

LETTER TO THE MEMBERSHIP FROM DR. FAISAL ABDU'ALLAH, PRESIDENT, SGC INTERNATIONAL

July 21, 2020

Dear SGCI Members,

On behalf of the Executive Committee, it is my great pleasure to serve as the next President of SGCI. I would like to thank the past President Sarah Ellis who navigated our board through the tide of uncertainty and remained committed to the concerns of our members. I would also like to extend gratitude to Stephanie Alaniz, Sage Perrott, and Charles Beneke who have resigned from their roles.

We are amid two pandemics, the indiscernible (COVID 19) and the ever-present implicit bias called racism – both affecting the bodies of black and brown people disproportionately. The SGCI board's attempt to initiate meaningful change for our members and printmaking community fell far short of the restorative change needed to pull society towards a deeper reckoning with race and provide achievable goals. But the board is committed to the work of questioning and dismantling the systems that have been in place within SGCI and that space it inhabits in the printmaking community.

Our [2020 Strategic Plan](#) on Space: Inclusivity & Intersectionality in Action in the SGCI Handbook states:

Space is generated by the fundamental principle of mandating a culturally responsive framework that creates space for all through the cultural kaleidoscope created by welcoming intersectionality and inclusive perspectives. Space is where alterity, diverse ways of seeing, and freedom of expression provide an appropriate testbed to educate and influence artists, students, and professionals beyond the boundaries of the organization. To realize the profound potential of Space, SGCI must insure that inclusivity and intersectionality are reflected in:

- The Executive Board composition,
- Leadership (board) programming, and
- Membership participation and engagement.

SGCI is committed to making an honest appraisal of its history to dismantle the hostile environment experienced by some of its members. The key to reconciliation is listening to each other as power concedes nothing without motive or demand.

The board has reviewed the open letters and online discussions from the members and acknowledge this is the time and season for change. We would implore our patrons to exercise patience whilst we commence our evaluation. To address this, we have created thelisteningchannel@sgcinternational.org, an email address that will be received by multiple board members and revisited at board meetings. Currently, this email address is being checked by myself, Arron Foster, and Nicole Geary. Please reach out to us at this email, or for an anonymous form, please visit our [Contact Us](#) page.

As an artist and scholar, I have been unequivocal in my duties and responsibilities, and as President I ask you to judge me and the board by our actions. We remain committed to you, the organization and making the arts accessible to all.

The Founding Member Boyd Saunders felt printmaking never held a position of special prominence as a serious art form in the American South. The board is listening to our members to write in unison the next chapter of SGCI to insure it remains the space where alterity, diverse ways of seeing, and freedom of expression provide an appropriate proving ground to educate and influence artists beyond the organization.

Dr. Faisal Abdu'Allah
President, SGC International