



Press release:

Embargoed until: Thursday 20 July

Founding Co-Artistic Director of Brighton Early Music Festival steps down

Brighton Early Music Festival (BREMFB) announced today that Co-Artistic Director, Clare Norburn will be stepping down from her position as Co-Artistic Director after the 2017 Festival in order to concentrate on her career as a writer of concert/plays.

Norburn and fellow Co-Artistic Director, Deborah Roberts co-founded Brighton Early Music Festival in 2002, overseeing its growth into one of the UK's most dynamic classical music organisations. Although stepping down as Co-Artistic Director, Clare will continue her involvement with Early Music Live!, the Festival's young ensemble training programme. Deborah Roberts will continue as Artistic Director, programming future festivals alongside a number of experts in a variety of fields, continuing the festival's dynamic approach, and building of new audiences.

Commenting on her departure, Clare said: "BREMFB is one of the most important chapters of my life. I am so proud to have worked with Deborah and so many wonderful colleagues, artists and audiences to co-found and co-develop what is now one of the pioneering forces in early music.

"15 years is a long time and I now feel the time is right to move on to devote more time and energies to my writing of concert/plays. When I started BREMFB, I never dreamt that writing would become such an important thing in my life. I will be forever grateful that Deborah and BREMFB were brave enough to let me try my hand at writing. I wouldn't be facing such an exciting future with commissions and partnerships and ideas, were it not for that opportunity. I am pleased that I will still be involved with my BREMFB colleagues on the Early Music Live! training programme and look forward to cheering on the organisation as it continues to grow and thrive."

Deborah Roberts, Co-Artistic Director said: "Clare and I have had a long and fruitful partnership since we first had the crazy idea to start an early music festival in Brighton over a cup of coffee back in 2002! Neither of us had any idea that 15 years on BREMFB would have become such a strong and established organisation. Clare's contribution cannot be measured. She has always worked tirelessly not only in keeping the festival on track financially, but has been an inspiring partner in our continuing to programme a festival that is unique and groundbreaking, offering exciting challenges to artists and audiences alike. I wish her all the very best in her future as a writer and in the development of her own festival in Stroud Green. I am delighted that she will continue her highly valued work with our young artists programme and hopefully as a writer and singer in BREMFB projects in the future. Meanwhile Clare will be appearing in both capacities this year – premiering another of her concert/plays with The Telling."

Simon Mathews, Chair of BREMFB said: "The Board would like to thank Clare for her hard work and all she has done to develop and champion BREMFB over the past 15 years. Her financial and fundraising expertise is one of the reasons that BREMFB has continued to grow and thrive in a

challenging financial climate which has seen other classical music organisations falter. The Board are working with Deborah and Clare on robust plans to ensure a strong future.”

ENDS

For more information, high resolution artist images or interviews, please contact Cathy Boyes, Festival Producer at cathy@bremf.org.uk or 01420 86267.

Notes to editors:

Early Music Live! is delivered in partnership with the Royal Academy of Music’s Historical Performance Department and (for the first time in 2017/18) Snape Maltings. Over the past 10 years, Early Music Live! has helped 43 emerging groups (162 musicians), showcasing them and securing first BBC Radio broadcasts. In recent years Norburn has taken a key role in nurturing ensembles, including Ensemble Molière, Palisander and The Marian Consort, to develop new cross-artform and digital work, helping them to secure other engagements, put together tours and secure Arts Council funding to tour new projects. This approach is inspired by the theatre sector who take the lead in nurturing young companies: there is nothing else comparable to this strategic approach in the classical music world.