



# *Women of the Island*

Our lives reflected in story and song.

Harbour Voices Festival  
Sunday, June 30  
Anglican Cathedral  
8:00pm



# *Women of the Island*

Our lives reflected in story and song.

For centuries, in many cultures around the world, women have been the lantern-bearers – life-givers, lovers, listeners, leaders. With both a fierceness and frailty, we choose to honour their strengths, struggles and sisterhood, learning what we can from their legacy and bringing it forth into our modern world. We often think of the past as a simpler time, but the truth is, life gives and takes, as it always has, with many layers of complexity – of humanity.

# Programme

Kaipava Finnish folksong, arr. Jussi Chydenius

Legacy Deantha Edmunds, arr. Leslee Heys  
Annie Corrigan, Oboe

Atlantic Blue Ron Hynes, arr. Leslee Heys  
Julia Halfyard, monologue

Godspeed Ron Hynes, arr. Leslee Heys  
Heather Kao, violin & Erin Enguehard, soloist

Kekatu dziesma Peterisk Vasks  
Sarah Moores, Erin Enguehard, Julia Halfyard,  
Siobhan Donovan, soloists

In Shadow Leslee Heys  
Heather Kao, violin

Smoke's Up Leslee Heys  
Heather Kao, violin

Ta na Solbici Samo Vovk

# Longing

## **Kaipaava**

Finnish folksong  
arr. Jussi Chydenius

Who among us has never felt the tug of heartstrings – missing a loved one, home, the sea.

And without the moon or sun to shine, this world it is so dark.

And for the sake of one fine boy my heart is troubled and sad.

You are fine like the grass on the meadow, I am lowly like the earth.

Oh, if you knew, my beloved, how much I miss you now!

For sure you would hasten back to me and not tarry on your way.



# Legacy

## Legacy

Deantha Edmunds  
arr. Leslee Heys

Inspired by the rich musical history of Labrador, acclaimed Inuk soprano, Deantha Edmunds, creates songs that tell the stories of contemporary Inuit life. *Legacy* was inspired by her feelings of heaviness and hopelessness about missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirited people – to uplift their voices and honour those who have been lost, but also to spark in all of us the urge to do better, bring about peace, and to connect with one another.

No matter how long, how near, how far.  
Led by Sister Sun or the North Star,  
You will be found, we'll sing you home.  
Your beautiful Spirit not left to roam.

Sister, I feel you walking with me.  
I hear your voice on the breeze.  
And I know that you will always be more than a memory.  
Alive like the wind flying free.

You left us a legacy: Hold on to your history.  
Write a new plot, dance, drum. Do not forget.  
It's never too late to rise and resonate.

*Nukak, ippiniavagit pisu Katigigavit  
Tusaavagit anugimmi  
Kauijimavunga ullu tamaat IkKaumananginnaniak Kagit  
Anugittut tingi jok*

We stand with you. We speak for you.  
We hold you high. It's not goodbye.

Sister, I feel you walking with me.  
I hear your voice on the breeze.  
And I know that you will always be more than a memory.  
Alive like the wind flying free.

*Atsunain gila gut*



## Ron Hynes

Known fondly as “the man of a thousand songs”, Ron Hynes is perhaps one of the most prolific individuals to come out of Newfoundland and Labrador. Widely regarded as one of Canada’s premier singer-songwriters with a career spanning over 30 years, Hynes’ songs have become part of the fabric of Newfoundland culture. Sadly, after a life battling his own demons of addiction and later, succumbing to cancer, Ron passed away in 2015, but he left behind a rich tapestry of stories and songs that are beloved not only in this province, but world wide.

# Loss

## Atlantic Blue

Ron Hynes  
arr. Leslee Heys

At 1:30am on February 15, 1982, the Ocean Ranger, an oil rig on the Grand Banks off the coast of Newfoundland, transmitted its last message: "There will be no further radio communications from Ocean Ranger. We are going to lifeboat stations." Shortly thereafter, in the middle of the night on Valentine's Day, in the midst of severe winter weather, the crew abandoned the platform. The platform soon after, sank. Of the 84 souls aboard, not one survived. Six years after this tragedy, Ron Hynes wrote the song he considered to be his most important work, *Atlantic Blue*. Told from the perspective of a wife left behind, the grief and anguish are palpable. While *Atlantic Blue* was inspired by a specific event, it is relatable to all who know the dangers of life alongside an unforgiving ocean – it's rare to find a Newfoundlander or Labradorian who hasn't experienced loss at the hands of the sea.

What colour is a heartache from a love lost at sea?  
What shade of memory never fades but lingers to eternity?  
How dark is the light of day that sleepless eyes of mine survey?  
Is that you, Atlantic Blue? My heart is as cold as you.  
How is one heart chosen to never lie at peace?  
How many moments remain? Is there not one sweet release?  
Who's the stranger at my door, to haunt my dreams forever more?  
Is that you, Atlantic Blue? My heart is as cold as you.  
I lie awake in the morning, as the waves wash on the sand,  
I hold my hurt at bay, hold the lives of his children in my hands.  
And whose plea will receive no answer?  
Whose cry is lost upon the wind?  
Who's the voice so familiar, that whispers my name as night draws in?  
Whose wish never fails to find my vacant heart on Valentine's?  
Is that you Atlantic Blue? My heart is as cold as you.

# Letting go

## Godspeed

Ron Hynes  
arr. Leslee Heys

A requiem of sorts, for his dear friend and fellow Atlantic Canadian musician, Gene MacLellan, who took his own life in 1995. Ron Hynes wrote "Godspeed" as a tribute – you'll hear reference to "put your hand in the hand", a gospel pop song composed by MacLellan. Showing his humanity, Ron questions the loss, but with kindness and compassion, having battled his own torments, perhaps he was better able to find understanding.

Godspeed, Godspeed  
Forgive a sweet soul a desperate deed  
His was a prison and he was freed  
Godspeed, Godspeed

God bless, God bless  
What's born out of sorrow or out of distress  
Speculation is anyone's guess  
God bless, God bless

God only knows what takes a petal from the rose  
What makes the dark rivers over flow  
What makes a lifetime come and go

But God damn, God damn  
You put your hand in the hand of the man  
Must have believed he would understand  
Forgive a sweet soul a desperate deed  
Godspeed, Godspeed





# Legend & Lore

## **Kekatu dziesma**

Peterisk Vasks

Not much can be said about the subject matter of this piece – we know it’s a “carnival song” but the dialect is ancient and not easily translated to English. What makes this piece so fascinating to us is that it takes familiar subject matter – mummering – and turns it on its head! In rural Newfoundland and Labrador, mummering was a traditional Christmas pastime, whereby neighbors would dress up in silly clothes so that they wouldn’t be recognizable and travel from house to house. A light hearted affair, mummers would be treated as guests, with a little tippie (alcoholic beverage) and of course, music and dancing!

Interestingly, the mummering tradition of the Baltic region in Northeastern Europe has a more sinister undertone, akin to pagan ritual, which is quite evident in Kekatu dziesma.



## Leslee Heys

When we think of folk music, we often think of the past, and passing down stories and songs is incredibly important. Less often, however, do we consider how our own place in history will be documented and interpreted by future generations. Leslee Heys continues to mark her place as one of Newfoundland and Labrador's most important composers - re-envisioning our beloved folksongs, ensuring they remain relevant to young singers and new audiences; but also also capturing the essence and spirit of our contemporary culture. Leslee's ability to interpret emotion, craft exquisite lines of text and melody is second to none - how lucky we are to have this incredible composer and collaborator by our side every week! Thank you, Leslee, for these gifts you bring.

# Life giver

## In Shadow

Leslee Heys

A family secret, kept tucked away, only whispers and shadows betray the truth. For generations, this was how it was for young women who came to find themselves unwed and pregnant. Socially unacceptable to keep and rear the child themselves, these circumstances were sometimes referred to as “Newfoundland adoptions”. In these cases, the mother of the family would take the child on as her own – raising it alongside her daughter (its mother), as a sister. It’s difficult to imagine what these young mothers must have felt, watching their child from a distance, raising and loving it as a sibling instead of mother. We’ve chosen to tell this story and lift the veil of shame that often went along with such secrets.

Somewhere by edge of the rolling sea we have born our child.  
Amid the sea drift, the treasures of a woman’s grace.  
Must we be shadow mothers? Only in shadow, mothers.  
Who must deny the best thing we have done.  
In daylight voiceless sisters. The still and silent sisters.

We are the sunlight that showers you with kisses from afar.  
We are the rivers that carry your boat to the shore.  
We are the swallows soaring above you to guide you home.  
Our love unknown. We cannot call you our own.

In our dreams we fold you gently in our arms and keep you safe from the storms. How can a love that roars like the ocean be contained in a quiet and lonely heart.

In silence must we bear our pride. In silence must we bear our loss.  
And we bear our joy and our pain.

We are the sunlight that showers you with kisses from afar.  
We are the rivers that carry your boat to the shore.  
We are the swallows soaring above you to guide you home.  
Our love unknown. We cannot call you our own.

# Lifeblood

## Smoke's Up

Leslee Heys

In rural Newfoundland and Labrador, before the centralization of services drove many towards larger centres, hundreds of small communities were scattered along the coves and inlets along our shores. Life in these fishing villages wasn't easy – hard laborious work, harsh weather, limited resources. But there was love, kindness, and camaraderie in abundance. The term “smoke's up” refers to the fact that the first chore of the day was to light the stove and get a fire going – for warmth, for cooking and boiling water. And neighbors checked on neighbors – if the smoke wasn't up at someone's home, something was amiss and they would be checked in on. It's a metaphor for a life where, in these tight-knit communities, fellowship and kindness were the most valuable resources of all.

Every break of day, we would scan the roofs of our little cove for a curl of grey. When the smoke was up, we would know that all were safely through the night.

We were raised to stay, though times got tough in our little cove. So, we stayed by the rocky shore and we tried our best. And kindness bloomed despite the cold.

We knew many hands would make light work.  
And that we stood upon the shoulders of mothers and fathers.  
That a rising tide of kindness would lift all of our boats, all of our hearts.

Every child was known. Every child was welcomed in every home.  
And the music played through the long dark nights in the corner of the kitchen by the stove.

We would stitch and sew the little treasures that we had found.  
Spread them out in a golden quilt of shared blessings.  
And when the smoke was up, a silent nod that we'd made it through the night.

We knew many hands would make light work.  
And that we stood upon the shoulders of mothers and fathers.  
That a rising tide of kindness would lift all of our boats, all of our hearts.

# Laughter & Liveliness

## Ta Na Solbici

Samo Vovk

There isn't a culture around the world (that we know of!) where weddings aren't a huge festivity! An excuse to dance, sing, laugh; a joyous celebration of love, of family, of life continuing on. It's a shared human experience that we can all relate to, no matter how we culturally express it.

There was a wedding in village Solbica.

Feet were hitting the floor so loudly that drown out the river Bila.

It was echoing off the mountain Kanin.

Feet were hitting the floor so loudly that drown out the church bell.



# Lady Cove

Artistic Director: Kellie Walsh  
Collaborative Pianist: Leslee Heys

Founded in 2003, Lady Cove Women's Choir was named after the remote community of Lady Cove on Newfoundland's rugged yet beautiful east coast. The name is representative of the spirit and philosophy of the choir: a community – a haven where woman-identified members come, not only to explore their own musicianship, but to share their lives and experiences in a sisterhood.

Our mission is to reveal the strength, versatility, creativity, and beauty of women's choral music; to provide talented and dedicated woman-identified musicians with exceptional musical and interpersonal experiences; and to actively contribute to the ongoing evolution of culture in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Lady Cove is a highly respected member of a vibrant and diverse arts community and has garnered a national and international reputation for excellence, not only for its high-performance standard but also for its innovation and creativity. Over the past 21 seasons, Lady Cove has been awarded top marks at numerous competitions, including European Grand Prix for Choral Singing events and the World Choir Games. The choir has also been invited to perform at prestigious national and international conferences, such as the World Symposium on Choral Music, The International Council for Traditional Music, and Choral Canada's "Podium". Most recently, the choir travelled to Italy to compete at the Seghizzi International Choral Singing Competition.

Beyond excellence in performance, Lady Cove has forged a mandate that speaks to the potential of building community through choral singing and the choir's obligation to support and engage with youth, woman-identified community groups, and charitable organizations.



## Choir Members:

Angela Antle

Leah Antle

Margot Antle

Jennifer Babstock

Claire Bates

Donna Beck House

Alice Breen

Elizabeth Brennan

Mary Brennan

Heather Bridal

Alice Brun-Newhook

Louise Brun-Newhook

Kristian Butt

Cheri Carroll

Hayley Cheeseman

Michelle Chippett

Sarah Comerford

Ashley Catherine Cook

Anna Corbett

Holly Daley

Siobhan Donovan

Erin Enguehard

Alanna Fitzpatrick

Brenda Gatherall

Julia Halfyard

Jennifer Halliday Chafe

Sarah Halliday

Tina Hand

Becca Hender

Alyssa Hicks

Amelia Hollett

Kayla Humby

Leanne Kearsey

Nicole Lambert

Andrea Lane Gardner

Erin Light

Adrianna Lear

Meaghan Malone

Yvonne Manning

Anna Mercer

Annie McCarthy

Colleen McCarthy

Sarah McDonald Moores

Jennifer Nakashima

Emily Nelder

Katharine Nuotio-Trimmm

Gillian Peters Pridham

Chanel Rolle

Jill Ryan

Lori Shortall

Rose Skinner

Erin Sullivan

Katie Sullivan

Rebecca Taylor-Sussex

Mariève Thériault

Norah Veinott

Angela Warren

Abra Whitney

Miriam Woelfel

## Board of Directors:

Eleanor Swanson, Chair

Heather McKinnon, Vice Chair

Sherina Wall, Secretary

David White, Treasurer

Gerry Allan

Jennifer Babstock

Peter Cowan

Jeremy Pridham

Karen Skinner

Rose Skinner

Rosellen Sullivan

Ian Wallace

## Administrative Staff:

Angela Warren, Administrative Director

Lori Shortall, Administrator

# Kellie Walsh, Artistic Director



A proud native of Newfoundland and Labrador, Kellie Walsh is the Founder and Artistic Director of Lady Cove Women's Choir, Artistic Director of Shallaway Youth Choir, and Co-Founder and Artistic Director Emeritus of Newman Sound Men's Choir. She holds Bachelor's degrees in both Music and Music Education, in addition to a Master of Music degree in conducting from Memorial University. Kellie was named

the 2008 NL Arts Council's Emerging Artist for her contribution to arts and culture in our province. In March 2013, Kellie received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, an award honouring significant contributions and achievements by Canadians and, in 2016, was awarded the Order of Newfoundland and Labrador. Most recently, Kellie was awarded the Senate of Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Medal.



# Leslee Heys, Collaborative Pianist



Leslee Heys is a multi-faceted musician living and working in St. John's, Newfoundland. Now in her fifteenth year as the collaborative pianist for Shallaway Youth Choir, she is very dedicated to the pedagogical principles of this progressive and excellent choir. Leslee is also the principal accompanist for the award-winning choirs Lady Cove and Newman Sound, has a dynamic private piano studio,

and is a sought-after accompanist and adjudicator. Lately, her interests have led her into the realm of composing and arranging. Her choral settings, particularly of Newfoundland and Labrador songs, have gained international recognition, and are introducing Canadian and American choirs to the richness of her provincial musical heritage. During a performance in Ireland, one of her arrangements was noticed by Henry Leck and is confirmed to be published by Hal Leonard Publishing in the near future.

Leslee's skills as coach/ accompanist have led to international performances in more than a dozen countries, as well as participation in Canadian events such as Festival 500, Opera on the Avalon, the National Music Festival, and the rESOund Festival of Contemporary Music. Leslee holds a Bachelor of Music Performance from the University of Toronto, a Master of Music Performance from the University of Western Ontario, and an Associateship from the Royal Conservatory of Toronto (Performance).

# Deantha Edmunds, Inuk Soprano



Deantha Edmunds is Canada's first Inuk professional classical singer. She was appointed a Member of the Order of Canada in December 2023 for her activity as a performer, writer, composer, and mentor - work which seeks to empower Indigenous people and share their stories. Her work has international reverberation as well as community integrity. She brings a level of professional excellence to Canada's

Indigenous art scene that is unique and important.

Notable appearances include singing at the opening ceremony of the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2021, performing for His Holiness, Pope Francis in Iqaluit at the official apology to Inuit residential school survivors in 2022, and singing the Nunatsiavut anthem for King Charles III at the St. John's welcome ceremony of the 2022 Canadian Royal Tour which focused on Reconciliation.

Creating original music, collaborating with other musicians, contributing to Indigenous productions, and mentoring young artists, Deantha shares her voice and vision with her whole heart, and is drawing accolades from across Canada and the world.

Lady Cove acknowledges the  
support of:



Canada Council  
for the Arts

Conseil des arts  
du Canada

## Thank You

Harbour Voices Festival

Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist

Holy Heart of Mary High School

Leslee Heys

Deantha Edmunds

Heather Kao

Annie Corrigan

Brainerd Blyden-Taylor & the Nathaniel Dett Chorale

Lady Cove Board of Directors

All our chorister and community volunteers