

Report to the Charity Commission 2020-21

In spite of the Charity's activities being curtailed by the Covid-19 pandemic during the financial year the Trustees have been able to adapt to further the charities aims within the parameters of the Government's guidelines.

Performance

Having committed to the production of *@emele*, a comic opera by Roger Simmonds and David Willcock, the work of the Trustees has been focused on the promotion and funding of this work in line with the detailed budget submitted by the production team and agreed by the Trustees.

In September 2020, after the easing of lockdown measures, the production team held auditions for the leading roles, from which four singers were cast. However, following these auditions, the production team suggested that five more professionals should be cast in the roles of the Olympian Gods. This increased the production budget but the Trustees felt that, with the state of theatre and the arts providing little or no work for any of the auditionees, who were uniformly of a high standard, the aims of the charity would be furthered by the inclusion of more young professionals. This wisdom of this decision was underlined by the continuing restrictions on the number of amateur singers; this precluded more than six amateurs being included in the production.

The contracts for the four lead roles included a fund-raising concert to be held in Oxford in late October 2020. New lockdown measures meant there could be no audience and consequently the Trustees decided to cancel this concert. Instead, video excerpts of *@emele*, along with interviews with the singers about themselves and their roles were filmed free by a local production company (as a donation in kind) with the aim of using these to promote the production on the charity's website. The website was developed to reflect the 2021 season and links made to a new YouTube channel for the Charity.

The venue for the production was to have been The North Wall theatre in Oxford but, thanks to the cancellation of shows in 2020, the Trustees were informed that the booking for July 2021 would have to be cancelled. Fortunately, Mr and Mrs Keene offered their house and garden in Wheatley pro bono instead. The Trustees were able not only to benefit from the stability of this commitment in their planning but also save several hundred pounds in location and rehearsal fees.

Fundraising

The putative fundraising concert in October had to be cancelled but the Trustees were successful in securing both grants and sponsorship. Major grants were obtained from The Thistle Trust and The Martin Smith Foundation.

Support of young artists and community involvement

Restrictions for Covid severely inhibited the Charity's work with young people and community involvement in this year. The increased number of young artists contracted for the production was a step forward in the encouragement of young talent, however, the Trustees' plans for partnerships with local schools and the

involvement of younger people had to be postponed for health and practical reasons. Not only was it deemed unsafe for outside agencies to visit schools, teachers were so hard-pressed that they had no time to collaborate on external projects. Consequently, all contact with amateur singers was made via electronic media in this period. A small semi-chorus was assembled using recordings for auditions though, pleasingly, this included two school-leavers who were put forward by the music teacher at Oxford High School.

Ruth Burdett
Chair of Trustees



OXFORDSHIRE CONTEMPORARY OPERA
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
2020 - 2021

Oxfordshire Contemporary Opera

Statement of financial activities in FY 2020/21

	Note	FY 2019/20 £	FY 2020/21 £
Income			
Brought forward from FY 2018/19		1,461.73	
Brought forward from FY 2019/20			2,191.21
Ticket sales from concert	1	660.00	
Raffle ticket sales	1	130.00	
Donations	2	100.00	2,505.00
Total income		<u>2,351.73</u>	<u>4,696.21</u>
Expenditure			
The Sun voucher	1	25.00	
Parchments Print	1	15.00	
Raffle Ticket Books	1	6.54	
Cost of refreshments	1	113.98	
Squarespace		216.00	
OCO Insurance			600.00
Parchments Print	3		176.00
Rehearsal space hire	3		168.00
Rehearsal Pianists	3		400.00
Soloist travel expenses	3		75.32
Carecheck			12.00
Postage	3		22.14
Total Expenditure		<u>(160.52)</u>	<u>(1,669.46)</u>
Funds			
At April 2020		2,191.21	-
Net Movement of Resources in the Year		730.48	835.54
At April 2021			<u>3,026.75</u>

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure are derived from continuing activities.

Notes

1. A fund-raising concert was held on 26th October, 2019.
2. In FY 20/21 funds were donated by The Thistle Trust (£1,500) and the Martin Smith Foundation (£1,000).
3. All these expenses were incurred in preparation for the OCO production of *@emele* in July 2021