

Friday 12 May 2023

7pm Milton Court Concert Hall

Voiceworks: Creative Minds in Song

directed by **Gavin Roberts & Rebecca Cohen**

SONG
IN THE **CITY**

 **mind**
for better mental health

in Tower Hamlets
and Newham

Milton Court

Please make sure that digital devices & mobile phones are switched off during the performance.

Please do not stand or sit in any gangway.

Eating is not permitted in the auditorium.

Drinks are allowed inside the auditorium in polycarbonates.

Filming or recording of the performance is not permitted.

Latecomers will be able to enter the auditorium at a suitable break in the performance.

Guildhall School of Music & Drama

We hope you have enjoyed today's performance at Guildhall School. We would be grateful for a voluntary donation to support world-class training for these talented artists, as they embark on their journey to becoming world-leading performers and production artists. You can make your donation using our GoodBox devices located at the Box Office and foyer bars, or text* GSDONATE to 70970 to donate £5. Please speak to the front of house team if you require assistance.



Fundraising, payments and donations will be processed and administered by the National Funding Scheme (Charity No: 1149800), operating as DONATE. Texts will be charged at your standard network rate. For Terms & Conditions, see www.easydonate.org

Song in the City

Gavin Roberts artistic director

Rebecca Cohen co-director

Sarah Walker CBE patron

Iain Burnside patron

Registered Charity no 1147050

Charitable support helps Song in the City to deliver our ground-breaking projects which transform lives. We offer invaluable professional development opportunities for the next generation of classical musicians, commission new work with up and coming composers, and develop and deliver ground-breaking social projects such as Creative Minds in Song.

To support us visit:

www.songinthecity.org/donate

Thank you

Alex Knox

Cerrita Smith

Raymond Yiu

Andrew Watts

Pamela Lidiard

Julian Philips

Samantha Malk

Armin Zanner

Karen Wise

Michael Wardell



Creative Minds in Song, a ground-breaking social project pioneered by **Song in the City**, explores the deep link between mental illness and creativity.

Bringing together writers from **MIND in Tower Hamlets and Newham** with postgraduate students from the Guildhall School, the project inspires the co-creation of brand-new songs over a series of workshops, written by those with lived experience of mental illness in collaboration with Guildhall School composers, pianists and singers. Through poetry and music, the project gives the experience of those who have suffered from mental illness a creative life. This world premiere performance will feature the new songs and will tell the story of the project and its participants through words and music.

The project is funded by the Guildhall School's Research Fund – an internal source of funding available to the School's staff for innovative and cutting-edge research projects and curriculum initiatives. To find out more about the School's research, see www.gsmd.ac.uk/research-engagement-services/research.

Writers

Murat Ahmed
Laurie Allen
Eisha Karol
Sonia Cummings
Jeanna L'Esty
Paul Happé
Isobel Lane

Composers

Francisco Fontes
Elif Karlidag
Michał Kawecki
Gavin Roberts
Daisie Sitlani

Piano

Jonny Budd
Zhaoyin Luo
Daisie Sitlani

Soprano

Bridget Esler
Miku Yasukawa
Roberta Philip
Mariana Fernandes

Mezzo Soprano

Lyla Levy-Jordan

Countertenor

Eliran Kadussi

Baritone

Tom McGowan

Percussion

Charlie Hodge

Voice, Kalimba, Metallophone

Eisha Karol

Electronics

Michał Kawecki

Pre-recorded Voice

Jeanna L'Esty

Programme

Why Can't You Hear Me (World Premiere)

Jeanna L'Esty poet

Michał Kawecki composer

Lyla Levy-Jordan mezzo-soprano

Michał Kawecki electronics

Why can't you hear me would not have been written if it were not for this project. The aftermath of my episodes of seizures last year left me creatively paralysed. I needed a very strong outside stimulus to allow me to revisit the experience safely. I have tried here to express the abstract and disembodied feeling that I experienced, also the physical manifestation, and in so doing have begun to write again.

– *Jeanna L'Esty*

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'Why Can't You Hear Me'. It consists of two staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a time signature of 4/4. The music starts with a dynamic marking of *mf* and a triplet of eighth notes. The lyrics 'no way to stop. be-gin - ning mid - dle end be - gin - ning mid - dle end' are written below the notes. The second staff begins with a dynamic marking of *pp* and a measure rest of 65. It features a triplet of eighth notes and a dynamic marking of *f* at the end. The lyrics 'Arms flay - ing sob - bing pel - vis rock - king tights legs tights rock - king pel - vis sob - bing flay - ing' are written below the notes.

The silent scream into the darkness
The ground dissolving, my body sinking into quicksand.
Reality shattered like shards of broken glass,
No sense of passing time.

I scream but like a dream no sound.
Screaming with no voice into the emptiness of space.

Why can't you hear me
Why can't you see I am in pain.
Stretched on the rack
Every sinew nerve stressed taught
To breaking point

continued on next page

I scream.....screeeeeeeeeeeam
But no one hears me...only silence
A scream that tortures my body and my brain.
And now the silent scream you cannot hear
Attacks the creamy substance in my head,
Dashing it against the inside of my skull
Till all my body shakes in a grotesque ghastly shiver.
Arms flaying sobbing pelvis rocking thighs legs...
There is no way to stop.
The seizure must run its course
Beginning middle end.

Some gentle touch to say "I understand"...
Is that too much

Pallini by Jeanna L'Esty

read by the poet

Today at Rafina (World Premiere)

Jeanna L'Esty poet

Francisco Fontes composer

Mariana Fernandes soprano

Zhaoyin Luo piano

Today at Rafina is the first poem in a collection of eight inspired by the changing moods of the sea at Rafina Bay north east of Athens. It represents for me a summer of freedom, independence and a pure state of happiness - jumping on a bus from the road the original Marathon was run to go and play in the waves at Rafina with Poseidon. But if the sea was calm the god was playing somewhere else, and I felt all the jealousy of a jilted lover! (Poet quotation)

– *Jeanna L'Esty*

Today the sea belonged to Poseidon....
His trident skewered me
(I will not tell you where)
And tossed me from the sea onto the stony shore
Drowning me under the unforgiving waves.

GO! I do not want you here!
But you can sit and pay my power homage;
You can listen to the drums I beat from deep inside
My ancestral mansion, peopled with Nereides and sunken ships

You can sit and gaze at the hazy shapes of land
That merge into the distance beyond the skyline
And imagine before you a stage for all the cast of Myths ;
Pegasus in flight swooping the water,
Aphrodite seductive atop the frothing foam.

Today I saw Poseidon and he talked to me.
He wooed me and chastised me
And wore a frown beneath his crown.
I do not want to feel his trident's prongs again.
I will be humble in his company.



The beach at Rafina, Attica, Greece

Sewing Poem from 'Sea Suite' by Eisha Karol

read by the poet

The Siren Song of the Sea at Twilight (World Premiere)

Eisha Karol poet

Gavin Roberts composer

Lyla Levy-Jordan mezzo-soprano

Jonny Budd piano

Eisha Karol voice, kalimba, metallophone

The Siren Song of the Sea at Twilight was written in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil, after a swimming trip to the beach, watching the sun going down over the sea - at a time when I was studying folkloric dances in Brazil. It's part of a longer performance piece, 'SeaSuite', which has been staged with different musicians and dancers. In this version we explore the influence of the gamelan on Debussy by including a metallophone from a gamelan orchestra in the piece.

– *Eisha Karol*

She came back again to haunt me
The shadow that stalked me as a child
When my twenties had done with me
And what's next sat on my shoulder
Expected I but never to return
To a place once known and left behind
On a road I thought curved onward not around

Move closer, said the water
While lightning flashed across the bay
I wanted the blue to swallow me up
But was afraid it would be brown not blue
The tides pulled me in towards the rocking boats
I saw myself wade out into the water
That promised me a velvet peace
While another Eisha turned away
Letting the sea devour the beach



Eisha Karol performing in Sea Suite

Mental Health Poem (World Premiere)

Murat Ahmed poet

Daisie Sitlani composer

Bridget Esler soprano

Daisie Sitlani piano

I say a prayer
That in my lifetime we can all live stigma free
That all humanity will open their eyes and see
That mental health is not a curse but a blessing for all to see
That the world can overlook my diagnosis,

And see me as human being
That my son looks me in the eyes
And can see by my smiling face
That I'm free as the flock of seagulls that fly over the River Thames

Lully, Lullay (World Premiere)

Isobel Lane poet

Gavin Roberts composer

Bridget Esler soprano

Daisie Sitlani piano

Lully lullay, my little tiny child,
Tightly curled in your shining shell,
I'll sing you to sleep and all shall be well.

Bye bye lullay

Lully lullay, my little tiny child,
Snug in the shell that holds you so tight,
Its translucent whiteness shimmering light,

Bye bye lullay

Lully lullay, my little tiny child,
Hold still now your safe shell is starting to crack,
As slowly our haven is shadowed in black,

Bye bye lullay

Lully lullay, my little tiny child,
The darkness is growing, the demons are here,
But fear not my darling for I will take care,

Bye bye lullay

Lully lullay, my little tiny child,
As softly I draw out the fine silver charm,
That will hold you surely and keep you from harm,

Bye bye lullay

Lully lullay, my little tiny child,
Cradling you gently I see you appear,
Here in my arms there is no need for fear,

Bye lullay

Lully lullay, my little tiny child,
So now my sweet sweetening you open your eyes,
The dreaming is over, it's time to arise,

Bye bye lullay. *

**The musical setting is of verses 1, 2, 4 & 6*

There is a Lady Here by Isobel Lane

read by the poet

My Child Fell (World Premiere)

Isobel Lane poet

Michał Kawecki composer

Miku Yasukawa soprano

Daisie Sitlani piano

I wrote this poem when I was actually in hospital again. It is written as a deliberate pair to 'My Child Died' which Michal set to music for the last Creative Minds project. It illustrates some of what my mind has felt like when I am ill but does have hope.

– *Isobel Lane*

My Child Fell.
Far, down through the whirlpool
Spinning wild,
Fractured spirit swirling,
Tattered streaks of mind
Tangling her hair.

Down deep she dropped
Into the dark night
Oh her black soul!
Stripped bare of being she sank
Into the soft earth.

World abandoned she lay long
Still and silent in the Darkness
Without a glimmer of light
Till into the silence crept a sound
The seed of her heart was beating.

continued on next page

Softly breathing the child took form
And gathering brightness was reborn
Crying, laughing,
Silver sparks of water leaping
Glittering in the air

Till free she flew, so joyously singing
Soaring skywards, fully living
To her heaven,
In her being,
In her song.

Refuge (World Premiere)

Paul Happé poet

Francisco Fontes composer

Eliran Kadussi countertenor

Zhaoyin Luo piano

In 1739, Jean-Joseph Happé left a village in northern France. He joined the French Huguenot community at Spitalfields, a few streets from here. They were the original refugees, Protestants fleeing persecution in Catholic France, the word *refugié* in French. In 1752, he married Mary Parent; they were my six times great grandparents. There is a house in Brick Lane, the archetypal street of immigrants, now lined with Bangladeshi restaurants, where my family lived for generations. By chance, when I arrived in London, myself a refugee from mental suffering, I found myself close to where my ancestors arrived. At a time when migrants are being stigmatised and criminalised, it is well to remember everyone here is an immigrant if you go back far enough. Even the Angles and Saxons. Even the Welsh.

– *Paul Happé*



59 Brick Lane, built in the 18th Century as a Huguenot Chapel.

It was later used as a Methodist mission and a Synagogue. It has been the Jamme Masjid Mosque since 1975.

What's in a name?
A word, a single word, that marks
A story of flight, pursued by hate,
Seeking refuge in a foreign land,
Speaking a tongue not their own,
Finding safety among strangers,
When their own disowned them.

Les réfugiés

What's in a name?
A single word that marks me,
A name passed down.
Behind me shadows
Of unknown family fly,
Generations without name,
Joined only by a word.

Before the house,
In the street of refugees,
I stand lost and alone,
Looking up at windows blank and dark.
They look down on me from far away,
Names in a family tree,
Calling across the years.

Here I stand,
Refugee from the past,
Seeking relief from loss and grief,
A fatherless child,
A childless father,
In the street of ancestors,
Before the house of family.

Home at last.

As Fate Would Have It by Paul Happé

read by the poet

Petite Fleur (World Premiere)

Paul Happé poet

Elif Karlidag composer

Tom McGowan baritone

Jonny Budd piano

Sidney Bechet was one of the early greats of jazz music. He wrote and played *Petite Fleur* when he was living in Paris in the 1950s. It was one of the first pieces I learned to play on saxophone. My daughter was about six when I first began to play. It can be sad being a dad. I often could not be with her when she was growing up. I could not live with her. It felt that she was always being taken from me. I felt I was her ghost father, there and then not there. As the ghost of Hamlet's father, doomed for a certain time to walk the night, fades away, he calls, 'Adieu. Adieu. Remember me.

– *Paul Happé*

I see you there,
Your hair kissed by the wind.
You place your berries in your basket
At the end of a row of canes.
You are out of my reach.

I see you there,
Bobbing in the water.
Like a little fish,
You swim away,
Still out of my reach.

I see you there,
Paddling in the shallows
On a sandy beach.
You skirt the rising tide
And wander away,
Always out of my reach.

I see you there
Only in my mind.
You will not see me,
You will not speak.
You have turned away,
Ever out of my reach.

Will I see you there?
Hope springs paternal,
Hope is all there is.
You shout at me in anger.
Your harsh words
Push me away,
Further out of reach.

I see you no longer.
You are distant now
In another life.
I, a shadow in your past,
A ghost, a memory, a shade.
Remember me, remember me,
Eternally out of your reach.



Sidney Bechet

My Dear Father by Sonia Cummings

read by the poet

Crying Silently (World Premiere)

Sonia Cummings poet

Elif Karlidag composer

Roberta Philip soprano

Charlie Hodge percussion

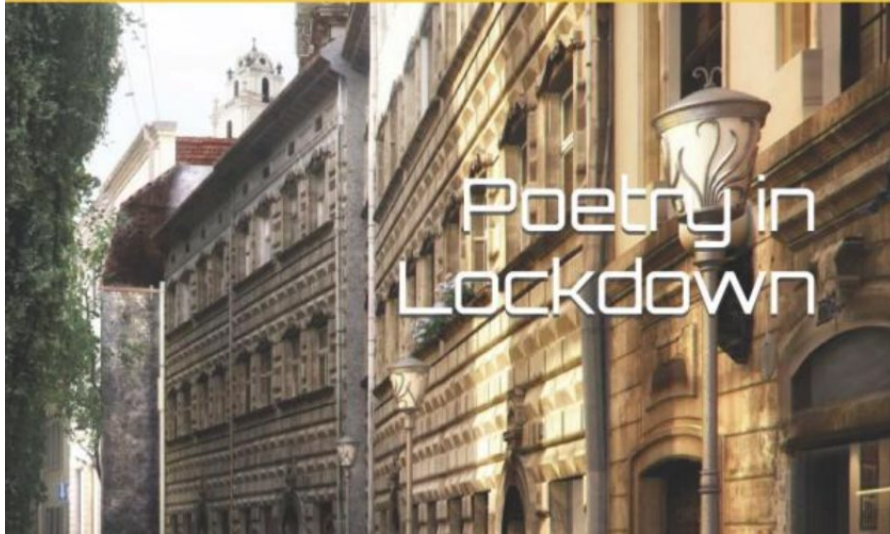
This poem came about from years of silent suffering; being mentally and physically abused and too ashamed and scared to ask for help. Having a breakdown opened the door to getting the support I needed. Please, please, if you are someone, or you know someone who is suffering, don't hold back. You deserve better. Shout as loud as you can to make your voice heard. We need love. I hope that by listening to this song, it will take the bolt off your prison door.

– *Sonia Cummings*

Crying silently.
Mind body and soul ache
Do I forgive,
Do I forget,
Do I seek revenge,
Do I love,
Do I hate,
Crying silently.
Who caused the pain,
Me you I am going insane,
Don't need you
Messing with my brain,
Stop playing wicked games,

Crying silently.
Battered and bruised,
Bearing the scar,
Hurt betrayed,
Lied to, laughed at,
Wearing the fool's hat,
Crying silently.
Do I answer my silent cry,
Do I curl up and die,
Do I shout no more will I,
Do I put a stop to this cruelty
No more no more,
Crying silently.

Sonia B.



One of Sonia's publications, Poetry in Lockdown

Plaintive Cry of a Gentle Butterfly (World Premiere)

Laurie Allen poet

Elif Karlidag composer

Roberta Philip soprano

Daisie Sitlani piano

Alone Seated in Garden Repose
Nature Gripped My Very Soul
Surrounded by Fragrance Fresh
Of Borders, Flower Beds and Shrubberies
Transported from Time Periods themed
Sun Blush Red smothered by Jealous Clouds
Awoke to Hear the Plaintive Cry
Of a Gentle Butterfly

Gossamer Wings of Orange Hue
Trimmed with Colour of Azure Blue
Fell to earth Wings crumpled by
A Cruel Wind
Reflective Pursuit of Beauty
That Can Be so
Easily Crushed by the Unexpected.

*Butterflies Do Cry
Nature uplifts the spirit
Never deny that thought
Sight, touch, senses are inspired to delve deeper
Butterflies do cry
(poem structured delightfully by nature's beauty)*

– Laurie Allen



The gardens of Museum of the Home (formerly the Geffrye Museum) - a free museum in the 18th-century Grade I-listed former almshouses in Shoreditch. It was here that Laurie was inspired to write the poem above.

Grief by Laurie Allen

read by the poet

This is published in my book 'Good Grief', which had six other contributing writers at St Joseph's Hospice. It was written to uplift those that are going through emotional disharmony during loss and bereavement.

– Laurie Allen

Bah! Humbug! (World Premiere)

Laurie Allen poet

Gavin Roberts composer

Tom McGowan baritone

Jonny Budd piano

A cockney hinterland (Bethnal Green)
Pokes its tongue out at its close relative, the City of London
Ere we will tell you to speak proper
Bah humbug is the smug reply
Take a trip dawn the Frog and Toad (road) and we will show you

– Laurie Allen of Petticoat Lane

Popular Cockney Rhyming Slang Phrases

SLANG PHRASE	MEANING	EXAMPLES
Apples and Pears	stairs	"time for bed Jimmy, get yourself up the Apples and Pears"
Adam and Eve	believe	"would you Adam and Eve it?"
Bacardi Breezer	freezer	"I'll just stick it in the Bacardi"
Brass Tacks	hard facts	"Lets just get down to the brass tacks"
Bag for Life	wife	"I took me Bag for Life to the Dolly Mixtures"
Calcutta	butter	"pass the Calcutta over 'ere would ya please?"
Cherie Blair	penalty fare	"I jumped off the tube and got Cheri'd"
Cherry Pie	lie	"You're tellin' a Cherry ain't ya son!"
Dawn French	stench	"Phew there's a Dawn French coming out those drains today"
Dot Cotton	rotten	"that looks absolutely Dot Cotton"
Everton Toffee	coffee	"let's have an Everton"
Fluffy Bunny	money	"look at all that Fluffy Bunny"
Hampstead Heath	teeth	"Goin to the dentist to have me 'ampsteads looked at"
Hat and Scarf	laugh	"You 'avin a Hat and Scarf mate or what?"
Inky Smudge	Judge	"But the old Inky's givin' me 6 months"
Jim Fenner	tenner (£10)	"where's that Jim you owe me?"
Jack Dee	cup of tea	"Jack Dee - milk, one sugar, cheers mate!"
Kitchen Sink	drink	"lets go to the rubber for a Kitchen Sink"
Lump of Lead	head	"use yer Lump!"
Macaroni Cheese	car keys	"have you seen me Macaronis?"
Nina Simone	phone	"stop rabbittin' on the Nina and put the telly on"
Pat Cash	slash (urinate)	"just goin' to the loo for a quick Pat Cash"
Tom and Dick	sick	"I ain't goin into work today. I'm feeling Tom and Dick"
Tom Cruise	bruise	"That's a hell of a Tom Cruise you got there."



CREATIVE MINDS IN SONG

Music. Mental health. Creativity. Collaboration.

FRIDAY 2 JUNE 2023, 7PM

ST MATTHEW'S BETHNAL GREEN E2 6DT

Free Admission. Booking required on www.songinthecity.org/whatson



WWW.SONGINTHECITY.ORG