



Songs

from a

Small Train

PROGRAMME

COUNTERPARTS
music theatre arts

Songs from a Small Train

Trains and tracks appear regularly in poetry and music and it was likely that sooner or later the Tamar Valley Line would arrive in Calstock's thriving creative minds. Tonight's concert has taken train journeys between Gunnislake and Plymouth as a starting point. Local writers and composers asked weathered Tamar Valley travellers for their stories and turned them into songs. Quickly the project gathered speed. Asylum seekers from Plymouth who regularly take the Tamar Line to Calstock, joined in with their stories and musical talent. Train journeys became a metaphor for journeys through life, including the excitement and frustrations, the stops and starts that we are all familiar with.

Tonight's Songs from a Small Train would not have come together without the talents and skills of many. With her enthusiasm and encouragement musical director Helen Porter has in a very short space of time connected writers, composers, singers, musicians and the Calstock Big Jazz Choir to create this unique celebration of train journeys, on the Tamar Valley Line in particular. Songs from a Small Train is a musical exploration bringing people together.

Counterparts Music Theatre Arts gratefully acknowledges the additional funding support from FEAST, Calstock Parish Council and First Great Western and individual donations, which made it possible to have first performance at this year's Calstock Jazz & Blues Festival. We hope you will enjoy the concert.

Peter Ursem, Chairman Counterparts MTA

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Lily Russell for having the brilliant idea of involving refugees in 'Songs From A Small Train', for DCRS sessions, arranging tickets, food, and all her organisation, love and support to everyone involved during the making of this project; Pat Joyce and Sue Turner at Devon and Cornwall Refugee Support; Annie Page; Kevin Gamm for his wonderful cooking in support of the project.

THANKS ALSO TO:

The Calstock Jazz Festival Committee (www.calstockjazzfestival.co.uk), Calstock Arts for lending staging, equipment and 'muscle', Mary Simpson and Tish Valva, Peter Bonsey (St Andrews Church), Rosie Brennan and Oz Osborne for advice and support, Tony Marson for driving the shuttle bus, Tim Hardy for lighting, Ken Finn for lighting assistance, Colin Boyd for sound.

There will be a collection at the end of the concert for Devon and Cornwall Refugee Support Council. This vital service is the only place that refugees and asylum seekers in Plymouth can go for advice and support. The centre is currently understaffed due to a cut in their funding, and overwhelmed with new arrivals from Syria.

PLEASE JOIN US AFTER THE PERFORMANCE IN THE OLD CHAPEL, CALSTOCK, for refreshments (bar) and a Q&A session about the project. The mini bus service will shuttle to Calstock from the Church. The train leaves Calstock at 10.32pm!

Songs from a Small Train will be performed again at the Old Chapel on Thursday 18th December. Seating is limited, so if you would like to book a ticket, please email: Helen@counterparts.org.uk or telephone 01822 833668

COUNTERPARTS MTA PRESENTS:

SONGS FROM A SMALL TRAIN

PERFORMED BY THE BIG JAZZ CHOIR
WITH GUESTS

PROGRAMME

FIRST HALF

Alto sax, bassoon, guitar: Anna Batson
Clarinet: Li Selman
Keyboard: Helen Porter/Paul Joyce
Guitar: Kai Benjamin
Saxophone: Kodai Benjamin
Viola: Andrew Gillett
Double Bass: Mike Thorn
Djembe: Chanda Nyerezani
Voices: Jennie Cox, Chrissie Wallis

- 1 Standing at the Station
- 2 Help Point
- 3 Going Back
- 4 Waving at the Train
- 5 Cnatanoooga Choo Choo
- 6 Looking for Gracie
- 7 One Minute
- 8 Stone
- 9 Eclairs on the Train
- 10 Cornwall Bound
- 11 Watch Dad

The music in the second half of the concert will be performed as one piece. Please refrain from clapping until the end of the concert.

SECOND HALF

Soloist: Mark Samuel
Djembe and vocals: Chanda Nyerezani
Keyboard/harmonium: Anna Batson/Helen Porter/Li Selman
Guitar, alto saxophone, bassoon: Anna Batson
Clarinet: Helen Porter
Double Bass: Mike Thorn

Additional vocals: Jennie Peach, Rohey Manneh, Chanda Nyerezani
Voice recordings: Mark Samuel; Chanda Nyerezani; Rohey Manneh; Rizgar Rahimpanah

- 1 Believe We Can Fly
- 2 Blues Duet
- 3 *Recording: Morning*
- 4 What do you See?
- 5 *Recording: Money*
- 6 Not Gotta Lotta Money
- 7 *Recording: Home Office*
- 8 Waiting in this Waiting Room
- 9 *Recording: Escaping Mugabe*
- 10 Suitcase
- 11 *Recording: Travelling*
- 12 Fellow Passengers
- 13 Journeying
- 14 Nothing Ever Happened
- 15 Bridges and Wings
- 16 *Recording: Language*
- 17 Just Because We Don't
- 18 My Beating Heart
- 19 Every Child
- 20 Blessing
- 21 Leaves on the Line
- 22 *Recording: Home*
- 23 Khoshamadid
- 24 Khoshamadid/Believe We Can Fly

1. STANDING AT THE STATION

Words and melody by Janet Nesaule. Performed by Janet Nesaule

First time, on the little train
He's come from the city.
Can't see a lot, night time,
Travelling to see his love.
Heart pounding, heart pounding -
Will he ever get there?
Anticipation....
Heart pounding, heart pounding
But she is there
Standing at the station

Quiet mornings on the little train
He wants to be invisible
Sound track - sweet music
Plays through the window in his mind.
Heart's quiet, heart's quiet
Taking it for granted
No elation.
Heart's quiet, heart's quiet
'Cos she's not there, he's looking everywhere,
standing at the station.

Next time, on the little train,
Light flooding all around him.
Mist rising from the river -
Lush meadows and rolling hills.
Heart beating, heart beating -
Caught up in his imagination
Heart beating, heart beating
Will she be there
Looking happy,
standing at the station?

Spends time on the little train,
Still needs the thrill of the city.
Nothing's perfect, even in the country,
Bad stuff happens everywhere.
Heart's still pounding,
heart's still pounding
What's changed,
Why the trepidation?
Heart's still pounding,
heart's still pounding
Because she's here, looking even better after all
the crazy years,
Standing at the station.

2. HELP POINT

Words and melody by Jayne Newton-Chance. Performed by Jayne Newton Chance.

Spoken text: Chanda Nyerzani

Seventeen at the station
And one is in a bubble
She's in trouble and she's looking for a friend.
People with their cases
And their automatic faces
She won't trust them she is sick of let's pretend
And she knows sometimes the train doesn't come.
So young and all her life
Is rolled into a suitcase that she
Wheels and she feels that she is late
Looking for affection she
Can't make the connection
what is her and what is her fate
And she knows sometimes the train doesn't come.
Seventeen at the station
With a kind of desperation that
Lingers as she's looking at the wall
Help point is written clearly
And she almost and she nearly
And her fingers reach out to make the call:
Push below to speak to an adviser.

Speak here, my dear, speak here.
You can talk to me in an emergency
You have a choice, says that voice.
The information on this station is that:

It is that one day your train is gonna come
Your train is gonna come!

3. GOING BACK

*Written by Ian Craft. Music by Paul Joyce.
Performed by Ian Craft and Paul Joyce*

Going back
from the place where I am
to where I began.
Going back.
Through corridors of leaves
past butterflies and bees
and long distant scenes.
Going back.
Over bridges and rivers
the Tamar and Tavy
and estuaries crossing.
Going back.
Woods that I climbed in
fields where I played
- innocent days.
Going back.
Past goal-posts and footballs
street corners and dance-halls
first kisses and fumbles.
Going back.

Passing Linda and Sandra,
the girls I remember
and more I forget.
Going back.
To my childhood
and family
generations before me.
Going back.

Serried streets, serried people,
hard looks and hard pavements
harsh noises, rough voices
so much that hurts me.
Stays in my memory
The place I grew up in
The place that I left.
No going back.

4. WAVING AT THE TRAIN

*Words and melody by Marianne Bos Clark.
Performed by Marianne Bos-Clark and Ineke Borsboom*

Daar gaat de trein over de brug
De trein, die loopt op diesel
Mensen zwaaien en soms zwaaien ze terug
Als ze ons ook zien
Zwaaien naar de trein
Kun je ons hier zien staan zwaaien naar de trein
Zie de trein daar gaan
In de verte kleine bootjes
Witte zeilen op het meer, wij spelen op het plein
En we hebben een geheime hut gebouwd
We springen slootjes op het veld achter de school
Kijk mij springen, Oh kijk mij springen
See the train pass on the bridge

The train, it runs on diesel
People waving, and sometimes they wave back
If they see us
Waving at the train
Can you see us down below, waving at the train

See the train pass on the bridge
Seagulls lined up on the jetty
Watch the ferry setting off, and we play on the quay
Don't tell anyone we built a secret den
And jump the rope swing on the tree down by the field
Watch me jump now, Oh watch me jump now.

5. CNATANOOGA CHOO CHOO

Saxophone - Kodai Benjamin

6. LOOKING FOR GRACIE

Written, composed and performed by Kai Benjamin.

Saxophone - Kodai Benjamin

Thought I'd see you on the morning train
They say you won't come this way again
Looking, looking for Gracie
I'm looking, looking for Gracie...

Thought I'd get to see your smiles
As the Tamar train eats up the miles
I found friends a plenty
But your seat was always empty

Down through Calstock and Bere Ferrers
Where the Kiwi boys lives were ended
Young lives lost to steam
Before they got to live the dream

Dreams may come and dreams may go
You're the only one I know
Makes me wait and makes me late
Miss the train at Gunnislake

Everyone's on a morning train
It's just that some
Don't ever come home again

The old guys read the paper
The young bloods stick together
The girls are looking pretty
The suits are headed for the city

Years pass on the Tamar Line
And singing just eats up the time
No one seems to know your name
And the stations just a waiting game

Thought I'd see you on the morning train
They say you won't come this way again
Looking, looking for Gracie
I'm looking, looking for Gracie....

7. ONE MINUTE

Written by Graham Peck. Melody by Li Selman.

Performed by the Big Jazz Choir with Anna Batson (bassoon) and Li Selman (clarinet)

Sick, raw and hungry
Arrived in Plymouth Sound
Two troop ships from New Zealand
The minutes pass on cool September days

Took the train to Slingsby camp
We had not fed since six
A promise of some tucker, boys
The minutes pass on cool September days

Along the Tamar Valley, rising as we went
To Bere and on to Exeter
The minutes move
This September afternoon

Halt at Bere Ferrers
Although it shouldn't be
But what the hell, our hunger gnaws
This minute, this September afternoon

So where's the grub,
We need it soon, jump down and give a shout
Be careful what you wish for boys
This minute now, this September afternoon

And on the line, a London train
Knows not men hidden by the bend
Brakes on fire, the fireman calls, the loco bore us down
This minute has arrived my lads, this September afternoon

This minute comes, it always comes
And the ten of us are gone
One minutes all it took my lads
That September afternoon

8. STONE

Written by Sara Wood.

Music improvised by Helen Porter (piano) and Anna Batson (bassoon)

A stone is laid
A foundation of great strength
For this stone must carry much:
Towers, spires, plinths, arches.
This stone must support a structure so vast,
So ethereal, so majestic....

A structure that soars towards the heavens
Heralded by thunder
Cloaked in clouds
Searching for angels.

The backbone of community
A temple of commerce
A pathway to other realms
A sanctuary

For in this sanctuary
There is time for contemplation,
For restoration, for prayer.
A balm for the soul,
rejuvenation of the mind.

In this sanctuary
People unite or separate

Young or old, healthy or infirm,
Believer... non-believer;
Worker; reveller; tourist; visitor.

A heaven ward space for all.

This cathedral-esque skyway
Has its own smell,
Its own sounds
Its own language....

A squeal, a squeak, a rattle, a roll
A distant rumble cushioned by the wind
brings a sigh of relief;
Of comfort; Steadiness, readiness,
timeliness
A feeling of belonging,
A knowing of destiny

This artery,
This vein,
This..... viaduct.

9. ECLAIRS ON THE TRAIN

Written, composed and performed by Jane Spurr with Dave Webb (guitar).

Eclairs on the train
Eclairs on the train
We'll never do that again
Eclairs on the train

Travel in on the train to the city
such a lot to see over bridges,
passing fields, rivers into seas.

Looking out the window
There's a bit of rain
We arrived at Plymouth
Got off and walked again.

Well we walked the length of the city
Just my mum & me
Stopped for drinks
Got a bag full of shopping
Something nice for tea

Dear train take us back to the village
As the dusk begins to fall
Here's to our long awaited treat
We celebrate this feat
Eclairs on the train
Eclairs on the train
we'll never do that again
Eclairs on the train

10. CORNWALL BOUND

*Written, composed, arranged and performed by Joy Treliving.
Guitar, Anna Batson.*

11. WATCH DAD

Written, composed and performed by Mary Gillett. Viola, Andrew Gillett.

Watch Dad roll milk churns while we hold hands
and stretch sunshine out, waiting for breakfast.
On the other side a steam train clatters along the single track
From Gunnislake to Kelly Bray, curl of smoke threads the morning.
We sing out across the valley
and our song comes back to us.
Light pours from the horizon escaping so fast into sky
It might not touch the same colour twice.
We sing out across the valley
and our song comes back to us.

NB: All music arrangements by Helen Porter, except No. 5 'Looking for Gracie' and No.8 'Eclairs On The Train', No.9 'Cornwall Bound.'

INTERVAL

The music in the second half of the concert will be performed as one piece. Please refrain from clapping until the end of the concert.

1. BELIEVE WE CAN FLY

What do you think?
What do you wish for?
Where are we going?
Believe we can fly..

2. BLUES DUET

See I woke up this morning
There is nothing to do
So I'm talking to myself like nothing else matters.

3. RECORDING: MORNING

"A regular day is like every day I wake up in the morning and the first thing is to go downstairs and check for any letter from Home Office, cos I'm still expecting my decision. I've not got a decision from home office which keeps you waiting and if I don't get any letter that means my day becomes a little bit boring, because usually there's nothing to do and I have to go to refugee support to spend two or three hours there. Anything to just kill some time is really appreciated. So I go there use internet and come back home. And I walk around the park and maybe visit Chanda one of my close friends in Plymouth. And when I come back home I write music and just relax and sleep. Most times I sleep. Most times."

4. WHAT DO YOU SEE?

What do you see when you're walking into town,
When you're wandering around, what do you see?
I see seagulls flying, people buying, rushing around
Making calls on mobile phones and rushing around
I hear waves crashing, rain lashing, noise all around
Busy people holding hands and love all around

5. RECORDING: MONEY

"Living on £35 is easy. But it's very hard. £35 I don't know how to explain to you how far it goes but why it's difficult a little bit is because this £35 is not actually a physical money it's just a card what called Azure card - and you are just limited to certain shops like Sainsbury's and Tescos and Iceland, and apart from these shops you can't use your card anyway. Mothercare, that is the most important bit, because I have to go there to buy a few bits for my son, but apart from that you don't have anything to live on. It's a little bit hard to juggle £35 in the week when you know you have your son and his mother is troubling you to get some clothes and buy baby food what £10 and when you spend £15, £20 you have £15 to live on for a whole seven days. It's really hard but what

do you do you have to survive. When it comes to £35 I'm African, I'm really traditional - £35 is big money to me. I can survive on less. If I had physical money I can go African shopping buy some African food – if you know African food it's always heavy. So if you eat African food you can live on that one meal a whole day, but your food here, I'm not used to it. Especially dairy – most of your food contains milk – I have to juggle around the shop to get what exactly to buy and sometimes I just doesn't get good stuffs. Anyway £35 is not big, is not small, we still appreciate it but I would really be happy if the money was actually physical."

6. NOT GOTTA LOTTA MONEY

Not gotta lotta money in my pocket
Not gotta lotta money

7. RECORDING: HOME OFFICE

"I was interviewed in the Home Office, two years now. Since then I never hear anything. Sometimes they used to send letter to my lawyer and they say we need your picture. This is twice, I'm sending them my picture, but since then I never hear anything. So, I'm just sitting down and waiting."

8. WAITING IN THIS WAITING ROOM

Waiting in this waiting room
Standing on this station
Hanging Around
Will my train never come?

9. RECORDING: ESCAPING MUGABE

"I'm Chanda Nyerezani from Zimbabwe. I'm a musician. When I was in Zimbabwe I used to criticise the Mugabe regime and that didn't go down very well. With my band we used to perform at the opposition meetings political rallies, so we were the ones entertaining before people the main speaker came. So it was like galvanising the people if you like. With music in Africa we send messages through music so the regime didn't like that and at one point there was big violence the equipment was destroyed – the musical equipment. So my life was basically in danger because the secret agents were visiting our place so that's why I had to leave. That's why I came to England trying to seek asylum. It took me a long time. I've been here fourteen years. Some of the years I was also living underground. Cos the visa ran out. I came on a visiting visa, trying to seek asylum and it ran out and I had to live underground for a long time. And it was a hard life because when you are waiting for your decision you get £36 a week – nothing else – you're not even allowed to do paid work so it was tough. And on top of that I was suffering from heart problem. I've got pace maker fitted – so it was really taking a toll on my health. But now I'm fine – I've been granted and I can do any job I like but there aren't any jobs around so I'm still waiting."

10. SUITCASE

Lyrics and Music by Anna Batson, performed by Anna Batson

Did the maker's hands sew the journey map into these seams?
Did he stitch the leather and line it with my dreams?
He made it from both beast and cloth then fastened with a zip.
When at first I tried to sing my song, he sewed up both my lips.

Dreams that scatter on the ballast stones
Stories on the train...
Carry my flesh and move these bones
My suitcase with a label – no address, just my name...
Tears and smiles mix with the smears on the windows of this train.
Finding solace in sound, and mix my happiness with pain.
Goodnight wherever you may be as I cross this darker tide.
On steel toes we move from the day's kisses,
In silent wishes hide.
Kohshamadid
For my love won't hide inside this battered, closed-lipped case.
It just burns right through the glass and then escapes without grace.
And then it finds its way to those I love worlds away from here.
Yet I carry them in both my hands right through this greener land.
When dreams fall between the tracks, where do they all go?
Secrets and confessions whoosh past my ears in a heartbeat.
I search, but can't remember the last thing you said to me,
All I know is I am travelling my own history...
So I take this leather case of mine and wait my turn to move.
Someone will decide for me when my story is approved.
Please don't clip my wings this time - I really have to live.
Walk through gates and barriers with all my love to give...
Kohshamadid

11. RECORDING: TRAVELLING

"It's like each time we got on the train people are curious to know – I can see some of the passengers are keen to know who we are because we're a group of – you know there's black guys there - someone who looks like he's from Iraq, Kurdish – so who are these people – it's not a common sight you see every day that sort of mixture especially on a train going to Gunnislake!"

12. FELLOW PASSENGERS

My fellow passengers
Why are you looking at me?
What do you see when you look into my face?
Tell me, what do you see?
Are you curious when you look at me?
Is it my hair? Do you like what you see?
Do you think I'm a famous person?
Is that why you're staring at me?

13. JOURNEYING

I don't wanna go back there
Where I came from yesterday
It's so wrong, it's so wrong

14. NOTHING EVER HAPPENED

Sometimes you have to live life
Like nothing ever happened

15. BRIDGES AND WINGS

Lyrics and Music by Anna Batson, performed by Anna Batson

There's a mist that lolls between these hills and settles in the bones.
A hunger for a deeper sun that kissed a place called home.
But we're singing in this place of peace with all that's here and now.
We've rolled on rails and swum the skies till our feet found Cornish ground.
There's a love that burns between these ribs and settles in the heart,
A longing for a child's hand, or dancing in the dark.
But we're learning in this place of peace, with all that's here and now.
To close our eyes and drift and sway to the beating of our own heart.
All the sounds of the earth and her music.
Tongue-tied and wide-eyed.
Oh to do your thing.
All the sounds of the Earth and her music.
Tongue-tied and wide-eyed
Born on bridges and wings...
The arches of the viaduct lift like your haughty brows,
Pinned into the valley's hips, fringed with those ancient boughs,
Whispers from the water's edge, the river meets the sea,
The salt-marsh and it's sleeping birds, the moon that follows me...
All the sounds of the earth...
In the paper that's left on the seat are the figures of the day,
Someone's calculations printed red upon the grey.
Pylons poking rudely at the edges of the sky
Smooth line of the Tamar, we turn in from riverside..
The boats that spin against the tide, pull tight on their chains,
Ivy, bricks and stones and track suck at the passing train.
A tidal smudge, a triangle that warns of what might come,
Drumming on the underside, the brambles pluck and strum
All the sounds of the earth...

16. RECORDING: LANGUAGE

17. JUST BECAUSE WE DON'T

Just because we don't speak the same language
It doesn't mean that I can't understand you
Just because we don't speak the same language
It doesn't mean that I can't be with you
Just because we don't speak the same language
It doesn't mean that you don't know me
Just because we don't speak the same language
It doesn't mean that we can't live together!

18. MY BEATING HEART

My home, my life, my country, my family, my beating heart

19. EVERY CHILD

Mwana, Kinde, Child
Oh son, oh daughter, my son, my daughter
The children of our future

20. BLESSING

Blessing, having you is a blessing from the Lord
Funny, you bring out the funny side in me
Whenever I'm with you I feel at peace
Oh child, you are my peace
Oh my child, my world was empty
Oh child, when you smile I feel these changes

21. LEAVES ON THE LINE

Lyrics and Music by Anna Batson, performed by Anna Batson

What brings you here?
What did you leave?
Leaves on the line.
We are all spinning from beginning to end...
Turn the wheel through our seasons and circle the change.
Boxes to fit in and letters to send.
Opened, closed, naked, clothed.
What brings you here?
Why did you leave?
Leaves on the line.
Just got here in time.
Time, time...staccato pulse trips.

Delicate articulation flutters fear upon lips.
Solace in sound of mouths and mother tongues
Waiting in this waiting room.
I don't want your apology.
I just want to know,
Do I dance with my angels or my shadows?
I want to leave.
I want to move.
Leaves on the line.
Won't get there in time
Waiting in this waiting room...
This is me.
This is now.
Travel with my angels and my shadows.
Two carriages with a thousand tales.
Streaks of green and snaking rails.
A shriek (up 8ve) of metal, then a lean to the side.
Ghosts of hands that would cut and divide
That rock, that flesh, that love does not hide
Pushing through - a path for the train.
For me, for you - we pull and strain...
We are now moving - mirror of my eyes.
We have waited an endless time,
This space in between - where we leave and where we go
Are matters of time, drawn on the line.
With a burn that is new and an aching after-glow.
What brings you here?
Why did you leave?
Leaves on the line.
Just got here in time.

22. RECORDING: HOME

"Home is where the heart is. Every day I think about home. I know it's not a very good place right now but it's always good to be home, where you feel at peace. You know, what you guys call home here in England is very special, but here you don't have your extended families your cousins, your aunts living with you – you live kind of far apart, but home in Africa you have mother, children, aunts – almost everybody live in the same house and when you get out of that congregation – it's like death. You miss it more than life. Home is just...we miss home."

23. KHOSHAMADID

Near and far, wherever you are
Stars will shine, you'll always be mine
Khoshamadid.

24. KHOSHAMADID/BELIEVE WE CAN FLY (Reprise)

Helen Porter, about Songs from a Small Train...

Sessions began at DCRS (Devon and Cornwall Refugee Support Centre) in early September, with Lily Russell and I travelling by train to Plymouth on Monday mornings. Here we met Mark and Chanda. Mark's skill for improvising words and melodies became very quickly apparent, with Chanda playing percussion (on the table!). I recorded these sessions, then made vocal arrangements for the choir to sing. As the project developed, Mark and Chanda wrote more songs, while I composed additional music for the choir. In rehearsal, Mark and Chanda improvised over the choir arrangements. Rizgar, Rohey, Jess, Mark, Chanda, Elvira and her son Adam travelled by train every week to rehearse with the choir. Kebbe, (the choir will remember her beautiful spontaneous dancing) who came to a rehearsal early on in the process, had to drop out of the process after her permission to remain in the UK was refused. Believe We Can Fly (words written in first session at DCRS with several contributors); Waiting In This Waiting Room; Sometimes You Have To Live Life; Same Language; Every Child; My Home, My Country written and composed by Helen Porter (with improvisation by Chanda Nyerezani). . . Not Gotta Lotta Money by Helen Porter with improvised vocal line by Mark Samuel Blues duet; What Do You See; Fellow Passengers; Journeying; Blessing music by Mark Samuel; text by Mark Samuel and Chanda Nyerezani Khoshamadid was written at a workshop with a number of refugees who came to Calstock to play table tennis, and members of the Big Jazz Choir. Anna Batson's three songs are a response to the stories, experiences and observations of the refugees and asylum seekers Lily and I worked with and have come to know as friends.

THE BIG JAZZ CHOIR

SOPRANOS: Nicola Baker, Joanna Bell, Patsy Bennett, Carole Constable, Mary Gillett, Jayne Newton-Chance, Jennie Peach, Lily Russell, Sarah Sheppard, Jan Simpson, Helen Stone, Kate Thomas, Gill Wyatt

ALTOS: Wendy Batten, Jenny Bolders, Ineke Borsboom, Marianne Bos-Clark, Val Brice, Sally Dyer, Linda Evans, Rebecca Garland, Julie Harmsworth, Ruth Harris, Ashleigh Hazeldine, Sarah Hazeldine, Margaret Killip, Liz Peadon, Li Selman, Sue Whiteman, Corinna Woodall, Rohey Manneh

TENORS: Josh Hamilton, William Langdon, Chris Miller, David Twine

BASSES: Julian Clinkard, Tony Couchman, Peter Espig, Richard Hendin, Graham Peck, Jon Selman, Peter Ursem, Rizgar Rahimpanah

HELEN PORTER is a singer, composer, pianist and music facilitator. She has worked on theatre and arts projects with some of the most prestigious music and theatre organisations in the country, including the Royal Opera House (ROH2), National StudioTheatre and most recently, with the Helen Chadwick Song Theatre on 'War Correspondents', currently touring the UK. She is passionate about giving people a voice through music and singing, and has worked on music and theatre projects in the community with people of all ages from early life to end of life, as well as with disabled people and with socially disadvantaged people. She is vocalist with jazz quartet Misbehavin'. She set up the Big Jazz Choir in 2013 after moving from Dorset to Calstock.

ANNA BATSON is a multi-instrumentalist, teacher, workshop facilitator, singer and songwriter / composer based in SE Cornwall. She studied Music in Birmingham (1999), focusing on bassoon performance and composition. Since that time she has worked to support individuals to make their own music, as well as organisations such as 'Drake Music' and 'Plymouth Music Zone'. Anna makes use of a wide variety of influences, genres and instruments in her work. She is recently a recipient of an Arts in Health Award.

MARK SAMUEL is from Nigeria and has been in the UK since 2012. "As an asylum seeker you have a lot of spare time. I spend most of my time writing and composing songs. One of my songs that was produced by Plymouth Music Zone was trending on Sound Cloud. The joy I got from the fact that someone somewhere was playing my music is beyond words. Life hasn't been great with me, but that doesn't mean you have to throw in the towel. You bring your head down and you plough through. If there's life, there's hope."

CHANDA NYEREZANI is a performing musician, who now has refugee status in this country. "I fled Zimbabwe for England on 16th of June 2001 after persecution from the Mugabe regime and the secret police for performing songs at opposition rallies. I have been teaching primary school children African drumming as part of Reach Out Connect (ROC). The aim was to help me and other migrants to integrate and to high-light cultural awareness. I would love to continue with this work, but I need more drums to be able to do so."

ROHEY MANNEH came to England on 15th February 2005. She is an asylum seeker. 15/2/2005. There are many things that Rohey wants to be able to do but as yet she is unable to work because her status as a refugee has not yet been confirmed. She is however happy to be here, although life is not always easy. "Sometimes I say to myself: Who am I, and where do I belong? I am still young and full of life and energy. I cannot go back to where I am from so where do I belong? I am just a human being like everybody else. The one thing that makes me feel good is when I am singing with Plymouth music zone and Calstock's Big Jazz Choir."

RIZGAR RAHIMPANAH is from Kurdistan and has been in England for ten months.

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FEAST is a programme to make great art happen across Cornwall. FEAST harnesses the talents and energy of Cornwall's artists and communities, generating new opportunities for everyone to enjoy the arts. The focus is on bringing people together to share experiences as audiences or participants, and on animating local celebrations and cultural life. Investment for FEAST comes from Arts Council England and Cornwall Council. The programme is managed by Cornwall Arts Centre Trust.