

People Poems Biography

People Poems are an acoustic duo comprised of guitarist, vocalist and songwriter Harry Orme and vocalist Francesca Haincourt. In 2013, having spent 3 years as part of Leeds' instrumental/improvised music scene whilst studying jazz at Leeds College of Music, Orme wanted to take what he'd learned from that aesthetic into the realm of stripped-back, acoustic songwriting. *'I love playing improvised music, but I felt a real need to be making something more direct, more permanent,'* says Orme. *'I needed something to differentiate the new material I was writing from the other things I'd been doing up until that point – so “People Poems” was created less as a pen-name, more as a title for that new body of work.'*

The project has been fiercely independent from the start. *'The first year of gigs funded our own recording setup, and then a lot of the money we made on the first EP went back into extending that setup for the next recording. It was important to us that we could give ourselves the time to make exactly what we wanted to make.'* People Poems' first EP, *Monologues*, was released in autumn 2014, and it was at that point that Haincourt became involved. The two had worked together before, with Orme appearing as a guitarist on gigs led by Haincourt, and he says she was the natural choice when recruiting a second vocal. *'Originally the intention was just to mark the Monologues launch show with something a little different, so I wrote a set of harmonies with Francesca in mind. The response from the audience was so overwhelming, and it gave such an extra depth to the songs, I didn't really have any choice but to stop thinking about People Poems as a solo project and to consider Fran an integral part of the music moving forward.'*

As the name suggests, People Poems' second EP *'Duologues'* marks that transition from solo to duo. The pair rehearsed and recorded the EP in the 6 months following the release of *Monologues*, whilst maintaining a busy schedule performing around the north of England. *'The interplay between Damien Rice and Lisa Hannigan on his records has always been a big influence for me, so to have someone like Francesca on board – who has such a beautiful voice and is so sensitive to the lyrics that I write – is really more than I could have hoped for.'*

The duo has drawn comparisons to other male/female singer-songwriter pairings such as Rice/Hannigan and Laura Marling/Johnny Flynn, but Orme is keen to emphasise that the vocal harmonies are anything but typical – *'we're drawing a lot on classical string and jazz horn arranging techniques, which hopefully set us apart a little in terms of texture. We're aiming as much for “chamber music” as we are for “folk.”'* They seem to have been successful in this aim, as Mike Price of *Vibrations* magazine describes the *'delightful'* vocal harmonies as *'sending a shiver down one's spine.'* *Duologues*, whilst capturing this new depth of sound, retains the sincere intimacy of *Monologues*, along with Orme's brutally honest, narratively compelling lyrics.

People Poems' reach has continued to extend further outside of their home base of Leeds as this summer they appeared in cities throughout the UK whilst on tour in support of *Duologues'* release. Their momentum shows no sign of slowing as they now begin work on a new full-length LP, with their next UK tour scheduled for spring 2016.

<https://www.peoplepoemsmusic.com>
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