

STILL NOT EVEN

**A gender analysis
of 600 San Francisco/Bay Area theatrical productions
from the Counting Actors Project 2014-2018**

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**Women
ARTS**

INTRODUCTION

In June 2011, when I was feeling frustrated by a stalled-out acting career, I started tracking gender of actors, directors and playwrights in the shows I was seeing in the San Francisco Bay Area, and sharing the results via a blog I'd been writing about my acting career. I named this the *Counting Actors Project*.

As *Counting Actors* grew, I moved my monthly post from a personal blog to a more visible blog/website called *Works by Women San Francisco*, run by Christine Young, an Associate Professor of Theater at the University of San Francisco. In 2014 WomenArts and Martha Richards commissioned the report *Not Even* which used data from the project's first 500 shows to examine trends in gender representation in the region. And in January 2019, seven and a half years and over 1000 shows later, I published my last post and stopped counting.

Over time, the energy needed to amplify and share the monthly post was growing. As more and more voices have joined the conversations around gender parity and other facets of equity, diversity and inclusion, my methods of distributing the monthly blog post were becoming less effective. I reached the limit of how loudly I could 'shout' what I was sharing.

Also, through working on this project, I've become so much more aware of the systems and structures that are keeping us from parity. And this awareness has shifted my interests towards wanting to address those systems and structures more directly.

In 2011 when I started counting, I was much less aware of gender as a spectrum, and only saw the binary. In creating this project, I've always relied on folks who were watching shows to report what they saw onstage and in their programs as the method for data gathering. I knew at the time I started that I wouldn't be able to count racial/ethnic data in this way. Asking someone to guess about another person's race based on how they looked or what name was in a program was inherently problematic.

And as my understanding of gender has moved beyond binary, I've come to see this as a flaw in my data collection on gender as well. In order for this kind of counting to be truly accurate and representational, I believe it needs to be self-reported by the artists involved, and this mostly volunteer project just didn't have the bandwidth for that.

I am afraid that local theater makers might think I've stopped counting because the community had 'solved' or 'fixed' the issue of gender parity. Let me be very clear: ***gender parity is in no way solved, fixed or done in the Bay Area Theater community.*** Some of the data in this report will show that we are trending towards parity, and some of the data is less conclusive.

This report examines the data from the 605 shows counted between November 2014 and December 2018, and also compares the more recent data to the data covered by *Not Even*. After reading, I hope you'll have a clearer understanding of the ways in which the Bay Area theater community is *Still Not Even*.

SUMMARY OF *NOT EVEN*

In March 2015, WomenArts published *Not Even*, a report that synthesized the *Counting Actors Project* data collected from 500 shows produced in the San Francisco Bay Area between June 2011 and November 2014. In that report, these were the key findings:

1. **Fewer Jobs for Women** – Women had fewer jobs than men as playwrights, directors, and actors.
 - Women wrote fewer than 3 out of 10 shows.
 - Women directed about 4 out of 10 shows
 - Women actors received 4 out of 10 union contracts
2. **No Improvement** – Between 2011-2014, there was no significant improvement in women's employment in Bay Area theatres.
3. **Fewer High Paying Jobs** – Women were less represented in the highest paying jobs.
4. **Women Wrote More Roles for Women** – Women played 57% of roles in plays written by women and only 41% of roles in plays written by men.
5. **More Plays With Majority Male Casts** – Plays with a majority of male actors were twice as common as plays with a majority of female actors.

The data also showed that although newer plays had better representation than classic ones, women only wrote 35% of the plays written since 2000, and while women hadn't exactly been 'siloe'd' into women's projects, female artists received fewer opportunities and resources than male artists.

To read *Not Even*, or to access infographics and a key findings summary of *Not Even*, please visit: <https://www.womenarts.org/not-even/>

STILL NOT EVEN SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

For the *Still Not Even* study, a team of volunteers counted the directors, actors and playwrights of 605 shows produced in the nine county San Francisco Bay Area from November 2014 to December 2018. Analysis of this data has yielded the following key findings:

1. STILL FEWER JOBS FOR WOMEN - Women are still given fewer jobs as writers, directors, and actors.
 - Women wrote just over 3 out of 10 shows
 - Women directed about 4.5 out of every 10 shows
 - Women received about 4 of every 10 union acting contracts
2. STILL FEWER HIGH PAYING JOBS - Women are still less represented in the highest paying jobs as playwrights and union actors.
3. STILL MORE PLAYS WITH MAJORITY MALE CASTS - Plays with a majority of male actors are one and a half times more common than plays with a majority of female actors.
4. WOMEN STILL WRITE MORE ROLES FOR WOMEN - Women played 56% of roles in plays written by women and 44% of roles in plays written by men

HOWEVER

5. Though not at parity, women's representation is
 - a) improving across all areas in terms of overall picture & highest paying jobs,
 - b) trending upward over time for women playwrights,
 - c) increasing for women actors in plays written by male playwrights

AND

6. Trans/non-binary artists made up no more than 1% of the artists working in any category - actors, directors or writers, and there were no trans/non-binary union actors counted.

SNE KEY FINDINGS GRAPHIC

DATA ANALYSIS

Between June of 2011 and December of 2018, members of the Bay Area theater community including audience members, actors, directors, designers, stage managers, technicians and theater administrators submitted gender related data on over 1000 shows produced in the San Francisco Bay Area. In *Not Even*, published March 2015, I analyzed data from the first 500 shows counted by the project, from June 2011 through Nov 2014. The current report, *Still Not Even*, focuses on the 600 shows counted between Nov 2014 and Dec 2018.

As with *Not Even*, I wanted to create a report that would be useful to theater decision-makers of the San Francisco Bay Area region, so I surveyed Artistic Directors, Associate Artistic Directors, Casting Directors and Literary managers about which questions were of interest to them. 35 artistic leaders responded to the survey and their top questions were:

- Has gender parity improved since *Not Even* report?
- How does money/budget size affect gender representation?
- Do new plays have better parity than classics?
- Do directors direct plays by writers of the same gender?
- How often do casts include 50% or more actors of one gender?
- Does playwright gender influence gender of characters in plays?

This report looks at the data using these questions as lenses. Additionally it compares the data from both reports, *Not Even* and *Still Not Even*, using these same questions.

To see spreadsheets of the raw data used in the report, or a list of all the shows counted by the project, please email countingactors@gmail.org

What's the overall picture? How much work is there for women, men and non-binary artists in the San Francisco Bay Area?

In the 605 shows counted, men outnumbered women in every category except non-union actor. Non-binary artists made up no more than 1% of artists in any category.

Women outnumbered men as non-union actors, but made up less than 50% in all other categories, with playwriting the lowest at 33%. Trans artists were 1% of the non-union actors, but less than 1% in every other category, except union actors, which had no trans artists.

Not every show had one playwright and one director. Some plays were co-written and/or co-directed. Some shows were an evening of short plays that had more than one playwright and/or more than one director. For musicals, the musical director is counted in the director category, and all writers (book, lyrics, composer) are counted in the playwright category.

	Women	Men	Trans & Non-Binary
Playwright	33% 302 artists	66% 606 artists	<1% 4 artists
Director	45% 359 artists	55% 443 artists	<1% 1 artist
Union Actor	43% 740 artists	57% 970 artists	0% 0 artists
Non Union Actor	50% 1622 artists	49% 1593 artists	1% 25 artists

Table 1: Women mostly had fewer jobs than men

How does this data compare to the *Not Even* data?

Though not at parity, women artists are gaining ground in all areas.

In 2015's *Not Even* women non-union actors were the closest to parity at 46% and playwrights trailed furthest behind at 27%. With this data set, all groups have made gains in representation, with the largest change happening for playwrights. However, the only group that shows parity at this time is non-union actors.

Has gender parity improved since *Not Even* report?

There has been some improvement between 2015 and 2018 for both playwrights and non-union actors, but no growth pattern over that time for union actors or directors.

Women playwrights have seen the biggest gains since the 14-15 season, moving from 25% to 39% over this time period. Non-union women have moved to over half of non-union actors working across these four and a half seasons but union women have a less discernible pattern over this time. Women directors have varied from a low of 38% in the 15-16 season to a high of 52% in 17-18.

The variability of these numbers suggests that even though gender parity might be measured for a single season, additional energy and attention is required to maintain equal representation over time.

	14-15* 165 shows	15-16 150 shows	16-17 153 shows	17-18 144 shows	Fall 18** 55 shows
Women Playwrights	25% 56 artists	29% 68 artists	35% 75 artists	38% 84 artists	39% 36 artists
Men Playwrights	75% 169 artists	70% 164 artists	65% 139 artists	61% 136 artists	61% 57 artists
Trans Playwrights	0 % 0 artists	<1% 1 artist	0% 0 artists	<1% 3 artists	0% 0 artists
Women Directors	45% 92 artists	38% 77 artists	43% 84 artists	52% 108 artists	39% 27 artists
Men Directors	55% 113 artists	62% 124 artists	57% 110 artists	47% 97 artists	61% 43 artists
Trans Directors	0 % 0 artists	0 % 0 artists	0 % 0 artists	<1% 1 artist	0 % 0 artists
Women Union Actors	44% 214 artists	40% 156 artists	45% 195 artists	43% 179 artists	44% 75 artists
Men Union Actors	56% 270 artists	60% 233 artists	56% 238 artists	57% 236 artists	56% 96 artists
Trans Union Actors	0 % 0 artists	0 % 0 artists	0 % 0 artists	0 % 0 artists	0 % 0 artists
Women Non-Union Actors	47% 429 artists	48% 401 artists	49% 355 artists	51% 393 artists	52% 215 artists
Men Non-Union Actors	53% 477 artists	51% 425 artists	50% 358 artists	48% 367 artists	46% 189 artists
Trans Non-Union Actors	<1% 1 artist	<1% 2 artists	1% 6 artists	1% 7 artists	2% 10 artists

Table 2: Some areas of women's employment has improved

**Shows from July 2014 to Nov 2014 were added to this column to give a full season*

***Because data collection ended in December 2018, only the first half of the season is included*

How does this data compare to the *Not Even* data?

In *Not Even*, our key finding was that women's employment did not improve over the three and a half theater seasons studied, and actually was lower in the final season than it had been in the first. Comparing the earlier data to the current set reinforces the upward trend for women playwrights and the smaller upward trend for non-union women actors. While the union women have trended upwards as well, they have seen very little change over the last three seasons. Women directors has fluctuated the most, and it is hard to see any trend in this group, which currently has a lower level of representation than it did in the 11-12 season, even though it was above 50% in the 17-18 season.

The absence of a director trend across all of the data makes a very strong case for framing of gender parity as a concept that requires continued advocacy, rather than a mark to be achieved.

How does budget size affect representation?

Women were still less represented in the highest paying jobs as playwrights and union actors.

As in the previous report, I considered the type of Actors' Equity contract used by theater companies as a means to examine employment by budget size. While Actors' Equity is the union for actors and stage managers, and sets rates for their salaries, the salaries for directors and playwrights often fall in line with what an actor is paid. The theaters in the Bay Area that pay the highest salaries to actors are also the ones that have the largest overall budgets and highest profiles. So, although I am not able to divide by budget size, dividing by type of contract has a similar effect.

I divided the data into the same three contract types as in *Not Even*:

- **Non-Union/Union Code:** Non-union shows do not use Equity actors. Pay rates can vary wildly, but artists are typically offered a stipend. Union Codes allow Equity actors to work without benefit of contract. Like non-union shows, pay rates can vary significantly, but all artists on union code projects typically receive some kind of stipend. We have two union codes available for use in the Bay Area: the Bay Area Project Policy (BAPP) and the Member Production Code (MPC). Both have limits on rehearsal hours, size of theatre, total number of performances and more. The BAPP stipulates that no one can be paid more than the Equity actors,

so other artists working on BAPP productions receive a stipend that is equal to or less than the union members' stipend. The MPC is used by Equity members to produce their own work, and is not available to theatre companies. The MPC has no required stipend.

- **Equity Contract without Health Weeks:** These lower level Equity contracts require that the actor is paid a weekly salary, but do not require the producer to contribute additional money to Actors' Equity's healthcare fund. A union actor working on this level of contract will not gain any eligibility for union health care coverage. Pay rates here are between \$240 - -\$275/week for the union actor. Non-union actors working on these types of contracts may receive a stipend or a weekly salary depending on the company. In the Bay Area, these contracts include: Modified Bay Area Theatre Agreement (MBAT) *Tier 1 only*, Special Appearance Agreement (SA), Theatre for Young Audiences Agreement (TYA) *per performance contract only*.
- **Equity Contract with Health Weeks:** When an Equity contract includes health weeks, it means that for each week the actor works, the producer not only pays their salary, but also makes a contribution to the Actors' Equity health care fund. Actors who work enough weeks in a year at theatres that offer health weeks are eligible for union health care coverage. Salary minimums for these contracts can range between \$250-\$1000/week. The health care contribution is an additional \$160-\$170/week. Not all of these contracts allow for non-union actors to work on the same show as union actors, but when they do, the non-union actors can be paid a stipend or a weekly salary. These contracts include: Modified Bay Area Theatre Agreement (MBAT) *Tier 2 only*, Bay Area Theatre Agreement (BAT), Guest Artist Agreement (GA), Letter of Agreement (LOA), League of Resident Theatres Agreement (LORT), Theatre for Young Audiences Agreement (TYA) *weekly contract only*.

For additional details about Actors' Equity contracts, please visit the Actors' Equity website at www.actorsequity.org, but please note that the Rulebooks Library is no longer available to non-members.

After sorting the data from the current crop of 605 shows, here were some of the most interesting trends:

- Women playwrights had only 3 of 10 productions at the highest tier, and 3.5 of 10 productions at the lowest tier.

- Women directors worked in equal proportions at the lowest and highest tier, which was still less than half of the available jobs.
- Non-union men and women worked at near parity to each other in all 3 tiers.
- Union women worked the least at the highest tier, dropping to just over 4 of 10 union jobs at that level. At the two lower tiers, they took over half the union jobs.
- At the highest tier, the number of union women actors working is 613 artists. This is not only significantly smaller than the numbers of union men actors working (864 artists) but also smaller than the numbers of non-union women (669 artists) and non-union men (643 artists). **This imbalance suggests that union contracts are biased towards male actors.**
- Non-binary artists were only represented in the lowest tier as playwrights and directors, and while seen in all three tiers as non-union actors, they were mostly at the lowest tier.

It's also worth noting that there are 321 union shows with health weeks and 45 union shows without health weeks. So although women had majority representation in the without health weeks category for directors and union and non-union actors, this still represents less than 10% of the total shows in the overall data set.

	Non-Union/Union Code 236 shows	Union Shows No Health Weeks 45 shows	Union Shows with Health Weeks 321 Shows
Women Playwrights	35% 133 artists	45% 28 artists	30% 139 artists
Men Playwrights	64% 239 artists	55% 34 artists	70% 330 artists
Trans Playwrights	1% 4 artists	0% 0 artists	0% 0 artists
Women Directors	44% 146 artists	57% 29 artists	44% 184 artists
Men Directors	56% 184 artists	43% 22 artists	56% 233 artists
Trans Directors	<1% 1 artist	0% 0 artists	0% 0 artists
Women Union Actors	54% 68 artists	57% 64 artists	43% 613 artists
Men Union Actors	46% 57 artists	43% 53 artists	57% 864 artists
Trans Union Actors	0% 0 artists	0% 0 artists	0% 0 artists
Women Non-Union Actors	49% 873 artists	51% 73 artists	51% 669 artists
Men Non-Union Actors	50% 878 artists	47% 67 artists	49% 643 artists
Trans Non-Union Actors	1% 16 artists	2% 3 artists	<1% 6 artists

Table 3: Women were still less represented in the highest paying jobs

How does this data compare to the *Not Even* data?

Though not at parity, women artists have increased representation in almost every category, including highest paying jobs.

At the highest paying level, more women are working as directors, playwrights and actors, and proportions have increased as well, by as much as 7%.

The 'glass proscenium' may still exist, but may be getting thinner.

Do new plays have better parity than classics?

- Women wrote 5 out of 100 of the shows counted from prior to 1960.
- Women wrote 4 out of 10 of the shows counted from between 1960 and 2018.
- Women wrote 4 out of 10 of the shows counted from between 2000 and 2018.

Though an answer to this question seems obvious to many, the reason to ask it is because many folks I've talked to, especially those who work mostly with new plays, are very eager to blame 'the canon' of classic plays for the lack of gender parity.

And while the shows from prior to 1960 (the 'Classic' group) feature only 7 female playwrights total, which does drag overall numbers down, when we look at plays written from 1960 to present (the 'Modern' group), we are still at a 60/40 split favoring male writers.

Women wrote 5 out of 100 of the shows counted from prior to 1960. The 7 female writers & shows in the Classic group are: **Lillian Hellman** (*Watch on the Rhine*) **Aphra Behn** (*The Rover*), **Agatha Christie** (*The Mousetrap*), lyrics writers **Betty Green** and **Carolyn Leigh**, part of a 6 person writer team (*Peter Pan*), and **Dorothy Fields**, book writer on a 3 person team (*Something for the Boys*). I think it's also significant to note that two of the productions counted here (*The Rover* & *The Mousetrap*) were both part of a season of women playwrights at Shotgun Players. **Lillian Hellman** was also one of the lone classic womens' voices in 2015's *Not Even*.

Women wrote 4 out of 10 of the shows counted from between 1960 and 2018.

While there is a nearly ten-fold increase in the number of women playwrights produced in the modern group, this group still falls short of parity.

	Women	Men	Trans
Classic Shows (Pre 1960) 101 shows	5% 7 playwrights	95% 131 playwrights	0% 0 playwrights
Modern Shows (1960-2018) 500 shows	39% 293 playwrights	59% 464 playwrights	<1% 4 playwrights

Table 4: Classic and Modern Shows

How about slicing the set of plays even further and just looking at plays that are written since 2000 (the 'Millennial' group)? Unfortunately, there are no representation changes. ***The Modern and Millennial sets both have 4 of 10 shows written by women playwrights.***

	Women	Men	Trans
Millennial Shows (2000-2018) 420 shows	42% 271 playwrights	58% 369 playwrights	1% 4 playwrights

Table 5: Millennial Shows

How does this data compare to the *Not Even* data set?

Women playwrights have slightly better representation in all three time periods. If we compare the data of these Classic, Modern and Millennial sets to the *Not Even* data, female playwrights have moved up a very slight percentage in all 3 groups.

With the next few questions, we will examine the ways that women working in one area of theater may affect the opportunities for women in another area. Taken in combination, we can also bring up the questions ‘do women artists tend to get ‘siloed’ into womens’ projects?’ and ‘do women artists get fewer resources to do their work?’

Do directors direct plays by writers of the same gender?

Both women and men directors work more often with other artists of their gender.

Women directors are more likely to direct plays by women writers and also work more often with women actors, both union and non-union. Men directors are more likely to work with male writers and actors. Male and female directors worked with trans playwrights and actors in equal numbers.

Also, although a slightly higher percentage of the shows directed by women were on union contract than shows directed by men, the higher total number of shows directed by men indicates that ***shows directed by men received more resources than shows directed by women.***

Shows Directed by Women 271 directors • 250 shows 37% Non-Union/Union Code 63% Union Contract			
	Women	Men	Trans
Playwrights	44% 131 artists	56% 165 artists	<1% 1 artist
Non Union Actors	56% 595 artists	43% 459 artists	1% 11 artists
Union Actors	46% 346 artists	54% 405 artists	0% 0 artists

Table 6: Shows directed by women

Shows Directed by Men 348 directors • 292 shows 41% Non-Union/Union Code 59% Union Contract			
	Women	Men	Trans
Playwrights	25% 100 artists	75% 300 artists	<1% 1 artist
Non Union Actors	46% 748 artists	54% 882 artists	1% 11 artists
Union Actors	41% 321 artists	59% 469 artists	0% 0 artists

Table 7: Shows directed by men

How does this compare to the data from the *Not Even* report?

Both women and men directors are working with more women playwrights and union and non-union actors than previously.

How does gender of playwright influence gender of characters in plays?

Women and men playwrights wrote with roughly a 55/45 split favoring their gender. Producing more female playwrights would help lead to greater opportunities for female actors.

Women wrote roles for 588 women actors and men wrote roles for 1460 women actors. However, although men wrote more total roles for women, there are a few other factors at play.

- *Total number of plays with male writers is more than two times the total number of plays with female writers.*
- *Plays by men have a larger average cast size than plays by women.*
Average cast size for male playwrights is roughly nine actors and for female playwrights the average cast size is just under six actors. This can partly be

explained by looking at the fact that male playwrights are better represented as writers of classic plays, which tend to have larger casts than contemporary plays.

The budget related data (see *table 3*) shows that men playwrights get over two thirds of the productions at the highest budget level. This, plus the smaller cast sizes for women writers suggest that **women playwrights are still working on a smaller scale and with fewer resources than their male counterparts.**

Shows written by Women or All Woman Teams			
199 playwrights•178 shows 35% Non-Union/Union Code 65% Union Contract			
	Women	Men	Trans
Directors	63% 122 artists	37% 72 artists	0% 0 artists
Union Actors	53% 243 artists	47% 217 artists	0% 0 artists
Non Union Actors	59% 345 artists	40% 234 artists	1% 7 artists

Table 8: Shows written by Women

Shows written by Men or All Men Teams			
486 playwrights•366 shows 39% Non-Union/Union Code 61% Union Contract			
	Women	Men	Trans
Directors	38% 174 artists	62% 282 artists	0% 0 artists
Union Actors	39% 435 artists	61% 677 artists	0% 0 artists
Non Union Actors	47% 1025 artists	52% 1137 artists	<1% 11 artists

Table 9: Shows written by Men

How does this data compare to the *Not Even* data?

Both male and female playwrights have moved towards writing more gender balanced scripts. In *Not Even*, playwrights had written with a 60/40 split favoring their own gender.

How often do casts include more than 50% actors of one gender?

Plays with more than 50% male actors are one and a half times more common than plays with more than 50% female actors.

Male playwrights wrote just over half of the plays with more than 50% female actors, but significantly more of the plays with more than 50% male actors. Women directors are more than half of the directors who direct plays with more than 50% female actors, ***but women get significantly fewer opportunities to direct plays with more than 50% male actors.*** Majority female cast shows were almost equally likely to be produced at the union and non-union level, but two thirds of majority male cast shows were produced at the union level, suggesting that ***shows with majority male casts had more access to resources.***

Union women actors get more jobs on majority female cast shows and union men actors get more jobs on majority male cast shows, but when comparing total numbers of artists working, ***more than twice as many male union actors are employed in the majority male cast shows as women union actors in the majority female cast shows, again suggesting an imbalance of access to resources.***

Majority Female Cast 203 shows 48% Non-Union/Union Code 52% Union Contract			
	Women	Men	Trans
Playwright	48% 161 artists	51% 169 artists	1% 3 artists
Director	55% 156 artists	44% 125 artists	<1% 1 artist
Union Actors	63% 270 artists	37% 158 artists	0% 0 artists
Non Union Actors	68% 822 artists	31% 381 artists	1% 7 artists

Table 10: Majority Female Cast Shows

Majority Male Cast 268 shows 35% Non-Union/Union Code, 65% Union Contract			
	Women	Men	Trans
Playwright	20% 81 artists	80% 318 artists	0% 0 artists
Director	35% 126 artists	65% 236 artists	0% 0 artists
Union Actors	32% 302 artists	68% 633 artists	0% 0 artists
Non Union Actors	36% 537 artists	64% 959 artists	1% 9 artists

Table 11: Majority Male Casts

22% of shows had equal numbers of roles for men and women and were twice as likely to be written by a male playwright. Women and men directors worked on these shows in nearly equal numbers. Like majority male cast shows, these shows were more often produced by union theaters than non-union theaters, again ***indicating more access to resources for shows with equal numbers in the casts.***

Shows with Equal Male/Female Casts 130 Shows 35% Non-Union/Union Code 65% Union Contract			
	Women	Men	Trans
Playwright	34% 58 artists	66% 114 artists	0% 0 artists
Director	48% 74 artists	52% 80 artists	0% 0 artists
Union Actors	49% 164 artists	51% 174 artists	0% 0 artists
Non Union Actors	50% 255 artists	49% 245 artists	1% 5 artists

Table 12: Shows with equal casts

How does this data compare to the *Not Even* data?

Plays with majority male casts are no longer more than half of what gets produced. A startling piece of information uncovered by *Not Even* was that plays with majority male casts were 55% of the total shows in the data set, just over twice as many shows as the majority female cast shows. In the current data set, the even gendered and majority female cast shows have both gained ground.

To return to the additional questions from the top of this section:

Do women artists get ‘siloed’ into working on women’s projects?

Are women artists generally given fewer resources than men artists?

Women Playwrights

- Were more likely to write majority female cast plays than majority male cast plays
- Were more likely to be directed by a woman director
- Got fewer than one third of productions at the highest budget levels

Women Directors

- Were more likely to be asked to direct a play by a female playwright
- Were less likely to be asked to direct a play with a majority male cast (which typically have more resources)

Women Actors

- Were more concentrated in plays with female playwrights
- Were more concentrated in plays with female directors
- Worked as non-union actors in greater numbers than as union actors, even at the highest contract levels

Women Union Actors

- Were closer to parity in shows directed by women
- Were more likely than men union actors to be cast in shows written by women

It seems that women directors and women playwrights frequently collaborate, women playwrights write roles for women actors, and women actors in a majority female cast will probably have a woman director. It's not exactly a silo, but there does seem to be a correlation between the different jobs that women do in theater. Looking at the resources, the difference in total production numbers for women versus men show how few opportunities there are for women at the highest budget levels, and how often women directors, playwrights and actors work with fewer resources than men.

What are the trends for Trans/Non-binary artists?

For the purposes of Counting Actors, any artist using a pronoun other than he or she is counted in the 'Trans/Non-Binary' category. As pronouns have become more common as part of artist bios in programs, identifying these artists has become easier. In some cases where I wasn't sure if an artist identified in this group, I also did internet searches for interviews and other writing where a playwright or director might have discussed their pronouns. I fully acknowledge that Counting Actors did not have the resources to ask artists how they self-identify. As mentioned in the introduction, this is one of the reasons that I've chosen to stop counting.

Here is the data that the project has collected for shows with Trans/Non-Binary playwrights, directors and actors.

- The project counted no Trans/Non-Binary union actors
- There was 1 Trans/Non-Binary director
- There were 4 Trans/Non-Binary playwrights
- There were 25 Trans/Non-Binary non-union actors

The Trans-Non-Binary actor count trended upwards from 2015-2018 from one actor in the 14-15 season to ten actors in the first half of the 2018 season. (See Table 3).

All of the Trans/Non-Binary playwrights were in the 'Millennial' group, of writers from 2000-2018. They were **MJ Kaufman** (*Sagittarius Ponderosa*), and **Nick Hadikwa Mwaluko** (*Waafrica 123*, *Participants*, and *Shifting Spaces*). It's significant to note that *Participants* and *Shifting Spaces* were both short play evenings featuring multiple writers.

In terms of budget, ***all four of these productions were in the Non-Union/Union Code category***. Sixteen of the Trans/Non-Binary actors worked on shows in this category, three worked on shows in the Union Contract without Health Weeks category, and six worked in the Union Contract with Health Weeks category (see Table 6).

Waafrica 123 was also the only show with a Trans/Non-Binary director. Of the other 3 shows with Trans/Non-Binary writers, two had female directors, and one had a male director.

The twenty-five Trans/Non-Binary actors worked in twenty-two different shows, and were not the majority in any cast. Those shows were more likely to be directed by women and written by men, and featured male and female actors in almost equal numbers.

Shows with Trans/Non-Binary Actors 22 shows, 64% Non-Union, Union Code 36% Union Contract			
	Women	Men	Trans/Non-Binary
Playwrights	38% 20 artists	55% 29 artists	8% 4 artists
Directors	60% 25 artists	38% 16 artists	2% 1 artist
Actors	43% 97 artists	46% 104 artists	11% 25 artists

Table 13: Shows with Trans/Non-Binary Actors

I have a lot of questions about representation of Trans/Non-Binary artists. For me and for many others, advocating for female/male gender parity in theater has always been couched in the fact that women and men are each roughly 50% of the general population, as well as additional numbers about percentages of women and men who are members of Actors' Equity, graduates of college arts programs, etc.

So my first question was: How many trans/non-binary people are there, followed immediately by how many trans/non-binary folks are making theater in the SF Bay Area?

As additional research for this report, I've found data that suggests that LGBT people make up 4.5% of the US population and that .6% of those are trans/non-binary people, as well as additional data that California has a .76% trans/non-binary population and that San Francisco is 15.4% LGBT. This data comes from a 2017 Gallup poll, and a 2016 Williams Institute survey.

Actors' Equity's most recent report that includes member demographic data is from 2017, and has no numbers for trans/non-binary people. Member demographic data is self-reported by roughly 85% of membership, and didn't have an option to self-identify as trans/non-binary until after the 2017 report was compiled. Anecdotally, I've heard that we do have some trans/non-binary members in the SF Bay Area region, but that they may not be publically identifying as trans/non-binary because they fear it will limit their casting. Theatre Bay Area doesn't keep gender related data of members, but has shared with me some data from a gender audit of the TBA Awards, which shows that 25 awards participants or .64% were counted as 'other' and an additional 222 or 5.7% were counted as 'prefer not to say'.

This lack of clear information about trans/non-binary representation in theater suggests to me that more accurate counting and study of playwright, director and actor gender identity is a much needed piece of research.

MOVING FORWARD

Throughout this report, I've compared the *Still Not Even* data to the data from *Not Even*. In many aspects, the numbers in *Still Not Even* are closer to parity than the *Not Even* numbers. It gives me hope to see these changes, but there is still work to be done.

We have not reached 50% for any group other than the non-union women actors, who in many cases are working on the same productions as union men actors, and not receiving equal pay for equal work. There is growth in the numbers of women playwrights, directors and actors, growth in numbers of plays with majority female casts, and an upward trend over time for female playwrights. We are making progress, but it is slow, and our gains feel fragile, especially in our current political climate, where women's rights and women's credibility seem to be under serious attack.

I am fearful about how others will distill this report, especially those people who do not have the time or energy or interest for a deep dive into the data. Will they see a headline, or a single graphic image and think that gender parity is solved or fixed? Will that allow those busy people, who may also hold decision making power in a Bay Area theater company, to feel that they don't have to think about parity anymore and that they can relax and go about their decision making business the way they always have?

There is a real danger of back-sliding if we don't continue to keep gender parity at the forefront of our decision making. Gender stereotype and patriarchal thinking are so pervasive in every aspect of our culture. Even those of us who are regularly thinking about gender parity are not immune to these influences.

During the writing of this report, I visited the Exploratorium (the Bay Area's hands-on science museum) with my partner. Within an exhibit about identity, we found a set of playing cards for an implicit bias test about gender and career. The task/experiment was to see how quickly the player could sort the cards into two piles: 1) women's names and 'business' words and 2) men's names and 'home' words.

As I flipped through the cards, I felt triumphant at my speed, sorting cards reading Jeff and George into the same pile as the card that said baby, and cards reading Pam and Susan into the pile with the resume and computer cards. "I'm such an awesome feminist, I'm crushing this!" was ringing through my brain, when I looked down to see the kitchen card in the Pam/Susan pile. In my moment of pride, my bias seized its opportunity and took charge.

So back to those busy decision makers - in their moment of celebration or relaxation or pride about the upward trajectory of gender parity in the region, what will they overlook because of their unconscious biases? A marketing campaign that plays on sexualizing women of color? A casting decision that shuts union women out from a job that includes health care benefits? Hiring women directors for the shows on the second stage or the youth stage but not the main stage? Programming trans playwrights for readings or in a one-act night but not for full productions?

All of these are actions that include women and non-binary people, but keep them from thriving with true parity and equality of resources. And there are many structures and systems that keep us from parity, from the competitive nature of the audition and casting process to unpaid apprenticeships to schedules that don't mesh with the realities of parenting young children.

Scrubbing the remaining bias and blind spots from our organizations will actually take more energy, not less. It's as if we've swept our floors and picked up the obvious clutter, but now we need to get into the corners, under the furniture, and finally put away all of the stuff that has accumulated in the junk drawer. Bias and blind spots are sneaky and hard to see, and I think even more so when you're feeling like you've done the work and done it well.

So for those at theater companies who feel like they're on top of gender parity in terms of how they fit in to the local theater community, stay vigilant! Continue to examine the systems and structures of your organization to search for additional ways to support and pay women theater makers. For those who aren't affiliated with an organization, I think that the conclusion from *Not Even* still holds a lot of value. In a nutshell, we all make choices and our choices are where we hold power to advocate for gender parity.

And most importantly, let's find ways to keep talking to each other about gender parity. The Counting Actors monthly blog post was intended as a tool to start conversations, so let's keep sharing with each other what we're feeling, seeing and noticing about gender parity in the region.

Let's keep talking - in the audition waiting area, on the theater related social media groups, at board meetings, opening night parties, strike, in classrooms, in the wings, on a 10-minute rehearsal break, the box office, the development office, the shop, the writer's group meeting, the lobby, everywhere.

Let's keep listening as well, and seeking to do so intersectionally, with folks of a variety of ages, genders, ethnicities as well as a variety of disciplines within theatermaking, with folks from large organizations, small organizations and artists who work independently without organizational support.

I can't wait to hear what we all have to say!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to Martha Richards and WomenArts for commissioning this second report. Your advocacy is tireless and your expertise is profound. Your extensive efforts in the field of gender parity advocacy over time is truly inspirational.

Thank you as well to Christine Young and the Works by Women San Francisco blog for continuing to provide a home and distribution platform for the monthly blog posts for over five years. This infrastructure is greatly appreciated.

Thank you to the folks who've shared show statistics over the years. Many folks contributed a single show, but there were a few regular contributors who gave show statistics month after month after month, most notably Matt Weimer and Karen Thomson Hall. The depth and breadth of this report is because of the contributors, who ensured I had shows from all corners of our nine county region.

The Bay Area is so fortunate to have a variety of folks advocating for gender parity via various groups and platforms. I thank the Yeah I Said Feminist Facebook salon, the instigators of the upcoming Bay Area Womens' Theater Festival (March-May 2020), the Gender Parity committee at Theatre Bay Area, and the Bay Area Liason Committee of Actors' Equity, especially Kelly Ground and Brian Herndon, for providing additional insight related to contracts used in the region.

Thanks always to Kevin.

And finally, thanks to all who've used the data collected via this project to make change and promote gender parity. I've heard from students who've cited the previous report as part of a thesis paper, professors who've put the report in their syllabus, development staff who use it when applying for funding, artistic leaders who keep a copy of the key graphic sheet on the wall in their office, and a board member who brought the report to a board meeting which led to a playwright parity pledge in season planning at the organization.

Thank you all.

DATA FAQ

How were shows selected and collected?

The show selection criteria were:

- **The performance took place in the 9 county San Francisco/Bay Area:** San Francisco, Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, Marin, Sonoma, San Mateo, Solano, and Napa counties OR the contract's city of origin was within the 9 county San Francisco/Bay Area (this typically excludes commercial productions of recent Broadway hits that are on a national tour).
- **The company pays their actors:** no school performances or shows done by a company that identifies as a community theater or amateur theater. There are some unpaid actors included in the count, typically working as interns/apprentices/students on a production that also included union actors.
- **The performance was a full production:** no staged readings, developmental showings, etc.

To collect show data, audience members and artists answered questions in an online submission form. The vast majority of shows collected were submitted by someone who either saw the show or was involved in the production. Show submissions came from actors, directors, playwrights, stage managers, technical crew, producers, and artistic and administrative staff. In the first few months of the project, there were a few shows that I collected via online programs (fewer than 15 of the total shows counted).

Why are there so many more playwrights and directors than shows?

Some of the shows included were written or directed by teams. Other shows might include multiple short plays, which may be written by more than one playwright and/or directed by more than one director. For musicals, the director category includes both directors and musical directors, and the playwright category includes writers of the book, lyrics and/or music.

Did you count transgender/gender non-conforming artists?

Yes. Any artist who self-referred with the pronoun she/her was counted as female and he/him was counted as male. If the artist used pronouns such as zhe/hir/they, they were counted as transgender/non-binary. Mostly this info was gleaned from program bios, but in a few cases, I searched online for interviews with artists that included questions about their preferred pronouns.

I fully acknowledge that my counting method privileges a female/male gender binary and as my understanding of the gender spectrum has evolved, I've come to recognize that to report gender accurately requires the artists to self-report. I strongly urge organizations with more funding and organizational infrastructure than me and my largely volunteer project to track gender via artist self-reporting in future data gathering efforts.

Why didn't you count race/ethnicity in this project?

I felt that an accurate reporting of race/ethnicity would have required all artists involved to self-report their ethnic identity/racial background, and given the resources I had available for this project, I didn't have the capacity to do that. Asking those in the audience to speculate on the ethnicity of the actors they saw was something I was not comfortable doing. I urge organizations with more funding and organizational infrastructure to track race/ethnicity in future data gathering efforts.

Why didn't you count age in this project?

Like race/ethnicity, accurate reporting of age would have required artists to self-report. I was not comfortable with asking others to speculate on the age of actors they saw, and collecting self-reported data was beyond the capacity of this volunteer project. I urge organizations with more funding and organizational infrastructure to track age in future data gathering efforts.

Who do you count as a writer for adaptations and translations?

When a show is adapted from non-theatrical source material, the person doing the adaptation is counted as the playwright, not the author of the original material. For translations, the original playwright is counted, not the translator.

How do you count doublecast roles?

For doublecast roles, both actors are counted as full performers. Most often, this happens with children who alternate performances.

How do you count musicians?

Counting musicians depends on what they are asked to do in the performance. If the musicians are not onstage and do not have any lines, they aren't counted as actors. If they are seen onstage, it depends on whether or not they are given lines and/or blocking, wear costumes that integrate with the show's design aesthetic, have character names or are simply credited as 'musician'. This is probably the most important counting related reason for seeing the shows live versus using a program or online resource to count.

Did you include understudies in your actor count?

No. Understudies are integrated into productions in very different ways at theaters in the Bay Area. In some cases they are paid a full weekly salary and their photo and bio is included in the program along with the cast, and elsewhere they may be uncompensated and/or uncredited. They may be only hired as an understudy, or also acting in the show in a smaller role with understudying a lead or larger role included in their job description. Because of the great variety of understudy compensation and obligation, I chose to leave them out of this report.

ABOUT THE STUDY COLLABORATORS

VALERIE WEAK is an actor, teaching artist and gender parity advocate. She has performed at San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, CenterREP, Word for Word and Shotgun Players, and many other SF Bay Area Companies. On-camera work includes *13 Reasons Why* as well as industrials and indie films. She teaches for American Conservatory Theater in their Young Conservatory and Studio programs. She is excited to be part of the Instigator team for the inaugural Bay Area Womens' Theater Festival (Spring 2020) and grounded by recent participation in the CalShakes Transformative Justice Training cohort.

MARTHA RICHARDS is the Founder and Executive Director of WomenArts, a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing visibility and opportunities for women artists in all genres. Prior to WomenArts, Richards served as Executive Director of Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College and as Managing Director of StageWest, a LORT theatre in Springfield, Massachusetts. Richards has a B.A. in Economics from the U.C. Berkeley and a J.D. from the U.C. Hastings College of Law. She is a member of the California bar and was one of the founding directors of California Lawyers for the Arts.