

Emancipation Reflection Project

THE Theatre is committed to improving the world we live in. In that pursuit we've created this activity to encourage citizens to continue the enlightenment and conversation regarding the important work of the Black Lives Matter Movement.

Local support for BLM is incredibly heartening and the **Emancipation Reflection Project** is intended to promote further self-reflection and personal growth on issues facing Black, Indigenous, People of Color in the United States. As White citizens are unveiling uncomfortable truths and accepting responsibility for our roles within a broken system, Authentic Theatre Ensemble, UWSP, and Alice's Garden encourage you to commemorate the July 4th holiday with an introspective reflection on independence and its role as it pertains to every member of our American society.

How to participate:

- Choose an outdoor location to wander- try somewhere new! Schmeckle Reserve, The Sculpture Garden, The Green Circle Trail, Iverson Park, Piffner Park
- Read the Emancipation Proclamation in its entirety
- Read and reflect on uncomfortable truths and the words of Black Americans.
- Share revelations or pictures to THE Theatre's Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook pages to further promote conversation regarding the topic.
 - Use the hashtag #EmancipationReflection Tag @THETheatreOrg



January 1, 1863

By the President of the United States of America: ABRAHAM LINCOLN

A Proclamation.

Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

"That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

"That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof, respectively, shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be, in good faith, represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State, and the people thereof, are not then in rebellion against the United States."

Now, therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief, of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days, from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following, to wit:

Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, (except the Parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James Ascension, Assumption, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the City of New Orleans) Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia, (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth)], and which excepted parts, are for the present, left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward shall be free; and that the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known, that such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-seventh.

Reflect as you walk

If uncomfortable or upset by any of the following, ask yourself 'why?'

Then, ask yourself what experiences may have brought the speaker to make such a statement.



The Emancipation Proclamation was not a document written due to a country's, or president's, recognition of the full humanity of enslaved Black people.

It was a means to an end; that end being a saved Union and shortened Civil War.

Emancipation: the fact or process of being set free from legal, social, or political restrictions; liberation.

What was never "emancipated" was the behavior of diminishing, labeling, persecuting, and dehumanizing Black, Indigenous, People of Color. Where has that brought us? How does that contribute to the current outcry in our country? What are your greatest fears for these days, this moment in history?

It's common for white Americans to position themselves as the neutral arbiters of what is or is not racist and what other Americans are allowed to be angered by. -Greg Howard



What does it mean to have independence? What does it look like not to be an independent person?

Is our system set up to enhance independence and a Black American's admittance in social and business society in the same way a White person gains, accepts, and lives as independent?

When you are accustomed to privilege, equality feels like oppression. -Oscar Auliq-Ice



Do you appreciate cultures? Do you enjoy learning about and experiencing traditions different from your own? Do you believe those traditions are inherently better or worse? If not, how can that view shape your acceptance of inequities between races and cultures in the other arenas of daily life?

You cannot accept DIVERSITY and not embrace INCLUSION. -Sam Dinga



What is the social contract between law enforcement and the independent citizens they are sworn to protect? Is this contract being fulfilled for all Americans? How often are you afraid of losing your life if pulled over by law enforcement? Does a Person of Color share your same reaction when hearing a siren? If you had that same fear how would it practically manifest itself in response to that stimulus?

How is whiteness used as a means to an end?

Name ten things you need to do to emancipate your whiteness.

You may no longer have the privilege of being unaware of your white privilege and how you intentionally, or unintentionally have weaponized it. -Venice Williams

