Center Theatre Group embarks on a search for a visionary artistic leader steeped in community, invested in an anti-racist practice, and ready to join the Center Theatre Group staff and board in the quest to be change-makers and makers of great theatre for the Los Angeles community.

Organization

Center Theatre Group (CTG) was founded in 1967 and is ranked in the top five operating budgets for not-for-profit operating theatre companies in the United States. It is a resident company of The Music Center of Los Angeles County, one of America’s three largest performing arts centers with other resident companies that include the Los Angeles Master Chorale, Los Angeles Opera, and Los Angeles Philharmonic. CTG’s mission is:

To serve the diverse audiences of Los Angeles by producing and presenting theatre of the highest caliber, nurturing new artists, attracting new audiences, and developing youth outreach and arts education programs. This mission is based on the belief that the art of theatre is a cultural force with the capacity to transform the lives of individuals and society at large.

Over the past 55 years, CTG has entertained millions of audience members and produced some of the most important shows of our time, many of which have been world premieres and have gone on to award-winning Broadway runs and beyond. CTG produces and presents a broad range of theatrical works in three distinct yet complementary venues: The Ahmanson Theatre (1,600 to 2,100 seats) and Mark Taper Forum (736 seats)—both leased from Los Angeles County as part of the Music Center Campus in the heart of Downtown Los Angeles—and the Kirk Douglas Theatre (317 seats), which opened in 2005 and is leased from Culver City in the thriving entertainment district of Culver City, about ten miles west of Downtown Los Angeles. Across these venues, CTG annually produces 14 to 18 productions serving an audience with over 550,000 visits per year. In addition to operating the three distinct theatrical venues, CTG leases offices and rehearsal spaces in a 1940s-era building adjacent to the Ahmanson Theatre, and owns a costume and prop shop, as well as leasing a scene shop and warehouse in nearby Boyle Heights, just east of Downtown.

CTG strives to make Los Angeles the theatre destination for audiences and artists from around the world and to make a major impact on Los Angeles, the lives of residents of the greater L.A. area, and all those who experience its artistic, educational, and community programming. CTG has been an industry leader in new play development, commissioning 65 new works and producing 40 world premieres in the last decade alone. CTG is committed to cultivating diverse artists and contributing to the cultural scene in and beyond Los Angeles by hosting workshops, nurturing playwrights, supporting local theatres, and creating art with the community. Initiatives include Block Party, an annual celebration of L.A. theatre in partnership with smaller Los Angeles theatre companies to bring greater resources and recognition to the L.A. theatre ecosystem, and the L.A. Writers’ Workshop, which fosters local playwrights, particularly from diverse backgrounds, and encourages bold new writing. In addition to onstage programming, CTG has robust and award-winning education and community programs which have long been embedded in the company as part of the dynamic culture of Los Angeles.

In October 2020, CTG launched the Digital Stage, a multimedia digital platform, to serve audiences and support its artists during the pandemic shutdowns. From on-demand streamed performances and interactive shared experiences to educational workshops, over 200 distinct projects have been created or shared by over a million households. Live performances resumed during the 2021-2022 season and the Digital Stage has been put on hold to be reexamined in conjunction with future leadership in the context of the strategic plan and vision.

During the pandemic pause in operations, CTG responded to the industry’s call to address systemic inequities toward BIPOC communities by beginning a process of regular assessment, education, training, and change. CTG’s Commitments to Change were first posted in June 2020 and were followed by the formation of a permanent Anti-Racism, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (AREDI) committee by the board of directors, as well as ongoing communication regarding progress toward the goals.
Over the past year, CTG board and staff have completed a comprehensive Strategic Alignment Process that included outreach to over 800 artists, audiences, donors, and other stakeholders. It ensured that individuals were engaged in CTG’s future, and that everyone in the organization has an understanding of the purpose of the company and how the envisioned future will be achieved. The result of this work was a new articulation of CTG’s Company Values:

- **Artistic Ambition** – We create and present a broad range of outstanding live theatrical work that is bold, authentic, provocative, engaging, entertaining, and inspiring. We support artists working at the highest levels of their own experience and craft.

- **Artistic Identity, Risk-Taking, and Innovation** – The theatrical creative process is the center of our work. We collaborate with diverse, creative, and innovative artists, risk-takers, and boundary-breakers to bring great stories to life and create theatre magic.

- **Centering Los Angeles** – We are a civic institution anchored in the cultural vibrancy and rich diversity of Los Angeles, committing to represent the communities that make up our great city, country, and world by bringing theatre to our stages for Los Angeles audiences.

- **Lifelong Learning, Inspiration, and Human Connection** – We nurture a lifelong passion for theatre in our current and future generations. We center human connection through collaboration, inclusion, imagination, united in the power of storytelling.

- **Respect, Compassion, Social Conscience, and AREDI** – Guided by our social responsibility, we lead with respect and compassion. We create opportunities, cultivate relationships, and dismantle barriers using an anti-racist frame that strives to include marginalized, underrepresented, and excluded communities.

CTG was led by Founding Artistic Director Gordon Davidson from 1967 to 2004 and was under the artistic leadership of Artistic Director Michael Ritchie from 2005 to 2021. CTG is governed by a 48-member board of directors led by President Amy R. Forbes. The board includes the Artistic Director and Managing Director/CEO Meghan Pressman, who joined the company in 2019. CTG normally employs more than 180 full- and part-time artistic and administrative staff and another 700 to 900 artists and craft personnel on a per show basis over the course of a season. In the five seasons before the pandemic, annual expenses ranged between $45 million to $65 million. The board has not yet approved a budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, but total revenue is expected to exceed $60 million with approximately $15 million from contributions and grants, and $45 million from ticket sales, program services, and other revenues. CTG has a quasi-endowment (reserve fund) of approximately $25 million and a permanently restricted endowment of approximately $25 million.

**Community**

Los Angeles County is the one of the largest in the United States, with nearly 10 million residents in 88 cities and nearly 140 unincorporated areas. The Los Angeles region has the largest creative industry in the world and is bursting with talented actors, writers, directors, designers, and technical artists. According to a report by the Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles leads the nation in the creative sector of the new economy. The heart of the television and film industry is in and around the Los Angeles area and therefore a magnet for creative talent at the highest level.

Los Angeles County ranks among the most ethnically and culturally diverse populations in the world and has at least 185 languages spoken at home. Its demographics include 9 percent Black or African American alone, 1.5 percent American Indian and Alaska Native alone, 15.6 percent Asian alone, 0.4 percent Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, 3.3 percent Two or More Races, 49.1 percent Hispanic or Latino, and 25.3 percent White alone, not Hispanic or Latino. Approximately 21 percent of the population is below age 18 and almost 15 percent is over age 65.

Los Angeles County boasts fifteen beaches, nine national parks, more than 93 museums, 11 major league professional sports teams, and four major amusement parks. Los Angeles has been confirmed as the site for the 2028 Summer Olympics, which will be the third time this dynamic community will have hosted the games. As it did in 1984, the Olympics represents a huge opportunity for the arts community. In the past, the Olympics have been paired with an arts festival, and CTG and its artistic leadership will be expected to serve as a leader in this effort, alongside the theatrical and arts communities in Los Angeles.
CTG would like to uplift and honor the native people of the Los Angeles basin who first called this land their home. CTG acknowledges that the Tongva, Chumash, and Tongva Gabrieleno native people are the Indigenous caretakers of the land upon which the theatres stand.

Sources: edited from lacounty.gov; discoverlosangeles.com; census.gov

**Position Summary**

The Artistic Director (AD) will inspire and guide CTG's robust, diverse staff and artists, championing a cohesive artistic vision and encouraging all members of the CTG community to take an active role in the artistic work and educational programs. The AD will be excited about becoming a part of the fabric of Los Angeles, invested in anti-racist practices, and ready to join the CTG team in its quest to be change-makers. The AD will provide vision and leadership working in partnership with the Managing Director/CEO (MD/CEO) to form the executive leadership of CTG. Reporting to the board of directors, the AD is responsible for the direction and artistic priorities of CTG and for upholding the organization’s Fundamental Principles (Mission, Vision, Company Values) within the realities of financial, technological, human, and other resources. Jointly, the Artistic and Managing Directors will ensure that CTG is seen as one of the premier theatres in the nation and chart an exciting and ambitious path for the future.

As part of a bold vision, the AD will be responsible for upholding the organization’s AREDI goals. The AD will be committed to the theatre industry and to using the art of theatre to broaden horizons and illuminate new perspectives. Keeping these perspectives in mind, the AD will oversee commissioning new work, the development of plays and musicals, and the artistic choices relative to the selection of shows produced or presented at the Mark Taper Forum and The Kirk Douglas Theatre. They will serve as the leading artistic advisor and provide curatorial feedback to the MD/CEO and Producing Director and collaborate with these individuals in the selection of shows to be presented at the Ahmanson Theatre.

The AD will enthusiastically participate in the cultivation and stewardship of donors by actively collaborating with the board and MD/CEO and engage with the philanthropic community to ensure the organization’s long-term vitality. While advancing the national reputation of the organization, the AD will be deeply committed, both onstage and off, to engaging local artists and championing CTG’s educational and community programming. They will be a visible and engaging presence in the Los Angeles community and throughout the organization, committed to building authentic relationships.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**Artistic Vision and Implementation**

- Set the direction of the artistic team and other key artistic and program personnel in developing and implementing a comprehensive, vibrant, and inclusive artistic vision that is informed by and built on CTG’s commitment to developing new work while also leveraging the unique facets of each CTG venue and the breadth of the entire organization.
- Conceptualize, develop, implement, and supervise theatrical productions, community engagement, and educational programming in line with the Mission, Vision, and Company Values.
- Ensure sound artistic and financial planning for each production and program in partnership with the MD/CEO and in collaboration with the leadership team, balancing a superior experience for guest artists and staff, as well as for other artistic partners, with the need for institutional sustainability.
- Develop and cultivate positive, creative, and artistic relationships with local, national, and international playwrights and theatre artists while evaluating potential partners for new projects.
- Commission playwrights and generative artists for premieres and other projects, manage the commissioning process, and mentor new voices to support new play development.
- Collaborate with the artistic and production teams, set and maintain high artistic and production standards, and ensure a positive and safe workspace for all artists and technicians within a creative environment.
- Provide thoughtful and human-centered leadership and guidance to directors, choreographers, designers, music directors, and other involved artists, working in close partnership with production teams.
- Supervise the casting for productions and workshops, ensuring a fair and inclusive casting process.
- Actively engage in the local, regional, and national theatre sector by attending plays and productions.
- Embrace other artistic vision and implementation responsibilities as needed.
Community Engagement and Audience Development

- Cultivate strategic partnerships and build authentic relationships to understand community needs and advance the organization’s artistic and community engagement goals.
- Serve as a spokesperson and ambassador for the organization, participating in public dialogue, speaking engagements, social appearances, and donor cultivation events.
- Forge and maintain positive and enduring relationships with the political decisionmakers responsible for the funding and maintenance of CTG’s venues and programs.
- Actively engage and support the Education & Community Partnerships programs and directly or indirectly ensure that they remain central to the work of the organization and focused on artists at all points in their careers, audiences before and after the show, theatre as a part of everyday life, and the next generation of theatregoers, artists, and artisans.
- Inspire donors and audiences to feel connected to the organization and foster positive interactions with arts and cultural organizations at the local, regional, and national levels.
- Develop positive and impactful relationships with community-based organizations that connect people to CTG and support the organization’s AREDI commitments and activities.
- Foster positive interactions with arts and cultural organizations at the local, regional, and national levels by participating in convenings, joint activities, and professional associations’ boards, committees, and panels.
- Embrace other community engagement and audience development responsibilities as needed.

Executive and Organizational Leadership

- Build and nurture a strong partnership with the MD/CEO to form a transparent and collaborative executive leadership team, implement financial and organizational strategies to ensure the overall success of the organization.
- Develop positive, responsive, and collaborative working relationships with the board of directors, reporting regularly on the organization’s artistic activity.
- Engage in the organization’s contributed revenue enhancement activities, coordinating with the Institutional Advancement team to cultivate and steward donors and actively take part in development and fundraising activities.
- Strategize with the Marketing and Communications team to advance earned revenue goals, and supporting branding, public messaging, advertising, social media, and other public communications.
- Embrace other executive and organizational leadership responsibilities as needed.

Traits and Characteristics

The AD will be a people-oriented, creative leader who is passionate about theatre and personally engaged in advancing CTG’s Fundamental Principles in the organization and throughout the field. They will be motivated by new ideas, methodologies, and approaches that will best serve the diverse audiences of a dynamic multi-venue organization with a broad reach throughout the community. Using a human-centered approach, the AD will value teamwork and appreciate the collective efforts and voices of internal and external stakeholders. This individual will be flexible, comfortable interacting frequently with a variety of people, and easily adaptable to changing circumstances. Decisive and assertive, the AD will be resourceful in considering the investments and time, talent, and financial resources that advance CTG’s artistic vision while also supporting the mission and values.

Other key competencies of the role include:

- **Leadership and Diplomacy** – The ability to inspire and influence others with an exciting artistic vision, build trust that supports creative risks, and leverage networks that advance the organization’s mission.
- **Professional and Personal Accountability** – The capacity to strategize and prioritize teams and tasks necessary to meet or exceed agreed upon expectations of the role and assume accountability for decisions and actions.
- **Continuous Learning** – The creativity to take initiative, regularly adopt new concepts or technologies, and keep abreast of new information through listening, learning, reading, and engaging.
- **Teamwork and Decision Making** – The dexterity to build team decisions towards consensus, respect individual perspectives, appreciate the contributions of team members, and celebrate their shared goals.
- **Time and Priority Management** – The aptitude to ascertain competing priorities, resolve difficulties, overcome obstacles, and maximize the use of time and resources to attain the desired artistic and financial outcomes.

**Qualifications**
Demonstrated artistic and creative experience in theatre endeavors with a track record of successful engagement with both artists and community is required. Exemplary verbal and written communication skills, as well as multiple language aptitude, are greatly appreciated. The ideal candidate will have a proven track record of leading large and complex teams and projects in a unified way. Previous experience commissioning and producing new works by emerging and established playwrights is required. Residence in the Los Angeles area is expected, as is the ingenuity to be a local and national leader.

**Compensation and Benefits**
CTG offers a competitive compensation and benefits package commensurate with experience and accomplishments. The base salary is expected to be around $550,000 and comprehensive benefits include medical, dental, vision, long-term disability, life, and AD&D insurances; flexible spending accounts, 401(k) retirement plan with an employer match, employee assistance program, and additional benefits.

**Applications and Inquiries**
As part of an inclusive process, interested applicants are invited to inquire and/or submit a letter that balances artistic philosophy with accomplishments, a resume that highlights a commitment to artists and community, and a production-oriented curriculum vitae that demonstrates how an applicant’s past theatre experience has made a meaningful contribution to contemporary society. To submit materials (electronic submissions preferred), please click here or visit artsconsulting.com/employment. For questions or general inquiries about this unique opportunity, please contact:

Wyona Lynch-McWhite, Senior Vice President  
Bruce D. Thibodeau, President

8581 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 406  
Los Angeles, CA 90069-4120  
Tel (888) 234.4236 Ext. 225 (Mrs. Lynch-McWhite) or Ext. 201 (Dr. Thibodeau)  
Email CenterTheatreGroup@ArtsConsulting.com

**Center Theatre Group is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against any applicant on the basis of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, color, ancestry, disability, age, national origin, pregnancy, veteran/military status, genetic information or any other basis prohibited by law. CTG will consider for employment qualified applicants with criminal histories in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Los Angeles Fair Chance Initiative for Hiring Ordinance. We support, promote, and embrace a diverse workforce.**