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THE MUSIC HALL NAMES MARKUS GOTTSCHLICH AS PRESIDENT & CEO

Arts executive, advocate, and internationally recognized Steinway Artist will begin leading the historic Portsmouth nonprofit on September 1

Portsmouth, NH (July 8, 2026) – The Music Hall Board of Trustees is pleased to announce that **Markus Gottschlich** has been named the organization’s next **President & Chief Executive Officer**, effective **September 1**.

Gottschlich is an Austrian-American arts executive, arts advocate, and Steinway Artist with more than 15 years of experience leading strategic transformation for cultural institutions across the United States. He comes to The Music Hall with a distinctive combination of executive leadership, financial stewardship, creative vision, and the perspective of an internationally recognized performing artist.

As President & CEO, Gottschlich will lead one of the nation’s oldest performing arts institutions as it enters its next chapter of growth, community engagement, and artistic impact. His experience includes revitalizing nonprofit organizations across Florida, New Mexico, and Central Europe, with a focus on aligning institutional priorities with meaningful public engagement, intercultural exchange, and long-term sustainability.

“Markus is the right leader for The Music Hall at this important moment in our history,” said **Jude Blake, Chair of The Music Hall Board of Trustees**. “Throughout the search process, we were looking for someone who understood both the responsibility and the promise of this organization – its historic legacy, its role in the community, and its potential for the future. Markus brings a rare combination of artistic perspective, executive experience, financial discipline, and community-centered leadership. The Board is thrilled to welcome him to The Music Hall.”

Most recently, Gottschlich served as Executive Director of the Warehouse Arts District Association in St. Petersburg, Florida, where he guided the organization through significant

funding reductions and consecutive natural disasters. Through strategic programming, disciplined financial management, and strong community partnerships, he sustained the district's momentum and helped elevate it to national recognition as one of USA TODAY's Top Three Arts Districts in the United States. His leadership during this period earned him recognition for excellence in nonprofit leadership.

A Certified Fundraising Executive and internationally touring performer, Gottschlich views philanthropy as an essential investment in vibrant communities. At The Music Hall, he will draw on his experience as both an arts executive and artist to build on the organization's historic legacy while advancing artistic excellence, lifelong learning, and regional economic vitality.

"It is a profound honor to join The Music Hall and help steward this incredible legacy into its next chapter," said **Markus Gottschlich**. "What draws me to Portsmouth is the vibrant community spirit and the immense potential within the organization's unique venues. As both an executive and performing artist, I believe a cultural institution truly belongs to its people. I look forward to listening to, learning from, and collaborating with our brilliant staff, board, volunteers, and neighbors to foster innovation while keeping our work deeply rooted in the community."

The appointment follows a thoughtful national search process led by ThinkingAhead Executive Search and The Music Hall's President & CEO Search Committee made up of members of The Music Hall's Board of Trustees, Portsmouth community leaders, and staff and volunteers.

The Board also expressed gratitude to **Joe Gleason**, who has served as Acting President & CEO during the organization's leadership transition.

"We are deeply grateful to Joe for his steady leadership and commitment to The Music Hall," Blake said. "His work helped guide the organization through an important period and positioned us well for this next chapter. The strength and momentum of The Music Hall today is a reflection of Joe's leadership, the dedication of our staff, and the continued support of our community."

Gottschlich will officially begin as President & CEO on **September 1**. Additional opportunities for the community to meet him will be announced in the coming months.

ABOUT THE MUSIC HALL

The Music Hall, established in 1878 as a Vaudeville theater, has become a cornerstone of Portsmouth's vibrant arts scene. Over nearly 150 years, it has evolved into a premier

performing arts center, featuring two distinct venues: the landmark Victorian-era Historic Theater, designated an American Treasure by the National Park Service, and the modern Music Hall Lounge, an intimate 116-seat cabaret-style space. Together, they host over 130,000 patrons annually, offering a diverse array of live performances and on-screen programming that foster creativity and community.

In 2024, The Music Hall expanded its cultural offerings by taking over the New Hampshire Film Festival, the state's longest-running film festival, which attracts thousands of visitors each fall with independent films, panels, and networking events. That same year, it opened a new Members Club with McKeon's Bar and the Box Office & Ticketing Hub, housed in the historic Kearsarge House on Congress Street. This exclusive speakeasy-style club allows members and sponsors direct access to the Historic Theater.

Since 1987, The Friends of The Music Hall, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, have upheld its mission: to present diverse, high-quality arts programming as a vital cultural hub for the Seacoast community. Today, The Music Hall continues to enrich Portsmouth's cultural fabric with world-class entertainment while generating over \$15 million in economic impact to the downtown economy.

For more information on The Music Hall, please visit www.TheMusicHall.org. Or follow on social media: X: @MusicHall | Facebook: /musichall | Instagram: @musichallnh | YouTube: /musichallnh

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