UTAH SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL
Artistic Director Leadership Profile
May 2023
Bard.org
THE POSITION

The Artistic Director for the Utah Shakespeare Festival (USF) will be a dynamic leader with a passion for Shakespeare production, performance in repertory, and ensemble storytelling who will work collaboratively with Festival staff and company members, the Board of Governors, and the leadership of Southern Utah University to articulate and direct the Festival’s vision and propel the organization into its next decades of artistic excellence.

The Artistic Director is responsible for conceiving, developing, and implementing the artistic vision and focus of the organization, and for major decisions about the ongoing development of the aesthetic values and activities including mainstage productions, The Greenshow, new play development, and educational programming.

The Artistic Director stewards the equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging values of the Festival.

The Artistic Director is responsible for the hiring, supervision, and evaluation of resident and seasonal artistic personnel including artistic associates, directors, designers, and performers. The Artistic Director reports to the Festival’s Managing Director.

In partnership with the Managing Director, Board of Governors, and Festival staff; the Artistic Director develops and implements the strategic plan and an annual operating budget ensuring the financial affairs of the organization are viable, sustainable, and transparent.

The Artistic Director is a spokesperson for the organization’s artistic mission and programs with Festival stakeholders including the Board of Governors, patrons and donors, community members, media and others. Fundraising and events are integral duties.

**Additional Functions and Duties**

Serve as the leader of the artistic and production team to develop season plans, calendar, and play selection. Selects and schedules season plays and other productions.

In collaboration with the Managing Director, develop and adhere to the annual operating budget. Determine appropriate departmental policies/procedures, and budget expenditures.

Implement the artistic vision and strategic goals for the organization, including the management of day-to-day artistic operations and seasonal oversight. This includes attending design and production meetings, technical and dress rehearsals, and preview and opening performances to ensure artistic excellence and mission adherence.

Auditions, recruits, and hires directors, designers, and performers. Make necessary artistic adjustments as needed during rehearsals and performances. Oversees the Production Manager and Festival Stage Manager who recruit, hire, and supervise seasonal stage management and production staff. Collaborates with the General Manager to negotiate fees and contracts with artists and unions.

Partners with the SUU Department of Theatre, Dance and Arts Administration department to cultivate educational opportunities and maximize efficiencies with facility scheduling.

Assist the Managing Director, USF Development office, and SUU Advancement office in fundraising efforts. Engage with Festival stakeholders to deepen relationships and enhance contributed revenue opportunities.

The Artistic Director will contribute creatively (design, direct or perform) in at least one theatrical production per year at the Festival. After the first two years in leadership, they may have the opportunity to work professionally with other organizations at the discretion of the University President. The off-campus artistic residency shall be to the mutual benefit of both USF and the guest presenting theatre.
ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY – bard.org

The Utah Shakespeare Festival was founded in 1961 and presented its first season in 1962. It was started in response to two influences: an estimated quarter of a million summer tourists desiring more evening activities after visiting the area’s national parks, and a young entrepreneur and actor’s desire to produce great theatre. Festival Founder Fred C. Adams, having joined the faculty in 1959 as an assistant professor of theatre arts at what is now Southern Utah University, was wondering what could draw people off the newly planned I-15 freeway to stop in Cedar City. City leaders were desperate to find a way to attract people (and dollars) to Cedar City and its Main Street.

Shakespeare was a natural choice for Cedar City. Historically, the people of southern Utah have a love for drama and especially the works of Shakespeare. Adams proceeded with his new company and presented *The Taming of the Shrew, Hamlet,* and *The Merchant of Venice* that first season. A small company of college students and townspeople produced the plays on an outdoor platform, backed by a partial replica of an Elizabethan stagehouse. Between rehearsals, volunteer actors helped build their own stage, props, and costumes. The initial two-week season attracted an excited 3,276 spectators and yielded a much-needed $2,000 profit on which to build a second season.

In 1992, the Festival started the groundwork for the New American Playwrights Project (now Words Cubed). These staged readings are presented to Festival patrons who desire an opportunity to view the current work of some of today’s newest and best playwrights.

On May 8, 2000, the Festival joined the ranks of some of America’s most famous and respected theatres when it received the coveted Tony Award® for America’s Outstanding Regional Theatre.

USF plays to over 100,000 patrons annually over a sixteen-week season with a budget of more than $7 million. Each year the Festival produces eight or nine professional plays in rotating repertory. In addition, an educational tour visits schools throughout the West during the spring months. In keeping with its mission to entertain, enrich, and educate its audiences, the Festival also offers a variety of on-site activities such as a free pre-play *Greenshow,* play orientations, literary and production seminars, summer workshops and classes, and backstage tours—making it a true destination theatre, and one of Utah’s cultural treasures.
MISSION, VISION, VALUES

Mission
The Utah Shakespeare Festival is a destination theatre that presents life-affirming classical and contemporary plays and musicals, in rotating repertory, and interactive experiences. All of our work is intended to entertain, educate, and enrich regional and national audiences.

Vision
The vision of the Utah Shakespeare Festival is to create impactful theatre that reflects and celebrates the emotional complexity of our collective humanity.

Values
Integrity
We embrace all members of our community with a deep commitment to being fair, trustworthy, and honest.

Community
We recognize and respect the diverse and unifying interests and goals of the people we serve including our audiences, artists, donors, staff, and national theatre community. We strive to serve as a good citizen of our university, city, state, and country.

Artistry
We are committed to the highest level of theatrical artistry. We pursue, throughout the organization, talented, dedicated, bold, and creative individuals.

Collaboration
Collaboration is the essence of our creative process. This process is the best way to not only truly fulfill our artistic vision but to optimize our work as administrators, technicians, and artisans.

Diversity and Inclusion
Our best work is possible when every individual can bring their authentic self to an environment of acceptance and mutual respect. As we attract people with underrepresented voices and value their contributions we amplify our ability to fulfill our mission.

Financial Responsibility
As stewards of a more than fifty-year-old arts institution, we recognize that the creation of great theatrical art is predicated on effective and sensible financial and business practices.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
The Utah Shakespeare Festival is committed to the principles of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in everything we do. This requires our devotion to erase all traces of systemic racism, within our organization and everywhere else we can affect it. Shakespeare wrote that “we know what we are, but not what we may be.” We resolve that the Festival may be fully anti-racist, embracing all people who have been under-represented on our stages and that we will be a theatre that depicts, investigates, and celebrates the lives and humanity of people who have suffered discrimination and persecution, in order to play our part in relieving the oppression that, sadly, continues to this day while also honoring the vast tapestry of humanity.
THE PLACE

Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

The Utah Shakespeare Festival has both historical and contemporary relationships with Indigenous peoples. Given that Southern Utah has always been a gathering place for Indigenous peoples, we acknowledge that this Too’veep (land) is the traditional and ancestral homelands of the Nung’wu (Southern Paiutes). The Utah Shakespeare Festival recognizes the enduring relationship between many Indigenous peoples and their traditional homelands. We are grateful for the territory upon which we gather today; we respect Utah’s Indigenous peoples, the original stewards of this land; and we value our relationship with the Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah. To this end, we acknowledge and honor the Tribe for its resilience, its deep connection to this land, and express our appreciation for the opportunity to live, learn, and enrich the lives of all those who gather on their homelands.

Southern Utah University

The Utah Shakespeare Festival is part of Southern Utah University (SUU), a relationship that has helped foster the growth and viability of the Festival for more than sixty years. Confirming this critical relationship, USF’s Managing Director reports directly to SUU’s President.

Southern Utah University’s more than 140 campus and online majors, minors, certificates, and graduate programs across seven academic colleges are fully accredited but the university is much more than classrooms and textbooks. It specializes in career-focused learning, hands-on experience, and personalized attention for its more than 15,000 students from all over the world who attend both in person and online. Visit suu.edu for more information.

Cedar City and Iron County

From the beginning, Cedar City and SUU have been inseparably connected. The founding of the university is of particular importance to the community and illustrates why the people of Cedar City and Iron County feel a profound sense of ownership over the institution and its success today—125 years later. In 1898, the early settlers of Cedar City faced the heroic task of constructing a state-required three story brick building in eight months time, or risk losing the school to another town. Those time constraints meant the construction process began in the depths of a record-cold and snowy winter in order to complete the building in time. Though they would never benefit from the school themselves, these farmers, miners, and ranchers risked their lives, mortgaged their homes, and sacrificed their time and resources to build the school for the benefit of all who would come after them. Many of the descendants of these founders still reside in Cedar City and have children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren who attend SUU.

This legacy continues today as SUU partners with Cedar City and Iron County to collaboratively address issues, many of which are a result of the region and university’s growth and the needs of students within the community. SUU works closely with local leaders and community groups to foster an inclusive and welcoming environment on- and off-campus to position the university as a gathering place for community events and programs including the Utah Shakespeare Festival.

Sully John of the Paiute Tribal Youth Performers performs before the Tio Greenshow, 2022.
OUR THEATRES

The Beverley Taylor Sorenson Center for the Arts
The home of the Utah Shakespeare Festival is at the Beverley Taylor Sorenson Center for the Arts on the campus of Southern Utah University. This $44 million dollar arts complex was dedicated July 7, 2016. It includes three theatres as well as office, rehearsal, educational, and artistic space for the Festival. The Beverley Center also includes the Southern Utah Museum of Art (SUMA) with its Stillman Sculpture Court. The buildings are surrounded by flower beds, the Pedersen Character Sculpture Garden, the Balcony Bards Seminar Grove, the Ashton Family Greenshow Commons much more making the Beverley Center a gathering place for cultural and community activities.

Engelstad Shakespeare Theatre
The Engelstad Shakespeare Theatre celebrated its opening night on July 7, 2016. It is an open-air space, reminiscent of Elizabethan theatres but with modern amenities and technology. As the symbolic home of the Festival, it features plays by Shakespeare and other playwrights whose works are appropriate for its outdoor Elizabethan-inspired architecture. It is also used for educational programming for Southern Utah University. The theatre seats 921 and is named for the Ralph J. and Betty Engelstad family.

Randall L. Jones Theatre
The stunning Randall L. Jones Theatre opened June 23, 1989, as a new indoor space for the Festival to offer classics of world drama by “Shakespeares of other lands.” It is also a performance space for Southern Utah University during the academic calendar. The theatre seats approximately 770 and has been recognized nationally for its architectural beauty. It is named after a Cedar City native known as the “father of tourism” in southern Utah.

Eileen and Allen Anes Studio Theatre
The Eileen and Allen Anes Studio Theatre—a flexible space that seats up to 200—opened its doors on July 30, 2016. It was designed to showcase smaller, more intimate shows for the Festival and as a home for its new plays program. The theatre is named for long-time supporters Eileen and Allen Anes.
LEADERSHIP

Michael Bahr, Interim Managing Director

Education: MEd, Education (Southern Utah University), BA, Theatre Arts, Acting/Directing emphasis (Southern Utah University), Certified in Secondary Education in Theatre and History; Bradley J. Cook Legacy Award for Experiential Learning; Teacher of the Year


Derek Charles Livingston, Interim Artistic Director/Director of New Play Development

Other Theatres: managing artistic director (Celebration Theatre), program manager/production and new play producer (Playwrights Project), festival artistic producer (Plays in Progress, Cygnet Theatre), acting roles at various theatres, and director of multiple plays

Awards: New Hampshire Drama Award/Lead Actor (Driving Miss Daisy); LA Scenie Awards, Best Director—Sweeney Todd and M Butterfly; LA Ovation—Shakespeare’s Rêf (director nomination), Pinafore! (producer nomination), Hedwig and the Angry Inch (producer, winner); LA Weekly—Insurrection: Holding History and M Butterfly (directing nominations)

Education: MFA, film production/direction, UCLA School of Film and Television; BA, theatre arts, Brown University

Tanya J. Searle, Artistic Associate/Festival Stage Manager

Previously at the Festival: Clue, Ragtime, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Henry V, Charley’s Aunt, Twelve Angry Men, Twelfth Night, Guys and Dolls, To Kill a Mockingbird, Scapin, Much Ado about Nothing, Othello, How to Fight Loneliness, An Iliad, The Taming of the Shrew, among others

Other Theatres: Arizona Theatre Company, Pioneer Theatre Company, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Houston Grand Opera, Atlanta Ballet, Orlando Shakespeare Festival

Teaching Credits: Troy University, Southern Utah University, Alabama Shakespeare Festival

Education: MFA in stage management, University of Alabama/Alabama Shakespeare Festival; MA in food studies, Chatham University

Professional Affiliations: Actors’ Equity Association

Richard Girtain, Production Manager


Broadway: technical director—The Scottsboro Boys, Lyceum Theatre (transfer from Guthrie Theater), End of the Rainbow, Belasco Theatre (transfer from Guthrie Theater)

Other Theatres: technical director, Guthrie Theater; technical director, Juilliard School; production manager/technical director, FSU/Asolo MFA acting program

Other Credits: opera—technical director, Dido and Aeneas, Versailles Royal Opera House; technical director, Der Freischutz, Heartbeat Opera Company, Baruch Performing Arts Center

Publications: The Technical Director’s Toolkit, co-author with Zak Stribling

Teaching Credits: Yale School of Drama, guest lecturer; University of North Carolina School of the Arts job fair guest lecturer

Education: BA in theater, minor in religious studies, University of Tennessee; MFA, technical production, Florida State University

Professional Affiliations: USITT
LEADERSHIP

Kami Terry Paul, General Manager
Teaching Credits: Masters of Arts Administration Program at Southern Utah University
Education: Bachelor of Arts from Weber State University; Master of Business Administration, Southern Utah University; Utah Women’s Leadership Exchange Program

Donn Jersey, Director of Development and Communications
Previous Work: former group publisher for the Greenspun Media Group (GMG) in Las Vegas, overseeing the daily news operations of the Pulitzer prize-winning LasVegasSun.com; published several magazines and other award-winning dot coms for GMG including The Sunday, LasVegasWeekly.com, Health Care Quarterly, and VegasInc.com
Public Service: board member of Mission High School, Cedar City Historic Downtown Economic Committee, Southern Utah Museum of Arts, West Valley City Arts Council

Katherine Norman, Education Director
Other Theatres: Montana Shakespeare in the Parks (education director), Door Shakespeare (actor, camp director), Forward Theatre (actor, playwright), Milwaukee Chamber Theatre (playwright), Whoopensocker (actor, teaching artist), Optimist Shakespeare (actor), Adishakti/Dash Arts (actor), Double Edge Theatre (actor), Missoula Children’s Theatre (actor & teaching artist)
Teaching Credits: Interlochen Center for the Arts (program director), University of Wisconsin-Madison (instructor and lecturer), Southern Utah University (instructor) Kattaikkuttu Gurukulam (teaching artist), Oakhill Prison Humanities Project (teaching artist)
Other Credits: UW-Madison Educational Neuroscience Lab and Community Arts Collaboratory (researcher)
Education and Degrees: PhD (ABD) in Educational Psychology, MS in Educational Psychology, and MA in Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies/Theatre for Youth from the University of Wisconsin-Madison; BFA in Acting from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Website: www.KatherineENorman.com

Mindy Benson, SUU President
Mindy Benson serves as the President of Southern Utah University where she prioritizes the needs of faculty, staff, and students, mental health resources, and campus culture. Benson also focuses on strengthening community and University partnerships.
Prior to her appointment as president in 2022, Benson served as Vice President of Alumni and Community Relations at SUU for eight years. In that role, Benson built a new division for community outreach and many of the public-facing entities of the University including Alumni Relations, Regional Services, the Utah Center for Rural Health, Business Resource Center and Small Business Development Center, the Southern Utah Museum of Art (SUMA), and the Larry H. Miller Utah Summer Games.
She has advanced through a variety of positions at SUU including Executive Director of Alumni Relations and Director of Student Life and Leadership. Along with her leadership responsibilities, Benson has also taught courses on campus for 15 years in the departments of Hotel, Resort, and Hospitality Management and Communication.
In addition to her work at SUU, Benson is a professional event consultant and planner with experience producing hundreds of high-level productions across the country, including concerts, political conventions, as well as gubernatorial and U.S. presidential inaugurations. Mindy is a Cedar City native, with ties to SUU that go back generations. She holds a BS in Zoology and a Master of Arts in Professional Communication from SUU.
QUALIFICATIONS

Required
Must be a visionary leader capable of creating and articulating long-range organizational goals with experience in professional theatre administration

Knowledge of classic and contemporary theatre with familiarity of the Shakespeare canon

Experience with professional theatre operating procedures in artistic, production, and administrative areas

Effective communication skills, ability to collaborate with diverse creative personalities, adheres to detail and deadlines, commitment to customer service, builds consensus, and the ability to make difficult decisions while seeking team input

Bachelor’s degree in arts, theatre, humanities, or a related field

Preferred
Three to five years as an Artistic Director, Associate Artistic Director or other leadership position in a non-profit professional theatre

Experience with repertory performance

Fundraising and financial capabilities

Master’s Degree in theatre or related field

Applications, Inquiries, and Nominations
Confidential inquiries and nominations should be sent electronically to:
Donna Law, USF AD Search Chair
ADsearch@bard.org or law@suu.edu
Apply here

For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by June 16, 2023.
A scene from The Greenshow, 2019.