



The Billie Holiday Theatre

Executive Director, The Billie Holiday Theatre
& Executive Vice President for Arts & Culture,
Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation

Brooklyn, NY, USA

Background

About The Theatre

OUR TRUTH. OUR THEATRE. OUR STORIES

Founded in 1972 by Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation (Restoration) – the nation's first community development corporation (CDC) – The Billie Holiday Theatre (BHT) is the artistic anchor to the largest African American community in the nation, Central Brooklyn, and is one of the last remaining theaters forged in the aesthetic and sociocultural kiln of America's Civil Rights/Black Arts Movements.

Located at the center of Restoration Plaza in the historic Black cultural mecca of Bedford-Stuyvesant, the mission of this Obie and AUDELCO Award-winning Theatre has been to provide audiences with complete and authentic portrayals of the experiences of people of African descent across the world, and to provide artists of African diaspora pure and unapologetic artistic freedom.

In 1981, BHT made history when it transferred the hit play *Inacent Black* to Broadway with fifty percent of the financing being derived from the Black community; a first in the theatre world (as cited in The New York Times), and unheard of prior to *Inacent Black*.

Today, BHT's state-of-the-art creative campus is home to such artistic luminaries as Lena Horne, Max Roach, Eubie Blake, Stephanie Mills, Ben Vereen, Jay Z, Yasiin Bey, and more. Many of today's successful actors, writers, designers, and musicians developed their craft at The Billie Holiday Theatre. Actors such as Samuel L. Jackson, Debbie Allen, Tichina Arnold, Bill Cobbs, Phyllis Yvonne Stickney, Carol Woods, Elaine Graham and Ebony JoAnn to name but a few.

The legendary William "Smokey" Robinson had his first musical, *Raisin' Hell*, produced at BHT, while other notable authors whose debut plays were produced at BHT include: Samm Art Williams, legendary jazz musician Weldon Irvine, and John Henry Redwood (*The Old Settler*).

The BHT is more than a theater. It is the entity that oversees all arts programming at Restoration including Youth Arts Academy, Skylight Gallery, Black Arts Institute, events on the Plaza, and the Institutions-in-Residence program for companies such as Evidence, Cumbe, Frank Silvera Workshop, Noel Pointer Foundation, and Nova Film Fest.

Exemplifying their commitment to community development, BHT operates out of Restoration's physical space on a fee reimbursement model. Restoration provides core support through funding the facility and staff of BHT, while BHT fundraises independently to

cover all artistic programming costs. This partnership empowers BHT to maintain its individual 501(c)(3) status, institutional reputation, and community stakeholders. Restoration's financial, administrative, and structural backstop are essential offerings to the synergism of this partnership.

The Future of The Billie Holiday Theatre

Today, The Billie Holiday Theatre produces, presents, and commissions new and classic works and festivals in theater, dance, music, visual arts, and film; provides artistic and institutional residencies; and serves ages 3 to 103 with educational programming across the Theatre and Restoration's art programs. As the cultural cornerstone of Central Brooklyn and Restoration, BHT continues to be committed to its founding vision to produce and present all forms of art and education by challenging unjust systems that historically prevent artists, institutions, and communities' full access to world-class arts, creative spaces, and resources.

As Restoration embarks on a quest to redefine its role for the 21st Century, the organization continues to recognize the vital role arts and culture plays in creating opportunities for strengthening the economy, creating jobs, community engagement and creating a sense of place. In 2019, Restoration selected Sir David Adjaye as the master planner for its Innovation Campus. Redesigning the Plaza as a hub for economic development, art and culture and public spaces is part of a five-year plan to redefine Restoration's role for the future. The design highlights the critical role of arts and culture in creating a vibrant and flourishing community and positions The Billie Holiday Theatre to become a comprehensive performing and cultural arts center at the heart of the campus.

The Billie Holiday Theatre currently has 6 full-time staff, 5 part-time staff, a board of 11, and an annual operating budget around \$1.4 million exclusive of the in-kind, personnel, and facility costs which are provided by Restoration.

Please access these links to learn additional information about [The Billie Holiday Theatre](#) and [Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation](#).

About the Restoration Innovation Campus

Restoration Innovation Campus builds on Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation's history of strengthening the economic upward mobility of Central Brooklyn residents. A first-of-its-kind living laboratory, the Innovation Campus brings together everything the Central Brooklyn community needs to participate in the tech-driven and creative economies. This strategy focuses on reducing the racial wealth gap and creating wealth.

The organizing principle of the Innovation Campus is impact, where like-minded companies and organizations will choose to locate to benefit from proximity to each other and to

support the mission of a more equitable economy– a business campus infused with purpose. The campus will create an ecosystem that comprises innovative economic mobility programs alongside major industry anchors and community and cultural organizations, establishing a “virtuous cycle” to help close the racial wealth gap –and create a model that can be replicated in communities across the globe.



Position

Restoration seeks a dynamic and innovative executive to lead all visual, performing, educational arts programming that takes place on the campus of Restoration, both its current site and its future Innovation Campus.

This experienced leader will perform two roles and have a dual reporting structure. As an Executive Vice President, this person will report to Restoration’s CEO and lead all of Restoration’s art programs (Youth Arts Academy, Skylight Gallery, Black Arts Institute, events on the Plaza, and Institutions-in-Residence program for companies such as Evidence, Cumbe, Frank Silvera Workshop, Noel Pointer Foundation, and Nova Film Fest). In the role of Executive Director, they will report to the chair of the board of The Billie Holiday Theatre and lead the BHT team. Additionally, the ED/EVP will oversee the day-to-day administrative and operational management of BHT ensuring strategies are effectively implemented across all sectors of the organization.

This is an exciting moment to lead. A primary aspect of this role will be working in partnership with senior leaders to create and execute a comprehensive strategic plan that advances the work of the institution and leads it through its next chapter of growth with effective and impactful leadership.

BHT has received local and national recognition for its programming and its longstanding support for Black artists. As the Theatre marks its 50th anniversary season, the ED/EVP will have the opportunity to lead a beloved institution that has stood firmly as a beacon for artistic brilliance and innovation.

Responsibilities

Strategic Vision and Leadership

- Lead the vision and articulation of an institutional strategic approach, across BHT, all of Restoration's artistic initiatives, and Restoration's campus; ensuring that BHT has both short and long-range strategic plans that embrace the vision of Restoration and achieve its mission in a consistent and effective manner.
- Direct and manage the administration of BHT including direct fundraising and external relations, community relations, presenting & production, educational program development, personnel administration, facilities and financial management, marketing, and communications. This work requires leadership, initiative, and an entrepreneurial spirit, while also engaging and collaborating with Restoration staff/
- Drive community engagement through serving as a vital and accessible resource for the community; reimagining and executing additional uses for The Billie Holiday Theatre that sustainably creates stakeholder access to its facilities, with the intention of developing an additional revenue stream for the Theatre.
- Attract and build a high-performing culture of accountability, trust, and collaboration that embraces change and empowers staff; implements transparent and active communication and delegation ensuring staff are kept abreast of decisions made at the senior leadership level; promote intra- and interdepartmental teamwork ensuring staff feel connected to institutional priorities, and establish decision-making processes ensuring to support The Billie Holiday Theatre in achieving its objectives.
- Provide inspirational leadership and direction to staff, encouraging innovation while ensuring the development and management of an effective organization.
- Cultivate a strong and transparent working relationship with Restoration's President & CEO and BHT's Board that ensures open communication and alignment around the organizational goals.
- Update and brief the Board on the status of the organization's progress. Serving as the chief liaison, ensure that the board is actively engaged with and well-informed about the organization's activities and work closely with the Board Chair to advance the agenda.

Organizational Excellence and Business Acumen

- In partnership with Restoration, provide oversight for the effective and sound management of BHT's operational infrastructure including optimizing policies, practices, and systems, ensuring the organization operates within budget guidelines, and that contractual obligations are fulfilled.

- Provide direction and vision on the strategic framework needed to ensure capacity to achieve programmatic goals and organizational priorities.
- Develop and manage a small team of seven full-time and five part-time employees; provide empathetic leadership and development to department staff and amplify the contributions through mentorship, strategic instruction, and management.

Relationship Building & Resource Development

- Act as an ambassador and key spokesperson for BHT and the arts programming it operates at Restoration; as an employee of Restoration play an enthusiastic and influential role in advancing BHT's values and raising the visibility of the institution in the public, philanthropic, political, and cultural communities.
- Build, strengthen, and enhance relationships while building bridges and cultivating new innovative partnerships amongst a broad range of stakeholders; proactively seek out opportunities to increase the organization's influence and reputation locally, regionally, and beyond.
- Partner with Restoration's Development entity to devise and implement a multi-pronged fundraising strategy that expands solicitation activities, engages donors and diversifies funding streams.
- Deepen and enhance BHT's engagement with local audiences through partnerships with peer institutions, government agencies, foundations, corporate leaders, and city, state, and regional community organizations.
- In partnership with senior leadership, devise a compelling brand strategy that creates consistency of voice and messaging around Restoration's comprehensive arts offerings and successfully increases audiences and visitors.

Innovation and Engagement

- Facilitate the development and execution of BHT programs, projects and initiatives that joyfully celebrates Black excellence and presents world-class programming, theatrical productions, and special exhibitions in the Central Brooklyn community and creates revenue opportunities well into the future.
- Foster a culture that yields creative, forward thinking, and thought-provoking programming that sparks new and existing visitors' curiosity and maintains BHT's relevance and positioning as a vital voice in the community.

Qualifications

The Executive Director will possess the following professional and personal qualities, skills, and characteristics:

- Preferred candidates will have a commitment and connection to the missions of The Billie Holiday Theatre and Restoration, and an unwavering belief in the transformative role of arts and cultural education in empowering and sustaining thriving communities.
- A “big-picture thinker” with proven success moving from conceptualization, managing multiple iterations of the concept, to goal-oriented implementation and clear execution; ability to set the vision and to develop and promote the strategies needed to advance the work.
- Proven organizational and administrative experience with budgets, staffing, deadlines, deliverables, and ability to think strategically about the resources needed for sustainability and growth.
- A highly respected, collaborative, and diplomatic professional with a track record of success leading a growing organization of similar size and complexity and experience and facility with Board leadership
- A financially savvy and politically astute leader with the ability to set clear priorities, delegate, and guide investment in people and systems; systems-oriented with keen analytic, organization and problem-solving skills, which supports and enables sound decision making.
- Demonstrated success and appreciation for fundraising; ability to galvanize support and generate excitement while effectively partnering with staff and stakeholders in the process.
- Exemplary relationship-building skills; highly respected yet humble and approachable leader with a genuine interest in creating and nurturing with a breadth of constituents.
- Outstanding presentation and communication skills; possess the experience and proclivity to be a charismatic spokesperson, relationship builder, and fundraiser.
- Nimble and entrepreneurial; ability to be proactive and creative in overcoming obstacles and resource constraints and to lead through change and growth in an evolving landscape.
- Empathic leader with high emotional intelligence who values trust, ethics, integrity, and transparency; a leader with the ability to foster and build communities of care that yield a deeper sense of well-being.
- Bachelor’s degree or equivalent experience, five years of senior leadership experience in non-profit or for-profit environments, with a minimum of eight years of progressive management experience.

Compensation & Benefits

The Executive Director & Executive Vice President position offers a competitive salary range of \$175,000–\$200,000 and comprehensive benefits package.

Commitment to Equity

Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation is committed to providing equal employment opportunity for all employees and applicants, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, disability, whistleblower status, or any other category protected by state or federal law. Restoration strongly encourages people with traditionally marginalized identities to apply.

DRG Talent Advisory Group

DRG is a Talent Advisory Group. We serve nonprofit organizations that care for, inspire, and enrich the lives of people all over the world. Our team of talent advisors shares a commitment to the values that matter to our clients, bringing more than 30 years of experience to serving the nonprofit community.

Our mission is to support nonprofits in bringing together the right leadership, talent, culture, and structure—so people and organizations can thrive.

This position description is based upon material provided by Restoration's The Billie Holiday Theatre.

Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, its board members, President & CEO, executives and employees are committed to providing equal employment opportunities for all persons regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ethnicity, gender, religion, source of income, sexual orientation, age, familial status, military status, domestic violence victim status, predisposing genetic characteristics, employment status, arrest or conviction record or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law. Equal employment opportunities extend to all aspects of the employment relationship, including hiring, transfers, promotions, training, terminations, working conditions, compensation, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment.

To apply to this position, please click [HERE](#).

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