

S A N S A R A

Sansara Choir

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Charity No. 1179978

Report and Financial Statements

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 JULY 2022



"expert interlocking of exquisite voices in a sound that takes us beyond our everyday selves"

- Edinburgh Music Review, 2022

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Trustees' Annual Report

For the period 1st August 2021 - 31st July 2022

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Charity name

Sansara Choir CIO

Other name the charity uses

SANSARA

Registered charity number

1179978

Charity's principal address

40 High Point, London SE9 3NZ

Trustees

Mr Charles Graham (Chair)

Miss Sarah Rennix

Mr Henry Southern

Mrs Michele Price (from 1 August 2022)

Mr Laurence Harris (from 1 August 2022)

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, foundation model, registered on September 18th 2018. It is governed by its Constitution.

Trustees

The Trustees meet at least quarterly, to discuss matters affecting the charity, review the financial position of the charity, and review the charity's activities and performance against its objectives. New trustees may be put forward by current trustees or members of the executive and are considered according to relevant experience, qualifications or specialist knowledge.

Management

The organisation is operationally managed by an executive team consisting of an Artistic Director (Tom Herring), Finance Manager (Jack Butterworth), and Learning & Participation Manager (Fiona Fraser).

Remuneration

The Trustees have approved remuneration for administration time for the Artistic Director. The Finance Manager, Learning & Participation Manager serve as volunteers.

Policies

The following policies are in place and are reviewed annually or when we make changes to our working practices. The Trustees are committed to the pastoral care of the singers, performers and volunteers, in particular as we have come out of lockdown and return to live performance and busier performing schedules.

- Safeguarding
- Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection
- Anti-Bullying
- Health and Safety
- Complaints
- Staff Code of Conduct

All policies can be found via our website, sansarachoir.com/safeguarding

Potential risks of all events, projects and engagements are carefully considered as part of the charity's standard governance procedures, and suitable oversight and contracts are put in place. The charity takes out an annual Public Liability insurance policy.

Public Benefit

In reviewing the reporting year and considering objectives for the year ahead the Trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and the duty under S 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 and confirm that that public benefit is being achieved by:

- Performing live to over 1,500 people across the UK and beyond.
- Reaching over 150,000 listeners worldwide across all streaming platforms.
- Supporting over 50 freelance artists and musicians with tailored professional and artistic development programmes.

OBJECTIVES

Charitable Objectives as set out in our constitution:

To promote the art of choral music for the public benefit by:

- (a)** the organisation and/or presentation of concerts of high educational and artistic merit, the production of recordings;
- (b)** the commissioning and performance of new music and/or the presentation of musical works of particular historical and cultural significance, research and presentation of musical editions;
- (c)** the organisation and presentation of concerts, workshops and collaborations with community musical groups, schools and other places of education;
- (d)** by such other means as the Board of Trustees shall from time to time determine.



SANSARA is a vocal collective making choral music that matters. By drawing on the unrivalled expressive potential of the human voice, we connect new audiences with timeless music and offer unique opportunities for reflection and renewal.

Our work is rooted in artistic excellence and social engagement. Whether commissioning new music that brings refugee communities together or using ensemble singing to support the journey through bereavement, we believe in the transformative power of choral music to make meaningful connections in people's lives.

SANSARA responds to the present and breathes new life into our rich musical traditions. We create artistic experiences which challenge the boundaries of form and genre, from intimate a cappella performances to immersive electronic soundscapes. We believe that working collaboratively, with authenticity and the highest levels of shared ambition, allows exceptional things to happen.

Established as a charity in 2018, SANSARA reaches hundreds of thousands of people every year through our critically acclaimed programme of concerts, recordings and community partnerships. As a collective we are committed to developing a core group of musicians and musical entrepreneurs - with the skills and passion to explore a new purpose for choral music.

SANSARA believes that choirs are living, breathing entities with a unique expressive power to give voice to compelling human stories. We create opportunities for people to experience and explore what choral music can mean to them, via the very highest quality performances, recordings and partnerships.

The UK is in the middle of a loneliness epidemic. 1 in 4 people are living with the devastating impact of social isolation on their physical and mental health. The legacy of a global pandemic, the climate emergency, cost of living and war in Europe have all contributed to a peak in anxiety leaving many people grief-stricken, isolated and fearful. All of this in the midst of an over-stretched health system meaning that people need to find new ways to help themselves and each other.

Human connection is a crucial part of the answer.

"I felt very supported and was able to talk about some things which I had not previously."

- Participant in SANSARA's *Rite To Grieve* project

Over the last five years, SANSARA'S unique choral offer and partnerships have created new spaces and contexts for connection, spirituality, reflection and growth. We have seen first-hand the impact that exceptionally high quality choral music can have on individuals and groups, whether at a concert or as part of a participatory experience.

SANSARA is open to everyone, sharing music we love in welcoming and beautiful settings. We invite our audiences to bring their own beliefs, experiences and emotions - and to join together in rare, genuine moments of connection.

"The whole experience was almost unbearably moving"

- Audience member, *Traces of the White Rose* performance



Chair's Report

I am delighted that this year was one of significant organisational growth for SANSARA, as we emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic with a renewed strategy and new trustees on our Board. Prudent financial management, alongside new and ground-breaking artistic projects, have allowed SANSARA not only to remain stable throughout this period, but to emerge with a bolder creative purpose to make choral music that matters, giving voice to powerful human stories.

SANSARA's core projects fuse artistic excellence with social engagement, and this was excellently exemplified with the release of the *My North* by Rebecca Dale, through our new partnership with the record label, Platoon. This piece was commissioned as part of our *Rite to Grieve* project, which was a creative response to the widespread crisis of grief and bereavement as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The piece sets text from W H Auden's *Funeral Blues*, and was premiered at a special commemorative event at the National Covid Memorial Wall on 29 March 2022.



In addition, we have recorded a fourth album (released after this reporting period, in Autumn 2022) which was funded by the Genesis Foundation Kickstart Fund and released via Platoon. This marks a step change in our ability to promote choral music, through Platoon's support in accessing wider audiences globally through Apple Music, Spotify and all major streaming platforms.

Despite significant efforts in terms of fundraising, our core position remains unchanged from previous years, and as a board we now have clear targets for 2023 to ensure that we can put SANSARA on a more stable financial footing, upon which Tom Herring's artistic vision can be built. We continue to be incredibly grateful to our core group of regular donors who have provided the choir with much needed support, without which we would not have survived the COVID-19 pandemic and continue to produce fantastic choral music-making.

In this reporting period, as noted in last year's report, Ms Sarah Hard resigned as a trustee and Mr David Hurley stood down as chair. I am pleased to report Mrs Michele Price and Mr Laurence Harris joined us as trustees, bringing significant legal, charity governance, and fundraising experience between them. We continue to review the skill set of the Board to ensure that we can fully support the development of the choir, and for that reason, we are currently recruiting for three additional trustees to bring expertise in financial governance, consumer and digital marketing, and fundraising to support our continued growth as we transition into the organisation that I know we have the potential to be.

- Charles Graham, Chair
April 2023

Artistic Director's Report

The achievements in this period were the first steps of delivering our renewed creative strategy as we emerged from the pandemic. Alongside the professional engagements and self-promoted events, three key projects stand out from the year: the development and pilot event of our *Rite to Grieve* project, the recording of our fourth album *Traces* and single *My North*, and our commissioning of Ukrainian composer Natalia Tsupryk.

At the beginning of this period, our Artistic Director and Learning and Participation Manager focused on developing our *Rite to Grieve* project: a response to the grief crisis in the wake of the pandemic. This involved researching and liaising with partners in the lead up to a pilot event on 3 October 2021. This event was transformational for the organisation, showing what we can offer beyond the stage. A thorough internal evaluation of the pilot event followed and has since informed the development of the project.



The recording of *Traces* in October 2021 was an important development for the choir, building on our existing collaboration with the University of Oxford's White Rose Project and funded in part by the Genesis Foundation's Kickstart Fund. The programme stems from a concert in February 2020 in collaboration with the White Rose Project, which set choral music alongside readings from the members of the White Rose resistance circle: five students and a professor who resisted Nazism and paid with their lives. The recording project was designed to expand on this initial programme, adding new repertoire such as Paul Ben-Haim's *Psalms 126* which we recorded for the first time.

During these sessions, we also recorded a new commission by Rebecca Dale as part of our *Rite to Grieve* project. *My North* was premiered at a special commemorative event at the National Covid Memorial Wall on 29 March 2022 and released as a single via Platoon on all streaming platforms in April.

Towards the end of the period, the choir commissioned Ukrainian composer Natalia Tsupryk to write a piece responding to the full scale invasion of her country by Russian forces in February 2022, with the aim of recording and releasing the piece as a single for Ukrainian Independence Day in August 2022 - a date which also aligned with six months since escalation of the war. The commission brief was designed to result in a work that would be performable by a range of ensembles, including amateur and community choirs, so that we could encourage future performances of the piece by other groups and - where possible - for people to work with refugees in their communities. Natalia's piece *A Quiet Night - Tyhoyi Nochi* was recorded on 29 July 2022 at

the Ukrainian Cathedral in London and has since been performed around the world, raising money for the Ukrainian Welcome Centre, based at the cathedral.

Alongside these main projects, the choir collaborated with renowned viol consort Fretwork for a programme of works by Arvo Pärt and Robert White. These were performed at three venues, including London's St John's Smith Square. This collaboration was a significant step in our artistic development and has continued beyond the end of the period of this report.

In summary, the 2021-22 year was an important period of artistic and organisational growth as we began to deliver some of our projects in line with our charitable objectives planned during the previous year of relative inactivity due to the pandemic. The work done in this time has since proved highly valuable for the development of the charity, its trustees and its creative freelancers.

- Tom Herring, Artistic Director
April 2023

ACTIVITIES

In the period August 2021 - July 2022:

Professional Engagements

- 24.10.21** Saxon Shore Early Music Festival
- 13.03.22** Winchester College: Tarney Passion
- 29.03.22** National Covid Memorial Wall Commemoration Event
- 31.03.22** SJE Arts, Oxford: Fretwork collaboration
- 13.04.22** St John's Smith Square (SJSS), London: Holy Week Festival - late-night event
- 14.04.22** SJSS, London: Holy Week Festival - Fretwork collaboration, late-night event
- 15.04.22** SJSS, London: Holy Week Festival - late-night event

Self-promoted Events

- 22.12.21** St Cross Church, Winchester: Christmas concert
- 07.04.22** St Cross Church, Winchester: Fretwork collaboration

Recordings

- 4-8.10.21** rehearsals and recording sessions for *Traces* and Rebecca Dale commission
- 22.04.22** *My North* single released via Platoon
- 29.07.22** recording session for Natalia Tsupryk commission

Project Development

- 03.10.21** Rite to Grieve pilot event

Digital Projects

- 22.01.22** Online premiere of Mahler 8 with Choir of the Earth

Case Studies

Rite to Grieve - Sarah's story*

Sarah joined us for our *Rite to Grieve* pilot event in October 2021. In 2020, Sarah lost her partner to Covid-19 and felt overwhelmingly isolated in the weeks and months that followed, later becoming involved in the Covid-19 Bereaved Families for Justice movement. When registering for our event, Sarah expressed her nerves at sharing her story with others, but also her desire to give voice to her story. In the final session of the day, Sarah was speaking freely and connecting with other participants, sharing in their collective yet individual experiences.

"It's hard to put into words how important the day was as the whole issue involves so many profound and complex emotions. I had been denied the opportunity to lay my ghosts to rest. But somehow, coming together with others who'd shared similar experiences and having a series of structured conversations, allowed me to find a framework on which to hang my grief."

**the participant's name has been changed*

Natalia's story

"With the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, my life was split into before and after, and although the Russian war really started eight years ago, I was still deeply shaken..."

Following the full scale invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces in February 2022, SANSARA commissioned the young Ukrainian composer Natalia Tsupryk to write a new choral piece for Ukrainian Independence Day.

"I feel honoured to have worked with SANSARA on the recording of my piece 'A Quiet Night - Tyhoyi Nochi'. I am incredibly grateful to them for showing such sympathy for the people of Ukraine and putting this sympathy into the magic of music. Their performance of the piece is honest and sensitive. It has been incredibly moving to see so many choirs following SANSARA's example and performing my piece all around the world."

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The charity's financial position in 2021-22 was largely shaped by a return to performing activity, following the relaxation of restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In particular, earned income (concert fees, ticket sales and CD sales) grew to £39,138 (from £8,335 in 2020-21), as in-person performances resumed and as reported in our accounts, section **A1**. Engagements included concerts in Oxford, Winchester and London with Fretwork, and a performance of Oliver Tarney's *St Mark Passion* and a Christmas concert in December 2021, both also in Winchester. We built new relationships with the Wiltshire Music Centre, Saxon Shore Early Music Kenardington and St John's Smith Square, with performances in June 2021, October 2021 and April 2022 respectively. We also continued our partnership with the Self-Isolation Choir, for two virtual performances, and also performed at a number of weddings, funerals and other private engagements.



We built new relationships with the Wiltshire Music Centre, Saxon Shore Early Music Kenardington and St John's Smith Square, with performances in June 2021, October 2021 and April 2022 respectively. We also continued our partnership with the Self-Isolation Choir, for two virtual performances, and also performed at a number of weddings, funerals and other private engagements.

Private donations remained broadly constant, at £9,640 (from £11,403 in 2020-21): we remain grateful to the Friends of Sansara for their ongoing support of the choir. Following a year of significant success in winning grant income, particularly for the *White Rose* and *Rite to Grieve* projects, our focus in 2021-22 was on delivering the two projects above.

Expenditure (**A3**) reflected the increased performing activity outlined above. There was marked growth in expenditure on music commission, filming, photography and publicity, venue hire and on musicians' fees and expenses, as we returned to a fuller performing schedule. We are proud to have provided over £40,000 of paid singing work to young professional singers, in a challenging financial and cultural climate. Fees for professional services also increased: the principal recipient of professional services fees is the Artistic Director, who receives a monthly retainer alongside other project-based fees.

The charity has no asset sales (**A2**) or asset purchases (**A4**) to report.

Expenditure (£78,350) outstripped income (£48,777) by £29,573 in this financial year: however, this is largely driven by £30,651 in restricted expenditure. We delivered on the grants which were won in the 2020-21 financial year, and which had contributed to restricted cash holdings of £43,775 (**A6**), at the beginning of the 2021-22 financial year. The choir's underlying, unrestricted position remained largely stable, with a net loss of only £222.

There are no transfers between funds (**A5**) to report.

Total cash holdings (**B1**) were £23,059 at year end, comprising £8,635 in unrestricted funds and £14,423 in four funds for restricted purposes, including for the *White Rose* and *Rite to Grieve*

projects, as well as for the *Les Voix Humaines* and *A Quiet Night* recordings, each of which has since been delivered in 2022-23.

As was foreseen in the previous financial report, the charity's financial activity in 2021-22 was shaped by the delivery of two grant-funded projects, for which funding had been won in the 2020-21 financial year; and by the return to a fuller programme of performing activity and increase in earned income as a result. Each of these contributed to a substantial increase in expenditure, principally on recording and performing. We are delighted that the choir has signed its first multi-project recording deal, with Platoon (part of Apple Inc.), which promises to be a major driver of income in 2022-23.

- Jack Butterworth, Finance Manager
April 2023

Accounting Policies and Management

Receipts and payments are the operational responsibility of the Finance Manager, who has delegated responsibility for expenditures of less than £500. Larger expenditures are subject to the approval of the Trustees.

The charity has a reserves holding policy to cover six months of core costs which was successfully maintained during this period. The reserves policy is reviewed annually and adjusted in accordance with current commitments and other prevailing economic factors.

Restricted and unrestricted funds

Funds are restricted where they have been raised for a clearly communicated purpose or project, or have been designated as such by the donor.

Unrestricted funds may come from sales of tickets or CDs, payment for concerts or workshops (by promoters or through ticket sales) or through unrestricted donations such as the Friends of Sansara scheme.

Risk Management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity may be exposed and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate any exposure to these risks.

Receipts and payments accounts

CC-16a

For the period from

01/08/2021

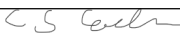
To

31/07/2022

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations	8,340	1,300	-	9,640	11,403
Gift Aid	-	-	-	-	1,939
Grant income	-	-	-	-	45,500
Income from services rendered inc. concert fees	29,946	-	-	29,946	7,785
Miscellaneous income	-	-	-	-	-
Sale of CDs	566	-	-	566	500
Sponsorship	-	-	-	-	-
Ticket sales	8,626	-	-	8,626	50
Sub total(Gross income for AR)	47,477	1,300	-	48,777	67,177
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
nil	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	47,477	1,300	-	48,777	67,177
A3 Payments					
Catering	105	9	-	114	-
Commission of music	350	2,500	-	2,850	600
Costs of sales e.g. box office	653	-	-	653	155
Digital and computing	923	-	-	923	673
Filming, photography and publicity	2,100	1,384	-	3,485	700
Hire of scores, microphones etc.	-	277	-	277	26
Payments to musicians - expenses	1,600	515	-	2,116	306
Payments to musicians - fees	24,263	15,925	-	40,188	20,035
Printing, postage and stationery	609	129	-	738	91
Professional services	14,225	4,863	-	19,088	10,468
Recording production and purchase	-	825	-	825	1,750
Travel and accommodation	705	411	-	1,116	18
VAT on purchases	280	712	-	992	589
Venue hire and insurances	1,885	3,102	-	4,987	1,793
Sub total	47,699	30,651	-	78,350	37,203
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
nil	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	47,699	30,651	-	78,350	37,203
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 222	- 29,351	-	- 29,573	29,973
A5 Transfers between funds					
A6 Cash funds last year end	8,857	43,775	-	52,632	-
Cash funds this year end	8,635	14,423	-	23,059	29,973

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
		to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash funds	8,635	14,423	-
	Total cash funds	8,635	14,423	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
	Details	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
		to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	nil	-	-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets	nil	n/a	-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Musical scores	Unrestricted	-	500
	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	nil	n/a	-	-
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		Charles Graham	23/03/2023	

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Sansara Choir (1179978)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Sansara Choir (the Trust) for the year ended 31 July 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

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



Andrew Radice

Chartered Accountant

Guelder Cottage, Hanging Langford, Salisbury, SP3 4NW

