



We Must Not Look Away

Dear Colleagues,

Mendocino Art Center is located on the north coast of California, a beautiful and complex area inhabited by artists, teachers, business owners, and activists. In our coast community, and in our art center community, each of us works together to respect the differences in human beings, and to reflect those differences through our art.

All of our communities are interconnected, and the art center ethos has always been to care for and inspire each other's creativity. Everything we stand for at the Mendocino Art Center centers around working together across boundaries and cultural differences for the betterment of humanity through art. We must not look away from this goal, because we are better together than apart.

Yet, sometimes circumstances force us to realize that we have all along been part of a problem. Recognizing that, changing ourselves and our communities, can be frightening, but again, **we must not look away.**

The tragic loss of life of George Floyd in Minneapolis, in the midst of the global COVID-19 pandemic, has opened deep wounds caused by systemic inequality and racism. Our nation is very divided, and the pain is real. We must come together as a community, as a nation, and stand up for a better world. We cannot turn away from recognizing the deep inequities embedded in our society, and how they tragically and disproportionately affect black, brown, and indigenous communities. The perpetuation of inequality, division, racial disparities, fear, and ignorance has brought us to where we are today.

We stand beside our neighbors in Minneapolis and across the country to argue for justice and equality for all. We encourage everyone to act with empathy and respect for one another. **We believe in fighting for what is right, because what is right is what we most surely need now.**

Debra Lennox
President, Board of Directors

Roccie Hill
Executive Director