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**“As a sector we have proved ourselves adaptable, resilient
and imaginative”**

SIMON TAYLOR ELECTED NEW CHAIR OF THE ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ORCHESTRAS

*LSO’s Kathryn McDowell and Southbank Sinfonia’s Justin Lee appointed new board
members as sector braced for challenging time ahead*

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra Chief Executive Simon Taylor has been elected the new chair of the Association of British Orchestras (ABO), the national body representing the collective interests of professional orchestras throughout the UK. He will replace Tim Walker of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, who steps down after 3 years at the helm.

Mr Taylor, who joined BSO in 2008 will lead the ABO board through what is set to be a challenging time for the UK arts sector.

He said:

“I am very honoured to be appointed chairman of the ABO. I am acutely aware of the current challenges facing the arts in general and the orchestral sector in particular , with looming cuts in public spending and an economy only slowly emerging from recession. However, orchestral music-making in the UK can stand comparison with anywhere in the world and as a sector we have proved ourselves adaptable, resilient and imaginative.

“In this role I look forward to playing what part I can in continuing to demonstrate the vitality and importance of our orchestras to the musical, cultural, social and economic fabric of society”

Mark Pemberton, Director of the ABO, said:

“Simon brings experience and charm to what will be a further challenging period, with orchestras wrestling with uncertainty over future funding streams. We will also benefit hugely

from our new board members Kathryn and Justin, who will represent the interests of the London self-governing orchestras and the unsubsidised sector respectively”.

Commenting on the work of outgoing Chair Tim Walker, Mr Pemberton said:

"We owe Tim an enormous debt of gratitude for his dedication to the ABO during what has been a challenging three years for British orchestras. From the outcome of the last Comprehensive Spending Review to the impact of the impending spending cuts, he has been a calm and authoritative presence at the helm of the ABO board, and a superb advocate on behalf of British orchestras to politicians and the general public."

London Symphony Orchestra's Kathryn McDowell and Southbank Sinfonia's Justin Lee were also elected onto the board. They join fellow members Peter Harrap, Orchestra & Chorus Director, Welsh National Opera; Andrew Jowett, Director, Town Hall & Symphony Hall, Birmingham; Barry Kempton, Chief Executive, City of London Sinfonia; Chi-chi Nwanoku MBE, Principal double bass, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment; Gavin Reid, Director of BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra; and Bob Riley, Chief Executive of Manchester Camerata.

Ends.

For further information and interviews with the new board members or Simon Taylor, contact: Melissa Milner melissa@dhacommunications.co.uk, 020 7793 4035, 07976 636 228

Biographies of the Chair and new board members

SIMON TAYLOR, ABO CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF BOURNEMOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Simon Taylor was appointed CEO of BSO in March 2008. Previously he was Senior Producer, Classical Music for BBC Northern Ireland, responsible for BBC concerts and the broadcast output of the Ulster Orchestra, as well as making music and documentary programmes for Radio Ulster and Radio 3. As Head of Performing Groups for RTE, Ireland's national broadcaster, from 1990 -1999 he was responsible for both the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland and RTE Concert Orchestra, a role that also involved the organisation of many large-scale events, recordings, broadcasts and international tours to USA, UK, Germany, Spain and Hong Kong. He worked closely with Ireland's major opera companies and music festivals and with leading popular and folk-music artists.

Prior to his involvement with orchestras he ran an independent music school in Dublin, which was the first in Ireland to offer a comprehensive jazz education programme. He also founded the Dublin International Guitar Festival and as a classical guitar recitalist he performed extensively in Ireland and internationally. In 1999 he was financed by RTE to undertake research into establishing an official international cultural promotion agency for Ireland. He was

worked as a radio broadcaster and music teacher and has served on the boards of the West Cork Chamber Music Festival and Sonorities Festival of Contemporary Music (Belfast).

He is currently a Board member of the Music Festival in Great Irish Houses, a governor of the Arts University College Bournemouth and was appointed Chairman of the Association of British Orchestras in November 2010.

KATHRYN McDOWELL, MANAGING DIRECTOR, LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Kathryn McDowell joined the LSO as Managing Director in 2005. She was brought up in Northern Ireland and read Music at Edinburgh University. After a post-graduate course in teacher training, she spent a year in Vienna working with refugees from Eastern Europe. In the mid-eighties Kathryn became one of the first education and community managers with orchestras, creating an extensive programme with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, and leading the ABO's first national education project "The Turn of the Tide". Since then, she led the bid for the creation of the Wales Millennium Centre and directed the City of London Festival. She also worked with Welsh National Opera and the Ulster Orchestra, before becoming Music Director of the Arts Council of England in the nineties.

Kathryn is a Governor of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, a member of the St. Paul's Cathedral Council, and Chair of the ABO's Sustainable Touring Review. She was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of Greater London in 2009.

JUSTIN LEE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SOUTHBANK SINFONIA

Justin Lee is Chief Executive of Southbank Sinfonia, the orchestra of young professionals and Britain's leading orchestral academy. Following studies at Oxford University and the London School of Economics, Justin has worked for four orchestras over the last 18 years ranging from the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra to the Academy of Ancient Music.

Southbank Sinfonia is unique in British musical life. Each year, it appoints a completely new orchestra of 32 players (typically aged 23 – 30 years old) who are then immersed in a full-time, eight-month programme of professional development: up to 60 concerts at festivals and venues across the UK, extensive community work, working with composers, and sessions covering areas as diverse as public speaking, movement and improvisation to taxation and entrepreneurialism.

SbS trains and performs side-by-side with many leading British orchestras across a wide range of genres: from the Royal Opera House and BBC Concert Orchestra to the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. It extends the realm of orchestral playing through its collaborations with the visual arts and theatre (in particular, the National Theatre). And through its business partners (BT, Cisco and others) it utilises technology, in performance but also for its world-wide auditions held via TelePresence.

Through its work (which is achieved with no public funding), SbS seeks not only to create a vibrant orchestra but also a generation of skilled, forward-thinking, proactive musicians well

equipped for the fast-changing music business, and who can communicate their passion for music to people of all backgrounds and ages.