

To the leaders of the business formerly named none/such, now called /none.

As it stands, your performativity is as clear as your privilege. Fortunately, there are ways to change that.

We do not believe in cancellation. We believe in consequences. We do not believe all consequences must be painful. We do not believe in coordinated revenge. We believe in resource-driven, collective recovery that redirects away from punitiveness and towards restoration. Otherwise, we run the risk of strengthening the very systems we seek to dismantle. Mincing words sabotage these intentions. As such, the time to be “called in” has passed. The recovery and wellbeing of those affected are our top priority.

In 2023, we call your attention towards a reality in which victims of violence are unafraid of speaking truth to power. The manner in which those experiences are shared is neither for us to decide nor the objective of this letter. With so many to have come forward, the objective of this letter was also not written for its contents to be discussed behind closed doors. As lives were clearly put in danger, this letter is now a collective response to severe incompetence and abuses of power too dangerous not to discuss openly. We wonder how many of your current artists know what you have done and allowed to happen.

There is no “listening and learning” without external efforts to unlearn. You have made many promises, yet promises don’t pay bills. Apology is not about who is right or wrong, but restoring health from harm.

Our next message will outline a restoration curriculum, which upon completion can serve as an example of men actively working to overcome systematic internalized violence. As your profile grows, this is an opportunity for you to contribute to the disruption of various systems of oppression within the nightlife industry both nationwide and abroad. It is also a chance to prove the consistency of your values and commitment to the mission you initially sold to the artists most deeply affected by your shortcomings – before your rebranding.

We hope you take that chance. Here are the reasons why:

You announced this booking agency amongst friends in April of 2022, with the intention of “bridging gaps and building communities”. ABCD and BIPOC across the queer spectrum were artists you claimed to highlight. The amount of accepted invitations versus the number of available agents quickly became untenable. As workloads snowballed, suggestions to scale back became warnings as early as June 2022.

Instead of taking them seriously, each notice was downplayed with increasingly misogynistic deflections of accountability. Meanwhile, artist payments rarely matched the artist fees initially agreed upon. Graphic designers were underpaid. Invoices and emails went unpaid and unanswered entirely. Communication amongst yourselves was just as untenable. Professionally, it caused gigs to break down and fall through. Personally, it created a gaslighting environment taking heavy tolls on mental health.

However, not everyone experienced this breakdown. Artists with friends in high places, seemingly higher profiles, and extracurricular interests were given outsize care and attention. Relationships between you and your artists painfully blurred the line between professional and personal. Concern became alarm as deflection became outright denial of dysfunction, causing 14 of your 25 artists to leave the agency in less than six months. All of them were ABCD and BIPOC. Although majority female, a straight cisgender white roster led by majority straight cisgender white men remained.

Even then, artists with perceived higher profiles were not immune from the clout culture you participate in. One of your international headlining artists found themselves playing an opening slot to an empty main floor at Institut Fuer Zukunft. Meanwhile, two of your leaders played to a full main floor hours later. The communication gap reached its most dangerous when one of your queer, BIPOC, non-German speaking artists arrived in Berlin and you did not communicate with them until 18 days later. In that time, they experienced several racist, xenophobic, and transphobic encounters. One xenophobic encounter with police could have been avoided had you been there in escort.

While multiple things can be true at once, these are not simply cases of workload overwhelm experienced by a nascent agency. As more artists come forward, it is clear that you were fully aware of your dysfunction yet feigned ignorance when the artist doesn’t have as much perceived experience or social capital to challenge you. Accountability and humility were decisions actively avoided since your inception. The slow defensiveness and outright silence of other /none leaders speak to their own complicity. The amount of financial investment powering /none makes it equally clear that resources to prevent all of this were well within your reach. Instead, it was used to throw parties and further silence discrimination.

Some of you did not even know this discrimination was happening. Which not only speaks to the lack of communication amongst yourselves, but also your trust in each other and priorities as a business. Claiming to be novice and experiencing growing pains only after things go irreversibly wrong by way of man-splaining is manipulative. Using your artists as social currency is exploitative. To be repeatedly made aware of harm yet repeatedly look the other way is abusive at worst. It has left your own counterparts vulnerable to guilt by association, when they would have otherwise offered to resolve several issues. It also made a severe impact on the mental health of several artists, and cost them unacceptable amounts of money. At what cost do you carry on as if nothing happened?

***This letter was composed by former members of /none.***