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March 3, 2023

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in support of the American Dance Institute's (ADI) (dba LUMBERYARD) pilot program called SEATS ON THE SPECTRUM. This program will expand access to neurodiverse audiences - especially individuals on the autism spectrum - attending Broadway shows.

For far too long, performing arts patrons on the autism spectrum have not had the opportunity to enjoy Broadway shows commensurate with neurotypical patrons. Their access has been limited to laudable but infrequently staged shows that are geared to individuals on the spectrum. The time has come for Broadway's practices to be updated so that when someone on the spectrum wants to see a Broadway show they are able to do so.

There are a number of elements that would be included in this pilot program such as aisle seats for easy access to lobbies and other quiet areas; technological interventions such as headphones and tablets; updated training of ushers to help accommodate neurodiverse patrons; and video screens mounted in the lobby, which will allow patrons on the spectrum to watch the show if they have left their seats.

Given the complexity of this endeavor, I applaud LUMBERYARD for bringing together a diverse group of leaders in the field: people on the autism spectrum; their family members and caregivers; medical experts; advocates for the autism community; managers of leading performing arts venues; and experts that have successfully integrated people on the spectrum into their business activities.

By working with Broadway, LUMBERYARD aims to lead the way in setting standards that will be adopted across the country and beyond. The overall audience experience will be improved, and the economic footing of Broadway will be strengthened as more patrons will have access to performances. I hope they receive the necessary funding to realize this vision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brad Hoylman-Sigal".

Brad Hoylman-Sigal
New York State Senate
47th District

Kelli O'Hara
C/O Perennial Entertainment
Attn: Erica Tuchman
erica@perennial-ent.com

March 3, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

I am delighted to submit this letter in support of ADI's Broadway pilot program, SEATS ON THE SPECTRUM, which aims to improve access to mainstream theatrical productions for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

My time performing on stage and screen has made me passionate about the role of theater to advance social and medical goals, both in the New York area and across the country. I have strongly advocated for groups like SAY (The Stuttering Association for the Youth), Kids in the Balcony, Kids Night on Broadway and even The Cancer Support Community who all use the power of theatre to promote wellness for those they serve. I believe deeply that the Broadway community must shine a spotlight on the issues affecting our communities and also be a resource in healing those issues.

This spirit must now extend to ensuring greater inclusion for theatergoers with autism and their caregivers. Attending a Broadway performance is a singular experience: sharing the magic of live performance with family and friends creates indelible memories and exposes young people to the myriad of careers unpinning the vast Broadway economy.

This Broadway Pilot Program recognizes that everyone can enjoy a theatrical performance and recognizes that other cultural sectors are light years ahead of ours when it comes to including people with autism and other forms of neurodivergence on a day-to-day basis.

Individuals with ASD and their families will need the support of Broadway performers, and I am honored to be part of the "hearts and minds" outreach to all patrons.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KOH', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Kelli O'Hara

**C. Christine Wheeler, PhD
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March 1, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to submit this letter in support of American Dance Institute, Inc. dba LUMBERYARD's efforts to secure funding for its Broadway pilot program, SEATS ON THE SPECTRUM. SEATS ON THE SPECTRUM aims to improve access to mainstream theatrical productions for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

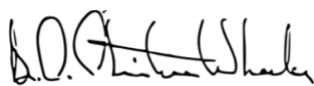
As a board member, I am well-acquainted with LUMBERYARD's ability to identify and address critical gaps in the performing arts field and develop industry-wide solutions. LUMBERYARD's neurodiversity initiative – with its focus on individuals with ASD – reflects its commitment to advancing artistic innovation for artists as well as for audiences.

Access to cultural experiences, including dignity of access, is crucial for individuals with ASD and their families. New York City is the cultural epicenter of our nation, but we have fallen behind other nations in serving those with different cognitive abilities. In theatrical terms, one might say this is a tragedy.

As a psychotherapist and clinical practitioner, I am committed to working with LUMBERYARD to identify and activate a committee of medical and therapeutic specialists, including Dr. Sumit Parikh, MD Psychiatrist Center for Pediatric Neurosciences Cleveland Clinic, Dr. Jeffrey Daly, MD Child & Adolescent Psychiatry New York City, Dr. Barry Kosofsky, MD Pediatric Neurology New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, Dr. Srishti Nangia, MD Pediatric Neurology New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, Michael P. Milham, MD, PhD, Psychiatrist, Vice President and Director of Research, Center for the Developing Brain, Child Mind Institute, among others. LUMBERYARD has a proven reputation for coalition building and I am confident that it will bring together ASD experts alongside innovators from the cultural and technology sectors to define and advance a national model for audience inclusion.

I have known LUMBERYARD's Artistic and Executive Director, Adrienne Willis, for more than 20 years. I can attest to her passion for creating new programs that serve our city and state and her ability to achieve scalable solutions. She brings professional experience in the performing arts, as well as a mother's love, to this issue. I urge you to support this important effort.

Sincerely,



C. Christine Wheeler, PhD