

'Unmissable revival of David McVicar's  
production shimmers and dazzles'

The Stage ★★★★★

Annual Review 2024



# GLYNDEBOURNE

# ANNUAL REVIEW 2024

On behalf of the executive team, I would like to express my sincere thanks to our supporters, members, the board of trustees, our staff, and to all our visiting performers, musicians and creative teams. Glyndebourne's ongoing success is founded on your commitment.

Richard Davidson-Houston  
Chief Executive Officer

## Our story of the last year is told in five sections:

- On stage
- Future artists
- In the community
- Financial review
- Environmental activity

Cover • Louise Alder (Cleopatra) in *Giulio Cesare*, Festival 2024. Photo: Richard Hubert Smith

Right • Rihab Chaieb (Carmen) and Dingle Yandell (Zuniga) in *Carmen*, Festival 2024



'This Carmen unleashes the life force of Bizet's opera as potently as any in recent years.'

Financial Times

# ON STAGE

We celebrated our 90th anniversary in 2024 with outstanding productions on stage and sold-out performances across the year.

## FESTIVAL

We staged five operas in Festival 2024: *Carmen*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *The Merry Widow*, *Giulio Cesare* and *Tristan und Isolde*.

The Festival was a success both artistically and in terms of audience numbers, as we recorded the highest paid ticket attendance since comparable records began in 2007, with an audience of 94,384.

The Festival opened with a popular, fresh interpretation of Bizet's *Carmen*, directed by Diane Paulus in her Glyndebourne debut.

Another highlight was our first full staging of Franz Lehár's operetta *The Merry Widow*, presented in a new English-language version by Stephen Plaice and Marcia Bellamy. We also revived David McVicar's acclaimed staging of Handel's *Giulio Cesare*, Barbe & Doucet's imaginative rendition of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and Nikolaus Lehnhoff's 2003 production of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*.

Overall audience ratings placed the revival of *Giulio Cesare* as the second highest-rated production of the last ten years, with more than 80% of respondents rating it 'exceptional'.

'Such playing! The acting! The dancing!  
The orchestra! The natural horns! Every little  
detail was wonderful. It was utterly amazing.  
The best thing I've ever seen in my life.'

Website comment on *Giulio Cesare*

Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen (*Giulio Cesare*) and Louise Alder  
(Cleopatra) in *Giulio Cesare*, Festival 2024





'The cast is extraordinarily fine, matching virtuoso vocal technique with clever characterisation and flawless comic timing.'

*Il turco in Italia*, The Guardian

## AUTUMN SEASON

On the mainstage from October to December 2024, we staged two operas: *La traviata* and *Il turco in Italia*, a programme of concerts and hosted the One Voice Festival of Singing, a joint project with Create Music for school groups across the south east. The concert programme featured Beethoven's *Symphony No 4*; Michael Tippett's secular oratorio, *A Child of Our Time*; a choral celebration of Baroque classics and the return of the Glyndebourne Christmas Concert.

Glyndebourne's Autumn Season saw full houses with attendance at 32,664, an increase of over 30% year-on-year. This included 4,236 concessions (13%) of which over 3,000 were children's tickets. We sold 97% of tickets and 26% of bookers were previously unknown to us. 25% of new adult ticket bookers had never attended an opera before.

The Autumn Season is already one of the UK's biggest opera events. The emphasis is on discovery, delivered through the celebration and platforming of emerging talent (nine singers including Elisa Verzier, *La traviata*'s Violetta and Fabio Capitanucci, Don Geronio in *Il turco in Italia* made their Glyndebourne debuts) and through designing the season to be accessible to new and more diverse audiences.

Inna Demenkova (Donna Fiorilla) and Michael Mofidian (Selim) in *Il turco in Italia*, Autumn Season 2024

We also reached audiences at home through our new production of *The Merry Widow*, directed by Cal McCrystal, which was aired on BBC Four on Christmas Day and made available on demand via BBC iPlayer.

Glyndebourne has a significant role to play in the UK opera industry and is one of the largest businesses in our area. Over 500 people were employed in artistic and technical roles alone, including backstage areas such as costume, props, lighting and stage management. We engaged musicians and artists from all over the world, including players from the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and the Glyndebourne Sinfonia.

'All the makings of a classic'

The i Paper

Germán Olvera (Danilo Danilovitsch) and Danielle de Niese (Hanna Glawari) in *The Merry Widow*, Festival 2024

98%

of seats were  
sold in 2024

Richard Hubert Smith



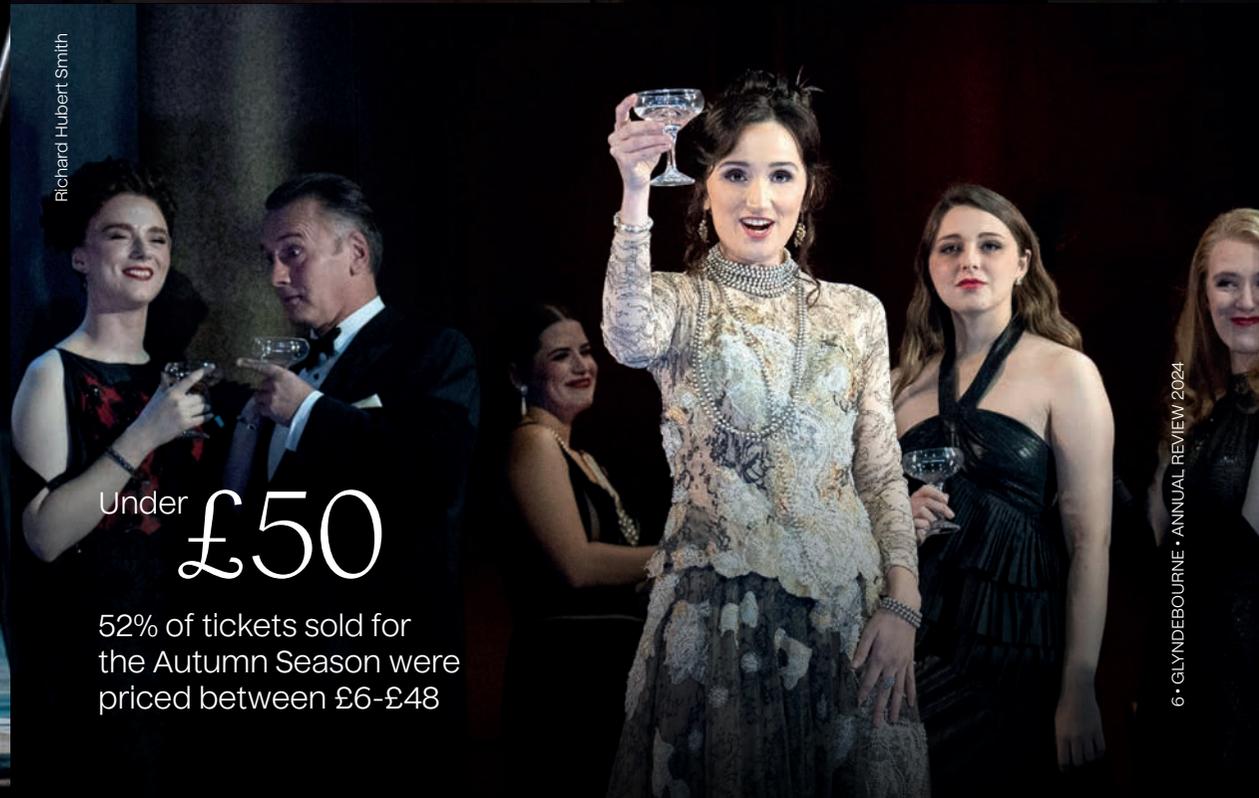
Filmed content viewed

2,067,651

times through YouTube plus the BBC  
broadcast of *The Merry Widow*

Tristram Kenton

Richard Hubert Smith



Under  
£50

52% of tickets sold for  
the Autumn Season were  
priced between £6-£48

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475 musicians, singers, dancers and actors performed at Glyndebourne



Richard Hubert Smith

700+

permanent, seasonal and freelance staff worked for Glyndebourne during 2024, excluding performers and musicians

Alun Callender



Bill Knight

We reached a live audience of

127,048

through a total of 104 mainstage performances



ASH

156

singers from 24 different countries and 6 continents performed on our mainstage

# FUTURE ARTISTS

At Glyndebourne, we are dedicated to encouraging artists at every stage of their career. Identifying, nurturing and showcasing emerging talent remained a key part of our work in 2024.

We support the next generation of singers, instrumentalists and composers through a range of talent development schemes.

## JERWOOD YOUNG ARTISTS

There were four exciting young singers on the Jerwood Young Artists programme, which provides world-class coaching and performance opportunities for exceptionally talented young singers in the Glyndebourne Chorus. Henna Mun, a South Korean soprano, covered the second cast Cleopatra in *Giulio Cesare* and was awarded our prestigious John Christie Award for her outstanding work during the summer.

Already a prize winner at the 2023 Kathleen Ferrier competition, another of our Jerwood Young Artists was Welsh tenor George Curnow who covered (understudied) the role of Cascada in *The Merry Widow*. Michael Lafferty, who transitioned from baritone to tenor, covered the role of Remendado in our production of *Carmen* and Kathleen Nic Dhiarmada, a lyric soprano, covered the role of Papagena in *Die Zauberflöte* during her time as a Jerwood Young Artist.

'It has without a doubt given me a huge helping hand in advancing my career, and I will always be indebted to Glyndebourne for putting their faith in me.'  
Michael Lafferty, tenor

Right • Henna Mun performing in the Ebert Room



'My time as a Jerwood Young Artist has been nothing but positive this year. With weekly coaching by prominent people in the industry to [performing in] concerts, I have learned so much as an artist.'

Henna Mun, soprano

## PEGASUS OPERA MENTORING PROGRAMME

We continued to partner with Pegasus Opera to deliver a mentorship scheme for classical artists from African and Asian backgrounds. The programme was based around an intensive week of activities in June where the mentees were able to observe studio, stage and chorus rehearsals, a cover (understudy) run and a performance from backstage. They also met with artists and various key staff from different departments. In addition, the programme offers coaching and preparation for auditions. The mentees were four sopranos: Anusha Merrin, Lynda Nwabudike, Parvathi Subbiah and Yolisa Ngwexana.

'My highlights were watching *The Merry Widow* rehearsal – the production was perfect and so much fun to watch. It was inspiring seeing everyone from stage management to the conductor working together... I also enjoyed the tour of the music library and archive; it was so insightful and interesting to understand how things work. I also loved the coaching with Matthew Fletcher, a member the Glyndebourne music staff, he gave me very useful advice.'

Yolisa Ngwexana, Pegasus mentee, 2024



## GLYNDEBOURNE ACADEMY

Glyndebourne Academy is the flagship national vocal talent development programme for 16-26 year-old singers who have faced obstacles to progressing their operatic education. The 2024 cohort consisted of nine singers. Six of these participants were state-educated, and all those from independent schools were supported by bursary or scholarship. Glyndebourne Academy is led by our vocal talent consultant Mary King.

'Glyndebourne Academy is just spot on when it comes to hitting the balance between kind encouragement and professionalism. While my late start on this path and past obstacles are acknowledged, I feel treated with respect, like a professional/equal, rather than like a child that knows nothing. I always felt challenged, but never out of my depth, which kept me motivated and very excited.'

Ilona Sofia Nastase, 2024 Academy participant

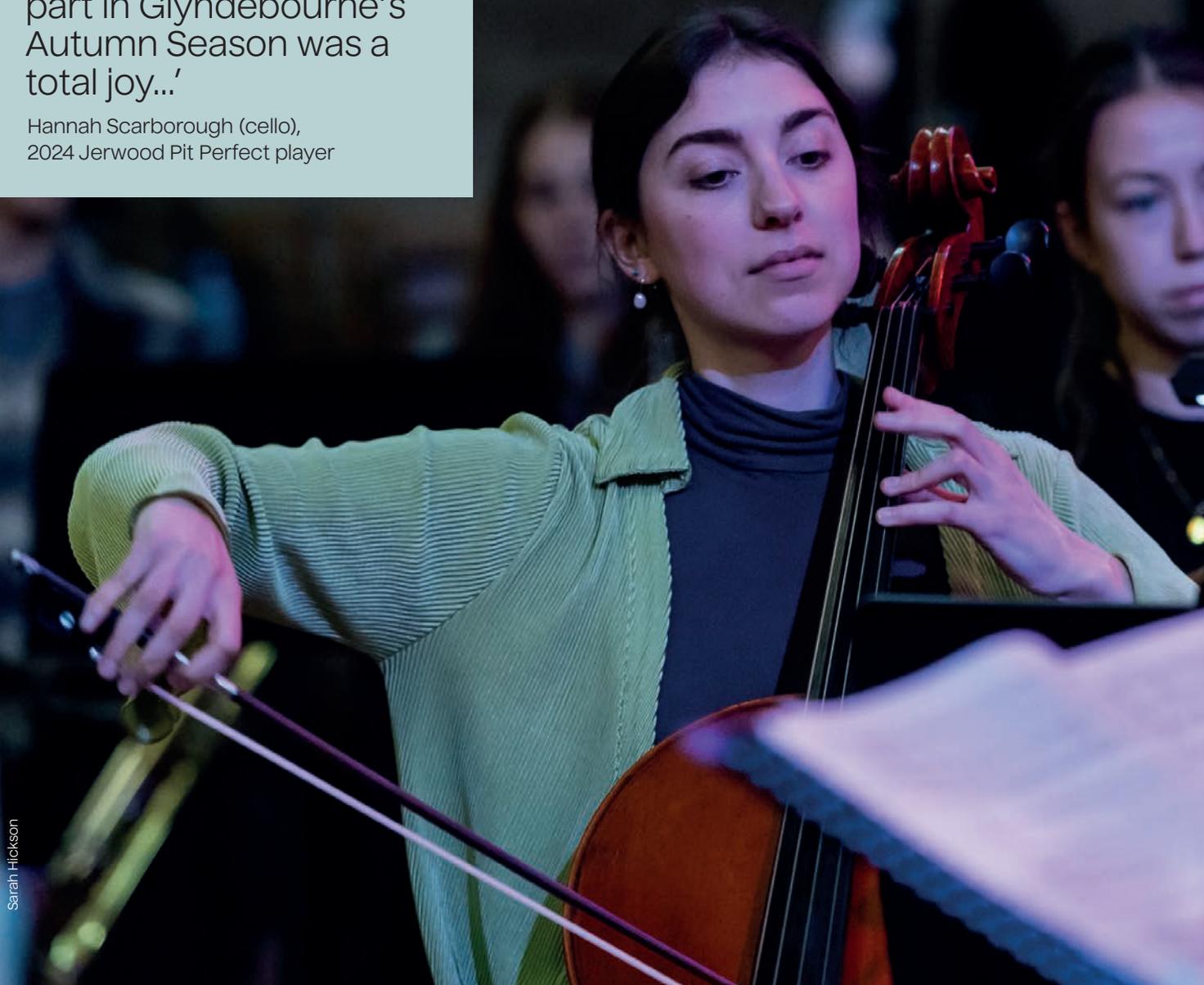
Glyndebourne Academy participants 2024, with coaches and vocal talent consultant Mary King (centre, striped shirt)



'... I am reflecting on how fortunate I feel to have been a part of Pit Perfect this year. To have played a small part in Glyndebourne's Autumn Season was a total joy...'

Hannah Scarborough (cello),  
2024 Jerwood Pit Perfect player

Sarah Hickson



## JERWOOD PIT PERFECT

The Jerwood Pit Perfect programme saw seven young instrumentalists join the Glyndebourne Sinfonia for all performances of *La traviata* during the Autumn Season, gaining their first professional operatic experience alongside mentoring and professional support. They were Alexandra Schifflers (violin), Madeleine Pickering (violin), Vanessa Hristova (viola), Kelvin Chan (viola), Hannah Scarborough (cello), Georgia Lloyd (bass) and William Scotland (French horn).

The recently-graduated instrumentalists also joined players from the Glyndebourne Sinfonia and soloists George Curnow (tenor) and Jade Moffat (mezzo soprano) in a programme of seven chamber music recitals. In addition, they performed in and delivered workshops to five schools, and spent a day at the University of Sussex working with a wide range of young musicians.

Jerwood Pit Perfect cellist  
Hannah Scarborough

## BALANCING THE SCORE

Alex Ho and Lucy Armstrong, resident composers on our Balancing the Score scheme, both wrote pieces for chamber music concerts performed by our Jerwood Pit Perfect players and toured to rural venues across Sussex. Lucy also composed a new piece for our Good Company music in care homes project, as well as a song called *Christmas Magic* that was performed by over 800 primary schoolchildren on Glyndebourne's mainstage in December, and a further 1,400 children in venues across Sussex.

*Christmas Magic* proved to be a particular hit with the young people involved in our One Voice project, with it being voted the favourite song among participants (beating several Christmas classics).



Balancing the Score composer Lucy Armstrong during our community project *Sincerely Yours*



## COVER ARTISTS

Glyndebourne plays an important role in the development of emerging artists by providing a platform for artists to showcase their talent and launch their careers, with many singers gaining valuable experience through covering roles.

Cover artists (understudies) receive five weeks of intensive rehearsals led by an opera production's assistant director and assistant conductor who, like the singers, gain vital professional experience from the process. Rehearsals culminate in a performance at which the cover company performs the opera in full in front of Glyndebourne's artistic administration department and an invited audience of opera industry professionals and agents. In 2024 the Cover Artists programme supported over 40 artists.

*Giulio Cesare* cover cast rehearsal featuring Tom Scott-Cowell (Giulio Cesare) and Johanna Wallroth (Cleopatra). Johanna was also part of the second cast and sang in two performances during Festival 2024.

# IN THE COMMUNITY

We continued to work year-round with communities and partners across Sussex. Each year this culminates in a host of activities that take place alongside our mainstage Autumn Season productions.

Our work with children and young people includes a programme of activities for schools, plus participation outside of school through Glyndebourne Youth Opera. Our ambition is to provide operatic experiences for, with and by young people, especially those who wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity.



## SCHOOLS

A total of 59 groups from across Sussex attended our dedicated performances for schools of *Il turco in Italia* during the autumn. These performances introduce schoolchildren to live, fully-staged opera in Glyndebourne's auditorium. We offer travel grants to support state-funded schools to attend, with priority given to those schools with the highest percentage of pupils eligible for free schools meals.

'I was unsure about this experience with our children, however they thoroughly enjoyed it and many of their parents have said how much they would like to go with them on another occasion.'

Brede Primary School, teacher feedback

We also reached 113 state and academy school groups through the One Voice Festival of Singing project, in partnership with Create Music, and schools in Eastbourne and Crawley through the Singing Schools Network project.

As part of the One Voice project, primary schoolchildren learn festive repertoire and then come together at venues across Sussex to sing together. At four concerts taking place at Glyndebourne, children had the extraordinary opportunity to perform alongside the Glyndebourne Chorus and members of the Glyndebourne Sinfonia on our mainstage to a live audience.

82% of students agreed or strongly agreed that participation helped increase their confidence in singing and 89% of students agreed or strongly agreed that it was enjoyable.

Through the Singing Schools Network composer Howard Moody and soprano Rhiannon Llewellyn worked with a small number of schools to learn concert repertoire and co-compose songs in response. In 2024 they learned parts of the *Christmas Oratorio* and *A Child of Our Time* and then performed these alongside the Glyndebourne Chorus and Sinfonia at largescale sharing events in the community.

5,596 children reached through our performances for schools and singing projects during the Autumn Season.



'... It was fabulous to see the pupils so engaged in an activity that was really out of their comfort zone, and completely alien to them too! Their feedback was really positive, so we shall look forward to the next time.'

Ilsa Moon, Cavendish Primary School

As part of our work, we also delivered training for teachers to support learning in the classroom and members of the Glyndebourne Chorus went into schools to sing and work with children throughout the autumn term.

98% of students across our projects were from state, academy, special schools or other alternative education providers.

This included 130 children from 12 alternative education provider groups, including Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Children in Care and Home Educator groups.

We also worked with East Sussex Careers Hub and their Open Doors programme. Over one week, school groups enjoyed visits to Glyndebourne where they were taken on a tour of the site and backstage areas, culminating in Q&A sessions with staff. Through Open Doors we worked with pupils and schools from lower socio-economic backgrounds, based on Pupil Premium and Free School Meal rates. 179 young people from mainstream state and SEND schools, plus other alternative education settings, took part in the programme. 100% of teachers and support staff strongly agreed (86%) or agreed (14%) that the visit was really engaging for students.



## GLYNDEBOURNE YOUTH OPERA

Glyndebourne commissioned a new community opera by Jonathan Dove and April De Angelis, entitled *Uprising* (world premiere in 2025). In the build-up to *Uprising*, we formed two community hubs, in Eastbourne (East Sussex) and Worthing (West Sussex), for young people aged 14-19, with the aim of providing opportunities for diverse groups to experience high-quality music and arts activity. The sessions focused on celebrating and encouraging young voices and empowering participants to respond creatively to highlight their concerns about climate change.

91% said taking part increased their self confidence. 88% said they felt empowered to use their skills and voice to tackle global problems. 100% felt their ideas were valued.

With the support of our delivery partner, The Human Hive, in total over 100 young people attended workshops. Opera makers Freya Wynn Jones and Darren Abrahams (The Human Hive), supported by instrumentalist/songwriter Zangi Gichohi and artist Annis Joslin, led the groups in an exploration of what it's like to be in an opera ensemble and discover how opera and its cumulative art forms can be used to talk about the changes we want to see in the world today.





Richard Hubert Smith

Alongside the new hubs in Eastbourne and Worthing, we continued to deliver workshops at Glyndebourne and in other places in East Sussex such as Brighton & Hove, Newhaven and Uckfield.

100% said workshops made them want to take part in more Glyndebourne Youth Opera activities. 100% agreed or strongly agreed that the workshops were fun.

Above • Members of Glyndebourne Youth Opera took part in the children's chorus in *Carmen*, Festival 2024

Our youth opera programme also offers opportunities to perform on Glyndebourne's mainstage in Festival and Autumn Season productions. 35 children performed alongside the Glyndebourne Chorus in our annual Christmas concerts. This was the biggest children's chorus for our Christmas Concerts to date (the previous highest was 24). All children performing were auditioned and trained in workshops at Glyndebourne across the autumn. Our brand new production of *Carmen* during the Festival also featured 12 young singers aged 9-13 years from Glyndebourne Youth Opera. These young singers were part of the children's chorus, benefiting from the truly exceptional experience of 180 hours of coaching, rehearsals and performances on the Glyndebourne stage.

## COMMUNITY PROGRAMME

Throughout the Autumn Season we also delivered a range of projects to engage people of all ages and backgrounds.

Members of the Glyndebourne Sinfonia and Chorus visited care homes across Sussex for interactive performances with residents as part of our Good Company project. The performance included a commission from Balancing the Score composer Lucy Armstrong based on a Vera Lynn radio show, *Sincerely Yours*. Vera Lynn's daughter attended the performance at the care home where her mother was a Patron. In total we performed in 12 care homes across Sussex and reached 334 people through the project.

312 amateur singers from the local area participated in two masterclasses in our theatre – one on Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* and another on Vivaldi's *Gloria*. Members of the Glyndebourne Chorus sang alongside participants while our Chorus Director, Aidian Oliver, led each masterclass.

Also during the autumn, musicians on the Jerwood Pit Perfect development scheme performed concerts in educational settings and in local community venues in partnership with Applause Rural Touring. The programme included visits to five schools, a day at the University of Sussex featuring a concert, masterclasses and a side-by-side rehearsal with the University Symphony Orchestra, performances in five rural community venues, plus two concerts at Glyndebourne.

Richard Milone, leader of the Glyndebourne Sinfonia, performing during *Sincerely Yours*, one of our 2024 community projects





Sam Stephenson

157

schools engaged from across Sussex



Sarah Hickson

55,187

in-person contact hours in total for beneficiaries across our community projects



Sarah Hickson

76%

of children attending school matinee performances had never seen an opera before



Sarah Hickson

23,062

beneficiaries reached in total across the year through our community work



Pablo Strong

46,642

participants, visitors and audiences reached during the Autumn Season, across mainstage and community work

# FINANCIAL REVIEW

2024 was designed to give a strong financial performance... and did.



Dmitry Cheblykov (Escamillo) with the Glyndebourne Chorus in *Carmen*, Festival 2024

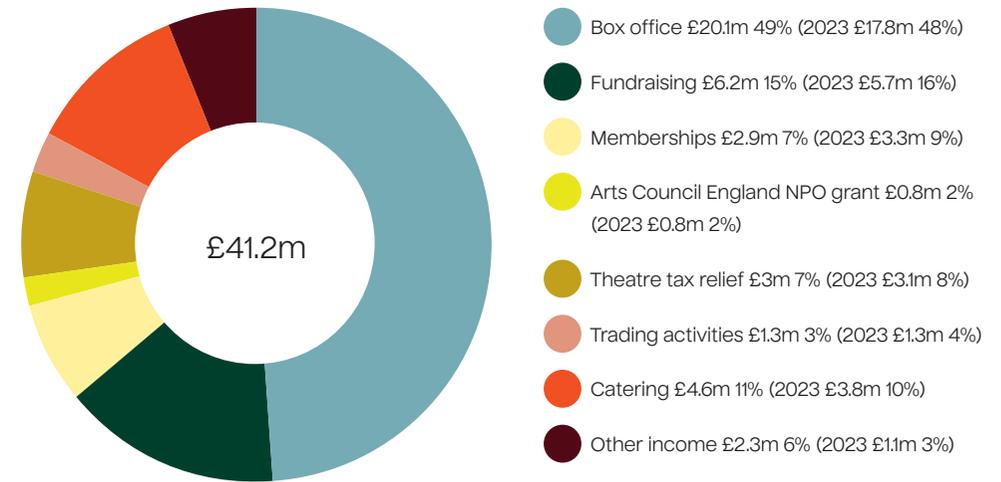
Our total income for the 2024 financial year was £41.2m (£36.9m in 2023), half of which (49%) continued to be generated from Box Office sales with a further 22% from fundraising and membership.

After a total expenditure of £37.9m (£33.2m in 2023), we ended the year with a net income of £3.3m (£3.7m in 2023), before a £5.2m unrealised gain (£1.6m in 2023) in our investment values. The 2024 artistic repertoire was planned during the Covid pandemic in an uncertain financial and operational environment and as such the 2024 financial year was designed to deliver a strong financial performance. Choices were made to give a greater weighting to well known opera titles and to deliver five, rather than the usual six, productions over the Festival 2024 period.

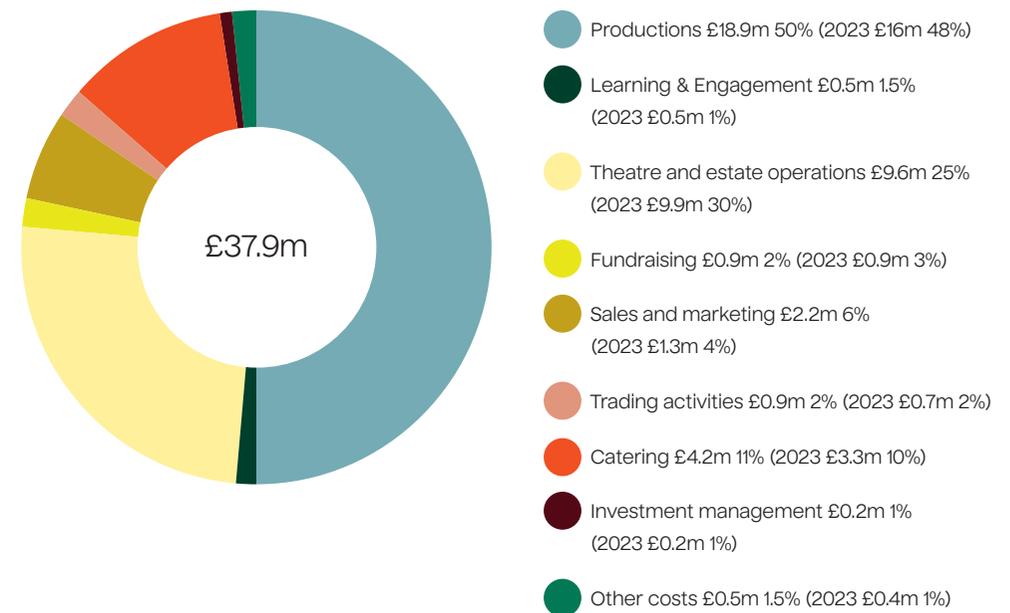
The financial and economic landscape remains challenging. Our operating cost base remains stubbornly high after a period of sustained high inflation rates. There is also an urgent and ongoing need to address the maintenance and refurbishment of our technical infrastructure, customer facilities and the wider estate. The support of our existing audiences, longstanding members, and donors remains vital for our success, as well as the nurturing of new audiences and supporters. Coupled with the financial disciplines of budgetary and cost control, this will maintain our financial resilience and empower us to achieve our artistic and learning ambitions.

*NOTE: Income and expenditure figures at the time of publication are subject to finalisation and audit in the statutory accounts. Our full annual report and financial statements will be available on the Charity Commission website at [gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission) from July 2025.*

### 2024 Total income • £41.2 million (2023 • £36.9 million)



### 2024 Total expenditure • £37.9 million (2023 • £33.2 million)



# ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITY



Our physical landscape plays a crucial part in the Glyndebourne experience.

We work and perform in an extraordinarily beautiful part of the country and our responsibility to ensure we preserve it is a crucial part of our ethos here at Glyndebourne.

The gardens and opera house are a fundamental part of any visitor experience, as well as providing a creative backdrop for our performers, musicians and staff.

While our wind turbine has been powering Glyndebourne since 2012, each year an environmental plan that tackles big strategic projects alongside smaller, day-to-day activities is carried out.

## OUR MISSION

**We are committed to:**

- Reducing our carbon footprint, halving direct carbon emissions by 2030 (from a 2019 baseline) and achieving net zero emissions by 2050.
- Being industry leaders in minimising both our direct and indirect impact on the environment.
- Ensuring that environmentally responsible management and operational procedures are fundamental to all that we do.
- Following the principles of reduction, re-use and recycle in our waste management, as we continue to send zero waste to landfill.

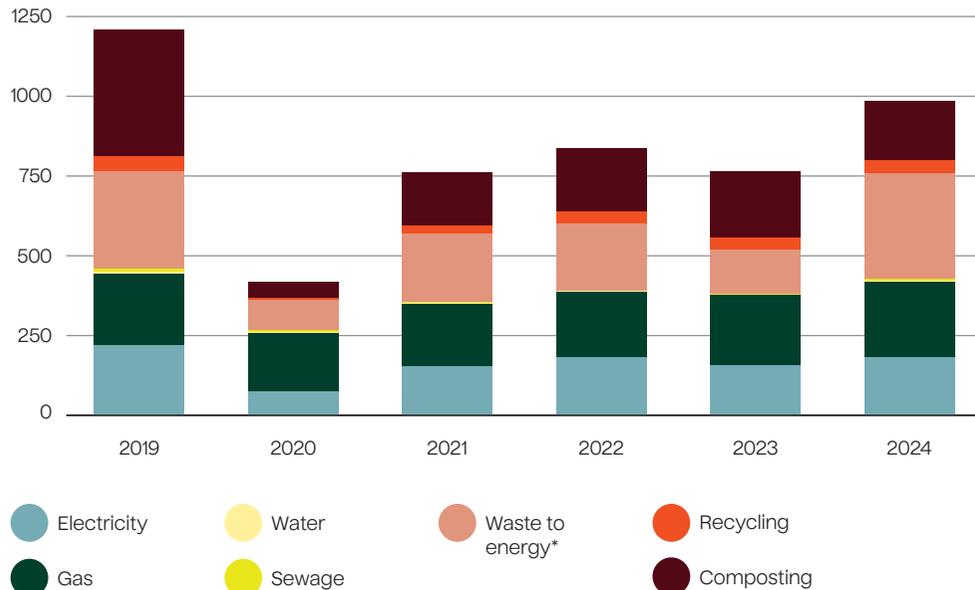


# WHAT HAPPENED IN 2024?

## Energy creation and management

- In 2024 our wind turbine produced more than 90% of our total electricity usage.
- Energy saving was enhanced with the completion of Phase 2 of the opera house double glazing project and the final phase of our auditorium lighting replacement project. For the latter, existing infrastructure was utilised to save on waste and cost, and brings to a close a project that began in 2022 to introduce a new LED lighting system in the auditorium that is significantly more efficient in terms of energy consumption and longevity.
- Our gas usage rose by 5% against 2023 due to increased performances (104 in 2024, 96 in 2023) and colder weather conditions. The programme for replacing older boilers with higher efficiency gas boilers was completed in 2024.
- CO<sub>2</sub> emissions also rose against 2023 due to an increase in general waste across the site – some of which was a result of increased audience figures – that could not be recycled and was converted to energy.

## CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in tonnes



\* non-recyclable waste into usable forms of energy eg electricity

## Waste recycling

We continued to work with Recorra on our waste management. The recycling and waste management company reported:

	2022	2023	2024
Total waste recycling 	102,580 kg	103,210 kg	106,350 kg
CO <sub>2</sub> savings from waste recycling 	69,680 kg	70,070 kg	77,100 kg
Waste recycling per employee 	9.9 kg/wk	9.9 kg/wk	10.2 kg/wk

## Re-use

- The PA system in the Ebert Room (rehearsal and performance space) was replaced and the old system donated to Theatre Clwyd for parts.
- Scenery for operas no longer in our repertoire were taken apart and recycled by Setaway in Scotland for reuse.

## New initiatives

- Preparations were made for the installation of solar panels on the roof of the Production Hub, with work completed in January 2025.
- More scenic elements were made onsite in our Production Hub, reducing transportation costs to scenery contractors in Plymouth and Cardiff, cutting carbon emissions.
- In preparation for Festival 2025, the flooring for our new production of *Parsifal* was supplied by EC Forest Products, located just seven miles from Glyndebourne, and is designed to be fully re-usable.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITY IN 2025

In 2025 we will continue to develop our strategic plan of action for all environmental activity.

As we look seriously and in detail at necessary developments to our physical space to equip us for the next 100 years, respectful consideration will be given to the environmental impact of any works or design plans.

Meanwhile some more immediate projects on the horizon include:

- The extension of a viability study to replace the minibus fleet with electric buses – this was trialled in 2024 and will continue to be assessed.
- Alongside the 36 EV car charging stations in our audience and staff car parks, the feasibility of further EV charging stations in our coach park is being explored.
- Phase 3 of the opera house double glazing installation is now underway.
- Replacement of stage and backstage lighting to LED systems now that the auditorium project has been completed.
- Further deployment of sensor LED lighting to offices and stores.
- Carbon literacy training for staff.

Danny Harratt, Glyndebourne's Head of Facilities, on the roof of the Production Hub reviewing the newly-installed solar panels, January 2025



Glyndebourne Productions Ltd  
Company registration number: 00358266  
Registered charity number: 243877  
VAT number: 785415013

### Governance

Executive Chairman • Gus Christie  
Chief Executive Officer • Richard Davidson-Houston  
Artistic Director • Stephen Langridge  
Music Director • Robin Ticciati  
Finance Director & Company Secretary • Lisa Wong

We are fortunate to benefit from the many diverse skills and experiences of our Board of Trustees whose counsel, guidance, challenge and support is invaluable.

### Trustees

Lord Davies of Abersoch CBE (Chair)  
Jolyon Barker  
Karthi Gnanasegaram  
Sarah Hopwood  
Alina Kessel  
Dr Anna Mallett  
Gautam Rangarajan  
Victoria Robey CBE  
Christopher Walter  
Helen Ward

John Botts CBE *Honorary board member*

*With thanks to the generous individuals, trusts and foundations and organisations that have shown support for Glyndebourne over the last year. Your help ensures we can continue to be a special place where world-class opera is created and enjoyed.*

Annual Review design: Kate Benjamin

Stuart Skelton (Tristan) and Miina-Liisa Väreälä (Isolde), *Tristan und Isolde*, Festival 2024



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Richard Hubert Smith

Elisa Verzier (Violetta) in *La traviata*,  
Autumn Season 2024

