

For Immediate Release:  
Toronto – June 15, 2017

## New Executive Director for Workman Arts



*Kelly Straughan  
(Credit: Tanja Tiziana)*

**Workman Arts** is pleased to announce the appointment of **Kelly Straughan** as our new Executive Director.

One of the leading voices in Ontario's arts community, Kelly has spent the past five years as Executive Director of the Toronto Fringe Festival, the largest theatre festival in Ontario.

"I'm thrilled to be joining the Workman Arts team," says Straughan, "it's one of the most unique and innovative arts organizations in Canada. I look forward to meeting the 300+ member artists and facilitating their incredible and diverse talents. I'm entering the organization at an exciting time with the construction of the new Centre for Excellence at CAMH. This is an opportunity to take what I have learned as a festival director and apply it to the building of a new arts hub that will be a state of the art facility for artists living with mental health issues."

"We wanted someone who could take Workman Arts to the next level at the unique crossroad of art and mental health and wellness," said the Chair of the Workman Arts Board of Directors **Patrick Manley**. "Kelly is a proven leader in the arts community who understands the needs and the vision of a charitable arts organization."

Straughan will oversee this year's Fringe Festival - happening from July 5 to 16 - before formally stepping down there on July 28th to resume her new duties at Workman Arts.



Celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, Workman Arts is an arts and mental health organization known internationally for its artistic collaborations, presentations, knowledge exchange, best practices and research on the impact of the arts on the quality of life for persons living with mental health and/or addictions experiences. It is also a proud partner of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH).

"Kelly has had great success during her time at Toronto Fringe-- we are excited to work with her in developing and promoting and sharing the work of artists and performers with lived experience of mental illness," says CAMH VP of Communications and Partnerships **Lori Spadorcia**.

Workman Arts is the longest-running multidisciplinary arts and mental health organization in the world. Founded in 1987 by **Lisa Brown**, a former psychiatric nurse at the CAMH, and guided by the principle that the creative process is integral to the quest for personal and spiritual development, Workman Arts has grown over the years from a theatre company of eight to a multidisciplinary arts organization with over 300 member artists.

For more information, please visit: [www.workmanarts.com](http://www.workmanarts.com)

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