

March 21, 2018

To our cast members and company, patrons and community,

We have heard you. As boardmembers, it is our responsibility to ensure an environment where our artists can be free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, or inappropriate behavior of any kind. And we have failed to maintain that environment.

On March 16, 2018, the Seattle Times released an article in which Harlequin Managing Artistic Director, Scot Whitney, was quoted in response to questions involving actors having come forward with allegations of sexual harassment by playwright Israel Horovitz during the time his plays were being produced by the theater. The board would like to go on record that the statements made by Director Whitney do not reflect the opinions of the board, nor the opinion of Harlequin Productions.

This afternoon, Scot Whitney contacted the executive committee, and offered his immediate resignation as boardmember and Managing Artistic Director. This evening, the board voted to accept his resignation.

In addition, the board moved to engage an independent team to conduct a thorough investigation of culture, incidents, policies and procedures regarding harassment at Harlequin Productions, and report to the board with findings and recommended actions to ensure Harlequin provides a safe and inclusive environment for all.

We realize that there is an unfortunate history of sexual harassment in the performing arts industry and abhor that this incident took place within our own theater community. While no organization is perfect, we strive to uphold the highest standards when it comes to the physical and emotional safety of our actors and staff. This situation is unacceptable and we wish to be an example to the community at large in our efforts to right these wrongs.

In ten days, we are scheduled to host our season launch party, *Eclectica*. No. The board feels that this is no time for a party, and absolutely no time for a fundraiser. Our season announcement used to come in May – to that end, we are postponing the *Eclectica* event and season launch, with a new date to be determined.

The executive committee of the board will be meeting again this week to discuss these actions more fully and in depth. Every boardmember, however, wanted to provide this message immediately - our number one goal is to ensure that Harlequin Productions is able to flourish long into the future.

Ben Cushman, Chair
On behalf of the Board of Directors
Harlequin Productions