



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Verb Theatre is seeking applications from Calgary-based, early career theatre artists interested taking our company into the next chapter of its adventure in an Artistic Leadership Role (Artistic Director/Producer/Team). The ideal candidate(s) are brave, curious, empathetic, ambitious, forward-thinking artists with a passion for telling cutting edge stories in innovative ways, and who are excited about the opportunity to use the existing resources of Verb Theatre to grow the company, expand its artistic impact, and champion the mission and values of the company to the community.

Verb Theatre is an equal opportunity employer that welcomes applications from artists of all backgrounds, regardless of gender, race, sex, ethnicity, ability, and political affiliation.

ABOUT VERB THEATRE

MISSION:

Tomorrow's Theatre, Today

At Verb Theatre our mission is to provide for our audience theatrical experiences that explore cutting edge ideas in innovative ways. We start conversations today that will be important to our audiences tomorrow with our **surprising**, **important**, and **evocative** performance.

HISTORY:

Verb Theatre was founded in 2009 by Jamie Dunsdon who served as Artistic Director until 2022, along with the support of Artistic Associates Shea Heatherington, Kiana Wu, Anna Cummer, Col Cseke (who also served as Co-Artistic Director from 2010 – 2016), and Jessica Robertshaw. During that time, Verb focused on producing contemporary plays from both Canadian and international playwrights, and has proudly produced multiple world premieres. Some of our past productions include: *Bliss (The Birthday Party Play)*, *A More Sparkling Version of Ourselves*, *The Wolves*, *Blackbird*, *Easter Island*, *Sextet*, *Lungs*, *The Fight or Flight Response*, *Jim Forgetting*, *Marg Szkaluba (Pissy's Wife)*, and many more.

STRUCTURE:

Verb Theatre is incorporated as a Not-for-Profit Society under the Alberta Societies Act, and a Charitable Organization through the CRA Charities Directorate. The Artistic Director reports directly to the Verb Theatre Society Board of Directors.

FUNDING:

Verb Theatre receives operating funding from the Alberta Foundation for the Arts (CPAO Stream) and Calgary Arts Development (Professional Theatre Stream), as well as Casino Funding through the AGLC. It is also eligible for support from multiple foundations and other granting bodies. The new Artistic Leadership will inherit sufficient funding to program their own season of work.

ABOUT THE POSITION

Since 2009, Verb Theatre has been a founder-led, project-driven organization and are now transitioning to the next phase of Verb's growth which will see a new team take over the Verb Theatre mission in their own way. We are open to considering a few different models for the new leadership structure, and encourage applicants to pitch the model they intend to use in their cover letter.

Applicants may apply as:

- An Individual (a solo Artistic Director/Producer who may later craft their own team)
- A Pair (as Co-Artistic Producers, or, an Artistic Director and Executive Director Team)
- A Team (multiple artists)

Application Deadline: June 15, 2022

Start date: September 1st, 2022

Salary: \$20,000 is the starting salary for this position, however there a small amount of room for flexibility if the position is shared between a pair or team. The artist(s) may receive additional fees for participating in individual productions (eg. a separate directing fee). Our hope is that this position will become more full-time in the years to come.

Why are we seeking "early career artists?"

Verb Theatre has always placed mentorship among its core values, both as mentors and mentees, and simply put: we don't feel there are enough opportunities for emerging leaders to put their leadership skills to the test. Most new theatre companies shut down before they reach the 18-month mark due to the countless barriers faced when starting new companies (lack of knowledge of how to start a non-profit/charity, the wait time needed to be accepted into operating grant streams and AGLC funding streams, lack of new company infrastructure, lack of seed funding, etc.), and having battled each of those dragons ourselves, we at Verb respect just how daunting they can be. That's why we wanted to pass on a company which has already built that early infrastructure, collected those foundational tools, and even accumulated a decent supply of reserve funding so that the next leadership team is ideally set up for success.

Feel like you've got the drive, the ambition, the heart, and the artistic daring to run this company but are maybe a bit worried about the logistics? We are pleased to say that outgoing Artistic Director Jamie Dunsdon will remain available as a mentor to support the new artistic leadership through the transition and in the years to come on an as-needed basis. She will be available to talk you through the basics of company management, reporting, budgeting, and more. The new artistic leadership is also highly encouraged to seek out other mentors and supports to help take them in the direction of their choice.

What the new artistic leadership will inherit: In the spirit of giving the new leadership a chance to hit the ground running, we have not programmed a 2022/23 Season so that the new leader(s) can usher

in the new era with their own programming. Verb's retained earnings are such that there is a room to program a reasonable season (2-3 shows depending on size/scale of shows) in 2022/23. We ask the new team to maintain the mission, values, name, and legacy of Verb Theatre, though they may choose to interpret the mission in their own way.

What else are we looking for?

The ideal candidate(s):

- Has post-secondary, specialized theatre training or equivalent experience (eg. professional theatre experience beyond the traditional training programs)
- Has professional theatre experience (eg. self-producing a play, having worked for a professional company, having worked as an intern, etc.)
- Has some experience in directing and/or producing
- Are enthusiastic, engaged, and eager to pour their energy into growing the company and taking it to the next level!
- Are committed to upholding Verb Theatre's mission to produce cutting edge contemporary plays
- Are committed to upholding Verb Theatre's values both within the company and the community at large (see value statement below)
- Are Calgary-based artists who are able to hit the ground running in September, 2022.

The Responsibilities of the Artistic Leadership

- Create and enact an artistic and operational vision for Verb Theatre on a seasonal and long-term basis
- Program and execute a season of plays that uphold the Verb Theatre mission
- Apply for grant funding and complete annual reporting to various granting and funding bodies
- Market, promote, and champion Verb's work and cultivate an audience base for that work
- Hire artists, marketing support, and additional contractors and staff as needed
- Collaborate with artists, designers, technicians, and other artists in theatrical production
- Manage the finances of Verb Theatre, including annual/project budgeting, book-keeping
- Report quarterly or bi-monthly to the Board of Directors
- Update, create, and enact strategic plans in cooperation with the Board of Directors
- Maintain Verb Theatre Society's status as a not-for-profit society and charitable organization, including annual reporting and ongoing compliance with charitable and non-profit codes
- Represent Verb Theatre to the larger community, including stakeholders and collaborators
- Protect and preserve the legacy of Verb Theatre so that it remains sustainable for years to come

HOW TO APPLY

Interested applicants/teams are asked to apply to info@verbtheatre.com no later than June 15, 2022 with the following:

- A resume or cv
- A letter of interest, no more than 2 pages, which includes

- A little about yourself (no need to repeat what's on your resume, just a little additional insight into who you are)
- Why you want to take on the artistic leadership of Verb Theatre. We don't need a full vision, just a bit about what motivates you to apply.
- The leadership model you want to employ (solo, pair, or team) and the names of the key members of the team, if applicable.
- Why this job is the right fit for you, and why you are the right fit for it.
- How you interpret the mission of Verb Theatre.
- A list of three references (Name, phone number, email, and relationship)
- In the subject line of your application, please state: ARTISTIC LEADERSHIP APPLICATION

If applicants require additional support or access needs, do not hesitate to ask by emailing info@verbtheatre.com

HIRING PROCESS

Applications will be accepted until June 15, 2022. All applicants will receive a confirmation email that their application has been received, and will receive notice of whether their application has been shortlisted for advancement.

A first round of interviews with a list of shortlisted applicants will take place on June 21 or June 22 (please contact us if those dates do not work for you) over Zoom or in person. These interviews will approximately 1 hour long and consist of both a vision presentation from the applicant and a question and answer session with the hiring committee. Applicants will be asked to present a vision for their leadership of Verb including a sample season of plays/programming. More details will be provided. A second interview may be held with a finalist or finalists in late June.

We aim to have the next leadership team selected by July 1, 2022 and will inform all applicants of their application status.

Compensation: The shortlisted candidates or teams selected for interviews will be compensated in the amount of \$100 per team in recognition of the time, heart, skill, and vision it takes to participate in a process of this nature. These payments will be made by e-transfer following the interview.

Access needs: Verb Theatre welcomes applications from applicants from a variety of backgrounds and life experiences, so if you have any access needs that would help make the interview process more successful for you, please let us know at info@verbtheatre.com

Appendix A: Verb Theatre Value Statement

Updated as of 2022

Above all, Verb Theatre values **respect**. At Verb, we actively seek ways to ensure that anyone who interacts with us knows their full humanity is acknowledged, welcomed, and respected in our spaces even (and especially) when there is disagreement. As such, we are committed to continuing to explore ways we can be more accessible (artistically, financially, physically, and

emotionally) to everyone we work and interact with. Respect for the individual humanity of each person is at the core of all our decision-making, and may take a number of different forms.

- We respect our **audiences**, honouring the time and energy each audience member brings into our theatre by providing provocative, important, and undeniable experiences.
- We respect our **artists**, recognizing their humanity, skill, and dignity by creating inclusive and brave creative spaces.
- We respect our **stakeholders**, appreciating that much of what we do is funded by tax dollars, private donors, and ticket buyers and live that respect by investing that financial support wisely, productively, and magically.

Verb Theatre values **bravery** in our artistic experimentation, and strives to create an artistic culture where creative risks are encouraged. This courageous approach helps us to both dream big and to be accountable and honest with ourselves and each other.

Verb Theatre values **curiosity** as an essential quality needed to ask the daring questions that help us better understand each other. Verb values the **diverse range of perspectives and representations** on our stages and marvels at the **complexity** and **truth** of a wide range of human experiences. Humanity is complex, nuanced, and interesting and we want our art to be as well. This diversity may be expressed in the scripts we choose, the stories we tell, the actors we cast, the artists we hire, and conversations we initiate over the course of months or even years.

Verb Theatre values **empathy**. We at Verb believe that theatre is a site of radical empathy, and this is true in both our performances and our creation processes. We believe in empathy-driven rehearsal rooms where human needs are nurtured. We invite both artists and audience members to help us understand their needs so that we might better meet them.

Verb Theatre values **mentorship**, both as givers and receivers. We want to support many generations of artists by providing exposure and access to any knowledge, know-how, and experience we might have to offer, and take pride in unlocking the potential of emerging artists to share with the greater community. As the benefactors of mentorship ourselves, we seek out the expertise of senior artists in our own development

Verb Theatre values **liveness**. We celebrate the ritual value of theatre, and the importance of liveness in our artistic craft. Togetherness and shared experience make theatre an act of ritual empathy, and we value the live audience as an essential and beloved contributor in that experience.

Verb Theatre values **professionalism**. We strive to build a creative culture that works toward excellence and the highest standard of quality, and recognize that taking care of our artists is vital to ensuring a healthy, professional workspace.