



## Artist Biography

Outi Smith, a Finnish singer and pianist now based in Scotland, was born with two restless feet, a curious mind, and an open heart that encouraged her to travel between countries, seeking new experiences.

She is equally as adventurous with her approach to music. Through her studies in classical, contemporary and jazz voice and piano in Joensuu Conservatoire (FIN), Strathclyde University's acclaimed Applied Music Course, and the Royal Scottish Conservatoire and over years of performing in different groups and settings around the UK and overseas, Outi has developed her ethereal yet quirky vocal style and happily hops between styles and genres.

Although her heart has found a home in jazz, as a songwriter and arranger she also draws on her classical experience while interweaving a myriad of further influences. In her original compositions she explores the ground between jazz and folk. She especially appreciates the storytelling aspects of folk, and the beauty of jazz for her is in the variety, interpretation and constant reinvention of the story being told. She is increasingly passionate about improvisation, a practice which has taught her to embrace being in the moment and fully accept her creative vulnerability. She is currently practicing her own storytelling skills by writing material for her first album.

Outi's debut single 'Shiver' was released in March 2023. The song draws inspiration from Finnish folklore and the character of Aino in Kalevala, the Finnish National Epic. In her own words:

*"Aino has only a minor part to play in Kalevala but her story repeats all over the Finnish folklore in different forms. It tells of a young woman, who is promised to an older man against her will, and after a chance encounter with him alone in the forest finds herself with a side of the story no one wants to believe. Rather than accepting her fate she decides to join the 'maidens under the sea' and later comes back to taunt the man in the form of a fish. It is this ability and power to go through a metamorphosis in the wake of a personal tragedy that I based my song on. It is a celebration of the feminine strength. And her story, in one form or another, is well known to women all over the world."*

As well as performing as a singer/songwriter, Outi is part of a jazz duo with guitarist Nico Gaul, playing a diverse mix of jazz and blues standards as well as more obscure pieces. After having played several private parties and smaller venues, the duo performed at last year's Callander Jazz and Blues Festival to great acclaim and is looking forward to adding more high-profile performances under their belt this year.

Outi is also one third of vocal harmony trio Juniper Three with Laura Hill and Aimee Penman. The trio performs their own arrangements of hand-picked songs, including both covers and originals in an eclectic mix of styles. Juniper Three received a mention on the 'highly recommended' list after their performance at the 2023 Danny Kyle Open Stage. They are currently working on their debut EP.