



STRINGS ATTACHED

enabling quality chamber music for Brighton & Hove

stringsattachedmusic.org.uk
January 2022

Report of the Committee for 2021

This annual report summarises Strings Attached activity during 2021 and includes the Coffee Concert Season 2020/21.

The 2020/21 season of Coffee Concerts was an unusual one. The continuing coronavirus pandemic meant that live performance, normally a cornerstone of the Strings Attached experience, was impossible for the whole season. It is also not possible, therefore, in this annual report to reflect on the usual wide range of music making to which we have become accustomed. (Live concerts returned in Autumn 2021 and will be included in the annual report for 2022).

However, this does not mean there was no music for us to enjoy. As a result of the combined ingenuity of the Brighton Dome and Brighton Festival team and the Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra we were treated to three online concerts led by renowned pianist and BPO Music Director Joanna MacGregor.

The first of these, sponsored by Andrew and Margaret Polmear, featured the Gildas Quartet in November 2020, playing Schubert, Haydn and the Shostakovich piano quintet with Joanna MacGregor. This felt like an oasis in the desert for live music lovers and was very well received despite the online format.

The second (in February) and third (in April) featured a bespoke BPO Chamber ensemble. These concerts included works by Bach, Mozart, Schubert, Brahms, Pärt and Piazzolla (this latter arranged by MacGregor) and thus provided a varied chamber music repertoire. The ensemble rose to the challenge of such variety in style very successfully.

Strings Attached is grateful to Brighton Dome and Brighton Festival for developing the means for us to continue to enjoy chamber music during this difficult period.

We are, as ever, grateful to Chris Darwin for his excellent programme notes, and to Andrew Polmear (and occasionally John Hawkins) for his ever prompt and interesting official reviews and also for producing the newsletter. Andrew has stepped down from providing reviews

because of hearing issues and is now replaced as official reviewer by Michael Wilkinson. We are grateful to Andrew for his illuminating reviews over the years and look forward to reading more from Michael.

Thanks are due to David Botibol for maintaining our website. This year his work has included developing an online membership form and making links on the web page easier to find – we are especially grateful for these extra tasks. Thanks go also to Chris Darwin for maintaining the pages containing the calendar of chamber music events and for local amateur performers. We are, as ever, grateful to Andrew Comben and his team for making concerts happen during 2021 despite the pandemic.

The refurbishment of the Corn Exchange has progressed during the lockdown period and we look forward to being able to return to it. Work has progressed more slowly during lockdown unfortunately. Strings Attached has sponsored a seat in the refurbished space.

Whilst there has not been an opportunity to welcome young people to concerts during this season, our membership of the Cavatina Scheme, which contributes to the ticket price for those between the ages of 8 and 25, has continued. In addition, free membership of Strings Attached is now offered to students. Members are encouraged to make suggestions for ways of encouraging a younger audience to the Coffee Concerts.

Our work is only possible thanks to the kind generosity of Members – your subscriptions and donations are helping not only to keep the future of the Coffee Concerts secure but also to provide more wonderful chamber music for people who live around Brighton and Hove. Donations in particular will make it possible occasionally to provide extra concerts after our return to the Corn Exchange. If you would like to find out more or make a donation, please contact us at info@stringsattachedmusic.org.uk.

The committee was saddened to learn of the death in April of former committee member Euan Read.

Betty Skolnick has joined the committee which now numbers six.

The committee met on three occasions in 2021.

On 31 December 2021 we had 67 members. This is a significant reduction on the 109 members we reported last year – we look forward to former members rejoining!

Current Committee: Mary McKean (Chair), Christine Moon (Treasurer), Margaret Polmear (Secretary), Guy Richardson, Helen Simpson, Betty Skolnick.



Mary McKean (Chair)

