

## MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WAGNER SOCIETY

WEDNESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2017 18.30 – 21:00

15 Gibson Square, London N1 0RD

**ATTENDEES:** Neil King (Treasurer)  
Cormac Cawley (Secretary)  
Helen Beardsley  
Harry Clarke  
Geoffrey Griffiths  
Jan Leigh

**APOLOGIES** Alan Ridgewell (“AR”), Ray Godson (“RG”), Richard Miles (“RM”/“Chair”), & Katie Clay (“KC”).

**GUEST** Henry Kennedy

The meeting opened at 18:30 and was declared quorate, there being present at least one officer and other committee members constituting at least one third of the total committee membership. The Treasurer chaired the meeting in the absence of the Chairman.

The Treasurer welcomed Henry Kennedy, one of the Society’s 2017 Bayreuth Bursars.

### **Item 1: Apologies for absence**

As above.

### **Item 2: Minutes of Meeting on 16.08.2017.**

The draft minutes of the meeting on 26.07. 2017 were proposed and agreed by all, subject to some comments which NK had passed to CTC by e-mail before the meeting.

On matters arising it was agreed that CTC would chase committee members for their comments about the draft AGM minutes.

### **Item 3: Chairman’s Report**

RM had sent an e-mail to NK with the following points for the attention of the meeting: -

1. George Osborne has promised to join the Society
2. RM sent in his suggestions for the Goodall Award for 2018.

### **Item 4: Treasurer’s Report**

NK reported that he had circulated the accounts for July/August, detailing tickets sales and events final results. The numbers were a bit rosier.

NK reported that the class had made a loss despite Dame Gwyneth’s assertion that NK’s figures were not correct.

On the question of the Budget, NK proposed, and the meeting agreed that everyone must take responsible for their element – KC on Wagner News, HC for the Website, CTC for the AGM costs, and so on. NK would like us to discuss this again at the next meeting.

On the question of reserves, NK thinks that we should maintain the current level because of the revenue they produce for the Society.

#### **Item 5 - Written Resolution & Decision Procedure (“WRP”)**

CTC reported on the WRP and agreed to produce Revised Bye-laws to address the issues of abstention and appointment of proxy for consideration by the next meeting.

#### **Item 6: “Wagner 1900” Grant Application**

NK reported that the RWVI were offering €1000. Apparently, Andrea Buchanan had spoken in favour of this when the RWVI made its decision.

The meeting agreed that we would ask Ms Anna Stoll Knecht (“ASK”) to give our members a 30% discount on all aspect of the conference, not just the Tristan performance. It was agreed that CTC would write to ASK and clarify our position on this, so as to move the matter forward.

#### **Item 7: Grants Scheme**

It was agreed to leave this topic for discussion as the next meeting.

#### **Item 8: Bayreuth Bursaries/Mastersinger co-operation**

At this point NK invited HK to share his views on the Singing Competition and the Bayreuth Bursary, particularly bearing in mind his experience of the latter and his contact with singers and young musicians.

HK felt that the prize-money should be linked to teachers and tuition. He also suggested that there should be a registration fee. He considers the £5000 prize to be a good one and he also agrees with the age limit of 32.

He feels that we need to work more on our links with music colleges and e-mail them with details of free membership for students.

HK also suggested that we publicise the singing competition on the “musicalchairs” website (which displays and advertises details of music and singing competitions) and is a reference point for students.

HK felt that the Singing Competition should also be a focal point for sponsoring singers.

He also considers that the Stipendium is a good avenue for mentoring young singers and musicians.

HK also thinks that the Masterclasses were of interest not only to singers but also to musicians. For this reason, HK thinks that we should be doing more masterclasses for students. He explained that since the music colleges do not do many Wagner masterclasses as they are much more exclusive, there is a role for us here.

HK thinks we should be stressing to students the things which they can have for free!

He also feels that the Masters giving the masterclass can give valuable advice to students about not just their voices but how to pursue a career from a networking and contacts point of view. This would be particularly helpful where some of the Masters had repertoire other than Wagner.

HK also felt that in relation to the Ballot for Bayreuth tickets, we should consider giving talks about the offers which members would be going to Bayreuth.

### **Item 9: Co-option of Henry Kennedy onto committee**

NK proposed that Henry Kennedy be co-opted onto the committee in accordance with Clause 7(b) (i) of the Society's Constitution. CTC seconded the proposal. The meeting voted unanimously to co-opt Henry.

### **Item 10: Events Officers' Reports**

#### ***(i) JL Events Officer's Report***

JL explained that since she had started her degree course in Opera studies she won't have as much time to devote to events going forward.

It was agreed that CTC would send mailchimp to members about the Bayreuth Bursary Event on 05.10.2017 for which ticket prices were £20. Catherine Dixon is doing the catering. JL reminded the meeting that St Botolph's were losing their piano, which means that we shall have to find an alternative location whenever a piano is required. JL also mentioned the question of dinner for the artists after the event.

JL reported that she was planning the DAE Events and that she was hoping that David Nice would interview DAE. Catherine Dixon will do the catering for this event.

We then have the Christmas party at NK's house and the Joint Societies Dinner at the Lancaster Hall on 17.01.2018.

JL is hoping that we can do the event with Michael Volle in January.

JL also proposed an event around the "Idea of a Siegfried".

JL reported that it was possible to hire a room at Pushkin house for £480 but that we would need to pay £90 for their kitchen facilities.

JL reported that it was possible for charities to hire Lancaster Hall (location for the music charities dinner) for £120.

JL also mentioned the Mayfair hotel as a possible location for future events.

#### ***(ii) HB Events Officer's Report***

The meeting considered a proposal by CTC and seconded by HB on whether to extend the deadline for acceptance of applications for the singing competition to 29.09.2017. Following a vote, the proposal was carried.

HB reported that according to Dame Gwyneth the quality this year was very good. HB will report to the next meeting on who had made it through the auditions (which were taking place on 15.10.2017) to the finals day.

### ***(iii) Events sub-committee***

The meeting decided to establish an Events Subcommittee. JL, GG and HK agreed to join that subcommittee. It was agreed that AR would also be asked to join.

### **Item 11: Media, Advertising, Twitter & Facebook**

HB reported on this.

Items which have been included recently are the fact that Katie Stephenson is now an ENO "?????" Artist.

HB asked for photos from Bayreuth

HP pointed out that we need someone to deal with advertising on these platforms.

HP also reported that David Nice is doing a session on the Ring at the frontline club. If this is a not-for-profit event, then they should give us something free in return such as advertising or publicity.

JL mentioned that we need to contact Longborough about including something in their periodical magazine.

### **Item 12: Membership Report**

NK reported that the numbers were ticking up slowly.

### **Item 13: Website Report**

HC reported.

He estimated that the new site/platform should be ready for the committee to view by the end of this week (24.09.2017). Once we have all until we can then make a decision about whether or not to go with the new platform.

HC explained that it was an Apricot/CMS platform a bit like WordPress and was designed for societies like ours. There would be no problems with plug-ins not working. It deals with events, ticket sales and discounting for example. The finance aspect is fully integrated, and it is compatible with PayPal, Stripe and Visa.

### **Item 14: Wagner News**

KC has sent a message to NK to remind the committee that tomorrow (21.09.2017) was the deadline for contributions to the Bayreuth Edition of Wagner News.

### **Item 15: Goodall Award Nominations**

The meeting considered nominations for the Goodall award.

Mark Elder, Richard Farnes, Lisa Gasteen, Marek Janowski, Richard Jones, Jonas Kaufmann, Wasfi Khani, Iain Paterson, Stuart Skelton, Nina Stemme, Klaus Florian Vogt and Catherine Foster were the nominees.

Following a poll of participants in the meeting it was agreed that Catherine Foster, Iain Paterson, Mark Elder, Nina Stemme & Richard Farnes were the most popular nominees. It was therefore agreed to poll committee members on these five nominees on the basis of single transferable votes.

### **Item 16: Date for Dinner in 2018**

NK mentioned that the date for the dinner would depend on the availability of the winner of the Goodall Award for 2018. The sooner we could make our decision about the award the quicker we could get the dinner in the diary and start making plans for it.

### **Item 17: Covent Garden Lohengrin**

NK stressed the importance of planning events to coincide with the Covent Garden Lohengrin. The events committee would lead on this.

### **Item 18: Covent Garden Ring Autumn 2018**

NK suggested that the committee decide on suitable dates on which we could all go.

### **Item 19: Baden Baden Parsifal**

NK suggested that the committee coordinate their plans for Baden-Baden.

### **Item 20: AOB**

1. The question of an events catering committee was raised. It was agreed that the events committee would deal with this going forward.
2. It was agreed that the meeting in January would be on the 18<sup>th</sup> as we are all at the Music Societies Dinner on the 17<sup>th</sup>.
3. It was also agreed that the meeting in October would be on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **MEETING ENDED 21.30**

### **NEXT MEETINGS**

Wednesday 18 October

Wednesday 15 November

### **2018**

Thursday 18 January

Wednesday 21 February

Wednesday 21 March

Wednesday 18 April

AGM 16 May 2018 (proposed)