



FACTORY THEATRE Artistic Director Search

FACTORY THEATRE (Toronto, Canada) is seeking a visionary, creative, and energetic individual to serve as its next Artistic Director. Reporting to the Board of Directors and working in partnership with the Managing Director, the Artistic Director will be responsible for developing and implementing an imaginative, compelling vision that shapes the strategic direction of all artistic programs at Factory. The Artistic Director will focus on creating original Canadian works, audience development and artist and community engagement initiatives.

The Artistic Director will be a leader in the Toronto arts community with a strong desire to engage with artists and organizations locally, within Ontario, and across Canada. The ideal candidate will have a drive to build audiences and embrace their role in both the public and private sectors, the support needed to deliver on strategic artistic priorities, and a value for collaboration.

As the artistic leader of Factory Theatre, the Artistic Director will play an active role as a thought partner in planning the organization's overall advancement. Supporting and partnering with artists, staff, the board, and volunteers, the Artistic Director will implement the strategic plan while building a thriving, creative, and diverse culture that serves Toronto, its neighbouring community, and artists. The Artistic Director will conceptualize and implement a plan to continue growing Factory's artistic objectives while leading and motivating a highly effective team to realize them.

Factory Theatre is committed to continuing its journey to being a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization. Factory is committed to an open and transparent hiring process and encourages applications from our diverse community. We welcome all applications from women and gender nonconforming people, people of colour, Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, people of all sexual orientations, and all others who may contribute to the further diversification of Factory.

Factory Theatre is currently evaluating a range of solutions for facility renewal, including redevelopment of the current property and opportunities at new locations. No immediate or confirmed plans are in place, but a significant phase of facility renewal is highly likely in the next 2-5 years

This is an exciting and unique opportunity for an artistic professional who can bring together their vision, experience, and passion for theatre, and who believes they can collaborate to create a strategy that will position Factory as a leader in the Toronto arts community. The Artistic Director must have an interest in theatre in all its forms, new play development, and the development of the next generation of artists and audiences. They will want to invest in Factory's success and growth and will find personal fulfillment in being part of its future.



Photo Credit, Monster (2023) by Daniel MacIvor, pictured: Karl Ang, design by: Trevor Schwelinus, photo by Dahlia Katz.



The Organization

Founded in 1970 by Ken Gass and Frank Trotz, Factory Theatre was the first company in the history of this country to produce only Canadian plays. Its huge initial success led to the founding of the Alternate Theatre Movement, which radically changed the face of Canadian theatre in favour of the Canadian voice. For more than 50 years, Factory has been known as the “Home of the Canadian Playwright” and has produced more than 300 new Canadian plays in mainstage productions and 600 more in workshop and other formats.

Throughout the 1970s, Factory operated out of several venues across Toronto. In 1979, founding artistic director Ken Gass left the company, and Bob White assumed the artistic leadership (1979-87). In 1984, Factory moved into its present location at 125 Bathurst Street. Under the Artistic Direction of Jackie Maxwell (1987-1995), the company continued its commitment to new Canadian work and developed a strong presence in translating the work of Quebecois authors for English-speaking audiences. Ken Gass (1996-2012) returned to Factory at a time of great financial duress. With the commitment of all its talented staff, led by its Artistic and Managing Directors, the subsequent period was one of operational stabilization and the presentation of dynamic seasons that increasingly focused on the work of culturally diverse artists and diverse theatrical voices. From 2012-2014, Nina Lee Aquino and Nigel Shawn Williams were Co-Artistic Directors, and beginning in 2014, Nina was appointed sole Artistic Director of Factory, the first person of colour to lead the organization and the first woman of colour to serve as Artistic Director of a venued theatre company in Canada.

Alongside the appointment of Nina Lee Aquino, Factory quickly established itself at the forefront of an emerging movement in Canadian theatre. A new, young, and diverse community of artists coalesced around Nina’s leadership and once again put Factory at the nexus of an important cultural moment in Toronto. Nina’s tenure approached Factory’s Canadian Theatre mandate through an intercultural lens, interrogating our understanding of Canadian identity through developing new plays that spoke to a breadth of cultural experiences under the Canadian umbrella and reimagining the canon with diverse artistic teams at their centre. Over 10 seasons, Nina programmed a diverse lineup of world and Toronto premiere productions and established multiyear creative relationships with a number of playwrights; added bold and imaginative re-interpretations of classic Canadian plays to Factory’s annual programming; fostered relationships with some of the best theatre companies from across the country and brought their productions to Toronto audiences through Factory’s CrossCurrents Canada presentation series; and secured Factory’s reputation as a leader in developing new plays and as a champion of writers. Nina’s tenure also saw a renewed commitment to artist training, building a pedagogy centred on new play development and intercultural creation.

When the company shut its doors for over two years during the COVID-19 pandemic, it established itself as a national leader in digital theatre creation. The company produced 14 world premieres that were commissioned and developed specifically for digital platforms and leaned into its national mandate to engage artists and audiences from every province and territory.

From 2022, artistic director Mel Hague guided the company through a post-pandemic re-opening to a vibrant period of renewal, marked by bold programming, partnerships, and an unwavering commitment to Canadian voices. Under Mel’s leadership, Factory leaned into its founding vision, and works under her tenure have run the gamut, from imaginative re-engagement with Canadian classics to new works exploring genre-based storytelling and innovative approaches to writing and creation.

The Community

Toronto is the most populous city in Canada and the capital city of the province of Ontario. The Greater Toronto Area has a 2021 population of 6.7 million people and is the fourth-most populous city in North America. The city is the anchor of the Golden Horseshoe, an urban agglomeration of 9.8 million people (as of 2021) surrounding the western end of Lake Ontario.

Toronto is an international centre of business, finance, arts and culture, and sports and is home to many of Canada's leading performing arts organizations. It is a multicultural melting pot that new Canadians from around the world call home. It is vibrant and alive with a constantly changing landscape, and exciting opportunities abound.

Factory Theatre is located in Toronto's Queen West, named by Vogue magazine as one of the coolest neighbourhoods in the world. Queen West is the vibrant, bustling, and historical centre of the city. With their theatres, iconic live music venues, street art, and eclectic independent stores, Queen West is where Toronto's artistic soul lives and breathes



Artistic Director Roles and Responsibilities

The Artistic Director has the overall responsibility for the artistic management of the theatre and for the development and implementation of its artistic output and programming. The Artistic Director works collaboratively and in partnership with the Managing Director, who has chief producing and general management responsibility for the theatre. The Artistic Director and Managing Director report directly and equally to the Board of Directors. The core responsibilities of the Artistic Director are divided into five key areas.

ARTISTIC DIRECTION

- The overall artistic direction of the Theatre, including the selection of the annual season program, hiring of all artistic and production personnel, and overseeing casting and creative teams; creative and budget development for individual projects.
- Ongoing development of short-term and long-range artistic programs and policies which contribute to the attainment of the Theatre's goals, and the execution of such programs and policies as approved by the Board of Directors.
- Working with the Managing Director to develop long-term operational strategies to ensure the continuation and expansion of Factory's work and mandate.
- Development of the annual creative plan for all play and artistic development, workshops, readings, and staged productions at Factory, including festivals and co-productions; as well as any potential digital programming.
- Being the artistic lead in planning for programming, communications, and educational departments in annual operational and longer-term strategic plans which serve to increase creative success, audiences, supporters and various stakeholders.

- Directing one full-scale production per season, as well as artistic/creative functions as part of the artist training and play development activities of the company, including readings, workshops and any public performances.
- Overseeing other artistic and programming activities such as artist training and play development programs, and related staff, including hiring and supervision.
- Engaging, supervising and evaluating artistic personnel with the possible negotiation of all artist and production contracts, including but not limited to directors, playwrights, performers, designers, and stage managers (contract compliance supervised by the Managing Director).
- Hiring, supervising and evaluating key technical personnel.

LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

- With the Managing Director acting as executive leadership for all staff and volunteers, supporting and contributing to the values of the organization and its well-being, as well as the well-being of its personnel.
- With the Managing Director, ensuring that the theatre complies with all financial, legal, statutory and contractual requirements.
- With the Managing Director acting as liaison to the Board of Directors, keeping the Board fully informed of plans and outcomes, reporting specifically on the artistic activity of Factory.
- Attendance at weekly staff meetings and at all meetings of the Board of Directors.

OPERATIONS AND FISCAL MANAGEMENT

- With the Managing Director, **acting as producer and budget control** on all season productions.
- Working with the Managing Director and finance committee of the board, **creation and monitoring of all operational, project and capital budgets**, cash flow and investments for each season.
- With the Managing Director, **co-creation of all proposals and grant applications** for support of programs and operations for artistic elements of grant applications, including the identification and development of potential new funding sources.
- **Active participation in fundraising activities** and initiatives, providing direction and support accordingly, as well as participating in fundraising calls to individuals, foundations, and corporations.

ADVOCACY, COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND MARKETING

- With the Managing Director, acting as the public face of Factory Theatre, including speaking to private and public organizations and to the press.
- Helping to advance the relationship between the Theatre and various local, provincial, and regional organizations, including government agencies and advocacy groups, community and local business groups and arts organizations.
- Working with the Managing Director and related Board committees and senior staff, on the development of branding, marketing, and communications messages and plans to represent Factory to external stakeholders and support attendance and revenue targets.
- Fostering the development of good relations with other cultural organizations by participating in meetings and joint activities where appropriate.
- Attending performances by other professional theatre and performing arts companies in order to maintain the Theatre's profile in the professional community and to stay abreast of current programming trends.

CAPITAL MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

- With the Managing Director and Board of Directors, creating, planning, and executing short and long-term projects for the upkeep, use, and improvement of Factory's facility.

Traits and Characteristics

Visionary, dynamic, independent, self-motivated, detail and people-oriented, the Artistic Director will have exceptional artistic, social and verbal communication skills and value frequent interaction and collaboration with others. The Artistic Director will be committed to making space for others at the table.

The Artistic Director will be an experienced and entrepreneurial professional with the vision to actively pursue Factory's goals with bold creativity and determination and will have a high degree of personal accountability - with a commitment to exceeding expectations.

The Artistic Director will balance tasks and projects with a sense of urgency and possess superlative interpersonal and communication skills that articulate compelling verbal and written messages for support. A self-sufficient and self-managed professional with a highly organized approach, the Artistic Director will have the ability to achieve organizational objectives with artists, staff, board members, volunteers, donors, and prospective supporters. This individual will bring an affinity for Factory's mission and vision and a passion to positively impact the organization's long-term success.

Other key Traits and Characteristics of the role include:

- **Creativity & Innovation** – Creating innovative approaches, programming, processes, technologies and/or systems to achieve the desired result.
- **Leadership** – Organizing and influencing people to believe in a vision while creating a sense of purpose and direction.
- **Strategic Thinking & Ambition** – Imagining, envisioning, projecting and/or creating what has not yet been actualized.
- **Negotiation & Diplomacy** – Listening to many points of view and facilitating agreements between two or more parties while effectively and tactfully handling complex or sensitive issues.
- **Resiliency** – The ability to quickly recover from adversity.
- **Teamwork and Interpersonal Skills** – Cooperating with others to meet objectives and the ability to effectively communicate to build rapport while relating to many different people.
- **Decision Making & Project Management** – Analyzing all aspects of a situation to make consistently sound and timely decisions with the ability to identify and oversee all resources, tasks, systems, and people to obtain results.
- **External Stakeholder Focus** – Anticipate, meet, and exceed stakeholder needs and expectations.
- **Flexibility, Time, and Priority Management** – The ability to prioritize and complete tasks to deliver desired outcomes within allotted time frames while readily modifying, responding and adapting to change with minimal resistance.
- **Artist & Employee Development/Coaching** - Facilitating, supporting, and contributing to the professional growth of others.
- **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion** - Being aware and sensitive to the gaps and opportunities with ED&I in the organization.

Qualifications and Experience

Candidates will have 8+ years of progressive experience in strategic artistic leadership in Canadian theatre, with a focus on new play development. Experience as a theatre director and/or a dramaturge in setting programming and selecting creative teams is required. Superior written/verbal communication skills and experience collaborating with diverse stakeholders are required. Formal education is an asset but not required. Candidates must possess expertise in and willingness to mentor and develop team members to create a high-performing team and demonstrate the ability to translate artistic aims and values into programming, strategies, and plans. Experience as an Artistic Director in a venue will be an asset.



Compensation

Factory Theatre offers a comprehensive compensation package with an annual salary of \$80,000 - \$90,000 per year, commensurate with experience, together with membership in Factory's benefit programs, and paid vacation. The ideal candidate will be based in Toronto or willing to relocate.

Application Instructions

The Factory Theatre Artistic Director Search is led by Nancy Webster, Nicola Dawes, and Martin Bragg of **Martin Bragg & Associates**. To apply in confidence, please email your letter of interest and resume in Word or PDF format to Martin Bragg & Associates at factory@mbassociates.ca. **The review of applications will begin immediately, and candidates are encouraged to apply early.** The deadline for receipt of applications is February 15, 2026. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply and will receive an acknowledgement of their application. No phone calls, please.



Photo Credit, Honey I'm Home (2024): written, performed and designed by Lester Trips (Theatre), pictured: Lauren Gillis, photo by Eden Graham