

SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA

GENERAL DIRECTOR

ABOUT SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA

Since its inaugural season in 1977, Spoleto Festival USA has established itself as America's premier performing arts festival. For 17 days and nights beginning the Friday of Memorial Day weekend, Spoleto fills Charleston with renowned artists and emerging performers in disciplines including opera, theater, dance, and a wide range of music – from symphonic to chamber to choral, jazz, and folk. The Festival produces its own operas, specializing in rarely performed masterpieces by well-known composers, American premieres, and traditional works presented in new ways. In 2022, the Festival will present its fourth commissioned world premiere opera, *Omar*.

As its core mission, Spoleto Festival USA presents programs of the highest artistic caliber while maintaining a dedication to young artists, a commitment to all forms of the performing arts, a passion for contemporary innovation, and an enthusiasm for providing unusual opportunities for established artists. The Festival is proud to provide young performers the opportunity to work with master artists, conductors, directors, designers, and performers. Illustrious artists who performed early in their careers at Spoleto Festival USA include Renée Fleming, Emanuel Ax, Joshua Bell, Yo-Yo Ma, Laurie Anderson, Rhiannon Giddens, Taylor Mac, Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, Jennifer Rowley, and Cécile McLorin Salvant.

More than a launching pad for young talent, Spoleto has also served as a catalyst for cultural change, aiding in Charleston's flourishing as a top destination. With help from the city and generous donors, Spoleto has spearheaded the renovations of numerous performance spaces: Festival Hall, Dock Street Theatre, College of Charleston Sottile Theatre, and the Charleston Gaillard Center.

Central to the Festival's success each season, the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra is one of the country's most prestigious ensembles for young professional musicians. As the orchestra-in-residence for Spoleto Festival USA, the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra accompanies Spoleto's opera selections and symphonic concerts, and smaller ensembles are selected to participate in choral, chamber, and contemporary performances. Assembled anew each year through nationwide auditions, the Festival's Orchestra takes on a dynamic new identity with the participation of both returning and new musicians. Alumni of the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra can be found in almost every professional orchestra in the United States.



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Spoletto Festival USA was founded with a mission to pair young artists with established masters and provide a fertile ground for experimentation, exploration, and artistic learning. Vital to the Festival's endurance are its endeavors to engage audiences across a broad spectrum. With programming that includes sending Spoletto artists into schools, inviting students into its theaters, holding public discussion series, and organizing master classes and workshops for budding artists, the Festival aims to spark connections and leave a lasting impression on the next generation of artists and arts lovers. Spoletto ETC (Engaging The Community) comprises three avenues:

Tailored education programs include artists visiting area schools, such as Bank of America Chamber Music artists performing at Sanders-Clyde Creative Arts and Memminger Elementary, as well as **students visiting Festival venues** for special performances. Spoletto artists also work with student-focused organizations outside of schools, such as the Charleston Jazz Academy, Charleston Symphony Youth Orchestra, and College of Charleston's arts management program.

Community engagement programs include free discussions before the Festival (like the **Salon Series** and **Exploring Omar**) as well as Artist Talks during the Festival (**Conversations With** and **Jazz Talks**). Programs also include Spoletto's **Open Stage Door** – providing more than 800 complementary tickets each season to the area community-based nonprofit organization – and **Azure Concerts**, performances designed specifically for individuals who are on the autism spectrum or have similar challenges.

Programs for professional advancement to aid in the development of young artists and arts administrators. This avenue includes the **Spoletto Festival USA Orchestra**, the Festival's resident ensemble, as well as Spoletto's **apprentice program** – a short-term internship opportunity for college-age students interested in acquiring hands-on experiences in such fields as artist services, box office, development, finance, media relations, orchestra operations, and production.

When the 2020 Festival was cancelled due to COVID-19, the organization pivoted to digital programming, including workshops and conversations with artists, subsequently broadening Spoletto's reach. Going forward, the Festival will continue to offer programs for audience engagement in the digital sphere as well as in person.

Piccolo Spoletto Festival: An official companion to Spoletto Festival USA, this regional celebration of the arts and local community features hundreds of free and modestly priced events with a focus on accessibility and participation in the arts. Piccolo Spoletto is operated by the City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs.

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Spoletto Festival USA has an annual operating budget of approximately \$8 million, a full-time staff of 25, and a team of three artistic directors responsible for Orchestral Activities, Chamber Music, and Choral Activities who report to the General Director. The Festival payroll can expand up to 500 during the Festival season. There is a national Board of Directors comprised of 49 voting members. It owns its historic headquarters building in downtown Charleston and a dedicated scene shop, and it has a 75-year lease to operate Festival Hall.

THE POSITION

The General Director of Spoletto Festival USA will be a visionary artistic and administrative leader who will inspire Board, staff, the public, and artists and ensure that the institution continues to be known worldwide for artistic excellence, thought-provoking programs, risk taking, and innovation. Through performances and a wide range of educational and engagement efforts, the General Director will be committed to ensuring that the Festival attracts an ever-more diverse audience, and has the financial and operational capacity to fully support its mission today and in the future.

Deepening the Festival's connection to Charleston and the region, the General Director will enthusiastically and proactively develop new relationships with civic, cultural, and community leaders, and lead the organization's ongoing programmatic and educational efforts to engage and inspire Charleston's diverse communities through an expanded and prioritized commitment to access, equity, and inclusion.

Embracing the "joy of the Festival," the General Director will shape the overall strategic direction for the organization working in close partnership with a dedicated board and a committed, talented artistic team and administrative staff. The General Director is responsible for the Festival's overall management including: its artistic and educational programs; its physical, financial, and human resources; and its future growth and development. The General Director, with the support of and in partnership with the Board, ensures the financial health of the Festival through a combination of creative and aggressive fundraising, ticket sales, marketing, sponsorship, and other earned revenue pursuits.

While the highly anticipated Festival is the center of attention for 17 exciting days each spring, the Festival is an anchor cultural institution in the city of Charleston, and it is expected that the General Director will be a visible and charismatic spokesperson year-round for the Festival and the arts throughout the region.

Key institutional priorities for the incoming General Director include but are not limited to:



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EXTERNAL PRIORITIES

- Ensure that the Festival continues to produce and present world-class programming that defines its artistic reputation and honors its history of presenting new work and introducing emerging artists; bring a fresh perspective to programming and work closely with the artistic team to develop innovative and marketable seasons that will attract both existing and new audiences locally and from afar and generate excitement, visibility, philanthropic support, and revenue;
- Serve as an enthusiastic and highly visible ambassador and fundraiser for the Festival; assume leadership of a multifaceted fundraising effort that reaches new supporters, solidifies relationships with existing ones, and builds community and trust along with financial security;
- Strive to make the Festival a must-visit destination; continue to enhance and build the Festival's brand locally, nationally, and internationally through traditional and digital platforms;
- Develop collaborative working relationships with key members of the local civic, business, and cultural communities in Charleston and the region;
- Explore presenting and producing partnerships nationally and internationally that may benefit the Festival.

INTERNAL PRIORITIES

- Fully understand the Festival's business model and continually refine and improve its sustainability going forward while never compromising on excellence in support of its mission; know the financial impact of programming choices and mitigate risk through fundraising and sponsorship;
- Develop collaborative and close relationships with members of the Board and find ways to bring forth their best ideas, efforts, resources, and contacts; continue to identify and attract more diverse Board members and those who represent the next generation of trustee leadership;
- Value the knowledge and expertise of staff, listen to their ideas, and work with them to ensure the Festival operates with efficiency and sustainability in support of its artistic and civic engagement goals;

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- Supervise and recruit, as needed, a highly qualified and motivated professional staff; delegate specific responsibilities and appropriate authority; hold individuals accountable for specific and collective performance; maintain morale and provide direction; and continue focus on building staff diversity;
- Capitalize on what makes the Festival special as a home for artists and destination for audiences; enhance visitor experience and maintain and/or expand existing partnerships with the City of Charleston, Piccolo Spoleto, the College of Charleston, and other partners;
- Be creative and entrepreneurial in pursuit of additional programming and earned income opportunities outside the Festival dates, including artist residencies and maximizing the potential of Festival Hall;
- Guide Board and staff in a strategic planning process;
- Expand the commitment to developing existing and engaging new audiences, especially in underserved communities, through traditional and digital programming and a wide range of educational initiatives; ensure the financial and institutional resources required to expand and support these efforts.

THE PERSON

The General Director will have a deep commitment to the performing arts and their value to society and will also have or be:

- A successful manager with a track record of artistic and institutional success presenting and producing, especially opera; ideally, festival experience; a pragmatic risk taker;
- A proven commitment to the importance of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access to the success of the Festival; someone who understands this cultural moment and views art as having a social function;
- An artistic collaborator with a broad and current network and interest in opera, music, dance, and theater;
- Warm, engaging, and an enthusiastic and accomplished fundraiser and relationship builder;
- Strong organizational skills with proven ability to focus, prioritize, and execute;

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- The ability to manage financial operations and programs in a fiscally sustainable way;
- Committed to education and developing audiences for both traditional and challenging work; rewarded by the successes of local community engagement and connection as well as national/international critical recognition;
- An appetite for and prior success with collaborations and partnerships;
- Creative marketing savvy; comfortable with technology and digital platforms;
- Excellent communication skills;
- Strong interpersonal and leadership skills; decisive, confident, humane;
- Eager to make Charleston their home and become an engaged and visible presence in the community and its social scene;
- An entrepreneurial spirit; a track record of coalescing others around objectives and their successful implementation.
- The Festival is committed to being a home for a wide range of artists, audiences, and ideas. As such, the General Director must embrace, champion, and relate to a diverse constituency.

For more information, visit <https://spoletousa.org/>.

Spoletto Festival USA is an equal opportunity employer and committed to diversity in hiring. Equity is central to our culture, mission, and who we are as an arts organization. Spoletto Festival USA does not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, membership, parental status, military status, or any other non-merit factor.

Please send application – expression of interest letter and CV – or nomination(s) to Becky Klein and Mark Tarnacki at Spoletto@PhillipsOppenheim.com.

Spoletto Festival USA
March 2021