



# The Kennedy Center

## OPENING STAGES

A Quarterly Newsletter for People with Disabilities Pursuing Careers in the  
Performing Arts

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**FROM THE EDITOR:  
DISABLED AND ACTING VS. ACTING DISABLED**

Not long ago I saw a play, in which a young actor with a disability had a leading role. This young man was a friend of mine. So, I knew him to have a mobility impairment and to get around in a manual wheelchair. I also knew him to have a clear, well-trained, resonant voice and a cheerful, outgoing personality.

The play was set in the office of a speech therapist, and my young friend played the therapist's patient. He appeared on stage in his own wheelchair. But, instead of speaking in his normal voice, he mimicked the slurred speech and word finding difficulty of someone with a brain injury or other neurological disability. And, instead of seeming cheerful and outgoing, he affected a shy and hesitant personality. In other words, he acted and did so very convincingly.

I, who knew how well he had transformed himself for the role, applauded his ability. But, I wondered if others in the audience, who might have gleaned from his biography that he really had a disability, would appreciate his skill. I was afraid that they might dismiss him as only playing himself.

Only playing oneself is the scornful caveat to which actors with disabilities are often vulnerable. But, as Alan Toy, well-known actor with a disability, asks, "Are women -- or men for that matter -- lesser actors when they play characters of their own gender? Of course not." \*

When able-bodied actors play characters with a disability their performances are applauded as virtuosic, Oscar-worthy star turns. Think of Daniel Day-Lewis as Christy Brown in "My Left Foot." But, what if someone who actually had cerebral

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**The Kennedy Center**

Opening Stages Newsletter  
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palsy had taken the role?

Here are a few reflections from a non-actor but someone who has tremendous respect for the craft. An actor with cerebral palsy would have never won an Oscar for playing Christy Brown, no matter how good he was, because in the public eye the disability looms larger than the individual. Creating an illusion may be the heart of acting, but when the illusion calls as much attention to itself as Day-Lewis' did it undermines its own power. It becomes spectacle, not acting.

On the other hand, when actors with disabilities are on stage or screen the disability has a chance to fade into the background as it does for most of us in real life, and character can emerge into the foreground. What impedes this process toward realism is stereotypical casting. That is casting based on cultural assumptions about the meaning of disability. For example, the "crip" is always either bitter and evil or innocent and victimized.

Alan states "If society allowed us to be part of the norm, we would get credit or not, based on the same critical values applied to all other actors." That is the goal we must all work toward achieving. And the best way may be, not by ranting -- as I perhaps am guilty of doing -- but by applauding the theater and entertainment industries for the incremental progress they are making. Robert David Hall's continuing role as Dr. Robbins on *CSI* comes to mind as an example in which Hall's disability and his character's is neither hidden nor exploited for symbolic meaning. It seems to have little or nothing to do with who the skilled, seasoned, and seen-it-all Dr. Robbins is. Because of that disability loses its power to evoke either pity or terror in the audience. What a consummation devoutly to be wished!

Paul Kahn

\*Watch for a great interview with Alan in a future issue of *Opening Stages*.

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## **BASIC BUSINESS SAVVY FOR ARTISTS** **by Susan Schear**

### **Introduction**

I was most charged by attending the Kennedy Center ADA/504 Conference for Arts Managers this past August. Charged by the conviction of each person attending to create change, reach his or her goals and achieve success.

Yes, many people who attended the conference live with disabilities, but their disabilities did not impede them from accomplishing their goals. Others attendees live or work with people with disabilities, or their audience includes them.

This article, targeting performing artists with disabilities, will provide direction and offer questions to help you assess your needs, goals, vision and opportunities for success.

### **The challenge of balancing business and art**

There is a tendency to focus on your art versus business, but a focus on both is necessary. Planning, goal setting and time management will help you concentrate appropriately on both sides. Resource management (capital, space, etc.) will help you with both as well.

### **The Five "Ps" -- Professionalism, Presentation, Positivity, Passion and Perseverance**

1. An old adage is, "You don't get a second chance to make a first impression." Make an impact by being professional in everything you do: phone calls; in-person contact; sending a thank-you note to a colleague, producer or director for an opportunity; and professional presentation of your press kit and materials.
2. Your presentation complements your professionalism.
3. Be positive in everything you do. It may be difficult in certain situations, however people want to hire and do business with those that are positive and professional!
4. Your passion will come through the work you do as an actor and artist, particularly when you are focused and within your natural abilities and competencies.
5. Persevere and believe in yourself. Concentrate on moving forward and continually working towards new opportunities. Remember your passion, and focus on why you are choosing to be an artist, writer, actor, dancer, musician, producer or director.

### **Network and Develop Relationships**

As you often hear, "it's not what you know, but who you know." Networking (developing relationships) is critical to your career. The key to networking is to determine how you can benefit others. When you approach someone with this intent, often they will reciprocate.

Getting yourself "out there" is important for several reasons: avoiding isolation; meeting other actors or professionals that may recommend you; being a resource for others; maintaining your visibility among professionals; and assessing current and future trends in your field.

### **Establish Peer Support Communication**

Whether in person, phone or on-line, it is most beneficial to include other actors, writers, artists and professionals in your support network. Be selective, trust and

feel comfortable with those that can guide you. Of course, you should be available for their questions as well.

A network such as this will allow you to present yourself and your work, learn from others, provide support and connections, and develop additional confidence and self-esteem.

### **Manage your time**

A common challenge for artists and business professionals! Managing your time for acting, writing, performing, marketing, taking courses, attending conferences, lectures and workshops, or for simply being with family and friends is a continual “push-pull.” You should be cognizant of your needs and schedule time accordingly.

### **Plan for success**

“Failing to plan is planning to fail.” It is important to plan. Determine where you are currently; where you want to go; how you will arrive there; what capital, space, education and experts it will take. Thereafter, periodically assess whether your plan is on track and what needs to be re-evaluated.

### **Focus your energies**

Decide what is it you want to do and how you want to do it, rather than trying to accomplish everything or be in too many places at once. Although sometimes difficult, it is important to “not be everything to everyone,” as that can often leave you fragmented and unfocused.

### **Know your vision**

Where do you want to be in five years? What will your career look like? What will you be doing? Will you have shifted, changed or added to your current discipline? Will you be traveling, teaching or writing about your career? What will your personal and family life be like?

For some it is easier to think about the bigger picture and where they would like to be in five years. For others, it is more comfortable to have “both feet planted on the ground,” and, therefore, thinking five years into the future may be daunting. But, take some time and try to envision where you would like your career to be in five years. Then, roll it back to the present. How can you make your vision become a reality?

### **Know your values**

Decide what is important to you as a person, an artist and a businessperson, so that you can make effective decisions regarding where and when you perform, your fee, how you conduct business and with whom. For example, you as an actor using a wheelchair have auditioned and been chosen for the lead role in a play scheduled to open in a theater that has a reputation for not adequately serving people with disabilities. In fact, the owners of the theater are presently in court battling a lawsuit,

which challenges their lack of accessible seating. This means that some of your friends, family and colleagues who also use wheelchairs will not be able to attend your performance.

As an actor chosen for the lead role, you need to consciously determine your values in order to make the best decision for you. Do you graciously accept the role, work to leverage some changes in the theater before accepting the role, or not accept the role due to the theater's inequities in serving people with disabilities? What is important to you? How will you come to a comfortable decision? How will your values benefit you in making this difficult decision?

### **Define your goals**

As defined by Webster's, a "goal is the result or achievement toward which effort is directed; aim; end." Goals need to be realistic, measurable, specific, and achievable within a specific timeframe. They need to be written and prioritized. Goals are not something that you frame, file away and never examine again. Verbalize your goals to someone that you trust; you will become more accountable for your goals and help them to become a reality.

### **Know your worth**

Believe in yourself. Be positive and communicate your value to others through everything that you do: your body language; a positive nod, smile or affirmation; your work; your expertise and knowledge; your vision, passion and commitment for the work, program or performance.

### **Know your core competencies**

If you are a Shakespearean actor, don't go for a role where your expertise is not relevant. Understand what types of roles come naturally to you; understand your unique abilities.

### **Know your strengths and weaknesses**

Know what is inherent to you in both the arts and business arenas. Determine what skills you need to improve in order to achieve the places in the market that you have targeted.

### **Know your opportunities and challenges**

What are the current or future opportunities available? Do they match or complement your core competencies and strengths? Do they link with your values and passion? Is there a chemistry and connection? Are they part of your expertise, or are they too far of a stretch? If so, how can those challenges be overcome?

### **Define and know your target market**

What do you want to do? Is it Broadway or off-off Broadway, community theatre or nightclub performances? Is it local or does it involve travel? Is it a musical, comedy or drama? Is it writing dramas or producing musicals? Is your target market part of

an upward trend or is the interest lessening? Do you have what it takes to participate in your target market?

Defining your target market will help you to determine what you want to do, where, how, with whom, why, and when.

### **Know your competition**

Know who is out there. What are they doing? Learn from them where possible. Talk to them about their experiences, if possible. Where are they getting jobs? Form alliances with them to be a backup actor or an additional resource to them if they need you.

### **Pay attention to the bottom line**

Be fiscally responsible. Understand financial statements. This may not be one of your core competencies, however it is beneficial to have an understanding of these documents. You may choose to hire a bookkeeper or an accountant to manage your finances, but you are ultimately responsible. Many workshops, seminars and on-line courses are available through the Small Business Administration (SBA) and other programs, including the Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) at many universities and colleges and the Service Core of Retired Executives (SCORE).

### **Closing**

Numerous resources are available to benefit you as you develop your career and business as an artist. Many people can guide you and help you along your path. It is okay to ask for and accept help and to practice being reciprocal to others. Communicate your progress along your path. Congratulate and applaud yourself as you reach your goals and as you challenge yourself with new opportunities. Your positive attitude, presentation, professionalism, passion, and perseverance will lead to continued movement toward success as an artist and businessperson! Bravo!

*Susan Schear is the President of ARTISIN LLC, a New Jersey-based company that provides business consultation services to artists and arts organizations. She can be contacted at [susan.schear@artisin.com](mailto:susan.schear@artisin.com) or (201) 599-9180.*

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## **GOING EAST WITH DEAF WEST THEATRE**

*(Editor's note: We recently spoke with Ryan Schlecht and Ty Giordano, two deaf actors who moved with Deaf West Theatre's production of "Big River" to its historic run at the Roundabout Theatre on Broadway.)*

**OPENING STAGES:** Was it difficult for you as a deaf actor to get professional training? Where did you receive training?

**TY:** It is no more or less difficult for a deaf actor to get training. It is a question of being able to access this training. I was fortunate to receive training at Deaf West's

Summer School for Professional Actors. I had instruction from Phyllis Frelich, Bob Daniels, Gary Austin, among others.

**RYAN:** I also received training at summer schools for deaf actors provided by the National Theater of the Deaf and Deaf West Theatre. I've attended NTD's summer school twice and Deaf West Theatre's summer school once.

**OPENING STAGES:** What role did you play in "Big River?" What did you enjoy most about playing that role?

**RYAN:** I am actually an ensemble actor. All my roles had titles: Dick Simon, Posse, Young Fool, Hank, and Sheriff Bell. I don't know if I have a favorite role, but overall the challenge was to adjust your emotions and mind for each character as quickly as possible. I enjoyed evolving myself into different roles, putting myself in different circumstances. I also enjoyed doing a solo song as Young Fool, which involved choreography that I had to remember. It all required the knowledge of rhythms, and every day I had to carefully make sure I stayed in rhythm, as the pianist sometimes had a change of rhythms in each show. I also understudied for Huck Finn, Pap, Uncle Silas, and Duke. Continuous new challenges appeared as I changed roles. That made me a better actor.

**TY:** I played the role of Huck Finn in "Big River." I thought it was amazing that I was able to play the Great American Hero. But, of course, I was terrified--how can I live up to people's expectations or perceptions of Huck Finn? I just played him as true to myself as I could, and that, I found, is what Huck is all about--being true to the self. So I got a kick out of that, that I could be myself onstage.

**OPENING STAGES:** Can you describe the production and the different modes of communication that it incorporated?

**TY:** "Big River" is a signed play with a vocal accompaniment, not a vocal play with a signed accompaniment. That is how we tried to sell the show. Deaf actors would sign their lines, while hearing actors would speak for them. Hearing actors would sign and speak at the same time for themselves.

**RYAN:** The production had two forms of communications: American Sign Language and spoken English. However, you can consider music another form of language, if you wish to. Often, hearing actors were selected based on how eager they were to learn sign language and their skills interacting with deaf actors. We had interpreters who helped establish the bridge of communication between deaf and hearing actors, as well as staff and directors of the production. Our ASL team also made a huge contribution. It contained deaf actors who had a long history in theater, television, and film, plus a hearing interpreter. The ASL team's deaf staff taught the hearing actors sign language. The music translator taught the deaf actors the rhythms and lyrics.

**OPENING STAGES:** What was it like moving with the production from Deaf West Theatre to Broadway? What were the major differences between working at a local theater and working in the commercial theater?

**RYAN:** The journey from Deaf West Theatre to Broadway was an inspiration to my acting career. I never thought this would be possible, and I'm fortunate to have been a part of this journey. I enjoyed learning how the business works with importing productions from local to commercial theaters –there are a lot of obstacles to overcome. It's a challenging job to satisfy everyone -- artistic directors, investors, and other important people involved. One interesting challenge we encountered when importing "Big River" to Broadway was the difference in audiences. In New York City we had a different kind of ovation compared to Los Angeles. Still, as weeks passed by, we saw a growth of revenue during our production's run in New York City. Our production is a new idea to New Yorkers -- a deaf musical -- making us proud to present it for the first time. Also, it was interesting to work in a larger, "heavy-staffed" production, compared to working at Deaf West Theatre, which has few seats and a small number of staff. I felt at ease with more helping hands and working on a larger stage. It was nice to have more special effects and technologies to use on stage on Broadway, thanks mainly to a larger budget.

**TY:** Who would ever have thought we would make it so far? It's been a wonderful journey. For deaf audiences, it's been so thrilling that a show where everybody uses sign has made it to Broadway. I am grateful that many Broadway shows offer one or two sign-interpreted performances per season where interpreters will stand to the side, apart from the action. But the difference between "Big River" and this interpreter setup is that there is no separation between the action and sign--it's all there, on the stage. Hearing audiences have had some resistance. But for the most part they have embraced this show, and it has often been described as an eye-opener, a life-changing event. At the beginning of the show, Twain signs and speaks at the same time. Then I come onstage, and how appropriate it is that Twain lends his voice to me, while I sign the lines. The audience learns to look at the signer, and experience the voice as if it were a "voiceover." The voice and sign interact seamlessly. I often heard that audience members couldn't tell who was deaf or hearing. I am thrilled to see that New York critics have given this show such high marks.

**OPENING STAGES:** How were accommodations like ASL interpreters arranged for you in New York?

**RYAN:** I'm pleased to say that Roundabout Theatre Company was sensitive to the deaf actors' needs. We had door flashers for knocking and fire alarms with flashing lights. They provided a TTY at the theatre. A device captioned all signed and spoken lines for audience members who had difficulty hearing. Another nice thing that Roundabout Theatre Company did was installing televisions backstage and in the dressing rooms. That helped us have visual access to everything on stage when we were not on stage ourselves. Also, a television in front of the stage was used to help the deaf actors recognize the music director's head nodding in rhythms and cues. What's more the backstage and dressing room televisions had captions for announcements instead of hearing them from the speakers.

**OPENING STAGES:** Did you encounter any issues connected with working in the commercial theater, such as the need to join Equity that have had an impact on your ability to work and live?

**RYAN:** Each deaf actor's career differed after the run of "Big River" on Broadway. One got a recurring guest role in a TV show. Another deaf actor got a few more auditions after "Big River." It does impact deaf actors' opportunities in the entertainment business, but it still is not enough. We all became eligible to join Equity. Few had joined previously. And Equity can benefit us by protecting us from being disadvantaged with contracts. It does provide additional services— things like health insurance, a pension plan and a credit union. However, Equity doesn't take responsibility for giving us more jobs in commercial theaters. It's our duty to show up at auditions as usual. However, Equity gives us more access to auditions. Still, it's very difficult to get other jobs in commercial theaters, as their productions do not contain deaf roles. We frankly hope that "Big River" gave Broadway a taste of the deaf musical, hoping it will bring in more deaf musicals or plays in the future, expanding deaf actors' opportunity to work on Broadway and elsewhere.

**OPENING STAGES:** What advice would you give to other deaf people who want to pursue an acting career?

**TY:** Do not allow your deafness to be the focus of your career. You are human first and deaf second. Do not exploit or allow anyone else to exploit deafness as the defining focus of who you are. Being deaf can be both a blessing and a curse. You can use it to educate people, and you will find that it will turn people away from you. Use these experiences. Go deeper and find a common ground, where a mutual understanding can be achieved. But, most of all, act because it's the one thing you want most to do. You don't have to make money to be happy doing it.

**RYAN:** Simply said, it's a tough business to get in. Deaf actors can start off with summer schools provided by deaf theaters. They can get better access to auditions held at deaf theaters. The biggest key in acting is to work with the right people. I mean work with those who have networks. Deaf West Theatre has a great network. However, that does not mean that Deaf West Theatre can make life easy for you. You have to work and prove yourself. For some people, it can be an endless journey. It took me four years with low income, barely able to support myself, to achieve this milestone of playing on Broadway. Continue attending classes to grow your acting talents. That helps you prepare for future auditions better. Remember that, if you're deaf, your opportunities are very limited, and you might not be able to find many auditions that have roles for you. However, it never hurts to go to auditions, regardless of whether there are deaf roles or not, and prove to yourself that you're capable of doing non-deaf roles. Directors, in rare cases, could change their minds and use a deaf actor instead for a specific reason. So, don't just rely on deaf theaters for opportunities but expand yourself, make yourself a "product," a marketable person, or start a new deaf theater in another part of the nation. We'd love to see more of that!

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## PROGRAMS

### THE ACTORS' FUND OF AMERICA

The Actors' Fund of America is a nonprofit organization that was founded in 1882. Its mission is to provide for the social welfare of all entertainment professionals-- not just actors but also designers, writers, sound technicians, musicians, dancers, administrators, directors, film editors, and stagehands. Its Headquarters and The Aurora Residence are located in New York City, with regional offices in Los Angeles and Chicago. The Nursing Home and Assisted Living Care Facility are in Englewood, New Jersey. The Actors' Work Program has offices in New York and Los Angeles.

The Actors' Fund is pledged to provide help "with compassion, confidentiality and preservation of dignity for the individuals concerned."

One of the services it provides is the Artists' Health Insurance Resource Center (AHIRC). AHIRC offers a state-by-state database of resources for artists and people in the entertainment industry, the self-employed, low-income workers, the under-insured, the uninsured and many other groups who require medical care.

For more information about the Actors' Fund go to <http://www.actorsfund.org/about/index.html>.

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## NEWS AND NOTES

### ABC FELLOWSHIPS SEEK DIVERSITY AMONG TV DIRECTORS

In order to increase diversity among directors in television ABC and the Directors Guild of America (DGA) are pursuing plans for the 2005 ABC/DGA Directing Fellowship Program. Talented women and minority directors are encouraged to apply from February 2-28, 2004. This will be the fourth year of the Program.

In the 2004 Program, slated to begin in January, three fellowships will be awarded for a period covering approximately 36 non-consecutive weeks of the television season. Fellows will be employees of ABC and will be paid an annualized salary of \$50,000. They will observe and be mentored by select DGA directors as part of a notation system intended to provide exposure to different perspectives and artistic approaches. The Program is also intended to increase opportunities for professional relationships with executive producers, show runners, and other television executives. Directing assignments are not provided, implied or guaranteed.

Appropriate applicants to the Program might include theater directors, associative directors, assistant directors, stage managers, those who have directed their own or other independent films, as well as participants in the DGA Mentoring Program.

For more information, e-mail [abc.fellowships@abc.com](mailto:abc.fellowships@abc.com), write ABC/DGA Television Directing Fellowship, ABC Entertainment Talent Development, 500 South Buena Vista Street, Burbank, California 91521-4389, or call (818) 560-4000.

The website [http://www.abctalentdevelopment.com/html/tv\\_direct\\_mainpage.htm](http://www.abctalentdevelopment.com/html/tv_direct_mainpage.htm) also has links to many valuable resources in writing, directing, production and other aspects of the television industry.

### **FORUMS ON CAREERS IN THE ARTS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

The California Arts Council will sponsor two forums on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities. The first will be on December 1 at the Oakland Museum of California, and the second will be on December 8 at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The goal of the forums is to identify barriers and create opportunities for people with disabilities who are seeking careers in the arts.

You can download a flyer about the forums at <http://cac.ca.gov/feature/disconf.pdf>. For more information contact Wayne Cook by e-mailing [Wcook@caartscouncil.com](mailto:Wcook@caartscouncil.com) or by calling 916-322-6344.

### **CONFERENCE ON COMMUNITY AND PERFORMANCE**

"Community/Performance" is a conference that will bring together scholars and practitioners of participatory art, community performance, performance theory and related fields. The three-day event will take place June 4-6, 2004, on the campus of Bryant College in Rhode Island.

As part of "Community/Performance" the national organization ACN/Arts Culture Nature will sponsor a number of panels and workshops that address art and ecology issues, including: issues of community art, participatory art, minority culture and aesthetics, arts-in-education practices, e-communities, landscape and art, environmental art, performances of the everyday, popular culture and performance.

For more information contact Petra Koppers, conference director, by e-mailing [pkoppers@bryant.edu](mailto:pkoppers@bryant.edu) or writing Petra Koppers, Assistant Professor of Performance Studies, English and Cultural Studies Department, Bryant College, 1150 Douglas Pike, Smithfield, Rhode Island 02917.

## **NEW STATE DIRECTORIES ASSIST WITH ACCESSIBILITY**

The National Arts and Disability Center (NADC) has released new State Resource Directories on ADA Compliance and Technical Assistance. Each state has its own directory that contains listings of organizations and agencies that provide technical assistance regarding the ADA and the arts. Included in these listings are disability agencies and organizations and information about creating an access advisory committee for conducting outreach to the disability community. To review a state directory, go to <http://www.nadc.ucla.edu/states.htm>.

## **NEW THEATER FEATURES ACTORS WITH DISABILITIES**

Performers Access Studio is a newly established theater company dedicated to promoting the inclusion and fostering the development of actors with disabilities. Its first production was held in September at Theater For The New City in New York. For more information call 212-387-7790, e-mail [performersaccess@nyc.rr.com](mailto:performersaccess@nyc.rr.com), or write to

Laurel Sanborn, Executive Director  
Performers Access Studio  
36 Gramercy Park East #3E  
New York, N.Y. 10003

## **CALL FOR ENTRIES TO FILM FESTIVAL**

ReInventions is a newly formed not-for-profit film studio dedicated to presenting provocative stories of non-fictional and fictional transformation. Its focus is to profile people not widely recognized in the mainstream media. ReInventions is currently seeking films for its film festival and online film library. The deadline for submissions is January 8. For more information go to [www.ReInventions.org/howtosubmitfilm.html](http://www.ReInventions.org/howtosubmitfilm.html) or e-mail [rita@reinventions.org](mailto:rita@reinventions.org).

## **WEB SITE FOR PERFORMING ARTISTS LAUNCHED**

Go Tour is a new Web site for independent performing artists, arts administrators and audiences nationwide. Created by The Field, a New York City nonprofit dedicated to assisting individual performing artists, the site includes artist interviews, profiles of venues and a list of resources. It provides information in five major areas:

1. Destinations: a searchable database of artist-recommended local venues, ranging from coffee houses to formal theaters, searchable by region, discipline and size of house.
2. Local Guides: articles by artists and arts administrators on their hometown communities, places they've toured, and how they've maintained their careers, plus advice from professionals on topics ranging from legal issues to the pros and cons of touring.
3. Provisions: local resources recommended by artists and administrators in the community, including supports for the arts, publicity, teaching opportunities, and where to meet and socialize with other artists.
4. Sharing the Road: classifieds for artists to find artistic and production collaborators, services and goods, and other resources.
5. Speak Out!: a bulletin board service for focused, issue-oriented discussions where participants share resources, brainstorm, and tackle what's affecting the performing arts community.

In each of these areas, site visitors are encouraged to add information and share their own experiences. For more information contact:

GoTour

c/o The Field

161 6th Ave., New York, NY 10013

Tel: (212) 691-6969 ext. 300

E-Mail: [info@gotour.org](mailto:info@gotour.org)

Web site: [http://www.gotour.org/?session\\_id=3f85d2c9720fd514\\_29199](http://www.gotour.org/?session_id=3f85d2c9720fd514_29199)

### **JOB OPPORTUNITY: VSA ARTS OF GEORGIA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

VSA arts of Georgia, a community arts organization, seeks an individual with staff management, fundraising and nonprofit administration experience. VSA arts of Georgia is the local affiliate of VSA arts International. VSA arts of Georgia provides access to the arts for people with disabilities and those who are economically disadvantaged. It is a statewide resource working with artists and organizations to fulfill a vision of an inclusive community that encourages everyone to enjoy and participate in the arts. This position is a full-time exempt position (40 hours week).

Qualifications: Bachelor's Degree; working knowledge of and passion for the arts; strong working knowledge of ADA and issues pertaining to the disability community; strong written and oral communication skills; ability to implement strategic plan; experience supervising staff; ability to work collaboratively with a variety of constituencies; experience with fundraising and financial management; commitment to VSA arts of Georgia mission and programs.

Application process: E-mail cover letter, resume, and three references to vsadirector@genpt.com. The deadline for application is December 15. VSA arts of Georgia is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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- mail the same information to Accessibility Program, Opening Stages, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, 2700 F. Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20566-0001, or
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