

Alex Izaak Milling // Extended CV

Improviser, Composer, Performer, Sonic Artist

Education History

2021 - 2025

Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Music, specialising on Jazz Guitar at Leeds Conservatoire, UK

Primary Mentors - Rob Bentall, James Mainwaring, Chris Sharkey

Other Mentors - Dave. Kane, Matthew Bourne, Emil Karlsen

2019 - 2021

BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Music Technology at Exeter College, UK

Primary Mentors - Roz Harding, Ian Rossiter

Highlighted Concerts

Full Concert Log can be found on [my website](#)

In duo with Matthew Bourne, consisting of Quadrophonic Guitar, Church Organ and MemoryMoog

Wainsgate Chapel, Hebden Bridge, July 2025

In solo presenting, 'Harmony After Amplification', - an Improvisation on Guitar with Quadrophonic

Sound

Leeds Conservatoire's 'The Venue', Leeds, May 2025

In quartet alongside Gaia Blandina, Desmond Clarke and Iris Casling, exploring contemporary

classical music and electronics,

Wharf Chambers, Leeds, January, 2025

Alongside the Exu (James Mainwaring, Emil Karlsen, Dave Kane)

Hyde Park Book Club, Leeds, November 2024

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Alongside Sveið (Federico Reuben, James Mainwaring and Emil Karlsen)

Wharf Chambers, Leeds, January, 2025

Alongside Chris Sharkey

Sela Bar, Leeds, June 2025

Alongside Tongue Depressor and No Disc.

Wharf Chambers, Leeds, December, 2024

The Leeds Contemporary Jazz Orchestra, led by James Mainwaring

Leeds Conservatoire's 'The Venue', Leeds, March 2024

The Big Ideas Large Ensemble, led by Chris Sharkey

Carlsen Club, Manchester, June 2025

Awards

Runner up for the Leeds Rotary Club Music Prize

This award is for the student who gained the highest mark for their Final Recital, in which I was shortlisted for after receiving a 90.00 for my performance of 'Harmony After Amplification'.

Recordings and Releases

2022

You are invited

In duo with Nika Ticciati, under the project name, 'Tilikum The Great', consisting of a Drums and Guitar, exploring improvised noise and progressive rock.

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2025

Cardigan Road

A solo record consisting of Guitar and Effects

All his Angels

A live solo record consisting of Manipulated and Resampled Vocals

2026

Music Never Helps

In Duo with Theo Gowans (Territorial Gobbins) as dual vocal manipulations

(recorded but pending release)

Performer and Perceiver (for Dolby Atmos 7.1)

A solo record consisting of Quadrophonic Guitar and Vocals, mixed in a Spatial Audio Suite at Leeds Beckett University.

Bourne // Milling

In Duo with Matthew Bourne on Guitar with Effects & Keys with Memory Moog

Relevant Experiences and Community Involvement

Member of the Fusebox Promotion Team

During my time in Leeds, I have played and then subsequently joined the team that runs 'Fusebox' - a longstanding jazz, improv, avant-garde and experimental gig series based in Headingley that has hosted heavyweights in the improvising genre such as Maggie Nichols, Pierre Alexandre Trembley, Alex Bonney, Phil Minton and Ruth Giller (Skylia).

Member and participant in the Leeds Improvising Orchestra

I am a part of the Leeds Improvising Orchestras, who partake in day long recording sessions and gig's, lead by Ozzy Moysey, of Ancient Infinity Orchestra.

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Member and participant in the Leeds Contemporary Jazz Orchestra

Led by Mercury Prize Nominated Saxophonist James Mainwaring, I was a part of a 20 piece orchestra including 2 bassists, 3 drummers, 2 guitarists, 2 Grand Pianos and a 10 piece Horn section, exploring his work for acclaimed album Mycorrhiza, as well as newer compositions and graphic scores.

Promoter at Wharf Chambers

I have helped organise, and run multiple events at Wharf Chambers in collaboration with The Limpet Club, Heinus Whining Events and my own evenings, helping fundraise for Human Right and LGBTQ+ Matters alongside Rory Masling and Iris Casling. These nights that have hosted Fred Frith, Chris Corsano, Mick Flowers, Evischen, Laura Cocks, Weston Olenki, Maddie Greenstone, Desmond Clarke, Gaia Blandino and Federico Reuben.

Member of Jam on Toast

Jam on Toast is a regularly held dance workshop and jam taking place at OpenSource Arts, Leeds where there's an emphasis on movement to live sound. I am one of the regular musicians that help out for the jam section and improvise with a plethora of other musicians, including Ozzy Mosey, Fergus Quill, Amelie Yoshizawa, Glen Leach and members of the Awen Ensemble.

Teaching At Leeds Junior Conservatoire

As a part of my community music module at Leeds Conservatoire, I led a course to Leeds Junior Conservatoire participants, with ages ranging from 11 - 17 in two separate groups. The module I was based on music theory and creative practice inside the scope of creative songwriting.

Assistant Recording Engineer

I assist Chris Sharkey on his Guerrilla recording sessions in a range of settings, including Chapel FM's church hall, and Eiger Studio's rehearsal Spaces. We have recently collaborated on recording Yoshizawa, a prog band who recently played at ArcTangent, and Architecton, an improvised Ambient Trio consisting of Rory Maslen on Bass, Richard Baetke on Contra Sax and Nick Katuszonek on Drumkit.

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Freelance Live Sound Engineer

For the Jazz Joint at Sela bar, ran by James Mainwaring until last year, where it changed hands to Notathing events, I am the dedicated in house engineer, having to provide my own gear and equipment for live sound a long with recording, mixing and mastering any set's required by the ensembles playing.

I also work at a collection of other local bars in Leeds and have built a reliable reputation to run and record a smooth running gig.

Collaborators

Matthew Bourne	Federico Rebeun	Ed Jones
James Mainwaring	Desmond Clarke	Jiannis Pivladis
Emil Karlsen	Gaia Blandina	Dave Walsh
Dave Kane	Alex Harper	Jamil Sheriff
Chris Sharkey	Pierre Alexander Tremblay	Jamie Taylor
Rob Mitchel	Hinrik Thorisson	Wharf Chambers
Ben Gaunt	Mia Windsor	Wainsgate Chapel
Rob Bentall	Seb De Krom	Sumac Way
Leeds Conservatoire	Exeter College	Fusebox
Discontinued	Norther Guitars	Fox and Newt
Chapel FM	Ozzy Mosey	Fergus Quill
Leeds Contemporary Jazz Orchestra	Eiger Studios	OpenSource Arts
Elusive Jazz	Harvey Parkin Christie	Teresa Winter
The Limpit Club	Teruki Chan	Nika Ticciati
Hyde Park Book Club	Theo Gowans	P3 Annihilation
Offshoots	Sela Bar	Glen Leach

Selected Coursework

Electroacoustic Composition and Analysis

78.00 // first

Taught Under Rob Bentall, we discussed and analysed seminal EA works ranging from Klang by Jonty Harrison, to more contemporary pieces such as Icebreaker by Manuella Blackburn. We were then tasked with building an 8 minute portfolio of multiple EA compositions, with accompanying programme notes.

I composed 1 piece exploring the found sounds of an industrial coffee machine whilst discussing the juxtaposition of EA music and 'Coffee Shop' Music, and 1 piece recording the ritual in it's entirety of restringing my guitar, and discussed the relationship an improviser has with their instruments.

Specialist Study (Jazz Guitar)

90.00 // first

Mentored under Chris Sharkey, this was the heaviest weighted assignment on the BA at Leeds, in which you perform a 40 minute set demonstrating professional competence in regard to the range of skills appropriate to the chosen musical idiom. It's designed to be somewhat a culmination of the musicianship you have gained during your time on the course.

I wanted to take advantage of the Concert Hall that I'd have access to for this performance, and decided to lean nearer the direction of immersive exhibition rather than a regular 'gig'. I designed a quadrophonic guitar rig utilising a range of effect pedals, a system I designed in my laptop that will 'interpret' my input information in different ways, and a collection of extended techniques and 'tabletopping' tools to create an extended set going into moments of Minimalist Composition, Free, Contemporary and extended improvised Jazz.

Performance with Electronics under Chris Sharkey

88.00 // first

Taught under Chris Sharkey, the module featured academic research on different ways technology has been utilised in live performance throughout the 20th and 21st century. This accumulated to a live performance and accompanying essay analysing the processes used and creative decisions.

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Extended Improvisation

76.00 // first

Taught under Matthew Bourne, James Mainwaring & Ed Jones, in small groups we explored the history of of extended improvised music, mainly under the tradition of free jazz. Sessions were interactive and were mainly activity based, with a lot of improvisation games and reflection of performances. The assignment was a short solo performance inside of this idiom, in which I decided to play with the intention of only being able to play a note once the previous one starts feed-backing and resonating inside the room I was in.

Arranging and Orchestration under Robert Mitchell

70.00 // first

Taught under Rob Mitchell, we analysed and dissected larger ensemble arrangements, ranging from Ellington's big bands to Kenny Wheeler's nonets, we were then tasked to write and record our own original composition for a nonet.

Technical Skills

Musicianship

A proven and accomplished knowledge of the electric guitar, being able to perform, compose and teach under multiple idioms inside of Jazz, Improvised Music, Free Music, Rock, Metal and Contemporary Classical Music.

Production

A deep understanding and utilisation of analogue equipment such as guitar pedals in a creative manner, as well as a more commercial settings. This is including but not limited to Tone building, no input mixing, noise music and tape manipulation techniques.

A deep understanding of DAW's, primarily using Ableton Live and Logic Pro x

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Coding

An understanding of other code based music creation softwares such as Live MSP, SuperCollider, VCV Rack and LanniX, with mentorship from Federico Reuben at York University.

A growing understanding of coding languages html, css, javascript and python.

Notation

A deep understanding of combining use of Musescore and vector manipulation software such as Affinity, and an interest in exploring other notation softwares, such as Lillypad for Contemporary and experimental scoring.

Quotes

“Alex is in possession of an enviable deftness of execution in what was/is a very advanced technological setup - involving multiple amplifiers, guitar, and electronics. Much of this is still gestating/in its early stages of development. Musically, Alex is years ahead of his peers, not least due to the unique conceptualisation of his work, and a surety of exactly where / how he wants to develop as an artist.”

- **Matthew Bourne**

“Alex Izaak Milling (is a)part of a newer generation of local improvisers harbouring formidable creative appetites.”

- **The Wire Magazine**

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In reference to my Specialist Study Final Recital Performance at Leeds Conservatoire

"At times, the sound was an onslaught on the senses and ears. To be able to say I've heard things today that I've never heard before in sound or music is a real testament to your research and commitment to this project"

- **David Walsh**

"I hope you continue to develop and take it as far as you can – to venues across Europe and beyond – and find spaces to share this experience. Because it is as much about experience as it is about music."

- **Jamie Taylor**

"Masterful performance, off the scale musicianship"

- **Matthew Bourne**

References

Professor Rob Bentall, Associate Professor of Sound Design, Composition and Performance
Leeds Conservatoire
r.bentall@lcm.ac.uk

Chris Sharkey, Senior Lecturer
Leeds Conservatoire
c.sharkey@lcm.ac.uk

Dr Matthew Bourne, Principle Lecturer
Leeds Conservatoire
M.bourne@lcm.ac.uk

Other Professional Relationships

Federico Reuben, Senior Lecturer

York University

federico.reuben@york.ac.uk

Pierre Alexandre Tremblay, Research Professor of Composition

Conservatorio della Svizzera italiana

tremblap@gmail.com