



ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ORCHESTRAS

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

2020/21

PREFACE

Gavin Reid was chair of the ABO for much of this year and I would like to open by thanking him for steering us through the first months of a pandemic that still has such a strong hold on our personal and professional lives.

Orchestras the length and breadth of the country have found innovative ways to stay in touch with their audiences, and with each other; and the creativity of orchestras and their musicians has kept music flowing in this hardest of years. The support and work of the ABO has been an essential part of all our lives during these times, whether through its regular members' meetings, or the tireless work of Mark and his team in lobbying on our behalf. The membership of the ABO has grown in the last year, a testament to the value of the work the organisation does on behalf of its membership.

And to think that we all thought Brexit was going to dominate the work of the ABO in this year. Resolving the challenges of the UK's exit from the EU was, and remains, a significant part of the ABO's work, with important progress being made in some areas during the year. The true impact of Brexit on our sector will not be completely clear until the pandemic is past, and the ABO team will continue to work through the uncertainties for the sector, guiding and advising us all.

Mark, Jenny, Emily, Fiona, Chris, with Janet joining us recently as Jenny's maternity cover, are a brilliant team, and my thanks to them for their remarkable work is heartfelt. The online conference in March was an astonishing achievement in itself, a perfect example of how Mark and his team have found new and powerful ways to champion, connect and develop the sector.

My thanks also to the board who have supported the team through the year, and have also enthusiastically embraced the challenges of change. At the AGM in November we outlined our plans for a governance review that informed the recruitment of two new co-opted directors in January and is now nearing its end with the recruitment of two new member-nominated directors in June 2021.

At our conference in March 2021 we were challenged to address diversity in all its forms in our sector. The changes in the way we recruit to the board is just one step in our journey to seek to ensure the ABO properly reflects our world. As we emerge from the pandemic and find our way through the complexities of Brexit, we must continue to reflect on who and what we are, as an organisation and a sector, and who we are for. We have a long way to go before we are properly representative of our country; our audiences, our teams, our orchestras will keep changing to reflect and celebrate our communities; and the ABO will continue to have diversity, equality and inclusion as a priority in its work on your behalf.

At the heart of all of our organisations are our musicians. At the ABO conference in March we awarded 'the musicians' the ABO Award. As we see audiences returning to venues, they continue to be the beating heart of our organisations. Their resilience and creativity always deserve our gratitude, this year more than any.



Simon Webb
Chair

INTRODUCTION

2020/21 was a year like no other. Following the first national lockdown on 23 March 2020, we had no idea that we would then see an entire year lost to Covid-19 restrictions and extended lockdowns across the nations.

But it is in crises like this that associations come into their own. The ABO moved rapidly online to facilitate regular meetings, helping members share knowledge and build resilience. And we worked with the UK Government to develop the industry guidance for England that was published in July 2020. Through its participation in DCMS's Entertainment & Events Steering Group and Venues Working Group, the ABO has helped guide subsequent revisions to the guidance, initially to inform the partial lifting of restrictions that was permitted in the Autumn, which led to concerts and performances taking place subject to Covid-19 protocols, and then the roadmap for reopening that was published in February 2021. We have also made sure that our Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish members have kept abreast of and been able to influence their own national guidance and reopening plans.

We also worked with DCMS on a strategy for financial recovery, and provided evidence of the damage to the sector that informed the announcement of the Culture Recovery Fund. We are grateful to the Treasury for recognising the importance of culture and providing much-needed emergency funding across the nations.

But the ABO itself had to take action to shore up its finances, to reflect possible damage from the pandemic. It used government support measures to reduce expenditure on staffing. And having already been served notice to leave its offices in Rose Street, it negotiated a discount on its remaining term while also securing a rent-free period on its new office in Somerset House.

Meanwhile, it managed to adapt to the new reality of meetings online with a shift to paid-for attendance for its events, culminating in an astonishingly well-attended online conference, delayed to March. We are hugely grateful to our principal media partner Classic FM, and to BBC Radio 3 for their input into the conference programme, as well to the many other sponsors and partners who helped make the conference such a success. And we were delighted that we were able to shift the Find Your Way programme online, maintaining our commitment to nurturing the next generation of leaders.

Allied to the welcome support of the membership, meaning subscription income remained stable, the financial out-turn on the year was significantly better than first feared. This enabled the ABO to offer its members a freeze in their subscriptions for the following year.

But Covid-19 was not the only story this year. Brinkmanship over a No Deal Brexit, and the eventual publication of the EU-UK Trade & Co-operation Agreement, put the ABO to a lot of work ensuring that its members understood the profound consequences for touring into the EU, from work permits to road haulage, and on future recruitment of musicians. The ABO has taken a lead in pressing government for clarification on some of the key issues that Brexit poses for our members, and has managed to secure concessions and clarifications that make their prospects a little better.

Both the Covid-19 crisis and Brexit have led to more press interest in the ABO than ever before, with a host of articles in print and online in the UK and abroad, and invitations to speak at international events online. The ABO continues to be seen as a leader on the issues affecting orchestras globally.

I and the team are extremely grateful for the active support of the board members during the year. As ever, we remain committed to delivering on our mission of connecting, championing and developing professional orchestras and youth ensembles across the UK, and to ensuring a vibrant and sustainable sector, regardless of the challenging circumstances.



Mark Pemberton
Director

REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2020/21

TO BE PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ORCHESTRAS

MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

The ABO board agreed the following **mission statement** commencing 1 April 2019: The ABO's mission is to enable and support an innovative, collaborative and sustainable orchestral sector, and to provide advice, support, intelligence and information to the people who make British orchestras a global success.

The key **Strategic Objectives** of the Association cover three areas of activity:

- **Connecting**
- **Championing**
- **Developing**

Using the framework of the mission statement, our key **aspirations** for 2019-2022 will be to deliver on these key objectives through:

- **Connecting** members to other members and the wider industry through networking opportunities, keeping our members well-informed and up-to-date with best practice to help build resilience and financial sustainability.
- **Championing** orchestras and the wider membership, raising their profile and influence with key stakeholders and the British public, through political engagement, the media, social media and stakeholder bulletins. We will track and influence the development of legislation and government policies both in the UK and internationally, and advocate the value of public and private investment in the orchestral sector.
- **Developing** the skills and knowledge of our members' staff, including providing and signposting to high quality professional development opportunities and nurturing emerging leaders.

2020/21: THE YEAR IN HIGHLIGHTS

APRIL

Scottish Members, Fundraising Managers, Concert & Orchestra Managers, Finance Managers, Education Managers, Freelance Orchestras, Opera & Ballet Members meetings. Find Your Way online residential course. ABO Board Meeting. Director chairs European Orchestras Forum on impact of Covid-19.

MAY

Scottish Members, Stage & Transport Managers, Education Managers, Key Contacts, Concert & Orchestra Managers, Contract Orchestras, Marketing Managers meetings. ABO Board Meeting. APPG on Classical Music meeting. Director chairs European Orchestras Forum and Music Network UK, and attends DCMS Reopening Group and Pearle conference.

JUNE

National Youth Orchestras, Opera & Ballet, Scottish Members, Welsh Members, Contract Orchestras, Education Managers, Concert & Orchestra Managers, Finance Managers, Full & Associate Members meetings. ABO Board Meeting. Director holds meetings with the Culture Minister and Shadow Culture Minister, and attends the DCMS Entertainment & Events Working Group.

JULY

Chairs & Trustees, Scottish Members, Opera & Ballet, Chamber Orchestras, Concert & Orchestras Managers, Youth Ensembles meetings. ABO Board Meeting. APPG on Classical Music meeting. Director chairs meeting of Music Network UK.

AUGUST

Opera & Ballet, Contract Orchestras and Concert & Orchestra Managers meetings. ABO office moves to Somerset House.

SEPTEMBER

Scottish Members, Welsh Members, Opera & Ballet and Key Contacts meetings. ABO Board Meeting. APPG on Classical Music. Director chairs Music Network UK and attends DCMS Venues Steering Group, DCMS Entertainment & Events Working Group and APPGs for the Performing Arts joint meeting. Presentation of the ABO/RPS Salomon Award.

OCTOBER

Scottish Members, Welsh Members, Contract Orchestras meetings. Director attends DCMS Venues Steering Group and End of Transition Period Working Group.

NOVEMBER

Scottish Members, Welsh Members, Opera & Ballet, Chamber Orchestras, Concert & Orchestra Managers, Education Managers, Finance Managers, Fundraising Managers, Marketing Managers, Stage & Transport Managers and National Youth Orchestras meetings. ABO Brexit workshop with DCMS. ABO Board Meeting and AGM. ABO Trust Meeting. Director attends DCMS Venues Steering Group, Pearle conference and DEFRA roundtable.

DECEMBER

Scottish Members, Opera & Ballet, Contract Orchestras and Youth Ensembles meetings. Find Your Way and Essentials of Find Your Way courses. APPG on Classical Music. Director chairs Music Network

UK, Global Orchestra Association Leaders and ACEVO Arts & Heritage Group, and attends DCMS Entertainment & Events Working Group, Venues Steering Group and End of Transition Period Working Group.

JANUARY

All Members, Scottish Members, Welsh Members, Opera & Ballet, Contract Orchestras meetings. Director attends DCMS Venues Steering Group, Entertainment & Events Working Group, and roundtable with DCMS Secretary of State.

FEBRUARY

Scottish Members, Welsh Members, Opera & Ballet, Contract Orchestras, Stage & Transport Managers, National Youth Ensembles meetings. ABO Board Meeting. APPG on Classical Music. Director chairs ACEVO Arts & Heritage group and attends DCMS Venues Steering Group.

MARCH

Aftershock: ABO Conference 2021 and presentation of ABO awards. Contract Orchestras meeting. Director attends DCMS Venues Steering Group, Entertainment & Events Working Group and Touring Working Group meetings.

CONNECTING

ABO CONFERENCE

The annual Conference, in association with Principal Media Partner **Classic FM**, Media Partner **Classical Music**, Charity Partner **Help Musicians** and International Partner **British Council**, took place online from 10-12 March 2021.

The Conference theme was ***Aftershock***. There were keynote speeches by Caroline Dinenage MP, Minister for Digital & Culture, Sir Nicholas Serota, Chair, Arts Council England, and Alan Davey CBE, Controller of BBC Radio 3 and Classical Music. Panelists included Roger Wilson, Black Lives in Music; Alex Laing, principal clarinet, Phoenix Symphony Orchestra; Katy Balls, Deputy Political Editor, The Spectator; Chris Giles, Economics Editor, Financial Times; Jamie Njoku-Goodwin, Chief Executive, UK Music; James Sanderson, Director of Personalised Care, NHS England and NHS Improvement and CEO, National Academy of Social Prescribing; Simon Woods, President and Chief Executive, League of American Orchestras; Sakurako Fisher, former Chair, San Francisco Symphony; Aaron Flagg, DMA Chair, Associate Director, Juilliard Jazz Studies Program; Anthony McGill, Principal Clarinet, New York Philharmonic; Vanessa Reed, President & CEO, New Music USA; Matías Tarnopolsky, President and Chief Executive Officer, Philadelphia Orchestra; and BBC Radio 3 presenter Georgia Mann.

Sponsors of the conference included Soundforms, Boomerang Carnets, Composers Edition, Wise Music Group and Black Cat Music & Acoustics. We are also grateful to the Musicians' Union for providing financial support for attendance by musicians.

Headline numbers for the conference are that in 3 days we:

- put on **17** different sessions
- with **57** speakers / panelists
- to **576** total unique delegates

SPECIALIST MANAGERS MEETINGS

Specialist Managers Meetings continued to form the backbone of the ABO's events programme, and the of meetings ramped up during the year due to the Covid-19 crisis and shifting meetings online. The Specialist Managers Meetings provide opportunities for colleagues from different organisations to meet and discuss subjects of mutual interest and benefit from the latest developments in their field through talks and surgeries given by experts.

Meetings for Chairs & Trustees, Chamber Orchestras, Contract Orchestras, Concert & Orchestra, Education, Finance, Fundraising and Stage & Transport Managers, along with Opera & Ballet, Scottish and Welsh members took place during the year. Meetings in Spring and Summer 2020 were open access and well-attended, providing much-valued forums for discussing the impact of the pandemic on the sector. The Autumn series reverted to booking to attend and saw 289 attendees in total. Reports of the meetings are available to download from the members' area of the ABO website.

During the year, members heard from a range of external speakers from organisations including Indigo, Road Haulage Association, Orchestras Live, HMRC, Foyle Foundation, John Ellerman Foundation, PRS Foundation, Baker Richards, Cog Design and Rock-it Cargo.

We are hugely grateful to the chairs of the respective specialist manager groups for helping develop agendas and source external speakers:

- Chairs & Trustees – John Singer, Chairman, City of London Sinfonia
- Chamber Orchestras – Peter Helps, Sinfonia Viva
- Concert & Orchestra Managers – Alex Walden, BBC Concert Orchestra and Phil Boughton, Opera North
- Education Managers – Steve Pickett, Hallé Orchestra
- Finance Managers – Ian White, Scottish Chamber Orchestra
- Fundraising Managers – Nick Brealey, Britten Sinfonia
- Opera & Ballet – Phil Boughton, Opera North
- Scottish Members – Jenny Jamison, Scottish Ensemble and Jo Buckley, Dunedin Consort
- Welsh Members – Peter Bellingham, Sinfonia Cymru

The ABO also held an online Brexit workshop with DCMS in November 2020, with 81 attendees.

CHAMPIONING

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The ABO team met regularly during the year with representatives from the government and funding agencies, and holds regular meetings with the UK's arts associations and entertainment unions to discuss common strategies on arts policy and funding.

In April 2017 the ABO appointed Connect Communications to serve as Public Affairs consultants. Their role is to connect the ABO with ministers and parliamentarians, provide strategic advice, monitoring and research, as well as help with the production of key documents and responses to government consultations.

Over the year, meetings were held with Ministers and officials at the DCMS, other government departments and with parliamentarians to present evidence on the impact of Covid-19 and Brexit on the orchestral sector.

The **All Party Parliamentary Group on Classical Music** exists to bring together parliamentarians who have an interest in and wish to further the appreciation of classical music; to act as an interface between British orchestras' on and off-stage activities, the wider classical music industry, including broadcasters and the recording industry, and key decision makers and opinion formers; and to look at the potential for establishing parliamentary classical music awards and promoting and supporting young musicians. The ABO serves as the Group's secretariat, and advised parliamentarians during the year on various issues. APPG meetings during the year inevitably focused on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the classical music industry, with guest speakers Kevin Appleby, Chair, British Association of Concert Halls in May; Horace Trubridge, General Secretary, Musicians' Union in September; and acclaimed soprano Mary Bevan in December. In February the focus shifted to the EU-UK Trade & Co-operation Agreement. A joint meeting of the APPGs for the Performing Arts took place in September.

Our e-bulletin, *ABO News*, with news and information on the activity of ABO members, was sent to parliamentarians and key stakeholders at regular points during the year.

COMMUNICATIONS

Following the departure of Claire Willis of ElevenTenths PR as ABO's press consultant, Victoria Taylor worked with the ABO team from December 2019 to April 2021. Following the Covid-19 outbreak, Victoria worked to try and ensure the ABO's concerns for the orchestral sector were voiced in the media. Briefings were sent to key media contacts resulting in coverage by ITV News, Classic FM, Financial Times, The Stage, The Observer, The Guardian and The Times, as well as from publications in France, Japan and Hong Kong, all including quotes by ABO Director Mark Pemberton. Other press coverage included an authored piece by the ABO Director in Music Week and Arts Professional and interviews on BBC Radio 3's Music Matters and BBC Radio Scotland's Classics Unwrapped. Victoria also sent briefings relating to Brexit resulting in coverage in BBC News Online, The Guardian, Evening Standard, Classic FM, all including quotes from ABO Director. Mark Pemberton was also interviewed on BBC Radio 4's Front Row.

Victoria has also managed announcements relating to the Salomon Prize, Sirens Fund, Find Your Way and the ABO Board resulting in coverage in classical music industry media including BBC Radio 3, The Strad, International Arts Manager, Classical Music and Arts Professional.

For the online ABO Conference in March 2021, Victoria worked with the ABO team and with media partners Classic FM and Classical Music to ensure the smooth running of media and PR. Victoria also provided social media support and live tweets for the awards. Press coverage for the conference included two authored pieces (by ABO Director and by ABO Chair) in International Arts Manager, a feature on BBC Radio 3 Music Matters including interviews with ABO Director and two Conference speakers, as well as news coverage in Classical Music, Classic FM, Journal of Music, Arts Professional, The Violin Channel, The Telegraph, Slipped Disc, Thoroughly Good Blog and on BBC Radio 3's In Tune. Post conference coverage included an authored piece by ABO Director in the Big Issue and articles written by ABO conference speakers, Victoria Sayles and Claire Gevaux, for The Strad.

As of April 2021, Libby Binks of Sharp Arts Media has taken over the role of ABO press consultant.

ABO/MU CASUAL CONCERT/FREELANCE ORCHESTRAL AGREEMENT

The ABO continued to negotiate the ABO/MU Agreement through its working party comprised of Mark Pemberton and Jenny Daly, ABO; John Harte, Aurora Orchestra; Elaine Baines, City of London Sinfonia; Timothy Walker, London Philharmonic Orchestra; James Williams, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra; and Peter Helps, Sinfonia Viva. Negotiations were concluded successfully for an agreement for 2020/21.

AWARDS

The **ABO Award** is presented annually to the individual or institution considered by the members to have made the most important contribution to the orchestral life of the UK. In recognition of the unique circumstances of this year, the award was announced at the end of ABO Conference as going not to an individual or institution, but to a collective: **The Musicians**.

ABO Special Awards were presented to **John Summers**, former Chief Executive of the Hallé Orchestra, and **Timothy Walker CBE AM**, former Chief Executive of the London Philharmonic Orchestra in recognition of their service to the ABO and the UK's orchestral sector.

ABO/Classical Music Awards were presented to **Crispin Woodhead**, Chief Executive, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (Orchestra Manager of the Year), **John Gilhooly**, Chief Executive, Wigmore Hall (Concert Hall Manager of the Year) and **Moema Parrott**, CEO, Polyarts (Artist Manager of the Year).

The 2020 **ABO/RPS Salomon Prize** was presented to **Jane Mitchell**, Principal Flute, Aurora Orchestra, at a concert at Saffron Hall in September.

NATIONAL MUSIC COUNCIL AND MUSIC EDUCATION COUNCIL

The ABO is a member of the National Music Council, which exists to promote the interests of the music sector. The Director was re-elected as the NMC's Chairman in December 2020. It is also a member of the Music Education Council.

PEARLE* AND INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

The ABO and its members benefit hugely from membership of Pearle* (Live Performance Europe), the European league of performing arts associations, which helps the ABO keep track of and influence legislative and regulatory developments within the EU and which holds twice-yearly conferences of its members. The Director attended its conferences online, and also attended meetings of the Live Performance Sector Social Dialogue Committee in Brussels, which brings together employers' associations and trade unions from across the EU. Following the UK's departure from the EU, the ABO is no longer eligible to attend these meetings.

The ABO benefits from attending international conferences and engaging with colleagues abroad, through forging connections with arts leaders, orchestras and orchestral associations in other countries, and sharing and disseminating best practice to our respective memberships. With conferences shifting online due to the pandemic, the Director was able to attend and speak at Classical Next, League of American Orchestras and International Artist Managers Association events.

WEBSITE, SOCIAL MEDIA AND UPDATE

The ABO's website continues to be an invaluable source of communication and information for members and the general public. Figures show that from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 there were 43,279 visits from 20,498 unique visitors generating over 119,457 page views. These are an excellent measurement of how valuable the website has become in communicating its message to members and the wider world.

The ABO has continued to "tweet" relevant news via Twitter to its 8400 followers and the hashtag for the ABO Conference was widely used by delegates as well as observers away from the conference.

The ABO continued to distribute its much-valued monthly members Update, supplemented by regular bulletins, and Education and Youth Ensemble e-bulletins.

DEVELOPING

The ABO continues to provide access to a range of briefing sheets on topics of relevance and concern to the membership, and provides up-to-date information on events and information via its monthly email Update for members. The ABO continued to offer advice for the benefit of its members, and we are grateful for the pro-bono advice on VAT provided by Graham Elliott and tax advice from Smith & Williamson.

FAMILY ARTS CAMPAIGN

The ABO remains a member of the Family Arts Campaign consortium and is represented on the Project Board. The Campaign is now an Arts Council England Sector Support Organisation, with The Albany as accountable body. Projects included Family Arts Campaign webinars and widening access to data on family audiences through a partnership with The Audience Agency's Audience Finder database. Work on core activity continued, including promotion of family events via the Fantastic for Families listings website, online training, support to local Family Arts Network, and promotion of the Family Arts Standards quality-mark. Work on promoting age-friendly and intergenerational practices continued through promotion of the new Age-Friendly Standards and Celebrating Age seminars.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The ABO was unable to run its regular training courses this year due to the pandemic.

LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME: FIND YOUR WAY

The 2019-20 Find Your Way (FYW) programme finished with a final group meeting in May 2020 where participants heard from Lydia Connolly, Director, Harrison Parrott. Over the summer the ABO put out an open call for applications to the 2020/21 programme: 16 applications were received, and following zoom interviews six participants were selected. The 2020/21 programme was again jointly led by Richard Wigley, Wigley Arts Management and leadership trainer Andy Beaumont, with Fiona Harvey, the ABO's Education & Youth Ensembles Consultant as project manager. The ABO is grateful to Help Musicians, the Vernon Ellis Foundation and the ABO Trust for their continued funding of Find Your Way.

In 2020, we introduced a new buddy system for the participants, who were matched with FYW Alumni to be given support throughout the programme. The full list of participants, mentors and buddies is:

| Name | Mentor | FYW Alumni “Buddy” |
|--|--|---|
| Richard Collins, Head of Programming, Royal Northern College of Music | Matthew Swann, CEO, City of London Sinfonia | Tim Davy, Tours & Projects Manager, London Symphony Orchestra |
| Ursula Heidecker-Allen, Violinist, Royal Scottish National Orchestra | Lisa Tregale, Director, BBC National Orchestra & Chorus of Wales | Catherine Arlidge, Sub Principal Second Violin, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Artistic and Educational Director, National Children’s Orchestras of GB |
| Sumita Menon, Choral and Schools Projects Manager, London Symphony Orchestra | Jenny Jamison, CEO, Scottish Ensemble | Claire Bayliss, Orchestra Manager, Royal Opera House |
| Ruth Millar, Deputy Orchestra Manager, Ulster Orchestra | Simon Webb, Director, BBC Philharmonic | Annie Lydford, Managing Director, Nevill Holt Opera |
| Nick Thorne, Executive Director, Orchestras for All | Gavin Reid, CEO, Scottish Chamber Orchestra | Nick Jackman, Campaigns and Projects Director, London Philharmonic Orchestra |
| Kate Whitlock, General Manager, Hebrides Ensemble | Bob Riley, CEO, Manchester Camerata | Jenny Nicholls, Director of Concerts, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra |

The group’s first meeting took place in October with Chi-chi Nwanoku, Chineke! Foundation as guest speaker. The second meeting took place in December, when the group met with Lydia Connolly, Director, Harrison Parrott and the ABO Director. Richard Wigley held one-to-one meetings with participants during October/November. A third group meeting took place on 1 February, where for the first half of the meeting they were joined by eleven FYW Alumni. The cohort curated a session at the ABO Conference in March, titled ‘Aftershock: Reflect, Rebuild, Reconnect’, inspired by the *Aftershock* theme. Two informal catch up meetings were held in November and January.

The residential course planned for April 2021 was postponed to August 2021 with an extended deadline to attract an additional six participants to join the course.

We ran the “Essentials of Find Your Way” across three weeks 30 November to 14 December. The course is for those who are interested in finding out more about the principles of Find Your Way. Annie Lydford, General Manager, Nevill Holt Opera and 2017/18 FYW Alumna was the guest speaker for the course. The participants were:

- Victoria Eyre, Concerts & Tours Manager, Royal Northern Sinfonia & Classical Team, Sage Gateshead
- Sophie O'Donnell, Production Coordinator, Ulster Orchestra
- Katie Lucas, Learning & Participation Manager, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO)
- Felix Lo, Orchestra Manager, Southbank Sinfonia
- Kate Jones, Programming Executive, Royal Albert Hall
- Helen Macleod, Choruses Manager, BBC
- Marcus Norman, Artist Development Manager, Southbank Sinfonia
- Simone Homes, General Manager, Bath Philharmonia
- Jonathan Westrup, Education Manager, Open Up Music
- Lisa Rourke, Sub-Principal Viola, Royal Scottish National Orchestra
- Alessandro Tommasi, Tour Manager, Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester
- Colette Overdijk, Tutti Ist violin & MU steward, BSO

Since April 2020, we have held Zoom meetings for FYW Alumni, which attracts around 20 people each time. Guest speakers have included Chi-chi Nwanoku; Gavin Reid, Scottish Chamber Orchestra; and Simon Woods, League of American Orchestras.

HEALTHY ORCHESTRA

The ABO maintained its Healthy Orchestra programme. The ABO is a partner in Conservatoires UK's Musical Impact project, which over four years will work to enhance the health and wellbeing of musicians studying and working in Britain.

EDUCATION & YOUTH ENSEMBLES PROGRAMME

During the year we held a number of COVID-19 focused meetings on Zoom for Education Managers and Youth Ensembles. We worked with Music Mark and Making Music in these meetings to provide clear briefings for members, and to gather information for advocacy and information purposes.

The bi-annual Specialist Manager Meetings of education managers were held online. They continue to enable members to share their work and hear from guest speakers, representing participants in orchestral education projects or those who work with the participants such as teachers.

In June 2020 our guest speaker was Bridget Whyte, CEO, Music Mark. She provided an overview since the first national lockdown, and the discussion focused on what the return to school meant for music, guidance for teachers, advocating for the importance and value of music, reconnecting across networks and partnerships and being adaptable.

In November 2020, the focus of the meeting was music and health, with a presentation by Matthew Swann, City of London Sinfonia, Sarah Derbyshire, Orchestras Live, and Fiona Harvey, ABO, of the report 'Orchestras in Healthcare'. We presented the findings of the survey carried out over the summer of 2020. In March 2021, we co-presented the report to the Music Education Council's spring seminar on the subject of music, health and wellbeing. The report was launched in March 2021 in time for the ABO Conference session, 'A Healthier Nation'.

YOUTH ENSEMBLES

The national youth orchestras of GB, Wales, Ireland, Northern Ireland and National Children's Orchestras of GB, National Youth Folk Ensemble, National Open Youth Orchestra and Orchestras for All met in June and November 2020, to discuss and share work, artistic and operational issues. They also summarised the issues they were facing to provide more detail for the ABO Director in his work with DCMS.

The Education & Youth Ensembles Consultant co-hosted zooms for ABO youth ensembles with Making Music's youth groups, and also attended meetings hosted by the Irish Association of Youth Orchestras, sharing information about latency in online performance, and online distance learning. In June, Catherine Arlidge chaired a meeting for youth ensembles which covered the digital offer and the physical and mental wellbeing of students, including how to keep them motivated and engaged. This was followed by a co-hosted meeting with Music Mark to discuss and clarify the guidance that had been issued by government departments.

During the year the Education & Youth Ensembles Consultant attended the following seminars/events on behalf of the ABO:

- Classical Next Global Orchestras Meeting
- League of American Orchestras Conference session: Gathering Again: The Science of Orchestral Music Making Amidst COVID-19
- National Campaign for the Arts Open Space Conference ‘Over the Rainbow’
- Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance strategic partners meeting
- Musical Care Taskforce meetings focusing on music-making with people who live with dementia

BRITISH COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL MENTORING PROGRAMME

Following the ABO Conference, the British Council worked with the ABO on implementation of an International Mentoring programme for emerging leaders. A selection process took place in March 2021 and a full report will be contained in the Annual Review for 2021/22.

ABO TRUST

The ABO Trust was a beneficiary of a legacy from the estate of Mrs Elizabeth Ashton Edwards in 2010. The trustees have agreed to make a grant to the ABO towards the costs of its Education & Youth Ensembles and Find Your Way programmes.

SIRENS

The ABO Trust received a donation of £200,000 in 2016 from Diana Ambache to support the costs of the Sirens fund, to encourage the programming of works by historical women composers for a 10 year period. The fund has an annual end of February deadline. In 2020, seven awards were made to:

- Bath Philharmonia for Grazyna Bacewicz *Divertimento for Strings*
- Manchester Camerata for Anna Amalia von Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach *Overture to Erwin and Elmire*
- Royal Liverpool Philharmonic for Amy Beach *Gaelic Symphony*
- Royal Northern Sinfonia for Helen Munktel *Bränningar op. 19 (Breaking Waves)*
- Scottish Chamber Orchestra for Clara Schumann *Piano Concerto in A minor Op 7*
- Southbank Sinfonia for Grace Williams *Sea Sketches*
- Ulster Orchestra for Elizabeth Maconchy *Nocturne*

Due to COVID-19 those works that were due to be performed in 2020 were postponed, and each orchestra is revising its plans for performances at later dates.

FINANCE

The ABO made a surplus for the year ended 31 March 2021 of £49,132. This resulted in reserves increasing to £255,335. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the national shutdown of performing arts venues, the ABO took steps to protect itself from financial damage. Savings were made through utilising the Job Retention Scheme and negotiating a rent-free period on its new office at Somerset House. Income was better than expected, with retention of membership subscriptions, a shift to digital events, and higher than expected attendance at the online conference. This has meant an increase in reserves, to offset any potential downturn in 2021-22.

MEMBERSHIP

Despite the pandemic, the ABO saw huge loyalty from its members, with minimal cancellation of subscriptions, and a number of new members. Orpheus Sinfonia joined as Full Members, and National Schools Symphony Orchestra and Ulster Youth Orchestra as Associate members. Garsington Opera and Music in the Round became Affiliate members, Rock-It Cargo, SOS Global and Hal Leonard joined as Corporate Members and The Corner Shop PR joined as Sole Trader member. A full membership list as at the end of the financial year is included in this Annual Review.

GOVERNANCE

The Board met five times during the year, ensuring scrutiny of the Association's activities and finances.

The AGM in November saw the retirement of Gavin Reid, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Matthew Swann, City of London Sinfonia, and their places will be filled by an open recruitment process in June 2021.

Following an open call for candidates, Leslie Kwan, Founder and Managing Director, Lionsgate Music and Chris Loughran, Senior Policy & Advocacy Advisor, The HALO Trust, were co-opted to the board in February 2021.

The ABO is grateful to Laurie Watt, former Senior Counsel at Charles Russell Speechlys, for his support as the Association's Honorary Legal Adviser.

STAFF

Mark Pemberton continued to serve as Director, Jenny Daly as Membership & Operations Manager and Emily Singh as Office & Events Administrator.

The staff were supported by Fiona Harvey, Education & Youth Ensembles Consultant; Stewart Powell, Finance Manager, SOLT/UK Theatre (to August 2020) and Chris Wright, Finance Consultant (from August 2020); Victoria Taylor PR; and Connect Communications.

ABO MEMBERSHIP 2020/21

FULL MEMBERS

Those professional orchestras and ensembles which have existed for not less than two years in the UK, and have undertaken no fewer than 24 public performances, entitled to all services and discounts and having a vote at General Meetings.

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| Academy of Ancient Music | Orpheus Sinfonia |
| Academy of St Martin in the Fields | Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra |
| Arcangelo | Philharmonia Orchestra |
| Aurora Orchestra | Red Note Ensemble |
| Bath Philharmonia | Royal Liverpool Philharmonic |
| BBC Concert Orchestra | Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra |
| BBC National Orchestra of Wales | Royal Philharmonic Orchestra |
| BBC Philharmonic Orchestra | Royal Scottish National Orchestra |
| BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra | Sage Gateshead (Royal Northern Sinfonia) |
| BBC Symphony Orchestra | Scottish Chamber Orchestra |
| Birmingham Contemporary Music Group | Scottish Ensemble |
| Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra | Sinfonia Cymru |
| Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra | Sinfonia Verdi |
| Britten Sinfonia | Sinfonia Viva |
| Chineke! Foundation | Southbank Sinfonia |
| City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra | The English Concert |
| City of London Sinfonia | The Glasgow Barons |
| Dunedin Consort | The Hallé |
| English Baroque Soloists | The Hanover Band |
| English Symphony Orchestra | The Mozartists |
| Gabrieli Consort & Players | The Sixteen |
| La Serenissima | Ulster Orchestra |
| London Chamber Orchestra | |
| London Contemporary Orchestra | Opera/Ballet Orchestras |
| London Handel Orchestra | Orchestra of English National Ballet |
| London Mozart Players | Orchestra of English National Opera |
| London Philharmonic Orchestra | Glyndebourne on Tour Orchestra |
| London Sinfonietta | Northern Ballet Theatre Orchestra |
| London Symphony Orchestra | Orchestra of Opera North |
| Manchester Camerata | Royal Ballet Sinfonia (Birmingham Royal Ballet) |
| Monteverdi Choir and Orchestras | Orchestra of the Royal Opera House |
| Northern Chamber Orchestra | Orchestra of Scottish Ballet |
| Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment | Orchestra of Scottish Opera |
| Orchestra of the Swan | Orchestra of Welsh National Opera |
| Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique | |

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Those orchestras that have been in existence for less than two years or have given less than 24 professional public performances in the UK; non-UK professional orchestras; conservatoires; national and local youth orchestras

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|---|--|
| Bristol Plays Music | Oasby Music Group |
| Chamber Orchestra of Europe | Orchestras for All |
| Chetham's School of Music | Oxfordshire County Music Service |
| Congleton Youth Orchestra | Royal Academy of Music |
| Devon Music Education Hub | Royal College of Music |
| Digital Orchestra (Drake Music) | Royal Conservatoire of Scotland |
| East Dunbartonshire Music Service | Royal Northern College of Music |
| English Folk Dance and Song Society | Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama |
| Guildhall School of Music and Drama | RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra |
| Hallé Youth Orchestra | Severn Arts |
| Highgate School | Singapore Symphony Orchestra |
| Iceland Symphony Orchestra | Snape Maltings |
| Irish Association of Youth Orchestras | Stoneleigh Youth Orchestra |
| Kingston Upon Hull Music Service | Thames Youth Orchestra |
| National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain | The Paraorchestra and Friends |
| National Open Youth Orchestra | The Szilvay Foundation & Colourstrings |
| National Opera Studio | Trinity College Junior Dept Symphony Orchestra |
| National Schools Symphony Orchestra | Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance |
| National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain | Ulster Youth Orchestra |
| National Youth Orchestras of Scotland | University of Birmingham Music Department |
| National Youth String Orchestra | Wells Cathedral School |
| Nevis Ensemble | Westmorland Youth Orchestra |

AFFILIATE MEMBERS

Those organisations involved with the presentation, support and commissioning of the work of the Association and its full members, such as funding agencies, broadcasters, festivals and venues

| | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Arts Council England, and nine regional offices | Making Music |
| Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music | Music For Youth Music in the Round |
| Barbican Centre | Opera & Music Theatre Forum |
| BBC Proms | Orchestras Live |
| BBC Radio 3 | Royal Albert Hall |
| Bristol Beacon (formerly Bristol Music Trust) | Royal Philharmonic Society |
| British Arts Festivals Association | Saffron Hall Trust |
| British Council | Southbank Centre |
| Cadogan Hall | Spitalfields Festival |
| Children's Classic Concerts | St David's Hall |
| Classic FM | St John's, Smith Square |
| Garsington Opera | Music Mark |
| Help Musicians | Three Choirs Festival |
| Incorporated Society of Musicians | Town Hall & Symphony Hall, Birmingham |
| Live Music Now Scotland | Wigmore Hall |

CORPORATE MEMBERS*Other interested parties and commercial organisations that support the work of the Association and its members*

| | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 2434.com Ltd | Maestro! Tour Management Ltd |
| Action for Children's Arts | Orchestras Canada |
| Aircraft Chartering Services | Oxford University Press |
| Arts Marketing Association | Pulleyn Orchestra Transport |
| Askonas Holt Ltd | Rock-it Cargo |
| Black Cat Music | Tilney, Smith & Williamson |
| Boomerang Carnets | SOS Global |
| Cameron Mackintosh Ltd | Sound Sense |
| China Symphony Development Foundation | Sound Space Vision |
| Hal Leonard Europe Limited | Specialised Travel Ltd |
| HarrisonParrott | Stagecast Ltd |
| IMG Artists | Symphony Services International |
| Intermusica Artists' Management | The Musicians Answering Service |
| International Artist Managers' Association | The Ivors Academy (formerly BASCA) |
| La Playa | Young Classical Artists Trust |
| League of American Orchestras | |

SOLE TRADER MEMBERS

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Anna Rowe | Trudy Wright Executive Coaching & Music |
| Marion Friend MBE | Consultancy |
| The Corner Shop PR | VLT Legal Services |

HONORARY MEMBERS*By invitation of the ABO board*

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Andrew Bennett | Roy McEwan OBE |
| Simon Crookall | Edward Smith |
| Trevor Ford | John Summers MBE |
| Sir Clive Gillinson | Malcolm Warne Holland |
| Michael Henson | Timothy Walker CBE AM |
| Antony Lewis-Crosby | Laurie Watt |
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BBC Philharmonic Orchestra
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

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