



PRESS RELEASE

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Henley Festival Artistic Director takes National Chair

Henley Festival's Artistic Director, Stewart Collins, has just been elected Chair of the British Arts Festivals Association (BAFA). In this position he will represent the UK's festivals when talking to government committees, the Arts Council, overseas festivals and festival organizations. He will also be in charge of advising the country's festivals on how to survive the current credit crunch and looming recession.

BAFA is the umbrella body that represents over 100 UK festivals ranging from Edinburgh, BBC Proms, Brighton – and, of course, Henley - to much smaller ones such as Hebden Bridge and Corsham. Stewart was elected at the recent BAFA conference, held in Liverpool to coincide with that city's Capital of Culture series of events. He takes over the three year post from Nick Dodds, former head of Brighton Festival and Brighton Dome.

Says Stewart, "I have one immediate big issue – helping advise member festivals on how to survive and prosper through the credit crunch. My biggest aim will be that of drawing all types of festivals together so that we can lobby powerfully as one body. In other words, to draw the likes of Glastonbury, WOMAD, etc, into the ring so that we can speak with one voice.



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A third, vital role, is that of professional development within individual festivals, helping make festivals ever more professional and efficient at what they do (quite apart from being brilliant at presenting great performance!). This is something we pride ourselves on at Henley, at the same time as having a deep appreciation of the loyalty of our audiences!"

One of Stewart's first responsibilities in the New Year will be to represent the British Festivals' movement at the European Festivals' annual gathering in Granada, Spain. He adds, "This is, of course, perfect timing from Henley's point of view. By that stage our own Festival's programme will be at the last stage of finalisation and we will be planning its launch to the public. We're looking forward to another fabulous event in July, and I can't help feeling my appointment is a credit to the Festival itself and its image as simply one of the most successful and diverse festivals around."

Henley Festival 2009 runs from 8th-12th July. For more information visit www.henley-festival.co.uk

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For more press information, please contact Miranda Johnson on 01962 890208 or Rachel Shimell on 02380 732981 or email mirandajohnson@btinternet.com / rachel.shimell@ntlworld.com

Henley Festival Trust

As in previous years, all net proceeds from Henley Festival 2009 will go direct to the Henley Festival Trust to finance charitable activity. Examples of this valuable, and much appreciated, work include providing: music and arts activity in local schools, instruments for promising young musicians and music therapy for brain-injured attendees at Headway day centre in Henley-on-Thames.

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