



The Serse Trust(Registered Charity 1153972)  
6 Beechwood Avenue  
Weybridge  
Surrey KT13 9TE  
*Chairman:* Christopher Silvester  
*Treasurer:* James Alexander

## **The Serse Trust Annual Activity Report for 2019**

The Serse Trust was formed on 18th December 2012. It obtained HMRC approval on 1st June 2013 [Ref. no. EW00385] and full registered charitable status on 26 September 2013 [No. 1153972].

The trustees are Christopher Silvester (chairman), whose professional background is in journalism and PR; James Alexander (treasurer), whose professional background is in investment management; and Edward Houghton, whose professional background is in the law. During the course of 2019 Dr Alan King, a consultant anaesthetist and doyen of the London Handel scene, joined the board of trustees, In addition, the Friends of the Trust contains a solicitor and a music critic/former agent.

The Trust was formed to support companies that seek to revive 18th-century opera seria. The principal vehicle is Opera Settecento, of which Leo Duarte is the Director. During 2019 we appointed Joanne Miller as General Manager to continue organising our mini-tours and conduct a marketing push based around our Promotional Video project. Miranda Jackson was appointed Executive Director to develop and oversee all the activities of the opera company.

In the course of 2019 The Serse Trust sponsored two major concert performances for Opera Settecento of *Venceslao*, a Handel pasticcio. One was in London and the second in Germany, with the LHF and the Halle Handel Festival as co-producers. We also co-promoted a very successful concert with The Handel Friends.

*Venceslao* was the fourth pasticcio we have resurrected from obscurity following our success with *Catone* in 2015, *Elpidia* in 2016 and *Ormisda* in 2017. The productions elicited huge applause at both venues including a standing ovation in Germany. Our six young singers received very good reviews.

The approximately £40000 costs of *Venceslao* were shared between the two productions since we negotiated combined fees for most of the artists and much of the preparation and rehearsal costs were shared.

The co-promoted November concert with The Handel Friends featured a neglected but substantial Handel "operatic" cantata *Aminta e Fillide*. The singers were the up and coming soprano duo Fair Oriana. The concert was our first foray into original performance gestures, with the two sopranos being coached by a leading expert in the field, Brian Robins. A record turnout for a Friends concert was well rewarded with an outstanding concert that also received some rave reviews. The concert ran at substantial operating loss but the extremely generous donation from Alan King plus the use of some of our reserves was able to cover this very worthwhile venture,

Also in November we recorded a promotional video featuring some of the best arias from our pasticcio series. Some of the clips will be put up on our website but the main rationale is produce material that can be sent to promoters and concert venues around Britain and Europe to secure bookings for Opera Settecento,

The continued success of LHF and Halle appearances led to us being rebooked for 2020 for a co-production of Handel's *Fernando* using a prestigious, new, performing edition published by Barenreiter.

The next generation talent that we choose for our concerts as part of our charitable aims continued to prove their worth around the concert halls and opera houses of Europe. We are delighted to see that Erica Eloff has been booked as Leonora for 2020 in a new production of *Fidelio* with leading German opera festivals having spent much of 2019 featuring as Queen of the Night in the *Magic Flute* also in that country. Marie Lys is also playing Leonore in Germany (and Austria) in 2020 as well as a run in *Candide* as Cunegonde in Lausanne. Rupert Charlesworth goes from strength to strength, Having played at the ENO as Tamino and as Fernando in *Miranda* in Bordeaux amongst

many quality engagements in 2019, he features prominently in Hanover opera's productions in 2020. Ilona Revolskaya's career is also developing really well having been appointed by the Theater an der Wien in Vienna, Austria, as a young principal artist, she headlines twice in 2020 as Genia and as Eurydice.

The Trust had a total turnover of £50,000 in 2018 (£48,000 in 2018). Donations (plus associated Gift Aid) and grants again made up just under 25% income, the bulk coming from fees, ticket and programme sales.

The major personal donors (Alan King, Edward Houghton, James Alexander) were again very supportive in giving their normal annual contributions. We also received a number of other individual donations and support from Alan Sainer and Angela Cain, amongst others. We were also grateful for another significant donation from the Behrens foundation via Stephen Cockburn. We would also like to thank Paul Fage for undertaking the annual Independent Examination of our accounts.

Almost all our expenses go on singers, musicians, research and venue hire. Administration costs were minimal as time was volunteered free of charge, mostly by the Trustees and other supporters. Our revenues were only very modestly ahead of costs in 2019 as we spent cash on The Handel Friends concert and invested for the future with our promotional video.

**James Alexander**



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

The Serse Trust

1153972

## Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period  
from

01/01/19

To

31/12/19

### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Donations	9,800	-	-	9,800	8,600
Ticket and programme sales, fee	39,988	-	-	39,988	36,805
Gift Aid rebates	-	-	-	-	2,364
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b> (Gross income for AR)	49,788	-	-	49,788	47,769
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total receipts</b>	49,788	-	-	49,788	47,769
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Production 1 (Venceslao LHF/Halle)	40,731	-	-	40,731	24,540
Production 2 (Handel Friends)	3,243	-	-	3,243	15,866
Promo Video	2,134	-	-	2,134	489
Other costs	2,120	-	-	2,120	489
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	48,228	-	-	48,228	41,384
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total payments</b>	48,228	-	-	48,228	41,384
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	1,560	-	-	1,560	6,385
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	20,684	-	-	20,684	-
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	22,244	-	-	22,244	6,385

## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Current Account	21,496	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	21,496	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	OK	OK
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	

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The Trustees of The Serse Trust  
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26 April 2020

**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Serse Trust**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity, The Serse Trust ('the Trust') for the year ended 31 December 2019.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act'). I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'PSFage', written in a cursive style.

Paul Fage