



Executive Director

Position Status: Full Time
Salary Range: \$47,000-\$50,000
Organization Type: Private Non-Profit < 25 Employees
Application Deadline: Friday, July 11, 2008

Position Summary

Executive Director is responsible for development and fundraising, board relations, financial management, and general administration. Demonstrated success in development and fundraising is essential. Excellent team building and staff management skills are required. Executive Director must communicate effectively with all constituents. The Executive Director is responsible for effective delegation while maintaining oversight. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors and works collaboratively with the Artistic Directors to ensure an integrated approach to fulfilling Harlequin Productions' mission. The Executive Director will maintain and expand the confidence and stature of Harlequin Productions as a well respected and well-run performing arts resource for the community and will represent Harlequin Productions and the programs we offer to continually enhance this confidence.

Introduction to Harlequin Productions

Harlequin Productions is a professional, not-for-profit theater company dedicated to the creation of new works, neglected works and unconventional treatments of classics. Through an eclectic selection of surprising material, we explore the human adventure in search of theatrical magic that expands perspective and human empathy.

We love great stories that take us by surprise and challenge our assumptions. We love language that gives flight to the imagination. By selecting great plays and doing them well, we have attracted an enthusiastic audience that is willing to take risks with us because they have come to expect and anticipate a new and dynamic experience every time they attend the theater.

We also understand that theater is a collaborative process. Our ultimate goal is not producing "shows," but creating an opportunity for the ephemeral magic of catharsis. We believe that by treating our staff and artists well, and encouraging them to participate actively and creatively in all levels of production, we engage what is greatest in all involved, and that this is where the magic of live theater dwells.

Our success in balancing art with business is evident in our audience. Despite the fact that the vast majority of our work is unknown to our patrons, annual ticket and subscription sales (24,000 and 1,400, respectively) are more than 50% higher than the national average for theaters of our size—a statistic that is impressive in itself, but even more remarkable for a company in a town of 40,000.

Harlequin Productions has also managed, through its long-term commitment to Pay-What-You-Can performances, Rush Ticket and school group discounts, to attract a larger contingent of younger audience members than is usually found, either regionally or nationally.

Harlequin Productions was founded in 1991 with the primary objective of raising the bar for theatrical production in the region in terms of sophistication of programming and quality of both performance and design. A group of five theater artists agreed to pool their startup capital—\$400 cash—to test a theory: if we produced the kind of theater we were passionate about—and did it well—we would find an audience to support it.

In seventeen seasons Harlequin Productions has produced over 100 shows, including 30 world, U.S., or west coast premieres. Our seventeen Shakespeare productions have included many obscure works, including King John, Measure for Measure, The Winter's Tale and Cymbeline. Remaining work has tended toward strong, language-driven plays by such playwrights as Tom Stoppard, Tennessee Williams, Eugene O'Neill, Martin McDonagh and Conor McPherson, as well as local and lesser known playwrights.

Harlequin Productions originally rented space for our productions in the 100-seat “black box” in the local performing arts center. We quickly outgrew the space and began searching for a home of our own. In 1996 the State Theater, a beautiful old movie theater in the heart of downtown, closed its doors and was boarded up. In June of 1997 we began a campaign to turn the abandoned movie theater into a beautiful live performance space. Seventeen months later, we opened our doors.

We are currently wrapping up the \$1M “Freeing the Phoenix” Campaign that has allowed us to replace our roof and HVAC system, build new administrative offices, remodel our box office and dressing rooms, upgrade office and production equipment and significantly lower our mortgage.

Harlequin Productions also serves as a significant economic driver for downtown Olympia—a unique and charming town that has fought an uphill battle to maintain a vital downtown core. The arts in general, and Harlequin Productions, in particular, attract a large audience downtown. A recent survey indicates that over 70% of our audience either shop downtown or dine out when they come to see a show, and nearly 50% do both. We believe that our continued health is valuable to all of the businesses in downtown Olympia.

Harlequin Productions runs a summer youth program called The Shakespeare Experience. In 2006, seven students from this classical actor-training program for teens were cast in our production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*—two of them in leading roles. And in 2007 another seven students were cast in our production of *Macbeth*. These on stage experiences give students an opportunity to collaborate and perform with professional actors, designers, director, fight director, choreographer and composer in a full-scale production of a Shakespeare classic. The results have been a great success for all involved.

Harlequin takes a collaborative approach to its art as well as its staff, allowing them to fully share and utilize their unique skills and talents. Harlequin is managed by a core staff of nine full and part-time employees with tenures ranging from three to seventeen years. The founders, Scot and Linda Whitney, are the Managing Artistic Director and Artistic Director, respectively. They started the company in 1991 with \$400 and, with the help of outstanding staff and volunteers along the way, have grown it to its current \$950,000 budget.

Scot was a filmmaker for many years before turning his talents to theater. He has won numerous awards for film and theater direction and for his leadership in the “Save the State” renovation project. Two of his productions, *The Tempest* and *Hapgood*, are included in the “Theater on Film and Tape Archive” at the Lincoln Center. In addition to directing and executive management functions, Scot has been the leading fundraiser for Harlequin Productions.

Linda is a director, set designer, costume designer and dramaturge. She is also the creator of our annual Stardust series, writing and directing a new show every year. Stardust opens our season each year and is the most popular holiday offering in the region. Linda has won a number of awards for artistic accomplishments and leadership, including the 1997 Artists Trust President’s Award.

The Executive Director will manage and oversee the business aspects of the organization. While decision-making authority over all artistic matters will remain exclusively with the artistic directors, the Executive Director will work collaboratively with them toward the ultimate mission of positioning Harlequin among the best theater companies in the Pacific Northwest.

Harlequin’s board of directors is made up of community and business leaders who are appreciators of our art and dedicated to the mission of Harlequin Productions. In addition to ensuring fiscal responsibility through oversight and fundraising, they are ambassadors for Harlequin’s work in the community.

Traits and Characteristics

Harlequin Productions seeks a business leader who is comfortable working in the not-for-profit environment. The ideal candidate will be collaborative and creative, sensitive to the needs of peers and subordinates, and capable of producing long-term plans as well as managing the operational aspects of a year-round producing theater. The position requires outstanding problem-solving, communication, and team-building skills. The Executive Director will need to make effective use of time and resources, work comfortably and effectively with various constituencies, and be able to set priorities and multi-task. The successful candidate should have experience identifying sources of financial support and cultivating relationships that lead to expanded capacity. Above all, the Executive Director must have a passion for Real. Live. Theater.

Development & Fundraising

Executive Director will develop the annual development plan in collaboration with the Managing Artistic Director, the Board and staff and will be responsible for its implementation. The development plan will include activities and strategies that will allow the organization to operate in a fiscally sound manner, meet its short and long-term goals, and fulfill its mission. The plan should be comprehensive and include, but not be limited to, all matters concerning financial support and organizational and program promotion.

Fundraising

- Develop and implement plan to increase donor base and other organizational support
- Manage current fundraising initiatives including the annual campaign, in-kind donations, holiday and summer raffles, program advertising sales, sponsorship procurement, program support, and grant writing.
- Develop and propose new and enhanced fundraising initiatives
- Participate in direct solicitation related to all development initiatives
- Support grant writing function
- Develop and increase utilization of donor database system to meet organization's needs

Public Relations

- Develop and implement Harlequin's public relations plan in partnership with the Managing Artistic Director and other staff.
- Represent the organization in the community through participation in and public speaking before business, service and civic groups. Recruit and coordinate participation in those events from board members, staff and volunteers.
- Establish and maintain positive relationships with groups that support Harlequin.

Marketing – Direct effort as well as delegation in this area of responsibility is expected.

- Sell program ads
- Solicit private parties/group ticket sales
- Solicit State Theater rentals
- Negotiate and manage trade agreements
- Work with box office staff to ensure ticket sales and marketing strategies are effectively implemented.
- Develop and implement audience development strategies to maximize both subscription and single ticket sales.

Advertising & Promotion

- Develop and implement Harlequin's advertising and promotion plan in partnership with the Managing Artistic Director and other staff.
- Coordinate development of printed materials with the Artistic Directors and Whitney Design, including brochures, postcards, posters, programs, newsletters and other promotional materials.
- Develop new and creative ways to promote Harlequin's shows, events, the State Theater and the organization in general.

Program Development

- Participate in the development and enhancement of education programs

Board Relations

The Executive Director works closely with the Board of Directors to ensure the fiscal viability and effective governance of the organization and support the board in their role as fiscal stewards, fundraisers, and friendraisers for the organization.

- Attend monthly board meetings keeping the board apprised of progress toward organization's financial and development goals.
- Assist the board in their responsibility for recruiting and developing board members, including developing a formal orientation process and online board manual.
- Collaborate with board president to ensure board members are supported in their responsibility to contribute to the organization financially, to promote its productions and programs within their circle of influence and to become good ambassadors for the organization in the community.

- Collaborate with board committee chairs to ensure goals are clearly set, action plans are in place and committees have adequate staff support.
- Act as the liaison between the Board and staff members to ensure communication of organizational needs.

Financial Management

The Executive Director is responsible to the board for managing the fiscal affairs of the organization within the approved budget. The Executive Director will oversee the development of the organization's fiscal budget in collaboration with the Artistic Directors. The Executive Director ensures that systems and procedures are adequate to provide timely and accurate financial reporting to management, the Board of Directors and outside stakeholders such as donors, patrons, and governmental agencies.

- Oversee and participate in budget development.
- Develop the necessary monitoring procedures to assure that all funds are properly used and accounted for.
- Report and explain budget variances to the board in a timely manner.
- Ensure cash management policies and procedures are in place to maximize return on investments and to ensure adequate cash flow.

General Administration

The Executive Director is charged with managing and protecting Harlequin's assets and ensuring proper fiscal checks and balances are in place. Executive Director will develop sound policies, processes and procedures to ensure organizational integrity. Executive Director will ensure that Harlequin's infrastructure is sound, personnel are effectively managed and supported, pertinent governmental regulations are properly addressed, and technology systems keep pace with the needs of the organization. The Executive Director is responsible to manage all departments except the Production Department, which is managed by the Artistic Directors. The Executive Director is, however, responsible for HR functions for all employees.

- Ensure contracts are properly negotiated and approved, including lease, rental and production contracts.
- Analyze and develop database systems to accommodate organization's requirements.
- Provide for adequate facilities security and maintenance
- Ensure proper asset tracking, security, and maintenance
- Ensure programs are effectively managed and implemented
- Risk Management - ensure proper business insurance coverage is secured and that internal controls are in place to protect assets.
- Technology Systems Management - ensure technology systems adequately address organization's needs and that technology systems are properly maintained
- Human Resource Management – Executive Director is responsible for employee policies and procedures; recruitment, hiring and terminations; internship and volunteer programs; employee benefits, team development and compensation planning.

Requirements:

- A Minimum of 5 years executive management experience, 3 years non-profit development experience, and 3 years business management experience, including financial management, all of which may run concurrently;
- A Bachelor's Degree, preferably in Business, Non-profit Management or Public Administration.
- Candidates who progress in the process will be required to produce professional references, including two reference letters.

Send your resume and cover letter to:

Harlequin Productions
 Executive Director Search
 Attn. Sarah J. Coats, Chair, Search Committee
 202 4th Ave. E
 Olympia, Washington 98501
 or via email to sallycoats@comcast.net

Include a cover letter describing how your skills and experience relate to this position.

Contact Details:

Contact for questions about hiring process: Sarah Coats, Chair, Search Committee

Phone: (360) 491-3749 (evenings)

Email: sallycoats@comcast.net

Contact for questions about Harlequin Productions: Aleena Schneider, Business Manager

Phone: (360) 705-3250 (daytime)

Email: aleena@harlequinproductions.org

Website: <http://www.harlequinproductions.org/>