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SEPTEMBER 4, 2015

LA STAGE Alliance

4200 Chevy Chase Drive

Los Angeles, CA 90039

Attn: Recruitment Committee

RE: Executive Director Position

Dear Mr. Martinez and Members of the Recruitment Committee,

Los Angeles theater is at an inflection point.

You can feel it in our theaters.

We can all pick our favorite signs of trouble: a mid-week audience at the Taper, the number of open Development Director positions, the anger of Facebook and Twitter posts, Equity's proposals and tactics, the shrinking column inches in the LA Weekly (and others); the disparity between what our city looks like and what our theater looks like . . .

But, there are also signs of great hope: the number of stunning productions that are extending, the solidarity and passion with which the community banded together to fight a common challenge, a positive pivot in the integrity of the work at both the Geffen and the Taper, the promise of new leadership and collaboration at the Wallis, The Broad Stage, and two of our university programs. And, most importantly, in those glorious moments when we are reminded of theater's power and immediacy as it cuts through the mediation of technology and distraction that rules our modern lives to reconnect us with the essential questions of humanity.

More so than at any moment since the early 2000's, our community is shifting.

The question is: in which direction? And more meaningfully: who can nudge these trend lines? Can we change in ways that are financially sustainable?

Clearly, some of these challenges can only be faced by the individual theaters that make up our ecosystem: how they meet the world and the profundity with which they believe theater can be a vital part of our society, our city — this will influence the role theater plays in the life of Angelenos.

But some of these challenges are bigger than a single theater . . .

Some of what burdens Los Angeles theater requires a broader vision, a more precise implementation. Some of these hurdles are larger than any one theater can tackle alone, requiring both our artists and our administrators to look beyond their own challenges, their own audiences. How do we, as an entire

community, find a deeper, sophisticated, and sustainable collaboration that makes Los Angeles theater better — and in the process — makes Los Angeles a more livable city?

I believe this is LA STAGE Alliance's role in our dramatic scene.

As I sat down and talked with members of our community about LA STAGE Alliance's potential (and more broadly the state of everything from the Producer's League to Equity to the state of philanthropy in Los Angeles), I consistently heard concern about two things: a profound lack of leadership across the community and a profound uncertainty about what comes next (about what the future looks like). In speaking with Artistic Directors, Executive Directors, Board Members, Funders, actors - everyone was hungry for a vision.

The challenge, of course, is manifold. Vision alone, while needed, is not enough. That vision must pencil out. The way forward must support the community but it must also financially sustain LA STAGE Alliance, itself.

Humbly, I think I can offer the concrete vision that will bring financial stability to LA STAGE Alliance.

And through that alliance with, and of, the community — encourage the kind of broad collaboration and buy-in that will forge a more sustainable destiny. Through both carefully framing the challenges we face and by offering meaningful and measurable implementation that both meets the community where it is and helps it to tackle the crises that threaten the performing arts more broadly, I believe LA STAGE Alliance could become essential and indispensable to the community and the city.

Why me?

Over the past two decades of devotion to Los Angeles theater, I've worn many hats. I've had the privilege of producing at virtually every level of LA theater — from the barest of shoestring budgets to the larger houses. I've taught some of our most talented students and professionals. I've tried to give voice to the community and highlight the best our community has to offer through my work at KCRW. I've worked within a major university as an advocate and liaison for the arts.

More than simply being familiar with the challenges of theater in Los Angeles, I've faced them. I've built a theater and kept a \$12 million dollar project on-time and on-budget (Kirk Douglas Theater); I've increased ticket revenue 20% year over year for 3 years (Shakespeare Center of LA); I've raised the contributed income of an annual gala by 50% (SCLA); I've produced over 100 plays, workshops, and readings for the American theater. I appreciate the challenges that our theaters and our administrators face because I have faced them myself (as a discrete example: both the profound promise and the utter inscrutability of PatronManager isn't an abstract notion to me - I've lived it and I know how to make it better).

These two decades dedicated to Los Angeles theater have given me an appreciation for the whole and a passion for the small details that can actually move the needle.

My experience is only half of the equation. I believe profoundly in Los Angeles theater. My passion, wrought from this belief, is now in engaging the broader ecosystem: to address the cultural infrastructure of Los Angeles. While our community is at an inflection point, the resource that is Los Angeles theater remains largely under-appreciated, the potential impact untapped.

How can we, together, change that?

The moment is primed for LA STAGE Alliance to forge a stronger, more compelling identity for both itself and for the community it represents: Los Angeles deserves it. It would be an honor to share my vision for how to make that a reality with you and discuss further my qualifications for and excitement about the Executive Director position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Anthony Byrnes', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Anthony Byrnes