



Chairperson's Report Annual General Meeting Wed 31st May 2023

Chairperson: Gail Prentice.

The report below aims to give an overview of the 2022-23 season, focusing on its content, management, funding and issues that arose. Much of the contents of this report will have been aired and discussed previously, at biannual meetings, however a summary is provided below.

The Season

The 22/23 season comprised a total of 10 concerts:

5th September 2022 - Musicahora Festival, Chile

28th October 2022 - Augmented Vocality

27th January 2023 - Ink Still Wet VI

16th February 2023 - HRSE Featured Young Artists Recital

8th March 2023 - Inner, International Women's Day

28th March 2023 - Pierrot Lunaire (SARC)

29th March 2023 - Pierrot Lunaire (Seamus Heaney Homeplace)

30th March 2023 - Pierrot Lunaire Audio Recording

31 March 2023 - Pierrot Lunaire Video Recording

1st April 2023 - UYO Workshop and Concert.

26th May 2023 – French Connection

Two concerts are still pending:

16th June 2023 – Nieuwe Noten (Belfast)

18th June 2023 - Nieuwe Noten (Amsterdam)

In addition, members of HRSE gave the following 5 workshops at QUB:

24th Oct 2022 - Cello Workshop QUB

5th Dec 2022 - Flute & Violin Workshop

7th Dec 2022 - Solo Flute Workshop

27th April 2023 – Full Ensemble (incl. conductor) Year 3 Composition Workshop

28th April 2023 – Full Ensemble (incl. conductor) Audio Engineering Workshop

Recording

This year saw the ensemble make an audio and video recording of Schoenberg's Pierrot Lunaire. This took two full days in addition to what was a 4 day patch. The video is still in the process of editing, but we hope will be ready by the end of season.

The purpose of the video is for general promotional use on Youtube, however there may be an opportunity to release the work as a CD or online album in future.

Workshops

All workshops were completed this year on a face-to-face basis.

Performances:

All scheduled concerts took place as planned, except for some expected personnel changes due to illness and regular players being unavailable.

Commissions:

Commissions for this season included a new ACNI supported arrangement of a Greg Caffrey song cycle on text by Seamus Heaney. We also had the usual three PRSf funded works from early career composers. This year these were from Matt Dowie, Sam Kane and Aidan Maclean. The composer Ian Wilson received funding from **ACNI Creative Individuals Recovery Programme** to write a new work for contrabass clarinet and the ensemble which featured in our Ink Still Wet VI concert. Unfortunately, our application to the ACNI commissioning fund was unsuccessful. An application has been made to Arts Council Ireland

for two commissions for Raymond Deane and Stephen Gardner. The decision on this application is still pending.

Next year's call for proposals for our PRSf commissions closes this Friday 2nd June 2023. Selection will be made before 16th June 2023.

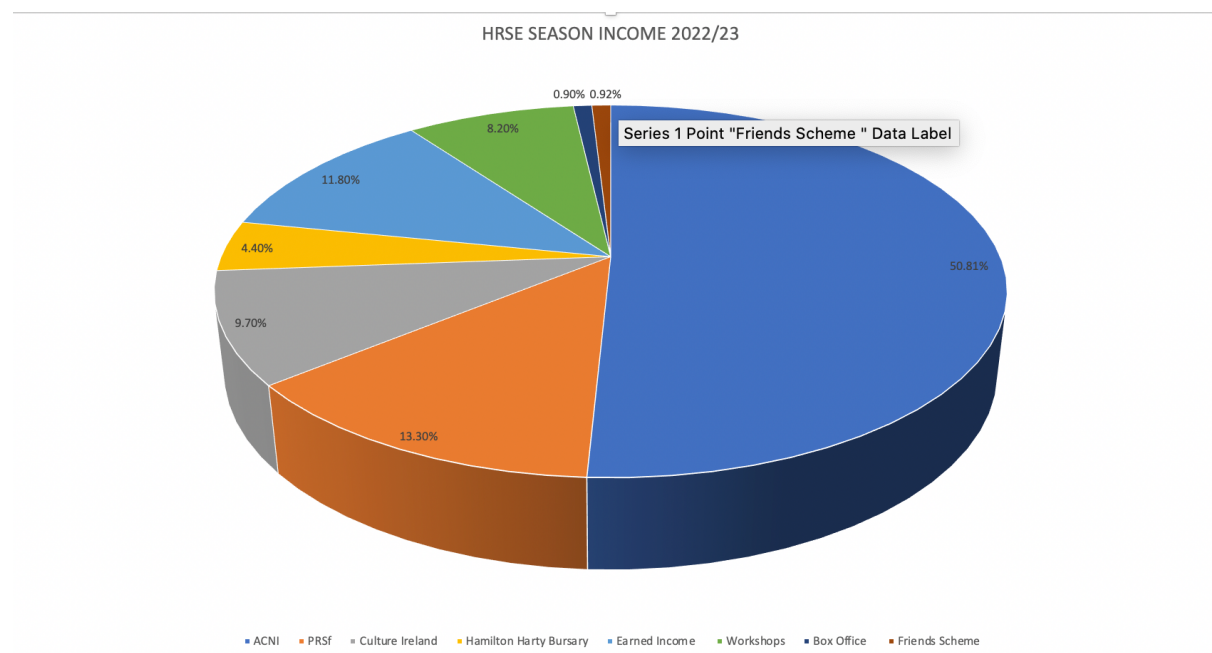
Funding:

The season's activities were supported through successful funding applications which included the **ACNI Project Funding for Organisations, PRSf Talent Development Partnership** and funds accessed through QUB's **Hamilton Harty Bursary**. Additional funding was sought in response to a call from **British Council** for the purpose of a 'scoping visit' to Poland to plan possible projects for 2025. HRSE also accessed funds from **Culture Ireland** to fund 2 concerts abroad: Musicahora (Chile) and Nieuwe Noten (Amsterdam).

The remainder of HRSE's income came from earned income and profits from workshop fees after performers had been paid.

HRSE is delighted to hear that it will once again be supported through the **PRSf Talent Development Partnership**. PRSf had informed us two years ago that it would not be supporting all its existing clients in the future. HRSE is one of the organisations to be retained in PRSf's portfolio of clients.

A breakdown of how HRSE is funded in 2021-22 is illustrated in the pie chart below.



Next Season's funding:

The annual application for **ACNI Project Funding** (Lottery Funds) is in the process of completion and is due on 5th June 2023. Decision is due in mid-July. The Project Funding ceiling has been raised to £75K for 2023/24. It is envisaged that our application will ask for an uplift on last year.

PRSf funding of £13k towards early career composer commissions, showcase and admin has been approved, though payments are still outstanding (final payment of last year's grant and first payment of this years).

Our **Industry Professional** budget remains at a maximum of £8k, and the full amount of funding was accessed this year.

Our application to the Hamilton Harty Bursary is pending at this stage.

Concert Income – Current Season:

Concert income for the season stands at **£10,428** and is itemised as follows:

- Birmingham Conservatoire (Augmented Vocality) - £6,000
- QUB Lunchtime Recital - £700
- Musicahora Chile - £1,864
- Nieuwe Noten (Amsterdam) - £1,864

Financial:

Interim annual accounts have recently been drawn up for the organisation by **Donald Minshull Chartered Accountants**, up to the end of March 2022, to facilitate future funding applications. The accounts show an annual turnover of **£85,830** for the tax year 2021/22.

Partner Organisations:

HRSE's partnership with **QUB** has been maintained and we are currently seeking support for the coming season.

New partnerships this season were forged with **Birmingham Conservatoire, Musicahora Festival, Chile** and with **Nieuwe Noten, Amsterdam**. Existing partnerships have been built upon with **Contemporary Music Centre** and **Ulster Youth Orchestra**.

Staffing:

The appointment of Aisling Agnew as Concert Manager (who took up post in Dec 2021) has continued to be one of the most significant developments in the organisation. Aisling was a founder member of the ensemble and her extended role in the organisation's administration brings renewed insight, commitment, and enthusiasm to HRSE. Aisling has been shadowing the Artistic Director during the current season. See below on Succession Planning.

Press and Marketing:

This Season's brochure was again a 40-page publication and was distributed online only. Next season we are planning a return to a hard copy brochure.

A PDF version was distributed electronically and was made available to download on our website.

The Ensemble's website was updated at the start of the season, and throughout, and has been used in conjunction with social media (twitter, Facebook and Instagram) to promote the organisation.

In addition, regular publicity campaigns using Mail Chimp were mounted in the run up to events. Other means of publicity, including our partner organisation's websites and mailing lists, have also been used extensively.

All our publicity and design work above was carried out by **27Graphique**, an arrangement that has allowed the administrators time to focus on other matters. Their design led publicity and social media work, in conjunction with their brochure design, ensures a corporate feel across all materials. This is an arrangement that has worked extremely well now in its 2nd year of implementation.

Audience:

Our events have been reasonably well attended, though we feel we would benefit from improved student attendance. In particular, our Augmented Vocality, Ink Still Wet VI and Pierrot (Belfast) concerts were particularly well attended.

Succession Planning:

HRSE Artistic Director finishes his tenure with the ensemble at the end of June after 10 Years. Aisling Agnew has been shadowing this role during the current season and it is hoped that she will take on the responsibilities of Artistic Direction for a reviewable interim period of 6 months. Discussions with Music Officer Ciaran Scullion at Arts Council on 31st May 2023 confirmed that the Artistic Director's role can indeed be filled from within the organization for this limited time period. It was also suggested by Ciaran Scullion that another limited term appointment (again 6 months) can be made to cover the vacant Concert Manager position. After the 6-month interim period, both posts will have to be advertised. In exceptional circumstances the interim posts can be (at ACNI's discretion) extended to a maximum of 11 months.