

# Meet The Badass, All-Girl Theater Troupe That's Lin-Manuel Miranda-Approved

THE  
HUFFINGTON  
POST

These girls are NOT throwing away their shot.

by: Emma Gray

---

I was in the [room where it happened](#) — that is, the room where “Hamilton” creator Lin-Manuel Miranda won a “Fairy Godfather Award” just hours before [he won a Pulitzer Prize](#).

The award, given to both Lin and his father Luis A. Miranda, was on behalf of [Girl Be Heard](#), an all-girl, non-profit theater troupe whose goal is essentially to change the world, one artistic piece at a time. All of the shows the troupe puts on are made up of original works, written and performed by young women between the ages of 12 and 21.

The pieces tackle topics from bullying and body image to racial identity and police brutality. Let's just say that these young women are [not throwing away their shot](#). (“Hamilton” lovers, see what we did there?)

“Since its founding in 2011, Girl Be Heard has used theater to inspire activism and shed light on social justice issues,” Girl Be Heard co-founder and Executive Director Jessica Greer Morris said in a press release. “Its beyond our wildest dreams to celebrate two NYC heroes, Luis Miranda and his son Lin-Manuel, the ‘young, scrappy and hungry’ Shakespeare of our time.”

Girl Be Heard's dedication to putting “critical, human and civil rights issues center stage” fits quite naturally with the way that Miranda views theater as a vehicle for “human change.”



BRAD BARKET VIA GETTY IMAGES  
*Lin-Manuel Miranda with Girl Be Heard co-founder and Executive Director Jessica Greer Morris, and the young women who performed.*

(After his in-depth [interview and gender equality-themed freestyle with Emma Watson](#), it's clear that he's a feminist.)

“I saw ‘West Side Story’ for the first time in sixth grade, and there was a song about whether it’s better to live in Puerto Rico or here,” Miranda told The Huffington Post. “And when you’re a Puerto Rican kid growing up [in New York], you can’t believe that musical theater has addressed a question central to your daily life. I think it starts from there and goes outward. **Musicals address the topics that we face in our daily life, and they are transformative.** And they change the world in a very real way.”



BRAD BARKET VIA GETTY IMAGES

*Lin-Manuel and his father Luis Miranda, accepting Girl Be Heard's first ever Fairy Godfather Award.*

Like the thousands of people who enter the show's digital lottery each day, the young women of Girl Be Heard are endlessly inspired by Lin-Manuel's "Hamilton." At the luncheon on Thursday, where both Mirandas accepted their awards, the young women of Girl Be Heard performed original, "Hamilton"-inspired pieces. The scenes and songs addressed the immigrant experience, black womanhood and the power of female representation on stage.

“Lin-Manuel Miranda made Angelica [Schuyler] smart and conscious and frustrated by social expectations,” said 17-year-old Veronica Marks, during the performance. “And he not only let Eliza [Schuyler]’s voice into the narrative, he gave her the final word.”

*Watch Girl Be Heard member Jai Raphael do some feminist-themed freestyling:*

Halle Paredes, 16, who has been a part of Girl Be Heard for three years, told HuffPost exactly why it's so powerful to be a part of an all-girl theater group. “It's turned my voice from a whisper to a roar,” she said. “The leg up that theater has is that people want to listen.”

And ultimately, that's what Girl Be Heard is all about — creating opportunities for young women's stories to be heard, and demanding that people listen. “I felt transformed [after joining Girl Be Heard],” said Halle. “I realized my voice meant something.”