

The Studio Symphony Orchestra

Company No. NI 046714

Charity No. NIC103028

Annual Report and Statement of Accounts

For the year to 31st March 2023

Annual Report for the year ended 31st March 2023

The trustees of the Studio Symphony Orchestra are pleased to submit their report and accounts for the period April 1st 2022 to March 31st 2023.

Summary of Events

Four public concerts:

Summer Concert – St. Comgall's, Bangor – 28th May 2022

Conductor: David Openshaw

Leader/Soloist: Ottoline Maas

Schubert - Overture "Rosamunde"

Beethoven - Romance in F

Rossini - Overture "Semiramide"

Dvorak - Symphony No.8

Autumn concert – Bangor Abbey 1st October 2022

Conductor: Martin Wall

Weber - Overture Euryanthe

Schubert - 8th Symphony 'Unfinished'

Dvorak - Czech Suite in D major

Mozart - Divertimento in D major K136

Beethoven Concert - Island Arts Centre, Lisburn - 26th November 2022

Conductor: David Openshaw

Violin: Tamás Kocsis

Beethoven – Fidelio Overture

Beethoven – Violin Concerto

Beethoven – movements from Symphonies No. 5, 6 & 9

Orchestral Masterpieces concert – Elmwood Hall, Belfast – 25 March 2023

Conductor: David Openshaw

Piano: Michael McHale

Shostakovich – Festive Overture

Mozart – Piano Concerto 'Jeunehomme' K.271

Shostakovich – Symphony No. 12

32 full orchestra rehearsals.

Accounts

Please see our accounts attached to this submission.

It will be noted that there was a surplus of £2,373 for the year leaving a retained reserve of £18,610.

Analysis of Concert costs for the 2022/23 reporting period:

Summer Concert – St. Comgall’s, Bangor	Deficit of £251.00
Autumn concert – Bangor Abbey	Surplus of £1,248.00
Beethoven Concert - Island Arts Centre, Lisburn	Surplus of £618.00
Orchestral Masterpieces concert – Elmwood Hall, Belfast	Straddles two financial years; Surplus of £528.00 in 2022/23, Deficit of £1,952.00 in 2023/24

Analysis of Costs

Costs can be seen in the accompanying accounts. The biggest cost is for the services of our Conductor and Leader (£7,425). These are for our main professional musical direction and cannot be avoided if we are to realise our objectives as a charity.

Income 2022/23

Subscriptions	£7,550.00
Friends of the SSO	£495.00
Tickets and programme sales	£7,129.00
Retirement Dinner	£1,240.00
Donations & Grants	£291.00
Fundraising activities	£593.00
Tea & Coffee	£265.00
Fundraising events	£414.00
Total	£17,977.00

Governing Process and Constitution

The Studio Symphony Orchestra is constituted as a Northern Ireland Company, limited by guarantee. We are therefore governed by Memorandum and Articles of Association, which have been submitted to the Charity Commission. We are obliged to lodge accounts with Companies House annually and also with HMRC if required. The AGM for the 2021-2022 season was held on 31st May 2022 (i.e., during the reporting period for this Trustees Report). This was the first AGM since 2019 owing to the pandemic.

Charity Trustees

Board members become eligible to be appointed Charity Trustees.

The following were Trustees on 31st March 2023:

Mrs Alison Bell
Ms Bernagh Brims
Dr Paula Gibson
Mr Alan Greenlee
Mr Paddy McAree
Mr Eoghan O'Reilly
Mr Philip Stanley

Demonstration of Public Benefit of The Studio Symphony Orchestra in the year ended 31st March 2023

The purpose of The Studio Symphony Orchestra is twofold:

1. To provide education and training in orchestral music playing to the public in Northern Ireland through orchestral general and sectional (string, wind and percussion) rehearsals of a range of music given by trained orchestral musicians.

The activity includes working with choirs to perform a wide range of choral works.

The benefit flowing from this is that the participants can have a greater understanding of and skill in playing a wide range of orchestral music.

Success of this can be demonstrated through member surveys, participation levels and quality of performances (gauged through feedback from newspaper critics and tutors).

There is no perceived harm in this purpose.

The intended beneficiaries are members of the public over 18 years old who have trained to a standard in music which will enable them to participate. The Studio Symphony Orchestra does not audition potential members. People who wish to join are invited to participate in rehearsals so that they can themselves judge whether they can benefit from membership. The orchestra has reduced membership costs for senior citizens, students and those who are unwaged.

There is a private benefit to members who are teachers in that their musical abilities and knowledge in pursuit of teaching will be enhanced, but this incidental and a necessary part of the activity.

Demonstration of this purpose during year ended 31st March 2023

The first post-pandemic concert performance by the Orchestra took place on 28th May 2022.

Rehearsals for the 2022-23 season commenced in August 2022 and continued for the entire season, up to May 2023. This was the first complete season by the Orchestra since before the Covid-19 pandemic.

2. To promote the art and appreciation of orchestral music to the general public in Northern Ireland by the presentation of public concerts, performances and lectures.

The benefit from this is a greater understanding of the works performed and a provision of performances of works which would be unlikely for the Ulster Orchestra to perform (for example Richard Strauss's Alpine Symphony which requires an orchestra of 120+ musicians and therefore very expensive to put on).

Success in this can be judged by audience surveys and audience numbers.

There is no perceived harm in this activity.

The beneficiaries of this are the general public in Northern Ireland and the members of the orchestra who are performing.

As in the first purpose, members of the orchestra who are music teachers can derive a private benefit from performances and lectures but this is incidental and a necessary part of the activity.

Demonstration of this purpose during year ended 31st March 2023

Performance of four public concerts to over 600 audience members, in Belfast, Bangor and Lisburn.

Provision of detailed programme notes for every concert to allow audience members to fully appreciate the music being performed. These are original notes, written by members. They are also published on our website to maximise accessibility.

Explanation by our conductors of the works being performed helps to give audiences a greater understanding of the music being played. This is an expert commentary by a professional musician.

Provision of information to members and public through our website and other social media.

This statement was approved by the Trustees on 16th January 2024.

Eoghan O'Reilly

Trustee