

Wednesday  
17th April

**Composers & Poets  
Forum Showcase:**  
*A Leeds Songbook*

FILLING THE  
CITY WITH  
SONG  
LEEDS  
LIEDER FESTIVAL  
2024

ON WINGS  
*of* SONG

LEEDS LIEDER 20<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL



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# Wednesday 17 April

WED 17 APRIL | 4PM  
LEEDS MINSTER

## Composers & Poets Forum Showcase: *A Leeds Songbook*

*"... what do you get if you speed-date composers from northern colleges with local poets? The answer is 'A Leeds Songbook', an inspiring portrait of the city and its inhabitants across the centuries. The atmosphere was relaxed but the buzz was electric..."*

Clive Paget, *The Guardian*, June 2023

A continuation of the acclaimed 2023 'Leeds Songbook' project, our Composers & Poets Forum adds further creative contributions to Leeds Lieder's song collection. 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 been built on collaborations made over the Spring and workshops during the Festival. Come and hear the fruits of their labours in today's exciting showcase!

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

### The 2024 composers and poets are:

Peter Cooper, composer & Hannah Stone, poet  
Glen Downie, composer & Chris Cambell, poet  
Huw Mears, composer & Susan Darlington, poet  
David Palmer, composer & Lizzie Nolan, poet  
Jan Pospisil, composer & Nigel Karl Stone, poet  
Emilie Speaight, composer & Abbi Senior, poet  
Rosemary Shapes Tickle, composer & Kristina Diprose, poet  
Goi Ywei Chern, composer & Yvonne Ugarte, poet  
Dawn Walters, composer & Laura Strickland, poet  
Kinna Whitehead, composer & Ian Parks, poet



Please see separate programme page for the biographies of the Leeds Lieder Young Artists who will be performing.



## **With Cheer**

Music by Peter Cooper and Words by Hannah Stone

Performed by Biqing Zhang (soprano) and Yongqiu Yuan (piano)

### **Programme Note**

Although Peter enjoys setting various poetic forms, including sonnets, we agreed that here, a more flexible form was needed. The subject is a farmer Hannah volunteers with in a Community Supported Agriculture project. Hannah's poem includes rhythmic lists of activities and crops, giving scope for repetition, and uses internal rhyme, assonance and alliteration to provide word-painting. Peter set the poem as a celebratory major-key song, with moments of dissonance and gently adventurous harmony reflecting the light and shade of life toiling outside. The syllabic setting leaves room for the nuances of Hannah's text, and is reflected by the rhythmic movement in the piano. The bell-like closing bars invoke the nearby ruined abbey. - Hannah Stone

### **Peter Cooper (Composer)**

Peter Cooper is a composer and tenor from Pocklington, East Yorkshire, based in Glasgow since 2019. He recently graduated with a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, during which he took composition lessons with Tom Wilson and Oliver Searle. He continues to study composition there part-time under Fabrice Fitch. Before coming to Glasgow, he studied music at Magdalen College, Oxford for two years, with a choral scholarship. Being a singer, he naturally enjoys writing for voices, but he has also composed a number of works for piano, string quartet, and other instruments and ensembles.

### **Song Text**

#### **With Cheer**

(For 'Lizzie')

She's the sunshine on this farm that's squashed  
between beleaguered River Aire and Kirkstall Road;  
greeting the volunteers with cheery smile.  
She shows us how to sow and plant, weed and stake,  
water and harvest. Gales may buffet us, rain drench,  
but with Lizzie alongside we laugh and chat.  
We shelter, cradling mugs of tea in grubby hands,  
sharing snacks. 'With cheer' she signs off  
weekly messages about the harvest share;  
the regal pumpkins, frills of kale,  
saucy forked carrots, muddy spuds.  
What cheer they bring to meal times!  
Three cheers for inspiring Lizzie!

Hannah Stone

### **Hannah Stone (Poet)**

Hannah Stone has published a number of volumes of poetry, including collaborations with other poets, most recently *The Invisible Worm* (Indigo Dreams Publishing, 2023). She has an extensive portfolio of activities in the poetry community of Leeds, including as poet-theologian for Leeds Church Institute, editor of Dream Catcher literary journal, and enjoys ongoing collaborations with composer Matthew Oglesby. In 2023 her poetry was featured in the Guardian Poem of the Week column, and won the David Oluwale Memorial Writing Competition. She holds degrees in English (London), Theology (Leeds), and Creative Writing (Leeds Trinity). She tutors for the Open University.



## ***She Walks the Blue and Yellow Lands***

Music by Glen Downie and Words by Chris Cambell

Performed by Deirunas Jasiulionis (tenor) and Fang-Lin Liu (piano)

### **Programme Note**

I didn't immediately click with Leeds. My first five years here were awful. But I bought a riso print of Kirkstall Abbey from Kristyna. Every time I see it, I smile. It makes me want to learn to see Leeds the way she does! And that's the power of art. Hopefully this poem/song can do that for someone too! *Chris Cambell*

In my writing I've tried to capture the clean lines and bright colours found within Kristyna Baczynski's illustrations, using open and bright harmonies with clear lines. Likewise, the magic found in many of her comics is well captured in Chris's words, which are abundant with life and energy, with sharp and clear rhythms. Abrupt words are carefully placed against more fluid and expansive ones which has informed the form which shifts between the more fluid lines and the spiky energetic rhythms. - Glen Downie

### **Song Text**

#### ***She Walks the Blue and Yellow Lands***

Yorkshire tongued with Ukrainian blood,  
chirping "Ey up" or "Dobryden" to every  
living thing she catalogs along her way.

Planting storied seeds into paper cups,  
fertilised by pencil shavings, and eraser dust,  
watered with hard work and wanderlust.

Nurtured by nature in times of trouble,  
reminded how it is delicate, beautiful,  
disgusting, and somehow still magical.

Ephemeral bits of infinite once witnessed  
now survive in Kristyna's archive of comics.  
What could be more wonderful?

Chris Cambell

### **Glen Downie (Composer)**

Glen Downie is an instrumental/vocal composer originally from Aotearoa New Zealand. He's currently studying towards a PhD with Jeremy Thurlow at the University of Cambridge, on a Cambridge Trust International Scholarship.

He has been the young composer representative for New Zealand at the 2022 (postponed from 2020) Asian Composers League festival and held the NZSO-National Youth Orchestra composer in residence (2019). He has participated in selective international workshops such as the 2017 tactus' composers forum with the Brussels Philharmonic and Ensemble Musiques Nouvelle (Mons), and also engages in free and group improvisation as saxophonist.

### **Chris Cambell (Poet)**

Chris Cambell (They/He) is a queer, nonbinary, Native American immigrant with ADHD who writes poetry for performance and publication. Their work examines the stories society overlooks, highlights the inequality that this demonstrates, and explores how we can use our creativity to break this cycle.

Chris is a slam champion, has been published in anthologies internationally, has a collection of poetry out with Broken Sleep Books, and has competed in the UK National Poetry Slam finals twice, so far. One of these years they just might win! But, regardless, they're having a lot of fun.



## ***The Birdman of Adel Woods***

Music by Huw Mears and Words by Susan Darlington

Performed by Felicitas Wrede (soprano) and Abhisri Chaudhuri (piano)

### **Programme Note**

Adel Woods is a place of refuge from an increasingly busy pace of life; a green lung where we often bump into the birder. We have never spoken, although we nod hello. It feels like any greater interaction would be an intrusion as he seems so at ease and at one with nature. In comparison, we feel clumsy and mere interlopers. This dichotomy is captured in the sound world of our song. It is raw and vulnerable, dark and melancholic, yet for every moment of crushing solitude, it offers a glimpse of shimmering brightness. - Susan Darlington and Huw Mears

### **Huw Mears (Composer)**

Huw Mears, 22, was born in Llithfaen, a small ex-quarry village on the Llŷn Peninsula to parents Vincent and Sharon. Having grown up in the Welsh heartland, he speaks fluent Welsh along with English, and considers himself firmly tied to Welsh musical and poetic culture.

Although his current output leans stylistically towards the modern, he draws special influence from several British composers who have fallen out of the limelight - Sir Edward German and Sir Arthur Sullivan in particular - as well as the works of later 20th century composers such as Leonard Bernstein. In his own work, he focuses on drawing joy from simple musical material, paying equal concern to melody and his own experimentations with harmony. He endeavours to inject a certain level of whimsy into all but the most severe of pieces. In his free time, he enjoys walking, writing, and curling up with a book and a symphony.

### **Susan Darlington (Poet)**

Susan Darlington's poetry regularly explores the female experience through nature-based symbolism and stories of transformation. It has been published in Northern Gravy, Dreich, Dream Catcher, Ink Sweat & Tears, and Hedgehog Press among others. She has two pamphlets available: *Traumatropic Heart* (Selcouth Station, 2021) and *Never Wear White* (Alien Buddha Press, 2022). Follow her on X (formerly Twitter) at @S\_sanDarlington

### **Song Text**

#### ***The Birdman of Adel Woods***

Boot prints in mud and a snapped  
birch twig are the only sign  
that birdman is here, silent  
with listening to the ripple of robin,  
the natter of nuthatch  
in its outlaw mask. I want to reach out  
but am afraid his jacket will crumble  
into moss in my clumsy fingers,  
his hat will unravel with spider silk  
and spin out on the breeze. Be caught  
on words that are pellet-hard,  
coughed up in fur and bone. A tongue  
I can't comprehend as I crash  
through bramble, the screech of birds  
telling me I don't belong.

Susan Darlington



## **The Changeling Moss**

Music by David Palmer and Words by Lizzie Nolan

Performed by Laura Coppinger (soprano) and David Palmer (piano)

### **Programme Note**

The Changeling Moss is an intimate tale about nobody in particular. It is autobiography and fairytale and landscape chronicle and just a silly little song, all at once. Inspired by the macabre humourous melancholy of Border Ballads and the landscape of the reclaimed bogs and marshes of North Leeds, it tells the story of three neurodivergent children growing up in suburban households with very different approaches - and very different effects. - Lizzie Nolan

### **Song Text**

#### ***The Changeling Moss***

Three homes were built in the bottom of the valley  
Backed up to the banks of the babbling beck;  
And to each home was born a babbling baby;  
As sunny as the sky, as calm as the lake.  
One called Reed, and one called Stone,  
And Moss on the other bank all alone;  
And the proud parents stood in the doorway calling:  
"See my beautiful baby! See my beautiful home!"

---

Sometimes in the spring the beck also rises,  
Along with the sap and the love and the song;  
And some kinds of soil can drink less rain,  
If the clay of their body resists too long.  
But this is not something that parents must heed,  
For all parents know what their precious child needs;  
As they all stand in the doorway calling:  
"See our beautiful baby! See the charmed life we lead!"

---

And the parents of Reed built a beautiful garden  
All around the walls of their beautiful home -  
Shipped in the finest of flora and the finest of trees,  
(And when the roots drowned and rotted, the finest of loam).  
And the Stone parents smirked at their neighbours' strife,  
And paved all theirs over, for an easier life.  
And both sets stood in their doorways calling:  
"See how we triumph! See how we thrive!"

---

...

### **David Palmer (Composer)**

David Palmer is a London-based composer and pianist specialising in 20th and 21st century repertoire. David has studied composition with Richard Barrett, Robert Saxton and Matthew Sergeant. As a composer for the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, David's compositions were performed in such venues as the Britten Studio of Snape Maltings, Birmingham Symphony Hall, Tate Britain, Southbank Centre, and the Music Room of the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall. David read music at the University of Oxford, and now teaches undergraduate modules at the University. His studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama are generously supported by the Norman Gee Foundation.

### **Lizzie Nolan (Poet)**

Lizzie has been surrounded by music and words from the very beginning, both inside and out. Her work is influenced by the music of speech, the rhythms of everyday life, and the way the human mind and the natural world often rhyme, if you really listen.



...

The Reed parents knew that all children change,  
And they can be guided and moulded and pruned...  
But others are changelings who spit, hiss and bite,  
Or sit silent and sullen amid the life that they've ruined.  
And Stone's parents laughed, as well they might  
(With their own child's tears buried far down out of sight).  
And they face each other across their gardens calling:  
"See our cleverness! See how our way is right!"

---

Now Reed's garden is beautiful, precious and tamed  
(An everlasting fight, pouring gold after sweat),  
But Reed is not there, though he's welcome, they say;  
When he can behave. He's not chosen to yet.  
Stone is still home - a quiet girl, and good;  
If rain washes right off then there's no way to flood.  
And sometimes she stands with her parents in the doorway:  
"See our perfect girl! See no trace of mud!"

---

But what of Moss, on the other bank alone?  
Well, some know what it is to live by the beck,  
And live with the water's rise, and the changeling's rage.  
Think: How sunny IS the sky? How calm IS the lake?  
Look at the banks - see what flowers can be found!  
See what does not rot! See what is not drowned!

Moss lives there still, amidst bog-iris and sedge,  
And sits there with Reed at the water's edge.  
They don't call to the neighbours - it's enough to be known,  
In your own beautiful bog. Your own beautiful home.

Lizzie Nolan



## City Turned Into a Song

Music by Jan Pospisil and Words by Nigel Karl Stone

Performed by Anton Kirchhoff (baritone) and Jou-an Chen (piano)

### Programme Note

Inspired by an act of human kindness during a period of mourning, this song is a silver lining surrounding the darkest cloud. What if, overnight, the people of Leeds turned into the notes, melodies, rhythms, and lyrics of a song? It is dedicated to any grieving families in the city.

One voice alone has the power to turn a whole city into a song. Make everyone sing words and melodies they never heard before as if it came deeply from their own hearts. All it takes is the courage to share one's own depth of heart and soul with tender confidence and love. This song is dedicated to all those courageous voices in Leeds and the whole world. - Nigel Karl Stone

### Song Text

#### City Turned Into a Song

The cobbled market choir calls  
The lakeside serenades  
Feast on, you picnicking throng  
Soar on, clouded kites  
Skip through the eclipsing rope  
Canal walking hopes  
While father mourns  
Weeping mother sighs  
On the day that the city turned into a song

Listen to the lion roar in City Square  
Pass it forward to the people gathered there  
Grocer, sister, stranger, son, friend, everyone  
This is the day the city turns into a song

The baritone free man still echoes  
Charity, melody, rave on  
Chant from the stands, ripple out  
So loud, so proud  
Hear the coffee sippers, the day trippers  
The gift buyers, the heavy sighers  
The well-wishers  
Well met, marching hand in hand  
Under a star-crossed sky, a crescent moon  
On the day that the city turned into a song  
Nigel Karl Stone

### Jan Pospisil (Composer)

Jan Pospisil is a Composer, Composer for Screen and Conductor born in Czech Republic. Currently he is finishing his final year of BMus studies at Royal College of Music in London, specialised in Classical Composition and Composition for Screen, under the lead of Dr. Haris Kittos. He also had lessons with Dimitri Scarlato, Filip Sijanec and Enrica Sciandrone. Before studying at RCM, he studied for 4 years at Prague Conservatoire Classical Composition, Music Theory and Orchestration under highly esteemed Czech composers Ondrej Kukal and Milos Bok.

Jan is described as a highly creative and flexible composer with a "lush", "romantic" and "original" sound with influences from composers such as Poulenc, Prokofiev, Legrand and Hisaishi creating an unique "neoromantic" style with influences from Jazz and Film scores which makes his music popular among listeners.

Among his biggest successes are his position as an associate composer with the Czech Olympic Committee, composing music for their media campaigns and Paris 2024 Summer Olympics related events and his close collaboration with the RCM conducting faculty, creating exam and audition pieces for current and aspiring students. His works are regularly played by RCM students and are in high demand. In the past, his works were performed by Fidelio Trio, RCM orchestras, Prague Conservatoire ensembles and multiple theatre ensembles.

### Nigel Karl Stone (Poet)

Nigel Stone is a 60 year old writer of poetry and short prose, as well as an actor and occasional chef. He was born and raised in Leeds. The city has featured frequently in his written work.

Having collaborated in the past with visual artists, including the painter, Pete Fowler, and the award winning 'Place and Memory' artists collective, Nigel was eager to work alongside a composer of music.

Nigel identifies as an old dog keen to learn new tricks, and so as soon as he'd submitted his application for A Leeds Songbook, he looked up the definition of "lieder".





## ***A lighthouse near Holbeck***

Music by Rosemary Shapes Tickle and Words by Kristina Diprose  
Performed by Èlia Farreras Cabero (soprano) and Lucas Huber Sierra (piano)

### **Programme Note**

This song celebrates a kind friend, someone ordinary and remarkable. The idea came from her love of urban nature and a story about wasps abandoning their nest for her flat. Rosie and I talked about thin places, making space and boundary-crossing as themes we wanted to explore.  
- Kristina Diprose

I transformed simple melodic ideas into a series of textures that reflect (on) the ideas and characters that appear in Kristina’s poem; the piano part grows in the spaces left by words that were edited out between drafts. I hope I captured some of Bess’s spirit in my music! - Rosemary Shapes Tickle

### **Song Text**

#### ***A lighthouse near Holbeck***

(for Bess)

how it starts   bossy robin   knocking on  
family of blue tits   charm of finches

*Welcome friends!*   she lays out a feast of seeds

the beech tree stirs   creeps closer   rustles her  
awake   at dawn   in her canopy bed

she paints   and scatters   red & yellow leaves

then the wasps arrive evicted tired   cold  
she’s terrified

but kind

she understands

she hangs   a beacon   *Make yourself at home*

Kristina Diprose

### **Rosemary Shapes Tickle (Composer)**

Rosemary Shapes Tickle (she/they) is an emerging composer, audio producer and human with an interest in music about stories, environments and journeys, whose music has been performed in the UK and abroad.

In addition to composing concert music for solo instrumentalists, ensembles and choir, Rosemary produces soundtracks for stage and media.

Rosemary’s current inspirations include the sapphic tension between a river and a canal, DIY stores and beachcombing. Ongoing projects include a soundtrack to a queer retelling of the Twelve Dancing Princesses and a work for electronics and found percussion on environment and memory.

Rosemary studies at the RNCM, and lives in Salford.

### **Kristina Diprose (Poet)**

Kristina Diprose co-runs the Rhubarb at the Triangle open mic in Shipley, and co-edited its anthologies *Un/Forced* and *Seconds*. She has been shortlisted and anthologised in the Ginkgo Prize and Leeds Poetry Festival competitions and was an Ilkley Literature Festival 2023 New Northern Poet. *Thin Spells*, her debut pamphlet of ecopoetry, is forthcoming in 2025 from Black Cat Poetry Press. Some recent poems appear in publications from Strix, Open Shutter Press and The Wee Sparrow Poetry Press. Instagram: @kristinadiprose

## Life Lessons

Music by Emilie Speaight and Words by Abbi Senior

Performed by Aksel Rykkvin (baritone) and Zany Denyer (piano)

### Programme Note

Around this time last year, I watched a video that was going viral on social media of a couple dancing to a busker in the centre of Leeds. It was a beautiful video to watch, but what made it even more special to me was that the couple in the video were family friends who I'd known since I was little.

When I was offered the opportunity to write about the people of Leeds, the video sprung to mind immediately - and it has been a wonderful experience to write about them, and something I've really treasured. I wanted this poem to encompass the magic of the video while translating the personal lessons I learnt from them growing up - and Emilie has done a brilliant job capturing all of that meaning and imagery within her composition. - Abbi Senior

### Emilie Speaight (Composer)

Emilie Speaight is a Danish-British composer, violinist and soprano based in London and currently studying for a master's degree in composition at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance. She has previously held choral scholarships at The Queen's College, Oxford and King's College London. Her particular areas of focus include vocal, piano, percussion and film music, and her work draws on a wide range of influences including Ruth Crawford Seeger, Ursula Mamlok, Stravinsky, Messiaen, Scandinavian folk music and mythology, contemporary French spectral music, and global jazz and hip hop.

### Abbi Senior (Poet)

Abbi Senior (She / Her) is a queer, disabled writer and poet based in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire. Her writing utilises storytelling to explore health, identity and politics, and she regularly performs at poetry nights and open mics around the North; recently coming third in the Huddersfield Literature Festival Poetry Slam.

Abbi is a co-founder and co-host of Ink Spill; a thriving poetry project which hosts regular workshops and events, including a monthly poetry night and a festival, alongside a podcast: Spilling Ink. She is currently working on her debut collection and a poetry show entitled: "Counting Down From Ten". @ByAbbiSenior

### Song Text

#### Life Lessons

On a rainy weekday morning, as the world rushes on **by** -  
they two alone pause, with a twinkle in each **eye**,  
by a busker singing sweetly, a keyboard under **hand**,  
to her audience of just those two: the woman and the **man**.

The transformation happens quick, a 'blink and miss it' kind of **one** -  
as his toe taps to the rhythm, her heart listens to the **song**.  
Then the pavement becomes their ballroom, as dazzling as Blackpool **tower** -  
the street lamps become stage lights, the rain a confetti **shower**.

A crowd begins to gather; folk standing side by **side**  
and with a disco ball of camera phones, the moment's shared **worldwide**.  
As the song comes to an end, the crowd applauds, then **gone**  
but there beyond the final chord, the dance continues **on**.

Abbi Senior



## Richard's Song

Music by Dawn Walters and Words by Laura Strickland

Performed by Thomas McGowan (baritone) and Benjamin Collyer (piano)

### Programme Note

The poem is in the voice of Richard McCann, an international speaker from Leeds whose mum was Wilma McCann. The initial piano motif, echoed by the voice, suggests the motion of stitching, and the idea of Wilma's name being woven through a bird's nest. The first verse is in a melancholy C minor, reflecting the sorrow of losing a loved one, while the second brings hope, tinged with remembrance and love. This piece is in memory of Wilma McCann - mother, daughter, sister and friend. - Laura Strickland and Dawn Walters

### Song Text

#### Richard's Song

(in memory of Wilma McCann)

I stitch your name on ribbons Mum,  
and stream them to our garden  
on Scott Hall Avenue,  
where a bird weaves them round her nest  
to keep her babies warm,  
and when she leaves to look for food  
they're safe and not in fear of falling.

When they learn to fly,  
their song will follow kids  
chattering their way to school.  
They'll sing of longing,  
the sound rising to the sky  
they'll sing and sing and sing,  
until they raise their young  
to sing for you, Mum,  
until everyone sings your name -  
*Wilma.*

Laura Strickland

### Dawn Walters (Composer)

Dawn Walters is currently reading Music at the University of York. An Alto soloist and small ensemble singer, she has extensively set Shakespeare's songs and sonnets, performances of which have been featured in the International Composers' Festival and on BBC Radio.

Dawn's choral piece, *Pro Dolorosa Eius Passione*, written for The Swan Consort, was featured on the Choral Chihuahua Podcast and is published by Banks Music.

Recently, Dawn has extended her compositional repertoire by writing for strings and other instruments. This year Ensemble Intercontemporain will be workshopping her violin and piano piece, *Dalton Holme*, and Chimera Ensemble included her new string quartet in their summer concert of 2023.

### Laura Strickland (Poet)

Laura Strickland is a poet and MA student at Manchester Metropolitan University and is a member of Settle Poets. Her work has appeared in *The North*, *Northern Gravy*, *Ink*, *Sweat and Tears*, *Dreamcatcher*, *Strix*, *The Frogmore Papers* and *High Window*. Laura was shortlisted in the Leeds Poetry Festival and Black Cat Poetry Press competitions. She is one of 20 poets included in Poetry Archive's Worldview 2023. Laura was longlisted in Nine Arches Primers and was one of 12 poets selected for Lancaster Literature's Mosaic 2023. She is working on her first pamphlet.

## The Poet

Music by Kinna Whitehead and Words by Ian Parks

Performed by Cerys MacAllister (soprano) and André Bertoncini (piano)

### Programme Note

The Poet is a tribute to the well-loved Leeds writer Linda Marshall who lives and writes in Headingley. Linda has published several collections of poems and is well known in the poetry community in Leeds for the entertaining recitals of her own work. She can often be found in the cafes of Headingley where she relaxes and writes. We wanted to capture the distinctive atmosphere of both Linda's poems and the suburb where she writes them. - Ian Parks

### Song Text

#### The Poet

In wintertime she can be found  
Beneath an absinthe moon  
Where lamps are lighted in the dark.

She comes trailing patchouli  
With a ribbon in her hair;  
Leaves petals scattered on the floor  
And poems under the door  
Where new-found couples sway

In Headingley, Far Headingley  
When the stars begin to freeze.

In summertime you'll find her there  
Between the mirrors of Arcadia  
And the ticking Clock Cafe,  
Walking through the windless park  
With strings amber, strings of pearl -  
The warm wind in her hair,  
Between the teapots and the upturned glass,  
Dispensing love poems everywhere

In Headingley, Far Headingley  
Where her poems sing in the trees

Ian Parks

### Kinna Whitehead (Composer)

Kinna Whitehead is a British composer, singer, filmmaker and musician. Her work is multi-faceted and includes songwriting, concert compositions, art film, music/sound production and performing. Inspired by creatives such as Philip Glass, Kate Bush, Meredith Monk and Mona Hatoum, Kinna draws influences from many artistic disciplines to create exciting new work.

Kinna has had her work performed and displayed at Centrala, Eastside Projects, Flatpack Festival (Birmingham), the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, Peckham Festival and the Royal Academy of Music (London). Her film *Lights* was selected to be displayed in the 2023 Royal Academy of Art Summer Exhibition and was awarded the Arts Club Under-35 Award.

### Ian Parks (Poet)

Ian Parks is a poet and academic. He is the editor of *Versions of the North: Contemporary Yorkshire Poetry*. His translations of the modern Greek poet Constantine Cavafy were a Poetry Book Society Choice. His poems appear in *Poetry Review*, *The Times Literary Supplement*, *Modern Poetry in Translation*, *Poetry* (Chicago) and the *Folio Book of Love Poems*. His Selected poems 1983-2023 are published by *Calder Valley Poetry*. He runs the *Read to Write* poetry group in Doncaster.

## Letter From Heaven

Music by Goi Ywei Chern and Words by Yvonne Ugarte  
Performed by Anusha Merrin (soprano) and Chunmeng Ge (piano)

### Programme Note

The person I have chosen as the subject of this song, Letter From Heaven, is Tony Ugarte, Leeds born and bred. He is also the father of Emil and Amali and step-dad to Tim. Our son, Emil, passed away at the age of 22 months and three days after losing his second battle against meningitis.

A piece of our hearts will never heal and I know that this song will bring some measure of comfort to Tony as he still feels such a huge bond with our son, even though Emil's address is now in Heaven.

Tony was born in 1949 at Mount Cross Hospital on Broad Lane, Bramley, the youngest of two brothers. He went to Broad Lane Primary School, then Brudenell County Secondary School and then started work in 1966 at Burtons in Leeds 9. - Yvonne Ugarte

### Song Text

#### Letter From Heaven

I now live on the edge of your world  
The torch of your love for me burns ever-bright  
Your strength and your courage are my guiding light  
You taught me so much when I lived down on earth  
Compassion and love, always knowing my worth  
You'll still hear my voice in the breeze through the trees  
Do not be disheartened, despairing or sad  
For I'm always there with you  
My hero, my dad.

Yvonne Ugarte

### Goi Ywei Chern (Composer)

Goi Ywei Chern (b. 1996) is a Singaporean composer and guitarist. He has studied in the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) School of Music and the Royal College of Music, and he is currently undertaking an MPhil/DMus (Composition Route) in the Guildhall School of Music and Drama under the supervision of Professors Richard Baker, Matt Kaner, and Julian Anderson.

Goi has taken part in numerous performances and competitions, winning the International Antonin Dvorak Composition Competition in 2023 (Senior Category) and the Leong Yoon Pin Composition Competition 2016 (Chamber Music). He was also a participant in MusicFest Aberystwyth 2019. In 2021, his piece *Concertino for Soprano Saxophone and Wind Ensemble* was premiered in the Amaryllis Fleming Concert Hall in the Royal College of Music, London, by saxophonist Robert Finegan and the RCM Wind Ensemble conducted by Simon Channing.

### Yvonne Ugarte (Poet)

Yvonne is a 64 year old Leeds lady, brought up in care, fostered and later adopted. Poetry has been her way of expressing herself from the age of 5, finding it easier writing her feelings down rather than talking to the adults in her childhood.

She has published 2 books, the latter raising over £1,000 through sales and donations to Martin House Children's Hospice where my son, Emil, was so lovingly cared for.

Over the years, she has appeared on TV, in the local newspaper, in numerous anthologies and various podcasts.

She is also a volunteer and trustee of two charities and also a Director of another.

## Project 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*, *New Music at Darmstadt*, and the *Cambridge Companion to Serialism* are published by Cambridge University Press, while *John Cage's Concert for Piano and Orchestra* (with Philip Thomas) is published by Oxford University Press. His music appears on *pneuma*, *Sapindales*, and *Naiads* (Another Timbre). His tuba piece, *Lamapdes*, won the Ivor Novello Award for solo composition in 2021. He is Professor of Music and Aesthetics at the University of Leeds.



### **Hannah Stone (Poets' Convenor)**

Hannah Stone has published a number of volumes of poetry, including collaborations with other poets, most recently *The Invisible Worm* (Indigo Dreams Publishing, 2023). She has an extensive portfolio of activities in the poetry community of Leeds, including as poet-theologian for Leeds Church Institute, editor of *Dream Catcher* literary journal, and enjoys ongoing collaborations with composer Matthew Oglesby. In 2023 her poetry was featured in the Guardian Poem of the Week column, and won the David Oluwale Memorial Writing Competition. She holds degrees in English (London), Theology (Leeds), and Creative Writing (Leeds Trinity). She tutors for the Open University.




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