



This official statement was composed, reviewed, and unanimously approved by all team members of Argent Combat on Thursday, 07 January 2021.

Hello, Argent Combatants!

We hope that you all remain safe, healthy, and kind. This message is to offer comfort in these tumultuous times and to make abundantly and unapologetically clear who we are as an organization. It is also to address a horrifying observation that we feel necessary to bring to light. In our hearts, we know that our prospective, current, and alumni students; colleagues; staff; collaborative artists and organizations; and our supporters and followers are, as a majority, agents of compassion. We have had the absolute honor and privilege to witness so many of you individually step up to defend the rights of others and individually take a step back in order to hold space for and to amplify the voices of marginalized people.

We are so inspired by and proud of your tireless advocacy and efforts to support those we love. Though our annual student survey results are still pouring in, it is easy to see how diverse each magnificent thread is in the tapestry we are all weaving together as a young community and educational institution. YOU make Argent Combat the institution of agency, advocacy, compassion, consent, empowerment, education, affirmation, and honest communication that it aspires to be. This is an incredible gift for which our words can't rightly articulate. All that our staff can do is support your kind efforts as best we can in the ways we can navigate efficiently, and continue to be inspired to reflect your advocacy and kindness.

This said, it has come to light within the Theatre community that some individuals who threatened democracy on January 6th have been identified as Theatre professionals, at least two of which have sought career advancement through studying the art of Stage Combat, per their networking pages, social media presence, and posted resumes. Fortunately, upon our administrative research to date, none are associated with: Argent Combat's staff; our collaborative artists, instructors, artisans or theatrical prop artisans; venues; and/or organizational colleagues. However, we find it would be irresponsible to completely rule out the possibility that current and future prospective students could be individuals whose life-missions and

ideologies are contrary to our mission as an organization and could be harmful to our beloved student body, colleagues, and affiliated organizations.

Upon examination and confirmation of details, we also find it repugnant, unforgivable, and abhorrent that said identified individuals came armed to the Capitol Building with intent or contemplation to cause harm to individuals. This is something we not only are very vocally against but actively seek to abolish. Though we advocate the rights to peacefully protest and to tell honest stories with narrative clarity through the art of Stage Combat, we are philosophically a pacifist organization and support democracy and the rights of our beloved students, colleagues, affiliate organizations, and supporters. That is, so long as your causes reflect equal rights and seek to empower our community as opposed to weaken it with petty, selfish, bigoted, and (to be perfectly frank) idiotic rhetoric.

To state the purpose of this message simply: If you, in any way, sympathize with the individuals who sought to overthrow American democracy on January 6th, we have no patience for your vacuous and harmful rhetoric and (in our ongoing and tenacious work to be an organization which is very vocally anti-fascist, anti-racist, anti-misogynist, anti-homophobic, anti-transphobic, anti-ableist, and anti-abuse and r*pe cultures)* encourage you to take this time to not pursue advancing your career as an Actor Combatant with us.

**Addendum: It was brought to our attention by a beloved student that we neglected to specify that we are also passionately and vocally against religious discrimination. In light of the egregiously anti-Semitic and Islamophobic messages and behavior of the Capitol Building insurrectionists, we feel it is very important to express this to our students- No matter your creed or religious background, you are warmly and enthusiastically welcomed in our community. Special thanks to this student for bringing this oversight error to our attention!*

If you support what happened at the Capitol Building on that day, we are not the organization for you. Our colleagues, students, vendors, affiliate and parent organizations, and venues are not for you.

Argent Combat is a young and compassionate non-profit institution; all of our staff, colleagues, vendors, venues, and students use their time, platforms, and talents to cultivate altruistic tenants and to tell honest stories with narrative clarity, amplifying the voices of our loved ones who have been silenced unjustly. If you support the activities that took place at the Capitol Building, we will actively seek to ensure that you have no place in our community and will, furthermore, actively seek to extinguish any efforts you have to advance your career in our mission's narrative.

The truth is, though we recognize free speech as an inexorable right, we will happily remind you that your actions and your words have consequences. You have a right to say and do what

you will, but we are entitled to exercise our same inalienable right to ban you from our offerings and to express concerns to our colleagues as your personal missions are contrary to theirs, should they seek our confidential professional consultation. We have no time or patience for bigotry of any kind.

You are not a “warrior” if your mission is to harm marginalized people and/or their inexorable rights as American citizens and artists: You are a sniveling, entitled, pathetic coward if you support the terroristic attack on democracy that our nation witnessed. You are a liability and a physical manifestation of the very most obnoxious, harmful, and pathetic philosophies our organization seeks to combat daily.

Argent Combat is committed to the policy that all students shall have equal access to programs without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation, except in those cases where specific physical limitations prohibit participation in performing the required skills in a manner safe to themselves or to their participants. No student shall be afforded unfair advantages or privileges. Argent Combat and its students will conduct themselves in a manner that respects the dignity and rights of all persons without prejudice.

We respect all students' legal and personal rights, personal freedom, and privacy, and will preserve students' anonymity if discussing aspects of their work with others and will not disclose confidential information without consent from the student unless required by law. Please note that law requires that we report terroristic threats, treason, and the attempts and contemplations thereof under Art.III.S3.C1.1.2 of the Constitution. We will uphold that duty, and gladly, if it means that our beloved student base, colleagues, and affiliated organizations can confidently continue to exercise their inexorable rights to have their voices heard, to keep all students and audiences from harm, and to highlight the aspects of humanity that uplift us all as opposed to hinder us as a nation and artistic community through the pathetic and narrow lens of bigotry.

All concerns and questions can be addressed to brittany@argentcombat.com.



Brittany Holdahl

Brittany Holdahl
Executive Director, Argent Combat