

The Swan Consort CIO

Charity number 1194785

Annual report and accounts
1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

Trustees

The following served as Trustees in this period:

Kieran Cooper
Nataliya Izedinova
Tom Wale (Chair)

Accounts

INCOME

| | |
|---------------|----------|
| Fees | 16626.29 |
| Donations | 600 |
| Bank interest | 2.63 |
| Total | 17228.92 |

EXPENDITURE

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Artist fees and travel | 16381.58 |
| Bank charges | 78 |
| Total | 16459.58 |

| | |
|---------------------|--------|
| Result for the year | 769.34 |
|---------------------|--------|

BALANCE SHEET

| | |
|----------------------------|--------|
| Opening balance | 0 |
| Result for the year | 769.34 |
| Cash in bank 31 March 2023 | 769.34 |

Artistic Director report – Anita Datta

March 2022

Schools Workshops, BREMF

As the final part of the Brighton Early Music Festival Young Artists programme, five members of The Swan Consort delivered workshops to two primary schools in Brighton and Hove on a Bird Song theme. These workshops built on mentoring provided by BREMF at the Royal Academy of Music in February, that had been attended by Anita Datta and Serena Jopson, to refine the workshop plan. The response to the workshops was extremely positive, and the children engaged well with the material, finishing by having completed a vocal warm up, sung in unison, and improvised a 4-part 'madrigal' inspired by bird calls provided by the RSPB. The workshops are intended to serve as a pilot for a large-scale touring project in 2023.

Feedback from Schools:

A message to say an enormous thank you for our fabulous workshop on Thursday. The children were really buzzing & inspired afterwards & we all enjoyed your beautiful singing, many of the adults supporting said how much they had enjoyed the session too!

...

Thank you again & good luck with other education projects you do, you have put together a really good formula.

Emma Bright, Westdene Primary School

THANK YOU VERY MUCH for your concert/workshop yesterday.

The children really enjoyed it. It was very interactive and engaging.

The behaviour was very good as a result of the engagement of the children. Well done!

Juan Maestro, Elm Grove Primary School

Personnel: Anita Datta, Ailsa Campbell, Serena Jopson, Robin Datta, Samuel Gilliatt

May 2022

'Contrapunctus', London Festival of Contemporary Church Music

The Swan Consort delivered the World Premiere of Alastair Borthwick's *Missa Brevis* (Chichester Music Press) on 9th May at St Pancras Church, Euston. The programme was entitled 'Contrapunctus: A Brief History of Mass', and featured the new work interspersed with music by Tallis, Taverner and Byrd. There were also readings in Old and Middle English selected and delivered by Dr Amy Albudri (University of Hull), resulting in a multifaceted hour-long performance incorporating text with the old and new music. The programme was reasonably well attended considering limited marketing by the festival. The programme was funded by Canterbury Christ Church University, where Professor Borthwick is the Head of the School of Arts and Design. Extensive programme notes were provided online to reduce environmental impact.

Personnel: Anita Datta, Ailsa Campbell, Rachel Haworth, Lewis Cullen, Matthew Farrell, Dominic Wallis, Robin Datta, Stuart O'Hara, Ben Tomlin, Tim Reader

June 2022

Tour of Spain

The Swan Consort made their international debut with a tour of Spain in June 2022. The initial invitation was to the Festival Renaissance in Valencia, run by Fundacio Cultural CdM. The invitation had been for 2021, when the festival selected The Swan Consort following a Europe-Wide call for young artists via REMA, but the performance was postponed due to Covid travel restrictions. This performance was augmented by performances with Madrid-based ensemble *Quondam* (dir. Rupert Damerell), and a lunchtime recital in Ávila as part of the Festival Internacional de Música Vocal (run by Maite Seco Benedicto).

The consort arrived in Madrid to rehearse with *Quondam* on 14th June, principally to support them in preparing and performing the world premiere of a new Stabat Mater setting by Manuel Ruíz del Corral. Following the rehearsal, the consort travelled to Valencia where they performed as one of the main concert events in the Monestir San Miquel dels Reis in Valencia on 16th June. The concert coincided with the annual REMA conference, and approximately 40 delegates from across Europe attended the concert, including promoters of various international early music festivals. The Swan Consort then travelled to Las Navas del Marques in Ávila and performed with *Quondam* in an evening concert on the 18th June, and separately in a stand-alone lunchtime recital on 19th June. Both events were well attended by local audiences and dignitaries. The Swan Consort received positive verbal feedback from the promoters of both events, and from a number of the delegates and promoters of other festivals attending the Valencia concert in association with REMA.

Personnel: Anita Datta, Lewis Cullen, Robin Datta, Alexander Jones, Ben Tomlin, Stuart O'Hara

August - September 2022

Private Engagements: Wedding Ceremonies

For the first time, The Swan Consort this year received requests to perform at wedding ceremonies. The first (Wedding A) was in Newnham College, Cambridge and entailed a full consort booking for the ceremony and the reception. The second (Wedding B) was in Wirral in Merseyside, and involved a booking of six singers for the ceremony only. Both of these events, serving as a private booking not related to the organisation's charitable purposes, provided a range of benefits to the organisation as a charity. These include financial contributions towards the organisation's overheads for the period surrounding the wedding; the creation of employment for our young artists; opportunities to produce social media material to continue the promotion of the ensemble and the maintenance of its good reputation; opportunities to explore new repertoire for public performance and trial singers who have not previously performed with the group in a less pressurised context than a public concert. The couple for Wedding A solicited the consort through a personal connection with the founder, whilst the couple for Wedding B identified the consort through a search online. Extremely positive feedback was received from both wedding parties, and it is recommended that the consort

further explore the provision of music for weddings to support the broader charitable and artistic work of the organisation.

Feedback

“The music really made the whole day; thank you”

Isabel Nimmo, Bride, Wedding A

Personnel (Wedding A): Anita Datta, Ailsa Campbell, Rosa Sparks, Lewis Cullen, Luthien Brackett, Robin Datta, Dominic Wallis, Luca Myers, Henry Montgomery

Personnel (Wedding B): Anita Datta, Molly O’Toole, Lewis Cullen, Alexander Rowland, Jonathan Hill, Tom Butler

October 2022

Canterbury Festival

Building on the Contrapunctus programme delivered at LFCCM in May, The Swan Consort performed a lunchtime recital at St Gregory’s Centre for Music as part of the Canterbury Festival. The programme was kept the same, although due to late confirmation from the university the personnel differed. The concert was again sponsored by Canterbury Christ Church University, and the consort were also engaged to deliver a Masterclass to music students and the choral scholars of Canterbury Cathedral following the concert. The lunchtime concert series at St Gregory’s is free entry, but the majority of the seating is available to reserve through pre-booked tickets. All pre-booked tickets were reserved in advance of the concert, and the hall was at full capacity with additional walk-ins. The producer stated that this was the best attended concert in the entire recital series during the festival. The university made a video and audio recording of the programme, that can be used to promote the programme and The Swan Consort for future opportunities. The masterclass, led by Anita Datta with input from The Swan Consort, was well-attended and extremely successful. Three small groups of students performed and received constructive critique, before all attendees were invited to participate in a workshop rehearsal of Byrd’s *Emendemus in Melius* and *Civitas Sancti Tui*. Approximately 50 students and 10 staff participated from across the School of Creative Arts and Design, including the university chamber choir, Canterbury Cathedral choral scholars, and music students. The singers in The Swan Consort sang with the participants, and demonstrated features as requested by Anita to support the workshop.

Feedback:

the thanks and appreciation should all be on our side: you gave what was one of the most profoundly impressive concerts St Greg's has seen and heard, and the programme was every bit the tremendously effective juxtaposition of old and new we had been eagerly anticipating. And, of course, it was particularly meaningful, given that the new work was Alastair's wonderful music. Stunning performance and inspiring presentation; thank you very much indeed.

The workshop afterwards was everything we could have wished for, notwithstanding the first group's performance. You dealt with that extraordinarily well, combining sensitivity,

patience, and a high musical standard. It was a masterclass in how to run a masterclass; thank you very much for that. Of course, the plenary singing was the proverbial icing...

Many, many thanks again, and I do hope our paths re-cross before too long.

Dr Christopher Price, Head of Music, CCCU

Personnel: Anita Datta, Rosa Sparks, Natalie Houlston, Lewis Cullen, Matthew Farrell, Dominic Wallis, Robin Datta, Jonathan Hill, Lucas Maunder