



PRESS RELEASE

ERIN GAVAGHAN APPOINTED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CLEAN BREAK, COMPLETING THE COMPANY'S THREE-WOMEN LEADERSHIP TEAM

Award-winning women's theatre company Clean Break is pleased to announce that **Erin Gavaghan** has been appointed as its Executive Director.

Erin will take up her post in October 2018, completing the company's new leadership team, alongside Joint Artistic Directors Róisín McBrinn and Anna Herrmann. This team will lead Clean Break into an exciting new chapter as the company celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2019.

Erin Gavaghan comes to Clean Break following six years at Siobhan Davies Dance where she is currently Executive Director. Her career also includes General Manager at Soho Theatre and positions at the Royal Albert Hall and Natural History Museum. She is a Trustee of Deafinitely Theatre.

Kim Evans OBE, Chair: 'We are delighted to welcome Erin to Clean Break. Her experience across the performing arts; her great track record of leading and inspiring teams and building partnerships; and her commitment to our values make her exceptionally well placed to help us achieve our mission to produce bold, adventurous and outstanding theatre that enables women to realise their full potential. Erin, Róisín and Anna will be a force to be reckoned with and I'm excited to be working with them.'

Erin Gavaghan, (incoming) Executive Director: 'I have been a huge fan of Clean Break's work for well over a decade and am inspired by the way the company places the authentic stories of women at the heart of everything it does. I am completely thrilled to join the team at such a pivotal moment in its development. I am excited to work alongside Róisín and Anna taking the company forward into its next chapter. I can't wait to join them, as well as Clean Break's staff, artists, Board and - especially Members - and be a part of the exceptional work it creates.'

Róisín McBrinn and Anna Herrmann, Joint Artistic Directors: 'We are so pleased that Erin will be joining us as Executive Director. The third member of our shared leadership team is such a critical appointment and we're confident that Erin's vast experience, huge passion for Clean Break and commitment to ground-breaking theatre and performance will be an exciting fit as we move into our new model of

producing more theatre and creating more radical opportunities for women with experience of criminal justice to change their lives and make more noise at this pivotal moment.’

Clean Break recently received a Tonic Award for its dedication to changing women’s lives through theatre and commitment to new writing. During 2018, activity includes: Alice Birch’s *[BLANK]* - a co-commission with National Theatre Connections (which was performed by young people around the UK and at the National Theatre); Katherine Chandler’s *Thick As Thieves* - co-produced by Theatr Clwyd (premiering at Theatr Clwyd in October then touring prisons and theatres around the UK); participating in Artichoke’s Processions project; and *Belong*, created by a group of young women with Natasha Marshall, Clean Break’s Channel 4 Playwright In Residence and winner of a Most Promising New Playwright Offie for *Half Breed*. The 40th Anniversary programme for 2019 will be announced soon.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Clean Break changes lives and changes minds through theatre – on stage, in prison and in the community.

Acclaimed theatre company Clean Break produces ground-breaking plays with women writers and actors at the heart of its work. Founded in 1979 by two women prisoners who believed that theatre could bring the hidden stories of imprisoned women to a wider audience, it is still the only theatre company of its kind remaining true to these roots; inspiring playwrights and captivating audiences with the company’s award winning plays on the complex theme of women and crime.

Its commissioned playwrights have included Zawe Ashton, Alice Birch, Lin Coghlan, E V Crowe, Vivienne Franzmann, Tanika Gupta, Katie Hims, Sam Holcroft, Lucy Kirkwood, Chloë Moss, Rebecca Lenkiewicz, Winsome Pinnock and Rebecca Prichard.

Recent Clean Break successes have included *House/Amongst The Reeds* by Somalia Seaton & Chino Odimba (Edinburgh Fringe and Yard Theatre 2016), *Joanne* written by Deborah Bruce, Theresa Ikoko, Laura Lomas, Chino Odimba and Ursula Rani Sarma (Soho Theatre and Latitude Festival 2015, RSC Making Mischief Festival, August 2016), *Spent* by Katherine Chandler (touring conferences and Higher Education settings), Vivienne Franzmann’s *Pests* (Royal Court Theatre, Royal Exchange Theatre + tour), *Sweatbox* by Chloë Moss (Latitude Festival 2015), *Fingertips* by Suhayla El-Bushra and *Meal Ticket*, a company-devised play (Latitude Festival 2014), Katie Hims’ *Billy the Girl* (Soho Theatre), Roz Wyllie’s *Stepping Off the Edge of the World* (Soho Theatre + tour), Rebecca Prichard’s *Dream Pill* (Almeida Festival 2013, Latitude Festival 2012, Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2011), Sonya Hale’s *Hours til Midnight* (Latitude Festival 2013, Southbank Centre + tour), Chloë Moss’s *There Are Mountains* (HMP Askham Grange), Sam Holcroft’s *Dancing Bears* and Chloë Moss’s *Fatal Light* (Latitude Festival 2011), and *Charged*, written by six of the UK’s foremost contemporary playwrights in 2010, revived as *Re-Charged* in 2011 (Soho Theatre).

Erin Gavaghan is an experienced executive arts manager who has worked within both new writing theatre and contemporary dance and choreography.

Erin comes to Clean Break from Siobhan Davies Dance, an artist-led interdisciplinary, contemporary arts organisation based in south London which advances the art-forms of dance and choreography. At Siobhan Davies Dance she has held several roles, most recently as Executive Director (from 2014). Prior to working for Siobhan Davies Dance, she was the General Manager of Soho Theatre (2008-2012), having also followed a path of progression from Front of House Manager (2005-2007) and Deputy General Manager (2007-2008). Since moving to London from Canada in 2000, Erin has also worked at the Royal Albert Hall as the Stewards Administrator and Natural History Museum managing catering services.

Her experience has seen her manage mid-scale capital projects, implement organisational change, and lead income generation initiatives.

Erin's voluntary work includes mentoring and serving as a Trustee for Deafinitely Theatre since 2012.

Erin studied English Literature and Theatre (Directing) at the University of Victoria (Canada) and attained an MA in Arts Policy and Management from Birkbeck in 2005. She has a passion for life-long learning.

Róisín McBrinn is a theatre director with over fifteen years experience working in the UK, Ireland and internationally. She has been with Clean Break since 2016 as the Head of Artistic Programme and during that time has directed *Joanne* (Soho Theatre and RSC) and *House/Amongst The Reeds* (Yard Theatre) for the company. Róisín became Joint Artistic Director of Clean Break on 1 July 2018.

She was formerly Associate Director at Sherman Cymru where she oversaw the commissioning and developing of new Welsh writing. Róisín has directed for the Donmar Warehouse (*Novecento*), Sheffield Theatres (*Afterplay*), West Yorkshire Playhouse (*Yerma*), Prime Cut (*Villa/Discorso*), The Abbey Theatre (*No Escape, Perve, Heartbreak House*). She has developed new work for Soho Theatre, The National Theatre, The Bush, The Abbey and Sherman Theatre.

This summer she is directing a stage adaptation of Roddy Doyle's *The Snapper* for Dublin's Gate Theatre which runs until September 2018.

Anna Herrmann has been working in the field of theatre and social change for twenty seven years, specialising in theatre and education with marginalised groups in the UK and abroad. She has been with Clean Break since 2002 as the Head of Education, leading the company's award winning work with women in the criminal justice system and women at risk of entering it. Anna became Joint Artistic Director of Clean Break on 1 July 2018.

Anna is co-author of *Making a Leap: Theatre of Empowerment: A Practical Handbook for Creative Drama Work with Young People* (Jessica Kingsley Publishers). She has an MA in Arts Education from Royal Central School of Speech and Drama and a PG Cert (Distinction) in Race and Ethnic relations. She is a regular

visiting lecturer on Applied Theatre courses at Universities across the Country and between 2006 and 2018 was a trustee of Leap Confronting Conflict; a UK based national charity specialising in youth and conflict. Anna sits on the Steering Group of the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance and is also a trained coach and regularly mentors artists in participatory settings.

PRESS CONTACT:

Nancy Poole on 07957 342 850 / nancy@nancypoolepr.com

Sally Muckley on 020 7482 8611 / sally.muckley@cleanbreak.org.uk

www.cleanbreak.org.uk

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