

St Paul's Opera
Report of the Trustees and Financial Statement
For the year ended 31 December 2023

Address	St Paul's Church Rectory Grove London SW4 0DX
Trustees	Patricia Carter Anthony Bell Anthea Bishop (res. 21 March 2023) Jonathan Boardman Charlotte Brosnan Matthew Carter Alexandra Dinwiddie Philip Hensher (appt. 16 May 2023) Susan Roberts
Independent Examiner	Catherine Atkin LLB ACA CTA Atkin & Co Chartered Accountants 75 The Chase London SW4 0NR

History

St Paul's Opera was founded in 2013 within the organisational framework of St Paul's Church, Clapham. From January 2022, St Paul's Opera was fully independent from St Paul's Church. Charitable status was gained on 30 May 2022.

Objectives and aims

To advance the art of opera and classical vocal music for the benefit of the public through the organisation and production of performances and educational classes and events.

St Paul's Opera is embedded in the local community to which it contributes significantly. Its purposes are:

- To advance the experience, understanding and enjoyment of opera and classical vocal music
- To provide development opportunities to singers training for, or early in, their professional opera careers
- To advance education about opera

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REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

Artistic Programme and Schools Outreach

St Paul's Opera's annual programme involves a three-evening and one matinée summer festival of staged opera, and a number of gala and oratorio concerts. The programme also includes an annual masterclass conducted by an internationally renowned opera singer for the benefit of early-career singers as well as a fund-raising gala featuring four internationally renowned opera singers.

To advance its educational aims St Paul's Opera collaborates with local primary schools to promote and enhance awareness and understanding of opera and vocal music.

This report deals with activities throughout the 2023 calendar year.

20 January: Love and War Gala Concert

23 February: Masterclass given by David Butt Philip

23 March: David Butt Philip Gala Concert

21 April: 10th Anniversary Gala concert

29, 30 June and 1 July: *Carmen*, opera by Georges Bizet (which was also the focus of the schools' outreach programme)

20 October: Endless Pleasure Gala Concert

8-9 December: *Little Red and The Big Bad...* reimagined opera after César Cui

Love and War

Gala concert featuring husband and wife Louis (bass baritone) and Tanya Hurst (soprano). The programme comprised arias and duets from works by Verdi, Puccini, Rossini, Rachmaninoff, Wagner and Donizetti. Originally planned for the end of 2022, the concert has been postponed due to illness but successfully started SPO's 2023 programme.

Masterclass

SPO Patron David Butt Philip returned for his fifth masterclass to give five young singers the benefit of his experience. One member of the audience was moved to write: "I'd never been to a Masterclass before and, to be honest, wasn't sure what to expect. By the end of the evening, though, I was seriously impressed. It was absorbing being able to watch and listen to five young singers being shown how to enhance their performance by the insightful advice of a world class opera singer."

David Butt Philip Gala

Always a popular evening, David was joined by three other opera stars – Katie Stevenson, Ross Ramgobin and Natalya Romaniw – who together brought the magic of the international opera stage to Clapham.

10th Anniversary concert

Celebrating SPO's 10th birthday, many past performers returned to St Paul's Church to perform an evening of 'greatest hits' from opera staged by the company in the previous decade, including arias and scenes from opera including *Figaro*, *Così fan tutte*, *Albert Herring*, *Magic Flute* and *Don Giovanni*. We even persuaded young Royal Opera House tenor Michael Gibson to perform a rafter-rattling *Nessun Dorma* for us.

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Carmen

One of the highlights of our year, rehearsals started in April for the fully staged June/July production of *Carmen*. The cast of 21 included 16 singers who were at a late stage of their specialist music conservatoire or college training or early in their professional careers. Performances included an 11-piece chamber orchestra. For the first time SPO was able to provide the singers with a modest bursary, £100, to cover the cost of travel to and from rehearsals and the performances. Audience numbers for the four performances were more than 470.

Endless Pleasure

Autumn and the onset of colder, darker evenings saw an enthusiastic audience warmed by a joyful selection of music. Featuring many of the singers who formed the cast of *Carmen*, as well as many well-known – and some more obscure – operatic arias, *Endless Pleasure* even ventured into the world of musical theatre. The finale was the Champagne Chorus from *Die Fledermaus*, giving a hint as to the identity of the opera chosen for 2024.

Little Red and the Big Bad...

In December, St Paul's Opera staged a production of *Little Red and the Big Bad...* featuring a specially commissioned libretto from London-based Canadian writer and opera director Ashley Pearson, which gave a modern twist to an age-old story. There was one evening performance and a special matinée performance for children and families.

The matinée was free for children, with a particular focus on children from schools participating in the schools' outreach programme. Audience numbers for this performance were 130 over two days.

Schools' Outreach

St Paul's Opera's Schools Outreach Programme was expanded in 2023 and involved four local state primary schools, up from two in the previous year. The schools were Macaulay CofE, Heathbrook, Reay and Bonneville, and involved up to 160 children aged 8 to 11. Workshops introducing opera through singing, music, storytelling, and role-play were led by *Carmen* cast members experienced with children's choirs and music groups. Cast members involved were all DBS certificated.

Public benefit

In accordance with St Paul's Opera's Objects, the activities reported here benefited three particular groups: our audience, our singers, and local schoolchildren. St Paul's Opera introduced and implemented a Safeguarding Policy during the year, in recognition of its duty to safeguard the welfare of children and adults at risk of harm from its activities, including online.

Appointment of Trustees

St Paul's Opera's constitution requires that there be at least three Trustees. The initial Trustees were the eight subscribers to the Constitution. In the period reported, one Trustee resigned, and one new Trustee was appointed. In selecting individuals for appointment, the Trustees are obliged to have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the charity.

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Finance summary

This report relates to the period from 1 January to 31 December 2023. In the years from its foundation in 2013 to the last month of 2022, St Paul's Opera's banking was included, in a separate account, in the banking arrangements of St Paul's Church with NatWest Bank. In November 2022 St Paul's Opera opened an account with Cater Allen Private Bank.

Income for the 2023 period reported was £46,711. Expenditure was £50,609, which included £1,393 in equipment purchases. When planning for the year the Trustees were aware that the Summer Opera was likely to result in a deficit – the loss of almost £4,000 on the event accounts for virtually all of 2023's overall loss.

The cash balance at 31 December was £11,118. All funds held by St Paul's Opera are unrestricted. The Trustees were confident that the funds were adequate to the projected plans for 2024.

The Trustees are grateful for the funding support received from the April Trust, Cosman Keller Art and Music Trust, Emma's Estate Agents, Pilates Sanctuary and personal donations. A successful Friends scheme has also attracted generous funding from supporters.

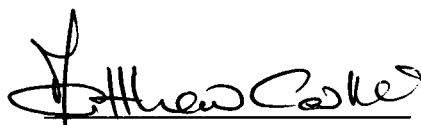
Structure, Governance and Management

St Paul's Opera is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), registered with the Charity Commission on 30 May 2022. St Paul's Opera is governed by its Constitution. There are currently eight Trustees (October 2024).


The Trustees serving during the year reported and since the year end were:

Patricia Carter
Anthony Bell (res. 7 September 2024)
Anthea Bishop (res. 21 March 2023)
Jonathan Boardman
Charlotte Brosnan
Matthew Carter
Alexandra Dinwiddie
Philip Hensher (appt. 16 May 2023)
Susan Roberts

The Trustees have concluded and affirm that the activities carried out in the period from 1 January to 31 December 2023 fulfil St Paul's Opera's charitable objectives.


Trustee

Date: 9.10.24


Trustee

Date: 9/10/24



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

St Paul's Opera

1199122

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/01/2023

To

31/12/2023

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					
Transfer funds from St Paul's Church	-	-	-	-	18,132
Income from Events	32,743	-	-	32,743	18,554
Donations and subscriptions	6,757	-	-	6,757	4,835
Sponsorship	7,211	-	-	7,211	3,458
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	46,711	-	-	46,711	44,979
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	46,711	-	-	46,711	44,979
A3 Payments					
Expenditure on events	42,572	-	-	42,572	27,263
Rent and insurance	2,272	-	-	2,272	1,500
Merchant charges	1,568	-	-	1,568	1,181
Administration costs	2,054	-	-	2,054	19
Independent Examiner	750	-	-	750	-
Equipment	1,393	-	-	1,393	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	50,609	-	-	50,609	29,963
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	50,609	-	-	50,609	29,963
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 3,898	-	-	- 3,898	15,016
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	15,016	-	-	15,016	-
Cash funds this year end	11,118	-	-	11,118	15,016

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	Bank accounts	10,968	-	-
	Cash float	150	-	-
			-	-
	Total cash funds	11,118	-	-
	(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	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
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	

REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF ST PAUL'S OPERA
CHARITY NO: 1199122
ON THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED to 31 DECEMBER 2023
SET OUT ON PAGES 1 AND 2

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 December 2023

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with 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 which give me cause to believe that that, in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did 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.

Signed:  **Date** 04 October 2024

Name: Catherine Atkins ACA CTA
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Clapham
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