

Les Azuriales Opera Trust 1077210

Trustees report for the year ended 31 October 2020

Reference and Administration details

Trustees

Sarah Holford – Chair

Fiona Brannon

George Gluck

Mark Holford

Thomas Holford

Katharine Price

Richard Salter

Bankers

Messrs Coutts and Co

440 Strand

London WC2 0QR

Independent Examiner:

Mr S C Davies

Dyke Ruscoe & Hayes Ltd

110 Corve Street

Ludlow SY8 1DJ

Trust Registration Number:

1077210

1. Structure Governance and Management

Les Azuriales Opera Trust was formed in May 1997. It is an unincorporated charity and is constituted by a Trust Deed. The day-to-day business is conducted by Sarah and Mark Holford in consultation, as necessary, with the other Trustees.

The appointment of the Charity Trustees is governed by the Trust Deed. There should be at least three trustees. Charity Trustees are elected upon recommendation of the Board and it is the Board's aim to ensure there is a mix of skills appropriate for the effective operation of the Trust.

2. Objectives and Activities

- i) The trust was formed with the objects of advancing the education of the public in the arts particularly by:
 - a) Facilitating and improving accessibility of the arts particularly music, more specifically opera;
 - b) Improving standards of execution and appreciation of the arts, particularly music, more specifically opera;

- c) Encouraging assisting and supporting young performers and composers of music and more specifically opera;
- d) Educating the public in the art and science of music and more specifically opera.
- ii) Furthering such other charitable purposes as the Charity Trustees may from time to time in their discretion decide, including through the provision of grants aimed at preserving and restoring buildings and places of historic importance.

3. Main achievements and Review of Activities

In view of the extraordinary nature of this year and in particular its devastating effects on the performing arts

a. Activities Planned

- Young artists' showcase at Mansfield Street in May
- Choral Evensong at St Michaels in Beaulieu-sur-Mer
- And a live stream performance of Il Segreto Di Susanna by Wolf Ferrara from the Villa Ephrussi in early September

The first had to be postponed because of lockdown and the other two because of the quarantine introduced by the British government on returnees from France. Every effort was made to preserve expenses incurred (travel etc) for future.

b. Alternative Activities supported

During the lockdown and beyond we supported a number of initiatives that showed creativity

- To Elizabeth Karani who commissioned and performed a comic piece about Covid - link <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=BVwtzCNXTWg>
- To Virtual Opera in support their production of L'Enfant et les Sortilège by Ravel. Les Azuriales supported all their alumni (about 6 singers) employed in this creative venture, which was eventually shown on Marquee TV to much acclaim.
- To Njabulo Madlala's Voices of Africa online singing competition – initially conceived as a means of raising morale amongst South African opera singers as well as by means of many small prizes, helping them to buy food which they were struggling to do (all performance work had disappeared). The funds for this came out of the money raised for our Hardship fund. In the end the final standard was so high that Les Azuriales awarded an “alumni prize” – which meant that we took on a singer (selected by our usual panel of Bryan Evans, Sarah-Jane Davies and Sarah Holford) as an honorary alumnus, which means giving the ongoing support in career development to a singer with genuine potential and commitment. The prize went to Kamohelo Tsotetsi, a 30-year-old bass baritone with a great voice and musicality. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zk7n0VtYrwBtWkGxNXfc0QedYI24kAn2/view?usp=sharing>

This has since been recognised by his being awarded a place at the National Opera Studio (supported by all UK's major opera houses).

- Lastly, we were fortunate enough to visit the New Generation festival in Florence at the end of August. Alumna Anush Hovhannisyan is part of the creative team and appeared in a wonderful concert in the Boboli Gardens. Les Azuriales has supported this young festival in the past and this year we supported their new opera studio Mascarade, which offers bespoke coaching and career training to exceptionally talented singers, as well as exposure and introduction to a Europe wide set of opportunities. Sadly, our 2019 alumnus Thando Zwane who was selected for 2020 – 2021 let everyone down badly by not turning up or telling anyone why, after we had helped with his flights and visa costs of £690. A loss that had to be written off.

c. Hardship Fund

In response to the sudden and complete collapse of all planned opera work Les Azuriales set up a Hardship Fund for our alumni that was boosted by Mark Holford's sponsored Bike Ride and which raised £7,536 (excluding Gift Aid of £1,382). This was used to help cover immediate urgencies such as rent and other regular expenses by way of:

- Loans until the self-employed income support payments started, or
- Grants in cases where the applicant did not qualify for such support to tide them over until they could find a longer-term solution.
- Support for other schemes which provided paid work for our Alumni
 - i) VOpera's online production of Ravel's L'Enfant et les Sortilèges - £600.
 - ii) Supporting Voices of South Africa on-line Singing Competition run by alumnus Njabulo Madlala by giving a small prize and providing technical IT and other assistance - £1,018.
 - iii) Opera in Lockdown - a specially commissioned piece by Richard Barnard featuring Elizabeth Karani and Thomas Atkins - £650.

We also gave practical advice and found non-monetary solutions. We were gratified by the reaction of many of our alumni who told us that just knowing that someone was looking out for them made a huge difference.

At the end of this accounting year, we had spent £9,375 on hardship payments.

d. Normal ongoing support

- Anna Staruskevich (Les Azuriales 2011) a Ukrainian mezzo soprano— contribution to fee for indefinite leave to remain - £1,000. She was the first mezzo to win the Handel Singing Competition in 2012.
- Elizabeth Karani - (pre lockdown) travel bursary for auditions - £234.
- Thando Zwane - a travel bursary for flight to attend Mascarade Opera Studio - £690.
- Glen Cunningham - voice and music coaching - £660.
- Monica McGhee - voice therapy following treatment for thyroid cancer (prior to joining the National Opera Studio) - £622.
- Chum Sijeqa – scholarship to cover living costs while attending the Guildhall School Opera course of which half was transferred in this year accounts and the remainder will be paid in December 2020 -£2,400.

4. Meetings

- a) The trustees met on the 1st November 2019
 - i. To reappoint Dyke Ruscoe and Hayes as accountants for a further 12 months
 - ii. To re-elect Mark Holford for a further terms of 3 years
 - iii. To announce the plans for 2020 by 25th December
 - iv. To consider a legacy campaign
- b) The trustees met again on 10th June 2020 They resolved
 - i. To approve the draft accounts for 2018/ 2019
 - ii. To approve the criteria of the Hardship fund (previously discussed by email and the support in various degrees of the first 12 applicants
 - iii. To support the application of Elizabeth Karani for 50% of the cost of the Opera in Lockdown project

- iv. To approve the application of Monica McGhee for payment of medical expenses
- v. To approve the support of Chuma Sijeqa for living expense while at GSMD in the sum of £4,800 to be paid in two tranches of £2,400 six months apart

5.1. Income received

In the year ending October 2020, the Trust received funds of £29,872 made up as follows:

- Donations to Young Artists programme £16,963
- Hardship and Voices of South Africa donations £7, 536
- Tax refunds on Gift Aided donations £2,873
- Hardship loans repaid £2,500

5.2. Activities

- a) Awards and bursaries totalling £5,606 were awarded to:
 - A Ukrainian mezzo soprano towards the fee for ILR application - £1,000
 - A British Tenor - £660 for voice and music coaching
 - A South African Bass Baritone - to cover living expenses for six months at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama - £2,400
 - A Scottish soprano for vocal rehabilitation - £622
 - A South African baritone for travel to Italy to attend the Mascarade Studio - £690
 - A British soprano for travel expenses - £234
- b) An advance of £3,295 was paid to Les Azuriales Opera's Festival account to cover production costs for the planned live stream Il Segreto di Susanna travel costs, and general admin expenses
- c) The Trust's other expenses were:
- d) £122 for data protection and bank charges,
- e) £980 for accountancy
- f) £365 for insurance

6. Other sources of income: Sponsorship and tickets

In addition to the individual donations made to the Trust, Les Azuriales Opera made £1,325 from ticket sales for the London Concert on 16th April 2019, which was postponed due to Covid and remained, in the festival account

7. Financial review and Reserves Policy

The accounts cover all the activities of the Trust during the year. A profit of £9,629 was made this year which added to the sum of £5,449 brought forward from last year left the Trust with a balance of £15,078 cash funds to carry forward. To the extent that certain donations are given for a specific activity, we have ensured that these are used for that activity. The loan outstanding from Mark Holford of £3,000 could not be repaid this year and has therefore to be carried over to next year. The Trust must continue to keep its outgoings to a minimum though there should be enough after a further round of fundraising to continue to support Les Azuriales Opera's planned activities in 2021.

8. Public Benefit

The Charity's trustees acknowledge the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's published general and relevant sub-sector guidance on public benefit. They have referred to the Guidance when reviewing the Trust's aims and strategy and in planning its future activities. The review of activities referred to above highlights the achievements made in the year. The Trust's links with the community have continued to be developed throughout the year. Through activities and events held throughout the year, the Trust's donations have provided support, education and training for young performers. It has also facilitated and improved accessibility to the events. The Trust continues to promote awareness and availability of assistance across the broadest possible range of social groups. Through its events it gives the public an understanding of the processes involved in educating singers in their technique and in the creation of opera, thereby encouraging the wider appreciation and attendance of opera.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Les Azuriales Opera Trust

1077210

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01-Nov-19

To

31-Oct-20

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations	-	16,963	-	16,963	48,802
Donations - Hardship Fund	-	7,536	-	7,536	-
Tax refunds	-	2,873	-	2,873	7,999
Hardship Fund repayments	-	2,500	-	2,500	-
Other income (tickets)	-	-	-	-	400
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	-	29,872	-	29,872	57,201
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	-	29,872	-	29,872	57,201
A3 Payments					
Insurance	-	365	-	365	1,197
Awards, bursaries and sponsorship	-	5,606	-	5,606	1,364
Payment to Villa Ephrussi	-	-	-	-	8,907
Transfer to Festival account	-	3,295	-	3,295	10,500
Transfer to Association account	-	-	-	-	10,000
Fee for music director and coaching	-	500	-	500	17,006
Accountancy	-	980	-	980	1,120
Bank charges	-	87	-	87	170
Data protection	-	35	-	35	35
Hardship Fund	-	9,375	-	9,375	-
Prize money	-	-	-	-	9,895
Sundry expenses	-	-	-	-	2,952
Loan repayment	-	-	-	-	1,000
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	20,243	-	20,243	64,146
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	-	20,243	-	20,243	64,146
Net of receipts/(payments)	-	9,629	-	9,629	6,945
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	400	5,049	-	5,449	12,394
Cash funds this year end	400	14,678	-	15,078	5,449

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Opera Trust current account	400	14,678	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	400	14,678	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
	Owed to Mark Holford	Unrestricted	3,000	
	Accountancy - 2020	Restricted	1,000	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
			Sarah Holford	



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of	Charity Name Les Azuriales Opera Trust		
On accounts for the year ended	31 October 2020	Charity no (if any)	1077210
Set out on pages	1 and 2 <small>(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)</small>		

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 October 2019.

Responsibilities and basis of report As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:  **Date:** 26 Aug. 2021

Name: Stuart Carl Davies

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

FCCA

Address: Dyke Ruscoe & Hayes Ltd

110 Corve Street, Ludlow, Shropshire

SY8 1DJ