



The Amarillo Symphony

[www.amarillosymphony.org](http://www.amarillosymphony.org)

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**ORGANIZATION**

In 1924, Amarillo, Texas, was a fledgling city on its way to becoming the population center of the Texas Panhandle. That year, a Philharmonic Club began with just a handful of volunteer musicians led by Miss Grace Hamilton and others. The fledgling orchestra faced serious challenges as it struggled to survive the next several decades – the Great Depression, World War II, a revolving door of conductors. But as Amarillo grew, so did the fortunes of its Symphony. In 1948, two men came along to save the Symphony. A. Clyde Roller, the new Music Director, and Edward Melin, violinist, teacher and orchestra manager, set out to recruit the best musicians from throughout the Panhandle to turn this burgeoning musical group into a full-fledged symphony orchestra.

By 1955, it was clear that it takes more than musicians to make an orchestra succeed – and so the Amarillo Symphony Guild was formed. In the years since, it has become a model for volunteerism in Amarillo, in Texas, and across the U.S and boasts 600 members. Soon, the Amarillo Symphony became a fully professional orchestra, maintaining a consistent base of loyal players and a steady stream of artistic success for several more decades. Many well-regarded conductors made their mark during this period, including Thomas Hohstadt, Thomas Conlin, and Robert Bernhardt.

The first meeting of the Amarillo Symphony Guild was held in May 1955. Since its inception, this women's organization has raised awareness and funds to expand the Symphony's reach into the community. The first fundraising event in 1955 was the Symphony Ball which still continues today. In 1962, the Guild initiated a project called Symphony Sweethearts which has evolved into the Belles and Beaux program. The Guild's energetic volunteers enable the Symphony to deliver important educational and community outreach programs including KinderKonzerts, Lunch & Listening, Christmas Roundup, and Vintage Amarillo.

A dramatic new source of funds began in 1980, when Sybil B. Harrington provided a multimillion dollar gift to both the Symphony and West Texas State University to split the costs for a resident string quartet. The Harrington String Quartet has since gone on to win the prestigious Fiscoff National Chamber Music Competition. Now in its 25<sup>th</sup> year, the Quartet has performed to rave reviews in Chicago, New York and Houston as well as well-received performances overseas. In 1988, James Setapen took up the baton in Amarillo and began a new era of artistic growth and discipline as well as organizational expansion.

In 2005, the Symphony made its debut in a world-class venue, the Globe-News Center for the Performing Arts. The hall seats 1,250 and is where the Symphony plays 7 classical masterworks programs with 2 concerts of each plus a summer concert added in upcoming seasons. The Board of Directors consists of 30 with an Executive Committee of 12 with 5 voting members and an entire Board that meets 9 times per year. Amarillo Symphony is a per-service, non-union orchestra which also serves as the resident orchestra of 7 December Nutcracker performances with the ballet company, also on a per-service basis. There are currently 4 full-time staff in addition to the Executive Director role, plus several part-time employees.

In February 2007, capping a 22-month process that attracted almost 200 international candidates, Kimbo Ishii-Eto was named the new Music Director and Conductor of the Amarillo Symphony. His first season was the third sold-out season in a row, and he will begin his first season in residence in September 2008 – the Symphony's 84<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Ishii-Eto spent seven seasons as Music Director of the Cayuga Chamber Orchestra and is Resident Conductor with the Komische Oper Berlin where he has been conducting best-selling performances of opera as well as coveted orchestra concerts. Born in Taiwan, Ishii-Eto, who is affectionately known as Kimbo, regularly performs in Europe, Asia, and the Americas conducting the most prestigious opera and orchestra concerts.

Amarillo Symphony has a \$1.3 million operating budget and a \$5 million endowment. As the only professional orchestra in the Panhandle area, the Symphony employs 85 skilled musicians to perform for more than 2,500 subscribers each year in the new Globe-News Center for the Performing Arts under the baton of Music Director Kimbo Ishii-Eto. In addition to its regular concerts, the Symphony offers an array of successful education programs, from youth orchestras to specialized music programs for underprivileged children, bringing the gift of music to thousands of young people throughout the Texas Panhandle each year.

## **COMMUNITY**

Amarillo is the center of the 26-county Texas Panhandle region. The city is home to more than 182,000 residents, and the combined population of Potter and Randall counties (both of which Amarillo straddles) surpasses 223,000. The city enjoys a highly diversified economy, offers some of the Southwest's finest schools and medical facilities, and has the state's best year-round climate. Few cities Amarillo's size can boast of such a diverse economic base. From oil and gas production, agriculture, precious metal refining aircraft production to just about every industry in between, Amarillo enjoys a wide array of businesses. The Amarillo Economic Development Corporation aggressively recruits new industry, aided by a .25 percent city tax approved by city voters.

Amarillo's cultural scene is the envy of the state. The new Globe-News Center for the Performing Arts in downtown Amarillo seats almost 1,300 and is home to the Amarillo Symphony, the Lone Star Ballet and the Amarillo Opera, in addition to scores of other performances. The Sybil B. Harrington Fine Arts Complex at West Texas A&M University is the premiere educational and performance facility in the region. Other arts highlights include the Amarillo Little Theatre, one of the oldest continuously operating community theaters in the country; the Amarillo Museum of Art; the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum; the Galleries at Sunset Center; Chamber Music Amarillo; and more.

What's more, Amarillo's residents passionately support the city's arts groups. Specifically, the Symphony has seen a 25 percent increase in annual fund donations and an astounding 225 percent increase in concert sponsorships in the past four years. The region also includes the majestic Palo Duro Canyon State Park, visited by more than a half-million people each year. One of the largest canyons in the U.S., it measures 120 miles long and 800 feet deep. Other highlights include Historic Route 66, the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame and Museum, the Don Harrington Discovery Center, Wonderland Amusement Park, the world-famous Cadillac Ranch and more.

The Amarillo Independent School District has 37 elementary schools, 10 middle schools and four high schools. The area is also home to Amarillo College, a two-year public community college with more than 160 different programs of study, and to WTAMU, a member of the Texas A&M University system that offers a doctoral program in agriculture and 60 undergraduate and 43 graduate degree programs. In addition, the Texas Tech Health Sciences Center at Amarillo provides education for medical students and residents.

## **POSITION SUMMARY**

The Executive Director is accountable for successful implementation of the policies set forth by the Board of Directors, always striving to achieve its mission to infuse the Amarillo community with an unbridled enthusiasm for the performance and discovery of great orchestral music. Reporting to the President of the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will be charged with leading the Amarillo Symphony into the next phase of its journey, with its mission, vision and community's values as a guide. The Executive Director will work in concert with the Music Director to achieve these goals collaboratively and will represent the Amarillo Symphony to many constituencies, both internal and external. The scope of responsibility will include providing leadership, vision, and direction in the areas of artistic planning and performance, concert promotion and production, financial management and controls, educational program development and implementation, staff management, community engagement, fundraising, orchestra personnel policies, long-range planning, and Board communication and development. The Executive Director will maintain an institutional culture which balances the diverse richness of the Amarillo community and Amarillo Symphony's artistic traditions and programs with the efficacy of best business practices, fiscal accountability, and institutional impact.

The Executive Director will collaborate with the Music Director to plan the artistic season in order to build new audiences and continue to expand the reach of the symphony to a wider and more diverse population. The Executive Director will consult and strategize with the Music Director and staff regarding the annual artistic, educational and outreach plans and appropriate budget which fulfills the organization's artistic vision and simultaneously maximizes earned income opportunities. The Executive Director, in tandem with the Music Director and Board President, communicates the work and artistic mission of the organization to the public through the media and at public speaking engagements. The Executive Director, in consultation with the Music Director, will seek and obtain new opportunities for performances throughout the Texas Panhandle; manage contracts and coordinate all elements, and logistics of run-out concerts.

The Executive Director will ensure effective communication with the Symphony's constituencies, the volunteer groups, the Board, the staff, the musicians, and the other arts organizations, the Deans of the Schools of Music of the local colleges and universities, public agencies, government agencies, and the general public to achieve the public service objectives of the Amarillo Symphony. The Executive Director will guide the growth, public image and increased brand awareness of the organization, clearly articulating its mission, vision, programs and impact as a primary spokesperson with the Music Director and Board President. The Executive Director will develop partnership agreements with music, performing, and community organizations to advance Amarillo Symphony's outreach activities and collaborative partnerships throughout the region. The Executive Director will identify key stakeholders, develop strategies, and define how key messages will be delivered to various individuals and institutions to maximize visibility, brand, and earned and contributed revenues of the Amarillo Symphony.

The Executive Director will oversee short-term and long-range strategic planning and implementation processes, including the effective mentoring and supervision of the organization's human resources, mobilization of technological resources, and decision making related to appropriate use of fiscal resources. The Executive Director will provide support to best utilize the talents and resources of the Board, stimulate involvement, recruit new members, and work closely with the Board to ensure strong fiscal health and effective governance of the organization.

### **TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS**

The Executive Director should have the ability to understand and embrace Amarillo Symphony's unique mission and special character and be sensitive to and supportive of the needs of its diverse constituencies including subscribers, donors, Board members, volunteers, community leaders, orchestra musicians and administrative staff. The selected individual should find the opportunity compelling to work with the Music Director to build a more visible reputation for the Amarillo Symphony while serving the regional needs of the community.

The Executive Director will be a results oriented leader who has a keen ability to organize and motivate people to accomplish institutional goals while creating a sense of order and strategic direction. The Executive Director must have the capacity to guide the organization through a crucial intersection where best business practices meet the community engagement and artistic quality needs of a growing and diverse Amarillo region.

Leading candidates will have imagination, vision, leadership and a passion for music and for furthering the artistic and community culture of the Amarillo and the entire Texas Panhandle. This will require an individual with a strong tendency towards futuristic thinking, team building, consensus-oriented management, effective decision making, strategic thinking and tactical pragmatic implementation.

The successful candidate will be a team player for whom the ownership of ideas is less important than the result of the collaborative effort. The Executive Director, therefore, should be able to help distill ideas, clarify issues and have intellectual depth and pragmatic know-how with the roll-up-your-sleeves approach to accomplishing goals and objectives. It is not enough to be a strong conceptual thinker and creative generator of ideas; the person selected must be able to move from dialog to decision making and to develop strategies that inspire others towards implementation of goals.

The Executive Director must have exceptional organizational and administrative skills. The ability to plan, set goals and objectives, organize and follow-through is important. An excellent knowledge of fiscal and technological management is critical. The Executive Director should have an understanding of institutional image building, marketing, external relations, fund development and have the presence and capacity to move initiatives forward in each of these areas. The Executive Director should be the model of integrity, fairness and have the highest ethical standards. Ingenuity, compassion, dedication, enthusiasm, humor and energy are also key attributes.

### **EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Bachelor's degree required with focus in music or the arts and master's degree preferred. Minimum of 3-5 years of senior management experience in a non-profit organization, preferable in the performing arts. Successful candidate will demonstrate a record in fundraising and experience in marketing, possess superb written and verbal communication skills, strong interpersonal skills; a leadership style marked by enthusiasm with a desire to innovate. Organization and motivational skills must be exceptionally well developed. Must be able to competently interact with a culturally and ethnically diverse population of musicians, Board, volunteers and staff, and be able to work respectfully with all age groups. Ability to give direction and guidance, have the self-assuredness and confidence to enforce rules and regulations, but be flexible in order to preserve a positive community brand image and stakeholder satisfaction.

### **COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS**

Competitive salary commensurate with qualifications and experience with a comprehensive benefits package that includes medical insurance, vacation, and many more.

### **APPLICATIONS AND INQUIRIES**

Cover letter, resume, and demonstrable accomplishments to:

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