

A LETTER OF SOLIDARITY WITH OUR JULIET -
FRANCESCA AMEWUDAH-RIVERS

When news of Francesca Amewudah-Rivers' casting in Jamie Lloyd's production of Romeo and Juliet was announced so many people celebrated and welcomed this news. Many of us took to social media to shower our baby sis with love and congratulations- a huge deal for someone so young in their career. A huge rising talent. But then what followed was a too familiar horror that too many of us visible Black dark skinned performers have experienced. The racist and misogynistic abuse directed at such a sweet soul has been too much to bear. For a casting announcement of a play to ignite such twisted ugly abuse is truly embarrassing for those so empty and barren in their own lives that they must meddle in hateful abuse. Too many times Black performers - particularly Black actresses - are left to face the storm of online abuse after committing the crime of getting a job on their own. We welcome The Jamie Lloyd Company's statement and we hope that their statement will extend to committed emotional support for Francesca on her journey with the production. Too many times theatre companies, broadcasters, producers, steamers have failed to offer any help or support when their black artists face racist and misogynistic abuse. Reporting is too often left on the shoulders of the abused who are also then expected to promote said show.

We want to send a clear message to Francesca and all Black women performers who face this kind of abuse - WE see you. We see the art you manage to produce with not only the pressures that your white colleagues face but with the added traumatic hurdle of misogynoir. Those that came before you are by your side. Those waiting in the wings, are by your side. Allow yourself space to play and find joy in this role that your hard work and commitment has brought forth. We are so excited to watch you shine.
Every Tongue That Rises Up Against You Will Fall.

And to the keyboard warriors who feel discomfort in Our visibility, cry on the internet all you want, but We are here to stay.

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