

ECHO VOCAL ENSEMBLE

Registered Charity number 1186162

TRUSTEE ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022

Registered Address

2 Ellesmere Close
Caversham
Reading
RG4 5HG

Trustees

Sarah Ralphs	(chair)	From 5 November 2019
Nick Jackman		From 5 November 2019
Matthew Neudegg	(treasurer)	From 5 November 2019
Daniel Sargeant		From 5 November 2019
Naomi Taylor		From 5 November 2019

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

For the period ending 31st March 2022

Our Objectives

Echo is a professional vocal ensemble that aims for both excellence and accessibility, presenting the highest quality music in the least pretentious way possible. We aim to inform, entertain, and inspire audiences across the UK, while getting every audience singing. We want to explore the full range of what ensemble singing can achieve, including improvisation and multi-disciplinary collaborations, while aiming for musical excellence at all times, and are committed to reaching a varied and extensive demographic with our work.

Our aims are to:

1. Innovate within the sector of ensemble singing
2. Reach a diverse audience and break down barriers within this art form
3. Achieve artistic and musical excellence

In particular, we are keen to challenge the preconceptions and traditions that can sometimes be associated with choral music in the UK - the fixed association with the church, the 'seriousness' of western classical repertoire and its presentation, and a critical approach to the idea of a 'fixed' historical canon. By doing so, we aim to reach the widest possible audience and allow them to engage in a meaningful way with music through inclusive experiences.

Our measure of success is gauged by the audience, participant and artist reaction to each event, and the number of new audiences and participants we can reach each year.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

For the period ending 31st March 2022

Review of Performance

Listening to Lassus

May 2021 saw the culmination of the Listening to Lassus project, which was a collaboration between Echo, vocal artist Aminita Francis and director Miriam Sherwood. A special occasion - the ensemble's first live performance following the pandemic. It took place as part of the Chiltern Arts Festival in Henley to a full audience. The project was supported by Angel Early Music and Fidelio Charitable Trust.

Messiah 250

Echo collaborated with Bath-based Paragon Singers for a project based on Handel's Messiah. It celebrated the history of Bath's association with the work, and reimagined an early performance of the piece in the city, organised by the astronomer William Herschel. Through January and February, our conductor Sarah ran a series of singing workshops throughout Bath, including a Come and Sing day, a free taster day for beginner cities and, in partnership with charity Julian House, weekly singing sessions for homeless and vulnerable people living in Bath. Those participants were then invited to join Echo and Paragon Singers to sing the chorus for the performance.

Echo's singers joined the choir as well as performing the solos in the piece. The staging was directed by Tom Guthrie, we were accompanied by a fantastic orchestra of period instruments led by Bojan Čičić, and the rehearsals and performance were filmed by students from Bath Spa University. The filmed footage is still being edited, and the intention is to produce a trailer and film for distribution later in the year. The project was supported by Arts Council England, some individual donors, ticket sales and a kickstarter.

Touring

Already Gone

Our 'Already Gone' tour in summer 2021 was without a doubt our biggest endeavour to date - this tour encompassed four world premieres and took us to Kings Place and Stoller Hall for the first time - both very big venues and a new city (Manchester), alongside a performance in Birmingham, a composition workshop in June in London and a feature on BBC Radio 3. A consort of six singers performed at BBC Radio 3's In Tune in July to promote the tour.

Audience numbers were good as well, considering we were visiting cities for the first time - 150 for Kings Place, 80 for Manchester and a sold-out gig in Birmingham. We offered cheap tickets for under 30s, and our audience demographic for London and Manchester was 40% under-30s, which was great. It was also our most successful fundraising effort so far - with support from Genesis Foundation, The Golsoncott Foundation, RWV Trust and The London Community Foundation: Cockayne - Grants for the Arts. The same programme was taken to Lancaster in December 2021, as part of the Lancaster Arts promotion.

Other performances

Other performances during the year took us to a variety of places across the UK. Highlights include a programme with the newly formed ECHOR orchestra (the name similarity is a coincidence!), a programme of contemporary and 17th century Polish sacred music that we

took to Cambridge (Cambridge Early Music) and London (St Martin in the Fields), and taking our 'Flight of Song' programme to Winchester. It was great to reach new audiences with these performances, so we can build on that in the future.

Recording

Ganda Boys

In February 2022, Echo were approached by the Ganda Boys to do some collaborative recording. Originally from Uganda, lead singers Denis Mugagga and Daniel Sewagudde are London-based and specialise in bringing a fresh light to Ugandan traditional music with some English lyrics. The first recording we collaborated on was 'Tweyanze' and the second 'Njabala Njabala'. It was brilliant for us to work with the duo and rehearse/perform in a totally new way. We'll be collaborating with them again for a third video at the end of May, and plan to find further opportunities to perform with them in the future.

Rebecca Burns & John Barber - March 2022

We were approached by each of these composers to record some of their compositions. Rebecca Burns booked us to record her piece 'Five Calls' for upper voices with text by Monica Parish, at St. Mark's, Regents Park. In the same week we recorded a number of vocal works by John Barber at the Gresham Centre. These works are still being edited and will be released later this year.

Online Content

The Improvisation Initiative

We ran The Improvisation Initiative (April-May 2021), a programme designed to introduce online audiences to improvisation in the latter part of the spring lockdown of 2021, and increase the skills within our core ensemble. We invited four highly skilled practitioners - Alex Parry, Cicilia Osborne, Sylvia Lim and Héloïse Werner - to work with our core ten singers each morning, before doing our own experimental work in the afternoon, building on their input.

The audience-facing element of the project consisted of online Zoom sessions and then an hour-long filmed performance, over three Sundays in April / May. It was designed as pay-as-you-feel, which was very successful as some people attended via just a couple of pounds but yet the project still balanced financially.

12 Days of Christmas

Echo put together this completely digital performance package, designed as a Christmas present, alongside the Gesualdo Six and the Swan Consort, in partnership with the Ryedale Festival. This year we filmed at Birdsall House in Malton, North Yorkshire, and performed four pieces: 'Heyr þú oss himnum á' by Anna Þorvaldsdóttir, 'Videte Miraculum' by Thomas Tallis, 'Bogoroditse Dyevo' by Rachmaninoff, and 'Daniel, Daniel, Servant of the Lord' arranged by Undine Smith Moore. Over 700 digital gifts were purchased and we had lots of positive feedback from the programme.

Financial Review

Over the course of the period, the charity had a surplus of £5,618.

At the end of the period, the charity has unrestricted funds of £16,148, and zero restricted funds.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

For the period ending 31st March 2022

Governance

Echo Vocal Ensemble is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered on 5th November 2019. The Trustees approved the Echo Vocal Ensemble Constitution, which serves as the governing document of the charity.

Trustees

Trustees are appointed to the board of the charity to manage the affairs of the CIO. The board must comprise no fewer than three trustees.

New trustees must be appointed by a resolution of the existing trustees for a term of two years. Any new trustee will be judged on the basis of their skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the charity.

Management

Responsibility for the day-to-day management of the charity is held by two co-artistic directors, who report on performance to the board.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF ECHO VOCAL ENSEMBLE

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Echo Vocal Ensemble (the charity) for the 12 months ended 31 March 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').

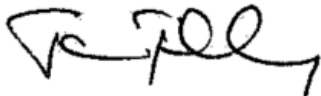
I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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



9 JAN 2023

James Tilley
ACA

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

For the 12 months ending 31st March 2022

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2021	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2022
	Notes	£	£	£	£	£	£
Income from:							
Donations	2	17,904	-	17,904	12,578	-	12,578
Charitable activities	2	12,790	-	12,790	50,319	-	50,319
Other		-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Income		30,694	-	30,694	62,897	-	62,897
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds		-	-	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities		(18,818)	-	(18,818)	(56,856)	-	(56,856)
Administration expenses		(1,345)	-	(1,345)	(423)	-	(423)
Other		-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditure		(20,163)	-	(20,163)	(57,279)	-	(57,279)
Net surplus/(deficit) for the period		10,530	-	10,530	5,618	-	5,618
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		-	-	-	10,530	-	10,530
Total funds carried forward		10,530	-	10,530	16,148	-	16,148

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 31st March 2022

		2021 Total	2022 Total
	Notes	£	£
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents		12,211	16,750
Debtors	3	-	7,366
Total Assets		12,211	24,116
Current liabilities			
Creditors	4	(1,408)	(7,679)
Deferred income	5	(273)	(288)
Total Liabilities		(1,681)	(7,967)
Funds of the Charity			
Unrestricted Funds		10,530	16,148
Restricted Funds		-	-
Total Funds		10,530	16,148

APPROVED BY


Sarah Ralphs

Chair of Trustees

On behalf of all of the trustees

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the 12 months ending 31st March 2022

1 Accounting policies

Basis for preparation

These accounts are prepared on an accruals basis in compliance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), and with the Charities Act 2011. We consider the charity to be a going concern and the accounts have been presented accordingly.

Given that this is the first year of activity for the charity, no comparative year is disclosed in these accounts.

2 Recognition of income

Income is recognised when the charity becomes entitled to the resource and it is likely that the charity will receive the income.

Echo Vocal Ensemble recognises two main types of income:

Charity Activities	Income related to specific events, performances or services (for example ticket sales)
Donations	Income related to general support for the charity and its operations, including 'Friends' memberships.

Any income outside of these parameters is considered 'Other Income'.

Restricted funds are income committed to the performance of a particular event or series of events. Currently Echo does not have any restricted income.

'Friends' memberships are recognised over the life of the membership.

3 Debtors

At 31st March 2022, Echo Vocal Ensemble had £7,366 (2021: £0) of debtors related to charitable activities.

4 Creditors

At 31st March 2022, Echo Vocal Ensemble had £7,679 (2021: £1,408) of creditors related to day-to-day expenses.

5 Deferred Income

Deferred income refers to one-year memberships issued under the 'Friends' scheme. £288 was

deferred at 31st March 2022.

During 21/22, the Friends Membership scheme was changed to a rolling monthly scheme and therefore we expect no further income to be accrued.