

Annual report 2018

# A YEAR OF CHANGES

## Review

During the financial year, the City of Helsinki, the owner of the UMO Foundation, initiated a review into the operation of the foundation. This was prompted by a succession of unprofitable years and its purpose was to provide a new framework for the orchestra's strategy and a basis for its financial stability. The review was carried out by M.A. Riitta Heinämaa.

Based on the review, a host of new frames for the operation of the Foundation and binding measures to improve its finances were established. Among the objectives was to recruit a new Artistic Director for years 2020–2021 (+ option for 2022), with Ed Partyka being appointed. The set of rules, plan of action and financial strategy were updated; the role of the General Manager was clarified; and the musicians' collective agreement was reshaped. In addition to these, a club was founded enabling private persons and organisations alike to become orchestra's supporters through paid membership or by appointment. The development process will be continuing until the end of 2019.

As a result of the review, also the orchestra's name underwent a change. According to the owner's wishes, UMO Jazz Orchestra became UMO Helsinki Jazz Orchestra as of March 2019.

## Finances

The UMO Foundation is funded by the City of Helsinki (48 %) and the Ministry of Education and Culture (30 %). The current level of self-financing, 22 %, continues to be one of the highest among Finnish musical orchestras and comprises of e.g. private and festival performances and ticket sales. Staffing costs make up 68 % of the total operating costs.

Financially the year was satisfactory, for it was the second profitable year in succession after a long period of loss-making. The revenue of 28 090 € was achieved through

some temporary dismissals and putting both the members of administration and orchestra itself on short time for the second year in a row.

## Operation

In 2018, the number of concert attendees grew significantly, approximately 37 %. In total, 31 324 visitors attended UMO Helsinki Jazz Orchestra's concerts, and on top of this radio and online broadcasts reached an audience of roughly 330 000 listeners. The orchestra performed in 103 concerts and public and private events during the year.

Audience outreach, i.e. artistic activity involving the audience, is an increasingly important and rapidly developing part of the organisation's operation. A significant new venture was to participate in the nationwide project the Art Testers, aimed at Finnish secondary school children. In addition to this, some of the orchestra's rehearsals were made open to the public; the concept for performing in different kinds of institutions was developed; and new partnerships for activity preventing social exclusion were established. Audience outreach targets mainly four different social groups: children and young people, students, institutions and special groups.

The year was altogether successful artistically. The audience was pampered with a great deal of new music: the year saw the premiere of 75 new arrangements and 16 entirely new pieces. The orchestra collaborated with 125 musicians, soloists, composers, arrangers and other freelancers. UMO Helsinki Jazz Orchestra is one of the most notable employers in the field of Finnish jazz music, and its relations to freelancers in the sphere are intimate. The artistic fruits of the year can be enjoyed on the orchestra's website, YouTube channel, social media pages and the [HelsinkiKanava.fi](http://HelsinkiKanava.fi) online service.