

**GENOVESE VANDERHOOF & ASSOCIATES**  
Cultural Management Consultants

## **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

### **VIRGINIA OPERA** **The Official Opera Company of the Commonwealth of Virginia** **General Director**

*Virginia Opera seeks applications for the position of General Director from individuals with senior experience in opera company administration, financial management, and fund-raising. Virginia Opera is the only opera company in North America to perform a full season of grand opera in three main stage venues (in Norfolk, Richmond, and Fairfax).*

#### **The Organization:**

*Virginia Opera (VO), now in its 45<sup>th</sup> year of operation, is known nationally for the identification and presentation of the finest young artists, for the musical and dramatic integrity of its productions, and for the ingenuity and variety of its education and outreach programs.*

*The company has a working budget of \$5.3 million with over 28 main stage performances, reaching nearly 50,000 attendees, as well as more than 150,000 students. It has a tradition of commissioning new works and does four main stage productions annually.*

*Organized in 1974 by founding chair Edythe C. Harrison, Virginia Opera was launched with two productions in Norfolk. Shortly thereafter, Peter Mark was appointed Artistic Director, a position he held for over 35 years. He was named Artistic Director Emeritus in 2012. Russell P. Allen was appointed President and CEO in 2011, returning to Virginia Opera after six years as General Manager (1994-2000). He is retiring in June of 2020. Adam Turner, one of opera's most exciting young conductors, was appointed Artistic Director in 2018, having been Principal Conductor and Artistic Adviser for four seasons.*

*Virginia Opera's statewide expansion began with performances in Richmond, Virginia's capital, in 1979. By 1983, the Richmond and Central Virginia Board of Virginia Opera formed and a Richmond office was opened. In 1992, the company expanded to Northern Virginia, presenting its first main stage performance at the Center for the Arts at George Mason University in Fairfax. Virginia Opera was named The Official Opera Company of the Commonwealth of Virginia by the Virginia Legislature in 1994, in recognition of its contribution to the Commonwealth and to the world of Opera.*

*Virginia Opera's education and outreach programs include the Herndon Foundation Emerging Artists Program, providing training, performance opportunities, access to industry connections, and resources to a group of opera's talented rising stars. It is highly competitive, receiving more than 650 applicants for an average of 12 to 20 artist contracts. Led by Shelby Rhoades, Principal Coach of Virginia Opera, the Emerging Artists appear on the main stage, tour in creatively staged educational productions, and perform in recitals, donor events, and the VO Master Teacher Series.*

*In addition, Operation Opera, led by Community Outreach and Musical Director Dr. Glenn Winters, is a customized outreach program that delivers a variety of dynamic, in-depth, and entertaining lectures across the Commonwealth. Student Night @ the Opera provides reduced ticket prices to attend main stage performances.*

## **Position Summary**

The General Director is directly responsible for the supervision and effective operation of all Virginia Opera activity within all three of its markets, working closely with the Artistic Director, to fulfill the corporate vision to "enrich the cultural community of the Commonwealth of Virginia through the passion, power and beauty of opera."

All of the VO's main stage markets are expanding, and the General Director will assume a position as an arts leader in each market, working with major donors and other cultural institutions.

The General Director's presence is regularly required at all fund-raising and board/committee meetings in all three markets.

Direct duties include:

**Artistic:** Ensuring that the artistic quality of VO is maintained at the highest possible professional level, working in close partnership with the Artistic Director;

**Finance:** Ensuring an appropriate and successful financial operation, including appropriate staffing, expense/revenue monitoring/tracking, and reporting;

**Fund-Raising:** Planning, facilitating, supervising, and managing all VO fund-raising efforts;

**Board Development:** Working with the Board's Nominating Committee to ensure the appropriate growth of volunteers dedicated to furthering the mission and objectives of VO;

**Education/Outreach:** Ensuring effective and exciting education and outreach programs;

**Marketing:** Guiding marketing planning statewide for all three markets, as well as consistent brand messaging.

All personnel employed by VO report directly or indirectly to the General Director. The General Director has ultimate responsibility for all staffing, including artistic personnel.

## **Candidate Profile:**

The ideal candidate must have senior experience in cultural administration, the talent and disposition for direct involvement in fund-raising, and the willingness (and energy) to spend time in three markets. In addition the new General Director must possess excellent financial acumen and budgeting skills, as well as a deep knowledge of opera production in order to manage the development and implementation of the annual operating budget.

The new General Director must have the leadership, managerial, and organization skills necessary to run a large and complex company operating in multiple markets; high-level and effective interpersonal and communication skills required for dealing with a variety of stakeholders; sophisticated financial management experience including cash flow planning and debt management reduction; and a knowledge of and passion for opera.

We seek an individual with the vision needed to lead the company to speak to both current and future generations; the interest and skill in collaborating with other arts and non-arts stakeholders in our markets and within the field; and the ability to inspire staff, volunteers, and donors.

Other required skills include: significant fund-raising experience; strong writing and computer skills; training in opera/music and/or arts management is desirable. A good contact network throughout the opera industry is useful.

Salary commensurate with experience.

## **How to Apply:**

Please send resume and cover letter with salary requirements and a list of references by Friday, 28 February 2020, to:

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