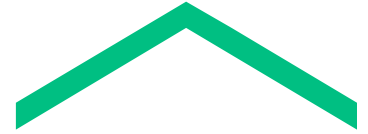


# The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum



December 22, 2020

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To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to submit this letter expressing my full support of Piti Theatre Company's fantastic project "Your Town" which I had the privilege to present at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum. I met Co-Artistic Director of Piti Theatre Co., Jonathan Mirin at a NEFA Idea Swap in 2018 and was introduced to his ongoing series of productions called "Your Town." In these projects, Jonathan immerses himself deeply into New England communities and skillfully weaves together the town's stories through history, theater, and intergenerational engagement. This idea stuck with me and I was delighted to reconnect on the occasion of The Aldrich's exhibition "Twenty Twenty" a series of works on paper rolled out sequentially in response to the 2020 election season. 2020 has been historic year and the work being created by the artists reflects their lived experience through a landmark election year, a global pandemic, and a national reckoning with systemic racial injustice and police brutality.

We initially envisioned "Your Town (The Musical)" as a live performance but through the necessity of change required by the current coronavirus pandemic, developed "Hindsight is," a three-episode podcast series in the radio play genre that released weekly in the fall of 2020. The series focused on vignette scenes with a range of local and regional historical figures in Connecticut including women's Suffragist Alice Paul and former NAACP Connecticut Chapter President William Webb. Actors portrayed these historical figures, dramatizing social and political issues intensified this year such as voting rights, racism, and fascism through their unique perspectives as citizens from the past.

The third episode was a particular triumph of Jonathan's collaborative work as he joined multiple sessions of our Aldrich Teen Fellows program where we bring in local teens to create projects based on our exhibitions. Jonathan worked with the teens virtually in conducting research, teaching playwriting and theater skills, and ultimately in directing the teen's voice acting the third episode of the series.

The collaborative nature of Piti's work prompted us to connect with multiple community partners including the Ridgefield Historical Society, Ridgefield Library, and local historian and author Jack Sanders. Jonathan's generous work also connected us with further individuals through this project including family members of the aforementioned William Webb and opportunities to find funding through Connecticut Humanities. We also produced two public programs in association with the episodes including an anti-racism workshop with The Anti-Racist Table as well offering a downloadable curriculum guide intended for educators and parents illuminating the themes of each episode.

Collaborating with Piti Theatre Co has been an incredibly gratifying experience and a great joy to stretch ourselves to produce creative and challenging virtual content amid the multiple shutdowns and uncertainty of this unprecedented year. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Namulen Bayarsaihan

Director of Education