

# Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival: Director of Marketing and Communications

## Opportunity in Brief

Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival (HVSF) has undergone tremendous artistic and programmatic evolution in recent seasons under the leadership of Artistic Director Davis McCallum and Managing Director Kate Liberman, including the infusion of new and contemporary works for the stage, transfers of HVSF productions to peer theaters, and a major investment in community engagement and art-making initiatives. HVSF is now laying the foundation for its next phase, offering its artists and audiences in the Hudson Valley region a much-needed source of inspiration and optimism as they look to the post-COVID era together and the company moves to its first ever permanent home. HVSF seeks a **Director of Marketing and Communications** to join them in charting this journey from a seasonal festival to a year-round cultural anchor for the region. As a cultural organization with deep roots in its local community, and with its rising profile in the Greater New York City arts landscape, HVSF is an organization with an attractive mix of stability and ripe opportunities for innovation.

HVSF seeks a highly motivated, skilled, and experienced Director of Marketing and Communications to join the team at this exciting point in the Festival's history. They will work in close partnership with the Artistic Director, Managing Director, and an engaged and energized Board to expand strategic initiatives in support of high artistic standards, strong connection to the community, and successful engagement of loyal and growing audiences. The DMC will be supported by external resources for graphic design, press representation, and digital marketing, and responsible for an annual ticket sales goal of approximately \$1.2 million (based on 2019), representing 48% of the annual operating budget. They will also be essential in supporting the brand transition as HVSF moves to its new home.

## HVSF Mission Statement

Rooted in the landscape of the Hudson Valley, with the plays of William Shakespeare as our touchstone, HVSF engages the widest possible audience in a theatrical celebration of our shared humanity.

## Vision

We are a classical repertory theater that embraces the present moment, and our work springs from the most essential of elements — actor, audience, language, and landscape. As both a local community hub and a national arts destination, we foster meaningful human connections at the convergence of nature and culture.

## HVSF Core Values

Excellence, Inclusion, Generosity, Playfulness, Sustainability

## About HVSF and Its History

Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival is a critically acclaimed, professional, non-profit theater company based in Garrison, NY. The Festival has established a reputation for lucid, engaging, and highly inventive productions staged under this iconic, open-air Theater Tent overlooking the Hudson River at historic Boscobel House and Gardens. In recent years, the Festival has also ventured beyond the Tent, touring its work to other venues throughout the Hudson Valley, transferring productions to other theaters, engaging its community through radically participatory art-making, and reaching over 50,000 students and educators annually through its year-round Education programs. Over the years, HVSF's exuberantly irreverent productions have gained a devoted following. Critics from The New York Times, The New Yorker, and The Wall Street Journal have applauded the clarity, energy, wit, and imagination of our productions, and the unique and playful nature of the actor-audience relationship under the tent. Every summer, over 35,000 friends and supporters come together under this tent to enjoy vibrant productions in one of the most unusual and exciting performance venues in the American Theater.

HVSF was founded by Melissa Stern and Terry O'Brien in September 1987 with an outdoor production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Maniotoga, home of industrial designer Russell Wright, in Garrison, NY. The following year, Boscobel House and Gardens agreed to host HVSF's mainstage season on the estate's expansive grounds, and that summer's production of Shakespeare's *As You Like It* was performed under a tent overlooking the Hudson River. Under O'Brien's leadership, and with the enthusiastic support of our Board of Directors and community of patrons, HVSF grew dramatically. In 1994, we added a second show to our season. That same year, HVSF deepened its impact on the region by offering hands-on, performance-driven education programs to area schools. In 2004, we began to tour innovative Shakespeare productions to middle and high schools. In 2006, HVSF acquired a spectacular, custom-designed, open-air theater tent with seating for 540, establishing a performance venue unlike anything else in American theater. HVSF has served more than 500,000 patrons since our first season in 1987.

Terry O'Brien led the theater for 27 years, directing more than 30 productions, and stepped down as Artistic Director in December 2013. After a nationwide search for his successor, HVSF's Board appointed Davis McCallum as Artistic Director in May 2014. In 2015, HVSF's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* transferred to The Pearl Theatre Company in New York, where it earned rave reviews and garnered the company's first-ever Drama League Nomination. In 2016, HVSF celebrated its 30th anniversary with its largest single project to date, a citizen-driven production of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*, followed two years later by a citizen-driven world premiere of Seth Bockley's *Rip Van Winkle; or, Cut the Old Moon Into Stars*. In 2017, the Festival produced its first ever world premieres — Kate Hamill's *Pride and Prejudice* (a co-production with Primary Stages in New York) and Lauren Gunderson's *The Book of Will*. In 2019, HVSF produced its first-ever musical, Sondheim's *Into the Woods*. 2021 will be HVSF's final season at its long-time location at Boscobel House and Gardens. In 2022 the theater will move to its first ever permanent home on 98 spectacular river-view acres, thanks to the generosity of philanthropist Chris Davis.

## Director of Marketing and Communications Job Description

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### Overall Objectives

The DMC is a full-time, year-round senior staff leadership position responsible for moving the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival's mission forward by cultivating new and existing audiences through marketing and communications campaigns. The DMC oversees the creation, refinement, and implementation of strategies and tactics designed to generate greater awareness of the organization and its work, and to elevate the Hudson Valley region and HVSF's new theater campus as a cultural destination. These tactics will build new audiences and deepen relationships with existing audiences, thereby increasing earned income and improving brand position. Additionally, the DMC will participate as a member of the HVSF leadership team and assist in strategic thinking and long-term planning for the institutional brand and vision of the company.

The DMC's results-oriented approach to marketing and communication will allow the organization to:

- Meet or exceed revenue goals
- Strengthen its brand
- Retain and grow a strong customer base
- Attract new audiences
- Ensure a positive and welcoming audience experience for all
- Expand community awareness and appreciation of the various programs at HVSF
- Enhance the pride of association experienced by donors, theatergoers, community members, artists, partners, and other stakeholders

### Responsibilities

- Plan, develop, and execute all phases of promotional campaigns, including print (season brochure, postcards/flyers, season program book, education and development brochures, etc.), email, blog, digital display, press, and social media campaigns with an eye toward consistency of the brand voice
- Plan, develop, and execute all phases of audience development campaigns, including new audience outreach and donor outreach

- Build and monitor predictive ticket sales income forecasts and ticket pricing models as a part of the annual budgeting process, in collaboration with the Box Office Manager, Finance Director, and Managing Director
- Build and monitor the Marketing and Communications expense budget and Audience Services/Front-of-House expense budget, in collaboration with the Finance Director and Managing Director, and with input from the Box Office Manager and Audience Services Manager
- Oversee and manage all vendor and marketing-focused consultant/contractor relationships and deliverables
- Implement all public facing communications, including the annual audience survey
- Orchestrate and publish all social media, email, website, and blog content
- Plan and execute photo and video shoots, with professional photographers and videographer and in collaboration with HVSF staff
- Support any digital programming HVSF produces including any zoom theater, podcasts, or recorded streams and ensure digital ticketing and distribution to HVSF's audience
- Oversee and manage press representation consultancy to build and maintain relationships with local and national media contacts, ensuring comprehensive press coverage in local, regional, and national markets
- Oversee and manage the Box Office Manager and Audience Services Manager to train and supervise a professional, warm, and engaged Front-of-House staff while also ensuring their compliance to COVID regulations, as applicable
- Develop promotional partnerships and advertising deals throughout the region, including maintenance of relationships with local businesses that advertise in HVSF's season program book
- Plan and execute strategic promotional events, both on-site and throughout the region
- Collaborate with Director of Development on the strategy, execution, and analysis of donor appeals, as well as planning and execution of donor communications more broadly
- Oversee a consultancy in the creation and implementation of a new brand for HVSF as we move to our new home
- Partner in HVSF's goal to be an Anti-Racist organization, participating in weekly staff conversations about combating issues of structural racism in our organization and support public communication about our efforts in this regard
- Refine and revise HVSF's style guide as needed
- Prepare quarterly reports for Board of Directors
- Provide ongoing strategic support to HVSF Staff leadership and Board of Directors
- Represent HVSF locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally
- Other duties as assigned

## **Qualifications and Experience**

The DMC must demonstrate:

- Leadership and supervisory experience in the field with at least five years' experience in the arts at an advanced level
- Administrative experience that demonstrates excellent judgment, the ability to listen well, attention to detail, budgeting and financial management skills and prioritization.
- Experience in theater and/or multi-arts marketing planning, strategies, and tactics
- Experience interacting with high-level contacts, including artists, community leaders, donors, and patrons
- Experience in training and supervising staff and interns, as well as fostering positive team environments

The DMC must demonstrate technical familiarity with/expertise in:

- Ticketing/Donation Platforms (Spektrix, Tessitura, Vendini, Blackbaud, etc.)
- Project Management Platforms (Asana, Basecamp)
- Wordpress and iFrame or API integrations, as well as basic styling (HTML, CSS)
- Adobe Suite (Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator) or comparable design software
- Microsoft Office (Excel, Word) and Google Suite

## **Personal Characteristics**

Our ideal DMC will demonstrate:

- Superior leadership, strong motivation, and focus
- A high level of creative energy, self-confidence, integrity, humor, and generosity
- Proven visual, oral, and written communication skills
- Strong analytical, problem-solving, organizational, and budgeting skills

- Ability to work calmly, effectively, and flexibly in high-pressure situations with artists, administrators, and audiences
- Strong design sensibilities and ability to communicate abstract concepts to designers and contractors
- A love for the Hudson Valley and familiarity with the geography and press distribution of local communities

Our ideal DMC will be local (within 40 miles) to the Cold Spring/Garrison area, with reliable personal transportation.

### **Terms and Compensation**

This is a year-round, permanent, full-time, salaried commitment. Late nights and weekends, especially during the summer season (June – September), will be required. Benefits package, including health coverage and paid vacation/personal/sick time, is offered. Salary range: \$65k-\$75k.

### **To Apply**

HVSF is an equal opportunity employer dedicated to building a culturally diverse and equitable environment and we strongly encourage applications from BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) Candidates To apply: please submit a cover letter, resume, and three references via email to [kliberman@hvshakespeare.org](mailto:kliberman@hvshakespeare.org)

To apply, please send your resume, cover letter, three references, and three design and/or writing samples to Managing Director Kate Liberman at [kliberman@hvshakespeare.org](mailto:kliberman@hvshakespeare.org). *No phone calls, please.*