



PRESS RELEASE

26 August 2015

## Spitalfields Music announces the appointment of Eleanor Gussman as its new Chief Executive

**Spitalfields Music** is delighted to announce the appointment of **Eleanor Gussman** as the charity's new Chief Executive. Gussman will join Spitalfields Music in October 2015 to lead its Festivals and year round Learning & Participation programme, and as it prepares to celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2016.

Gussman joins Spitalfields Music after over 8 years at the London Symphony Orchestra, including leading pioneering music education initiatives as Head of LSO Discovery. Most recently she has acted as a consultant for clients including London Sinfonietta and Wellcome Trust.

Professor Maurice Biriotti, Chair of Spitalfields Music commented:

"I am thrilled to announce the appointment of Eleanor as Spitalfields Music's new Chief Executive. Eleanor's superb musical and artistic integrity, combined with her passionate belief in the power of music, make her an excellent leader for our organisation. Her commitment to using music to inspire and enrich individuals and bring communities together will doubtless allow her to excel in her new role. As we prepare to celebrate our 40th anniversary, it is with great excitement that I and the rest of the Spitalfields Music team welcome Eleanor, and look forward to working with her on a renewed and purposeful vision for the future of Spitalfields Music."

Eleanor Gussman commented:

"I am absolutely delighted to be joining Spitalfields Music in the lead up to the 40th anniversary in 2016. The organisation's world-class programming, award-winning education programme and setting in the heart of East London make it irresistible. It is also an honour to be joining at a particularly exciting point in Spitalfields Music's development. I am greatly looking forward to building upon the exceptional work to date and to working with Maurice and the team to shape the future direction of Spitalfields Music."

This announcement comes at a particularly busy and successful time for Spitalfields Music, and ahead of an exciting year as the organisation celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016. In 2015, in addition to its ever-popular Summer Festival which garnered critical praise for the broad spectrum of music on offer, the charity also presented its first ever Takeover Spring Festival curated and produced by pupils at three local Tower Hamlets schools.

Booking opens for **Spitalfields Music Winter Festival 2015 (4-15 December)** on 21 September. The festival includes seasonal music from The Sixteen, The English Concert, a performance of Bach's Christmas Oratorio performed from memory, and festival debuts from three new ensembles including two from Europe – renowned early music ensemble Les Arts Florissants and Belgian baroque orchestra B'Rock. The festival continues the Spitalfields Music tradition of presenting a mix of early and contemporary music, premieres, works-in-progress and music for young people; including Musical Rumpus the charity's flagship project for babies and toddlers.

### **Eleanor Gussman biography**

Eleanor Gussman is a leader in the field of music education. Her experience of commissioning innovative performance projects for young people and communities, ground-breaking talent development initiatives, and pioneering digital programmes spans over a decade. As Head of LSO Discovery, the London Symphony Orchestra's music education and community programme, she led on major new ventures. These included an award-winning digital platform, LSO Play, and a creative hub for composers at St Luke's, LSO Soundhub. Under her leadership, Discovery created landmark participation opportunities at the heart of the orchestra's artistic programme: enabling 80 young musicians from East London to perform in the Opening Ceremony of London 2012; developing intergenerational community projects in collaboration with the Aix-en-Provence festival; and embedding creative music practice in classrooms across East London through a systematic Continuing Professional Development programme. Prior to leading LSO Discovery, Eleanor oversaw the LSO's Artist Development programme and worked for the Asian Music Circuit. Most recently she has acted as a consultant for clients including the London Sinfonietta and Wellcome Trust. She holds a degree in music from York University and a masters in ethnomusicology from the School of Oriental & African Studies.

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### **Notes to editors**

**Spitalfields Music**, which marks its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016, is a creative charity producing live music experiences in East London through a year-round programme of festivals and creative learning and participation projects. Based in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, it reaches over 30,000 people a year, with participants and audiences ranging in age from newborn to over 90 years-old.

Spitalfields Music's annual festivals (Spitalfields Music Summer Festival & Spitalfields Music Winter Festival) bring together world-renowned artists and local musicians. Spitalfields Music regularly commissions new music, supports emerging artists, explores how music interacts with other art forms and curates works that challenge, provoke and inspire. To ensure access to all, 30% of tickets for Spitalfields Music's two annual festivals are free or £5.

Spitalfields Music's award-winning Learning & Participation programme, which celebrated 25 years in 2014, innovates within the sector, particularly in work with early years (0-3 years-old) and training music leaders. Projects in the programme run throughout the year within and outside of the festivals. These bring participatory music opportunities to members of the local community in schools, community centres, hospitals and libraries across Tower Hamlets.

Spitalfields Music continues to expand its work across the wider East London area, and in 2015 – 2016 will continue to tour its flagship project *Musical Rumpus* outside of London, both across the UK and internationally. Spitalfields Music is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO), and the only NPO working in classical music based in East London. Winner of the Charity Awards 2014: Arts, Culture & Heritage category

[spitalfieldsmusic.org.uk](http://spitalfieldsmusic.org.uk)



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