

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS FOR THE ARTS

EXECUTIVE SEARCH • PLANNING • ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS

POSITION PROFILE

Artistic Director

**Children's Musical Theater (CMT) San Jose
San Jose, CA**

OPPORTUNITY

Children's Musical Theater San Jose (CMT) seeks an engaging, collaborative, and strategic Artistic Director to help guide its next chapter. Now in its 57th Season, CMT is one of the nation's foremost theaters producing work by and for young people, and its decades of successful programming position it to thrive under dynamic new artistic leadership. Theater leaders with a passion for artistic excellence, a commitment to nurturing diverse voices and perspectives, and an excitement for mentoring young people and early-career artists will find a receptive and supportive community at CMT. This position reports directly to the Board of Directors and serves as the company's co-leader, working in close collaboration with the Managing Director.

BACKGROUND

Founded in 1968, CMT has grown from a grassroots volunteer organization to the leading provider of arts education in Silicon Valley and one of the nation's largest theatrical performing and training organizations for youth. As the oldest performing arts organization in San Jose, CMT is dedicated to providing musical theater experiences of exceptional caliber for children ages 4-20, spanning all abilities, and to presenting enriching, entertaining theater for all of Silicon Valley. Each year, CMT provides hands-on artistic opportunities for 1500+ young people in a pre-professional setting, performing for audiences of nearly 35,000 annually.

CMT's [mission](#) is to *"train and educate today's youth through musical theater to set and achieve high artistic and personal goals, and to inspire them to become exemplary artists, patrons, and citizens of tomorrow."* With inclusiveness and quality as its guiding principles, CMT presents world-class theater performed by local youth and early-career artists. Its unique commitment to cast all who audition - regardless of experience, financial resources, ability, or background - is at the heart of its work, and is first among its five core values:

- Cast All
- Empower Youth
- Foster Growth
- Produce Success
- Celebrate Diversity

Current Environment

CMT currently operates on an annual budget of approximately \$3.5 million, which supports a full-time staff of approximately 15, over 20 teaching artists and education professionals, and 30-40 professional artists who make up the artistic teams for annual productions. A significant portion of its work is carried out by dedicated community volunteers, mostly parents. These individuals are supervised by or coordinate with professionals in front-of-house, production, backstage, and rehearsal-related roles.

CMT's productions are presented at the Montgomery Theater, a 465-seat, city-owned theater in Downtown San Jose. CMT recently opened its Creative Arts Center, a 25,000-square foot facility approximately 10 minutes from the theater. Operated by CMT on a long-term lease, the CAC houses five rehearsal studios, production shops, and education and administrative spaces for the company, and serves as a vibrant hub for the CMT community.

Programming

CMT's season features 11 productions annually, in several tiers of programming designed to meet the needs and abilities of a wide range of participants:

- **2 Junior Talents** productions (cast members between the ages of 7-10)
- **4 Rising Stars** productions (cast members between the ages of 8-14)
- **3 Mainstage** productions (cast members between the ages of 14-20)
- **2 Marquee** productions that showcase the talents of top emerging Bay Area performing artists, including many CMT alumni.

CMT has proudly presented the regional or West Coast non-professional premieres of several musicals, including *Billy Elliot*, *Miss Saigon*, *Les Misérables*, *Kinky Boots*, and *Head Over Heels*, as well as celebrated, NEA-supported productions such as *Rent*, *American Idiot*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and *The Who's Tommy*, among others.

Education

CMT's education work complements and reinforces its onstage programming, and is a critical part of its mission. Programs include:

- CMT Studio - School-year training programs featuring acting, improv, dance, voice, recital, audition preparation, and other classes, as well as masterclasses with visiting professional artists; serves 1200+ students each year.
- Camp CMT - One- and two-week sessions during the school year and summer focusing on building theater skills and other recreational and educational opportunities; serves 750+ students each year.
- Student Audience Matinees - Fifteen to twenty performances per year dedicated to student audiences, including no-cost tickets for 2000 students from San Jose Title 1 public schools and summer camps for marginalized youth. This program serves 7000+ participants each year.

Leadership

CMT is governed by a 17-member Board of Directors, drawn from a community of prior CMT participants and Silicon Valley's wider population and committed to bringing a wide range of perspectives to the organization. Carin Watson serves as Chair. (A full bio for Carin Watson can be found [here](#).) Managing Director Dana Zell joined CMT in 2014 and oversees administration, operations, and revenue generation for the organization, collaborating with the Artistic Director on strategic direction and other key leadership areas. A native of the Bay Area and a past program participant at CMT, she serves as the co-leader of CMT with the Artistic Director, and both report directly to the board. (A full bio for Dana Zell can be found [here](#).)

About San Jose

The City of San Jose is the county seat of Santa Clara County, the largest city in Silicon Valley, and the 3rd largest in California. Santa Clara County is home to approximately 1.9M people, and its five largest ethnic groups are Asian (Non-Hispanic) (40%), White (Non-Hispanic) (27%), Hispanic or Latino (25%), Mixed Race/Multiracial (Non-Hispanic) (4%), Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) (2%). (Source: [censusreporter.org](https://www.censusreporter.org))

Well known as the heart of the global tech industry, Silicon Valley also has a thriving arts and culture community that includes professional theaters, museums, opera, dance, a symphony, jazz, and visual arts organizations; it is also home to world-class public and private universities like Stanford, UC Berkeley, and UC San Francisco. Vibrant and diverse neighborhoods reflecting its global draw, a rich dining scene, and access to the wider Bay Area's natural beauty and cultural offerings are also part of its attraction. [Click here](#) for more information.

ASSETS AND CHALLENGES

The next Artistic Director will join the organization at a pivotal time with the opportunity to chart CMT's course for its next chapter. CMT has evolved significantly since its founding, and offers substantial assets that the next Artistic Director can rely on as they join the organization. These include:

- A long track record of high-quality productions that engage participants and audiences from across Silicon Valley and beyond.
- The Creative Arts Center, a 25,000-square foot space opened in 2021 to house rehearsal and education activities, production shops, and administrative offices.
- An engaged community of CMT participants, volunteers, alumni, and their families, who hold dear their experiences with the organization, frequently over many years or even generations.
- An experienced and dedicated staff and a core team of professional artists that are committed to CMT's mission.

Along with these opportunities, the next Artistic Director will be able to move CMT forward and find new solutions to challenges, in concert with the senior team and Board, including:

- Furthering the professional development, work environment, and size/scope of CMT's core staff.
- Growing CMT's artistic and professional community and refining the producing model to maximize their impact.
- Innovating new programming that supports the overall revenue/business model of CMT.
- Continuing to operationalize the organization's commitment to equity and inclusion.
- Providing collaborative leadership at a time when all producing companies are seeking balance between programmatic ambition and human/financial resources.
- Ensuring the alumni population is engaged and aligned around CMT's future.
- Working closely with the Managing Director to find and expand new sources of revenue, with a particular focus on audience development, education programming and other earned revenue streams.

POSITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

These are the primary roles and responsibilities of the Artistic Director:

- Foster an innovative artistic vision for CMT that aligns with the organization's mission and values; set a strategic programmatic course for that vision that inspires performers, audiences, donors, staff, and Board.
- Lead the season planning process, including the selection of productions and artistic teams.
- Oversee season productions and work with artistic teams to ensure that CMT's values of artistic excellence, inclusion, and community are being met.
- Develop and manage annual production budgets in coordination with other key staff.
- Collaborate with other senior staff to innovate educational programs that further CMT's mission, production work, and overall institutional position.
- Foster a productive partnership with the Managing Director; lead jointly and by example.
- Maintain a working culture that supports and inspires the best work of program participants, artistic professionals, staff, and Board.
- Hire, lead, and mentor the artistic, education, and production teams.
- Imbue and deepen CMT's efforts articulated in their Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Plan.
- Serve as a primary public face and ambassador of CMT with civic organizations and public officials, institutional and corporate funders, as well as patrons, volunteers, and participant families.
- Work with the Managing Director, staff, and Board to strengthen CMT's fiscal sustainability including support of fundraising activities and earned revenue generation.
- Help plan and execute the organization's annual fundraising Gala, including the artistic components.

QUALIFICATIONS AND SPECIAL TRAITS

While no single individual will likely possess all of these qualifications, the Search Committee will make their evaluation on the following criteria:

- Demonstrable track record as a highly creative theater artist, with deep experience especially in musicals. While the Search Committee is open to candidates of other backgrounds, a director with a background in musical theater is strongly preferred.
- Strong producing skills and the ability to lead and inspire teams of professionals and volunteers in a high-volume production environment.
- A deeply held commitment to working with young people and early-career professionals, and facilitating their artistic and personal growth. The committee will consider a range of backgrounds, but direct experience in areas such as arts education, engagement, or public programming will be meaningful.
- A strategic thinker, able to adapt and innovate in collaboration with the Managing Director and Board to achieve mutually agreed objectives.
- A collaborative, positive, communicative leadership style.
- A demonstrable commitment to equity and access and a desire to create an inclusive environment.
- Prior roles in non-profit theater organizations.
- A dynamic public presence that will inspire the Board, staff, and public to support the theater's artistic work and organizational vision.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills; a good listener as well as a compelling speaker.
- A wide knowledge of the musical theater industry and canon (classic and contemporary).
- Satisfaction in facilitating the best work in others.
- Integrity, truthfulness, and ethics.

COMPENSATION AND START DATE

The annual salary range for the Artistic Director starts at \$125,000 and includes a full benefit package including: paid vacation/PTO and holidays; health, dental, and vision insurance; disability and life insurance; and a 403(b) plan.

CMT has engaged Management Consultants for the Arts to facilitate this search; Thomas Pearson, Emily Knapp, and David Mallette are leading the search. The hiring decision will be made by a search committee of CMT's board, staff, and community members. They hope to make a final decision by early 2025, with the new Artistic Director onsite in summer 2025.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITMENT

CMT is committed to inclusive recruitment and hiring practices throughout all levels of the organization, ensuring that its staff, management, and executive leadership reflect and serve its communities. For more information on its commitments to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging, [click here](#). CMT does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, ethnicity, or sexual orientation,

disability, religion, or any other characteristic protected by law. CMT has cultivated an organizational culture that encourages producing theater through an equitable lens and creating an environment committed to inclusion and excellence.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates should submit the following items for consideration:

- A current resumé
- Cover letter (no more than 1 ½ pages)
- Four professional references
- Salary expectation

The cover letter should describe your background and your approach to leadership, and could also address:

1. What is it about this role and CMT that excites you?
2. What in your background makes you a compelling candidate for CMT?
3. CMT is committed both to artistic excellence and to providing access. How do you see those two commitments complementing each other and how would we see them in your prior work?
4. When you think about success in leading CMT, what comes to mind?

All documents should have the candidate’s name as part of the file name. Submissions should be made through Management Consultants for the Arts’s website at:

<https://www.mcaonline.com/searches/artistic-director-cmt>

Management Consultants for the Arts, Inc

www.MCAonline.com

Phone: 203-353-0722

Questions about this search may be submitted to info@MCAonline.com

With “CMT Artistic Director Search” in the subject line.