

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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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Trustees	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)	
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 Jane Mitchell Alana Grady Helen McKeown Jane Walker	<i>Chief Executive and Company Secretary</i> <i>Creative Director</i> <i>Senior Concerts Manager</i> <i>Development Manager</i> <i>Finance Manager</i>
Independent Auditor	WP Audit Services LLP North House, 198 High Street Tonbridge Kent TN9 1BE	
Principal Bankers	CAF Bank Ltd 25 Kings Hill Avenue West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ	

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TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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.

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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.

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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.*

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).

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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 20th 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.

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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).

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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.

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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.

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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

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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*.

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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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"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.



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 20th 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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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

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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**

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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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Photo by Marco Borggreve

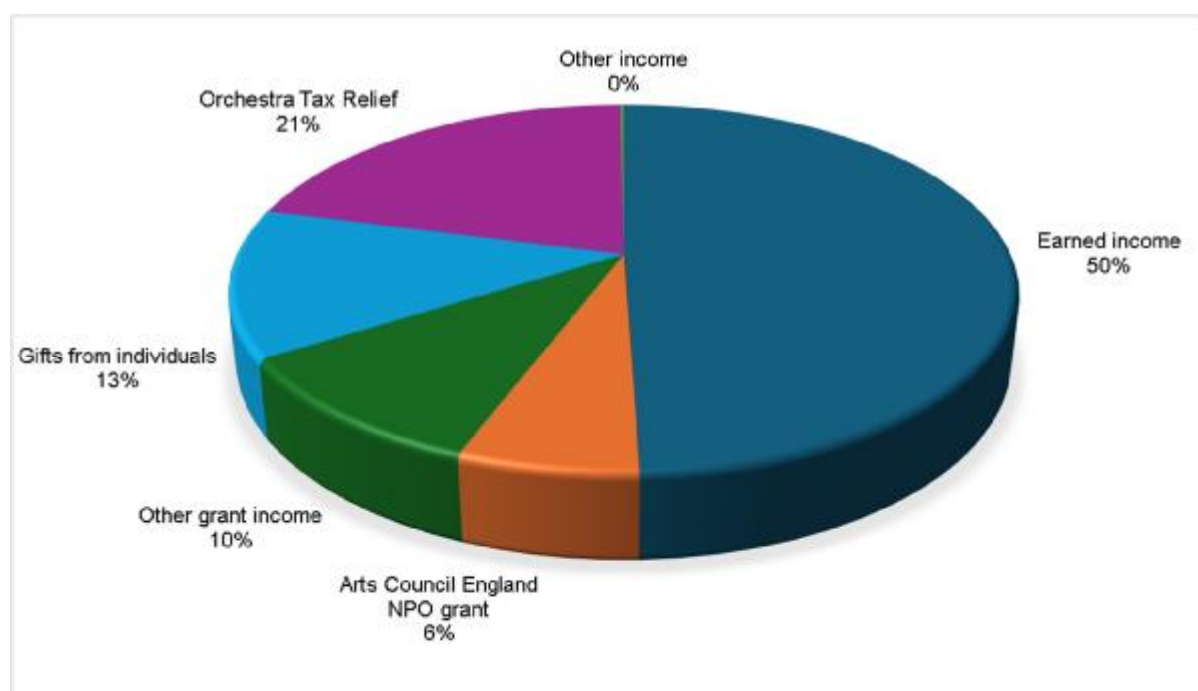
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FINANCIAL REVIEW

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:

	2024/25	2023/24
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.

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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 20th 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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- 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.

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

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)

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.

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

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.

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

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.

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

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. 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**

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	461,030	215,000	676,030	476,560
Charitable activities	4	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
Total		2,032,731	251,719	2,284,450	1,731,337
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	5	167,617	-	167,617	143,892
Charitable activities	6	1,625,926	261,719	1,887,645	1,693,507
Total		1,793,543	261,719	2,055,262	1,837,399
Net movement in funds		239,188	(10,000)	229,188	(106,062)
Reconciliation of funds:					
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 £
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	11		31,999		35,676
Tangible assets	12		15,803		16,985
			<u>47,802</u>		<u>52,661</u>
Current assets					
Stocks		-		597	
Debtors	13	907,609		734,826	
Cash at bank and in hand		308,831		29,635	
		<u>1,216,440</u>		<u>765,058</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(318,384)		(376,912)	
Net current assets			898,056		388,146
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	15		(479,702)		(203,839)
Total net assets			<u>466,156</u>		<u>236,968</u>
The funds of the charity:					
Unrestricted funds			431,156		191,968
Restricted funds			35,000		45,000
Total funds	16		<u>466,156</u>		<u>236,968</u>

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 £
Cash flows from operating activities:			
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	A	4,757	(118,589)
Cash flows from investing activities:			
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)
Cash flows from financing activities:			
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
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		279,196	(84,664)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		29,635	114,299
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	B	308,831	29,635
A. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities			
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. Analysis of changes in net debt			
	Cash at bank £	Bank loans	
		Due within one year £	Due after one year £
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)

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

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**

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.

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

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.

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

3 INCOME FROM DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2025	2024
	£	£
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**

4 INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2025 £	2024 £
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
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,130,100	800,568
	<hr/>	<hr/>

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

5 EXPENDITURE ON RAISING FUNDS

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

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>

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

8 SUPPORT COSTS

	2025	2024
	£	£
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)

	2025	2024
	£	£
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	<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

	2025 £	2024 £
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:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
£80,001 - £90,000	-	1
£90,001 - £100,000	1	-

11 INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Film rights £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 April 2024	36,771	36,771
Additions	-	-
At 31 March 2025	<u>36,771</u>	<u>36,771</u>
Amortisation		
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>
Net book value		
At 31 March 2025	<u>31,999</u>	<u>31,999</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>35,676</u>	<u>35,676</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025
12 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computers & equipment £	Total £
Cost		
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/>
Depreciation		
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/>
Net book value		
At 31 March 2025	15,803	15,803
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 March 2024	16,985	16,985
	<hr/>	<hr/>

13 DEBTORS

	2025 £	2024 £
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/>

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

14 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2025 £	2024 £
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:

	2025 £	2024 £
Balance at 1 April 2024	57,460	-
Released to income	(57,460)	-
Received in the year and deferred	61,995	57,460
Balance at 31 March 2025	<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

	2025 £	2024 £
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> £
Restricted funds					
<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>
Unrestricted funds					
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><u>236,968</u></u>	<u><u>2,284,450</u></u>	<u><u>(2,055,262)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>466,156</u></u>

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> £
Restricted funds					
<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>
Unrestricted funds					
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>
CURRENT YEAR			
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>
PRIOR YEAR			
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:

	<i>2025 £</i>	<i>2024 £</i>
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).