

PITTSBURGH OPERA

GENOVESE VANDERHOOF & ASSOCIATES

Cultural Management Consultants

**Position Announcement
GENERAL DIRECTOR
PITTSBURGH OPERA
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**

Pittsburgh Opera seeks its next visionary leader

As it looks forward to its 87th season, Pittsburgh Opera—one of America’s most artistically respected and community-driven opera companies—invites recommendations and applications for the position of **General Director**.

Our innovative and transformational leader, Christopher Hahn, retires at the end of the 2025-26 season. During his 26-year tenure, first as Artistic Director (2000) and then as General Director (since 2008), Pittsburgh Opera has become a national model of creativity, inclusivity, and resilience. His leadership has brought new vitality, audiences, and acclaim to the company.

Pittsburgh Opera boasts a rich tradition of classic and contemporary operas, including world premieres; outstanding educational programs; an acclaimed Resident Artist training program; and a progressive outlook towards the future as a true community partner and resource.

Hahn’s era has been one of artistic daring, civic leadership, and organizational excellence.

We seek a dynamic, strategic, inspired leader ready to carry forward this powerful momentum, while shaping a bold new operatic future: someone who can inspire trust, rally support, and orchestrate success both on and off the stage; a general director with a comprehensive blend of artistic vision, business acumen, and strategic capability.

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the General Director serves as Chief Executive Officer of Pittsburgh Opera, responsible for both artistic direction and overall administrative leadership of this \$7.8 million company.



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CHRISTOPHER HAHN:

Christopher Hahn has truly been a change-maker and exceptional leader who has enhanced the profile and reach of Pittsburgh Opera both in its community and in the wider opera world.

His legacy includes:

- **A dramatically expanded repertoire**, embracing Baroque works, 20th-century masterworks, and daring new operas;
- **Premiering contemporary works**, including co-productions and world premieres that advanced the art form and drew national attention;
- **Transforming the Resident Artist Program** into one of the country's most respected incubators for emerging singers, directors, and other opera professionals;
- **Leading the company's 2008 move** to the Bitz Opera Factory—a 45,000 sq. ft. historic building (1869) that earned LEED certification; it now houses rehearsal space, costume shops, administration, and performance facilities;
- **Boldly producing live COVID-compliant performances** with in-person audiences during the fall of 2020—the only U.S. opera company to do so during the early days of the pandemic—and then sharing them digitally with a global audience;
- **Launching accessibility and engagement initiatives**, including transportation and childcare support, staging performances in non-traditional venues, creating the New Guard group for emerging professionals, and forging new community partnerships and collaborations.

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Founded in 1939 by five visionary women, Pittsburgh Opera today is viewed as one of the most vibrant opera organizations in the United States. It is the seventh oldest opera company in the United States and an anchor of the city's Downtown and Cultural District.

Pittsburgh Opera's current Music Director, Antony Walker's first conducting assignment with the company was the 2004 production of IL RITORNO D'ULISSE. Since then, he has conducted over 250 Pittsburgh Opera performances of more than 50 operas. Maestro Walker has brought an engaged and highly informed leadership to the company's musical forces as well as developing a music staff of note. His contract was recently extended through June of 2029.

The 2025-26 season includes LA BOHEME, FELLOW TRAVELERS, CURLEW RIVER, FALSTAFF, and the world premiere of TIME TO ACT. These five operas will be produced at four different venues across the city.



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PITTSBURGH:

A renaissance city in every sense, Pittsburgh was once known as “Steel City,” because of the dominant role it played in the American steel industry. Since the 1990’s, however, the city has combined its industrial legacy with intellectual and artistic energy now focusing on health care, education, and technology. Today the region is home to 68 colleges and universities such as Carnegie-Mellon University, the University of Pittsburgh, and Duquesne University, as well as nine Fortune 500 companies such as PNC Financial Services.



Pittsburgh is renowned for its cultural institutions including the Carnegie Museums, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh Public Theatre, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, the Andy Warhol Museum, and the Heinz History Center, among many such internationally acclaimed arts activities.

Pittsburgh Opera plays a vital role in the city’s identity and has been a major participant in the post-pandemic recovery and revitalization of Pittsburgh’s Downtown and Cultural District.

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EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION:

Pittsburgh Opera seeks a general director who honors tradition while daring to innovate: someone ready to lead with heart, imagination, fiscal responsibility, and strategic clarity. The new leader must be a charismatic, highly adaptive, intuitive yet disciplined individual who will approach the position with passion and creativity

In this role the General Director is responsible for:

- Setting and executing artistic vision and strategy in partnership with Music Director Antony Walker;
- Curating innovative and accessible seasons in multiple venues, blending beloved classics with bold contemporary works and new commissions;
- Overseeing fiscal management, fund-raising, marketing, and strategic planning;
- Cultivating relationships with individual donors, corporate sponsors, government agencies, foundations, the media, and other stakeholders;
- Championing education, community engagement, and equitable access to the arts;
- Leading and inspiring a highly experienced administrative and artistic staff and the Resident Artist Program, ensuring artistic and operational excellence across all departments;
- Collaborating with the wider cultural community in Pittsburgh, nationally and internationally;
- Working closely with a highly committed and active Board of Directors.

The General Director is the primary leader in fulfilling the mission of the company, responsible for both top line and bottom line growth. This person works in close collaboration with the Music Director, Managing Director, the Directors of Marketing, Development, Artistic Operations, Education, Community Relations, and Production, and the Board of Directors.



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The new general director will have:

- A deep knowledge of the operatic repertoire and production;
- Prior leadership experience in an opera company;
- A proven track record in fund-raising and relationship-building;
- Excellent communication skills and the ability to serve as a compelling spokesperson for Pittsburgh Opera;
- A commitment to community engagement and artistic risk-taking;
- A broad network within the opera industry and the ability to attract top-tier creative talent;
- The tactical skill of identifying and discussing problematic situations, and executing difficult solutions with tact and diplomacy.
- The ability to work collaboratively with Pittsburgh Opera's long-tenured staff and community partners, leading with respect, insight, inspiration, and wisdom.

Training in opera and/or business management is essential. In addition the new leader must have general knowledge of, and experience with not-for-profit arts revenue generation, operational and long-term planning, budget development, office administration, board relations, union negotiations, information systems, and human resource management.

Compensation: \$230,000-\$250,000 with a comprehensive benefits package and relocation assistance.

Deadline for Application: Monday, 15 September 2025

Application Process:

Interested candidates are invited to submit a letter of interest, resume and the names/contact information for four professional references, in confidence to:

Margaret Genovese
Senior Partner
gvamargaret@aol.com
Genovese Vanderhoof & Associates
416/340-2762

For additional information: www.pittsburghopera.org; www.genovesevanderhoof.com.

