

For immediate release, 17/06/15:

OAE Communications and Creative Programming Director is appointed MD of Canada's Tafelmusik Orchestra



William Norris ©Joe Plommer

William Norris, Communications and Creative Programming Director at the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, has been appointed Managing Director of Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra in Canada. He will take up his new position in Toronto in the autumn.

Norris has been at the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment for 10 years, where he spearheaded a massive increase in OAE ticket sales and introduced ground-breaking initiatives such as The Night Shift, a 'rules free' concert series which has been hugely successful in attracting a younger audience and which has been at the forefront of the burgeoning 'alternative classical' movement.

He has also been responsible for radical marketing campaigns to help change perceptions of classical music, such as the head-turning 'Not all audiences are the same' campaign which involved audience members including a bodybuilder and a salsa dancer posing alongside members of the Orchestra, illustrating the diversity of the OAE's audience.

Last season's graphic identity celebrated the OAE's maverick roots with a 'guerrilla' style campaign, while next season the Orchestras 30th birthday and rule-breaking ethos is visualised with images of musicians being captured in shattered glass.

Crispin Woodhead, Chief Executive of the OAE, comments:

'William has always reflected the innovative and fresh approach of the OAE with his inspiring

marketing, and dynamic initiatives like *The Night Shift* and *The Works*, attracting new audiences to classical music. He recently developed a new artistic collaboration with Shakespeare's Globe and led cross-genre projects including collaboration with contemporary choreographer Henri Oguike, inspired by Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*. He's constantly sought to innovate and break new ground, in line with the OAE's ethos. He will be greatly missed by staff and players alike.'

Sir Martin Smith, Chairman, says:

'We would like to congratulate William on this prestigious appointment, and thank him wholeheartedly for his immense contribution to the OAE over the last ten years. We are very sad to see him go but are delighted for him that he has such an exciting new opening, and wish him all the very best for the future.'

William Norris comments:

*'Working at the OAE has been a huge privilege and pleasure for me, and I'm massively proud of what I and my team have achieved over the years, particularly in redefining how an Orchestra represents itself in its marketing materials and in refocusing our press strategy – bringing it in-house and targeting a wider range of media, allowing the Orchestra to punch above its weight in the crowded London marketplace. Added to this *The Night Shift* has not only been a wonderfully fun and challenging project to work on, but I am pleased that through it we have introduced the OAE to many new fans, in venues ranging from the Royal Vauxhall Tavern through to the Roundhouse. I am now looking forward to exciting new challenges with *Tafelmusik*, another hugely innovative and ambitious ensemble, and relish the chance to join them at what is an exciting new stage of their history.'*

Other OAE members of staff to have gone on to prestigious roles include former Chief Executive David Pickard who left to become General Director of Glyndebourne and is now Director Designate of the Proms; General Manager Michael Garvey who is now Director of BBC National Orchestra of Wales; and former Chief Executive Marshall Marcus who became Head of Music at Southbank Centre and is now CEO of the European Union Youth Orchestra.

– Ends

Notes to Editors:

Player-led and ceaselessly innovative, the **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment** is one of the world's most respected period ensembles. They are a Resident Orchestra at Southbank Centre, Associate Orchestra at Glyndebourne Festival Opera and tour both nationally and internationally.

Founded in 1979 and based in Toronto, Canada, **Tafelmusik** is one of the world's top baroque orchestras and chamber choir.

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