



## **Spectra Ensemble**

### **Trustees' report for the year ended 5 April 2023**

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 5 April 2023. These will be filed later than usual because of difficulties engaging an accountant for the year, but the filing is in line with an extension granted by HMRC.

#### **Reference and administrative details**

<b>Charity name:</b>	Spectra Ensemble
<b>Charity registration number:</b>	1185940
<b>Registered office address:</b>	7 Blenheim Drive Oxford OX2 8DH
<b>Trustees:</b>	Ms Florence Carr Ms Giulia Sartori Conte Mr Jonathan Cross Mr Mark Galtrey Ms Cressida Peever (chair) Ms Susanna Stranders

#### **Structure, governance and management**

The charity is an Association Model CIO governed by articles of association adopted on 20 March 2019. Spectra Ensemble was registered as a charity on 22 October 2019.

#### **Objectives and activities**

The purpose of the charity, as set out in the governing document, is:

To promote and foster for the benefit of the public the understanding and appreciation of opera, as well as associated aural and visual arts, through the provision of public performances and related educational events.

Our activity generally consists of operatic performances and educational workshops through which we challenge traditional definitions of opera and open opera up to new audiences.

The charity trustees have complied with the duty outlined in section 4 of the 2006 Act, which requires them to give due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission.



## Achievements and performance

This year Spectra Ensemble was able to revive and tour *The Boatswain's Mate*, which was originally part of our 2020 programme of activity. The production included many of the same elements as our 2018 production of the piece, but we worked with some new personnel on the cast and creative team and the show was redesigned with a view to touring. With its folk-imbued score, English text and recognisable domestic setting, this production has always offered great potential to reach people who may be unfamiliar with opera and following the success of the short run in 2018 we wanted to reach a wider audience. The Artistic and Executive Directors have been working towards this remount since late 2019.

The production played 8 performances in London, Oxford, Aldeburgh and Great Yarmouth; these venues were specifically chosen to ensure a diverse range of audience members, including regular operagoers and those who rarely have access to opera. The production's seaside setting proved a useful selling point in Aldeburgh and Great Yarmouth. *The Boatswain's Mate* played to 606 people in total and garnered positive reviews:

★★★★

"a revelation"

*The Stage*

★★★★

"Spectra Ensemble deserve great praise for believing in this piece, reinventing it without changing the emotional geometry, and finding the right tone to make a serious feminist point while decking it all out with plentiful humour and incident"

*British Theatre*

"superb singing and characterisation"

*Opera Today*

There was particular praise for John Warner's reduced arrangement for piano trio; *British Theatre* called it a "beefy, incisive sound from only three instruments, without sacrificing too much of the densely written orchestral texture" while *The Guardian* commented favourably on the "excellent piano trio performing a bold, bare-bones reduction of Smyth's score". This provides us with further encouragement, beyond simple expediency, to continue commissioning reduced arrangements of larger orchestral works.

Several audience members in Oxford, Aldeburgh and Great Yarmouth commented on what a difference it made to be able to attend opera locally. In response to a question via our audience survey about what would encourage them to see more opera, people responded, "ease of access – i.e. performances reasonably close to home" and "opportunities locally rather than travelling to London". For Spectra Ensemble, this feedback confirms the importance of touring our work to ensure wider access to opera. We are pleased to have built relationships with new venues and the company aims to develop a broader network of touring venues in the future.

This project has helped to raise Ethel Smyth's profile and to celebrate women in music. Spectra Ensemble has been part of a wider resurgence of interest in Smyth, performing in a year when her Mass in D major featured at the Proms and Glyndebourne presented her large-scale opera *The Wreckers* – the first time an opera by a woman has ever featured in Glyndebourne's professional



programme. *The Boatswain's Mate* offers a fascinating contrast with *The Wreckers*, showing off Smyth's talent for comedy and incorporating various influences from traditional British music. Spectra Ensemble is delighted to have been able to demonstrate the range of her ability. During the post-show talk that we arranged in Oxford, Dr Leah Broad commented on the importance of building a performance tradition for neglected works by women, bringing them squarely into the repertoire so that they are no longer treated as oddities. With this production, we have started to do just that. One enthusiastic audience member wrote, "We were bowled over by the quality of the whole thing and will certainly look out for other Ethel Smyth operas."

### Financial review

Spectra Ensemble's reserves are low at the end of this financial year because of a small loss on *The Boatswain's Mate*, which can be attributed to increased competition for funding in the current climate and the reluctance of some audience groups to return to live performances following the Covid-19 pandemic. As of 5 April 2023, the charity had a total of £6,940 in its bank account, allocated as £2,940 for unrestricted funds and £4,000 for restricted funds.

We continue to hold our ambition of building a higher level of reserves and we look forward to starting to do that via the Theatre Tax Relief claim on *The Boatswain's Mate*. As a rule of thumb, the charity trustees would like to hold reserves equivalent to 10% of an average production budget, which at the moment would be £4,000.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019.

This report was signed on behalf of the Board of Trustees by

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Cressida Peever'.

Cressida Peever, Trustee  
2 February 2024

## **Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Spectra Ensemble**

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 5 April 2023 which comprise the trustees' report, receipts and payments account, and statement of assets and liabilities.

### **Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### **Basis of independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Acthave not been met; or
- 2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



**Richard Nelson FCCA**  
**Breckman & Company Ltd**  
**Chartered Certified Accountants**

49 South Molton Street  
London W1K 5LH

16 April 2024

**SPECTRA ENSEMBLE****RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT****YEAR ENDED 5 APRIL 2023**

<b><u>RECEIPTS</u></b>	<b>Unrestricted funds £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Total £</b>
Box office income from The Boatswain's Mate	7,984	-	7,984
Donations	-	6,600	6,600
Grants	-	5,064	5,064
Membership fees	147	-	147
Total	<u>8,131</u>	<u>11,664</u>	<u>19,795</u>
<b><u>PAYMENTS</u></b>			
Annual insurance	660	-	660
Production fees	-	16,313	16,313
Musician fees	1,216	1,100	2,316
Performer fees	2,410	6,826	9,236
Artist travel/accommodation	901	-	901
Consumables/props	390	-	390
Marketing/PR	1,411	-	1,411
Printing/postage/stationery	153	-	153
Total	<u>7,141</u>	<u>24,239</u>	<u>31,380</u>
<b><u>NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</u></b>	<u>990</u>	<u>(12,575)</u>	<u>(11,585)</u>
<b>Cash funds brought forward</b>	<u>1,950</u>	<u>16,575</u>	£ <u>18,525</u>
<b>Cash funds carried forward</b>	<u>2,940</u>	<u>4,000</u>	£ <u>6,940</u>

**SPECTRA ENSEMBLE**

**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**

**YEAR ENDED 5 APRIL 2023**

	<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Restricted funds</b>	<b>2023 Total</b>
<b>Assets</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Debtors	-	-	-
Bank	2,940	4,000	6,940
Cash	-	-	-
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Total cash funds	2,940	4,000	6,940
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Creditors	(1,500)	-	(1,500)
Accruals	(1,800)	-	(1,800)
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<b>Total net assets</b>	<u><u>(360)</u></u>	<u><u>4,000</u></u>	£ <u><u>3,640</u></u>

Signed on behalf of the Board of Trustees by



Cressida Peever, Trustee on 16 April 2024