



Artistic Director Theatre Company Denver Center for the Performing Arts

The Denver Center for the Performing Arts (DCPA) invites applications and nominations for the position of Artistic Director of the Theatre Company (TC).

The Artistic Director will have the opportunity to make a lasting impact and will help DCPA build on its 38-year record of superb service to the people of Denver and surrounding communities. The Artistic Director will serve as the leader of a remarkable ensemble of theatre artists, the steward of an illustrious tradition of creating and staging great productions, and the visionary of a new era of brilliant theatre. The ideal candidate will be an innovative, inspiring, and experienced leader; a creative and skilled theatre artist; a selfless colleague; a nationally recognized and imaginative director; a bold but judicious manager, and an eloquent evangelist for the power of theatre to create a more inclusive and compassionate community.

The Organization - History and Leadership

The Denver Center for the Performing Arts is the largest nonprofit theatre organization in the nation, presenting Broadway shows, and producing original theatre, musicals, and innovative, multimedia experiences. During the 2016 season, DCPA entertained 1.2 million guests in 887 performances of 43 productions and nearly 300 additional events. More than 105,000 students of all ages were served by its arts education programs. The organization had a budget of \$66 million in the 2016 fiscal year and employs more than 1,000 full-, part-time, and contractual staff.

Theatre in Denver has a long and illustrious history, nurtured by the vision of extraordinary civic leaders. The origins of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts go back to 1953 when it opened as the Denver Civic Theatre. Soon thereafter, the legendary heiress, Helen Bonfils – actress, theatrical producer, philanthropist, and owner of The Denver Post – started producing and presenting theatre in Denver and never stopped. The Helen Bonfils Foundation was established in the 1960s and she continued to support theatre, cultural, educational, humanitarian, and healthcare causes in Colorado until her death in 1972 at the age of 82. Upon her death, the Foundation was overseen by Donald Seawell, Ms. Bonfils’ former Broadway producing partner and attorney. Under the provision that the funds be used “for the benefit of mankind,” Mr. Seawell created both downtown’s Arts Complex and its primary resident company, the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, for the purpose of creating and promoting an interest in and an appreciation and knowledge of the performing arts.

Within two years Seawell’s vision for downtown’s Arts Complex was under construction, soon to become the largest collection of theatrical venues under one roof in the country: 11 performance spaces on a four block, 12-acre site in downtown Denver. Mr. Seawell served as DCPA’s Chairman for 35 years, until 2007, when he handed the reins to Daniel L. Ritchie. Mr. Seawell continued his service as Chairman Emeritus until his death in 2015 at the age of 103.

Daniel Ritchie is a noted philanthropist, former banker, broadcasting executive, and Chancellor of the University of Denver. Mr. Ritchie served concurrently as Chairman & CEO of DCPA until 2015, when the positions were separated. In June 2017 he stepped down as Chairman, making way for Martin Semple, a devoted patron since DCPA’s grand opening on New Year’s Eve 1979, a trustee since 2007, and only the third person to serve as Chairman of the Board of Trustees in almost forty years. Few nonprofit theatres have enjoyed such stable and experienced leadership and institutional strength. Artistic leadership has been equally stable, with only four Artistic Directors since the theatre’s founding: Edward Payson Call, followed by interim director Peter Hackett, Donovan Marley (1984-2003), and Kent Thompson, who served from 2004 until early 2017.

Janice Sinden is President and CEO of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts. Ms. Sinden previously served as Chief of Staff to Denver Mayor Michael Hancock, overseeing 26 city departments, with over 11,000 employees and a budget of \$1.5 billion. She is widely respected as an indefatigable leader who is “about as well connected as

anyone could possibly be,” according to Mr. Ritchie. Janice has a lifelong passion for theatre and the arts, a work ethic born of her childhood spent on a dairy farm, and a fierce commitment to make DCPA’s vision – “To be the most engaging theatre organization in the nation” – a reality.

Management Structure

DCPA is governed by a Board of Trustees consisting of up to 30 prominent and accomplished community leaders. The organization is led by President and CEO, Janice Sinden. The Executive Staff consists of nine department heads. The Artistic Director serves as a member of the DCPA executive staff and reports to the President and CEO. Other members of the executive staff include directors of Programming: the Managing Director of the Theatre Company, Executive Director of Education, and the Executive Director of Broadway and Cabaret; and directors of Company Wide Services: the Chief Financial Officer, Chief Marketing Officer, VP of Facility Management and Events, AVP of Technology, VP of Human Resources, and Chief Development Officer. Together they manage the programs and activities of the largest nonprofit theatre organization in the country.

The Community – Denver, Colorado

Denver is the capital of Colorado, the fastest growing city in America, and was recently rated as the best place to live in the USA by U.S. News and World Report. Denver is famously known as The Mile High City for a good reason; its official elevation is 5,280 feet. Situated like the jewel in the crown of the Front Range of the Rockies, Denver has a front row seat to spectacular natural beauty. 120 miles of mountains can be seen from downtown Denver, including three 14,000 foot summits. But it’s not all wild country. Denver is at the center of a 12-city metro area of more than 3.5 million people, and is widely recognized as the cultural hub of the Mountain West.

With its vibrant nightlife, urban sophistication, access to outdoor adventure, major league sports teams, and abundant entertainment and cultural opportunities, Denver is consistently named the best city for young singles, and has a rapidly expanding population of Millennials to show for it. 70% of Denver’s residents are under the age of 45. In 2015, the National Endowment for the Arts ranked Colorado as first in the nation in per capita attendance at dance, concert and theatre events.

Theatre in Denver has a history as old as the city itself. Denver was born out of the gold rush in 1858, and opened its first theatre by 1859. Its first opera house was built in the 1880s. The 1908 Democratic National Convention nominated William Jennings Bryan for president in Denver’s Municipal Auditorium. That building lives on today within the Denver Performing Arts Complex as the Ellie Caulkins Opera House and the Buell Theatre, home to DCPA’s Broadway series.

In 1988 Colorado made a bold investment in the cultural life of the Denver metropolitan region by establishing the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District, funded by a dedicated sales tax increment. SCFD became a national model for public arts funding and continues to distribute many millions of dollars to cultural organizations of all kinds in the district. It was recently renewed until 2030 by an overwhelming vote.

Denver is, in short, one of the best places in the nation to make theatre, with a dedicated and discerning audience, an appetite for experimentation, and the resources to support the work. It is also a great place to enjoy a uniquely rich quality of life.

DCPA Programming

DCPA is a creative force in American Theatre, a beloved cultural institution locally, a crucible of new work for both traditional and non-traditional stages, a nurturer of new voices, a celebrated source for theatre education, and the jumping off point for major national tours of Broadway shows. The scope and scale of DCPA’s offerings are unique among theatres and performing arts centers nationally, comprising six lines of programming.

DCPA Theatre Company — The Tony-winning company produces an annual season of up to 10 powerful and personal productions. The company’s production capacity and skill of its artists are second-to-none. “If you can dream it, we can build it,” is their credo. The Company has an increasing commitment to bold, relevant, often adventurous work and has produced more than 160 new works (*The Book of Will*, *The Legend of Georgia McBride*, *The Laramie Project*, *Sense & Sensibility The Musical*, *Tantalus*, *Lydia*, *The Whale*, *Quilters*, and *Black Elk Speaks*, among them). This passion for fresh voices inspired the creation of the Colorado New Play Summit, an annual festival featuring readings and performances of new scripts, plus workshops and fully staged productions for a select few. The New Play Summit (now in its 13th year), and the Women’s Voices Fund, an endowment that supports women playwrights and directors, are important legacies of former Artistic Director, Kent Thompson. In its most recent season, the Theatre Company sold more than 11,000 tickets and welcomed 5,500 subscribers. The audience average age is 52. A production history may be found online at www.denvercenter.org/about-us/theatre-company.

DCPA Off-Center — A theatrical testing ground that develops innovative, participatory programming both on- and off-site, especially aimed at developing Millennial audiences (*Sweet & Lucky*, *Travelers of the Lost Dimension*, and coming in Fall 2017, a 360-degree, immersive production of the jazz musical, *The Wild Party*, staged in a repurposed aviation hangar in Denver’s thriving Stapleton community). Off-Center is the newest and most unconventional programming line under supervision of the Theatre Company, enjoying an incredible 8x growth in audience in the past three years (average customer age of 42).

DCPA Broadway — A preferred stop on the Broadway touring circuit that has included more than a dozen national tour launches (*The Lion King*, *The Book of Mormon*, *If/Then*, *Pippin*) and the pre-Broadway debuts of Disney’s *The Little Mermaid* and *Frozen* (summer 2017). The 2017/18 season will include the Broadway phenomenon, *Hamilton*, and in the 2018/19 season, the DCPA will kick off the national tour of *Dear Evan Hansen*. In its most recent season Broadway series attendance reached almost 500,000 and more than 22,000 subscribers looking for spectacular, world-class entertainment.

DCPA Cabaret — Casual and fun entertainment in the intimate Garner Galleria theatre, featuring shows like Denver’s longest-running cabaret hit, *I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change*.

DCPA Education — Statewide educational programs that serve more than 105,000 students annually through acting classes, in-school workshops, in-theatre field trips, and audience engagement programs.

DCPA Event Services — Premier rental venues that use DCPA’s talent for theatrical innovation to capture the imagination of guests in lobbies, theatres, the Directors Room, and the Seawell Grand Ballroom.

DCPA Theatre Company – Facilities

- ❖ The Stage Theatre – 750-seat flagship of the Theatre Company; proscenium, fully-trapped stage
- ❖ The Space Theatre – 400-seat theatre in the round; tiered seating, fashioned after The Old Globe
- ❖ The Ricketson Theatre – 233-seat proscenium theatre
- ❖ The Jones Theatre – 207-seat; thrust stage, tiered seating

Position Summary

The Artistic Director (AD) will conceive and articulate the vision for the Theatre Company and will lead the organization to achieve that vision. The AD’s fundamental responsibility is to ensure the Theatre Company’s success, as measured by its artistic excellence, its relevance and impact in the community, the accomplishment of both short- and long-term goals, and accountability to DCPA’s diverse constituents. The AD will be expected to lead the creation and production of work that will continue to advance the TC’s reputation as one of the most admired organizations in the nation.

In collaboration with other DCPA programming leaders, the AD will select the programming for the Theatre Company, Off-Center, and the Colorado New Play Summit, and will provide artistic oversight of all TC programs and activities. The AD will choose all artists, including guest directors, playwrights, actors, designers, composers, lyricists, and coaches; manage the Theatre’s professional relationship with artists; supervise the work of the TC’s Associate Artistic Directors, and provide leadership for the Artistic Department. The AD will direct as many as two productions each season and will provide artistic direction and oversight for new play development.

The Artistic Director is responsible for the preparation of the annual season calendar and will work with the CEO, CFO, and Managing Director to prepare the TC’s annual budget for approval by the Board of Trustees, to whom the

AD is accountable for sound financial management. The AD will participate as a member of DCPA's Executive Team and the DCPA Programing Team, and will collaborate with other DCPA leaders to create a strong and cohesive public identity. The AD will act as an ambassador to the national theatre community; a spokesperson for the TC locally, regionally, and nationally; and will participate in fundraising and promotional events as required.

Traits and Characteristics

The AD will be a demonstrated leader with an exceptional ability to articulate a compelling theatrical vision both internally and externally, possessed of a nimble and inquiring mind, creative, passionate, and imaginative. The AD will be a keen listener and a generous colleague, adept at synthesizing the ideas of others and creating a strategy for energetic action, and will build motivated and inspired teams to implement that strategy. The successful candidate will be a director with broad experience across a wide range of plays - equally comfortable with the classical canon and daring new work, - and will have significant experience with new play development. The AD will be attuned to the evolving communities served by the theatre, both locally and nationally, with a unique ability to "see over the horizon" and anticipate the important conversations that cultural organizations will need to stimulate in their communities. Above all else, the successful candidate will be an extraordinary theatre artist whose vision and creativity will inspire the vision and creativity of colleagues and audiences alike.

Required Qualifications

- ❖ Minimum of 15 years experience in professional theatre
- ❖ Demonstrable proficiency as a director, evidenced by having directed a wide range of plays and types of plays on varied stages for multiple theatres
- ❖ A leadership style that is open and collaborative; the ability both to create an effective team and to act as a member of the team, coupled with a facility for acting decisively at the right time
- ❖ A sophisticated ability to direct the work of production teams and to understand and appreciate their contributions
- ❖ Significant experience in and commitment to the development of new plays
- ❖ A flair for recognizing "diamonds in the rough," for seeing the potential of new scripts in early drafts
- ❖ A talent for creating bold, thought provoking, relevant new work and for managing the risks inherent in venturing beyond safe and predictable material
- ❖ An understanding both of the importance of the theatre's deeply attached, existing subscriber base and a commitment to producing and directing work that speaks to the next generation of theatre patrons
- ❖ Foresight: the ability to understand where the TC needs to be well before it actually gets there
- ❖ A strong national network of theatre artists – directors, actors, designers, and playwrights
- ❖ The ability to strengthen the existing national identity of the TC
- ❖ Excellent communication skills; the ability to speak and write persuasively; mature interpersonal skills; diplomacy; a talent for nuance; a builder of respectful and collaborative professional relationships
- ❖ The capacity to inspire others
- ❖ A deep, personal dedication to the value of the arts in individual lives and to the art of theatre as an essential element of any enlightened, diverse, compassionate community
- ❖ Demonstrated success as a leader/director in the American/international theatre community
- ❖ Demonstrated success building relationships with diverse audiences
- ❖ A commitment to cultivating a diverse, respectful, and inclusive working environment within the theatre itself and among casts and production teams
- ❖ A talent for empathy and for understanding the pulse of the theatre's patrons
- ❖ A willingness to support the DCPA's development and fundraising activities as an eloquent advocate for the theatre and its programs
- ❖ Integrity – a commitment to honesty, transparency, and personal accountability

Desirable Qualifications

- ❖ Significant leadership experience in professional theatre, preferably as an artistic director
- ❖ Experience in developing or directing new plays or musicals that proved to have national appeal, with multiple productions at major American theatres
- ❖ Experience as an Artistic Director at a LORT theatre, or one of similar size and scope
- ❖ Broad range of experience as a leader/director in American/international theatre community
- ❖ An MFA in Theatre or comparable education and experience
- ❖ A practical understanding of the business aspects of managing a theatre company
- ❖ The willingness to help build a stronger theatre community locally by acting as an ambassador and resource to other theatres in the Denver region

- ❖ Experience in the production of work for young audiences and families
- ❖ Experience supporting arts education initiatives
- ❖ A friendly, outgoing demeanor and a good sense of humor

Applications and Inquiries

Please submit a cover letter describing interest and qualifications, accompanied by a resume and four professional references, including contact information and relationship to the applicant. All applications will be treated as confidential and no references will be contacted without the applicant's approval. Initial review of applications will begin on or about July 1, 2017 and continue until the position is filled. Interested applicants should submit materials as soon as possible.

This position is a full-time position with benefits. If you're interested in applying, all applications and/or inquiries should be directed via email only to DCPA's search consultant:

John Haynes - Bard Arts Consulting
info@BardArtsConsulting.com

MS Word or PDF attachments only, please
Subject Line: DCPA Artistic Director Search
File names of all attachments should include applicant's last name

Please keep submissions to no more than 6-8 pages and do not include lengthy attachments at this time. No phone calls please.

The Denver Center for the Performing Arts, an Equal Opportunity Employer, is dedicated to the goal of building a culturally diverse and equitable environment and strongly encourages applications from minorities and women. All qualified applications will receive consideration for employment without regard to age, race, color, religion, gender, gender identity, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, sexual orientation or any other characteristic protected by law. This position will remain open until a diverse pool of candidates is identified. EOE M/F/D/V