

Organization

Founded in 1991 by James Houghton and based in Manhattan, New York City, Signature Theatre (Signature) celebrates playwrights and gives them an artistic home, making an extended commitment to a playwright's body of work. Signature produces several plays by each resident writer and delivers an intimate and immersive journey into each playwright's vision. Playwrights-in-Residence have included many illustrious and well-established playwrights, as well as contemporary and emerging ones, including Edward Albee, Quiara Alegria Hudes, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, Tony Kushner, Dave Malloy, Arthur Miller, Dominique Morisseau, Lynn Nottage, Sam Shepard, Anna Deavere Smith, August Wilson, Lanford Wilson, and Lauren Yee. Signature, its productions, and its resident writers have been recognized with more than 100 awards, including two Pulitzer Prizes, 41 Obie Awards, 15 Drama Desk Awards, 32 Lucille Lortel Awards, and many others. In 2014 Signature became the first New York City company to receive the Regional Theatre Tony Award.

Signature's current home is The Pershing Square Signature Center (The Center) located on 42nd Street in the heart of New York City's theater district. It is the only performing arts center to have been built in New York City since Lincoln Center. Designed by Frank Gehry, The Center is comprised of three unique theater spaces and two studios, including the Irene Diamond Stage, The Romulus Linney Courtyard Theatre, The Alice Griffin Jewel Box Theatre, and The Ford Studio. Its spacious lobby with a café presents SigSpace, which brings dynamic artistic programming to The Center's public spaces, sustaining it as a free public workspace and social hub for New York City artists. In addition to its use for theatre, film, television, and photography, The Center can also be rented out for corporate events.

Signature is renowned for its residency programs, which provide opportunities for multiple Playwrights-in-Residence to produce work at the same time. The Spotlight Residency program is a celebration and exploration of a single writer's body of work over the course of a year. The Premiere Residency program supports multiple playwrights as they build bodies of work by guaranteeing each writer three productions of new plays over a five-year period. The Launchpad Residency is an incubator for early career playwrights, offering a broad range of opportunities over three years, including two \$15,000 commissions, a full production and a full workshop production, guided mentorship, a week-long writing retreat outside of New York City, and access to private workspace at Signature.

Signature is deeply committed to equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA) and is continually building toward a more just, open, and democratic theatre to celebrate playwrights and welcome all to its artistic home. In 2018 Signature established an EDIA Staff Committee. Comprised of volunteer staff, this committee meets regularly to discuss issues related to EDIA work with the intention of transforming Signature in a place of cultural equity. There is also a Board EDIA Committee, which works closely with the EDIA Staff Committee to ensure that people at all levels of the organization are dedicated to advancing EDIA work throughout the institution. EDIA initiatives include supporting emerging writers from historically underrepresented communities, committing to hiring diverse artistic teams, and lowering barriers to access by offering Choose What You Pay pricing options for shows. The Signature Ticket Initiative is a ticket subsidy program that makes seats for every performance affordable.

Signature has a 24-member board of trustees led by Chairman Edward Norton and President Douglas E. Chittenden. Tim McClimon has served as Executive Director since 2022 and manages a staff of 37. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, Signature reported a total revenue of \$8.3 million, with \$5.6 million from contributions and grants and \$2.7 million from box office revenue and other earned revenue. The budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, is set at \$8.7 million.

Position Summary

The Artistic Director will design and implement Signature's artistic vision, curating an exciting and diverse season of productions that is in alignment with its organizational mission. Reporting to the board of trustees and partnering with the Executive Director, they will develop artistic programs and initiatives to elevate the theater's profile within the community, increase audience attendance, and secure its financial health. As the public face of the theater, the Artistic Director will engage with a wide variety of stakeholders including artists, audience members, and donors, while fostering deep connections throughout the theatrical industry, particularly Broadway, off-Broadway, and the larger performing arts arenas. Building a culture which is characterized by collaboration and open communication, the Artistic Director will be committed to hearing and uplifting diverse voices and artistic perspectives, in all aspects of their work and partnership.

Role and Responsibilities

Artistic Vision, Strategy, and Execution

- Conceive, develop, and articulate a compelling and inspiring artistic vision which advances Signature's mission and values.
- Foster a close working partnership with the Executive Director, ensuring that artistic decisions are made in alignment with Signature's organizational objectives.
- Curate and program exciting and engaging productions that reflect the breadth of contemporary theater, and which celebrates and uplifts the stories of people and communities from all backgrounds.
- Demonstrate an entrepreneurial and imaginative approach to developing and executing new and innovative artistic initiatives.
- Maintain awareness of current trends and best practices within the theater industry, while using such knowledge to creatively meet the evolving needs of audience members.
- Embrace other Artistic Vision, Strategy, and Execution responsibilities, as needed.

Community Building and Representation

- Serve as the face and spokesperson for Signature, representing the theater in its interactions with the public, in order to enhance its reputation and visibility.
- Nurture relationships with playwrights, directors, actors, and other artists, fostering the development and presentation of exciting new work.
- Advocate for diversity in casting, the selection of creative teams, and in all artistic choices, so that all voices and perspectives are considered and represented.
- Implement artistic initiatives to engage with the New York and wider theater community, including educational and community engagement initiatives, to attract and retain diverse audiences.
- Collaborate with community organizations and cultural institutions, including schools and colleges, in creating meaningful and long-lasting partnerships.
- Cultivate relationships with potential and existing donors, in order to secure fundraising support for productions, artistic programs, and other projects.
- Embrace other Community Building and Representation responsibilities, as needed.

Administrative Leadership and Board Collaboration

- Partner with the Executive Director to oversee and guide Signature in implementing its strategic and financial objectives.
- Attract, recruit, and retain high-caliber artistic talent, while managing artistic staff and artists, providing motivation, clear direction, and delegating tasks when necessary.
- Provide artistic leadership and guidance to all artistic teams and throughout the entire production process, from the selection of playwrights and new works to the development and rehearsals of performances.
- Grow a positive culture and work environment that supports cohesive, creative, and inclusive work, where all departments and staff are valued, and all voices are appreciated.
- Participate actively in board meetings, providing regular and transparent updates on artistic activities, while developing a positive and collaborative relationship with all board members.
- Champion EDIA and anti-racism initiatives as cornerstones of all organizational and artistic decisions.
- Embrace other Administrative Leadership and Board Collaboration responsibilities, as needed.

Traits and Characteristics

The Artistic Director will be a creative, inspiring, and charismatic visionary, who cares more for the quality of art being produced and the well-being of Signature, than their own ego. Embracing an innovative and forward-thinking perspective, they will envision new and inventive artistic approaches, while embracing risks and exploring new artistic collaborations. Possessing excellent interpersonal skills, they will effectively build rapport with artists, staff members, the board, and other constituents. Self-reflective and humble, they will have a commitment to continuous improvement and be open to feedback. With a deep commitment to equity and inclusivity, the Artistic Director will be dedicated to ensuring Signature is a vibrant and accessible cultural hub for all people.

Other key competencies include:

- **Leadership and Teamwork** – the ability to organize and influence people to believe in a vision and create a sense of purpose, while building a culture of teamwork, cooperation, and agility in meeting objectives.
- **Resiliency and Flexibility** – the capacity to quickly recover from adversity while readily modifying, responding, and adapting to change with minimal resistance.
- **Personal Accountability and Diplomacy** – the dexterity to be answerable for personal actions while effectively and tactfully handling difficult or sensitive issues.
- **Influencing Others** – the ability to personally affect others' actions, decisions, opinions, and thinking.

Qualifications

A demonstrable track record of success in artistic collaboration, fostering relationships, and enhancing financial support for artistic endeavors, ideally within a professional theater environment, is needed. A comprehensive understanding of contemporary theatrical trends, and an ability to select diverse and compelling productions, is essential. The Artistic Director may or may not be a practicing director, playwright, or producer. A commitment to upholding Signature Theater's mission is critical. There is no specific educational credentials or number of years of experience in theatrical leadership required.

Compensation and Benefits

Signature provides a competitive and equitable compensation package with an estimated salary in the range of \$280,000 to \$320,000. Benefits include paid vacation, sick leave, personal days, and holidays; health, long-term disability, and life insurance; and a voluntary 403(b) retirement plan, among others that are provided to all full-time employees.

Applications and Inquiries

To submit a cover letter and resume with a summary of demonstrable accomplishments (electronic submissions preferred), please click [here](#) or visit artsconsulting.com/opensearches. For questions or general inquiries about this job opportunity, please contact:

Geoff Chang, Vice President



1040 First Avenue, Suite 352

New York, NY 10022-2991

Tel (888) 234.4236 Ext. 218

Email SignatureAD@ArtsConsulting.com

Signature Theatre is continually building toward a more just, open, and democratic theatre to celebrate playwrights and welcome all to its artistic home. Signature Theater believes its strength lies in the diversity of its resident playwrights' voices and vision, and that diversity enriches theatrical experiences.