

# AURORA ORCHESTRA

England & Wales · Charity number 1155738

## Details

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Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	<a href="#">08523283</a>
Registered	2014-02-11
Register	<a href="#">View on the Charity Commission register</a>

## Contact

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**Website**                 [www.auroraorchestra.com](http://www.auroraorchestra.com)

## Activities

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**Objects:** THE OBJECTS OF THE CHARITY ARE TO PROMOTE, MAINTAIN, IMPROVE AND ADVANCE EDUCATION PARTICULARLY IN THE APPRECIATION OF MUSIC IN ALL ITS FORMS THROUGH THE PRESENTATION OF PUBLIC CONCERTS.

**Activities:** Aurora aspires to be the world's most creative orchestra, combining the very highest quality of performance with an exceptional breadth of artistic horizons, a passion for adventure, and a trailblazing approach to concert presentation.

## Classification

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- **How:** Provides Services
- **What:** Education/training, Arts/culture/heritage/science
- **Who:** Children/young People, The General Public/mankind

## Geography

- France
- Germany
- Netherlands
- Switzerland
- Throughout England

## Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£2,284,450	£2,055,262	£466,156	11
2024-03-31	£1,731,337	£1,837,399	£236,968	12
2023-03-31	£1,788,217	£1,853,269	£343,030	9
2022-03-31	£946,212	£903,977	£408,082	5
2021-03-31	£916,829	£633,577	£365,847	6

## Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Andrew Romain Hochhauser		2022-09-22
Christophe Kasolowsky		2025-10-10
Dame Liz Forgan		2019-12-09
Ian Karet		2025-10-10
JAMES CAMERON FITZGERALD SEYMOUR LAWRIE		2024-02-07
Jillian Barker		2025-10-10
Michael Alan Laven		2019-12-09
Rachel Elizabeth Mortimer		2018-07-24
Suzanne Szczetnikowicz		2017-03-31

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**

England & Wales - Charity number 1155738

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# Accounts

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Company number: 8523283  
Charity number: 1155738



(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

**TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

*FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025*

# AURORA ORCHESTRA

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## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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<b>Trustees</b>	Elizabeth Forgan DBE <i>Chair</i> Andrew Hochhauser KC Michael Laven Ben Lumsden (resigned 23 September 2024) Rachel Mortimer Kayeye Ntumba (resigned 6 November 2024) Louise Smith (resigned 10 October 2025) Suzanne Szczetnikowicz Sharon Zhu (resigned 14 November 2025) James Lawrie Jillian Barker (appointed 10 October 2025) Ian Karet (appointed 10 October 2025) Christophe Kasolowsky (appointed 10 October 2025)
<b>Company registered number</b>	8523283 (England and Wales)
<b>Charity registered number</b>	1155738
<b>Registered office</b>	The Music Base Kings Place 90 York Way London N1 9AG
<b>Senior Management Team</b>	John Harte <i>Chief Executive and Company Secretary</i> Jane Mitchell <i>Creative Director</i> Alana Grady <i>Senior Concerts Manager</i> Helen McKeown <i>Development Manager</i> Jane Walker <i>Finance Manager</i>
<b>Independent Auditor</b>	WP Audit Services LLP North House, 198 High Street Tonbridge Kent TN9 1BE
<b>Principal Bankers</b>	CAF Bank Ltd 25 Kings Hill Avenue West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ

## **AURORA ORCHESTRA**

### **TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

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The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the charity for the year to 31 March 2025. The Trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements of the company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019). This report is also the Directors' Report under company law.

The reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report.

Since the charity qualifies as small under section 382 of the Companies Act 2006, the Strategic Report required of medium and large companies under the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013 has been omitted.

#### **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

Aurora Orchestra is a charitable company limited by guarantee. It is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association, dated 9 May 2013, amended by special resolutions of 5 December 2016 and 7 February 2024.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the charity are to promote, maintain, improve and advance education particularly in the appreciation of music in all its forms through the presentation of public concerts.

#### **ORGANISATION**

The Board of Trustees (set out on page 1) must have a minimum of three members. It convenes for a minimum of four meetings each year in pursuit of the objectives described below.

John Harte (Chief Executive) acts as Secretary to the Board. Principal Conductor Nicholas Collon, Creative Director Jane Mitchell and several members of the management team also attended board meetings during the period. Other guest attendees including Principal Players are invited to meetings on an ad hoc basis.

#### **BOARD COMMITTEES**

The Board supports the orchestra's administrative team on an ongoing basis through a group of committees with particular areas of responsibility. These currently include the following:

- Finance & Operations
- Appointments & Governance

The Board agrees formal Terms of Reference for each committee.

#### **TRUSTEE APPOINTMENT, INDUCTION, AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

The Appointments and Governance Committee regularly audits the collective skills and experience of the board, identifying skills gaps and making recommendations to the board on trustee recruitment. Any new Trustee must be appointed by a resolution of the existing Trustees, and the board aims to ensure that its membership reflects a diverse range of views and backgrounds. New Trustees will meet with the Chair and Chief Executive prior to joining the Board. Induction and training of new Trustees is overseen by the board's Appointments and Governance Committee; the Committee Chair and Chair of Trustees also meet annually with all Trustees individually to review performance, identify any particular training needs, and set objectives for the year ahead.

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### MANAGEMENT

Aurora Orchestra's management team during the 2024/25 financial year comprised the following:

- Chief Executive John Harte oversaw the day-to-day running of the organisation, managing senior staff, cultivating and maintaining external relationships, and developing the orchestra's forward strategy in close partnership with the Principal Conductor and Creative Director.
- Creative Director Jane Mitchell shared overall responsibility for the orchestra's artistic direction and programming with the Principal Conductor and Chief Executive as part of the artistic planning team; during this period she took particular responsibility for developing the orchestra's new online learning resources.
- Principal Conductor Nicholas Collon had overall responsibility for the orchestra's musical direction, and shared responsibility for the orchestra's artistic direction and programming with the Creative Director and Chief Executive.
- Learning Director Rebecca Barnett oversaw the orchestra's work with young people – including taking overall responsibility for the Aurora Classroom project – supported by Learning Producers Sarah Lloyd and Helen Mead.
- Development Manager Helen McKeown supported the orchestra's fundraising activity, assisted by Development Officer Camilla Carden.
- Senior Concerts Manager Alana Grady and Concerts and Participation Manager Anahita Falaki were responsible for the production of concerts, recordings, broadcasts and other projects, and oversaw the production of the orchestra's work for young children and families including online learning resources, supported by Orchestra Assistant Tara Collins.
- Finance Manager Jane Walker had responsibility for accounting and book-keeping, supported by Finance Assistant Avi Taler.
- Marketing Manager Harriet Orbell was responsible for communications and audience development.
- Other freelance staff included Orchestra Personnel Manager Hal Hutchinson and other occasional support staff as required by individual projects.

#### RISK MANAGEMENT

The Trustees have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and systems have been established to mitigate those risks. Procedures have been put in place to minimise both external and internal risks and these procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they still meet the needs of the charity. The Trustees are satisfied that the Trust's assets attributable to each of its individual funds are available and adequate to fulfil its obligations in relation to those funds.

Key risks identified and managed in this period included:

- Seasonal cashflow challenges posed by the payment in arrears of Orchestra Tax Relief as this has increased as proportion of the orchestra's overall income: this is managed with an loan finance agreement with CAF Bank to ensure adequate liquidity at year end;
- Failure to meet income targets: the orchestra continued to focus on growing individual giving income, including plans to launch a new Philanthropy Committee in 2025/26. A new trustee with particular expertise in fundraising was sought as part of a board recruitment round launched in spring 2025, with an appointment subsequently made (October 2025);
- Failure to adequately keep pace with the artistic possibilities of new technologies: Aurora continued to invest in Aurora Classroom as its flagship digital product, and a new trustee with a background in education was appointed as part of the 2025 board recruitment round;
- Loss of income as a consequence of an unforeseen problem with an international tour: additional travel time was built into touring arrangements to ensure greater tolerance of travel disruption, and additional financial contingencies incorporated into international touring budgets.

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### **PROGRESS AGAINST 2022–2025 BUSINESS PLAN**

Aurora's activity during this financial year was shaped by its 2022–2025 Business Plan, incorporating the following mission statement:

*Aurora creates vibrant musical adventures that share a passion for orchestral music with the broadest possible audience. We produce vivid and intensely powerful musical experiences combining the very highest performance quality with creative presentation and an exceptional breadth of artistic horizons. We harness the extraordinary versatility of the chamber orchestra to make orchestral music speak in powerful new ways for first-time listeners and lifelong classical devotees alike.*

The organisation's work continues to be underpinned by four key values as follows:

- **Aim high:** *we will strive without compromise for the very highest levels of artistic and organisational excellence, with a passionate commitment to quality throughout our output. We will seek to inspire and challenge our audience, players, collaborators, and staff with projects that are never less than extraordinary. We will be prepared to take risks and break convention in the pursuit of an ever better artistic product.*
- **Music first:** *whilst we will be fearless in our artistic adventures, these will always be in the service of making music we play speak more powerfully. We will always seek to place music and musicians at the heart of our projects, and when collaborating across art forms we will always ensure that music and the orchestra's creative voice is central to the artistic product. We will be brave enough to walk away from projects where this musical integrity can't be guaranteed, even where these offer substantial rewards.*
- **Music for all:** *we believe passionately that orchestral music can and should be a source of enrichment for everyone. We will refuse to settle for performing only to existing classical concert-goers, instead actively seeking to grow a bigger, more diverse audience for orchestral music in the UK and beyond.*
- **Have fun:** *joy in music-making is central to our work. Whilst we seek to foster a working culture of challenge and ambition, we also want to ensure that our artistic and management personnel always share in this sense of enjoyment. We want Aurora to be a special, distinctive and enjoyable place to work, and will strive for the best working conditions for players and staff.*

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'Public Benefit: Running a Charity' (PB2). The Trustees believe that the quality, breadth, and accessibility of Aurora's work means that the orchestra's programme offers a clear public benefit.

The orchestra's current business plan sets out the following specific objectives for the period 2022–2025:

- 1) Develop a vibrant digital offer worthy of the Aurora brand:** *launch Aurora's online learning resources and teacher CPD programme nationally; set in motion new digital initiatives in partnership with key collaborators which allow Aurora to blaze a trail in the online realm.*
- 2) Build organisational resilience:** *Move towards more sustainable financial and staffing models, including growing new revenue streams, reducing pressure on key creative roles, and building reserves.*
- 3) Deliver a vibrant and distinctive programme of live activity which builds on Aurora's sector-leading reputation for quality and creativity:** *plan and deliver a live programme of outstanding quality and innovation, focused particularly around a small number of key venue relationships.*

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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**4) Realise the extraordinary potential of Aurora's programme to reach new audiences for classical music:** *Through live and online activity, achieve a measurable step-change in expanding the reach of our work beyond established classical audiences.*

The orchestra's progress over the period 2022–2025 is measured against these four objectives, as well as against specific key performance indicators agreed with Arts Council England as part of the organisation's National Portfolio Organisation funding agreement. These included a series of agreed outcomes supporting Arts Council England's current 10-year strategy *Let's Create*, and agreed measures around ACE's four current Investment Principles.

The end of the 2022–2025 Business Planning cycle offers an opportunity to reflect against progress made against these four objectives over the past three years. Headline progress against each objective is set out below.

**1) Develop a vibrant digital offer worthy of the Aurora brand**

Aurora's digital offer has been transformed over the past three years.

The central initiative driving this change has been Aurora Classroom, a specially-created learning resources platform aimed at supporting the delivery of high-quality music education in primary schools. For many primary school teachers, teaching music is a daunting and time-consuming task. Aurora Classroom aims to empower all primary school teachers to deliver high impact and engaging music lessons effortlessly, regardless of their own musical abilities and confidence. Working with specialist teachers (including specialists in SEND provision), the learning team designed and built a platform which today offers four complete units of work covering EYFS, KS1, KS2 and SEND; more recently a secondary offer has also been introduced as part of the platform.

After initially experimenting with a paid-for subscription model, it soon became clear that cost was proving a barrier to adoption amongst schools with little or no budget for music provision; it also became increasingly evident that offering the platform for free would make it easier to encourage partner organisations (music hubs, venues etc) to signpost the platform to their own schools networks. In 2025 a decision was taken to open the platform up for free to all schools. The result has been a dramatic scaling up of impact, with over 1800 unique users now signed up to the platform based across more than half the local authorities in the UK and 15 countries worldwide. Within the past month alone, over 300 teachers logged into the platform and engaged with content for a combined total of over 60 hours. Industry recognition for the platform has included a shortlisting for the 2024 Music & Drama Education Awards.

Another major step forward during this period was Aurora's move into self-produced broadcast-quality concert films. These included our Orchestral Theatre staging of *The Rite of Spring*, captured in partnership with Finnish national broadcaster YLE and the Helsinki Festival. This film went on to win the Grand Prix at the Golden Prague Festival, the world's leading festival of international arts television; it was also commercially licensed to Marquee TV for global distribution.

2022–2025 also saw an increase in engaging content being shared through our updated website and particularly social media channels. An expanded library of high-quality filmed content, drawing particularly on Aurora Classroom and films of Orchestral Theatre performances, as well as bespoke marketing content, drove a significant increase in engagement (see below for further details).

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### **2) Build organisational resilience**

Over the period 2022–2025 Aurora succeeded in doubling organisational turnover (£917k in 2020/21 vs £2.3 million in 2024/25) and unrestricted reserves (£148k in March 2021 vs £431k in March 2025) compared with pre-pandemic benchmarks. Philanthropic income from individuals has more than trebled (from £64k annually in 2020/21 to around £300k in 2024/25), and is on course to grow to over £300k annually in 2025/26, driven by a match-funding campaign around the orchestra's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the receipt of two significant legacy gifts (the first in the orchestra's history). The launch of a new Philanthropy Committee is planned for early 2026, further reinforcing fundraising capacity. Seasonal cashflow challenges around the receipt in arrears of Orchestral Tax Relief have been successfully managed through a loan finance arrangement with CAF Bank.

The salaried team increased from 5 in 2020/2021 to 11 FTE by March 2025, including specialist teachers appointed on payroll to support Aurora Classroom. Executive responsibility has been devolved more evenly across an expanded senior team, with specialists now in post covering finance, learning, marketing, development and production. The board has continued to reinforce its capacity to support the orchestra with recent appointments (2025) bringing additional skills in governance, fundraising and education.

#### **3) Deliver a vibrant and distinctive programme of live activity which builds on Aurora's sector-leading reputation for quality and creativity.**

2022–2025 was a period of unprecedented creative production for Aurora, with groundbreaking projects setting a new high-water mark for our Orchestral Theatre work. These included several landmark productions for the BBC Proms and cross-art form work as part of our Southbank Centre series, a new strand of performances developed for nightclub spaces, and a first full multi-date international tour of an Orchestral Theatre production.

Particular highlights included a *Rite of Spring* (2023) production developed in collaboration with Helsinki Festival, described by *The Times* as 'one of the most breathtaking BBC Proms in history'; Beethoven's ninth symphony (2024) explored in the company of actors (including a deaf actor playing the role of Beethoven); and an Orchestra Theatre introduction to Shostakovich's fifth symphony (2025) created in partnership with leading physical theatre company Frantic Assembly. Each of these projects harnessed Aurora's distinctive memorised approach to unlock radically new possibilities for theatrical and educational impact within a concert setting.

The orchestra worked with an extraordinary range of collaborators ranging from Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Lawrence Power, Anna Meredith and Héloïse Werner to sarod player Debasmita Bhattacharya, TV actors Charlotte Ritchie and Mathew Baynton, and the hugely popular animated character Peppa Pig. Externally-produced projects included a production of Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* for Britten Pears Arts and the Royal Opera House, and the premiere of Colin Matthews' opera *A Visit with Friends* for Britten Pears Arts. Audio albums were recorded with artists including Abel Selaocoe, Nicola Benedetti and Allan Clayton.

In spring 2025 the orchestra premiered *Carnival*, a new theatrical production created by Creative Director Jane Mitchell with the collaboration of Frantic Assembly, at the Southbank Centre's inaugural Multitudes Festival. The production went on to tour to several venues in the UK and across Europe (Germany, Switzerland and Holland) as our first experiment in self-produced mid-scale theatrical touring. More generally, Aurora's growing reputation has driven a substantial increase in international touring during this period, with invitations to many of the leading concert halls in Europe including debuts at the Konzerthaus Berlin, Helsinki Music Centre, Alte Oper Frankfurt and Edinburgh International Festival.

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### **4) Realise the extraordinary potential of Aurora's programme to reach new audiences for classical music.**

Between 2022–2025 Aurora's work reached a collective live concert audience of nearly 100,000 with 233 performances staged in 8 countries. The orchestra also engaged close to 6,000 young people with its live programme for schools and CPD activity for teachers.

Of our four key objectives, evidence of progress against this goal has been hardest to pin down empirically – in particular a lack of direct access to box office data continues to pose challenges in terms of audience analysis. Nevertheless we were able to point to significant evidence of our work reaching beyond an established classical audience, including for instance:

- The take-up of Aurora Classroom nationwide, including succeeding in attracting users in more than one third of England's local authority areas defined by Arts Council England as 'Priority Places' with low levels of cultural engagement. Whilst it is currently very difficult to put an exact figure on the number of young people being reached by the platform, our estimates suggest that over 10,000 children may be benefitting from the programme nationwide in the current year.
- The success of a new immersive concert strand delivered in partnership with commercial promoter Broadwick Live, which saw 6,000+ listeners brought physically inside orchestral symphonies in London nightclub spaces Printworks and Drumsheds across three projects during the period 2022–2025. Survey data indicated that 59% of attendees at the 2023 Printworks event were under 45 and 67% were attending an Aurora event for the first time.
- Sharing work in a wide variety of community contexts with audiences who rarely if ever have the opportunity to engage with live orchestral music, ranging from Bristol care home residents to hundreds of inner-city comprehensive secondary school students in a Tottenham warehouse.
- Southbank box office data suggests that during the Southbank Centre 23/24 season, 64% of bookers were new to Aurora Orchestra and 21% of bookers to Aurora concerts were completely new to the Southbank. Far, Far Away family concerts continue to pull in the highest number of first time bookers, mostly due to the audience 'aging out' of the Early Years concert series.
- Kings Place box office data suggests that during the Kings Place 2024 season, 44% of bookers were new to Kings Place. Similarly to the Southbank Centre, the Far, Far Away series draws in a substantially higher % of first time bookers, averaging 52% in comparison to an average of 33% for the rest of the series.

Aurora's social media followers almost doubled in this period. In February 2023, our cumulative followers across all social media platforms (excluding X, which Aurora stopped using in November 2024) stood at just over 20,000. By April 2025, this figure was 38,819. A TikTok account was launched in October 2023, which now has over 3,500 followers. Marketing has focused on growing the Instagram audience in particular as that has the highest engagement of all channels. In this period Aurora's Instagram followers have grown from just over 5,000 followers to 14,700 (and as of October 2025 this figure is now over 20,000 followers).

# AURORA ORCHESTRA

## TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

### ACTIVITY REVIEW 2024/2025 – THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

In 2024/25 Aurora delivered **15 creative projects** featuring music by **44 composers**.

Aurora gave **51 public performances**, attended in person by **29,620 people** (plus many more through radio and online broadcast)



Aurora gave **39 performances for schools**, in concert halls and on-site at some schools.

**1,946 children** watched a live performance by Aurora Orchestra with their school.

More than **4,000 children** had access to Aurora Classroom resources at school.

Aurora employed **161 freelance orchestral musicians** across the year.

Aurora also collaborated with **47 creative professionals**, including actors, directors, designers, illustrators, videographers and British Sign Language interpreters.



**In the UK** Aurora performed in Norwich, Saffron Walden, Bury St Edmunds, Snape, Southampton, the Isle of Wight, Southend-on-Sea and London.

**Aurora also travelled to** La Rochelle, Zurich, Geneva, Bern, Munich, Bielefeld, Hamburg, Frankfurt, Berlin, Cologne & Bruges.



*Photos: Julian Guidera for Eroica by Heart at the QEH; Nosa Malcolm for Turner Sims Concert Hall; Sisi Burns for the BBC Proms; Edouard Maetzner for Firebird by Heart at Victoria Hall, Geneva.*

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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#### PERFORMANCE PROGRAMME REVIEW

The 2024/25 financial year generated a rich and varied artistic output comprising several of the orchestra's signature **Orchestral Theatre** projects as part of our flagship Southbank Centre series and at the BBC Proms, a vibrant programme of live activity at **Kings Place**, an ambitious **creative learning** programme encompassing live and digital activity, and a number of other collaborative projects.



*Photo by Julian Guidera*

Aurora relies on generous contributions from individuals, trusts and foundations, venue partners, statutory funders and gifts in wills to raise at least 30% of its income each year. Without this vital support, Aurora's performance programme across 2024/25 would not have been possible.

The orchestra would particularly like to thank the following organisations for their support in 2024/25: Arts Council England, the Southbank Centre's Orchestra Development Fund, the BPI Music Export Growth Scheme, Kings Place Music Foundation and The Parabola Foundation, Cockayne – Grants for the Arts, The Karlsson Játiva Charitable Foundation's Signatur Programme, the PRS Foundation, the Vaughan Williams Charitable Foundation, The Goldsmiths' Company Charity; The Radcliffe Trust; The Nugee Foundation; Chapman Charitable Trust; Three Monkeys Trust; Samuel Gardner Memorial Trust and two anonymous supporters.

During the year Aurora received entitlement to an outstanding legacy gift from Nicholas Snowman OBE, the long-term supporter, trustee and great friend of the orchestra who sadly died in 2023. Nicholas's generous gift is being used to underpin a year-long match-funding campaign to celebrate the orchestra's 20th anniversary, starting in May 2025. Aurora would like to express its sincerest thanks to Margo and Hector Snowman for their support and encouragement of this match-funding initiative.

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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Special thanks are also due to the following individuals for their support during the year: James and Jan Lawrie, Michael and Rita Laven, Louise Kaye, The estate of Michael Gwinnell, The Marchus Trust, Helen and Richard Sheldon and the Aurora Patrons, Memory Champions and Friends.

#### i) ORCHESTRAL THEATRE

In May 2024, Aurora revisited **Beethoven's Eroica Symphony** for a series of memorised performances, including a 'living programme note' introduction to the work delivered by Nicholas Collon, BBC Radio 3's Tom Service and the Aurora players. The performances toured to the Apex in Bury St Edmunds and the Queen Elizabeth Hall (where the Eroica was paired with Strauss's *Metamorphosen*), and to Snape Maltings (where the programme additionally featured Strauss's Horn Concerto No.1, performed by Aurora Principal Annemarie Federle). Aurora additionally gave two immersive performances of the Eroica at Norwich Cathedral, during which Nicholas Collon gave a spoken introduction to the work, and audience members could move and sit among the orchestra's players.

*"An amazing and unique experience [...] I have never felt so included in a classical performance before – it felt how music SHOULD be – accessible to all."*

*"I could see from the reaction of the kids in the audience, who were invited to sit amongst the musicians, it was something that they are unlikely to ever forget."*

*"The musicians played with great joy, which communicated to the audience. Allowing people and especially children to sit amongst the players was great. This is a great way to engage children and young people with classical music. We need these future audiences."*

– Audience feedback, Norwich performances



Queen Elizabeth Hall photos by Julian Guidera; Norwich Cathedral photos by Luke Witcomb

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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In August, the orchestra joined forces with the BBC Singers and National Youth Choir of Great Britain to perform **Beethoven's monumental Ninth Symphony** from memory, in signature Aurora style. The theatrical first half featured a new script by Jane Mitchell, drawing on Beethoven's conversation books to build a fascinating picture of Beethoven's life as he composed his final symphony in the midst of hearing loss. Alongside the Aurora musicians, the script was brought to life by actor Rhiannon May – who brought her own lived experience of deafness to the project – and actor/BSL interpreter Thomas Simper. With performances at Saffron Hall and the Royal Albert Hall as part of the BBC Proms, the performance received an outstanding reaction from both press and audiences, garnering 5 stars in *The Times* (the orchestra's eighth consecutive 5-star *Times* review of BBC Proms projects), *The Guardian*, the *arts desk* and *Broadway World*. The BBC Proms performance was also televised on BBC Four.

*"Music and emotion made electrifyingly visual."* – Erica Jeal, *The Guardian*, ★★★★★

*"As an explosion of joy and expression of humanity, it couldn't be bettered."* – Rebecca Franks, *The Times*, ★★★★★

*"Aurora deserve praise for consistently upholding the principle that music has its stories that can and need to be told, and told well. Through sticking to that principle, they created an extraordinary, genuinely unforgettable evening."* – Sebastian Scotney, *the Arts Desk*, ★★★★★

*"This is what music education and performance should look/sound like."*

*"Utterly wonderful. Such joy, vitality, love between the players and between them and the audience."*

*"The opening sequence was amusing and illuminating and the symphony itself so thrilling – goosebumps all round."* – Audience feedback



Photos by Sisi Burns for the BBC Proms

In October, Aurora revived its memorised production of **Stravinsky's *Firebird*** in two very different contexts. The orchestra gave concert performances at the Queen Elizabeth Hall and Snape Maltings, in a programme which also featured Ravel's Piano Concerto with soloist Alexandre Tharaud and an introductory presentation to the *Firebird* with BBC Radio 3's Tom Service. The orchestra also continued its experiments in amplified immersive performance at the DRUMSHEDS event space in Tottenham. Across two performances, more than 1,200 audience members were invited to experience Stravinsky's *Firebird* and Ravel's *Boléro* from inside the orchestra: utilising soundscape technology, the immersive set-up allowed audience members to circulate around the space, get up close to the instrumentalists and explore the performance from different angles. To frame the two pieces being performed, Aurora commissioned new electronic music from composer Sam Swallow, new text from Kate Wakeling summarising the story of the *Firebird* (recorded as a voiceover by actor Naomi Frederick), and imagery and animation from Stanton Media, inspired by the original set and costume designs for the *Firebird*.

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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Aurora also toured to Switzerland for the first time, giving concert hall performances of the *Firebird* and *Boléro* in Geneva, Bern and Zurich.

*"This educational warmup was not merely entertaining, it was revelatory, and greatly enhanced the standing and scoreless performance, which, when it came, was electrifying"*

– Christopher Sallon, *Seen and Heard International*, review of Queen Elizabeth Hall performance

*"This exhilarating programme was exceptional even by the standards of the conductor Nicholas Collon and his adventurous instrumentalists [...] Looking around at an audience that seemed full of young, curious punters I saw expressions of wonder and awe."*

– Richard Morrison, *The Times*, ★★★★★ review of DRUMSHEDS performance

*"Getting to experience the full symphonic power of Aurora in this dynamic setting was so educational and to be honest, really emotional. It was an evening full of energy, innovation, and the magic of live music."*

– Emma Carney, *The Live Review*, ★★★★★ review of DRUMSHEDS performance



Queen Elizabeth Hall photo by Julian Guidera; DRUMSHEDS photo by Jake Davis

In February, Aurora was joined by rising star cellist, vocalist and composer **Abel Selaocoe** for two sold-out performances at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. This joyful programme paired Selaocoe's own cello concerto *Four Spirits* with a memorised performance of Beethoven's dance-filled Symphony No.7. A jubilant celebration of the composer's South African roots, Selaocoe's cello concerto *Four Spirits* combines virtuosic writing for solo cello and percussion with vibrant orchestral music and communal singing, moving seamlessly across musical styles and traditions. *Four Spirits* redefines the parameters of the cello, the concerto format, and of orchestral music more widely, and is one of a rare number of works that incorporates audience participation (in the form of communal singing) in a way that feels both profoundly moving and musically authentic. Aurora Players were required to sing at various moments throughout the piece, as well as responding to Selaocoe's improvisations. The performance at the Queen Elizabeth Hall was recorded for release on Warner Classics – the first commercial recording of *Four Spirits*. In addition to London performance, the project reached audiences of more than 8,400 people as part of Aurora's biggest international tour to date, with performances at seven venues across Germany and Belgium including debut performances in Bielefeld, Frankfurt, Berlin and Bruges. The Beethoven symphony also toured to Saffron Hall, paired with Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 27 with soloist Imogen Cooper.

*"It was a breath of fresh air – exciting, unpredictable, inspiring and surprising. Absolutely loved Abel Selaocoe and his collaboration with Aurora Orchestra. And what a special thing to hear an orchestra sing and for us the audience to sing!"*

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### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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*"The most amazing orchestral performance I've ever experienced. It has inspired me to love classical music more."*

*"The combination of Abel Selaocoe and his innate and generous musicality and the Aurora orchestra who bring the music to life and are the most dynamic visual and audial orchestra I have ever heard was utterly spellbinding. And the smaller venue of the QE Hall made the concert that much more intimate. Loved every second. Cried and felt alive."*

*"[Abel Selaocoe's] ability to involve the audience in the performance was impressive to say the least and made the occasion very powerful and very moving."*

*"Both Abel Selaocoe and the Aurora Orchestra are mesmerising and I'd go out of my way to see both/either again. It was also great to be part of an age diverse and really engaged audience – that added to the enjoyment of the experience."*

**– Audience feedback, Queen Elizabeth Hall performance**



*Photos by Julian Guidera*

During the year, creative development took place for Aurora's most ambitious theatrical project to date: a new production built around a staging of Saint-Saëns' *Carnival of the Animals*, in collaboration with physical theatre company Frantic Assembly. Boldly pushing the boundaries of orchestral performance and redefining what the role of an orchestral musician can be, the production reimagines Saint-Saëns' *Carnival* in a playful and darkly humorous way, including a new commission by British composer Richard Ayres.

In March, the Aurora players and creative team worked with Frantic Assembly for a week of creative development workshops to devise the staging, ahead of rehearsals and premiere performances in May 2025. With the Aurora players fully integrated into the theatricality of the performance, during this week they explored skills in movement, storytelling, interacting with set / props and performing physical theatre lifts – with instruments – as well as workshopping Ayres's new commission.

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*Photos by Stanton Media.*

Throughout the year, Aurora's Orchestral Theatre strand continued to offer outstanding opportunities for freelance orchestral players to develop as individual and collective artists. Experimentation, risk-taking and learning new skills – all in the pursuit of achieving artistic excellence – are woven throughout these projects, offering players unique opportunities to step considerably outside of their comfort zones. What's more, feedback from players overwhelmingly indicates that they enjoy these experiences. Below is some of the feedback received from Aurora players about projects they have taken part in this year:

*"Best, most alive, most exciting and musically rewarding concert I've ever done"*

*"The environment that Aurora has created allows musicians to strive for musical excellence and achieve it."*

*"These memorised projects are some of the most musically fulfilling work I do"*

*"Playing from memory always brings a degree of satisfaction that isn't always achievable in 'normal' orchestral playing"*

*"I felt a freedom of expression I've not felt before"*

*"I learnt so much memorising the music for the first time. It opened my eyes (literally) to visual cues and made me much more aware of the bigger picture"*

*"I haven't done a project like this before. It encouraged me to apply myself and step up to challenges."*

*"As ever, so rewarding to be challenged (and sadly so rare otherwise in our profession)"*

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*"I felt a huge sense of pride for myself and my colleagues. We overcame a huge challenge together and produced two beautiful performances"*

*"I learnt a lot from my fellow section members"*

*"There's a genuine community in this orchestra and the sense of achievement is warmly and evenly shared"*

*"I feel the experience positively impacted not only on my playing, but also on my general sense of wellbeing!"*

#### ii) KINGS PLACE SERIES

In its sixteenth year as Resident Ensemble at Kings Place, Aurora presented a varied programme of concerts, many of them as part of the venue's year-long 'Unwrapped' programming strands (focused on Scotland in 2024 and Earth in 2025).

**Outlanders** in April 2024 was a special collaborative programme inspired by Celtic migrants to the Atlantic coast. Aurora's musicians were joined by Edinburgh-based folk singer **Robyn Stapleton** for her Kings Place debut, Vermont-born folk singer-songwriter and instrumentalist **Sam Amidon**, and American composer, conductor and arranger **Nico Muhly**. The concert journeyed from Scottish shores to North America through arrangements by Muhly of traditional folk songs and ballads, with many arrangements having been created especially for this project. Music by Anna Meredith, James MacMillan and Paul Simon completed the programme. The programme appealed to a wide range of audiences – 63% of audience members who responded to the post-concert survey were attending their first Aurora concert.

In September Aurora was joined by fiddler **Donald Grant** and friends for an evening of traditional Gaelic and contemporary string music. The evening featured the world premiere of a new work by Grant, *Thuit an Oichche Oirnm (The Night Overtook Us)*, inspired by the hardship, beauty and community spirit of winter in the Highlands and Islands. Traditional tunes again played an important part in this programme, with several arrangements of traditional Scottish tunes and Gaelic Songs, as well as music by David Fennessy and Ailie Robertson. November saw the production of ***The Wolf, the Duck and the Mouse*** at Kings Place for schools and families. Based on the popular children's book and with music by Martin Suckling, this production is a 40-minute musical adventure for orchestra and narrator aimed at 4-8-year-olds. With audience participation woven throughout the score, Suckling immerses listeners in musical ideas to provide an entertaining introduction to orchestral instruments. Aurora delivered one sold-out show for families, and a second performance attended by children from local primary schools in Camden, conducted by rising star Chloe Rooke. Also in November, Aurora Principal Players **Maia Cabeza** (Violin) and **Sébastien van Kuijk** (Cello) were joined by revered Scottish pianist **Steven Osborne** for an evening of French music in Hall One.

Aurora opened its 2025 season at Kings Place and contribution to the 'Earth Unwrapped' programme with a collaboration with the **BBC Singers**, featuring music by Kim Porter, Mahler and Britten alongside Fauré's *Requiem*, conducted by Nicholas Collon.

*"Stapleton's group of Scottish songs [...] were beautifully delivered; the settings Muhly supplied for them were always immensely respectful, and at pains to preserve the integrity of the original."*

– **Andrew Clements, review of Outlanders, The Guardian, ★★★★★**

*"This chamber-scaled Requiem never felt underpowered. With these forces, the tender fervour of Fauré's thoroughly undogmatic quest for post-mortem transcendence had every chance to shine."*

– **Boyd Tonkin, review of BBC Singers collaboration, the Arts Desk, ★★★★★**

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*Photos by Monika S. Jakubowska (left) and Julian Guidera (right)*

#### iii) CREATIVE LEARNING

Young people have been at the heart of Aurora's mission since the orchestra's earliest days. Aurora aims to create music experiences for young people that are imaginative, accessible and impactful in the long term. Activity during 2024/25 included 'Far, Far Away' storytelling performances for families and schools, which reached more than 1,700 children across London, Southampton, the Isle of Wight and Southend-on-Sea; a large-scale immersive production for more than 500 secondary school children at DRUMSHEDS; and the continued expansion of the Aurora Classroom learning resources, which bring the orchestra into the heart of primary schools across the UK. With every project, teachers are supported to grow their practice and embed music in their school for the future.



*Photo by Nosa Malcolm for Turner Sims Concert Hall*

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**Aurora Classroom** brings music of the highest quality directly into classrooms, via a digital platform expertly developed by Aurora's creative learning team and education specialists. For many primary school teachers, teaching music can be a daunting and time-consuming task. Aurora Classroom is a platform that empowers all primary school teachers to deliver high impact and engaging music lessons effortlessly, regardless of their own musical abilities and confidence.

The Aurora Classroom resources remained a key focus of the orchestra's creative learning programme in 2024/25. April 2024 saw the launch of **Discover Beethoven**, the first unit of resources for children in Key Stage 2, plus bespoke activities for SEND learners. Presented by Linton Stephens, the unit is based on film and audio recordings of Aurora performing Beethoven's Symphony No. 6. Children learn about the interrelated dimensions of music, explore how music can express emotion, and develop musical skills and understanding through a variety of films, songs and stories.

The logo for 'Discover Beethoven' features the word 'Discover' in a smaller green font above the word 'Beethoven' in a larger, bold green font. A stylized green bridge graphic is positioned above the 'Beethoven' text.

*Photos of Aurora Classroom lesson by Stanton Media; illustration by Annalisa Salis.*

The 2024/25 financial year also saw the development of **Stories in Sound** – Aurora Classroom's second unit of resources for children in Key Stage 2 – ahead of its launch in April 2025. Taking inspiration from Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, the unit has a strong focus on composition – an area of weakness highlighted in Ofsted's 2023 Music subject report – providing resources for children to create their own composition and story. At the heart of the unit is Aurora's staging of *Symphonie fantastique*, recorded at the BBC Proms in 2019. Stories in Sound combines excerpts from the BBC Proms recording with newly recorded material featuring Aurora's musicians, and a newly commissioned story from Kate Wakeling which follows the shape of *Symphonie fantastique* and is inspired by Berlioz's music. The story is presented as a 10-minute film combining graphic novel-style animation (with illustrations by Matthew Dunn) with live action (captured and edited by Stanton Media), narrated by

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Lucy Drever. The story forms the inspiration for many of the activities in the unit, as children compose new music to continue the story. The unit also features two new songs to learn, with words by Kate Wakeling and music by Iain Farrington, and a newly commissioned arrangement of the Waltz from *Symphonie fantastique* to support instrumental performance in schools.

An estimated 4,000+ children engaged with the Aurora Classroom resources at school across the 2024/25 financial year, with teachers continuing to share excellent feedback. In an online survey of participating teachers in June 2024, 100% of respondents agreed that pupils had shown greater engagement in music lessons as a result of Aurora Classroom; that children from all backgrounds and educational starting points can access the content of Aurora Classroom; and that Aurora Classroom has supported, strengthened or developed their pedagogy. Feedback included:

*"We love the videos, they are pitched perfectly. The children have really enjoyed watching them and teachers are beginning to be more secure in delivering lessons themselves having watched the videos."  
"I like that it is broken down into small steps even for non-specialists to understand and I also like that the lesson plans are included for all lessons."*

*"Flexible, very engaging for children. The unit [on] Beethoven is particularly good!"*

*"I feel that my pedagogical approach to teaching music in EYFS has really benefitted"*

*"Teachers have gained in confidence; feeling empowered to teach lessons themselves without using the videos."*

*"We have children talking with more confidence about their musical learning, using musical terminology and accessing instruments more freely."*

While the programme continued to receive excellent feedback from teachers, progress with securing subscriptions from schools was slower than expected; the usual challenges of engaging schools – including lack of budget, intense pressure on teachers and relative under-prioritisation of music compared to other subjects – were compounded by the change in music hub structure in summer 2024, causing hubs to pause their decision-making and spending. In response, and following much consideration of Aurora Classroom's business model, the orchestra decided to open up the Aurora Classroom resources for free from April 2025 as part of the orchestra's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, removing any barrier posed by the subscription cost.

The Aurora Learning team continued to offer high-quality **teacher CPD sessions** and support to teachers throughout the year, including those using the Aurora Classroom resources and those attending a schools' performance. These included two online sessions tailored to teachers who are new to Aurora Classroom; a webinar session exploring Composition in the Primary Classroom; a bespoke in-person session for schools taking part in the Thurrock Trailblazer programme; and CPD sessions linked to Mendelssohn and the Moving Machines, Bach and the Noisy Night-Time and Inside Stravinsky at DRUMSHEDS (see next two sections). In total, 96 teachers took part in a CPD session during the year.

Aurora continued its series of Far, Far Away storytelling performances for young children, families and schools with two projects, **Mendelssohn and the Moving Machines** in June / July 2024, and **Bach and the Noisy Night-Time** in February 2025. Far, Far Away introduces children aged 3-7 to classical music in an immersive and engaging way. Each production combines new arrangements of a single composer's music, performed by Aurora's world-class musicians, with an original story by children's poet Kate Wakeling and a new song to learn during the show. Led by an experienced storyteller, the shows are fun and playful, while offering several opportunities for audience participation and meaningful skills progression in music (including singing, dancing and exploring rhythm and pulse).

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### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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Photos by Monika S Jakubowska

**Mendelssohn and the Moving Machines** is Aurora's first 'Far, Far Away' show devoted to the music of a female composer, combining special arrangements of Fanny Mendelssohn's music for piano, bassoon and clarinet with a new story exploring different modes of travel and transport. With an engaging and interactive set (designed by Lily O'Hara) and several moments of audience participation (including singing, movement, and opportunities for children to 'conduct' the musicians), the show provides an inspirational and fun introduction to classical instruments. In June and July, activity included:

- Two days' of performances for schools in the South West, including in-school performances on the Isle of Wight, and a day of performances at Turner Sims Concert Hall for local primary schools, nurseries and childminder groups
- Five performances at Kings Place for local Camden and Islington primary schools
- As part of Aurora's ongoing partnership with Westminster Special Schools, a day of child-led workshops at QEII Jubilee School, plus a day of workshops at College Park School's new satellite site in Pimlico. These performances were led by Patxi del Amo and were adapted according to pupils' needs (for example, with more sensory activities).
- Performances for families in Hall Two at Kings Place across two weekends.

*"Today was so wonderful. Everything about the music, the performers, how everyone interacted with our children and how accommodating the venue was amazing. I wish we could come every week. The children got so much out of it."*

*"Some of the children are not able to attend performances like this outside of school, so it was a really significant experience for them."*

– **Teacher feedback**

*"We were all truly blown away [by] every member of the cast, your skill and ability to seamlessly adapt to our children's needs and vibes!"*

*"Aurora has an excellent understanding of our students' needs."*

– **SEND teacher feedback**

*"The quality matched the level I have seen [from Aurora] on the concert hall stage before, and it's so good to see that all audiences are equally valued in terms of the care and work that goes into putting together your offer and programmes."*

– **Peer review feedback**

In February, Aurora revived a classic Far, Far Away production, **Bach and the Noisy Night-Time**, for a schools' tour reaching London, Southampton and Southend-on-Sea. This production combines

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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arrangements of Bach's Goldberg Variations for flute, cello and harp with a story about three musicians who are unable to sleep. More than 650 children attended a performance with their school:

- Aurora continued to build partnerships in the South West with a further day of performances for schools, nurseries and childminder groups at Turner Sims Concert Hall in Southampton; this included one group from a school for children with visual impairments
- Four performances for schools at the Southbank Centre's Clore Ballroom
- Further visits to Aurora's partner SEND schools in London: College Park's satellite unit at Hallfield Primary, QEII Jubilee School, and TreeHouse School in Haringey. Performances were adapted according to individual pupils' needs and strengths.
- Aurora also visited two special schools in Southend for the first time: Lancaster School and The St Christopher School.



*Photo by Julian Guidera*

*"[The experience] gave the children the chance to see formal venues are inclusive."*

*"I liked how they had a harp because there are very few opportunities for pupils to experience large instruments like that."*

*"Most of them want to attend another show - many of them hadn't been to a concert before as we selected pupil premium pupils who often don't have extra curricular opportunities."*

*"Using the training materials gave us more confidence to teach the children about music and the possibility to introduce different genre of music."*

**– Teacher feedback**

*"The staff involved in the performance/organisation were very professional, understanding and happy to adapt aspects of the show to suit our learners' needs. They were very engaging with our pupils which was much appreciated."*

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*"Amazing from start to finish. We need more of it."*

– **SEND teacher feedback**

Across the 2024/25 financial year, Far, Far Away reached 1,284 school pupils and a further 442 children through public family performances.

In October Aurora delivered its first immersive, memorised orchestral performance for secondary school children at **DRUMSHEDS**. With the orchestra spread out across the warehouse space on podiums, 562 children were given a unique opportunity to experience Stravinsky's *Firebird* and Ravel's *Boléro* from 'inside' the orchestra, standing up close to Aurora's musicians as they performed from memory. Pupils joined from schools in Haringey, Hackney, Camden, Barnet, Lambeth, Wandsworth, Redbridge, Essex, Cambridge, Suffolk and Surrey. The schools were arranged into three large groups, which were 'rotated' around the event space between movements, enabling pupils to experience the performance from all angles.



*Photo by Jake Davis for DRUMSHEDS*

*"The students loved the whole experience – it was such an engaging way to experience an orchestra and they loved the programme choices. The players were really friendly and our students loved getting up close to the instruments."*

*"The pupils said the immersive aspect made it much more engaging. They loved being up close to the musicians. Many of them were initially sceptical about this music as they lack the exposure, but they all loved the experience"*

*"The huge smiles on their faces when the percussion got going spoke volumes."*

– **Teacher feedback**

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

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Photos by Jake Davis for DRUMSHEDS

*"I'm not sure they will ever forget this experience. The vastness of the venue and seeing (for many) their first orchestral concert will be a long lasting memory."*

*"The experience was amazing and without changing it at all I know it will have made a lasting impact on the students. It was absolutely incredible to feel so much a part of the orchestra and inside the sound. It was really inspiring."*

*"Every single student was affected on some level."*

– Teacher feedback

### iii) OTHER COLLABORATIONS

This year Aurora collaborated on two projects with violinist **Patricia Kopatchinskaja**, one of Southbank Centre's Resident Artists for 2024. For **Everyday Non-sense** in April 2024, the concert stage was transformed into a living room where Kopatchinskaja and members of Aurora Orchestra performed music by Ligeti, Cage, Mozart and more, finding music in the most unexpected everyday places. In March 2025, the orchestra performed alongside Kopatchinskaja at BOZAR in Brussels for **Dies Irae**, a theatrical orchestral programme devised and directed by Kopatchinskaja as a personal response to climate change, featuring music from Lotti and Dowland to Ustvolskaya, Jimi Hendrix and George Crumb, as well as Kopatchinskaja herself.

*"Everything was performed with razor-sharp timing, and the show was cunningly contrived to move from calmness to hilarious frenzy. The last few minutes, with Patkop shrieking nonsense poetry and the orchestra jabbing and feinting in support, brought the house down. To tread such an exact line between desultory chaos and precisely controlled nonsense must have taken hours of patient rehearsal. As the Dadaists knew, being silly is actually a serious business."*

– Ivan Hewett, *The Telegraph*, ★★★★★

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

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*Photo by Marco Borggreve*

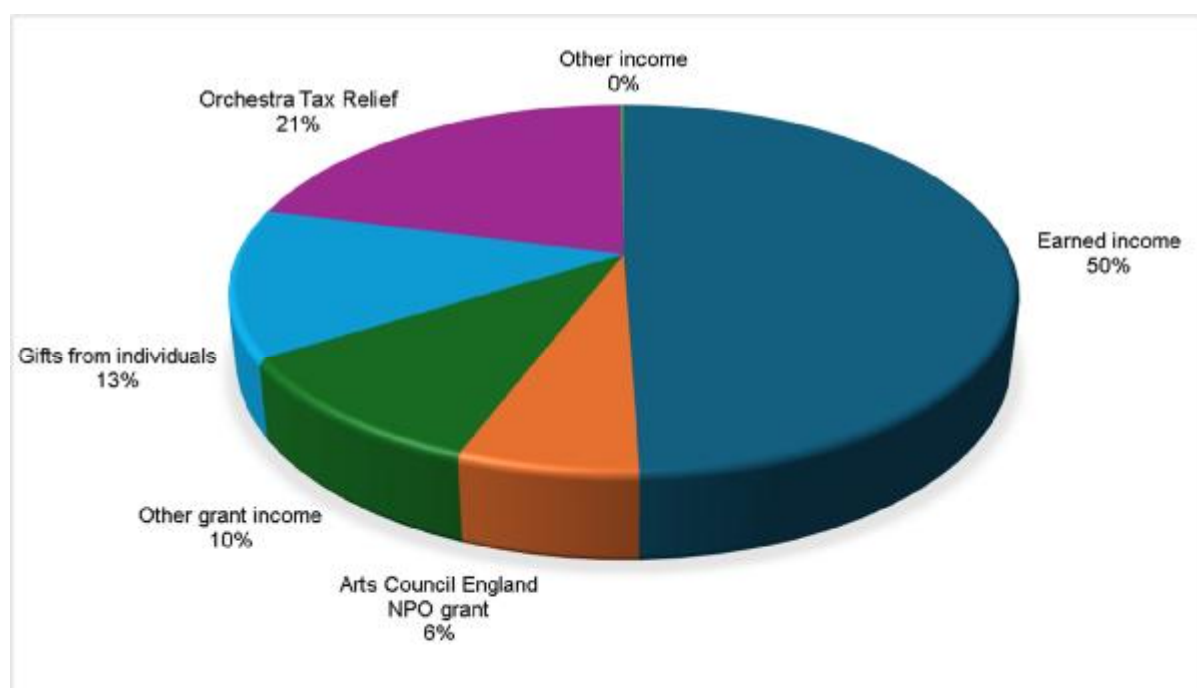
## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

#### FINANCIAL REVIEW

The 2024/25 financial year saw Aurora's turnover exceed £2 million for the first time, with a net surplus for the period of £229,188. The orchestra's income mix comprised a mixture of earned and contributed income as follows:

	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Earned income	£1,130,100 (50%)	£800,568 (46%)
Arts Council England NPO grant	£143,519 (6%)	£143,519 (8%)
Other grant income	£235,000 (10%)	£180,500 (10%)
Gifts from individuals	£297,511 (13%)	£152,541 (9%)
Orchestra Tax Relief	£474,485 (21%)	£452,360 (26%)
Other income	£3,835 (<1%)	£1,849 (<1%)



The impact of Orchestra Tax Relief at the higher rate (50%) introduced following the pandemic continued to be felt, allowing Aurora to plan larger-scale, more creative and higher-quality work. The news that the rate of OTR would be set permanently at 45% from 1 April 2025 rather than tapering back to the previous level of 25% was warmly welcomed by all at Aurora.

A decision was taken towards the end of the financial year to stop charging subscription income for the Aurora Classroom online learning platform from 1 April 2025. Whilst these subscriptions had generated a modest commercial income stream for the orchestra (£6,040 in 2023/24; £6,439 in 2024/25) this had plateaued and it had become clear that even a heavily subsidised subscription price was proving a clear barrier to take up amongst primary schools with little or no budget for music education. As a consequence the platform was opened up free of charge to all users from 1 April 2025, since when subscriptions have increased dramatically, with users in more than half of the UK's local authority areas.

During the year Aurora disbursed £1.36 million in direct project costs (2023/24: £1.2 million), representing 66% of overall expenditure (2023/24: 64%), the majority of which comprised fees to freelance players and other artists, with £461,067 or 22% (2023/24: £435,184 / 24%) spent on salaried staff costs.

## **AURORA ORCHESTRA**

### **TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

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Contributed income continued to grow both in real terms and as a proportion of turnover, with income from individual giving reaching almost £300k for the year. The increase from the prior year (£152,541) was driven in part by a generous legacy gift accrued for and then received shortly after the end of the 2024/25 financial year from the estate of Nicholas Snowman OBE, used as the starting point for a 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary match-funding campaign launched in spring 2025. In addition to Arts Council England's ongoing core support, Aurora received grants from funders including the Garfield Weston Foundation, the BPI Music Export Growth Scheme, the Karlsson Játiva Charitable Foundation's Signatur programme for creative learning activity, the Parabola Foundation towards the Kings Place programme, and grants from The John R Murray Trust, the New Berlioz Edition Trust, The Goldsmiths' Company Charity and an anonymous foundation in support of Aurora Classroom.

The orchestra's balance sheet as at 31 March 2025 showed unrestricted reserves at £431,156 as well as £35,000 in restricted grant funding carried forward for expenditure in 2025/26 (2023/24: £191,968 unrestricted reserves; £45,000 restricted).

#### **RESERVES POLICY**

The Trustees understand the need to build up sufficient reserves to provide a degree of financial security for the orchestra's ongoing operations. The Board currently sets its unrestricted reserves target at 6 months' worth of core overhead expenditure (equivalent to £304,989 for the 2024/25 financial year).

At the balance sheet date, unrestricted reserves were £431,156 (2023/24: £191,968), or 141% of the board's target level. Free reserves (being unrestricted reserves less fixed assets) were £383,354 (2023/24: £139,307).

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

The Trustees are committed to ensuring that the orchestra takes steps to minimise its environmental impact. This includes regular reporting to Julie's Bicycle on the carbon footprint of its artistic programme and taking environmental impact into account when planning touring activity (e.g. booking train over air travel wherever possible for international tours).

#### **FUNDRAISING DISCLOSURES**

The Trustees have considered the provisions of section 13 of the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016, and note the following:

- Aurora raises funds in support of its programme through philanthropic gifts from individuals and grants from trusts and foundations.
- During the financial year 2024/25 the charity did not employ the services of any external fundraiser(s).
- The charity received no complaints about fundraising activity during this financial period.
- The charity makes every effort to protect vulnerable people and other members of the public from behaviour which is an unreasonable intrusion on a person's privacy; is unreasonably persistent; and/or placed undue pressure on a person to give money or other property.

Following a thoroughgoing review of the orchestra's data processing policies in light of the introduction of the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2018, an updated organisational Privacy Policy is published on the orchestra's website.

#### **FUTURE PLANS**

Aurora continues to plan a vibrant programme of future activity based around its dual London residencies at Southbank Centre and Kings Place. Highlights include:

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### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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- Signature Orchestral Theatre projects including programmes built as part of Aurora's self-promoted series at Southbank Centre, including a revival of its *Rite of Spring* project as the opening event in the 2026 edition of the Multitudes cross-art form festival, and new projects in preparation for the BBC Proms in 2026 and 2027
- Major national and international touring projects including an 11-date tour in April 2026 around the same *Rite of Spring* project, including a debut appearance at the Berliner Philharmonie and a return to the Migros series in Switzerland
- The launch of a new informal concert format emerging out of Aurora's distinctive memorised performance practice, designed to make orchestral music accessible and relevant for a wider variety of community audiences ranging from school children to care home residents
- Performances as part of Kings Place's year-long 'Earth Unwrapped' (2025) and Memory Unwrapped' (2025) seasons
- The launch of new digital content for the Aurora Classroom platform based around the orchestra's recent *Carnival* project, and ongoing CPD training for teachers
- An expanded programme of schools' performances including not only the orchestra's ongoing programme of work for EYFS and KS1 pupils but also new live projects aimed at Key Stages 2 and 3.

### TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT

The Trustees (who are also directors of the charity for purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable group will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO AUDITOR

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' report is approved has confirmed that:

- as far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**

**TRUSTEES' REPORT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

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This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies' regime in Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees on 18 December 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

**Dame Elizabeth Forgan (Chair)**

## **AURORA ORCHESTRA**

### **INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

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#### **Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of Aurora Orchestra ("the charitable company") for the year ended 31 March 2025, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

#### **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group and parent charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### **Conclusions relating to going concern**

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

#### **Other information**

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

**Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report, which includes the directors' report for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

**Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the charitable company has not kept adequate and proper accounting records or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the charitable company's financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies exemption in preparing the directors' report.

**Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the preparation of the financial statements of the charitable company, and the procedures that management adopt to ensure compliance. We have considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements, and in particular we identified: the Companies Act 2006, Financial Reporting Standard 102 and the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

We have also identified other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the amounts or disclosures within the financial statements, but for which compliance is fundamental to the charitable company's operations and to avoid material penalties, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), employment law, health and safety, and taxation legislation particularly concerning Orchestra Tax Relief.

Having reviewed the laws and regulations applicable to the charitable company, we designed and performed audit procedures to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence. Specifically, we:

- Selected a team with sector experience to perform the audit;
- Obtained an understanding of the charitable company's procedures for ensuring compliance with laws and regulations;
- Obtained and reviewed internal policy and procedure documents;
- Made enquiries of management and the trustees regarding whether they were aware of any actual or suspected incidences of non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- Obtained and reviewed meeting minutes;
- Reviewed legal expenses accounts for indications of any possible non-compliance; and
- Reviewed the completeness and accuracy of any disclosures made in the financial statements.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including considering how fraud might occur. This was performed by:

- Making an assessment of the charitable company's control environment, systems and controls including identifying any weaknesses and considering the risk of management override of controls;
- Considering whether there are any incentives or opportunities for management to manipulate financial results;
- Obtaining and evaluating the trustees' assessment of the risk of fraud, and enquiring as to whether they are aware of any actual or suspected incidences of fraud;
- Reviewing the accounting policies and accounting estimates for signs of management bias; and
- Identifying key risks relating to irregularities as relating to player payments, the recognition and cut-off of grant income, the Orchestra Tax Relief claim, and the identification and application of restricted funds.

We then designed audit procedures in response to the risks identified, including performing detailed substantive testing with appropriate risk factors on player payments, grant income, a detailed review of the Orchestra Tax Relief claim including vouching to supporting evidence, and substantive testing of the expenditure applied to all material restricted funds.

The audit has been planned and performed in accordance with auditing standards, however, because of the inherent limitations of audit procedures there remains a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those that may lead to material misstatements in the financial statements. There are inherent difficulties in detecting irregularities, and irregularities that result from fraud may be more difficult to detect than irregularities that result from error, for example due to concealment, override of controls, collusion or misrepresentations. In addition, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less audit procedures are able to identify it.

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

#### Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company, the charitable company's members as a body and the charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

**James Mathieson FCA**  
**Senior Statutory Auditor**  
For and on behalf of:  
**WP Audit Services LLP**  
Chartered Accountants  
Statutory Auditors

Date: 19 December 2025

North House, 198 High Street  
Tonbridge  
Kent TN9 1BE

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
(INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds 2025 £</b>	<b>Restricted funds 2025 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2025 £</b>	<b>Total funds 2024 £</b>
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	<b>3</b>	461,030	215,000	676,030	476,560
Charitable activities	<b>4</b>	1,093,381	36,719	1,130,100	800,568
Orchestra and Film Tax Relief credit		474,485	-	474,485	452,360
Investments		3,835	-	3,835	1,849
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,032,731</b>	<b>251,719</b>	<b>2,284,450</b>	<b>1,731,337</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	<b>5</b>	167,617	-	167,617	143,892
Charitable activities	<b>6</b>	1,625,926	261,719	1,887,645	1,693,507
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,793,543</b>	<b>261,719</b>	<b>2,055,262</b>	<b>1,837,399</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>239,188</b>	<b>( 10,000)</b>	<b>229,188</b>	<b>( 106,062)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward:		191,968	45,000	236,968	343,030
Total funds carried forward		431,156	35,000	466,156	236,968

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**BALANCE SHEET  
AS AT 31 MARCH 2025**

	Note	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Intangible assets	11		31,999		35,676
Tangible assets	12		15,803		16,985
			47,802		52,661
<b>Current assets</b>					
Stocks		-		597	
Debtors	13	907,609		734,826	
Cash at bank and in hand		308,831		29,635	
		1,216,440		765,058	
<b>Creditors:</b> amounts falling due within one year	14	( 318,384)		( 376,912)	
<b>Net current assets</b>			898,056		388,146
<b>Creditors:</b> amounts falling due after more than one year	15		( 479,702)		( 203,839)
<b>Total net assets</b>			466,156		236,968
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>					
Unrestricted funds			431,156		191,968
Restricted funds			35,000		45,000
<b>Total funds</b>	16		466,156		236,968

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 18 December 2025 and were signed on its behalf by:

**Dame Elizabeth Forgan (Chair)**

**Company number: 8523283**

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities:</b>			
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	A	4,757	( 118,589)
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>			
Purchase of intangible fixed assets		-	( 36,771)
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		( 3,085)	( 6,326)
Investment income		3,835	1,849
Net cash used in investing activities		750	( 41,248)
<b>Cash flows from financing activities:</b>			
Repayments of borrowing		( 76,311)	( 64,827)
Cash inflows from new borrowing		350,000	140,000
Net cash provided by financing activities		273,689	75,173
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		279,196	( 84,664)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		29,635	114,299
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	B	308,831	29,635
<b>A. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities</b>			
Net income/(expenditure) per the Statement of Financial Activities		229,188	( 106,062)
Depreciation and amortisation charges		7,944	5,165
Investment income		( 3,835)	( 1,849)
Decrease in stocks		597	-
Increase in debtors		( 172,783)	( 8,507)
Decrease in creditors		( 56,354)	( 7,336)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		4,757	( 118,589)
<b>B. Analysis of changes in net debt</b>			
		<b>Bank loans</b>	
	<b>Cash at bank</b>	<b>Due within one year</b>	<b>Due after one year</b>
	£	£	£
At the beginning of the year	29,635	( 76,311)	( 203,839)
Cash flows	279,196	-	( 273,689)
Non-cash changes: maturity analysis	-	2,174	( 2,174)
At the end of the year	308,831	( 74,137)	( 479,702)

## **1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

### **Basis of preparation of the financial statements**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Aurora Orchestra meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

The financial statements are presented in pounds sterling and rounded to the nearest pound.

### **Going concern**

The Trustees have assessed that there are no significant doubts in the company's ability to continue as a going concern. As a result, the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

### **Income**

Income from donations and grants is recognised when the charity is entitled to the funds, the receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably. For donations, this is usually on receipt. For grants, this is usually when a formal offer is made in writing, unless the grant contains terms and conditions outside of the charity's control which must be met before the charity is entitled to the funds, in which case the income is recognised when the conditions have been met. Where grants are received in response to a proposal including a budgeted timescale, such that the timescale for the expenditure is implicit in the grant agreement, the income is recognised in accordance with that timescale.

Income from legacies is recognised when the charity is entitled to the income, receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably. It is normally considered probable when there has been a grant of probate, the executors have established that there are sufficient assets in the estate to pay the legacy, and any conditions attached are within the control of the charity or have already been met.

Income from charitable activities is recognised in the period in which the relevant services are delivered and is stated net of VAT. Income from performance-related grants in connection with the charitable activities is recognised to the extent that the performance-related criteria have been met.

### **Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised on the accruals basis when a present legal or constructive obligation exists at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation, and the amount can be estimated reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on the basis of estimated usage, calculated as the proportion of directly attributable staff costs.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

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**1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES continued**

Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure incurred by the charity to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities events and non-charitable trading.

Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the charity's objectives.

**Fund accounting**

General funds are unrestricted funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees.

Designated funds are a subset of unrestricted funds and represent funds set aside by the Trustees for specific future purposes or projects.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular purposes.

**Intangible fixed assets and amortisation**

Rights to films developed in collaboration with third parties are accounted for as internally-generated intangible fixed assets. They are recognised initially at cost and subsequently as cost less accumulated amortisation and any accumulated impairment losses.

The film rights are amortised on a straight-line basis over the estimated useful economic life of 10 years.

The charity assesses at each reporting date whether there is any indication that the intangible asset may be impaired. If any such indication exists, the charity estimates the recoverable amount of the intangible asset and recognises an impairment loss for any shortfall below carrying amount.

**Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated realisable value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Computers and office equipment	25% on the straight line basis
Musical equipment and library	10% on the straight line basis
Music stands	16.7% on the straight line basis

Assets costing less than £250 are not capitalised but are recognised as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities in the year incurred.

**1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES continued**

**Stocks**

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value after making due allowance for obsolete and slow-moving stocks.

**Financial instruments**

The charity only has financial instruments of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Short term basic financial instruments such as trade debtors and trade creditors are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value. Long term basic financial instruments such as bank loans are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

**Leases**

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the lease term.

**Employee benefits**

The costs of short-term employee benefits are recognised as a liability and an expense.

Payments to defined contribution pension schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

**2 STATUS**

Aurora Orchestra is a company limited by guarantee with the company registration number 08412045 (England and Wales) and the charity registration number 1155738. The address of the registered office is The Music Base, King's Place, 90 York Way, London N1 9AG.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)****NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025****3 INCOME FROM DONATIONS AND LEGACIES**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Donations	297,511	152,541
Grants	378,519	324,019
	<u>676,030</u>	<u>476,560</u>

In the preceding period, income of £271,674 was restricted.

Grants included above were as follows:

Anonymous funders	25,000	25,000
Arts Council England (National Portfolio)	143,519	143,519
Chapman Charitable Trust	2,000	-
Cockayne - Grants for the Arts and The London Community Foundation	-	25,000
Garfield Weston Foundation	30,000	-
Garrick Charitable Trust	-	4,000
The Golden Bottle Trust	15,000	-
Music Export Growth Scheme	25,000	-
New Berlioz Edition Trust	18,000	-
PRS Foundation's Resonate programme	15,000	-
Signatur - The Karlsson Játiva Charitable Foundation	50,000	50,000
The Big Give Arts for Impact Campaign	5,000	10,000
The Foyle Foundation	-	29,000
The Goldsmiths' Company Charity	17,500	17,500
The John R Murray Trust	20,000	15,000
The Nugee Foundation	2,000	-
The Radcliffe Trust	5,000	-
The Reed Foundation	-	3,000
The Samuel Gardner Memorial Trust	1,500	-
Three Monkeys Trust	2,000	2,000
Vaughan Williams Foundation	2,000	-
	<u>378,519</u>	<u>324,019</u>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

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**4 INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Public performances:		
Performance fees	1,059,959	729,979
Performance-related grants	36,719	35,350
Programme sales, sales of recordings and reimbursed costs	7,775	2,079
Creative learning:		
Learning and participation income	25,647	33,160
	<u>1,130,100</u>	<u>800,568</u>

In the preceding period, income of £35,350 was restricted.

**5 EXPENDITURE ON RAISING FUNDS**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Fundraising staff costs	85,887	76,139
Direct fundraising costs	12,155	18,613
Support costs allocated	69,575	49,140
	<u>167,617</u>	<u>143,892</u>

AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

6 EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	<i>Direct costs 2025 £</i>	<i>Direct staff costs 2025 £</i>	<i>Support costs 2025 £</i>	<i>Total 2025 £</i>
Public performances	1,275,030	212,055	171,781	1,658,866
Creative learning	84,137	79,909	64,733	228,779
	<u>1,359,167</u>	<u>291,964</u>	<u>236,514</u>	<u>1,887,645</u>
	<i>Direct costs 2024 £</i>	<i>Direct staff costs 2024 £</i>	<i>Support costs 2024 £</i>	<i>Total 2024 £</i>
Public performances	1,075,754	202,327	130,581	1,408,662
Creative learning	119,974	100,201	64,670	284,845
	<u>1,195,728</u>	<u>302,528</u>	<u>195,251</u>	<u>1,693,507</u>

In the preceding period, expenditure of £318,509 was applied to restricted funds.

7 DIRECT COSTS

	<i>2025 £</i>	<i>2024 £</i>
Artists and freelancers	772,862	644,463
Venue hire	129,583	109,337
Music and instrument hire	84,916	107,766
Aurora Classroom	21,160	28,658
Commissioning	61,917	61,695
Travel and subsistence	281,324	239,613
Other direct costs	7,405	4,196
	<u>1,359,167</u>	<u>1,195,728</u>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**8 SUPPORT COSTS**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Support costs comprise:		
Support staff costs	83,216	56,517
Freelance staff	68,345	62,943
Marketing and website	55,502	39,841
Staff expenses and recruitment	11,442	9,112
Premises costs	24,000	20,500
Insurance	4,028	4,439
Other office costs	19,235	19,655
Bank charges and interest	22,839	16,889
Depreciation	4,267	4,070
Amortisation	3,677	1,095
Governance costs:		
Audit and accountancy	9,538	9,330
	<u>306,089</u>	<u>244,391</u>

**9 NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Operating lease rentals	24,000	20,500
Depreciation	4,267	4,070
Amortisation	3,677	1,095
Auditors' remuneration for audit services	9,538	9,330
	<u>9,538</u>	<u>9,330</u>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**10 STAFF COSTS**

	<b>2025</b> <b>£</b>	<b>2024</b> <b>£</b>
Gross salaries	396,306	377,204
Employer's National Insurance contributions	37,129	32,659
Employer's pension contributions	27,632	25,321
	<u>461,067</u>	<u>435,184</u>
Freelance fees:		
Artists	759,881	613,774
Direct freelancers	12,981	30,689
Administrative freelancers	68,345	62,943
	<u>841,207</u>	<u>707,406</u>

The average number of persons employed by the charity during the year was 11 (2024: 12).

Staff receiving remuneration in excess of £60,000 fell into the following bands:

	<b>2025</b> <b>No.</b>	<b>2024</b> <b>No.</b>
£80,001 - £90,000	-	1
£90,001 - £100,000	1	-

**11 INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS**

	<b>Film rights</b> <b>£</b>	<b>Total</b> <b>£</b>
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1 April 2024	36,771	36,771
Additions	-	-
At 31 March 2025	<u>36,771</u>	<u>36,771</u>
<b>Amortisation</b>		
At 1 April 2024	1,095	1,095
Charge for the year	3,677	3,677
At 31 March 2025	<u>4,772</u>	<u>4,772</u>
<b>Net book value</b>		
At 31 March 2025	<u>31,999</u>	<u>31,999</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>35,676</u>	<u>35,676</u>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**12 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS**

	<b>Computers &amp; equipment £</b>	<b>Total £</b>
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1 April 2024	63,899	63,899
Additions	3,085	3,085
Disposals	( 8,232)	( 8,232)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 March 2025	58,752	58,752
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At 1 April 2024	46,914	46,914
Depreciation eliminated on disposals	( 8,232)	( 8,232)
Charge for the year	4,267	4,267
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 March 2025	42,949	42,949
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net book value</b>		
At 31 March 2025	15,803	15,803
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
At 31 March 2024	16,985	16,985
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

**13 DEBTORS**

	<b>2025 £</b>	<b>2024 £</b>
Trade debtors	244,915	158,285
Prepayments and accrued income	660,472	573,627
Other debtors	2,222	2,914
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	907,609	734,826
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**14 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Bank loans	74,137	76,311
Trade creditors	129,810	152,276
Other taxation and social security	10,554	12,285
Accruals and deferred income	103,883	136,040
	<u>318,384</u>	<u>376,912</u>

The movement on deferred income is as follows:

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Balance at 1 April 2024	57,460	-
Released to income	( 57,460)	-
Received in the year and deferred	61,995	57,460
	<u>61,995</u>	<u>57,460</u>

Deferred income relates to income from the provision of services which has been invoiced in advance of delivering the related services, and to performance-related grants for which not all of the performance-related conditions had been met at the balance sheet date.

**15 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Bank loans: long term	356,550	203,839
Bank loans: long term due greater than 5 years	123,152	-
	<u>479,702</u>	<u>203,839</u>

The bank loans are unsecured and carry interest at fixed rates of 5.5% and 6.5%.

AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

16 MOVEMENT ON FUNDS

CURRENT YEAR	<i>Brought forward</i> £	<i>Income</i> £	<i>Expenditure</i> £	<i>Transfers</i> £	<i>Carried forward</i> £
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
<i>Performance programme:</i>					
Carnival workshop	-	2,000	( 2,000)	-	-
Beethoven 7 / Abel Selaocoe	-	40,000	( 40,000)	-	-
King's Place programme	-	36,719	( 36,719)	-	-
Harold in Italy	-	10,000	-	-	10,000
<i>Creative learning:</i>					
Aurora Classroom and schools' performances	45,000	163,000	( 183,000)	-	25,000
	<u>45,000</u>	<u>251,719</u>	<u>( 261,719)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>35,000</u>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General fund	191,968	2,032,731	( 1,793,543)	( 223,875)	207,281
Designated anniversary fund	-	-	-	223,875	223,875
	<u>191,968</u>	<u>2,032,731</u>	<u>( 1,793,543)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>431,156</u>
Total funds	<u>236,968</u>	<u>2,284,450</u>	<u>( 2,055,262)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>466,156</u>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**16 MOVEMENT ON FUNDS continued**

PRIOR YEAR	<i>Brought forward</i> £	<i>Income</i> £	<i>Expenditure</i> £	<i>Transfers</i> £	<i>Carried forward</i> £
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
<i>Performance programme:</i>					
Rite of Spring R&D	4,000	4,000	( 8,000)	-	-
King's Place programme	-	35,350	( 35,350)	-	-
Augurs of Spring	14,485	64,375	( 78,860)	-	-
Memory Champions	-	18,746	( 18,746)	-	-
<i>Creative learning:</i>					
Far, Far Away	-	21,053	( 21,053)	-	-
Aurora Classroom and schools' performances	38,000	163,500	( 156,500)	-	45,000
	<u>56,485</u>	<u>307,024</u>	<u>( 318,509)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>45,000</u>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General fund	286,545	1,424,313	( 1,518,890)	-	191,968
	<u>286,545</u>	<u>1,424,313</u>	<u>( 1,518,890)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>191,968</u>
Total funds	<u><u>343,030</u></u>	<u><u>1,731,337</u></u>	<u><u>( 1,837,399)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>236,968</u></u>

**Designated anniversary fund**

To mark the orchestra's 20th birthday in spring 2025, the board launched an anniversary match-funding campaign aimed at generating £500,000 in unrestricted funds towards the orchestra's charitable activities, including its performance programme and creative learning work.

**Beethoven 7 / Abel Selaocoe**

This restricted fund supported Aurora Orchestra's collaboration with cellist, vocalist, and composer Abel Selaocoe for a major performance and touring project. The programme featured Selaocoe's original cello concerto Four Spirits alongside a memorised performance of Beethoven's Symphony No.7, celebrating musical innovation and cultural fusion.

**Augurs of Spring**

This restricted fund supported Aurora Orchestra's landmark Orchestral Theatre production of The Rite of Spring.

**Harold in Italy**

This restricted fund supported Aurora Orchestra's new Orchestral Theatre staging of Berlioz's Harold in Italy at the Southbank Centre in June 2025, in collaboration with violist Lawrence Power and actor Charlotte Ritchie.

**Aurora Classroom and schools' performances**

This restricted fund supports the development and delivery of Aurora Orchestra's Aurora Classroom programme, an inclusive music education initiative designed to bring exceptional orchestral experiences into primary and secondary schools across the UK.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

17 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	<i>Unrestricted funds</i> £	<i>Restricted funds</i> £	<i>Total funds</i> £
<b>CURRENT YEAR</b>			
Tangible fixed assets	47,802	-	47,802
Net current assets	863,056	35,000	898,056
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	( 479,702)	-	( 479,702)
	<u>431,156</u>	<u>35,000</u>	<u>466,156</u>
<b>PRIOR YEAR</b>			
Tangible fixed assets	52,661	-	52,661
Net current assets	343,146	45,000	388,146
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	( 203,839)	-	( 203,839)
	<u>191,968</u>	<u>45,000</u>	<u>236,968</u>

18 FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

At 31 March 2025 the charity was committed to future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	<b>2025</b> £	<b>2024</b> £
Due within one year	<u>2,000</u>	<u>2,000</u>

19 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The key management personnel are considered to be the trustees and the Senior Management Team.

During the year, 1 trustee (2024: 0) was reimbursed for a total of £347 (2024: £nil) of travel expenses to fulfil their duties. 1 trustee (2024: 0) received £235 (2024: £nil) remuneration for professional services provided to the Charity during the year.

During the year the trustees and other related parties donated a total of £81,383 inclusive of Gift Aid (2024: £32,384 including Gift Aid), none of which involved conditions which would, or might, require the charity to alter significantly the nature of its existing activities.

The total amount of employee benefits (including employer's pension contributions) received by key management personnel during the year was £280,506 (2024: £265,093).

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**

England & Wales - Charity number 1155738

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# Accounts

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Company number: 8523283  
Charity number: 1155738



(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

**TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

*FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024*

# AURORA ORCHESTRA

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## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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Trustees	Elizabeth Forgan DBE <i>Chair</i> Andrew Hochhauser KC James Lawrie (appointed 7 February 2024) Michael Laven Ben Lumsden (resigned 23 September 2024) Rachel Mortimer Kayeye Ntumba (appointed 7 February 2024, resigned 6 November 2024) Louise Smith Suzanne Szczetnikowicz Sharon Zhu
Company registered number	8523283 (England and Wales)
Charity registered number	1155738
Registered office	The Music Base Kings Place 90 York Way London N1 9AG
Senior Management Team	John Harte <i>Chief Executive and Company Secretary</i> Jane Mitchell <i>Creative Director</i> Alana Grady <i>Senior Concerts Manager</i> Helen McKeown <i>Development Manager</i> Jane Walker <i>Finance Manager</i>
Independent Auditor	Lindeyer Francis Ferguson Limited North House, 198 High Street Tonbridge Kent TN9 1BE
Principal Bankers	CAF Bank Ltd 25 Kings Hill Avenue West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ

## **AURORA ORCHESTRA**

### **TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the charity for the year to 31 March 2024. The Trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements of the company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019). This report is also the Directors' Report under company law.

The reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report.

Since the charity qualifies as small under section 382 of the Companies Act 2006, the Strategic Report required of medium and large companies under the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013 has been omitted.

#### **Structure, Governance & Management**

Aurora Orchestra is a charitable company limited by guarantee. It is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association, dated 9 May 2013, amended by special resolutions of 5 December 2016 and 7 February 2024.

#### **Objects**

The objects of the charity are to promote, maintain, improve and advance education particularly in the appreciation of music in all its forms through the presentation of public concerts.

#### **Organisation**

The Board of Trustees (set out on page 1) must have a minimum of three members. It convenes for a minimum of four meetings each year in pursuit of the objectives described below.

John Harte (Chief Executive) acts as Secretary to the Board. Principal Conductor Nicholas Collon, Creative Director Jane Mitchell and several members of the management team also attended board meetings during the period. Other guest attendees including Principal Players are invited to meetings on an ad hoc basis.

#### **Board Committees**

The Board supports the orchestra's administrative team on an ongoing basis through a group of committees with particular areas of responsibility. These currently include the following:

- Finance & Operations
- Appointments & Governance

The Board agrees formal Terms of Reference for each committee.

#### **Trustee Appointment, Induction and Performance Review**

The Appointments and Governance Committee regularly audits the collective skills and experience of the board, identifying skills gaps and making recommendations to the board on trustee recruitment. Any new Trustee must be appointed by a resolution of the existing Trustees, and the board aims to ensure that its membership reflects a diverse range of views and backgrounds. New Trustees will meet with the Chair and Chief Executive prior to joining the Board. Induction and training of new Trustees is overseen by the board's Appointments and Governance Committee; the Committee Chair and Chair of Trustees also meet annually with all Trustees individually to review performance, identify any particular training needs, and set objectives for the year ahead.

## **AURORA ORCHESTRA**

### **TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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#### **Management**

Aurora Orchestra's management team during the 2023/24 financial year comprised the following:

- Chief Executive John Harte oversaw the day-to-day running of the organisation, managing senior staff, cultivating and maintaining external relationships, and developing the orchestra's forward strategy in close partnership with the Principal Conductor and Creative Director.
- Creative Director Jane Mitchell shared overall responsibility for the orchestra's artistic direction and programming with the Principal Conductor and Chief Executive as part of the artistic planning team; during this period she took particular responsibility for developing the orchestra's new online learning resources.
- Principal Conductor Nicholas Collon had overall responsibility for the orchestra's musical direction, and shared responsibility for the orchestra's artistic direction and programming with the Creative Director and Chief Executive.
- Learning Director Rebecca Barnett oversaw the orchestra's work with young people – including taking overall responsibility for the Aurora Classroom project – supported by Learning Producers Sarah Lloyd and Helen Mead.
- Development Manager Helen McKeown supported the orchestra's fundraising activity, assisted by Development Officer Camilla Carden.
- Concerts Manager Alana Grady and Concerts and Participation Manager Anahita Falaki were responsible for the production of concerts, recordings, broadcasts and other projects, and oversaw the production of the orchestra's work for young children and families including online learning resources, supported by Orchestra Assistant Tara Collins.
- Finance Manager Jane Walker had responsibility for accounting and book-keeping.
- Marketing Manager Harriet Orbell was responsible for communications and audience development.
- Other freelance staff included Orchestra Personnel Manager Hal Hutchinson and other occasional support staff as required by individual projects.

#### **Risk Management**

The Trustees have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and systems have been established to mitigate those risks. Procedures have been put in place to minimise both external and internal risks and these procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they still meet the needs of the charity. The Trustees are satisfied that the Trust's assets attributable to each of its individual funds are available and adequate to fulfil its obligations in relation to those funds.

Key risks identified and managed in this period included:

- Seasonal cashflow challenges posed by the payment in arrears of Orchestra Tax Relief as this has increased as proportion of the orchestra's overall income: this was mitigated by an ongoing loan finance agreement with CAF Bank to ensure adequate liquidity at year end pending the receipt of the OTR claim from HMRC;
- Failure to meet income targets: the orchestra continued to focus on growing individual giving income following a successful major gifts initiative around the 2023 Rite of Spring project, and a new trustee with particular expertise in fundraising was appointed;
- Failure to adequately keep pace with the artistic possibilities of new technologies: Aurora continued to invest in Aurora Classroom as its flagship digital product, and a new trustee with a background in education technology and entrepreneurship was appointed as the incoming Chair of the orchestra's Finance and Operations Committee;
- Loss of income as a consequence of an unforeseen problem with an international tour: additional travel time was built into touring arrangements to ensure greater tolerance of travel disruption, and additional financial contingencies incorporated into international touring budgets.

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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#### Mission statement and measuring success

Aurora's activity during this financial year was shaped by its 2022–2025 Business Plan, incorporating the following mission statement:

*Aurora creates vibrant musical adventures that share a passion for orchestral music with the broadest possible audience. We produce vivid and intensely powerful musical experiences combining the very highest performance quality with creative presentation and an exceptional breadth of artistic horizons. We harness the extraordinary versatility of the chamber orchestra to make orchestral music speak in powerful new ways for first-time listeners and lifelong classical devotees alike.*

The organisation's work continues to be underpinned by four key values as follows:

- **Aim high:** we will strive without compromise for the very highest levels of artistic and organisational excellence, with a passionate commitment to quality throughout our output. We will seek to inspire and challenge our audience, players, collaborators, and staff with projects that are never less than extraordinary. We will be prepared to take risks and break convention in the pursuit of an ever better artistic product.
- **Music first:** whilst we will be fearless in our artistic adventures, these will always be in the service of making music we play speak more powerfully. We will always seek to place music and musicians at the heart of our projects, and when collaborating across art forms we will always ensure that music and the orchestra's creative voice is central to the artistic product. We will be brave enough to walk away from projects where this musical integrity can't be guaranteed, even where these offer substantial rewards.
- **Music for all:** we believe passionately that orchestral music can and should be a source of enrichment for everyone. We will refuse to settle for performing only to existing classical concert-goers, instead actively seeking to grow a bigger, more diverse audience for orchestral music in the UK and beyond.
- **Have fun:** joy in music-making is central to our work. Whilst we seek to foster a working culture of challenge and ambition, we also want to ensure that our artistic and management personnel always share in this sense of enjoyment. We want Aurora to be a special, distinctive and enjoyable place to work, and will strive for the best working conditions for players and staff.

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'Public Benefit: Running a Charity' (PB2). The Trustees believe that the quality, breadth, and accessibility of Aurora's work means that the orchestra's programme offers a clear public benefit.

The orchestra's current business plan sets out the following specific objectives for the period 2022–2025:

- 1) Develop a vibrant digital offer worthy of the Aurora brand:** launch Aurora's online learning resources and teacher CPD programme nationally; set in motion new digital initiatives in partnership with key collaborators which allow Aurora to blaze a trail in the online realm.
- 2) Build organisational resilience:** Move towards more sustainable financial and staffing models, including growing new revenue streams, reducing pressure on key creative roles, and building reserves.
- 3) Deliver a vibrant and distinctive programme of live activity which builds on Aurora's sector-leading reputation for quality and creativity:** plan and deliver a live programme of outstanding quality and innovation, focused particularly around a small number of key venue relationships.

**4) Realise the extraordinary potential of Aurora's programme to reach new audiences for classical music:** Through live and online activity, achieve a measurable step-change in expanding the reach of our work beyond established classical audiences.

The orchestra's progress over the period 2022–2025 is measured against these four objectives, as well as against specific key performance indicators agreed with Arts Council England as part of the organisation's National Portfolio Organisation funding agreement. These included a series of agreed outcomes supporting Arts Council England's current 10-year strategy *Let's Create*, and agreed measures around ACE's four current Investment Principles. Good progress was made in 2023/24 against each of the objectives, as shown in the detailed activity summary and financial review set out below.

### Activity Summary 2023/24

The financial year 2023/24 generated a particularly rich and varied artistic output, including the orchestra's most ambitious undertaking to date, a new Orchestral Theatre production based around Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*. Concert activity during this period reached over 30,000 people in the UK and internationally, whilst the orchestra's programme for young people saw Aurora engage with over 7,000 children through a combination of live and digital work. The season was notable for a diverse array of collaborative work spanning film, theatre, and multiple musical genres; for commissioning across several disciplines (literature, animation, set design and projection); and for the prominence of female composers within its artistic offer (the Donne Foundation's recent annual report lists Aurora amongst the Top 10 orchestras globally for representation of female composers within its programme).

## 1. Performance programme highlights

### a) *The Rite of Spring*

In summer 2023 Aurora presented its boldest Orchestral Theatre production to date – a project that in many respects represented the culmination of two decades of artistic experimentation at the frontiers of orchestral music-making. Working in collaboration with co-producing partners the BBC Proms and Helsinki Festival, the orchestra presented **The Rite of Spring** at the Royal Albert Hall and Helsinki Music Centre in August 2023 as the culmination of a project which had been in development for several years. In the first half of this groundbreaking production, the Aurora players, conductor Nicholas Collon and two actors presented a dramatic and musical exploration of Stravinsky's masterpiece, exploring the background to its creation and the score itself. Conceived by Aurora's Creative Director Jane Mitchell and Principal Conductor Nicholas Collon, the presentation incorporated player movement, newly-commissioned projections from Anouar Brissel, theatrical lighting and set design, and set the scene for a world-first performance of the work entirely from memory.

In its seventh consecutive 5-star review of Aurora's BBC Proms projects, *The Times* described the project as "one of the most breathtaking Proms in history", whilst *The Observer's* Fiona Maddocks wrote: "In a Proms season overflowing with virtuosity, Aurora Orchestra and their by-heart *Rite of Spring* wins out for risk and technical agility." In addition to unanimous five-star verdicts from all reviewers attending, the project scored a 100% 'excellent' rating in audience surveys, the highest of any Prom in 2023; it also attracted one of the largest proportions of under-18 and under-44 bookers in the season. The project also provided a unique professional development experience for the 99 freelance players participating, with artist feedback surveys consistently indicating that the production had been a career highlight for many. "The most exciting and fulfilling project of my career by an absolute mile" wrote one player. "The potential for what can be done with the presentations in terms of making classical music accessible to new audiences is just so exciting, and I think Aurora serves as a working example of exactly what it *should* be like. I have never played in such a supportive section of such immense quality. Once I was into the industry, I had thought the vision I had as a 17-year-old of constant youth-orchestra joy was unrealistic, but this has shown me that it is possible. It's honestly made the slog of the last 10 years feel like it's worth it."

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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Additional touring performances of *The Rite of Spring* were also presented at Saffron Hall, Snape Maltings, the Rheingau MusikFest and Elbphilharmonie Hamburg. For these performances the orchestra was joined by cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason performing as soloist in Bloch's *Schelomo*.

*"To memorise [The Rite of Spring], and to inhabit this violent music so thoroughly that the music seemed to flash like electric shocks from the very bones and sinews of the players, was simply one of the boldest and most breathtaking achievements I have witnessed in the Albert Hall... Stravinsky and Diaghilev, the ultimate iconoclasts, would have loved it."* – Richard Morrison, The Times, ★★★★★

*"Aurora Orchestra – performing from memory – delivered a high-energy Rite that saw the music pulse across the concert hall."* – Erica Jeal, The Guardian, ★★★★★

*"Everyone was on their feet at the end, a standing ovation for a standing orchestra in a performance that was, in every respect, unforgettable."* – Fiona Maddocks, The Observer, ★★★★★

#### **b) Southbank Centre series**

In its second year as Resident Orchestra, Aurora presented a broad range of collaborative projects at the Southbank Centre.

In May 2023 the orchestra performed a mixed programme of American works by Gershwin, Copland, Bernstein and Caroline Shaw under the title **American Rhapsody**. Tom Poster appeared as soloist for Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*; the concert also featured a specially-created commission from Australian filmmaker Jon Frank inspired by Charles Ives' *Three Places in New England*. In October 2023 the orchestra collaborated with percussionist/composer Manu Delago for **Newton's Rainbow**, an audiovisual concert featuring Delago's work *Environ Me*, alongside music by Anna Thorvaldsdottir and Henry Purcell. A multimedia performance incorporating specially-created film and animation, the production also featured sarod player Debasmita Bhattacharya who appeared as soloist for Delago's piece *Newton's Rainbow*. In March 2024 Aurora presented a new Orchestral Theatre staging of **Winterreise** with tenor Allan Clayton, based upon Hans Zender's 'composed interpretation' of Schubert's song cycle. Conceived and directed by Jane Mitchell, the production incorporated elements of spatial design and movement, memorisation, set design, projection and lighting to illuminate aspects of the narrative and score for audiences in a new way. All three of these programmes toured to Saffron Hall as part of Aurora's ongoing relationship with this unique concert hall, constructed at the heart of an Essex comprehensive school. *Winterreise* was additionally presented at the Konzerthaus Dortmund – the orchestra's debut appearance in the venue.

Aurora also appeared with Patricia Kopatchinskaja for **Dies Irae** (February 2024), a theatrical orchestral programme devised and directed by Kopatchinskaja as a personal response to climate change, and featuring music from Lotti and Dowland to Ustvolskaya, Jimi Hendrix and George Crumb, as well as Kopatchinskaja herself.

The orchestra continued to develop new work for children and families as part of its Southbank Centre series. February 2024 saw the premiere of a newly-created production for early years audiences, **Mendelssohn and the Moving Machines**, exploring the theme of transport through specially-arranged music by the unjustly neglected 19<sup>th</sup>-century composer Fanny Mendelssohn and a new story created by Aurora Writer-in-Residence Kate Wakeling (see Creative Learning section below for details of linked activity for schools).

Earlier in the year (April 2023) Aurora also presented **The Making of the Orchestra**, a concert for all ages incorporating the UK premiere of *Philharmonia Fantastique*, a creative collaboration between composer and DJ Mason Bates, Oscar-winning director and sound designer Gary Rydstrom, and animation director Jim Capobianco. This imaginative introduction to the instruments of the orchestra was paired with Britten's *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, with presenter Yolanda Brown delivering a new narration commissioned from Kate Wakeling.

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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*"An epic mash-up with ear-popping sounds."* – Richard Morrison, The Times, on Newton's Rainbow ★★★★★

*"With Aurora Orchestra on pungent top form under Nicholas Collon's brisk baton, the orchestral tapestry gripped and fascinated almost as much as Clayton's compelling journey through Schubert's 24 songs of lost love and devastation."* – Geoff Brown, The Times, on Winterreise ★★★★★

*"The bustling action brings a rich operatic dimension to the cycle, as Clayton's performance interacts not just with sets and lighting but the Aurora players who take on the character of the people, or other creatures, the wayfarer sees or imagines (in "Die Krähe", they even wear crow masks)."* – Boyd Tonkin, The Artsdesk, on Winterreise ★★★★★

*"A challenging, provocative evening that leaves you feeling vaguely shell-shocked."* – Tim Ashley, The Guardian, on Dies Irae ★★★★★

#### **c) Kings Place series**

In its fifteenth year as Resident Ensemble at Kings Place, Aurora presented a varied programme of concerts, many of them as part of the venue's year-long 'Unwrapped' programming strands (focused on the theme of Sound for 2023 and Scotland in 2024). In June 2023 the orchestra welcomed guest cellist **Laura van der Heijden** for a programme featuring music by Ligeti, CPE Bach and Schubert; later in the year (September 2023) the versatile Scottish composer/performer **Anna Meredith** appeared for a concert built around her immersive work *Anno*, which reimagines and responds to Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* using surround-sound spatial audio. In November 2023 Principal Players took over the intimate surroundings of Hall Two to present Anna Thorvaldsdottir's *In the light of Air* in the round alongside works Takemitsu, Michael Gordon, Debussy and Ligeti.

At the start of 2024 Aurora launched the Scotland Unwrapped series with a programme built around Mendelssohn's **Scottish Symphony** (February 2024) and featuring music by Richard Strauss, Sally Beamish and Peter Maxwell Davies. Aurora's newest Principal Player Annemarie Federle made her concerto debut with the orchestra performing Strauss' first horn concerto.

Work for younger audiences at Kings Place included revivals of storytelling concerts **Mozart in the Garden** (June/July 2023) and **Beethoven and the Dinosaurs** (December 2023). In addition to public performances for family audiences, both productions were presented in performances for schools (see Creative Learning below).

*"Beyond the great lights, clever stage design and the continuous flow of the pieces, as well as the shorter concert duration [...] and Gibson's presentation of the works, it was, above all, Aurora [Orchestra]'s masterful ensemble playing that truly elevated the concert to the next level."* – Marat Ingeldeev, Bachtrack, ★★★★★

*"A conceptually elegant, flawlessly executed evening that in all sorts of ways transported you to a different dimension."* – Rachel Halliburton, The Artsdesk, ★★★★★

*"The performance was perfectly pitched for the age group. It was highly enjoyable and had a great mix of quiet listening, movement, singing and musical participation. The children were clearly delighted and, back at school, they talked about how they had enjoyed it."* Teacher feedback from Far, Far Away performance

*"It was a magical, special performance from start to finish and I had tears in my eyes more than once."* Teacher feedback from Far, Far Away performance

#### **d) Recording projects**

During the 2023/24 financial year Aurora invested in two recording projects. In August 2023 the orchestra partnered with Finnish national broadcaster YLE to produce a film of **The Rite of Spring** project, captured live at the Helsinki Music Centre. The film was shown on Finnish television, and presented to international distributors at a special screening hosted by YLE at the Avant Premiere trade fair in Berlin (February 2024). It was subsequently acquired by Marquee TV for global Streaming Video on Demand and by the Swiss broadcaster RSI for TV broadcast, and won the Grand Prix at the 2024 edition of the Golden Prague Festival, the leading international festival of music, dance and theatre films.

Aurora also partnered in this period with independent record label Signum to make a studio recording of Hans Zender's **Winterreise** with soloist Allan Clayton. The recording will be released in 2025.

## **2. Creative Learning**

### **a) Aurora Classroom**

Aurora Classroom – Aurora's innovative learning platform supporting the delivery of music teaching in primary and SEND schools – continued to be a major focus of the orchestra's learning programme. A second complete unit of work was launched in June 2023, doubling our offer for Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Special Educational Needs (SEND) settings. Entitled 'Meet the Instruments', this unit introduces children to instruments of the orchestra as well as non-western instruments including the West African djembe.

The 2023/24 financial year also saw the development of a third unit of work, 'Discover Beethoven', based around Beethoven's 'Pastoral' symphony. Featuring films and audio recordings of Aurora Orchestra performing the symphony from memory, the unit introduces children to the interrelated dimensions of music and notation whilst also exploring the power of music to tell a story and express emotion. Children develop skills in music through listening and responding to the symphony, singing (including two new songs commissioned from Kate Wakeling and Iain Farrington), composing, improvising, and participating in instrumental playalong activities (using five specially-commissioned arrangements of the symphony by Iain Farrington). A newly commissioned story by Kate Wakeling, *A Day Like This*, is woven throughout the 10-week lesson plan. The story has been animated with illustrations by Annalisa Salis and threads Beethoven's music through a charming story about Nate and his dog Luna as he navigates the emotions and experiences of a pre-teen boy. Building on previous units aimed at EYFS, KS1 and SEND settings, Discover Beethoven was developed with KS2 and older SEND learners in mind.

New partnerships in Thurrock, Southend and the Isle of Wight saw the impact of Aurora Classroom extend well beyond London schools; in the case of Thurrock and the Isle of Wight, this was further enhanced by live performances to help embed Aurora's work more deeply in the local community. Encouraging additional schools to subscribe to the platform has proved more challenging than initially forecast, with limited budgets and pressure on schools to focus energy and resources on STEM subjects proving barriers to takeup despite excellent feedback on the quality and impact of the resources. Nevertheless Aurora Classroom has expanded steadily, and by the end of the 2023/24 financial year was in use in more than 60 schools across England, by an estimated 190 teachers and 5,800 children.

Over 90 teachers engaged with CPD training delivered by the Aurora team during the year, including in-person events delivered in London and Swansea.

*"The best music program I have used for in my 18 year teaching career."* (Teacher feedback, Aurora Classroom)

*"One non-specialist teacher really does not enjoy teaching music and he found the resources very helpful and led to him delivering a good music lesson."* (Teacher feedback, Aurora Classroom)

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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*"Students are so much more confident working with each other and showing what they have learnt."*  
(SEND teacher on Aurora Classroom)

*"It was really helpful and inspiring. I would like to attend more CPD online sessions like this."* (CPD session attendee)

#### **b) Schools performances**

Aurora delivered a variety of special performances for schools and SEND settings in 2023/24 linked to storytelling productions for young children developed as part of the Kings Place and Southbank Centre series, including the following:

- As part of the summer 2023 **Mozart in the Garden** project, three days of shows for children at Camden primary schools (397 children reached) and one day of adapted performances at QEII Jubilee School for children with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD). 100% of teachers surveyed rated the quality of the performance as high and reported high levels of pupil engagement. *"All of [the students] had a positive experience at the performance and it is something that they will remember and talk about for months to come"* (Teacher feedback).

- As part of the autumn 2023 **Beethoven and the Dinosaurs** project, two days of performances for Camden primary schools and one day of performances for children with a diagnosis of autism at College Park School. The schools' performances reached over 300 children; 100% of participating teachers strongly agreed that children were engaged during the performance. *"I really appreciated the way the performers interacted with our SEND children. The children were given resources to use and had their vocalisation responded to"* (Teacher feedback).

- In Q4 we delivered a brand new Far, Far Away storytelling production, **Mendelssohn and the Moving Machines** including a day of schools' performances at the Southbank Centre. Over 300 school children attended the performances, including pupils from TreeHouse school (for children with a diagnosis of autism) and Heron School (for secondary-aged pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties); teacher feedback included *"I watched all the pupils and witnessed every single child fully engaged and anticipating what was going to happen next. A pleasure to watch!"*.

#### **Financial Review**

The 2023/24 financial year saw Aurora invest in an ambitious artistic programme including its most critically-acclaimed Orchestral Theatre production to date. Income from all sources remained broadly in line with the prior year, with £1,731,337 total revenue (2022/23: £1,788,217) including £324,019 or 19% in grant income (2022/23: £250,019) and £152,541 or 9% in donations from individuals (2022/23: £96,581). The impact of Orchestra Tax Relief at the higher rate introduced following the pandemic continued to be felt, allowing Aurora to plan larger-scale, more creative and higher-quality work. The news that the rate of OTR would be set permanently at 45% from 1 April 2025 rather than tapering back to the previous level of 25% was warmly welcomed by all at Aurora.

The scale of the Rite of Spring project in particular brought additional financial risk, and an overspend on this project was one of two principal contributing factors to the deficit for the year being higher than originally forecast (£106,062 as compared with £14,033 budgeted); the other being slower-than-anticipated growth of commercial income linked to the Aurora Classroom project.

During the year Aurora disbursed just under £1.2 million in direct project costs (2022/23: £1.3 million), representing 65% of overall expenditure, the majority of which comprised fees to freelance players and other artists, with £435,184 or 24% (2022/23: £302,011) spent on direct staffing costs. The net financial result for the year was a deficit of £106,062. Budgets for the 2024/25 year show the orchestra returning to a modest surplus.

Contributed income was in line with expectations, with an increase of more than 50% in income from individual donors compared with the previous financial year particularly noteworthy. The orchestra was

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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the grateful recipient of several major grants, including renewed support from the Karlsson Játiva Charitable Foundation's Signatur programme for creative learning activity and the Parabola Foundation towards the Kings Place programme, funding from Cockayne–Grants for the Arts for performances under the umbrella of Aurora's Southbank Centre series, and new grants from The Foyle Foundation, The John R Murray Trust, The Goldsmiths' Company Charity and an anonymous foundation in support of Aurora Classroom.

The orchestra's balance sheet as at 31 March 2024 showed unrestricted reserves at £191,968 as well as £45,000 in restricted grant funding carried forward for expenditure in 2024/25 (2022/23: £286,545 unrestricted reserves; £56,485 restricted).

#### Reserves Policy

The Trustees understand the need to build up sufficient reserves to provide a degree of financial security for the orchestra's ongoing operations. The Board currently sets its unrestricted reserves target at 6 months' worth of core overhead expenditure (equivalent to £273,929 for the 2023/24 financial year).

At the balance sheet date, unrestricted reserves were £191,968, 70% of the board's target level. Free reserves (being unrestricted reserves less tangible assets) were £139,307 (2022/23: £271,816). The organisational budget for 2024/25 shows unrestricted reserves returning to close to 100% of the target level by March 2025.

#### Environmental Impact

The Trustees are committed to ensuring that the orchestra takes steps to minimise its environmental impact. This includes regular reporting to Julie's Bicycle on the carbon footprint of its artistic programme and taking environmental impact into account when planning touring activity (e.g. booking train over air travel wherever possible for international tours).

#### Fundraising disclosures

The Trustees have considered the provisions of section 13 of the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016, and note the following:

- Aurora raises funds in support of its programme through philanthropic gifts from individuals and grants from trusts and foundations.
- During the financial year 2023/24 the charity did not employ the services of any external fundraiser(s).
- The charity received no complaints about fundraising activity during this financial period.
- The charity makes every effort to protect vulnerable people and other members of the public from behaviour which is an unreasonable intrusion on a person's privacy; is unreasonably persistent; and/or placed undue pressure on a person to give money or other property.

Following a thoroughgoing review of the orchestra's data processing policies in light of the introduction of the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2018, an updated organisational Privacy Policy is published on the orchestra's website.

#### Future plans

Aurora continues to plan a vibrant programme of future activity based around its dual London residencies at Southbank Centre and Kings Place. In addition to several major projects not yet publicly announced, highlights include:

- Signature Orchestral Theatre projects including programmes built around memorised performances of Stravinsky's *Firebird* Suite and two Beethoven symphonies for the 2024/25 financial year

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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- Major international tours including a debut appearance at the Migros series in Switzerland in autumn 2024 (appearances in Bern, Zurich and Geneva) and the orchestra's largest international tour to date planned for March 2025, incorporating performances in Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Cologne and Bruges, and featuring guest soloist/composer Abel Selaocoe
- Performances as part of Kings Place's year-long 'Scotland Unwrapped' (2024) and 'Earth Unwrapped' (2025) seasons
- A major project developed in partnership with the BBC Proms to mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Beethoven's ninth symphony, to be performed at the Royal Albert Hall and televised on BBC Four
- The launch of the new 'Discover Beethoven' unit of work for Aurora Classroom, as well as the creation of a further unit based around the music of Berlioz, and ongoing CPD training for teachers
- A major new collaboration with commercial promoter Broadwick Live building on the success of immersive concert performances at the Printworks venue in 2021 and 2023
- An expanded programme of schools' performances including not only the orchestra's ongoing programme of work for EYFS and KS1 pupils but also new live projects aimed at Key Stages 2 and 3.

The board and artistic team have also begun planning for Aurora's 20th-anniversary season in 2025, including several special commissions and Orchestral Theatre projects marking the occasion.

#### **Trustees' responsibilities statement**

The Trustees (who are also directors of the charity for purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable group will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

#### **Disclosure of information to auditor**

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' report is approved has confirmed that:

- as far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**

**TRUSTEES' REPORT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies' regime in Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees on 18 November 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

**Dame Elizabeth Forgan (Chair)**  
Chair

## **AURORA ORCHESTRA**

### **INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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#### **Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of Aurora Orchestra ("the charitable company") for the year ended 31 March 2024, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

#### **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group and parent charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### **Conclusions relating to going concern**

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

#### **Other information**

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

**Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report, which includes the directors' report for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

**Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the charitable company has not kept adequate and proper accounting records or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the charitable company's financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies exemption in preparing the directors' report.

**Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the preparation of the financial statements of the charitable company, and the procedures that management adopt to ensure compliance. We have considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements, and in particular we identified: the Companies Act 2006, Financial Reporting Standard 102 and the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

We have also identified other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the amounts or disclosures within the financial statements, but for which compliance is fundamental to the charitable company's operations and to avoid material penalties, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), employment law, health and safety, and taxation legislation particularly concerning Orchestra Tax Relief.

Having reviewed the laws and regulations applicable to the charitable company, we designed and performed audit procedures to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence. Specifically, we:

- Selected a team with sector experience to perform the audit;
- Obtained an understanding of the charitable company's procedures for ensuring compliance with laws and regulations;
- Obtained and reviewed internal policy and procedure documents;
- Made enquiries of management and the trustees regarding whether they were aware of any actual or suspected incidences of non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- Obtained and reviewed meeting minutes;
- Obtained and reviewed correspondence with the regulator;
- Reviewed legal expenses accounts for indications of any possible non-compliance; and
- Reviewed the completeness and accuracy of any disclosures made in the financial statements.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including considering how fraud might occur. This was performed by:

- Making an assessment of the charitable company's control environment, systems and controls including identifying any weaknesses and considering the risk of management override of controls;
- Assessing the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including considering how fraud could occur;
- Considering whether there are any incentives or opportunities for management to manipulate financial results;
- Obtaining and evaluating the trustees' assessment of the risk of fraud, and enquiring as to whether they are aware of any actual or suspected incidences of fraud;
- Reviewing the accounting policies and accounting estimates for signs of management bias; and
- Identifying key risks relating to irregularities as relating to player payments, the recognition and cut-off of grant income, the Orchestra Tax Relief claim, and the identification and application of restricted funds.

We then designed audit procedures in response to the risks identified, including performing detailed substantive testing with appropriate risk factors on player payments and grant income, post period end review, detailed review of the Orchestra Tax Relief claim and vouching to supporting evidence, and substantive testing of the expenditure applied to all material restricted funds.

The audit has been planned and performed in accordance with auditing standards, however, because of the inherent limitations of audit procedures there remains a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those that may lead to material misstatements in the financial statements. There are inherent difficulties in detecting irregularities, and irregularities that result from fraud may be more difficult to detect than irregularities that result from error, for example due to concealment, override of controls, collusion or misrepresentations. In addition, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less audit procedures are able to identify it.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

#### Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company, the charitable company's members as a body and the charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

**A S Healey FCA CTA DChA**  
**Senior Statutory Auditor**  
For and on behalf of:  
**Lindeyer Francis Ferguson Limited**

Statutory Auditors  
Chartered Accountants

Date: 12 December 2024

North House  
198 High Street  
Tonbridge  
Kent TN9 1BE

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
(INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	<i>Unrestricted funds 2024</i>	<i>Restricted funds 2024</i>	<i>Total funds 2024</i>	<i>Total funds 2023</i>
Note	£	£	£	£
<b>Income from:</b>				
Donations and legacies	3	204,886	271,674	476,560
Charitable activities	4	765,218	35,350	800,568
Orchestra and Film Tax Relief credit		452,360	-	452,360
Investments		1,849	-	1,849
		<u>1,424,313</u>	<u>307,024</u>	<u>1,731,337</u>
Total		1,424,313	307,024	1,731,337
<b>Expenditure on:</b>				
Raising funds	5	143,892	-	143,892
Charitable activities	6	1,374,998	318,509	1,693,507
		<u>1,518,890</u>	<u>318,509</u>	<u>1,837,399</u>
Total		1,518,890	318,509	1,837,399
<b>Net expenditure</b>		( 94,577)	( 11,485)	( 106,062)
Transfers between funds		-	-	-
		<u>( 94,577)</u>	<u>( 11,485)</u>	<u>( 106,062)</u>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		( 94,577)	( 11,485)	( 106,062)
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>				
Total funds brought forward:		286,545	56,485	343,030
Total funds carried forward		<u>191,968</u>	<u>45,000</u>	<u>236,968</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)****BALANCE SHEET  
AS AT 31 MARCH 2024**

	Note	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Intangible assets	11		35,676	-	
Tangible assets	12		16,985	14,729	
			<u>52,661</u>	<u>14,729</u>	
<b>Current assets</b>					
Stocks		597		597	
Debtors	13	734,826		726,319	
Cash at bank and in hand		29,635		114,299	
		<u>765,058</u>		<u>841,215</u>	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	14	( 376,912)		( 368,470)	
<b>Net current assets</b>			388,146		472,745
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year</b>	15		( 203,839)		( 144,444)
<b>Total net assets</b>			<u>236,968</u>		<u>343,030</u>
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>					
Unrestricted funds			191,968		286,545
Restricted funds			45,000		56,485
<b>Total funds</b>	16		<u>236,968</u>		<u>343,030</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 18 November 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:

**Dame Elizabeth Forgan (Chair)**

**Company number: 8523283**

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities:</b>			
Net cash used in operating activities	A	( 118,589)	( 249,572)
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>			
Purchase of intangible fixed assets		( 36,771)	-
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		( 6,326)	( 9,925)
Investment income		1,849	878
Net cash used in investing activities		( 41,248)	( 9,047)
<b>Cash flows from financing activities:</b>			
Repayments of borrowing		( 64,827)	( 40,161)
Cash inflows from new borrowing		140,000	150,000
Net cash provided by / (used) in financing activities		75,173	109,839
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		( 84,664)	( 148,780)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		114,299	263,079
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	B	<u>29,635</u>	<u>114,299</u>
<b>A. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities</b>			
Net expenditure per the Statement of Financial Activities		( 106,062)	( 65,052)
Depreciation and amortisation charges		5,165	3,136
Investment income		( 1,849)	( 878)
(Increase) in debtors		( 8,507)	( 417,316)
Increase in creditors		( 7,336)	230,538
Net cash used in operating activities		<u>( 118,589)</u>	<u>( 249,572)</u>
		<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>B. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents</b>			
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>29,635</u>	<u>114,299</u>
<b>C. Analysis of changes in net debt</b>			
		<b>Bank loans</b>	
	<b>Cash at bank</b>	<b>Due within one year</b>	<b>Due after one year</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
At the beginning of the year	114,299	( 60,533)	( 144,444)
Cash flows	( 84,664)	-	( 75,173)
Non-cash changes: maturity analysis	-	( 15,778)	15,778
At the end of the year	<u>29,635</u>	<u>( 76,311)</u>	<u>( 203,839)</u>

## **1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

### **Basis of preparation of the financial statements**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Aurora Orchestra meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

The financial statements are presented in pounds sterling and rounded to the nearest pound.

### **Going concern**

The Trustees have assessed that there are no significant doubts in the company's ability to continue as a going concern. As a result, the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

### **Income**

Income from donations and grants is recognised when the charity is entitled to the funds, the receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably. For donations, this is usually on receipt. For grants, this is usually when a formal offer is made in writing, unless the grant contains terms and conditions outside of the charity's control which must be met before the charity is entitled to the funds, in which case the income is recognised when the conditions have been met. Where grants are received in response to a proposal including a budgeted timescale, such that the timescale for the expenditure is implicit in the grant agreement, the income is recognised in accordance with that timescale.

Income from legacies is recognised when the charity is entitled to the income, receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably. It is normally considered probable when there has been a grant of probate, the executors have established that there are sufficient assets in the estate to pay the legacy, and any conditions attached are within the control of the charity or have already been met.

Income from charitable activities is recognised in the period in which the relevant services are delivered and is stated net of VAT. Income from performance-related grants in connection with the charitable activities is recognised to the extent that the performance-related criteria have been met.

### **Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised on the accruals basis when a present legal or constructive obligation exists at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation, and the amount can be estimated reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on the basis of estimated usage, calculated as the proportion of directly attributable staff costs.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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**1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES continued**

Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure incurred by the charity to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities events and non-charitable trading.

Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the charity's objectives.

**Fund accounting**

General funds are unrestricted funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees.

Designated funds are a subset of unrestricted funds and represent funds set aside by the Trustees for specific future purposes or projects.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular purposes.

**Intangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Internally-generated intangible fixed assets are capitalised when the following criteria are demonstrated:

- The technical feasibility of completing the intangible asset so that it will be available for use or sale
- The intention to complete the intangible asset and use or sell it
- The ability to use the intangible asset or to sell it
- How the intangible asset will generate probable future economic benefits
- The availability of adequate technical, financial and other resources to complete the development and to use or sell the intangible asset
- The ability to measure reliably the expenditure attributable to the intangible asset during its development

Rights to films developed in collaboration with third parties are accounted for as internally-generated intangible fixed assets. They are recognised initially at cost and subsequently as cost less accumulated amortisation and any accumulated impairment losses.

The film rights are amortised on a straight-line bases over their estimated useful economic life of 10 years.

The charity assesses at each reporting date whether there is any indication that the intangible asset may be impaired. If any such indication exists, the charity estimates the recoverable amount of the intangible asset and recognises an impairment loss for any shortfall below carrying amount.

**Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated realisable value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Computers and office equipment	25% on the straight line basis
Musical equipment and library	10% on the straight line basis
Music stands	16.7% on the straight line basis

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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**1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES continued**

Assets costing less than £250 are not capitalised but are recognised as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities in the year incurred.

**Stocks**

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value after making due allowance for obsolete and slow-moving stocks.

**Financial instruments**

The charity only has financial instruments of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Short term basic financial instruments such as trade debtors and trade creditors are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value. Long term basic financial instruments such as bank loans are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

**Leases**

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the lease term.

**Employee benefits**

The costs of short-term employee benefits are recognised as a liability and an expense.

Payments to defined contribution pension schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

**2 STATUS**

Aurora Orchestra is a company limited by guarantee with the company registration number 08412045 (England and Wales) and the charity registration number 1155738. The address of the registered office is The Music Base, King's Place, 90 York Way, London N1 9AG.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)****NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024****3 INCOME FROM DONATIONS AND LEGACIES**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Donations	152,541	96,581
Grants	324,019	250,019
	<u>476,560</u>	<u>346,600</u>

In the preceding period, income of £218,449 was restricted.

Grants included above were as follows:

The Arnold Clark Community Fund	-	1,000
Arts Council England (National Portfolio)	143,519	93,519
The Big Give Arts for Impact Campaign	10,000	-
Cockayne - Grants for the Arts and The London Community Foundation	25,000	20,000
The Foyle Foundation	29,000	-
Garrick Charitable Trust	4,000	-
The Goldsmiths' Company Charity	17,500	-
John Lyon's Charity	-	25,500
The John R Murray Trust	15,000	-
Signatur - The Karlsson Játiva Charitable Foundation	50,000	50,000
The Lucille Graham Trust	-	3,000
The Reed Foundation	3,000	5,000
The Royal Philharmonic Society Audience Fund	-	25,000
The Samuel Gardner Memorial Trust	-	1,500
The Astor Foundation	-	1,500
PRS Foundation's The Open Fund for Organisations	-	8,000
PRS Foundation's Resonate programme	-	2,000
Three Monkeys Trust	2,000	2,000
New Berlioz Edition Trust	-	10,000
Vaughan Williams Foundation	-	2,000
Anonymous funders	25,000	-
	<u>324,019</u>	<u>250,019</u>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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**4 INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Public performances:		
Performance fees	729,979	911,772
Performance-related grants	35,350	35,750
Programme sales, sales of recordings and reimbursed costs	2,079	1,437
Creative learning:		
Learning and participation income	33,160	33,803
	<u>800,568</u>	<u>982,762</u>

In the preceding period, income of £37,750 was restricted.

**5 EXPENDITURE ON RAISING FUNDS**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Fundraising staff costs	76,139	45,038
Direct fundraising costs	18,613	18,503
Support costs allocated	49,140	45,122
	<u>143,892</u>	<u>108,663</u>

AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

6 EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	<i>Direct costs 2024 £</i>	<i>Direct staff costs 2024 £</i>	<i>Support costs 2024 £</i>	<i>Total 2024 £</i>
Public performances	1,075,754	202,327	130,581	1,408,662
Creative learning	119,974	100,201	64,670	284,845
	<u>1,195,728</u>	<u>302,528</u>	<u>195,251</u>	<u>1,693,507</u>
	<i>Direct costs 2023 £</i>	<i>Direct staff costs 2023 £</i>	<i>Support costs 2023 £</i>	<i>Total 2023 £</i>
Public performances	1,214,000	138,536	138,794	1,491,330
Creative learning	112,197	70,474	70,605	253,276
	<u>1,326,197</u>	<u>209,010</u>	<u>209,399</u>	<u>1,744,606</u>

In the preceding period, expenditure of £317,714 was applied to restricted funds.

7 DIRECT COSTS

	<i>2024 £</i>	<i>2023 £</i>
Artists and freelancers	644,463	798,393
Venue hire	109,337	144,329
Music and instrument hire	107,766	67,066
Aurora Classroom	28,658	-
Commissioning	61,695	27,833
Travel and subsistence	239,613	286,625
Other direct costs	4,196	1,951
	<u>1,195,728</u>	<u>1,326,197</u>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**8 SUPPORT COSTS**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Support costs comprise:		
Support staff costs	56,517	47,963
Freelance staff	62,943	70,669
Marketing and website	39,841	67,826
Staff expenses and recruitment	9,112	19,151
Premises costs	20,500	13,073
Insurance	4,439	2,900
Other office costs	19,655	11,532
Bank charges and interest	16,889	12,271
Depreciation	4,070	3,136
Amortisation	1,095	-
Governance costs:		
Audit and accountancy	9,330	6,000
	<u>244,391</u>	<u>254,521</u>

**9 NET EXPENDITURE**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Net expenditure is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Operating lease rentals	20,500	13,020
Depreciation	4,070	3,136
Amortisation	1,095	-
Auditors' remuneration for audit services	9,330	6,000
	<u>9,330</u>	<u>6,000</u>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**10 STAFF COSTS**

	<b>2024</b> <b>£</b>	<b>2023</b> <b>£</b>
Gross salaries	377,204	262,365
Employer's National Insurance contributions	32,659	22,148
Employer's pension contributions	25,321	17,498
	<u>435,184</u>	<u>302,011</u>
Freelance fees:		
Artists	613,774	728,780
Direct freelancers	30,689	69,613
Administrative freelancers	62,943	70,669
	<u>707,406</u>	<u>869,062</u>

The average number of persons employed by the charity during the year was 12 (2023: 9).

Staff receiving remuneration in excess of £60,000 fell into the following bands:

	<b>2024</b> <b>No.</b>	<b>2023</b> <b>No.</b>
£80,001 - £90,000	-	1
£90,001 - £100,000	1	-

**11 INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS**

	<b>Film rights</b> <b>£</b>	<b>Total</b> <b>£</b>
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1 April 2023	-	-
Additions	36,771	36,771
At 31 March 2024	<u>36,771</u>	<u>36,771</u>
<b>Amortisation</b>		
At 1 April 2023	-	-
Charge for the year	1,095	1,095
At 31 March 2024	<u>1,095</u>	<u>1,095</u>
<b>Net book value</b>		
At 31 March 2024	<u>35,676</u>	<u>35,676</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

12 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	<b>Computers &amp; equipment</b>	<b>Total</b>
	£	£
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1 April 2023	57,573	57,573
Additions	6,326	6,326
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 March 2024	63,899	63,899
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At 1 April 2023	42,844	42,844
Charge for the year	4,070	4,070
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 March 2024	46,914	46,914
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net book value</b>		
At 31 March 2024	16,985	16,985
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
At 31 March 2023	14,729	14,729
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

13 DEBTORS

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	£	£
Trade debtors	158,285	171,559
Prepayments and accrued income	573,627	541,730
Other debtors	2,914	13,030
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	734,826	726,319
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**14 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Bank loans	76,311	60,533
Trade creditors	152,276	240,633
Other taxation and social security	12,285	7,957
Accruals and deferred income	136,040	59,347
	<u>376,912</u>	<u>368,470</u>

The movement on deferred income is as follows:

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Balance at 1 April 2023	-	-
Released to income	-	-
Received in the year and deferred	57,460	-
	<u>57,460</u>	<u>-</u>
Balance at 31 March 2024	<u>57,460</u>	<u>-</u>

Deferred income relates to income from the provision of services which has been invoiced in advance of delivering the related services, and to performance-related grants for which not all of the performance-related conditions had been met at the balance sheet date.

**15 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Bank loans: long term	203,839	144,444
	<u>203,839</u>	<u>144,444</u>

The bank loans are unsecured and carry interest at a fixed rate of 6.5%.

AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

16 MOVEMENT ON FUNDS

CURRENT YEAR	<i>Brought forward</i> £	<i>Income</i> £	<i>Expenditure</i> £	<i>Transfers</i> £	<i>Carried forward</i> £
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
<i><b>Performance programme:</b></i>					
Rite of Spring R&D	4,000	4,000	( 8,000)	-	-
King's Place programme	-	35,350	( 35,350)	-	-
Augurs of Spring	14,485	64,375	( 78,860)	-	-
Memory Champions	-	18,746	( 18,746)	-	-
<i><b>Creative learning:</b></i>					
Far, Far Away	-	21,053	( 21,053)	-	-
Aurora Classroom and schools' performances	38,000	163,500	( 156,500)	-	45,000
	<u>56,485</u>	<u>307,024</u>	<u>( 318,509)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>45,000</u>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General fund	286,545	1,424,313	( 1,518,890)	-	191,968
	<u>286,545</u>	<u>1,424,313</u>	<u>( 1,518,890)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>191,968</u>
Total funds	<u>343,030</u>	<u>1,731,337</u>	<u>( 1,837,399)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>236,968</u>

AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

16 MOVEMENT ON FUNDS continued

PRIOR YEAR	<i>Brought forward</i> £	<i>Income</i> £	<i>Expenditure</i> £	<i>Transfers</i> £	<i>Carried forward</i> £
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
<i>Performance programme:</i>					
Rite of Spring R&D	7,000	-	( 3,000)	-	4,000
Martin Suckling collaboration	8,000	-	( 8,000)	-	-
King's Place programme	45,000	37,750	( 82,750)	-	-
Immersive experimental concert formats	10,000	25,000	( 35,000)	-	-
Wolf, Duck, Mouse project	-	2,000	( 2,000)	-	-
Performances at Printworks and Queen Elizabeth Hall	-	20,000	( 20,000)	-	-
Berlioz Symphonie Fantastique project	-	10,000	( 10,000)	-	-
Héloïse Werner commission	-	8,000	( 8,000)	-	-
Memory Champions	-	1,000	( 1,000)	-	-
Augurs of Spring	-	30,375	( 15,890)	-	14,485
<i>Creative learning:</i>					
Aurora Classroom and schools' performances	48,000	122,074	( 132,074)	-	38,000
	<u>118,000</u>	<u>256,199</u>	<u>( 317,714)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>56,485</u>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General fund	290,082	1,532,018	( 1,535,555)	-	286,545
	<u>290,082</u>	<u>1,532,018</u>	<u>( 1,535,555)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>286,545</u>
Total funds	<u><u>408,082</u></u>	<u><u>1,788,217</u></u>	<u><u>( 1,853,269)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>343,030</u></u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

17 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	<i>Unrestricted funds</i> £	<i>Restricted funds</i> £	<i>Total funds</i> £
<b>CURRENT YEAR</b>			
Tangible fixed assets	52,661	-	52,661
Net current assets	343,146	45,000	388,146
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	( 203,839)	-	( 203,839)
	<u>191,968</u>	<u>45,000</u>	<u>236,968</u>
<b>PRIOR YEAR</b>			
Tangible fixed assets	14,729	-	14,729
Net current assets	416,260	56,485	472,745
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	( 144,444)	-	( 144,444)
	<u>286,545</u>	<u>56,485</u>	<u>343,030</u>

18 FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

At 31 March 2024 the charity was committed to future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	<b>2024</b> £	<b>2023</b> £
Due within one year	<u>2,000</u>	<u>1,260</u>

19 CONTINGENT ASSET

At the balance sheet date, the charity had been notified that it is due to receive a legacy from the estate of the late Nicholas Snowman OBE. Probate had not been granted at 31 March 2024 and so the legacy is not included in the financial statements as the income recognition criteria were not met. The amount of the legacy is expected to be £100,000.

## **20 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

The key management personnel are considered to be the trustees and the Senior Management Team.

There were no trustees' remuneration, reimbursed expenses nor other benefits during the current or preceding period.

During the year the trustees donated a total of £32,384 inclusive of Gift Aid (2023: £18,000 including Gift Aid), none of which involved conditions which would, or might, require the charity to alter significantly the nature of its existing activities.

The total amount of employee benefits (including employer's pension contributions) received by key management personnel during the year was £265,093 (2023: £209,274).

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**

England & Wales - Charity number 1155738

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# Accounts

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Company number: 8523283  
Charity number: 1155738



(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

**TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

*FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023*

# AURORA ORCHESTRA

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## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

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Trustees	Elizabeth Forgan DBE <i>Chair</i> Nicholas Hardie (retired November 2023) Andrew Hochhauser KC Michael Laven Jenny Lewis (retired November 2023) Alistair Lomax (retired November 2023) Ben Lumsden Rachel Mortimer Louise Smith (appointed July 2023) Suzanne Szczetnikowicz Sharon Zhu
Company registered number	8523283 (England and Wales)
Charity registered number	1155738
Registered office	The Music Base Kings Place 90 York Way London N1 9AG
Senior Management Team	John Harte <i>Chief Executive and Company Secretary</i> Jane Mitchell <i>Creative Director</i> Alana Grady <i>Senior Concerts Manager</i> Helen McKeown <i>Development Manager</i> Jane Walker <i>Finance Manager</i>
Independent Auditors	Lindeyer Francis Ferguson Limited North House, 198 High Street Tonbridge Kent TN9 1BE
Principal Bankers	CAF Bank Ltd 25 Kings Hill Avenue West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ

## **AURORA ORCHESTRA**

### **TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

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The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the charity for the year to 31 March 2023. The Trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements of the company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019). This report is also the Directors' Report under company law.

The reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report.

Since the charity qualifies as small under section 382 of the Companies Act 2006, the Strategic Report required of medium and large companies under the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013 has been omitted.

#### **Structure, Governance & Management**

Aurora Orchestra is a charitable company limited by guarantee. It is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association, dated 9 May 2013, amended by a special resolution of 5 December 2016.

#### **Objects**

The objects of the charity are to promote, maintain, improve and advance education particularly in the appreciation of music in all its forms through the presentation of public concerts.

#### **Organisation**

The Board of Trustees (set out on page 1) must have a minimum of three members. It convenes for a minimum of four meetings each year in pursuit of the objectives described below.

John Harte (Chief Executive) acts as Secretary to the Board. Principal Conductor Nicholas Collon, Creative Director Jane Mitchell and several members of the management team also attended board meetings during the period. Player interests were represented by Player Representative Sébastien van Kuijk with other guest attendees invited on an ad hoc basis.

#### **Board Committees**

The Board supports the orchestra's administrative team on an ongoing basis through a group of committees with particular areas of responsibility. These currently include the following:

- Finance & Operations
- Appointments & Governance

The Board agrees formal Terms of Reference for each committee.

#### **Trustee Appointment, Induction and Performance Review**

The Appointments and Governance Committee regularly audits the collective skills and experience of the board, identifying skills gaps and making recommendations to the board on trustee recruitment. Any new Trustee must be appointed by a resolution of the existing Trustees, and the board aims to ensure that its membership reflects a diverse range of views and backgrounds. New Trustees will meet with the Chair and Chief Executive prior to joining the Board. Induction and training of new Trustees is handled by the board's Appointments and Governance Committee; the Committee Chair and Chair of Trustees also meet annually with all Trustees individually to review performance, identify any particular training needs, and set objectives for the year ahead.

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

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#### Management

Aurora Orchestra's management team during the 2022/23 financial year comprised the following:

- Chief Executive John Harte oversaw the day-to-day running of the organisation, managing other senior staff, cultivating and maintaining external relationships, and developing the orchestra's forward strategy in close partnership with the Principal Conductor and Creative Director.
- Creative Director Jane Mitchell shared overall responsibility for the orchestra's artistic direction and programming with the Principal Conductor and Chief Executive as part of the artistic planning team; during this period she took particular responsibility for developing the orchestra's new online learning resources.
- Principal Conductor Nicholas Collon had overall responsibility for the orchestra's musical direction, and shared responsibility for the orchestra's artistic direction and programming with the Creative Director and Chief Executive.
- The orchestra's production team – comprising Senior Concerts Manager Alana Grady, Concerts and Participation Manager Anahita Falaki, and Orchestra Assistant Tara Collins (appointed January 2023) – was responsible for the production of concerts, recordings, broadcasts and other projects, and oversaw the production of the orchestra's work for young children and families including online learning resources.
- Finance Manager Jane Walker (appointed September 2022) had responsibility for accounting and book-keeping.
- Development Manager Helen McKeown oversaw the orchestra's fundraising activity.
- Learning Director Rebecca Barnett oversaw the orchestra's creative learning programme including the Aurora Classroom platform.
- Marketing Manager Harriet Orbell (appointed September 2022) was responsible for marketing and audience development.
- Other freelance staff included Orchestra Personnel Manager Hal Hutchison and other occasional support staff as required by individual projects.

#### Risk Management

The Trustees have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and systems have been established to mitigate those risks. Procedures have been put in place to minimise both external and internal risks and these procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they still meet the needs of the charity. The Trustees are satisfied that the Trust's assets attributable to each of its individual funds are available and adequate to fulfil its obligations in relation to those funds.

Key risks identified and managed in this period included:

- Seasonal cashflow challenges posed by the payment in arrears of Orchestra Tax Relief as this has increased as proportion of the orchestra's overall income: this was mitigated by an ongoing loan finance agreement with CAF Bank to ensure adequate liquidity at year end pending the receipt of the OTR claim from HMRC;
- Failure to meet income targets: the orchestra continued to explore new income streams (including growing subscription income from Aurora Classroom) and invested in a new specialist fundraising role to support increased individual giving targets (including the launch of a new supporter circle around the *Rite of Spring* project);
- Failure to adequately keep pace with the artistic possibilities of new technologies: Aurora continued to invest in Aurora Classroom as its flagship digital product and embraced new creative technology partnerships around several key projects including its Printworks events in March 2023 and *Rite of Spring* production for summer 2023;
- Loss of income as a consequence of an unforeseen problem with an international tour: additional travel time was built into touring arrangements to ensure greater tolerance of travel disruption, and additional financial contingencies incorporated into international touring budgets.

- Departure or prolonged absence of key creative and management personnel, particularly CEO, Creative Director and Principal Conductor: organisational resilience was encouraged by delegating leadership roles more widely across the management team; staff salaries were benchmarked for competitiveness; and wherever possible contingency plans were mapped out for projects deemed to be critically dependent on the involvement of one or more key artists.

### **Mission statement and measuring success**

Aurora's activity during this financial year was shaped by its 2022–2025 Business Plan, which incorporated the following mission statement:

*Aurora creates vibrant musical adventures that share a passion for orchestral music with the broadest possible audience. We produce vivid and intensely powerful musical experiences combining the very highest performance quality with creative presentation and an exceptional breadth of artistic horizons. We harness the extraordinary versatility of the chamber orchestra to make orchestral music speak in powerful new ways for first-time listeners and lifelong classical devotees alike.*

The organisation's work continues to be underpinned by four key values as follows:

- **Aim high:** we will strive without compromise for the very highest levels of artistic and organisational excellence, with a passionate commitment to quality throughout our output. We will seek to inspire and challenge our audience, players, collaborators, and staff with projects that are never less than extraordinary. We will be prepared to take risks and break convention in the pursuit of an ever better artistic product.
- **Music first:** whilst we will be fearless in our artistic adventures, these will always be in the service of making music we play speak more powerfully. We will always seek to place music and musicians at the heart of our projects, and when collaborating across art forms we will always ensure that music and the orchestra's creative voice is central to the artistic product. We will be brave enough to walk away from projects where this musical integrity can't be guaranteed, even where these offer substantial rewards.
- **Music for all:** we believe passionately that orchestral music can and should be a source of enrichment for everyone. We will refuse to settle for performing only to existing classical concert-goers, instead actively seeking to grow a bigger, more diverse audience for orchestral music in the UK and beyond.
- **Have fun:** joy in music-making is central to our work. Whilst we seek to foster a working culture of challenge and ambition, we also want to ensure that our artistic and management personnel always share in this sense of enjoyment. We want Aurora to be a special, distinctive and enjoyable place to work, and will strive for the best working conditions for players and staff.

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'Public Benefit: Running a Charity' (PB2). The Trustees believe that the quality, breadth, and accessibility of Aurora's work means that the orchestra's programme offers a clear public benefit.

The orchestra's current business plan sets out the following specific objectives for the period 2022–2025:

**1) Develop a vibrant digital offer worthy of the Aurora brand:** launch Aurora's online learning resources and teacher CPD programme nationally; set in motion new digital initiatives in partnership with key collaborators which allow Aurora to blaze a trail in the online realm.

**2) Build organisational resilience:** Move towards more sustainable financial and staffing models, including growing new revenue streams, reducing pressure on key creative roles, and building reserves.

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

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**3) Deliver a vibrant and distinctive programme of live activity which builds on Aurora's sector-leading reputation for quality and creativity:** plan and deliver a live programme of outstanding quality and innovation, focused particularly around a small number of key venue relationships.

**4) Realise the extraordinary potential of Aurora's programme to reach new audiences for classical music:** Through live and online activity, achieve a measurable step-change in expanding the reach of our work beyond established classical audiences.

The orchestra's progress over the period 2022–2025 is measured against these four objectives, as well as against specific key performance indicators agreed with Arts Council England as part of the organisation's National Portfolio Organisation funding agreement. These included a series of agreed outcomes supporting Arts Council England's current 10-year strategy *Let's Create*, and agreed measures around ACE's four current Investment Principles. Significant progress was made in 2022/23 against each of the objectives, as shown in the detailed activity summary and financial review set out below.

#### Artistic Summary 2022/23

2022/2023 saw Aurora's rapid post-pandemic regrowth continue, with the orchestra's busiest season of live activity to date reaching a combined live audience of over 45,000 people (36,000 in the UK and a further 9,000 internationally). In addition to mounting full concert seasons at Kings Place and Southbank Centre and an expanded programme of UK touring, the orchestra also resumed international activity with appearances in Austria, Belgium, Germany and Ireland. Further investment was also made in Aurora Classroom, the orchestra's digital learning platform aimed at supporting music teaching in primary school and SEND settings.

#### 1. Southbank Centre series

After six seasons as an Associate Orchestra, in April 2022 Aurora joined the Southbank Centre's family of Resident Orchestras as part of the first change to the venue's roster of resident ensembles in a generation.

In its first year as Resident Orchestra Aurora delivered three major projects at Southbank Centre showcasing its signature memorised performance strand, and vividly illustrating the range of theatrical and educational possibilities which this approach can unlock. In June 2022 (Royal Festival Hall) the orchestra welcomed Ukrainian violinist Valeriy Sokolov for his debut appearance with the orchestra, performing Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto as part of a programme also featuring a memorised performance of Shostakovich's ninth symphony. The symphony was introduced by one of Aurora's distinctive staged introductions, presented by Nicholas Collon with Tom Service. The orchestra toured versions of this programme to Bury St Edmunds and the Kölner Philharmonie in Cologne.

In September 2022 the orchestra revived its landmark Orchestral Theatre staging of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, infused with theatrical lighting, costume, set design and choreographed player movement. Guest actor Mathew Baynton appeared as Berlioz for a production at the Royal Festival Hall which used the composer's score, letters, and other contemporaneous accounts to bring audiences under the skin of the music. The orchestra also toured the symphony in concert alongside Ravel's first piano concerto to Antwerp, Bregenz and Hamburg (with Alexandre Tharaud as soloist), and to Warwick and Dublin (with pianist Tom Poster).

In March 2023 the orchestra returned to the Queen Elizabeth Hall for the world premiere of Héloïse Werner's newly-commissioned *For Mira*, written in memory of the composer Mira Calix, presented alongside two works by Beethoven – his fifth symphony (performed here from memory) and the fourth piano concerto with Jan Lisiecki as soloist. The orchestra also presented its memorised Beethoven 5 in several other contexts. These included touring appearances alongside Lisiecki in Heidelberg and Munich, as well as a concert for care home residents presented at Bristol Cathedral in association with Bristol Beacon. The symphony also formed the centrepiece of a second project at the Printworks nightclub venue in Rotherhithe: a pair of immersive performances delivered to a combined audience of

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c. 4,000 people. Configured in an 'exploded' layout which allowed the audience physically to explore the orchestra as it performed in the vast space of a building that once housed Europe's largest printing press, Aurora's players presented the Beethoven symphony alongside newly-commissioned electronic music by Nwando Ebizie.

For younger audiences Aurora premiered a new concert theatre work for young audiences by Martin Suckling, *The Wolf, the Duck and the Mouse*, inspired by the illustrated children's book of the same name by Mac Barnett and Jon Klassen. Also on offer for young children and families (February 2023) was Debussy and the Snow Elephant, a revival of one of Aurora's intimate multi-sensory storytelling concerts based around the music of Debussy.

"Tom Service, a fired-up presence on stage, together with Collon are in danger of becoming one of the greatest double acts in musical presentation... This would not have been so satisfying without the superlative playing of Aurora Orchestra throughout, entirely from memory, with pinpoint precision in the strings, a choral-like weight from the woodwind and virtuosic displays from the brass, all delivered with infectious enthusiasm."

(\*\*\*\* Bachtrack on Aurora's Shostakovich 9 at the Royal Festival Hall).

"[Werner's work] was the centrepiece of a programme that had begun with an outstandingly fresh, punchy account of Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto... The piece gives the Aurora musicians the space to explore their personal trove of associations by quietly describing places that have personal significance to them. It's an introspective piece which grows out of lapping, disjointed chords until the textures threaten to disintegrate, when a pair of bassoons restore order with a consoling lament. It's a direct, touching act of remembrance."

(\*\*\*\* The Guardian on Werner/Beethoven)

"In the vaulted splendour of Bristol Cathedral, another pioneering ensemble, the Aurora Orchestra under the baton of Nicholas Collon, reminded us that music matters at every stage of life... The ancient building's height and resonance (I counted seven seconds' reverb on a particular end-of-movement chord) made an already immersive experience overwhelming, as well as thrillingly loud. Tears were shed."

(\*\*\*\* The Observer on Aurora's care homes concert at Bristol Cathedral)

## 2. Kings Place series

Aurora delivered a full season of live activity as Resident Ensemble at Kings Place, including several performances as part of the venue's year-long *Voices Unwrapped* series.

The year started with a first collaboration with the BBC Singers, with Sophie Jeannin conducting a programme featuring music by Caroline Shaw, Reena Esmaïl, Vaughan Williams and Tomás Luis de Victoria, as well as James Macmillan's setting of *Seven Last Words from the Cross*. The concert was recorded for broadcast on BBC Radio 3. Also as part of *Voices Unwrapped*, Aurora presented a collaboration with tenor Nicholas Mulroy, who co-curated a mixed programme of Baroque music and 20th-century Latin American song in new chamber arrangements – perhaps the first time Bach, Purcell and Monteverdi have shared a concert billing with Silvio Rodríguez, Mercedes Sosa and Víctor Jara. The 2023 season concluded with a rare performance of Shostakovich's 14th symphony, performed in the original Russian by soloists Elizabeth Atherton and Peter Rose as part of a programme also featuring works by Mahler and Britten.

During the 2022/23 financial year the orchestra also belatedly concluded its complete cycle of Mozart's piano concertos – a 25-concert journey originally intended to conclude in 2020 but extended by the intervention of the pandemic. Pianist Javier Perianes made his debut as soloist with the orchestra for a performance of Mozart's final Piano Concerto, no. 27 in B flat (July 2022), marking the first time in history a British orchestra has ever presented all 27 concertos live in concert as part of a single concert series. Other Kings Place performances in this season included the *Orchestral Theatre* production for children *Schumann and Pepper the Monkey* (July 2022), and a first contribution to Kings Place's 2023

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'Sound Unwrapped' season (February 2023) featuring works by Gershwin, Debussy, George Benjamin and John Adams.

"You invariably come away from an Aurora Orchestra concert with ears refreshed and mind revived... After a couple of numbers, I ceased to worry if the high concept behind this cross-continental, cross-century fusion really worked (Mulroy cites "themes of love, power, faith, and the poetic imagination"). It was enough that soloist and players combined to lead the way through an arresting, sometimes ravishing, landscape studded with vocal and instrumental treasures... We finished gratified by the quality and integrity of all the music-making on the way."

(\*\*\*\* The ArtsDesk on Aurora's collaboration with Nicholas Mulroy)

"The playing was terrific in its precision, detail and drive."

(\*\*\*\* The Guardian on Shostakovich 14 at Kings Place)

"a powerful performance by the Aurora Orchestra and the conductor Nicholas Collon. Unflinching, bleak, fierce, this was a reading that didn't shy away from the symphony's darkest corners."

(\*\*\*\* The Times on Shostakovich 14 at Kings Place)

### 3. Other live highlights

Aurora returned to the BBC Proms (July 2022) for a sold-out appearance featuring guest soloist Patricia Kopatchinskaja as violinist for Shostakovich's first violin concerto; the orchestra also performed Beethoven's fifth symphony from memory, preceded by one of its signature staged introductions to the piece.

External co-productions included a collaboration with Fiery Angel Productions, presenting touring performances of Peppa Pig: My First Concert, a theatrical concert designed to give young children their first experience of classical music and orchestral instruments. Hosted by characters from the popular television series Peppa Pig, the production was co-devised and scripted with Aurora Creative Director Jane Mitchell, and toured to venues in London, Bristol, Birmingham, Manchester and Edinburgh.

The orchestra was also invited to appear as part of a Royal Opera House / Britten Pears Arts co-production of Britten's opera The Rape of Lucretia, with performances at Snape Maltings (October 2022) and the Linbury Theatre (November 2022).

"A Prom can give you width of musical experience, or depth, but rarely both. Either you're enthused and entertained and leave with a smile on your face, or you get a profound spiritual journey that makes you reluctant to applaud at the end. The wonderful thing about this Prom was that we got both"

(\*\*\*\*, The Telegraph on Aurora's performance at the BBC Proms)

"An exceptionally thrilling performance and it drove the audience close to frenzy."

(\*\*\*\* The Times, Aurora at the Proms)

"In the pit Corinna Niemeyer led a coruscating account of the work, the thirteen soloists from the Aurora Orchestra playing this fascinating score which brims with invention as if their lives depended on it."

(\*\*\*\* Music OMH on The Rape of Lucretia)

"Peppa Pig: My First Concert is a must see for all the family and especially a fantastic way to engage children in culture that is rich in our society and history."

(Get the Chance, Wales)

### 4. Learning programme

Across the financial year 2022/23, Aurora Classroom evolved from initial development phase (academic year 2021/22) to 'soft launch' (academic year 2022/23). This shift coincided with the appointment of

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three specialist staff – two Learning Resources Producers and one Learning Director – to lead on this aspect of the orchestra's work from summer 2022.

Over the course of the financial year, the Aurora Classroom platform had 22 subscribing schools, plus a further four schools continuing to use the platform for free in return for their continued support in resource development. Online CPD was delivered for these schools, and two further dedicated sessions were held in Southend-on-Sea for a cluster of ten schools, and online for the six 'Thurrock Trailblazer' schools. Production of our second unit of content, Meet the Instruments, began in October 2022 and continued for the remainder of the financial year. This was a much larger undertaking than the creation of Aurora and the Magical Toy Box due to the five distinct programmes written for the different year groups, totalling over 800 audio tracks and 200 films.

We recruited a further ten schools with 'free' subscriptions from January 2023 to support our piloting of this second unit in EYFS, KS1 and SEND settings. In contrast to the large number of piloting schools in 2021/22, we decided to focus more closely on a small group of 'beacon' schools for the Meet the Instruments pilot and forge closer relationships with individual schools to encourage future paid subscription to the platform.

We were pleased to host our first 'Teacher CPD Day' at Southbank Centre, with venue hire provided in-kind owing to our Resident Orchestra status, in March 2023. This event was free for teachers to attend and comprised two classroom-based workshops led by our Learning Resources Producers Helen Mead and Sarah Lloyd, a vocal workshop led by Lucy Hollins, and a percussion workshop led by Aurora percussionist Owen Gunnell. The day, attended by 30 teachers, culminated with a short presentation of Aurora Classroom and performance of Beethoven and the Dinosaurs.

Whilst much of our learning work this year focused on the digital offer for younger children, this year also saw the development of resources for secondary schools, starting with Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*: this included 150 discounted tickets for the orchestra's performance at Royal Festival Hall, a pre-concert talk for Southbank's 'Encounters' programme, and a resource available on TES.com for A-level Music teachers to download.

All at Aurora were deeply saddened to learn of the news of the sudden death of Nicholas Snowman OBE in March 2023. Nicholas was a close friend and supporter of the orchestra for over a decade, including as a Trustee from 2016–2022. He had been particularly closely involved in the planning of the Rite of Spring project for summer 2023, and the production was subsequently dedicated to his memory. Trustees pay warm tribute to Nicholas' enormous contribution not only as a champion of Aurora but more broadly as a tireless and hugely effective advocate for music and music education in the UK and internationally over the past half century.

### Financial Review

During 2022/3 the orchestra continued to rebuild its financial position following the disruption caused by Covid-19. Earned income exceeded pre-pandemic levels, in turn allowing the delivery of an unprecedented volume of high-quality artistic activity. The return of international touring income was a particularly welcome driver of growth, as was the government's decision to extend its post-pandemic uplift to Orchestra Tax Relief rates as a means of catalysing increased output. The latter allowed the company to be bolder in scaling up our activity following the uncertainty of the previous two years, and was a major factor underpinning a doubling of overall income in 2022/23 compared with the prior year. Income for the year ending 31 March 2023 was £1,788,217 (compared with £946,212 in 2021/22), of which 81% comprised earnings from performance and learning activity and associated tax reliefs; 5% regular core funding from Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation; 5% philanthropic gifts from individual supporters; and the remainder grants from trusts and foundations. The orchestra disbursed over £1.3 million in direct project costs (2021/22: £499,557), representing 72% of overall expenditure, the majority of which comprised fees to freelance players and other artists, with just under £210,000 or 11% (2021/22: as restated £129,419) spent on direct staffing costs. The net financial result for the year was a small deficit in unrestricted funds totalling £3,537.

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### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

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Contributed income fell as expected compared with the previous year as temporary additional support from Arts Council England through the Culture Recovery Fund came to an end. The orchestra was the grateful recipient of several major grants, including renewed support from the Karlsson Játiva Charitable Foundation for creative learning activity and the Parabola Foundation towards the Kings Place programme, funding from Cockayne–Grants for the Arts for performances under the umbrella of Aurora's Southbank Centre series, and an award from the RPS Audience Fund for experimental work at Printworks.

The orchestra's balance sheet as at 31 March 2023 showed unrestricted reserves at £286,545 as well as £56,485 in restricted grant funding carried forward for expenditure in 2023/24 (2021/22: £290,082 unrestricted reserves; £118,000 restricted). The unrestricted reserves position is in excess of the board's current target for the 2023/24 year, and offers some modest headroom for artistic investment going into a season in which the orchestra will tackle its most ambitious touring project to date – an Orchestral Theatre staging of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*.

The economic outlook for arts organisations continues to be very uncertain, with the cost of living crisis continuing to impact on individual donors and correspondingly increased pressure on the resources of organisational funders. Within this context Aurora continues to develop new revenue streams to increase financial resilience, including by expanding subscription income from Aurora Classroom in 2023/24 as well as continuing to build international touring revenues.

#### Reserves Policy

The Trustees understand the need to build up sufficient reserves to provide a degree of financial security for the orchestra's ongoing operations. The Board currently sets its unrestricted reserves target at 6 months' worth of core overhead expenditure (equivalent to £273,929 for the 2023/24 financial year).

At the balance sheet date, unrestricted reserves were £286,545, 105% of the board's target level. Free reserves (being unrestricted reserves less tangible assets) were £271,816 (2022: £282,142).

#### Environmental Impact

The Trustees are committed to ensuring that the orchestra takes steps to minimise its environmental impact. This includes regular reporting to Julie's Bicycle on the carbon footprint of its artistic programme and taking environmental impact into account when planning touring activity (e.g. booking train over air travel wherever possible for international tours).

#### Fundraising disclosures

The Trustees have considered the provisions of section 13 of the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016, and note the following:

- Aurora raises funds in support of its programme through philanthropic gifts from individuals and grants from trusts and foundations.
- During the financial year 2022/23 the charity employed the services of one external fundraiser supporting the drafting of applications to trusts and foundations (May 2022–November 2022).
- The charity received no complaints about fundraising activity during this financial period.
- The charity makes every effort to protect vulnerable people and other members of the public from behaviour which is an unreasonable intrusion on a person's privacy; is unreasonably persistent; and/or placed undue pressure on a person to give money or other property.

Following a thoroughgoing review of the orchestra's data processing policies in light of the introduction of the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2018, an updated organisational Privacy Policy is published on the orchestra's website.

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### TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

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#### Future plans

During the course of the year Aurora's team made plans for an increasingly ambitious programme of creative output. In addition to activity to be delivered as part of ongoing residencies at Southbank Centre and Kings Place, a particular focus of artistic planning since the year end was a new Orchestral Theatre production based around Stravinsky's Rite of Spring planned for summer 2023. This reached the later stages of development during the 2022/23 FY, with detailed creative work in collaboration with projection designer Anouar Brissel, consulting director James Bonas and a number of other external creative partners. Aurora's Rite was successfully staged at the BBC Proms and Helsinki Festival in August/September 2023, garnering unprecedented critical acclaim. Plans are already underway to revive the production in a future season, with interest from a number of prospective international host promoters.

The expansion of Aurora Classroom continued following the year end, with the launch of a second unit of work on the platform ('Meet the instruments'), and plans for a new Key Stage 2 unity inspired by Beethoven's 'pastoral' symphony in development for 2024. Aurora's creative learning team are working in collaboration with a number of concert venue partners to scale up the impact of the platform nationally, offering subscriptions to local schools networks as well as planning linked live performances and teacher training to be delivered in the local venues.

The orchestra aims to maintain its commitment to diverse programming and commissioning, with 2023/24 collaborators including Debasmita Bhattacharya, Anna Meredith, Anna Thorvaldsdottir, Sidiki Dembele and Anouar Brissel. Expanding the orchestra's international touring programme continued to be a major strategic focus, including confirmed plans for Aurora's largest-scale tour to date in March 2025. The board and artistic team have also begun planning for Aurora's 20th-anniversary season in 2025, including several commissions and Orchestral Theatre projects.

#### Trustees' responsibilities statement

The Trustees (who are also directors of the charity for purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable group will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

#### Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' report is approved has confirmed that:

- as far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware, and

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

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- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies' regime in Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees on 20 December 2023 and signed on their behalf by:

**Dame Elizabeth Forgan (Chair)**  
**Chair**

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

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#### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Aurora Orchestra ("the charitable company") for the year ended 31 March 2023, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of the group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

#### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group and parent charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

#### Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

**Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report, which includes the directors' report for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

**Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the charitable company has not kept adequate and proper accounting records or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the charitable company's financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies exemption in preparing the directors' report.

**Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

## **AURORA ORCHESTRA**

### **INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

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We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the preparation of the financial statements of the charitable company, and the procedures that management adopt to ensure compliance. We have considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements, and in particular we identified: the Companies Act 2006, FRS102 and the Charities SORP.

We have also identified other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the amounts or disclosures within the financial statements, but for which compliance is fundamental to the charitable company's operations and to avoid material penalties, including GDPR / data protection regulations, employment law, health and safety, and taxation legislation particularly concerning Orchestra Tax Relief.

Having reviewed the laws and regulations applicable to the charitable company, we designed and performed audit procedures to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence. Specifically, we:

- Selected a team with sector experience to perform the audit;
- Obtained an understanding of the charitable company's procedures for ensuring compliance with laws and regulations;
- Obtained and reviewed internal policy and procedure documents;
- Made enquiries of management and the trustees regarding whether they were aware of any actual or suspected incidences of non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- Obtained and reviewed meeting minutes;
- Obtained and reviewed correspondence with the regulator;
- Reviewed legal expenses accounts for indications of any possible non-compliance; and
- Reviewed the completeness and accuracy of any disclosures made in the financial statements.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including considering how fraud might occur. This was performed by:

- Making an assessment of the charitable company's control environment, systems and controls including identifying any weaknesses and considering the risk of management override of controls;
- Assessing the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including considering how fraud could occur;
- Considering whether there are any incentives or opportunities for management to manipulate financial results;
- Obtaining and evaluating the trustees' assessment of the risk of fraud, and enquiring as to whether they are aware of any actual or suspected incidences of fraud;
- Reviewing the accounting policies and accounting estimates for signs of management bias; and
- Identifying key risks relating to irregularities as relating to player payments, the recognition and cut off of grant income, the Orchestra Tax Relief claim, and the identification and application of restricted funds.

We then designed audit procedures in response to the risks identified, including performing detailed substantive testing with an appropriate risk factor on player payments and grant income, post period end review, detailed review of the Orchestra Tax Relief claim and vouching to supporting evidence, and substantive testing of the expenditure applied to all material restricted funds.

The audit has been planned and performed in accordance with auditing standards, however, because of the inherent limitations of audit procedures there remains a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those that may lead to material misstatements in the financial statements. There are inherent difficulties in detecting irregularities, and irregularities that result from fraud may be more difficult to detect than irregularities that result from error, for example due to concealment, override of controls, collusion or misrepresentations. In addition, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less audit procedures are able to identify it.

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### INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

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A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

#### Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company, the charitable company's members as a body and the charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

**A S Healey FCA CTA DChA**  
**Senior Statutory Auditor**  
For and on behalf of:  
**Lindeyer Francis Ferguson Limited**

Statutory Auditors  
Chartered Accountants

Date: 21 December 2023

North House  
198 High Street  
Tonbridge  
Kent TN9 1BE

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
(INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

		<i>Unrestricted funds 2023</i>	<i>Restricted funds 2023</i>	<i>Total funds 2023</i>	<i>Total funds 2022</i>
	<b>Note</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<i>As restated £</i>
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	<b>3</b>	128,151	218,449	346,600	447,451
Charitable activities	<b>4</b>	1,402,989	37,750	1,440,739	498,438
Investments		878	-	878	323
Total		<u>1,532,018</u>	<u>256,199</u>	<u>1,788,217</u>	<u>946,212</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	<b>5</b>	108,663	-	108,663	102,098
Charitable activities	<b>6</b>	1,426,892	317,714	1,744,606	801,879
Total		<u>1,535,555</u>	<u>317,714</u>	<u>1,853,269</u>	<u>903,977</u>
<b>Net (expenditure) / income</b>		( 3,537)	( 61,515)	( 65,052)	42,235
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<u>( 3,537)</u>	<u>( 61,515)</u>	<u>( 65,052)</u>	<u>42,235</u>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward:		<u>290,082</u>	<u>118,000</u>	<u>408,082</u>	<u>365,847</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u>286,545</u>	<u>56,485</u>	<u>343,030</u>	<u>408,082</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**BALANCE SHEET  
AS AT 31 MARCH 2023**

	Note	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	11		14,729		7,940
			<u>14,729</u>		<u>7,940</u>
<b>Current assets</b>					
Stocks		597		597	
Debtors	12	726,319		309,003	
Cash at bank and in hand		114,299		263,079	
		<u>841,215</u>		<u>572,679</u>	
<b>Creditors:</b> amounts falling due within one year	13	( 368,470)		( 109,001)	
<b>Net current assets</b>			472,745		463,678
<b>Creditors:</b> amounts falling due after more than one year	14		( 144,444)		( 63,536)
<b>Total net assets</b>			<u>343,030</u>		<u>408,082</u>
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>					
Unrestricted funds			286,545		290,082
Restricted funds			56,485		118,000
	15		<u>343,030</u>		<u>408,082</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 20 December 2023 and were signed on its behalf by:

**Dame Elizabeth Forgan (Chair)**

**Company number: 8523283**

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities:</b>			
Net cash used in operating activities	A	( 249,572)	( 83,942)
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		( 9,925)	( 4,520)
Investment income		878	323
Net cash used in investing activities		( 9,047)	( 4,197)
<b>Cash flows from financing activities:</b>			
Repayments of borrowing		( 40,161)	( 29,618)
Cash inflows from new borrowing		150,000	-
Net cash provided by / (used) in financing activities		109,839	( 29,618)
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		( 148,780)	( 117,757)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		263,079	380,836
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	B	114,299	263,079
<b>A. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities</b>			
Net (expenditure) / income per the Statement of Financial Activities		( 65,052)	42,235
Depreciation charges		3,136	3,294
Investment income		( 878)	( 323)
(Increase) in debtors		( 417,316)	( 173,845)
Increase in creditors		230,538	44,697
Net cash used in operating activities		( 249,572)	( 83,942)
<b>B. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents</b>			
Cash at bank and in hand		114,299	263,079
<b>C. Analysis of changes in net debt</b>			
		<b>Bank loans</b>	
	<b>Cash at bank</b>	<b>Due within one year</b>	<b>Due after one year</b>
	£	£	£
At the beginning of the year	263,079	( 31,602)	( 63,536)
Cash flows	( 148,780)	-	( 109,839)
Maturity analysis	-	( 28,931)	28,931
At the end of the year	114,299	( 60,533)	( 144,444)

## **1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

### **Basis of preparation of the financial statements**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Aurora Orchestra meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

The financial statements are presented in pounds sterling and rounded to the nearest pound.

### **Going concern**

The Trustees have assessed that there are no significant doubts in the company's ability to continue as a going concern. As a result, the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

### **Income**

Income from donations and grants is recognised when the charity is entitled to the funds, the receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably. For donations, this is usually on receipt. For grants, this is usually when a formal offer is made in writing, unless the grant contains terms and conditions outside of the charity's control which must be met before the charity is entitled to the funds, in which case the income is recognised when the conditions have been met. Where grants are received in response to a proposal including a budgeted timescale, such that the timescale for the expenditure is implicit in the grant agreement, the income is recognised in accordance with that timescale.

Income from charitable activities is recognised in the period in which the relevant services are delivered. Income from performance-related grants in connection with the charitable activities is recognised to the extent that the performance-related criteria have been met.

### **Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised on the accruals basis when a present legal or constructive obligation exists at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation, and the amount can be estimated reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on the basis of estimated usage, calculated as the proportion of directly attributable staff costs.

Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure incurred by the charity to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities events and non-charitable trading.

Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the charity's objectives.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

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**1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES continued**

**Fund accounting**

General funds are unrestricted funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees.

Designated funds are a subset of unrestricted funds and represent funds set aside by the Trustees for specific future purposes or projects.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular purposes.

**Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated realisable value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Computers and office equipment	25% on the straight line basis
Musical equipment and library	10% on the straight line basis
Music stands	16.7% on the straight line basis

Assets costing less than £250 are not capitalised but are recognised as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities in the year incurred.

**Stocks**

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value after making due allowance for obsolete and slow-moving stocks.

**Financial instruments**

The charity only has financial instruments of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Short term basic financial instruments such as trade debtors and trade creditors are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value. Long term basic financial instruments such as bank loans are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

**Leases**

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the lease term.

**Employee benefits**

The costs of short-term employee benefits are recognised as a liability and an expense.

Payments to defined contribution pension schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

**Prior period adjustment**

During the period, the charity reviewed its methodology for the allocation of staff and support costs. For comparability, the prior period has been restated on the same basis. The effect on the prior period was to reduce expenditure on raising funds and increase expenditure on charitable activities by £14,359.

## AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

#### 2 STATUS

Aurora Orchestra is a company limited by guarantee with the company registration number 08412045 (England and Wales) and the charity registration number 1155738. The address of the registered office is The Music Base, King's Place, 90 York Way, London N1 9AG.

#### 3 INCOME FROM DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2023 £	2022 £
Donations	96,581	63,915
Grants	250,019	383,536
	<u>346,600</u>	<u>447,451</u>

In the preceding period, income of £173,000 was restricted.

Grants included above were as follows:

The Arnold Clark Community Fund	1,000	-
Arts Council England (National Portfolio)	93,519	93,519
Arts Council England (Culture Recovery Fund)	-	145,016
Cockayne - Grants for the Arts and The London Community Foundation	20,000	25,000
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	-	7,001
Garrick Charitable Trust	-	4,000
John Lyon's Charity	25,500	23,000
Signatur - The Karlsson Játiva Charitable Foundation	50,000	50,000
The Lucille Graham Trust	3,000	-
The Nugee Foundation	-	1,500
The Radcliffe Trust	-	4,500
The Reed Foundation	5,000	-
The Royal Philharmonic Society Audience Fund	25,000	25,000
The Samuel Gardner Memorial Trust	1,500	-
The Astor Foundation	1,500	-
PRS Foundation's The Open Fund for Organisations	8,000	-
PRS Foundation's Resonate programme	2,000	3,000
Three Monkeys Trust	2,000	2,000
New Berlioz Edition Trust	10,000	-
Vaughan Williams Foundation	2,000	-
	<u>250,019</u>	<u>383,536</u>

AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

4 INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	£	£
Performance fees	911,772	306,147
Learning and participation income	33,803	13,853
Performance-related grants	35,750	35,000
Orchestra and Film Tax Relief credit	457,977	136,791
Programme sales, sales of recordings and reimbursed costs	1,437	6,647
	<u>1,440,739</u>	<u>498,438</u>

In the prior period a grant of £35,000 has been reclassified to income from charitable activities based on the performance-related nature of the grant agreement.

5 EXPENDITURE ON RAISING FUNDS

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	£	£
Fundraising staff costs	45,038	39,499
Direct fundraising costs	18,503	9,828
Support costs allocated	45,122	52,771
	<u>108,663</u>	<u>102,098</u>

6 EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	<i>Direct costs</i>	<i>Direct staff costs</i>	<i>Support costs</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023</b>
	£	£	£	£
Orchestral activity	1,326,197	209,010	209,399	1,744,606
	<u>1,326,197</u>	<u>209,010</u>	<u>209,399</u>	<u>1,744,606</u>
	<i>Direct costs</i>	<i>Direct staff costs</i>	<i>Support costs</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<b>2022</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2022</b>
	£	£	£	£
Orchestral activity	499,557	129,419	172,903	801,879
	<u>499,557</u>	<u>129,419</u>	<u>172,903</u>	<u>801,879</u>

In the preceding period, expenditure of £273,000 was applied to restricted funds.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)****NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023****7 DIRECT COSTS**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Artists and freelancers	798,393	363,720
Venue hire	144,329	76,356
Music and instrument hire	67,066	17,275
Commissioning	27,833	18,706
Travel and subsistence	286,625	22,725
Other direct costs	1,951	775
	<u>1,326,197</u>	<u>499,557</u>

**8 SUPPORT COSTS**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Support costs comprise:		
Support staff costs	47,963	34,981
Freelance staff	70,669	50,362
Marketing and website	67,826	69,415
Staff expenses and recruitment	19,151	9,467
Premises costs	13,073	8,903
Insurance	2,900	2,748
Other office costs	11,532	16,237
Bank charges and interest	12,271	7,420
Depreciation	3,136	3,294
Governance costs:		
Legal and professional fees	-	17,847
Audit and accountancy	6,000	5,000
	<u>254,521</u>	<u>225,674</u>

**9 NET (EXPENDITURE) / INCOME**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Net (expenditure) / income is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Operating lease rentals	13,020	8,820
Depreciation	3,136	3,294
Auditors' remuneration for audit services	6,000	5,000

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)****NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023****10 STAFF COSTS**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Gross salaries	262,365	183,420
Employer's National Insurance contributions	22,148	14,544
Employer's pension contributions	17,498	5,935
	<u>302,011</u>	<u>203,899</u>
Freelance fees:		
Artists	728,780	351,819
Direct freelancers	69,613	11,901
Administrative freelancers	70,669	50,362
	<u>869,062</u>	<u>414,082</u>

The average number of persons employed by the charity during the year was 9 (2022: 5).

One employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 in the year (2022: one).

**11 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS**

	<b>Computers &amp; equipment</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1 April 2022	47,648	47,648
Additions	9,925	9,925
At 31 March 2023	<u>57,573</u>	<u>57,573</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At 1 April 2022	39,708	39,708
Charge for the year	3,136	3,136
At 31 March 2023	<u>42,844</u>	<u>42,844</u>
<b>Net book value</b>		
At 31 March 2023	<u>14,729</u>	<u>14,729</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>7,940</u>	<u>7,940</u>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**12 DEBTORS**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade debtors	171,559	4,320
Prepayments and accrued income	541,730	304,596
Other debtors	13,030	87
	<u>726,319</u>	<u>309,003</u>

**13 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Bank loans	60,533	31,602
Trade creditors	240,633	45,453
Other taxation and social security	7,957	15,103
Accruals and deferred income	59,347	16,843
	<u>368,470</u>	<u>109,001</u>

**14 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Bank loans: long term	144,444	63,536
	<u>144,444</u>	<u>63,536</u>

The bank loans are unsecured and carry interest at a fixed rate of 6.5%.

AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

15 MOVEMENT ON FUNDS

CURRENT YEAR	<i>Brought forward</i> £	<i>Income</i> £	<i>Expenditure</i> £	<i>Transfers</i> £	<i>Carried forward</i> £
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
<i><b>Performance programme:</b></i>					
Rite of Spring R&D	7,000	-	( 3,000)	-	4,000
Martin Suckling collaboration	8,000	-	( 8,000)	-	-
King's Place programme	45,000	37,750	( 82,750)	-	-
Immersive experimental concert formats	10,000	25,000	( 35,000)	-	-
Wolf, Duck, Mouse project	-	2,000	( 2,000)	-	-
Performances at Printworks and Queen Elizabeth Hall	-	20,000	( 20,000)	-	-
Berlioz Symphonie Fantastique project	-	10,000	( 10,000)	-	-
Héloïse Werner commission	-	8,000	( 8,000)	-	-
Memory Champions	-	1,000	( 1,000)	-	-
Augurs of Spring	-	30,375	( 15,890)	-	14,485
<i><b>Learning and participation:</b></i>					
Aurora Classroom and schools' performances	48,000	122,074	( 132,074)	-	38,000
	<u>118,000</u>	<u>256,199</u>	<u>( 317,714)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>56,485</u>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General fund	290,082	1,532,018	( 1,535,555)	-	286,545
	<u>290,082</u>	<u>1,532,018</u>	<u>( 1,535,555)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>286,545</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	<u><u>408,082</u></u>	<u><u>1,788,217</u></u>	<u><u>( 1,853,269)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>343,030</u></u>

AURORA ORCHESTRA (A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

15 MOVEMENT ON FUNDS continued

PRIOR YEAR	<i>Brought forward</i> £	<i>Income</i> £	<i>Expenditure</i> £	<i>Transfers</i> £	<i>Carried forward</i> £
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Performance programme	58,000	92,000	( 80,000)	-	70,000
Learning and participation	160,000	81,000	( 193,000)	-	48,000
	<u>218,000</u>	<u>173,000</u>	<u>( 273,000)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>118,000</u>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General fund	147,847	773,212	( 630,977)	-	290,082
	<u>147,847</u>	<u>773,212</u>	<u>( 630,977)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>290,082</u>
Total funds	<u>365,847</u>	<u>946,212</u>	<u>( 903,977)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>408,082</u>

16 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

CURRENT YEAR	<i>Unrestricted funds</i> £	<i>Restricted funds</i> £	<i>Total funds</i> £
Tangible fixed assets	14,729	-	14,729
Net current assets	416,260	56,485	472,745
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	( 144,444)	-	( 144,444)
	<u>286,545</u>	<u>56,485</u>	<u>343,030</u>
<b>PRIOR YEAR</b>			
Tangible fixed assets	7,940	-	7,940
Net current assets	345,678	118,000	463,678
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	( 63,536)	-	( 63,536)
	<u>290,082</u>	<u>118,000</u>	<u>408,082</u>

17 FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

At 31 March 2023 the charity was committed to future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	<b>2023</b> £	<b>2022</b> £
Due within one year	<u>1,260</u>	<u>840</u>

**18 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

The key management personnel are considered to be the trustees and the Senior Management Team.

There were no trustees' remuneration, reimbursed expenses nor other benefits during the current or preceding period.

During the year the trustees donated a total of £18,000 inclusive of Gift Aid (2022: £16,313 including Gift Aid), none of which involved conditions which would, or might, require the charity to alter significantly the nature of its existing activities.

The total amount of employee benefits (including employer's pension contributions) received by key management personnel during the year was £209,274 (2022: £107,948).

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**

England & Wales - Charity number 1155738

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# Accounts

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**Registered Company Number 8523283 (England & Wales)**  
**Registered Charity 1155738**



**Aurora Orchestra**  
(A company limited by guarantee)

**Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements**

**for the year ended**

**31st March 2022**

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

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**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Reference and administrative details of the charity and its trustees**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2022**

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<b>Directors (and Trustees):</b>	Elizabeth Forgan DBE (Chairman) Nicholas Hardie Andrew Hochhauser KC Michael Laven Jenny Lewis Alistair Lomax Ben Lumsden Rachel Mortimer Suzanne Szczetnikowicz Sharon Zhu
<b>Company Secretary:</b>	John Harte
<b>Senior Management Team:</b>	John Harte                      Chief Executive Jane Mitchell                Creative Director
<b>Registered Office:</b>	The Music Base King's Place 90 York Way London, N1 9AG
<b>Registered Company Number:</b>	8523283
<b>Registered Charity Number:</b>	1155738
<b>Bankers:</b>	CAF Bank Ltd 25 Kings Hill Avenue West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees**  
**For the year ended 31 MARCH 2022**

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The Trustees present their report together with financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022, which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

**Structure, Governance & Management**

**Governing Documentation**

Aurora Orchestra is a charitable company limited by guarantee. It is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association, dated 9 May 2013.

**Organisation**

The Board of Trustees must have a minimum of three members. It convenes for a minimum of four meetings each year in pursuit of the objectives described below. The complete membership of the Board during the past year was as follows:

Dame Elizabeth Forgan DBE  
Rebecca Barnett (appointed 30 September 2021; retired 24 May 2022)  
Andrew Blankfield (retired 22 September 2022)  
Nicholas Hardie  
Andrew Hochhauser KC (appointed 22 September 2022)  
Katherine Hudson (retired 30 September 2021)  
Mike Laven  
Jenny Lewis (appointed 30 September 2021)  
Alistair Lomax  
Ben Lumsden (appointed 30 September 2021)  
Rachel Mortimer  
Richard Sheldon KC (retired 30 September 2021)  
Nicholas Snowman OBE (retired 22 September 2022)  
Suzanne Szczetnikowicz  
Sharon Zhu (appointed 3 Feb 2022)

John Harte (Chief Executive) acts as Secretary to the Board. Principal Conductor Nicholas Collon, Creative Director Jane Mitchell and several members of the management team also attended board meetings during the period. Player interests were represented by Player Representative Jamie Campbell, with other guest attendees invited on an *ad hoc* basis.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2022**

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**Board Committees**

The Board supports the orchestra's administrative team on an ongoing basis through a group of committees with particular areas of responsibility. These currently include the following:

- Finance & Operations
- Appointments & Governance

The Board agrees formal Terms of Reference for each committee.

**Appointment and Induction of Trustees**

The Appointments and Governance Committee regularly audits the collective skills and experience of the board, identifying skills gaps and making recommendations to the board on trustee recruitment.

Any new Trustee must be appointed by a resolution of the existing Trustees, and the board aims to ensure that its membership reflects a diverse range of views and backgrounds. New Trustees will meet with the Chair and Chief Executive prior to joining the Board.

**Management**

Aurora Orchestra's management team during the 2021/22 financial year comprised the following:

- Chief Executive John Harte oversaw the day-to-day running of the organisation, managing other senior staff, cultivating and maintaining external relationships, and developing the orchestra's forward strategy in close partnership with the Principal Conductor and Creative Director.
- Creative Director Jane Mitchell shared overall responsibility for the orchestra's artistic direction and programming with the Principal Conductor and Chief Executive as part of the artistic planning team; during this period she took particular responsibility for developing the orchestra's new online learning resources.
- Principal Conductor Nicholas Collon had overall responsibility for the orchestra's musical direction, and shared responsibility for the orchestra's artistic direction and programming with the Creative Director and Chief Executive.
- Concerts Manager Alana Grady was responsible for the production of concerts, recordings, broadcasts and other projects, and oversaw the production of the orchestra's work for young children and families including online learning resources.
- Development Officer Helen McKeown supported the orchestra's fundraising activity.
- Concerts Assistant and Librarian Anahita Falaki provided administrative and music librarian support.
- Other freelance staff included Orchestra Personnel Manager Hal Hutchison, Finance Manager Christopher Wright, and other occasional support staff as required by individual projects.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2022**

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## Risk Management

The Trustees have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed and systems have been established to mitigate those risks. Procedures have been put in place to minimise both external and internal risks and these procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they still meet the needs of the charity. The Trustees are satisfied that the Trust's assets attributable to each of its individual funds are available and adequate to fulfill its obligations in relation to those funds.

## Mission statement

Aurora's mission statement during this period remained unchanged as follows:

*Aurora creates vibrant musical adventures that share a passion for orchestral music with the broadest possible audience. We produce vivid and intensely powerful musical experiences combining the very highest performance quality with creative presentation and an exceptional breadth of artistic horizons. We harness the extraordinary versatility of the chamber orchestra to make orchestral music speak in powerful new ways for first-time listeners and lifelong classical devotees alike.*

The organisation's work continues to be underpinned by four key values as follows:

***Aim high:*** we will strive without compromise for the very highest levels of artistic and organisational excellence, with a passionate commitment to quality throughout our output. We will seek to inspire and challenge our audience, players, collaborators and staff with projects that are never less than extraordinary. We will be prepared to take risks and break convention in the pursuit of an ever better artistic product.

***Music first:*** whilst we will be fearless in our artistic adventures, these will always be in the service of making music we play speak more powerfully. We will always seek to place music and musicians at the heart of our projects, and when collaborating across art forms we will always ensure that music and the orchestra's creative voice is central to the artistic product. We will be brave enough to walk away from projects where this musical integrity can't be guaranteed, even where these offer substantial rewards.

***Music for all:*** we believe passionately that orchestral music can and should be a source of enrichment for everyone. We will refuse to settle for performing only to existing classical concert-goers, instead actively seeking to grow a bigger, more diverse audience for orchestral music in the UK and beyond.

***Have fun:*** joy in music-making is central to our work. Whilst we seek to foster a working culture of challenge and ambition, we also want to ensure that our artistic and management personnel always share in this sense of enjoyment. We want Aurora to be a special, distinctive and enjoyable place to work, and will strive for the best working conditions for players and staff.

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'Public Benefit: Running a Charity' (PB2). The Trustees believe that the quality, breadth and accessibility of Aurora's work means that the orchestra's programme offers a clear public benefit.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2022**

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**Artistic Summary 2021/22**

Following a year in which much of the orchestra's live activity had to be postponed or cancelled as a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic, 2021/22 was a year of regrowth for Aurora. In London the orchestra staged a full programme of concerts at Kings Place, and restarted activity at Southbank Centre following the venue's complete closure over the previous season. UK touring activity also recommenced, and the orchestra continued to invest in an expanded digital learning programme initiated in 2020/21.

**1. Kings Place series**

Aurora's contribution to the year-long 'London Unwrapped' series at Kings Place continued throughout 2021. The orchestra welcomed tenor Allan Clayton for a concert featuring music by Britten, Kate Whitley, Walton and Elgar (June 2021) whilst Iestyn Davies appeared as soloist for an eclectic programme spanning four hundred years of music from Purcell and Dowland to Oliver Knussen, Richard Rodney Bennett and Nico Muhly (September 2021). Cassie Kinoshi joined the orchestra alongside her jazz ensemble to perform her newly-commissioned *Three Suns Suite*, alongside works by Hannah Kendall and John Adams (November 2021).

Aurora also launched Kings Place's 2022 'Voices Unwrapped' series, with baritone Roderick Williams as soloist for a programme featuring works by Mahler, Vaughan Williams, Schoenberg and Judith Weir (February 2022). The orchestra's story-telling concert series for young children, *Far, Far Away*, continued with productions inspired by the music of Bartók (June 2021) and Tchaikovsky (December 2021). A concert planned for New Year's Eve was postponed to summer 2022 as an upsurge in coronavirus caused further disruption over the winter.

*Let's hear it for the face-slap of live music. How we've missed its invigorating delights! A finely honed orchestral performance by a crack collective of string players – even when there are only 15 of them – can make the blood pump and tears flow. Nicholas Collon knows this, and the delight with which he introduced his concert in the glowing acoustic of King's Place showed he couldn't wait to regale us. (\*\*\*\* Mark Valencia, Bachtrack)*

*Typically committed musicianship from the Aurora principals united a disparate bill crowned by Davies's emotionally agile and (of course) technically adroit leaps between styles and epochs... A reminder of music's healing power for a city shaken again by the terrors of a plague. (Boyd Tonkin, The Arts Desk)*

*A remarkable concert... Aurora's players accompanied [Williams] with the unity of the best orchestras mingled with the sensitivity of the finest chamber groups. To misquote Purcell's song, music for a while did all our cares beguile; the whole evening proved utterly riveting. (Jessica Duchon, inews.co.uk).*

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2022**

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## **2. Southbank Centre series**

Aurora staged two performances as Associate Orchestra with guest soloist Nicola Benedetti. At a socially-distanced performance at the Royal Festival Hall (July 2021), the orchestra paired Beethoven's Violin Concerto with Richard Ayres' *No. 52: a meditation on Beethoven's deafness* originally commissioned for Aurora's performance at the 2020 BBC Proms but not previously heard by a live audience because of the previous year's lockdown. In November 2021 Aurora returned to the Queen Elizabeth Hall for a performance of Beethoven's seventh symphony by heart, alongside Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto.

A planned concert featuring the music of Anna Meredith (January 2022) had to be cancelled as a result of further coronavirus-related disruption. Activity recommenced in February 2022 as Aurora partnered with Fiery Angel Entertainment to stage performances in the Queen Elizabeth Hall of *Peppa Pig: My First Concert*, an introduction to orchestral music inspired by the popular children's TV show and co-devised with Aurora Creative Director Jane Mitchell.

*Beethoven's violin concerto may be among the most frequently played of all violin concertos, but it was a fair bet that in the hands of the country's favourite violinist Nicola Benedetti and our most stylish and innovative orchestra it would come up fresh and new. And so it did. This was the most exciting performance of the concerto I've heard in years. Part of the reason it worked so well is that it was preceded by a piece composed in homage to Beethoven which captured the tragedy of his deafness, and so made the violin concerto shine all the brighter. No.52 (3 Pieces about Ludwig van Beethoven: dreaming, hearing loss, and saying goodbye) was composed by the British composer Richard Ayres, who suffers from profound hearing loss himself... There was a stubborn naïve insistence in the procession of Ayres's ideas, a deliberate lack of polish which caught the poignancy of Beethoven's own naive and unpolished expressions of despair.*

(\*\*\*\*\* Ivan Hewett, The Telegraph)

## **3. Other live highlights**

Aurora made its debut appearance at Printworks (November 2021), the vast industrial building in Rotherhithe that formerly housed Europe's largest printing presses, and now functions as one of the UK's leading nightclubs. Across two sold-out performances, a combined audience of 2,500 people were welcomed inside Beethoven's seventh symphony as the orchestra performed the work from memory, with movements framed by new electronic music created especially by Sam Swallow. Audience data showed that 74% of attendees were under the age of 45.

Further highlights included an appearance at the Royal Albert Hall for the BBC Proms, with a programme pairing Stravinsky's *Firebird* Suite and Rachmaninov's Variations on a Theme by Paganini with soloist Pavel Kolesnikov. Touring engagements outside London restarted, with appearances at the Royal Concert Hall Nottingham, Saffron Hall, Apex Bury St Edmunds, Snape Maltings and St Albans Cathedral.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2022**

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*It's nobody's fault, but – try as they might – the BBC Proms can often feel rather middle-aged. Whether it's the lumbering albatross of a building, the ushers in their dated, casino waistcoats or the tone of zealous jollity (Have fun! But silently and according to the rules!), it somehow all adds up to a lack of freshness, spontaneity. Thank goodness for Aurora Orchestra. If the BBC are serious about refreshing their arts content they could do a lot worse than deploy Aurora for a series of Bernstein-style programmes. Just think of the impact... If music education in UK schools had only a fraction of this expertise, this energy and commitment, just think of the young musicians we could be creating.*

(\*\*\*\* Alexandra Coghlan, The Arts Desk)

#### **4. Digital activity**

Aurora's digital learning resources initiative continued to gather pace during 2021/22, with an expansion of the number of schools involved in piloting the new platform (60 nationwide by the end of the financial year). Following a grant from the Garfield Weston Foundation's Weston Culture Fund, the orchestra had invested in a suite of digital resources aimed at supporting high-quality music teaching in schools (particularly EYFS, KS1 and SEND settings). Enriched by a programme of CPD for teachers delivered in person and online, the resources are intended to cater for teachers of all levels of experience, including those with no previous experience of delivering music activities.

The management team continued to work towards a public launch of the new platform in summer 2022, with a recruitment process launched to engage specialist staff who will further develop and market the resources to schools and music hubs over coming seasons. The findings of a detailed internal evaluation of the pilot were very encouraging, with 100% of participating teachers strongly agreeing that the programme had had a positive impact on their pupils; 90% agreeing that pupils had developed musical skills as a direct result of the resources; and 85% agreeing that they had contributed to the development of skills outside music. 85% of teachers surveyed reported that the programme had boosted their confidence in delivering music in the classroom.

#### **Financial Review**

During 2020/21 the orchestra began to rebuild its finances following the trauma of the early stages of the pandemic, which had seen the orchestra's financial position damaged by cancellations and postponements of activity. This trajectory of growth continued in 2021/22, with the partial recovery of Aurora's earned income stream as social distancing was phased out and larger-scale performance to public audiences became possible after a period of restrictions.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2022**

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Freelance musicians continued to face financial challenge and in many cases hardship during this period, with government support not available to many self-employed artists. Within this context Aurora continued to support efforts by the Association of British Orchestras to lobby government for additional assistance for freelance musicians, and signposted players to other possible sources of relief from financial hardship caused by the crisis. The orchestra continued to take the view that the most effective way of supporting the freelancers who play for Aurora was to rebuild the performing calendar as quickly as possible, and this informed the decision to restart touring activity as soon as restrictions on public performances began to lift, despite the continuing risk of disruption to events. Income from the orchestra's programme increased threefold on the previous year (from £150k in 2020/21 to over £450k in 2021/22), with just under £500k expended on direct project costs, the majority of this sum being fees paid to freelance players. Costs of performing activity were partly offset by increased income from Orchestra Tax Relief: a temporary doubling of the rate of the relief introduced by government mid-year provided additional stimulus to expand the programme more quickly than would otherwise have been possible.

Contributed income continued to play a crucial role, including support from Arts Council England through the second and third rounds of the Culture Recovery Fund. The orchestra attracted several grants from trusts and foundations towards its programme, including significant grants from the Karlsson-Játiva Foundation for its creative learning activity, the Parabola Foundation towards the Kings Place programme, Cockayne-Grants for the Arts for the resumption of performances at Southbank Centre, and the RPS Audience Fund for the experimental project at Printworks. The balance of the Weston Culture Fund grant carried forward from the previous financial year was expended as planned on the digital learning resources project.

The orchestra's balance sheet as at 31 March 2022 showed an improved financial position, with unrestricted reserves at £290,082 as well as over £100,000 in restricted grant funding carried forward for expenditure in 2022/23. Whilst a climate of ongoing economic uncertainty means that all arts organisations are likely to face significant financial challenge in the coming years, this robust foundation will allow the orchestra to plan for future activity with confidence. Aurora continues to seek to diversify and grow revenue streams to increase financial resilience, in particular aiming to attract income from subscriptions to the digital learning resources from 2022/23.

#### **Reserves Policy**

The Trustees understand the need to build up sufficient reserves to provide a degree of financial security for the orchestra's ongoing operations. The Board currently sets its unrestricted reserves target at 6 months' worth of core overhead expenditure (equivalent to £267,719 for 2022/23).

#### **Environmental Impact**

The Trustees are committed to ensuring that the orchestra takes steps to minimise its environmental impact. This includes regular reporting to Julie's Bicycle on the carbon footprint of its artistic programme, and taking environmental impact into account when planning touring activity (e.g. booking train over air travel wherever possible for international tours).

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2022**

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**Fundraising disclosures**

The Trustees have considered the provisions of section 13 of the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016, and note the following:

- Aurora raises funds in support of its programme through philanthropic gifts from individuals and grants from trusts and foundations.
- During the financial year 2021/22 the charity did not employ the services of any external fundraiser(s).
- The charity received no complaints about fundraising activity during this financial period.
- The charity makes every effort to protect vulnerable people and other members of the public from behaviour which is an unreasonable intrusion on a person's privacy; is unreasonably persistent; and/or placed undue pressure on a person to give money or other property.

Following a thoroughgoing review of the orchestra's data processing policies in light of the introduction of the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2018, an updated organisational Privacy Policy is published on the orchestra's website.

**Future plans**

The 2021/22 financial year saw plans developed for the orchestra's most ambitious season to date in 2022/23. An agreement was struck for Aurora to join the family of Resident Orchestras at Southbank Centre from September 2022, with an expanded programme of live activity, and collaboration around the digital learning resources aimed at catalysing wider take-up nationally. At the same time the ongoing relationship with Kings Place was also renewed, with Aurora to appear as Resident Ensemble from autumn 2022 as part of a new 5-year partnership agreement.

Highlights planned for the 2022/23 season include a revival of the orchestra's ambitious Orchestral Theatre staging of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* (September 2022), a return to Printworks (March 2023) and its busiest-ever year of international touring, including debut appearances at Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Bregenzer Festspielhaus, Helsinki Music Centre and DeSingel Antwerp. The digital learning resources were launched nationally in summer 2022, supported by three new specialist staffing appointments. The orchestra will appear at the Royal Opera House and Snape Maltings for a new production of Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* directed by Oliver Mears (autumn 2022), and the creative team is developing plans for Aurora's boldest theatrical production yet for summer 2023. The orchestra will expand its commitment to diverse programming, with 2022/23 collaborators including Caroline Shaw, Nwando Ebizie, Anna Meredith, Anna Thorvaldsdottir, Sidiki Dembele and Soumik Datta amongst others.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2022**

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**Trustees' responsibilities for the financial statements**

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income or expenditure of the Trust for the year. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going-concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

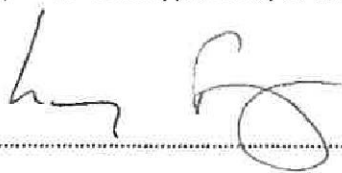
The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Trust and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with Part VI of the Charities Act 1993.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

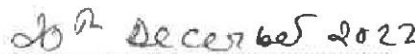
**Statement of disclosure**

- a) So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant information of which the independent examiner is unaware, and
- b) they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken in order to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the independent examiner is aware of that information.

This report has been approved by all of the charity's Trustees, and signed on their behalf by:



Dame Liz Forgan, Chair of the Trustees



Date

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Independent auditor's report to the members of Aurora Orchestra**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2022**

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**Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of Aurora Orchestra (the "Charity") for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet and Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Charity's affairs as at 31 March 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

**Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

**Conclusions relating to going concern**

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the Charity's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Independent auditor's report to the members of Aurora Orchestra (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2022**

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**Other information**

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

**Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the strategic report and the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report (incorporating the strategic report and the directors' report) have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

**Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Annual Report including the Strategic Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us;
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns;
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not obtained all the information and explanations necessary for the purposes of our audit.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Independent auditor's report to the members of Aurora Orchestra (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2022**

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**Responsibilities of the trustees**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 10, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the Charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- Reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- Enquiring of management concerning actual and potential litigation and claims; - performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- Reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

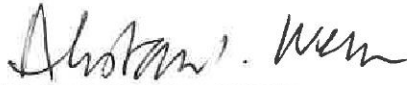
**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Independent auditor's report to the members of Aurora Orchestra (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2022**

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We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

**Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the Charity's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Alistair I Wem BSc FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)  
Wem & Co Chartered Accountants (Statutory Auditor)  
Savoy House  
Savoy Circus  
London W3 7DA

21 / 12 / 2022

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Statement of financial activities (incorporating an Income and expenditure account)**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2022**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2022 £	TOTAL 2021 £
<b>Income from:</b>					
Voluntary income	2	309,451	173,000	482,451	766,290
Investments	3	323	-	323	44
Charitable activities	4	463,438	-	463,438	150,495
<b>Total income</b>		<b>773,212</b>	<b>173,000</b>	<b>946,212</b>	<b>916,829</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	5	116,457	-	116,457	132,444
Charitable activities	5	514,520	273,000	787,520	501,133
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>630,977</b>	<b>273,000</b>	<b>903,977</b>	<b>633,577</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure)</b>		<b>142,235</b>	<b>(100,000)</b>	<b>42,235</b>	<b>283,252</b>
Transfers between funds	14	-	-	-	-
Total funds brought forward	14	147,847	218,000	365,847	82,595
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	14	<b>290,082</b>	<b>118,000</b>	<b>408,082</b>	<b>365,847</b>

All the above results derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised during the year.

The accompanying accounting policies and notes on pages 17-25 form an integral part of these financial statements.

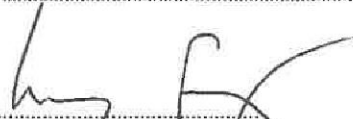
**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Balance Sheet at 31 March 2022**

	Notes	2022		2021	
		£	£	£	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>	11		<u>7,940</u>		<u>6,714</u>
<b>Current assets</b>					
Stock		597		597	
Debtors	12	309,003		135,157	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>263,079</u>		<u>380,836</u>	
		572,679		516,590	
<b>Creditors - amounts falling due within one year</b>	13	<u>(109,001)</u>		<u>(62,319)</u>	
<b>Net current assets</b>			463,678		454,271
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>471,618</u>		<u>460,985</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year			(63,536)		(95,138)
<b>Net assets</b>			<u>408,082</u>		<u>365,847</u>
<b>Income funds</b>					
Restricted funds	14		118,000		218,000
Unrestricted funds	14		290,082		147,847
<b>Total charity funds</b>			<u>408,082</u>		<u>365,847</u>

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity as at 31 March 2022 and of its net incoming resources for the year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 of the Act and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the Charity.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees

on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2022 and signed on their behalf by:

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dame Liz Forgan, Chair of the trustees

The accompanying accounting policies and notes on pages 17-25 form an integral part of these financial statements.

**Company Registration Number: 8523283**

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Statement of Cash Flows - for the year ended 31 March 2022**

	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Cash used in operating activities</b>	<u>(83,942)</u>	<u>403,181</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Interest income	323	44
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(4,520)	(4,719)
<b>Cash provided by (used in) investing activities</b>	<u>(4,197)</u>	<u>(4,675)</u>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>		
Loans received	-	-
Repayment of borrowing	(29,618)	(60,869)
<b>Cash provided from financing activities</b>	<u>(29,618)</u>	<u>(60,869)</u>
<b>Increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>	<u>(117,757)</u>	<u>337,637</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	380,836	43,199
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	<u><u>263,079</u></u>	<u><u>380,836</u></u>
 <b>Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities</b>		
Net movement in funds	42,235	283,252
Add back depreciation charge	3,294	3,245
Add notional interest	-	2,962
Deduct interest income shown in investing activities	(323)	(44)
Decrease (increase) in stock	-	-
Decrease (increase) in debtors	(173,845)	122,841
Increase (decrease) in creditors	44,697	(9,075)
<b>Net cash used in operating activities</b>	<u><u>(83,942)</u></u>	<u><u>403,181</u></u>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Notes to the financial statements - for the year ended 31 March 2022**

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**1 Summary of significant accounting policies**

**1.1 General information and basis of preparation of accounts**

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention, modified to include items at fair value. The financial statements have been prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2015) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

**1.2 Company status**

The Charity is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the Trustees named on page 1. In the event of the Charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the Charity. The nature of the charity's operations and principal activities are the promotion and production of concerts of orchestral music.

**1.3 Funds**

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes. The costs of administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

**1.4 Income recognition**

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of financial activities when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Voluntary income and donations are included in incoming resources when they are receivable, except when the donors specify that they must be used in future accounting periods, then the income is deferred. The income from fundraising ventures is shown gross, with the associated costs included in fundraising costs. Incoming resources from tax reclaims are included in the statement of financial activities at the same time as the gift to which they relate.

Fees and ticket income in respect of concerts and education projects are accounted for on an accruals basis. Such income is deferred if received in advance of the concert or project date.

**1.5 Expenditure recognition**

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been included under expense categories that aggregate all costs for allocation to activities. Expenditure is recognised when there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. It is categorised under the following headings:

- Expenditure on charitable activities
- Expenditure on raising funds

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### Notes to the financial statements (continued) - for the year ended 31 March 2022

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#### 1.6 Support costs allocation

Support costs are those that assist the work of the charity but do not directly represent charitable activities and include premises and office costs, governance costs, and administrative payroll costs. They are incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management carried out at head office. Support costs have been apportioned between charitable activities and raising funds on a representative percentage allocation.

#### 1.7 VAT

Almost all VAT is recoverable. Any irrecoverable VAT is included within resources expended.

#### 1.8 Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specified purposes laid down by the donor. Expenditure for those purposes is charged to the fund, together with a fair allocation of overheads and support costs.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for expenditure on the general objectives of the charity.

#### 1.9 Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

#### 1.10 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

#### 1.11 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

All assets costing more than £250 are capitalised.

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the following bases:

Computers and office equipment	straight line over 4 years
Music library	straight line over 10 years
Music stands	straight line over 6 years

#### 1.12 Stocks

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Cost includes all direct costs.

#### 1.13 Debtors and creditors receivable/payable within one year

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

#### 1.14 Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

## **AURORA ORCHESTRA**

### **Notes to the financial statements (continued) - for the year ended 31 March 2022**

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#### **1.15 Going concern**

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the Trustees believe that there are sufficient resources to continue for the foreseeable future. The Trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure is sufficient with the level of reserves for the charity to be able to continue as a going concern.

#### **1.16 Financial instruments**

The Charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their transaction settlement value.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**

**Notes to the financial statements (continued) - for the year ended 31 March 2022**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
<b>2 Voluntary income</b>				
Grants	245,536	173,000	418,536	699,185
Donations				
Individual giving	63,915	-	63,915	67,105
Corporate donations	-	-	-	-
	<u>309,451</u>	<u>173,000</u>	<u>482,451</u>	<u>766,290</u>
<b>Grants received, included above, are as follows:</b>				
ACE - Culture Recovery Fund	145,016	-	145,016	200,000
Arts Council England	93,519	-	93,519	156,065
Karlsson Játiva Charitable Foundation	-	50,000	50,000	-
Parabola Foundation	-	35,000	35,000	8,000
Cockayne - Grants for the Arts and the London Community Foundation	-	25,000	25,000	-
Royal Philharmonic Society	-	25,000	25,000	-
John Lyon's Charity	-	23,000	23,000	-
HMRC - Furlough Grant	7,001	-	7,001	83,310
Radcliffe Trust	-	4,500	4,500	-
Garrick Charitable Trust	-	4,000	4,000	-
The PRS Foundation for Music	-	3,000	3,000	-
Three Monkeys Trust	-	2,000	2,000	-
Nugee Foundation	-	1,500	1,500	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	-	-	185,410
BPI Music Export Growth Scheme	-	-	-	20,000
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	-	-	-	18,500
Sir John Fisher Foundation	-	-	-	10,000
London Borough of Islington	-	-	-	5,000
The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust	-	-	-	3,500
The Leche Trust	-	-	-	3,000
Trustees of the New Berlioz Edition	-	-	-	2,000
RVW Trust	-	-	-	2,000
Ambache Charitable Trust	-	-	-	1,400
Austin & Hope Pilkington Trust	-	-	-	1,000
	<u>245,536</u>	<u>173,000</u>	<u>418,536</u>	<u>699,185</u>
			<b>Total 2022 £</b>	<b>Total 2021 £</b>
<b>3 Investment income</b>				
Interest receivable			<u>323</u>	<u>44</u>

Income from investments was £323 (2021: £44) which was wholly attributable to unrestricted funds.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Notes to the financial statements (continued) - for the year ended 31 March 2022**

	<b>Total 2022</b>	<b>Total 2021</b>
	£	£
<b>4 Income from charitable activities</b>		
Performance Fees	320,000	89,923
Orchestra tax relief	135,979	44,160
Film tax relief	812	12,345
Programme sales, sale of recordings, reimbursed costs	6,647	4,067
	<b>463,438</b>	<b>150,495</b>

Income from charitable activities was £463,438 (2021: £150,495), of which £0 (2021: £0) was attributable to restricted funds.

	<b>2022 Staff Costs</b>	<b>2022 Direct Costs</b>	<b>2022 Support Costs</b>	<b>2022 Total</b>	<b>2021 Total</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
<b>5 Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	55,099	9,828	51,530	116,457	132,444
Charitable activities	148,800	499,557	139,163	787,520	501,133
<b>Total</b>	<b>203,899</b>	<b>509,385</b>	<b>190,693</b>	<b>903,977</b>	<b>633,577</b>

Included in support costs are governance costs of £5,000 (2021: £4,000)

	<b>2022 Premises costs</b>	<b>2022 Financial &amp; legal</b>	<b>2022 Office admin</b>	<b>2022 Total</b>	<b>2021 Total</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
<b>6 Analysis of support costs</b>					
Raising funds	3,148	19,783	28,599	51,530	46,389
Charitable activities	8,503	53,426	77,234	139,163	100,791
	<b>11,651</b>	<b>73,209</b>	<b>105,833</b>	<b>190,693</b>	<b>147,180</b>

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	£	£
<b>7 Net income/(expenditure) for the year</b>		
This is stated after charging:		
Depreciation	3,294	3,245
Auditor's remuneration	5,000	4,000

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Notes to the financial statements (continued) - for the year ended 31 March 2022**

	Unrestricted Funds 2022 £	Restricted Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2021 £
<b>8 Analysis of expenditure by fund</b>				
Raising funds	116,457	-	116,457	132,444
Charitable activities	514,520	273,000	787,520	501,133
	<u>630,977</u>	<u>273,000</u>	<u>903,977</u>	<u>633,577</u>

In 2021, of the total expenditure £507,767 was from unrestricted funds, and £125,810 from restricted funds.

	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
<b>9 Staff costs and employee benefits</b>		
Salaries	183,420	227,296
Social security costs	14,544	18,722
Employer pension contributions in the year	5,935	6,600
	<u>203,899</u>	<u>252,618</u>
Freelance fees to artists	351,819	119,235
Freelance fees to administrators	62,262	60,965
	<u>414,081</u>	<u>180,200</u>
	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
The average number of employees during the year was as follows:	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>

One employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 during the year (2021: one)

The key management personnel of the Charity comprise the Senior Management team listed on page 1. The total amount of employee remuneration and benefits received by key management personnel for their services to the Charity was £107,948 (2021: £147,173)

**10 Trustees' remuneration and benefits**

None of the trustees received any remuneration or benefits for the year ended 31st March 2022, nor for the year ended 31st March 2021.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Notes to the financial statements (continued) - for the year ended 31 March 2022**

<b>11 Tangible fixed assets</b>	<b>Computers &amp; equipment £</b>		
<b>Cost</b>			
At 1st April 2021	43,128		
Additions	4,520		
Disposals	-		
At 31st March 2022	<u>47,648</u>		
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1st April 2021	36,414		
On disposals	-		
Charge for the year	3,294		
At 31st March 2022	<u>39,708</u>		
<b>Net Book Value</b>			
At 31st March 2021	<u>6,714</u>		
At 31st March 2022	<u>7,940</u>		
		<b>Total 2022</b>	<b>Total 2021</b>
<b>12 Debtors</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade debtors		4,320	18,171
Prepayments		37,325	1,676
Accrued income		267,271	104,434
Other debtors		87	10,876
		<u>309,003</u>	<u>135,157</u>
		<b>Total 2022</b>	<b>Total 2021</b>
<b>13 Creditors</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Amounts falling due within one year</b>			
Bank loans and overdrafts		31,602	29,618
Trade creditors		45,453	14,460
Deferred income		-	2,000
Accruals		16,843	10,480
Other creditors		15,103	5,761
		<u>109,001</u>	<u>62,319</u>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**

**Notes to the financial statements (continued) - for the year ended 31 March 2022**

	<b>Total 2022</b>	<b>Total 2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>13 Creditors (continued)</b>		
<b>Amounts falling due after more than one year</b>		
Bank loans and overdrafts	63,536	95,138
	<b>63,536</b>	<b>95,138</b>

**Deferred income**

Where terms or conditions have not been met or uncertainty exists as to whether they can be met then the relevant income is not recognised in the year but deferred and shown on the balance sheet as deferred income.

Income deferred from the previous period	2,000	2,000
Released to the statement of financial activities	(2,000)	(2,000)
Arising during the current year:		
Grants received in advance	-	2,000
Performance fees received in advance	-	-
	<b>-</b>	<b>2,000</b>

<b>14 Statement of Funds</b>	<b>1 Apr 2021</b>	<b>Incoming Resources</b>	<b>Resources Expended</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>31 Mar 2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Restricted Funds</b>					
Performance Programme	58,000	92,000	(80,000)	-	70,000
Learning & Participation	160,000	81,000	(193,000)	-	48,000
	<b>218,000</b>	<b>173,000</b>	<b>(273,000)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>118,000</b>
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>					
Performance Programme	147,847	773,212	(630,977)	-	290,082
	<b>147,847</b>	<b>773,212</b>	<b>(630,977)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>290,082</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>365,847</b>	<b>946,212</b>	<b>(903,977)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>408,082</b>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Notes to the financial statements (continued) - for the year ended 31 March 2022**

**15 Leases**

At 31 March, the company had annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £
	Land and buildings	Other	Land and buildings	Other
<i>Expiry date:</i>				
Less than 1 year	10,080	-	16,620	-
Between 2 and 5 years	-	-	-	-
More than 5 years	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,080</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>16,620</b>	<b>-</b>

**16 Related party disclosure**

During the year, donations totalling £7,500 (2021: £6,500) were received from trustees. Remuneration to key management personnel is stated in note 9.

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 £	2021 £
<b>17 Analysis of net assets between funds</b>				
Tangible fixed assets	7,940	-	7,940	6,714
Net current assets	282,142	118,000	400,142	359,133
	<b>290,082</b>	<b>118,000</b>	<b>408,082</b>	<b>365,847</b>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**

England & Wales - Charity number 1155738

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# Accounts

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Registered Company Number 8523283 (England & Wales)  
Registered Charity 1155738



**Aurora Orchestra**  
(A company limited by guarantee)

**Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements**

**for the year ended**

**31st March 2021**

# AURORA ORCHESTRA

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**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Reference and administrative details of the charity and its trustees**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2021**

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<b>Directors (and Trustees):</b>	Rebecca Barnett Andrew Blankfield Dame Liz Forgan DBE (Chair) Nicholas Hardie Michael Laven Jennifer Lewis Alistair Lomax Ben Lumsden Rachel Mortimer Nicholas Snowman OBE Suzanne Szczetnikowicz	
<b>Company Secretary:</b>	John Harte	
<b>Management Team:</b>	John Harte Jane Mitchell Alana Grady Helen McKeown Anahita Falaki	Chief Executive Creative Director Concerts Manager Development Manager Concerts Assistant
<b>Registered Office:</b>	The Music Base King's Place 90 York Way London, N1 9AG	
<b>Registered Company Number:</b>	8523283	
<b>Registered Charity Number:</b>	1155738	
<b>Bankers:</b>	CAF Bank Ltd 25 Kings Hill Avenue West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ	

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees**  
**For the year ended 31 MARCH 2021**

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The Trustees present their report together with financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021, which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

**Structure, Governance & Management**

**Governing Documentation**

Aurora Orchestra is a charitable company limited by guarantee. It is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association, dated 9 May 2013.

**Organisation**

The Board of Directors must have a minimum of three members. It convenes for a minimum of four meetings each year in pursuit of the objectives set out below. The directors are also the Trustees for the purpose of charity law. The following directors served on the Board during the year ended March 2021:

Andrew Blankfield	
Dame Liz Forgan DBE	
Nicholas Hardie	
Katherine Hudson	Resigned 30 September 2021
Michael Laven	
Alistair Lomax	
Rachel Mortimer	
Richard Sheldon QC	Resigned 30 September 2021
Nicholas Snowman	
Suzanne Szczetnikowicz	
Nick Torday	Resigned 30 September 2021

The following directors were appointed after March 2021

Rebecca Barnett	Appointed 30 September 2021
Jennifer Lewis	Appointed 30 September 2021
Ben Lumsden	Appointed 30 September 2021

John Harte (Chief Executive) acts as Secretary to the Board. Principal Conductor Nicholas Collon, Creative Director Jane Mitchell and several members of the management team also attended board meetings during the period. Player interests were represented by Player Representative Jamie Campbell, with other guest attendees invited on an *ad hoc* basis.

**Appointment and Induction of Trustees**

Prospective Trustee appointments are discussed by the Board at regular intervals with a view to enhancing its ability to support the orchestra. Any new Trustee must be appointed by a resolution of the existing Trustees. A new Trustee will meet with the Chairman and Chief Executive prior to joining the Board, and is assigned a particular area of responsibility matching their own field of expertise.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

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**Board Committees**

The board supports the orchestra's administrative team on an ongoing basis through a group of committees with particular areas of responsibility. These currently include the following:

- Finance & Operations
- Appointments & Governance

**Management**

The financial year 2020/21 saw significant changes to Aurora Orchestra's staffing model as the organisation adapted to the challenges of the pandemic. Following a restructure during the summer of 2020, Aurora Orchestra's management team comprised the following:

- Chief Executive John Harte oversaw the day-to-day running of the organisation, managing other senior staff, cultivating and maintaining external relationships, and developing the orchestra's forward strategy in close partnership with the Principal Conductor and Creative Director.
- Creative Director Jane Mitchell shared overall responsibility for the orchestra's artistic direction and programming with the Principal Conductor and Chief Executive as part of the artistic planning team; during this period she took particular responsibility for developing the orchestra's new online learning resources.
- Principal Conductor Nicholas Collon had overall responsibility for the orchestra's musical direction, and shared responsibility for the orchestra's artistic direction and programming with the Creative Director and Chief Executive.
- Concerts Manager Alana Grady was responsible for the production of concerts, recordings, broadcasts and other projects, and oversaw the production of the orchestra's work for young children and families including online learning resources.
- Development Officer Helen McKeown supported the orchestra's fundraising activity.
- Concerts Assistant and Librarian Anahita Falaki provided administrative and music librarian support.
- Other freelance staff included Orchestra Personnel Manager Hal Hutchison, Finance Manager Christopher Wright, and other occasional support staff as required by individual projects.

**Risk Management**

The Trustees have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed and systems have been established to mitigate those risks. Procedures have been put in place to minimise both external and internal risks and these procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they still meet the needs of the charity. The Trustees are satisfied that the Trust's assets attributable to each of its individual funds are available and adequate to fulfill its obligations in relation to those funds.

**Mission statement**

Despite the huge upheaval caused by the pandemic, Aurora's core mission statement during this period remained unchanged per the orchestra's 2018–2022 Business Plan, as follows:

*Aurora creates vibrant musical adventures that share a passion for orchestral music with the broadest possible audience.*

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

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*We produce vivid and intensely powerful musical experiences combining the very highest performance quality with creative presentation and an exceptional breadth of artistic horizons. We harness the extraordinary versatility of the chamber orchestra to make orchestral music speak in powerful new ways for first-time listeners and lifelong classical devotees alike.*

The organisation's work continues to be underpinned by four key values as follows:

***Aim high:*** *we will strive tirelessly and without compromise for the very highest levels of artistic and organisational excellence, with a passionate commitment to quality throughout our output. We will seek to inspire and challenge our audience, players, collaborators and staff with projects that are never less than extraordinary. We will be prepared to take risks and break convention in the pursuit of an ever better artistic product.*

***Music first:*** *whilst we will be fearless in our artistic adventures, these will always be in the service of making great music speak more powerfully. We will always seek to place music and musicians at the heart of our projects, and when collaborating across art forms we will always ensure that music and the orchestra's creative voice is central to the artistic product. We will be brave enough to walk away from projects where this musical integrity can't be guaranteed, even where these offer substantial rewards.*

***Music for all:*** *we believe passionately that orchestral music can and should be a source of enrichment for everyone. We will refuse to settle for performing only to existing classical concert-goers, instead actively seeking to grow a bigger, more diverse audience for orchestral music in the UK and beyond.*

***Have fun:*** *We recognise that a key part of our appeal to audiences and artists alike is our sense of joy in music-making. Whilst we seek to foster a working culture of challenge and ambition, we also want to ensure that our artistic and management personnel always share in this sense of enjoyment. We want Aurora to be a special, distinctive and enjoyable place to work, and will strive for the best working conditions for players and staff.*

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'Public Benefit: Running a Charity' (PB2). The Trustees believe that the quality, breadth and accessibility of Aurora's work means that the orchestra's programme offers a clear public benefit.

### **Artistic Summary 2020/21**

2020/21 was a year of unprecedented disruption for Aurora's artistic programme, as well as for the freelance players and salaried staff who deliver it. The Covid-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of dozens of projects including three international tours that had been years in the planning. No artistic activity was possible for the first four months of the year while stringent home working and distancing restrictions remained in place. The complete closure of Southbank Centre meant that one of the orchestra's two core London series had to be placed on hold for the entire year. International touring was also halted for the whole period.

Despite these setbacks Aurora was able to continue to deliver an adapted programme, allowing the orchestra to maintain a connection with its core audience whilst also making much more rapid progress than previously anticipated in developing a distinctive digital offer.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

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## **1. Digital activity**

The pandemic catalysed a planned expansion of Aurora's online programme. Over the summer of 2020, licences were for the first time agreed with the BBC to allow the orchestra to share footage of past orchestral theatre projects staged at the BBC Proms, including productions built around the orchestra's distinctive memorised performances. Content was shared freely on YouTube on a weekly basis throughout the summer under the banner of a new digital channel, **Aurora Play**. The archive broadcasts were enriched by a series of specially-created films hosted by Jessie Maryon Davies: 'Join in with Jessie' encouraged viewers of all ages to get under the skin of music being performed and to share their own creative responses online. Jessie also hosted a series of behind-the-scenes interviews with Aurora principal players discussing the music being performed and their memories of the rehearsals and performances. Aurora Play content attracted over a million views during the course of the year, a tenfold increase in engagement with the orchestra's digital channels compared with the previous year.

During 2020/21 Aurora also devised and launched a new suite of **online learning resources** for use in schools. For the past eight years, Aurora's Far, Far Away storytelling series for young children and families has been one of the most popular strands of the orchestra's live activity. Combining live instrumental performance of the highest calibre with original storytelling and a playful, multi-sensory approach to concert presentation, each concert explores a particular composer or style of music, weaving together special arrangements for chamber forces with an original story from Writer-in-Residence Kate Wakeling and a beautifully designed set built around the audience and musicians. Audiences are invited to step inside each story through guided listening, singing, dancing, holding props and much more, becoming immersed in a magical world of music, language, discovery and play.

For several years we have recognised that we are reaching the limit of how much further Far, Far Away can be scaled as a live offer: almost all of the 100 or so performances we stage each year are regularly sold out, and we have growing waiting lists of schools wanting to experience the special performances we host for Early Years and Key Stage 1 classes, as well as tailored versions for SEND settings. The pandemic provided the space and time to move forward with a long-held plan to develop a digital version of the programme which would allow us radically to scale the impact of this work, offering it to schools throughout the UK and internationally.

During the autumn of 2020, working in partnership with Stanton Media we created a filmed version of one Far, Far Away production, *Tchaikovsky and the Marvellous Kingdom*. In parallel our creative team, led by Jane Mitchell, devised and produced an extensive series of shorter films hosted by Jessie Maryon Davies designed to be used by teachers in primary and SEND settings to embed music in the classroom. A new website was designed a built to house the content. Offering flexible ways to navigate the content as well as schemes of work showing how it could be used to underpin a half term's worth of teaching. Content was developed in close consultation with teachers (including specialist guidance from SEND professionals), and the programme is designed to align closely with both the national curriculum and new Model Music Curriculum. The learning resources were subsequently piloted in over 20 schools across England during the summer of 2021, and we continue to work towards a national launch for the 2022/23 academic year.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

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## **2. Kings Place series**

Kings Place was in the vanguard of venues returning to live activity after the pandemic. As Resident Orchestra Aurora worked closely with the venue's team to offer a vibrant adapted programme from the summer of 2020.

In September we staged two outdoor performances of Beethoven's 7<sup>th</sup> Symphony in the West Handyside Canopy at Kings Cross in partnership with Kings Place – the first symphonic-scale orchestral performances for ticketed audiences anywhere in the UK since the start of the pandemic.

*"A ferocious performance that Beethoven would have loved."* (\*\*\*\* Richard Morrison, *The Times*)

*"Blessed are the players and musical organisations who adapt and innovate, for they shall inhabit the post-lockdown landscape... The soul was truly fed, as it can only be in a live event; the proof was in the enterprise. Much more of this, please."* (\*\*\*\* David Nice, *The Arts Desk*)

During the autumn the orchestra presented a trio of chamber-scale concerts: these were planned to be streamed online as well as open where possible to distanced audiences, meaning that when lockdown restrictions were reimposed we were able to press ahead with performances behind closed doors. This trio of concerts – two of which were broadcast on BBC Radio 3 – allowed the orchestra to continue its journey through the complete cycle of Mozart's Piano Concertos, with reduced arrangements of concertos nos. 23, 25 and 26 performed with Steven Osborne, Imogen Cooper and Louis Schqizgebel respectively. We also engaged three outstanding young female composers – Electra Perivolaris, Sasha Scott and Sylvia Lim – to write a new work for each of these concerts, creating opportunities for the next generation of UK-based composers at a moment of unprecedented challenge for the music sector.

Aurora's Kings Place series continued into 2022 with a centenary performance of *The Lark Ascending* (also broadcast on BBC Radio 3)

*"Rarely have I seen so many smiles on stage as at Kings Place on Saturday. The combination of the delight of the performers being back in their natural environment with the genial and generous-spirited music they were playing brought out the best in everyone."* (\*\*\*\* Bernard Hughes, *The Arts Desk* on Aurora's performance with Imogen Cooper, October 2020)

*"A bonanza of surging energy and fresh hope."* (\*\*\*\* Geoff Brown, *The Times* on Aurora's performance with Elena Urioste, February 2021)

## **3. BBC Proms and UK touring**

The central artistic highlight of this disrupted year was a televised performance behind closed doors as part of a re-imagined BBC Proms season. Aurora presented a memorised performance of Beethoven's Symphony No. 7, introduced by Nicholas Collon and Tom Service with one of the presentations which have become a feature of Aurora's Proms appearances in recent years. The programme also included the premiere of Richard Ayres *No. 52: Three Pieces about Ludwig van Beethoven*, an intensely personal work inspired not only by Beethoven's famous 'Heiligenstadt Testament' but by the composer's own struggles with hearing loss.

*"Music can inspire compassion and empathy as it burrows us into the mind of another human being, and this assuredly did... An absolute tour-de-force, displaying sky-high musicianship, memory and nerves of steel."* (\*\*\*\* Jessica Duchon, *The Arts Desk*)

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

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*“Collon’s performance was light, lithe and immaculately played, always keeping something in reserve; this was the Seventh as a joyous celebration of energy” (\*\*\*\* Andrew Clements, The Guardian)*

*“A magnificent achievement.” (Richard Morrison, The Times)*

*“It was clear that every player absolutely inhabited the music, pushed into physical gesture by its unflagging brilliance... THIS is how to celebrate Beethoven’s 250th anniversary!” (\*\*\*\*\* Barry Creasy, Music OMH)*

Limited UK touring activity during this year included a pair of performances for reduced audiences at Saffron Hall.

### **Financial Review**

The financial year 2019/20 was severely affected by the loss of commercial income in the final quarter as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, leaving the orchestra for the first time with a negative unrestricted reserves position at year end.

The board notes that the financial impact of the pandemic on freelance musicians has been especially severe. Whilst some freelance players have been able to secure support through government income support schemes, many have found themselves ineligible for such support for a variety of reasons which are often beyond their control. In combination with the sharp curtailment of performing opportunities for freelancers during the 2019/20 year this posed a potentially existential threat to the careers of many musicians.

Aurora supported efforts by the ABO during this period to lobby government for additional support for freelance musicians, and signposted players to other possible sources of support for musicians facing financial hardship as a result of the crisis. Strategically, the board took the view that the best way for Aurora to support the pool of freelance musicians who play for the orchestra was to rebuild the orchestra’s performing calendar as quickly as possible. This approach informed our decision to restart live activity as soon as possible despite the many challenges this posed, rather than simply mothball the organisation until risks associated with performing had subsided.

Over the course of 2020/21 Aurora succeeded in stabilising and rebuilding its financial position. In July 2020 Aurora was awarded an emergency grant by Arts Council England of just over £60,000 to help offset some of the losses incurred by the impact of coronavirus; this was followed in the autumn by a further £200k through the first round of the government’s Culture Recovery Fund. Significant savings to overhead expenditure have been achieved, including through the government’s Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, and the charity has continued to receive welcome philanthropic support from many of its existing individual and organisational supporters. Major grants in this period included £180k towards the orchestra’s new online learning resources project and wider digital programme from the Garfield Weston Foundation, emergency support from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, and a grant from the BPI Music Export Growth Scheme aimed at expanding the orchestra’s forward international touring programme.

Despite the financial challenges at the start of the financial year, the orchestra was able to maintain a viable cashflow position throughout. This was achieved as a result of loan finance put in place with CAF Bank prior to the pandemic – intended to help the orchestra manage seasonal cashflow fluctuations linked to the payment of Orchestra Tax Relief, this financing arrangement allowed a vital buffer against the initial shocks caused by the pandemic to the orchestra’s business model.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

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The orchestra finished the 2020/21 financial year in a much improved financial position, with unrestricted reserves totalling £147,847, as well as over £200,000 in restricted grant funding carried forward for expenditure in 2021/22. Whilst the orchestra continues to face great uncertainty, this represents a solid foundation from which to build over coming seasons, and allows the orchestra to plan for future activity with confidence. The board also notes that some of the early-stage planning and digital work undertaken during the pandemic is hoped to generate new income streams in future: from the international touring invitations secured during this period for 2022 and beyond to the new online learning resources which will be launched to schools nationally in coming years.

### **Reserves Policy**

The Trustees understand the need to build up sufficient reserves to provide a degree of financial security for the orchestra's ongoing operations. Following current Arts Council England guidance the board currently sets its unrestricted reserves target at 8 weeks' worth of pre-pandemic turnover (equivalent to just over £160,000). It is likely that during the year ahead the board will revise this target to better reflect the changing circumstances and risks facing the organisation.

### **Fundraising disclosures**

The Trustees have considered the provisions of section 13 of the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016, and note the following:

- Aurora raises funds in support of its programme through philanthropic gifts from individuals and grants from trusts and foundations.
- During the financial year 2020/21 the charity did not employ the services of any external fundraiser(s).
- The charity received no complaints about fundraising activity during this financial period.
- The charity makes every effort to protect vulnerable people and other members of the public from behavior which is an unreasonable intrusion on a person's privacy; is unreasonably persistent; and/or placed undue pressure on a person to give money or other property.

Following a thoroughgoing review of the orchestra's data processing policies in light of the introduction of the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2018, an updated organisational Privacy Policy is published on the orchestra's website.

### **Future plans**

Despite the reduction in activity occasioned by the pandemic, plans continued for future projects. These include a revival of the orchestra's staging of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* scheduled for autumn 2022, as well as a major new orchestral theatre project to be developed with international co-producers in 2023. With the support of Intermusica and the German agency Fast Forward Classical we worked to build the orchestra's touring calendar, with a busy calendar of UK dates from the 2021/22 season onwards including international activity planned to restart from summer 2022.

Since the end of the 2020/21 financial year the orchestra also has also launched a new partnership with the Printworks London venue in Rotherhithe: formerly home to Europe's largest printing presses, the venue now operates as one of the UK's leading electronic music venues. Aurora staged a pair of experimental immersive concerts at Printworks in autumn 2021 for combined audience of over 2,000 people, many of whom had never previously attended an orchestral concert. Following the success of this first collaboration Aurora is planning further such events in future seasons.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Report of the Trustees (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

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Other plans for coming seasons include the continued development of our residency series at Kings Place (including collaborations with Cassie Kinoshi, Javier Perianes, Roderick Williams and the BBC Singers) and our Associate Orchestra series at Southbank Centre (including projects featuring Patricia Kopatchinskaja and Nicola Benedetti in 2021/22).

**Trustees' responsibilities for the financial statements**

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income or expenditure of the Trust for the year. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going-concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

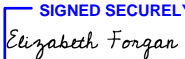
The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Trust and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with Part VI of the Charities Act 1993.

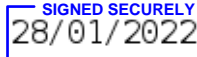
They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

**Statement of disclosure**

- a) So far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant information of which the independent examiner is unaware, and
- b) they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken in order to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the independent examiner is aware of that information.

This report has been approved by all of the charity's Trustees, and signed on their behalf by:

  
SIGNED SECURELY  
*Elizabeth Forgan*  
28/01/2022 at 6:13:06 PM UTC

  
SIGNED SECURELY  
28/01/2022  
28/01/2022 at 6:13:06 PM UTC

.....  
Dame Liz Forgan DBE, on behalf of the Board of Trustees

.....  
Date

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Independent auditor's report to the members of Aurora Orchestra**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

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## **Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of Aurora Orchestra (the "Charity") for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet and Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Charity's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of its incoming resources and application of resources for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

## **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## **Conclusions relating to going concern**

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the Charity's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Independent auditor's report to the members of Aurora Orchestra (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

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**Other information**

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

**Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the strategic report and the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report (incorporating the strategic report and the directors' report) have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

**Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Annual Report including the Strategic Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us;
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns;
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not obtained all the information and explanations necessary for the purposes of our audit.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Independent auditor's report to the members of Aurora Orchestra (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

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**Responsibilities of the trustees**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 10, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the Charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- Reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- Enquiring of management concerning actual and potential litigation and claims; - performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- Reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance; and
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Independent auditor's report to the members of Aurora Orchestra (continued)**  
**For the Year Ended 31 MARCH 2021**

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**Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the Charity's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

SIGNED SECURELY  
*Alistair I Wem*  
28/01/2022 at 6:34:25 PM UTC

.....

Alistair I Wem BSc BFP FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)  
Wem & Co Chartered Accountants (Statutory Auditor)  
Savoy House  
Savoy Circus  
London W3 7DA

SIGNED SECURELY  
28/01/2022  
28/01/2022 at 6:34:25 PM UTC  
Date .....

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Statement of financial activities (incorporating an Income and expenditure account)**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2021**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2021 £	TOTAL 2020 £
<b>Income from:</b>					
Voluntary income	2	542,480	223,810	766,290	388,264
Investments	3	44	-	44	138
Charitable activities	4	150,495	-	150,495	865,382
<b>Total income</b>		<b>693,019</b>	<b>223,810</b>	<b>916,829</b>	<b>1,253,784</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	5	132,444	-	132,444	149,661
Charitable activities	5	375,323	125,810	501,133	1,205,566
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>507,767</b>	<b>125,810</b>	<b>633,577</b>	<b>1,355,227</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure)</b>		<b>185,252</b>	<b>98,000</b>	<b>283,252</b>	<b>(101,443)</b>
Transfers between funds	14	-	-	-	-
Total funds brought forward	14	(37,405)	120,000	82,595	184,038
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	14	<b>147,847</b>	<b>218,000</b>	<b>365,847</b>	<b>82,595</b>

All the above results derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised during the year.

The accompanying accounting policies and notes on pages 17-24 form an integral part of these financial statements.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Balance Sheet at 31 March 2021**

	Notes	2021		2020	
		£	£	£	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>	11		6,714		5,240
<b>Current assets</b>					
Stock		597		597	
Debtors	12	135,157		257,998	
Cash at bank and in hand		380,836		43,199	
		516,590		301,794	
<b>Creditors - amounts falling due within one year</b>	13	(62,319)		(62,763)	
<b>Net current assets</b>			454,271		239,031
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			460,985		244,271
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year			(95,138)		(161,676)
<b>Net assets</b>			365,847		82,595
<b>Income funds</b>					
Restricted funds	14		218,000		120,000
Unrestricted funds	14		147,847		(37,405)
<b>Total charity funds</b>			365,847		82,595

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity as at 31 March 2020 and of its net incoming resources for the year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 of the Act and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the Charity.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees

on ..... SIGNED SECURELY  
28/01/2022 ..... 2022 and signed on their behalf by:

SIGNED SECURELY  
Elizabeth Forgan  
28/01/2022 at 6:13:06 PM UTC

.....  
 Dame Liz Forgan DBE, Chair of the trustees

The accompanying accounting policies and notes on pages 17-24 form an integral part of these financial statements.

**Company Registration Number: 8523283**

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Statement of Cash Flows - for the year ended 31 March 2021**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Cash used in operating activities</b>	<u>403,181</u>	<u>(178,110)</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Interest income	44	138
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(4,719)	(456)
<b>Cash provided by (used in) investing activities</b>	<u>(4,675)</u>	<u>(318)</u>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>		
Loans received	-	150,000
Repayment of borrowing	(60,869)	(4,375)
<b>Cash provided from financing activities</b>	<u>(60,869)</u>	<u>145,625</u>
<b>Increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>	<u>337,637</u>	<u>(32,803)</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	43,199	76,002
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	<u><u>380,836</u></u>	<u><u>43,199</u></u>
 <b>Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities</b>		
Net income / (expenditure)	283,252	(101,443)
Add back depreciation charge	3,245	3,122
Add notional interest	2,962	2,744
Deduct interest income shown in investing activities	(44)	(138)
Decrease (increase) in stock	-	-
Decrease (increase) in debtors	122,841	29,826
Increase (decrease) in creditors	(9,075)	(112,221)
<b>Net cash used in operating activities</b>	<u><u>403,181</u></u>	<u><u>(178,110)</u></u>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Notes to the financial statements - for the year ended 31 March 2021**

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**1 Summary of significant accounting policies**

**1.1 General information and basis of preparation of accounts**

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention, modified to include items at fair value. The financial statements have been prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2015) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

**1.2 Company status**

The Charity is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the Trustees named on page 1. In the event of the Charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the Charity. The nature of the charity's operations and principal activities are the promotion and production of concerts of orchestral music.

**1.3 Funds**

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes. The costs of administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

**1.4 Income recognition**

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of financial activities when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Voluntary income and donations are included in incoming resources when they are receivable, except when the donors specify that they must be used in future accounting periods, then the income is deferred. The income from fundraising ventures is shown gross, with the associated costs included in fundraising costs. Incoming resources from tax reclaims are included in the statement of financial activities at the same time as the gift to which they relate.

Fees and ticket income in respect of concerts and education projects are accounted for on an accruals basis. Such income is deferred if received in advance of the concert or project date.

**1.5 Expenditure recognition**

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been included under expense categories that aggregate all costs for allocation to activities. Expenditure is recognised when there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. It is categorised under the following headings:

- Expenditure on charitable activities
- Expenditure on raising funds

## AURORA ORCHESTRA

### Notes to the financial statements (continued) - for the year ended 31 March 2021

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#### 1.6 Support costs allocation

Support costs are those that assist the work of the charity but do not directly represent charitable activities and include premises and office costs, governance costs, and administrative payroll costs. They are incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management carried out at head office. Support costs have been apportioned between charitable activities and raising funds on a representative percentage allocation.

#### 1.7 VAT

Almost all VAT is recoverable. Any irrecoverable VAT is included within resources expended.

#### 1.8 Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specified purposes laid down by the donor. Expenditure for those purposes is charged to the fund, together with a fair allocation of overheads and support costs.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for expenditure on the general objectives of the charity.

#### 1.9 Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

#### 1.10 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

#### 1.11 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

All assets costing more than £250 are capitalised.

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the following bases:

Computers and office equipment	straight line over 4 years
Music library	straight line over 10 years
Music stands	straight line over 6 years

#### 1.12 Stocks

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Cost includes all direct costs.

#### 1.13 Debtors and creditors receivable/payable within one year

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

#### 1.14 Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**

**Notes to the financial statements (continued) - for the year ended 31 March 2021**

**1.15 Going concern**

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the Trustees believe that there are sufficient resources to continue for the foreseeable future. The Trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure is sufficient with the level of reserves for the charity to be able to continue as a going concern.

**1.16 Financial instruments**

The Charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their transaction settlement value.

	<b>Unrestricted Funds £</b>	<b>Restricted Funds £</b>	<b>Total 2021 £</b>	<b>Total 2020 £</b>
<b>2 Voluntary income</b>				
Grants	475,375	223,810	699,185	290,966
Donations				
Individual giving	67,105	-	67,105	97,298
Corporate donations	-	-	-	-
	<b>542,480</b>	<b>223,810</b>	<b>766,290</b>	<b>388,264</b>

**Grants received, included above, are as follows:**

ACE - Culture Recovery Fund	200,000	-	200,000	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	185,410	185,410	-
Arts Council England	156,065	-	156,065	91,829
HMRC - Furlough Grant	83,310	-	83,310	4,137
BPI Music Export Growth Scheme	20,000	-	20,000	-
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	-	18,500	18,500	40,000
Sir John Fisher Foundation	10,000	-	10,000	-
Parabola Foundation	-	8,000	8,000	75,000
London Borough of Islington	5,000	-	5,000	-
The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust	-	3,500	3,500	-
The Leche Trust	-	3,000	3,000	-
Trustees of the New Berlioz Edition	-	2,000	2,000	-
RVW Trust	-	2,000	2,000	-
Ambache Charitable Trust	-	1,400	1,400	-
Austin & Hope Pilkington Trust	1,000	-	1,000	-
Karlsson Jativa Charitable Foundation	-	-	-	50,000
The Leverhulme Trust	-	-	-	12,000
The Reed Foundation	-	-	-	10,000
The PRS Foundation for Music	-	-	-	8,000
	<b>475,375</b>	<b>223,810</b>	<b>699,185</b>	<b>290,966</b>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Notes to the financial statements (continued) - for the year ended 31 March 2021**

	<b>Total 2021</b>	<b>Total 2020</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>3 Investment income</b>		
Interest receivable	44	138

Income from investments was £44 (2020: £138) which was wholly attributable to unrestricted funds.

	<b>Total 2021</b>	<b>Total 2020</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>4 Income from charitable activities</b>		
Performance Fees	89,923	702,768
Orchestra tax relief	44,160	149,954
Film tax relief	12,345	-
Programme sales, sale of recordings, reimbursed costs	4,067	12,660
	<b>150,495</b>	<b>865,382</b>

Income from charitable activities was £150,495 (2020: £865,382), of which £0 (2020: £0) was attributable to restricted funds.

	<b>2021 Staff Costs</b>	<b>2021 Direct Costs</b>	<b>2021 Support Costs</b>	<b>2021 Total</b>	<b>2020 Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>5 Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	79,621	6,434	46,389	132,444	149,661
Charitable activities	172,997	227,345	100,791	501,133	1,205,566
<b>Total</b>	<b>252,618</b>	<b>233,779</b>	<b>147,180</b>	<b>633,577</b>	<b>1,355,227</b>

Included in support costs are governance costs of £4,000 (2020: £4,000)

	<b>2021 Premises costs</b>	<b>2021 Financial &amp; legal</b>	<b>2021 Office admin</b>	<b>2021 Total</b>	<b>2020 Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>6 Analysis of support costs</b>					
Raising funds	2,241	20,871	23,277	46,389	46,093
Charitable activities	4,869	45,347	50,575	100,791	99,637
	<b>7,110</b>	<b>66,218</b>	<b>73,852</b>	<b>147,180</b>	<b>145,730</b>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Notes to the financial statements (continued) - for the year ended 31 March 2021**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>7 Net income/(expenditure) for the year</b>		
This is stated after charging:		
Depreciation	3,245	3,425
Auditor's remuneration	4,000	4,000

	<b>Unrestricted Funds 2021 £</b>	<b>Restricted Funds 2021 £</b>	<b>Total Funds 2021 £</b>	<b>Total Funds 2020 £</b>
<b>8 Analysis of expenditure by fund</b>				
Raising funds	132,444	-	132,444	149,661
Charitable activities	375,323	125,810	501,133	1,205,566
	<b>507,767</b>	<b>125,810</b>	<b>633,577</b>	<b>1,355,227</b>

In 2020, of the total expenditure £1,243,227 was from unrestricted funds, and £112,000 from restricted funds.

	<b>Total 2021 £</b>	<b>Total 2020 £</b>
<b>9 Staff costs and employee benefits</b>		
Salaries	227,296	268,927
Social security costs	18,722	26,449
Employer pension contributions in the year	6,600	8,147
	<b>252,618</b>	<b>303,523</b>
Freelance fees to artists	119,235	576,622
Freelance fees to administrators	60,965	78,417
	<b>180,200</b>	<b>655,039</b>

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
The average number of employees during the year was as follows:	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>

One employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 during the year (2020: one)  
The key management personnel of the Charity comprise the Senior Management team during the period - John Harte, Jane Mitchell, Megan Russell and Caroline Harris. The total amount of employee remuneration and benefits received by key management personnel for their services to the Charity was £147,173 (2020: £189,948)

**10 Trustees' remuneration and benefits**

None of the trustees received any remuneration or benefits for the year ended 31st March 2021, nor for the year ended 31st March 2020.

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Notes to the financial statements (continued) - for the year ended 31 March 2021**

<b>11 Tangible fixed assets</b>	<b>Computers &amp; equipment £</b>	
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1st April 2020	38,409	
Additions	4,719	
Disposals	-	
At 31st March 2021	<u>43,128</u>	
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At 1st April 2020	33,169	
On disposals	-	
Charge for the year	3,245	
At 31st March 2021	<u>36,414</u>	
<b>Net Book Value</b>		
At 31st March 2020	<u>5,240</u>	
At 31st March 2021	<u>6,714</u>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>12 Debtors</b>		
Trade debtors	18,171	12,574
Prepayments	1,676	12,985
Accrued income	104,434	231,383
Other debtors	10,876	1,056
	<u>135,157</u>	<u>257,998</u>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Notes to the financial statements (continued) - for the year ended 31 March 2021**

	<b>Total 2021</b>	<b>Total 2020</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>		
Bank loans and overdrafts	29,618	20,987
Trade creditors	14,460	8,673
Deferred income	2,000	7,080
Accruals	10,480	9,801
Other creditors	5,761	16,222
	<b>62,319</b>	<b>62,763</b>

**Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year**

Bank loans and overdrafts	95,138	124,639
Other creditors	-	37,037
	<b>95,138</b>	<b>161,676</b>

**Deferred income**

Where terms or conditions have not been met or uncertainty exists as to whether they can be met then the relevant income is not recognised in the year but deferred and shown on the balance sheet as deferred income.

Income deferred from the previous period	7,080	86,154
Released to the statement of financial activities	(7,080)	(86,154)
Arising during the current year:		
Grants received in advance	2,000	-
Performance fees received in advance	-	7,080
	<b>2,000</b>	<b>7,080</b>

<b>14 Statement of Funds</b>	<b>1 Apr 2020</b>	<b>Incoming Resources</b>	<b>Resources Expended</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>31 Mar 2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Restricted Funds</b>					
Performance Programme	80,000	34,900	(56,900)	-	58,000
Learning & Participation	40,000	188,910	(68,910)	-	160,000
	<b>120,000</b>	<b>223,810</b>	<b>(125,810)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>218,000</b>
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>					
Performance Programme	(37,405)	693,019	(507,767)	-	147,847
	<b>(37,405)</b>	<b>693,019</b>	<b>(507,767)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>147,847</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>82,595</b>	<b>916,829</b>	<b>(633,577)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>365,847</b>

**AURORA ORCHESTRA**  
**Notes to the financial statements (continued) - for the year ended 31 March 2021**

**15 Leases**

At 31 March, the company had annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £
	Land and buildings	Other	Land and buildings	Other
<i>Expiry date:</i>				
Less than 1 year	16,620	-	16,620	-
Between 2 and 5 years	-	-	-	-
More than 5 years	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,620</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>16,620</b>	<b>-</b>

**16 Related party disclosure**

During the year, donations totalling £6,500 (2020: £11,076) were received from trustees. Remuneration to key management personnel is stated in note 9.

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 £	2020 £
<b>17 Analysis of net assets between funds</b>				
Tangible fixed assets	6,714	-	6,714	5,240
Net current assets	141,133	218,000	359,133	77,355
	<b>147,847</b>	<b>218,000</b>	<b>365,847</b>	<b>82,595</b>