

THE MANIFATSO

The Beliefs of Your Plus-Size Students and Peers

1. Fat is not a bad word. Every body belongs on stage.
2. Skinny is not the standard. A person's body does not determine their ability to perform. The idea of a "neutral body" (one that is thin, conventionally attractive, and often white) must be erased. A role not explicitly being plus-size does not immediately make it for thin people.
3. Check your biases. We will not be typecast as the funny one or the mother or the villain or the old man or the victim. Before you decide to cast a bigger body in one of those roles, ask yourself if their audition leads to that character, or if you are letting your perception of their body influence your opinion on them.
4. Romance is for everyone. Everyone finds love in their life, whether it be in a relationship, or within themselves. Thin bodies do not always have to equal the ingénue or romantic lead. Denying fat bodies the opportunity to play romantic roles is to say we do not deserve to be loved.
5. We are not being brave for being sexual.
6. We are not being brave for being loud.
7. We are not being brave for being on stage.
8. We will take up space.
9. We will not apologize for taking up space.
10. We will not simply be grateful for the opportunity that we have been given. We do not have to take an opportunity if it will not help us grow as artists.

11. We will not work harder than thin people to get the same treatment. We deserve that treatment already.
12. You will respect us as human beings. Our bodies are a part of who we are, but they do not define our worth.
13. We are not in charge of educating you. If you hold a bias towards a bigger body, it is your responsibility to curve it.
14. We are not “talented for plus-size people”. We are just talented. End of discussion.
15. We will make art powered by joy, not pain.
16. We stand with and in support of every other marginalized group.

Listen to us. We have voices and we deserve to be heard.
We may be scared to voice our thoughts, but if we say nothing,
nothing will change.

Written by Riley J Ellis and Charlotte Seaver