



supporting women and parents in opera

# SWAP'ra

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1185454

## ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD

## 2 MAY 2023 – 1 MAY 2024

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# LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

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## 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

Mary Miller

Sarah Noble

## REGISTERED OFFICE

25 Greenways,  
Chelmsford,  
CM1 4EF

## BANK

Metro Bank,  
1 Southampton Row,  
London, WC1B 5HA

The Co-operative Bank plc  
P.O. Box 101  
1 Balloon Street  
Manchester  
M60 4EP

Registered charity number 1185454

# REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD

## 2 MAY 2023 – 1 MAY 2024

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This document has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charity Commission and complies with the Charity's governing document.

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 artists with portfolio careers including 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 freelance artists and building-based arts 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 2023/24

After a busy few years and in light of funding challenges, SWAP'ra paused public-facing activity during the 23/24 financial year. The charity maintained its presence online and at various industry events, and the senior management team remained available to freelancers for advice and support. This year saw the development of professional relationships and the planning of future projects, including a fundraiser and a second SWAP'ra Retreat for 2025. In addition, SWAP'ra continued to add to its curated listings of women composers - *Forgotten Voices* - on Oxford International Song Festival's digital database. *Forgotten Voices* is generating over 3000 views per month and continues to grow in popularity.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

The period of this report covers the period 2 May 2023 – 1 May 2024. Accounts are prepared on a cash basis.

The charity's opening balance of £7,227 comprised £3,868 unrestricted and £3,359 restricted funds. SWAP'ra received no income during this financial year. Expenditure of £3,214 covered the final invoices from the SWAP'ra Retreat at Glyndebourne (February 2022) and essential overheads such as web hosting and insurance.

## 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.



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

SWAP'ra (Supporting Women and Parents in Opera)

1185454

## Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period  
from

2-May-23

To

1-May-24

### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
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#### A1 Receipts

				-	3,364
				-	17,200
				-	22
				-	-
				-	-
				-	-
				-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	-	-	-	-	20,586

#### A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).

	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	-

<b>Total receipts</b>	-	-	-	-	20,586
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#### A3 Payments

Project delivery fees (SWAP'ra Retreat 2022/23)		2,550	-	2,550	2,101
Communications	292	144	-	436	5,600
Insurance		193	-	193	-
Other	35		-	35	5,752
			-	-	284
			-	-	-
			-	-	3,670
			-	-	197
			-	-	135
<b>Sub total</b>	327	2,887	-	3,214	17,739

#### A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)

	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	

<b>Total payments</b>	327	2,887	-	3,214	17,739
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<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	- 327	- 2,887	-	- 3,214	2,847
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#### A5 Transfers between funds

	-	-	-	-	-
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#### A6 Cash funds last year end

	3,868	3,359	-	7,227	4,380
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<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	3,541	472	-	4,013	7,227
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### 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

Metro bank	234	75	-
Co-Op bank	3,017	200	-
PayPal	289	197	-
<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>3,541</b>	<b>472</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 £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details			
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
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 liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	Details			
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of  
all the trustees

Signature

Print Name

Date of approval

DocuSigned by:

Sarah Holford

6628A4EDADA9425...

Sarah Holford

28 February 2025