

Lady Jess: Job Description and Testimonial

JOB DESCRIPTION

SECTION VIOLIN ___ Symphony is looking for full-time section violinist. **ROLE** Duties include a weekly performance and rehearsal schedule for ___ weeks of the year, an active role in community engagement that includes accountability measures between board and musicians, attendance at a minimum of two(2) board meetings per season, and enrollment in the paid symphony mentor program (with paid training).

WHY WE CARE AND HOW WE OPERATE Core values of our orchestra include a commitment to active, diverse and current programming, and an openness to creative evolution and growth. Our musicians are respected for who they are, their respective talents and their commitment to the community in which we exist. We believe in active community and board-musician engagement, and ask this of each musician onstage. We see our organization as both a company and a service, and we treat our musicians and patrons with the same consideration. As a Symphony musician, you would demonstrate a commitment to artistic excellence, an openness to change/adjustment and a commitment to effective, active, exciting community engagement. You will have a valued say in programming choices, and an open invite to board meetings. You will find excitement in engaging in new methods of arts education, and have the option to engage in mentor-mentee relationships with a diverse group of students and young professionals.

TESTIMONIAL I knew I was in the right place when I was offered the option to make a higher salary that was based on community and academic engagement. In my pre-trial+audition in-person interview, the orchestra laid out clear and realistic plans to both engage the community, and continuously seek musicians that could relate to its patrons and students in both an artistic and socio-economic way, including, amongst other things, a system of accountability between the members of the board and the musicians themselves, for both artist care and community engagement. I'd read about this in the job description, but didn't believe it was true until I took my trial. At that point in the interview, even though I hadn't yet taken audition or trial, I felt that my perspective was valued as a member of the organization, versus the normal feeling of being one in a sea of others, all subject to a traditional hierarchy that seemed to outweigh the actual priorities of its employees, on and off the stage. During my interview, company benefits were outlined, and it was made clear the level of engagement necessary outside of the concert hall, whether it be through the use of social media or other extraneous elements. This was followed by a discussion about previous orchestral experience, and I didn't feel pressured to fill some kind of summer quota experience that was isolated to paper. I felt that my interviewee, and the orchestra committee by proxy, had a genuinely human interest in how I came to find myself applying for a spot in their ensemble. The interview was conversational without losing the formality of process. Finally, I was given the choice to know (job descriptions only, no names) who would be on my audition panel. Even though the audition was later that afternoon, it helped soothe my anxiety to feel like I had additional tool to formulate a plan. Remembering that the orchestra had a pre-existing structure for accountability with regards to musician treatment and arts education, one that included things like open board meetings that took place in the hall instead of a closed room, and an internship program that actively paired administrative and educational interns with symphony musicians outside of the office also had a physically calming effect. This seemed even more appealing to me after learning that the orchestra offered internships for both school credit and for pay; they were currently piloting a program that called for interns involved in both the performance and administrative worlds of the orchestra. At the conclusion of the interview, I was compensated for any travel expenses, and told that were I to pass the screened audition round, any further travel and accommodations would be covered by the orchestra. Throughout

my application and audition process, I felt valued and respected. My experiences factored into the application process, and this alone was unprecedented for any American orchestra. My decision to leave the freedom of freelancing behind in favor of a singular, salaried position was made significantly easier because of this audition process, and I am more than satisfied by my choice. It also means that should I need to leave my position, or retire, I'd had the comfort of knowing I'd be leaving my position to someone who'd be walking into a similar, now even more secured position.