

MINUTES

The Berlioz Society ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Berlioz Society,
held on Tuesday 4th October 2016 at 7pm
in the Master's Room, the Art Workers Guild,
6 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AT

Present:

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| Alastair Aberdare (Chairman) | Michael Brown | David Cairns |
| Linda Edmondson | William Edmondson | Christopher Follett |
| Avril Godfrey | Brian Godfrey | Charles Harvey |
| Gareth Jones | Simon Jones (notes) | Chris Moore |
| Peter Payne | Helen Petchey | Martin Price |
| Monique Roseberg | | |

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Diana Bickley | Adrian Brown | Jonathan Burton |
| Michael Drake | Terry Heard | Robert Keer |
| Shelagh Marston | Margo Miller | Adam Ridley |
| Julian Rushton | Charles Shaw | Rosie Yacobi |

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM, HELD ON 8 OCTOBER 2015

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

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- 3.1 5.5 The £1,000 contribution to the 2015 Oxford Liederfest has been paid.
- 3.2 5.6 The contribution of £500 to assist publication of Volume IX of the Correspondance Générale was not called upon in the end. Instead, the sum will now be put towards Peter Bloom's scholarly edition of the Memoirs.
- 3.2 8.2 The proposed sesquicentennial performance of pieces using 6,500 children's voices would include "All *People* that on Earth do Dwell" rather than "All Creatures that on Earth do Dwell".

4 SECRETARY'S REPORT

- 4.1 The Berlioz Society, under Adam Ridley's impetus, presented a Hector Berlioz Study Day at the Oxford Lieder Festival in October. David Cairns and Julian Rushton gave talks, and Chris Follett organised publicity tables which generated a great deal of interest. The day also included two Berlioz song recitals.

- 4.2 The 2015 Members' Weekend looked at Berlioz the writer. David Cairns began the proceedings with an overview of the Memoirs, "Evenings with the Orchestra" and the music journalism scene in Paris. Katherine Kolb spoke on Berlioz's use of Irony and Ideal, Hugh Macdonald on his relationship with La Fontaine, Peter Bloom on the new edition of the letters and Julian Rushton on Berlioz's libretti. Alastair Aberdare interviewed Robin Ticciati and then spoke on "Les grotesques de la musique", and Gunther Braam talked about the impact of Berlioz's journalism in Germany.
- 4.3 Julian Rushton was presented with the Berlioz Society medal at the Weekend, in recognition of his critical and scholarly work over the years.
- 4.4 The January event at the Forge in Camden was organised this year by the Alkan Society. There was very little interest from Berlioz Society members (two members attended), and we have informed the other societies that we shall not be involved in organising any events in future.
- 4.5 The Society had a table at two Berlioz concerts at the Barbican early in the year, connected to the wider Shakespeare 400 celebrations, and the LSO kindly agreed to let us place quarter-page advertisements at no cost.
- 4.6 The "Ridley Day" held in June focused on "Béatrice et Bénédict", with talks by David Cairns, Adrian Brown and Julian Rushton. This was in anticipation of the performances of the opera at Glyndebourne in July and August.
- 4.7 The Society offered assistance with tickets, information and accommodation to members for the Festival Berlioz at La Côte Saint-André in late August, as in previous years. However, only one London-based member attended. Chris Follett will continue to offer this service in future, and hopefully the 2017 theme, "Berlioz in London", will generate more interest. One of the highlights of the Festival was a concert performance of "Benvenuto Cellini" by the Cologne Opera Company conducted by François-Xavier Roth, and this went hand in hand with an excellent exhibition on the opera at the Musée Berlioz. Chris had assisted the museum with this, liaising with ENO to provide video extracts, photographs and other material from the 2014 Terry Gilliam production.
- 4.8 The Society website has been redesigned and streamlined.
- 4.9 Alastair Aberdare is heading negotiations with many different organisations and individuals to coordinate the commemoration of Berlioz's sesquicentennial in 2019.

5 TREASURER'S REPORT

- 5.1 Copies of the 2015 accounts were distributed.
- 5.2 Income from subscriptions and donations had risen considerably, from £3,710 in 2014 to £4,302 in 2015. Money received to date in 2016 has nearly matched the 2015 total and may well overtake it.
- 5.2 The amount of Gift Aid received had dropped in 2015 but this represented money reclaimed from 2014 income and should be higher for 2016.
- 5.3 The "Ridley Day" generated a higher than usual surplus of £211. This year, it is nearer £50.
- 5.4 The 2015 Members' Weekend generated a surplus of £745, compared to £844 in 2014.
- 5.5 Costs for production and distribution of the Bulletin rose a little in 2015, mainly due to increases in postage.

- 5.6 The Society made a contribution of £1,000 towards the running of the Oxford Lieder Festival in October 2015, as part of its charitable remit to bring Berlioz and his works to a wider public. Similarly, £500 has been committed towards publication of Peter Bloom's scholarly edition of the Memoirs.
- 5.7 Other income was lower in 2015 than the previous year. Sales of the Colin Davis memorial edition of the Bulletin had boosted the 2014 income.
- 5.8 £431.92 was spent on advertising and promotion in 2015, largely on leaflets and flyers.
- 5.9 The inter-society event held in January 2015 at the Forge in Camden was hosted by the Berlioz Society. Much of the income and some of the expenditure fell in 2014, with most of the expenditure and a small amount of further income in the following year: as a result, 2015's accounts show income of £765 and expenditure of £2,933.
- 5.10 The net change in free funds for 2015 was a deficit of £222, a manageable amount.
- 5.11 2016 is looking fine financially, and there is no reason to increase subscription rates.
- 5.12 The Art Workers Guild have increased their fees, and this will affect the costs of the Weekend from 2017 onward. It may be necessary to look for a new venue although the Guild is extremely popular.

6 ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR

- 6.1 The existing Committee were willing to serve for the next year, with the exception of Dave May, who was stepping down as Website Manager.
- 6.2 Linda Edmondson will be stepping down as Membership Secretary but remaining on the Committee.
- 6.3 Peter Payne is prepared to serve as the Membership Secretary.
- 6.4 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 (and Website Manager) | Simon Jones |
| • Membership Secretary | Peter Payne |
| • Media Manager | Christopher Follett |
| • Weekend Coordinator | Helen Petchey |
| • Summer Event Coordinator | Shelagh Marston |
| • Archivist | Brian Godfrey |
| • Member (temporarily without portfolio) | Linda Edmondson |

- 6.5 Avril Godfrey moved that the Committee be re-elected. This was seconded by William Edmondson and passed unanimously by the meeting.

7 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- 7.1 The Chairman thanked the Committee for their work, energy and enthusiasm over the past year. Individual thanks were due to Linda Edmondson for her work as Membership Secretary and to Simon Jones for his considerable efforts in setting up the much-improved new Website, with valuable assistance from Dave May.
- 7.2 He also welcomed Peter Payne into the Membership Secretary role next year.
- 7.2 Special thanks went to our President, David Cairns, for his tireless and active work at the various meetings throughout the year and his production of the excellent Bulletins.
- 7.3 Forthcoming performances of Berlioz works include the *Symphonie fantastique* conducted by Nicholas Collon in Nottingham and Birmingham in October and a performance of the *Requiem* under the baton of François-Xavier Roth in November.
- 7.4 Plans are being put in place for commemorations of Berlioz's sesquicentennial in 2019. The idea is to encourage as many orchestras, choirs and festivals as possible to perform Berlioz pieces.
- 7.5 Three specific initiatives being pursued are:
- A Berlioz app or iBook, giving information and encouraging interest in his life and work;
 - A performance of the *Te Deum* including a choir of 600 children; and
 - A massed children's choirs event (ideally around 10,000 strong), recalling the Charity Children's concert heard by Berlioz in 1851 in St Paul's Cathedral – this could also hopefully be used to première a full performance of *Le Temple Universel*.
- 7.6 The project is gathering momentum. The Berlioz Society has donated £500 towards developing the idea. Anyone with ideas and energy to volunteer is very welcome. Fundraising expertise would be extremely helpful.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 8.1 Charles Shaw suggested a report of the year be placed on the website to publicise what the Society does, along with a list of contents of the Bulletin. The summary of the year will be done, but the Bulletin contents might pose problems should people want individual articles.
- 8.2 Gareth Jones is a new member, and had been persuaded to join whilst talking to someone by the Society table at the Barbican after the performance of "*Roméo et Juliette*" earlier this year. He can vouch for these tactics being successful.
- 8.3 William Edmondson suggested Presto Classical, a music retailer online and at Leamington Spa, as a possible source of funding. The proprietor, Howard Skempton, sponsors new music and knows Thomas Adès (a Berlioz enthusiast).
- 8.4 Brian Godfrey asked why the charges at the Art Workers Guild were going up so drastically. A new management initiative at the Guild has decided to increase them, and has also decided the charitable function of the Berlioz Society, promoting music and literature, does not deal with the plastic arts and does not qualify for their charitable discount.

The evening concluded with a viewing of movements from a 1985 performance of "*Roméo et Juliette*" on DVD, conducted by Sir Colin Davis.