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CLASSICS

Will Todd
ALL WILL BE WELL



Will Todd *piano* | Voices of Hope | Will Todd Ensemble | Mark Edwards *conductor*

ALL WILL BE WELL

WILL TODD

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VOICES OF HOPE, WILL TODD *Piano*
WILL TODD ENSEMBLE, ALINA ORCHESTRA
MARK EDWARDS *Conductor*

www.signumrecords.com

WILL TODD WRITES:

“This new collection of my choral music features recent commissions from choirs near and far. The overall theme of the album is one of hope, but also concern for our relationship with living things and the planet we inhabit. In *Earthificat* I have based a new secular, environmental text on the words and structure of the famous evensong canticle *Magnificat* and in *Renew Me In The Sunlight* the words ask for strength for us to move forward in balance with nature. There is a movement, *Reverence* from my secular mass *m=pV*, a work about our stewardship of nature and our place within the universe, and a setting of some beautiful words by the great nature poet William Wordsworth in *We Are Laid Asleep*. Alongside this are Christmas settings and other choral songs. The timbres weave between my more classical a cappella and strings texture, towards a more jazz inflected sound world in tracks such as *On This Night* and *Let All The People Praise You*. I have worked many times with the inspirational Newcastle-based choir Voices of Hope who won BBC Choir of The Year in 2016 and who have continued to grow in vocal magic and audiences since that time. It's been a joy to work with them and their musical director Mark Edwards alongside my own ensemble and string players from the Alina Orchestra. Huge thanks to all who contributed and supported us via the crowdfunder to help make this project possible and to Signum Classics for their belief in this recording.”

WILL TODD INTRODUCES THE MUSIC:

1 All Will Be Well

Commissioned by Simon Wood for Requiem To Cancer in 2018 in aid of Cancer Research UK *All Will Be Well* was premiered at St Paul's Covent Garden, London on 14th September 2018. With my own text, inspired by the famous Julian of Norwich saying which begins 'All shall be well..' this is a piece about optimism, companionship, and the belief that love is beside us through all things. This new recording features added strings.

*There's a bloom that never fades,
there's a dream that stays
There's a hope which carries me through all my days
So I will bring a shining light, a story new to tell
In the end all things shall pass and all will be well*

*I am here beside you, I am holding you
I will be the hand of love in all you do
So I will bring a shining light, a story new to tell
In the end all things shall pass and all will be well*

Words by Will Todd | Publisher: Oxford University Press

2 We Are Laid Asleep

We Are Laid Asleep was written in 2020 to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the birth of one of the world's most celebrated poets, William Wordsworth. This is the first movement of a three movement choral suite setting words from Wordsworth's poem *Tintern Abbey*. I find this part of the poem so moving, in the way it connects us to the living world and our place within it.

*We are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.*

Words by William Wordsworth | Publisher: Tyalgum Press

3 Reverence

Reverence is a movement from *m=pV*. A secular work, inspired by the double meaning of the word 'Mass', *m=pV* is loosely based on the shape of the Ordinary Mass, hence six movements with original texts exploring humanity's relationship with the earth and the universe. *Reverence* is the 4th movement of *m=pV* which was commissioned by Southern Oregon Singers in 2020. I've wanted to write this work for a long time - a piece which draws on my experience and heritage of singing christian liturgy but moves into something more secular, universal and physical, allowing people of all faiths and none into a shared wonderment at the miracle of life on earth and the responsibilities that brings.

Reverence is inspired by the Sanctus, the 4th movement of the traditional mass.

*Extraordinary. Astonishing. Inspirational.
This connection of star and planet:
Energy and Life.
Every atom resonates in one physical truth.*

Words by Will Todd | Publisher: Tyalgum Press

4 Sing Me Home

This is the middle movement of the three movement *When Music Sounds Choral Suite* which was commissioned to commemorate the 130th annual Mrs Sunderland Festival, and also the bicentenary of Mrs Sunderland, a noted singer in 19th century England known as 'The Yorkshire Queen of Song'. The work was commissioned in conjunction with Huddersfield Choral Society who premiered it at the Last Night Concert of the 2019 Mrs Sunderland Festival on 23rd February 2019.

*When I am lost I listen for your song,
Far away I feel a distant memory, calling me
across a wilderness.
Sing me a song to guide me.
O melody, breaking through the darkest night
O, I am lost without my guiding star, this blessed
lullabye I hear from afar,
To bring me home and fill my heart again.
To sing me home and fill my heart again.
Sing me a song to heal me.
There is a song to mend my broken heart
There is a way for us to find our love anew.
Let my voice be full once more and call to you,
To bring me home and fill my heart again.
To sing me home and fill my heart again.*

Words by Will Todd | Publisher: Tyalgum Press

5 Blessed Are The Peacemakers

Blessed are the Peacemakers was commissioned by Enid Merritt to celebrate the musical career of Paul Merritt and premiered in Canada at First-St Andrew's United Church, London, Ontario in 2016.

Enid and Paul were great supporters of my music and I was fortunate to make a number of trips to work with their choir in London, including a very memorable performance of my Mass in Blue. The setting picks up on the amazing certainty which lies within the text and the melody grows gently from the opening sustained notes in the altos, building in intensity as the anthem progresses. Originally for piano only this version has added oboe, harp and strings.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God

Words from the Gospel of St Matthew 5:9 | Publisher: Boosey and Hawkes

6 Take Away My Sorrow

Take Away My Sorrow was commissioned by Simon Davies-Fidler in 2018 in memory of his father, Eric Fidler, for Voices Of Hope.

It was music which came to me very quickly as I sat at the piano on the morning that Simon and I first discussed the possibility of me writing the piece, and the words, melody and harmony seemed to come to me in a single block of thought. Originally in 8 parts, this version is the one prepared for publication by OUP and is mainly in 4 parts.

*So many mysteries, so many agonies I do not understand
On this night of stars I await your grace
I await the one who when he shows his face takes
away my sorrow
So many troubles, so many struggling, so many
bowed in grief.
On this night of faith you will set me free
And I praise the Son who when he smiles at me
takes away my sorrow
Take away my sorrow, take away my sorrow, take
away my sorrow
On this night of love you have come for me
It is you who through eternity takes away my sorrow*

Words by Will Todd | Publisher: Oxford University Press

7 O Magnum Mysterium

Commissioned by Jason Throne for Unionville High School Chorale and Brandywine Valley Chorale in 2024 this setting of the famous *O Magnum Mysterium* text weaves interlocking vocal lines over a piano drone with percussion and saxophone accompaniment.

*O magnum mysterium
Et admirabile sacramentum
Ut animalia viderent Dominum natum
Jacentem in praesepe!
Beata Virgo, cujus viscera
Meruerunt portare
Dominum Christum
Alleluia*

Text from the Holy Matins for Christmas | Publisher: Tyalgum Press

*O great mystery,
and wonderful sacrament,
that animals should see the newborn Lord,
lying in a manger!
Blessed is the virgin whose womb
was worthy to bear
the Lord, Jesus Christ.
Alleluia!*

8 See Amid The Winter's Snow

This setting of *See Amid The Winter's Snow* was written for Philip Redfern and the choir of St George's School, Edinburgh. Written for female voices and piano, it was first performed in December 2014. The lovely words, which I've adapted slightly from the 19th-century carol by Edward Caswall, have been a part of my Christmas celebrations for as long as I can remember, and there are several wonderful tunes associated with the text. In writing this new melody I wanted to explore again the timeless nature of the poetry.

*See amid the winter's snow,
Born for us on earth below,
See, the Lamb of God appears,
Promised from eternal years!
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn!
Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all the world again:
Christ is born in Bethlehem.*

*Sacred Infant, all divine,
What a tender love was thine,
Thus to come from highest bliss
Down to such a world as this.
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn...*

*"As we watched at dead of night,
Lo, we saw a wondrous light;
Angels singing 'Peace on earth'
Told us of a Saviour's birth."
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn...*

*Teach, O teach us, Holy Child,
By Thy face so meek and mild,
Teach us to resemble Thee,
In Thy sweet humility.*

Words adapted from Edward Caswall (1814–1878) |
Publisher: Boosey and Hawkes

9 On This Night

On This Night is a new lyric to a commission from 2019 of a three movement choral and big band work *Praise All Things* for Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church in Texas. The original 2nd movement was a setting of Psalm 150 and I have created an alternative Christmas lyric for this piece as a stand-alone carol.

*On this night of God's miracle
See a manger bed, and a child in Mary's arms.
Born into a humble place, born into a
sorrowing world,
A saviour to redeem us all by his birth.
All night I'm singing alleluia
My heart is filled with alleluia
Kneel down and worship the Christ-child on this night.*

*See the shepherds who have come to him,
See their wonder as they gaze upon the Lord.
May I be a shepherd too, bowing to an infant king
And coming to a stable filled with heavenly light?
All night I'm singing alleluia...*

*Will you hold me Lord, forever,
May you always be beside me through my days?
So that I may come at last into the house of God
And kneel with the Magi at the manger?
All night I'm singing alleluia...*

Words by Will Todd | Publisher: Tyalgum Press

10 Renew Me In The Sunlight

This is the final movement from the choral suite *Songs of Renewal*, commissioned by Benjamin Goodson and Bath Camerata in 2018 using the piano accompaniment version (the original was a cappella). In this lyric I am asking for us to have the courage to be renewed in our actions and in our love and care of the world and others.

*Renew me in the sunlight.
Renew me in the blossom tree.
Renew me in the rainfall.
Renew me in the child born.
Transform me. Let me bring light.*

*Renew me in others.
Renew me when I take your hand.
Renew me in loving.
Renew me in forgiving.
Transform me. Let me bring light.
And in the moment I forgive
I am transformed, I am renewed.*

*Renew me in hoping.
Renew me in comforting.
Renew me in reaching.
Renew me in listening.
Transform me. Let me bring light.*

Words by Will Todd | Publisher: Boosey and Hawkes

11 Let All The People Praise You

This setting of words from Psalm 67 for SATB and piano with optional bass, drums and alto saxophone was commissioned in 2020 by the Brown family and dedicated to Alma Lowe, a Prima Donna with the Carl Rosa Opera Company and her three children. As the setting progresses the saxophone weaves around the voices and at the end the repeated refrain of the psalm on the voices brings the piece to a quietly affirmative close.

*God be gracious to us and bless us
And make his light to shine upon us
That your way may be known on earth
Your saving power among all nations.
Let the people praise you O God
Let all the people praise you.*

*O let the nations rejoice and be glad
For you will judge the people righteously
And govern the nations upon earth.
Let the people praise you O God
Let all the people praise you.*

Words from Psalm 67 | Publisher: Tyalgum Press

12 This Miracle We Share

Commissioned by Gail Davies-Fidler to celebrate her husband Simon's 40th birthday, my text for this carol seeks to connect the miracle of the incarnation with the preciousness of God's gift of our earthly home – the 'miracle we share' is both the natural environment and also the birth of Jesus Christ.

*What can I offer to this infant king?
How can I find a gift to honour him?
Shepherds bow low, and magi bring him gold.
Angels sing praises from above.
What may I bring to show my love?
Heavenly child, this night I promise you
Care of this earth, my gift, in all I do.
Care for this world, our fragile, earthly home,
Care for creation everywhere,
Love for this miracle we share.
This earth, my gift, my care,
Love for this miracle we share.*

Words by Will Todd | Publisher: Boosey and Hawkes

13 Earthificat

This is a revised version of *Blessed Art Thou* which was written for Nigel Short and Tenebrae in 2014 with words by Ben Dunwell. I have used the same shape to create a new secular text based on the elements and structure of the *Magnificat*, exhorting the listener to live life in harmony with nature and to fight for the future of our relationship with the planet.

*My heart sings to the Earth, the power of this place!
My soul dances aloud the power of this place;
Dances in this miracle place!
For Earth sustains such abundance of living;
Even the smallest things of the earth.*

*I will always be made wonderful by this gift;
This earth, fountain of life.
My heart sings this fountain of life.*

*And she will hold me if I can be in balance
and harmony.
She can rain storms of raging darkness;
And shake us away with destruction.*

*She tears down our towers in a moment;
And our indifference will leave us hopeless and lost.*

*But we may make inspirational change;
Changes are coming and we are the voices*

*My heart sings to the Earth the power of this place;
Dances in this miracle place!*

*And through the gift of our children,
Conditional on our love, our care of Earth, our
home, we rise anew.*

For this miracle of Earth: Sing aloud.

Words by Will Todd | Publisher: Tyalgum Press

14 A New Sunrise (Instrumental - Alina Orchestra directed by Will Todd)

This short instrumental work for strings and harp was written one morning in Rhinebeck New York in 2024 and inspired by the beautiful sunrise that I saw at my friend's house. There is tranquillity in the dawning of a new day, but also challenge, and the arc of the piece moves from the sonorous D major opening through gradually more dissonant material before returning to the stillness and promise of the opening phrases.

Publisher: Tyalgum Press

VOICES OF HOPE

Voices of Hope is an award-winning chamber choir based in the North East of England. Founded in 2011 by Simon Davies-Fidler, Scottish conductor Mark Edwards was appointed as Musical Director in 2020. Having originally formed for a one-off charity concert in 2011, Voices of Hope have since gained widespread recognition and success, most notably being crowned 2016 National Choir of the Year. Following this, Voices of Hope represented the UK in the 2017 European Let

the Peoples Sing finals and the 2019 Derry International Choir Festival. Additionally, Voices of Hope have contributed several broadcasts on BBC Radio 3 and have been televised on BBC Four. Voices of Hope regularly enjoy collaborations with celebrated artists, including Ēriks Ešēvalds, John Rutter and VOCES8. Their recent album, *Northern Lights*, celebrates living composers from around the world.



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MARK EDWARDS

Originally from Edinburgh, Mark trained and performed as a percussionist before completing his studies in Conducting at the Royal Northern College of Music, with Clark Rundell and Mark Heron, where he was awarded the Brierley Kershaw Prize for Conducting. In 2017, Mark won the National Brass Band Conducting Competition and more recently was a semi-finalist in the Citta' Di Brescia-Giancarlo Facchinetti Conducting Competition. He has taken part in masterclasses with renowned conductors such as Sir Mark Elder, Marin Alsop, Nicolás Pasquet and David Hill. He has performed in venues such as Royal Albert Hall London, Bridgewater Hall Manchester, Symphony Hall Birmingham, Musiikkitalo Helsinki.

As assistant conductor, he has worked with BBC Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, RTÉ concert orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Psappha, assisting conductors such as Sir Mark Elder, Vasily Petrenko, Vassily Sinaisky, John Storgårds and Simone Young. He is also musical director for Voices of Hope, Hexham Orpheus Choir and the City of Leeds Youth Orchestra and guest lecturer in Conducting at Newcastle University.



© Mark Savage

WILL TODD

Will Todd taught himself the piano from an early age and grew up in County Durham, North East England where his grandfather was a coal miner and his parents were teachers. His love of improvising has been the central force in a wide ranging career of composing and playing. Will has worked with many of the UK's leading music organisations including Royal Ballet, Welsh National Opera, Opera North, The Halle Orchestra, Opera Holland Park, The Sixteen, The BBC Singers and the BBC Concert Orchestra. He has also visited many countries performing and directing his music.

His love of choral music is reflected in a large output including masses, anthems and larger sacred concert works including *Mass in Blue*, which has been performed hundreds of times around the world since its 2003 premiere. His carol *My Lord Has Come* has become a worldwide favourite since it was included in Oxford University Press's *Carols for Choirs Five* in 2012. Other widely performed choral pieces include *Passion Music*, *Jazz Missa Brevis* and his arrangement of *Amazing Grace*. Will Todd also has an impressive list of theatre works including *The Screams of Kitty Genovese*, produced most recently by Tête à Tête Opera in London and Edinburgh, *Alice's*



© Rob Blackham

Adventures in Wonderland and *Christmas Carol* for Opera Holland Park, *Migrations* for Welsh National Opera and *Song of our Heartland*, commissioned by Opera North.

Will Todd is president and patron of a number of UK choirs. He strongly believes in music making for all, and his personal motto when directing choirs is 'find the passion'. His music is published by Oxford University Press, Boosey and Hawkes and Tyalgum Press and released on Signum Records.

Further information at www.willtodd.co.uk

ALINA ORCHESTRA

Alina is a professional orchestra that makes classical music accessible and inclusive for everyone in the community. Founded by Chief Executive, Nick Cutts, the Orchestra creates concerts that introduce classical music by presenting it in a friendly and approachable way, taking audiences on a musical journey with captivating performances of the highest artistic excellence, led by renowned Musical Director, Hilary Davan Wetton.

Alina provides a dedicated programme of outreach in order to support vulnerable/disadvantaged groups, using music to promote wellbeing. This includes:

- Wellbeing workshops for residents of local care homes which feature music, song, communication and interaction.

- Music education opportunities which support local music services and their students.
- 'Band in a Van' - a series of small, interactive music-making events for those members at the heart of disadvantaged communities that, for whatever reason, do not have access to classical music and its many benefits. In 2024, Band in a Van was shortlisted for an award as part of the Classic FM 'Music Teacher of the Year' series of awards.
- The Orchestra collaborates with local organisations to create fantastic partnerships for events or community projects, providing opportunities, where possible, for young aspiring soloists, composers and conductors to showcase their excellence.

www.alinaorchestra.com



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PERFORMERS:

Piano: Will Todd

WILL TODD ENSEMBLE

Bass: Gareth Huw Davies

Drums and Percussion: Doug Harper

Saxophone on *O Magnum Mysterium*, *On This Night* and *Let All The People Praise You*: Paul Jones

Violin on *Sing Me Home*: Suzanne Evans

Oboe: Louise Hayter

STRINGS OF ALINA ORCHESTRA (fixer: Nick Cutts)

Violin

Dominic Moore (*Leader*)

Naomi Rump

Julian Trafford

Brigitte Mallon

Caroline Mitchell

Stephanie Waite

Viola

Claire Newton

Lynne Baker

Bass

Alexander Verster

Cello

Toby Turton

Greg Duggan

Lily Hope

Harp

Jean Kelly

VOICES OF HOPE

Conductor: Mark Edwards

Soprano

Bonnie Brinn

Olivia Cameron

Hannah Fumoleau

Mary Houlton

Claire Morley

Michelle Smith

Alto

Emma Banks

Lorna Edwards

Charlotte Galloway

Alice Malkin

Laura Oldfield

Anna Williams

Tenor

Owain Bennett

Simon Davies-Fidler

Dan Lawrence

Chris Vernazza

Bass

Richard Bruce

Chris Davies

Damien Hall

Tim Hockin

Warren Smith

Lewis West

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Elizabeth Woods

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RENEW ME IN THE SUNLIGHT (WILL TODD)

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Recording Engineer – James Welch
Assistant Engineer – Tyler Davies
Recording Assistant – James Kedwards and Maher Woo-Shear

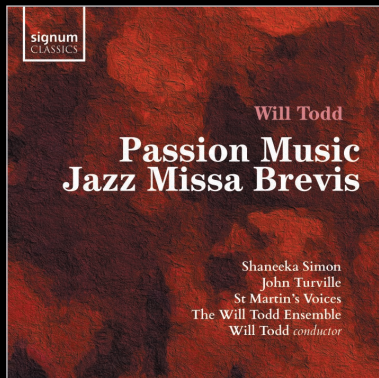
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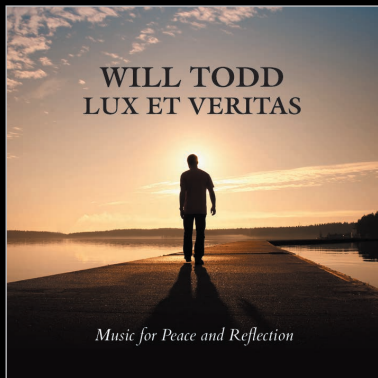
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