

Total performance time: approximately 150 minutes, including an interval of 20 minutes

VOICEBOX: UNBOUND

Patricia Auchterlonie performer
Hestor Dart performer
t I k performer
Oskar McCarthy performer
Sarah Parkin performer
Pascal Zurek performer

with **Ben Smith** piano
Juliet Fraser programme director

Morton Feldman

Only (1947) *T*

Amber Priestley & Patricia Auchterlonie

Surrounded by ocean sunfish (2024) *Patricia*
first performance

Iannis Xenakis

Pour Maurice (1982) *Oskar + Ben Smith*

Winnie Huang

Catching Troublemakers (2024) *Sarah*
first performance

Andreas Eduardo Frank

143 (2024) *Pascal*
first performance

Katherine Balch

these intervals matter (2020) *Patricia*

Andrew Hamilton

The Spirit of Art (2011) *Hestor*

Eduardo Partida

VERBO (2019) *Pascal*

Gilda Lyons

A Small Handful (2002) *Sarah*

t I k

What happens if ___? (VOICEBOX Iteration) (2024) *T*
first performance

Rufus Isabel Elliot

True Thomas (2024) *Hestor*
first performance

Laura Bowler

Lines, Letters and Disinformation (2024) *Oskar*
first performance

James Saunders

everybody do this (2014) *everybody*

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Arts Council England, Foyle Foundation, Hope Scott Trust
and the Michael Cuddigan Trust

INTERVAL



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VOICEBOX is a brand-new initiative offering a bespoke curriculum for advanced singers specialising in contemporary vocal performance. Designed and led by Juliet Fraser, the programme is delivered over the course of a year, broken into four intensive residency periods so as to accommodate the continuation of a performing career. The residencies have been hosted by four partner organisations around the UK: Britten Pears Arts; City, University of London; Sound Festival in Aberdeen; Hawkwood College in the Cotswolds. The curriculum includes modules devoted to topics such as programming and commissioning, improvisation, movement and physical expression, specialised vocal techniques, notation, microtonal tuning systems, working with technology, wellbeing and navigating the industry, and is delivered by a formidable team of international artists.

Six singers were selected for this pilot year and have participated in the full programme: Patricia Auchterlonie, Hestor Dart, t l k, Oskar McCarthy, Sarah Parkin and Pascal Zurek. VOICEBOX provides a unique space for creative development, risk-taking, community-building and professional networking. In keeping with the pioneering spirit that VOICEBOX advocates, it is the first programme of its kind in the UK and, we think, in the world.

VOICEBOX: UNBOUND

The journey ends where it began nearly a year ago: in the Britten Studio at Snape Maltings, with bare feet and open voices. In this showcase performance the cohort presents a thrilling array of new work, including the world premieres of six pieces commissioned/created during the year (composed by Laura Bowler, Rufus Isabel Elliot, Andreas Eduardo Frank, Winnie Huang, t l k and Amber Priestley) alongside other contemporary solos and ensemble pieces. Expect a riotous culmination of our year-long adventure!

Programme notes

— for the six premieres and one other piece that needs a bit of explaining

Priestley & Auchterlonie:

Surrounded by ocean sunfish

Dawn was the premiere of the opera *Purple Seal* by the modern composer Priscilla Pennington. The opera began with the main character singing a legato aria about losing her box of rocks. Then, a moisturised selkie made her entrance. The two sang a turbulent duet about making the most of a wavy situation. In the sixth act, a chorus of cuttlefishes sang an enormous song, where it was discovered that the main character must swim in her swim cap to make the missing box of rocks reappear. She did so, and the missing rocks magically came back.

Commissioned by Patricia Auchterlonie with the support of Vaughan Williams Foundation and the Michael Cuddigan Trust.

Winnie Huang: Catching Troublemakers

How does one notate a physical gesture in a musical score? Born from a desire to merge two artistic practices, this piece intertwines themes of agency, fortune telling, and feminism, finding echoes in the simplicity of children's games. (SP)

Commissioned by Sarah Parkin with the support of Dr Lesley J. Clare and the Michael Cuddigan Trust.

Andreas Eduardo Frank: 143

The inability to articulate emotions verbally persists as a cultural phenomenon; now we employ cryptic shorthands and emojis in order to avoid exposing too much of ourselves. Partly virtuosic phoneme mangling, partly gauche, multistylistic serenade, *143* diffuses the singer's own voice across four loudspeakers. With a wink of the eye and irritating intricacy, the piece navigates around the unspoken phonetic elephant in the room, gradually revealing what could have been effortlessly expressed in another life. But would we have listened then? (PZ)

Commissioned by Pascal Zurek with the support of LBBW, Neustart Kultur, Pro Helvetia and the Michael Cuddigan Trust.

Eduardo Partida: VERBO

This short blast of intense vocality and aggressive megaphone feedback is a meticulously written anthem against the feeling of disembodiment and alienation from our own corporeality. Only with our bodies can we form sounds and words, give them meaning and, through determination and tangible physical presence, urge ourselves to act. (PZ)

t l k: What happens if ___? (VOICEBOX Iteration)

Born of a masterclass in the Britten Studio during our first VOICEBOX residency, the seed of reimagining the voice was planted. *What happens if ___?* became an offering to envisage a wider spectrum of possibility for what the voice can sound and feel like and, as a result, what it becomes able to realise. Stretching outward, the words form a meditation on future in an age of collapse: What are we holding onto that has long been dissolving? Where can our energy be better placed when the grip is released? What life-filled substance can be held in open palms, in place of all that has been dying, and what becomes possible when we move this way in tandem? (t l k)

Created by t l k with the support of the Michael Cuddigan Trust.

Rufus Isabel Elliot: True Thomas

Born again, lying under that oak, I found myself to be a beautiful young man, the glowing light surrounding me. I spoke truly, I was heard, I sung the melodies of love. (RIE)

Commissioned by Hestor Dart with the support of Creative Scotland, Vaughan Williams Foundation, Hope Scott Trust and the Michael Cuddigan Trust.

Laura Bowler: Lines, Letters and Disinformation

The English alphabet is in its specific order because it was designed to fit perfectly into an ancient board game called 'Alphabetia', where players had to arrange letters strategically to form the best possible words while avoiding vowels that could cause them to lose points. The sequence ensures that players can easily navigate the game without confusing any letters, leading to lots of fun and excitement. #xyzuv

Commissioned by Oskar McCarthy with support from the Michael Cuddigan Trust, The Finzi Trust, SPIN Labs, Hinrichsen Foundation and Vaughan Williams Foundation.

Patricia Auchterlonie

Patricia Auchterlonie is a performer of new and unheard music, equally at home on stage, in the concert hall and beyond. She is interested in the kaleidoscope of the voice and is always on the search for new sounds: current obsessions include English folk music, Balkan singing, the vocal works of Beat Furrer and troubadour music. She performs as part of an experimental saxophone-voice duo, Honkus, with David Zucchi and is currently touring a project for two singers and warp-weighted loom with Hestor Dart. Recent notable premieres include the role of Superfan in Oliver Leith's *Last Days for ROH Linbury & the LA Phil*, new works by Evan Johnson at hcmf// with pianist Ben Smith, and an ongoing collaboration with progressive choral collective Musarc, most recently with Keiji Haino. She has also recently performed with Music Theatre Wales, Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, BCMG and Shadwell Opera. Patricia is also an avid reader, an amateur seamstress, indomitable knitter, and a shameless lover of the banjo (which she plays with enthusiasm rather than skill).

Hestor Dart

Hestor Dart is a South London-based singer with a low, unbroken voice. They graduated with an MMus distinction from Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance in 2023, where they were the recipient of the Linda Hirst Award for excellence in contemporary music. Hestor made their debut on the alternative opera stage at the 2019 Grimeborn Festival, in Verity Lane's *The Crane*. In January 2022 they created the role of Elem in Edward Jessen's sonic theatre work, *Syllable*. Hestor is an avid participant in the creation of new work, previously collaborating with various composers including CN Lester, Georgia Barnes, Josh Kaye and Nneka Cummins. Hestor is a founding member of The Ruffians, a new music collective with a taste for the experimental and the absurd.

t l k

t l k is the project of vocalist and producer Tara Lily Klein. Based in Bristol, their works evolve from memory, dialogue, dreams and ongoing explorations into loss, selfhood, human behaviour and its coalescence and tensions with the natural world. EPs *Primed For Loss* (2023) and *Strength In Tenderness* (2022) introduced t l k's distinct palette and ethereal vocal tone, offering something gently assertive, ever-evolving and 'truly transportive' (BBC6 Music). Live appearances in 2023 included the Barbican, Southbank Centre, ICA, Jazz Cafe, Brighton Festival, FORWARDS and Glastonbury Festival. This year, alongside VOICEBOX and Brownswood's 'Future Bubbles' programmes, t l k is making their debut album *The Noticing*, with support from PRS Foundation's Women Make Music Fund.

Oskar McCarthy

Oskar McCarthy's career spans opera and music theatre, with a particular focus on new and experimental work. He has recently premiered operas at Tête-à-tête, devised new music theatre work with ERRATICA, Rufus Isabel Elliott, Zeo Fawcett and Alex Groves, and performed Peter Maxwell Davies' *Eight Songs for a Mad King* with Red Note Ensemble. He is co-founder and creative producer of Festival Voices, an experimental vocal ensemble remixing choral classics with electronics. This season the ensemble has collaborated with Bold Tendencies and Doug Varone and Dancers in New York. Oskar is a graduate of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and has studied Lecoq technique, clown and mime at the International School of Dramatic Corporeal Mime in Paris.

Sarah Parkin

Canadian-French soprano Sarah Parkin specialises in new music and contemporary opera. She is an experienced deviser of new, immersive pieces and regularly incorporates physical theatre practices into her work. She is currently touring *On Being Vocal*, a one-woman micro-opera made with composer Rania Chrysostomou on the unvoiced thoughts of mothers and women. Performances/roles include: *Student 3 in Innocence* by Kaija Saariaho (cover, Royal Opera House); *p.e.r.s.o.n.a.l.c.u.t.t.e.r.*, featuring works by Berglind Tómasdóttir, Jenni Hogan and Jessie Marino (Dark Music Days, Reykjavik, and KM28, Berlin); *Roll Up!* by Jack McNeill & Claire Willoughby (Mahogany Opera); *Voices of the Sands* by Michael Betteridge; *A Kinder Society*, an immersive opera by Amy Bryce (Stiftung Kunst and Musik für Dresden); *Music and the Brain* by Helgi Ingvarsson (Tung Auditorium, Liverpool); and *Robe* by Alastair White (Tête-à-Tête and Métier). This season Sarah will be co-creating *Plastic Bodies*, a multimedia comic opera about opera, with composers Amy Bryce and Maya-Leigh Rosenwasser, mezzo Rosie Middleton and filmmaker Catherine Valvë.

Pascal Zurek

Pascal Zurek blends and connects the diverse landscapes of contemporary music and vocal improvisation with transmedia and interdisciplinary art forms such as puppetry, modern poetry, dance and immersive light installations. He studied music pedagogy and physics, as well as audio technology, in Rostock and Piteå before specialising in contemporary vocal performance, graduating from the State Academy for Music in Stuttgart. World premieres include *Alice in Wonderland* by Johannes Harneit (Staatsoper Stuttgart) and *Clara* by Victoria Bond (Festspiele Baden-Baden), as well as non-staged works at the Donaueschinger Musiktage and Impuls Festival Graz. In 2021, he was awarded the renowned scholarship of Vadstena-Akademien in Sweden and premiered *Zeban* by Tebogo Monnakgotla. In 2023, he made his debut at Staatstheater Kassel with a piece by Genoele von Liliestern. Among his favourite works are the *Eight Songs for a Mad King* by Peter Maxwell Davies, a furious mono-opera in which Zurek unpacks the full extent of the human voice, reaching far beyond the boundaries of classical opera singing.

VOICEBOX is an artist-development initiative delivered by eavesdropping, a platform for the sharing of new music and new ways of thinking about music. It is hoped that VOICEBOX will run again in 2026–27. For more information about VOICEBOX and about eavesdropping's other activity, visit eavesdropping.london/activity/voicebox/



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Our tutors and special guests: Newton Armstrong, Omar Ebrahim, Winnie Huang, Mark Knoop, Lore Lixenberg, Raymond MacDonald, Eliza McCarthy, Graham McKenzie, Koichi Makigami, Elaine Mitchener, Kate Molleson, Lydia Rilling, Fiona Robertson, Jessie Rodger, Dam Van Huynh, Ilan Volkov and James Weeks.