



PRESS RELEASE

CLEAN BREAK CELEBRATES TONIC AWARD AND ANNOUNCES AUTUMN CO-PRODUCTION WITH THEATR CLWYD, *THICK AS THIEVES* BY KATHERINE CHANDLER

Clean Break was honoured to receive a **Tonic Award** at a ceremony hosted by Jenni Murray at May Fair Theatre on 19 March. Actor **Jennifer Joseph** (Clean Break Member; credits include Donmar Warehouse's all-female Shakespeare trilogy) presented the Award to **Lucy Perman MBE** (Chief Executive) who was joined at the event by **Róisín McBrinn** (Clean Break's Head of Artistic Programme), **Anna Herrmann** (Head of Education), Clean Break playwright **Natasha Marshall**, and actor / Clean Break Member **Sarah-Jane Dent**.

Clean Break was recognised for forty years of work on the theme of women and the criminal justice system, giving opportunities to generation after generation of female creatives, and giving voice to women whose experiences are all too often silenced by society.

The Tonic Awards celebrate the achievements of game-changing women in theatre and the performing arts, and significant organisations, projects and productions that redefine the role of women in the performing arts, both on and off stage. Other recipients honoured at the event were **Emma de Souza**, *Waking the Feminists*, **The Royal Exchange Theatre Manchester**, **Steffi Holtz** and **Gina Abolins**, **Kully Thiarai**, **Lyn Gardner**, **Caryl Churchill** and **Katie Mitchell**.

The Award coincides with the announcement of *THICK AS THIEVES* by **Katherine Chandler**, Clean Break's first ever co-production with **Theatr Clwyd**. Directed by Clean Break's Head of Artistic Programme **Róisín McBrinn**, the production premieres at Theatr Clwyd from 11 – 27 October (press night: 17 October) then tours.

Two women from very different worlds: Karen has built a picture-perfect life while Gail struggles to keep hers together. When Gail re-enters Karen's life from out of the blue she brings with her everything Karen has been running from... This tense, revealing play explores what it means to care for one another and asks who, in a time of increasing disconnect, we expect to look after us.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

Tonic supports the arts and creative industries to achieve greater gender equality in their work and workforces. The Tonic Awards celebrate the achievements of women who are changing the face of our theatre industry, and projects and productions that are redefining the role of women in the performing arts. Tonic Theatre created the Awards so that the amazing contributions of women to theatre can be highlighted publicly – not just the doom and gloom stories about under-representation – and so that younger women in particular have visible role models to aspire to.

Clean Break changes lives and changes minds through theatre – on stage, in prison and in the community.

Acclaimed theatre company Clean Break produces ground-breaking plays with women writers and actors 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 is still the only theatre company of its kind remaining 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 Zawe Ashton, Alice Birch, Lin Coghlan, E V Crowe, Vivienne Franzmann, Tanika Gupta, Katie Hims, Sam Holcroft, Lucy Kirkwood, Chloë Moss, Rebecca Lenkiewicz, Winsome Pinnock and Rebecca Prichard.

Recent successes have include Tanya Moodie's soaring performance in *Joanne* written by Deborah Bruce, Theresa Ikoko, Laura Lomas, Chino Odimba and Ursula Rani Sarma (Soho Theatre and Latitude Festival 2015, RSC Making Mischief Festival, August 2016), *Spent* by Katherine Chandler (touring conferences and Higher Education settings), Vivienne Franzmann's *Pests* (Royal Court Theatre, Royal Exchange Theatre + tour), *Sweatbox* by Chloë Moss (Latitude Festival 2015), *Fingertips* by Suhayla El-Bushra and *Meal Ticket*, a company-devised play (Latitude Festival 2014), Katie Hims' *Billy the Girl* (Soho Theatre), Roz Wylie's *Stepping Off the Edge of the World* (Soho Theatre + tour), Rebecca Prichard's *Dream Pill* (Almeida Festival 2013, Latitude Festival 2012, Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2011), Sonya Hale's *Hours til Midnight* (Latitude Festival 2013, Southbank Centre + tour), Chloë Moss's *There Are Mountains* (HMP Askham Grange), Sam Holcroft's *Dancing Bears* and Chloë Moss's *Fatal Light* (Latitude Festival 2011), and *Charged*, written by six of the UK's foremost contemporary playwrights in 2010, revived as *Re-Charged* in 2011 (Soho Theatre).

Katherine Chandler's theatre credits include *Bird* (Royal Exchange Theatre/Sherman Theatre), *Parallel Lines* – winner of Wales Drama Award (Dirty Protest Theatre/Chapter Arts), *Before it Rains* (Sherman Theatre/Bristol Old Vic), *Hood* (National Theatre), *Buddy* (Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama/The Gate), *The Silly Kings*, *Peggy's Song* (National Theatre Wales), *The Princess and the Pea*, *The Ugly Duckling* (Sherman Theatre), *Spent* (Clean Break), and *Leaves on a Line* (Royal Court/Dirty Protest Theatre).

Róisín McBrinn is an award-winning theatre director. She is the Head of the Artistic Programme at Clean Break theatre company and her credits for the company include *Joanne* (Soho Theatre/RSC) and *House/Amongst the Reeds* (Yard Theatre). Other credits include *Novecento* (Donmar Warehouse), *Afterplay* (Sheffield Theatres), *Yerma* (West Yorkshire Playhouse), *Discurso* (Prime Cut Villa), *No Escape*, *Perve*, *Heartbreak House* (The Abbey Theatre), *Before it Rains*, *Sleeping Beauties* and *It's A Family Affair* (Sherman Theatre). She will also be directing the forthcoming stage adaptation of Roddy Doyle's *The Snapper* for The Gate Theatre, Dublin.

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