Society is in the midst of earth shattering events that will forever change the core of human history—the pandemic of Covid-19 and the heinous execution of George Floyd on the streets of Minneapolis.

As artists it is our job to illuminate the human experience—to strive and struggle to reveal the stories and the human toll of the global pandemics of racism and Covid-19.

The Phoenix Project proposes this: Just as protesters march to bring the actual events in focus, VCUarts can do the same. Let’s not wait until the cutting edge of racism and death diminish. It’s time for the Phoenix to rise.

How do we start? In Fall 2020, student groups are given the premise of a story or an aspect of a story drawn from actual events. Ideally, these students are from every discipline in VCUarts. Through instruction, each group will create their own unique presentation. Your difference will be your strength. No previous playwriting experience is necessary.

Interested theatre students—register for Assistant Professor David Toney’s Playwriting class (THEA 365) this Fall. Interested students and faculty from other VCUarts disciplines should email Sharon Ott (slott@vcu.edu).