

# CLEAN BREAK

## PRESS RELEASE

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### CLEAN BREAK IS DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE THE APPOINTMENT OF ITS NEW CHAIR OF TRUSTEES, ALISON FRATER

**Alison Frater** is announced as Chair of the Board of **Clean Break**, the acclaimed women's theatre company changing lives and minds on stage, in prison and in the community. Alison takes up the position from 23 July, succeeding Kim Evans OBE who steps down from the role following eight years of service.

**Alison Frater** is an advocate for the transforming value of the arts in the criminal justice system, and writes on arts, health, and justice in the scientific, medical and general press. She is currently Chair of the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance, a trustee of Clinks and a member of the Transforming Lives Advisory Board, Prison Reform Trust. She is a visiting professor in the Department of Criminology and Sociology at Royal Holloway and a public health lead researcher on a probation based mental health study at UCL. Throughout her career, Alison has fought for women's rights and held lead roles in public health working to tackle health inequalities. She's been a senior leader in the voluntary and public sector, with positions including: Chief Officer at the Brook Advisory Centres; Director of Public Health in Bristol and in North Hampshire; Head of Public Health in NHS England (London).

**Alison Frater:** *'Clean Break has reached out to connect with and raise women's voices in the face of many crisis during an extraordinary journey to success as a leading-edge theatre company. As its new Chair, I know Clean Break will survive and thrive beyond the present pandemic. Theatre has sustained and changed me and I'm excited by the opportunity to stand alongside women who won't be ignored and whose artistic and educational work inspires a personal and political agenda for change. The work of Clean Break reveals the causes of crime and the impact of a racially discriminating and moribund criminal justice system on individuals, their families and communities. I take very seriously the privilege of stepping into the shoes of previous extraordinary Chairs who've driven a fantastic mission to champion women's lives and life chances through the advocacy and authenticity of theatre. I am especially grateful to Kim Evans who has been hugely welcoming and a great inspiration.'*

**Erin Gavaghan, Anna Herrmann, Róisín McBrinn - Clean Break's leadership team:** *'We are delighted to welcome Alison as our Chair. We have had the pleasure of working with her over a number of years in her role as Chair of National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance*

*and have witnessed her outstanding contribution to the Alliance as it has grown in stature, influence and ambition. She brings to Clean Break the inimitable combination of expertise in criminal justice, women's issues and the arts, and we know that she shares our vision and our mission of a world where women are no longer criminalised but are able to fulfil their full potential. Alison has the tenacity, resolve and skillset as well as warmth and compassion which we believe will serve us well in the years to come post Covid-19, as we commit to rebuild better and differently.'*

Clean Break thanks outgoing Chair Kim Evans OBE for her invaluable contribution to the company:

**Erin Gavaghan, Anna Herrmann, Róisín McBrinn:** *'Kim has been a phenomenal Chair. She has steered us through significant organisational change and an incredibly tough external climate, with care, expertise and commitment. Her combination of leadership experience, her membership of the Parole Board, and her strong values and feminist beliefs, have been a perfect match. Kim has championed diversity and inclusion throughout her time, and her personal commitment to this helped drive our Board in increasing its representation, importantly resulting in appointing Clean Break Members to be at the table and share power. She encouraged us take up space, be brave and ambitious, and it is testament to her leadership that we have achieved significant growth, profile and reach over recent years. We wish her all the best in her next pursuit and know that this is by no means a goodbye as she will continue to be a friend to, and champion of, the company as we move forward with resilience, confidence and strong values as her legacy.'*

**Kim Evans OBE:** *'It's been a privilege to be Chair of Clean Break for the past eight years and part of an organisation producing extraordinary work that changes lives and minds. I have learned a great deal from this company of excellent women – my fellow Trustees, the staff, and above all our Members, women whose lives have been affected by their involvement with the criminal justice system. We stand on each other's shoulders. My successor, Alison Frater, brings many valuable skills that will ensure the company continues to make provocative theatre and provide services for women that are needed more than ever in these challenging times. I know she will enjoy her role at Clean Break, and I wish her every success.'*

**Clean Break Board:** Sabba Akhtar; Deborah Coles; Sara Forbes; Doreen Foster; Alison Frater (incoming Chair); Shaen Gaber; Alison Jefferis; Ellie Kendrick; Winsome Pinnock; Amanda Richardson; Tanya Tracey; Despina Tsatsas.

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

**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.

Since closing its building in March due to the Covid-19 crisis, Clean Break has been working to ensure that its community remains vital. Along with *2 Metres Apart*, Clean Break has also launched *Write 2 Connect*, a letter writing project connecting women in prison with women in the community, and an online artistic programme to provide a creative space for women with experience of the criminal justice system or at risk of entering it. The company's 2020 productions have also included: *Inside This Box* by Yasmin Joseph, performed by Clean Break Young Artists at Arcola and Omnibus; *Not Pretty Like The Rainbow*, by Clean Break Member Daisy King, performed by Clean Break Members in a range of settings; and *Sweatbox* by Chloë Moss touring in a prison van.

Clean Break celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2019. Highlights included: *Inside Bitch*, conceived by Stacey Gregg and Deborah Pearson, devised by Lucy Edkins, Jennifer Joseph, TerriAnn Oudjar and Jade Small, at the Royal Court Theatre; *[BLANK]* by Alice Birch at the Donmar Warehouse; *Belong* by Brazen, Clean Break's Young Artists, at Arcola Disruption Festival and Lyric Hammersmith Evolution Festival; *All The Lights Are On*, the company's first collaboration with Cardboard Citizens; *Sweatbox* by Chloë Moss, touring the UK in a prison van; and a series of events and talks.

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