

CLEAN BREAK

CLEAN BREAK ANNOUNCES THE DEPARTURE OF JOINT ARTISTIC DIRECTOR RÓISÍN MCBRINN

After eight years with the company, Róisín McBrinn is leaving Clean Break. She will direct the premiere of *Favour* at the Bush Theatre in June before joining The Gate Theatre in Dublin as Artistic Director. As Clean Break's Joint Artistic Director and Chief Executive, Róisín has been included in the prestigious lists The Stage 100 and Big Issue Top 100 Changemakers. As part of Clean Break's leadership team, she has developed the company as a major force on the new writing landscape, commissioning the UK's most important contemporary women playwrights, and embedded its Members (women caught up in the criminal justice system or at risk of entering it) at the heart of its work.

Róisín joined Clean Break in 2014 as Head of Artistic Programme and became Joint Artistic Director, alongside Anna Herrmann, and Erin Gavaghan as Executive Director, as part of a new leadership structure in 2018. Her productions for the company include *Typical Girls* by Morgan Lloyd Malcolm (a Sheffield Theatres co-production), *Blis-ta*, an audio drama by Sonya Hale (BBC Audio Drama Award winner), *Thick as Thieves* by Katherine Chandler (at Theatr Clwyd), *Joanne*, written by six women playwrights (at Soho Theatre and Royal Shakespeare Company), *House* by Somalia Seaton and *Amongst the Reeds* by Chino Odimba (at Edinburgh Festival Fringe and Yard Theatre).

Róisín McBrinn: *'It's been a huge honour to jointly lead Clean Break for the past four years and to have worked here for eight. Huge thanks to our brilliant Board, the amazing Anna Herrmann and Erin Gavaghan whom I have led alongside, our wonderful staff team, all the artists and partners we collaborate with and of course, our Members. Working at Clean Break has taught me an immeasurable amount and it has been the most fruitful, formative and joyful time of my career. I will miss the whole community, but I am so excited to pass the baton on and see this vital, brilliant company morph and grow in someone else's hands.'*

Alison Frater and Tanya Tracey, Co-chairs of Clean Break Board: *'Róisín has been a solid creative foundation for Clean Break and a dynamic powerhouse for change. Working with our Members, she seized every opportunity to enable artistic expression, to inspire new writing and to support freelance artists. She jointly delivered the company's aspiration to grow its theatre-making roots, producing unique and excellent work. She worked tirelessly as part of the leadership team over the pandemic years finding innovative ways to ensure the voices of women affected by the criminal justice system were heard. There was also an astonishing number of debates, workshops, training events and talks online reaching out to audiences, finding expression for those most affected by the pandemic and driving high profile advocacy for ending the incarceration of women, tackling racism, inequality and injustice. She leaves the company with creative work for main stages in the pipeline and a*

legacy of achievement that will be difficult to replace. We thank her with all our heart and wish her well for the future.'

Erin Gavaghan and Anna Herrmann: *'Jointly leading Clean Break with Róisín for the last four years, we have faced some extraordinary times together, and we are proud of the bold, ambitious and courageous company we are today. We will hugely miss Róisín's vision, friendship, passion and unswerving commitment to justice and to joy. We wish her every success as she continues her career and look forward to seeing her continue to make beautiful theatre. Her contributions to our future plans will be a legacy that we are excited to build upon as we move ahead.'*

At this time, Clean Break also welcomes new Creative Associates **Titilola Dawdu** and **Rachel Valentine Smith**, who will work with the company for eighteen months with immediate effect and congratulates **Maya Ellis** and **Dezh Zhelyazkova** as they step into Producer roles in the company.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Róisín McBrinn

Róisín is Joint Artistic Director and Chief Executive of Clean Break. She has over twenty years' experience as a theatre director working in the UK, Ireland and internationally. For Clean Break she has directed *Typical Girls* (Sheffield Theatres), *Blis-ta* (audio drama), *Thick As Thieves* (Theatr Clwyd), *Joanne* (Soho Theatre and RSC) and *House + Amongst The Reeds* (Yard Theatre).

Amongst others, Róisín has directed for Chichester Theatre (*The Taxidermist's Daughter*), The Abbey Theatre (*No Escape/ Perve/ Heartbreak House*), The Gate Theatre Dublin (*The Snapper*), Sheffield Theatres (*Typical Girls/Afterplay*), Leeds Playhouse (*Yerma*), The Tricycle (*The Field*) and as Associate Director for Sherman Theatre (*Before It Rains, Sleeping Beauties* and *It's A Family Affair*). She trained at the Donmar Warehouse and was mentored by Kathy Burke.

Her awards include the Quercus Award (National Theatre) and the Young Vic Jerwood Young Directors' Award. She has been nominated for the Irish Times Best Director Award.

<https://www.roisinmcbrinn.com/>

Clean Break

Clean Break changes lives and changes minds through theatre – on stage, in prison and in the community. It produces ground-breaking plays with women's voices 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 remains 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 Alice Birch, Deborah Bruce, Lin Coghlan, E V Crowe, Vivienne Franzmann, Tanika Gupta, Katie Hims, Sam Holcroft, Theresa Ikoko, Lucy Kirkwood, Chloë Moss, Rebecca Lenkiewicz, Winsome Pinnock, and Rebecca Prichard.

Current Clean Break productions include [Blis-ta](#) – an audio drama by the late Sonya Hale, and [Sweatbox](#) – a film of Chloë Moss’s acclaimed play set in a prison van. [Booking is now open for Favour](#) by Ambreen Razia at Bush Theatre from 24 June to 6 August 2022.

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PRESS CONTACTS

For press enquiries about Clean Break, please contact:

Nancy Poole | nancy@nancypoolepr.com | 07957 342850

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



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