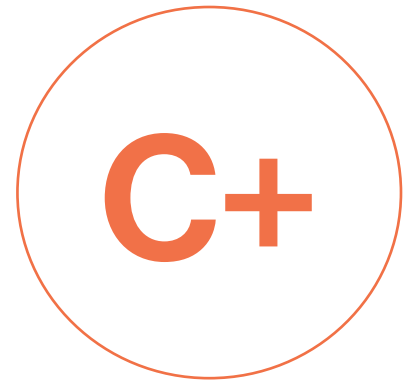
**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 1



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

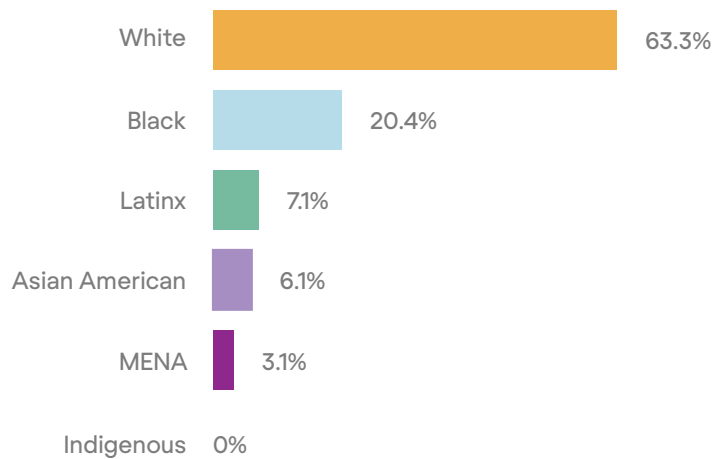
# Lincoln Center Theater



Lincoln Center Theater dedicated 3 out of 8, or 37.5%, productions this season to shows written by a BIPOC writer. However, the one BIPOC-written show produced on their Broadway stage, JUNK by Ayad Ayktar, had a predominantly white cast. Their most visible project this season, the revival of MY FAIR LADY by Lerner & Loewe, inclusively cast about 1/3 of its cast with BIPOC actors, though as a season, only 9.2% of roles were inclusively cast. All told, only 36.7% of their entire season was filled with BIPOC actors. This is a jump from their dismal showing a season prior where they only cast 19% BIPOC actors, but as one of the largest theatre companies in NYC with one of the largest budgets, we expect much more.

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 98



**\$2.29**

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

**36.7%**

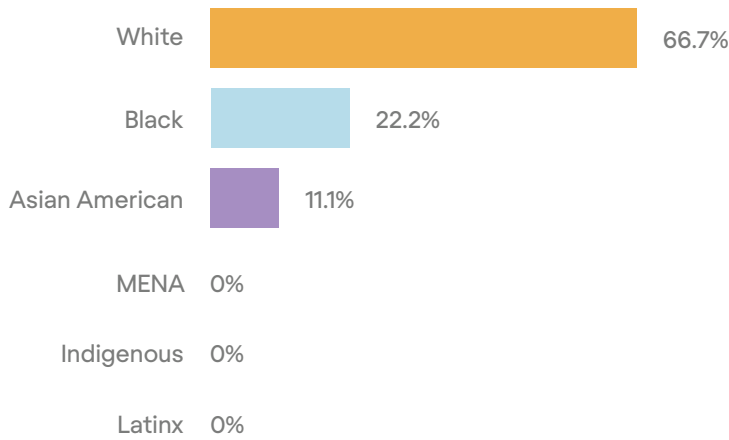
BIPOC actors



Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

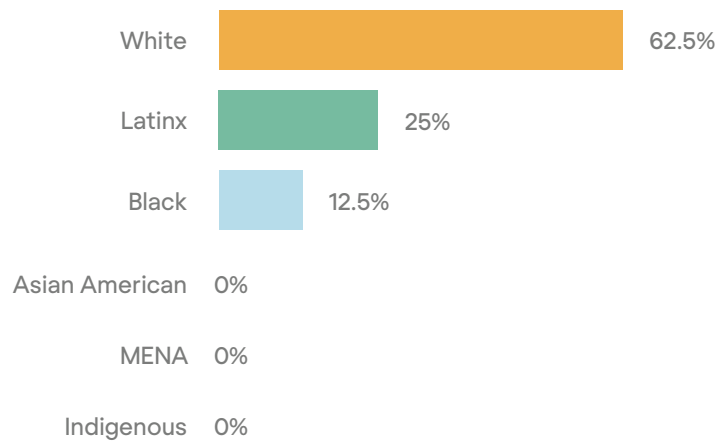
TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **9**



**33.3%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **8**



**37.5%**  
BIPOC directors

**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **2**



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

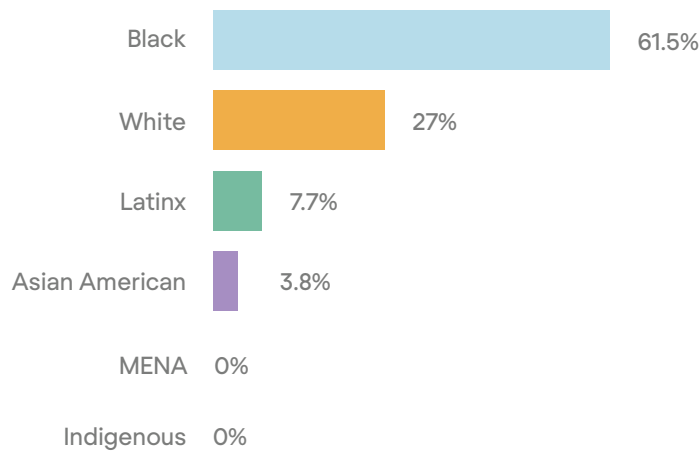
# MCC Theater



MCC Theater ranked third in our Most Diverse list this season. They dedicated 50% of their 4-show season to plays written by a BIPOC writer. While there was little use of Inclusive Casting, every single one of their shows had BIPOC characters. Due to their commitment this season to include BIPOC stories and characters, BIPOC actors filled 73.1% of their roles, a leap from just 17% the season prior. They only hired one BIPOC director even though more than one show was culturally specific, including one set in Africa directed by a White director, SCHOOL GIRLS, OR, THE AFRICAN MEAN GIRLS PLAY by Jocelyn Bioh.

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 26



# \$0.37

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

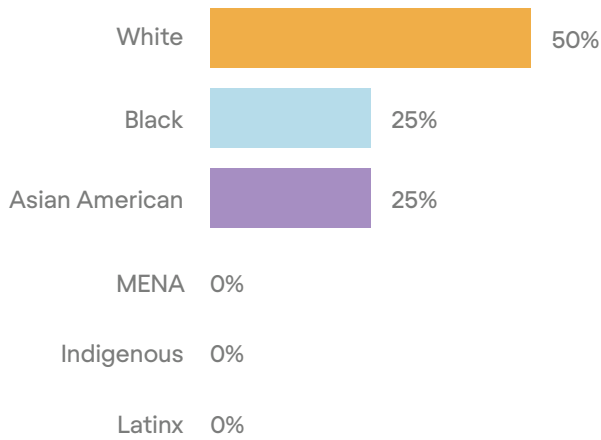
# 73.1%

BIPOC actors

Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

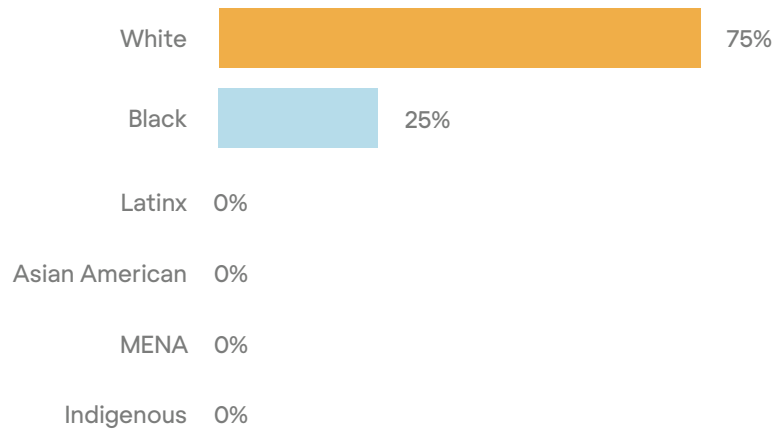
TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 4



**50%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 4



**25%**  
BIPOC directors

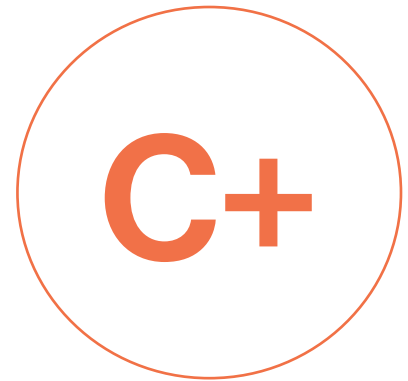
**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 3



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

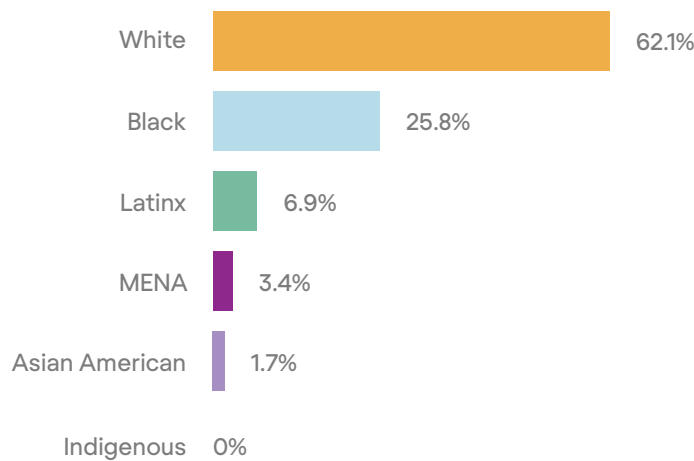
# Manhattan Theatre Club



MTC gave just 1 out of their 8 slots, or 12.5%, to SUGAR IN OUR WOUNDS, by BIPOC writer Donja R. Love, which they produced on their smallest stage. They hired two BIPOC directors, notably giving a BIPOC director the chance to direct a play written by a White writer, a rarity in the industry. Their Broadway revival of SAINT JOAN used Inclusive Casting for 42% of its roles, including for the title character, though there was very little use of Inclusive Casting for the rest of the season—only 24% of all roles were inclusively cast, in fact. All told, they only cast BIPOC actors for 37.9% of their roles, a steep drop from their previous season where they produced August Wilson’s JITNEY on Broadway and hired 56% BIPOC actors. This season was disappointing by comparison.

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 58



# \$1.69

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

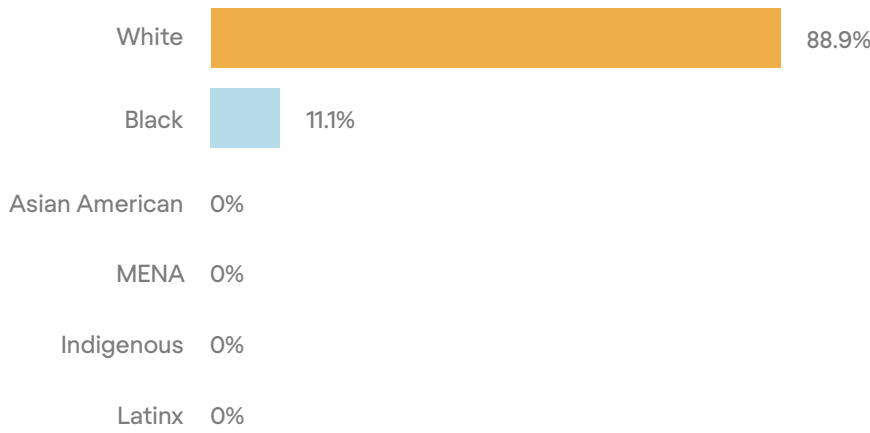
# 37.9%

BIPOC actors

Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

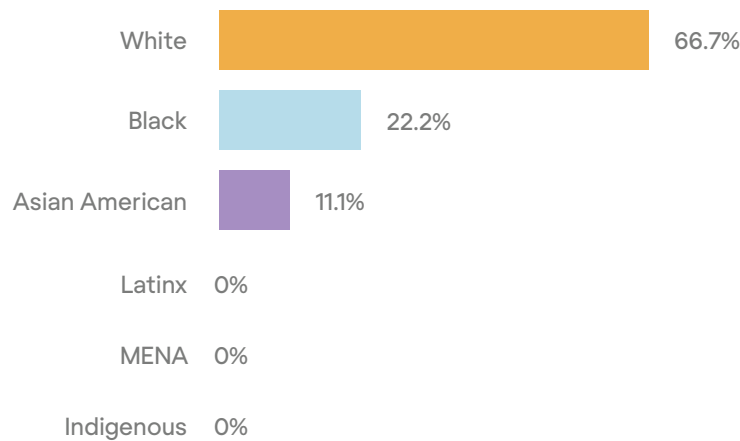
TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 9



**11.1%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 9



**33.3%**  
BIPOC directors

**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 1



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

# The New Group

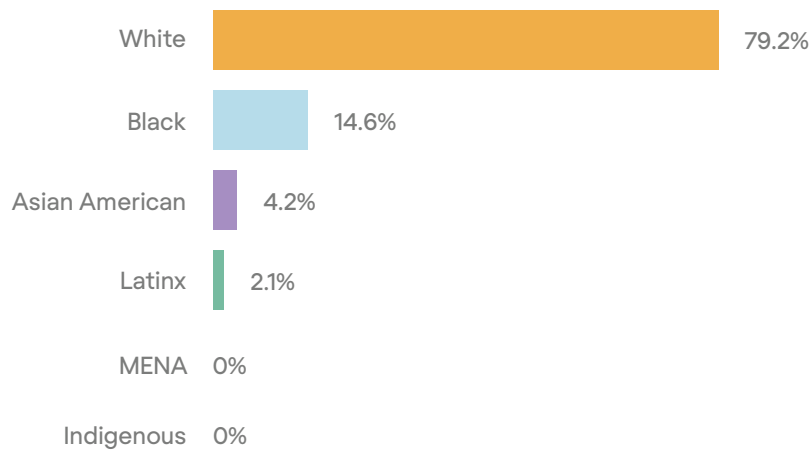


In the 2016-17 season, The New Group had an underwhelming showing with only 24% BIPOC actors. They are following that performance up this season with an even more dismal showing of only 20.8%. Add to that the fact that they hired no BIPOC writers or directors for the second year in a row, and a pattern begins to emerge: racial equity has not been a priority for this theatre company.

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## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 48



**\$3.80**

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

**20.8%**

BIPOC actors

Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **5**



**0%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **4**



**0%**  
BIPOC directors

**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **1**



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

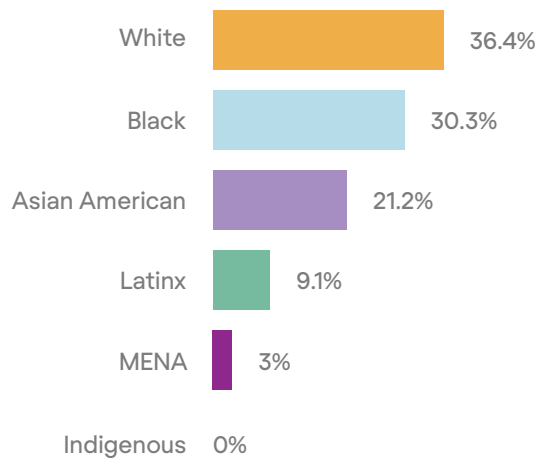
# New York Theatre Workshop



New York Theatre Workshop filled their season with 63.6% BIPOC actors, a concerted and deliberate leap forward, building upon last season's strong showing of 56%, putting them squarely on our Most Diverse list for the second year in a row. This season, they hired 100% women directors for the first time. While we applaud their commitment to gender equality, our hope is that racial considerations will be given the same focus for future writers and directors. This season, 2 out of 5 productions had a BIPOC writer and only one had a BIPOC director. AN ORDINARY MUSLIM by Hammaad Chaudry (making his professional debut), about Pakistani British experience, had a White director.

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 33



**\$0.57**

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

**63.6%**

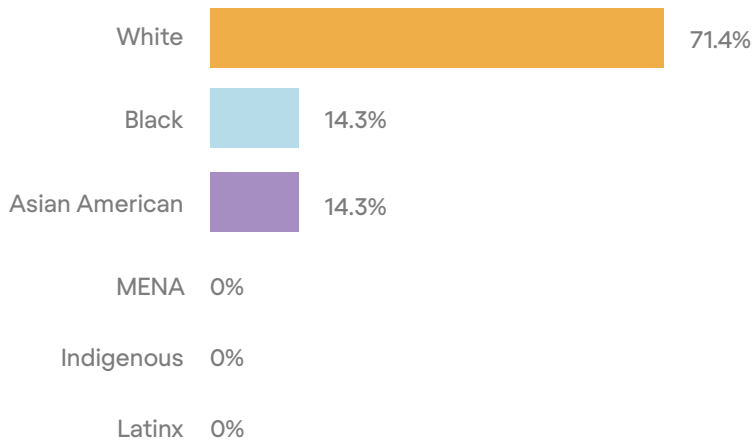
BIPOC actors



Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

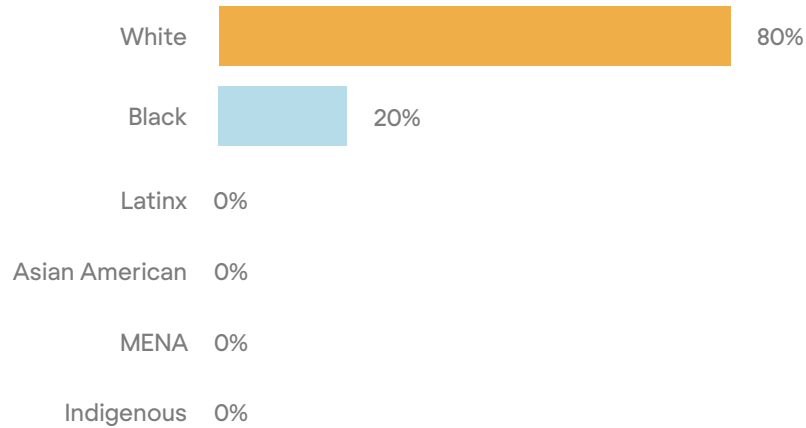
TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 7



**28.6%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 5



**20%**  
BIPOC directors

**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 1



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

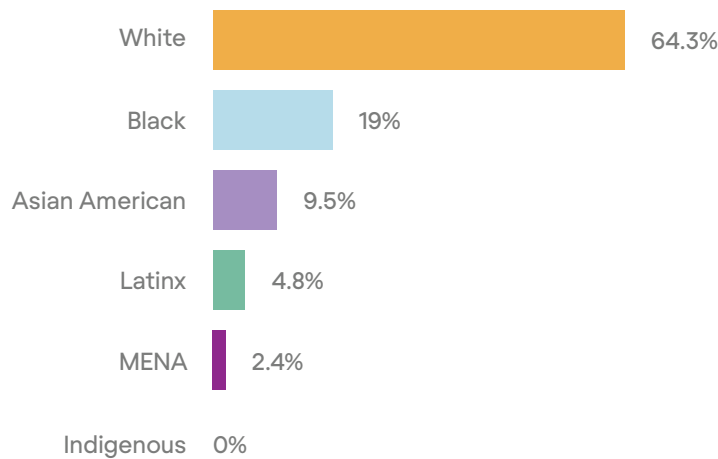
# Playwrights Horizons



Playwrights Horizons went into free fall this season, tumbling down to 35.7% BIPOC actors, a huge 22-point drop from their 2016-17 season (58%), but in line with their numbers from the 2015-16 season (34%). There was evidence of at least some Inclusive Casting for every single show save one about a White family, but not enough to make up the difference (31% of roles were inclusively cast). Only 1 out of their 7 offerings this year was written by a BIPOC writer—MANKIND by Robert O’Hara. In a season where 5 out of the 7 shows were written by women and one show centered around a transgender story, racial equity was not as much of a priority as gender inclusion for this theatre company.

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 42



# \$1.81

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

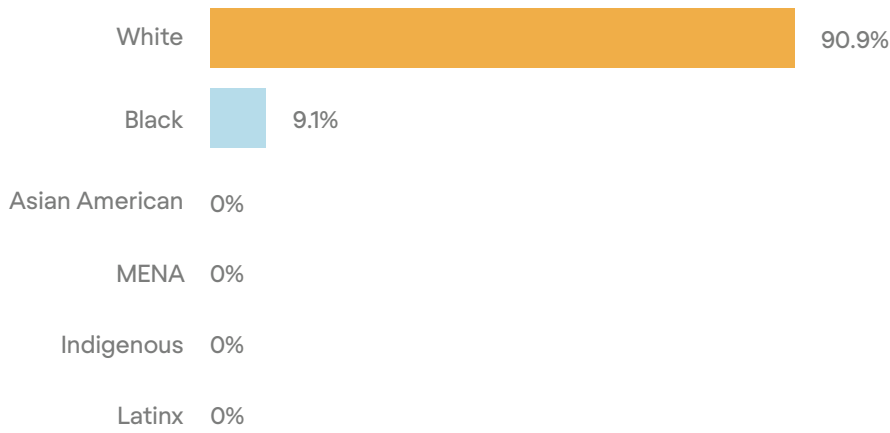
# 35.7%

BIPOC actors

Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

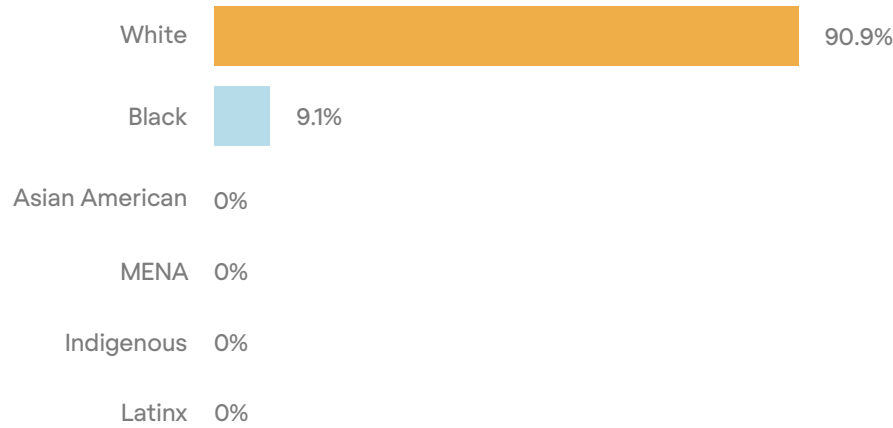
TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 11



**9.1%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 11



**9.1%**  
BIPOC directors

**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 1



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

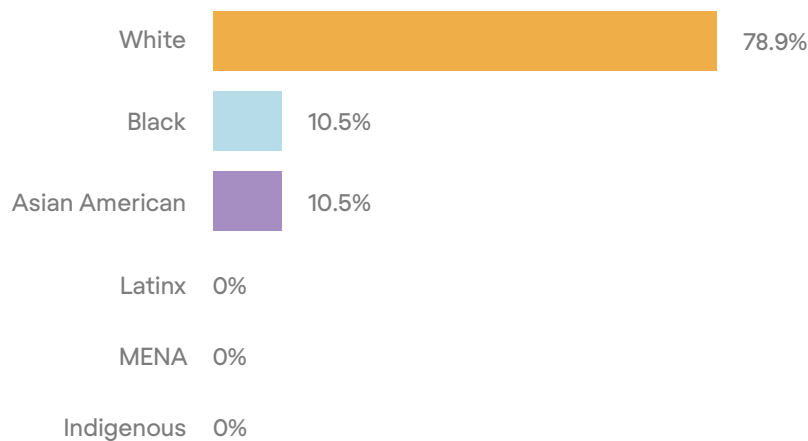
# Primary Stages



Primary Stages cast only 21.1% of all roles with BIPOC actors, up from even worse 15% the season prior. One show in their season, *THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THOMAS JEFFERSON, CHARLES DICKENS AND COUNT LEO TOLSTOY: DISCORD* by Scott Carter, cast 2 out of 3 roles with BIPOC actors playing well-known, White historical characters. Unfortunately, the rest of their season did not show as much innovation—only 16% of all roles were inclusively cast the whole season. They allocated only 1 of their 4 slots to a BIPOC writer and 100% of directors were White. Despite having made our Most Diverse list in prior years, these recent decisions have landed Primary Stages on our Least Diverse list two years in a row.

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 19



**\$3.75**

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

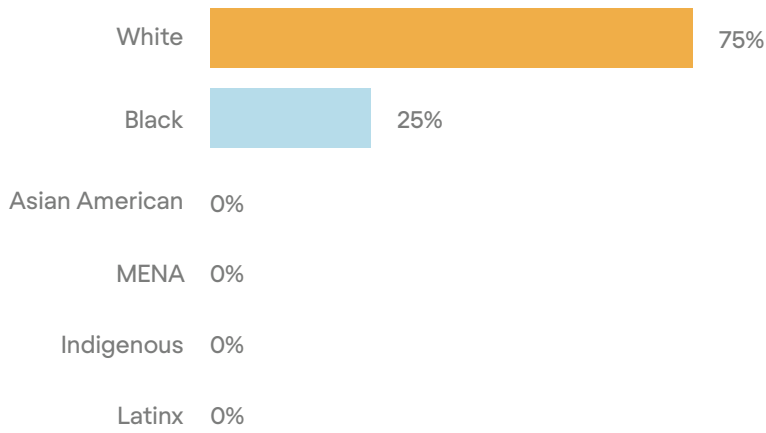
**21.1%**

BIPOC actors

Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 4



**25%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 4



**0%**  
BIPOC directors

**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 1



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

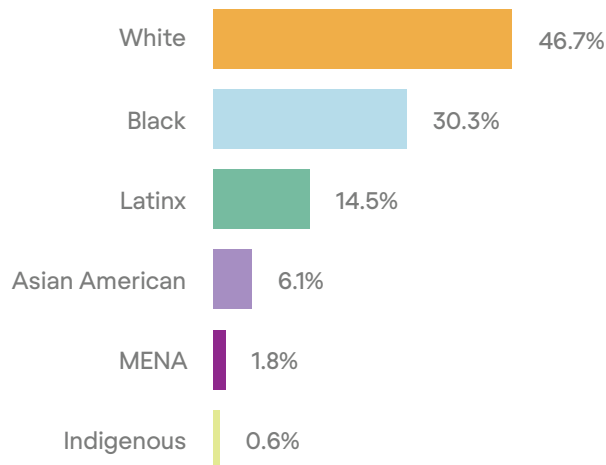
# The Public Theater



The Public Theater cast 53.6% of its roles with BIPOC actors, a jump from 42% the season prior. They have consistently landed on our Most Diverse list and are in the 5th spot this season. They dedicated 5 out of 17 production slots to a show written by at least one BIPOC writer, representing Black, Asian American and Latinx voices, and showed a continuing commitment to Inclusive Casting with 39% of all roles cast without regard to race, the second highest in our survey. No other theatre company hired as many Black or Latinx actors, however, Asian American actor representation remained consistently low. Their biggest blindspots came in the employment of directors. A whopping 14 out of 18 (78%) directors were White—3 of the 5 shows written by a BIPOC writer had White directors. There were only 2 instances where a BIPOC director had the opportunity to direct a play written by a White playwright, and in both cases, that playwright was William Shakespeare.

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **168**



**\$0.90**

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

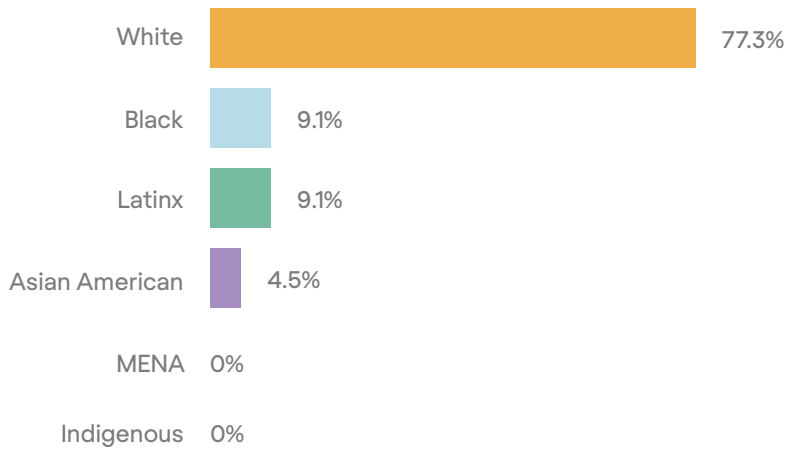
**53.6%**

BIPOC actors

Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

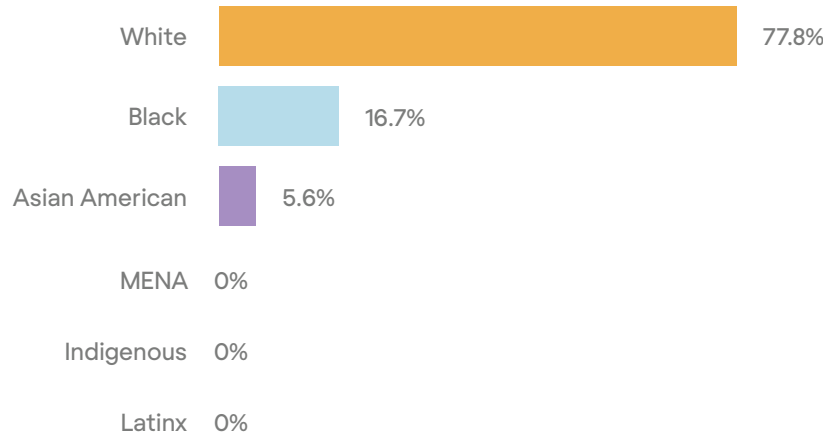
TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **22**



**22.7%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **18**



**22.2%**  
BIPOC directors

**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **1**



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

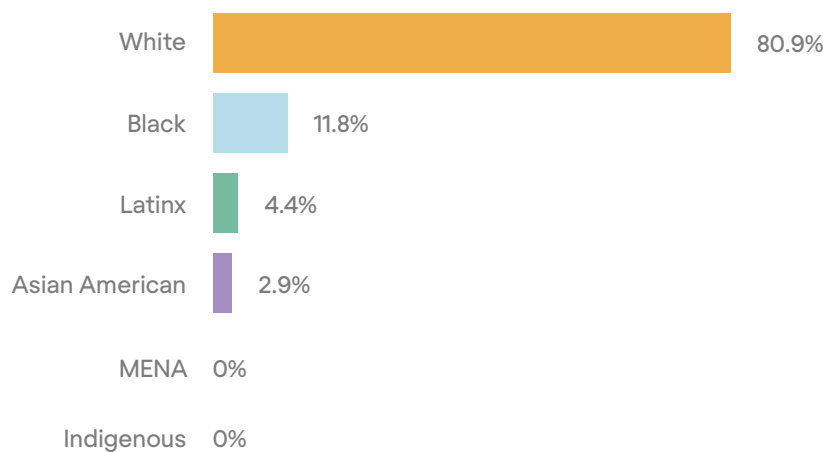
# Roundabout Theatre



The Roundabout Theatre Company has been one of the most consistent offenders in the 12 years of our survey and this year, they again land on the Least Diverse list after employing only 19.1% BIPOC actors. Evidence of Inclusive Casting was practically non-existent (7%). They dedicated just 1 of their 8 shows to a story written by a BIPOC writer— TOO HEAVY FOR YOUR POCKET by Jiréh Breon Holder. Even worse, they produced this show on their smallest stage and, compounded with the almost exclusive casting of White actors on their Broadway stages, had the highest racial income inequality of any company with multiple stages (see Spotlight p. 29). 100% of their directors hired were White. As the city’s largest theatre company receiving a disproportionate amount of public funding and foundational grants, we find this unacceptable.

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 68



**\$6.09**

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

**19.1%**

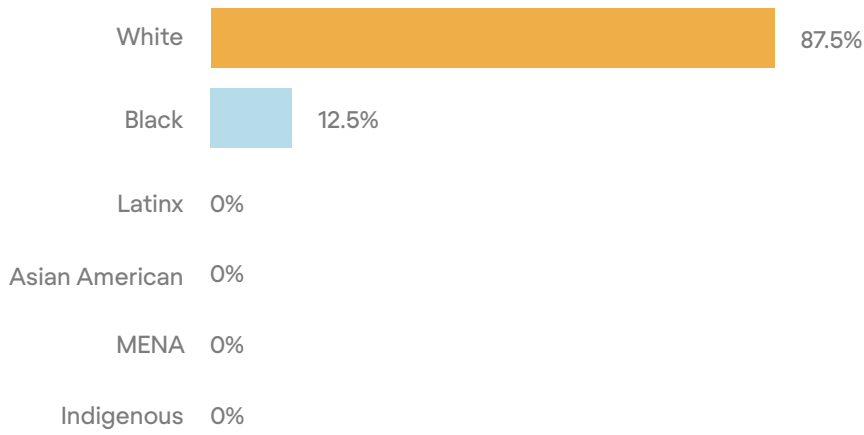
BIPOC actors



Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 8



**12.5%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 8



**0%**  
BIPOC directors

**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 1



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

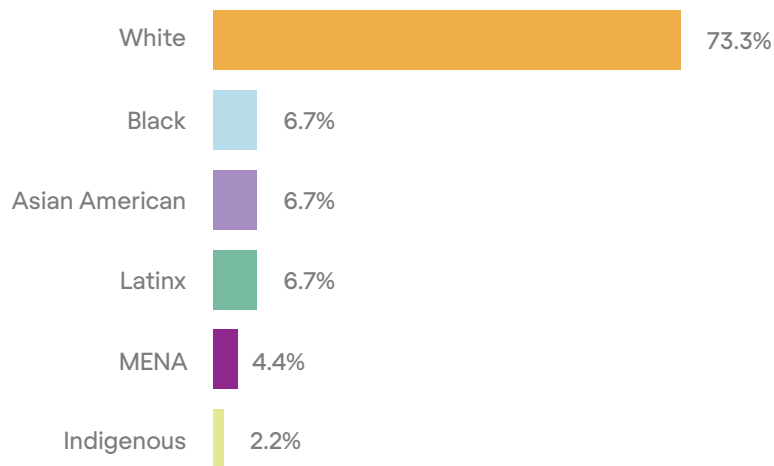
# Second Stage Theater



Second Stage began its inaugural season as a Broadway producer by adding a total of only 4 roles for BIPOC actors on Broadway. Of the two Broadway shows, STRAIGHT WHITE MEN by Young Jean Lee was the first time an Asian American woman playwright was produced on Broadway, though the story was entirely focused on White men. It should be noted that this play did give employment to an Indigenous actor, a rarity on Broadway, but in a non-speaking role that was situated outside of the story. Including their Off-Broadway space, they employed only 27% BIPOC actors, an alarming drop from 40% the season before, knocking them off our Most Diverse list. 100% of their directors were White.

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 45



# \$2.75

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

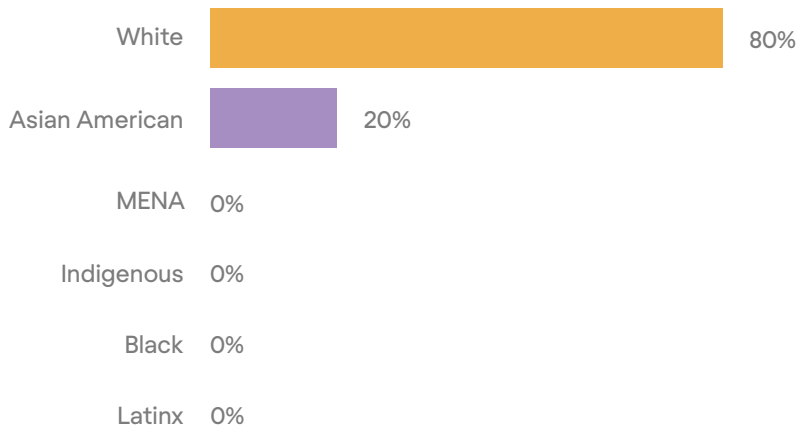
# 26.7%

BIPOC actors

Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

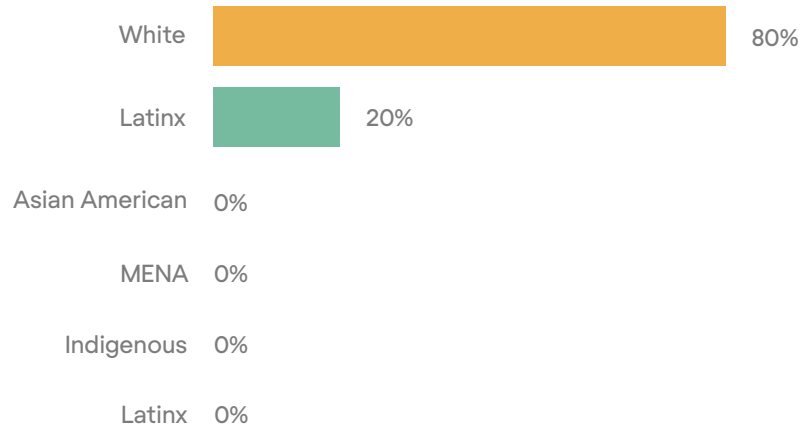
TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 5



**20%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 5



**20%**  
BIPOC directors

**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 1



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

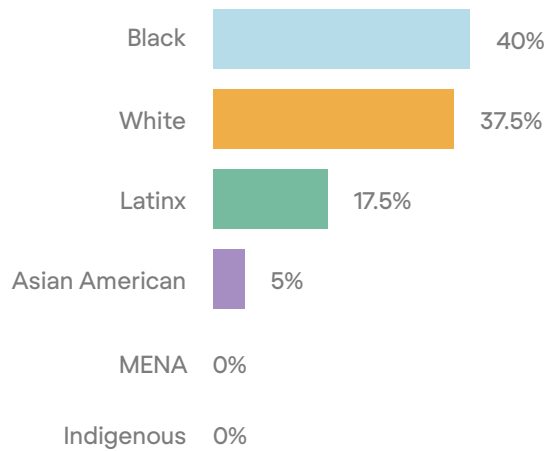
# Signature Theatre



Signature Theatre frequently makes our Most Diverse list and this year, lands in the number 2 spot. They dedicated 5 of their 6 productions to plays written by BIPOC writers in a celebration of the oeuvres of Suzan Lori-Parks, Dominique Morisseau, Stephen Adley Guirgis and Edward Albee. As a result, they hired over 62% BIPOC actors to fill their stages, although White directors dominated 2 to 1. As three of the plays written by BIPOC writers this season were paired with White directors, our hope is for more diversity among directors in future productions.

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 40



**\$0.66**

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

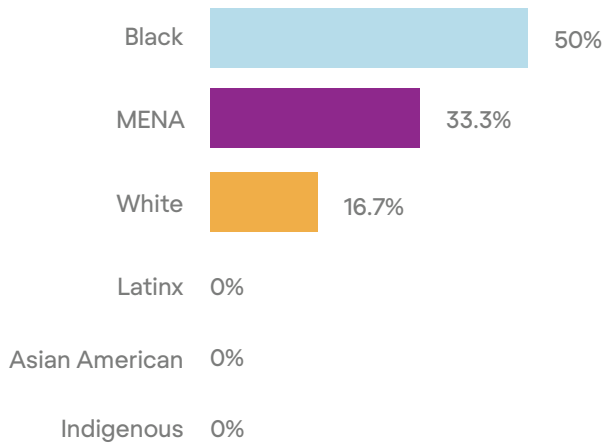
**62.5%**

BIPOC actors

Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

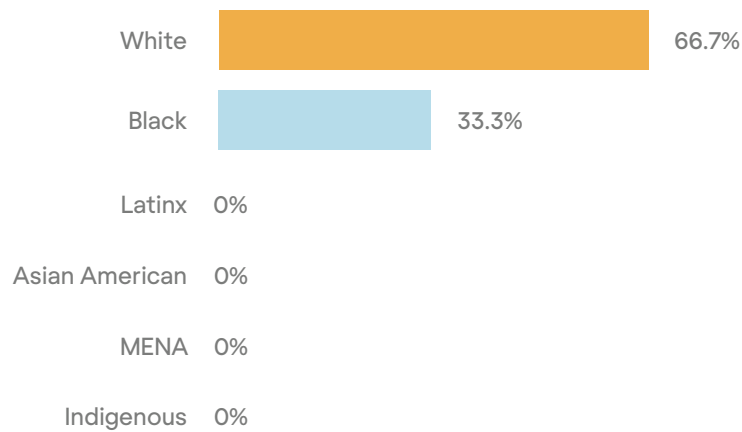
TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **6**



**83.3%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **6**



**33.3%**  
BIPOC directors

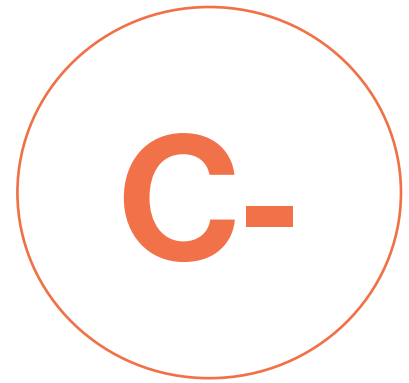
**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **1**



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

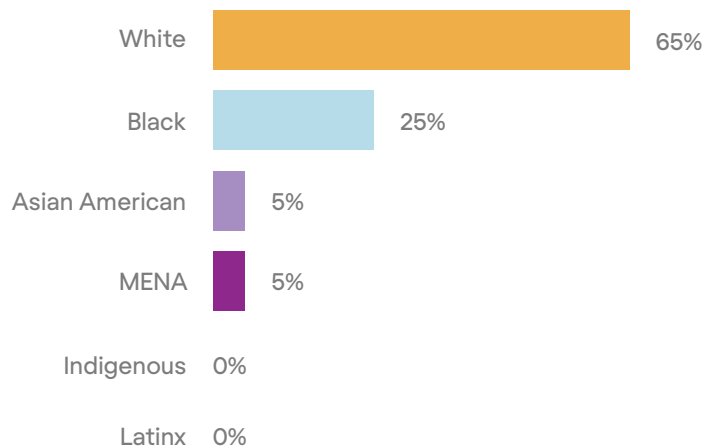
# Theatre for a New Audience



It is noteworthy that Theatre for a New Audience took the initiative of dedicating one of their productions this season to a work written by a BIPOC writer, HE BROUGHT HER HEART BACK IN A BOX by Adrienne Kennedy, which is rare for a company dedicated to Shakespeare and the classics. They hired 35% BIPOC actors for their season, in line with last year's 38%. 30% of roles were inclusively cast this season, which could be improved—their production of THE WINTER'S TALE, for instance, inclusively cast only 6 of the 16 roles. 100% of their directors were White.

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 20



# \$1.86

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

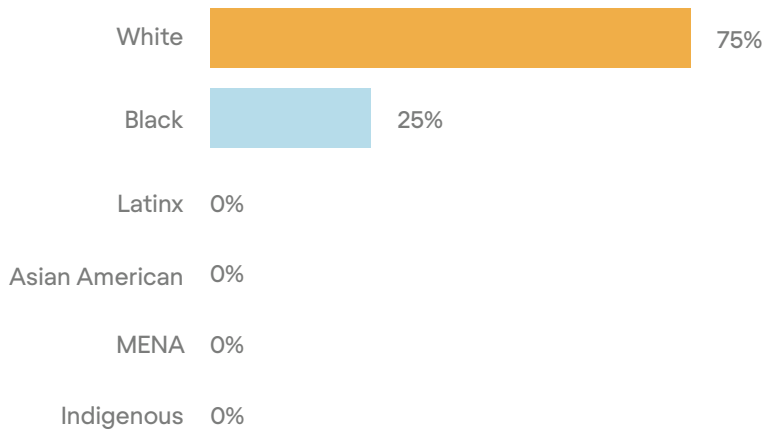
# 35%

BIPOC actors

Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 4



**25%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 4



**0%**  
BIPOC directors

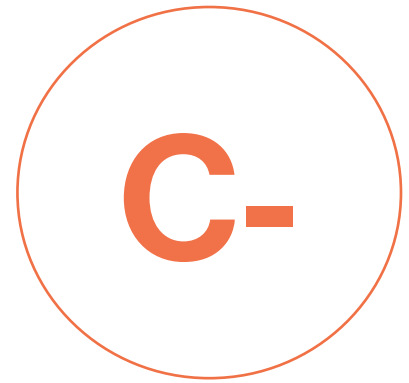
**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 1



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

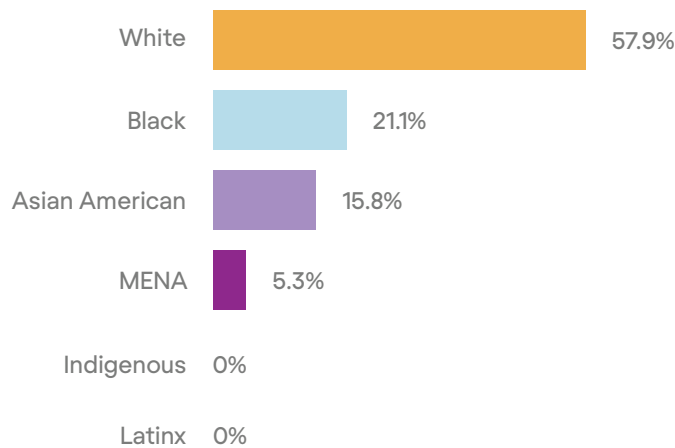
# Vineyard Theatre



The Vineyard Theatre presented a season of shows written 100% by White writers which has become a pattern for them—last season was also comprised of 0% BIPOC writers. This season, 42.1% of their roles were filled with BIPOC actors, a huge jump from the previous season when they only hired 5% and topped our Least Diverse list. It should be noted that 100% of the BIPOC actors this season were employed as a result of Inclusive Casting, the highest percentage of Inclusive Casting for any theatre company in the survey. Still, there is much room for progress in the employment of BIPOC artists. In addition to all White writers, 100% of the directors this season were also White.

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 19



# \$1.38

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

# 42.1%

BIPOC actors



Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **4**



**0%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **3**



**0%**  
BIPOC directors

**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: **2**



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

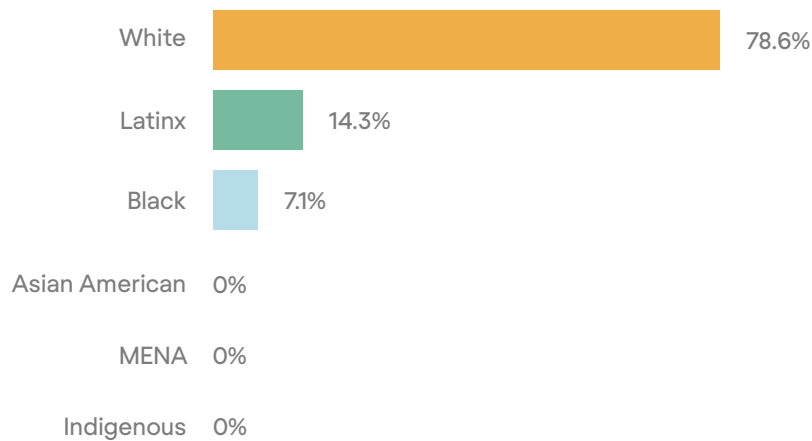
# WP Theater



WP Theater lived up to its mission of promoting the work of women by curating a season almost entirely written and helmed by women (one piece, ONE NIGHT ONLY, had a male co-collaborator). What they didn't do as well was recognize the intersectionality and primacy of stories by and about women of color. For the second year in a row—the only two years this theatre company has been included in this survey—WP produced 100% works by White writers directed by 100% White directors. Not surprisingly, the percentage of BIPOC actors working at their theater this season was small, 21.4%, smaller than their previous season (36%) and landed them on our Least Diverse list.

## ACTORS

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 14



**\$3.67**

spent on White actors for every \$1 spent on BIPOC actors, based on weekly salary minimums

**21.4%**

BIPOC actors

Non-Profits

**WRITERS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 5



**0%**  
BIPOC writers

**DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 5



**0%**  
BIPOC directors

**LEADERSHIP: ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

TOTAL AVAILABLE POSITIONS: 1



**0%**  
BIPOC leadership

# Non-Profit Productions by Theatre

2017–2018 Season

## **Ars Nova**

KPOP

Conceived by Woodshed Collective & Jason Kim; book by Jason Kim; music & lyrics by Helen Park & Max Vernon; directed by Teddy Bergman

THE LUCKY ONES by Sarah Gancher (author), Abigail Nessen Bengson (as The Bengsons, author, composer, lyricist), Shaun Bengson (as The Bengsons, author, composer, lyricist); directed by Anne Kauffman

## **Atlantic Theater Company**

ON THE SHORE OF THE WIDE WORLD by Simon Stephens; directed by Neil Pepe

DESCRIBE THE NIGHT by Rajiv Joseph; directed by Giovanna Sardelli

THE HOMECOMING QUEEN by Ngozi Anyanwu; directed by Awoye Timpo

HANGMEN by Martin McDonagh; directed by Matthew Dunster

THE GREAT LEAP by Lauren Yee; directed by Taibi Magar

THIS AIN'T NO DISCO music and lyrics by Stephen Trask and Peter Yanowitz; book by Stephen Trask, Peter Yanowitz and Rick Elice; directed by Darko Tresnjak

## **Classic Stage Company**

AS YOU LIKE IT by William Shakespeare; directed by John Doyle

Fiasco's TWELFTH NIGHT by William Shakespeare; directed by Noah Brody and Ben Steinfeld

FIRE AND AIR by Terrence McNally; directed by John Doyle

SUMMER AND SMOKE by Tennessee Williams; directed by Jack Cummings III

CARMEN JONES by Georges Bizet and Oscar Hammerstein II; directed by John Doyle

## **Irish Repertory Theatre**

THE HOME PLACE by Brian Friel; directed by Charlotte Moore

## Non-Profits

### **Irish Repertory Theatre (Continued from previous page)**

OFF THE METER, ON THE RECORD by John McDonagh; directed by Ciarán O'Reilly

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE by Anthony Palermo; directed by Charlotte Moore

THE DEAD, 1904 by James Joyce; adapted by Paul Muldoon and Jean Hanff Korelitz; directed by Ciarán O'Reilly

JIMMY TITANIC by Bernard McMullan; directed by Carmel O'Reilly

DISCO PIGS by Enda Walsh; directed by John Haidar

THREE SMALL IRISH MASTERPIECES by WB Yeats, Lady Gregory, and John Millington Synge; directed by Charlotte Moore

THE SEAFARER by Conor McPherson; directed by Ciarán O'Reilly

WOMAN AND SCARECROW by Marina Carr; directed by Ciarán O'Reilly

ON A CLEAR DAY YOU CAN SEE FOREVER music by Burton Lane; book and lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner; adapted and directed by Charlotte Moore

### **Lincoln Center Theater**

\*JUNK by Ayad Akhtar; directed by Doug Hughes

\*MY FAIR LADY book and lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner; music by Frederick Loewe; directed by Bartlett Sher

PIPELINE by Dominique Morriseau; directed by Lileana Blain-Cruz

THE WOLVES by Sarah DeLappe; directed by Lila Neugebauer

ADMISSIONS by Joshua Harmon; directed by Daniel Aukin

AFTER THE BLAST by Zoe Kazan; directed by Lila Neugebauer

QUEENS by Martyna Marjok; directed by Danya Taymor

PASS OVER by Antoinette Nwandu; directed by Danya Taymor

### **MCC Theater**

CHARM by Philip Dawkins; directed by Will Davis

SCHOOL GIRLS; OR, THE AFRICAN MEAN GIRLS PLAY by Jocelyn Bioh; directed by Rebecca Taichman

RELEVANCE by JC Lee; directed by Liesl Tommy

TRANSFERS by Lucy Thurber; directed by Jackson Gay

### **Manhattan Theatre Club**

\*PRINCE OF BROADWAY book by David Thompson; new songs by Jason Robert Brown; co-directed by Hal Prince and Susan Stroman

ACTUALLY by Anna Ziegler; directed by Lileana Blain-Cruz

### **Manhattan Theatre Club (Continued from previous page)**

THE PORTUGUESE KID written and directed by John Patrick Shanley

\*THE CHILDREN by Lucy Kirkwood; directed by James Macdonald

\*SAINT JOAN by Bernard Shaw; directed by Daniel Sullivan

IN THE BODY OF THE WORLD written and performed by Eve Ensler; directed by Diane Paulus

DAN CODY'S YACHT by Anthony Giardina; directed by Doug Hughes

SUGAR IN OUR WOUNDS by Donja R. Love; directed by Saheem Ali

### **The New Group**

DOWNTOWN RACE RIOT by Seth Zvi Rosenfeld; directed by Scott Elliot

JERRY SPRINGER THE OPERA music and lyrics by Richard Thomas; book and additional lyrics by Stewart Thomas and Richard Thomas; directed by John Rando

GOOD FOR OTTO by David Rabe; directed by Scott Elliot

PEACE FOR MARY FRANCES by Lily Thorne; directed by Lila Neugebauer

### **New York Theatre Workshop**

MARY JANE by Amy Herzog; directed by Anne Kauffman

HUNDRED DAYS by The Bengsons and Sarah Gancher; directed by Anne Kauffman

AN ORDINARY MUSLIM by Hammaad Chaudry; directed by Jo Bonney

LIGHT SHINING IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE by Caryl Churchill; directed by Rachel Chavkin

THE HOUSE THAT WILL NOT STAND by Marcus Gardley; directed by Lileana Blain-Cruz

### **Playwrights Horizons**

LOG CABIN by Jordan Harrison; directed by Pam MacKinnon

DANCE NATION by Clare Barron; directed by Lee Sunday Evans

THIS FLAT EARTH by Lindsey Ferrentino; directed by Rebecca Taichman

MILES FOR MARY created by The Mad Ones in collaboration with Amy Staats and Stacey Yen; directed by Lila Neugebauer

MANKIND written and directed by Robert O'Hara

THE TREASURER by Max Posner; directed by David Cromer

FOR PETER PAN ON HER 70th BIRTHDAY by Sarah Ruhl; directed by Les Waters

### **Primary Stages**

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THOMAS JEFFERSON, CHARLES DICKENS AND COUNT LEO TOLSTOY: DISCORD by Scott Carter; directed by Kimberly Senior

## Non-Profits

### Primary Stages (Continued from previous page)

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE by Kate Hamill; directed by Amanda Dehnert

A WALK WITH MR HEIFETZ by James Inverne; directed by Andrew Leynse

FEEDING THE DRAGON by Sharon Washington; directed by Maria Mileaf

### The Public Theater

JULIUS CAESAR by William Shakespeare; directed by Oskar Eustis

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM by William Shakespeare; directed by Lear deBessonet

HAMLET by William Shakespeare; directed by Sam Gold

MEASURE FOR MEASURE by William Shakespeare; directed by John Collins

TINY BEAUTIFUL THINGS based on the book by Cheryl Strayed; adapted by Nia Vardalos; co-conceived by Marshall Heyman, Thomas Kail, and Nia Vardalos; directed by Thomas Kail

OEDIPUS EL REY by Luis Alfaro; directed by Chay Yew

ILLYRIA written and directed by Richard Nelson

OFFICE HOUR by Julia Cho; directed by Neel Keller

Mobile Unit: THE WINTER'S TALE by William Shakespeare; directed by Lee Sunday Evans

KINGS by Sarah Burgess; directed by Thomas Kail

THE LOW ROAD by Bruce Norris; directed by Michael Greif

MISS YOU LIKE HELL by Quiara Alegría Hudes (author, lyricist) and Erin McKeown (composer, lyricist); directed by Lear deBessonet

MLIMA'S TALE by Lynn Nottage; directed by Jo Bonney

Mobile Unit: HENRY V by William Shakespeare; directed by Robert O'Hara

FIRE IN DREAMLAND by Rinne Groff; directed by Marissa Wolf

OTHELLO by William Shakespeare; directed by Ruben Santiago-Hudson

Public Works presents TWELFTH NIGHT: A Musical Adaptation of William Shakespeare's TWELFTH NIGHT conceived by Kwame Kwei-Armah and Shaina Taub; directed by Kwame Kwei-Armah and Oskar Eustis; music and lyrics by Shaina Taub

*Note: Two seasons of Shakespeare in the Park were included in the data this year to account for a methodology change in season determinations for non-profit theaters. See Methodology.*

### Roundabout Theatre

\*TIME AND THE CONWAYS by J.B. Priestley; directed by Rebecca Taichman

\*JOHN LITHGOW: STORIES BY HEART by John Lithgow; directed by Daniel Sullivan

\*TRAVESTIES by Tom Stoppard; directed by Patrick Marber

THE LAST MATCH by Anna Ziegler; directed by Gaye Taylor Upchurch

AMY AND THE ORPHANS by Lindsey Ferrentino; directed by Scott Ellis

## Non-Profits

### **Roundabout Theatre (Continued from previous page)**

SKINTIGHT by Joshua Harmon; directed by Daniel Aukin

TOO HEAVY FOR YOUR POCKET by Jiréh Breon Holder; directed by Margot Bordelon

BOBBIE CLEARLY by Alex Lubischer; directed by Will Davis

### **Second Stage Theater**

\*LOBBY HERO by Kenneth Lonergan; directed by Trip Cullman

TORCH SONG by Harvey Fierstein; directed by Moisés Kaufman

CARDINAL by Greg Pierce; directed by Kate Whoriskey

MARY PAGE MARLOWE by Tracy Letts; directed by Lila Neugebauer

STRAIGHT WHITE MEN by Young Jean Lee; directed by Anna D. Shapiro

### **Signature Theatre**

THE RED LETTER PLAYS: FUCKING A by Suzan Lori-Parks; directed by Jo Bonney

THE RED LETTER PLAYS: IN THE BLOOD by Suzan Lori-Parks; directed by Sarah Benson

JESUS HOPPED THE 'A' TRAIN by Stephen Adly Guirgis; directed by Mark Brokaw

OUR LADY OF 121ST STREET by Stephen Adly Guirgis; directed by Phylicia Rashad

PARADISE BLUE by Dominique Morisseau; directed by Ruben Santiago-Hudson

EDWARD ALBEE'S AT HOME AT THE ZOO: HOMELIFE & THE ZOO STORY by Edward Albee; directed by Lila Neugebauer

### **Theatre for a New Audience**

MARCEL AND THE ART OF LAUGHTER by Jos Houben and Marcello Magni

HE BROUGHT HER HEART BACK IN A BOX by Adrienne Kennedy; directed by Evan Yionoulis

THE WINTER'S TALE by William Shakespeare; directed by Arin Arbus

*Note: TWELFTH NIGHT was not included in the data as it was a co-production between The Acting Company and Delaware Resident Ensemble Players.*

### **Vineyard Theatre**

HARRY CLARKE by David Cale; directed by Leigh Silverman

THE AMATEURS by Jordan Harrison; directed by Oliver Butler

THE BEAST IN THE JUNGLE music by John Kander; book by David Thompson; directed by Susan Stroman



Non-Profits

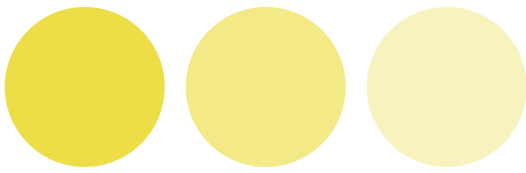
### **Women's Project**

ONE NIGHT ONLY (RUNNING FOR AS LONG AS WE CAN) by Monica Bill Barnes, Anna Bass and Robert Saenz de Viteri

WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST by Theresa Rebeck; directed by Adrienne Campbell-Holt

[PORTO] co-production with The Bushwick Starr in association with New Georges by Kate Benson; directed by Lee Sunday Evans

*\*Indicates a production produced on Broadway by a non-profit theatre that was not a commercial transfer.*



# Methodology

- Data was collected from every Broadway show that opened in the 2017-18 season and from the eighteen largest non-profit theatre companies in New York City. Non-profit theatre companies included in the survey are comprised of the major non-profit theatres in New York City providing employment under the Actors' Equity Association (AEA) Off-Broadway contracts. AEA contract status of New York City's non-profit theatres are assessed every five years in order to accurately include all available employment opportunities in the non-profit sector. Shows produced by non-profit theatre companies on Broadway (Lincoln Center, Roundabout Theatre Company, Manhattan Theatre Club, and Second Stage) counted for both Broadway statistics as well as for non-profit statistics, but were not double-counted when looking at the overall industry as a whole.
- Broadway productions included in the 2017-18 survey included all plays and musicals that opened prior to the 2018 Tony Awards. Special events were not included.
- Non-profit productions were determined by what the individual theatre companies deemed as part of their 2017-18 season regardless of when they occurred in the calendar year, including all Broadway shows produced as part of their announced season. Workshops, readings, special events, festivals, "five-night-only" events, non-Equity children's shows, and shows that were produced by other entities (where the theater was only renting out their space) were not included.
- Total number of actors hired during the 2017-18 season was 1,282—524 were employed by the commercial sector, 898 by the non-profits (140 of which were hired on Broadway contracts and counted towards total Broadway and total non-profit numbers).
- Total number of writers hired was 177—50 by the commercial sector and 139 by the non-profits (12 of which were produced on Broadway and counted towards total Broadway and total non-profit numbers).
- Total number of directors hired was 138—32 by the commercial sector and 117 by non-profits (11 of which were hired on Broadway and counted towards total Broadway and total non-profit numbers).
- Total number of artistic directors included in the survey was 22.
- Tallies for actors included understudies and

any replacement casts up until opening night only. Tallies for writers included playwrights, source material authors for adaptations, and librettists, lyricists, and composers for musicals.

- Actors, writers, directors, and artistic directors were grouped into one of the following racial categories: White, Black (includes Afro-Caribbean American), Latinx (does not include White Hispanic), Asian American (includes people whose ancestry comes from East Asia, South East Asia, the South Asian peninsula, and Asian Pacific Islanders), Middle Eastern/North African (MENA), and Indigenous (American Indian/Native/First Nation).
- For all individuals tallied, racial designations were based on self-identification as much as possible. Extensive research on individuals was conducted including, but not limited to, the following resources: artist websites, interviews, articles, bios, reviews, social media accounts, and both direct and indirect outreach to individuals and known contacts of individuals. In the rare cases where self-identification was not possible, actors were categorized based on the role they were playing or using best judgement based on the information available. Mixed-race actors were placed in the category that they were cast as, most likely to be cast as, or had a history of being cast as. In future reports, actors who identify as mixed-race will also be tallied.
- Non-Traditional and Inclusive Casting is defined by Actors' Equity as "the casting of Actors with disabilities, Actors of color (including but not limited to African American, Asian/Asian Pacific American, Hispanic American, Native American, and multi-cultural), Actors over 60, and women in roles where race, ethnicity, gender, sex, age, or the presence or absence of a disability is not germane." For the purpose of this report, Inclusive Casting (referred to as "Non-Traditional Casting" in previous reports) was confined to race only and did not include instances of open-gender, sex or age, or the casting of actors with disabilities. BIPOC actors counted in the Inclusive Casting category when they were cast without regard to their race and when race was not germane to the role. Examples include instances where a BIPOC actor was cast in a role that has been traditionally cast with White actors, and when a BIPOC actor was cast in a new play in a role that was not race-specific. Additionally, when a playwright specified that a role was to be played by a BIPOC performer (of any color, just not White) they also counted towards Inclusive Casting because the actor's specific cultural/racial background was not germane to the story. Inclusive Casting does not refer to instances when White actors are cast in traditionally BIPOC roles or have been cast when race is not germane to the role.
- BIPOC Productions were defined as any production with at least one BIPOC writer.
- Non-profit "Theater Grades" were calculated based on the number of BIPOC individuals hired over the total number of positions available at each theater for actors, writers, directors and artistic directors. To reflect a goal of 50% parity between BIPOC and White theater artists, letter grades were assigned based on the following: 54% BIPOC representation and above = A+; 50-53% = A; 47-49% = A-; 44-46% = B+; 40-43% = B; 37-39% = B-; 34-36% = C+; 30-33% = C; 27-29% = C-; 24-26% = D+; 20-23% = D; 17-19% = D-; 16% and below = F.
- Non-profit Theatre "Dollars Spent" was calculated using average weekly actor salary minimums for each theater and its individual venues.
- Totals in some charts and graphics may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
- Demographics for New York City are from the US 2019 ESTIMATED Census Bureau Data as listed on their website at the time of publication.

# Photo Credits

## **p. 10**

M. Butterfly, Matthew Murray

Red Letter Plays: In the Blood, Joan Marcus

Straight White Men, Blaine Davis

## **p. 11**

The Band's Visit, Jennifer Broski

Carmen Jones, Joan Marcus

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Frozen, Deen van Meer

Harry Potter and the Cursed Child, Manuel Harlan

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An Ordinary Muslim, Sara Krulwich

Hamlet, Sara Krulwich

The Wolves, Sara Krulwich

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