

FILLING THE CITY WITH SONG
LEEDS LIEDER FESTIVAL
2023

FRI 9 – SAT 17 JUNE 2023

TOUCHES *of* SWEET HARMONY

POEMS & BIOGRAPHIES

COMPOSERS & POETS

Guest of Honour
Dame Janet Baker

President
Elly Ameling

Director
Joseph Middleton

HOWARD
ASSEMBLY
ROOM

LEEDS
CONSERVATOIRE

FRI 9 JUNE | 7.30 PM | HOWARD ASSEMBLY ROOM

Leeds Lieder Festival 2023

Composers & Poets Forum Concert

'A Leeds Songbook'

Brand new for 2023, a re-imagined Composers & Poets Forum sees the birth of '*A Leeds Songbook*'. Stories about the people of Leeds, told in poems by the people of Leeds, set to music by composers brought to Leeds and performed by our Leeds Lieder Young Artists. Firmly rooted in the locality, our songbook will draw many threads across disciplines. These Forums have built on collaborations made over the Spring and workshops during the Festival.

With special thanks to our Composers & Poets Convenors, **Martin Iddon** and **Hannah Stone**, for leading the project and workshops.



Pure Chance

Georgia Barnes (composer) and **Richard Wilcocks** (poet)

Performed by **Anna Trombetta** (mezzo-soprano) and **Koenraad Spijker** (piano)

'Pure Chance' is a poem about a good friend of mine, a film and stage actor and musician who can draw on a wonderful trove of anecdotes. Over a pint recently, he told me about his experiences in various casinos, revealing that he had now kicked his addiction to high-stakes gambling. The poem results from a subsequent interview with him.

The music for Pure Chance alternates in styles between something of cabaret, jazz and a more contemporary sound. The mezzo-soprano in this piece explores the character of our protagonist through a confessional song. Richard Wilcocks

Rigid planning's out, except for your
preparing, best happenings are surprises.
Pure chance is why we're here on Earth, consider
random eggs entered by unruly sperm
to create the first buzz.

Loving son of loving Leeds parents,
trumpet taught by father, flung out of schools,
beguiled by dramas, jazz bands, sixpences
cascading from fruit machines, anything
that brought you the buzz.

Styling hair was sort of fun, but acting
offered a good deal more, so you can climb
into another human's skin, characters
who despair, die, shout, laugh and love
and make you feel the buzz.

You know that when casinos call or two flies
creep up a wall you become a wild thing
scenting a kill, unrestrainable,
hungering for a golden grail, a big win
good for a short-lived buzz

and its fading often brings you back
to chance and that clutching shame as when
you stare at the tempting Thames, after
a London film premiere which you quit
to lose a grand, and the buzz.

Ditched, you hope. Late wife nurtures.
She's an amulet in the audience
laden with love as your lips tremble
and trumpet speaks of rapture or sadness
to make you feel that buzz.

© Richard Wilcocks

Georgia Barnes

Georgia Barnes studied composition at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance. Her music has been described as exhibiting 'pockets of richness' which 'gains in rhythmic complexity' (Stephen Fry). She has had commissions from the Royal Opera House (the Jette Parker Young Artists and the Casco Phil), The London Mozart Players and the Central School of Music and Drama. She has also written for festivals such as Tête à Tête Opera Festival and now, Leeds Lieder. Georgia is currently working as a TV researcher on the 2023 season of the BBC Proms and is a producer for Opera Prelude.

Richard Wilcocks

Richard Wilcocks has worked as a journalist, as a teacher and for the British Council at the University of Poznań in Poland. He was in the distant past the compere of a folk club, and now sings bass with Leeds Festival Chorus. His regular opera reviews can be found on bachtrack.com. He is Secretary of Leeds Peace Poetry, and holds a PhD from The Northern Film School. His poems have appeared rather sporadically in various small magazines, some now extinct, most recently in the Leeds anthology *And the Stones Fell Open*. A selection will feature in Dreich Magazine (Scotland) soon.



Jazz and the Onset of Spring

Samuel Cox (composer) and **David Cattanach** (poet)

Performed by **Wencong Xue** (baritone) and **Chia-Yun Hsieh** (piano)

The text considers different aspects of Leeds marking how a varied population moves within. David Bierne has a close interest in the jazz scene in Leeds, buying tickets at Jumbo Records. He supports Leeds United and is interested in Irish Writers and engages in Creative Writing classes at the Swarthmore Centre.

Having to compose for a text which was subject to change in real time was a very engaging challenge, one that has proven to be an active learning experience for myself. The focus on the jazz scene within Leeds lends itself to many creative solutions. David Cattanach

Passion time - season at Elland Road
To recover from goals missed
He sought the language of jazz
Players who reach for glory

He enters the club
Where basements resound,
On the steps down his shoes rotate.
Love, dreams and desire will unwind.

Crowds gather on Briggate

Fountain birds fly, trees issue leaf.
Students and mixed worlds walk the pavements.

He learns from this heady mix
Of cotton fields and bondage drums,
Guitars will extol literature and life.
A union man seeks a better deal

Listen a quiver of the heart
Echoes bend chords with rhyme and strum
Crowds gather on Briggate

Fountain birds fly, trees issue leaf.
It takes many villages to build a city

This Irishman brings his architecture
Of lineages and industries
Born on Hyde Park Road; one village
Of many building Leeds.

Jazz a passion.
Hear the refrain

Fountain birds fly, trees issue leaf.
City draws you in grandeur and grime.

© David Cattanach

Samuel Cox

Samuel Cox is a student from Shropshire currently studying for his Master's Degree in Music Composition at the University of Sheffield, with a wide range of experience as a performer in choirs, bands and as a vocal soloist. Samuel has a strong passion for composing choral pieces and music for film and media.

David Cattanach

Sensitive soul, who engages with the thrust of nature and the 'human condition'. David has participated with Swarthmore Centre, Leeds and Otley Poets who encourage creative writing. Work has been published online at FlightoftheDragonfly and physically in several publications.

Past engagements include a Community version of *The Magic Flute* in 1988; Otley Troubadours – *Chevin Rouge Slow Canter Merry Tales* and *The Walrus Said*, edited by Ben Lowe; and finally *Things Fall Apart* and *Even More Electrifying Women* edited by Hannah Stone. For the libretto - Leeds Songbook, David has consulted David Beirne for his views of Leeds cultural life.



Hineni: Here I Am

9 Haikus by Ruth Steinberg

Kenrick Ho (composer) and Ruth Steinberg (poet)

Performed by Bethan Terry (soprano) and Francesca Lauri (piano)

'Hineni: Here I Am' is inspired by the story of the Burning Bush. God called Moses from the burning bush and he answers with the Hebrew word 'Hineni: Here I am'. The piece consists of 9 Haikus, 15 syllable Japanese poetry form, fragments of Len's long journey from 1937 Krakow, Poland to here in Leeds. Many Hineni moments are scattered throughout the piece.

Hineni pulled to become a GP aged 48

Hineni teaching medical students at Leeds University

Hineni on Ilkley Moor

Hineni being a doctor in Leeds until age 81

Hineni in India teaching local villagers to become health workers

Hineni as returning GP during the Covid pandemic

Hineni in India teaching local villagers to become paramedics

Hineni as returning GP during the Covid pandemic

Ruth Steinberg

Striding Ilkley Moor

Skylark vertical journey

Thank you, Len whispers

Nineteen thirty nine

Earth trembles worlds overturn

Len tossed on the wind

I was born in Krakow

with the budding linden trees

March thirty seven

Wutsk to Asino

Cattle truck jolt spilling soup

Siberia this time

Leeds is last stop

Doctor healer listener

Roundhay Park delight

Teacher and healer

Dundee Leeds to Ecuador

and India Dr Len

Len doctor again

Covid calls and he answers

"What's worrying you?"

On Otley Chevin

Doctor Len boots on breathes in

Heart sings with the wind

Here I am, always

Hineni in Hebrew tongue

Just like Moses said

©Ruth Steinberg

Kenrick Ho

Kenrick Ho is a Toronto-born, Hong Kong-raised, and now UK-based composer-researcher currently completing a PhD in composition at the University of Leeds. His practice-led thesis, supervised by Martin Iddon and Freya Bailes, explores creative opportunities that emerge within the multifariousness of human agencies in AI embodiment through experimental composition. More specifically, his research/music engages with questions about the physicality of performance, embodied cognition, and more broadly, the manifold inter-co-authorship between the performer, composer, and the computer. He expects to complete his doctoral degree in 2023.

Ruth Steinberg

Ruth Steinberg is a writer, poet, and story weaver. Born in Newcastle upon Tyne into a Jewish family not long after World War 2, a Geordie Jew. She is fascinated by the power of story to transform and touch hearts. She entered a world of true stories of courage and integrity when she met Dr Len Biran in 2000. She crafted a one woman show *A Flower is not a Rat*, a weave of Jewish stories, song, and poetry, showing us the world we thought we knew from new angles. Recently performed at Leeds Playhouse as part of 1001 stories.



Michelle: Keep Fit Star

Tomos Jones (composer) and **Emma Storr** (poet)

Performed by **Georgie Malcolm** (soprano) and **Edward Campbell-Rowntree** (piano)

I chose to write a sequence of haiku to honour Michelle because the form forced me to be succinct and focused. I wanted to celebrate Michelle's role in sustaining us during lockdown but also introduce a lighter note when describing some of the poses we do in her Keep Fit classes. Emma Storr

Emma's poetry has a real sense of joy and affection, and I wanted to capture these sensations with a vibrant, lively score that brought these aspects to the forefront. The music starts with a very still opening, evoking the lethargy of Lockdown, before springing to life with a dance. Tomos Jones

Lockdown was lonely
trapped at home scared to go out
we slumped on sofas

Dancing into our
lives on Zoom each morning she
linked us together

We gripped and grunted
clenched core muscles and wobbled
on one leg, eyes shut

She stretched and toned us
showed us the Conga, Cha-Cha
our carpets wore out

We knelt on our mats
became dogs on a lamppost
or bridges of steel

We are fit and well
led by Michelle we dance on
hear our hearts beating

© Emma Storr

Tomos Jones

Tomos Owen Jones is a Welsh tenor, composer and conductor, currently studying a Masters degree in composition and vocal studies at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Tomos' compositions have been performed by ensembles including Cardiff Polyphonic Choir and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, and won the WNO-RWCMD Composition Competition 2021. Tomos has sung operatic roles with the RWCMD Opera School, WNO Young Company and at the Tête à Tête Opera Festival London. Tomos recently conducted *Hansel and Gretel* with May Street Opera, and has just premiered his first chamber opera *The Egg* at Atmospheres Festival 2023 in Cardiff.

Emma Storr

Emma Storr is a writer living in Yorkshire. Her poems have been widely published in magazines and anthologies and won prizes in local and national poetry competitions. Her debut pamphlet *Heart Murmur*, based on her experience of working as a GP, was published by Calder Valley Poetry in 2019.

In 2022, Fair Acre Press published *Offcumdens*, featuring 41 of Emma's poems paired with Bob Hamilton's photographs of Yorkshire's people, streets and landscapes. A new poetry collection by Emma, *The Year of Two Winters*, will appear later in 2023 published by Indigo Dreams.



Kirkstall Abbey

Daniel Lau (composer) and Rachel Flint (poet)

Performed by Helena Moore (soprano) and Francesca Orlando (piano)

'Kirkstall Abbey' is an art song for soprano and piano, created collaboratively by Daniel Lau (composer) and Rachel Flint (poet). It gives a history of a monument through its people and highlights its ongoing inspiration to artists.

The music begins with a recitative, allowing the Abbey to introduce itself, before embarking on a journey back in time to its construction in the 1100s. Following an exhilarating section, the music gracefully approaches its conclusion, embracing a tender and tranquil character, reminiscent of Kirkstall Abbey's enduring spirit. This serene passage testifies to the Abbey's unwavering presence and ongoing contributions to the world. Rachel Flint

For eight centuries since my creation,
Here I have stood in dedication;
To Mother Mary for the
Deliverance of de Lacy.

Cistercian monks called me home
Until Henry V111 fell out with Rome,
Thomas Cranmer fell out of favour;
Colonel North became my saviour.

He presented me to LCC
To preserve my history
Muse for artists, I continue to be
Standing stoic in pensive beauty.

© Rachel Flint

Daniel Lau

Daniel Lik-chi Lau is a composer and baritone hailing from Hong Kong. Currently based in Manchester, United Kingdom, he is pursuing a Master of Music in Composition at the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM), having previously graduated from The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) with a Bachelor of Arts in Music.

Daniel's compositions have been played by renowned ensembles such as the BBC Singers, Psappha, Hong Kong Youth Choir, Kantos Chamber Choir, and RNCM Brand New Orchestra. His artistic vision is to integrate his theological beliefs and thoughts, to address relevant social phenomena and issues, and to showcase the unique characteristics of the Cantonese language in his music.

Rachel Flint

Rachel Flint, 34, is a lifelong resident of Leeds, UK and a writer. Rachel's love of writing began at age 7, with a poem written for her grandfather. She has no set schedule for writing but believes poetry is a good way to de-clutter the mind and get her thoughts down on paper.

Rachel's poems were runner up in the Leeds Peace Poetry competition, When life begins in 2013 and her poem 'Shade Battalion' was shortlisted in 2015. She is part of the awesome People Poetry group and campaigns for Citizens UK. She considers her involvement in both groups magical!



Follow the River

A sonnet for Gill Connors. Mother, teacher, poet, history lover.

Brett Miller (composer) and **Alison Lock** (poet)

Performed by **Rachel Barnard** (mezzo-soprano) and **Beth Haughan** (piano)

Follow the River draws inspiration from the sounds of Leeds. Its undulating and temperamental energy is evocative of the river Aire which is mentioned in Alison's poem. The lied also pays homage to Leeds Minster and its commonly performed bell-ringing peal, "Yorkshire Surprise Maximus". This peal is deeply woven into the structure of the song and can be heard throughout, sometimes obscured by the raucous sounds of the harsh tide and sometimes ringing clearly. These elements work together to express the struggle of the working-class artist in Alison's poem who, despite her struggles, never lost sight of her dream. Brett Miller

Follow the river oh daughters of mine.
Go swift as a bird at the turn of the tide.

Let no one keep you on a distant land.

Raise a glass my dears, dance through the night,
feel the warmth of the city by candlelight.

I'll tell you my hardships of life troubled through,
how a love ground down is a life undone.
Never again be coerced by the moon.

Raise a glass, my dears, dance through the night,
feel the warmth of the city by candlelight.

Swim the wild swim, my brave ones, you are.
Hold steady the wheel, sail beyond the bar.

I'll be keeping a watch from the banks of the Aire.

© Alison Lock

Brett Miller

Brett Miller is a Liverpool-born composer and guitarist studying under Tom Harrold at Leeds Conservatoire. Brett primarily composes concert music for acoustic instruments and often draws inspiration from his experiences living in the coastal regions of Liverpool and Ostia, Rome. Some of his most recent works aim to evoke the atmospheres of these locations, where sounds of nature blend with the urban sound environment. He recently participated in Opera North's Make a Scene project, and his music has been workshopped by ensembles such as Psappha, The Hermes Experiment, and Ligeti Quartet.

Alison Lock

Alison Lock writes poetry, short fiction, and creative non-fiction – the author of two short story collections, four collections of poetry, and a novella. Her work has been published in many literary magazines, and broadcast on BBC Radio 3. Her latest poetry collection is *Unfurling* (2022) Palewell Press. Her work focuses on the relationship of humans and the environment, connecting an inner world with a love of nature through poetry and prose. <http://www.alisonlock.com>



Meanwood to Middle Earth

George Parris (composer) and **Amina Alyal** (poet)

Performed by **Charlotte Jane Kennedy** (soprano) and **Frasier Hickland** (piano)

The song commemorates J. R. R. Tolkien on the 50th anniversary of his death on 2 September 1973. In the 1920s, Tolkien lived in Leeds, when in post as Professor of English Language at the University of Leeds. He worked with E.V. Gordon during this time on their critical edition of 'Gawain and the Green Knight'. Although Tolkien was not to begin work on 'The Lord of the Rings' for another ten years, it is pleasing to imagine that the author, a keen walker, first thought of its landscapes and characters while strolling in Meanwood Park, twenty minutes' walk from his home.

Through shifting harmonies from dissonant to more consonant pallets, 'Meanwood to Middle Earth' pulls Tolkien's fantastical landscapes into focus - from initial inspiration to the formation of an idea. Amina Alyal

Meanwood to Middle Earth

Meanwood, run of the mill, everyone's wood.

Here where the light is low and green,

apple and jade, honeydew shade,

a figure wanders, half unseen.

No mean feet trod these stones

soaked by the flapping waves

of tiny torrents, here where Leeds

led into Middle Earth

by way of quarry, mill and flowing beck,

sustained by grit and will, a lonely trek.

Meanwood, Mirkwood, Fangorn Forest,

trees about to walk, about to speak.

Here where the light is low and green,

apple and jade, honeydew shade,

a figure wanders, half unseen:

Imagination, in a hat and cloak,

waves its staff,

and lurks in rags

by diamond sparkles in a pool

of foaming beer and rainbow fire,

seizing fish

and radiating light in rings.

© Amina Alyal

George Parris

George Parris is a London-based composer with a particular interest in choral music and theatre. His work has been performed across the country by a variety of ensembles, including voces8 and the voces8 scholars, and has been praised for its evocative and thoughtful writing. George's style combines his love for early 20th century French Impressionism with influences from both the traditional and contemporary worlds of choral music to create a sound and style of composition with story-telling at its heart. George studied music as an undergraduate at the University of Manchester and is currently enrolled at the Royal Academy of Music, studying for a Masters degree in composition.

Amina Alyal

Amina Alyal has published two poetry collections and is Senior Lecturer in English and Creative Writing at Leeds Trinity University. She has co-written and performed poetry with drumming group Kaminari UK, and is a member of the experimental poetry and music group The Forgotten Works (with Oz Hardwick and Karl Baxter).



King

Danny Saleeb (composer) and **Dalton Harrison** (poet)

Performed by **Jonny Maxwell-Hyde** (tenor) and **Edward Picton-Turbervill** (piano)

The poem 'King' explores the journeys we take and how identity and gender direct our sense of belonging as we search to find connection and growth. It was inspired by the community work led by Phil Pearce who after leaving prison used his strength and resilience to direct young people onto a different path. The music of the song is based on the four-note idea that sets the words 'You don't see me'. This motif is reflected and transposed, and finally set in obsessive repetition over chords that become increasingly muscular, ending with repetitions in reverence to a discovered king. Danny Saleeb

You don't see me
I stand kicking the stones under trees
Watch leaves change colour under
Dusk
Streets sweep us out the gutters
You see a boy
But when the boy becomes a man
What then?
We search for a life that's grown heavy with debris
We need unity
We become armour
We stand in groups
Follow each other one by one
The games life taught us
Till the deck's split to twelve and a king

© Dalton Harrison

Danny Saleeb

Danny Saleeb is a British composer, born in 1985, who writes sacred and secular music for choir and organ, chamber music, and works for film and stage. He has received commissions from ensembles and institutions including: The BBC Singers, Westminster Abbey, The John Armitage Memorial Trust, and BBC Radio 3.

Since 2020, he is avidly pursuing an interest in algorithmic methods of composition, and is working on PhD research into algorithmic composition and the role of analogy in composing at the University of York, supported by the White Rose College of the Arts & Humanities. He is also dedicated to music in education, teaching musicianship and composition at Sheffield Music Academy.

Dalton Harrison

Dalton Harrison is a dyslexic Criminal Justice and Criminology Student at the University of Leeds; that's why he believes he did the practical before the theory. Dalton is a transgender man with a history of prison who has written articles for *Queer AF*, *Pinknews* and collaborated on an award winning academic article in the *Educational Review*. Dalton has recently had his poetry used for the production of *Out of the Blue* by BA Theatre and Performance students and Dance United Yorkshire and their production *Seventeen*. *The Boy Behind the Wall* is his debut bibliographical poetry collection.



Every Shade of Light

Thomas Stearn (composer) and **Chris Cambell** (poet)

Performed by **Noëlle Drost** (soprano) and **Jorian van Nee** (piano)

Chris wanted to focus on a creative in Leeds. Someone making their corner of the world a better place through their art and on their own terms. Kim Joy is everything Chris could have hoped to find and more. Life is painfully imperfect and yet, we continue, hoping for joy.

Tom's compositional approach focused on conveying an overall message about Kim Joy's baking and personality through the music. This is in part conveyed through the refrain of the third stanza which also acts as joining sections within the piece. Other sections which reference baking more specifically are deliberately more musically playful to show the range of emotions present within the poem.

Thomas Stearn

Flour follows behind her
clouds of cuteness rise
in response to repeated kneading
every egg takes its beating
so why hide how life
has cracked our shells?

Learn to take baking and tears in turns
mix dry ingredients first, then the wet,
let these rituals and rules calm our nerves.

Joy perseveres.
She reminds us
we can smile,
we can try.

Turn our troubles into turtle bread
to tell our friends it's not the end,
we'll be alright.

Nothing in this world can
stop us from frosting
ourselves in rainbow bolds
and every shade of light.

Because we know the kitchen opens early
and it closes late, but so long as we're here
let's spend this time making cat cakes!

© Chris Cambell

Thomas Stearn

Thomas Stearn is a British choral composer and vocal teacher based in the UK, where he is currently pursuing a PhD in Music Composition at the University of Sheffield under the supervision of Professor Dorothy Ker and Professor Simon Keefe. His PhD research focuses on word painting and text setting within vocal composition. Thomas has received several premieres of his work over the years, including performances by choirs in Aberdeen and Sheffield. He previously completed his master's degree (2018) in Vocal Music with Professor Paul Mealor and Professor Phillip Cooke.

Chris Cambell

Chris Cambell (he/they) is a queer, working class, neurodivergent, Native American immigrant. He writes poetry for performance and publication, enjoying the tension of writing pieces that challenge the audiences each medium attracts. Chris uses poetry to examine the stories that society overlooks. He seeks to understand what that says about the world we live in and how we can change it by shifting these narratives and queering syntax. He's a poetry slam champion on three continents, competed in the UK National poetry slam finals two years in a row, and has a book out with Broken Sleep Books in November.



Leonora - The Uncommon Woman

Ulysse Verjus (composer) and Ruth Kelsey (poet)

Performed by Stephanie Wong (soprano) and Anna Chiu (piano)

Leonora Cohen (1873-1978) is one of Leeds' unsung heroines, having played a significant part in the women's suffrage movement in the early 20th century. Very much the activist, she daringly smashed a glass case in the Tower of London to attract attention to the cause. Eventually successful, universal suffrage is something which is taken for granted today – though many fail to understand the power of their vote in bringing about change. Ruth and Ulysse have collaborated in song to show how Leonora suffered for women to be able to vote, and how important it is to exercise this right. Ruth Kelsey and Ulysse Verjus

I am a simple milliner
who heeded Pankhurst's cry
and made some noise,
believed in deeds not words.

I smashed the glass with an iron bar
in London's Tower: how else could we claim power?
So I smashed the glass with an iron bar.

*They imprisoned me in Armley Gaol;
I bore indignity and pain. I starved myself,
I was restrained, force-fed through a tube,
all so you can make your mark today
with a pencil stub, in a makeshift wooden booth.*

I smashed the glass with an iron bar
in London's Tower: how else could we claim power?
So I smashed the glass with an iron bar.

My iron bar belongs to you
that crash of breaking glass became your right;
I urge you, please don't take it lightly.
Place your cross, make your noise:
support, disrupt, remove the corrupt

and remember me.

© Ruth Kelsey

Ulysse Verjus

Ulysse Verjus is a French composer and pianist currently studying at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Brought up in the countryside near Lyon, he began studying music and started taking piano lessons at seven. He composed his first pieces at fifteen, after moving to New York. Inspired by a wide range of genres from classical music to French house to dubstep, and a variety of composers from J. S. Bach to Philip Glass to Ryuichi Sakamoto, Ulysse's music is equally influenced by his fascination with counterpoint and tonal harmony. His compositions therefore span a variety of different styles: piano études, electronic pieces, experimental orchestral music, minimalist compositions, classical songs on French poems, film music, etc.. Ulysse is also a keen improviser, both solo and collaboratively, working with fellow musicians as well as dancers and actors.

Ruth Kelsey

Ruth lives in Leeds and is a member of Otley Stanza. She's been writing poetry since 2010, having studied Creative Writing at the University of Leeds. Ruth has had poems published in a number of poetry magazines and anthologies, notably *Check Hope Remains* (125th & Midnight), *Whirlagust* (Yaffle Press), *Ink Sweat & Tears* and *Obsessed With Pipework*. She came third in the 2020 Yaffle Prize, and is working towards a first collection. In 2021 Ruth's poetry was used in the Leeds International Piano Competition's 'Piano Trail' as part of the festival's musical night walks.



One of our own

Ode to the Football Fan

Obe Vermeulen (composer) and **John Streatfield** (poet)

Performed by **Charles Cunliffe** (bass-baritone) and **Daniel Peter Silcock** (piano)

Ode to The Football Fan is a Spoken Word poetry piece dedicated to the people of Leeds and its respective football club. The poem focuses on Leed-born professional football player Calvin Phillips who grew up playing for Leeds United; now of Man City. This piece also highlights undertones of classicism. The purpose of the music is to give this compelling message even more strength. The composer searched for different approaches to communicating this text. Next to singing, the baritone and even the pianist will use a variety of techniques such as Schonberg's 'sprechstimme', shouting, whispering, rapping and narrating. Obe Vermeulen

Those in society who don't understand the beautiful game or see it as a turgid tribal affair are offside, in my opinion, and should be offset by a V.A.R. decision.

It takes two seconds to read between the lines or Bend it like Beckham.

The script of sensationalism has been prescribed to the tide of hungry mouths.

Teetering on the turn of the wrecking ball, classicism.

Blasted into the top corner.

It is causing a schism in the chaos and order of Joe blogs.

Ball games entertain the masses millions.

Domestic football institutions are worth billions,

yet a Leeds fan knows the honour of the badge is priceless.

Who wouldn't want to be a Gold Cloak?

Draped in chants and cheers of Yellow and blue.

Kalvin, this poem I dedicate to you.

Philips screwdrivers aren't ever as handy as our Calvin. Game recognizes game and real knows the deal.

That lad who stayed after dark in the middle of the park was Certi!

Leader among men at the age of ten or maybe it was fifth-teen. Either way, even Ben was jealous; a monster like that was at the centre of all things!

Leeds Midfielder-

how about all other Academy graduates are Mid-

in my opinion.

Deep lying because since 2018, he has devoted himself to being the city's centre back.

The backbone of Elland Road.

He is a Playmaker, game changer, and that's only his hairstyle.

Drip, from head to tip, he could give Harry styles.

Kalvin Phillips gave us new hope and returned our fortunes to where we belong. Leeds's coffers didn't have an empire state of mind to lean upon.

Talent, balance mixed with true Northern Grit.

Authentic. Just like his birthplace.

Man says how it is, and he's one of our own.

One of our own! Leading lights.

© John Streatfield

Obe Vermeulen

Obe Vermeulen is currently studying composition and conducting at the Royal College of Music in London. His repertoire consists of classical pieces, film and theatre scores. He collaborated with (animation) filmmakers, textile artists, actors and dancers. His music has been performed by Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, HERMESensembles, I Solisti, the Flemish Radio Choir, Camerata RCO and many others. In 2021, his orchestral piece *Explore* premiered on the Belgian TV. Later in 2021 the composer released a prestigious series of 14 solo pieces: *Cadenzas*, which he recorded with some of Belgium's leading musicians. In June 2022 his 50-minute long theatre-performance of *Enigma* premiered in Ghent. This composition tells the story of Alan Turing.

John Streatfield

John Streatfield is a Spoken Word poet from West Yorkshire. John recently participated in his first-ever professional competition, the Huddersfield Literature Festival Spoken Word 2023 final, where he was awarded 2nd place. John holds a degree in Creative Writing and English Literature from the University of Central Lancashire. His poetry influences include George the Poet, Suli Breaks, Kae Tempest, Saul Williams and Neil Hilborn. John loves dogs and football, but for the interest of transparency to the reader, he doesn't support Leeds himself.



Voluntary

Niki Zohdi (composer) and **Adrian Salmon** (poet)

Performed by **Florian Störtz** (bass-baritone) and **Mark Rogers** (piano)

When I met Niki at the Leeds Lieder Poets and Composers Forum, and heard his music, I knew immediately that I wanted to collaborate with him. His musical interests, from early music at one end of history, to the ‘new complexity’ composers at the other, were very much in line with my own and my background as a Cambridge choral scholar and cathedral musician in my 20s.

‘Voluntary’ is a 14-line poem, some might say a sonnet, that pays tribute to professional and voluntary musicians in church, college and cathedral choirs around the country. This amazing tradition of ours that doesn’t often find itself celebrated in poetry. I’ve tried to give Niki lots in the text to work with musically, with references to Pärt, Pérotin and Bruckner, and I’ve tried to get to the heart of why we, as church musicians, feel so privileged to do what we do, often for low or no pay, every week of the year. I hope Alex Woodrow, and the musicians of Leeds Minster, feel it gets even a little way towards that. Adrian Salmon

‘Voluntary’ is a piece that connects both my practice as a composer and my practice as a performer together in that I use my compositional interests in a piece which relates to Anglican choral music and, specifically, the choir of Leeds Minster. In addition, I sometimes sing with the choir of Leeds Minster so setting this text has a further personal dimension. The text contains multiple references to choral music, all of which appear in one way or another in the piece – from references to fragmental quotations. Working with Adrian has been a wonderful experience because he is also a professional singer. His understanding of vocal text setting is extremely instinctive and backed up with a beautifully crafted text. I dedicate this piece to Alex and all the members of the Leeds Minster choir, past and present. Niki Zohdi

And if you ask us why we do this, we might speak
about tradition, about a thousand years of music
from Perotin to Pärt, about dark wood and glinting brasses,
about gold mosaic tiles, about bringing the air alive
in this old space.

Some of us may be believers, some not.

But when we really speak, it’ll be about each other,
about David’s amazing bottom Ds, how we can always rely
on Lizzie to help us through a tricky rhythm,
about that look that Alex gives us

that makes us sure we can relax and breathe and sing;

how we know, with no-one telling us,

if we weren’t here we would be missed.

True faith, as the centurion knew it in his bones.

Locus iste a Deo factus est. This priceless sacrament.

© Adrian Salmon

Niki Zohdi

Niki Zohdi is a composer, tenor and conductor. He completed his music undergraduate degree and composition master’s degree at Goldsmiths, University of London under the tutelage of Roger Redgate. Niki is currently a practice-led PhD researcher in composition at the University of Leeds supervised by Mic Spencer and Martin Iddon and explores the concepts of collision and proximity in his music. He has also received tuition in composition from Chaya Czernowin, Laura Bowler, and Jeremy Peyton-Jones. His music has been performed, workshoped and recorded in the UK, Europe and Israel. As well as being a composer, Niki is a tenor both as a soloist and in professional choirs throughout Lancashire and Yorkshire.

Adrian Salmon

Adrian Salmon lives in Bingley, West Yorkshire. Birmingham born, he was brought up in and around the Black Country and Worcestershire. His poems have appeared in several online and print journals, including *Algebra of Owls*; *Ink*, *Sweat and Tears*; *Prole*; *Strix*; and *WRITE where we are NOW*. In 2021 he was commissioned by the Edvard Grieg Kor in Bergen, Norway, to write four poems to be set to music by their associated composers. Adrian’s pamphlet, *Moonlight through the Velux window*, was published in June 2019 by Yaffle Press.



Workshop Leaders

Martin Iddon (Composers' Convenor)

Martin Iddon is a composer and musicologist. His research concentrates on post-war music in West Germany and North America. His books *John Cage and David Tudor*, *John Cage and Peter Yates*, and *New Music at Darmstadt* are all published by Cambridge University Press, while *John Cage's Concert for Piano and Orchestra*, co-authored with Philip Thomas, is published by Oxford University Press. His music appears on three CDs on the Another Timbre label, *pneuma*, *Sapindales*, and *Naiads*. In 2021 his solo tuba piece, *Lampades*, won the Ivor Novello Award for solo composition. He is Professor of Music and Aesthetics at the University of Leeds.

Hannah Stone (Poets' Convenor)

Hannah Stone hails from London but has lived in Leeds for over 30 years. She holds degrees in English Literature and Language, Theology, and Creative Writing, and combines academic work (in the field of Eastern Christian Spirituality) with freelance activity as a poet, editor and convenor of literary events based in Leeds, including for the Leeds Library. She currently teaches for the Open University. She has published four volumes of poetry, and several collaborations, focusing on the voices of women throughout history. She has also been extensively published in anthologies, print and online journals, and is in demand as a performer of her poetry and for running workshops. Hannah's poem 'Second Sleep' was Carol Rumens' choice for her Poem of the Week Blog in *The Guardian* in February 2023. She is editor of the literary journal *Dream Catcher*, and poet-theologian for Leeds Church Institute.

Hannah collaborates with composer Matthew Oglesby and their *Penthos Requiem* received its long awaited second performance in Leeds Minster on Good Friday this year, to a standing ovation, the text being based on her PhD research into penitent grief. She is an enthusiastic choral singer, contributing to three choirs within Yorkshire and also deputising for the Leeds Minster Choir sopranos.