Press release

Sophie Solomon becomes new Director of the Jewish Music Institute

JMI welcomes the multi-talented charismatic violinist Sophie Solomon as its new Director. Sophie, who will take up her duties in the new year, is passionate about Jewish music and has devoted herself as a composer, performer and educator, to bringing this music to a wide and diverse audience.

While still at Oxford studying Russian and History (with first class honours) she was a founder member of the popular Jewish Roots band Oi Va Voi. She later became a solo recording artist for Decca and has performed her own klezmer arrangements with the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican.

Though only in her early 30s, Sophie has years of experience in the field of media and marketing. She is also a creative programme developer, able to bring together diverse groups of people with exciting results and has strong personal relationships with most of the key musicians, promoters, festivals and educationalists in the global Jewish music scene. As a natural teacher she has the ability to inspire and entertain, achieving the right balance between learning and fun.

Sophie says ‘I see this as a fantastic opportunity to bring my enthusiasm, intellect and commercial acumen to bear on an amazing organisation with the power to really touch both individuals and communities. Geraldine Auerbach has demonstrated inspiring vision and pioneering energy in bringing the JMI to life over the last decades and I relish the chance to build on this incredible legacy and lead and develop the organisation in its next exciting stage’.

Geraldine Auerbach, founding Director of the Jewish Music Institute which is based at SOAS at the University of London and works in many branches of Jewish music says: ‘With Sophie at the helm I see a glorious future for JMI. We could not have dreamed up a more excellent person to take the position. We are very lucky’.

Jennifer Jankel, the Chairman of JMI says: ‘We were overwhelmed with the number of excellent and talented people from whom we had to choose a worthy successor to take forward and develop Geraldine’s amazing work of 28 years. However our committee members were unanimous in choosing Sophie and we are very excited about working together to bring the knowledge and appreciation of Jewish music to ever wider audiences in the UK and abroad’.