



supporting women and parents in opera

SWAP'ra

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1185454

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 2 MAY 2021 – 1 MAY 2022

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LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

CONSTITUTION

SWAP'ra is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (no. 1185454), registered with the Charity Commission on 23 September 2019 and is governed by its constitution dated 7 May 2018.

TRUSTEES

The Trustees serving during the period covered by this Report were as follows:

Sarah Holford (Chair)

Catherine Carby (Treasurer)

Professor Natasha Loges (appointed July 2021)

Antonia Lydford (retired September 2021)

Sarah Noble

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REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD 2 MAY 2021 – 1 MAY 2022

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their first full year report and financial statements. These have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charity Commission and comply with the Charity's governing document. Structure and Governance

SWAP'ra is a registered charity, number 1185454. It is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and was registered with the Charity Commission on 23 September 2019.

TRUSTEES

Trustees are appointed with regard to the skills, knowledge and experience required for the effective administration of the CIO. Apart from the first Trustees, all Trustees are appointed for a term of three years which may be renewed.

AIM AND PURPOSES

The charitable objects of SWAP'ra, as described in the constitution, are:

- 1) The promotion – for the public benefit – of equality and diversity in the opera industry, and the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of gender or parenthood in particular, but not exclusively, by:
 - a) Advancing education in and raising awareness to issues of equality and diversity.
 - b) Promoting a culture in favour of equality and diversity throughout the opera industry
 - c) Conducting or commissioning research on equality and diversity issues in opera and making the conclusions available to the public.
 - d) Promoting and supporting projects to facilitate the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of gender or parenthood in opera.
 - e) Supporting women and parents working in opera including by way of



grants, advice, counselling, mentoring or otherwise as the trustees see fit.

- 2) To further such charitable purpose or purposes as the trustees in their absolute discretion shall think fit.

BACKGROUND - WHY ARE WE HERE?

SWAP'ra is a group of artists and creative professionals who have come together to build a supportive community to effect positive change for women and parents in opera.

The aim is to be a voice for women (including trans and non-binary people) and parents of all genders in opera by:

- Celebrating professional achievements in an industry where women are under-represented in many areas;
- Advocating for working conditions that better accommodate family and parenting commitments;
- Challenging preconceptions to improve attitudes towards women and parents in the arts Providing a friendly and non-judgmental community that offers peer support together with a forum to explore practical issues;
- Developing a platform for performance and publicity;
- Responding to the impact and implications of Covid 19 both in the short and longer term especially in the context of the ongoing challenges for women and parents in opera.

The ultimate aim is to foster an environment in which women and parents are enabled to thrive professionally; the balancing of career and family/parenting commitments is actively supported by companies; and a female CEO, Music Director, Artistic Director, Conductor, Composer or Librettist is no longer noteworthy.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

SWAP'ra had its beginnings at the end of 2017, when a group of artists active in the opera industry met to discuss how they could constructively address the challenges and barriers that women and parents working in opera continue to battle against.

This is not a new conversation for those affected by these issues. But the aim is to raise the volume and to bring these conversations to the attention of those in positions to

effect positive change.

The SWAP'ra Senior Management Team is made up of singers, directors, teachers and educators, producers, company directors, instrumentalists and arts managers. Together the team has a broad range of experience and expertise working across the UK and internationally and as such is in a strong position to act as a conduit between creatives and managers.

SWAP'ra launched in the summer of 2018 with a spectacular Gala at Holland Park, hosted by Fiona Shaw and showcasing the talents, both on and off-stage, of 150 female directors, instrumentalists, conductors, singers, stage managers, composers, librettists and project managers. Named by Fiona Maddocks in The Guardian as one of the best classical music events of 2018, the Gala struck a significant chord for many. The response to the launch, and the funds raised (over £15,000) enabled SWAP'ra to submit its application to the Charity Commission soon after, and, as noted above, the organisation was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (1185454) in September 2019.

WHAT DO WE WANT THE FUTURE TO LOOK LIKE?

Our vision is that women are evenly represented in all job roles within the opera industry.

- Younger artists at the beginning of their careers don't feel they have to choose between professional success and parenthood.
- Artists of all genders aren't afraid for their careers when they move between life stages (such as pregnancy, adoption, IVF, menopause, ageing) but have the support they need to consider their options.
- There is a widespread culture of respect and support for women and parents within the industry, as a result of the correction of unconscious biases.
- It is normal for those in the industry to experience working conditions that accommodate family life.

To achieve this vision, our programme focuses around three key pillars of activity:

Performance | Mentoring & Peer Support | Advocacy & Research

PROGRAMME AND ACTIVITIES 2021/22

The focus of activity during 2021-22 has been building on our framework to ensure maximum impact, building capacity, and strengthening governance for long-term resilience by appointing a new trustee, and developing a fundraising strategy. The aftermath of the Coronavirus pandemic and rising living costs continue to have a devastating impact on the performing arts and, particularly, on the lives of freelance opera professionals. Our programme, as outlined below, has also sought to support those individuals most impacted by the situation.

I. Advocacy & Research

A. Partnership with PiPA.

We continue our partnership with PiPA (Parents in the Performing Arts) which sees both organisations supporting one another's programmes to amplify their voices. Kitty Whately remains a member of a focus group which helped to inform and develop the PiPA Bittersweet Symphony report, which was published in October 2022, which reported on the experience of working lives and caring duties in classical music

B. Forgotten Voices Research and development

We continue to develop our Forgotten Voices project, launched earlier in 2021, celebrating, highlighting, and making accessible the work of women composers whose work is unjustly neglected. After many hours of research into songs by women from the past, we held workshops with two singers and a pianist to sight-read through a large stack of music with a view to choosing repertoire for the Forgotten Voices performance projects listed below. We were hugely grateful to the Golsoncott Foundation and Ralph Vaughan Williams Trust and the Wavendon Foundation for their support with this workshop. Between them they contributed £4000 to this research.

C. Hours Study

We conducted a study of the scheduling system in UK opera companies for singers during the summer opera season. Around 30 singers were asked to submit the number of hours that they were called for on the Friday night schedule they received each week, and then to submit the number of hours that they actually worked for the end of the week. The aim was to highlight how much time is wasted which impacts on

those who need to organise and pay for childcare in advance of rehearsals. The results of this study have not yet been collated, but will eventually help us to demonstrate in future talks with opera companies the need and reasons for better advanced scheduling.

II. Mentoring and Peer Support

A. SWAP'ra Cafe

First run in 2019 as a live event in London for parents and carers, the SWAP'ra Café has provided regular online peer support since the beginning of the pandemic. It now has a loyal following and offers a supportive space where parents and carers can ask for and share practical advice about juggling careers with caring responsibilities. With so many freelance opera professionals experiencing extremely challenging times during the Coronavirus pandemic, the opportunity to share experiences with people in similar situations has been especially valuable.

B. Carers Week

In celebration of Carers Week 2021, we ran a series of special on-line discussions for parents and carers with specific needs. There was a session for parents and carers of people with special needs and disabilities, one for parents of teenagers and students, one for single parents, and one for carers of those with elderly relatives. There was also a queue and a session with established professional singers, to discuss how they juggle both a career and that parental responsibilities.

C. Inspiration! Videos and Blogs

Our blogs and interviews are a valuable resource on the website, delving into the lives and achievements of women composers from the past, celebrating inspiring women and parents from all areas of the opera world, and sharing their experiences, insights and practical responses to the challenges of gender inequality and balancing family and career. We continue to add to these resources, and offer them for free to anybody visiting our website.

III. Performance

A. Forgotten Voices performances

Following the success of our inaugural Forgotten Voices project in March 2021 presented in association with HERA, Oxford Lieder Festival's artistic director Sholto Kynoch invited SWAP'ra to co-curate events for their spring 2021 Weekend of Song, and going forward as a long-term project to unearth and to give voice to some of these unjustly forgotten composers. All three of the main evening recitals kicked off with a mini-recital 'warm-up' slot performed by some of the outstanding young artists who contributed to our online festival in 2021. These artists presented music by Hedwige Chrétien, Margarete Schweikert, Margaret Bonds, Elizabeth Maconchy, Johanna Müller-Hermann, Betty Jackson-King, Rebecca Clarke, Elaine Hugh-Jones, and many more.

B. Lecture Recitals

SWAP'ra also curated a series of lecture recitals for the Oxford Lieder Spring Weekend. Having chosen four of the women that we were most interested in from the R&D workshops, we planned four lecture recitals to be given by SWAP'ra Trustee Professor Natasha Loges and guest speakers, respected and expert academics Dr. Leah Broad and Dr. Kate Kennedy. The lectures celebrated and explored songs by four composers: Hedwige Chrétien, Margarete Schweikert, Elizabeth Maconchy and Johanna Müller-Hermann, showing how their music both fitted into and challenged expectations of song composition in their day. The lectures were punctuated by songs performed live by artists who are established Oxford Lieder regulars and favourites. For more information on the performers featured see <https://www.swap-ra.org/oxford-lieder>

This project was a great success, acclaimed by audience members and praised enthusiastically by artists involved in all the performances, lectures and workshops. We are extremely grateful to the Winship Foundation and to the Royal Musical Association for enabling us to pay for such high quality artists and speakers for these events. All of these events were filmed and have now been made available online for anyone to view for free, which is a fantastic record for us to be able to point our followers to, and a wonderful resource for our ever-growing catalogue of Forgotten Voices media.



In the long term, SWAP'ra will collaborate with Oxford Lieder Festival to create an invaluable online resource for artists and programmers looking to expand their repertoire of women composer's artsongs. This will include song-focused biographies, links to scores, recordings, texts and translations, programming suggestions, and more. They are also exploring partnerships with festivals and other opera and music organisations with a view to providing additional performance platforms and extending the reach of the project further. We are continuing to research composers and gather repertoire, and we look forward to curating future events at Oxford Lieder for both live and recorded performances.

ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

For a short period we had the administrative support of a general manager, Ruth Perrin. We recruited online through our social media platforms, mailing list and through professional musician job websites. The SWAP'ra Board of Trustees shortlisted applications for the Senior Management Team to select from. Ruth was a fantastic member of the team, supporting the SMT to streamline its digital filing system, developing a fundraising database, and supporting the day-to-day running of the organisation. Ruth was with us on a fixed term contract, and our intention is to raise funds to employ a part-time administrator again in the future to support the SMT.

In May 2021 we recruited for a new board member to replace Katie Wright who stepped down from her role in January 2021. We were absolutely thrilled to receive an application from Natasha Loges. Professor of Musicology at the Hochschule für Musik Freiburg, Natasha was formerly Head of Postgraduate Programmes at the Royal College of Music, where she introduced a dedicated class on women in music. She remains deeply committed to raising awareness of women musicians through her teaching, research and public engagement. Natasha regularly broadcasts on BBC Radio 3 and writes for BBC Music Magazine. She gives talks and leads events for festivals and venues including the Southbank Centre, Wigmore Hall, Oxford Lieder Festival, Liedfestival Zeist and Leeds Lieder.



Towards the end of the financial year we began recruiting for two more trustees and more members of the Senior Management Team in order to grow and strengthen our governance and operations capacity. Appointments took place the financial year ending May 2023.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The period of this report covers the first full financial year of the charity, 6 May 2021 – 5 May 2022

The charity's opening balance of £7,115, made up of unrestricted donations. During the period of this report, a total of £6300 was given to the Forgotten Voices project, all from Trusts and Foundations. £4000 of this was for the Research and Development, £2300 for the Oxford Lieder performances.

Expenditure during the period came to a total of £9,496 with the largest items being Project Fees for Forgotten Voices at £4,082 and Administration at £4,457.

The SWAP'ra team continued to work almost entirely on a pro bono basis with their project management fees representing just 5% of expenditure. The Trustees are committed to developing a sustainable funding strategy for the charity which will enable the team to be paid appropriately for their skills and expertise.

The total funds carried forward on 1 May 2021 was £4,380.

The trustees are extremely grateful to all those who supported SWAP'ra during the year.

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS

These accounts have been prepared under the receipts and payments method and are presented on the Charity Commission template. Receipts and payments accounts contain a summary of money received and spent during the period and a list of assets and liabilities at the end of the period.



RESERVES POLICY

The Trustees' policy is to hold surplus unrestricted funds as reserves to safeguard the Charity's ongoing financial sustainability and to provide support for future projects.



Receipts and payments accounts

For the period
from

2-May-21

To

1-May-22

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 £
A1 Receipts					
Donations from individuals	191	500	-	691	661
Donations to Emergency Fund	-	-	-	-	2,115
Donations from Trusts & Foundations	-	6,000	-	6,000	-
Refunds	70	-	-	70	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	261	6,500	-	6,761	2,776
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	261	6,500	-	6,761	2,776
A3 Payments					
Administration	2,689	1,768	-	4,457	3,207
Project management	-	450	-	450	900
Emergency Fund	-	-	-	-	5,240
Project Fees (Forgotten Voices)	-	4,082	-	4,082	450
Coaching	-	-	-	-	650
Communications	254	-	-	254	731
Subscriptions	38	-	-	38	50
Travel	22	-	-	22	-
Insurance	193	-	-	193	-
Sub total	3,196	6,300	-	9,496	11,228
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	3,196	6,300	-	9,496	11,228
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 2,935	200	-	- 2,735	- 8,452
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	7,115	-	-	7,115	15,567
Cash funds this year end	4,180	200	-	4,380	7,115

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 £
B1 Cash funds				
		4,180	200	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	4,180	200	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account (s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets				
		-	-	-

	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-

B3 Investment assets

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

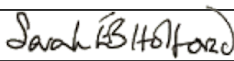
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

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
	Sarah Holford	01/03/23