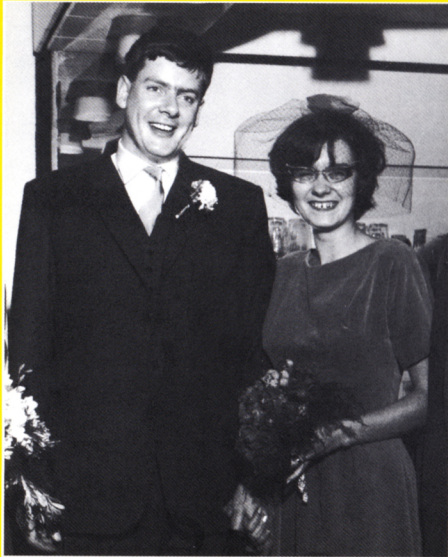


Kate Westbrook

Mike Westbrook



John and Margery Styles

FINE 'n YELLOW

Steve Berry

Chris Biscoe

Jon Hiseman

Pete Whyman

FINE 'n YELLOW

Dedicated to the memory of Margery and John Styles

TEXT **Kate Westbrook** MUSIC **Mike Westbrook**

with

Kate Westbrook VOICE

Chris Biscoe ALTO & SOPRANO SAXOPHONES / ALTO CLARINET

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- 2 YELLOW DOG (11.29)
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- 9 WHAT I LIKE (8.52)

*COMPOSED BY BILLIE HOLIDAY
TRACKS 2 & 3 SOLO CHRIS BISCOE
TRACKS 7 & 8 SOLO PETE WHYMAN
TRACK 9 ALTO SAX SOLOS PETE WHYMAN
THEN CHRIS BISCOE.

*Recording directed, engineered, and mixed by
Jon Hiseman at Temple Music Studios, Sutton,
Surrey, January / February 2009.*

*With thanks to Chris Assheton, Jane Gracie and
Penny Valender.*

*Commissioned by the Margery Styles Estate with
additional financial assistance from Airshaft Trust.*

*News about all Westbrook projects, tours and
recordings is published quarterly on the website
in the Smith's Academy Informer founded by
Margery and John Styles in 1985.*

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DESIGN AND LAYOUT BY MARTYN LEWIS AT MADGOOSE.COM

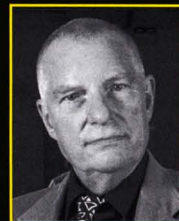
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The Band



Kate Westbrook

photo Davies and Starr / Icon



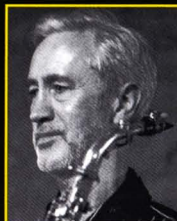
Mike Westbrook

photo Joss Reiver Bany



Jon Hiseman

photo Temple Music



Chris Biscoe

photo Peter Symes



Steve Berry

photo Daniel Parker



Pete Whyman

photo Rick Lloyd

FINE 'n YELLOW

In 2008, in the final months of her illness Margery Styles decided to commission a piece of music from Mike and me, to commemorate her life, and that of her husband John who died in 1989. Characteristically, she didn't mention her bequest to us and, soon after her funeral, we were astonished to have this opportunity.

John and Margery were supporters of jazz and, in particular of our circle of musicians. In 1985 they started the Smith's Academy Informer, a quarterly newsletter about the band's activities. After John's death Margery continued to run the SAI which is now 25 years old.

Her dedicated work for people with learning difficulties occupied much of her energies in those years after John's death. In her leisure time she travelled, sometimes on tour with the band, mostly alone or with one of her close friends. She visited many countries on the five continents. For some years she wore a jacket of John's. She was travelling for both of them (My Lover's Coat, and My Lover's Heart).

On one of these trips she was able to visit the grave of her Geordie father she had never known. He died in 1942 as a prisoner of war on the infamous Burma railway (Yellow Dog).

Margery's favourite colour was yellow. In the Autumn of 2009 I was standing in our small yard looking at the last remaining leaf on our fig tree. The leaf being yellow, I thought of Margery and I wrote the song Yellow Fig Leaf.

John and Margery met when they were both working for Guinness, and subsequently they ran pubs in various parts of the country. Hence the opening verse of What I Like, a song that aims to express their exuberance, their love of good company, jazz, jokes - the good things of life.

Kate Westbrook

Throughout FINE 'n YELLOW the shape of Kate's text determines the musical form. In Yellow Dog the vocal line and the bass line unfold together in simple phrases, without repetition, over a long, open-sounding structure. This forms the basis for Chris's alto solo. The song uses the lower range of Kate's voice, all the way down to the A below the C below middle C. I wanted a particular sound for the instrumental theme, and found it with the combination of alto sax and the bass clarinet in its upper register.

Working with just a handful of musicians, and not even using all of them all the time, makes me think "What do I really need? What can I leave out?" The stripping away of non-essentials makes the music stronger. My Lover's Coat concentrates on just voice and double bass, with minimal keyboard, and brushes. This begins like a traditional jazz sequence, but then opens up, with a minor key section in the middle. The solo improvisations, for alto (Dollarbird), for piano (Through The Dark) and clarinet (Yellow Tracery) are loosely based on this sequence.

The lower register of Kate's voice is heard again in Yellow Fig Leaf, floating over a rhythm laid down by Steve on multiple double basses using his remarkable 'chopstick' technique. Here the horns are soprano sax and bass clarinet.

My Lover's Heart, an extended version of the same structure as My Lover's Coat, has Pete on clarinet, as soloist, plus a clarinet section consisting of the alto and bass members of the family.

What I Like, with its interplay of thee/four and four/four time is a favourite jazz groove. I had the chance to try a new sax section sound - two soprano saxes playing in the lower register make a very funky combination. With Kate's catalogue of likes and blessings, quick-fire exchanges by the two altos, vocal interjections by the band, jazz quotes and, to cap it all, a classic drum solo by Jon, we really pulled out all the stops to round off this tribute to Margery and John.

Mike Westbrook

MY LOVER'S COAT

I will wear my lover's coat
On all the great land masses and
Over all the mighty oceans.
I will write 'Love' as a girdle round the globe.
A is for the Astronaut I love.
I will run so fast and fly so swiftly,
My lover on cloud nine will read
The yellow-light tracery of my body.
'L' I will Lip-smudge across America,
'O' will Overflow Africa
'V' Verily will fit Asia
'E' will spread Eagle across Australia
And when I get home to Europe
I will speak with the blackbird in my hedge,
"Did you read what I wrote my love, love, love;
Did you spell out 'Love'?"

YELLOW DOG

A pale yellow pi dog crosses my path.
I drink from my water bottle
And taste chlorine and rust.
Two snake kraits intertwine,
Amorous little night snakes,
They disappear down in a rat hole.
A Dollarbird Roller flies 'cross my path.
I drink from my water bottle
And taste sorrow and loss.
Jokes, kindness, grief,
Until,
Ice-clad,
I stand at my father's grave.
No one will whistle Blaydon Races
For a dead Geordie lad.
The sun burns the sky,
Burns the ground, burns the gully dry,
Burns the tawny dust,
Burns rock and low scrub,
Burns the wall of bones,
Burns my burgeoning surprise,
Burns my weeping eyes.

YELLOW FIG LEAF

Come the autumn my fig tree sheds
All but one of its large three lobed leaves.
There remains one perfect leaf
Hanging by a breath of a thread.
It is yellow gold.
Possessed by the sun, it seems lit from within.
Like handmade paper it is veined
With a tracery of fine, dark ochre lines.
Then
It falls,
It curls,
It blotches,
It shrivels,
It darkens.
It disappears.
I will savour many snowfalls and winter days,
Remembering the fig leaf that breathed your name,
Before tiny fleshy green buds appear again.

MY LOVER'S HEART

I will ride my Lover's heart
To greet each day's new morning, and
Across all the falling sun-downs.
I will write 'Love' as a star-burst through the dark.
A is for the Acrobat I love.
I will chase the sky and race so swiftly,
My lover on the earth will read
The yellow light tracery of my body
'L' I will lip-smudge across oblivion
'O' will overleap memory
'V' verily will jump right now
'E' will spread eagle today and forever.
And when I get back to Zero
I will speak with the desire in my loins.
"Did you see that I wrote my love, love, love;
Did you spell out 'Love'?"

WHAT I LIKE

I like Guinness, I like stout,
Pour me a glass of wine and hear me shout,
Which wine? Any wine!
Cheers, smiles, mean saxophone about.
I like taverns, I like bars,
Show me a cosy pub and hear me bark,
Which pub? Any pub!
Jokes, laughter, a game of darts.

Bless us with friendship
Bringing heartease,
Warmth and kindness,
The gift to please.
Bless us with affection
To steer life along,
Nature's bounty
And a sweet rousing song.

I like bossa, I like swing,
Dance me a round again and hear me sing
Which dance? Any dance!
Jumping jive, rock 'n rolling.
I like cherries, I like fries,
Give me a plate of food and hear me cry,
Which food? Any food!
Gravy, pepper, puddings and pies.

I like fireflies, I like bears,
Take me walk-about and hear me declare,
Which walk? Any walk!
Mountains, valleys, sea-spray on the air.
I like Dizzy, I like 'Trane
Play me some Ellington and hear me say
Which Ellington? Any Ellington!
Mingus, Monk, Getz and Carla Bley

I like wood stoves, I like snow,
Tuck me in a cabin and hear me explode
Which cabin? Any cabin!
Pine logs, nightfall, a small screen movie show.
I like travel, I like risk,
Put me on a moving train and hear me dig
Which train? Any train!
The Sahara, Bootle, Mmbai and Minsk.

I like reading, I like words
Open me a storybook and hear me purr,
Which story? Any story!
Comedy, tragedy, anything absurd.

I like amber, I like blonde,
Paint me a yellow room and hear me respond,
Which yellow? Any yellow!
Gold or canary, the sun shines on and on....

Bless us with desires, humour and grace,
Love, wisdom, and our own rightful place.
Bless us with music, bless us with song,
A world in harmony
And the music goes on and on and on.....

Kate Westbrook

YELLOW

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