

Southern Rep Theatre seeks Managing Director

Managing Director

Title: Managing Director

Reports to: Board of Directors

Status: Full Time Permanent/Exempt Position to start early 2022.

Salary: \$60,000

Benefits: Health insurance, paid time off, and professional resources to be discussed and envisioned with the applicant.

We at Southern Rep Theatre seek a Managing Director to lead us in implementing, advancing and sustaining effective operations, programs, finances, fundraising, and planning. We are a professional theatre operating under an Equity SPT contract. Our Board is seeking a change-agent to work with our new Artistic Director, peer-to-peer, to re-imagine our theater. Innovative and bold ideas are welcome. The Managing Director will enthusiastically lead and collaborate with our Board and Artistic Director to implement our 3-year plan to 1) strengthen internal capacity (fundraising, marketing, finances, and board governance) and 2) ensure that the fight *against* racism and *for* social justice pervades all aspects of our organization. The Managing and Artistic Directors will work together, peer-to-peer, and report directly to the Board. Our new Managing Director will play a critical role in rebuilding and re-energizing a respected theatre organization to become an artist-driven, community-centered leader in the New Orleans cultural scene.

Southern Rep is an organization undergoing profound change. And as a historically white organization, we struggle to fit into and serve the Black community around us. We are proud of our artistic achievements and the ways we have served artists, and we are ready to build on our strengths and evolve into a future that serves all of our community and does not cause harm. We keenly understand the challenges of a two-person (FT) staff leading us through this time of transformation and building back. Our board will support our new leadership by providing a variety of resources, including anti-racism consulting and our own fundraising skills and connections to local donors. We look forward to discussing what other resources our new leaders will need to succeed. More on the specific details of Southern Rep's history below.

We are Looking for a Managing Director Who Will:

Be a Leader with an Energized, Entrepreneurial Spirit: Provide visionary, thoughtful leadership with an entrepreneurial spirit that inspires staff, board, audience, and community to participate in Southern Rep's vibrant and exciting future.

Organize and Lead Our Administrative Needs: fundraising, finances, audience services, marketing/communications, planning, and staff development.

Be an Anti-Racist Leader: Work with staff and board to uphold our commitment to ensure that the fight *against* racism and *for* social justice pervades all aspects of our organization.

Build a People-Centered Organization: as the organization rebuilds, use empathy to promote a collaborative, creative, inclusive learning environment for the staff, members, students, and volunteers within the organization.

Lead our Fundraising: Build a culture of philanthropy to increase contributed revenue through grants, corporate sponsors and individual donors with the support of the Artistic Director.

Lead our Development Efforts: Supervise a Development Consultant and Grant Writer. Nurture and develop relationships with donors, corporations, foundations, and community and government agencies with the support of our Artistic Director.

Develop Budgets and Manage Contracts: Create and oversee our budgets to advance our mission and achieve organizational goals in collaboration with the Artistic Director and the Board. Negotiate contracts with artists, agents and unions.

Lead our Marketing: Work with a communications consultant and contract marketing manager to develop our institutional and programmatic marketing plans to build visibility and strengthen recognition.

Manage Board Governance: Work with the Board to advance Board governance and effectiveness through strategic recruitment, engagement, training and education.

Help Realize our Artistic Potential: Work closely with the Artistic Director to realize artistic potential and enhance audience experience.

Participate in cultural and community activities: Ensure Southern Rep's presence as a collaborator and partner in New Orleans.

Be an Advocate: Build awareness and support for the role that arts, artists, and arts organizations play to build a thriving, caring, and creative community.

You're a Great Fit For This Job If:

You have experience in arts administration, nonprofit management or a related field.

You possess a leadership background that includes managing staff, building and strengthening strategic partnerships, and overseeing finances and budgets.

You have a genuine, demonstrated commitment to and interest in fundraising.

You have previous experience working alongside a board (helpful, but not required).

You have a deep passion for theater and the arts.

You believe that a people-centered organization values and respects everyone. Every day.

You possess a deep appreciation for a substantive, meaningful experience of understanding and working in communities and making collaborative changes built on relationships and partnerships.

In your past work you have shown specific commitments and actions to advance equity, diversity, inclusion, and access.

More About Our Theater: Founded in 1986 by Rosamary O'Neill, Southern Rep became known for producing stimulating new American plays delivered with consistently high production values. One subscriber said "*SRT carries the torch for innovative theater here*".

Our commitment to new plays continued under the Artistic Leadership of Ryan Rilette and then Aimée Hayes. Examples include the 4 X 4 program which would support 4 local playwrights each year in writing and sharing short new plays, ambitious collaborative projects such as the regional premiere of Taylor Mac's **The Lilly's Revenge**, produced by 4 local companies under Southern Rep's leadership and establishing awards such as the Ruby Prize, which honored an emerging Black female playwright each year. While these programs/programming stood out in a city with few resources to support theater/new work, most of the writers and actors involved were white, and our audience remained largely white. During this time we also lost our lease on our space and became itinerant, with our audiences following us from space to space.

By 2018, we had a budget of \$1 million, a full-time of 13 and produced 4-5 mainstage plays per year. Working with Alembic Development, we designed a theater space inside the former St. Rose de Lima church on Bayou Road in the historically Black neighborhood of Treme. We hoped that the move would provide a long-term venue for us to expand programming. Instead, the move surfaced fundamental questions both about SRT's sustainability as well as how it can support and serve the community.

Our financial capacity was overmatched by the needs of the new space. In addition, we were careless with our relationship building in our new neighborhood, and did not do the slow, necessary work of discovering what our neighbors needed and wanted from a community theater.

As these issues were coming to a head, COVID-19 forced the theater into hibernation. Aimée Hayes departed the theater after a transition process, and we began facing our financial issues, and irresponsible missteps with the neighborhood we had tried to call home. We moved out of the church, which will now become a home to Black-led performance companies who have never had a home. We began a strategic planning process with a consultant that helped us see how we

failed to build the infrastructure (marketing, fundraising, governance) necessary for a sustainable theater. We hired an interim Executive Director, Sam Sweet to work with Interim Artistic Director Sacha Grandoit, to launch the plan and begin repairing and rebuilding our relationship with the neighborhood. Sam Listened to Black residents and members of the Black Arts community and crafted a Statement on Harm, Repair, and Healing as well as an action plan to become an Anti-Racist Theater. With the support of COVID Relief funding, we have planned and will mount a 21-22 season.

Hiring our new Managing Director and Artistic Director is the next step in our time of reckoning, transition and re-imagining our theater.

To Apply: We invite you to email your resume and a cover letter (no more than 2 pages, please) telling us about your interest in the position and how your skills match what we have described above to mdsearch@southernrep.com. No phone calls please. We would like our new Managing Director to start in early 2022.

Southern Rep welcomes inquiries, nominations, and applications from people of all backgrounds, cultures and communities. We encourage BIPOC leaders to apply.