

# ASPEN LEADERSHIP GROUP

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## DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

### SPOKANE SYMPHONY

Spokane, Washington



The Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Spokane Symphony in the search for a Director of Development.

The Director of Development will serve as the chief advancement officer for the organization, leading all aspects of contributed income including annual operating income, endowment activity, capital projects, and other special projects which further the work of Spokane Symphony on behalf of its community and members. The Director of Development will be responsible for raising an estimated \$2 million in annual support as well as work to further the progression of a \$14 million endowment, with priorities around both general funding and special initiatives as they arise.

Spokane Symphony, incorporated in 1945 as the Spokane Philharmonic, continues its long tradition as the largest and most active professional performing arts organization in the Inland Pacific Northwest. Led by Music Director, James Lowe, the 70-piece professional orchestra performs more than 60 concerts, for over 150,000 listeners each season across platforms, and provides a wide variety of exceptional educational experiences. A non-profit organization governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees, the Spokane Symphony Society is generously supported by the more than 300-member Spokane Symphony Associates, the Orchestra's volunteer organization.

Spokane Symphony is driven by a belief that orchestral music nurtures the human spirit, enhances the quality of life, and is integral to the preservation and development of culture. It is dedicated to the mission of providing high quality, professional orchestral performances and education to the Inland Northwest for the purpose of enriching and transforming lives through music. This is achieved through presentation of high-quality performances of classical, popular, and innovative music, creating cultural enrichment for audiences of all ages and backgrounds, and aiding in the artistic development of audiences and musicians by providing new musical experiences. Spokane Symphony is committed to developing and delivering educational and community programs that inspire.

Dedicated to bringing cultural enrichment to the community, Spokane Symphony has developed award winning, innovative programming that includes contemporary and traditional composers from around the globe. It works to collaborate with other art organizations such as the Spokane Civic Theatre to present *Les Miserables* and *West Side Story*, and *La Boheme* with Opera Coeur d'Alene (now Inland Northwest Opera). Spokane Symphony has outreach programs that include the Library Pass program, College Card, and student discounts. Its concerts are broadcast on local radio station 91.1 KPBX-FM.

In addition to community programming, the Spokane Symphony Education Program aims to bring audiences to a new relationship with music and the arts. The programs that have been developed build on the work of educators to engage teachers in preparing students for concert attendance, and to involve students in interactive presentations.

Each year, nearly 24,000 students, teachers, and parents in the Inland Northwest are enriched by the musicians of Spokane Symphony. Programs include concerts for fourth and fifth graders, and the Link Up program with Carnegie Hall's Weill Institute of Music for grades 3-5 which puts instruments in the hands of students, and teaches the application of music concepts. For secondary schools, Spokane Symphony has the Young Musicians Education Program, which puts professional musicians in the classroom to provide students with one-on-one learning opportunities to raise music proficiency. The Young Friends program provides free tickets for students to attend a Spokane Symphony Masterworks concert which honors community educators. Educational outreach also goes beyond the traditional classroom and includes master classes that are free and open to the public.

### **REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS**

The Director of Development will report to the Executive Director, Jeff vom Saal and will serve on the organization's Management Team. The Director of Development will oversee a team of three with opportunity for further expansion.

### **FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

*I am humbled that you've expressed interest in our organization and as a potential colleague of mine. The purpose of this letter is to help you better understand our organization and the framework for this position by providing insight and context into our current operations, and how we envision our future. Most importantly, it's to create a connection with you even before we meet, and for you to "get" us.*

*There are many things I can tell you about—our triumphs and failures, the staff culture, or anecdotal data points around our economic impact or how many students we served the year before the pandemic. We can get to all of that in time. What I think you need to know is what makes us tick, and what "future us" looks like—and for you to really invest the time to consider whether future you matches future us.*

*The Spokane Symphony | Fox Theater is a creative community enterprise with a distinctive identity and organizational style unlike any other I have encountered in my nearly twenty years of experience in orchestra management. We are a mid-tier (Group 3) orchestra which performs approximately 60 concerts per season, reaching an audience of about 30,000 per year. The organization owns and operates the Fox Theater, a 1931 Art Deco theater which was masterfully restored in the early 2000's and re-opened to the public in 2007 following a \$34 million renovation. Taken together, the Fox | Symphony enterprise is one of the busiest and most vibrant arts, culture, and entertainment entities in the Pacific Northwest. Taken a step further, I believe that we are one of the most enterprising, driven, and interesting orchestra organizations in this country today.*

*What makes our organization unique and outstanding is the fact that we are much more than an orchestra. Since my arrival in 2016, we have been on a mission to activate The Fox to the best of our abilities, to reach authentically into our community through programming and find audiences often inaccessible through traditional Symphony content, and to animate our vision of creating a hall for all. The pandemic was cataclysmic for this organization and arrested the excellent work we were doing towards the goal of creating a vibrant cultural living room for our community. Earned revenues were reduced by 97.5%, from over \$3 million in 2019, to \$54,000 in all of FY21. However, we have rebounded with audacity and there is a white-hot energy within this organization to build a better future for ourselves and for those we serve.*

*When the pandemic shut us down in March of 2020, the role of Director of Development was vacated and the position remained unfilled until last May, when we engaged interim counsel to provide day-to-day help with building towards our contributed revenue goals. Now, we have determined it is time to focus on a long-term solution and to find the person who will round out our Management Team's style, skills, experience, and vision, and help us maximize our potential to reach our philanthropic goals.*

*My greatest achievement thus far in my tenure is surrounding myself with extraordinary individuals. Together, we work to animate our vision of creating a fountain of consumable content, built on an uncompromising commitment to relatability, inspiration, and excellence. To that end, the people in and around this organization are outstanding. We work to give each person a voice, and to build upon the concept of collective genius. The Management Team of this organization is remarkably talented, insightful, and driven, as are those within each of our departments. Our Board of Trustees consists of individuals who are courageous, dedicated, and humble. Our Musicians are masters of their craft and enroll others in their love of music in an organic and authentic way.*

*I am immensely proud of our organization and the work we do. However, there is so much more we can and must do. We need a fantastic partner in our philanthropic work to help us maximize our impact on the community. I am seeking someone who is turned on by an organization like ours and is actively looking to leverage their experience in philanthropy and use it to effect meaningful, positive, palpable, and durable change to an organization—and to help propel the entire orchestra, performing arts, and entertainment industry ahead with the work we do.*

*Thank you for taking the time to read this and to consider the Spokane Symphony |Fox Theater a part of your future. Even if we don't meet this time around, I wish you the absolute best in your professional journey, and hope that our paths cross at some point.*

—Jeff vom Saal, Executive Director

## **SPOKANE SYMPHONY'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

Spokane Symphony welcomes people of all ethnicities, religions, and backgrounds. It pledges to promote and celebrate diversity within its multi-ethnic community. To achieve this goal, Spokane Symphony has appointed a Diversity Committee to ensure that all people can share and enjoy the music it makes. Work within the organization as well as through programming and outreach will indicate its leadership and dedication to equality. That stance on equality will solidify Spokane Symphony's role in responsible social leadership with existing audiences, and forward an expansion into new next-generational audiences and audiences which include People of Color, both of which will result in financial strength.

The Diversity Committee will continue to provide diversity materials for the Symphony organization; reach out to individuals to build a well-qualified and diverse Board of Trustees; collaborate with diverse groups on programming; connect with Indigenous peoples to provide collaborative and mutually beneficial services; and provide music performance and education to historically underserved neighborhoods.

## **PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Leadership and Presence**

The Director of Development will

- provide positive, engaging leadership of departmental personnel;
- lead a data-driven development culture;
- participate in staff leadership meetings, board meetings, and relevant board committees;

- work effectively with the Board of Trustees;
- represent the Symphony and Fox at community events;
- report at the Symphony Endowment Board meetings; and
- periodically provide status reports to the Board of Trustees.

### **Departmental Strategy and Planning**

The Director of Development will

- set strategic goals, build structures, and execute plans for advancing the Symphony and Fox through contributed income by sustaining and growing the number of donors and building a pipeline of major donors;
- develop, oversee, and update programs for planned giving through completion;
- oversee annual planning for all departmental activities;
- develop cross-functional and extra-organizational strategic partnerships as appropriate; and
- develop and oversee capital and other special campaigns.

### **Functional Oversight**

The Director of Development will

- oversee the recruitment, onboarding, and ongoing management for departmental personnel;
- ensure that systems and procedures to track cultivation and acknowledgements are effective, timely, and responsive;
- manage a portfolio of major donors and prospects;
- prepare solicitation materials including proposals, collateral for the public, and materials to help others understand progress and challenges the department is facing;
- ensure compliance around sponsor and individual donor recognition and benefits administration;
- oversee and coordinate research, writing, and submission of grant proposals to obtain support and subsequent reporting;
- maintain communication and positive working relations with funders, government agencies, donors, and volunteers;
- contribute to institutional materials as needed, including annual reports, departmental reports and board updates; and
- oversee planning and execution of fundraising and stewardship events and ensure an exceptional donor experience.

### **Finance and Budgeting**

The Director of Development will

- create and manage the department budget including cash flow projections around nine internal targets, CapEx, other off-budget projects, and the endowment;
- working with Chief Financial Officer and Executive Director, provide ongoing forecasts to maintain the budget; and
- manage expenses to budget and adjust spending as necessary.

### **Information and Data Management**

The Director of Development will

- design and deploy benchmarking and dashboard systems which bring about better financial literacy and general awareness of the role fundraising plays in the organization;
- leverage understanding of qualitative and quantitative analysis to produce projected income, behavioral segmentation, wealth-screening, and other higher-level information-driven results; and

- utilize tools available through the partnership with TRG/Purple7 to help inform tactics and drive financial literacy among staff, board, and musicians.

## **LEADERSHIP**

### **Jeff vom Saal**

#### **Executive Director**

Jeff vom Saal is the Executive Director of the Spokane Symphony & Martin Woldson Theater at The Fox, a position he has held since 2016. He is credited with infusing the organization with renewed verve and during his tenure, helped increase revenues from \$4 million to over \$6 million, an increase of over 50% in three years, reversing a structural deficit. He has also spearheaded efforts to broaden the reach of the Symphony and Fox, expanding the range of concerts and events, and establishing programs for children to attend symphony performances free of charge.

Prior to his appointment in Spokane, vom Saal held the position of Executive Director of the Orchestras of Marin, California (2012-2016); Quad Cities, Iowa/Illinois (2007-2012); and Fargo, North Dakota (2005-2007). His first job in the orchestra world was as the Executive Director of the Metrowest Youth Orchestra in Framingham, Massachusetts, when he was 23 years old.

Vom Saal was born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania and became interested in music at a young age, starting on the trumpet at age four, quickly finding music to be something he gravitated towards. In 2001, he received his Bachelor of Music in Trumpet Performance from the New England Conservatory of Music, studying with members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

To those who know vom Saal, he is often immersed in a project or working on something related to improving his orchestra. To vom Saal, work is intermixed with life, and that's the way he likes it.

In 2018, vom Saal was named Honorary Commander of the 93<sup>rd</sup> Air Refueling Wing at Fairchild Air Force Base. He is the National Chairperson for Group 3-4 Orchestras, of which the Spokane Symphony is a member. In June 2021, he was elected to the Board of the League of American Orchestras.

Vom Saal is currently enrolled in the General Management Program at Harvard Business School.

## **ARTISTIC LEADERSHIP**

### **James Lowe**

#### **Music Director, The Cowles Music Director Chair**

James Lowe is the Spokane Symphony's eighth conductor in its 76-year history, taking over after Music Director Eckart Preu ended his 15-year tenure with the organization in May 2019.

Born in Nottingham, England and currently residing in both Spokane and Scotland, he previously held the positions of Chief Conductor of the Vaasa City Orchestra in Finland, Associate Conductor of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and Chief Conductor of the Prussian Chamber Orchestra in Germany, and worked as Orchestras Advisor to the National Youth Orchestras of Scotland.

Lowe began playing the viola as a child, and went on to graduate from the University of Edinburgh with First Class Honours in music. He was subsequently invited by Benjamin Zander to be the Zander Conducting Fellow with the Boston Philharmonic, and was a recipient of the Bernard Haitink Fund for Young Talent, working as Assistant Conductor to Bernard Haitink with the Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam.

Lowe has conducted orchestras all over the world, including engagements with the Osaka and Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestras, the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra, the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Hallé Orchestra, the BBC Philharmonic, Scottish Ballet, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, plus numerous other ensembles in Europe, South Africa, and the United States.

In addition to his conducting work, Lowe is active as an educator, teacher of conducting, and is researching ways in which orchestras can meaningfully engage with a wider public.

### **PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Spokane Symphony seeks a Director of Development with

- a belief in the mission of Spokane Symphony—that orchestral music nurtures the human spirit, enhances the quality of life, and is integral to the preservation and development of culture;
- management experience with strong indicators of success in managing both formal and informal relationships, with staff, boards, musicians, patrons, and the community at large;
- a history of securing gifts with significant institutional impact from individuals, institutions, and government agencies, and planning for and leading successful campaigns;
- outstanding verbal and written communication skills;
- an ability to identify and address personal knowledge gaps, to learn on the job, and to cultivate sources of knowledge, expertise, and skill;
- an ability to understand and quickly adapt to new technology;
- solid judgement and a strong customer service ethic;
- an ability and willingness to work in a fast-paced environment with high productivity demands, and collaborate with other staff;
- follow-through and an inextinguishable focus on execution;
- an ability to engage effectively with a wide range of constituents with grace;
- trustworthiness, adaptability, and empathy, combined with intellectual curiosity and insight;
- proficiency with Microsoft Office Suite, particularly Excel, Adobe Creative Suite, and functional knowledge of Tessitura;
- strong writing, editing, and proofreading skills; and
- endowment campaign experience (preferred).

A bachelor's degree is required for this position as is at least seven years of experience in fundraising including four years of management experience.

### **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

Spokane Symphony offers a competitive salary and a comprehensive package of benefits.

### **LOCATION**

This position is located in Spokane, Washington.

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and resume. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Spokane Symphony as well as the responsibilities and qualifications stated in the position prospectus.*** Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

*To apply for this position, visit:*

*[Director of Development, Spokane Symphony.](#)*

*To nominate a candidate, please contact Anne Johnson, [annejohnson@aspenleadershipgroup.com](mailto:annejohnson@aspenleadershipgroup.com) or Michael Carver, [michaelcarver@aspenleadershipgroup.com](mailto:michaelcarver@aspenleadershipgroup.com).*

*All inquiries will be held in confidence.*