



The London Ballet Circle

**Trustees' Report and Examined Accounts
for the year ended 31 October 2023**

THE LONDON BALLET CIRCLE 2022/23

Patron: Sir Peter Wright CBE

President: Dame Monica Mason DBE

Vice Presidents:

Dame Merle Park DBE
Wayne Eagling
David Nixon OBE
Darius James OBE
Sir David Bintley CBE
Kevin O'Hare CBE
Cassa Pancho MBE
Dame Darcey Bussell DBE
Carlos Acosta CBE
Tamara Rojo CBE

The **Trustees and Elected Officers** during the reporting year were:

Susan Dalgetty Ezra (Chair)
Linda Gainsbury (until 2 March)
Krissie Poyser (Secretary)
Keith White (Treasurer)
Sylvia Villa
Fiona Erleigh
Ben Etteridge
Candace Kuss
Susan Lynas
Paul Pan (until 19 September)
Alastair Thomson

Registered Charity number: 1123258

Registered Office: (with effect from 20 January 2023)
42, The Hyde, Ware, Hertfordshire SG12 0ER

Independent Examiner:

M J Bushell Audit LLP
8 High Street
Brentwood
Essex
CM14 4AB

Bankers:

Unity Trust Bank
Four Brindley Place
Birmingham, B1 2JB.

The London Ballet Circle was established in 1946 by Stanley Hawkins with Ninette de Valois (regarded as the founder of British ballet) as its first president. The LBC is the world's oldest non-affiliated dance/ballet appreciation society. It became a charity in 2008 and its objects were widened in 2019. In summary these are:

- to promote and support dance and the kindred arts for the public benefit.
- to enhance public knowledge and appreciation of ballet and associated dance forms
- to encourage excellence, in particular by awarding bursaries for ballet/dance students
- to offer other charitable assistance for dance but not restricted to dance organisations.

The LBC sets out to achieve this in a number of ways by

- offering talks with dancers and leading creatives to members and the wider public
- arranging visits to ballet schools and company rehearsals
- giving bursaries and awards to dance and ballet students, and charitable donations to ballet companies and organisations to develop new work or to recognise their role in helping us achieve our objectives.
- promoting the art form to members through newsletters and to the world at large through the website and social media.

The development of online talks via Zoom during Covid lockdown has continued afterwards with success enabling the LBC to attract membership throughout the UK and now worldwide, particularly North America and Europe. It has also allowed the LBC to arrange speakers from anywhere in the world and minimise the disruption to their busy schedules.

Zoom only talks remain free to members with a small charge for the public. Where live meetings are also screened online as a hybrid event, a charge is made to all members to cover the increasing cost of London venues with again a differential higher charge for others. All bookings are made through the website to eliminate cash handling.

The LBC remains committed to offering a wide range of dance related speakers and both live and online events. Successful live events are important but the LBC also needs to fulfill its charitable duties and not just seek financial viability..

ACHIEVEMENTS 2022-2023

In the year 2022-2023 membership increased by about 10% to reach 560. The LBC held 33 events with an attendance of over 1700 Members & guests.

There were three hybrid events held at the Royal Ballet School featuring

- Royal Ballet principal Marcelino Sambé In Conversation with Sarah Crompton
- Laura Morera who was retiring as a principal dancer with the Royal Ballet In Conversation with Gerald Dowler, and
- Deborah Weiss In Conversation with Royal Ballet principal Vadim Muntagirov who stayed behind to meet guests and sign copies of his book 'From Small Steps to Big Leaps'.

At the AGM on March 2nd, the Royal Opera House conductor Jonathan Lo spoke, via Zoom, from his new home in Melbourne where he is now Music Director of Australian Ballet.

In addition, there were 12 other In Conversation Zoom meetings with guests (and listeners) from near and far. The LBC was honoured to host Cuban born Loipa Araújo, former ballerina and now legendary teacher In Conversation with Sarah Crompton. Principal dancer Xander Parish, formerly with the Maryinsky but now speaking from Norway, and other dancers from the Birmingham Royal Ballet, English National Ballet, Scottish Ballet and New York City Ballet companies also delighted listeners with stories about their lives and careers. The newly appointed Director of English National Ballet Aaron S. Watkin told listeners about his experiences dancing with leading classical companies and as Director at Dresden's Semperoper Ballett. Mthuthuzeli November from Ballet Black spoke with Christopher Marney about his career as a dancer and now as a sought-after choreographer.

Visits were also made to watch rehearsals and classes with schools and companies such as English National Ballet School, New English Ballet Theatre, Central School of Ballet, Northern Ballet, Ballet Black, Masters of Ballet Academy, and an annual visit with the Ballet Association to the Royal Ballet Upper School.

Yorkshire Summer Seminars, who have a close association with the LBC, invited the Chair to watch a pop-up class with Zenaida Yanowsky coaching young students with a range of abilities. This was a new initiative and the students delighted in their experience in one of the studios at the Royal Opera House.

LBC Members were also invited, for the first time, to attend a series of 'Dancing with the Stars' classes, also at the Royal Opera House, sponsored by 'Dance Forward' and the first being led by Royal Ballet principal dancer Yasmine Naghdi.

Another new event for the LBC was to run a stall at the Royal Ballet School Summer Fair held in the beautiful grounds of White Lodge in Richmond Park. Visitors to the Fair were treated to various dance displays by the younger students as well as having the opportunity to tour the school. The Fair was opened by former pupil Anna Rose O'Sullivan, current principal at the Royal Ballet and a former guest with the LBC. She and Christopher Powney, the School's Director, came up to chat with volunteers at the stall and posed for photos with passers-by. The stall helped raise the profile of the LBC and attracted several new members.

The LBC were the first visitors since the pandemic to be invited on a tour of the Freed's ballet shoe-maker's factory in the East End. Those attending were shown how pointe shoes are made individually for each dancer through the process of pleating, gluing, stitching and binding.

The LBC has continued with its proud tradition of awarding bursaries, scholarships and prizes to talented young students. The Stanley Hawkins bursary to attend Ballet Cymru's summer school was awarded to Lucy Wilson-Knight from Northern Ballet School. The LBC also presented the Ninette de Valois award at the Royal Ballet School graduating ceremony to Milda Luckute and Caspar Lench, and the Sir Peter Wright award was presented to Sophie Walters at Elmhurst Ballet School. Michael Maple, from the Northern Ballet Graduate programme, was awarded the LBC prize at the second annual Grad Pro International Showcase competition. Funding was also granted for three scholarships to the Yorkshire Summer Seminars. These awards are made possible through generous donations and profits from membership to the LBC.

The National Dance Awards, hosted by Graham Watts, Chair of the Dance Critic's Circle, presented the LBC's award for Outstanding Male Classical Performance to Marcelino Sambé for his portrayal as Pedro in Christopher Wheeldon's "Like Water for Chocolate". This LBC award is now funded by the LBC having been previously supported by an individual member, but the nature of the event makes this funding non-charitable (but still relevant to the charity objects).

Following the all-round success of the inaugural Choreographic Award in 2022, the LBC hopes to make this award a biennial tradition and are delighted that the 2024 Award will be for £10,000 – an increase from £7,500. Major schools and companies in England & Wales have been invited to make submissions and a panel of experts, Dame Monica Mason (LBC President and former principal dancer and Director of the Royal Ballet), Christopher Marney (choreographer, teacher and Artistic Director of London City Ballet), Deborah Weiss (dance writer and critic) and Elena Glurjidge (director of the Masters of Ballet Academy) will make their recommendations to the Trustees for approval. The winner or winners will be announced at the next AGM on 11 March 2024.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The year was successful financially, achieving a surplus in excess of £7,000. This has allowed £5,000 to be designated by the trustees into a new Choreographic Awards Fund to be carried forward to fund half of the 2024 award. Excluding the Choreographic Award in 2022, charitable

donations were increased by nearly 50% to £11,765 and represent over 60% of LBC's annual spending.

The increasing membership and the extensive events programme was reflected in significant income growth. Most members now make e commerce transactions and although this incurs some additional costs (card processing and website membership database costs), the handling of cheques can incur costs and a reducing manual newsletter distribution has achieved some savings. Those members make a contribution towards printing and postal costs.

RESERVES AND ACCOUNTING

While most of the expenditure is charitable donations, which could be varied according to income to maintain a suitable financial position, in practice the LBC has a number of long-standing student awards which it wishes to sustain to provide certainty to the receiving organisations. Having built up the expectations of a larger and more dispersed membership, the LBC also needs funds to meet those expectations, while still being able to respond to unexpected needs and costs.

The LBC therefore seeks to maintain a minimum reserve of an average one year's expenditure, excluding those restricted for a particular purpose. It has for some years held substantially in excess of this and plans over a number of years to expand charitable donations and further choreographic awards in a sustainable programme.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records and preparing financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the financial position in accordance with legal requirements. They are required to select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently; make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and prepare financial statements on a going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that The London Ballet Circle will continue. They are also responsible for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

GOVERNANCE AND RISKS

The AGM approved changes to the Constitution which introduced trustees being elected for a three-year term on a rotating basis instead of annually. It confirmed the ability to transact member and trustee meetings online and updated the legal provisions applying to charities since the previous 2008 Constitution.


The LBC updated its policies particularly in relation to safeguarding, volunteers, guidance for members and financial controls and has clarified its policy for giving charitable donations.


The sound financial position has mitigated some of the risks that exist in holding events and being reliant on membership payments and donations. However, the lack of suitable and affordable venues still concerns the trustees as well as the technology (its availability at venues and the extent to which trustees and volunteers can manage it) to deliver an extensive online programme of events. LBC has been able to use the facilities of The Royal Ballet School in the evening on a regular basis and while the cost is at a commercial rate, the expenditure stays within the "ballet community".

The Trustees maintain a risk list and review it at regular intervals.

The Trustees present their report and examined accounts for the year ended 31 October 2023.

On behalf of the Trustees:

signed  (Treasurer) dated 10 January 2024

signed  (Chair) dated 10 January 2024

THE LONDON BALLET CIRCLE
Receipts and payments Accounts

Charity registration number 1123258
1 November 2022 to 31 October 2023

	Note	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	2021/22
RECEIPTS					
Memberships		10835	0	10835	9320
Donations		2755	0	2755	3120
Gift Aid	1	2010	0	2010	1805
Events (Talks/Visits)		9505	0	9505	5150
Interest		473	0	473	32
Other		356	0	356	145
TOTAL RECEIPTS		25934	0	25934	19572
PAYMENTS					
Bursaries and donations					
Bursaries and Awards to students	2	3950	0	3950	3300
Donations to ballet organisations	2	8415	0	8415	4780
Choreographic awards		0	0	0	7500
sub total		12365	0	12365	15580
Administration and Governance					
AGM costs		162	0	162	0
Charity insurance		143	0	143	143
Bank and transaction charges		834	0	834	593
Computer software		338	0	338	185
Newsletter (Printing and Postage)		707	0	707	807
Website		1403	0	1403	1074
General administration		194	0	194	167
sub total		3781	0	3781	2969
Event costs					
Talks / visits		1693	0	1693	1548
Zoom licences		890	0	890	806
sub total		2583	0	2583	2354
TOTAL PAYMENTS		18729	0	18729	20903
NET RECEIPTS (PAYMENTS)		7205	0	7205	-1331

	Note	Unrestricted	Restricted	Designated	Total
Cash funds as at 31 October 2022		20121	2000	0	22121
Total Receipts		25934	0	0	25934
Total Payments		18729	0	0	18729
Net Receipts (Payments)		7205	0	0	7205
Transfers between funds	3	-5000	0	5000	0
Cash funds as at 31 October 2023		22326	2000	5000	29326
CHOREOGRAPHIC AWARDS					
Fund at 31 October 2022			0	0	0
Transfers			0	5000	5000
Income			0	0	0
Expenditure			0	0	0
Fund at 31 October 2023			0	5000	5000

Statement of funds 2022/23

Unrestricted funds are freely available for use by the trustees to further the charity's purposes. **Restricted funds** are received and used for purposes specified by the donor. **Designated funds** are allocated by the trustees for a particular purpose (and can be undesignated at their discretion).

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 October 2023

	Note	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Cash funds at bank	4	26970	2000	28970
Other monetary assets				
Gift Aid repayable	1	356	0	356
less Liabilities		0	0	0
NET ASSETS at 31 October 2023		27326	2000	29326

NOTES

- 1 - Gift aid claimed covered the period 1 November 2022 to 30 September 2023. The claim for the period 1 October to 31 October 2023 is made in 2023/24.

Gift aid repayable from HMRC is recognised as income at the time of the donation.

- 2 - The following bursaries, awards and donations were made in 2022/23:

ANNUAL AWARDS TO STUDENTS	Amount £
The Sir Peter Wright Prize (Elmhurst)	500
Yorkshire Ballet Seminars	1950
Ballet Cymru (Stanley Hawkins prize)	500
The LBC's Dame Ninette de Valois Awards (RBS)	1000
Total	3950

TO BALLET ORGANISATIONS	Amount £
DONATION FOLLOWING VISITS	
Alexander Whitley Dance	70
Ballet Black	150
Central School of Ballet	450
Dance Forward	500
English National Ballet School (2 visits)	1295
Masters of Ballet Academy (2 visits)	260
New English Ballet Theatre	500
Northern Ballet	750
Royal Academy of Dance	70
Royal Ballet Benevolent Fund (Freed's nominated charity)	420
Royal Ballet School	1500
OTHER	
GradPro	500
Dancers Career Development (match funded by Big Give)	500
Inspiration in Motion (Nomination of Linda Gainsbury on retirement)	100
Royal Academy of Dance (Fonteyn competition)	750
NON CHARITABLE - Dance Awards	600
Total	8415

- 3 - The Choreographic Awards Fund was set up by trustees on 1 September 2023 with the aim of supporting choreographic initiatives in the classical genre within ballet schools and companies. It is intended that awards are made every 2 years with funds transferred from general reserves every year.
- 4 - Cash funds
Restricted funds - The Company of Actuaries made a charitable donation to the London Ballet Circle in 2017 as a contribution towards the move of the LBC Archive to the V&A Museum, which has not yet been possible.
- 5- Trustee expenses
There were no trustee expenses. Trustees purchase goods and services on behalf of the charity. Transactions with trustees are as ordinary members.

THE LONDON BALLET CIRCLE

Year ending 31 October 2023

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

To the Trustees of The London Ballet Circle

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 October 2023.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

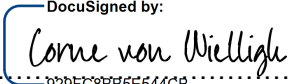
In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice : Accounting and Reporting by Charities

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:  Dated: 16 January 2024

M J Bushell Audit LLP
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