ORCHESTRA OF
The Swan

Orchestra of the Swan Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the year ending 31 August 2024

Charity Registration Number: 1068570

Company Registration Number: 03458051

orchestraoftheswan.org

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Cover Photograph: Eugene Mclaughlin

Pictured Left: James Northcott

Report of Strategy and Activity for the year ending 31 August 2024

2023-2024 was Orchestra of the Swan's 28th season, with orchestral residencies at Warwick Hall, Stratford-upon-Avon Play House, Hereford Courtyard and Pershore Number 8.

Over the last few years, we have been steadily shifting our programming focus to be more accessible and diverse, underpinned by the art of storytelling to appeal to both the concert and theatre audience. In line with this, our traditional classical concerts this season were reduced from fifteen to seven, while our cross-genre programmes increased from eleven to twenty one alongside two family concerts.

Just four of our concerts utilised conductors (Michael Collins and Rebecca Miller), with soloists, Xufei Yang, Jeneba Kanneh-Mason, Roderick Williams and oratorio soloists Samantha Hay, William Towers, Nicholas Mulroy and David John Pike; while the remainder of our concerts were smaller ensembles (12 or less) led from the violin by Artistic Director David Le Page, alongside leading actors Anton Lesser, Charlie Hamblett, Toyah Willcox and Mogali Masuku, leading soloists Matthew Barley, David Gordon, Matthew Sharp and Mark Ashford, and two performances with the bhangra rock band Kissmet.

To embrace smaller forces, an extensive amount of arranging for unique combinations of instrumentation was implemented by David Le Page, enabling each instrument to shine with the actual player in mind at the point of creation. This has inexorably raised the quality of performance, resulting in a noticeable improvement in the reputation of the orchestra in the sector and media. Alongside this, the Artistic Director has recognised the opportunity presented through the performance of arrangements of symphonic works for chamber orchestra – high quality performances of Mussorgsky *Pictures at an Exhibition* (arranged by Pierre-Alain Monot) and Wagner *Prelude & Liebestod* (arranged by Iain Farrington) would not otherwise be heard beyond the confines of Symphony Hall within the Midlands, whilst enabling the audience to delight in the inner texture and layering of each piece.

In our second full year at Warwick Hall, we welcomed 1,290 audience members to the three concerts (89% capacity), while Stratford achieved 97% capacity and Hereford audiences remained

consistent at 64% capacity. The most popular concert in Pershore was our Christmas concert, so in future years, we will restrict ourselves to a single Christmas concert at this venue. A £5 ticket price continued to be available for Under 35's for our Stratford concerts to encourage a younger audience, with thirty four sold across the five concerts.

Following our shift in emphasis away from traditional orchestral concerts with conductor and soloist towards a smaller more economical ensemble, we observed a slight increase in fully funded concerts from fourteen last season to seventeen this season.

Particular concert highlights:

Red Sky at Sunrise, our first 'Words & Music' programme in partnership with director Judy Reaves, script writer Deirdre Shields and producers Hambletts Ltd, which debuted the previous season at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre (based around the autobiographical writings of Laurie Lee, and interwoven with a carefully curated musical score fronted by leading actors Anton Lesser and Charlie Hamblett), embarked on a tour of seven concerts in six venues between May and July 2024. Every promoter was risk averse, insisting on a ticket-share deal, and of these, four venues (Malvern Theatres, Oxford Playhouse, Painswick Rococo Gardens and Salisbury Festival) sold out. The harsh lesson learned was that smaller, privately run venues, genuinely share risk and are invested in ensuring that the performances are a success, unlike venues that are part of a

nationwide conglomerate who provide the bare minimum in terms of marketing resource whilst ensuring that their interests and liabilities are covered before any visiting artist can secure any income. As a result, the tour broke-even having absorbed the losses in Richmond and York. Despite this setback, our PR team Hambletts secured a prime slot on the *Today Programme* on a Saturday morning in early September with an interview of Anton Lesser and David Le Page, which ensured that the remaining eight performances during September and October 2024, sold out.

> *"**Lesser and Hamblett** delivered an astonishing performance, the two actors and their orchestra, encompassing Lee's life completely, the unique use of **Orchestra of the Swan** a brilliant and novel device. **Red Sky** is a triumph, its understated theatricality allowing this musically accompanied autobiography to truly resonate. (Deirdre) Shield's adaptation leaves us aching for the pastoral wonderland of Lee's childhood, both the music and the words still echoing around my brain, reminding us of the beauty of life itself.*
> **Isabel Raper, Ox in a Box**

Entranced, Holy Trinity Church, Stratford upon Avon

This sold-out performance, enhanced by specialist lighting and projections, transported popular streaming tracks from our cross-genre recordings into a live venue, with pieces linked together by passages of improvisation, resulting in a non-stop auditory, immersive experience without the interruption of applause.

Earthcycle, Turner Sims, Southampton

"Jazz, folk, climate change and Vivaldi all in one performance - well what a show! The music was just amazing. The sound quality from the orchestra was so crisp and clear you couldn't help but be caught up and tap along. The opening movement of Vivaldi's ***Spring*** *was so uplifting and totally engaging...(****Earthcycle****) celebrated the wonders of the seasons while reflecting on humanity's impact upon them. This blend of sensory elements and thought-provoking content made for a great experience.* ***"Earthcycle"*** *by Orchestra of the Swan was a brilliant fusion of classical music and contemporary themes. The performance was a celebration of Vivaldi's timeless work, enhanced by modern interpretations and a powerful environmental message".*

Charlotte Ndupuechi, In Common Magazine

Our Digital Impact:

The 2023-2024 season saw a satisfying increase to 13.4 million audio streams following the release of our 5th cross-genre album since January 2021 – *Earthcycle*, released in January 2024, achieved No.14 in the UK Specialist Classical Charts, and Scala Album of the Week.

"Outstanding pieces are ones that bring out the versatile qualities of all the musicians, exemplified by David Gordon's ***The Elephant and the Moth*** *beginning intriguingly, but spilling over with charm when the pizzicato strings enter with the harpsichord. Outstanding extemporisation from David Le Page on violin playfully swoops and falls and the piano solo, with walking bass and lush string chords, warms the soul. Jackie Oates's voice towards the end startles with jazz timbres, fulsome chords in the strings, ending in a percussive, ambiguous spoken word. Later, a cheerful performance of* ***The Bright Phoebus*** *– arranged by Jackie Oates and Le Page – shows a remarkably unpretentious presentation of this folk tune. Its wassail-like qualities leave a smile on the face and it is a lovely example of the clear honesty of this project – refreshing in spirit and performance".*

Anne Templer, BBC Music Magazine

Alongside the album, we released our 8th digital concert of the same name, filmed at St John the Evangelist, Oxford in February 2023 incorporating seven tracks from the album. Instead of releasing it to the public for free as with prior digital concerts, we experimented with a new hybrid format in partnership with Orchestras Live and the Courtyard Theatre, replacing the first half of a concert performance in the studio theatre with a screening of the digital version, followed by a live second half with a chamber ensemble performing further cross-genre seasonal pieces. The theatre was well attended with unanimously positive audience feedback, demonstrating that there is an appetite for this hybrid format; we aim to explore this further in partnership with Orchestras Live.

During January and April 2024, we recorded a further two albums at St John the Evangelist in Oxford, for release in 2025:

Light & Shadow will be our 6th mixtape, cross genre album and will feature 12 film tracks arranged by David Le Page – including *American Beauty* (Thomas Newman), *Chi Mai* (Morricone), *Miserlou* (trad), *Truman Sleeps* (Philip Glass), *Exit Music for a Film* (Radiohead), *Twin Peaks Theme* (Badalamenti), *Solsbury Hill* (Peter Gabriel), and *Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence* (Sakamoto). This album consciously moves away from notions of 'epic' films and instead explores intimacy,

closeups and the subtle textures of a chamber ensemble.

Symphony of Saints was a very special commission by Mandy Morrell in memory of her son Paul, a concertina maker. This symphonic work by Norwegian composer Martin Romberg celebrates the Scottish saints St Columba, St Aidan and St Cuthbert, was conducted by Andrew Griffiths and features soprano Joanne Lunn. We all felt so privileged to be a part of this recording, which will be released on the Resonus Classics label during 2025 alongside a new song cycle by Romberg, set to poems by Scottish poet Kenneth Steven.

The 23/24 season marked a key milestone in our online journey, with our digital footprint more than doubling in size. We gained 1,344 new followers across all our social platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn, and TikTok), an increase of 55%. The biggest gains were seen on TikTok, with a 47% increase in followers, rising from 592 the previous season to 869 followers as of September 2024. Instagram experienced a 29% increase, growing from 1,869 to 2,430 followers. While this represents a smaller increase than the previous year, it can be attributed to the more targeted approach adopted this season, in contrast to the broader, scattergun strategy of previous seasons.

The 23/24 season was also a pivotal time for our YouTube channel, where we amassed 77,200 views, a 72% increase on the previous year and the largest growth since the channel's launch in 2016. Additionally, we recorded the highest number of hours watched by followers, totalling 4,300 hours from September 2023 to August 2024, compared to 2,000 the previous year, along with 309 new subscribers compared to an increase in 190 during 22/23. It should also be noted that our viewing stats are directly connected to our single releases.

Our work in the community for people living with dementia

Café Muse is our 4-hour participative and themed music café including a free lunch, established in August 2021 and aimed at people living independently with dementia, loneliness and isolation in the communities around our concert venues: taking place in Hereford (weekly, for the Armed Forces community living with dementia, loneliness and PTSD), in Stratford (monthly for people living independently with dementia), and in Southam (monthly until November 2023 when the café ceased due to the lack of ongoing funding).

The principal change since our last annual report was the shift from the SWEMWBS system of evaluation to a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Observation scale as used by Prof. Aimee Spectre, UCL. The prior system required questionnaires to be filled in manually by participants, rather than based on verbal questions asked by volunteers, staff and players, which carers found arduous, intrusive and 'personal', detracting from their ability to relax and enjoy the respite aspect of the Café. The CBTO scale was adopted in Stratford and Hereford in November 2023 with data stored on our secure cloud-based CRM, Charitylog, giving us valuable quantitative data to evidence the impact of Café Muse. An early assessment was used as a baseline for later comparison, enabling us to observe changes/improvement in wellbeing.

Hereford Café Muse

42 weekly music-led sessions took place with 942 attendances by 34 individuals, themed around key events of the week such as D-Day, Trooping the Colour, St Patrick's Day, Valentine's Day and Christmas. Participants joined in the musical activities with singing, dancing and playing their own instruments (including percussion, guitar, clarinet, ukulele, harmonium and flute), discussing their life stories and the theme of the day.

Each session was led by up to three Mindsong-trained professional players including a Veteran and HAC Reservist Musician; all have received Mental Health Training from Combat Stress. Two specialist paid facilitators were present at each session - a Registered Mental Health Nurse working with Veterans, and a veteran QARANC and SSAFA caseworker – who liaise with venues

and players, networking and attending Veterans Mental Health Network and Armed Forces Covenant Partnership meetings to ensure we continue to promote the project, receive referrals, and remain connected with sector developments.

> *"Cliff has always been a very private person, nor an extrovert at all, but here at Café Muse you get him up and dancing, laughing and singing - something he doesn't do at home. It has been a life saver for me as when we attend Café Muse, I feel like a weight has been lifted from my shoulders"*
> **Participant, 20/09/23**

Stratford-upon-Avon Café Muse

Between September 2023 and July 2024, 10 monthly sessions took place at the Methodist Church, with 277 attendances by an average of 28 participants per session.

> *"I think your company are so kind and generous to offer such an amazing opportunity/experience to those living with dementia. ... Dementia is a cruel disease, and I can't thank you enough for the support you are giving to this community."*
> **Participant**

"John said that his wife Helen had been diagnosed 10 years ago, and he had felt so alone for a long period of time. Finding places like Café Muse has completely changed his life and has given him so much support and connection. He had been having a tough week as Helen had flooded the downstairs of the house, and so coming to Café Muse had been a welcome break. He told Di that he was so grateful that musicians of her calibre would give their time to come and play at these sessions. Di told me that she was moved to tears, as was he! And she proceeded to cry again even just retelling this story."

Feedback from Di, musician

Southam Café Muse

Three Café sessions took place attended by 71 participants until the café's closure at the end of November. Most participants moved to Stratford in order to continue to benefit from the sessions.

Care Homes

Alongside Café Muse, and with the full reopening of care homes post covid, 54 fully funded half-day sessions were delivered by pairs of Swan players at 18 regional care homes in Birmingham, Stratford, Herefordshire and Worcestershire as part of our ongoing ***Music Cares*** initiative.

"There were lots of smiles, laughter, happy faces, tapping of feet and clapping. For one resident who enjoys classical music and conducting whilst listening, Diane and Fran brought a special piece of music to play for him. Diane and Fran were able to quickly establish the type of music that residents engaged with and played accordingly. We have residents who for various reasons spend a lot of time in bed, but they did not miss out. As well as playing in communal areas on both floors, Diane and Fran played in the corridors outside residents' rooms, introducing themselves and saying hello and goodbye to each resident." Anne Hemming, Activity Coordinator at Cedar Lodge

"In both homes our individual room visits were perhaps the most meaningful so far; it touched each person so deeply, sending them to a place of deep happiness and we

could almost see them transcend to another place in their minds and body, it was beautiful to see. A lady just closed her eyes, put her head back, her body and mind melted into a place of peace, and she sang every word with happy tears rolling down her face. Suffice to say we were all gone! It's a really lovely project to be involved with and I am sure that the homes feel the deep value of us coming in. Otherwise, they only really get music through the TV or radio, they can't get to theatres or anywhere anymore, so it's a real life line for them."

Amy, Musician

Our community work for the visually impaired and for people living with complex disabilities

Following an initial pilot session during the summer of 2022, a full programme of activity was delivered between September 2023 and August 2024 in partnership with Sense TouchBase Pears, Birmingham – a community centre for people living with complex disabilities:

- 14 community cafés were delivered with 407 participants including a Christmas Party, an Easter Egg trail and two summer parties. The sessions were split into two hour-long sessions, one for children and one for adults who access the centre's day or residential services. Day services include Base Camp (adults with complex disabilities) and Sense

College (16–25-year-olds with complex disabilities). Residential services refer to the wider community that access SENSE, including Foxhollies School, Acorns Children's hospice, Age UK and other local residential centres. With a variety of music, participants were encouraged to dance, sing, play handheld percussion and join in in any way that they could.

- **Sound Seekers Sessions** – Ten accessible one-on-one music sessions were delivered for severely disabled SENSE clients and their carers supported by Mike Dryburgh, music lead at STBP. During these sessions the space was 'filled' with music and the participant took the lead exploring a wide range of instruments and vibration enhancing equipment. Information on each client was provided in advance, so that the resulting sessions could be tailored to best suit their needs and abilities, enabling unique creative expression. Emma Brown (double amputee) joined our players to deliver the session on May 7th; Emma is a Trustee of the OHMI Trust – the one-handed music charity, who make specially adapted instruments.

- **Sense College** – two group sessions were delivered for 16–25-year-olds who attend 'SENSE College' with complex disabilities, reaching 22 participants in total.

- **Acorns Children's Hospice**

  Four performance-based sessions took place for terminally ill children receiving respite or end of life care attended by 86 participants. Two Swan players delivered the sessions, often taking requests from participants and their families, encouraging humming, clapping and singing along.

In addition, two players performed to 130 attendees at Memorial Day, a very special day where the hospice remembers the children who have died during the prior year.

"Through the magic of music, Orchestra of the Swan has managed to transcend barriers, opening doors to a world of beauty and expression for everyone, regardless of their abilities. The impact of these sessions on the individuals we support cannot be overstated. They have not only enjoyed the music but have also found a sense of belonging and connection in the shared experience.

Moreover, the Orchestra of the Swan sessions have been instrumental in changing perceptions about how people can engage with various forms and genres of music. By providing a platform that is welcoming and accommodating to all, these sessions have shattered stereotypes and fostered a deeper appreciation for the diversity of musical expression."
Sunney Sharma, National Arts & Wellbeing Manager for SENSE

Priestley Smith School

Our partnership with this SEND school for the visually impaired continued this season with 15 full day sessions delivered to 83 visually impaired pupils per week by 5 Swan players between April and July 2024. Under the leadership of their Head of Music Jonas Aaron, workshops were inspired and themed around our *Red Sky at Sunrise* concert programme, developing song ideas and honing composition skills, culminating in a final concert of pupils' own music on July 9th.

The compositions explored themes of childhood and travelling, with titles *The Journey!*, *Thinking about Going Away, Brum Song, About Laurie Lee* and *Busy London*. Pupils chose to either sing, use body percussion or play an instrument to bring their compositions to life. In between sessions, pupils went on an expedition with their teachers to a nearby park to inspire ideas for their compostitions. The sounds they collected included bird noises, a cat's meow and busy traffic, which feature in their compostion *Brum Song*.

"We are really excited to have the players in each week. The children are getting so much out of it. Many of them don't get the chance to hear live music, especially from such talented players. The workshops flow really well, and the players let the children lead in the writing and composition in such an amazing way. The orchestra is wonderful and inclusive with everybody. I, as the music teacher feel privileged to have them in and feel I am learning so much about how I can teach my own lessons in the future. We hope we can continue having them back again next year, as this is such a special experience."

Jonas Aaron, Priestley Smith Music Lead, June 2024

Evergreen School

Between February and May 2024, we delivered 10 half-day workshops for 60 children with special educational needs at Evergreen School in Warwick. Split across the two school campuses (Deansway and Brittan Lane), each workshop series of 5 weekly sessions culminated in a sharing concert to families, with content based on the theme of Spring.

Best thing that has happened to the school all year!

Teacher at Evergreen Deansway, March 2024

Our work in regional Primary and Secondary schools

Our hugely important partnership with the Warwick Schools Foundation entered its third year this season, with an added urgency attached due to the parlous state of music education in regional state schools and the endemic lack of exposure to orchestral music and instruments that comes from a lack of government funding and investment.

We are therefore thrilled to report that we engaged 3,206 pupils across Warwickshire through our various activities, with three mainstream classical concerts (including a side-by-side performance of *The Nutcracker Suite* by fifteen Foundation pupils) supported by open rehearsals (attended by 319 school children); three conducting workshops for thirty six Foundation pupils led by conductor Rebecca Miller; a *Come & Play Day'* for eighty one pupils from eleven regional primary schools on the Foundation campus, and a *WOW!* day to inspire 120 Year 7 Foundation instrumental beginners, both of which were led by conductor Enyi Okpara, Assistant Conductor of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. A new development this season was a specific focus on eight CV34 primary schools, delivering whole school assemblies, singing and instrumental workshops to 2,032 children over four days, culminating in a festival day involving 300 children to share their 'learning' with friends and family.

"The students were buzzing for days after the concert, especially with it being so close to the workshop. It has been a fantastic few weeks of Orchestra of the Swan, and we hope to have many more of these great experiences "
Matthew Walton, Westgate Primary School Headteacher

S has only been learning the violin for a couple of months. To see them play in a concert was mind blowing! I'm so excited to see where our budding musician goes with this. **Parent feedback following the Primary Come & Play Day.**

"The highlight of the morning was the hour before lunch when we gathered together everyone in the school who is learning to play an instrument into our school hall to make our own Newburgh Pop-up Orchestra! We had cellos, violins, clarinets, flutes, a cornet, guitars, ukuleles and percussion (our keyboard players). We worked on and

performed a reel led by the wonderful musicians from the orchestra. The atmosphere was electric full of joy and music – our children were very proud of their achievements. Thank you so much to the Orchestra of the Swan".

Sarah Franklin, Newburgh Primary School

The most exciting development was the foundation of the Swan Youth Orchestra for 11 to 18-year-olds who had achieved Grade VI or higher on their respective instrument, in partnership with the Foundation, Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Music hubs.

SYO aims to nurture young talent, shape brighter futures and instil a lifelong passion for orchestral music, cultivating the next generation of orchestral musicians and orchestral audiences. Our mission is to enable children to flourish through learning and playing music together, empowering them creatively and supporting their development and ambition.

Due to budget constraints and insufficient public funding, many state schools lack instrumental ensemble opportunities, limiting students' access to music education. In response, SYO was created at the request of regional Music Hubs to address this gap, uniting pupils from state and private schools, ensuring we nurture diverse talent, contributing to a richer, more dynamic cultural landscape. Structured on a weekend course basis, rather than weekly rehearsals, SYO complements and enriches existing brass band, string and woodwind ensembles run by the

regional Music Hubs. It also responds to a growing need expressed by more advanced learners for intensive course-based opportunities, rather than weekly rehearsal commitments.

The inaugural course took place on February 3rd/4th 2024 on the Warwick Schools campus and was attended by sixty four students from thirty one schools and four home schooled students. Of these, nineteen were privately educated, and forty three state school educated. SYO was conducted by Matthew Coorey and supported by eleven Swan musicians, with participants studying the first movement of Brahms *Symphony No.2, La Rotta* arr. David Le Page and *Indiana Jones, Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* arr. Ralph Ford.

> *"My daughter, although a little tired today, had such a fabulous experience this weekend and (as was evident in the final performance) one of the highest quality. Thank you so much for all the work everyone put into facilitating last weekend's orchestra course. We look forward to October"*
> **Samantha Donohoe, Parent**

SYO now consists of two intensive weekend courses each academic year (in October and February), led by a renowned conductor incorporating improvisation workshops, instrument-specific tuition sessions with twelve professional Swan musicians, sectional rehearsals, full orchestral rehearsals and a celebratory end-of-course public performance. Participants are working side-by-side with our professional players, gaining insight and experience in a professional orchestral setting.

Our work on tertiary education

We delivered three projects this season in partnership with Coventry University and the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. Our Coventry 'Mix-Up' composition project involved three workshops with composition students and a side-by-side performance of their work with four Swan players. At the RBC, we delivered a similar composition project but with the final works recorded for their composition portfolios. In addition, our *Burning Swan* project led by David

Gordon and David Le Page, worked with ten students across multiple performance departments, teaching the art of improvisation and ending in a pop-up performance of material created.

Inclusivity & Relevance

We have continued to maintain our EDI goals, which this season resulted in fourteen ethnically diverse guest artists (as opposed to three during 2021-2022), fifteen ED orchestral players and the retention of eighteen ED professional players on our approved extras list. The Board continued to be representative with two ethnically diverse Trustees, and an updated I&R policy statement on our website. Every concert programme aimed to broaden our audience demographic, whether through programming works by black or female composers, featuring diverse guest soloists, or through our 'Words & Music' approach that straddles the concert and theatre audiences. Our work in the community addressed issues of visual impairment, disability and older people. Our partnerships were with organisations carefully selected to ensure we could learn from their expertise to reach under-represented and under-served communities.

Challenges of the Last Year

The main challenge was establishing our 'Words & Music' programming strand in the audience psyche, enabling promoters to trust that our new model of delivery fronted by a leading actor and in partnership with a director, script writer and theatre production company, could guarantee a strong audience attendance. It took an appearance on the *Today Programme* on Radio 4 to ensure that this shift in perception took place, providing a strong platform for the subsequent development of two new 'Words & Music' programmes based around the output of two further literary giants – George Eliot and Thomas Hardy – both of which went on to be premiered during the Autumn of 2024 to full houses. The 2023-2024 season has therefore been instrumental in developing confidence in this novel approach to concert programming, which has embedded our partnership with director Judy Reaves, script writer Deirdre Shields and producers Hambletts Ltd.

Fundraising

We would like to thank all those involved in the Orchestra of the Swan – players, support staff, volunteers, Friends of the Orchestra and the Friends committee (for their financial, office and front-of-house support), as well as our partners.

At a time of ongoing financial restraint, we are very grateful to our Corporate Partners - Chris Wheeler Graphic Design, Cloudscapes Ltd and Quotidian Investments - who have supported our programme this season.

Trust and public funding income remained steady due to the hybrid model of our activities. We would like to thank the following Charitable Trusts/Foundations and public bodies for their very generous support this season:

29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
Alan Edward Higgs Charity
Alan Woodfield Charitable Trust
Arts Council England
Baron Davenport's Charity
Boshier Hinton
Cavatina Chamber Music Trust
Courtyard Trust
Coventry Music Services
Dumbreck Charity
Edward Gostling Foundation
EH Smith Charity
Elizabeth Creak Charitable Trust
Elmley Foundation
Eric W. Vincent
Florence Cohen Charitable Trust
Foyle Foundation
GJW Turner Charitable Trust
Grantham Yorke Trust
Hereford City Council
Hopkins Sayer Charity
John Ellerman Foundation
John Martin's Charity
Lasletts Charity
LG Harris
Linbury Trust
Lord Barnaby Foundation
Masonic Charitable Trust
Measures Trust
Misses Barrie Charitable Trust
Orchestras Live
Perry Family Charitable Trust

Radcliff Trust
Roger & Douglas Turner Charitable Trust
Saintbury Trust
Sheldon Trust
Steel Charitable Trust
Stratford Town Trust
Ulverscroft Foundation
Warwick Schools Foundation
Wavendon Foundation
Webb Family Trust
Worshipful Company of Wheelwrights

We would also like to thank the many individual donors who provide not only valuable additional resources, but a personal connection to the local community.

The Future

The three 'Words & Music' programmes conceived and created this season in partnership with director Judy Reaves, script writer Deirdre Shields and Hambletts, fronted by leading actors/soloists – *Red Sky at Sunrise, GEORGE Eliot in Words & Music*, and *A Beautiful Thread, Thomas Hardy in Words & Music*, have captured the imagination of theatres across the UK with twenty four engagements already confirmed next season (September 2024 – August 2025) on a risk share basis at Wilton's Music Hall, Buxton Opera House, Northampton Derngate, Saffron Hall, Malmesbury Abbey, Hereford Courtyard, Warwick Hall, Stonehenge, Malvern Theatres, Oxford Play House, Salisbury Festival, Belgrade Theatre Coventry, St Mary's Guildhall Coventry, and Yvonne Arnaud Guildford. As momentum builds, we hope to secure national recognition for this novel programming approach, with funding from Arts Council England for a national tour.

As our audio streaming gathers momentum, we will continue to record an annual mixtape cross-genre album supported, if funded, by a filmed digital concert, with the opportunity to work in partnership with Orchestras Live to develop a hybrid performance model that combines our films with live performance.

Our partnership with Sense TouchBase Pears continues to develop a truly unique, bespoke training programme for both professional instrumentalists and SENSE staff with the potential to train young musicians on their journey through music college.

Our thriving partnership with the Warwick Schools Foundation, which has led to the founding of the Swan Youth Orchestra in partnership with the Heart of England Music hub, creates an incredible opportunity for state and private pupils to learn together from a top international conductor and to be coached by twelve professional Swan players, raising the standard of their ensemble playing in the process. The offer of up to thirty-five 100% bursaries ensures this opportunity is open to all.

At the year end, we recognise that in order to navigate a challenging arts landscape that remains underfunded and fraught with changing political priorities and a national levelling-up agenda, changes in the business infrastructure will need to take place, with a sharp contraction of central costs required to remain financially viable. These changes will be implemented over the next six months.

Debbie Jagla
Managing Director
19th February 2025

Trustees and Officers

Trustees	Simon Littlewood (Chair) John W E Liggins Nicholas Hodges – Resigned December 2023 Caroline Evans – Appointed December 2024 Altaf Kara - Resigned November 2024 Christopher Wheeler Marcus Willett Hilary Evans Sunney Sharma Roger Wilson Carolyn Hodges – Appointed February 2024
Charity Number	1068570
Company Number	03458051
Principal Address and Registered Office	Warwick Schools Foundation Myton Road Warwick CV34 6PP
Solicitors	Shoosmiths LLP 2 Colmore Square 38 Queensway Birmingham B4 6JB
Independent Examiner	Haines Watts Wolverhampton Limited Keepers Lane The Wergs Wolverhampton West Midlands WV6 8UA

Trustees' Report for the year ended 31 August 2024

The Trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, present their report and the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2024. These accounts have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102, and the Charities Act 2011.

Objectives

The charity's objectives continue to be to promote, advance, develop and maintain public education in and appreciation of the art and science of music in all its aspects by presentation of public concerts, recitals, opera, ballet, musical and dramatic works, displays and entertainments of all kinds involving orchestras, the theatre, variety, stage, musicals, radio and television for the public benefit. There has been no change in the objectives during the year.

Structure, Governance and Management

Orchestra of the Swan (the Orchestra) is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 26th February 1997 and it is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission.

The Trustees, who are also directors for the purpose of company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this Report are listed on page 26.

The Board has delegated responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the charity to the executive team, including the Managing Director and the Artistic Director.

The Managing Director is responsible for the day-to-day business and financial operations of the charity, staff management and the appointment of new staff, subject to Board approval.
The Artistic Director is responsible for developing the ambitious artistic vision of the Orchestra, the continued delivery of high quality, interesting and innovative programmes and to communicate this vision clearly to funders, staff, Trustees, Friends and other stakeholders. The

Artistic Director also appoints the core players of the Orchestra.

The titles of Managing Director and Artistic Director denote executive roles within the company and do not confer on the holders any of the primary responsibilities of Trustees and statutory directors of the company. The Trustees are wholly independent of the executive, do not receive any remuneration as Trustees, and are not accustomed to act in accordance with their wishes and directions.

The Trustees meet approximately six times per annum to receive reports from both the Managing Director and the Artistic Director and to consider those reports as well as to consider the short- and long-term plans for the charity and generally to fulfil their obligations as Trustees.

As part of those obligations the Trustees undertake a regular review of the financial risks that the charity may face and maintain a risk register. This register is intended to:

- Identify the material risks facing the charity
- Establish systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the register
- Implement procedures to minimise the potential liability to the charity should those risks materialise.

In addition, the charity has policies in place on Health and Safety, Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding and Equal Opportunities plus a Statement of Inclusivity and Relevance which is set out in full on our website.

Board Changes

We are delighted to welcome Carolyn Hodges to the Board (appointed in February 2024). Originally a music graduate, Carolyn had a 30-year career in the Telecoms and IT sector and, more recently, she has been running her own business as a qualified business and personal coach. With a wealth of experience to offer, Carolyn's extensive background and her long-standing support of the orchestra make her a valuable addition to the Board.

We are also delighted to welcome Caroline Evans (appointed in December 2024). Caroline is a keen supporter of the arts, with a particular enthusiasm for opera and orchestral performance, and she has an interest in music education arising from a decade-long association with the Warwick Schools Foundation. Caroline brings to the Board the legal experience she gained when she was in practice at the commercial bar.

The Board saw one resignation during the period covered by this report, namely Nicholas Hodges (resigned December 2023). We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Nicholas for his valuable support and guidance throughout his tenure.

Financial Review

Total income for the 2023/24 financial year rose by 5%, increasing from £696k to £729k (compared to a decrease of 8% in 2022/23).

However, funding from Public Grants saw a significant decline of 52% and income from private individuals fell by 30%. These reductions reflect the challenging economic conditions currently affecting the orchestra.

These declines were offset, in part, by a strong 25% increase in revenue from Box Office sales and private engagement fees, as well as a 6% rise in grant funding received from Trusts and Foundations.

Income was made up of the following:

- Trusts and Foundations: £260k or 35% of total income
- Box Office and Fees: £215k or 30% of total income
- Public Grants: £70k or 10% of total income
- Tax Relief - Gift Aid and Orchestra Tax Relief: £115k or 16% of total income
- Individuals: £43k or 6% of total income
- Other: £26k or 3% of total income

Total costs for the year also increased from £694k to £727k, an increase of 5% (2023: decrease 8%) in line with the increased activity resulting from the funding available.

The net outturn for the year was a surplus of £1,801 (2023: £2,149) boosting our total reserves as at 31 August 2024 by 2% to £84,453 (2023: £82,652), all of which are unrestricted funds.

Reserves Policy

Orchestra of the Swan has again reviewed its reserves policy, which is to retain sufficient funds in reserve to enable us to manage the company's affairs so as to be sustainable in the future.

The Orchestra requires reserves to provide for contingencies as they arise. In normal circumstances we programme our concert and dementia activities more than a year in advance, and yet we are heavily reliant on sponsorship and donations which can vary from year to year due to changes in the economic climate and many other factors.

The Trustees are determined to maintain strong financial controls and to continue to build unrestricted reserves over future years until they are equivalent to at least three months' running costs.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Trustees

Simon Littlewood
Chair of Trustees
19th February 2025

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Company law requires the charity Trustees to prepare accounts for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, for that year.

In preparing these accounts, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the applicable Charities SORP;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions, disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Orchestra of the Swan (Limited by Guarantee)

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 August 2024 which are set out on pages 34 to 44.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no 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 company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or

2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act 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; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities [applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

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.

Haines Watts Wolverhampton Limited

Haines Watts Wolverhampton Limited
Independent Examiner
Keepers Lane
The Wergs
Wolverhampton
West Midlands
WV6 8UA

19th February 2025

Statement of Financial Activities including Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31 August 2024

Income	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Donations and legacies	1	25,865	18,021	43,886	69,079
Investment Income	2	618	-	618	73
		26,483	18,021	44,504	69,152
Income from charitable activities	3	258,704	303,149	561,853	564,254
Other incoming resources	4	122,469	-	122,469	63,043
Total income		**407,656**	**321,170**	**728,826**	**696,449**
Expenditure					
Charitable activities					
Costs relating to staging performances		405,855	321,170	727,025	641,762
Governance costs		-	-	-	52,538
Total expenditure	5	**405,855**	**321,170**	**727,025**	**694,300**
Net surplus		1,801	-	1,801	2,149
Total funds brought forward		82,652	-	82,652	80,503
Total funds carried forward	14	**84,453**	**-**	**84,453**	**82,652**

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 40 to 45 form part of these accounts.

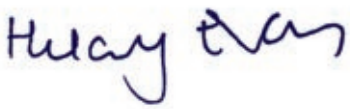
Statement of Financial Position at 31 August 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	9	1,680	4,581
Investments	10	-	1
		1,680	**4,582**
Current assets			
Debtors	11	149,068	158,910
Cash at bank and in hand		75,332	159,275
		224,400	318,185
Creditors:			
Amounts falling due within one year	12	(141,627)	(240,115)
Net current assets		82,773	78,070
Net assets		**84,453**	**82,652**
Funds of the charity			
Restricted Funds	13	-	-
Unrestricted Funds	14	84,453	82,652
Total charity funds		**84,453**	**82,652**

For the financial year in question the company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. No members have required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006. The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

These accounts were approved by the Board of Trustees for issue on 19 February 2025 and are signed on behalf of the board by:



Simon Littlewood
Chair of Trustees

Hilary Evans
Trustee

The notes on pages 39 to 44 form part of these accounts.

Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) '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 (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The Trustees have reviewed and considered relevant information, including the annual budget and future cash flows in making their assessment. Based on these assessments, given the measures that could be undertaken to mitigate the current adverse conditions, and the current resources available, the Trustees have concluded that they can continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the annual report and accounts.

The accounts are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the accounts requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Funds

General Funds – these are unrestricted funds that are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in the furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds – these are unrestricted funds that the Trustees have set aside for a particular purpose. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to these financial statements.

Restricted Funds – these are funds received where the donors have imposed specific restrictions on the use of those funds or which have been raised by the charity for specific purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged to the specific fund.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates.

Taxation

As a registered charity the Orchestra of the Swan is exempt from taxation on income and gains to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No taxation charges have arisen in respect of the charity during the period.

Fixed Assets

Tangible assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Investments in unlisted equity shares are initially recorded at cost and subsequently measured at fair value.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Equipment (including website)	25% straight line
Fixtures	10% straight line

Operating lease

Assets held under finance lease are included and depreciated in accordance with the company's normal accounting policies. The present value of future rental is shown as a liability. The interest element of rental obligations is charged to the statement of financial activities over the period of the lease in proportion to the balance of capital repayments outstanding.

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the statement of financial activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Investments

Fixed asset investments are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated impairment losses.

Listed investments are measured at fair value with changes in fair value being recognised in the statement of financial activities.

Notes to the Accounts year ended 31 August 2024

1. Donations and legacies

	2024	2023
	£	£
Donations and legacies	**43,886**	**69,079**

2. Investment income

	2024	2023
	£	£
Interest receivable	**618**	**73**

3. Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£
Orchestral performances	258,704	303,149	561,853	564,254
	258,704	**303,149**	**561,853**	**564,254**

The income for orchestral performances includes tickets, programme sales, as well as grants and funding in respect of specific performances and the commissioning and creation of new music for those performances. Further details are set out in the Trustees' Report that accompanies these accounts.

4. Other incoming sources

	2024	2023
	£	£
Orchestra Tax Relief	106,274	52,747
Other income	16,195	10,296
	122,469	**63,043**

After a review by the Trustees in 2024, it was decided that Orchestra Tax Relief should be recognised in the financial period in which the performances took place. This has increased income for 2024 by £42,322 compared to what it would have been under the previous accounting policy. This change of policy brings the treatment in line with that already used for Gift Aid.

5. Expenditure

Charitable activities	Staff Costs £	Other Costs £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Costs relating to staging performances				
– activities undertaken directly	237,850	489,175	727,025	641,762
Governance costs	-	-	-	52,538
	237,850	**489,175**	**727,025**	**694,300**

Included in other costs is depreciation of £3,492 (2023 £3,594)

6. Activities undertaken directly

Other costs relating to costs staging performances comprise:	2024 £	2023 £
Players fees	269,561	221,010
Conductor fees	18,675	17,169
Music	4,232	8,478
Event management	201,519	239,245
	493,987	**485,902**

Event management includes direct and indirect costs for orchestral performances, other artistic and community projects including hall hire, promotion, advertising, printing, and a proportion of the day-to-day costs of running the Orchestra.

7. Trustees

None of the Trustees (nor any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

8. Employees

Number of employees

The average number of monthly employees during the year was:	2024	2023
	Number	Number
Marketing	1	1
Administration	8	7
	9	**8**

Employment costs	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	217,811	184,296
Social Security costs	15,227	15,525
Employer pension contributions	4,812	3,492
	237,850	**203,313**

There are no employees who received total employee benefits of more than £60,000.

9. Tangible assets

	£
Cost	
At 1 September 2023	20,610
Additions	591
At 31 August 2024	**21,201**
Depreciation	
At 1 September 2023	16,029
Charge for the year	3,492
At 31 August 2023	**19,521**

9. Tangible assets cont.

	£
Carrying amount	
At 31 August 2024	**1,680**
At 31 August 2023	**4,581**

10. Investments

One Ordinary share of £1 is held in Orchestra of the Swan Trading Limited, being the whole share capital. It was incorporated in England and Wales and has staged certain concerts on behalf of Orchestra of the Swan. No profit was made and the company has been dissolved on 22 October 2024. The investment has been written off in these accounts.

11. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade debtors	5,022	60,124
VAT recoverable	-	1,270
Prepayments and accrued income	144,046	97,516
	149,068	**158,910**

12. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	832	13,444
Taxes and social security costs	5,960	-
Accruals and deferred income	134,835	226,671
	141,627	**240,115**

13. Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

	Balance at 1 September 2023	Income	Expenditure	Balance at 31 August 2024
	£	£	£	£
Other Specific Projects	-	321,170	(321,170)	-
	-	**321,170**	**(321,170)**	**-**

Other specific projects are outlined in the Trustees' Report and reflect specific grants and donations received which are to fund particular activities that the Orchestra undertakes and where the grant or donor specifies that the funds are to be used for that purpose.

14. Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 August 2024 are represented by:	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total
	£	£	£
Fixed assets	1,680	-	1,680
Current assets	224,400	-	224,400
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(141,627)	-	(141,627)
	84,453	**-**	**84,453**

15. Operating leases

The total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Not later than 1 year	10,763	10,250
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	29,245	40,008
	40,008	**50,258**

16. The charity is a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office Warwick Schools Foundation, Myton Road, Warwick, Warwickshire, CV34 6PP.

17. The Orchestra of the Swan is a company limited by guarantee and accordingly does not have a share capital. Every member of the company undertakes to contribute such amount as may be required not exceeding £10 to the assets of the charitable company in the event of its being wound up while he or she is a member.

ORCHESTRA OF
The Swan

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ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND
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Charity number 1068570
Orchestra of the Swan is a member of the ABO