



EMBARGOED UNTIL FRIDAY, MAY 12th at 4 PM EST

Media Contact: Wendy Lawrence, 2017 Festival Chair
(734) 663-3744, wvlawrence1@yahoo.com

###

Ann Arbor Summer Festival Director Amy Nesbitt To Depart

ANN ARBOR, MI – Amy Nesbitt will be stepping down from her role as the Executive and Artistic Director of the Ann Arbor Summer Festival (A2SF). After presenting the 2017 festival season, she will be transitioning in late summer to a new post in Arizona as the Director of Performing Arts for the nonprofit Scottsdale Arts.

Nesbitt was recruited for the position after a nationwide search by Scottsdale Arts, which oversees the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts, the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art (SMoCA), and Scottsdale Public Art. In her new role, she will oversee programming for the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts' year-round season and outdoor performances.

Festival board chair Wendy Lawrence notes, "The Summer Festival has been so fortunate to have had Amy's talents and skills for the past 11 seasons. During Amy's tenure, the Festival has significantly broadened its programming and increased its reach into our community. With an outstanding staff and a talented, diverse and enthusiastic board, we're in a strong position to begin this new chapter in our history. This is an exciting opportunity for Amy professionally, and it builds on her A2SF considerable experience with the festival, four seasons of which she has served as the festival director."

During her tenure at A2SF, likely as the longest serving full-time employee of the festival, Nesbitt helped grow the programming to more than 175 events over four weeks. With the festival team, she spearheaded the introduction of many notable initiatives, including the Acoustic Grove Stage, the Retreat wellness series, the volunteer greeter program, the beer and wine tastings, and the student intern program. Hundreds of artists have been presented at the festival under her leadership, with highlights including Trombone Shorty, Cake, Michael Franti, Flip Fabrique, Cesaria Evora, Circa, kd lang, Andrew Bird, Gilberto Gil, Pink Martini, Lily Tomlin,



and Sharon Jones & The Dap Kings. She has been the lead for the past ten seasons of Top of the Park, the free outdoor series, programming hundreds of bands and events, with highlights such as Mucca Pazza, That 1 Guy, NOMO, My Dear Disco, Wild Belle, Theo Katzman, and Third Coast Kings. Over the past decade the festival has become a major presenter in North America for outdoor, large-scale spectacles, and Nesbitt's efforts have been integral to bringing international artists like Australia's Strange Fruit, The Architects of Air from the U.K., Transe Express from Paris, and Erth's Dinosaur Zoo to Ann Arbor.

Nesbitt said, "After living in Ann Arbor for the past seventeen years, I will deeply miss the many friends I've made and the many trusted colleagues that I've worked with at UMS, The Ann Arbor Film Festival, The Ark, Fleming Artists, and in dozens of areas of the University."

She noted, "I've felt very fortunate to have been entrusted with stewarding the Ann Arbor Summer Festival, which is such an important regional cultural organization. I believe my contributions have made the organization stronger and more diverse than when I arrived. It has been a true honor to serve the greater Ann Arbor community in this way. I am proud to say the amazing production team we have built at the festival is fantastic, the board is deeply engaged, and the organization has a very exciting future ahead."

The Ann Arbor Summer Festival is an exhilarating celebration of performing arts, outdoor entertainment, and community spirit. An annual international arts gathering in Ann Arbor, Michigan, the four-week festival offers an array of ticketed and free events, both indoors and out, featuring a progressive mix of local, national, and international artists.

Presenting over 175 events each season and attracting a diverse audience of more than 80,000 people, the festival continues to grow as a major cultural event in the Ann Arbor community, and as a leading multi-arts celebration that enriches the cultural, economic, and social vitality of the region.

The festival's 34th season runs from June 6th through July 4th, 2017.

For more information on all festival events, please visit the festival website: a2sf.org.

###