

POSITION SPECIFICATION

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

New York, NY



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REPORTING TO: President/Executive Producer

LOCATION: New York, NY

SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director of Public Programming (“DPP”) for the Park Avenue Armory is charged with creating a compelling public voice and engaging a diverse community around the Armory’s mission and programs through a range of convenings and events held in its historic rooms and landmarked building. Reporting to the President/Executive Producer, Rebecca Robertson, the DPP is responsible for conceptualizing, designing, developing, and realizing the Armory’s Public Programming events in close collaboration with the Producing Director, Michael Lonergan, as well as the Programming, Production, and Marketing teams.

The goal of Public Programming at the Armory is to give voice to the Armory and further its role as a nurturing, relevant, diverse, and fearless artist-focused organization with exceptional programs that reflect the world we live in. Open and lively dialog with the public and artists are facilitated through events with simultaneous talks, performances, and exhibitions, which can range from intimate art-form driven salons (such as Branden Jacobs Jenkins’ *Salon on Literature*) and spoken word performances (such as Hari Kondabolu’s *Confrontational Comedy*) to large scale gatherings and multi-disciplinary symposia (such as Carrie May Weems’ symposium *The Shape of Things: The Culture of Violence*). These events have created a sense of community among artists and thought leaders gathered for a full day of discussions, performances, food, and music. The DPP also advises the Programming team to bring dimension, context, and a range of perspectives to the Drill Hall programming in the form of Artist Talks.

The DPP will bring their own perspective to creating, imagining, and shaping the Armory’s Public Programming, building on the strength developed over the last five years. This is an exciting opportunity to be part of a legacy of success in an internationally renowned institution with one-of-a-kind facilities during a time of critical dialogue and action, as well as demand for meaningful cultural experiences.

The key responsibilities of the DPP include:

- Conceive of and execute a schedule of Public Programming events that give voice to the Armory;
- Design public programs that are relevant and compelling, and convene prominent artists, thought leaders, performers, and intellectuals to create a must-attend events of talks, performance, and social interaction creating a forum that is meaningful and exciting to audience and participants;
- Manage budgets and coordinate across multiple departments with concurrent programs, events, and activities;
- Identify and build external partnerships and collaboration opportunities relating to Public Programming that will increase the Armory’s reach and enhance its profile;
- Collaborate with Armory Programming, Production, Development, and Marketing staff to ensure effective planning, resourcing, production, support, and promotion of Public Programming events within budget and operational parameters.

QUALIFICATIONS / REQUIREMENTS

The DPP will be a dynamic and entrepreneurial visual and/or performing arts professional who thinks creatively and strategically, synthesizes ideas and objectives, and delivers results in a fast-paced, fluid environment. They should have a nuanced understanding of artists' experiences and perspectives, well-formed opinions on the importance and impact of arts and culture, and an advanced appreciation of the role and operation of a mission-driven organization in a community. The ideal candidate will be a proven planner and executor who thrives in environments with conflicting and changing priorities and deadlines. The successful candidate will have their own rich and diverse network, as well as access to other networks, of artistic, cultural, and thought leaders.

The ideal candidate will have:

- A track record of innovative, impactful, and relevant public programming, with a demonstrated understanding of the Armory's mission, programs, and reputation, and an advanced understanding of and sensitivity to issues of diversity and social justice;
- A vast network of well-known and acclaimed artistic and professional contacts developed through hands-on experience and relationship-building in the field;
- Exceptional and effective communication and interpersonal skills, including verbal, written, and public presentation, with a wide range of artists, staff, audiences, contractors, and vendors;
- Leadership qualities and the ability to work professionally and productively with colleagues and staff, while operating effectively in a complex organization with centralized leadership;
- Demonstrated strength and skill in planning and managing budgets, including gathering data, projecting expenses, and developing creative solutions to achieve high level results within financial constraints;
- Experience overseeing and collaborating with staff and interns, including providing guidance and direction, managing performance, and nurturing professional development;
- The ability to support institutional fundraising efforts for programs, including providing information for proposals and meeting with a range of donors as needed;
- High proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite, including Outlook, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint;
- Ability to work evenings and weekends when programs and events are scheduled.

The ideal candidate will have gained and demonstrated the above skills and experiences through:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent, Master's degree, preferred, in arts, humanities, or related field, with an academic approach to arts engagement, critical thinking, identification of themes, and public edification;
- 8-10 years track record of convening, curating, and producing artistic panels, symposia, and talks around critical issues and similar events.

PERSONAL / PROFESSIONAL ATTRIBUTES

- A personal alignment with and professional commitment to the Armory's mission and Public Programming goals
- A natural convener, adept at bringing prominent people together and equally comfortable interfacing with well-known artists, community leaders, and scholars

- Demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism in all facets of work
- A presentation and management style that exudes credibility and gravitas
- Exceptional planning and organization skills
- Creative and proactive problem solver with flexibility to pivot when priorities shift
- A self-starter with relentless enthusiasm and energy
- A collaborative team player
- A professional who leads by example and works within established policies, procedures, and priorities

COMPANY DESCRIPTION

PARK AVENUE ARMORY

<https://www.armoryonpark.org/>

Part palace, part industrial shed, Park Avenue Armory (“the Armory”) fills a critical void in the cultural ecology of New York, supporting unconventional works in the performing and visual arts that cannot be fully realized in a traditional proscenium theater, concert hall, or white wall gallery. With its soaring 55,000-square-foot Wade Thompson Drill Hall and an array of exuberant period rooms, the Armory enables a diverse range of artists to create, students to explore, and audiences to experience epic, adventurous, relevant work that cannot be done elsewhere in New York.

In addition to the large-scale unconventional productions, the Armory also presents smaller scale performances and talks, salons, and symposia. Taking advantage of the array of rooms on the first and second floor, the public program *Interrogations of Form* presents talks, discussions, and performances around important issues and topics of our time, including an annual symposium on “Culture in a Changing America.”

In the restored Board of Officers Room that has been lauded as “a space for chamber music, which marries excellent acoustics and an austere elegant Gilded Age interior” (*The New York Times*), the Armory offers its acclaimed *Recital Series*, with the best of opera, classical, and contemporary musicians and vocalists in an intimate setting. In the *Artists Studio* series, jazz phenomenon, multi-disciplinary artist, and MacArthur “Genius” Jason Moran curates an eclectic series of music and contemporary art. Held in the restored Veterans Room, the program features innovative artists and artistic pairings that reflect the imaginative, collaborative, and improvisational spirit of the original designers of the Veterans Room.

The Armory also supports artists across genres in the creation and development of new work through its Artist-in-Residence program, which offers dedicated space and resources to artists across a variety of disciplines. Current Artists-in-Residence who are often involved in the Public Programming at the Armory include: Lynn Nottage, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, Carmelita Tropicana, Mimi Lien, Reggie “Regg Roc” Gray and the D.R.E.A.M. Ring, Theaster Gates, Carrie Mae Weems, Christine Jones and Steven Hoggett, and Sara Serpa.

The Armory also has an active commissioning program for Drill Hall productions that includes new works from Nick Cave, Douglas Gordon, Marina Abramović and Igor Levit, Reggie “Regg Roc” Gray and Peter Sellars, and works in development by Bill T. Jones, Lynn Nottage, Carrie Mae Weems, and Reggie “Regg Roc” Gray and the D.R.E.A.M. Ring.

Building upon its adventurous and wide-ranging programming (including public programming), the Armory also offers creativity-based arts education programs at *no cost* to underserved New York City public school students. Arts Education programs are an essential part of its mission, offering free performances and multiple workshops for every production, approximately 14,000 hours of mentored and rigorous internships and job training, and intensive school partnerships.

Concurrent with its artistic program, the Armory has undertaken an ongoing \$215-million revitalization of its historic building, designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architects Herzog & de Meuron. The multi-year renovation combines detailed and sensitive restoration of some of New York’s most important historic interiors with a dynamic contemporary renovation.

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