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Open Letter Regarding Anderson Lawsuit

To the CTC Community,

Today, we learned that a lawsuit has been filed against John Clark Donahue who served as our Artistic Director from 1965 through the mid-1980s and against Jason McLean, a member of the company in the 1980s. The complaint also names the Theatre alleging that more than three decades ago we were neglectful in the hiring and supervision of these individuals.

While this development is unwelcome in the sense that it returns to the forefront events from a difficult chapter in our history, we stand with any victim of abuse in his or her desire to see justice done. The crimes and misconduct of Mr. Donahue and the allegations against Mr. McLean date back to the 1980s, but there is no time limit on our abhorrence of such actions. Any abuse of a child is a terrible act; it goes against everything we believe in as professionals and as human beings.

At the same time, however, we have a responsibility to defend the Theatre from allegations that we think are misdirected. Such is the case here. Based on what we know today, we do not believe that the Theatre was negligent in its conduct. We will advocate for ourselves and our point of view as this case proceeds, yet we will do so being ever mindful that people in pain are at the heart of this matter.

There is nothing more important to us than the well-being of the young people we serve. In support of that priority, over the last 32 years we have created a comprehensive set of practices designed to keep children safe. Those practices have worked for our young actors and for all of our organization's participants; they continue to be a centerpiece of our culture and our day-to-day activities. This is an

area where we will never say “enough” but will instead strive to be better today than we were yesterday and even better tomorrow. Among the key elements of our protections:

- Mandatory background checks, including criminal history and the national sex offender database, for every paid position prior to starting work and on an ongoing basis;
- A “rule of 3” so that no staff or volunteer should ever be alone with a student in a private space;
- Socializing with children outside of scheduled rehearsals, performances, classes, or CTC-sanctioned professional activities is strictly limited;
- We are a mandatory reporting organization, which means any staff member must report any suspicion or knowledge of abuse or neglect.

Children’s Theatre Company is an organization of joy and passion comprised of people who value honesty and ethical conduct. We live by those values day-in and day-out on stage, in our classes, offices and in every relationship we create through our work. We will be guided by those same principles in this matter as well. Should you have questions or concerns regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Peter Brosius at peter.brosius@childrenstheatre.org.

On behalf of every member of our Company, thank you for your support for our mission and for allowing us to be a part of your family’s life. We value your patronage, but by far the most important thing you give us is your trust. We will always endeavor to be worthy of this gift.

Thank you,



Peter Brosius
Artistic Director



Jeff von Gillern
Chair, Board of Governors



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