



LESLIE KWAN AND CHRIS LOUGHRAN JOIN ABO BOARD

Two new members have been appointed to the Association of British Orchestras (ABO) Board: **Leslie Kwan, Founder and Managing Director, Lionsgate Music** and **Chris Loughran, Senior Policy & Advocacy Advisor, The HALO Trust**.

Leslie Kwan is an American harpsichordist and the founder and Managing Director of Lionsgate Music, a new charity dedicated to supporting the NHS through live chamber music concerts exclusively for hospital staff, patients and their families in the United Kingdom.

Chris Loughran is Senior Policy & Advocacy Advisor for The HALO Trust, a leading global landmine clearance and conflict recovery NGO. He leads HALO's UK and global policy and political engagement strategy, including at the UN in New York and Geneva.

The announcement follows the appointment in November 2020 of Director of the BBC Philharmonic, Simon Webb, as ABO Chair.

ABO Chair, Simon Webb: *Leslie and Chris join us following a search and recruitment process that forms part of a comprehensive governance review. They bring skills and perspectives that will strengthen our already excellent board, as we continue to support and offer leadership to the orchestral sector through and beyond these challenging times. The orchestral sector in the UK is full of creative ambition, and the ABO board needs to reflect this as it works with the ABO team on behalf of the sector. I look forward to Leslie and Chris bringing their energy and vision to the organisation.*

The Board now comprises **Peter Bellingham**, Chief Executive, Sinfonia Cymru; **Phil Boughton**, Director of Orchestra & Chorus, Opera North; **Thorben Dittes**, Director, Royal Northern Sinfonia and Classical Music Programme, Sage Gateshead; **Ellen Gallagher**, Associate, Hamllins LLP; **Jenny Jamison**, Chief Executive, Scottish Ensemble; **Leslie Kwan**, Founder and Managing Director, Lionsgate Music; **Chris Loughran**, Senior Policy & Advocacy Advisor, The HALO Trust; **Linda Merrick**, Principal and Professor, Royal Northern College of Music; **Simon Webb**, Director, BBC Philharmonic (Chair); and **James Williams**, Managing Director, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Kwan and Loughran join the ABO as it prepares for its **2021 Conference** which will take place online from **10-12 March**. Through a series of keynote speeches and interactive panel discussions, the three-day online conference will focus on the theme of '**Aftershock**', analysing the seismic issues that have sent shockwaves through the sector – from the devastating impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic and the threatening repercussions of Brexit, to the urgency of the climate change crisis and the reignited call to confront classical music's inequities and action meaningful change in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement. It will also offer an opportunity to champion the invention and flexibility shown by orchestras and musicians in continuing to connect with audiences,

and to discuss the new approaches they can take forward to adapt to the new post-COVID landscape and build recovery. For the first time, the opening day of the conference will be free to attend for musicians, hosted in partnership with Help Musicians.

For further information about the ABO and the 2021 ABO Conference visit abo.org.uk.

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Notes to editors:

Leslie Kwan
Founder and Managing Director, Lionsgate Music

Leslie Kwan is an American harpsichordist, and the founder and Managing Director of Lionsgate Music, a new charity dedicated to supporting the NHS through live chamber music concerts exclusively for hospital staff, patients and their families in the United Kingdom.

Highlights of Ms Kwan's career include Associate Marketing Director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra from September 2015 where she was managed niche cultural partnerships and events across all BSO brands, audience development for the Young Professionals Group, and the launch Medical Card programme between the BSO, local hospitals and medical schools in Boston, MA.

Recruited in 2016 by the Handel + Haydn Society as Acting Marketing Director, Leslie managed all marketing, communications and digital platforms for the organisation, launched H+H's digital concert hall, and secured corporate sponsorships in support of the organisation's fundraising goals. In 2018, Ms Kwan was invited by the Chineke! Foundation in London to manage the charity's press, marketing, communications and social media platforms.

Previously, Leslie founded L'Académie Baroque Orchestra in Boston, MA, a chamber ensemble that specialised in French Baroque repertoire, where she managed all operations and served as harpsichordist for eight seasons. Inspired by her mother's survival of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, Leslie launched and ran a weekly chamber music series exclusively for cancer patients, families and staff at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute between December 2012 and December 2015. In 2014, the series expanded into Massachusetts General Hospital in support of the patients, staff and families of the neonatal unit.

Born and raised in New York, Leslie began piano studies at age 4 and made her debut at Carnegie Recital Hall at age 10. She graduated from the LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts where she was a double major in piano and viola. Leslie holds degrees in harpsichord performance from Hofstra University in Hempstead, NY, and a Master of Music from the Mannes College of Music, New York City where she was a Helena Rubenstein scholar.

Chris Loughran
Senior Policy & Advocacy Advisor, The HALO Trust

Chris Loughran has 20 years' experience in the not-for profit and public sectors, including at senior leadership level. He specialises in policy, political influence and public affairs, primarily in disarmament and conflict response.

Chris has worked in Whitehall and also in the Middle East, South/South East Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. His current role is Senior Policy & Advocacy Advisor for The HALO Trust, a leading global landmine clearance and conflict recovery NGO. He leads HALO's UK and global policy and political engagement strategy, including at the UN in New York and Geneva.

Chris is also a Trustee of Platfform, Wales's leading mental health and system change charity. He holds a BA from the University of Oxford and a Masters from the School of Oriental & African Studies. He is shortly to become a Honorary Fellow at the University of Manchester.

The Association of British Orchestras

The Association of British Orchestras is the national body representing the collective interests of professional orchestras, youth ensembles and the wider classical music industry throughout the UK. The ABO's mission is to enable and support an innovative, collaborative and sustainable orchestral sector by providing advice, support, intelligence and information to the people who make British orchestras a global success. Recent initiatives include Resonate in association with PRS Foundation and BBC Radio 3, which supports the best orchestral music of the last 25 years, and Find Your Way which identifies and offers training to future sector leaders. The ABO campaigned successfully for Orchestra Tax Relief and continues to campaign for the sector at the highest levels, to help build resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. www.abo.org.uk @aborchestras