



To our community members,

Thank you for your letter regarding the rental performance presented and booked by Live Nation at the State Theatre this February. We always appreciate and welcome advice and insight from the community, and we have discussed this issue with senior staff and Board.

You are correct that Hennepin Theatre Trust does not select the shows that choose to rent the Orpheum, State or Pantages theatres.

Hennepin Theatre Trust does not manage the operations of the theatres. According to the terms of our agreement with the City, we are required to contract theatre management services—including ticketing, guest services and renting theatre space—to a third-party management company. That management company, Historic Theatre Group—due to contractual requirements and the protections of the First Amendment on the theatres as government-owned entities—is required to allow any presenter access to open dates for the theatres. The terms of the agreement state, “[The] tenant shall maintain an ‘open calendar’ policy which assures any presenter access to open dates on the calendars of the Facilities, if the presenter has secured the rights to present the act or production in question.”

The contract for the Jordan Peterson event is between Live Nation and Historic Theatre Group. As such, concerns regarding the show are best directed toward Live Nation. Hennepin Theatre Trust is not party to the agreement, and we have no authority to cancel the performance.

Hennepin Theatre Trust does not profit from rental events. We have no financial stake or gain in rental events booked in the theatres by outside promoters. No grant funds received by Hennepin Theatre Trust are used to support the theater operations.

Hennepin Theatre Trust does not agree with or support the views of all the uses of the theaters, certainly not those espoused by Jordan Peterson. When this show was booked by Live Nation and added to our calendars, it was met with distaste and deep concern from Hennepin Theatre Trust staff.

Hennepin Theatre Trust’s values—and our use of grant dollars—are represented in the events, shows and programming we present, promote and produce, as well as the more than 30 community partners we work with and support every year.

For example, we are proud to work alongside the Native American Community Development Institute (NACDI) to develop, fund and promote *We Are Still Here*, a multi-year public art project presenting Native and Indigenous storytelling along Hennepin Avenue and throughout the Twin Cities. Our booking department seeks out shows and live events that reflect our values, for example, Alok Vaid-Menon, an internationally acclaimed performance artist exploring themes of trauma, belonging and the human condition was presented by the Trust this summer, and Marisa Monte, a Brazilian singer, composer, instrumentalist and producer was presented by the Trust in partnership with the Cedar Cultural Center at the State Theatre this spring. Our public art project *It’s The People* features larger-than-life portraits of exceptional Minnesotans, photographed by Minnesotans. Our Spotlight Education program reaches more than 8,000 high school students across the state. *5-10 on Hennepin* is our youth-based summer engagement program in partnership with Kulture Klub Collaborative. Brave New Workshop, our resident comedy troupe, takes a no-holds-barred approach to critiquing our society. And, we partner with



organizations across the state, like the Black Storytellers Alliance, the Cultural Society of Filipino Americans of Minnesota and the African American Heritage Museum to offer our spaces in The Hennepin for their events and programs.

These are the programs, events and partnerships that speak to our commitment to positive change through the arts and our efforts to celebrate diversity, combat racism and provide economic opportunity for historically underrepresented artists and students.

We are aware that we need to better differentiate between events that are booked through the open calendar and events that are presented by Hennepin Theatre Trust. Our conversations with community members helped inform our approach to this challenge, and we are working to make the distinction more clear on our website—including our “About Us” section and event listings—and other communications materials, with immediate changes already made.

We believe in the power of the arts to bring people together and honor our differences and will not lose sight of our responsibility in creating a more just and welcoming world for all.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Nerenhausen', written over a white background.

Mark Nerenhausen, President & CEO