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## THE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ARTS & IDEAS WELCOMES BOBBY ASHER

### NEW DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMMING WILL PLAN 25th ANNIVERSARY SEASON

The **International Festival of Arts & Ideas** today welcomes **Bobby Asher** as the new **Director of Programming**. Bobby Asher will be officially introduced to the International Festival's Board on September 16 and begin work full-time in October, in New Haven, Connecticut.

"Bobby Asher immediately impressed us with his creativity, wide-ranging expertise, and passion for the arts," said Festival Co-Directors **Liz Fisher** and **Tom Griggs**. "He's known for leading innovative projects that are as exhilarating as they are challenging and that draw diverse voices into conversation about critical contemporary issues. We are thrilled to welcome him as the Festival's new Director of Programming and are certain that he will be a collaborative partner eager to engage with New Haven as he develops a 25th Anniversary Festival that will resonate with—and inspire—our community."

**Bobby Asher** adds, "I'm honored to join the New Haven community and excited to collaborate with the board and staff to help lead this extraordinary institution into its 25th Anniversary year in 2020 and beyond. The International Festival of Arts & Ideas is an incredible expression of the creativity and knowledge that exists in this vibrant city, and I look forward to the work of bringing together many voices from all parts of our community to create a Festival that connects us to the world, and also celebrates and fosters understanding of the human experience right here at home."

### ABOUT BOBBY ASHER

Originally from Oklahoma, Bobby Asher most recently served as Director of Programming at The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at the University of Maryland, where he curated the Visiting Artist Series and helped envision, implement, develop, and sustain several new arts initiatives, including the NextNOW Fest, an annual student-focused festival, and programming at MilkBoy ArtHouse, a restaurant, performance venue, and gallery space in downtown College Park. He also served as the Founding Managing and Artistic Director of the Bailey Performance Center at Kennesaw State University near Atlanta, as well as in other arts management positions in Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Georgia.

Bobby was a member of the Association of Performing Arts Presenter's 2012 Leadership Development Institute cohort, the 2016 EMC Arts Leaders as Cultural Innovators cohort, and has served on numerous grant panels and committees in service to the field of arts administration. He and his wife Hannah are dog-parents to an aging but still ultra-hyper terrier named Daisy, and he enjoys sailing, cooking and curing meats in his spare time.

The Festival has published an interview with Bobby online [here](#).

## **ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ARTS & IDEAS**

**The International Festival of Arts & Ideas** is a year-round organization that culminates with an annual celebration of performing arts, lectures, and conversations each June in New Haven, Connecticut. The Festival convenes leading artists, thought leaders, and innovators from around the world for 15 days of dynamic public programs to engage, entertain, and inspire a diversity of communities. More than 80% of Festival programs are free to the public, including events that feature some of the most influential jazz, classical, dance, and theater artists of our time.

The Festival takes place in venues and open spaces in downtown New Haven, in the heart of the northeast corridor, two and a half hours south of Boston and 90 minutes north of New York City.

The Festival's programs have an impact throughout the year and include additional performances, educational opportunities, and the annual Visionary Leadership Award. The Festival was established in 1996, by Anne Calabresi, Jean M. Handley, and Roslyn Meyer. They envisioned an annual celebration in New Haven—a city steeped in a rich array of cultural and educational traditions—distinguished from other arts festivals by its fusion of the arts with events centered on sharing ideas.

The Festival is presented with major support from Yale University, The City of New Haven, The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, Connecticut Office of the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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