



NEWS RELEASE

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Jack Reuler to step aside in July 2022 as Mixed Blood reinvents

(Minneapolis, Minn. — April 30) — Mixed Blood Artistic Director Jack Reuler will step aside in July 2022, the company announced today. Reuler made his choice after a nearly year-long strategic planning process with staff and board. That process led to a decision to shift to using art to connect people and organizations, with a goal of advancing dialogue on an issue and a sustained call to action.

“Mixed Blood is entering a time of dual transition—in leadership, from a founder to the next generation, and in the way it does its work, from a theater that addresses social justice issues to a social justice organization that uses theater as a way to catalyze action,” says Reuler.

Bob Lunning, Mixed Blood Board President, says, “Planning this past year— during the pandemic and in the shadow of our region’s reckoning with inequities— strengthened our resolve to bring Mixed Blood’s creativity and values to bear on the injustices around us.”

Reuler, who founded Mixed Blood in 1976 and has produced hundreds of shows over the past 45 years, calls the next chapter a reinvention, not an evolution. “We will transform how and why we create art,” he says. “Our goal is to use theater to disrupt injustice and to more effectively bring about systemic change. While I have a one-line resume, serving as Mixed Blood’s artistic director for 45 years, it is time in our field and at our organization for me to step aside. Ushering in the next generation of theater leaders has been a goal and joy of mine. I have so enjoyed theater as a platform to be a contrarian, provocateur, and rebel, it is time for new blood at Mixed Blood.”

The new model

Reuler describes the new model as guided by deep community engagement and rooted in the concept of radical hospitality. “Instead of finding and sharing stories we deem topical, our new guiding principle is ‘We want to be part of *your* story,’” says Reuler. The theatre will use art to connect people and organizations to advance dialogue on an issue, inspiring civic discourse and a sustained call to action. While the play is essential, it will be but one component in a multi-pronged, long-term focus on an issue.

Reuler says the company will begin to transition to the new model with ***Animate***, a play developed by Ken LaZebnik and Jack Reuler through a year of listening sessions with zookeepers, animal collection curators, zoo directors, primatologists, and zoo detractors.

Animate tackles issues of race and philanthropy through a lens of species preservation and conservation. It will be produced at Como Park Zoo in fall 2021.

The model will be piloted more fully with ***The Most Beautiful Home...Maybe***, also slated for fall 2021. Over the past year, Mixed Blood resident artist Mark Valdez has convened artists, developers, policymakers, and housing advocates from across the country for workshops and organizing events, using art to instill imagination into the possibilities for policy. After its Twin Cities run, the resulting production will travel to Los Angeles; Washington, DC; and Syracuse, NY, with organizing events happening concurrently in all locations.

National search

A national search for a new Mixed Blood leader will begin in May 2021 and be announced in early 2022. “Jack has been an extraordinary leader for more than four decades,” says Tabitha Montgomery, past president of the board. “He has brought exceptional theater, talent and acclaim to the Cedar Riverside neighborhood. We are grateful to have a year to transition to both a new model and new leadership.”

Global Village Gala

Mixed Blood kicks off its next chapter with a Global Village Gala on Thursday, May 5. Emcee Tom Jones II will be joined by Sally Wingert, Regina Marie Williams, Shá Cage and Harry Waters, Jr. in a fast-paced, entertaining 30-minute online program. More info at www.mixedblood.com.

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