

MINUTES

The Berlioz Society ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Berlioz Society,
held on Thursday 8th October 2015 at 7pm
in the Master's Room, the Art Workers Guild,
6 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AT

Present:

Alastair Aberdare (Chairman)	Libby Aberdare	David Cairns
Linda Edmondson	William Edmondson	Christopher Follett
Avril Godfrey	Brian Godfrey	Simon Jones (notes)
Robert Keer	Chris Moore	Helen Petchey
Martin Price	Monique Roseberg	Rosie Yacobi

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Margaret Bond	Adrian Brown	Michael Drake
Harold Hughes	Elizabeth Hughes	Shelagh Marston
Dave May	Dorothy May	Adam Ridley

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM, HELD ON 7 OCTOBER 2014

2.1 The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the previous AGM.

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 There were no matters arising.

4 SECRETARY'S REPORT

4.1 The 2014 Members' Weekend looked at Berlioz's theory and practice of orchestration, in the 170th anniversary year of the publication of his Treatise on Instrumentation. Among many fascinating talks, David Cairns looked at the background to the work, Julian Rushton explored Berlioz's use of musical colour, expression and meaning, and Hugh Macdonald investigated how far Berlioz practised what he preached. Adrian Brown looked at Berlioz's innovations from the perspective of a conductor. Alastair Aberdare interviewed Sir Antonio Pappano.

4.2 In addition, it was a great honour for the Society to be able to present Dame Janet Baker with the Berlioz medal at the dinner on Saturday night.

- 4.3 The 2015 “Ridley Day” took the form of a tribute to Sir Colin Davis. In addition to reminiscences from David Cairns and other members of the Society a guest speaker was Christine Pendrill, cor anglais with the LSO, who shared her memories of playing under Sir Colin.
- 4.4 Membership currently stands at 220, including universities and libraries. There has been a good response to the introduction of standing orders as a more convenient method of payment.
- 4.5 The Society offered assistance with tickets, information and accommodation to seven members at the Festival Berlioz in late August in La Côte Saint-André.
- 4.6 The Society is to present a Hector Berlioz Study Day at the Oxford Lieder Festival on October 24. David Cairns will be giving an introductory talk and a table will be set up in the Jacqueline du Pré Music Building in Cowley Place to display posters, flyers and generally promote Berlioz and the Society.
- 4.7 Extensive publicity is being carried out to promote the Society Weekend in late November, on the theme Berlioz the Writer.
- 4.8 There will be a Society table at two events at the Barbican early in 2016 – a full performance of the symphony *Roméo et Juliette* on 22 January and a Shakespeare 400 Discovery Day on 28 February.

5 TREASURER’S REPORT

- 5.1 Copies of the 2014 accounts, which had been approved by the Society's Trustees (the Committee), were distributed.
- 5.2 As predicted at the 2014 AGM, subscriptions and donations fell in 2014 (£3,710) compared with 2013 (£5,445). However 2015 subscriptions and donations had already exceeded the 2014 figure by a small amount with some further income due. Gift Aid of £618 was reclaimed in 2014 against £503 in 2013, reflecting the high subscriptions/donations figure for 2013; Gift Aid claims are received in the financial year after payments are made. The claim for 2015 is a little below that of 2014 and is yet to be made to HMRC.
- 5.2 There was a small surplus of £65 on the 2014 “Ridley Day”. The 2014 Weekend made a surplus of £844, against £1,582 in 2013. It is hoped that the 2015 Weekend will at least break-even.
- 5.3 Production costs for editions of the Bulletin remained constant during the year, but postage costs continue to increase. The high 2013 Other costs figure (£425) referred to the purchase of extra copies of the Colin Davis Memorial Bulletin; the resale of these was partly in 2013 and partly in 2014 (much of the £376 Other income).
- 5.4 The inter-society event held in January 2015 at the Forge in Camden was hosted by the Berlioz Society. Much of the income (£2,160) and some of the expenditure (£804) was recorded in 2014, with most of the expenditure and a small amount of further income in 2015, resulting in an overall loss on the event of £795. This meant that the Income figure for 2014 was inflated and that the apparent surplus of £3,184 does not represent the net change in “free funds”, which was £1,828, still a healthy figure.

- 5.5 On Saturday 24 October there is a Berlioz Day at the Oxford Lieder Festival, at which the Society will be represented. The Committee decided to make a contribution of up to £1,000 to the organisation of the Festival.
- 5.6 Peter Bloom will be speaking on the New Letters of Berlioz at the next Weekend; he is the co-editor of the forthcoming Volume IX of the Correspondance Générale, in which these letters will be published. The committee has agreed to make a contribution of £500 to assist in ensuring that publication can take place.
- 5.7 Whilst neither of these contributions has yet been made, they are expected in 2015 and are thus likely to appear in the 2015 accounts.
- 5.8 Over recent years the Society has built up a substantial “free funds” balance in the accounts and it has been felt that the Society is in a good position to make these contributions to further our aims. With this in mind, the Committee decided that the Forge event, the Oxford Lieder Fest and the donation towards publication of Berlioz’s correspondence fall very much within the charitable aims of the Society; they all bring Berlioz's legacy to a different public, quite possibly unfamiliar with him, his music and his achievements.
- 5.9 No increase in the subscription rate was proposed for 2016.

6 CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

- 6.1 On behalf of the Society, the Chairman thanked the Committee members – especially David Cairns, as “the agent of Berlioz on earth”, who continues to edit and produce the Bulletin to an exceptionally high standard. All three this year have been outstanding.
- 6.2 The Committee in turn thanked the Chairman for his unstinting hard work through the year.

7 ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR

- 7.1 The existing Committee were willing to serve for the next year.
- 7.2 No other nominations being received, the Committee was elected, as follows.
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| • President (and editor of the Bulletin) | David Cairns |
| • Chairman | Alastair Aberdare |
| • Vice Chairman | Adam Ridley |
| • Treasurer | Martin Price |
| • Secretary | Simon Jones |
| • Membership Secretary | Linda Edmondson |
| • Media Manager | Christopher Follett |
| • Website Manager | Dave May |
| • Weekend Coordinator | Helen Petchey |
| • Summer Event Coordinator | Shelagh Marston |
| • Archivist | Brian Godfrey |

- 7.3 William Edmondson moved that the Committee be re-elected. This was seconded by Robert Keer and passed unanimously by the meeting.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Upcoming events of interest are:

- 24 October 2015: Berlioz study day at the Oxford Lieder Fest;
- 30 November 2015: a performance of the Grande Messe des Morts at the Royal Albert Hall;
- 28 and 29 November 2015: Society Members' Weekend – Berlioz the Writer;
- 5 to 29 December 2015: *La damnation de Faust* as the first part of a 4-year Berlioz Cycle at Opéra Bastille.
- 19 January 2016: the Music Societies' dinner and concert at the Forge, Camden;
- 22 January 2016: *Roméo et Juliette* at the Barbican, conducted by Andrew Davis with the LSO;
- 17 February 2016: Inter Music Society Quiz, St Olave's Community Hall;
- 28 February 2016: excerpts from *Roméo et Juliette* and Shakespeare 400 Study Day at the Barbican;
- 26 June 2016: *Symphonie fantastique* conducted by Sir Simon Rattle at the Barbican;
- 23 July to 27 August 2016: *Béatrice et Bénédict* at Glyndebourne;

8.2 Alastair Aberdare noted that 2019 would be the sesquicentennial of Berlioz's death, and invited ideas and comments for commemorations or fundraising. He was working on a project to produce a Berlioz iBook and an online resource for students or enthusiasts, and would love to see a performance of the Te Deum using the ideal forces, including a choir of 600 children. A performance of pieces including "All Creatures that on Earth do Dwell" using 6,500 children's voices, as heard by Berlioz at a charity concert in St Paul's, would also be a fitting tribute. A group led by Alastair is currently working to generate ideas and support and to explore possible sources of funding for ventures such as these.

The evening concluded with a viewing of an American DVD, "In the footsteps of Berlioz".