

# 2022 RACIAL JUSTICE OPERA FORUM

## GROUP AGREEMENTS

### **CENTER TRUTH AND CONNECTION**

Racial justice must be rooted in truth to disrupt the incomplete and false narratives that support the fallacy of racial human hierarchy. I will always center the truth with the goal of connecting to heal the harm and build a better world together.

### **BE EXPLICIT ABOUT RACE**

Race is often the most difficult conversation for many to have in the United States. I will always be explicit about race in racial justice work. I will not default to gender identity, sexual orientation or preference, ability, nationality, etc., without being explicit about the impact of race and racism. I will be explicit about racial groups and always mindful that no one group is a monolith.

### **INTENT DOES NOT OUTWEIGH IMPACT**

Good intentions and a desire for change are important. Impact is most important. I will be accountable for the impact of my words and actions. If my impact does not align with my intention and causes harm, I will work to correct my impact without silencing those whom I have inadvertently harmed.

### **SHARE SPACE**

Everyone is harmed by racism and a fallacy of racial hierarchy. I acknowledge that some racial groups experience disproportionate harm under various circumstances. There is enough space for each of us to acknowledge the harm and healing necessary to enact racial justice. I also acknowledge that this work requires all of us and that no one is entitled to intimate spaces amongst other racial groups.

### **USE "I" STATEMENTS**

We all have experiences. There is power in taking ownership of my experiences and individual commitment to racial justice. I will use "I" statements and speak from my own personal experiences when sharing in group discussion.

### **SELF-CARE AND COLLECTIVE CARE**

Racial justice work is hard. I will be mindful of my own needs and the needs of others, including the need for truth and connection. We will be together for a limited amount of time. Collective care also means that I will actively move forward to speak when necessary and move back to allow others to speak.

### **BE FULLY PRESENT (THIS IS YOUR JOURNEY.)**

I am here by choice and agree to be fully present for the work and learning in this space. Progress can only take place when I do the work, which starts with my personal journey. I acknowledge that my progress is directly related to my effort and prioritization of this work.

### **EMBRACE DISCOMFORT AND NON-CLOSURE**

This space will be uncomfortable. I will lean into my discomfort and challenge myself to experience learning that does not prioritize my comfort with discussions about race. I also acknowledge that I will not receive a packaged set of tools or answers to solve a centuries-old problem within a short amount of time. Change cannot happen at the rate of my own comfort.

### **TURN TO WONDER**

I will suspend judgment during the forum. I will turn to wonder and consider what my own reactions are telling me when I have an emotional response. I will work to explore those emotions and experiences on my own and in a healthy manner while remaining in community with the forum participants.

### **COMPASSIONATE AND COURAGEOUS SPACE**

I will work with others to ensure a space of compassion — hearing the collective harm and healing in our shared experiences. I will also work with others to ensure a space of courage — boldly disrupting the system of false racial human hierarchy.