



## MEDIA RELEASE

### SOULPEPPER ANNOUNCES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Toronto, ON – August 30, 2018:** Soulpepper Theatre Company is pleased to announce the appointment of **Emma Stenning** as the Company's new Executive Director. Emma, a UK-based arts leader, brings a wealth of experience, ideas, and energy to Soulpepper as the company marks its 20th anniversary.

*"We received a lot of interest from many very talented people, from across Canada and abroad. With so much incredible talent, Emma was the committee's unanimous first choice. There is no doubt in our mind that Emma, with her experience, her energy, and her track record of collaborating with diverse artists, arts workers, donors, and government bodies, while mentoring the next generation of arts leaders, represents an exciting future for Soulpepper,"* said **Vanessa Morgan**, Chair of the Board. *"We didn't go about looking outside of Canada – quite the opposite in fact. It is a testament to Soulpepper and Canadian theatre that we received so much interest from across Canada and abroad. Our responsibility was to find the best person for the job, and we believe Emma represents that."*

Emma is currently Chief Executive of Bristol Old Vic, where she has been leading the company, in partnership with Artistic Director Tom Morris, for the past nine years. Under her tenure, the organisation has delivered a £25m redevelopment of its historic theatre, transformed its business model and re-established its profile on the regional, national and international stage. Previously, Emma was Head of Producing at Manchester International Festival, Head of Theatre for the London region of Arts Council England, a Cultural Programme Advisor for the 2012 Olympic Games, and Executive Director at Battersea Arts Centre.

Emma was recently on hand in Toronto to be introduced to Soulpepper Theatre Company members, donors and Board members.

*"Soulpepper is a world class theatre company; one that sits at the heart of a vibrant, creative city,"* said **Emma Stenning**. *"I feel both thrilled and privileged to be joining the exceptional team here as the organisation starts to shape its next chapter, and excited beyond belief to be making Toronto my home. It's been wonderful to spend some time at the Young Centre, beginning to get to know the community of staff, artists and supporters who, collectively, make up Soulpepper. I feel welcomed, inspired and energised, and I can't wait to get started."*

Emma is a 2005 Clore Fellow, an Honorary Doctor of Letters from Bristol University, Winner of the Clore Prize, and recognized by the Cultural Leadership Programme as a 'Woman to Watch'. Emma has written about the importance of mentorship and embracing risk and innovation. Emma was chosen by the Search Committee for her collaborative leadership style, demonstrated ability to build relationships, and her breadth of experience with helping to elevate a local company to new global heights.

Reporting (along with the Artistic Director) directly to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director is wholly responsible for leading the administrative, financial and general operations of the company. This includes oversight of a skilled senior team, including Finance, Human Resources, Producing, Production, Marketing & Communications, Development, Government Relations, Community Engagement and overall Administration. The Executive Director will share responsibility with the Artistic Director for the development of a new five-year Strategic Plan with input from artists, staff, a highly engaged Board of Directors, and supportive stakeholders.

Emma will assume her duties full time in mid-November, 2018, and will consult on operations until then. The Board of Directors' Search Committee worked closely with Daniel Weinzwieg at Searchlight Recruitment, and also considered input from Company staff and artists, to find the successful candidate.



Soulpepper's search for a permanent Artistic Director is continuing on schedule. The company is very fortunate that Alan Dilworth is serving the role of Acting Artistic Director until January 2019. Response to the search has been very positive, and the Board of Directors remains optimistic that it will be able to announce an appointment this fall.

Soulpepper's 2018 season continues with Mark Crawford's celebrated comedy *Bed and Breakfast* currently on stage and extended until September 8; the World Premiere of *Sisters* by Rosamund Small; the audience-favourite concert *A Moveable Feast: Paris in the '20s*; the Canadian Premiere of *The Royale* by Marco Ramirez; and the presentation of Obsidian Theatre Company's *Oratorio: A Theatrical Mixtape* by Motion and DJ L'Oqenz. Soulpepper's recently announced season demonstrates the company's commitment to developing new works and providing opportunities for the next generation of leaders, specifically recent graduates of The Soulpepper Academy.



Located in its multi-venue home, the Young Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto's Distillery Historic District, Soulpepper is Toronto's largest not-for-profit theatre company. Founded and guided by artists, Soulpepper has an integrated mission which includes: industry-leading youth and community outreach initiatives; artist training and mentorship programs; and a year-round diverse repertory season which is grounded in the classics and committed to the creation of new works, new forms, and innovative practices. Tickets to Soulpepper productions are available by calling the Young Centre Box Office at 416.866.8666 or by visiting [soulpepper.ca](http://soulpepper.ca).

The artists and staff of Soulpepper and the Young Centre for the Performing Arts acknowledge the original caretakers and storytellers of this land - the Mississaugas of the New Credit, the Haudenosaunee, the Anishinaabe, and the Wendat First Nations. We commit to honouring and celebrating their past, present and future.

Soulpepper believes all people have a right to express their individuality, to experience creative freedom, to feel safe at all times, and to be treated with dignity and respect.

Soulpepper gratefully acknowledges annual operating support from the Ontario Arts Council, the Toronto Arts Council, and the Canada Council for the Arts. Soulpepper is pleased to recognize the donors of transformational gifts to its Creative Capital Campaign: The Michael Young Family Foundation; The Slight Family; The Government of Ontario; Gail Drummond and Bob Dorrance; Kevin and Roger Garland; Ada Slight; and Richard Wernham & Julia West. Support for all Music Programming is provided by the Slight Family through the Slight Family Music Program. The Soulpepper Academy is supported by the RBC Foundation, and the Canada Arts Training Program at the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Soulpepper is grateful for the major sponsorship support of:  
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