



**CHARITY COMMISSION**  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

## Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 17/10/2022 Period start date To 16/10/2023 Period end date

Charity name: Musica Secreta

Charity registration number: 1180343

## Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	<p>The purposes of our charity are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To advance education, for the public benefit, in the knowledge and appreciation of music primarily but not exclusively for female voices, whether for choir, consort, or solo voices, accompanied or unaccompanied.</li></ul> <p>To further the development of public appreciation of and education in the musical arts through concerts, workshops, conferences, lectures, broadcasts, publications (print, digital, and online), and recordings, and by such other means as the trustees shall from time to time determine.</p>
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	<p>The charity fulfils its purposes through giving concerts, making recordings, and running workshops. Where possible and practical, amateur choirs are invited to be involved in performances.</p> <p>The charity also engages in primary trading through its website, selling scores and CDs. The website is also used to distribute free scores and advice to choirs wishing to develop experience in singing female-voice polyphony.</p> <p>The charity supports two ensembles: Musica Secreta, a professional ensemble normally comprising 8-10 singers, viol, and keyboard (organ or harpsichord); and Celestial Sirens, an amateur choir based in the south of England that meets on an ad hoc basis to prepare performances, sometimes alongside Musica Secreta. Musica Secreta is directed by Laurie Stras; Celestial Sirens remains directed by</p>

		Deborah Roberts. In 2022-2023 we decided to recognise formally the performance direction contribution of Claire Williams, the organist, who takes responsibility for tempi and ensemble during recordings and performances when Stras is otherwise occupied. Williams is now credited as Ensemble Director on programmes and recording notes.
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	In shaping the objectives for and planning the charity's activities, the trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and fee charging. The ensemble relies on grants and income from fees and primary trading to cover the costs of its activities. Budgets for projects are based on industry-appropriate rates (such as union-recommended rates, where available); grants are sought to reduce the fees chargeable to promoters.

### Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	The charity, the primary trading, and the ensemble are all managed by one person (Stras), who is also responsible for the research on which programmes are based, and the editions performed. Management of the charity involves all reporting tasks (accounting and annual report), populating and managing the website, managing the self-release label Lucky Music, social media marketing (and profile strategy) and delivery, grant writing and other forms of fundraising, administration around recordings and rehearsals (including accommodation, scheduling, booking of artists and technicians). Other members of the ensemble are only able to help in a limited way because none of the activity is remunerated.
Other		

### Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
--	----------------	--

Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.

Para 1.20

*Formal activities*

Between 17 October 2022 and 16 October 2023, formal activities have included:

- Recording of seven tracks, two for a Christmas "single" release in December 2023, and five for a special "EP" to raise awareness of metastatic breast cancer.

In September 2023, the ensemble recorded and videoed seven tracks, two of which were for released in December 2023 as a Christmas "single," and five of which were scheduled for monthly release between October 2023 and February 2024.

The original intent had been to collaborate with a number of other British early music ensembles to create an album that would raise funds for breast cancer research. This proved impossible because of charity commercial restrictions, but we went ahead and recorded tracks that we would release ourselves. Since this release activity falls into the next accounting period, full details will be provided in the next report.

In April 2022, Stras learned that she had received a Leverhulme Emeritus Fellowship for the completion of her book on the Biffoli-Sostegni manuscript. The fellowship will fund the recording – by *Musica Secreta* - of audiovisual examples for the book, which is being published by Cambridge University Press in a digital/online-first format.

*Musica Secreta website and score shop*

We continue to sell scores and CDs from the website; traffic increased this financial year because of the release of Laurie's edition of Maddalena Casulana's five-voice madrigal book.

*Recognition*

Mother Sister Daughter, which was released in the previous accounting period, received very favourable reviews. In particular, it was chosen among the best albums of 2022 by critics in the *New York Times* and the *New Yorker*.

---

## Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	<p>The reconciled bank account has a credit balance of £7949.41, and the cash box contains £50.00</p> <p>Total income from all sources was £6919.56. Total expenditure was £8156.80.</p> <p>Expenditure was higher than income this year, but overall the balance was down only £1,237 on 21-22, reflecting the spend on the recording session at the end of September 2022.</p>
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	Reserves are needed to bridge the gap between spending/paying fees and receiving payment from promoters. The ideal level of reserves is £3000 per contracted concert, the minimum we judge to be necessary to cover compensatory artists' fees for a single concert in case of promoter non-payment.
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	Although there is no separate account for reserves, there is capacity to cover our ideal reserve amount for 2022/23 in the general fund.
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	<b>n/a</b>
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	<b>n/a</b>
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	

### Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	<b>Royalties on recordings; primary trading; grants; crowdfunding</b>
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	<b>n/a</b>
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	<p>Risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>director retiring</li> <li>continued shrinking of arts sector in the UK</li> </ul> <p>After the discussion at the last annual</p>

		Trustees' meeting, Stras had a discussion with our Independent Examiner, Rachel Cooper, about the process of winding down the charity when the time comes. Cooper said it would not be difficult to do in terms of administration, but she recommended that any funds remaining in the account be spent on the charity's purposes, rather than just disbursed among ensemble members.
Other		

## Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter)	Para 1.25	The charity is governed by a constitution.
How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association, CIO)	Para 1.25	The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Association.
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	The trustees were approached by the ensemble's directors on the basis of their knowledge and skills associated with the charity's purposes.

### Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	
Other		

--	--	--

## Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Musica Secreta
Other name the charity uses	
Registered charity number	1180343
Charity's principal address	24 Oakmount Ave Southampton SO17 1DR UK

**Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity**

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Mr Nick Boston	Chair		
2	Ms Sarah Dunant		resigned 30/01/2023	
3	Prof Andrew Pinnock			
4	Ms Anna Wright		Appointed 30/01/2023	
3	Dr Susan Jackson		Appointed 30/01/2023	

**Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others**

Description of the assets held in this capacity	n/a
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	n/a
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	n/a

**Additional information (optional)****Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)**

Type of adviser	Name	Address

**Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)**

Professor Laurie Stras – administrator for the charity; director of the ensemble

**Exemptions from disclosure**

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

n/a



## Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)



Full name(s)

Nicholas Alexander Boston

Position (eg Secretary,  
Chair, etc)

Chair

Date

15/3/24



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name  
Musica Secreta

No (if any)  
1180343

## Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period  
from

Period start date  
10/17/2022


To

Period end date  
10/16/2023

### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Concerts	-	-	-	-	10,104
Donations	51	-	-	51	6,811
Education	-	-	-	-	-
Grants	-	-	-	-	12,826
Primary trading	5,125	-	-	5,125	3,146
Royalties	535	-	-	535	52
Gift Aid	1,209	-	-	1,209	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>6,920</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6,920</b>	<b>32,939</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>6,920</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6,920</b>	<b>32,939</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Accommodation and subsistence	172	-	-	172	1,931
Office peripherals	-	-	-	-	194
Primary trading expenses	1,433	-	-	1,433	2,450
Professional fees - musicians	3,000	-	-	3,000	17,274
Professional fees - technical	2,455	-	-	2,455	7,606
Professional fees - other	-	-	-	-	2,200
Space charges/hire	500	-	-	500	1,933
Transaction charges	152	-	-	152	259
Travel	445	-	-	445	2,738
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>8,157</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,157</b>	<b>36,583</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>8,157</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,157</b>	<b>36,583</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>- 1,237</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>- 1,237</b>	<b>- 3,644</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>9,236</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,236</b>	<b>12,880</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>7,999</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,999</b>	<b>9,236</b>

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Cash in bank	7,949	-	-
	Cash in hand	50	-	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>7,999</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>	Details	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		Nick Boston	11.3.24	