

# CONNAUGHT OPERA

*57 Connaught Street, London W2 2BB*

(CHARITY NUMBER: 1131004)

## REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

**YEAR ENDING 31 March 2024**

The Chair, Maria Arakie, reported to the Trustees at the AGM on 10/05/2024. Present were Wendy Mead (President) Dr Glenn Wilson (Treasurer), Alan Steinfeld (Secretary), Sabeed Dawood (Trustee/signatory) and Dr Bill Acker (Trustee). Domenic Pini (Trustee)

### STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

We are delighted to welcome a new Trustee Domenic Pini, a partner and co-founder of Pini Franco LLP. We know Domenic will be a valued asset to our board of Trustees.

Connaught Opera is an Unincorporated Association with a Constitution as its Governing Document. The Trustees were appointed by the Executive Committee, and as required by the Constitution, reappointed annually at the AGM. They have adopted the policies and procedures as supplied to them by the Charity Commission.

### CHARITABLE OBJECTS

The objects of the Charity are to relieve the needs of people suffering from sickness, poor health and old age living in Greater London and beyond by the provision of musical concerts in hospitals, residential and nursing homes, day centres and similar institutions.

### CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Connaught Opera raises funds to offer free concerts to older people in care in all the Greater London Boroughs and beyond. Our activities for the year ending March 2024 are detailed below.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibility for ensuring that the Charity's activities contribute to the public benefit. Having taken note of the Charity Commission's guidance on the subject, the Trustees believe that the Charity's activities do indeed contribute to the public benefit.

### TURNOVER

Our heartfelt thanks go to our major new benefactor, (who wishes to remain anonymous), who has made Connaught Opera their sole beneficiary of charitable giving. Any monies received from them will be used solely for activities that further our charitable purposes for the benefit of older, vulnerable people throughout England, with particular emphasis on enriching the cultural heritage of elders, resident in the Greater London area. The grant will not be used for any other purpose.

Income for this financial year to end March 2024 was £30,455.91 a decrease, compared with that to March 2023 (£53,550). Apparent large loss for this year resulted from a grant from an anonymous benefactor for 42 concerts in care settings plus 9 in heritage sites, arriving just before the end of March last year. We naturally placed the next round of concerts, and after they were performed, paid fees, in 2023/2024. The total of gifted concerts was increased by the HMRC Gift Aid this year. Importantly, our end of year balance remains healthy.

Virtually all our grant income goes directly to support our charitable activities. We believe it is most important that the elderly population, who have suffered many funding cuts, as well as additional stress due to lockdown, continue to have access to quality cultural and heritage events. Fortunately, our funders have been in general agreement and very supportive, requesting that when safe to do so, we take professional concerts to older people in care who would not otherwise be able to attend events in the community.

It is gratifying to learn that we are made so warmly welcomed by all the audiences we perform for when they can, once more, have live performances in their care settings and attend concerts in Heritage sites.

We make no apologies for quoting in full, this letter from **Sarah Russell, CEO Tibbs Dementia.**



***“Thank you for another wonderful afternoon in the magnificent surroundings of Shuttleworth House. Your annual concert for Tibbs Dementia Foundation has become a highlight of the year for many within our community who look forward to the concert for weeks in advance. Having the opportunity to experience, relax and enjoy a concert of the calibre you always produce is so important to and valued by our community.*”**

*For those with caring responsibilities day to day life can be stressful, isolating and a succession of tasks that become ever more challenging. Many of our carers can become isolated, exhausted, and sometimes experience depressive thought. An occasion such as this gives such a boost, an hour of escapism, joy, laughter and fun, a chance to connect with friends within the Tibbs community and to relax with tea and cake in beautiful surroundings has a profoundly restorative effect. The fact that the concerts are so accessible, free to attend and within an understanding environment is also so valued in a world which can often feel filled with barriers and constraint.*

*For those with dementia the concerts are always pure joy. The relaxed 'non anxious' atmosphere where people can 'just be themselves' helps those with dementia to fully engage. The surroundings, the warm welcome and the chance to 'meet the stars' after the show a real treat and confidence boost. The music of course has a great immediate impact with memories triggered and mood lifted, and Maria's costume changes are always a delightful visual boost too. Members of community enjoy the style of the show as well, relaxed, and interactive with Maria engaging so well with the audience tempered with Glenn and his tales and jokes. We were grateful to Dominic Barlow for stepping in at the last minute and playing so wonderfully, encouraging us to dance during his Glenn Miller set and waltzes. We do of course miss Nick and wish him a speedy recovery.*

*As a charity we so value this partnership, Maria your energy, enthusiasm, vision, and mission never changes. You work so hard to raise funds, organise and liaise with the venue, keeping us updated throughout as well as planning a professional show that's always so appropriate to our audience, relaxed and fun. We are grateful to the Wixamtree Charitable Trust for their support and ensuring the concert is accessible to all members of our community, and I'm delighted that 68 members of the Tibbs community were able to join us, a full house. Thank you too to the team at Shuttleworth House for making us feel so*







*after us so well and thoughtfully.*

*welcome and looking*

*I think the pictures say it all, but it really was a very special afternoon, an afternoon where reality was suspended, and we were transported to a happy, harmonious beautiful world”.*

## **GUNNERSBURY HOUSE AND MUSEUM**



**The Rothschild**

**Dining Room** was the glamorous venue for a third concert hosted by **Gunnersbury House and Museum**. Gunnersbury have requested a series of concerts following on the success of these shows during 2024. (This concert supported by **Barchester Charitable Foundation**). We are working hard to secure funding for a further 4 concerts before the end of 2024. The Museum commissioned a video of the March performance, which is featured on their website. This will also be shared on the Connaught Opera website under videos.



**KNEBWORTH HOUSE, Lord and Lady Cobbold** once again generously opened their home to residents in Quantum Care Homes in Hertfordshire. A short video is featured on our website.

Report [The 2023 Connaught Opera Performance at Knebworth House - National Care Forum](#)



## LEIGHTON HOUSE

Past residence of Frederic, Lord Leighton, whose imaginative and extravagant tastes created this exotic gem, set in the heart of London. Featuring Connaught in the studio in which our community concerts are hosted.



**City Bridge Trust (the Gold Standard of Funders)** provided our main support during 2022/2023 when many of our ‘regular’ sponsors were experiencing severe cutbacks due to making provision for the cost-of-living crisis. We are more than delighted that we have been awarded a third year of continuation funding from this very special and supportive funder – now called **City Bridge Foundation**.

**LONDON BOROUGH’S SUPPORT in 2023 2024** The **CBF** grants allow us to continue our work in all the London boroughs, when other funders have had need to adjust their priorities.

**ISLINGTON GIVING**, through their grants awarded by the panel, **Golden Grantmakers**, enabled us to perform 8 concerts in Islington, their area of benefit, during 2024.



**Hampton Hill Theatre.**

Age UK Richmond (Marie-Therese Keegan), organised groups from across the Borough to attend this concert “Glamorous Night”.



## FUTURE PLANS

We will continue applying for funding in our rolling programme.

### ***Reference and Administrative Details of the Charity***

The Charity is Connaught Opera, Registration Number: 1131004. Address of the principal officer of the Charity is 57 Connaught Street, London W2 2BB, Phone 07833736278. President is Mrs Wendy Mead, OBE, past Chief Commoner. Current Trustees are: Ms Maria Arakie (Chair), Alan Steinfeld KC (Secretary), Dr Glenn Wilson (Treasurer), Dr William Acker (Trustee), and Mr. Sabeed Dawood (Trustee and cheque signatory). Mr Domenic Pini (Trustee). Independent Examiner: Mr P L Boielle. M Eng. MAAT (Retired Community Accountant).

The Chair handles all day-to-day management of the charity as delegated by the Trustees. There are no salaried positions, and no profit is sought. Performers are paid a small, set fee for their services, in accord with a Charity Commission provision that Connaught Executives/Trustees who receive payment are in a minority of the Committee that sets the fee. Two are regular performers but neither is irreplaceable. If one is unavailable or indisposed a talented replacement can be drafted. This has occasionally happened in the past, with the result that we have never in our history (dating from 2003) had to cancel a planned concert, with the exception of the COVID 19 circumstances.

*Structure, Governance and Management:* The Charity has a constitution as its governing document. It is an Unincorporated Association. *Objects of the Charity* To relieve the needs of people suffering from sickness, poor health and old age living in Greater London and beyond by the provision of musical concerts for hospitals, residential and nursing homes, day centres and similar institutions.

*Activities of the Charity:* All activities are undertaken for the beneficiaries as described in grant proposals submitted to funders. The Charity keeps virtually no reserves other than restricted funds ear-marked for ongoing projects. Fees are allocated to professional artists only after concerts have been performed, as well as any allowance for administration and travel costs as outlined in grant applications.

Signed...*Maria Arakie*... Maria Arakie (Chair), 10/05/2024.

CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALESCharity Name  
Connaught OperaNo (if any)  
1131004

## Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date
	01 April 2023		31 March 2024

## 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 £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Grants	-	13,258	-	13,258	22,300
Donations	-	9,600	-	9,600	31,250
Gift Aid	-	7,598	-	7,598	-
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	-	30,456	-	30,456	53,550
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total receipts</b>	-	30,456	-	30,456	53,550
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Artists Fees	-	43,860	-	43,860	25,350
Travel	-	1,860	-	1,860	1,386
Video/Photo	-	1,750	-	1,750	1,000
Other Expenses	-	1,088	-	1,088	41
Wardrobe	-	1,082	-	1,082	1,025
ICT	-	837	-	837	1,404
Venue Hire	-	296	-	296	285
Insurance	-	235	-	235	227
Postage, etc.	-	96	-	96	57
Refreshments	-	-	-	-	200
<b>Sub total</b>	-	51,104	-	51,104	30,975
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total payments</b>	-	51,104	-	51,104	30,975
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	-	20,648	-	20,648	22,575
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	-	28,474	-	28,474	5,899
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	-	7,826	-	7,826	28,474

## 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 £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Bank Current Account	-	7,826	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	-	7,826	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		<b>Unrestricted funds to nearest £</b>	<b>Restricted funds to nearest £</b>	<b>Endowment funds to nearest £</b>
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>		-	-	-
		-	-	-
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	Kawai ES7 digital piano	Restricted	595	-
	Kawai ES110 digital piano & case	Restricted	572	-
			-	-
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>		Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
		Maria Arakie	Maria Arakie	24/04/2024
		Glenn Wilson	Glenn Wilson	24/04/2024 8



**Notes**

**1 GRANTS**

Islington Giving Golden Grantmakers	£5,150.00
City Bridge Trust	£5,000.00
Wixamtree Trust	£2,208.00
Barchester Charitable Fund	£900.00
	<hr/>
	£13,258.00

**2 DONATIONS**

Domenic Pini	£6,000.00
Bruce Quartermann	£3,000.00
Quantum Care	£500.00
Richmond Good Neighbours	£100.00
	<hr/>
	£9,600.00

**3 DEFICIT**

Connaught Opera received a substantial gift aided donation in the last quarter of 2022/2023 to fund 42 concerts in care settings plus 9 in heritage sites. These concerts took place during 2023/2024, with the result that there was a deficit of £20,648 on the year. However, at the year end, Connaught Opera still had reserves of £7,826, which will be sufficient to fund 2024/2025 activities until the 2024/2025 grants and donations come on stream.

**Independent Examiner’s Report**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Connaught Opera, Charity No. 1131004,

for the year ended 31 March 2024.

## **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the trustees of the charity 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 all 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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

Signed: *P.L. Boïelle*

Name: **Paul Laurence Boïelle**

Relevant professional qualification or membership of professional bodies (if any): **MAAT**

Address: **71 Lonsdale Road, Stevenage, Hertfordshire. SG1 5DD**

Date: 24<sup>th</sup>. April 2024