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LUMINATO FESTIVAL

Luminato Festival announces new CEO Anthony Sargent

Former founding general director of England's Sage Gateshead, visionary British arts leader and BBC veteran heads to Toronto

Toronto, ON – [Luminato Festival](#)'s co-founder and chair, Tony Gagliano, today announced **Anthony Sargent** as the organization's incoming CEO following an extensive global search. Sargent, a UK-based arts leader, brings a wealth of experience, ideas, and energy to Luminato Festival as the organization approaches its 10th anniversary.

"We couldn't be more excited to introduce Anthony as our incoming CEO as Luminato Festival looks toward its second successful decade," said Gagliano. *"In the past nine years, we've established a reputation as a premier multi-arts festival, known for presenting inspiring work by the best artists from Toronto and around the world. Anthony's reputation and work precedes him and we can't wait to see him take the Luminato Festival to the next level."*

Sargent is currently the elected chair of the New York-based **International Society for the Performing Arts** (ISPA), the leading international network for performing arts. He has presented the last seven editions of ISPA's celebrated artistic commissioning pitch session, *New Works Now*, in New York, São Paulo, Bogotá, Seoul, Wrocław, Toronto and later this month, in Malmö.

For the past 15 years, he was founding general director at [Sage Gateshead](#), an uncompromisingly ambitious arts centre for music performance and education in England, recognized internationally for its world-class performance and its inclusiveness, accessibility, and social engagement.

"In less than a decade Luminato Festival has made a global impact for Toronto – a proud new emblem of the city's multi-faceted cultural energy and sense of adventure," said Sargent. *"Festivals of many different kinds have been a consistent thread through my entire working life and I'm delighted to have been invited to work with Luminato's visionary artistic director Jorn Weisbrodt, with the festival's ambitious board and great staff team, and with the local arts community to lead Luminato into the future, adding new excitements to all its admired successes to date."*

During his time at Sage Gateshead, Sargent led the organization through its inception which included the building of a new, state-of-the-art facility (designed by Norman Foster) and the merger of three separate arts organizations to establish a new and recognizable brand, a series of development campaigns and a major review of the organization's business model at the end of its first decade to respond to falling public funding of the arts in Britain. Under Sargent's leadership, research showed Sage Gateshead had contributed £283m (\$580m) to the regional economy in just 10 years – almost three times the total public funding (capital and revenue) invested in the organization to that date.

Other highlighted past experiences include 16 years with the **BBC** in a range of roles in Arts and Current Affairs, Artistic Projects Director as part of **South Bank Centre**'s fresh senior management team as an independent organization, Head of Arts for Birmingham City Council, and much more.

Sargent will relocate to Toronto and is expected to begin his term later this summer, following the completion of immigration proceedings. He will attend the 2015 Luminato Festival (June 19 to 28) as an audience member. Until an official start date for Sargent has been set, Lucille Joseph continues to serve as Interim CEO, after which she returns to her role as Luminato Festival Vice Chair. **Searchlight Recruitment** worked with the Festival and its CEO Search Committee to recruit and select Sargent as incoming Luminato Festival CEO from a shortlist of Canadian and international candidates.

The 9th annual [Luminato Festival](http://www.luminatofestival.com) is set to create adventurous art and ideas in adventurous places from **June 19 to 28** with a celebratory, 10-day multi-arts schedule that reimagines Toronto and the way we experience it. This June, local, national and international artists, from one to 1,000, animate the city with music, theatre, dance, visual arts, literature, film, food, and more. For full programming details or to buy tickets, visit www.luminatofestival.com.

Anthony Sargent, biography:

Anthony Sargent held Choral Scholarships successively at Oxford University's Magdalen and Christ Church Colleges while studying Politics, Philosophy and Economics. From Oxford he joined the BBC, spending twelve years in a variety of radio and television production and presentation posts, finally in the newly created post of Concerts Planning Manager – responsible for the planning and artistic management and radio broadcasting of the BBC Proms and for the artistic management and broadcasting of the BBC Symphony Orchestra's work throughout the year.

In 1986 he joined the new management team of London's Southbank Centre (following the abolition of the Greater London Council) as the centre's first Artistic Projects Director, sharing responsibility for devising its overall artistic policies, and creating and leading the department responsible for most of the centre's own original programming and multi-disciplinary festivals.

In 1989 he took the new position of Head of Arts for Birmingham City Council, creating and implementing the Council's (first) Arts Strategy and leading many of Birmingham's most ambitious arts initiatives including Birmingham's 10-year festival of the 20th Century, Towards the Millennium, planned jointly with Sir Simon Rattle.

In spring 1999 he was invited to re-join the BBC as External Partnerships & Programme Development Manager for the nationwide BBC Millennium Music Live festival (the most ambitious music project the BBC had ever staged) then in 2000 he took up the fifth newly created job he has held in succession, leading the team creating Sage Gateshead as its founding General Director.

Anthony Sargent was created a CBE for services to the arts in 2013, and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, an Honorary Fellow of the Birmingham Conservatoire of Music and Sunderland University and in 2008 jointly with Sir Bobby Robson received the Hotspur Award, given annually to the person/s who 'with bold endeavour' have contributed most to the development of the North East of England. Most recently he was awarded Freedom of the Borough of Gateshead, the highest honour any English local authority can bestow.

About Luminato Festival:

Luminato Festival is Toronto's international multi-arts festival for people open to having art change their outlook on the world. For 10 days each June, Luminato Festival transforms Toronto's theatres, parks and public spaces with hundreds of events celebrating theatre, dance, music, literature, food, visual arts, magic, film, and more.

Luminato Festival is a charitable, not-for-profit, cultural organization whose vision is to commission and present significant local, national, and international programming that reflects Toronto as a crossroads of ideas, cultures and traditions. Now in its 9th year, Luminato Festival has become one of North America's leading arts festivals. The Luminato Festival runs June 19 to 28, 2015. [luminatofestival.com](http://www.luminatofestival.com)

Luminato Festival gratefully acknowledges the generous support and vision of its Founding Luminaries, SuperNova donors, the Artistic Director's Circle and Patron Circle Members. Luminato Festival proudly acknowledges the support of the following partners:

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Hi-res headshots of Anthony Sargent available upon request.

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