

= Gwyneth Herbert =

Gwyneth Herbert (born 26 August 1981) is a British singer @-@ songwriter , composer , multi @-@ instrumentalist and record producer . Initially known for her interpretation of jazz and swing standards , she is now established as a writer of original compositions , including musical theatre . Her songs have been described as " impressively crafted and engrossing vignette [s] of life 's more difficult moments " .

Three of her six albums have received four @-@ starred reviews in the British national press . Another album , *Between Me and the Wardrobe* , received a five @-@ starred review in *The Observer* .

= = Early life and education = =

Born in Wimbledon , London , Herbert was brought up in Surrey and Hampshire in the south of England . She began playing the piano at the age of three and was writing basic songs at the age of five . She also learned the French horn , achieving Grade 8 by the age of 15 . Throughout her teenage years she played music with local orchestras and bands such as the Surrey County Youth Orchestra and also briefly formed a short @-@ lived punk band called *Wasted Minds* . At 14 she recorded a demo tape of her own songs at Trinity Studios , Woking ; however , despite music industry interest , she chose to continue with her studies .

Herbert went to Glebelands School in Cranleigh , Surrey and , for her sixth form studies , to Alton College in Hampshire , where her musical tastes moved more towards jazz music . While she was studying at St Chad 's College , University of Durham , she met up with fellow student Will Rutter and together they began to write and perform in the cafés and bars of North East England as a jazz duo called *Black Coffee* .

= = Professional career = =

= = = First Songs = = =

After leaving university , Herbert and Rutter moved to London , where they soon met a former member of *Boney M* , who had been asked to judge a forthcoming Polish television music competition . She and Rutter were invited to enter , and *Black Coffee* won the competition . Returning to London , *Black Coffee* continued to perform in local bars , before being introduced to Ian Shaw , a noted jazz vocalist . This led eventually to the production of a debut CD , *First Songs* , initially credited to " Gwyn and Will " , of both original songs and jazz standards , which was launched at London 's *Pizza Express Jazz Club* in September 2003 . The Herbert / Rutter song " *Sweet Insomnia* " featured guest vocals from Jamie Cullum . Described by BBC Music 's reviewer as " a lovingly crafted debut " , the album received a significant amount of radio airplay on Jazz FM and BBC Radio 2 , and was promoted by Michael Parkinson .

= = = Bittersweet and Blue = = =

Soon after , Herbert was signed to the Universal Classics and Jazz label and released , in September 2004 , her first major label album , *Bittersweet and Blue* . This comprised mainly standards , but also included three original tracks by Herbert and Rutter . Herbert 's version of Neil Young 's " *Only Love Can Break Your Heart* " , taken from this album , was featured on the soundtrack of romantic comedy *Leap Year* , directed by Anand Tucker and starring Amy Adams and Matthew Goode . John Fordham , in a four @-@ starred review of the album for *The Guardian* , praised Herbert 's " precociously powerful chemistry of taste and meticulous care for every sound ? from a whisper to an exhortation " .

== Between Me and the Wardrobe ==

Herbert left Universal Classics and Jazz to pursue a less commercial and more personal musical direction and then self @-@ financed a project in which she collaborated with Polar Bear 's Seb Rochford in a production role . Between Me and the Wardrobe , an album of self @-@ penned songs , was recorded in three days and was never intended for general release . The album was initially made available , in 2006 , on Herbert 's own Monkeywood label before being picked up by Blue Note Records , making Herbert their first UK signing in 30 years . In a five @-@ starred review , Stuart Nicholson of The Observer said that on this album she " lets the lyrics do the work for her . They are well thought out , moving between artfully constructed soft @-@ focus simplicities to poignant yearning " .

== Ten Lives and All the Ghosts ==

In early 2008 , Herbert was commissioned by a collaborative project between Peter Gabriel and Bowers & Wilkins to record an acoustic album at Gabriel 's Real World Studios . The result of these sessions ? Ten Lives ? was released as a digital download in July 2008 , available only from the Bowers & Wilkins website as part of their Music Club .

Remixed versions of these songs were to form the basis of Herbert 's album All the Ghosts , which was released by Naim Edge in July 2009 in Europe to critical acclaim , including four @-@ starred reviews from The Daily Telegraph and The Guardian ; the album was released in the United States in June 2010 . This album also featured two further recordings ? including a cover version of David Bowie 's " Rock ' n ' Roll Suicide " ? by Robert Harder , who had previously collaborated with Herbert as recording engineer of Between Me and the Wardrobe . It was remastered for vinyl by Steve Rooke at Abbey Road Studios , London and reissued in LP format in 2010 .

== Clangers & Mash ==

In October 2009 , Herbert returned to Harder Sound Studio to record the song " Perfect Fit " which she gave away as a free download , available exclusively from Naim Edge . It was also released as a single on 7 March 2011 . The track was also one of nine tracks on her EP Clangers & Mash , released on 1 November 2010 , which included remixes , by Seb Rochford of Polar Bear , of some of her previously published songs .

In a four @-@ starred review for The Guardian , John Fordham described it as a " fascinating set of variations on the familiar for Herbert regulars , or an appealing introduction for jazz @-@ averse newcomers " , saying that although her songs had been radically transformed , " Herbert 's unfussy soulfulness and personal vision always glow through " .

== The Sea Cabinet ==

In January 2010 , Herbert was commissioned by Snape Maltings as artist in residence to write , record and perform a new body of work based on stories of the sea . This was performed in October 2010 at Snape Maltings . An album of this music , The Sea Cabinet , was released in May 2013 and launched in a series of concerts from 23 to 26 May at Wilton 's Music Hall in London 's East End . In a review of the album launch , The Guardian 's jazz critic John Fordham said that " Herbert 's imaginative narrative , and her casually commanding voice ? whether softly nuanced as confiding speech or at full soaring @-@ contralto stretch ? were the central characters in an entertaining and often moving show that opens a new chapter in her creative story " . Michal Boncza , in a review for the Morning Star of musical performances in 2013 , described it as a " stand @-@ out " , admiring " a voice that can effortlessly render any emotion with commanding ease . Every song is an impressively crafted and engrossing vignette of life 's more difficult moments and they grab the attention time and again " .

The Financial Times ' four @-@ starred review called it " a concept album about the debt British

history owes to the sea " . In a four @-@ star review The Independent described it as a " cabinet of curiosities " with " a cabaret approach to storytelling , in rollicking sea shanties and waltzes " , and " inventive " instrumentation " featuring wheezing accordions , warbling woodwind , tinkling music boxes and rolling bells " . Alexander Varty , for Vancouver 's The Georgia Straight said that the album " blends Weimar cabaret and English music @-@ hall stylings , with disquieting touches of avant @-@ garde jazz " .

Commenting on her live performance in July 2013 at the Love Supreme Jazz Festival in Glynde Place , East Sussex , Nick Hasted of The Independent said : " Gwyneth Herbert sings the shanties on her The Sea Cabinet album with happy , cabaret sensuality , detailing a relationship ? s shipwrecked , sunken past in ' I Still Hear The Bells ' " .

= = = The A ? Z of Mrs P = = =

In 2010 , Herbert won the Stiles and Drewe Song of the Year Award with her composition " Lovely London Town " , from a musical she wrote with playwright Diane Samuels . The musical , The A ? Z of Mrs P , tells the story of Phyllis Pearsall 's creation of the London A to Z street atlas . It was performed in workshop with actress Sophie Thompson in May 2011 and opened at Southwark Playhouse on 21 February 2014 starring Peep Show actress Isy Suttie . The show 's original cast recording , which includes a bonus track sung by Herbert , was released in March 2014 .

= = = Springtime for Henry (and Barbara) = = =

At Site Gallery , the contemporary art space in Sheffield , Gwyneth Herbert and the artist Mel Brimfield explored an imagined relationship between the sculptors Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth in Barbara and Henry ? The Musical , which ran from 18 November to 13 December 2014 .

This developed into the spoof musical Springtime for Henry (and Barbara) , which was performed at Wilton 's Music Hall in London 's East End on 26 and 27 January 2016 . It starred Frances Ruffelle as Hepworth and Andrew C. Wadsworth as Moore .

= = = Other musicals and compositions = = =

In April 2012 , Gwyneth Herbert 's one @-@ act musical Before the Law , co @-@ written with Christine Denniston and adapted from Peter Barnes ' A Hand Witch of the Second Stage , received a Special Commendation at the inaugural Sidney Brown Memorial Award (now called the S & S Award) for the best new unproduced musical of the year , which is run by Mercury Musical Developments (MMD) , the organisation that supports new musical theatre writing . It is the companion piece to After Lydia , a one @-@ act musical based on Terence Rattigan 's play of the same name , which was commissioned by Sounds of England and was also a collaboration with Christine Denniston . After Lydia was given a 45 @-@ minute reading at Ronnie Scott 's Jazz Club in London on Monday 14 March 2011 , starring Rebecca Caine , Andrew C. Wadsworth , Simon Green and Daniel Fraser , with Stefan Bednarczyk as musical director . Directed by Maria Friedman , it also had a staged reading at the Watermill Theatre , Newbury , Berkshire in August 2012 .

Herbert composed music for Le Tabou , a full two @-@ act musical theatre piece , written by Kath Burlinson and performed by Youth Music Theatre at the Barbican Theatre , Plymouth in August 2013 .

Herbert was the composer and sound designer for a play by Diane Samuels , Poppy + George , which was performed at Watford Palace Theatre in February 2016 .

She is also collaborating with Diane Samuels on writing a new musical about contraception , The Rhythm Method , which is in development at Watford Palace Theatre .

= = = Other work = = =

===== Performances =====

In March 2010 , Herbert performed a newly commissioned score for Marion Davies ? 1928 silent comedy classic The Patsy , at BFI Southbank 's Birds Eye View Film Festival .

In 2012 , Herbert joined forces with members of the Buck Clayton Legacy Band to explore , in a series of concerts and talks , the jazz repertoire of Peggy Lee . In July 2012 , she performed , with BBC Radio 3 DJ Max Reinhardt and Paris @-@ based singer China Moses , in a revue by Alex Webb which told the story of Café Society , New York ? s first non @-@ segregated nightclub . The show had a London Jazz Festival premiere at the Southbank Centre and a successful run at Kilburn 's Tricycle Theatre .

In 2014 , she collaborated with artist Mel Brimfield in presenting The Palace That Joan Built , a celebration of the centenary of Joan Littlewood 's birth , as part of the London Underground 's Art on the Underground programme . This included a live performance at Stratford Underground station .

In 2015 , as part of the London Sinfonietta ? s Notes to the New Government concert , which expressed composers ' hopes for the future of society following Britain 's general election , she performed a new song , " Tick Tock " , described by The Guardian as " gloriously done , inveigh [ing] against educational conformity " .

In January 2016 she and Frances Ruffelle performed a cabaret piece when Charles , Prince of Wales and Camilla , Duchess of Cornwall visited Wilton 's Music Hall .

===== Broadcasts =====

Gwyneth Herbert talked to Claire Martin about her album Bittersweet and Blue on BBC Radio 3 's Jazz Line @-@ Up on 12 February 2005 and was interviewed about her career on BBC Radio 4 's Woman 's Hour on 28 November 2007 . On 13 December 2013 , with Frances Ruffelle , Isy Suttie and Neil Marcus , she talked with Tom Service on his BBC Radio 3 programme Music Matters about the development of musical theatre and The A ? Z of Mrs P.

On 1 February 2008 , in a broadcast for BBC Radio 3 's Jazz Library , she joined the programme 's presenter Alyn Shipton to discuss the recordings of Ella Fitzgerald . On 23 March 2008 she joined Alyn Shipton to select the best albums from singer Anita O 'Day 's discography . On 23 October 2011 , in another broadcast for Jazz Library , subsequently made available as a podcast , she joined Shipton to identify the best work of the saxophonist and singer Louis Jordan . On 22 March 2014 she picked , with Shipton , the essential recordings of Dinah Washington .

In 2010 , 2011 and 2013 she and Thomas Guthrie sang in The Playlist , a series of BBC Radio 4 broadcasts recreating the previously unknown musical lives of famous figures from the past , discovering and recording their favourite songs ? including songs they themselves had composed .

===== Recordings =====

Gwyneth Herbert has appeared on other artists ' albums . She is featured on the track " A Day In The Life Of A Fool " on Konishi Yasuharu 's 2011 album One and Ten Very Sad Songs ? Konishi Yasuharu Is Pizzicato One (Universal Music) . She provided " vocal theremin " on the track " C.H.A.O.S. (The Third version) " on Bourgeois & Maurice 's 2013 album The Third . She also produced this track and three others on the album , co @-@ producing a fifth track with Ben Humphreys . She was a vocalist on Dave Price 's original soundtrack digital album for The Roof , which was performed by London 's Fuel Theatre during 2014 .

On Janette Mason 's 2014 album D ? Ranged she took lead vocals on two tracks ? the Alison Moyet song " This House " and Paul Weller 's " You Do Something To Me " . London Jazz News described the treatment of Paul Weller ? s song , with Herbert accompanied only by Mason ? s piano , as " a haunting and affecting performance " .

===== Production =====

Herbert is also a record producer . She produced Frances Ruffelle 's album , I Say Yeh @-@ Yeh , released on 9 October 2015 .

= = Performance = =

Gwyneth Herbert has been described as a " sophisticated jazz @-@ ballad artist " with a " precociously powerful chemistry of taste and meticulous care for every sound ? from a whisper to an exhortation " and " a voice that can effortlessly render any emotion with commanding ease " .

She performs solo , as a duo with her husband Ned Cartwright and with a band comprising Al Cherry (guitars) , Ned Cartwright (piano , saxophone and melodica) , Sam Burgess (bass) and Dave Price (percussion and fiddle) .

= = Personal life = =

After several years in Hackney , London , Gwyneth Herbert now lives in St Leonards @-@ on @-@ Sea , Hastings , East Sussex . In 2016 she married musician Ned Cartwright , who also plays in her band .

= = Discography = =

= = = Gwyneth Herbert & Will Rutter = = =

= = = Gwyneth Herbert = = =

= = = Various artists = = =

= = = The A ? Z of Mrs P Original London Cast = = =

= = = Janette Mason = = =