

Media Release

For Immediate Release

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ROYAL AND MCPHERSON THEATRES SOCIETY ANNOUNCE FRANZ LEHRBASS AS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Victoria, BC: The Royal & McPherson Theatres Society (RMTS) Board of Directors announce the appointment of Franz Lehrbass as executive director, effective January 21, 2020. Lehrbass will succeed current executive director, Lloyd Fitzsimonds when he retires in December after 20 years of leadership and dedication to the theatres.

"We are pleased to have Franz join our organization as our new executive director", said Lorne DeLarge, RMTS board president and executive director search committee chair "Franz has a proven track record as a professional manager and brings a strong background in the arts community. Additionally, his hands-on experience caring for a historic arts venue makes him a great choice to lead our organization going forward".

Lehrbass joins the RMTS after 10 years as the general manager of the Western Manitoba Centennial Auditorium in Brandon, Manitoba. Lehrbass led the organization by modernizing its administration, managing capital renovation projects, diversifying its capital funding, expanding its mandate and growing its overall business while delivering event services to a wide variety of professional, educational and community clients.

"I'm thrilled to be joining the Royal & McPherson Theatres Society. In meeting the RMTS staff I've discovered a team of professionals, each very experienced and deeply committed to providing excellent service to the clients and patrons of the Royal Theatre and McPherson Playhouse" said Lehrbass. "I'd also like to express my gratitude to Lloyd Fitzsimonds and the RMTS board for their excellent stewardship and development of these two historic theatres over the last 20 years. I am both inspired and humbled to be joining this highly collaborative team, and I can't wait to see what we can accomplish together."

Originally from South-Western Ontario, Lehrbass studied classical music performance at the University of Western Ontario and audio engineering technology at the Ontario Institute of Audio Recording Technology. Prior to his career in theatre management, Lehrbass worked for a startup in Silicon Valley and as a producer for the Canadian Broadcasting Company's music department.

"After 20 years of managing Victoria's historic civic auditoria I am pleased to be handing the reins over to Franz. He is more than qualified to be a leader in the Victoria community. I hope he finds as I have, that it is privilege to be the steward of these two beautiful buildings" said Fitzsimonds.

Lehrbass is a proud member of a dynamic five-person household. Partner Aimee, daughter Geneviève and sons Aidan and Martin will remain in Brandon to complete the school year and enjoy one more prairie winter. This summer the family embarks on a road-trip adventure from Brandon to their new home on beautiful Vancouver Island.

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