

## Press Release: Festival proves that Music can learn from Sport

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The recent commercial coups of the Manchester International Festival have been in part attributable to the application of key sports business principles to the music and arts industry. Leading niche sports business law firm, Couchman Harrington Associates, have played a key role in developing the underlying intellectual property and commercial programme for this new leading international music and arts festival based upon the existing sports commercial rights model used by many sport bodies and sports rights holders.

The firm was appointed as the Festival's retained legal advisors whose profile has already witnessed a meteoric rise since its launch early last year. Barely 6 months into the project and over twenty months before the event gets under way in July 2007, the Festival has raised over £1.8 million in sponsorship ( a record for Arts sponsorship in the UK in 2005) and is on the verge of attracting a major media partner.

CHA Partner Fraser Reid; "Large events, be they sport or music related, are essentially structured in the same way commercially. We have simply applied our knowledge and expertise from working on leading international sports events to the Manchester International Festival. So far, it seems to have worked very effectively."

The Festival, which will launch the world's first international festival of original, new work – created by leading artists from across the spectrum of credible popular culture, innovation and the arts- has already signed up 5 leading sponsors. The trailblazer launch event in November staged the first ever live performances from the hit band, The Gorillaz, at the Manchester Opera House to worldwide critical acclaim.

Richard Sanders, the Festival's Head of Sponsorship agrees: "Couchman Harrington have helped us put together a dynamic and effective commercial rights framework for our sponsors and other commercial partners. Their experience from working on sports events such as the Rugby World Cup and the Davis Cup and more recently A1 Grand Prix has been invaluable to us. They have helped create and develop a clear set of rights for us to work with and have been worth their weight in gold. I cannot underestimate their contribution to our significant early commercial successes".

The Festival intends to stage the next in its series of preview trailblazer events later this year.

**Couchman Harrington Associates is a commercial law firm offering specialist legal advice to the sports industry. The leading independent legal directories say the following about the firm:-**

*"Remarkably successful at a time when other firms have been looking to exit the sports market...winning business model" (Legal 500)*

*"The achievement of this firm is incredible ... it has made a huge impression in the market" (Chambers Directory 2006)*

**For further details, please contact**

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