

Minutes of a meeting held on Friday, 19th
January, at 11.30 at Crown House, Aldwych.

PRESENT: ~~THE XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~
Mr. James Lawrie

Stew →
Miss Anne Wood,
Mr. Eric Crozier,
Mr. Benjamin Britten.
Miss Elizabeth Sweeting.

1. As Mr. Lyttleton was unfortunately called away and could not attend the meeting, the number of directors present did not make up the necessary quorum of three. Mr. Lawrie suggested that those present should form a Committee, submitting minutes of the meeting to the next Directors meeting.
2. Miss Wood asked that an emendation should be made of her statement in paragraph 3 of the minutes of the last meeting. It should read 'Miss Wood said that she and the General Manager calculated that a sum of £8,000 would be needed to cover running costs and a new production in 1950/51, to meet which the Arts Council grant contributed £3,000 only. If this could be increased to £5,000, it seemed probable that the remaining £3,000 could be covered from the English Opera Group Association and other sources.'
3. Miss Wood, Mr. Crozier & Mr. Britten said that they had had conversations with Mr. Foy, who seemed a likely successor to Miss Sweeting as General Manager. They asked that Mr. Lawrie should meet him. Mr. Foy had useful connections through his agency and his recording company, and would be willing to run the E.O.G. from his London office. It was thought reasonable that his appointment with a salary not to exceed £750 should be discussed.
4. A letter from Mr. Guthrie to Mr. Britten was then discussed. Mr. Guthrie reported that he had had an unofficial conversation with Mr. Donald Albery, with the idea that Sir Bronson Albery should undertake the management of the E.O.G. from the offices of his own company. The Committee felt this would not be an entirely satisfactory arrangement, since, with the pressure of their own plans, the theatre management would probably not be able to devote to the E.O.G. all the necessary attention and it would in any case be essential for a General Manager appointed by the E.O.G. to deal with the other management.
5. A note from Mr. Lyttleton was read, reporting a conversation with Sir Ernest Pooley. Mr. Lyttleton had told him that an extra grant of £3,000 was necessary to fulfil engagements in 1950. Sir Ernest Pooley was sympathetic and stated his view that the Group might receive an extra grant in respect of 1951. Mr. Lyttleton asked that this should be £3,000 in addition to the £3,000 which the E.O.G. ordinarily receives, this to be without prejudice to the Group's receiving more. He had urged the necessity for speed, in order that the requirements of the bank should be satisfied and Sir Ernest had promised to obtain a decision from the Executive Committee as soon as possible. Mr. Crozier pointed out that if the £3,000 earmarked for 1951 were to be used for 1950, this would

make a new production for the the year of the Festival of Britain impossible. The Committee decided that further advice and help should be sought from Mr. Eric White at the earliest possible opportunity.

6. Mr. Lawrie suggested that a season of the Children's Opera at the Lyric, Hammersmith, during the Easter holidays would be welcomed by the public. Planning for this season would be the first charge of the new General Manager. In the meanwhile, Miss Sweeting was asked to write to Mr. Perry, Administrator of the Company of Four, to ask what arrangement might be made for such a season, supposing that the theatre were free at this time. Miss Wood pointed out that the period was a busy one for singers and that provisional plans must be settled as soon as possible in order to reserve the services of the cast of "Let's Make an Opera" and to plan rehearsals.

7. The General Manager informed the meeting that a Television performance of "Let's Make an Opera" from the Theatre Royal, Stratford, was scheduled for February 5th, and a broadcast of the work in the Home Service on March 5th. Facilities fees to the Group from these two performances would amount to £100.

8. The Committee proposed that the passing of the Balance Sheet for 1948 should be referred to the next Directors Meeting. Mr. Lawrie asked why it was so late in appearing. Miss Wood explained that the business of the year had included the separate establishment of the Opera Studio and the E.O.G. Association, and that there had been a great deal of business concerned with the clearing of the banking accounts and the constitutions of these two concerns. The absence of the General Manager acting as Company Manager on tour in England and abroad had also delayed the final settlement of queries which had arisen.

The meeting then terminated.

ENGLISH OPERA GROUP LTD.

M I N U T E S of the Directors' Meeting
Held at Crown House, Aldwych. W.C.2.
on
1st March, 1950.

Those Present: The President: The Earl of Harewood
 The Chairman: Mr. James Lawrie

Directors: The Hon T, M, Horder
 Mr. Erwin Stein

Artistic Miss Anne Wood
Directors: Mr. Benjamin Britten.

General Manager: Mr. Henry Foy.

1. Owing to the absence of the Chairman on Parliamentary business Mr. Horder, proposed Mr. James Lawrie should take the Chair. The proposal was seconded by Mr. Erwin Stein.
2. Mr. Lawrie the Directors present whether they would adopt the Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 10th February. It was agreed this should be done, but that line 4. paragraph 6. should be altered to read "from the funds available to them for 1951" this alteration was made, and the Minutes confirmed and signed.
3. Apising from the Minutes: Mr. Lawrie proposed that a warmer expression of gratitude be conveyed to Miss Sweeting, by Mr Foy, the General Manager. Mr. Lawrie said, and Mr. Foy agreed that Miss Sweeting had been of considerable help to him, and it was quite possible he might still have to call on her from time to time. Mr. Lawrie suggested that a further two weeks salary should be sent to her as a slight recognition of her work for the Group. This was seconded by Mr. Horder, and carried.
4. Mr. Lawrie asked Mr. Foy to quote from Sir Ernest Pooley's letter of 6th February, 1950.
5. Mr. Foy read a letter from The Arts Council dated 13th February offering a grant of £2,500 (two thousand five hundred pounds) towards the Group's production of "The Sleeping Children" (Easdale) in 1950 but the letter contained a proviso that "The Sleeping Children" should be presented again during the "Festival of Britain in 1951, and also stated that there may be

5. no further grants available to The English Opera Group from the Council for or in 1951. Mr Lawrie said in view of this, it was not possible to guarantee to present "The Sleeping Children" in 1951 although the Group had every intention of doing so. Miss Wood said she did not think The Arts Council had finally decided not to give any more grant to the Group for 1951-2 but that the projected Five Year Plan of The Arts Council might have some bearing on the matter. Mr. Lawrie suggested Mr. Foy should draft a letter to The Arts Council asking them to clear up paragraph "(b)". It might mean we would receive no further "1951 Festival" grant, but if by any chance it means we are not going to receive a 51-52 grant at all, we cannot agree to condition "(b)". Mr. Lawrie asked that the draft letter be sent to him, and he would discuss it with Mr. Lyttelton.

Re-election of Directors. Referring to the proposed increase in the number of Directors of The English Opera Group, Mr. Foy said this would involve an alteration of the Articles of Association of the Company. This alteration could be made by means of an Extraordinary Resolution to be put to a general meeting. Twenty one days clear notice of the resolution must be given to all members of The English Opera Group.

7. Mr. Lawrie, proposed the three retiring Directors be re-elected at the Annual General Meeting, and that he would discuss with the Chairman about the Extraordinary meeting.
8. Mr. Britten asked what should be done about other Directors, and made a suggestion that Mr. Isadore Kaplan, lawyer and Mr. Anthony Gishford, of Boosey and Hawkes, who were both extremely interested in the Group should both be invited to become Directors.
9. Mr. Stein proposed subject to the approval of the Chairman that Mr. Kaplan be asked to become a Director of the Group. This was seconded by Mr. Horder.
10. Mr. Foy told the meeting of his conversation with Mr. John Perry of "The Company of Four" He explained that owing to the difficulty of obtaining the artists, most of them being otherwise engaged for the Easter period, it was decided it would not be possible to undertake a tour at Easter
11. Mr. Britten thought it a good thing the Easter tour was out.
12. Mr. Foy said he had discussed with Mr. Perry the possibility of a tour of four weeks in November to be followed immediately

12. by a season at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, but suggested the terms should be different from last year's and should be arranged at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, on a percentage basis, but that a salary should be accepted for the tour.
13. Lord Harewood suggested we did not take Cambridge as it lost money.
14. Mr. Lawrie proposed that they should authorise the General Manager to negotiate for the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, for a season commencing the beginning of December for "Let's Make an Opera" on a percentage basis, and a guaranteed figure for the tour commencing December.
15. Mr. Britten said they did not wish to go to theatres which are too large as the children's voices could not be heard.
Mr. Lawrie said the General Manager should consult with Mr. Britten about the suggested towns.
17. Mr. Foy said he had received an enquiry from the Guildford Festival for one evening performance. Mr. Britten said that Wellington School had suggested a performance for one night and he thought if a series could be arranged, say four nights in one week it may pay.
18. Mr. Foy read a letter from Belfast regarding dates in the Autumn Miss Anne Wood said they had been approached before by Belfast but negotiations always broke down on a question of finance.
19. Mr. Foy read a letter from Cheltenham with regard to the alteration of the Festival programme. Mr. Lawrie suggested Mr. Britten and Mr. Foy should consult together re: the Cheltenham problem.
20. Mr. Foy said the actual machinery of Management had been very difficult owing to the outside commitments of the Artistic Directors.
21. Mr. Britten suggested an Executive Management Committee and an increase in the number of Artistic Directors, to meet about once a week and consult on any points arising. He suggested Miss Joan Cross and Mr. Peter Pears should become Artistic Directors, and asked Lord Harewood to be Chairman. Mr. Horder formalised the Artistic Directors into a Committee. Mr. Lawrie, thought it an excellent idea, but pointed out it was not practical to keep adding to the names of Artistic Directors on the publicity matter, but by forming an Executive Committee of Artistic Directors, and asking them to work on this committee it would obviate this.

22. Mr. Britten said it would help to have Miss Joan Cross and Mr. Peter Pears made more formally responsible for decision requested by us, and their inclusion on this Committee would ensure this.
23. Mr. Lawrie suggested the Chairman should be consulted before any action taken.
24. Mr. Britten will consult with Mr. Crozier.
25. Mr. Horder proposed the Executive Committee should be put forward as a formal resolution at the next meeting.
26. FINANCE The Bank are waiting for a letter from Head Office authorising an increase of the Overdraft limit to £4.800. Mr. Lawrie, said he would arrange to go to the bank.

There being no other business the meeting terminated.

ENGLISH OPERA GROUP LTD.

MINUTES of DIRECTORS' MEETING
held at 27, Soho Square, London, W.1.

on

22nd March, 1950. at 4.30.p.m.

Present:

President

The Earl of Harewood.

Directors:

Mr. J.H. Lawrie. (in the Chair)
The Hon T.M. Horder
Mr. Erwin Stein.

Artistic Directors:

Mr. Benjamin Britten
Mr. Eric Crozier.

Arts Council:

Mr.E.W. White.

General Manager::

Mr. Henry Foy.

1. Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 1st March 1950, were approved and signed.
2. Resignation of The Rt Hon Oliver Lyttelton was accepted. Mr. Lawrie proposed that a letter of appreciation and thanks for his work in connection with the Group should be sent to him. This was carried unanimously.
3. A resolution proposed by Mr. Stein that Mr. J.H. Lawrie be appointed Chairman was seconded by Mr. Horder and carried.
4. A letter was read from Mr. Tyrone Guthrie, tendering his resignation as a Director, because of his receiving payment from the Group as a producer.
5. Mr. Lawrie proposed that Mr. Isador Caplin be appointed a Director; this was seconded by Mr. Stein and carried. Mr. Lawrie also proposed Mr. Anthony Gishford's appointment as a Director which was seconded by Mr. Horder and carried.
6. It was reported that "The Sleeping Children" could not now be produced this year. The £2.500 grant from The Arts Council would not therefore be taken up this year, but "The Sleeping Children" could be produced for the 1951 Festival; there was also a possibility of producing "Dido and Aeneas"

7. Mr White asked that the Group's plans for 1951 be sent to him so that the question of a special Festival allowance for 1951 be clarified. He explained that more favourable consideration might be given to a later rather than an earlier application, and in reply to a question from Mr. Britten said the Autumn would be the right time to apply.
8. It was decided that Miss Joan Cross and Mr. Peter Pears be asked to serve on an Executive Committee along with the Artistic Directors, under the Chairmanship of Lord Harewood.

ENGLISH OPERA GROUP LTD

M I N U T E S of DIRECTORS' MEETING held
at 27 Soho Square, London, W.1.
on
12th June, 1950 at 3.0.p.m.

Present:

President: The Earl of Harewood

Directors: Mr. J.H. Lawrie (in the chair)
Mr. Isador Caplan
Mr. Anthony Gishford
The Hon. Mervyn Horder
Mr. Erwin Stein

Artistic Directors: Mr. Benjamin Britten
Miss Anne Wood

Arts Council: Mr. E.W. White

General Manager: Mr. Henry Foy

1. The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved after it had been pointed out that there was an error in the date heading, and initialed.

Arising from the Minutes it was decided that the Liverpool 1951 Festival should be offered the choice from our existing repertoire without a new production.
3. The General Manager reported that the Company of Four would allow us the Lyric Theatre Hammersmith for a Season in May 1951.
4. It was approved that we advance the first night of 'Dido and Aeneas' from June to May.
5. Mr. E.W. White explained a misunderstanding whereby Sadlers Wells had presumed the English Opera Group would not produce Dido in 1951.
6. The Chairman decided to write to Mr. Smith of Sadlers Wells expressing his regret over this misunderstanding and informing them of our proposed production dates for this Opera.

7. It was decided to withhold any press announcement until an answer had been received to this letter.
8. Mr. Eric Crozier's letter of resignation was discussed. It was decided that Mr. Britten approach Mr. Basil Coleman, and that subject to his approval he should be appointed. If Mr. Coleman were unable to accept, the Executive Committee should submit other names to the Board.
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Chairman

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ENGLISH OPERA GROUP LTD.

MINUTES of meeting of Board of Directors, held at 27, Soho Square, W.1.,
on MONDAY, 9th OCTOBER, 1950.

Present : President : The Right Hon. The Earl of Harewood.

 Directors : J. H. Lawrie (in the chair) ;
 I. Caplan ;
 The Hon. T.M. Horder ;
 Denis Rickett ;
 E. Stein.

 Artistic Directors : John Piper ;
 Anne Wood.

 Assessor to Arts Council : E. W. White.

 General Manager : Henry Foy.

1. The Minutes of the previous meeting were circulated, agreed, and signed.
2. The Chairman referred to the Directors' loss through the death of their colleague, Mr. Ralph Hawkes, and stated that he had sent a letter to Messrs. Boosey & Hawkes Ltd.
3. The Chairman asked the reason for the delay in putting out any announcement about the Group's 1951 season. The General Manager reported that detailed information on artistes, producers, etc., which was thought necessary for such an announcement was still lacking.
4. Mr. Eric Crozier's resignation as Artistic Director was accepted with great regret. The Chairman expressed the thanks of the Directors and Company for Mr. Crozier's brilliant work for the Company during its difficult initial years.
5. On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by Mr. Stein, Mr. Basil Coleman was elected an Artistic Director.
6. The Chairman reported that he had not been provided with any information on the 1949 accounts, and it was therefore decided that this item on the agenda be deferred until the next meeting.
7. After asking Mr. Foy to leave the meeting, the Chairman informed the Board that, in his and Mr. Britten's opinion, Mr. Foy had been carrying out his duties in a manner that was far from satisfactory. Amongst other things, he had made no entries in the cash book since his appointment ; had paid his own salary in advance ; had paid his secretary's salary, amounting to approximately £172, out of the Group's money ; had given floats up to £100 to stage staff, of which he had no record ; had an unexplained deficit of some £70 in the record of wages paid in cash ; and had arranged for performances of "The Children's Opera" at Tunbridge Wells and Eastbourne for which he had not engaged a full company and for which, within twenty-four hours of the start of the season, he had negotiated no contracts.

With the agreement of the Board, the Chairman left the meeting to speak to Mr. Foy and to make it clear to him that he had lost the confidence of the Board. On his return to the meeting, the Chairman said that Mr. Foy had stated his desire to resign the position of General Manager as from 31st October, 1950; he also acknowledged his own company's indebtedness to the Group for about £172 paid out to his secretary.

8. It was decided that Mr. Basil Douglas should be invited to accept the position of General Manager, and the Chairman was authorised to offer the position to Mr. Douglas on the following basis : salary of £800 per annum, payable monthly in arrear ; engagement terminable at either one month's or three months' notice on either side ; provision of office accommodation and the services of a secretary ; assistance of Mr. Wallis on the accounts side until such time as these could be carried on with only occasional supervision.
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MEETING OF THE ENGLISH OPERA GROUP EXECUTIVE
HELD ON 8TH AND 9TH OCTOBER, 1950.

Those present:

The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Harewood.
J.H. Lawrie.
Benjamin Britten.
Peter Pears.
Joan Cross.
Basil Coleman.
Erwin Stein.
Anne Wood.
Henry Foy (part of the time).

1. It was agreed that Henry Foy be asked by the Directors to resign.
2. It was agreed that approaches to Basil Douglas to accept the General Managership be followed up and Anne Wood was empowered to discuss the job fully with him and ask him to consider a salary of £800 p.a. to increase as the work of the Group increased, plus an office (to be found), Secretary and such accounting assistance as was later agreed to be necessary.
3. It was agreed that Elizabeth Sweeting's offer of help be accepted and that she should work at the office as much as she could in an attempt to straighten out current affairs.
4. Basil and Anne reported that they were going through the position of the "Let's Make an Opera" season the same evening with Henry Foy and that a report would be handed to Elizabeth Sweeting for her immediate follow-up.
5. Brian Easdale and Tyrone Guthrie came to go through their opera and discuss cast. It was agreed:-
 - (a) that the work was not really full length and should be accompanied by "The Wandering Scholar". This point had still to be agreed with Tony and Brian.
 - (b) that Brian and Tony should see the Milhaud opera the following night with a view to having Jennifer Vyvyan and Arthur Servant in the cast, and of approving the designer.
 - (c) that Tony produce the opera if the cast could rehearse with him for three weeks from 23rd April - Brian, Coleman and Tony, to polish it up near the opening date.
 - (d) that Norman Del Mar conduct the opera.
6. It was reported that it seemed extremely unlikely that John Gielgud could produce "Dido" and agreed that Joan should.
7. There was some discussion on what piece should go with "Dido". Suggestion: Monteverdi. No decision.

8. It was agreed that the Lyric season should start on Monday, 7th May with "Dido" and continue for three weeks. It was agreed that the season should consist of:

4 performances of "Dido".
5 " " "Lucretia".
5 " " "Herring".
2 " " "Beggar's Opera".
1 performance " "Let's Make" (plus matinees).

9.

Casting.

- (a) It was agreed that "The Beggar's Opera" be done with the recent cast.
- (b) It was agreed that Kathleen Ferrier be asked to do three performances of "Lucretia" with Joan, Peter, Mabel, Nielsen and Krips. To be decided:
- (i) Tarquinius.
 - (ii) Collatinus. (? Harold Williams, ? Richard Standen).
 - (iii) Junius.
- (c) It was decided that two later performances of "Lucretia" be given with a change of cast to include Jennifer, Nancy and Anne. Other changes to be discussed.
- (d) For "Albert Herring" it was agreed to:
- (i) try and find a second Lady Billows - Ruth Naylor, Emelie Hooke.
 - (ii) Miss Wordsworth - settle Rose.
 - (iii) try Max as Albert.
 - (iv) try Valetta Iacopi as Flo.
 - (v) cover for Nancy - ? Mary Grimmett.
 - (vi) an alternative for Anne Sharp.
- (e) Casting for "Dido" was discussed. Decisions to be made:
- (i) Is Peter to do Aeneas?
 - (ii) Alternative Belinda for Mabel.
- Designer also to be decided.

ENGLISH OPERA GROUP LTD.

Minutes of the Executive Committee, held at 2, Orme Square, W.2., on Thursday 9th November, 1950.

Present:- The Earl of Harewood.
Miss Joan Cross.
Miss Anne Wood.
Mr Benjamin Britten.
Mr Peter Pears.
Mr H. F. Wallis.
Mr Erwin Stein.
Mr Basil Douglas.

1. Financial Position. Reported (a) That the bank had refused to honour any more cheques.
(b) That Sir Ernest Pooley would receive a deputation from the Board of Directors on Friday November 17th.
(c) That the estimates show that by the end of the Lyric run there will be an overdraft of £5,000 including creditors. Guarantees amount to £5,800, loans to £3,800, leaving £2,000 to cover overdraft and creditors, and therefore a deficit of £3,000. Subject to a successful outcome of the visit to the Arts Council, guarantees will be sought to cover this deficit.
2. Estimates for 1951. Estimates for the production and running costs for the 1951 productions were prepared, for submission to the Arts Council, together with a memorandum detailing the aims and achievements of the Group to date.
3. Storage. Storage space reported available belonging to (a) Miss Wood, in Harley Place and (b) Watneys Ltd., in Notting Hill Gate. To be investigated by Mr Wallis and Mr Douglas.
4. L.C.M.C. Concert. Decided to accept provisionally an invitation by the L.C.M.C. to give a concert in their Festival series. May 22nd considered the most suitable date; Mr Douglas to talk to Mr Edward Clark, and propose a fee of £250.0s.0d.
5. Sadler's Wells. (a) Dido and Aeneas. Mr Douglas to report to Mr Norman Tucker that it was most unlikely that Nancy Evans would be available to Sadler's Wells for their production.
(b) Mr Douglas and Miss Wood to discuss with Mr Chamberlain the possibility of taking Sadler's Wells for a fortnight in July, (16th - 28th).
6. Lyric. Hammeramith. Agreed to abandon season at the Lyric, if and when a Sadler's Wells contract for July should materialise.
7. Next Meeting. Thursday, 16th November, at 10.15 a.m., at 2, Orme Square.

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THE ENGLISH OPERA GROUP. LTD.

Minutes of the Executive Committee, held at 2, Orme Square, on Thursday, 16th November.

Present: The Earl of Harewood.
Miss Joan Cross.
Miss Anne Wood.
Mr Benjamin Britten.
Mr Peter Pears.
Mr Erwin Stein.
Mr H. F. Wallis.
Mr Basil Douglas.

8. Minutes of Previous Meeting. The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and signed.
9. Financial Position. (1c). Mr Wallis' analysis of the Bank Receipts during 1950 was discussed and approved.
10. Estimates for 1951. (2). Further estimates discussed in preparation for the deputation to the Arts Council on Friday, November 17th.
11. Storage. (5). Nothing further.
12. L.C.M.C. Concert. (4). Mr Douglas reported conversation with Mr Edward Clark and instructed to confirm our provisional acceptance in writing, and propose that a new work should be commissioned.
13. Sadler's Wells. (5b). Mr Douglas and Miss Wood had been to see Mr Tucker and Mr Chamberlain at Sadler's Wells, who welcomed the prospect of the English Opera Group taking Sadler's Wells from July 16th to 28th. A loss of £400 a week thought inevitable, unless Sadler's Wells could be persuaded to accept a cut fee. (Receipts about £2,400 for eight performances - Sadler's Wells fee about £600, our costs about £2,000, plus £200 for printing and advertising. Mr Douglas to write and invite their most favourable terms.
14. Lyric. Hammersmith. (6). Agreed that Mr Douglas should also write to the Lyric, inviting their most favourable terms.
15. Copenhagen. Mr Douglas reported visit from Mr Blicher-Hansen, who is anxious for the Group to visit Scandinavia next Autumn, (Copenhagen, Oslo, and Stockholm). Agreed that the month of October might be reserved for this visit, but that Mr Dietrichson's terms should also be sought. Mr Douglas to write to both these gentlemen.
16. Kathleen Ferrier. Reported to be available for 'Lucretia' between July 20th and 25th.
17. Cheltenham. Mr Wilkinson had agreed to send Mr Douglas copies of his correspondence with Mr Foy. An estimate could then be prepared.

18. William Walton. Mr Douglas to ask him, before he leaves for Ischia, to conduct Facade in Cheltenham, Holland and Liverpool, and discover if Edith Sitwell is also available.
19. Manoug Parikian. Mr Douglas reported that Parikian was unwilling to lead the Opera Orchestra next year, except on special occasions. Agreed that it might be advisable to drop him altogether.
20. Next Meeting: Friday, 24th November, at 10.0 a.m. in Room 212, Broadcasting House, Langham Place. Please ask at the Reception Desk for Mr Basil Douglas.

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ENGLISH OPERA GROUP LTD.

MINUTES of meeting of Board of Directors held at 27 Soho Square,
W.1., on FRIDAY, 17th NOVEMBER, 1950, at 3.30 p.m.

Present :

President : The Right Hon. The Earl of Harewood.

Directors : J. H. Lawrie (in the chair) ;
Isador Caplan ;
Sir Kenneth Clark, K.C.B. ;
Anthony Gishford ;
The Hon. T.M. Horder ;
Erwin Stein.

Artistic Director: Benjamin Britten.

In attendance :

Basil Douglas ;
L. Periton ;
Elizabeth Sweeting ;
H. F. Wallis.

1. The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed.
2. Mr. Caplan reported that the premises in Portland Place could not be obtained. He would continue his search.
3. Mr. Caplan confirmed that all possible steps would be taken to recover the money owed to the company by Mr. Foy.
4. The Earl of Harewood reported that negotiations with Sadler's Wells appeared to indicate better terms than were offered by the Lyric, Hammersmith ; discussions were continuing.
5. A letter to the Opera Group performers asking for particulars of outstanding debts was circulated and approved for signature by the Chairman.
6. The Chairman reported that he, with Sir Kenneth Clark and Mr. Benjamin Britten, had met Sir Ernest Pooley and representatives of the Arts Council that afternoon. They had put to the Arts Council in the strongest terms the urgent need for further financial assistance if the company were to avoid being put into immediate liquidation. Sir Ernest Pooley had agreed to ask the Arts Council's Festival of Britain Committee for a grant of £5,000 in addition to that already promised ; the answer would be conveyed to the Chairman on Thursday, 23rd November. The directors agreed with the decision to consider putting the Group into immediate liquidation if this grant were not forthcoming in full.

(2)

7. Mr. Britten reported that Messrs. Boosey & Hawkes were considering giving the Group financial assistance.
 8. Subject to the alteration of two minor items, the draft 1949 accounts were approved, and it was resolved that the Chairman, with one other director, should sign the Balance Sheet as at 31st December, 1949.
 9. The next meeting of the Directors was fixed for Tuesday, November 28th, at 2.30 or Monday, December 4th, at 4.30.
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ENGLISH OPERA GROUP LTD.

MINUTES of meeting of Board of Directors, held at 27 Soho Square,
W.1., on TUESDAY, 28th NOVEMBER, 1950, at 2.30 p.m.

Present : Directors : Mr. J. H. Lawrie (in the chair) ;
Mr. Isador Caplan ;
Mr. Anthony Gishford ;
The Hon. T.M.Horder ;
The Hon. James Smith ;
Mr. Erwin Stein.

Artistic Directors : Mr. Benjamin Britten ;
Miss Anne Wood.

Arts Council Assessor: Mr. Eric Walter White.

In attendance : Mr. Basil Douglas ;
Mr. Peter Pears ;
Mr. L. Periton ;
Mr. H. F. Wallis.

1. The Minutes of the previous Meeting were approved and signed.
2. Arising from those Minutes, the Chairman pointed out that in his letter of November 17th he had made no reference to Messrs. Boosey & Hawkes Ltd. in connection with the sale of film rights ; when writing of the generosity of Mr. Britten, he ought to have added "and his publishers".
3. Correspondence with the Arts Council as circulated was reported : -
Sir Ernest Pooley to Chairman, November 22nd ; Chairman to Sir Ernest Pooley, November 22nd ; Sir Ernest Pooley to Chairman, November 28th.

It was agreed : -
 - (1) that the English Opera Group should accept the Arts Council's offer and carry on with a reduced programme which would involve no financial risk to the Group. Expenditure in 1951 was not now expected to exceed £13,000, a sum which would be met by new guarantees of £5,000 (£1,500 from Messrs. Boosey & Hawkes and £1,500 from another source) and by the grants from the Arts Council.
 - (2) that neither "THE SLEEPING CHILDREN" nor "DIDO AND AENEAS" should be dropped.
 - (3) that the London season, together with the reproduction of "THE RAPE OF LUCRETIA" (and consequently the visit to Wiesbaden) should be abandoned unless it were found possible to be guaranteed against loss.
4. In view of the change in the Arts Council's attitude evidenced by the letter of November 28th, the Chairman agreed to withdraw his offer of resignation.
5. A letter from the Company of Four to the Arts Council, listing certain complaints against the Group in connection with the current tour of "LET'S MAKE AN OPERA", was read by Mr. White and discussed. Mr. White undertook to provide a copy of the letter, which would be referred to the Executive Committee for answer.
6. Accommodation : No premises yet found.
7. Next meeting : No date arranged.

THE ENGLISH OPERA GROUP, LTD.

Minutes of the Executive Committee, held at 2, Orme Square, W.1., on Sunday, 17th December.

Present: The Earl of Harewood (in the chair).
Miss Joan Cross.
Miss Anne Wood.
Mr Benjamin Britten.
Mr Basil Coleman.
Mr John Piper.
Mr Erwin Stein.
Mr Basil Douglas.

37. Nimbus. Read and signed.
38. Storage. Premises in Islington reported available for sale
(Minute 22). Freehold. Mr Peter Banks investigating.
39. I.C.M.C. Mr Douglas reported discussions with Mr Edward Clarke
Concert. and Mr Leonard Isaacs, of the B.B.C., as a result of
(Minute 23). which it is hoped that the B.B.C. will sponsor the
programme and give us the use of the Concert Hall,
Broadcasting House.
40. Sadler's Wells. Mr George Chamberlain had written again, in reply to
(Minute 24). Mr Douglas, stressing their own financial difficulties;
a visit of the English Opera Group to Sadler's Wells
in 1951 is now most unlikely.
41. Lyric. A revised schedule of operas was approved, and the
Hammersmith. idea of giving concerts dropped. Agreed to forward
(Minute 25). the schedule to the Company of Four with revised
estimate.
42. Copenhagen. Still no reply from either agent. Mr Douglas to pursue
(Minute 26).
43. Cheltenham. Mr Wilkinson had been sent our proposals for the operas
(Minute 27). with the names of the principal singers and conductors,
and a request for a fee of £2,200. No reply yet
received.
44. Manoug Parikian. He had been sent the dates of the "Lucretia" performance
(Minute 19). and also of the concerts, and had accepted, provided that
the proposed tour of Germany with the Philharmonia
Orchestra did not materialise. Agreed that Geiger should
lead if it did, but that Parikian should nevertheless be
invited for the concerts; he could still be available
for these. Geiger would lead for the other operas.
45. Holland Festival. Nothing further. (Minute 30).
46. The Company of Mr Lawrie's reply to the Arts Council read and approved
Four.
(Minute 31).

47. Auditions.
5th December.

Miss A. Green (Mezzo-soprano).	No. ? Possible choriste
Mr F. L. Starr. (tenor).	No.
Miss M. Sargent. (mezzo-soprano).	No. ? Chorister.
Miss E. McNab. (soprano).	Hear again as Belinda
Mr F. Loring. (baritone).	Possible 'Sid'.
Mr J. Hawkwell. (baritone).	Bear in mind.
Miss T. Preston (soprano).	Possible Belinda and Lucia.
Mr J. Atkins. (bass-baritone).	No. ? Possible chorist
Mr R. Standen. (bass).	Hear again as Collatinus.
Mr D. Wicks. (bass-baritone).	No.
Mr L. Andrews. (tenor).	No.
Miss J. Clarke. (soprano).	No.
Miss H. Anderson. (soprano).	No.
Miss I. Sage. (soprano).	No. ? Chorus.
Miss S. Bourke. (mezzosoprano).	No.

48. General Manager.

Miss Wood suggested that Mr Lawrie should sign a letter to be sent to the company and other suitable persons and institutions, announcing that the English Opera Group now has a General Manager and a Secretary. Mr Douglas to consult Mr Lawrie.

49. 'Combattimento'.

Approved that John Cranko be invited to be choreographer, with Mr Pears and Mr Britten in charge of the music. Mr Piper undertook to discuss with Mr Cranko, and to advise on the choice of designer.

50. 'Didò'.

A subcommittee of Miss Cross, Mr Britten and Mr Piper empowered to meet and decide on the question of designer.

51. 'The Sleeping Children'.

(a). Producer: Mr Coleman expressed willingness to produce if the Committee considered him the right choice, but said he would like to know more about the opera. Play-through with piano fixed for Thursday, December 28th, at 10.30 a.m. at 8, St. George's Terrace. Mr Guthrie, Miss Nancy Evans, and Mr Norman Lumsden, should also be invited to attend. The choice of a curtain-raiser, e.g. Holst's "The Wandering Scholar" would depend on the timing of the opera at this play-through.

(b). Material. Pointed out that if the English Opera group pays for the material it will own it. Mr Rasedale to be asked whether he prefers to pay for it himself.

(c). Casting. Mr Guthrie to be informed of the Committee's lack of confidence in his preference for John Cameron; further names for consideration - Roderick Jones, Otakar Kraus, Stanley Pope.

52. 'Let's Make an Opera'.

(a). Current Run. Reported that it was beginning to do good business and that bookings after Christmas were heavy.

(b). The Company of Four reluctant to sponsor a further tour. Agreed to approach Jack Hylton and Emile Little and consult Stephen Ireland and Jack Moody. Mr Britten was confident he could find suitable children in Lowestoft and was in touch with the Education Authorities there.

52. (continued....
- (c). Agreed that a matinee should be given in aid of the Musicians' Benevolent Fund, if the Company of Four approved. Mr Douglas to consult Kitty Black.
 - (d). Agreed to suggest another television appearance to the B.B.C.
53. Australia. Agreed that the English Opera Group should make a three-months tour of Australia in the summer of 1952. It is unlikely that there would be any new productions to show in Europe in 1952, and it was considered that for this reason Aldeburgh, for example, would be content to do without the English Opera Group.
54. Visits to Cannes and Spain. Encouraging replies had been made in answer to enquiries from the Cannes Festival (March) and from Professor Walter Starkie, of the British Institute in Madrid, although it was considered unlikely that the English Opera Group could visit either Cannes or Spain in 1951.
55. Film. Muir Matheson wished to put forward the names of Mr Britten and the English Opera Group as possible contributors to a film with a story by Sergei Nolbrandov, which would be submitted to the National Film Finance Corporation. Approved, with reservations.
56. Bruce Boyce. Agreed that taking everything into consideration Bruce Boyce was the most suitable choice for the Vicar in Albert Herring. Mr Douglas to invite him to learn it. Agreed also that he was the second choice for Tarquinius after Otakar Traus.