

**Virginia Stage Company
Managing Director**

Virginia Stage Company seeks an experienced professional with strong business skills and a passion for multicultural theatre experiences to serve as the organization's Managing Director.

BACKGROUND

Virginia Stage Company (VSC) is Southeastern Virginia's leading non-profit theatre. Founded in Norfolk, Virginia in 1968 and adopting the current name in 1979, VSC has an annual budget of \$2 million, a 33 member Board (4 of whom are BIPOC), 21 full-time and 3 part-time staff, roughly 120 volunteers, about 1350 subscribers, and an annual attendance of about 58,000+. The organization serves an additional 12,857 young people who participate in VSC's extensive education and community outreach programs throughout the Hampton Roads region which includes Norfolk, Virginia Beach, and Newport News, an area rich in cultural attractions that include a major art museum, symphony orchestra, and opera company. In all, VSC strives to celebrate the community's rich diversity and reach out to the broadest possible constituency to offer innovative ways for people to experience theatre.

VSC has grown to be a highly respected regional theatre company, developing new plays and musicals with 28 world premieres in its 40 year history. VSC attracts artists from Broadway, off-Broadway, and other leading theaters across the country, as well as from the worlds of film and television. Recent highlights include a groundbreaking production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Virginia Symphony, the world premiere of the Tony Award-winning musical, *The Secret Garden*, Steven Schwartz's *Snapshots*, and Lanie Robertson's *Nobody Lonesome for Me*.

Virginia Stage Company produces a main stage subscription series consisting of six productions (with special matinee performances for students) and the annual holiday classics, *A Christmas Carol* and *The Santaland Diaries*. The Education & Community Engagement Department has a series of touring productions and educational programs for students in schools throughout Hampton Roads. VSC provides infrared listening devices, signed performances, and wheelchair accessibility.

The historic Wells Theatre is the performance venue for the Virginia Stage Company. Built in 1913, Wells Theatre is on the National Register of Historic Places and is particularly noted as a well-preserved example of Beaux-Arts neoclassicism. VSC acquired the lease for the Wells Theatre in 1979, and in 1986 raised \$3.5m to undertake necessary restoration work. In 2014, the Theatre was purchased by a VSC major donor and gifted to the City of Norfolk. The organization embarked on a \$4.5 million Centennial Campaign and has replaced the hemp & sandbags rigging system, renovated the entrance and main lobby, just installed a new flyloft, and is hoping to add new seats, and modernize lighting and soundstage technology.

During the past year and a half when Covid-19 closed the Wells Theatre, VSC found creative ways to continue offering locally produced live theatre by presenting August Wilson's *How I Learned What I Learned* in cooperation with HBC Norfolk State University and the Virginia Arts

Festival under an outdoor tent and presenting readings from Ken Ludwig's *Dear Jack, Dear Louise* beneath the guns on the deck of the battleship *USS Wisconsin*.

VSC is committed to work actively against systemic racism and has formed an Anti-Racism Team (ART), composed of board members, staff, and community stakeholders charged with leading this effort. Concurrently, its staff has been meeting weekly since last summer to address specific grievances outlined by BIPOC artists and allies as they navigate together towards a more just future for theatre.

Virginia Stage Company uses theatre as a catalyst to foster public discourse. According to Producing Artistic Director Tom Quaintance, "We believe that theatre is more than a play, place, or product - it is a living process that can expand thinking and offer fresh perspectives. Learning, critical thinking, and self-confidence all grow as we sit together in one space to experience and contemplate our shared world. Acknowledging and embracing differences in identity is essential to a dynamic cultural conversation - and theatre has just the tools to do that."

Public Works Virginia is a major initiative of Virginia Stage Company that seeks to move theatre out of the Wells Theatre and into the community and engage the people of Hampton Roads by making them creators of theater rather than spectators. Inspired by The Public Theater's Mobile Unit and Ten Thousand Things Theatre in Minneapolis, Public Acts helps break down the barriers to access caused by economics, geography, education and class. Hampton Roads has a significant transitory/military community, and is largely working class. Public Acts is the next clear step towards the Public Works goal of putting theater at the heart of every community, and community at the heart of every theater.

BASIC FUNCTION

Reporting to Virginia Stage Company's Producing Artistic Director Tom Quaintance, the Managing Director helps to define and execute the theatre's strategic direction and ensure VSC's continued excellence, both artistically and financially. They will work with the Producing Artistic Director, Board, and staff to provide overall leadership to the organization as it grows its artistic and educational vision, continues to diversify its board, staff, and programming, and expands its footprint, both in the community and nationally. This arts leader will have demonstrated skills in financial planning, facilities, operations, and internal management, be a strategic thinker, have an entrepreneurial spirit, and possess a strong commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and anti-racist practices. They will oversee finance, operations, marketing, and human resource functions including three direct reports: General Manager, Accounting Coordinator, and Marketing Director. The Managing Director will also work with Development and Education Directors and Production Manager on budgeting.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Managing Director is expected to work closely with the Producing Artistic Director, Board, and staff to ensure that VSC:

- Continues to build a reputation as a theatre that is a catalyst to foster public discourse and a place to “widen the lens so that we can see and embrace more of America.”
- Retains current audience constituencies and builds constituents among a multicultural group of supporters which includes military families stationed here;
- Successfully reimagines and remakes itself in a changing world where the global pandemic continues to provide opportunities to reshape the theatre and its programming beyond the circumstances.
- Creates the right balance of influence between artists, staff, board, donors, funders, subscribers, audience, community, and government to achieve VSC’s anti-racism, equity, programming, operational, and financial strategic goals.

The Managing Director’s immediate priorities will be to:

- Get to know Virginia Stage Company including employees, artistic and educational programming, finances, marketing and fundraising plans, as well as Norfolk and the surrounding community;
- Manage the business affairs of Virginia Stage Company, including cash flow and all income, expense, asset, liabilities, and capital lines, with the intent of supporting the mission and goals while achieving greater financial growth and sustainability as well as funding diversity;
- Work with the Producing Artistic Director and the Board to update long-range strategic plans and implement the organization’s mission and vision
- Lead and collaborate with stakeholders on the theatre and warehouse capital projects; manage and cultivate business relationships with vendors, partners, municipal authorities, and others as appropriate;
- In close cooperation with the Producing Artistic Director, serve as a spokesperson for the theatre on operating and financial issues;
- Work with the staff to understand their contributions and concerns as well as their strengths and areas for improvement; instill a strong sense of partnership and cohesion across the organization; with the Producing Artistic Director, hire, supervise, motivate, develop, and evaluate staff, ensuring that staffing is appropriate to meet the organization’s goals; ensure that approved policies are consistently implemented.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

The ideal candidate has at least 10 years of general management experience with an emphasis on strong financial controls and personnel management. Attributes and experience may include:

- A finance and business operations management professional, financially astute with hands-on experience with budgeting and cashflow management; an understanding of human resource management, personnel development, payroll, benefits management, and insurance (health and institutional);
- A strong interest in the theatre, performing arts, and arts education is a prerequisite, and a background working with theater organizations is strongly preferred;
- Demonstrated ability to forge mutually respectful and effective relationships with a diverse group of personalities; outstanding oral and written communication skills, including the means to address issues in non-confrontational and non-polarizing ways, but nevertheless with determination;
- A leader adept at planning, prioritizing, organizing, and following through; a good listener and strategist; a person with a sense of humor, curiosity, and perspective who will engage with and enjoy the Norfolk community.
- A demonstrable history and commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility; a readiness to lead ongoing efforts to ensure that VSC embodies an anti-racist organizational culture throughout the company and at the core of its programs.
- Ability to impart trust, integrity and solidity and guide others to do the same; an ability to participate in constructive disagreement; a team player and team builder; ability to work in close collaboration with staff, Board, artists, and a broad spectrum of community members.

COMPENSATION

- Salary for this position is between \$90,000-\$98,000 annually, and includes paid time off, medical coverage with modest employee share, parking, and other benefits.

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