

Annual General Meeting of the Adelaide Youth Orchestras Inc.
held on May 24, 2020 at 12:00PM via Zoom On-line
MINUTES

Present

Members: Catherine Baldwin, Anthony Beasley, Gertraud Beck, Rosie Burn, Lexi Buxton, Rameshwari Chauhan, Keith Crellin OAM, Michael Critchley, Simone Gibbs, Ross Goble, Jing Han, Ada Huang, David Kennedy, Jee Kim, Noreen Lucero, Christine McCabe, Linus Ng, Claire Oremland, Jenny Shen, Andrew Size, Nynke Van der Burg, Julie Weller, Ellena Williamson

Apologies: Jessica Lee,

Chair: Catherine Baldwin

1. Welcome

A quorum of members were in attendance. The meeting commenced at 12.00pm. Catherine Baldwin welcomed everyone thanking them for their efforts in using the on-line Zoom platform to attend this year's meeting along with their ongoing support throughout the difficult time of the COVID- 19 pandemic.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

Motion: That the minutes of the AGM held on May 15, 2019 be approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Through a show of hands, the motion was carried.

3. Election of Officers

Motion: That Catherine Baldwin, Noreen Lucero, Andrew Size and Simone Gibbs be appointed to the board for a further term. Moved: Linus Ng Seconded: Christine McCabe. Through a show of hands, the motion was carried.

4. Reports

4.1 Artistic Director's Report

Keith Crellin OAM presented his report noting that the spread of activities in South Australia by all groups of the Adelaide Youth Orchestras in 2019 was impressive. Community concerts, the Maestro series, Ensemble program and School and Senior Heroes concerts, lunch hour concerts and intrastate touring are all facets of this organisation of which we should be proud.

Community concerts

Our burgeoning community concerts have now become a major part of our presentations taking our music making into the suburbs bringing great joy to many audiences across Adelaide. From Elizabeth to Mt Barker, the Adelaide Youth Sinfonia, the Adelaide Youth Wind orchestra, the Adelaide Youth Strings and our chamber ensembles have been making their presence felt and it is to be hoped that we can expand these even further in the coming years. A very important aspect of these tours is the way in which they help to bind the groups in ways that weekly rehearsals cannot do. These tours which are made possible with the generous sponsorship of the RAA, whilst taking music into the suburbs also give more meaning to those performing and inspire them to greater heights.

Maestro Series

The Maestro series concerts performed by AdYO are now a centrepiece of our activities.

There were many fine performances in these Maestro concerts throughout the year and a major highlight was the performance by Jiwon Kim of the Lalo Symphony Espagnole. I am very keen to present a professional soloist each year as it is an important window for our young musicians into the world of the professional performer. Jiwon's performance inspired the orchestra to new heights and I felt this really showed in the performance of the rest of the program that day. Another highlight would have to be my passing on the baton to associate conductor Bryan Griffith for the second Maestro concert. He conducted a very challenging program including Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and two twentieth century works which took the orchestra in new directions and expanded their musical palette. The concerto performances of Lynda Latu, Tommy Ng and William Madden in Maestro 3 were a triumph for all three soloists and followed by the magnificent Rachmaninov first symphony firmly supported my thesis that if challenged, young musicians will always produce exceptional performances and grow in stature from such experiences.

Small Ensembles

AdYO now boasts four chamber ensembles which have weekly tutorials and move into the community to perform for schools and retirement villages as well as travelling intrastate to perform. The two string quartets, wind quintet and brass ensemble all performed in various venues and from all accounts were received with great acclaim. Chamber music apart from being a wonderful medium of expression also teaches great listening and ensemble skills and when the participants return to their large ensembles they pass on these important skills to their peers. Major Highlights here were the Recitals Australia Lunchtime Concerts which saw the debut of the new brass ensemble and the concert curated by the Australian String Quartet at Ukaria in Mount Barker for our two string quartets. This was a very special night of performances and to share the stage with the Australian string quartet in concert will be an occasion that all of our performers will always remember.

Schools Concerts

Our smaller ensembles along with AYS and AdYWO all presented many schools concerts throughout South Australia and feedback from their audiences suggests our continued presence in the schools is essential to the spread of musical appreciation and education in our community. Another important development was the schools concerts in Elder Hall given by AdSI and ADYO. This was a new direction for AdYO where schools came to a central place to hear the concert rather than have our larger groups touring. This is an expansion of our schools' program as it allows our large ensembles to also perform concerts for schools (and many more students) without the prohibitive expense of touring. There were many wonderful concerts presented to schools in 2019 but for me a major highlight was to see the Mahogany quartet on a tour of the Eyre Peninsula presenting their own concerts and communicating very successfully with audiences from reception to year 12.

The progress of AdYO, AdSI, AdYWO, AYS, Adelaide Youth Wind quintet, Adelaide Youth Brass Quintet and the Permanbuco and Mahogany String Quartets is a testament to the hard work of our conductors, tutors, managerial staff and our volunteers. The combined work and passion of all of these people ensures that AdYO will continue to prosper in the years to come and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who have contributed to the success of these groups. All of our ensembles contribute greatly to the musical health of our state and have become an indispensable part of the concert giving and educational performances in South Australia.

4.2 Chair's Report

Catherine thanked Keith for his report noting that anyone who experienced any of the concerts in 2019, 28 concerts and 13 days of schools and regional touring, would know for sure that AdYO is reaching a very high standard of performance. Our young people are really excelling at what they do and that's because they are terrific young people who are very well mentored and tutored,

encouraged by our professional staff and they get all these extraordinary opportunities that only our organisation can give to them. And then they get the wonderful feedback from children in schools, seniors and the big public audiences like the sell-out Gala at the Adelaide Town Hall. So, 2019 was really an exceptional year where we were riding a wave of tremendous investment, support and success. Congratulations to the artistic team and particularly Keith and also to Claire for her excellent leadership, great box office results, her financial controls and seamless logistics and organisation ably supported by Ellena and Lexi. A big thanks to all who provide that input, including our volunteers, who together have made it a shining year.

So, it is sad to find ourselves now in the situation with the COVID-19 lockdown and restrictions – but we have done remarkably well to retain the links and connections through digital and online activity. We hope to get back to where we were as soon as possible and the Board has been meeting at more regular intervals to monitor progress and government advice and how we can then respond to the current challenges.

We got terrific additional support from the Klein Family Foundation last year and we have been given support to not only set up our new youth wind ensemble which is very exciting and ably led by Sarah Byron but we also received a one-off project grant to produce a digital program to tell the story of the Adelaide Youth Orchestras. We have launched the '60 Second Symphony' video project that you may have been enjoying with short films produced by our young musicians. But when we get back to live performances and rehearsals we will capture the magic of what it is for young people to come together and to play musical instruments.

We've also had a really good relationship through sponsorship with the RAA and they've got behind our regional touring. It is such a significant experience for our musicians to get on the road together working as if they were a professional orchestra, delivering music to different types of venues and giving to communities that don't normally have access to live orchestral music.

We also managed to get an increase in our SA Government Grant and that's been overdue after a long and static period of funding. However, as a result of the 2019 SA Arts and Culture Plan, there is increased recognition of AdYO, our position, and the need for investment in our organisation. This is a big relief to the Board to ensure a greater sense of sustainability and a foundation for us to continue to grow. The other aspect of the SA Arts and Culture Plan was the announcement of developing a business case for a new concert hall for Adelaide- again, long overdue with ASO, AdYO and a music education hub being the prime users of the concert hall.

Motion: That the reports for 2019 presented by the Chair and the Artistic Director be accepted. Through a show of hands, the motion was carried.

5. Audit Report

Catherine noted that this year's Audit Report was longer than usual due to the need to document changes to the International Accounting Standards. She also reported that along with the artistic success of 2019 came a good financial position at the end of the year. After the losses of 2016 and 2017, the Board was very mindful of repairing that position to increase equity and to ensure a buffer that is need in an organisation like AdYO. The 2019 result has gone a long way to redress these losses. There is an expectation each year to make a 5% operating surplus to cover liabilities to staff and funders and for forward commitments that are necessary to the operations of a performing arts organisation. Cash in the bank is important to cover these liabilities and 2019 cashflow is in a very sound position. Thanks go to our Treasurer, Michael Critchley and Claire Oremland who have managed the budget. We have also had a lot of generous support from foundations, large and small and a

wonderful group of individual donors on whom the organisation relies for approximately 15% of yearly revenue. Special thanks to all donors and also to Grant Thornton who conduct the audit on a pro-bono basis.

Motion: That the Audited Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2019 be accepted and the appointment of Grant Thornton as Auditors be approved. Moved: Michael Critchley, Seconded: Andrew Size. Through a show of hands, the motion was carried

Any other business:

Chair of the Board, Catherine Baldwin asked if there were any questions. There being no questions, violinist Hannelle Lovell from AdYO treated everyone to a performance of the first movement of Prokofiev Solo Sonata in D Major. This was greeted by a hearty round of online applause from all those present.

The AGM concluded at 12.40pm