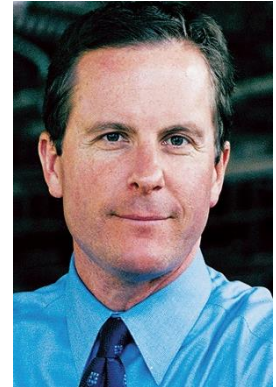


Kauffman appointed Executive Director of the Tucson Festival of Books

TUCSON, December 18, 2023 / The Tucson Festival of Books, one of the nation's largest book festivals, today announced the appointment of Welz Kauffman to the role of Executive Director. Kauffman's start date with the festival will be January 15, 2024.

Kauffman, who is a nationally known executive in the performing arts with a record of success in advancing several of the nation's most-treasured music organizations, will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Tucson Festival of Books and report to its Board of Directors.

"We are thrilled to welcome Welz to TFOB," said John M. Humenik, chair of the board and a co-founder of the festival. "Throughout his celebrated career, Welz has been instrumental in expanding large-scale events, access to classical music education, and the participation of sponsors, volunteers, and audiences."



Welz Kauffman

Kauffman, who resides in Tucson, is currently the Managing Director of True Concord Voices & Orchestra, Tucson's only GRAMMY-and EMMY-honored ensemble. He joined the critically acclaimed professional chamber choir and orchestra in 2021 with a focus on key strategic goals and initiatives.

"I can't wait to get started," Kauffman said. "My parents were both passionate English teachers and I know they would love everything about TFOB, especially that it is a community-wide celebration of literature for everybody, free-of-charge, and exists to improve literacy among children and adults – one of the many wonderful events that make Tucson unique."

Kauffman has four decades of artistic leadership from coast to coast and gained national acclaim as President and CEO of the Ravinia Festival, North America's oldest outdoor music festival, founded in 1904 in Highland Park, Ill. He was the face and voice of the organization for 20 years (2000-2020). In 2018, the Chicago Tribune named Kauffman "Chicagoan of the Year" for programming an expansive celebration of the Leonard Bernstein centennial.

With the Ravinia Festival, Kauffman doubled its budget and donor support, while broadening its programming to be more inclusive without losing its classical music underpinnings. He managed an annual 140-show summer season plus a dozen off-season performances including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He also contracted up to 40 non-classical acts per season, including performances by James Taylor, Bob Dylan, Lady Gaga, Tony Bennett, Mary J. Blige, and Lenny Kravitz, and developed a music education program, "One Score, One Chicago," throughout the Chicago Public Schools.

Earlier in his career, Kauffman, who also is a classically trained pianist, had artistic leadership and management roles with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra.

"His leadership and expertise in the arts, his passion for reading, and his love of books are a powerful combination," Humenik said. "The next chapter in TFOB's engaging story will be written with the contagious enthusiasm and innovative spirit Welz brings to everything he does."