

# MINUTES

## The Berlioz Society

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Berlioz Society,  
held on Monday 13 September 2010, at 7:00pm in the Art Workers Guild,  
6 Queen Square, Bloomsbury, London WC1N 3AT

#### Present:

Alastair Aberdare	John Beech	Diane Bickley
Margaret Bond	David Cairns	Celia Clarke
Michael Drake	Linda Edmondson	William Edmondson
Christopher Follett	Elizabeth Hughes	Harold Hughes (in chair)
Simon Jones (notes)	Robert Keer	David Lass
Shelagh Marston	David May	Dorothy May
John Ogden	Helen Petchey	Martin Price
Sir Adam Ridley	Monique Roseberg	Estelle Russell
Sylvia Saunders	Sheila Van Santen	Leon Wiseman
Rosie Yacobi		

#### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Brian Godfrey	Suzanne Hinton	Graham Ives
Jeanne Pingree	Julian Rushton	Geoffrey Ward

David Cairns formally opened the meeting and thanked the members for attending, then invited Harold Hughes to take the Chair.

#### 2 MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM, HELD ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2009

#### 3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- 3.1 The date of the AGM had been incorrectly assigned to 2008 rather than 2009. This will be amended.
- 3.2 Harold Hughes has contacted the French Institute with a view to possible joint meetings between them and the Society, and is waiting to hear from them.
- 3.3 The minutes of the previous AGM were agreed.

## **4 FINANCIAL REPORT**

- 4.1 In 2009 the Society had a deficit of almost £2,400 on its everyday activities. Incoming subscriptions and donations paid early were recorded in the 2008 accounts; outlays on advertising and publicity (£1,753) and new equipment were significantly higher than usual.
- 4.2 This was offset by the amount reclaimed through Gift Aid and a record-breaking surplus (over £1,700) from the 2009 Members' Weekend. The cost of producing Bulletins was lower than in 2008 as only two were paid for during the year.
- 4.3 The overall reduction in the Society's "free funds" for 2009 was £444.
- 4.4 The Society's turnover is not sufficient to require independent examination of the accounts. Sir Adam Ridley (seconded by Diane Bickley) moved the accounts be accepted, and this was agreed unanimously.
- 4.5 So far in 2010, the level of subscriptions is looking healthier, although Gift Aid reclaimed was down due to lower subscriptions in 2009.
- 4.6 Other income so far stands at £668 (net of £390 from members donating to the LSO Appeal), mainly from library sales and sales of recordings and books at the last Members' Weekend.
- 4.7 Bulletin costs are higher than last year's, but the advertising budget is back down to a more sustainable level.
- 4.8 Alastair Aberdare anticipates a possible deficit of around £200 for the current year, with the caveat that this depends upon whether the November Weekend runs to a profit or a loss.
- 4.9 As reserves are declining (and may fall below £3,000 in 2010), Alastair Aberdare felt the subscription should be raised from £15 to £20 (with an overseas fee based on £25 to cover additional postage costs) per annum. This was moved by Shelagh Marston, seconded by Diana Bickley and carried unanimously.
- 4.10 Rosie Yacobi asked whether members could have the option of paying by Standing Order. This is possible but the subscription can only be identified if the payer includes their name in the title of the payment.
- 4.11 The LSO Appeal had a very positive response from members, who have given £390. The Society will add £250 to this, and include Gift Aid received on the donations.

## **5 MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

- 5.1 Membership currently stands at 204, including libraries and educational establishments. 20 new members have signed up since the last AGM, and 8 have left. This is a net increase of 12 from 192 at the last AGM.
- 5.2 143 membership subscriptions had been paid in. 19 are complementary. 42 have still to pay. Revenue from subscriptions and donations banked so far for 2010 comprises £2,256, \$385 and 115€.
- 5.3 Of the new subscriptions, at least four were as a direct result of meeting Society members at the stands in the Barbican foyer before LSO performances.

## **6 ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

- 6.1 The Committee was unanimously re-elected, en bloc, in a vote proposed by Sir Adam Ridley and seconded by David Lass, including Shelagh Marston who had been co-opted since the last AGM.
- 6.2 The following were elected:
- Chairman: David Cairns
  - Treasurer: Alastair Aberdare
  - Administrator: Harold Hughes
  - Secretary: Simon Jones
  - Media Relations Officer: Christopher Follett
  - Website manager: David May
  - Committee Member: Brian Godfrey
  - Committee Member: Martin Price
  - Committee Member: Shelagh Marston
- 6.3 Harold Hughes announced his intention to stand down. He will however do this after the 2010 Members' Weekend. David Cairns, Alastair Aberdare and Shelagh Marston exhorted him not to do so, paying tribute to his role in providing ideas and turning them into reality.
- 6.4 Helen Petchey volunteered to join the Committee, as did David Lass (other commitments notwithstanding).

## **7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 7.1 Shelagh Marston suggested targeting new members through printing small leaflets for colleges.
- 7.2 Leon Wiseman felt the LSO Appeal took money from the Society at a time when it needed it. Alastair Aberdare said the Committee felt that, as Sir Colin Davis (who is heading the Appeal) is the Patron of the Society and a long-term champion of Berlioz, this was a gesture of thanks over as well as a donation. Sir Colin had also given his time at the last Weekend without charge, so this would also be a way of acknowledging this.
- 7.3 Leon Wiseman asked whether the returns on advertising costs could be analysed. This is very hard to measure. However, a stand in the foyer at concerts seemed to yield the

most obvious benefits so this would be pursued. Advertising within programmes is expensive and will be discontinued.

- 7.4 Leon Wiseman asked whether students could be encouraged to join via Facebook. William Edmondson quoted the example of Bromsgrove Concert Club, who had approached student bodies but with very little response.
- 7.4 Rosie Yacobi suggested approaching St John's Smith Square as they might display leaflets.
- 7.5 Linda Edmondson thanked Christopher Follett for his work in organising and running the walking tour of Berlioz's Paris earlier in the year. More such excursions would be welcomed.
- 7.6 Sir Adam Ridley was in favour of another visit to La Côte Saint-André, but suggested increasing the price to cover the cost of hiring an agent rather than leaving the responsibility to Society members. Harold Hughes said operators had been approached before the previous trip but had proved unresponsive.
- 7.7 There was considerable support for another trip to La Côte Saint-André, however the town has two hotels which are booked up very quickly. David Cairns will investigate the possibility of procuring bed and breakfast accommodation nearby to remove the need for a long drive to the concert venues.
- 7.8 The meeting thanked David Cairns for the standard of the Society's Bulletins.

## **END OF AGM**

The meeting closed formally, and was followed by a screening of the DVD "Keeping Score – Symphonie Fantastique", a commentary on the symphony by Michael Tilson Thomas.