**JOB DESCRIPTION AND EXPECTATIONS**

Music Director and Composer

**About Storycatchers Theatre.**

For 34 years, Storycatchers Theatre has been empowering court-involved youth to craft and perform musical theatre from their own personal stories of growing up in Illinois’ underserved neighborhoods. Using an award-winning and transformational writing methodology, these young people develop the skills needed to successfully re-enter society and move beyond their histories to become peer mentors, civic influencers and agents of change in our community.

Efforts include three residential programs inside juvenile justice facilities and “Changing Voices,” a post-release employment program of 17-24 year olds who write, rehearse, produce and tour their original musicals to civic leaders, Illinois judges, at-risk youth and other influential audiences to create space for crucial conversations.

**Who should apply.**

We’re looking for a Music Director/Composer who is great at the piano and able to create music with ease and creativity – a mature, patient explorer who likes trying different genres and working (and learning) with first-time-ever-onstage youth as they develop their stories into musical theatre. This person is a teacher, mentor, and a musical collaborator who likes to riff with the team but is also able to work alone to create music that brings out powerful emotion in simple and accessible ways. We want somebody who is comfortable leading youth who have experienced severe trauma and will dedicate their time and spotlight to them.

This individual must work successfully with all persons in the organization without regard to ethnicity, religion, age, national origin, physical challenge, sexual orientation, or gender.

**About this position.**

The Music Director/Composer works inside juvenile justice facilities in a program staffed with two other leaders – an Artistic and Program Manager. Together with teaching artists and 8-12 teenage, predominately black youth, they create an original piece of musical theatre. Writing sessions, music workshops, performance training and rehearsals take place approximately 40 weeks/year, 2-3 times per week, and culminate in a weekend of fully-realized public performances, all accompanied on the piano by the Music Director. Most music is created “at home” by the Music Director from youth lyrics, then workshopped in rehearsals and in staff meetings.

Full-time and part-time positions are being considered.

This position will provide a powerful opportunity to impact the lives of at-risk youth looking for mentors who can inspire and empower them to be agents of change in Chicago.

**Some things you might do in a typical program cycle.**

* Work with participants to create songs from their lyrics.
* Collaborate with teaching artists to assist in vocalizing a song.
* Discuss at a program meeting the emotional expression needed for a moment in the play.
* Lead musical collaboration sessions with Storycatchers participants to nurture their own writing and composition skills.
* Score songs written for a performance.
* Create a PDF and audio recording of a score for a community event.
* Orchestrate pieces of music for accompaniment with an outside professional company.
* Prepare musical games and warmups.
* Provide participants with coaching in basic musical interpretations.
* Accompany participants on the piano in a performance.
* Provide emotional support to a participant who is struggling with a personal issue.

**Additional responsibilities.**

* Be on time to all show and program calls.
* Attend occasional Artist Trainings.
* Attend and participate in all program meetings.
* Arrange to be available for all program sessions and meetings; communicate schedule conflicts promptly.

**What you’ll need to be a great candidate.**

* Must be an excellent piano player.
* Must pass a criminal background check, drug screen, PREA certification, and TB test.
* Valid driver’s license.
* Significant experience in theatre performance (preferably musical theatre) and familiarity with hip hop and/or urban music.
* Experience working with youth who have a history of trauma.
* Significant composing experience; excellent keyboard sight-reading skills
* Proven ability to create paper scores of compositions. Proficiency of Finale and/or Sibelius software preferred.
* Experience and comfort working with untrained people in an unpredictable environment.
* Must be able to meet tight deadlines.
* Self-starter and team player with a positive mindset.

**Required availability:**

* Part-time and full-time positions being considered
* 15-25 hours/week for part-time positions, depending on program assignment, rare weekends and some weeknights. Composing hours are flexible.

**Compensation and benefits.**

* Full-time: $45,000 - 50,000/year + medical benefits at no cost to employee.
* Part-time: $27-$30/hour depending on experience.
* Hourly rate includes all off-site/at-home prep time, meetings and program time.