

Statement of Erin Nanasi

My name is Erin Nanasi, and I am a woman who has survived sexual assault and domestic violence. I make this statement because I have always strived to encourage and embolden other survivors to tell their truth. I've written about my own experiences many times, hoping that one person might read my words, and realize they can stand up and say no more. But when it came to my experience at CTC, I was silent. This is my statement about what happened to me at Children's Theatre Conservatory, and why I am filing a civil suit.

Being a student at Children's Theatre was very complicated. On the one hand, we were privileged to be accepted into a nationally renowned children's theater program. We were honored, we were special, and we were envied. On the other hand, we were prey. We were told we were safe while being groomed, molested, and raped by our instructors and mentors. We were brainwashed by a megalomaniac into believing sexual contact between adults and children was perfectly normal. And when it all imploded, we were bullied by law enforcement, lawyers, teachers, and other students.

My abuser was Stephen Adamczak. He told me I was pretty, he paid attention to me, and one night, he gave me a ride home from rehearsal. He parked along Lake Harriet, and tried to rape me in his car. I told no one. Two of my friends were "having sex" with Adamczak, one who was 15, the other, 13. I knew of other students who were being abused, but what no one ever understood was we were programmed not to think of it as abuse.

Many of us have struggled to join this suit, myself included, because being a student at CTC was both wondrous and terrifying at the same time. I became a lighting designer because of CTC, and I also spent a lot of time in therapy, trying to come to grips with what happened to me there. I made incredible friends at CTC, and I also vividly remember being threatened by students when I was subpoenaed to testify in front of the grand jury.

For over 30 years, the survivors of CTC have been connected by a thread of trauma. Now, thanks to Jeff Anderson and Molly Burke, we are bound by a tapestry of truth. I have never been more proud of anyone than I am of the brave men and women who stand together to say no more. We will not be silent, we are no longer afraid, and we deserve to be heard.