

WORKSHOPS

Since 1975, Frankie has been running Voice Workshops in Britain, continental Europe, North America and Australia. She pioneered Voice Work based on traditional styles of singing, initially influenced by the North American singer and folk song collector Ethel Raim. The workshops are for singers and non-singers alike - in fact the aim is to do away with this distinction - and are inspired by cultures where everyone sings as naturally as they talk. While not aiming to have everyone become a 'singer', they offer the opportunity for people to explore and enjoy using their voices in an easygoing, supportive atmosphere.

'There is something essentially so joyous about this way of singing that most people's resistance melts and they are caught up.'

Sheila Miller - Folk News (Britain)

Frankie has run workshops for a wide range of people including women's groups; teachers and pupils in primary and secondary schools; people with physical disabilities; drama, music and social work students; music and theatre festivals; and theatre companies (including the National Theatre, Welfare State International and Compass Theatre). The workshops allow Frankie to call on aspects of the skills developed in her previous career as a social and group worker, and a trainer in organisational, team and personal development. She has also worked as an actress/singer with GRAEAE Theatre Co. and Cardiff Laboratory Theatre.

As well as running workshops on her own, Frankie co-leads them with Darien Pritchard, a movement and relaxation specialist (with whom she also runs Voice Teacher training workshops), and with Joan Mills, singer, theatre director and voice teacher.

'Whether working at the National Theatre Studio or in a community setting, Frankie Armstrong is able to unlock the most extraordinary and thrilling sounds from people's voices...'

Nigel Jamieson - Director, International Workshop Festivals



Amongst the Voice Workshops Frankie offers are:

If You Can Talk, You Can Sing - a basic workshop to free the voice, bring awareness of the body-voice relationship and play with the continuum from speaking to singing.

Singing in Harmony - as well as freeing and grounding the voice, exploring simple ways of creating harmonies, improvising with these, and learning songs and chants from around the world.

Song Interpretation and Performance Skills - for anyone who wishes to communicate songs; exploring physical preparation, presence, interpretation and nerves.

Voices of the Archetypes of Myth - using physical preparation, the imagination and story, to find the vocal qualities accessed through mythical figures - in order to extend the possibilities of vocal expression.

Voice Teachers Training (co-run with Darien Pritchard) - for people wishing to incorporate aspects of Frankie's approach into their own work.

For Community Arts Organisations, she also offers **Team Development, Organisational Consultancy** and (with Zarine Katrak) courses on **Equal Opportunities/Anti-Discrimination Practice** - using a large range of exercises to enable individuals, teams and organisations within Community Arts to improve morale, clarity and effectiveness around goals, roles and procedures; and also Training and Supervision.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND BOOKINGS:

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FRANKIE ARMSTRONG

Born in Cumbria, England, Frankie began singing when the skiffle boom hit Britain in 1957, and then became involved in the folk revival. Since 1962 she has built up a repertoire of British songs and ballads, which, along with contemporary British songs, still form the basis of her musical vocabulary. Frankie owes much of the early development of her singing style to the influence of A. L. Lloyd and the traditional women singers of the UK and Ireland.

Her repertoire includes rural, industrial, music hall and contemporary songs; those of her own and other songwriters such as Sandra Kerr, Leon Rosselson and Bertolt Brecht. She selects and interprets songs that explore and express personal and social relationships, especially those that focus on the experiences of women.

'Her songs are laments and celebrations and silly bits of fancy and fun - all neatly drawn back into their context...a fine and intriguing performance.'

Jeani Read - Vancouver Sun

Frankie has toured in the UK, continental Europe, the US, Canada and Australia, singing in a variety of settings - folk clubs, folk and arts festivals, community arts centres, theatres and for peace and women's organisations.

'Whether it's a song of our times or a hundred year old ballad Frankie Armstrong can make it vivid and real to us as few singers can. The urgency and intensity of her oft-unaccompanied singing cuts through the centuries, holds the audience spellbound.'

Ethel Raim - Sing Out (USA)

Frankie was involved in compiling a collection of 100 songs about women's lives, **My Song Is My Own** (Pluto Press) with Kathy Henderson and Sandra Kerr, and the record of the same name. She also appears on a range of recordings along with such performers as A. L. Lloyd; Ewan MacColl, Peggy Seeger and The Critics Group; on Ken Hyder's folk-jazz suite **Land of Stone** (Virgin); with Brian Pearson and Blowzabella on **Tam Lin** (Plant Life); with Dave Van Ronk on **Let No One Deceive You: Songs of Bertolt Brecht** (Flying Fish); and has sung and recorded with Roy Bailey and Leon Rosselson.

She also appears on current compilation CDs - **Voices: English Traditional Songs** (Fellside FECD 87); **Ballads: Traditional Ballads** (Fellside FECD 110); and **The Bird in the Bush: Traditional Songs of Love and Lust** (Topic TSCD 479).

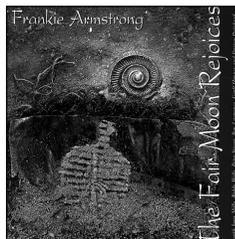
SOLO RECORDINGS



Ways of Seeing (Harbourtown HARCD 009), Frankie acappella; with Joan Mills, Venice Manley, Vivien Ellis and a women's choir.

'...instant realisation that the solo human voice can have more effective impact than all the moog synthesizers and orchestral choirs in the world.'

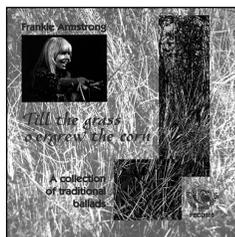
Colin Irwin - Melody Maker



The Fair Moon Rejoices (Harbourtown HARCD 027), Frankie with Joan Mills, Biddy Wells and musicians.

'Her singing of her own song, Out of the Darkness had a power and intensity approaching the vision of Blake himself. It was a superb example of the fusion of art and commitment.'

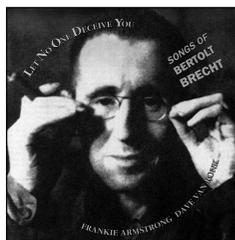
Maurice Rosenbaum - Daily Telegraph



Till the Grass O'ergrew the Corn (Fellside FECD 116), an album of traditional ballads; Frankie with John Kirkpatrick and Maddy Prior.

'Ms Armstrong...sings...with such vitality and feeling that her audience is swept along in the sheer pleasure she seems to find in her songs.'

John S. Wilson - New York Times



Let No One Deceive You: Songs of Bertolt Brecht (Flying Fish FF 70557), Frankie and Dave Van Ronk.

'...a magnificent recital...contains some of Brecht's most bitter and politically incendiary material...performed solo by the raw-voiced Van Ronk and the powerful Armstrong...Like Brecht's great songs, this resonant album strikes sparks.'

Billboard (USA)

'You'd be hard-pressed to find a singer on the British folk scene with a voice as powerful, versatile and expressive...She has the remarkable abilities to vividly convey the imagery of a song, capture and project its every nuance, its every dramatic detail, and perfectly exploit the natural tensions of lyric and melody, always giving the words the space to breathe.'

Keith Hudson - Taplas: Folk in Wales

Frankie's previous solo recordings are **Lovely on the Water** (Topic 12TS 216 - to be reissued on Fellside, 1997); **Songs and Ballads** (Topic 12TS 273); **Out of Love, Hope and Suffering** (Bay 206); **And the Music Plays so Grand** (Sierra Briar SBR 4211); and **I Heard a Woman Singing** (Fuse CF 389 - still available on LP).

PUBLICATIONS



As Far as the Eye Can Sing, Frankie's autobiography, edited by Jenny Pearson, published by Women's Press 1992 (ISBN O 7043 4294 4).

'I left her book feeling that I really knew this sincere, grounded, inspiring woman.'

John Button - i to i Magazine (Britain)

Frankie also co-authored **My Song Is My Own** (Pluto Press, 1979) with Kathy Henderson and Sandra Kerr - a collection of 100 songs about women's lives - and the record of the same name; and **The Action Research Experiment** (Save The Children, 1977) with Shirley Otto - a description and handbook on their work in team building and organisational consultancy.

She has contributed chapters to a number of books:

Voices (Pluto Press, 1984);

Glancing Fires (Women's Press, 1987);

The Sensual Body (Ebury Press, 1987);

Nothing Ventured (Rough Travel, 1991);

Discovering the Self through Drama and Movement: The Sesame Approach (Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 1996);

Vocal Vision (Applause Books, NY, 1997);

and **Ballads into Books: The Legacies of Francis James Child** (Peter Lang Publishing, 1997).