

# MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS FOR THE ARTS, INC.

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## Position Profile **Artistic Director** **CITY THEATRE** Pittsburgh, PA



THE ROYALE by Marco Ramirez (directed by Stuart Carden), 2017  
Photo by Kristi Jan Hoover

City Theatre is Pittsburgh's largest performing arts organization located outside Pittsburgh's downtown Cultural Trust (home of the Pittsburgh Public Theater, CLO, Symphony, Opera, and Ballet), and has a national reputation as a company producing the next wave of American theater.

### **ABOUT CITY THEATRE:**

City Theatre Company began in 1975 as a small touring troupe that performed in schools, parks, and housing projects. It has since emerged as a cultural anchor of Pittsburgh's bustling South Side neighborhood. Today, City Theatre owns and operates a complex of four buildings and a parking lot, including the 254-seat Main Stage and 110 seat Hamburg Studio theatres; sustains a year-round staff of 13 full-time employees complemented by more than 100 seasonal employees; serves as a rental and community space for outside groups; runs a robust education program centered on playwriting for nearly 2,500 middle and high school students; and produces and presents fully-staged productions (a 5-6 show subscription season of new plays), special booked-in attractions, its signature Young Playwrights Festival, year-round play development readings, and the annual Momentum Festival: New Plays at Different Stages, all with a focus on community engagement, parity, and diversity.

Under the leadership of Managing Director James McNeel, City Theatre operates as a TCG member theatre, associate member of the National New Play Network, and LORT D Theatre

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(agreements with AEA, SDC, and USA unions) with an annual operating budget between \$2.6 and \$2.8 million, has no external debt, and is governed by a 27-member Board of Directors (Beth Newbold, President).

### **Mission**

City Theatre's mission is to provide an artistic home for the development and production of contemporary plays of substance and ideas that engage and challenge diverse audiences. City Theatre serves audiences and participants of over 30,000 annually in the Pittsburgh region and holds the distinction of being voted Best Local Theatre Company eleven years running by readers of the *Pittsburgh City Paper*.

In its history, City Theatre has produced more than 75 world premieres, including many commissions, elevating the careers of countless playwrights and spawning hundreds of productions worldwide. Two such plays have received The Harold and Mimi Steinberg/American Theatre Critics Association New Play Award.

### **Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**

Located at the confluence of the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio Rivers, Pittsburgh is one of America's most livable cities, and in recent years has become a hotbed of innovation in the healthcare and technology arenas. Some 177,000 people work in Pittsburgh's tech-related industries, and their ranks continue to grow. Low cost of living, networking opportunities, and an innovative and devoted community make the city appealing to entrepreneurs, corporations, and artists alike. Pittsburgh's restaurant scene is booming and Zagat's named Pittsburgh its top food city in 2015. Through the efforts of the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust and other passionate cultural devotees, the cultural sector has blossomed with thriving venues for music, dance, theater, and performance art in the heart of Downtown and throughout the city.

### **OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES:**

The next Artistic Director will join a theater company with an admirable history and community awareness based on its artistic bona fides. Among the opportunities are:

- Continuing City Theatre's leadership in new work development with a potential for expanded and new partnerships.
- Phase Three of a capital campaign in the not distant future to generate funds to renovate and expand City's facilities (phase one renovation completed in November 2014; phase two renovation commencing in spring 2018)
- Genuine engagement with Pittsburgh's younger and more diverse communities has the potential to expand audience and impact.

- Work with the Board and Managing Director to develop a new long-range strategic plan including a critical focus on business and programming models that address local and national shifts in the theater field.

Along with these opportunities, there are notable challenges that the next AD must embrace:

- There is a generational shift in Pittsburgh's theaters and other arts organizations. City will need to find its place in this changing constellation and an ever-growing competitive entertainment marketplace.
- City Theatre recognizes the need to further diversify its community of artists, staff, board, and audience. The new Artistic Director will help continue and expand the work toward equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Programming in a way that will grow the consistently loyal subscriber base as well as single ticket buyers, while balancing the inherent disparate wants and desires of each category of audience member.
- Work with the board and managing director to achieve organizational sustainability, with the potential for building needed reserves and long-term investments.

#### **POSITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The Artistic Director and Managing Director will be expected to form a co-equal collaborative relationship in which both report to the board through its Chair.

**Artistic Leadership** - The Artistic Director will be expected:

- To lead, with the Managing Director, City's efforts to create a diverse, safe and respectful workplace.
- To be the company's artistic leader in choosing plays and other programs that recognize the company's history and its particular interest in developing new work, as well as to choose creative teams that ensure its high standards of excellence;
- To champion internally and externally the vision and goals of City Theatre;
- To establish and maintain strong relationships with upcoming and established playwrights, directors, actors, and designers;
- If a director, to direct up to two shows per season;
- To make choices in content and performance that attract an audience that looks like the increasingly diverse, changing, and younger population of the Pittsburgh area.
- To get to know Pittsburgh, and become a recognized leader in the city.
- To cultivate and lead the local artistic community of artists (actors, designers), while supplementing this pool with national talent and resources.

**Organizational Leadership** - The Artistic Director will be expected:

- To be a deeply committed organizational leader to the City Theatre staff, managing the positions that report to the Artistic Director and setting a culture of respect, kindness, transparency, and collaboration;
- To be a leader and resource to the Board of Directors, assuring that these volunteers have the information, motivation, and guidance to work effectively as trustees;
- To play an important role in cultivation and solicitation of major donors and foundations;
- To serve with the Managing Director as the public face and spokesperson of the theater;
- To help further develop City's vision for the theatre and articulate its mission;
- To co-lead with the Managing Director and Board the development of a new strategic plan.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

No one person will fully meet all these qualifications. The Search Committee will assess the degree to which each individual comes close to their expectations by evaluating the following factors:

**Professional Experience** -

- Demonstrated capacity to articulate a strong aesthetic and overall vision that inspires others.
- A proven leader, not necessarily in the top leadership position, but with institutional experience.
- A candidate who demonstrates a grasp of how artistic choices and the operational, financial, and producing elements of the theater work together.
- There is a preference towards someone who has demonstrated significant artistic achievement in the theater world.
- A clear comfort level in interacting with donors and potential donors and the ability to express artistic intention in writing and public forums.
- A track record of artistic innovation, which can take many forms but certainly includes developing new plays, as well as having positive relationships with playwrights, directors, designers, actors, and other theater artists.

**Personal Qualities and Values** -

The City Theatre's board and staff believe that the following qualities and values are important to the success of the next Artistic Director.

- Ability to establish a meaningful working partnership with the Managing Director.

- A proven commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- An approach to leadership that relies on transparency, openness, optimism, effective communication, and kindness.
- A communicator and a person who engenders trust and loyalty with Board and staff.
- A mentor and collaborator for staff.

**START DATE:**

Summer 2018

**PROCEDURE TO APPLY:**

Interested and qualified candidates are encouraged to submit in complete confidence a cover letter, resume, and professional references to the consulting firm retained to conduct the search. The letter of no more than 1½ pages should describe why this post and theater is attractive to the applicant and what about them and their work makes them a potentially strong contributor as a leader of City Theatre.

Application materials should be sent electronically – Word or PDF only, please – with the applicant’s name included as part of each file name to:

**Management Consultants for the Arts, Inc.**

Attn: Stephen Richard

**Email only:** [MgtConArts@gmail.com](mailto:MgtConArts@gmail.com)

**Subject Line:** **City Theatre AD Search**

January 2018